

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 011

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE NASSAU COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN; PROVIDING CERTAIN LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR APPLICATION; DIRECTING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Policy ROS.01.01 of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan (“Comprehensive Plan”) mandates the preparation and maintenance of a Park and Recreation Master Plan to guide the development and maintenance of County parks and recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Park and Recreation Master Plan is intended to inventory the County parks system, provide guidelines for the size, timing and phasing of parks in the County, establish criteria for, and priority ranking of, lands for acquisition and development, and identify potential funding sources as well as programs for implementation and a long-range capital improvements plan for future parks and recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Policy ROS.01.02 of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan, a 12-member Recreation Advisory Committee was formed to provide input on the development of a Park and Recreation Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, a series of community workshops and community surveys were conducted to provide input on the development of a Park and Recreation Master Plan, including spending priorities, facility and amenity needs, program needs, and community benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Board now finds it in the best interest of the County and its citizens to adopt the policies and recommendations included in the Nassau County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVLED by the Board of County Commissioners of Nassau County, Florida, as follows:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS. The above findings are true and correct and are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. ADOPTION OF MASTER PLAN. In accordance with Policy ROS.01.01 of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the Nassau County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan, dated as of January 25, 2021, which is attached hereto as Appendix A and incorporated herein

by reference (the "Parks Master Plan"), including the analysis, assessment of County needs and priorities, the long-range vision, and the recommended implementation strategy, is hereby approved.

SECTION 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND APPLICABILITY.

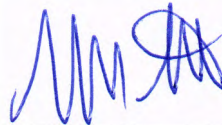
(A) The Parks Master Plan shall guide the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities in the County, including the size, timing, phasing, planning, acquisition, development, redevelopment, and funding of County parks and recreational facilities and provision of private parks and recreational facilities in accordance with County development standards.

(B) The County Administrator is hereby directed to develop or cause the development of any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or the Nassau County Code of Ordinances deemed necessary or desirable for the implementation of the Park Master Plan, which legislation shall address appropriate level of service standards, planning guidelines, and development requirements within the County. Such legislation shall be presented to this Board within 180 days for its consideration.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

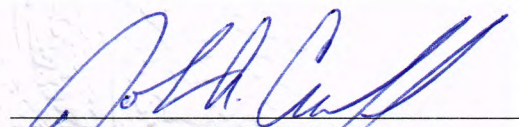
DULY ADOPTED this 25th day of January, 2021.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA**



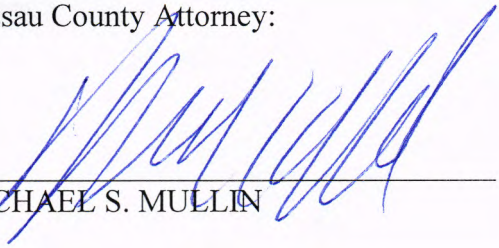
THOMAS R. FORD
Its: Chairman

Attest as to Chairman's Signature



JOHN A. CRAWFORD
Its: Ex-Officio Clerk

Approved as to form by the
Nassau County Attorney:



MICHAEL S. MULLIN

APPENDIX A

NASSAU COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN



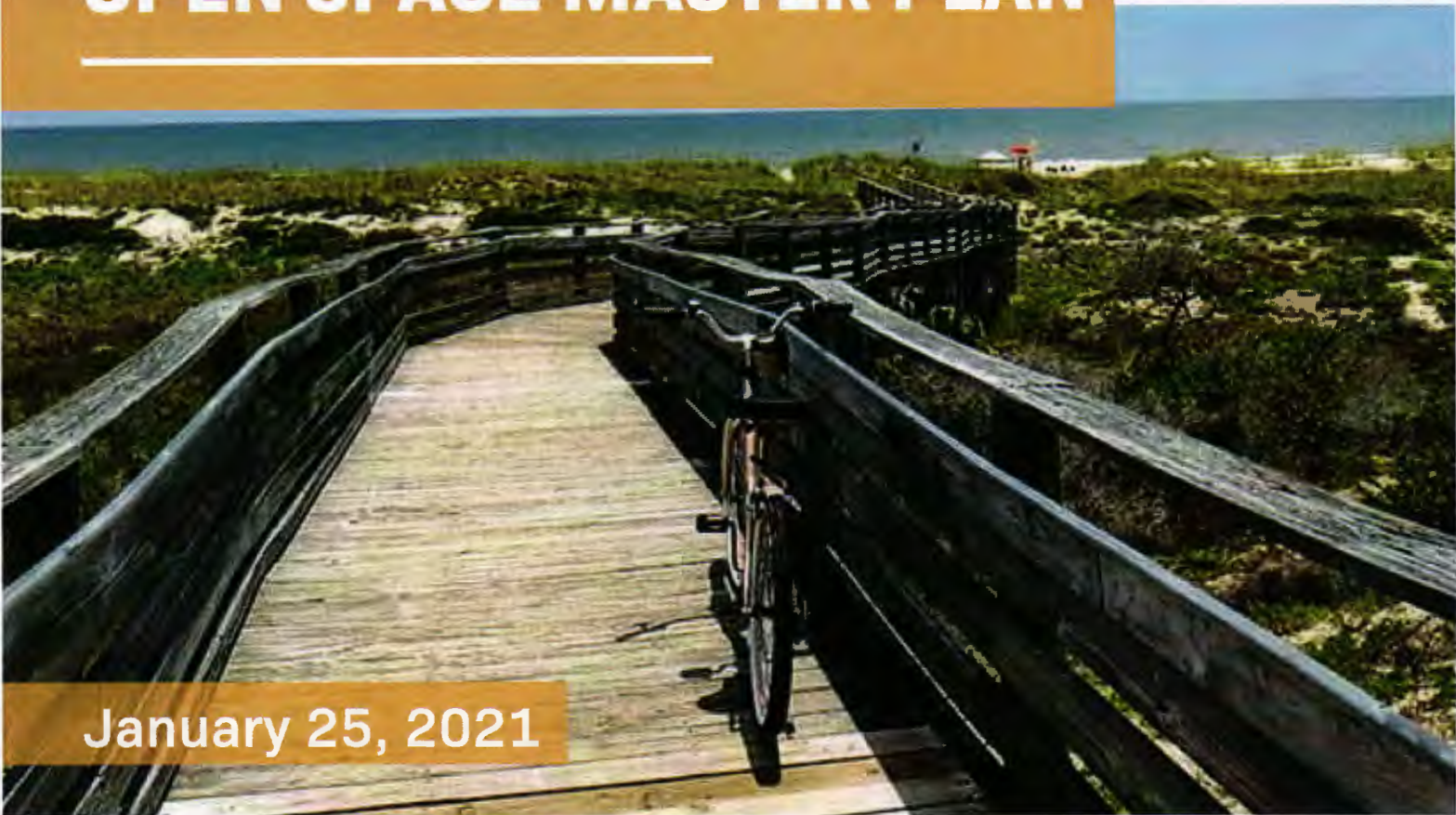
**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824



Nassau County

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN



January 25, 2021

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Executive Summary	i
i Introduction	Introduction	1
1 Existing Conditions & Issues Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Overview, Mission, & Vision 8 1.2 Demographics Analysis 10 1.3 Health Trends Analysis 18 1.4 Recreation Trends Analysis 31 1.5 Existing Parks & Recreation System Analysis 35 1.6 Existing Programs, Operations, & Maintenance Analysis 57 1.7 Review of Related Documents 66 	
2 Needs & Priorities Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Site Evaluations 98 2.2 Workshops 99 2.3 Interviews & Focus Group Meetings 108 2.4 Existing Level-of-Service (LOS) Analysis 110 2.5 Statistically-Valid Mail Survey 122 2.6 On-line Survey 141 2.7 Summary of Needs 144 	

3 Long-Range Vision	3.1 Mission Statement	150
	3.2 Foundational Values	151
	3.3 Guiding Principles	152
	3.4 Subsystems	159
	3.5 Subsystem Delivery Models, Classifications, & Recommendations	160
4 Implementation Strategy	4.1 Current Initiatives	220
	4.2 Updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan	223
	4.3 Updates to the County's Land Development Code	225
	4.4 Capital Improvements Funding	226
	4.5 Staffing, Operations, & Maintenance	230
	4.6 Action Plan	238
A Appendices	A1 National & Regional Recreational Trends Analysis	248
	A2 Stakeholder/Focus Group Interview Notes	272
	A3 On-line Survey Results	294
	A4 Preliminary Level-of-Service Recommendations	314
	A5 Statistically-Representative Mail Survey (under separate cover)	







Executive Summary

As one of the few remaining largely-undeveloped counties in Florida, Nassau County has the unique opportunity to control its own destiny.

Many other counties are nearing build-out, and struggling to undo the effects of years of poor planning and decision-making resulting in suburban sprawl, congested roads, poor water quality, degraded habitat, flooding, chronic disease, and other growth-related issues. Nassau County, however, has committed to managing growth and creating sustainable economic development in a way that maintains and improves the quality of life and unique character of the communities by utilizing its strengths – the people, the abundance of unspoiled natural resources, and its strategic location as the ‘Eastern Gateway to Florida.’

Of all the plans, policies, and designs being developed by Nassau County, none have the power of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROSMP) to impact the community’s livability, sustainability, and resiliency. Parks and the public realm (including streets, trails, conservation areas, civic spaces, and stormwater facilities) can help create jobs, increase revenues, protect natural resources, shape urban form and character, expand transportation access, improve health and education, and strengthen families. And, in light of worsening

wealth inequality, climate change, and political exhaustion, parks and recreation systems can be an oasis, bringing people together, mitigating effects of storms and severe weather, and providing an outlet for stress relief and opportunities to improve overall wellness for community members. Alexander Garvin notes that the public realm is “our common property. It is the fundamental element in any community—the framework around which everything grows.”

The PROSMP was developed over a two-year period, from the fall of 2018 to fall 2020, and includes a Preliminary Implementation Framework, Analysis of Existing Conditions, Comprehensive Needs Assessment, a Long-Range Vision, and the development of a Phased Implementation Strategy. Following are highlights from the planning process.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Existing Conditions & Issues Analysis includes an overview of the existing parks and recreation system, including the Parks and Recreation Department's mission and role; community demographics and trends; health trends analysis; recreation trends analysis; an evaluation of the existing parks system; an assessment of existing operations, maintenance, and programming; and a review of related planning documents that may be relevant to the PROSMP.

Key implications for the PROSMP include:

- Current and anticipated growth suggests an increasing need for parks and recreation facilities to meet demand, particularly for older adults;
- The wide disparity in incomes – particularly between east and west areas of the County – suggests the need for more equitable distribution of facilities and programs;
- The County's public realm (including parks, streets, trails and bikeways, civic spaces, and stormwater facilities) has the potential to address numerous critical community health issues; and
- The existing parks system needs to be updated and improved, including the repair and replacement of aging or damaged facilities and amenities; bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access; signage and wayfinding; accessibility for the disabled; historical and cultural interpretation; shade and shelters; branding and consistent use of materials; lighting; programming; and marketing and communications.



Yulee Sports Complex



NEEDS & PRIORITIES

A mixed-methods, triangulated approach – incorporating quantitative, qualitative, and secondary research techniques – was used to determine residents' parks and recreation needs and priorities.

Specific techniques included site evaluations, public workshops, a Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, interviews and focus group meetings, an existing level-of-service (LOS) analysis, a statistically-representative mail survey, and an on-line survey. Based on a review of the findings from all of the needs assessment techniques, residents' top priorities appear to include:

FACILITY PRIORITIES

- Multi-Purpose Trails;
- Swimming Pools;
- Indoor Recreation/Community Centers;
- Additional Large Community Parks; and
- Multi-purpose Sports Fields.



PROGRAM PRIORITIES

- Community Special Events;
- Fitness/Wellness;
- Nature Programs/ Environmental Education;
- Movies in the Park;
- Arts/Painting/ Crafts/Drawing Classes;
- Water Fitness; and
- Camps (Summer, School Break).



Public workshops

LONG-RANGE VISION

A long-range vision was developed for the County's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space system in response to residents' existing needs and priorities; the anticipated needs of future residents; and best practices and principles for parks and recreation system planning.

First, the vision includes a new mission statement for the recently newly-formed parks and recreation department:

"To respond to residents' needs and priorities, provide and maintain high-quality facilities, and contribute to the sustainability and resiliency of the County in a fiscally responsible manner."

Second, the vision is comprised of a dozen "subsystems" including:

- Large Regional Parks;
- Small Local Parks;
- Urban Parks and Open Spaces;
- Athletic Fields;
- Indoor Recreation Centers;
- Water Parks and Swimming Pools;
- Natural Lands and Conservation Areas;
- Beach Parks and Access;
- Boat Ramps, Fishing, and Kayak Access;
- Sidewalks, Bikeways, and Trails;
- Recreation, Health, and Educational Programs; and
- Integration of Parks and Stormwater Treatment Facilities.

Each subsystem includes a proposed County-wide 'service-delivery model,' and many include proposed prototypes or specific recommendations for improvements. For example, a prototypical local park design was developed for incorporation into the County's residential Land Development Codes; and concepts were developed to illustrate proposed improvements to Goffinsville, Peters Point, and Yulee Parks, serving as prototypes for activating other parks throughout the system.

FIGURE I.1 | Prototype for a Small Local Park



Example Park Amenities

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Pavilion + concession + restrooms | 8. Basketball/Tennis/Pickleball/ Multi-purpose court |
| 2. Playground + shade structure | 9. Pavilion |
| 3. Chess + checker table games | 10. Park zone traffic calming |
| 4. Outdoor foosball table | 11. Crosswalk |
| 5. Outdoor ping-pong table | 12. On-street parking |
| 6. Multi-purpose open space | 13. Sidewalk + tree zone/buffer |
| 7. Picnic table(s) | |



FIGURE I.II | Goffinsville Park Existing Conditions



FIGURE I.III | Activation of the Concession Area Goffinsville Park



FIGURE I.IV | Overall Long-Range Parks and Recreation Vision





IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Implementation comes in many forms, including new capital improvements, additional staffing, new programs, and increased maintenance.

Other forms of implementation include updates to comprehensive plans or land development regulations; partnerships with other agencies, businesses, or nonprofit organizations; changes to the agency's organizational structure; refocused delivery of programs and services in response to the agency's mission or residents' priorities; and changes to maintenance and operations procedures.

The County has taken several important steps to implement the new vision for its parks, recreation, and open space system, including the design or development of Tributary Regional Park, Nassau Crossing Park, and Westside Regional Park; improvements to existing parks; updated recreation impact fees; creation of a conservation land protection and acquisition program; and completion of the Amelia River-to-Sea (ARTS) Trail.

Moving forward, the proposed Implementation Strategy also includes the following actions:

- Integrate the long-range parks, recreation and open space vision – and proposed level-of-service standards - into the County Comprehensive Plan;
- Update the County's Land Development Code (LDC) to require developers to construct and maintain new local parks as community

infrastructure in accordance with the County's prototype and LOS standards;

- Develop a long-range financial plan to execute future parks, recreation, and open space capital projects, potentially including a number of short and long-term financing options such as bonds and loans. Estimated costs for the first phase of implementation exceed \$140M over ten years; and
- Develop a Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Plan that incorporates master plan recommendations for the County's role in providing parks and recreations services; organizational structure and staffing; programming; partnerships; maintenance roles and responsibilities; policies; and operational costs and funding.

The Implementation Strategy also includes a detailed Action Plan for priority initiatives. Top 10, short-term actions include:

TOP 10 SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

The following short-term actions should be initiated within FY 2020/2021:

Staffing

- Hire a Certified Parks and Recreation Director; and
- Hire or Contract for Parks Planning, Landscape Architecture Services.

Planning, Feasibility, and Funding Studies

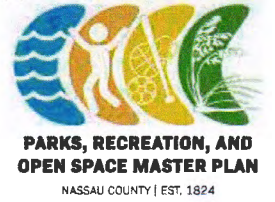
- Beach Parking and Access Study;
- Yulee Recreation and Aquatics Center;
- Comprehensive Plan and LDCs; and
- 10-Year Parks and Recreation Strategic/Funding Plan.

Capital Improvements

- Upgrade Existing Parks with the "Basic Nassau Package";
- Acquire Land for Regional Parks; and
- Improve Fishing and Kayak Access at Existing Parks.

Programming

- Develop and Implement a Pilot Programming Plan.



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Introduction



Introduction

The context statement to the Nassau County 2018 Trends Report discusses the unique opportunity the County has to control its own future; and the role that planning, policy and design decisions have in implementing and shaping that future.



Peters Point

"As Nassau County enters an era of transition we, collectively, have been granted an opportunity that most will never have. An opportunity to actively craft our future.

No matter how different we are, we share one overarching similarity, a desire to create a vibrant and dynamic community that provides a high quality-of-life and quality-of-place for our families and ourselves. The type of community that inspires connections with the natural and built environment. A community that promotes day-to-day social engagement and interpersonal connections. A community that facilitates the creation of places that are not only beautiful in form but functional for day-to-day life. A community that prioritizes a generational approach to securing the unique character of Nassau County.

We must make planning, policy and design decisions that put people at the center of the equation. We must establish a people first agenda, an agenda that places a priority on quality-of-life and generational sustainability - an agenda that places value in maintaining the unique character of Nassau County so that our children's children will know the place we have all come to love."

Of all the plans, policies, and designs being developed by Nassau County, none have the power of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROSMP) to impact the community's livability, sustainability, and resiliency.

Parks and the public realm (including streets, trails, conservation areas, civic spaces, and stormwater facilities) can help create jobs, increase revenues, protect natural resources, shape urban form and character, expand transportation access, improve health and education, and strengthen families. And, in light of worsening wealth inequality, climate change, and political exhaustion, parks and recreation systems can be an oasis, bringing people together, mitigating effects of storms and severe weather, and providing an outlet for stress relief and opportunities to improve overall wellness for community members.

More and more elected officials, community and business leaders, and developers are now acknowledging the irrefutable relationship between great parks and recreation systems and sustainable, resilient, and livable communities. For example, Denver's mayor Michael Hancock stated that "study after study has shown that the more open space and the more dedication of park space that you have, the healthier your community will be.... One of the things that developers understand is that if I have parks, people are more likely to want to invest and live and work in an area." Dr. Robert Zarr, founder of Park RX America and a pediatrician at UnitedHealthcare, notes that "the closer you live to green space, the more likely you are to access it, and the more likely you are to be active. For every dollar spent on

creating and maintaining trails, you save three dollars in health-care expenses." And Mick Cornett, former mayor of Oklahoma City, summarizes: "You can't be a great city without great parks."

Nassau County's "Vision 2032, A 25-Year Strategic Vision" states that "Nassau County is committed to managing growth and creating sustainable economic development in a way that maintains and improves the quality of life and unique character of the communities by utilizing its strengths – the people, the abundance of unspoiled natural resources, and its strategic location as the "Eastern Gateway to Florida." The Vision acknowledges the important role of parks, recreation, and conservation lands in sustaining residents' quality of life. Specific goals and objectives related to recreation and open space include:

- Conserve and/or preserve existing natural areas, including wetlands, floodplains, river corridors (such as, the St. Mary's River), streams, creeks, and wildlife habitats. By the year 2032, the acreage of publicly-owned natural, open space areas, and natural areas set aside for voluntary conservation or preservation, shall be equal to or greater than the year 2008 acreage; and
- Preserve existing and expand outdoor recreation areas, publicly-owned natural and open space areas, recreational facilities and services throughout Nassau County. By the year 2010, add additional level of service standards to the Comprehensive Plan for recreation and open space to include acreage for active outdoor recreation areas, numbers and standards for recreation facilities (including boat ramps, skate parks, and ball fields), and generalized locations based upon existing deficiencies and projected population growth.



This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan builds on the County's vision to establish a framework for the gradual growth and development of the County's parks and recreation system in an orderly, fiscally feasible manner.

The Master Plan was developed over a two-year period, from the fall of 2018 to fall 2020, including the following phases:

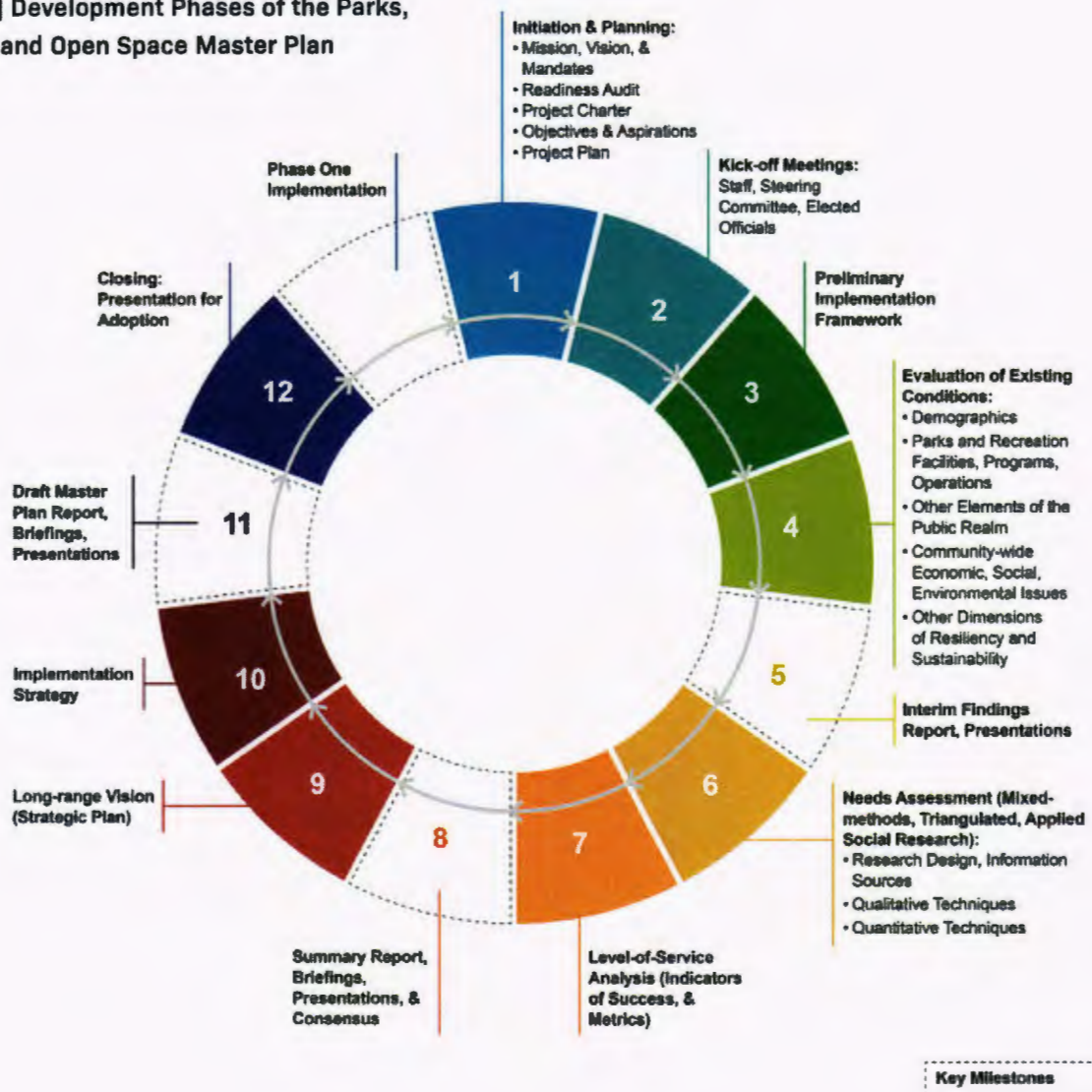
- **Development of a Preliminary Implementation Framework (PIF)** – including a hypothetical parks and recreation vision, estimated capital and operating costs, and proposed changes to impact fees, comprehensive plan policies, and land development regulations - as a basis for discussion with County staff, managers, and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC);
- **Analysis of Existing Conditions**, including the existing parks system, existing planning documents, demographics analysis and trends, and community-wide issues;

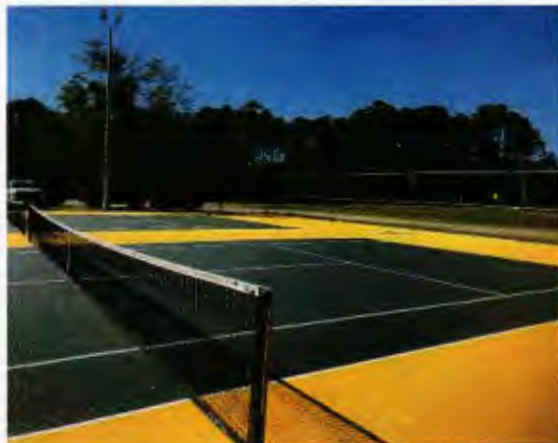


Nassau Landing

- **A Comprehensive Needs Assessment** – including interviews, workshops, surveys, public meetings, benchmarking, and a level-of-service analysis – to determine residents’ needs and priorities;
- **A Long-Range Vision** that responds to residents’ needs, and incorporates best practices in parks and recreation planning; and
- **A Phased Implementation Strategy** based on estimated costs, residents’ priorities, available and projected funding, and the role(s) of the County, municipalities, community developers, non-profit organizations, private recreation providers, and other partners.

FIGURE 0.1 | Development Phases of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan





Clockwise from top left: Stein-Tompkins Park; American Beach Community Center; Holly Point; Goffinsville Park; tennis court in Yulee; Summer Beach

Existing Conditions & Issues Analysis



Existing Conditions & Issues Analysis

The purpose of this first section is to summarize existing conditions and issues in order to identify implications for the parks and recreation system, the public realm, and community resiliency and sustainability.

The Existing Conditions & Issues Analysis includes an overview of the existing parks and recreation system, including the Parks and Recreation Department's mission and role; community demographics and trends; health trends analysis; recreation trends analysis; an evaluation of the existing parks system; an assessment of existing operations, maintenance, and programming; and a review of related planning documents that may be relevant to the PROSMP.



Yulee Athletic Association

Source: <https://tshq.bluesombrero.com/Default.aspx?tabid=1640111>

1.1 Overview, Mission, & Vision

Nassau County's Parks and Recreation Department is relatively young, having been the responsibility of the County's Facilities Maintenance Department until recently.

According to Nassau County's website, the Department is responsible for maintaining approximately 19 park locations; repairing and maintaining grounds upkeep service to provide a safe environment; supervising and assisting in new park facility construction; and working with the 501(c)3 not-for-profit organizations for youth sports activities. The Department does not offer any recreation programs or special events. This is consistent with other rural County parks and recreation systems throughout Florida that have traditionally focused on providing basic services such as boat ramps, beaches, ball fields, and natural areas.

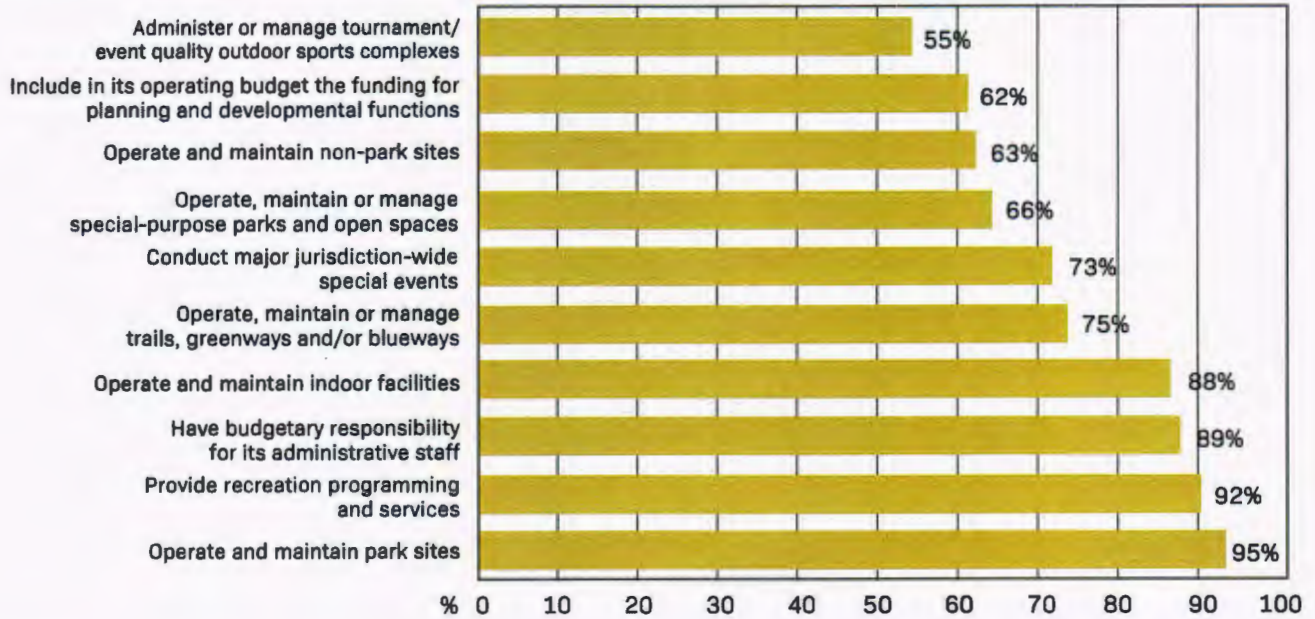
The Parks and Recreation Department does not yet have a stated mission and vision, or expressed values and roles that guide its day-to-day operations. There are no standards that dictate a Departments' mission and role. Some County Departments, for example, choose to continue providing basic services while consigning responsibility for recreation programming, special use facilities, and special events to municipalities or non-profit organizations. Others, such as Orange County (Orlando) choose

to offer a comprehensive menu of facilities and programs comparable to a major metropolitan parks and recreation department.

Nassau County will need to determine the role it wishes to play in meeting the recreation, social, economic, and environmental needs of the community in order to make decisions regarding staffing, operations, capital improvements, programming, organizational structure, and funding. **Figure 1.1** shows the percentage of parks and recreation agencies in the United States that assume "key responsibilities," according to the National Recreation and Park Association.



FIGURE 1.1 | Key Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies) (source: NRPA)



John Claxton Boat Ramp

1.2 Demographics Analysis

A key component of the PROSMP is a demographics analysis which helps provide a thorough understanding of the demographic makeup of residents within the county, assesses key economic factors, and identifies national, regional, and local trends.

The demographic analysis describes the population within Nassau County. This assessment is reflective of the county's total population and its key characteristics such as age segments, race, ethnicity, and income levels. It is important to note that future projections are based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis could have a significant bearing on the validity of the projected figures.



Population:

- 86,340 people live in Nassau County
- County is expected to grow to 112,131 residents by 2034



Age:

- Median age: 45.3
- By 2034, the 55+ age segment will encompass 42% of the population



Race/Ethnicity:

- 89% of the population is White Alone
- 90% of the population will remain White Alone for the next 15 years



Income:

- Median household income: \$73,098
- Median household income is higher than state and national averages



METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in January 2020 and reflects actual

numbers as reported in the 2010 Census as well as estimates for 2019 and 2024 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for 2029 and 2034 projections. The Nassau County's boundaries shown below were utilized for the demographic analysis. (See **Figure 1.2.**)

FIGURE 1.2 | Nassau County Boundaries

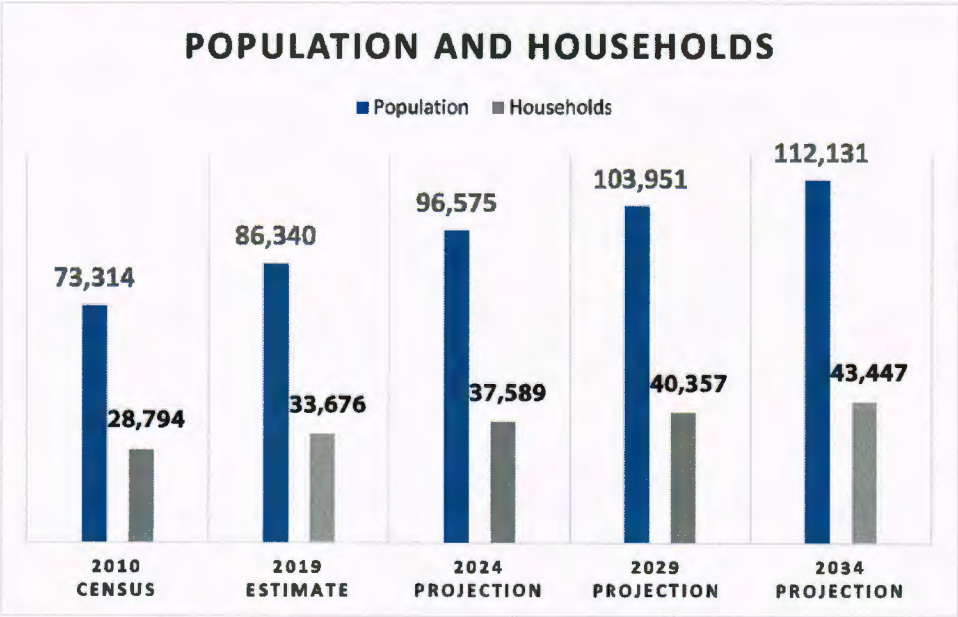


COUNTY POPULACE

Population

The county's population experienced a significant growing trend in recent years. Currently, the population is estimated at 86,340 individuals living within 33,676 households. Projecting ahead, the total population and total number of households are both expected to continue growing rapidly over the next 15 years. Based on 2034 predictions, Nassau County is expected to have 112,131 residents living within 43,447 households. (See **Figure 1.3**.)

FIGURE 1.3 | Total Population and Households





Age Segment

Evaluating the county by age segments, Nassau County exhibits a rather older population, with 37% of its residents over the age of 55. The county has a median age of 45.3 which is significantly older than the U.S. median age of 38.5.

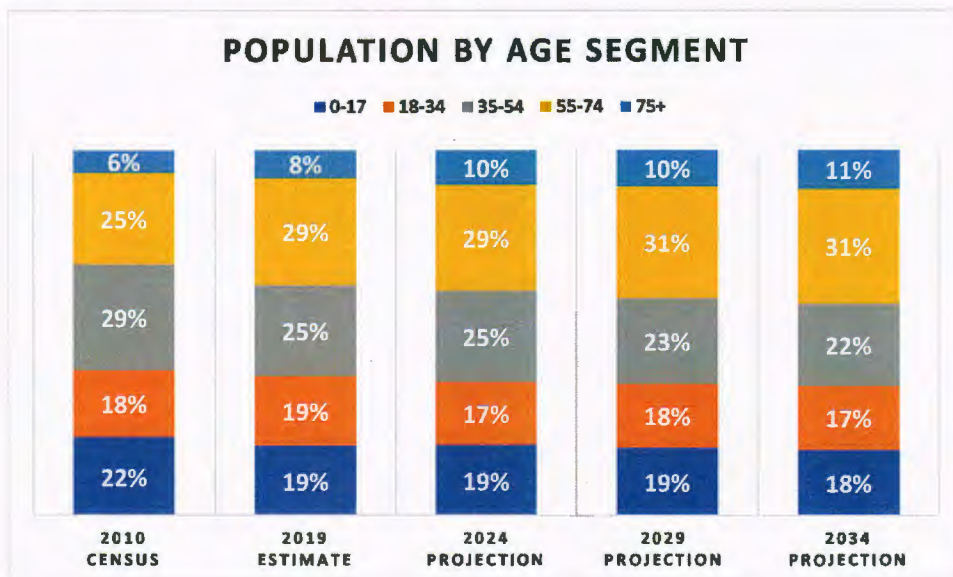
Over the next 15 years, the 55+ population is expected to grow to represent over 40% of the county's total population. This is largely due to the increased life expectancies and the remainder of the Baby Boomer generation shifting into the senior age groups. (See **Figure 1.4**).

As the Baby Boomer generation ages, the population of the United States over the age of 55 will continue to grow. Due to the continued growth of the older

age segments, it is useful to further segment the "Senior" population beyond the traditional 55+ designation.

Within the field of parks and recreation, there are two commonly used ways to partition this age segment. One is to simply segment by age: 55-64, 65-74, and 75+. However, as these age segments are engaged in programming, the variability of health and wellness can be a more relevant factor. For example, a 55-year-old may be struggling with rheumatoid arthritis and need different recreational opportunities than a healthy 65-year old who is running marathons once a year. Therefore, it may be more useful to divide this age segment into "Active," "Low-Impact," and/or "Social" Seniors.

FIGURE 1.4 | Population by Age Segments



Race and Ethnicity Definitions

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2010 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2000 Census and earlier censuses; therefore, caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2010) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

- **American Indian** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment;
- **Asian** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam;
- **Black** – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands;
- **White** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa; and

- **Hispanic or Latino** – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

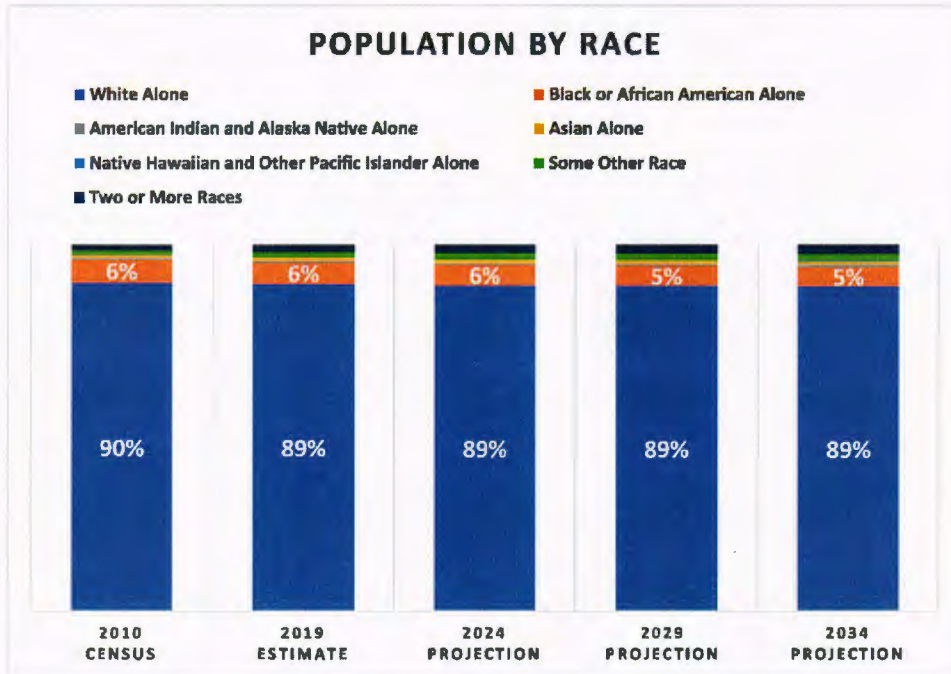
*Please Note: The Census Bureau defines Race as a person's self-identification with one or more of the following social groups: White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, some other race, or a combination of these. While Ethnicity is defined as whether a person is of Hispanic/Latino origin or not. **For this reason, the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity is viewed separate from race throughout this demographic analysis.***

Race

Analyzing race, the county's current population is primarily White Alone. The 2019 estimate shows that 89% of the population falls into the White Alone category, while the Black or African American Alone (6%) category represents the largest minority. The racial diversification of Spring Hill is less diverse than the national population, which is approximately 70% White Alone, 13% Black Alone, and 7% Some Other Race. The predictions for 2034 expect the county's population to remain dormant for the next 15 years. (See **Figure 1.5.**)



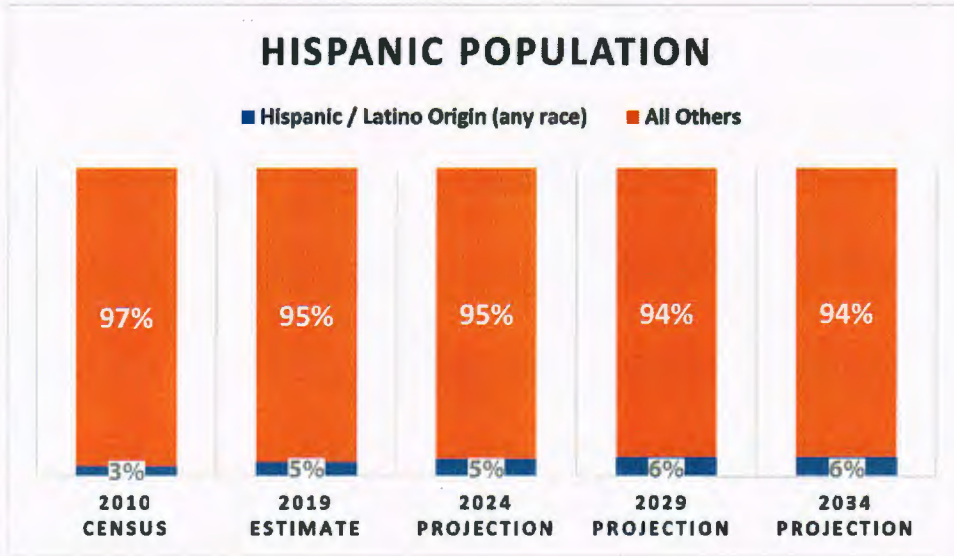
FIGURE 1.5 | Population by Race



Ethnicity

Nassau County's population was also assessed based on Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, which by the Census Bureau definition is viewed independently from race. It is important to note that individuals who are Hispanic/Latino in ethnicity can also identify with any of the racial categories from above. Based on the 2019 current estimate, those of Hispanic/Latino origin represent 5% of the county's current population, which is significantly lower than the national average (18% Hispanic/Latino). The Hispanic/Latino population is expected to grow slightly over the next 15 years, increasing to 6% of the county's total population by 2034. (See **Figure 1.6** on the following page.)

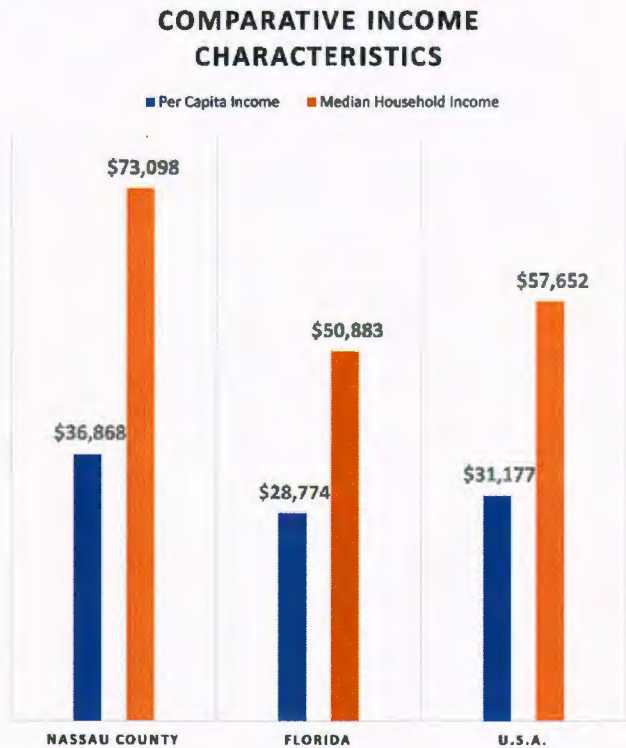
FIGURE 1.6 | Service Area's Population by Ethnicity



Household Income

The county's per capita income (\$36,868) and median household income (\$73,098) are both significantly higher than current state (\$28,774 & \$50,883) and national averages (\$31,177 & \$57,652). Additionally, both Nassau County's per capita income and median household income are expected to continue growing over the next 15 years reaching \$49,471 & \$97,293 (respectively) by 2034.

FIGURE 1.7 | Income Characteristics





Summary OF DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

- Nassau County's population annual growth rate (1.99%) is significantly higher than the U.S.'s (0.85%) growth rate, which suggests an increasing need for parks and recreation facilities to meet demand;
- Nassau County's household annual growth rate (1.93%) is also significantly higher than the national (0.80%) average;
- When assessing age segments, the county demonstrates a significantly older population than the national age segment distribution, which may indicate the need for more bikeways and trails, adult fitness programs, pickleball courts, indoor recreation areas, and other facilities and programs tailored towards older adults;
- The county's racial distribution has a higher White Alone population and lower Black Alone populations, when compared to national percentage distribution;
- Nassau County's percentage of Hispanic/Latino population (5%) is significantly below the national average (19%); and
- Nassau County's average per capita income (\$36,868) and median house income (\$73,098) are both well above average, when compared to the U.S.'s income characteristics (\$31,177 and \$57,652). This suggests that many residents may have higher disposable income, and may be willing to pay for quality facilities and programs that meet their specific needs. However, as discussed in the health evaluation, there is a wide disparity in income levels between residents living in the east and west areas of the county, which has significant implications for the need for parks and recreation facilities and programs.

1.3 Health Trends Analysis

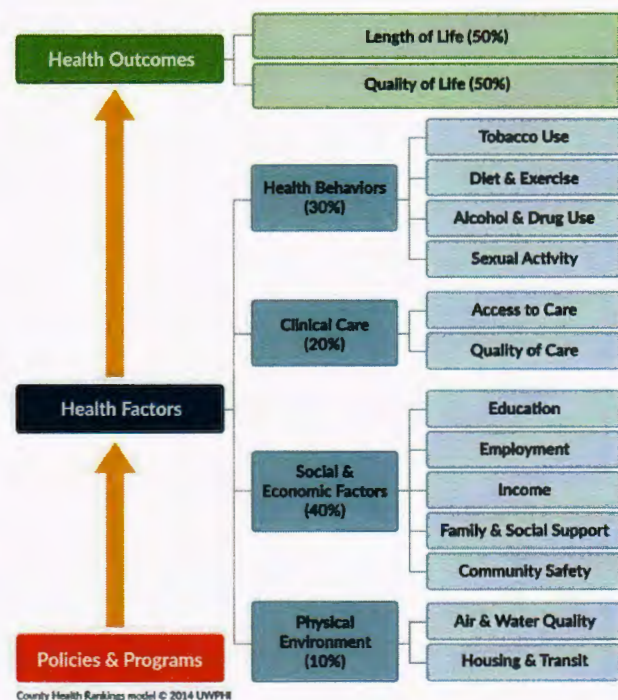
The overall health of a county is measured through two key health metrics – Health Outcomes and Health Factors.

Health Outcomes are end results caused by an individual's health; while Health Factors are circumstances which affect one's health. Both of core areas are comprised of several sub categories, which are weighted to comprise the overall county rankings.

The following sections provide tables that detail the health metrics for Nassau County, for both Health Outcomes and Health Factors, and provide rankings for Nassau County relative to the 67 counties within Florida. Then, the county is further compared to the State of Florida, as a whole, and to the top 10th percentile of all US counties. Assessing Health Outcomes, Nassau County ranks 36th out of 67 counties in Florida; while the county ranks 8th out of 67 for Health Factors.

Health trend data was sourced from the 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, which is conducted by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. For more information, visit www.countyhealthrankings.org.

FIGURE 1.8 | County Health Rankings Model





HEALTH OUTCOMES

Nassau County ranks 36th among Florida counties for Health Outcomes. Analyzing sub-categories for Health Outcomes, reveals that Nassau County ranks 44th for Length of Life and 24th for Quality of Life. Individual metrics from the study related to Health Outcomes have remained similar to state metrics; however, Premature Death was identified as an area of improvement.

FIGURE 1.9 | Health Outcomes (source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, www.countyhealthrankings.org)

Health Outcomes (ranked 36 out of 67 counties)				
Health Metric	County Rank (out of 67)	Nassau County	Florida	Top 10th Percentile US
Length of Life (ranked 44 out of 67 counties)	44			
Premature death		9,200	7,200	5,400
Quality of Life (ranked 44 out of 67 counties)	24			
Poor or fair health		17%	19%	12%
Poor physical health days		4.1	3.8	3
Poor mental health days		4.3	3.8	3.1
Low birthweight		8%	9%	6%

HEALTH FACTORS

Nassau County ranks 8th among 67 counties for Health Factors. This ranking was based on the following sub-categories and ranks: Health Behaviors (16th), Clinical Care (10th), Social & Economic Factors (5th), and Physical Environment (35th). Individual health indicators that have shown recent improvement for the county include Air Pollution, Violent Crime, Uninsured, Primary Care Physicians, and Dentists. The study also identified occurrences of Adult Obesity and Children in Poverty as an indicator that has become worse in recent years.

FIGURE 1.10 | Health Factors (source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, www.countyhealthrankings.org)

Health Factors (ranked 8 out of 67 counties)				
Health Metric	County Rank (out of 67)	Nassau County	Florida	Top 10th Percentile US
Health Behaviors (ranked 16 out of 67 counties)	16			
Adult smoking		16%	14%	14%
Adult obesity		30%	29%	26%
Food environment index		7.6	6	8.7
Physical inactivity		25%	23%	19%
Access to exercise opportunities		68%	80%	91%
Excessive drinking		19%	19%	13%
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths		29%	28%	13%
Sexually transmitted infections		242.2	520.4	152.8
Teen births		26	14	37
Clinical Care (ranked 10 out of 67 counties)	10			
Uninsured		12%	6%	96%
Primary care physicians		2,180:1	1,050:1	1,660:1
Dentists		3,310:1	1,760:1	1,260:1
Mental health providers		930:1	960:1	310:1
Preventable hospital stays		4,522	4,966	2,765
Mammography screening		44%	49%	37%
Flu vaccinations		48%	52%	43%
Social & Economic Factors (ranked 5 out of 67 counties)	5			
High school graduation		91%	89%	96%
Some college		60%	61%	73%
Unemployment		3.8%	4.3%	2.9%
Children in poverty		13%	21%	11%
Income inequality		4.2	4.9	3.7
Children in single parent households		33%	33%	20%
Social associations		11.8	7.6	21.9
Violent crime		166	420	63
Injury deaths		99	56	57
Physical Environment (ranked 35 out of 67 counties)	35			
Air pollution particulate matter		8.9	8.8	6.1
Drinking water violations		No		
Severe housing problems		15%	18%	9%
Driving alone to work		83%	80%	72%
Long commute driving alone		49%	38%	15%



Summary **OF HEALTH TRENDS**

The Health Trends Analysis indicates that the County's public realm (including parks, streets, trails and bikeways, civic spaces, and stormwater facilities) has the potential to address numerous critical community health issues and disparities, as illustrated in **Figures 1.11 - 1.17**.

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FIGURE 1.11 | Chronic Disease - Total Deaths or Hospitalization by Chronic Disease

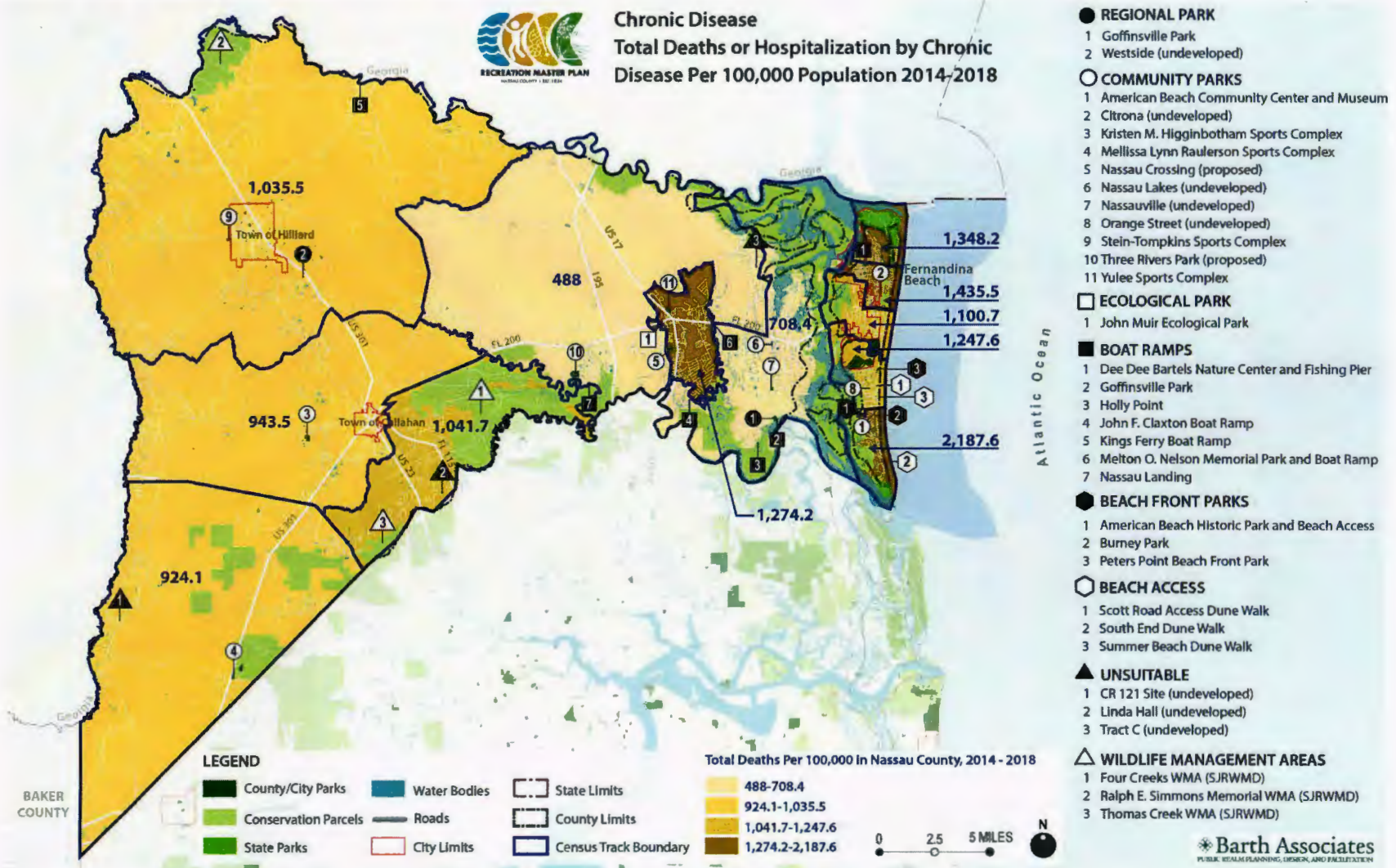


FIGURE 1.12 | Chronic Disease - Influenza and Pneumonia Deaths

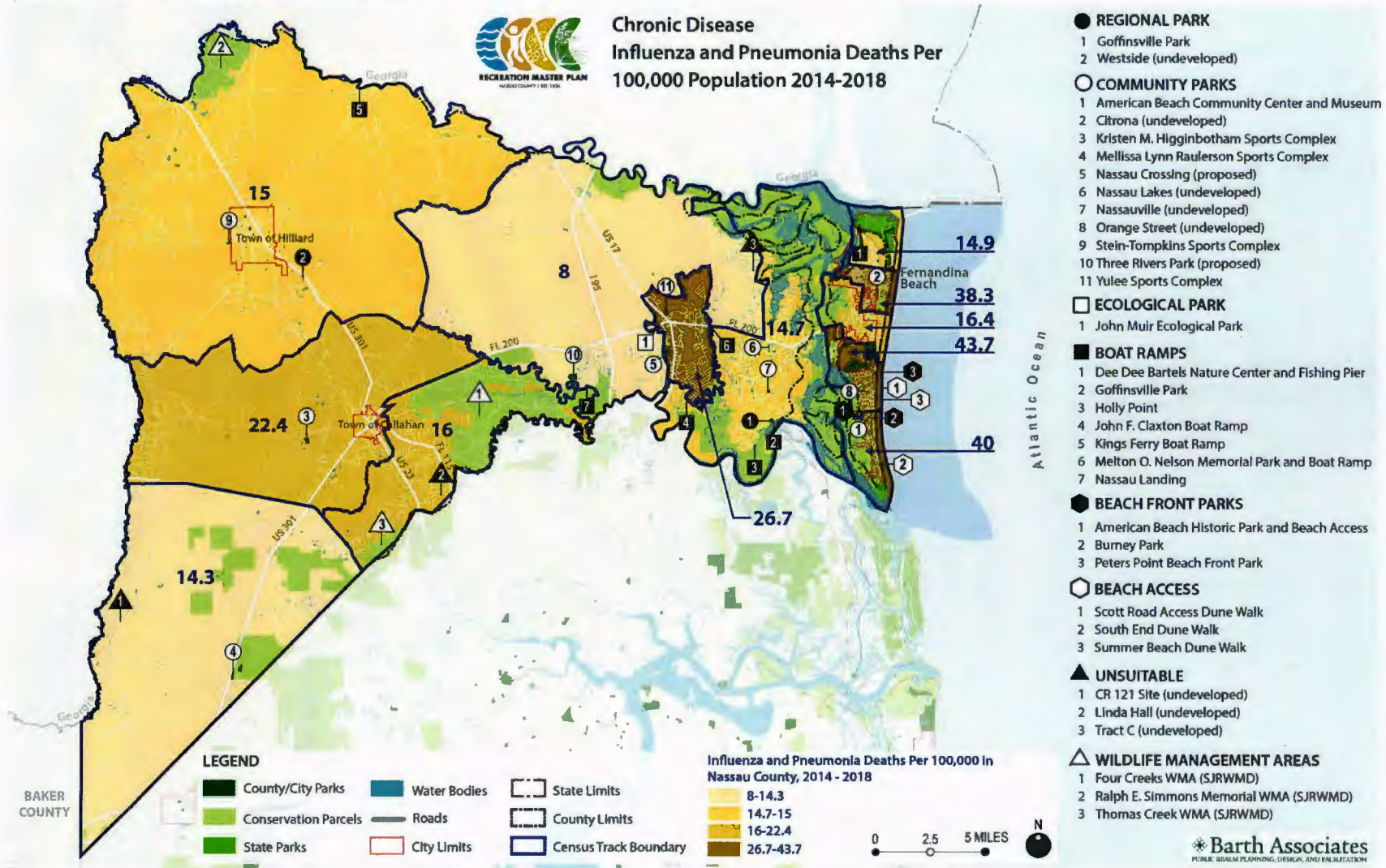


FIGURE 1.13 | Maternal and Child Birth Percentage of Births to Mothers who were Obese Prior to Pregnancy

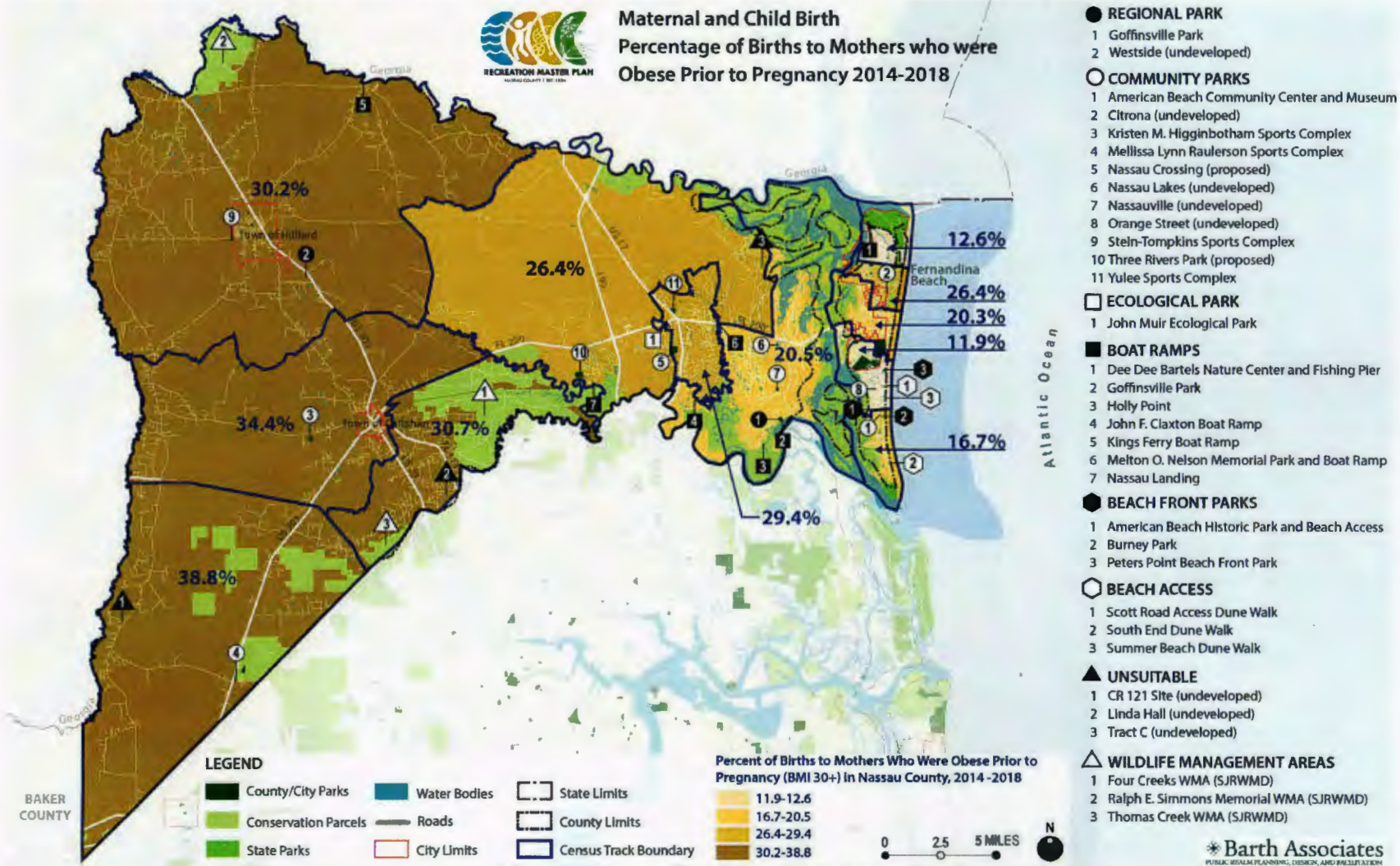


FIGURE 1.14 | Social Determinants of Health - Percentage of Families Below 100% Poverty Level

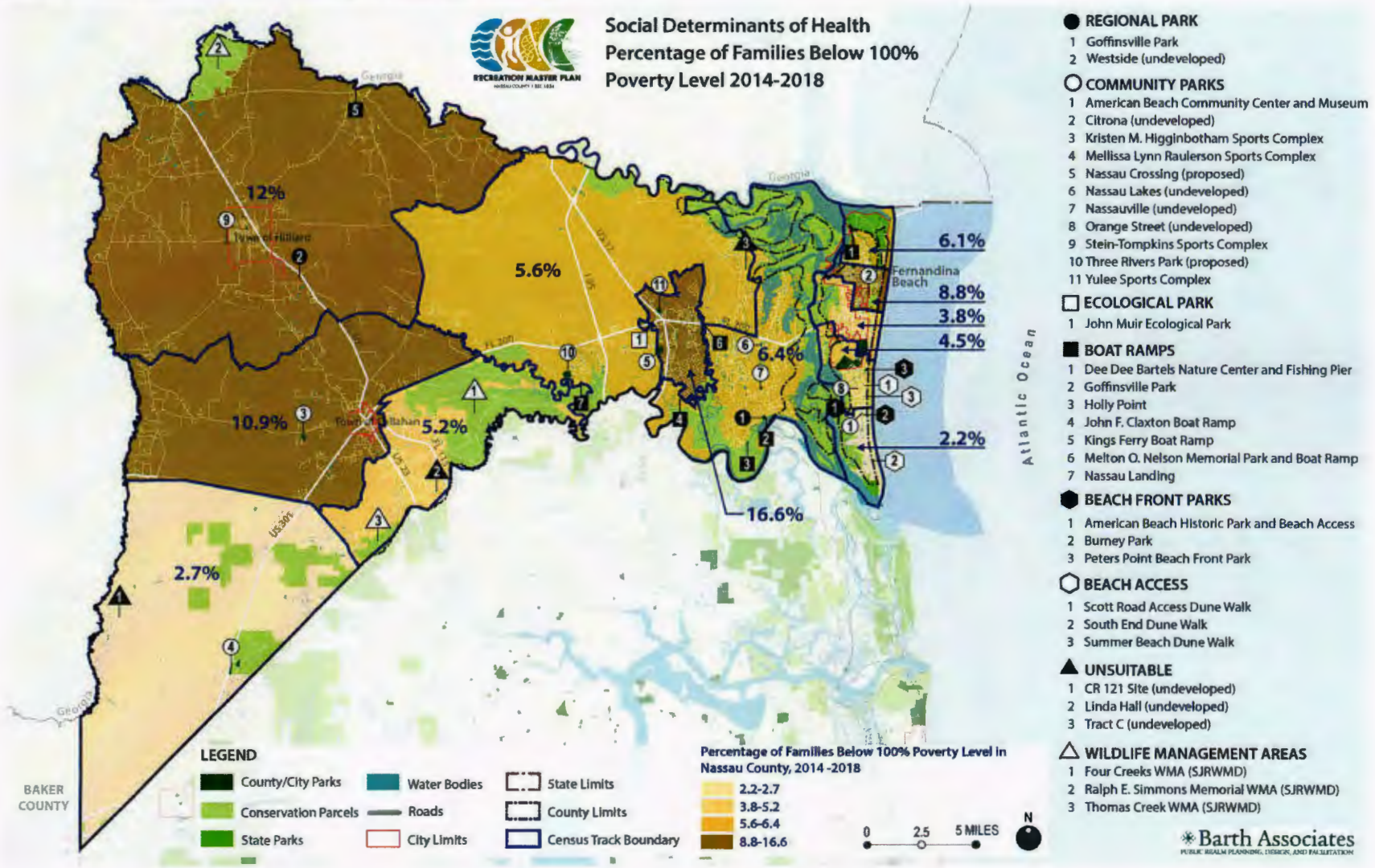


FIGURE 1.15 | Social Determinants of Health - Percentage of Households that Receive Retirement Benefits

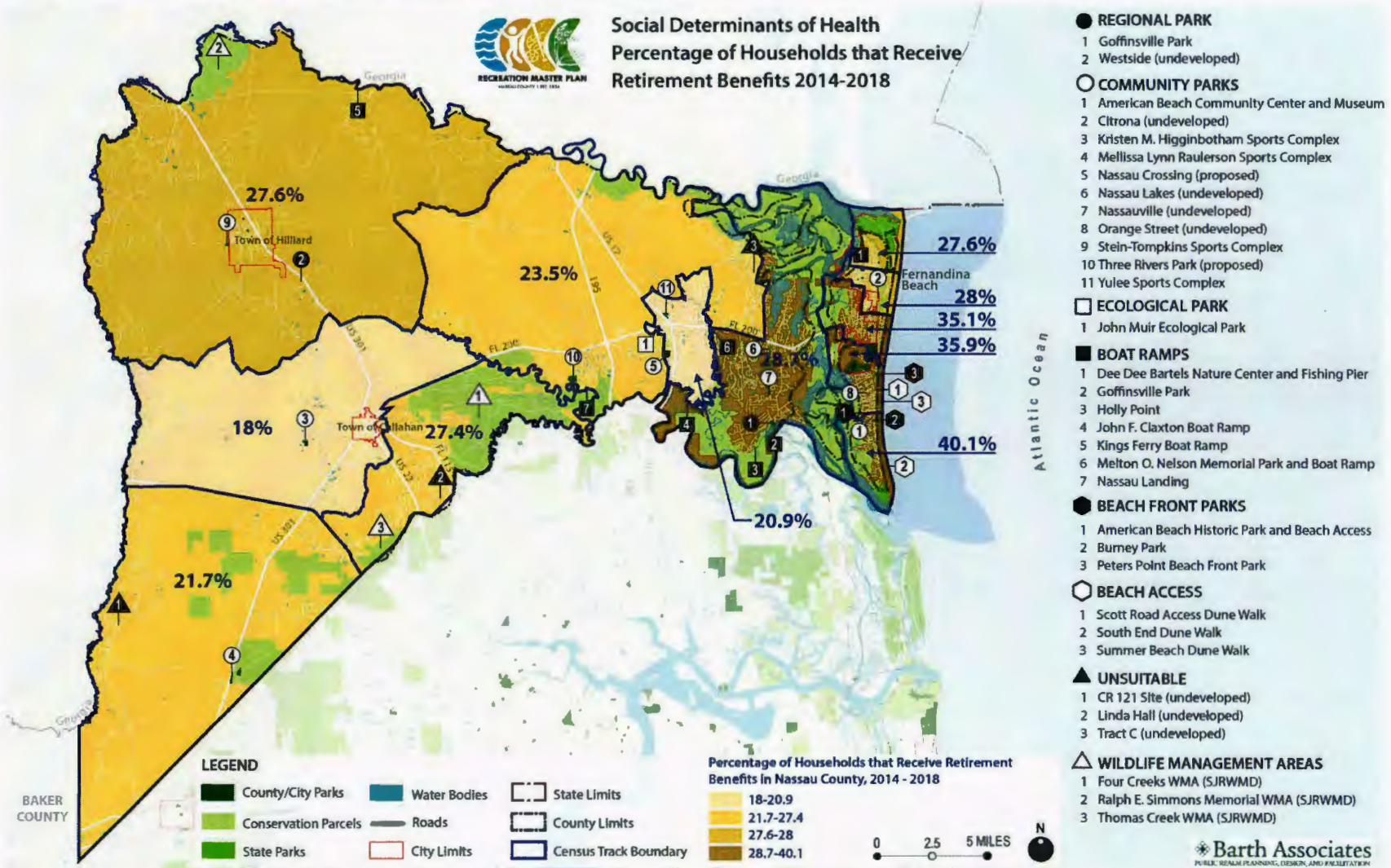


FIGURE 1.16 | Injury and Violence - Homicide Deaths

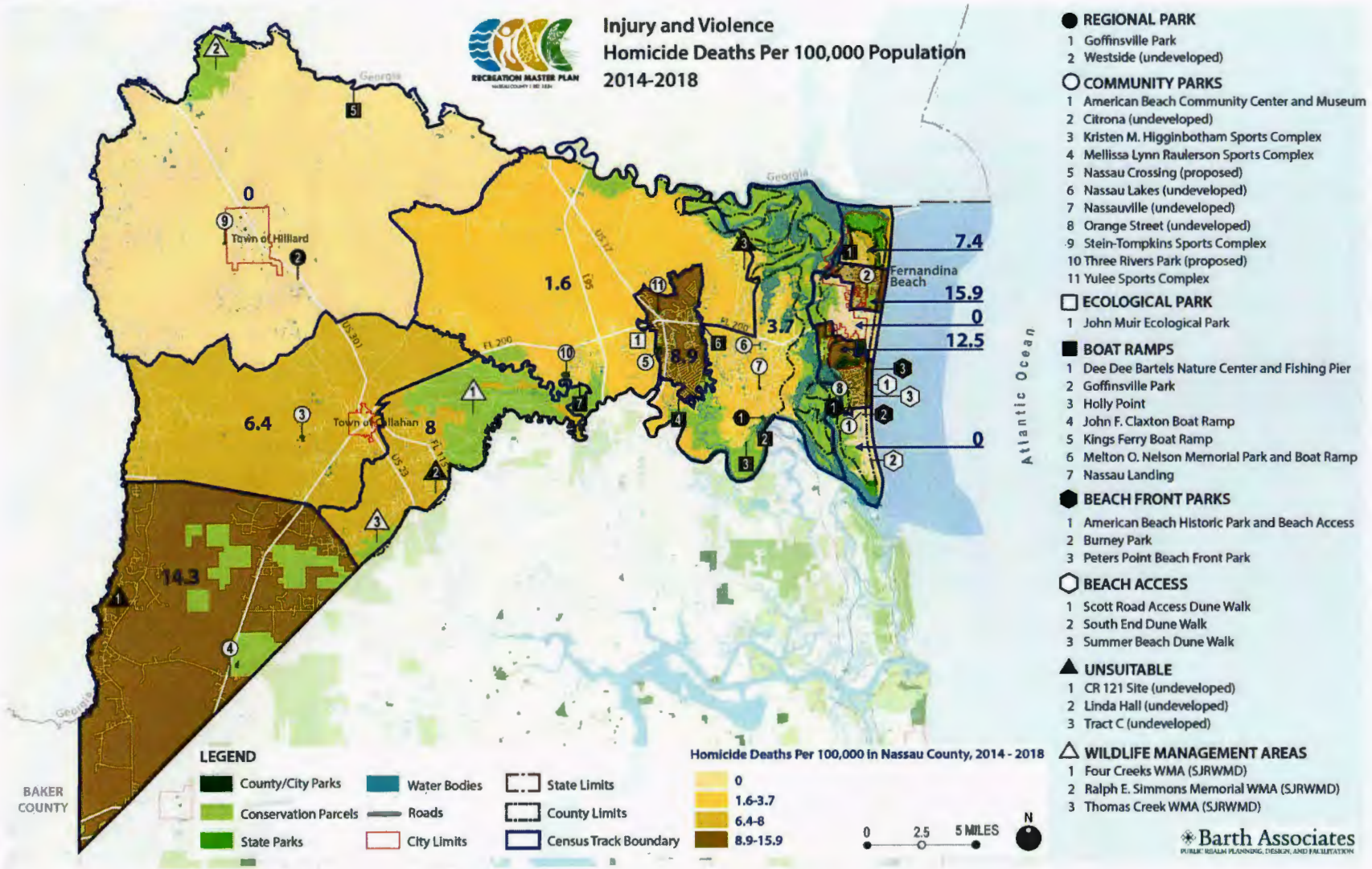
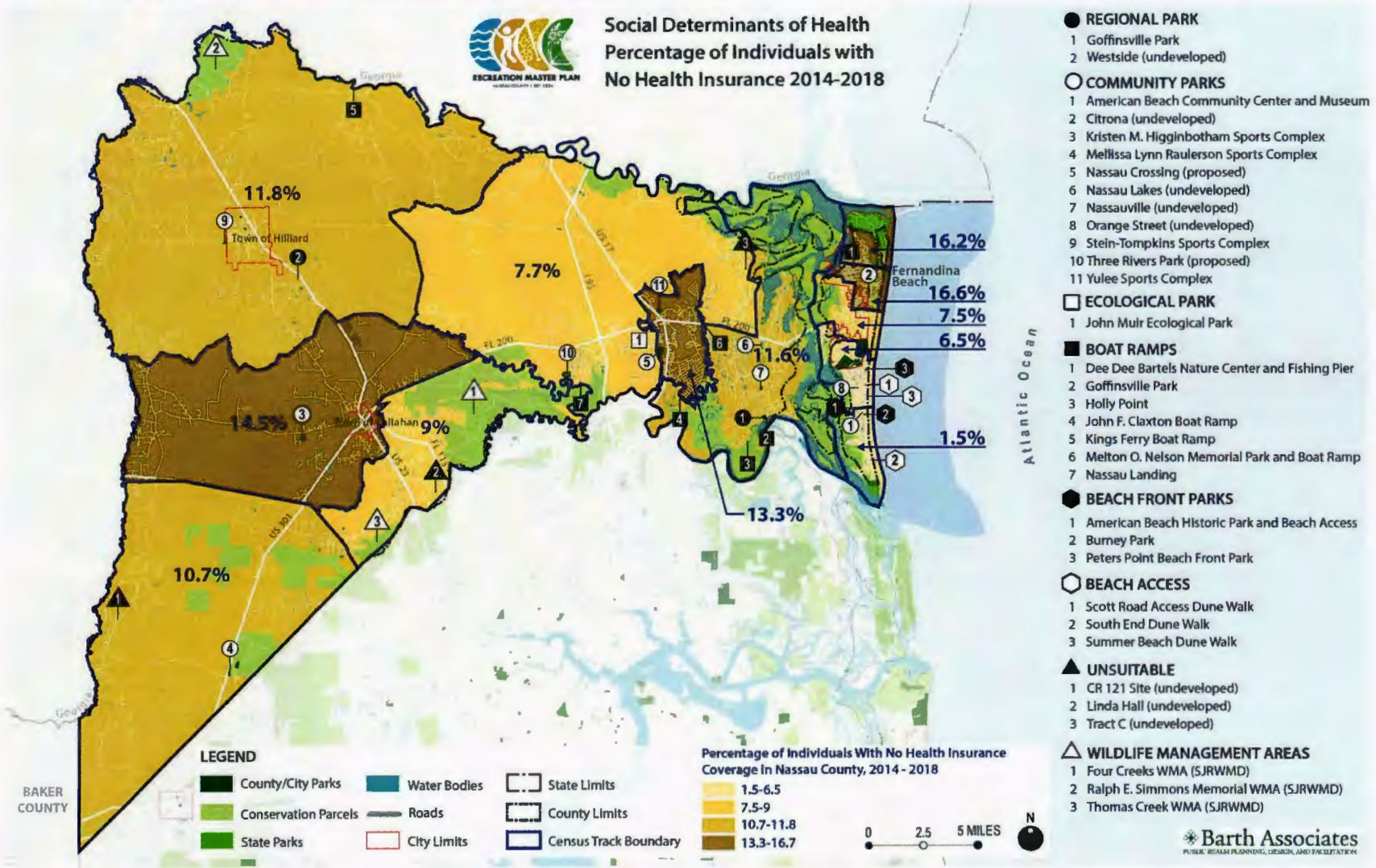


FIGURE 1.17 | Social Determinants of Health - Percentage of Individuals with No Health Insurance



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1.4 Recreation Trends Analysis

This analysis provides an understanding of recreational trends as well as generational participation trends.

Trends data used for this analysis was obtained from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). All trends data is based on current and/or historical participation rates, statistically valid survey results, or NRPA Park Metrics. A summary of the local recreation analysis follows, while national and regional trends are presented in **Appendix A1**.

LOCAL SPORT AND LEISURE MARKET POTENTIAL

Market Potential Index (MPI)

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data for Nassau County, as provided by ESRI. A Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within the city. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident of the target area will participate in certain activities when compared to the U.S. national

average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent lower than average participation rates, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rates. The service area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation.

Overall, the county demonstrates high market potential index (MPI) numbers in outdoor activities. These high outdoor activity MPI scores show that Nassau County residents are active and have a rather strong participation presence when it comes to recreational activities outdoors. This becomes significant when Nassau County considers starting up new programs or building new facilities, giving them a strong tool to estimate resident attendance and participation.

The charts that follow present the sport and leisure trends that are most prevalent for residents within Nassau County. The activities are listed in descending order, from highest to lowest MPI score. High index numbers (100+) are significant because they demonstrate that there is a greater potential that residents within the service area will actively participate in offerings provided by the department.

General Sports Market Potential

When analyzing the general sports MPI chart (Figure 1.18), golf (111 MPI) is the most popular sport amongst Nassau County residents when compared to the national average.

Fitness Market Potential

The fitness MPI chart (Figure 1.19) shows swimming (109 MPI) and walking for exercise (103 MPI) as the most popular activities amongst Nassau County residents when compared to the national average.

FIGURE 1.18 | General Sports Participation Trends

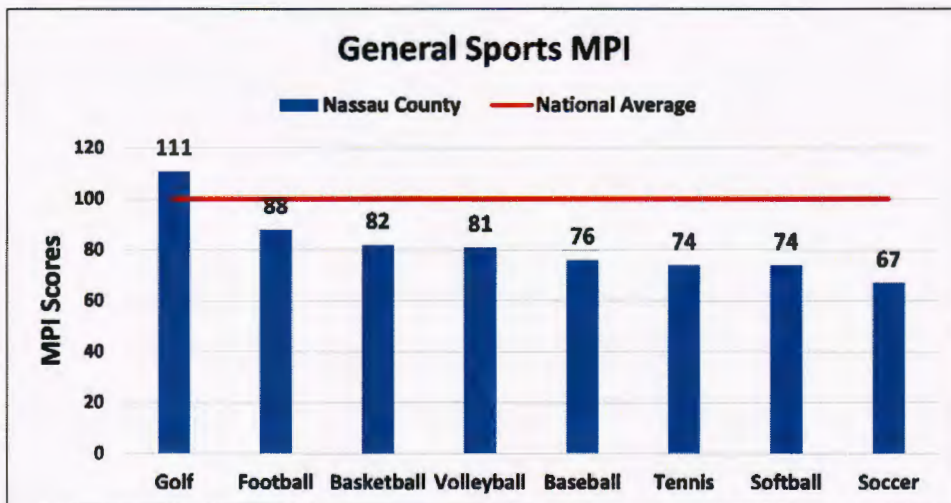
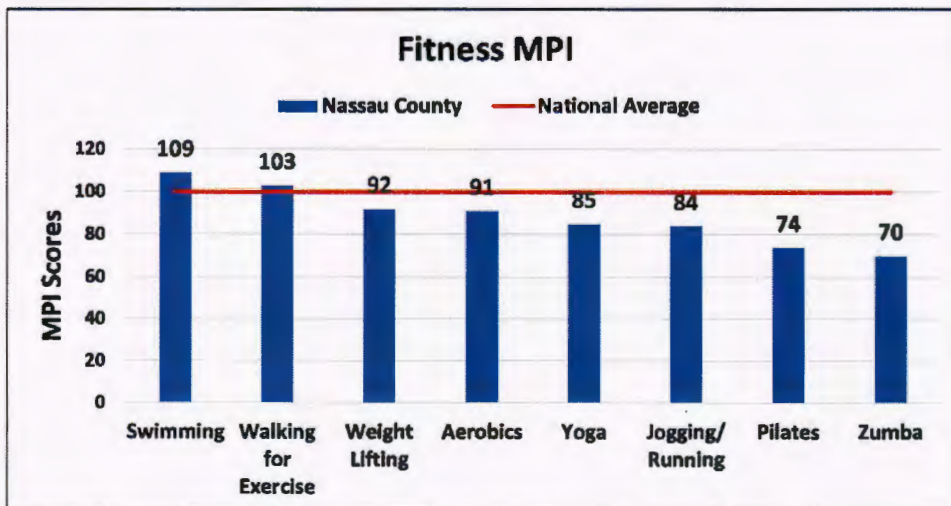


FIGURE 1.19 | Fitness Participation Trends

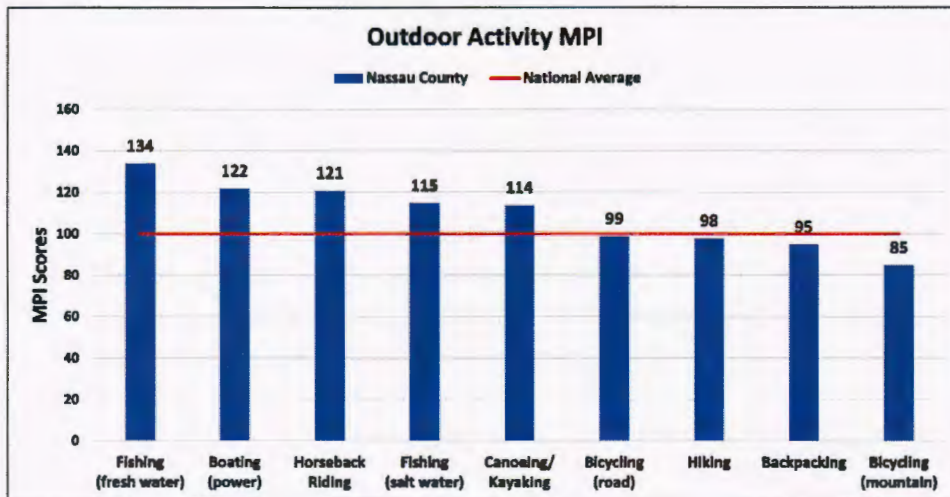




Outdoor Activity Market Potential

When analyzing the outdoor activity MPI chart, fresh water fishing (134 MPI), power boating (122 MPI), horseback riding (121 MPI), salt water fishing (115 MPI) and canoeing/kayaking (114 MPI) are the most popular activities amongst Nassau County residents when compared to the national average.

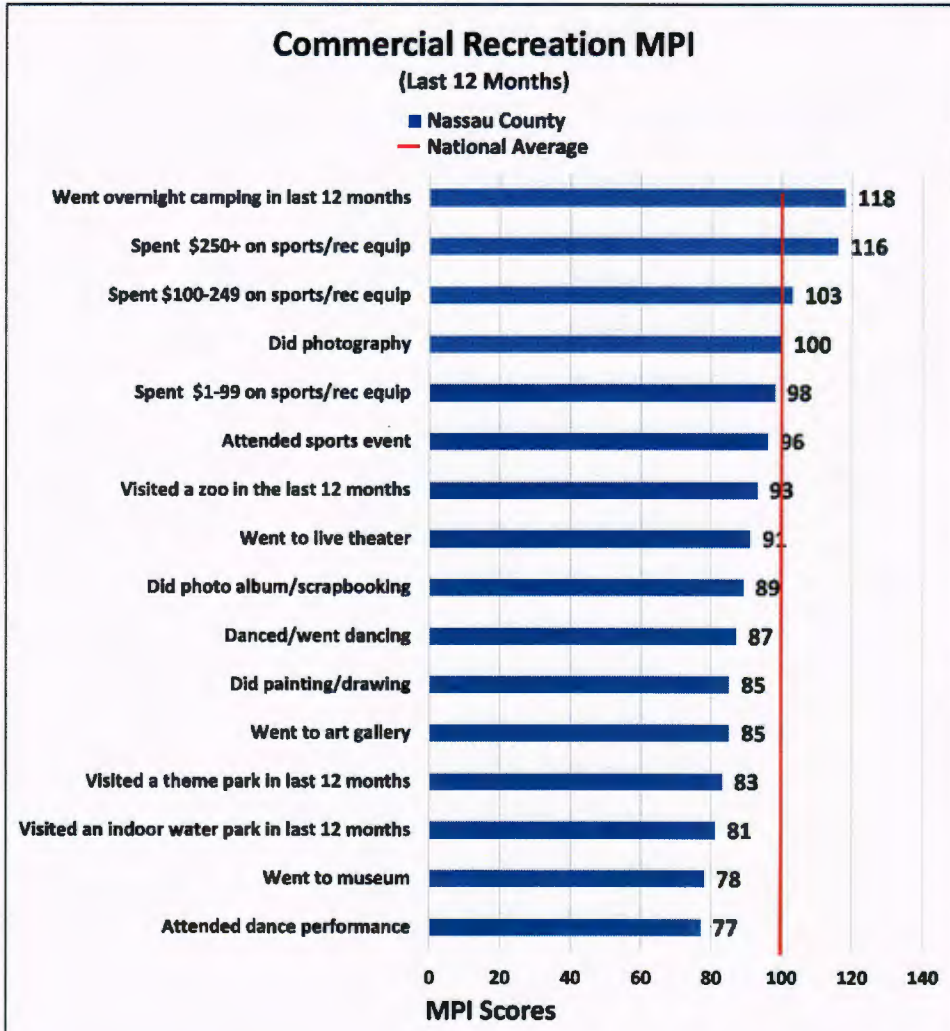
FIGURE 1.20 | Outdoor Activity Participation Trends



Commercial Recreation Market Potential

The commercial recreation MPI chart (Figure 1.21 on the following page) shows the most popular activities amongst Nassau County residents, when compared to the national average, were (in descending order): “went overnight camping in last 12 months” (118 MPI), “spent \$250+ on sports and recreation equipment” (116), and “spent \$100-249 on sports and recreation equipment” (103 MPI).

FIGURE 1.21 | Commercial Recreation Participation Trends



Summary OF RECREATION TRENDS

The Recreation Trends Analysis indicates a possible need for additional golf courses, swimming pools, multi-purpose trails (equestrian, hiking, fitness, bicycling, etc.), and fishing and boating access

(both fresh and saltwater, motorized and non-motorized). There is also a potential need for additional campsites and athletic fields.



1.5 Existing Parks & Recreation System Analysis

Nassau County's parks were evaluated by the Barth Associates team in terms of accessibility, comfort and image; uses and activities; and physical structures, using Goffinsville Park as the benchmark.

Research by park experts has shown that all successful parks and public spaces share common qualities:

- They are easily accessible;
- They are comfortable and have an attractive image;
- They allow users of all ages to engage in a variety of activities and allow people to gather and meet one another; and
- They are sustainable – meaning that they help meet existing needs while not compromising the needs of future generations.

Considering these qualities, representatives from the Barth Associates (BA) Team, in collaboration with staff, evaluated the County's parks based on four categories and 32 sub-categories. The County's premier park – Goffinsville Park - was used as a benchmark for the evaluation of the park system. Evaluation categories, described over the following pages, included 1) proximity, access, and linkages; 2) comfort and image; 3) uses, activities, and sociability; and 4) buildings/architecture.

1

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 transit stop located within ¼ mile of the park that connects to the park?*
- **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)*

2

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 (Exterior/Interior)**
 - *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 (Exterior/Interior)**
 - *Is there visual evidence of site management?*
- **Ability to easily supervise and manage the park or facility (Interior)**
 - *Is it easy to supervise the park and its facilities?*
- **Condition and effectiveness of any equipment or operation systems**
 - *Is the equipment and/or operating system in good condition?*
- **Branding**
 - *Is there a consistent branding theme throughout the park that allows users to quickly know that they are in a County park?*

3

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?*
- **Marketing or promotional efforts for the facility**
 - *Is the site being marketed effectively?*



**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

4 BUILDINGS/ARCHITECTURE

- **Image and aesthetics**
 - *Is the building visually attractive and does it contribute to the park's setting?*
- **Clarity of entry and connections to Park**
 - *Are there a hierarchy of entrances into the building that clearly connect to the park?*
- **Interior layout**
 - *Is the interior layout of the building well-organized and effective?*
- **Interior finishes, furniture, and equipment**
 - *Are finishes, furniture, and equipment undamaged, well-maintained, and aesthetically pleasing?*
- **Functioning dimensions of spaces**
 - *Are rooms and spaces sized appropriately for their function?*
- **Structural integrity**
 - *Does the building appear to be structurally sound?*
- **Building enclosure**
 - *Does the building enclosure appear to need repair?*
- **Building systems**
 - *Are all buildings systems operating and well maintained?*
- **Energy sustainability**
 - *Does the building contain any energy efficient components?*

Parks were evaluated collaboratively by staff and the BA Team using a five-point scale: 1.0 Needs Improvement to 5.0 Exceeding Expectations. **Figure 1.22** on page 48 illustrates the results of this analysis and **Figure 1.23** on page 49 maps the results.

PARK EVALUATIONS SUMMARY FINDINGS

Evaluation of the Nassau County Parks System using the criteria previously described resulted in an overall score of 2.6, suggesting the need for improvements. This need appears to be county-wide and irrespective of geography. Following is a summary of a variety of strengths and opportunities of the parks system.

Proximity, Access, and Linkages

Opportunities

- Most of the County's parks had poor visibility to the interior of the park from the surrounding neighborhood due to natural features or structures obstructing views. John F. Claxton Boat Ramp, however, had adequate visibility into the interior of the park, which the County should emulate throughout the park system;
- While a few of the parks are connected to surrounding neighborhoods with sidewalks, most are not. Few sidewalks are shaded, and many are adjacent to fast-moving traffic. Wherever possible, the County should construct shaded, off-road sidewalks to connect to parks;



Clear views into John F. Claxton Boat Ramp



- Signage and wayfinding is limited and varied throughout the park system. While many of the parks contain gateway and regulatory signs, most lack aesthetic consistency and hierarchy of sign options to inform, direct, and educate users. Some signs are also aging and need updating.

Over time, the County should update their signage. A comprehensive signage and wayfinding branding package could help address these issues as well as celebrate the park system's and community's unique character and attributes; and

- Many of the parks have limited lighting. In fact, rental lighting is used in Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex to light the fields. Inadequate lighting limits the overall usability and activation of the park. Additionally, many of the light fixtures are dated. The County should add LED light fixtures where appropriate. These fixtures should be controlled, direct, and precise to help control light spillage to the surrounding neighborhood.



Example of a variety of sign types in John Muir Ecological Park, Dee Dee Bartels, and Kings Ferry Boat Ramp



Old lighting in Yulee Sports Complex

Comfort and Image

Strengths

- Most of the County's parks have spaces that are relatively open, allow ample sightlines within parks, and have controlled access and entry points, which provide users with a sense of safety and security. American Beach Community Center and Museum, Dee Dee Bartels, Goffinsville Park, Holly Point, John F. Claxton Boat Ramp, Kings Ferry Boat Ramp, Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex, and Peters Point exhibit these qualities and provide users with a good sense of safety and security;
- Many of the County's parks are clean and well-maintained. This helps foster a sense of safety and pride in the system's parks. Goffinsville Park and John F. Claxton Boat Ramp are great examples of parks that are clean and well-maintained, and exhibit adequate management and stewardship; and
- Most of the park buildings contain equipment that is in good condition, effective, and well-maintained. American Beach Community Center and Museum is an example of a park building that contains equipment that is in good working condition.

Opportunities

- Overall attractiveness of some of County parks could be enhanced through updating, repair, and replacement of aging and/or damaged landscaping, hardscaping, amenities, and facilities. For example, Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex, Nassau Landing, Scott Road Access Dune Walk, Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex, and Yulee Sports Complex are in need



Clear and open sites lines within Peters Point provide a sense of safety and security



Adequate cleanliness and overall quality of maintenance in Goffinsville Park and John F. Claxton Boat Ramp



Ground cover, structures, and park amenities that appear to be dated and at the end of their useful life and should be replaced to enhance the first impression and overall attractiveness of the park

of such improvements. Making these changes would provide users with a good first impression and enhance the overall experience, perceived safety, and use of parks;

- Seating areas in many of the parks could be improved by adding more seating options, upgrading existing seating amenities, and in certain instances, enhancing the areas surrounding the seating. Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex, Scott Road Access Dune Walk, South End Dune Walk, and Summer Beach Dune Walk are examples of parks where additional seating could be added, especially to enjoy views to the beach and coastline. Additional seating could include movable tables and chairs that allow park users to customize seating areas to fit their comfort. Landscaping surrounding the seating areas should be replanted for increasing aesthetic appeal. Lastly, shade trees or shade structures could be installed to improve the comfort of seating areas;



Photo: W. G. S. Nix, Movable Seating in Grand Parks Open City Projects. Accessed March 27, 2020. <http://open-city-projects.com/movable-seating/>

Seating with shade could be added to areas surrounding amenities such as this playground in Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex to enhance user experience. Seating could be movable to allow users to customize their seating experience and colorful to add vibrancy to the park.



- While some parks contain shelters for users to seek refuge during inclement weather, many do not. The County should provide shelters in parks as appropriate based on the park type and function and provide covers for specific facilities, such as playgrounds and seating areas. This would allow users to enjoy the parks no matter the weather; and
- The County has an opportunity to enhance the park system's overall branding through the use of consistent materials and colors that celebrate the area's unique character and create a sense of place. Many of the County's parks use a variety of colors, materials, and styles in buildings, signs, amenities, and furnishings. Over time, the County should establish a consistent palette of standards that harmonize these elements throughout the park system.



*Seating areas with natural or structural shade.**

*Top photo: City of Chesapeake, Virginia; Courtyard Square Park; Accessed March 27, 2020; <http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/government/city-departments/departments/parks-recreation-tourism/parks/courtyardsquarepark.htm>. Bottom photo: HAGS Outdoor Canopies and Shade Structures; Protect your outdoor space with a Shade Structure; Accessed March 27, 2020; <https://www.hags.com/en-us/shade>



Varied branding through colors, materials, furnishings, and amenities throughout the Nassau County park system

Uses, Activities, and Sociability

Strengths

- Many parks contain the appropriate type, amount, and spacing of facilities and amenities to effectively support use and programming. Goffinsville Park, Holly Point, John F. Claxton Boat Ramp, Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex, and Peters Point Beach Front Park are examples of parks that have sufficient space and support infrastructure to facilitate use and programming.



Sufficient parking, facilities, and amenities at Goffinsville Park, John F. Claxton Boat Ramp, Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex, and Peters Point Beach Front Park facilitate use



Opportunities

- Goffinsville Park contains a variety of amenities and activities for a range of users to enjoy throughout the day. The multitude of activities also helps increase the level of activity and the sense of pride and ownership in the park;

Most of the parks, however, lack a mix of things to do. Fewer options may lead to low levels of activity and, at times, undesirable activities to take place in the parks. Pride and ownership wanes in such parks. The mix of amenities and programmed and unprogrammed activities at these parks should therefore be increased;

- The size, shape access, and topography of many parks limited the capacity to flexibly facilitate varied programing; and
- Most parks lack marketing and promotional tools. To the extent possible, the County should enhance marketing efforts through as many avenues as possible including traditional and digital means to increase community awareness of parks, recreation facilities, activities, and programs.



Mix of amenities and things to do in Goffinsville Park for users of all ages

Buildings/Architecture

Strengths

- Many park buildings have an attractive appearance with pleasing proportions and materials that positively contribute to the context of the park and neighborhood setting. Notable examples include buildings at the American Beach Community Center and Museum, Goffinsville Park, and John F. Claxton Boat Ramp;
- Most park buildings have clear entry points and connections to surrounding outdoor spaces as well as pleasant entry and lobby spaces with an adequate sense of arrival;
- Many park buildings have adequate space to support current programs and activities; and
- Most park buildings contain structures, enclosures, and building systems that appear to be in good condition.



American Beach Community Center and Museum's attractive architectural character and scale contributes to the overall appearance and positive first impression of the park and surrounding area



Opportunities

- Most of the evaluated parks contain interior finishes, furnishings, and equipment that are aging and in need of replacement. Specific examples are Burney Park and Peter's Point Beach Front Park. The County should develop a renovation plan and timeline to replace and update the furnishings, interior finishes, and equipment of these buildings; and
- Most of the evaluated park buildings contain systems that are not energy efficient. The mechanical, electrical, and sanitary disposal systems should be included in the renovation plan. All renovations should consider energy efficient elements and use sustainable materials.



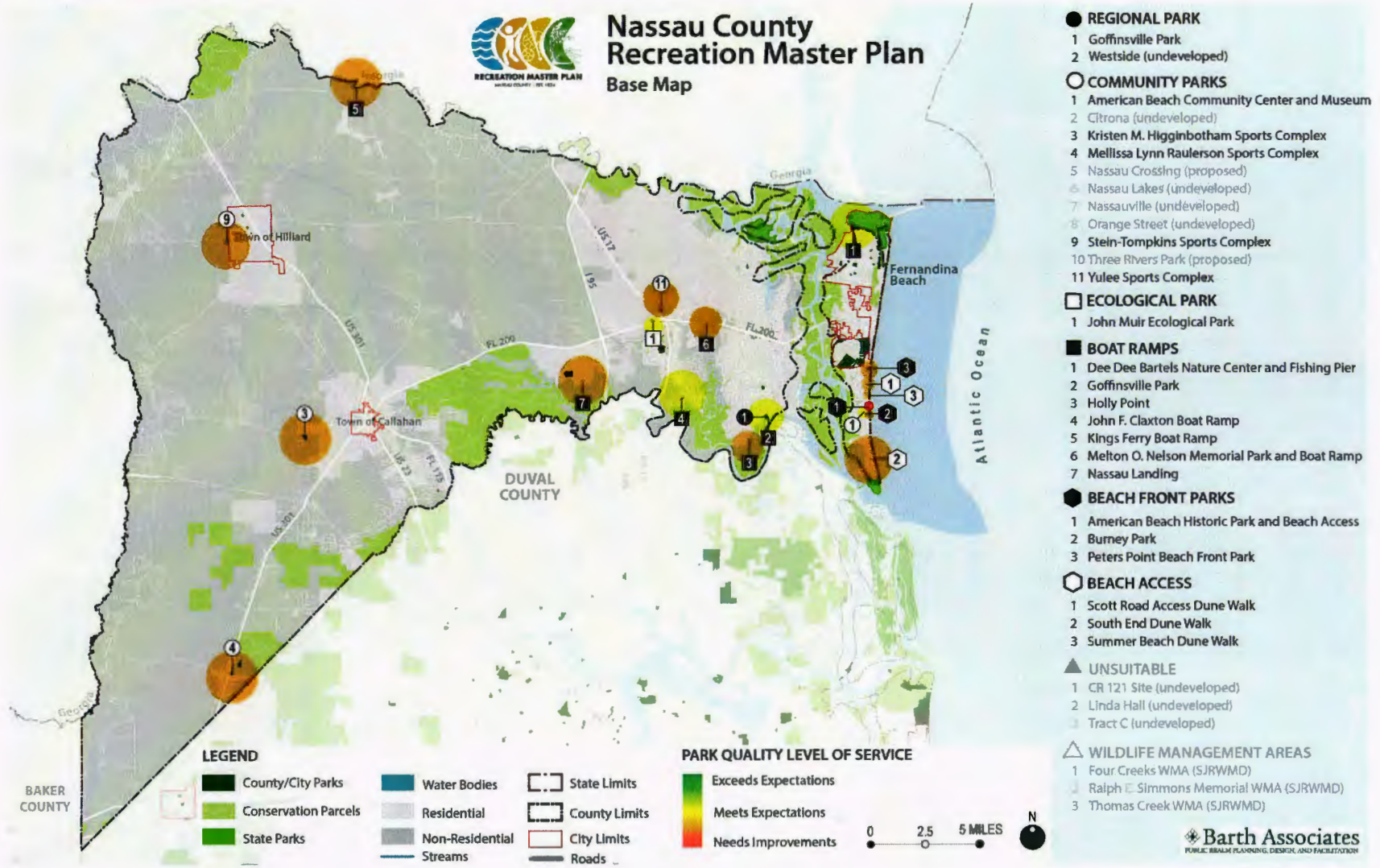
Interior finishes, materials, and equipment in Peter's Point Beach Front Park (top) and Burney Park (right) that should be replaced overtime.



FIGURE 1.22 | Park Evaluations Summary Matrix

LEGEND	Park Evaluations Summary Matrix																Average				
	American Beach Community Center and Museum	American Beach Historical Park and Beach Access	Burney Park	Dee Dee Bartels	Goffinsville Park	Holly Point	John F. Clanton Boat Ramp	John Muir Ecological Park	Kings Ferry Boat Ramp	Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex	Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex	Melton O. Nelson Memorial Park and Boat Ramp	Nassau Landing	Peters Point Beach Front Park	Scott Road Access Dune Walk	South End Dune Walk		Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex	Summer Beach Dune Walk	Yulee Sports Complex	
Needs Improvement 1.0-1.9	3.3	1.9	2.5	3.0	3.3	2.8	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.1	2.9	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.7	2.6	
Meets Expectations 2.0-2.9																					
Exceeding Expectations 3.0-3.9																					
5.0																					
TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES	3.3	1.9	2.5	3.0	3.3	2.8	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.1	2.9	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.7	2.6	
TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES (Without Architecture)	3.1	1.9	2.4	2.9	3.2	2.8	3.3	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.9	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.6	2.6	
PROXIMITY/ACCESS/IMAGES	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.5	1.8	2.3	2.8	3.2	2.3	2.0	2.5	2.8	2.3	2.7	2.4	1.7	1.8	1.7	2.3	2.3	
Visibility from a distance	3	2	2	2	1	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2.4	
Ease in walking to the park	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	3	2	4	4	3	1	3	2	2.3	2.3	
Transit Access	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1.3	1.3	
Clarity of information/signage	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	
ADA Compliance	3	2	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	3	2.8	
Lighting	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	3	2.9	2.9	
COMFORT & IMAGE:	3.8	1.3	2.7	3.4	3.9	3.4	3.9	3.1	2.9	3.3	2.8	3.0	2.3	3.0	1.7	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.8	
First Impression / overall attractiveness	4	1	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	2	4	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2.9	
Feeling of safety	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.4	
Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Exterior Site)	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3.2	
Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Facilities Interior)	4	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2.9	
Comfort of places to sit	2	1	2	3	3	4	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	2.2	
Protection from bad weather	4	1	3	4	4	4	4	3	1	3	3	1	1	4	1	1	3	1	3	2.6	
Evidence of management /stewardship (Exterior Site)	4	1	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3.1	
Evidence of management /stewardship (Facilities Interior)	4	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2.9	
Ability to Easily Supervise and Manage the Park or Facility (Interior)	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.5	
Condition and Effectiveness of any Equipment or Operating Systems	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	3.0	
Branding	4	1	2	2	4	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2.6	
USES AND ACTIVITIES & SOCIABILITY	2.8	2.0	2.3	2.8	3.8	2.7	3.2	2.2	2.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	1.8	3.0	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.0	3.0	2.5	
Mix of uses/things to do	3	2	2	2	4	2	3	1	3	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	3	2.2	
Level of activity	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	3	2.3	
Sense of pride/ownership	4	1	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	2.7	
Programming Flexibility	3	2	3	3	5	3	4	2	2	3	3	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	3	2.7	
Ability of Facility to Effectively Support Current Organized Programming	3	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.3	
Marketing or Promotional Efforts for the Facility or Activities	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	1.9	
BUILDINGS AND ARCHITECTURE:	3.7	2.6	3.4	3.7	2.8	4.0	3.6	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	
Image and Aesthetics	4	-	3	3	4	2	4	3	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	2	-	2	3.0	3.0	
Clarity of Entry and Connections to Park	4	-	3	4	3	3	-	4	-	3	3	-	2	-	-	3	-	3	3.2	3.2	
Interior Layout	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.7	2.7	
Interior Finishes and Furniture and Equipment	4	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2.8	2.8	
Functioning Dimensions of spaces	4	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.3	3.3	
Structural Integrity	4	-	3	4	4	3	4	4	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	2	-	3	3.3	3.3	
Building Enclosure	4	-	3	4	4	3	4	4	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	2	-	3	3.3	3.3	
Building Systems	3	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	3	-	3	3.1	3.1	
Energy and Sustainability	3	-	2	3	3	3	-	3	-	3	3	-	3	-	-	3	-	2	2.8	2.8	

FIGURE 1.23 | Park Evaluations Summary Map



Barth Associates
PUBLIC HEALTH PLANNING, DESIGN, AND FACILITATION

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Summary OF SITE EVALUATIONS

The site evaluations indicate that the Nassau County Parks System includes a couple of parks that contain a range of exemplary characteristics. For example, Goffinsville Park and American Beach Community Center and Museum exhibit great overall first impression and overall attractiveness, feeling of safety, cleanliness and overall quality of maintenance, and management and stewardship. The American Beach Community Center and Museum building is also exemplary architecturally and contains adequate interior cleanliness, finishes, furnishings, and equipment as well as an excellent overall quality of maintenance, management, and stewardship.

Most of the County's parks, however, are in need of improvements. These improvements include:

- Overall park improvements such as updating, repair, and replacement of aging and damaged landscaping, hardscaping, amenities, and facilities;
- Shaded sidewalks and transit connections to the surrounding community;
- Signage and wayfinding system that comprehensively informs, directs, and educates users about the park system and celebrates the park system's and community's unique character and attributes;
- Additional seating options, upgraded existing seating amenities, and enhanced areas surrounding the seating areas;
- Shade and shelters, specifically around park facilities, amenities, and seating areas;
- Consistent palette of standards that harmonize colors, materials, amenities, furnishings, and fixtures throughout the park system;
- Increased mix of amenities, facilities and programmed and unprogrammed things to do in parks;
- Sustainable lighting and energy efficient systems; and
- Improved marketing promotional efforts.

HIGH PERFORMANCE PUBLIC SPACES CRITERIA EVALUATION

In addition to evaluating the quality of parks, the parks were evaluated based on BA's High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS®) Criteria. A HPPS is defined as "any publicly accessible space that generates economic, environmental, and social sustainability benefits for their local community. A HPPS can be a park, trail, square, green, natural area, plaza or any other element of the 'public realm' that generates all three types of benefits; and meets 80% or more of the criteria listed in **Figure 1.24**.

Specifically, parks were evaluated based on their existing ability and future opportunity to meet HPPS® criteria using a five-point scale, 1.0 -1.9 Does not Meet Criteria to 5.0 - Achieves Criteria. **Figure 1.25** contains the findings from this evaluation.

The findings from this evaluation suggest that overall, with a score of 1.6, Nassau County's park system

is currently not meeting HPPS® criteria. However, there is potential for the system to improve its ability to meet HPPS® criteria. Parks that have the largest opportunity to improve include:

- **American Beach Historical Park and Beach Access;**
- **Goffinsville Park;**
- **John F. Claxton Boat Ramp;**
- **Peters Point Beach Front Park; and**
- **Yulee Sports Complex.**

Based on their potential to achieve HPPS® criteria, the County may consider prioritizing improvements of these parks.



Peters Point Beach Front Park



FIGURE 1.24 | 25 HPPS Criteria

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

- The space creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public and/or the private sectors;
- The space creates meaningful and desirable employment;
- The space indirectly creates or sustains good, living-wage jobs;
- The space sustains or increases property values;
- The space catalyzes infill development and/or the re-use of obsolete or under-used buildings or spaces;
- The space attracts new residents;
- The space attracts new businesses;
- The space generates increased business and tax revenues; and
- The space optimizes operations and maintenance costs (compared to other similar spaces).

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

- The space uses energy, water, and material resources efficiently;
- The space improves water quality of both surface and ground water;
- The space serves as a net carbon sink;
- The space enhances, preserves, promotes, or contributes to biological diversity;
- Hardscape materials were selected based on longevity of service, social/ cultural/ historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint and/or other related criteria;
- The space provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge; and
- The space serves as an interconnected node within larger scale ecological corridors and natural habitat.

SOCIAL CRITERIA

- The space improves the neighborhood;
- The space improves social and physical mobility through multi-modal connectivity – auto, transit, bike, pedestrian;
- The space encourages the health and fitness of residents and visitors;
- The space provides relief from urban congestion and stressors such as social confrontation, noise pollution, and air pollution;
- The space provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, and community or civic events;
- The space provides opportunities for individual, group, passive and active recreation;
- The space facilitates shared experiences among different groups of people;
- The space attracts diverse populations; and
- The space promotes creative and constructive social interaction.

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FIGURE 1.25 | HPPS Criteria Evaluation

	American Beach Community Center and Museum	American Beach Historical Park and Beach Access	Burney Park	One Oak Barnside	Goffhouse Park	Holly Point	John F. Claxton Beach Ramp	Kings Ferry Boat Ramp	Ernest M. Higdon Sports Complex	Welles Lynn Bauzaan Sports Complex	Jefferson G. Nelson Memorial Park and Boat Ramp	Finnan Landing	Peters Point Beach Front Park	Scott Road Access Dune Walk	South End Dune Walk	Stein-Tomblin Sports Complex	Summer Beach Dune Walk	Wales Sports Complex	Overall Average	Overall Score	
Overall Score	1.8	2.7	1.8	3.0	1.3	2.6	1.4	2.4	2.8	3.7	1.5	2.4	2.0	3.1	1.4	2.8	1.8	2.8	1.6	2.6	
Resource Criteria	1.6	2.2	1.7	3.1	1.1	2.3	1.3	2.1	1.8	3.0	1.2	2.8	1.8	2.4	1.4	2.7	1.4	2.6	1.7	1.7	2.1
The space creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public and/or private sectors	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
The space creates meaningful and desirable employment	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
The space indirectly creates or sustains good, living-wage jobs	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
The space sustains or increases property values	3	4	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	1	3
The space catalyzes infill development and/or the reuse of obsolete or under-used buildings or spaces	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
The space attracts new residents	2	3	3	4	1	2	1	3	3	4	2	2	3	4	2	4	1	3	3	3	1
The space attracts new businesses	2	3	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	3
The space generates increased business and tax revenues	1	2	1	3	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
The space optimizes operations and maintenance costs (compared to other similar spaces)	2	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	3	4	2	2	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	1	3
Environmental Criteria	1.7	2.7	1.0	2.0	1.1	2.6	1.4	1.7	2.9	4.0	1.8	2.7	2.1	3.4	1.3	2.6	1.3	2.9	1.3	2.3	
The space uses energy, water, and material resources efficiently	3	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4
The space preserves water quality of both surface and ground water	2	3	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	2
The space serves as a net carbon sink	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	3	4	5	2	2	3	4	1	2	1	3	1	2	1
The space enhances, preserves, promotes, or contributes to biological diversity	2	4	1	3	1	3	1	2	3	4	2	3	2	4	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
Hardscape materials were selected based on longevity of service, social/cultural/historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint and /or related criteria	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	3	2	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	2
The space provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge	1	3	1	4	1	3	2	4	2	4	1	3	2	4	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
The space serves as an interconnected node within larger-scale ecological corridors and natural habitat	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	2
Social Criteria	3.0	3.2	3.6	3.3	1.6	3.8	1.9	2.4	2.4	4.0	1.8	2.8	2.9	3.4	1.6	2.4	2.4	3.4	2.4	3.8	1.8
The space improves the neighborhood	3	4	3	4	1	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	4	1
The space improves social and physical mobility through multi-modal connectivity (auto, transit, bike, pedestrian)	1	1	3	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
The space encourages the health and fitness of residents and visitors	1	3	3	4	1	3	1	3	3	4	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	3	1
The space provides relief from urban congestion and stressors such as social confrontation, noise pollution, and air pollution	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	2
The space provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, and community or civic events	2	4	1	3	2	4	1	4	2	5	2	4	2	4	1	1	1	2	3	5	1

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1.6 Existing Programs, Operations, & Maintenance Analysis

Historically managed as a division of the County's Public Works Department, the County just recently hired its first Services Manager to manage the County's parks and facilities.

In addition to the Services Manager, parks recreation staff includes four full-time grounds keepers, a ¼-time administrative assistant, and 2 part-time services specialists to manage the County's community centers and rental spaces in Yulee, Callahan, Hillard, American Beach, Bryceville, and Goffinsville. The Public Works Director also devotes approximately 25% of his time to parks and recreation administration and management (see **Figure 1.26** on the following page). The Department is responsible for mowing, painting, cleaning restrooms, picnic shelters, community centers, and parking lots. Trash collection is contracted to private firms.

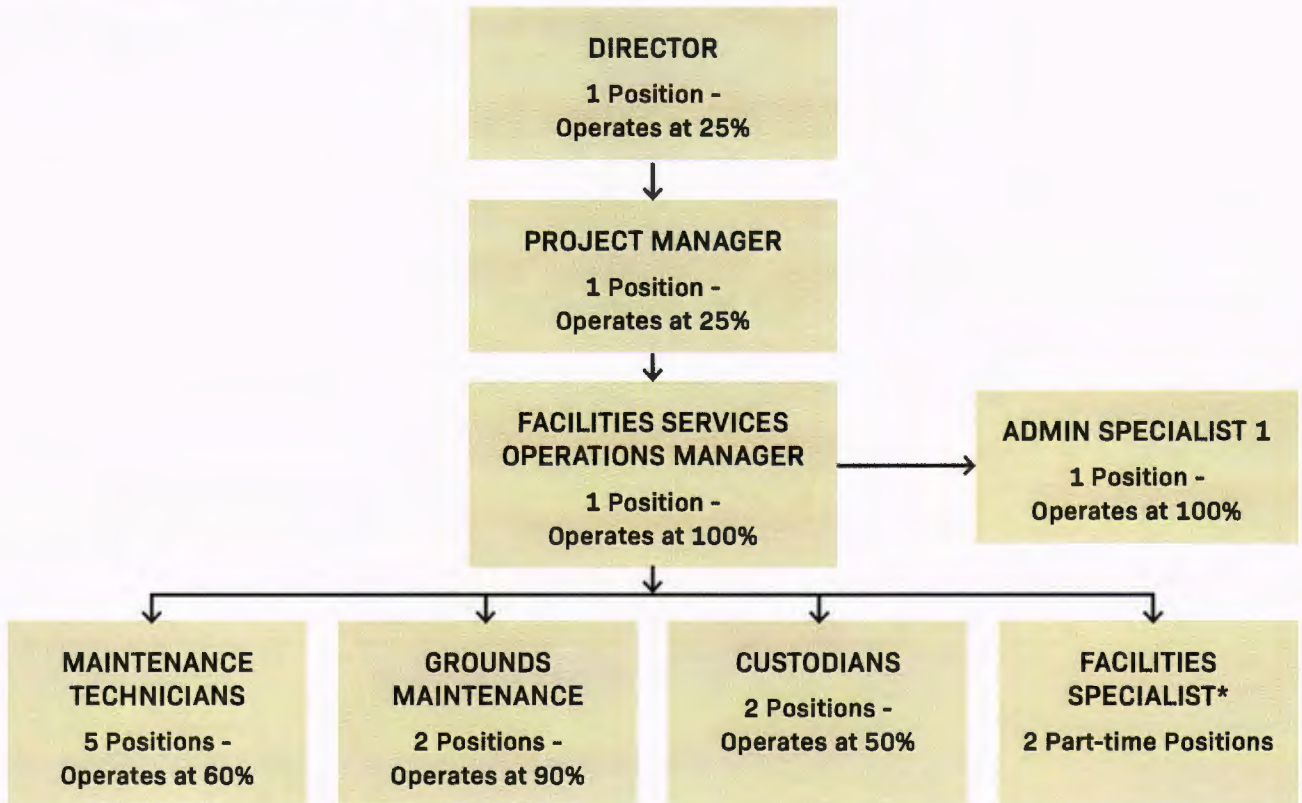
The Parks and Recreation Department currently manages approximately 175 acres of parks and open spaces, and has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.1M. Park amenities include 12 picnic shelters, 19 parking lots, 40 miles of trails,

10 sports fields, 16 restrooms, 6 sport courts, and 3 playgrounds in addition to the County's beaches.

The Department offers no recreation programs; sports leagues are managed by several athletic associations, who also help manage the sports fields they use for practice and competition.

Generally, as summarized from the site evaluations, existing parks are in fair condition and are clean and safe. However, there is not a county-wide maintenance management plan that establishes county-wide maintenance standards, and the quality of maintenance varies from park to park. Maintenance standards should establish routine times for the maintenance of key facilities and amenities. For example, maintenance standards can be broken down into Level One (highest care example around public buildings and high end sports fields); Level Two (general park mowing once a

FIGURE 1.26 | ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**Not filled yet; duties covered by Custodians.*

week and public facilities cleaned once a day); Level Three (park areas that include more natural areas and are mowed every two weeks); and Level Four (conservation areas that have minimal maintenance). Areas where there is a higher level of use by the public should include higher maintenance standards. Areas where there are fees associated with private use of the site - such as a rented picnic pavilion - should also have higher maintenance standards. Park maintenance staff and associations should also receive training regarding the proper maintenance of sports fields and other amenities.

Standards should also be developed for parks signage. Existing signs are inconsistent in color schemes, sizes, use of the County logo, and how rules and regulations are presented. There is a significant need for directional signs to locate existing parks.

Maintenance equipment is purchased through the Public Works Department for all equipment needed to maintain the parks. The maintenance shop for parks is in the Nassau County Government Center in Callahan. The Public Works Department does not



have a work order system to track true maintenance and repair costs as well as other capital expenses for parks related projects. The Public Works Department does not track daily usage of participants in the parks. The biggest complaints they address with in the parks are trash and noise.

Most parks were developed without master plans. A master plan should be developed for all parks to coordinate usage, traffic flow, safety, planned programming, as well as unplanned park use that supports a wide level of age groups and experiences.

The Park and Recreation Department does not have an asset management plan in place to determine asset replacement schedules for existing park amenities such as restrooms, picnic shelters, playgrounds, parking lots, and sports fields for each site. Also, no metrics have been developed to track customer satisfaction; currently, key performance indicators include the number of park user complaints, boat access satisfaction, and vandalism in parks.

The County Parks and Recreation Department does not offer any recreation programs to the residents of the county, but they do provide park space and amenities for use by other organized associations. Based on similar provider analysis, the County can contribute to growing recreation and park needs by providing:

- A connected trails system throughout the county to link small communities and to connect to special attractions throughout the county;
- More regional sports field complexes located throughout the county;
- More sport courts located throughout the county;

- Water trails to link County park sites via kayak or canoe;
- Dog parks;
- Regional community centers for seniors, youth, adults in all areas of programs including aquatics, people with disabilities, environmental education, sports, and special events for people to celebrate living in the county;
- A special event park to host events for people of all ages including music, entertainment, and food choices for people to enjoy as they gather. A farmer's market pavilion would also be a good consideration;
- Campgrounds for RV and tents to support the needs of visitors to the county who want a stayover beach experiences; and
- More well-designed playgrounds to support youth needs in the county and serve ages from 2-10 years old.

Partners and Similar Service Providers

Parks and recreation partners include youth sports associations, the City of Fernandina Beach, other public agencies such as the state park system, the Council on Aging, and the Florida Department of Natural Resources who regulate fishing and boating in coordination with the Nassau County Sheriff's Department. A number of providers provide local recreation programs and services including Field Sports (youth and adult), Senior Services, Aquatics, Tennis and Pickleball, Wellness and Fitness, and Art Related Programs.

Websites and other internet sources were researched to obtain information about the agencies in this assessment. Information gleaned from the agencies' websites is compiled in tables within this assessment to help the Parks and Recreation Department evaluate the need for additional programs, amenities, and facilities. Following are sources used:

- **Nassau County Parks and Recreation:**
<https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/Facilities#scrollLink6>;
- **Fernandina Beach Parks and Recreation:**
<http://fbfl.us/103/Parks-Recreation>;
- **City of Hilliard Parks:**
<https://hilliardohio.gov/our-parks/>;
- **McArthur Family YMCA:**
<https://hilliardohio.gov/our-parks/>; and
- **Boys & Girls Club:**
sheryls@bgcnassauclubs.org.

Service Area

The majority of recreation programs are offered in Fernandina Beach, Hilliard, and Callahan. Fernandina Beach has the most facilities and amenities available, mostly due to the population's attraction to the community located near the ocean. Other providers throughout the county include churches, youth sports associations, private fitness groups, YMCAs, and the Council on Aging.

Direct Similar Providers Agencies, Facilities, and Amenities

In order to compare facilities, services, and amenities to other agencies in Nassau County, listed below is the information about Nassau County Parks and Recreation, Fernandina Beach, Hilliard Parks and Recreation, the McArthur Family YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club (Nassauville Road). Tables throughout this assessment include the parks or facilities agencies, as well as a combined list of recreational services, programs, and activities that are offered. Nassau County Park and Recreation (NCPR) information is listed first so comparisons to similar providers can be easily identified. (See **Figure 1.27.**)

1. **Facility Providers:** Not all agencies provide programming but have facilities available that are used and programed by outside organizations on a rental (permit) basis. Facilities and amenities are shown in the table with the agency that has those facilities on premise. (See **Figure 1.27.**) **X** in a column indicates a facility is present / **M** indicates multiple facilities.



**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

FIGURE 1.27 | Facility Providers

Facility	Nassau Co. Parks and Recreation	City of Fernandina Beach	Hilliard Parks and Recreation	McArthur Family YMCA	Nassau Co. Council on Aging	Boys & Girls Club
Recreation Center (has programs for fitness/recreation)	X	M		X		
Community Center (rental for banquets, weddings, meetings, or events)	M	M				
Baseball Field	M	X	M			
Softball Field	X	X				
Football Field	X	X	X			X
Soccer Field	X	X	X			X
Multipurpose Field			X			
Multipurpose Court		X				X
Gymnasium		X		X		X
Basketball Court (Indoor and Outdoor)	X	X	M			M
Volleyball Court		X	X			X
Tennis and Pickleball / Court		M	X			
Multipurpose Court		M				
Roller Hockey Rink		X				
Skateboard Park		X				
Pool		M	M	X		
Splash Pad / Water Feature		X	X			
Playground / Play equipment	M		M			
Wellness and Fitness / designated space		M		X		X
Picnic Area	M	M	M		X	X

Facility	Nassau Co. Parks and Recreation	City of Fernandina Beach	Hilliard Parks and Recreation	McArthur Family YMCA	Nassau Co. Council on Aging	Boys & Girls Club
Pavilion	X	M				
Nature Education: classroom / outdoor facility		X				X
Trails	X	X	M			
Outdoor Fitness Equipment		X				
Art Related		X		X		X
Educational		X		X		X
Childcare at Agency				X		
Pre-School		X				
Beach / Boat Ramp Water Access	X	X				
Shelter House	X	X	M			



2. Program Providers: Agencies offer programs based on the interest of the community and people that use their facilities. Programs are led by primarily private instructors of the agencies, or in some cases maintained by a contract instructor. Some agencies

provide programming to offsite facilities. These programs are not differentiated in the table below. In **Figure 1.28**, each agency is marked if they provide the program. **X in a column indicates a program is offered.**

FIGURE 1.28 | Program Providers

Programs	Nassau Co. Parks and Recreation	City of Fernandina Beach	Hilliard Parks and Recreation	McArthur Family YMCA	Nassau Co. Council on Aging	Boys & Girls Club
Baseball	X	X	X			X
Softball		X	X			
Football		X				
Soccer		X				X
Lacrosse / Cricket		X				
Basketball		X				X
Volleyball		X	X	X		X
Tennis and Pickleball		X	X			
Roller Hockey		X				
Skateboard		X				
Karate			X			
Aquatics		X		X		
Wellness and Fitness		X	X	X	X	X
Nature Education		X				
Art Related Program			X		X	
Educational Program		X	X	X	X	
Senior Program		X		X	X	
Childcare at Agency				X	*	
Pre-School Program			X			
After School Program		X				X
Virtual Programs				X		X
Special Events		X	X		X	X

*Nassau County Council on Aging offers an Adult Day Care Program at the City of Fernandina Facility

- 3. Core Programs:** Core programs are most desired by the public and are most focused on by the agency due to the volume of users. Core programs are listed in the table below. (See **Figure 1.29.**) **X** in a column indicates the program is considered a core program.

FIGURE 1.29 | Core Programs

Core Programs	City of Fernandina Beach (all parks)	Hilliard Parks and Recreation	McArthur Family YMCA	Nassau Co. Council on Aging	Boys & Girls Club
Baseball	X	X			
Softball	X	X			
Football	X				
Basketball	X				
Volleyball	X	X			
Tennis and Pickleball	X				
Roller Hockey					
Skateboarding					
Aquatics	X	X	X		
Wellness and Fitness (Designated Space)	X	X	X	X	X
Nature Educations					
Art Related Programs		X		X	X
Educational Programs		X	X	X	X
Childcare at Agency	X				
Pre-School Programs					
Senior Programs			X	X	



**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

Indirect Providers

Program/Activities by Indirect Providers

1. Recreational programs are provided within a community by churches, townships, or city organizations, as well as not-for-profit business sponsored sports and activities. These activities are not supported by the agencies financially but are supported by

providing facilities for them to use. The number of programs and activities enjoyed by the community are listed if they are organized, maintained, and financially supported by a public, private, or non-profit organization. (See **Figure 1.30.**)

FIGURE 1.30 | Indirect Providers

Programs	Public	Private	Non-Profit
Baseball			1
Softball			
Football	4		
Basketball	2		
Volleyball	2		
Tennis and Pickleball		3	
Roller Hockey			
Skateboarding	3		
Aquatics	3		
Wellness and Fitness (Designated Space)	16		1
Nature Education	2		
Art Related Program	4		2
Educational Program	2		
Childcare at Agency	3		
Pre-School Program	7		
Special Events	1		2

1.7 Review of Related Documents

Barth Associates reviewed the following documents for potential implications for the Nassau County PROSMP.

- **Nassau County Vision 2032 Plan (2007);**
- **Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan**
<http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/compplan;>
- **2030 Recreation Master Plan: A Strategic Plan of Action (August 2016) (not adopted)**
[http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12905/Document-95-Percent-for-website?bidId=;](http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12905/Document-95-Percent-for-website?bidId=)
- **2030 Recreation Master Plan: A Strategic Plan of Action Appendix (August 2016) (not adopted)**
[http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12868/Appendix-95-pPercent-for-Website?bidId=;](http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12868/Appendix-95-pPercent-for-Website?bidId=)
- **2019 Nassau County, FL Growth Trends Report**
[http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18567/2019-Growth-Trends-Report-7-5-19-FINAL-;](http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18567/2019-Growth-Trends-Report-7-5-19-FINAL-)
- **2018 Nassau County, FL Growth Trends Report**
<https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/15444/2018-Growth-Trends-Report-Final-Draft-4-18-18;>
- **Nassau County Vulnerability Assessment: Phase I (May 2019)**
http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18440/Draft-Vulnerability-Assessment---Data-Collection-Phase-I_052019;
- **Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Vision Book (December 2019)**
[http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18856/WESTERN-NASSAU-VISION-BOOK-10-16-19?bidId=;](http://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18856/WESTERN-NASSAU-VISION-BOOK-10-16-19?bidId=)
- **William Burgess Context and Connectivity Blueprint (July 2019)**
<https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18226/William-Burgess-Context-and-Connectivity-Blueprint.>



- **Nassau County Mobility Fee Ordinance (August 2014) (Mobility Plan)**
[https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/11742/Ordinance-2014-16-reduced?bidId=;](https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/11742/Ordinance-2014-16-reduced?bidId=)
- **Nassau County Mobility Ordinance Update (April 2015)**
[https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12920/Ordinance-2015-04-revised-Mobility?bidId=;](https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/12920/Ordinance-2015-04-revised-Mobility?bidId=)
- **ENCPA Mobility Plan/Ordinance (June 2015)**
[https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/13124/ENCPA-Mobility-Plan-amended-in-Ord-2015-08?bidId=;](https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/13124/ENCPA-Mobility-Plan-amended-in-Ord-2015-08?bidId=)
- **FY 19-20 Budget**
[https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18929/FY19-20-FINAL-ADOPTED-BUDGET-9-23-19---Website-Version;](https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18929/FY19-20-FINAL-ADOPTED-BUDGET-9-23-19---Website-Version)
- **Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (FY19/20-FY23/24)**
[https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18944/2019-20-Final_101419-Website-Version;](https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/DocumentCenter/View/18944/2019-20-Final_101419-Website-Version)
- **Nassau Community Health Improvement Plan 2019-2021**
[http://nassau.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health-planning-and-statistics/_documents/updated-nassau-chip-2019-2021.pdf;](http://nassau.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health-planning-and-statistics/_documents/updated-nassau-chip-2019-2021.pdf)
- **Resident Survey on Recreation in Nassau County (2013);**
- **Timber to Tides Trail Corridor Master Plan (November 2019);**
- **Nassau County (Evergreen) Pace EH (Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health) (July 2018);**
- **Educational Plant Five Year Survey Report (June 2019);**
- **Conservation Finance Feasibility Study: Nassau County, Florida (April 2019);**
- **A Pace EH Project in the Evergreen Community of Nassau County, FL (August 2018);**
- **Nassau County Stormwater Master Plan (April 2012); and**
- **Florida State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)**

Following are key findings applicable to the County's parks and recreation system.

1. Nassau County Vision 2032 Plan (2007)

In 2007 Nassau County, in partnership with the Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach/Yulee (AIFBY) Chamber of Commerce, hired consultants MGT of America, Inc. to begin a long-term planning and consensus building process and develop a 25- year vision (2007-2032) for the county.

The creation of Vision 2032 was a transparent process with all meetings open to the public. A Steering Committee was established to provide administrative oversight of the Vision 2032 project. A communication plan was developed and implemented to provide residents with information about Vision 2032. Input was received from stakeholder groups and residents of Nassau County through multiple public involvement opportunities. Eight Public Participation Sessions were held throughout the county.

The recommended goals and strategies of Vision 2032, summarized below, reflect the community priorities identified in the visioning process. They became a primary source in the creation of the goals, objectives, and policies of the Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Quality of Life Goals

- Conserve and/or preserve existing natural areas, including wetlands, floodplains, river corridors (such as the St. Marys River), streams, creeks and wildlife habitat;
- Preserve existing and expand outdoor recreation areas, publicly-owned natural and open space areas, recreational facilities and services throughout Nassau County; and

- Engage the community as a whole to identify places in each community that are historically, socially and ecologically significant and recommend a plan that will reflect the desires, needs, and character of these existing "communities."

Infrastructure and Growth Management Goals

- Achieve a network of safe and efficient multi-modal transportation that is capable of meeting the transportation needs of residents and visitors at an acceptable level of service in a safe and efficient manner;
- Expand the economic base and create a fiscal sustainable community by attracting high technology and high value industry, office, research, and educational facilities that provide new employment opportunities and support the existing major employment sectors;
- Coordinate public and private efforts to ensure continuance of the vital tourism industry and identify opportunities to create a sustainable eco-tourism segment of the economy that takes advantage of the county's abundance of natural resource areas, such as the St. Mary's River;
- Encourage mixed-use developments designed to accommodate multiple community activities and services in close proximity. By reducing infrastructure demand, mixed-use developments can generate a positive fiscal impact on County's financial resources; and
- Establish design guidelines, dimensional criteria, and incentives to promote compact mixed-use development patterns. Characteristics of mixed-



use zoning include multiple uses dispersed vertically, shared parking located behind buildings, public amenities such as schools and parks as community focal points, and extensive pedestrian connectivity.

Economic Impacts & Financial Feasibility

As shown in the conclusions from the Fishkind Fiscal Sustainability Study incorporated in this Vision [2032 Vision Plan], the types of growth and development, which occur in Nassau County in the future, will have significant impacts on the financial abilities of the County to pay for current and future activities. Some very difficult choices will have to be made in order to ensure Nassau County maintains its current quality of life, pay for future growth, and ensures a continuation of the quality of life so important to residents.

- Type of Growth Determines Fiscal Impact;
- Not all land uses are created fiscally equal;
- Certain land uses yield a higher fiscal benefit to Nassau County;
- At current expenditure levels, typical residential land uses do not pay for themselves unless at very high price points;
- Office, retail, and industrial land uses have the ability to generate positive fiscal benefit; and
- Mixed-use development also has the ability to generate a positive fiscal benefit for the County.

2. Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, adopted in October 2010, establishes policies and priorities for the future physical, economic, and social development of Nassau County. Several overarching Comprehensive Plan goals – determined as necessary to effectively manage growth through a county-wide 25-year visioning exercise (“Vision 2032”) and the State-mandated Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) - which inform this PROSMP effort include:

- Planning for exponential growth, particularly in the western part of the county, in particular through the creation of policies and incentives to encourage efficient development patterns via the Land Development Code. Recreation, open space, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities are to be planned for each special district and overlay delineated in Future Land Use Maps;
- Protection of Nassau County's unique natural features (coastal dunes, tidal marshes, pine forests, pristine rivers) through the conservation of natural resources, and expanding communities' "green infrastructure"; and
- Development of the PROSMP itself to help enrich the lives of those in the community, improve the aesthetics of neighborhoods, increase property values, generate tourism, and enhance the overall image of the county.

Further, recreation and open space provision is considered throughout myriad development goals and strategies, both directly and indirectly in many Comprehensive Plan Elements, as described below.

Transportation Element

While the plan notes that only an extremely small percentage of people in Nassau County use alternative modes of transportation other than the automobile, it states that a successful transportation system must offer multi-modal options to the public, including increased bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Maps T-18 and T-19 illustrate existing, proposed, and planned bicycle facilities.

Recreation and Open Space (ROS) Element

- **Existing Park Definitions:** Last updated in 2017, this section of the Comprehensive Plan describes the County's existing definitions for three types of parks: "Neighborhood Park" (local park serving people within a half-mile radius, typically less than 10 acres in size); "Community Park" (designed to meet the needs of several communities usually within a 1-5 mile radius, at least 10 acres in size); and "Regional Park" (water-based or large resource-based park of at least 30 acres, intended to serve residents of the entire unincorporated area as well as of the municipalities). Specific attributes of each park type are provided in the accompanying Background Data and Analysis document;
- **Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities:** The Background Data and Analysis document lists existing County, Municipal, State, School, and Private Facilities, as well as total land areas;
- **Levels-of-Service (LOS)/Planning Guidelines (policies ROS.01.03, ROS.01.04, and ROS.01.07):** The ROS establishes an acreage LOS of 14 acres/1,000 residents, including 3.35 acres of community parks/ 1,000; 10 acres of regional parks/1,000; 0.25 acres/1,000 for beach access; and 0.40 acres/1,000 for boat facilities (see **Figure 1.31**). The ROS also establishes LOS for recreation facilities, based on the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). These include:

 - Baseball/Softball fields: 1/2,500 residents;
 - Basketball Courts: 1/5,000;
 - Football/Soccer Fields: 1/ 6,000;
 - Equipped play areas — 1/10,000;
 - Exercise/Parcours Trails — 1/15,000;
 - Aquatic Centers: 1/25,000; and
 - Tennis Courts: 1/5,000;
- **Analysis of Need:** There are very few neighborhood parks owned and/or managed by the County or its municipalities, though many are provided privately in residential developments. The Comprehensive Plan states that because most of the future population of the county will continue to live in unincorporated areas, provision of community parks will be a priority for the County in this planning period, as will the provision of both general and water-dependent regional parks. Based on current LOS standards, it is anticipated that by 2030, there will be a need for close to 1,100 acres of additional parkland, including 186 acres of Community Park land; 908 acres of Regional Park land; and 10 boat ramp lanes. It is noted that the needs analyses do not account for community or regional parks and recreation facilities provided by the County's municipalities, nor do they account for state parks and facilities. These parks and facilities are available to the general public and were factored into



FIGURE 1.31 | Existing ROS LOS Policies

Policy ROS.01.04

The County shall acquire, maintain, or manage through agreement, community and regional park facilities to achieve and maintain the adopted levels of service (LOS) shown below.

Type	Service Radius	Minimum Size	Area /1000 Residents	Other Requirements
Community Parks	1- 5 miles	10 Acres	3.35 Acres	
Regional Parks- General	County -wide	30 Acres	10 Acres	
Regional Parks- Beach Access	County -wide	Variable	.25 Acre	At .5 mile linear increments with adequate space for parking
Regional Parks- Boat Facility	County -wide	Variable	.40 Acre	1 ramp lane per 5,000 population

Policy ROS.01.05

In general, the County shall not seek to acquire neighborhood park facilities. Land and improvements for neighborhood parks shall be provided by new development through the site plan review process. Criteria for the location and design of such facilities shall be included in the Land Development Code (LDC), Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Development of Regional Impact (DRI) development order.

the LOS standards. However, the vast majority of projected growth is predicted to occur in unincorporated areas of the County, in many cases a significant distance from municipal or state parks. Park demands for ENCPA are also presented;

- **Acquisition of Park Facilities:** Land and improvements for neighborhood parks shall be provided through the site plan review process. This does not include County parks.

Land for recreation facilities may be provided through incentives such as cluster development standards, density bonuses, mixed use development, and other planning strategies. Required park land should be identified for dedication during the review process for a subdivision, Planned Unit Development (PUD), or Development of Regional Impact (DRI);

- **Funding:** Historically, funds for parks and recreation facilities have come from four major

sources: local option sales taxes (generating 40% of funds for capital developments), ad valorem taxes (24% of funds), impact fees (23%), and grants (13%). The plan recommends the County develop a 10 year+ long range capital improvements plan for parks and recreation facilities. Recreation impact fees are implemented as a funding source for new parks and recreation facilities, though it is recommended that the County investigate a more flexible administration of impact fees to help accomplish the County's parks and recreation goals (e.g. land transfers in lieu of payments). Grant funding will be sought from State and Federal sources. Partnerships with NGOS (Florida Communities Trust, the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, etc.) will be maintained to assist with funding and planning. Appropriate public-private partnerships will be encouraged to help fund and operate parks and recreation facilities when beneficial to residents;

- **Multi-Modal Access:** Recreational facilities required for new development shall be constructed to maximize appropriate multi-modal access. Bicycle racks will be installed at all new County recreation areas. Sidewalks, bicycle paths, and multipurpose trails shall be provided at the time of construction or reconstruction as defined in the County Land Development Code along public roads which provide access from neighborhoods to County parks. The County shall consider greenways to link existing and proposed nature reserves, parks, cultural and historic sites with each other. Greenways may include pedestrian and/or bike trails; and

- **Open Space Preservation:** The County shall regularly review the Land Development Code to maximize the preservation of open space, and new developments will be encouraged to provide large areas of open space and recreation facilities beyond those necessary to be concurrent with the additional community needs they create. Whenever possible, recreation sites should be established with multi-use purposes to provide both recreation facilities and to ensure preservation or conservation of environmentally sensitive lands.

Public Facilities

The County shall protect the function of natural drainage features, floodplains, and floodways. This will be accomplished, for example, through subdivision regulations which ensure new streets are designed to direct storm drainage in a manner that such water will be filtered through soils and native vegetation before the runoff enters drainage creeks.

Conservation Element

Many policies in this element are intended to safeguard natural communities and ecological systems through Land Development Code regulations intended to cluster growth or prohibit development in sensitive areas. "Green infrastructure" is to be preserved and expanded through the creation and protection of a network of waterways, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, greenways, and other natural areas that benefit the environment and economy as well as provide recreational opportunities. To this end, the County should look to acquire and/or manage natural lands that can provide ecosystem connections. Pedestrian and bicycle paths are encouraged as well in the name of



conservation, namely to help reduce vehicle traffic and thereby minimize negative impacts on air quality, as well as provide opportunities for active living.

Coastal Management Element

The County wishes to protect and conserve its remaining coastal barrier dunes, beaches, and overall environmental quality and wildlife habitat of the coastal area via establishing construction standards to minimize the impact of man-made structures and development. Water-related uses must be balanced with the need for protection. Still, the County will maintain, improve, and increase public beach access through acquisition and other land use controls. An inventory of existing public beach access will be taken and demand analyzed to establish future beach access requirements based upon projected populations. The County will require the dedication of public access to beaches or waterfront areas as a condition of development for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) located along the Atlantic Coast beaches or the Intracoastal Waterway. The County will also give priority to compatible water dependent uses over other land uses (such as public marinas and docks) to maximize the beneficial use of coastal natural resources, as long as they are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and meet national and local requirements.

Future Land Use

A series of Future Land Use Maps (FLUMS) illustrate the desired locations of particular import to the PROSMP: recreation (REC) uses, Public Buildings and Facilities (PBF) (including parks and recreation facilities), Conservation I (CSV I) (jurisdictional wetlands, including for passive recreation use),

and Conservation II (CSV II) (publicly owned conservation lands, with development limited to a site's management plan or guidelines or that which is deemed appropriate by state or federal agencies). Special districts and overlays which allow recreation, conservation/open space uses include the Three Rivers DRI; the PLM West DRI; the East Nassau Community Planning Area (ENCPA) (underpinned by development principles of a connected network of community amenities consisting of public parks, multi-use pathways, schools and playfields; greater pedestrian and bicycle mobility; a conservation and habitat network, including the St. Marys River Greenway); William Burgess Mixed Use Activity Center Overlay District (which has an expressed goal of incorporating high quality public spaces that create opportunities for cultural experiences and outdoor interaction, entertainment, and play for all ages and ability levels, with recreation, social and civic spaces and facilities being a central and foundational element of all site design within the District); the 100-Year Floodplain Overlay District; the St. Marys River Overlay District (meant in particular to protect and preserve the area's beautiful and unique habitat and provide considerable recreational value); and White Oak Plantation Limited Development Overlay District (whose allowed recreation uses are stipulated under Policy FL.02.04).

Schedule of Capital Improvements

Two parks and recreation projects – John Claxton Boat Ramp Community Park and Westside Regional Park – are listed in the schedule of capital improvements as tentatively occurring in FY20/21 and FY19/20, respectively. Several multi-use trails are listed in the capital improvements schedule as well.

3. 2030 Recreation Master Plan: A Strategic Plan of Action (August 2016)

The 2016 Recreation Master Plan, prepared by the County's Department of Planning and Economic Opportunity, provides a broad appraisal of recreation needs to guide the development of a county-wide system, with a planning horizon of 2030. The plan often describes the benefits of recreation as an economic driver. According to the plan, tourism is Nassau County's largest job creator and a leading form of economic development. As such, it is stated that a primary goal of the plan is to promote the expansion of the tourism industry beyond Amelia Island by capitalizing on the natural amenities and planned infrastructure improvements located on the mainland.

Based on public and stakeholder input derived from meetings and surveys; input from technical working group members from various government departments and interest groups; economic data from the Tourist Development Council; and LOS requirements contained within the Comprehensive Plan, it was determined the best value per dollar spend on recreation would be:

- water access;
- trails, blueways, and multi-use paths; and
- multi-purpose ballfields.

The plan also presents:

- Historical information pertaining to the state of parks in the county today. Notably, the plan cites that public investment in the recreation system did not match the rapid population

expansion that occurred between 1990 and 2010; and developer exactions on new residential developments were not sufficient to satisfy their impact on the system; and another significant expansion is predicted to take place by 2030;

- A description of seven individual park/facility types within the County's park classification system, consisting of neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, beach access (Atlantic Ocean and river shores), boat ramps and kayak launches (motorized and nonmotorized access), trails and blueways, and other amenities and facilities;
- An inventory of parks, including existing facilities, site photos and maps, opportunities for amenity and physical expansion, plus recommendations. Undeveloped potential parkland is included, with accompanying descriptions of the vision for the land as well as possible amenities. Suggested projects are not prioritized;
- Promotion of trails and blueways as an eco-tourism initiative to help bolster the tourism economy and community character. Blueways recommendations include securing non-motorized launch points in three to five-mile increments along the St. Marys River, and alternative launch points on Lofton Creek; create functional blueways along suitable tributaries; and create a motorized launch point in the Chester/Blackrock communities;
- Recommendations pertaining to Comprehensive Plan/LDC amendments and funding sources; and
- Supporting maps.



The 2016 Recreation Master Plan was not adopted, but has helped inform the development of this PROSMP.

4. 2030 Recreation Master Plan: A Strategic Plan of Action Appendix (August 2016)

The Appendix to the 2016 Recreation Master Plan (also not adopted) contains supporting documentation for the master plan, from promotional materials produced by tourism boards to scholarly articles. Most of the material adds credence to the fact that quality recreation amenities help economic development. Of particular import to the current PROSMP process is results from the resident surveys undertaken as part of the previous effort. A review of this information is presented as a separate entry below (see **14. Resident Survey on Recreation in Nassau County**).

5. 2019 Nassau County, FL Growth Trends Report

Through data collected from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), this report provides a demographic snapshot of the county in 2019. Authored by the Nassau County Department of Planning and Economic Opportunity, it illustrates the rapid growth anticipated for Nassau County over the next decade. The following are highlights from the report.

Population

As of 2018, the full-time population estimate (BEBR) was 82,748. Figure 1 of the report shows current

population disbursement. Annual tourists visiting Amelia Island totaled 690,000.

Nassau County is growing exponentially. Nassau grew by 3.6% last year, ranking as the 25th fastest growing county, by percent growth, in the United States. Over the coming decade (2019-2030), BEBR predicts Nassau will be the ninth fastest growing county in the State of Florida with a projected population expansion of 38% resulting in over 114,000 people calling Nassau home. Further, the report notes that a 79% population expansion over the next 26 years is a conservative estimate. As an excerpt included in the report from a developer states, this boom can be attributed to top-rated school districts, proximity to job centers in Duval, internal job growth in the county itself, and a high quality of life – a viable “alternative” to Duval and Clay counties. Facts provided regarding regional attractors also note the lure of Amelia Island/ Fernandina Beach, job centers shifting north, and regional transportation initiatives.

Verbiage in the report suggests the County is primed to establish forward-looking policy decisions, such as land conservation through fee-simple acquisition, to absorb the growth anticipated for Nassau County and to safeguard its natural resources to help ensure that quality of life in the area remains high.

Age

Nassau County’s population skews older, with the median age being 44.9 years, slightly older than the Florida median age of 41.8 years, and considerably older than the U.S. median age of 37.8 years. 21.6% of the population is over 65 years old.

Race and Ethnicity

Nassau County’s population is predominantly White (87.2%). This is a significantly higher percentage

than the State of Florida (87.2% versus 54.1% White). It follows that the Black/African American population is lower in Nassau County (6.1% versus 16.9% statewide), as is the Hispanic or Latino population (4.2% versus 25.6% statewide), Asian (1% versus 2.9%), and Other (1.6% versus 2.1%).

Household Income

Nassau County is relatively affluent. In 2017, the median household income was \$64,294, versus \$50,883 in the State of Florida. Just over 11% of individuals lived below the poverty line, versus 15.5% statewide.

Residential Development

Substantial residential development awaits the county. Figure 2 shows where recent residential development has occurred and where it is planned. Of the 36,382 entitled development units, 32,811 (90.2%) are yet to be built, with the largest developments being the ENCPA (19,962 units), Employment Center DSAP Central Planning Area (3,256 units), and Three Rivers (3,200 units), located in the northern and western parts of the county. The map shows significant National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Wetlands located in each of these areas. Figure 10 additionally shows locations of FNAI Rare Species Habitat located to the east of ENCPA. In addition, potential development parcels are shown, with an anticipated number of 5,330 units to be generated. Many of these parcels also contain substantial wetlands.

Employment

There are 30,745 workers who are resident in Nassau County. Nearly two-thirds (64.2%) are employed outside of the county, and nearly two-thirds of those

workers (63.8%) have jobs in Duval County. While it might appear the county is a bedroom community as a significant portion of people commute out to work, 19,360 workers are employed in the county. Many of these who work in Nassau County (43.1%, or 8,348 people) live outside and travel in to work. Figure 6 shows regional employment centers, primarily in southern Nassau and northern Duval counties, that are poised to stimulate further growth.

The report concludes with description of tools intended to help address root causes of the challenges facing the county, inspired in part by goals derived from the Vision 2032 plan (including the need to preserve natural areas, recreation facilities, and open spaces).

6. 2018 Nassau County, FL Growth Trends Report

A precursor to the 2019 Growth Trends Report, also written by the Nassau County Department of Planning and Economic Opportunity, this document serves as a comparison to the 2019 information presented above. Notable changes to data discussed above include:

- A full-time population increase of more than 2,000 people in 2019 (up from 80,456 in 2018);
- An Amelia Island tourist increase of around 40,000 people in 2019 (from 652,100 in 2018);
- A slight increase in median age in 2019 (up from 44.6 years in 2016);
- A median household income increase of more than \$5,000 in 2019 (up from \$59,196 in 2016);



- A slight decrease in the number of people below the poverty level in 2019 (down from 12.7% in 2018); and
- A decrease in the number of entitled units planned for development in 2019 (down from 37,536 in 2018), but an increase in the number of units to be generated from potential development parcels (up from 4,038 in 2018).

7. Nassau County Vulnerability Assessment: Phase I (May 2019)

This study, written by the Balmoral Group, assesses flooding, stormwater, and drainage issues in two areas of the county: east of I-95 on the mainland, and west of I-95 south and west of A1A/SR 200/301. Funded by a Resiliency Planning Grant awarded to the County by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the report is intended to prepare policy makers for potential increased hazards in areas expected to experience the most rapid development. Three types of inundation are described: episodic flooding, storm surges, and sea level rise. Significant findings related to the PROSMP effort include:

- Satellite data shows increased flooding in areas that are planned for additional residential development, especially in areas nearby the Intracoastal Waterway;
- Large sections of both the East and West areas of study are impacted by even the weakest and most frequent storm, a Category I. The most impacted sections would be on SR 200 between Callahan and the intersection with I-95, where even a category 1 storm surge could cover almost the entire section. Other areas impacted include the surroundings of St. Marys River;
- Areas that are close to the St. Marys River, Nassau River and the Intracoastal Waterway are the ones that would be impacted according to sea level rise projections;
- More than 60% of the conservation lands overlap with potential storm surges. Areas which would be seriously impacted by even minimal sea level rise are in the West, near the intersection of SR200 and I95, and in the East, near Tiger Island; and
- Flooding and sea level rise threatens to impact archaeological sites near Tiger Island, St. Marys River, and Amelia Island. About half of mapped cultural resources in the East would be in the path of a storm surge and about 15% would be impacted in a Cat 1 surge.

Repetitive Loss (RL) properties - insurable buildings for which two or more claims of more than \$1,000 were paid by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) within any 10-year period, since 1978 - are also examined. Findings include:

- **Flooding:** In the West area, RL properties are concentrated near Callahan by the county line, where there is no information on water frequency. In the East area, RL properties are South of SR 200 and just north SR 200 near the Intracoastal Waterway. These two areas have seen an increase in the water occurrence. The map also includes historical flood insurance claims. These differ with the RL property in the way that the historical claims include those

claims fewer than \$1,000. These properties are not considered a RL property, but they could in the future. These are more dispersed and include areas with ongoing residential developments (shown on Series 4, Map 1);

- **Storm Surge:** In the East area, almost all RL properties or properties that have filed a flood insurance claim are within a Cat 1 storm surge. In the West area, properties that are closer to I-95 would be the most affected, but most properties that are more inland could still be severely impacted by storm surge; and
- **Sea Level Rise:** As with storm surge, in the East area almost all of the properties would be within the most likely sea level rise scenario (1 ft.). In the West area, properties near I-95 and near the county line with Duval County would be the most impacted by sea level rise projections.

8. Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Vision Book (December 2019)

The County's Department of Planning and Economic Development composed this vision plan to help guide the exponential development anticipated for the area west of I-95, which encompasses 80% of the county's 649 square miles. Working with the Urban Land Institute over a two-year period, the County developed the plan based on extensive community input, focusing on protection of sense of place, natural preservation of areas, and preparation against flooding as several of the top priorities. The document emphasizes growth pressures the

west faces (referencing the Growth Trends reports in particular), notably by the county's population expansion of 38% by the year 2030 to over 114,000, and that roughly a third more of Northeast Florida's open spaces and agricultural lands are anticipated to be urbanized development by 2070.

The west's existing rural development pattern is currently at risk, as the County's development regulations do not take into account conservation, nor reflect local character, and what best suits residents' needs. A set of planning tools is proposed to help correct this issue and help inform the current PROSMP effort:

- Currently, Nassau County currently ranks 57th out of 67 counties with only 7% of total land in conservation. Proposed conservation tools can help address this problem, including a Conservation Land Acquisition and Management (CLAM) Program (expected to be implemented in 2021), Rural Conservation Boundaries, Easements, and Purchase and Transfer of Development Rights. Therefore, the County has recently initiated a conservation lands acquisition and protection program (see the description of the **Conservation Finance Feasibility Study** below);
- Zoning provisions such as overlay districts and Planned Unit Developments (PUD) that establish design guidelines and direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and protect open spaces;
- Transportation initiatives, such as proposed by the Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide, which provides a bridge between existing guidance on bicycle and pedestrian design and



rural practice, encourages innovation in the development of safe and appealing networks for bicycling and walking in small towns and rural areas. Enhancing walkability in rural areas can also help support aging in place, another aim of the plan; and

- Development of an Official Map, illustrating the goals and community vision set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, shows the locations of planned future public lands and facilities such as transportation, recreational parks and trails, and open space. The Official Map expresses a County's interest in acquiring these lands for public purposes sometime in the future.

Goals, objectives, and strategies are outlined in the document as well, and County staff and other organizations are assigned to carry them out. Those that are particularly relevant to the current PROSMP effort include:

- As part of an effort to manage floodplains and alleviate flooding risks:
 - Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code policies are to be updated, including mapping of wetlands and floodplains in Western Nassau for potential greenway corridor plans;
 - The County will continue to partner with the U.S. Army Corps and Water Management District to reduce flood risks in Western Nassau, in part by promoting open space preservation through conservation easements and planning tools;
 - Utilize the County's Vulnerability Assessment in reviewing land development policy by integrating the Vulnerability Assessment
- into greenway and wildlife habitat corridor planning efforts;
- As part of an effort to maintain/increase water quality in Western Nassau, an objective is to ensure rivers, streams and creeks are safe for recreation and fishing;
- One goal is to increase the percentage of land conserved as natural areas, including wetlands, floodplains, rivers, creeks, forests, and wildlife habitats:
 - Natural areas and open space would be required to be preserved in future development via a resource protection master plan; adoption of open space requirements for new development; and creation of an official greenways map;
 - Connect wildlife corridors throughout the west to minimize habitat fragmentation. This will be done through mapping exercises of habitat and incorporating findings into Comprehensive Plan, and by encouraging landowners to explore voluntary conservation options such as conservation easements for certain species;
 - Protect water bodies through potentially conserving overlays (as with St. Marys River);
- To help ensure the creation of healthy communities, it is proposed that the Land Development Code be updated to include trails and multi-use paths in new developments and to ensure required recreation is accessible for residents of all ages and abilities;
- Proactively preserve rural and agricultural sense of place in Western Nassau by:

- preserving open space and natural features such as through updating the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code with conservation subdivision design principles in PUDs;
- planning for rural transportation option such as horseback riding trails and smaller vehicle options (4-wheeler, golf carts);
- To help preserve community-based activities and create a better sense of place in the west, identify existing and future sites that provide use opportunities for community organizations and events; identify new opportunities for community events such as farmer's markets or arts and crafts fairs; and establishing locations for public art installations in Western Nassau through the implementation of the County's Public Art Ordinance;
- Preserve existing and increase percentage of publicly-owned natural and open space areas through:
 - Implementation of a County conservation land acquisition and management program to identify and preserve high-priority lands for conservation, including for passive recreation;
 - Increasing knowledge about recreational opportunities in State Forests within Nassau County;
- Preserve and expand opportunities for public access to waterways in Western Nassau through acquiring land around St. Marys River for regional recreational access; identifying new locations for future boat ramps, kayak launches, fishing piers, etc.;
- Expand recreation for all ages, abilities, and incomes in Western Nassau by:
 - Ensuring recreational opportunities exist for residents in Western Nassau at the neighborhood and regional levels;
 - Addressing adequate access to recreational opportunities in Western Nassau including multi-modal transportation (driving, biking, walking, riding) and parking; and
- Plan for future Nassau County government facilities in Western Nassau, including for recreation, taking into account the Vulnerability Assessment and the potential re-use of historic buildings when selecting locations.

9. William Burgess Context and Connectivity Blueprint (July 2019)

Compiled by Nassau County's Department of Planning and Economic Development, this document is a plan for the 5,266-acre area served by William Burgess Boulevard, located in the Yulee community – the fastest growing area of the county. It serves as the regulatory instrument to implement the adopted public policy defined in the 2032 Vision Plan and 2030 Comprehensive Plan for the William Burgess District (WBD). Broadly, the plan envisions a community with strong social centers and an enhanced sense of place. One plan goal is to ensure civic facilities and public infrastructure necessary to support new development are provided at the same time as new development is undertaken and that the burden to provide civic facilities and public infrastructure to support new development



is not placed on existing residents. More pointedly, Recreation and Open Space was identified as one of the most important issues facing the area through the Vision 2032 process. Some tenets of the plan particularly relevant to recreation and open space planning include:

- Developing a compact, walkable development patterns and interconnected streets networks (including "complete streets"), bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, private and public parks, open spaces, and ecological systems;
- New development and redevelopment with a residential component will require the provision of a proportionate share of recreation lands and facilities;
- Developing a sense of place through sharing the county's history and culture (relating to railway, timber, and auto-based tourism) and by incorporating public art/architectural design standards;
- Safeguarding the area's natural resources, including salt marshes, wetlands, and forests, as well as native wildlife via such tools as the Conservation Habitat Network (CHN) established in the Master Plan for the ENCPA;
- Planning and design of structures and amenities that take into account future flooding, stormwater, and drainage scenarios during storm events, as well as sea level rise, such as through the implementation of Best Management Practices for stormwater management (rain gardens, bioswales); and
- Creating a healthy community where people are allowed to age in place.

For the purpose of this analysis, there is assumed to be a 50% build-out of the WBD by 2045 under the proposed Transect Based Scenario, yielding up to 7,745 dwelling units based on population projections. For the purposes of this study, a mixture of housing types is assumed to be 33% Single Family (2.65 pph), 33% Multi-family (1.72 pph) and 33% Duplex/Triplex/Quad (2.43 pph). This equates to 17,555 people in the WBD by 2045. Table 3.2 of the report (on the following page as **Figure 1.32**) lists projected recreation needs of the district.

Specific recreation and open space developments planned as part of the district include:

- Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that integrates with the identified commuter rail/transit facility located at the intersection of the CSX raiing and William Burgess Boulevard, as well as other potential transit facilities/infrastructure along the SR200/A1A, US Hwy 17 and William Burgess Boulevard Corridors;
- High quality public spaces that create opportunities for cultural experiences and outdoor interaction, entertainment, and play for all ages and ability levels. Recreation, social and civic spaces and facilities shall be a central and foundational element of all site design within the District;
- In addition to the Recreation Levels of Service defined in Policies ROS.01.07 and ROS.01.04 for Community and Regional Parks, all new development or redevelopment within the District that includes a residential component shall provide neighborhood parks at ratio of four (4) acres of land per thousand people consistent. with the prototypical neighborhood

FIGURE 1.32 | Land and Facilities to Meet Levels of Services Standards at 50% Build-Out Scenario

Recreation Type	LOS	Required to meet LOS	Unit of Measure
Regional Park	10ac/1,000p	175.55	Acres
Community Park	3.35ac/1,000p	58.81	Acres
Neighborhood Park	4ac/1,000p	70.22	Acres
Regional Park - Boat Facility	0.4/1,000p	7.02	Acres
Boat Facility Ramp Lanes	1/5,000p	3.51	Ramp Lanes
Baseball/Softball	1/2,500p	7.02	Fields/ Amenities
Basketball	1/5,000p	3.51	Courts/ Amenities
Football/Soccer	1/6,000p	2.93	Fields/ Amenities
Equipped Play Area	1/10,000p	1.76	Facility(ies)
Exercise/Parcours Trails	1/15,000p	1.17	Facility(ies)
Aquatic Center	1/25,000p	0.70	Facility(ies)
Tennis Courts	1/5,000p	3.51	Courts/ Amenities

park as adopted by Nassau County. Consistent with Policies ROS.01.09 and ROS.01.15, Nassau County will include a fee-in-lieu provision in the Land Development Code for neighborhood parks within the District; and

- All new development and redevelopment located within the WBD shall provide for pedestrian cross connectivity throughout the WBD in the form of an extensive multi-use trail system designed to function as an integral component

of a multi-modal transportation network (see section regarding Multi-Use Trail and Figure 4.8 Green Infrastructure Map for further details).

Development will be governed by form-based code, described in transects that range from rural to urban, punctuated by five village centers. Figure 4.2 William Burgess District Transect Map illustrates the overall development plan for the district. Indoor/outdoor recreation and playgrounds are permitted in all areas except T-1 Natural Zone (though water dependent



recreational uses such as boat/kayak ramps/ launches and passive recreational opportunities such as elevated boardwalks, river front promenades and viewing platforms may be allowed). Permissible areas for other amenities such as public art, outdoor auditoriums, and farmers markets are listed in Table 4.2 Transect Use Table. Figure 4.7 shows the proposed mobility network.

Section 4.10 Parks, Natural Areas, and Civic/ Social Spaces describes how – through policy and implementation – a network of parks, civic spaces, and recreation areas will be intentionally designed as an integral component of the community fabric that creates the WBD, touching each development proposal. Descriptions of, possible locations for, and example forms of Greens, Squares, Plazas, and Playgrounds – the WBD’s “public spaces” – are presented under section 4.10.3.2.

Section 4.10.4 describes Natural Areas/T-1 Zone/ Conservation Habitat Network (CHN). It is noted that the CHN/T-1 Zone shall not be used in whole or part as a means of satisfying recreation LOS standards for Regional, Community or Neighborhood Parks except whereas related to water based facilities such as boat ramps, kayak launches, river-front promenades and similar amenities. Section 4.13 describes specific design standards for the public realm, including sidewalk/trail widths in the various transects.

10. Nassau County Mobility Fee Ordinance (August 2014) (Mobility Plan)

This file contains the County’s Mobility Fee Ordinance (No. 2014-16) as well as the County’s Mobility Plan Report, prepared by Gillette & Associates and King Engineering, attached as supporting documentation.

The ordinance states that a Mobility Fee shall be imposed on new construction in unincorporated and incorporated areas of the county to make improvements and additions to the transportation system necessitated by future growth, including for multi-modal projects for bicyclists and pedestrians. Any participating municipality that wishes to join the Mobility Fee program has an opportunity to do so, but is not required to join. For the purposes of exacting fees, the county is to be divided into two Mobility Zones (shown in Appendix B of the statute) and generally depict areas of planned urban, suburban, and rural forms of development. One zone encompasses the area east of I-95 and another the area west of I-95; the ENCPA constitutes a separate zone and is not subject to the provisions of the ordinance. Generally, projects must be constructed in the zone from which the fee was exacted, unless shown to have particularly far-reaching benefits. Fee reductions and/or credits can be issued if new developments are mixed-use and/or can demonstrate interconnectivity with adjacent developments/ transportation facilities. Appendix F shows average trip lengths by purpose; for “social/recreational,” the average trip length is 8.6 miles.

11. ENCPA Mobility Plan/ Ordinance (June 2015)

Ordinance 2015-08 states that there is a need for improved transportation networks – including bicycle and pedestrian facilities – in the ENCPA to facility mobility as well as access to recreation attractions in the area. Tax increment revenues/mobility fees generated by the ENCPA Mobility Network Fund will help fund the mobility network. Over \$8 million is identified as being needed to fund internal, off-street trails in the district.

- South End Beachfront Walkover Modifications;
- Scotts Road Beach Access Restroom Facility;
- John Claxton Boat Ramp Community Park Development;
- Callahan Ballpark Soccer Field Sod;
- Callahan Ballpark Shade Structures;
- Hilliard Ballpark Shade Structure; and
- Bryceville Shade Structures.

In addition, over \$4.6 million has been requested for Amelia Island Parkway Multi-use Trails (all sections) in FY 2019/20 and FY 20/21, and hundreds of thousands of dollars are earmarked for storm drainage each year of the CIP, which might have implications for future parks and recreation planning.

12. Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (FY19/20-FY23/24)

The requested amount for parks and recreation capital improvement projects totals nearly \$4 million between FY 19/20 and FY 23/24, as shown in **Figure 1.33**. The largest capital project anticipated is West Side Regional Park in FY 19/20, totaling \$2,705,344. The following facility improvements are also planned by FY 23/24:

- Burney Park Walkover Replacement;
- Burney Park/Goffinsville Lighting;

13. Nassau Community Health Improvement Plan 2019-2021

Prepared by the Florida Department of Health in Nassau County and the Partnership for a Healthier Nassau, the plan provides a summary of the former Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) group's findings and details new initiatives with

FIGURE 1.33 | Requested Capital for Parks and Recreation Projects, FY19/20-FY23/24

FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	Total Requested Capital
Capital: \$2,950,055 Financing Operating Impact: \$21,600	Capital: \$328,109 Financing Operating Impact: \$14,400	Capital: \$295,700	Capital: \$321,700	Capital: \$38,900	\$3,934,464



**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

goals, objectives and strategies targeting the five issues of access to care, behavioral health and substance abuse, community support, health disparities, and housing and healthy places. The document is meant to outline top health priorities in the county and serve as an education tool for the community. Notable findings include:

- Cancer and heart disease were the top two major causes of death in 2018, and chronic disease was noted as an issue. An assessment suggested that lack of safe walking paths was a threat to continued health problems;
- In 2016, only 19.2% of Nassau County residents lived within a half-mile, or 10-minute walk, from a park. This was 24 percentage points less than all Florida residents, in comparison. About 12% of Nassau County residents were within a half-mile of an off-street trail system, which was less than Florida by 5.8 percentage points;
- An opportunity to address the lack of physical activity, as well as access to healthy food, is the creation of spaces that encourage active lifestyles and a greater focus on providing walking and biking trails; and
- The development of new communities in Yulee and Callahan is seen as a prime opportunity to provide parks and recreation infrastructure through an increased tax base.

Though not implicitly stated, other county-wide health issues, such as isolation of senior citizens, the need for intergenerational connection for youth and older adults, the desire for clean air, and increasing problems with mental health, could also potentially be ameliorated through parks and recreation provision.

14. Resident Survey on Recreation in Nassau County (2013)

Growth Management Staff, working in partnership with the Northeast Florida Regional Council and local stakeholders, gathered public input into the needs and desires of residents regarding recreation in the county to inform the compilation of the 2016 Recreation Master Plan. Information was only gathered for parks and facilities under the control of the Nassau County Board of Commissioners; survey questions did not apply to parks managed by the City of Fernandina Beach, the Town of Hilliard, or the Town of Callahan. Key findings include:

- The three most popular activities (residents participated two or more times per month) were Running, Hiking, or Walking (67.3%), Beach Activities (64.6%), and Riding a Bicycle (59.6%). Activities. The three least popular activities (never participate) were Motor Sports (89.1%), Skateboarding/BMX (86.4%), and Tennis (72.0%);
- When asked what other activities residents participate in, or what they would participate in if available, residents repeatedly noted the following: bird watching, camping, dog parks, petanque/bocce ball, nature photography, ice skating, playgrounds, volleyball, and water parks;
- Parks and recreation facilities were rated poor, average, and excellent by residents. Notably, the top "excellent" performers were Beach Activities (40.5%), Fishing (29.4%), and Viewing

- Scenery or Wildlife (28.4%). Facilities rated as the "poorest" were Swimming in a Pool (28.2%), Riding a Bicycle (22.5%), and Tennis (16.2%);
- The top three reasons people did not rank facilities as "excellent" were "the facility is not available to me, because it is too far from my home" (22.9%); "the facility is poorly maintained" (21.2%), and "the facility's equipment is out of date" (13.3%);
 - Top reasons respondents believed there were shortcomings in County facilities were "there are not enough facilities" (81.3%); "parks and recreation is not a priority" (60.8%); and "the facilities are poorly built or maintained" (49.5%);
 - Residents' favorite parks were Goffinsville, Peter's Point, and the Yulee Sports Complex (although a significant number of respondents noted it could be improved upon). John Muir Park was repeatedly noted as a "least favorite";
 - Distances needed to travel to parks/proximity and lack/quality of bike paths were listed as common obstacles to park usage;
 - The majority of respondents (61.4%) reported that the most important reason they participate in outdoor recreation is to be with family and friends. About one-third of people stated "for relaxation, fun, or enjoyment" (35.5%) and "for health and physical fitness" (32.1%) were the most important reasons;
 - The vast majority (78.0%) of respondents said parks and recreation facilities were "very important" to them/their families. Still more (83.6%) said parks and recreation were "very important" to the community;
 - Over half of people (55.1%) reported the need for more Community Parks; 45.0% for Regional Parks; and 40.7% for Playgrounds. Many (69.5%) replied that "other" parks were needed as well, though few gave specifics regarding types, though pools and trails were mentioned several times. People stated more parks were needed in Westside/Yulee;
 - A significant number of people said they would be willing to walk rather far to get to a park: 26.8% said they'd be willing to walk more than a mile, and 30.4% said they walk up to half a mile. Similarly, people are willing to drive: 35.5% said they would drive more than 10 miles to get to a park, and 34.7% said they would drive 5-10 miles;
 - Over one-third of respondents (35.4%) reported that they have to drive 5-10+ miles the nearest park from their homes, whereas 10.8% said parks were located within one-half to one mile, and 10.1% said parks were located less than a half mile away;
 - The majority of respondents lived in zip codes 32034 (66 people) and 32097 (45 people). Over half (53.6%) had 3-5 people in their homes, while 39.1% had 1-2 people; and
 - Open comment themes include:
 - Need more parks and recreation of all kinds to help ensure high quality of life, particularly multi-use trails and pools;
 - Desire for increased maintenance of existing facilities;
 - Need for a focus on recreation development in Yulee; and



- Additionally, public comments are listed pertaining specifically to Callahan, Hilliard, and Bryceville.

15. Draft Timber to Tides Trail Corridor Master Plan (November 2019)

Prepared by GAI Consultants, a primary goal of the master plan is to emphasize community identity, enhance the public realm and streetscape, encourage recreation and bicycle and pedestrian activity, promote compact mixed-use development patterns, and improve environmental quality and floodplain management, while also attracting private investment and making use of already developed sites. In short, the report states that "this document serves as a playbook for catalyzing a human-scale corridor" (71).

People strongly indicated a desire for more trees, sidewalks/bicycle paths, and social spaces such as parks and public markets in a survey conducted as part of the outreach effort during the planning process. Better access to existing ecological resources is recommended through a connected park system. Opportunities identified to help accomplish this aim include:

- Enhance the "Yulee Greenbelt" of connected wetlands;
- Extend and connect off-street east-west walking/bicycle trail system;
- Add launch points along Lofton Creek;
- Revise land development code to include provisions for tree canopy and low-impact development requirements;

- Underground overhead utility lines to allow for bigger tree canopy and unobstructed views of natural areas;
- Create or expand "nature preserves" protecting land from encroaching development;
- Enhance wayfinding system with educational signage;
- Partner with Trust for Public Land in pursuit of "10-minute walk" to parks initiative;
- Create "moments of respite" along walking/ bicycling paths that allow for connection with nature;
- Create green zones (aka ecodistricts) to promote sustainable practices, reduce environmental impacts, and help revitalize areas near environmentally sensitive resources; and
- Establish an ecotourism plan to help raise awareness about the opportunities for nature recreation.

In addition, planning opportunities for the corridor of particular relevance to the current PROSMP effort include:

- The development of a cultural identity, via creating a unique identity by capitalizing on the area's historic features and programming a series of events such as markets, fairs, and festivals that celebrate what is unique about Yulee;
- The desire to connect communities through a network of secondary roads, trails, bike paths, and pedestrian infrastructure via a comprehensive trail system; protected bike lanes; connection of parks and schools to neighborhoods and amenities; and

- Low impact design (LID) is encouraged throughout the corridor to help manage stormwater (such as through bioswales and stormwater infiltration gardens).

The overall plan concept is presented on page 107, which depicts six character areas to help guide future land use and infrastructure policies for the plan area. A rural-to-urban transect approach is put forward as a method for implementation of the concepts developed in the plan. Walking and biking and access to nature/parkland are central features of each transect.

16. Nassau County (Evergreen) PACE EH (Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health) (July 2018)

Prepared by the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida in partnership with the Florida Department of Health in Nassau County, this report assesses the environmental health of the Evergreen Community, an unincorporated area of Nassau County. "Parks and Recreation" was listed as one of the "top six" environmental health priorities for the community, as was "Transportation and Safety." Findings from each of these priority areas are:

- **Parks and Recreation:** The Evergreen community, located in the center of the county, lacks access to recreational resources, the majority being located in the east. This limits the convenience of participating in physical activity in Evergreen. It was agreed community partners would take action developing Amos White Community Center, creating recreation areas for young and old community members (trail, basketball court, playground, etc.); and
- **Transportation and Safety:** "Lack of sidewalks" was the top priority issue for respondents of a community survey. Fernandina Beach and Amelia Island are two high conflict areas in Nassau County for bikers, particularly along Simmons Road and State Road 200. Community partners agreed to take action regarding sidewalks, walkability, road maintenance, speeding, flooding and drainage issues, and mosquito control.

17. Educational Plant Five Year Survey Report (June 2019)

This report describes the condition of current school facilities as well as the future needs. In relation to parks planning, it is notable that:

- New school sites should be located to maximize proximity to and seek to collocate with other public facilities, such as parks and community centers;
- Existing student attendance numbers are provided for each school, as well as recommended capacities. On the whole, enrollment numbers are anticipated to increase over a five-year period (2019/20 – 2023/24) by 819 students (from 11,928 to 12,747) for all grades, PK-12. The breakdown per grade level as follows:



- PK-3: +98 students (from 3,638 to 3,736);
- 4-8: +350 students (from 4,727 to 5,076);
- 9-12: +371 students (from 3,563 to 3,934);
- and
- Anticipated 10- and 20-year utilization per grade level is also provided on pages 123 and 125.

18. Conservation Finance Feasibility Study: Nassau County, Florida (April 2019)

At the request of the Nassau County Board of Commissioners, the Trust for Public Land compiled this document to help identify and secure public financing for priority conservation lands, agricultural preservation, and floodplain management. Unlike most local government funding for parks and land conservation in Florida, which is derived from budget appropriations, property taxes, general obligation bonds backed by property taxes, and local option sales taxes, this report focuses on general obligation bond for funding the creation and improvement of parks including allowable rates and limits, implementation procedures, and revenue raising capacity.

The following is recommended:

- **Bonding:** The County could issue a general obligation bond for parks and conservation purposes and levy property taxes to pay the debt service. Bond proceeds are limited to capital projects and may not be used for operations and maintenance purposes. The County Commissioners must submit the question of a bond issue to the voters;
- **Bond and Mill Levy:** A single ballot question may authorize bonding authority and a millage levy; the excess levy can be used for operations and maintenance. The mill levy must be within the County's 10-mill cap. Voter approval is required; and
- **Sales Tax:** Nassau County currently levies the Small County Surtax at the maximum rate of 1 percent. This tax generates about \$14.5 million annually, some of which has been spent on parks and land acquisition. Parks and conservation supporters could advocate for more funds for open space purposes from these revenues through the capital improvement budget process. Competition for funds is likely to be strong.

Next steps should include matching the funding options to the needs of the County to support conservation needs and testing voter attitudes toward a specific set of funding proposals. The Trust for Public Land recommends conducting a public opinion survey that tests ballot language, tax tolerance, and program priorities of voters in Nassau County.

19. A PACE EH Project in the Evergreen Community of Nassau County, FL (August 2018)

The presentation, compiled by the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida and the Florida Department of Health in Nassau County, provides an overview of the PACE Environmental Health (EH) process and goals; community background; review of work plan; data collection summary; lessons learned;

and next steps. The process engaged the Evergreen Community, a small, rural, primarily African-American enclave of approximately 158 people located in an unincorporated area near the center of the county on CR108, to understand community health status, top environmental health issues, and priorities for action. Though the majority of households had annual incomes of less than \$50,000 and the area lacks access to resources, it is surrounded by green space and its residents report to be in overall good health. Findings presented that are particularly relevant to the current planning effort include:

- Parks and Recreation and Transportation and Safety are top EH issues. Residents are concerned about flooding/drainage of main County road, the lack of sidewalks, the lack of safe play areas for children, and the need for recreational and outdoor activities for families;
- Renovating and improving the Amos White Community Center and developing the surrounding areas for recreation – primarily for trails - was noted as a top issue; and
- Meetings should be held in the community to listen to residents' needs and work in partnership with them to achieve desired outcomes.

20. Nassau County Stormwater Master Plan (April 2012)

This plan, compiled by CDM Smith, discusses the engineering analysis of the existing stormwater management system and identification of problem areas to create a roadmap for County staff to

efficiently use limited funds in addressing the most suitable projects to maximize benefits to the community. The study identifies "problem areas" that can be improved via capital improvement projects (CIPs).

Several CIPs, listed below and shown on Figure 6-1, could be developed further through the PROSMP process:

- **Spring Lake Drive (map ID AC03):** In this location, the connection to a wetland was severed during the construction of Spring Lake Drive. It is recommended that a connection be restored through improved piping;
- **Areas around Blackrock Road:** Flooding is a problem in this vicinity. It was determined that swales/ditches need to be better maintained and/or improved to convey water to Lanceford Creek. Priority CIPs are proposed specifically at Yahtzee Lane (map ID BR03b), Crews Creek Avenue (BR03c), Durden Road Outfall (BR03a), and Lang Road (BR03d); and
- **Callahan Middle School (map ID LS02):** Swales need to be enlarged on the eastern side of Denefield Road to allow runoff to convey to Upper Alligator Creek and alleviate flooding of athletic fields. Pipes should also be improved.

Other potential areas for intervention via the PROSMP process include additional areas noted as prone to flooding and that require increased ditch maintenance, as follows.

- Flood prevention suggested at:
 - Map ID BR02: Intersection at Blackrock Road and Heron Isles Parkway (Report Section 4.2.2);



- Map ID BC01: Police Lodge Road at Mills Creek (Section 5.2.16);
- Map ID BC02: S.R. 200 at Mills Creek (Section 5.2.17);
- Map ID MS01: Flooding on Musselwhite Road at Mills Creek (Section 5.2.18);
- Map ID SM03: Road Flooding at C.R. 121 (Section 5.2.5);
- Map ID SM04: Flooding at Dawson Road between U.S. Highway 17 & I-95 (Section 5.2.6);
- Increased ditch maintenance recommended at these locations:
 - Map ID BR01: The Pirate Woods subdivision (Section 4.2.1), located in Yulee, is a typical example of an area that would benefit from increased ditch maintenance;
 - Map ID AC01: Bismarck roadway (Section 5.2.21) crossing near Peaceful Trail drive, where increased maintenance would reduce the current ditch erosion; and
 - Map ID AC02: Seminole Trail there is evidence of ditch erosion (Section 5.2.22).

The majority of stormwater projects have been funded by the Transportation Fund, though funding from the One Cent Small County tax has also been allocated. The report suggests alternative funding sources could be additionally explored for financing projects, such as the General Fund, special district assessments, homeowners' associations, bonds, and developer impact fees. **Figure 1.34** shows the county's natural drainage systems.

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FIGURE 1.34 | Natural Drainage Systems



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Summary **OF EXISTING DOCUMENTS**

A tremendous number of County initiatives – including urban design, transportation, stormwater, and environmental – have implications for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. As discussed in the introduction, parks can stabilize and improve neighborhoods, provide bicycle and pedestrian

connectivity, store and treat stormwater runoff, provide wildlife habitat, and catalyze new economic development. The Long-Range Vision section of this PROSMP discusses how many of these initiatives can be incorporated into the County's parks and recreation system.

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Needs & Priorities Assessment



Needs & Priorities Assessment

The needs assessment is the heart of the PROSMP process, and is typically the catalyst for most plans. Elected officials and staff want to know, “What do our residents want or need from our parks and recreation system?”

A needs assessment is a type of applied social research that involves developing a research design, gathering and analyzing the data collected from various sources, and using the results to inform policy and program development. Barth Associates uses a mixed-methods, triangulated approach to needs assessments, which compares the findings from quantitative, qualitative, and secondary research techniques and data to identify top priorities. Needs Assessment techniques for Nassau County included those listed in **Figure 2.1**.

Following is a summary of the findings from each technique, as well as conclusions regarding Nassau County resident’s top priority needs.

FIGURE 2.1 | Needs Assessment Techniques

- **Site Evaluations (as discussed in Section 1);**
- **Workshops - two (2) Public Workshops and an Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting;**
- **Interviews and Focus Group Meetings;**
- **Existing Level-of-Service Analysis;**
- **Statistically Valid Mail-In/Telephone Survey; and**
- **On-line Survey.**

2.1 Site Evaluations

The site evaluations, discussed in the previous section, indicate a need to upgrade the entire County parks system.

While the County staff and volunteers who initially built and maintained many of the County's parks deserve a great deal of credit and gratitude from County residents, many park facilities and amenities have aged and need replacement. Additionally, very few of the County's parks were master planned or designed by landscape architect or other qualified park designers, and many suffer from piece-meal development, lack of branding or design, and poor-quality materials. Also, changing recreation trends and expectations suggest the need for more attractive park buildings (e.g. concessions, restrooms, pavilions, etc.) that create a brand and image for the county; higher quality recreation amenities such as turf fields, lighting, and site furnishings; and additional facilities such as dog parks, fitness stations, multi-purpose walks, pickleball courts, and indoor recreation facilities.



Kings Ferry Boat Ramp



Goffinsville Park

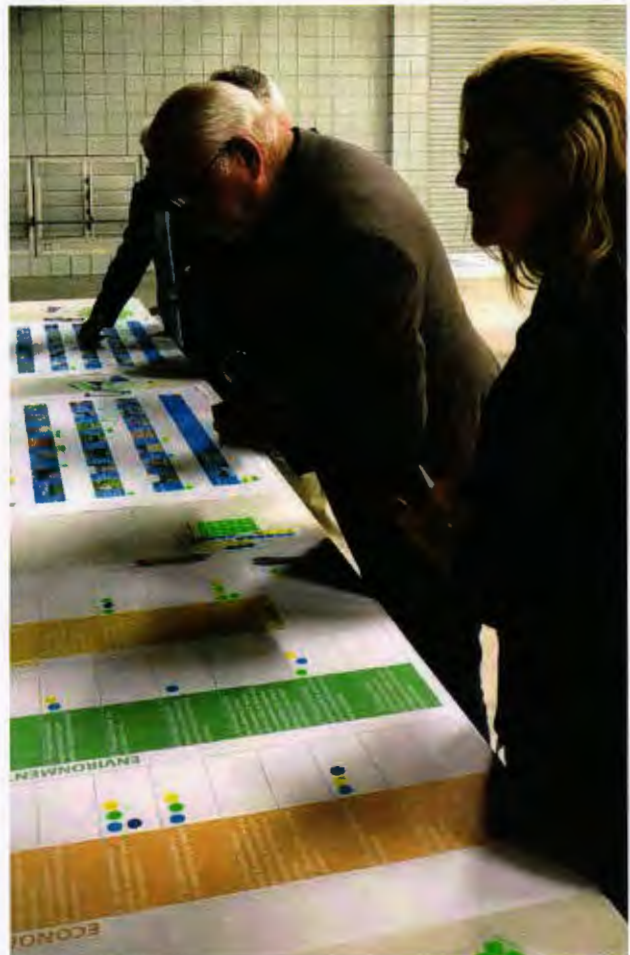


2.2 Workshops

Two public workshops were held in January 2020 to solicit residents' opinions regarding needs and priorities. A total of 52 residents and stakeholders attended. The Recreation Advisory Committee met concurrently to provide their input.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Public workshops were held on January 29, 2020 at Yulee Middle School (with 32 participants attending) and January 30, 2020 at Callahan (with 20 participants) to provide their input regarding parks and recreation needs and priorities. After a brief presentation, attendees participated in four needs assessment exercises and were asked to provide general comments. Following are the findings from the public workshops.



Public workshop

Spending Priorities

Participants were asked to distribute a "budget" of 10 coins between various **spending priorities**. The top five priorities for workshop attendees are shown at right.

Interestingly, however, the number one priority differed greatly between the two workshop locations. In Yulee, the top spending priority was "Multi-Use Trails, Sidewalks, and Bikeways," to which participants allocated 53 "coins." In Callahan, participants only allocated 6 coins to Multi-Use Trails, Sidewalks, and Bikeways, ranking them 5th. The top spending priority in Callahan, on the other hand, was "Indoor Recreation Centers and Gyms," to which participants allocated 32 coins; in Yulee, it was their 9th priority. These results point perhaps to somewhat divergent needs and/or desires in different parts of the county.



Spending priorities exercise at a public workshop



Facility and Amenity Needs

Participants were asked to place a "dot" by **facilities and amenities** that were important to them, but not adequately provided in Nassau County. The top five priority facilities are shown at right.

Although Pickleball courts were ranked as the top priority for the two public meetings combined, 14 people voted for them at the Yulee meeting, versus only one at the Callahan meeting. (Swimming pools were the top priority at the Callahan meeting, with 7 dots.) Roughly the same number of people per location allocated "dots" for the remainder of the top priorities.



Program Needs

Participants were asked to place a "dot" by **recreation programs** that were important to them, but not adequately provided in Nassau County. Top priority programs are shown at right.

Top priorities vary again between public meetings, with people at the Callahan location voting overwhelmingly for Before & after school programs (11 dots), versus only 4 at Yulee. On the other hand, "Other" – Pickleball courts received 11 dots in Yulee but none in Callahan. Camps and Athletic leagues were more popular in Yulee (7 and 8 dots, respectively) than in Callahan (3 and 1 dots, respectively). Learn to swim garnered the same number of dots at each place (6 dots each).



Community Benefits

As with the Recreation Advisory Committee, public workshop participants were asked to place a "dot" by **community benefits** that were most important to them and their households. Unlike facility and program needs, the allocation of "dots" regarding community benefits were roughly proportional between the two public meeting locations. Top priority community benefits included the following.

Environmental

1 The space improves water quality of both surface and ground water.
14 dots

2 The space provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge.
10 dots

3

- The space uses energy, water, and material resources efficiently; and
- Hardscape materials were selected based on longevity of service, social/cultural/historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint and/or other related criteria.

Tie - 9 dots each

Economic

1 The space sustains or increases property values.
15 dots

2 The space indirectly creates or sustains good, living wage jobs.
12 dots

3 The space creates meaningful and desirable employment.
9 dots

Social

1 The space provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, and community or civic events.
19 dots

2

- The space improves social and physical mobility through multi-modal connectivity – auto, transit, bike, pedestrian; and
- The space encourages the health and fitness of residents and visitors.

Tie - 12 dots each

3 The space improves the neighborhood.
14 dots



Other Needs or Comments

Participants were asked to list any additional comments regarding needs, priorities, and/or improvements to the parks and recreation system. Comments included:

Yulee

- Need for kayak launch at Boggy Mills Creek off of C.R. 200;
- 20 existing parks are mediocre; 10 parks are excellent;
- Need a large Pickleball complex; and
- Need soccer fields on east side of county (Yulee). Could use 4 fields now, another 4 within next 10 years.

Callahan

- Benchmark: Marion County;
- Affordable childcare, after school programs;
- Equity between municipal areas; indoor rec center for Callahan;
- Aquatic center for Callahan/Bryceville; Fernandina pool is packed;
- Upgrades to existing rec facilities; fields, lights;
- Mosquitoes are an issue for trails, outdoor rec.;
- Freshwater fishing access; and
- Non-profit centralized space.



Public workshop

ADVISORY GROUP

Twelve (12) stakeholders attended the Recreation Advisory Committee on January 29, 2020 in the FSJC Yulee Room. Attendees participated in the same exercises as the public workshops. Following is a summary of the outcome.

Spending Priorities

Participants were asked to distribute a "budget" of 10 coins between various **spending priorities**. The top five priorities were:

- 1** Natural/Conservation Lands
24 coins
- 2** Improvements to Existing Parks
18 coins
- 3** Beach/Water Access (including Kayak or Canoe Launch)
16 coins
- 4** Multi-use Trails, Sidewalks, and Bikeways
13 coins
- 5** Large, Multi-purpose Regional Parks
11 coins



Recreation Advisory Committee meeting



**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

Facility and Amenity Needs

Participants were asked to place a "dot" by **facilities and amenities** that were important to them, but not adequately provided in Nassau County. Many facilities received the same number of votes; therefore, the facilities tied for the top three priorities were:

- 1**
- Boating Access - Non-Motor (Canoe/Kayak); and
 - Playgrounds.

Tie - 5 dots each

- 2**
- Baseball/Softball Fields;
 - Community Gardens;
 - Community Recreation/Teen Centers;
 - Large Community Parks;
 - Multi-purpose Trails; and
 - Natural Areas/Nature Parks.

Tie - 4 dots each

- 3**
- Basketball Courts;
 - Park Shelters and Picnic Areas; and
 - Spraygrounds/Splash Pads.

Tie - 3 dots each

Program Needs

Participants were asked to place a "dot" by **recreation programs** that were important to them, but not adequately provided in Nassau County. Many facilities received the same number of votes; therefore, the facilities tied for the top three priorities were:

- 1**
- Before & After School Programs;
 - Nature Programs/Environmental Education;
 - Teen Programs; and
 - Camps (e.g. Summer/School Break).

Tie - 4 dots each

- 2**
- Athletic Leagues;
 - Athletic Special Events (e.g. 5k);
 - Community Special Events (Concerts, Festivals);
 - Programs for People with Disabilities; and
 - "Other" – Land Management.

Tie - 3 dots each

- 3**
- Art Exhibits;
 - Child Daycare;
 - Education Lecture Series;
 - Fitness/Wellness;
 - Learn to Swim; and
 - Music Programs.

Tie - 2 dots each

Community Benefits

Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Participants were asked to place a "dot" by **community benefits** that were most important to them and their households. Top priority community benefits included:

Economic

- 1** The space generates increased business and tax revenues.

9 dots

- 2**
 - The space sustains or increases property values; and
 - The space catalyzes infill development and/or the re-use of obsolete or under-used buildings or spaces.

Tie - 6 dots each

- 3**
 - The space creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public and/or the private sectors; and
 - The space optimizes operations and maintenance costs (compared to other similar spaces).

Tie - 5 dots each

Environmental

- 1** Hardscape materials were selected based on longevity of service, social/cultural/historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint and/or other related criteria.

7 dots

- 2**
 - The space improves water quality of both surface and ground water; and
 - The space serves as an interconnected node within larger scale ecological corridors and natural habitat.

Tie - 6 dots each

- 3**
 - The space enhances, preserves, promotes, or contributes to biological diversity; and
 - The space provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge.

Tie - 5 dots each



Social

1

- The space improves the neighborhood; and
- The space encourages the health and fitness of residents and visitors.

Tie - 7 dots each

2

- The space provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, and community or civic events.

6 dots

3

- The space provides relief from urban congestion and stressors such as social confrontation, noise pollution, and air pollution.

5 dots

Other Needs or Comments

Participants were asked to list any additional comments regarding needs, priorities, and/or improvements to the parks and recreation system. Comments included:

- Need to do joint planning with schools;
- Add existing/proposed schools to base map;
- Add municipal facilities to base map;
- Show proposed new transportation corridors;
- Ask school board to look at Regional Park sites; and
- Large Regional Library (adjacent to new park).

2.3 Interviews & Focus Group Meetings

Stakeholders ranging from recreation providers and special interest groups to business leaders, developers, and local government officials were asked to provide their insights regarding the parks planning effort.

Barth Associates conducted interviews and/or focus group meetings with 39 key stakeholders over a three-day period, from January 29-31, 2020.

Interview questions included:

- 1. Review of Scope/Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/methodology?
- 2. Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)?
- 3. Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- 6. Funding/Implementation:** Assuming that the PROSMP will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



The full interview and focus group notes are included in **Appendix A2**. Listed below are the parks and recreation needs that were brought up as priorities more than once, including the number of times the priority was discussed by stakeholders.

1**Multi-use Trails.**

Listed 5 times as a priority

2

- **Bandshell/Pavilion/Amphitheater; and**
- **Recreation Center.**

Each listed 4 times as a priority

3

- **Event/Meeting Space;**
- **Larger/Regional Parks;**
- **Sports Fields; and**
- **County-wide Organization/Planning/
Partnerships.**

Each listed 3 times as a priority

4

- **Non-motorized Boat/Kayak Launches;**
- **Boat Access - General/Motorized;**
- **Protection of Ecosystems/Wildlife
Corridors; and**
- **More Aquatics.**

Each listed 2 times as a priority



Amelia Island Trail

(source: <https://www.traillink.com/trail/amelia-island-trail/>)

2.4 Existing Level-of-Service (LOS) Analysis

Level-of-Service (LOS) was determined for Nassau County's parks, quantifying how well the system is performing in terms of the provision of outdoor space and indoor space, number of facilities, and access.

Using the inventory provided by the Nassau County Parks and Recreation Department (NCPRD), Barth Associates (BA) analyzed existing LOS for the following elements:

- **Acreage** – Measures acreage in a ratio to the community's population (acres per 1,000);
- **Facilities** – Measures facility capacity in a ratio to the community's population;
- **Indoor Recreation Center Square Footage** – Measures the quantity of indoor recreation space in a ratio to the community's population; and
- **Access** – Measures travel distances to parks.

The Acreage and Facilities LOS were benchmarked against National Recreation Parks Association (NRPA) Park Metrics County data.

ACREAGE LOS

Acreage LOS is measured by dividing the number of park acreage by 1,000 population. Park Acreage LOS was analyzed using the population estimates for the years 2010, 2019, 2024, 2029, and 2034, included in **Section 1.2 Demographics Analysis** and acreage provided by the County.

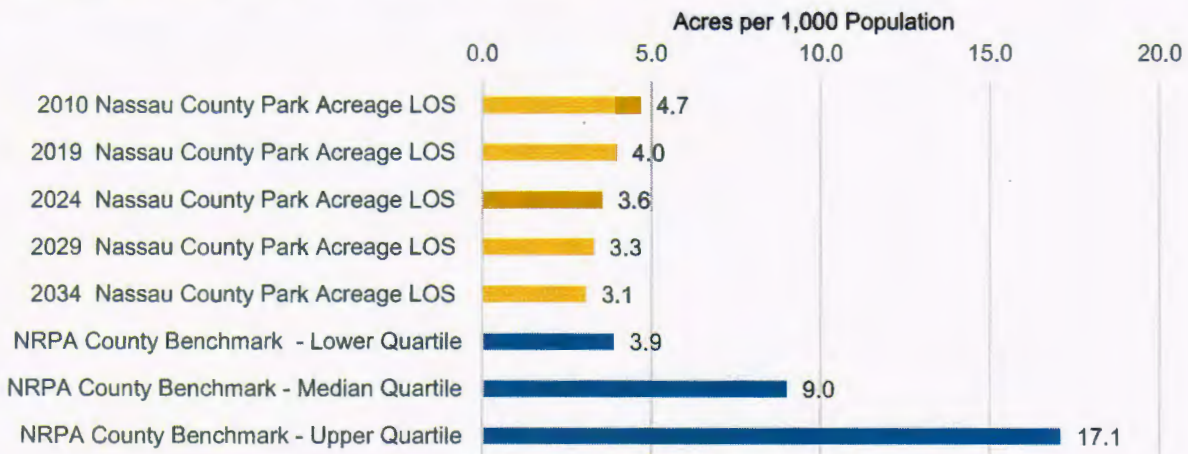
Figure 2.2 illustrates the findings from this analysis. Based on this analysis, the Nassau County Park Acreage LOS in 2010 was 4.7 acres per 1,000 population. By 2019, it decreased to 4.2 acres per 1,000 population. The acreage LOS would decrease to 3.6 Acres per 1,000 population by the year 2024, and to 3.1 Acres per 1,000 population by the year 2034 if the County does not purchase any more park land.

Figure 2.2 also compares these findings to NRPA County Benchmarks – a national metric of counties. This comparison suggests that Nassau County has an Acreage LOS that is close to the Lower Quartile of



NRPA Benchmarks. As the county continues to grow, it will fall below the Lower Quartile Acreage LOS. This suggests that Nassau County may have a need to acquire additional park land in the coming years.

FIGURE 2.2 | Acreage LOS Analyses & Benchmarking



FACILITIES LOS

Facilities LOS is measured by dividing the number of residents by the number of parks and recreation facilities. The higher the number, the less facilities there are per resident, and the more of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility. The lower the number, the more facilities there are per resident, and the less of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility.

Park Facilities LOS were analyzed using the population estimate for the year 2010, 2019, 2024, 2029, and 2034 included in Section 3.1- Demographics and Trends and the number of facilities provided by the County and confirmed via

Aerial Photography Analysis by BA. Similar to Park Acreage LOS, **Figure 2.3** on the following page also compares these findings to available Median NRPA County Benchmarks.

Nassau County recreation facilities that were unavailable or had a higher Facilities LOS number than NRPA Median Benchmark Facilities LOS number are highlighted in orange and suggests that there may be a need for those recreation facilities in the county. Additionally, this comparison will inform discussion during the Visioning Phase of the project related to the need for establishing the County Facilities LOS targets.

FIGURE 2.3 | Facilities LOS Analyses & Benchmarking

Facility	Nassau County Facilities LOS (Population per Facility)					NRPA Median County Benchmark
	2010 LOS	2019 LOS	2024 LOS	2029 LOS	2034 LOS	
Amphitheatre/Stage	-	-	-	-	-	289,907
Boat Ramp	7,331	8,634	9,658	10,395	11,213	-
Baseball Fields (Youth)	12,219	14,390	16,096	17,325	18,689	19,099
Baseball Fields (Adult)	24,438	28,780	32,192	34,650	37,377	44,177
Basketball Court	73,314	86,340	96,575	103,951	112,131	22,855
Dog Park	-	-	-	-	-	134,327
Football Field	12,219	14,390	16,096	17,325	18,689	42,641
Multi-purpose Playing Field	36,657	43,170	48,288	51,976	56,066	27,579
Pickleball Court	-	-	-	-	-	12,254*
Playground	24,438	28,780	32,192	34,650	37,377	12,674
Skate Park	-	-	-	-	-	230,000
Soccer Field (Youth)	18,329	21,585	24,144	25,988	28,033	26,876
Softball Field (Adult)	18,329	21,585	24,144	25,988	28,033	40,438
Softball Field (Youth)	8,146	9,593	10,731	11,550	12,459	18,646
Softball Field (Total)	5,640	6,642	7,429	7,996	8,625	40,438
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	-	-	-	-	-	126,093
Tennis Court	36,657	43,170	48,288	51,976	56,066	12,254
Walking Trail (LF or Miles)	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Note: Facility LOS based on BA experience.

This analysis suggests that compared to the benchmark, Nassau County may be in need for the following facilities:

- Amphitheater/Stage;
- Basketball Court;
- Dog Park;
- Multi-purpose Playing Field
- Pickleball Court;
- Playground;
- Skate Park;
- Soccer Field – Youth (by the Year 2034);
- Swimming Pool;
- Tennis Court; and
- Walking Trail.



Figure 2.4 below benchmarks the City's outdoor facilities to available Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Facilities LOS for agencies in Florida's Northeast Region based on population estimates for the years 2019, 2024, 2029, and 2034.

FIGURE 2.4 | SCORP Facilities LOS Analyses & Benchmarking

Outdoor Facility Type	Northeast Region Resident Participation	Northeast Region LOS X/1000 Participants	Number of Nassau County Facilities	Need Based on Participants in 2019	Need / Surplus to meet Northeast Region LOS by 2019	Need Based on Participants in 2024	Need / Surplus to meet Northeast Region LOS by 2024	Need Based on Participants in 2029	Need / Surplus to meet Northeast Region LOS by 2029	Need Based on Participants in 2034	Need / Surplus to meet Northeast Region LOS by 2034
Boat Ramps	23%	0.27	10	5.36	4.64	6.00	4.00	6.46	3.54	6.96	3.04
Baseball Fields	13%	1.32	9	14.82	(5.82)	16.57	(7.57)	17.84	(8.84)	19.24	(10.24)
Outdoor Basketball Courts	16%	1.20	1	16.58	(15.58)	18.54	(17.54)	19.96	(18.96)	21.53	(20.53)
Football Fields	13%	0.51	6	5.72	0.28	6.40	(0.40)	6.89	(0.89)	7.43	(1.43)
Tennis Courts	15%	0.99	2	12.82	(10.82)	14.34	(12.34)	15.44	(13.44)	16.65	(14.65)
Soccer Fields	7%	0.71	4	4.29	(0.29)	4.80	(0.80)	5.17	(1.17)	5.57	(1.57)
Outdoor Swimming Pools	26%	0.05	0	1.12	(1.12)	1.26	(1.26)	1.35	(1.35)	1.46	(1.46)
Paved Trails (Miles)	43%	0.05	0	1.86	(1.86)	2.08	(2.08)	2.23	(2.23)	2.41	(2.41)

This analysis suggests that compared to SCORP Benchmarks, Nassau County may be in need of the following facilities:

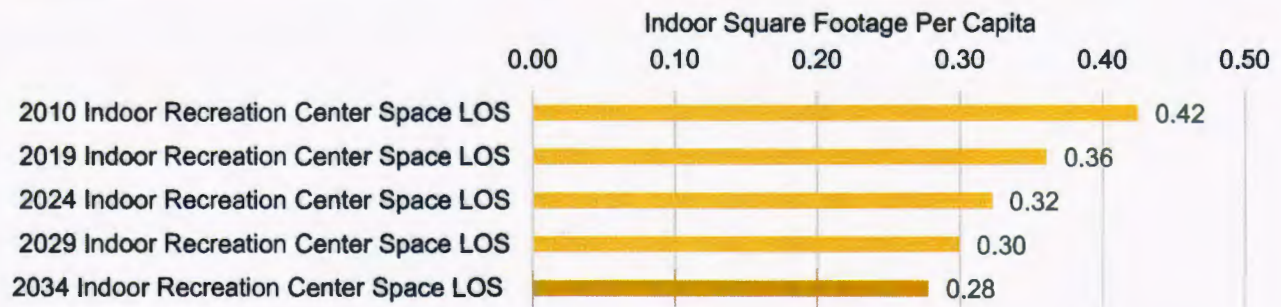
- Baseball Fields;
- Outdoor Basketball Courts;
- Football Fields (by the Year 2024);
- Tennis Courts;
- Soccer Fields;
- Outdoor Swimming Pools; and
- Paved Trails.

INDOOR RECREATION SQUARE FOOTAGE LOS

Indoor Recreation Center Space LOS is measured by dividing the amount of indoor and community recreation center space available to residents by the number of residents in the county. Industry guidelines suggest that communities that provide high quality indoor recreation services should have around 2.0 square foot of interior recreation center space per resident.

Figure 2.5 illustrates the findings from this analysis considering Nassau County's 2010, 2019, 2024, 2029, and 2034 population.

FIGURE 2.5 | Indoor Recreation Square Footage LOS Analysis



Nassau County currently has approximately 31,152 square feet of indoor recreation center space. This equates to approximately 0.42 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2010, 0.36 in 2019, 0.32 in 2024, 0.30 in 2029, and 0.28 in 2034. Based on this analysis, it appears that the county may be in need of additional indoor recreation center space.

Reaching the industry target of 2.0 square feet of indoor recreation center space per resident would require expanding the county's indoor facilities by approximately 192,848 square feet by the year 2034.



ACCESS LOS

Access LOS measures the distance residents have to travel to access parks and recreation facilities. It is used to understand how park access varies between different neighborhoods in a city. The distance used in the calculation of LOS is important; for example, should a County aim for all residents to have a park within 3 miles of their homes, within 1 mile, or even less?

Informed by industry best practices, the following distances were used to analyze Access LOS for the County's parks system:

- **Regional + Community Parks** – 3 miles, 5 miles, and 7 miles;
- **Beach Access Parks + Beach Front Parks** - 3 miles and 5 miles; and
- **Boat Ramps** - 5 miles.

Figures 2.7 – 2.9 on the following pages illustrate where the gaps appear to be in the county based on the analysis.

Figure 2.6 below provides a summary of these findings. Specifically, this summary suggests that while overall, the county may have a need for additional parks, the degree of need may be less based on the Access LOS Analysis distance used. The appropriate Access LOS distance that the County should establish will be further discussed in the Visioning phase of the project.

FIGURE 2.6 | Access LOS Summary

Park Type Analyzed	3 Mile	5 Mile	7 Mile
Regional + Community Parks	○	○	○
Beach Access Parks + Beach Front Parks	○	○	-
Boat Ramps	-	○	-

○ Partial Access

+ Full Access

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FIGURE 2.7 | Regional + Community Parks – 3 miles, 5 miles, 7 miles

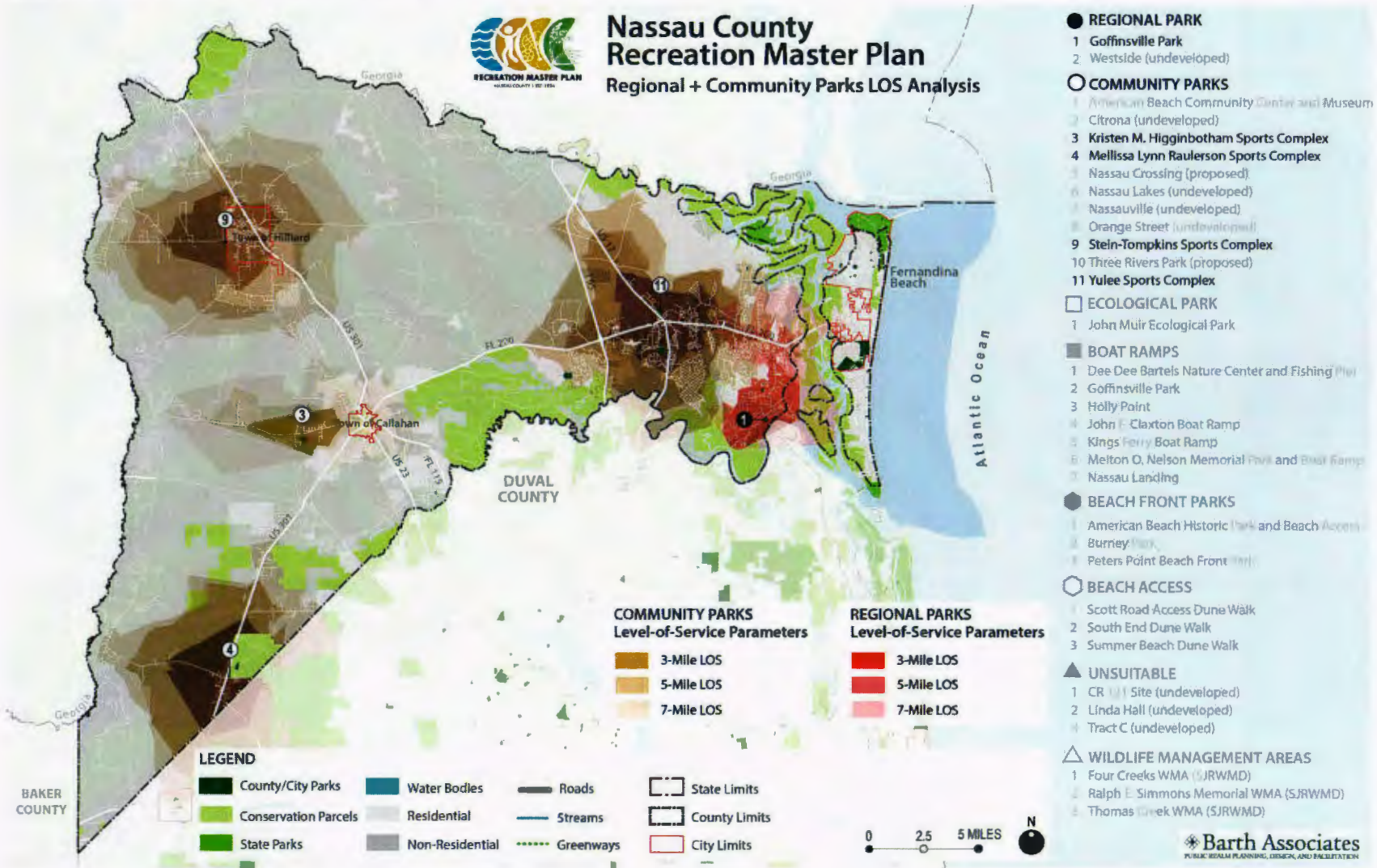


FIGURE 2.8 | Beach Access Parks + Beach Front Parks – 3 miles, 5 miles

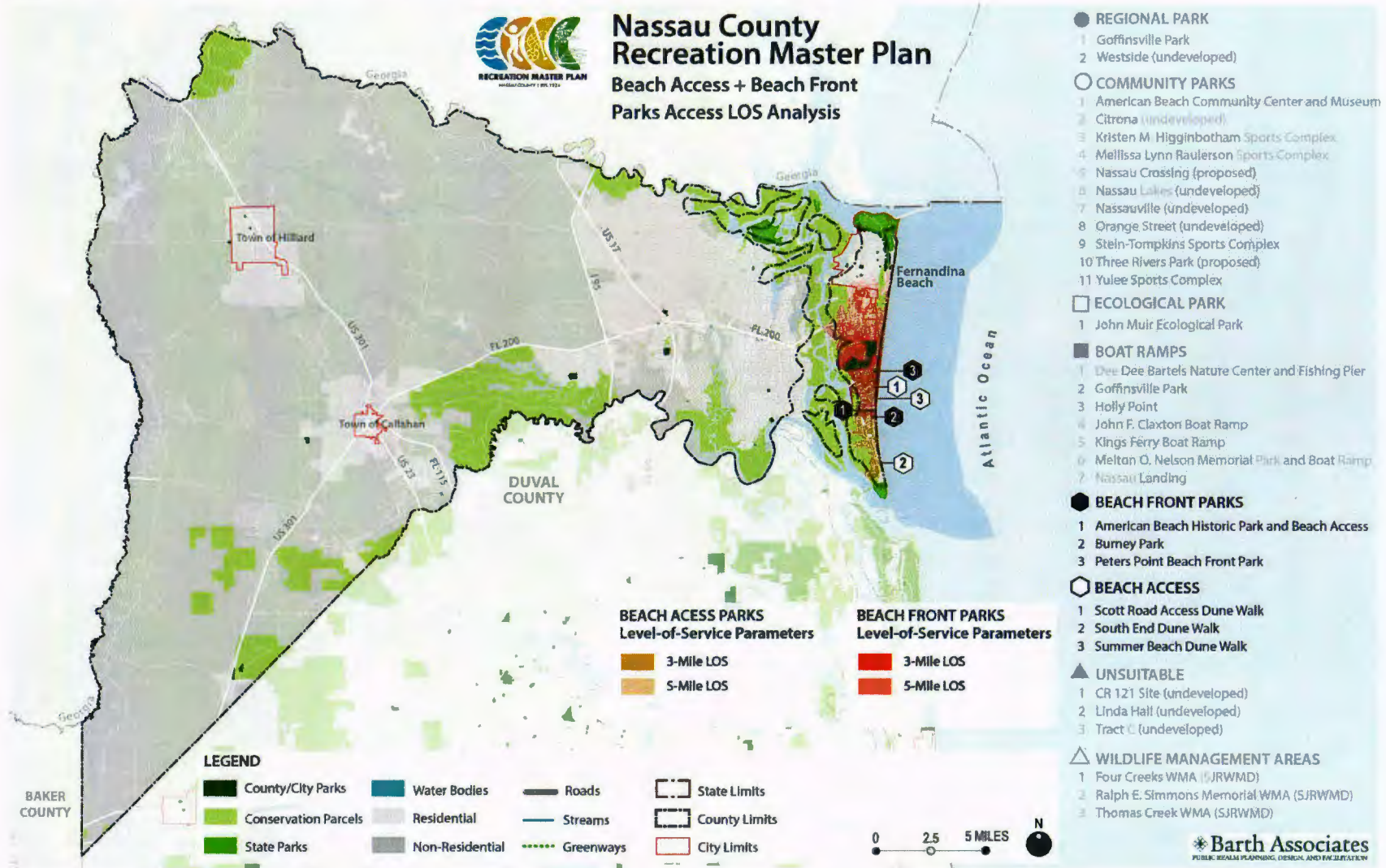
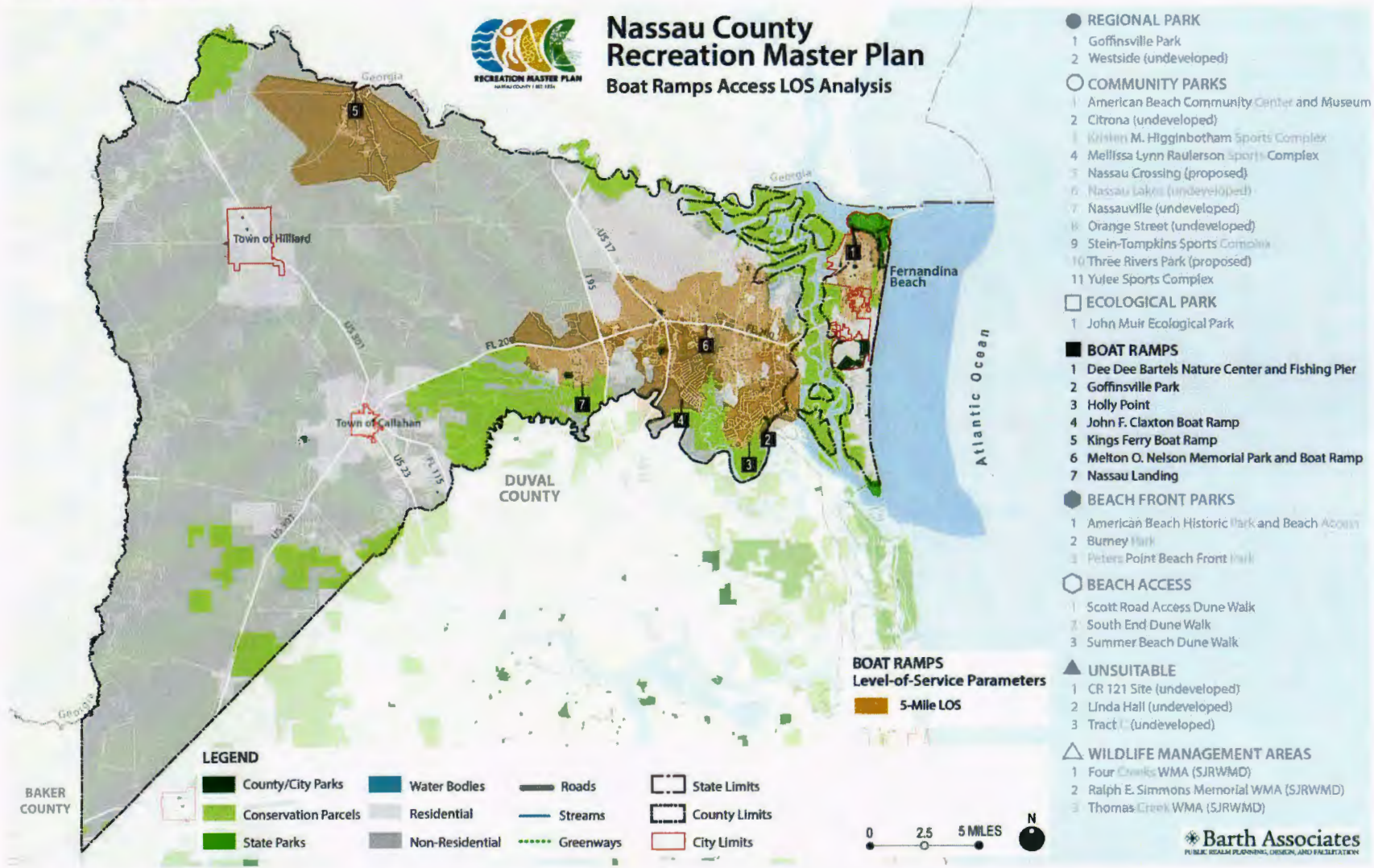


FIGURE 2.9 | Boat Ramps - 5 miles



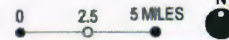
Nassau County Recreation Master Plan

Boat Ramps Access LOS Analysis



- REGIONAL PARK
 - 1 Goffinsville Park
 - 2 Westside (undeveloped)
- COMMUNITY PARKS
 - 1 American Beach Community Center and Museum
 - 2 Citrona (undeveloped)
 - 3 Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex
 - 4 Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex
 - 5 Nassau Crossing (proposed)
 - 6 Nassau Lakes (undeveloped)
 - 7 Nassauville (undeveloped)
 - 8 Orange Street (undeveloped)
 - 9 Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex
 - 10 Three Rivers Park (proposed)
 - 11 Yulee Sports Complex
- ECOLOGICAL PARK
 - 1 John Muir Ecological Park
- BOAT RAMPS
 - 1 Dee Dee Bartels Nature Center and Fishing Pier
 - 2 Goffinsville Park
 - 3 Holly Point
 - 4 John F. Claxton Boat Ramp
 - 5 Kings Ferry Boat Ramp
 - 6 Melton O. Nelson Memorial Park and Boat Ramp
 - 7 Nassau Landing
- BEACH FRONT PARKS
 - 1 American Beach Historic Park and Beach Access
 - 2 Burney Park
 - 3 Peters Point Beach Front Park
- BEACH ACCESS
 - 1 Scott Road Access Dune Walk
 - 2 South End Dune Walk
 - 3 Summer Beach Dune Walk
- ▲ UNSUITABLE
 - 1 CR 121 Site (undeveloped)
 - 2 Linda Hall (undeveloped)
 - 3 Tract 1 (undeveloped)
- △ WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS
 - 1 Four Coves WMA (SJRWMD)
 - 2 Ralph E. Simmons Memorial WMA (SJRWMD)
 - 3 Thomas Creek WMA (SJRWMD)

BOAT RAMPS
Level-of-Service Parameters
■ 5-Mile LOS



Barth Associates
PUBLIC REALM PLANNING, DESIGN, AND FACILITIES

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Summary

OF LEVEL-OF-SERVICE ANALYSIS

Based on the various LOS analyses completed, it appears that Nassau County may be in need of additional parks, recreation facilities, and indoor recreation center space. Specific facilities may include:

- Amphitheater/Stage;
- Baseball Fields;
- Basketball Court;
- Dog Park;
- Football Fields (by the Year 2024);
- Multi-purpose Playing Field;
- Pickleball Court;
- Playground;
- Skate Park;
- Soccer Field – Youth (by the Year 2034);
- Swimming Pool;
- Tennis Court; and
- Walking Trail.

These findings will be compared to findings from various qualitative analyses techniques and discussed further in the Visioning phase of the project.

2.5 Statistically-Valid Mail Survey

Mail surveys are the most statistically-representative needs assessment technique because they are based on a random sample of the target population, in this case the residents of Nassau County. Since surveying all of the residents is prohibitively expensive for most communities, a random sample is an affordable way to determine residents' needs and priorities.

Random sampling ensures that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the survey, and the statistical validity of random sampling has long been established. The random sample is generated from a list of all residents' addresses, and surveys are mailed to those selected.

METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in Nassau County. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at www.NassauCountyParksSurvey.org.

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage participation.

The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of the county from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 400 residents. The goal was exceeded with a total of 431 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 431 households have a precision of at least +/-4.7% at the 95% level of confidence.

The major findings of the survey are summarized below and on the following pages.



FACILITY USE & RATINGS

Respondents were asked to indicate if they have used nineteen major recreation facilities operated by the Nassau County that they have used during the past 12 months.

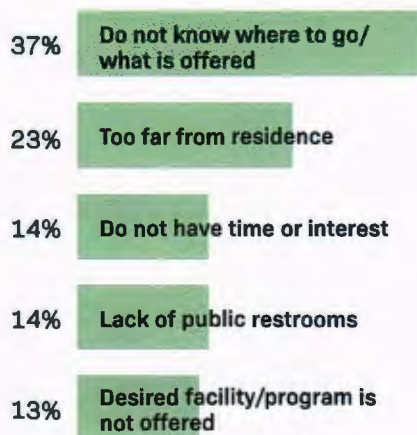
Over half (52%) of respondents rated their satisfaction of parks in Nassau County as "very satisfied" (21%) or "somewhat satisfied" (31%). Seventeen percent (17%) of responding households indicated they are "very satisfied" and 23% indicated they are "somewhat satisfied" with the number of parks in Nassau County.



Peters Point Park

BARRIERS TO FACILITY/PROGRAM USE & PARTICIPATION

Respondents were asked to indicate the primary reasons they do not use Nassau County facilities or participate in programs:

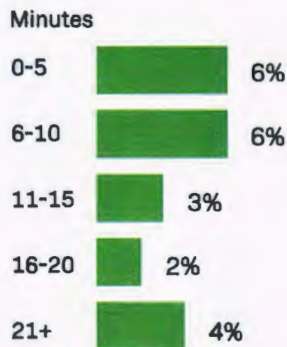


TRAVEL TO PLAYGROUNDS

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of minutes they would be willing to travel to a Nassau County playground via different methods of travel.

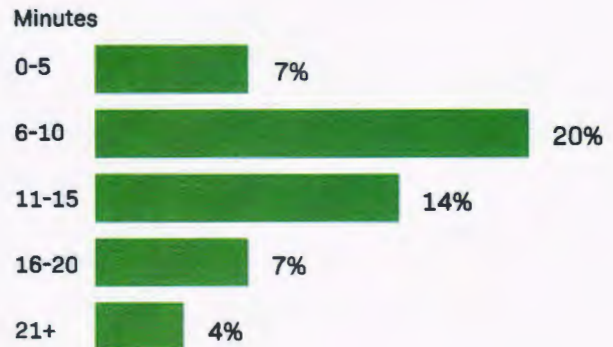
Public Transit

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground using public transit?



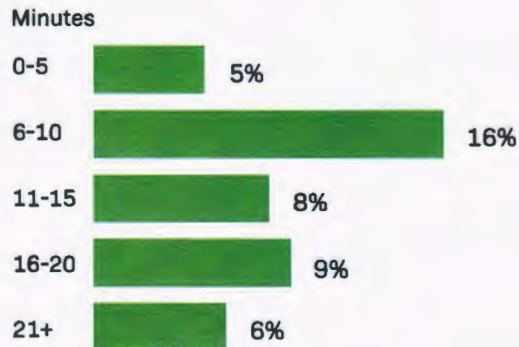
Walking

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground by walking?



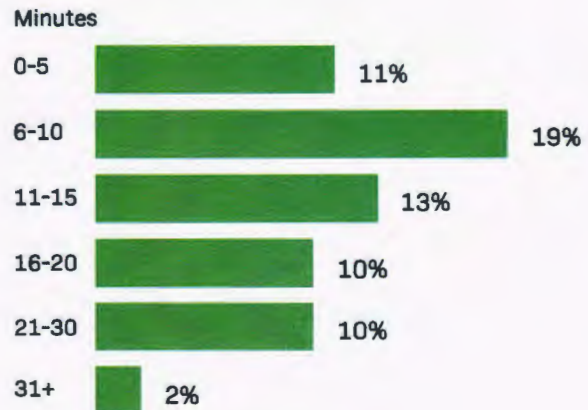
Biking

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground by biking?



Auto

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground using a car?



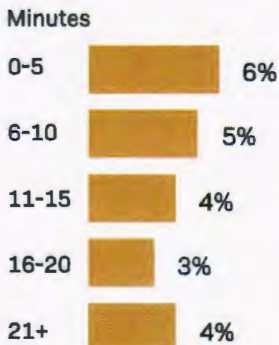


TRAVEL TO COMMUNITY CENTERS

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of minutes they would be willing to travel to Nassau County community center facilities via various methods of travel.

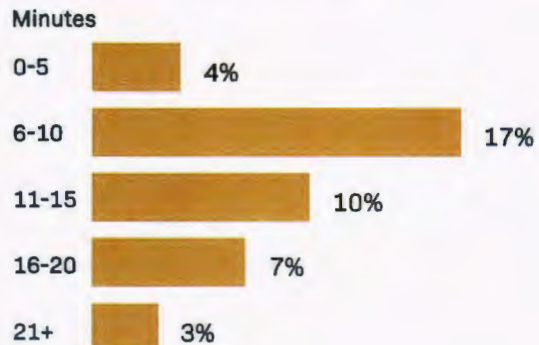
Public Transit

How long would you be willing to travel to a community center using public transit?



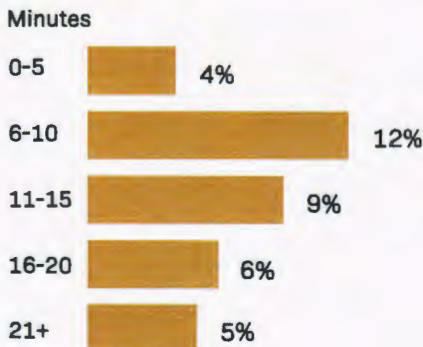
Walking

How long would you be willing to travel to a community center by walking?



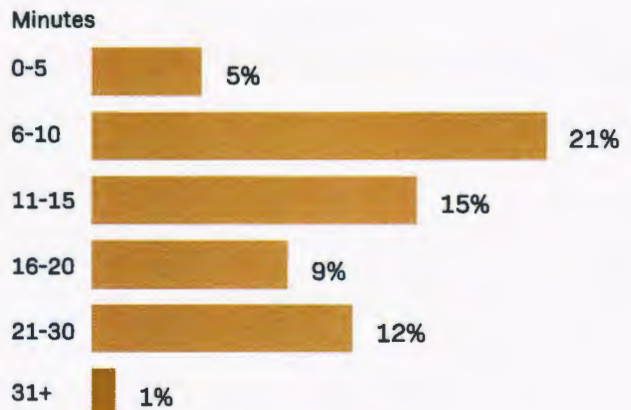
Biking

How long would you be willing to travel to a community center by biking?



Auto

How long would you be willing to travel to a community center using a car?

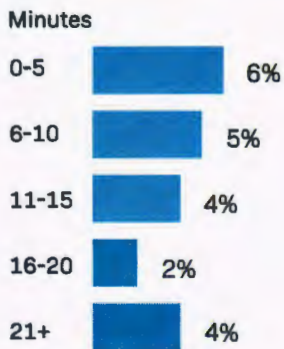


TRAVEL TO SPORTS FIELDS

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of minutes they would be willing to travel to Nassau County sports fields via various methods of travel.

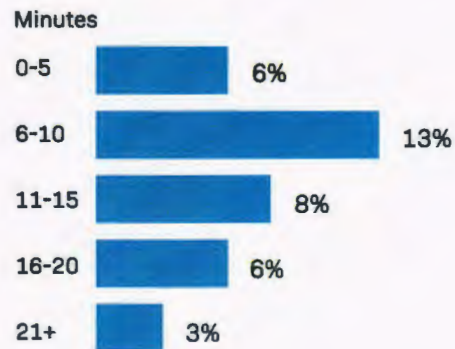
Public Transit

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground using public transit?



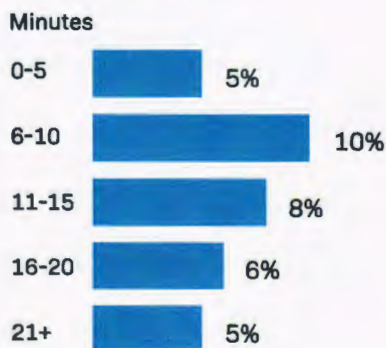
Walking

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground by walking?



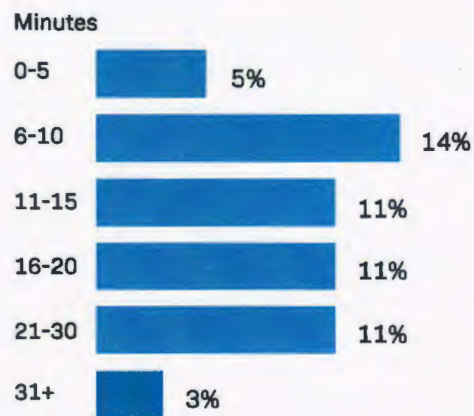
Biking

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground by biking?



Auto

How long would you be willing to travel to a playground using a car?



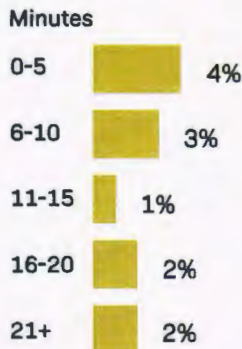


TRAVEL TO OTHER PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of minutes they would be willing to travel to other facilities in Nassau County via various methods of travel.

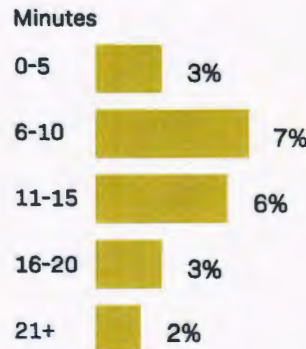
Public Transit

How long would you be willing to travel to other parks and recreation facilities using public transit?



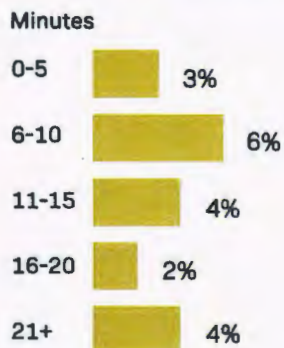
Walking

How long would you be willing to travel to other parks and recreation facilities by walking?



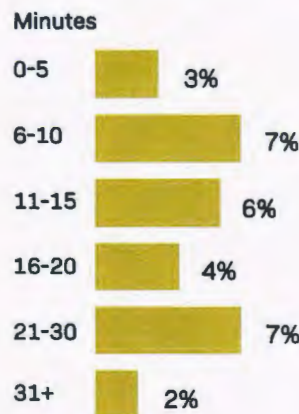
Biking

How long would you be willing to travel to other parks and recreation facilities by biking?



Auto

How long would you be willing to travel to other parks and recreation facilities using a car?



ACTIVITY/PROGRAM NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Activity/Program Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 27 activities/programs and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest "unmet" need for various activities/programs.

The four recreation activities/programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Community Special Events

- 17,896 households (or 47%);

2. Fitness/Wellness

- 16,030 households (or 42%);

3. Movies in the Park

- 14,833 households (or 39%); and

4. Nature Programs/ Environmental Education

- 14,332 households (or 38%).

The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 27 activities/ programs that were assessed is shown in **Figure 2.10**.

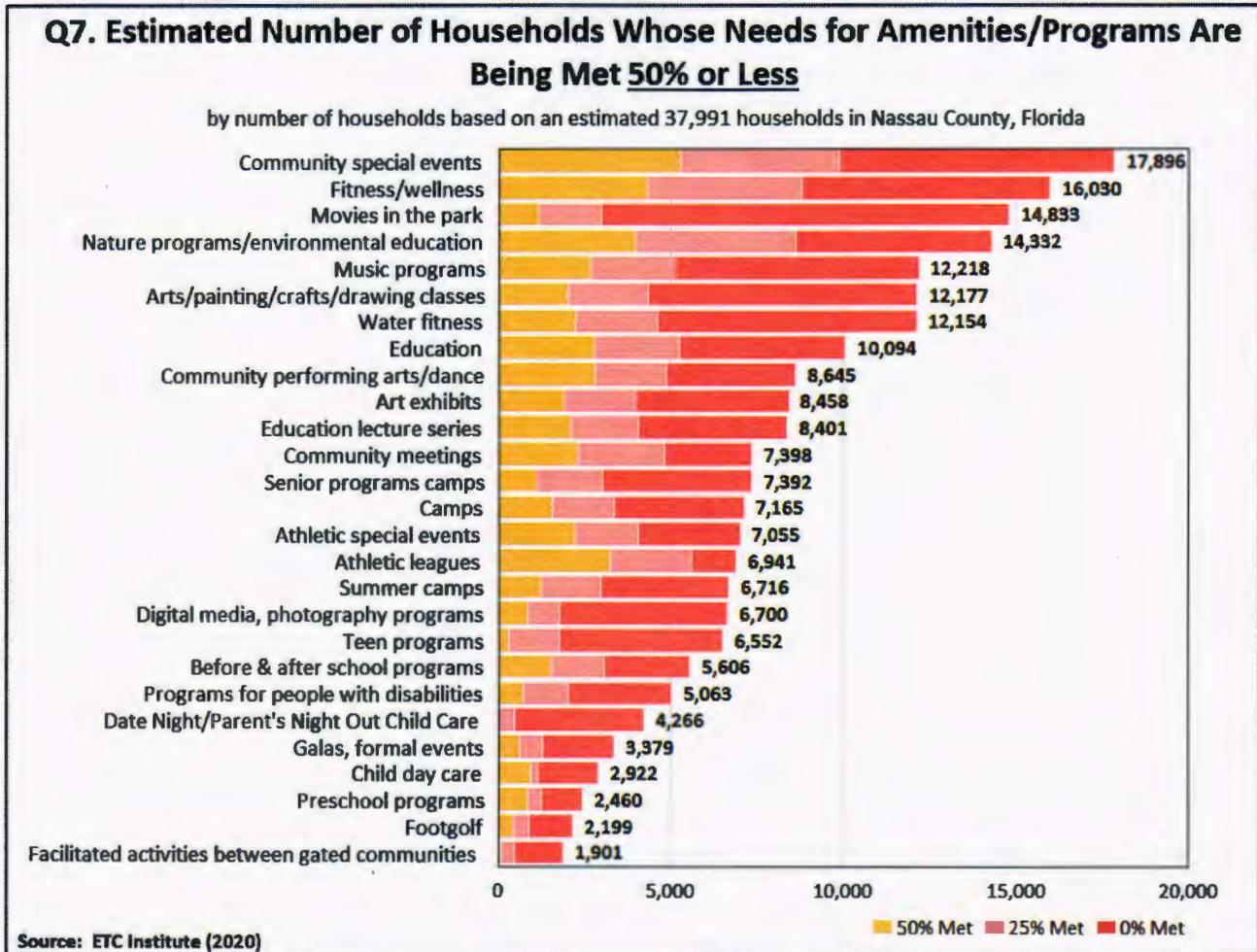


Nassau County Extension collecting oyster data in Goffinsville Park

(source: <https://www.facebook.com/NassauCountyExtension/>)



FIGURE 2.10 | Activity/Program Needs



Activity/Program Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each activity/program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each activity/program. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the four most important activities/programs to residents were:

The percentage of residents who selected each activity/program as one of their top four choices is shown in the graph on the next page.

1. Community Special Events

(34%);

2. Fitness/Wellness (33%);

3. Nature Programs/ Environmental Education

(23%); and

4. Athletic Leagues (17%).

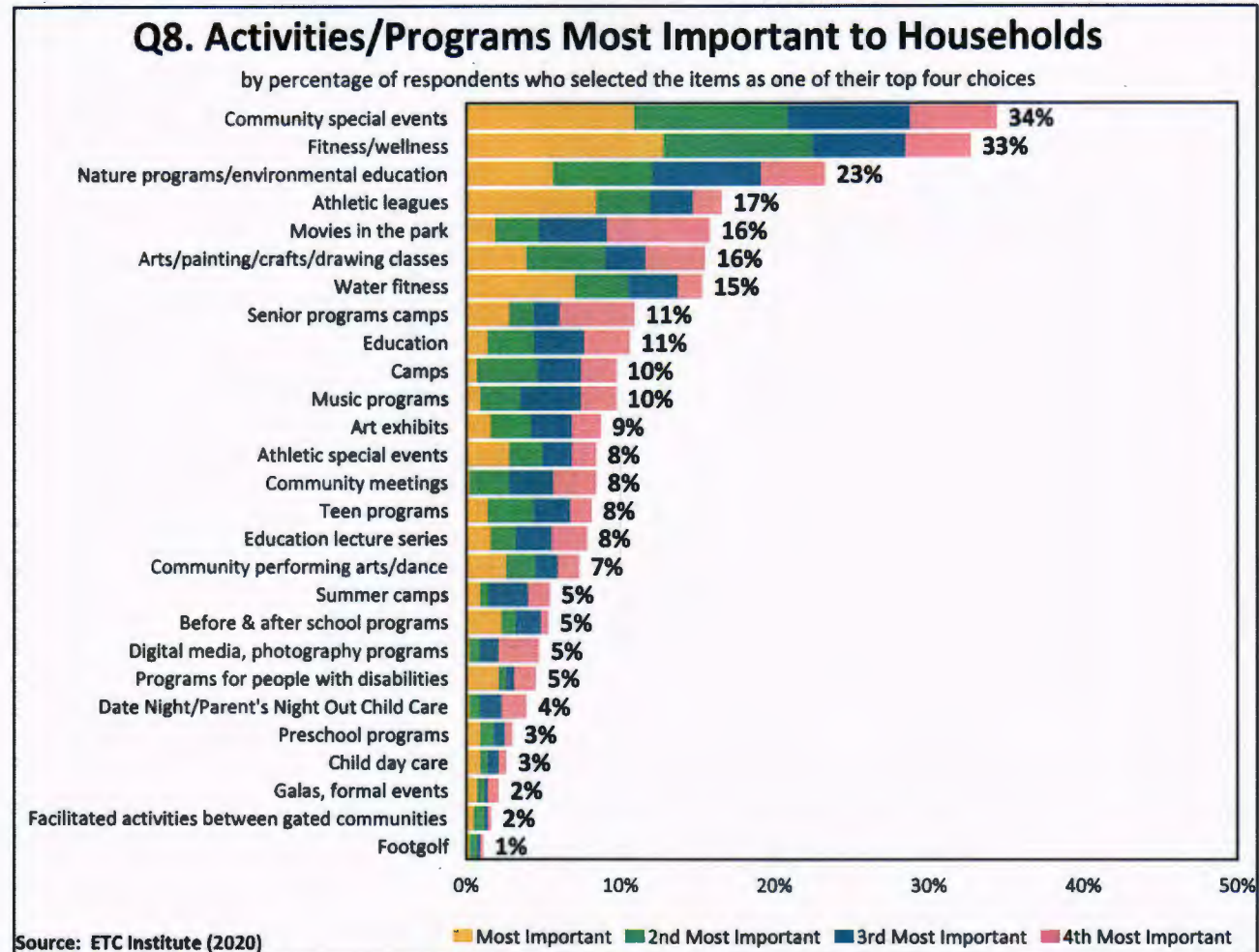


McArthur YMCA

(source: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstCoastYMCAMcArthur/photos/a.10151864593177460/10157582577227460>)



FIGURE 2.11 | Activity/Program Importance



Priorities for Activity/ Program Investments

The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments.

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of the full survey report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following six activities/programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- **Community Special Events** (PIR=200);
- **Fitness/Wellness** (PIR=185);
- **Nature Programs/
Environmental Education** (PIR=148);
- **Movies in the Park** (PIR=129);
- **Arts/Painting/Crafts/Drawing
Classes** (PIR=113); and
- **Water Fitness** (PIR=112).

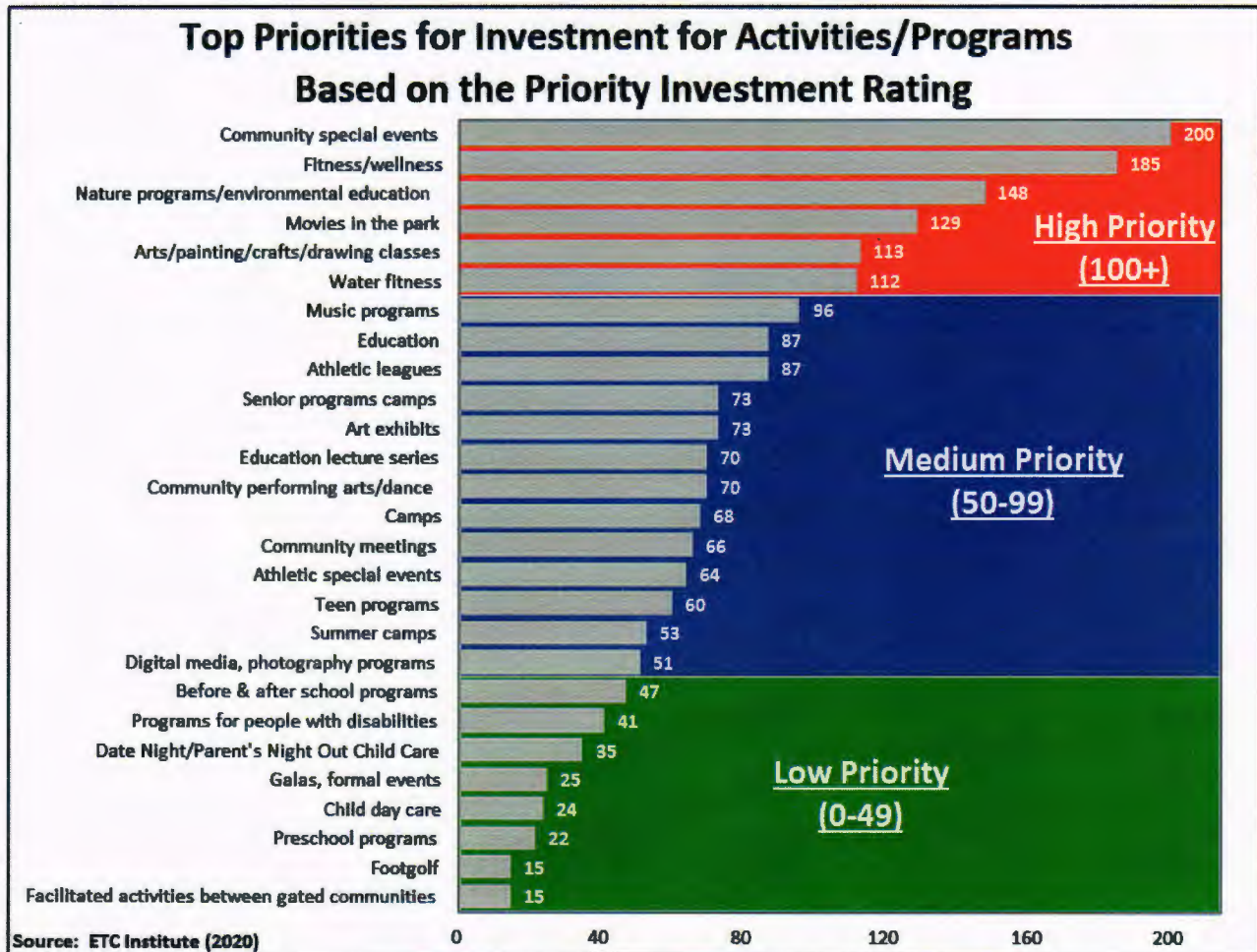
Figure 2.12 on the following page shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 27 activities/programs that were rated.



Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival, Amelia Island
(source: <https://www.shrimpfestival.com/parade>)



FIGURE 2.12 | Top Priorities for Activities/Programs based on PIR



AMENITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Amenity Needs

Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had a need for 32 amenities and rate how well their needs for each amenity were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had "unmet" needs for each amenity.

The four recreation amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Restrooms

- 14,980 households (or 39%);

2. Multi-Purpose Trails

- 13,859 households (or 36%);

3. Natural Areas/Nature Parks –

13,831 households (or 36%); and

4. Park Shelters and Picnic Areas

- 13,508 households (or 36%).

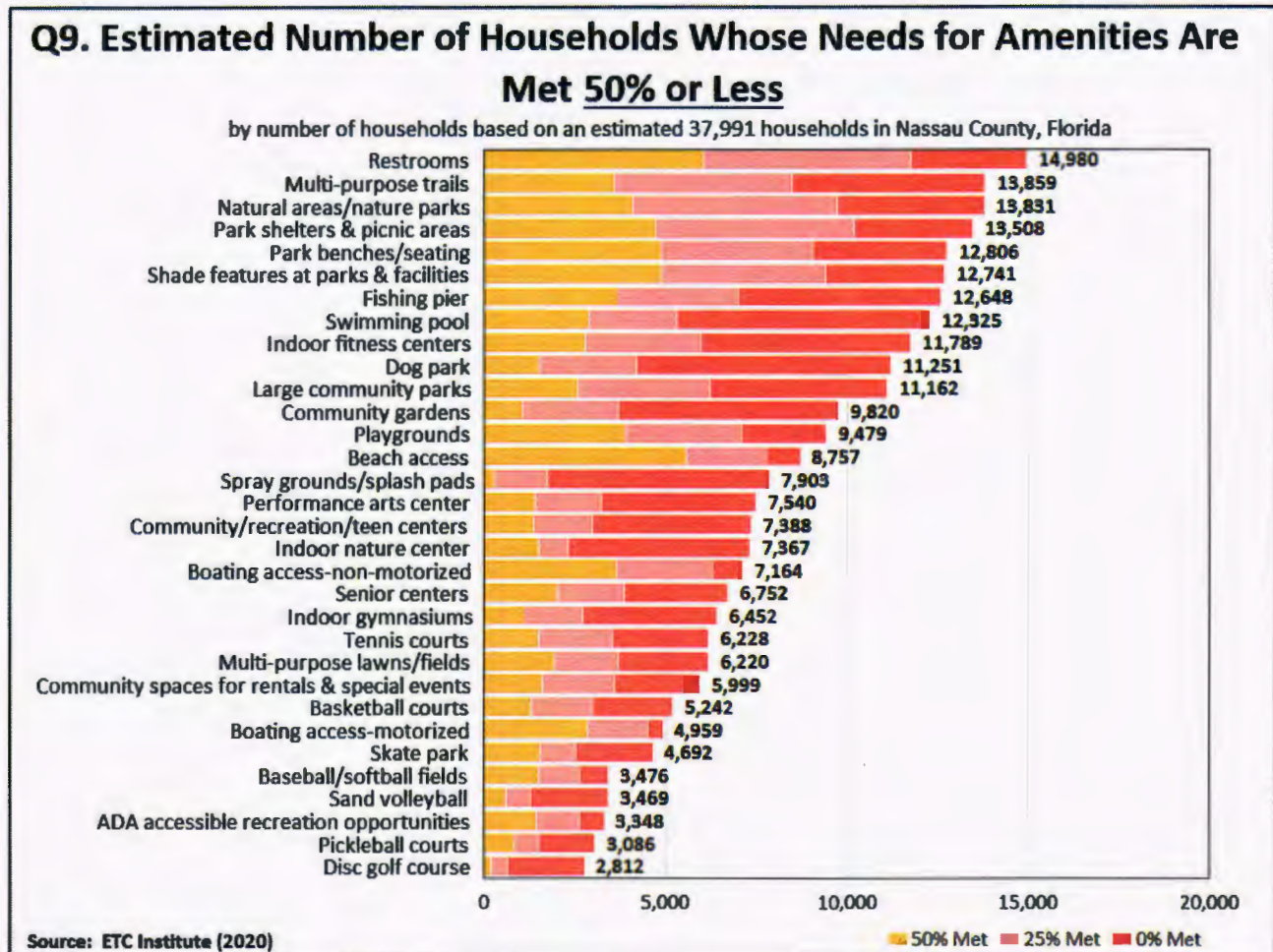
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 32 amenities that were assessed is shown in the graph on the next page.



Restrooms at Dee Dee Bartels Boat Ramp



FIGURE 2.13 | Amenity Needs



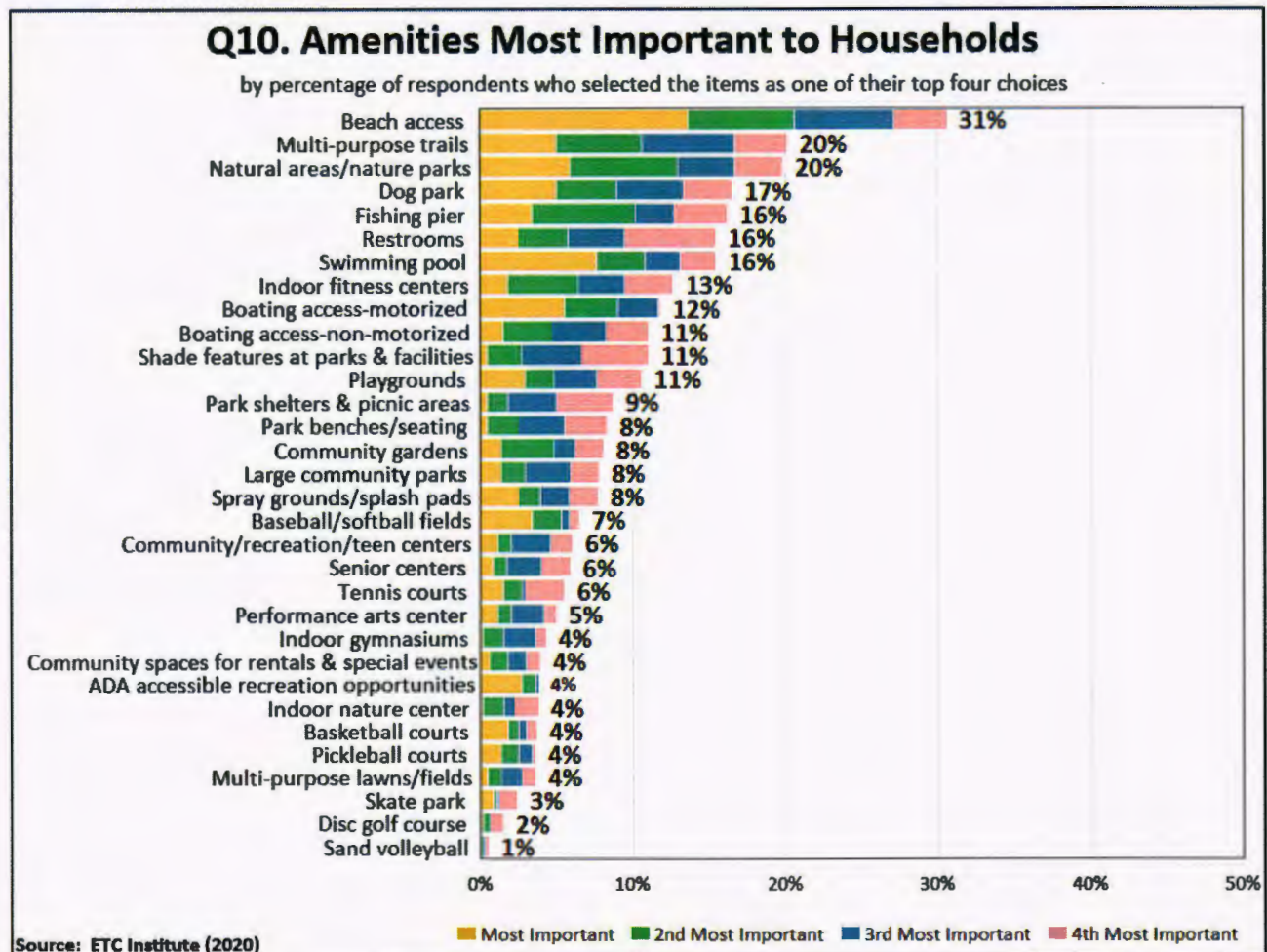
Amenity Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each amenity, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each amenity. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the four most important amenities to residents were:

1. **Beach Access** (31%);
2. **Multi-Purpose Trails** (20%);
3. **Natural Areas/Nature Parks** (20%); and
4. **Dog Park** (17%).

The percentage of residents who selected each amenity as one of their top four choices is shown in the following chart.

FIGURE 2.14 | Amenity Importance





Priorities for Amenity Investments

Based on the priority investment rating (PIR), the following 12 amenities were rated as "high priorities" for investment:

- **Beach Access** (PIR=158);
- **Multi-Purpose Trails** (PIR=158);
- **Natural Areas/Nature Parks** (PIR=157);
- **Restrooms** (PIR=150);
- **Fishing Pier** (PIR=138);
- **Swimming Pool** (PIR=133);
- **Dog Park** (PIR=129);
- **Shade Features at Parks and Facilities** (PIR=121);
- **Indoor Fitness Centers** (PIR=120);
- **Park Shelters and Picnic Areas** (PIR=119);
- **Park Benches/Seating** (PIR=113);
and
- **Large Community Parks** (PIR=100).

The graph on the next page (**Figure 2.15**) shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 32 amenities that were rated.



Peters Point beach access



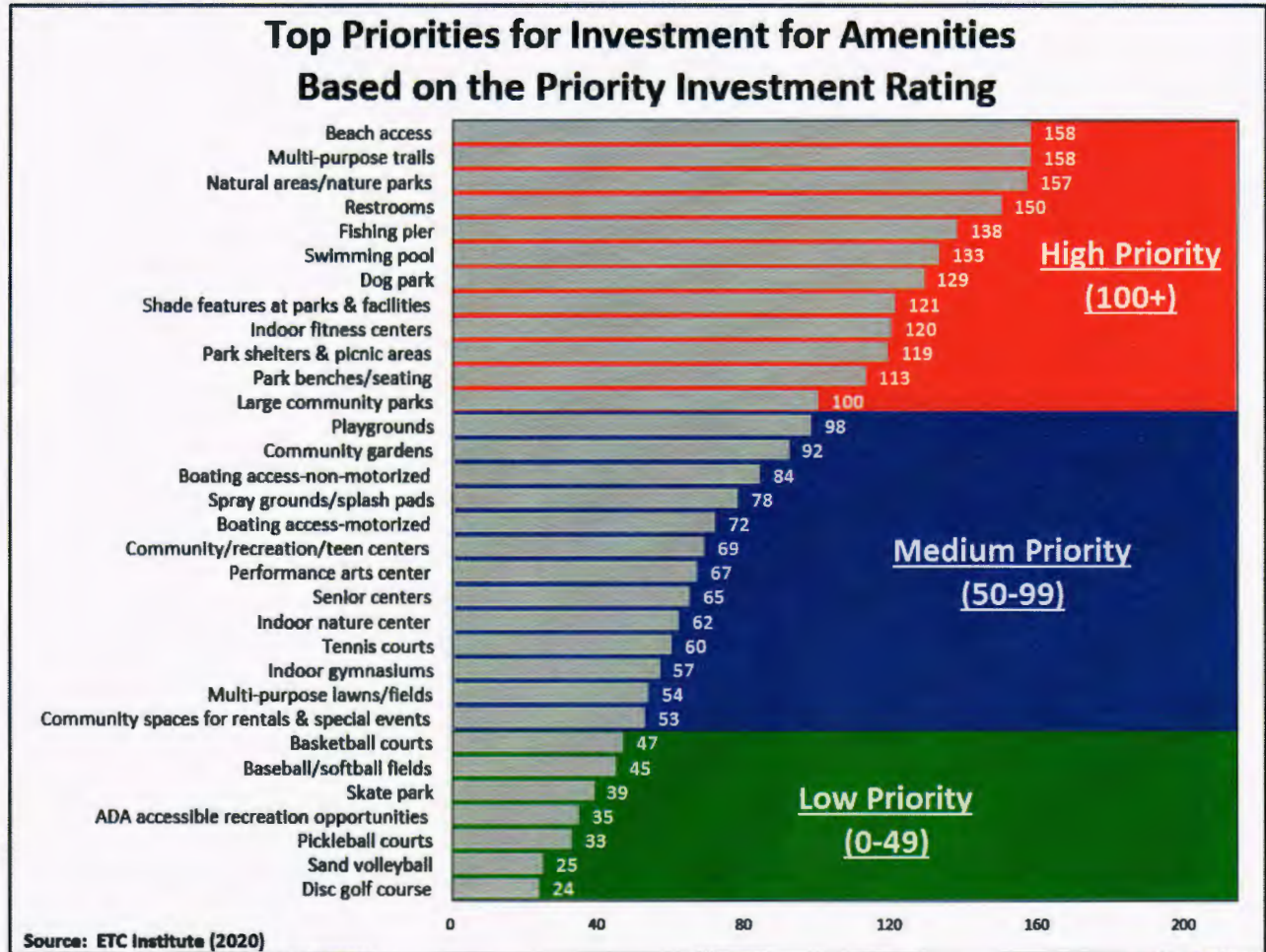
Amelia Island Trail

(source: <https://facesoftransportation.org/peoples-choice-2013-voting-now-open/gina-busscher-florida-dot/>)



Natural area at Dee Dee Bartels Boat Ramp

FIGURE 2.15 | Top Priorities for Amenities based on PIR





ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Level of Support of Various Actions

The highest level of support of various actions that Nassau County could take to improve the Parks and Recreation system, based on the sum of "very supportive" and "somewhat supportive" responses among residents who had an opinion, were: developing passive recreation opportunities (87%), acquiring land to protect natural areas (87%), and expanding park resources to improve facility maintenance (82%). The actions most important to responding households, based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, were:

1. acquiring land to protect natural areas;
2. developing passive recreation opportunities;
3. developing new facilities to meet resident needs and priorities; and
4. partnering with private corporations to offer additional recreation opportunities.



Goffinsville Park

- 21% of respondents are not supportive; and
- 4% of respondents did not provide their opinion.

Level of Support to Increase Taxes

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support of an increase in taxes to fund types of parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

- 19% of respondents are very supportive;
- 36% of respondents are somewhat supportive;
- 20% of respondents are not sure;

Level of Support to Increase Fees

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support of an increase in fees to parks and amenities owned and operated by Nassau County to fund parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

- 18% of respondents are very supportive;
- 29% of respondents are somewhat supportive;

- 17% of respondents are not sure;
- 33% of respondents are not supportive; and
- 3% of respondents did not provide their opinion.

Benefits to Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces

Respondents were asked from a list of 13 various benefits that parks, recreation, and open spaces could provide. The benefits most important to responding households were:

- Conservation of natural areas (64%);
- Community safety (50%);
- Preserving heritage of Nassau County (42%); and
- Community character (38%).

Information Sources

Over half (68%) of survey participants learn about parks, recreation programs, activities, and events from friends and neighbors. Fifty-nine percent (of respondents learn about County parks, recreation programs, activities, and events through the news media. The most preferred methods, as indicated by responding households and based on respondents' top two choices, were: news media (42%), County website (29%), and County Facebook (25%).

Social, Economic, and Environmental Challenges

Respondents were given a list of 15 different social, economic, and environmental challenges that communities are facing. The three challenges that were most important to responding households were: community safety (61%), preservation of natural areas (59%), and traffic congestion (54%).



Nassau County heritage - Evans' Rendezvous at American Beach



2.6 On-line Survey

The County conducted an on-line survey during April 2020, completed by 560 respondents.

Unlike the mail survey, the on-line survey is not based on a random sample of residents, and may not be statistically-representative. Also, some respondents may be non-County residents.

Findings from the on-line survey are included in **Appendix A3**. Following are highlights of the survey findings directly related to the parks and recreation needs assessment:

67%

SATISFIED WITH QUALITY

- Approximately 67% of respondents indicated that they were "satisfied", "somewhat satisfied," or "very satisfied" with the current quality of parks in Nassau County.

61%

SATISFIED WITH QUANTITY

- Approximately 61% of respondents indicated that they were "satisfied", "somewhat satisfied," or "very satisfied" with the current number of parks in Nassau County.

Water-front Parks

ARE THE MOST VISITED

- The five most-visited parks in the county over the past year are beach or water-front parks. The most-visited park in the county is Peters Point Park, visited by almost 72% of respondents over the past year, followed by Scott Road Beach Access (42%), Burney Park (42%), Dee Dee Bartles Boat Ramp (38%), and Goffinsville Park.

Lack of Knowledge & Distance

KEEP PEOPLE FROM USING PARKS

- The top two reasons that prevent respondents from using parks and recreation facilities or programs in Nassau County more often are "Do not know where to go/what is offered" (39%); and "Too far from our residence" (27%)

Nearly 70%

IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SMALL PARK WITHIN 10 MINUTES OF HOME

- Almost 70% of respondents said that is "important" or "very important" to have a small neighborhood park within a 10-minute walking distance (+/- ½ mile) of their home

<20 Mins by Car

TO COMMUNITY CENTERS & SPORTS FIELDS

<10 Mins on Foot

TO PLAYGROUNDS

- Respondents indicated they would be most willing to travel to community centers and sports fields by car, up to 20 minutes. To playgrounds, respondents reported they would most prefer to walk, taking up to 10 minutes.

Need More Programs

MOVIES IN THE PARK * SPECIAL EVENTS * TEEN PROGRAMS...

- The top 10 programs that 60% or more of respondents indicated a "need for more of" include Movies in the park (78%), Community special events (e.g. concerts, green markets, festivals) (72%), Teen programs (71%), Nature programs/environmental education (70%), Fitness/wellness (70%), Music programs (67%), Water fitness (66%), Programs for people with disabilities (64%), Education (e.g. GED, degree, trade, computer, programming, special interest, language, continuing ed., lifelong learning) (62%), and Camps (e.g. summer/school break) (60%).

Need More Amenities

SHADE FEATURES * SPRAY GROUNDS * MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS...

- The top 12 amenities or facilities that 60% or more of respondents indicated a "need for more of" include Shade features at parks and facilities (78%), Spray Grounds/Splash Pads (77%), Multi-Purpose Trails (74%), Restrooms (74%), Natural Areas/Nature Parks (72%), Large Community Parks (71%), Community Gardens (70%), Park Benches/Seating (68%), Multi-Purpose Lawns/Fields (66%), Park Shelters and Picnic Areas (65%), Swimming Pools (65%), and Community/Recreation/Teen Centers (64%).

Most Important Amenities

SPRAY GROUNDS * MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS * SWIMMING POOLS...

- The amenities that are "most important" to respondents, in order of priority, are spray grounds/splashpads, multi-purpose trails, swimming pools, natural areas/nature parks, and dog parks.

Funding via Tax Increases

IS MORE POPULAR THAN ADDING USER FEES TO PARKS

- 63% of respondents are "somewhat supportive" or "very supportive" of some increase in taxes to fund the types of parks, trails, and recreation facilities that are most important to them, but only 53% are supportive (somewhat or very) of adding user fees to parks and amenities.



Most Popular Improvements

MORE PASSIVE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES * MORE LAND TO PROTECT NATURAL AREAS * IMPROVED MAINTENANCE...

- Respondents are most supportive of the following 6 actions (in order of priority) to improve the County's parks and recreation system: Developing passive recreation opportunities (i.e., new greenway trails, high quality bicycle facilities, shaded sidewalks); Acquiring land to protect natural areas; Expanding park resources to improve facility maintenance; Developing new parks and recreation facilities to meet resident needs and priorities; Developing active recreation opportunities (i.e., swimming pools, splash pads, ball fields); Partnering with private corporations to offer additional recreation opportunities.

Most Important Parks Benefits

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS * RECREATION & ATHLETICS * COMMUNITY CHARACTER...

- The 5 parks and recreation benefits that are most important to respondents are (in order of priority): Conservation of natural areas; Recreation and athletics; Community character (quality of the built environment, neighborhoods, streetscapes, etc.); Neighborhood/Community open space for social interactions and play (creating sense of community/bringing people together); and Community safety.

Friends & Neighbors

ARE THE PRIMARY SOURCE FOR PARKS & RECREATION INFORMATION

- 67% of respondents learn about Nassau County parks and recreation programs, activities, and events from friends and neighbors, followed by the County's Facebook (57%), News media (local newspapers, news stations, etc.) (50%), the County's website (44%), Other local social media outlets (38%), Flyers/posters at facilities (31%), and School newsletters (16%). Respondents indicated that the 3 most preferred methods (in order of priority) are the County's Facebook, from friends and neighbors, and local news media.

Most Important Challenges

PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS * COMMUNITY SAFETY * TRAFFIC CONGESTION...

- Respondents indicated that the five most important social, economic, and environmental challenges facing the County are (in order of importance): Preservation of natural areas, Community safety, Traffic congestion, Limited access to multi-modal transportation options (e.g. sidewalks, bikeways, trails, transit), and Water quality.

2.7 Summary of Needs

Figure 2.16, Needs Assessment Summary Chart, compares the findings from the Statistically-Representative Survey conducted by ETC Institute (Column 1) to the findings from the other needs assessment techniques described in this section.

The "dots" in each column indicate the priority needs identified from each technique. Based on a review of the findings from all of the needs assessment techniques, residents' top priorities appear to include:

FACILITY PRIORITIES

- Multi-Purpose Trails;
- Swimming Pools;
- Indoor Recreation/Community Centers;
- Additional Large Community Parks; and
- Multi-purpose Sports Fields.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

- Community Special Events;
- Fitness/Wellness;
- Nature Programs/ Environmental Education;
- Movies in the Park;
- Arts/Painting/ Crafts/Drawing Classes;
- Water Fitness; and
- Camps (Summer, School Break).

Other priorities include:

- Beach Access;
- Natural Areas/Nature Parks;
- Restrooms;
- Fishing Piers;
- Dog Parks;
- Shade Features at Parks and Facilities;
- Park Shelters and Picnic Areas;
- Park Benches/Seating;
- Pickleball Courts;
- Indoor Gyms (Basketball/Volleyball);
- Bandshell/Pavilion/Amphitheater; and
- Updates/Repairs to Existing Facilities.

The top two barriers to program participation include:

- **34% of respondents indicated they don't know what is offered/available; and**
- **19% indicated program times/facility hours are not convenient.**



FIGURE 2.16 | Needs Assessment Summary Chart

Items in RED are considered HIGH PRIORITY needs in the Statistically-Valid Survey	Mail/Telephone Survey	Public Workshops	Advisory Group	Interviews & Focus Group Meetings	Level-of-Service Analysis	On-line Survey	Site Evaluations
RECREATION FACILITY PRIORITIES							
1. Beach Access	●						
2. Multi-Purpose Trails	●	●	●	●	●	●	
3. Natural Areas/Nature Parks	●		●	●		●	
4. Restrooms	●					●	
5. Fishing Piers	●						
6. Swimming Pools	●	●		●	●	●	
7. Dog Parks	●				●		
8. Shade Features at Parks and Facilities	●					●	●
9. Indoor Community Recreation/Teen/Fitness Centers	●	●		●	●	●	
10. Parks Shelters and Picnic Areas	●					●	●
11. Park Benches/ Seating	●					●	●
12. Large Community Parks/Parkland	●		●	●	●	●	
13. Pickleball Courts		●			●		
14. Indoor Gyms (Basketball/Volleyball)		●			●		
15. Bandshell/Pavilion/ Amphitheater				●	●		
16. Event/Meeting Space				●			

Items in RED are considered HIGH PRIORITY needs in the Statistically-Valid Survey	Mail/ Telephone Survey	Public Workshops	Advisory Group	Interviews & Focus Group Meetings	Level- of- Service Analysis	On-line Survey	Site Evaluations
RECREATION FACILITY PRIORITIES							
17. Sports Fields (Multi-purpose)		●		●	●	●	
18. Boat Access/Launches			●	●			
19. Playgrounds			●		●		
20. Skate Parks					●		
21. Tennis Courts					●		
22. Soccer Fields – Youth					●		
23. Baseball Fields					●		
24. Football Fields					●		
25. Spray Grounds/Splash Pads						●	
26. Community Gardens						●	
27. Updating/ Replacement/Repair of Existing Facilities		●	●				●
28. Signage and Wayfinding							●
29. Increased Mix of Amenities							●
30. Sustainable Lighting and Energy Efficient Systems							●



Items in RED are considered HIGH PRIORITY needs in the Statistically-Valid Survey	Mail/ Telephone Survey	Public Workshops	Advisory Group	Interviews & Focus Group Meetings	Level- of- Service Analysis	On-line Survey	Site Evaluations
RECREATION PROGRAM PRIORITIES							
1. Community Special Events	●					●	
2. Fitness/Wellness	●					●	
3. Nature Programs/ Environmental Education	●		●			●	
4. Movies in the Park	●					●	
5. Arts/Painting/Crafts/ Drawing Classes	●						
6. Water Fitness	●					●	
7. Before & After School Programs		●	●				
8. Learn to Swim		●					
9. Pickleball		●					
10. Camps (Summer, School Break)		●	●			●	
11. Athletic Leagues		●					
12. Teen Programs			●			●	
13. Music Programs						●	
14. Programs for People with Disabilities						●	
15. Education						●	

Long-Range Vision



Long-Range Vision

The County’s long-range Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision responds to residents’ needs and priorities; anticipates the needs of future residents; and aligns with the County’s values, goals, and guiding principles.

The Vision also integrates parks and open space with other elements of the county’s public realm, including streets, bikeways and trails, civic spaces, and stormwater treatment facilities. Elements of the vision include a mission statement, reaffirming the purpose and role of the parks and recreation department; the County’s foundational values, as communicated through other planning documents;

guiding principles that shape the vision; subsystem service delivery models and facility classifications that define how the County delivers parks and recreation services to its residents; and proposed classifications and recommendations for each subsystem including land acquisition, capital improvements, recreation programs, and others.

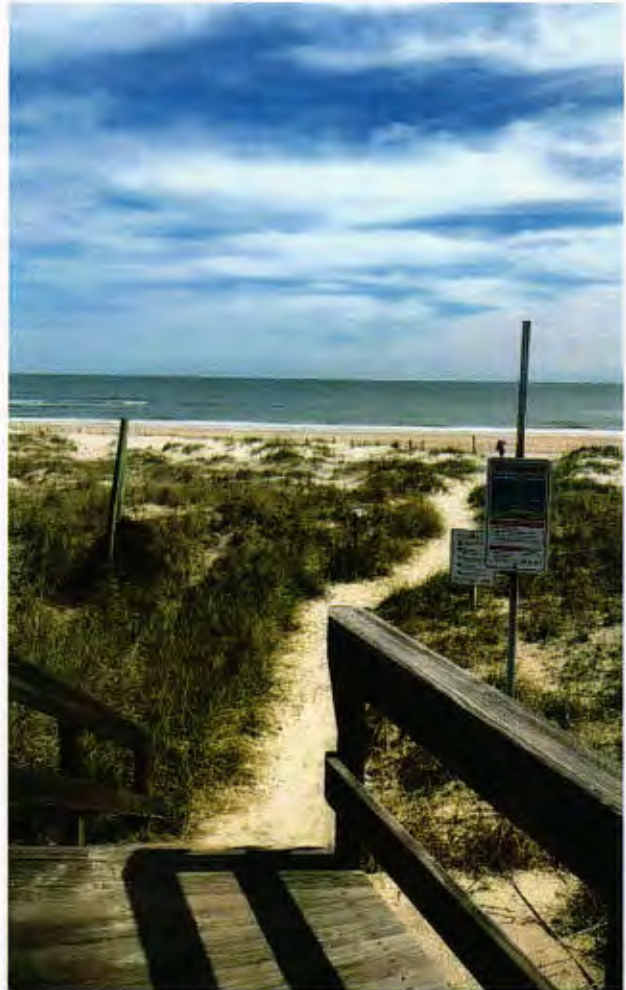
FIGURE 3.1 | Elements of a Long-Range Vision



3.1 Mission Statement

The County's Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining the County's 19 parks; supervising and assisting in new park facility construction; and working with the 501(c)3 not-for-profit organizations for youth sports activities.

Until recently the Department was part of the Facilities Maintenance Department, and has not yet established its own Mission Statement. Based on conversations with the County Commissioners and staff, the Department's mission appears to be to 1) respond to residents' needs and priorities; 2) provide and maintain quality facilities; and 3) contribute to the sustainability and resiliency of the County in a fiscally responsible manner. The Department should refine its mission over the coming year, aligning itself with the Commission's vision and county-wide goals.



South End Dune Walk



3.2 Foundational Values

Section 1.7 of this report, the Review of Related Documents, identified numerous County values applicable to the parks and recreation system.

These include (in alphabetical order):

- Aging in place;
- Community engagement;
- Compact, walkable, and efficient development patterns;
- Environmental resiliency and sustainability;
- Fiscal sustainability;
- Healthy lifestyles and places;
- High-quality educational opportunities;
- High-quality public spaces;
- High-quality facilities;
- Integration of best stormwater management practices for sea level rise and storm events;
- Low-impact design;
- Preservation of rural character;
- Protection and enhancement of tree canopy;
- Protection of natural resources;



Holly Point

- Recreational water access;
- Robust tourism;
- Safe and efficient multimodal transportation; and
- Sense of place

These values should continue to inform day-to-day decision-making regarding parks and recreation planning, design, programs, operations, and management.

3.3 Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are also an important component of a long-range vision, replacing standards as a basis for decision-making.

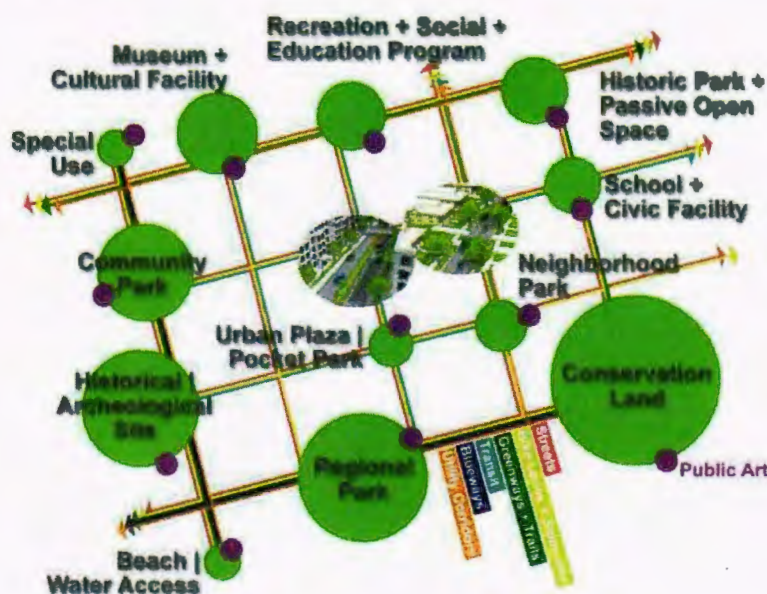
While the mission statement defines the *raison d'être* of the department, the guiding principles provide high-level guidance for implementing a compelling vision for the parks and recreation system. The following guiding principles have helped shape the County's parks and recreation vision.

PARKS AS PLEXUS

First, the principle of "parks as plexus" is to view the parks system as an integrated system, transcending individual departmental or organizational silos through collaboration. For example, parks could be thought of as stormwater treatment areas within a larger stormwater and flood control system; as trailheads and training areas within a bicycle and

pedestrian network; as exercise and fitness facilities within a community-wide wellness initiative; as wildlife habitat and tree canopy within a larger ecological system; as neighborhood stabilizers, job creators, and property value enhancers within a greater economic development initiative; as indoor and outdoor classrooms within the community's education and job training systems; as unique visitor destinations, with exceptional dining and recreation experiences, within a greater tourism development initiative; or as exhibition sites within the community's system of museums and botanical gardens. The County's vision is to collaborate with as many other departments and agencies as possible to generate multiple benefits for residents while leveraging County resources.

FIGURE 3.2 | Integrated Public Realm





HIGH-PERFORMANCE PUBLIC SPACES

The concept of HPPS—public spaces that generate multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits that contribute to a more sustainable and resilient community—is another innovative principle that has guided the development of the long-range vision. As introduced in **Section 1.5, Existing Parks and Recreation System Analysis**, each of the twenty-

five HPPS criteria (**Figure 3.3**) can be used as an aspirational goal for every existing and proposed park, trail, natural area, sports complex, and civic space in the system. Meeting the criteria often requires collaboration with other public realm providers. For example, meeting the first criterion—“the space creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public sector, the private sector, or both”—may require a public-private partnership working in conjunction with numerous other agencies or businesses.

FIGURE 3.3 | 25 HPPS Criteria

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

- The space creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public and/or the private sectors;
- The space creates meaningful and desirable employment;
- The space indirectly creates or sustains good, living-wage jobs;
- The space sustains or increases property values;
- The space catalyzes infill development and/or the re-use of obsolete or under-used buildings or spaces;
- The space attracts new residents;
- The space attracts new businesses;
- The space generates increased business and tax revenues; and
- The space optimizes operations and maintenance costs (compared to other similar spaces).

SOCIAL CRITERIA

- The space improves the neighborhood;
- The space improves social and physical mobility through multimodal connectivity – auto, transit, bike, pedestrian;
- The space encourages the health and fitness of residents and visitors;
- The space provides relief from urban congestion and stressors such as social confrontation, noise pollution, and air pollution;

- The space provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, and community or civic events;
- The space provides opportunities for individual, group, passive and active recreation;
- The space facilitates shared experiences among different groups of people;
- The space attracts diverse populations; and
- The space promotes creative and constructive social interaction.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

- The space uses energy, water, and material resources efficiently;
- The space improves water quality of both surface and ground water;
- The space serves as a net carbon sink;
- The space enhances, preserves, promotes, or contributes to biological diversity;
- Hardscape materials were selected based on longevity of service, social/ cultural/ historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint and/or other related criteria;
- The space provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge; and
- The space serves as an interconnected node within larger scale ecological corridors and natural habitat.

THE EXCELLENT CITY PARK SYSTEM

Peter Harnik provides additional guiding principles in *The Excellent City Park System*, which states that there are seven measures of an excellent system:

- A clear expression of purpose;
- Ongoing planning and community involvement;
- Sufficient assets in land, staffing, and equipment to meet the system's goals;
- Equitable access;
- User satisfaction;
- Safety from physical hazards and crime; and
- Benefits for the city beyond the boundaries of the parks.

Each of these measures could provide guidance for the development of a long-range vision.

PLACEMAKING

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) defines the guiding principle of placemaking as "both a process and a philosophy." First, "it is centered around observing, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work, and play in a particular space in order to understand their needs and aspirations for that space and for their community as a whole. With this knowledge, we can come together to create a common vision for that place." Second, "placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community... More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution" (PPS).

One of PPS's tools for placemaking is the Power of 10+, the idea that "places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that particular place, reflecting the culture and history of the surrounding community... Further, when cities contain at least 10 of these destinations or districts, their public perception begins to shift amongst both locals and tourists, and urban centers can become better equipped for generating resilience and innovation" (PPS). Therefore, the Power of 10+ can be used as the guiding principle for an entire city or region, the public realm, a parks and recreation system, or an individual park or place, as illustrated in **Figure 3.4**.



FIGURE 3.4 | Power of 10+



10-MINUTE WALK CAMPAIGN

Another guiding principle, applicable to the county's urban and suburban areas, is the 10-minute walk. The 10-Minute Walk Campaign (<https://10minutewalk.org/>) is promoted by the Trust for Public Land in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Urban Land Institute to ensure that "there's a great park

within a 10-minute walk of every person, in every neighborhood, in every city across America." This principle can also be adopted as a level-of-service metric ("Access LOS") that can be incorporated into the County's Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan - as well as the County's Land Development Codes - requiring new development to provide a small local park within 10 minutes of every resident. **Figure 3.5** illustrates a prototype of a small local park to be incorporated into the County's code.

FIGURE 3.5 | Prototype for a Small Local Park



Example Park Amenities

1. Pavilion + concession + restrooms
2. Playground + shade structure
3. Chess + checker table games
4. Outdoor foosball table
5. Outdoor ping-pong table
6. Multi-purpose open space
7. Picnic table(s)
8. Basketball/Tennis/Pickleball/ Multi-purpose court
9. Pavilion
10. Park zone traffic calming
11. Crosswalk
12. On-street parking
13. Sidewalk + tree zone/buffer



OTHER PRINCIPLES

Figure 3.6 below lists seven other guiding principles that are relevant to the County's parks and recreation vision.

FIGURE 3.6 | Additional Guiding Principles

Dimension	Principle	Source
Bicycle and pedestrian access	All streets should be designed, built, and operated to enable safe use by everyone, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.	Michelle Lieberman, "Complete Streets Policies + Bicycle + Pedestrian Plans: Key Tools for Supporting Healthy Communities," November 2018, https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/completestreets-bicyclepedplans.pdf .
Social equity	Residents of all races, economic means, and abilities are welcome and equipped to participate in all aspects of community life.	Mid-America Regional Council, "Creating Sustainable Places: Guiding Principles," https://www.marc.org/Regional-Planning/Creating-Sustainable-Places/Creating-Sustainable-Places/Guiding-Principles .
Stormwater treatment to protect natural streams	Post development balance of evapotranspiration, streamflow, and infiltration should mimic the predevelopment balance, which typically requires keeping significant runoff volume from reaching the stream.	Christopher J. Walsh et al., "Principles for Urban Stormwater Management to Protect Stream Ecosystems," <i>Freshwater Science</i> 35, no. 1 (March 2016): 398–411, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/685284 .
Green infrastructure	Green infrastructure should include an interconnected network of a wide range of landscape elements that support native species, maintain natural ecological processes, sustain air and water resources, and contribute to the health and quality of life for communities and people.	Green Infrastructure Center, "Green Infrastructure Principles and Planning Tools," http://www.gicinc.org/PDFs/Richmond_Regional_Workshop_Show_mini_workshop.pdf .

Dimension	Principle	Source
Health and wellness	Healthy communities decrease dependence on the automobile by building homes, businesses, schools, churches, and parks closer to one another so that people can more easily walk or bike between them; provide opportunities for people to be physically active and socially engaged as part of their daily routine; and allow persons, if they choose, to age in place and remain all their lives in a community that reflects their changing lifestyles and changing physical capabilities.	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, Division of Emergency and Environmental Health Services, "Healthy Community Design," fact sheet, June 2018, https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/docs/Healthy_Community_Design.pdf .
Economic development	Economic development should focus on strengthening assets that enable distinctive industries to flourish and grow from within rather than rely primarily on marketing to recruit individual firms from elsewhere.	Fred Drews, "5 Principles for Remaking Economic Development to Generate Growth, Prosperity, and Inclusion," Brookings Institution, March 23, 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2016/03/23/5-principles-for-remaking-economic-development-to-generate-growth-prosperity-and-inclusion/ .
Climate change adaptation	Responses should be sensitive to the wider context in which climate change is experienced, including multiple stressors.	Siri Eriksen et al., "When Not Every Response to Climate Change Is a Good One: Identifying Principles for Sustainable Adaptation," <i>Climate and Development</i> 3 (2011): 7-20, https://www.cakex.org/sites/default/files/sustainable.pdf .



3.4 Subsystems

Parks and recreation systems are made up of numerous “subsystems,” reflecting the values and resources of the community.

Historically, Nassau County's subsystems have reflected the county's traditional rural character, focused primarily on four subsystems: Athletic Fields, Beach Parks, Bike Trails, and Boat Ramps. Based on current and projected needs, the County's vision is to expand to 12 subsystems, including:

- Large Regional Parks;
- Small Local Parks;
- Urban Parks and Open Spaces;
- Athletic Fields;
- Indoor Recreation Centers;
- Water Parks and Swimming Pools;
- Natural Lands and Conservation Areas;
- Beach Parks and Access;
- Boat Ramps, Fishing, and Kayak Access;
- Sidewalks, Bikeways, and Trails;
- Recreation, Health, and Educational Programs; and
- Integration of Parks and Stormwater Treatment Facilities.



Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex

3.5 Subsystem Delivery Models, Classifications, & Recommendations

Each subsystem has its own unique constituents, facilities, programs, amenities, and issues; therefore, services may be delivered differently between subsystems.

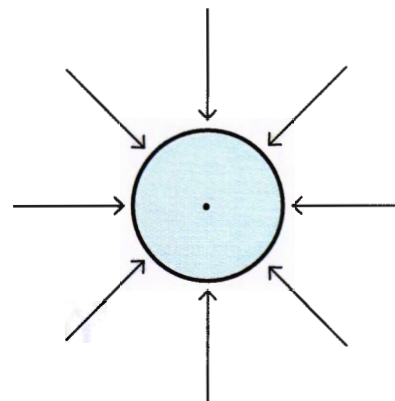
Also, each subsystem provides different opportunities to generate benefits for the community; for example, large regional parks may provide the greatest opportunity for stormwater treatment, while bikeways and trails provide opportunities to increase fitness and multimodal connectivity.

Five common, alternative Service Delivery Models have been developed by Barth Associates to help define a community's long-range parks and recreation vision: Centralized, Decentralized (Equity), Hub & Spoke, Venues, and Activities models. These models can apply not only to parks and recreation programs and facilities, but also to the distribution of social services, economic development initiatives, and conservation land programs.

First, the Centralized SDM (**Figure 3.7**) assumes that residents and visitors from throughout the community will drive to the central facility. This model typically applies to regional or signature facilities

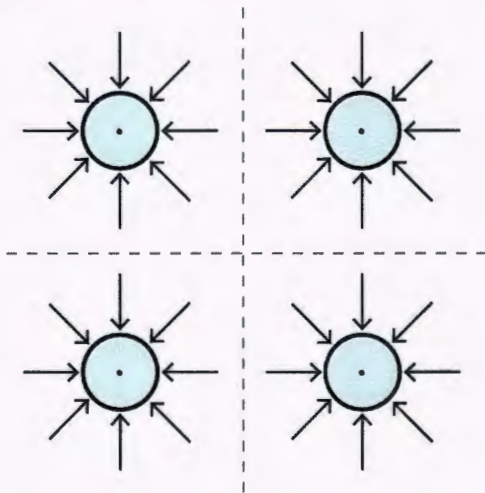
and subsystems such as an aquatics center, a sports complex, a social services center, an urban festival park, or a cultural center.

FIGURE 3.7 | Centralized SDM



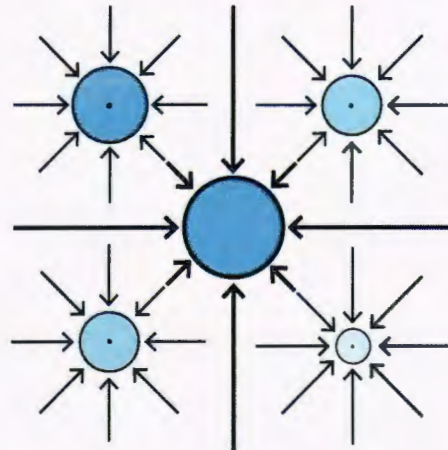
A decentralized Equity SDM (**Figure 3.8**), on the other hand, focuses on the equitable distribution of services, measured in terms of distance (Access LOS) or population served (Facility or Acreage LOS). An Equity SDM assumes that facilities or parks will be distributed equitably throughout the community, as opposed to a single centralized facility. It is the most common model used for counties and suburban areas, including parks, sports fields, and recreation centers. It could also be used as a basis for determining strategic satellite locations for the delivery of social services, grocery stores (in "food deserts"), and neighborhood retail centers.

FIGURE 3.8 | Equity SDM



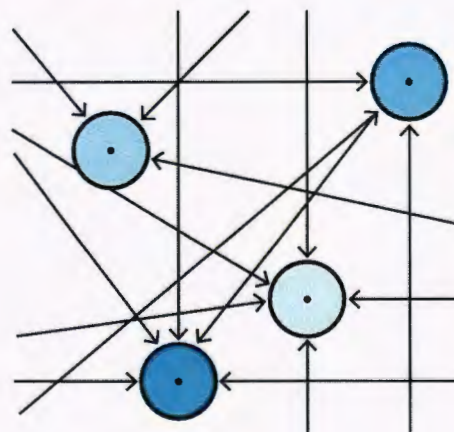
A Hub & Spoke Model (**Figure 3.9**) combines the Centralized and Equity Models. A common example is a large, centralized community/recreation center supplemented by several smaller, satellite facilities, or a central location to provide workforce training or homeless services, supplemented by smaller computer labs or food banks in community centers or libraries.

FIGURE 3.9 | Hub & Spoke SDM



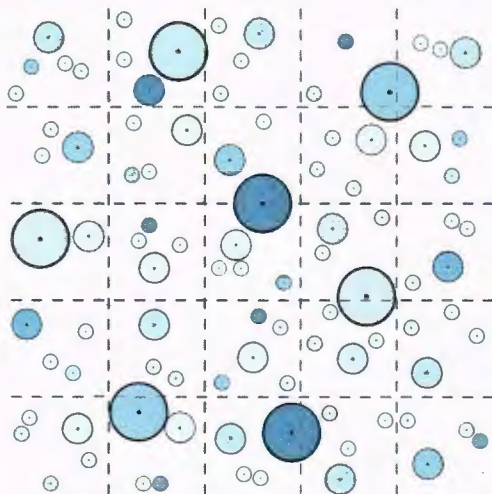
A Venues Model (**Figure 3.10**) is a variation on the Centralized model, and is common to small towns and cities. It assumes that the system is comprised of specialized facilities that will serve the entire community, regardless of access distance or population densities. For example, Fernandina Beach has a tennis complex; a downtown park; a sports complex; a recreation center; a cultural center; and a marina. Each venue has been planned and designed to serve the needs of residents citywide.

FIGURE 3.10 | Venues SDM



Finally, an Activity-based Model focuses on providing desired recreation opportunities throughout the community without regard for the type of park or recreational facility (**Figure 3.11**). This model is most common in large, urbanized sites where land is at a premium. A dog park or tennis courts may be located on top of a parking deck; a playground may be provided through a local church; and an athletic field may be provided through partnerships with local schools. For example, the City of Seattle built the I-5 Colonnade urban mountain bike skills park under Interstate 5; and the City of New York tows a seven-lane swimming pool barge down the East River – dubbed the “Floating Pool Lady” – to serve the residents of the Bronx each summer. The emphasis is not on park or facility types, but on providing access to recreational opportunities wherever and however they can be provided.

FIGURE 3.11 | Activity-Based SDM



Following is a discussion of the vision for each of the proposed County subsystems, including the most appropriate SDM and classifications.

1. IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS

Most of the County's parks were developed years ago to meet a specific purpose such as beach access, youth sports, or boat ramps. Yet it has become widely accepted that parks and open spaces should be designed to meet as many needs as possible, and to generate multiple community-wide benefits related to health and fitness, economic development, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

The County's vision is to gradually update all of its existing parks to meet broader community needs. Basic facilities and amenities that should be constructed wherever possible include:

- Preserved or restored natural areas;
- Restrooms;
- Dog parks, where appropriate (Equity model);
- Dog-friendly parks (current policy allows dogs on leash);
- Shade features including playground shade structures, shelters, and shade trees;
- Covered meeting pavilions, park shelters and picnic areas;
- Multi-purpose lawns;
- Playgrounds (Hub & Spoke model);
- Park benches and seating (places to “hang out,” particularly around playgrounds and water views);
- Updates and repairs to existing facilities;



- Multi-purpose walking trails with fitness stations or corrals;
- Neighborhood connectivity, such as wide sidewalks or bike paths;
- Multi-purpose courts;
- Solar charging stations;
- Drinking fountains;
- Stormwater treatment/rain gardens;
- Educational exhibits/learning labs, use of technology;
- Conscious design around viewsheds;
- Food truck areas;
- Site furniture, including trash receptacles and recycling containers; and
- Signage - multiple character themes – directional, site ID, environmental, educational.

The County's vision is to also develop several different character themes for improvements, such as beach character, western Nassau character, and urban character. All materials should be as sustainable and easy to maintain as possible.

Specific recommendations for improvements to existing parks include:

- **American Beach Community Center and Museum**
 - Promote the Museum as a visitor attraction through brochures, social media, resorts, hotels, trolley tours, and other tourism information;

- Increase admission price and hours of operation to generate additional revenues;
- Remove the fence located around the pond behind the center and create a multi-purpose, walking and nature trail with shaded seating areas;
- Promote the Museum and pond area as a special events and wedding venue to generate additional revenues;

- **American Beach Historical Park and Beach Access**

- Move the fence from around Evans Rendezvous to allow public parking and access to boardwalk;
- Connect Evans Rendezvous to the beachfront community/special events center;

- **Burney Park**

- Repair or replace the weathered boardwalk, provide additional seating, and replenish the eroded dune;
- Renovate the restroom building;
- Add amenities such as a food truck area, playground, and multipurpose walks;
- Add shade trees in the parking lot, along with native plantings to control erosion;



Weathered boardwalk at Burney Park

▪ **Dee Dee Bartels**

- Add a bait shop or concession;
- Improve the frequency and quality of restroom maintenance and trash collection;
- Improve the quality and aesthetics of signage and site furnishings;
- Connect to the adjacent Fort Clinch State Park and Beach to provide additional things to do;
- Promote the pavilion as a waterfront venue for special events, wedding receptions, and other rental uses to generate additional revenues;
- Establish a Nassau County architectural theme or brand;
- Add a playground, multi-purpose trail, and fitness equipment;

▪ **Goffinsville Park**

- Activate the park by providing a concession, outdoor patio, site furnishings, recreation/education/fitness programs, playground shade cover, informational and directional signs, and environmental exhibits;
- Redesign the concession building to include a more-welcoming walk-up entrance and window facing north (towards the parking lot), and a patio and food concession facing the water;
- Provide a variety of shaded, comfortable benches, chairs, and swings throughout the park; patio seating, for example, should include movable chairs and umbrella tables;
- Develop an overall park master plan to guide future development;

▪ **Holly Point**

- Create consistent branding through signs and architecture;
- Remove unnecessary fencing;
- Update information kiosks, signage, and site furnishings;
- Develop county-wide park design standards including architecture, site furnishings, signage, landscaping, etc.;

▪ **John F. Claxton Boat Ramp**

- Continue to maintain the nice tree canopy and pines;
- Use the attractive entrance sign, pavilion, metal roof, and "Old Florida" character as the basis for design standards for similar waterfront parks;
- Improve site drainage through the construction of naturalistic rain gardens;
- Add amenities such as a restroom building (same architectural style as the pavilion), playground, site furnishings, river-front swings, and a walking/fitness loop;

▪ **John Muir Ecological Park**

- Create additional things to do, such as exhibits, programs, and podcasts;
- Repair the rotting wood on the boardwalk;
- Promote the site as a venue for short school field trips, and prepare historical and environmental program materials and exhibits;



FIGURE 3.12 | Goffinsville Park Existing Conditions

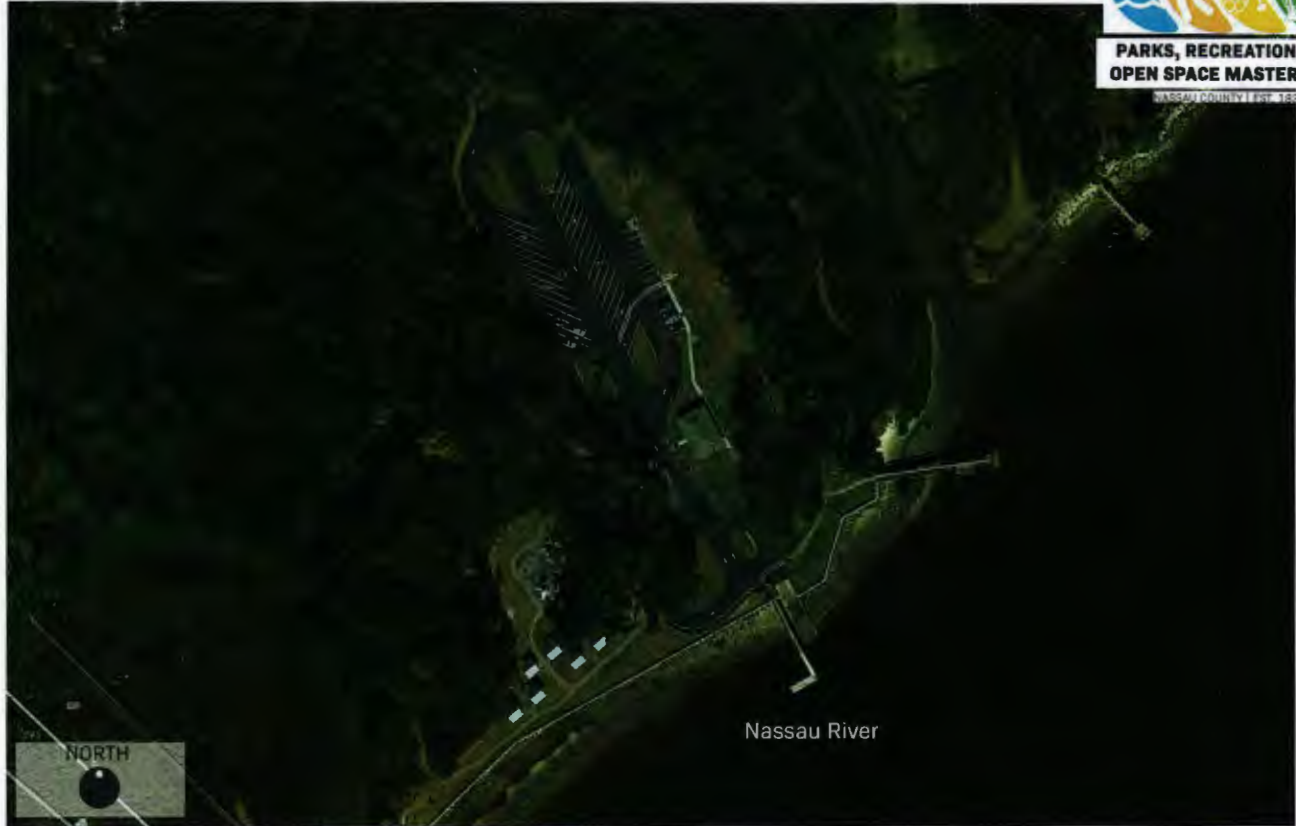


FIGURE 3.13 | Goffinsville Park Improvements



FIGURE 3.13A | Goffinsville Park Existing Conditions



FIGURE 3.13B | Activation of the Concession Area Goffinsville Park



- **Kings Ferry Boat Ramp**

- Add a second boat ramp lane possible;
- Expand the riverside picnic area - if permissible – to include picnic areas, a playground, swings, and seating;
- Expand boat trailer parking;
- Construct a restroom building;

- **Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex**

- Improve drainage;
- Renovate existing buildings;
- Provide more things to do, especially for visitors not involved in youth athletics;
- Purchase adjacent land(s) to expand parks uses, and parking;
- Prepare a site master plan that includes connections to the school, adjacent soccer fields, and adjacent vacant properties to illustrate the potential of the site as a regional park;

- **Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex**

- Strengthen the physical and programmatic connections to the adjacent community;
- Renovate existing buildings;
- Provide more things to do, especially for visitors not involved in youth athletics;
- Discuss the potential expansion of the site with the adjacent state forest;
- Improve drainage;
- Prepare a site master plan that includes connections to the community center and adjacent state forest to illustrate the potential of the site as a regional park;



Drainage issues at Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex (top) and Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex (bottom)

- **Melton O. Nelson Memorial Park and Boat Ramp**

- Relocate the kayak access to eliminate conflicts between motorized and non-motorized boats; acquire the Pages Dairy site, if possible, to serve as a kayak center;
- Add more informational/environmental/educational signage, e.g. stormwater treatment, habitat protection, and enhancement of the county's rivers and streams;
- Add more amenities;
- Construct an additional boat ramp lane, and additional parking, if possible;

- **Nassau Landing**
 - Add more amenities and things to do, such as a picnic pavilion and tables, playground, and educational/environmental exhibits;
- **Peters Point Beach Front Park**
 - Charge vendors a fee for horse-trailer parking and beach access;
 - Charge residents and visitors to reserve picnic shelters;
 - Charge a fee for beach camping, and limit to one night;
 - Provide more things to do, such as a playground, event space, multi-purpose walking path, and outdoor fitness stations;
- Renovate restrooms to reflect Nassau architectural theme or brand;
- Add shade trees and native plantings to parking lot;
- Replace grass with native plantings, except for multipurpose lawns;
- **Scott Road Access Dune Walk**
 - Add more things to do, such as a beach concession, carts, vendors, and food trucks;
 - Trim the vegetation at the entrance to open sight lines and make the park more inviting;
 - Improve bicycle/pedestrian access;

FIGURE 3.14 | Peters Point Beach Front Park Existing Conditions

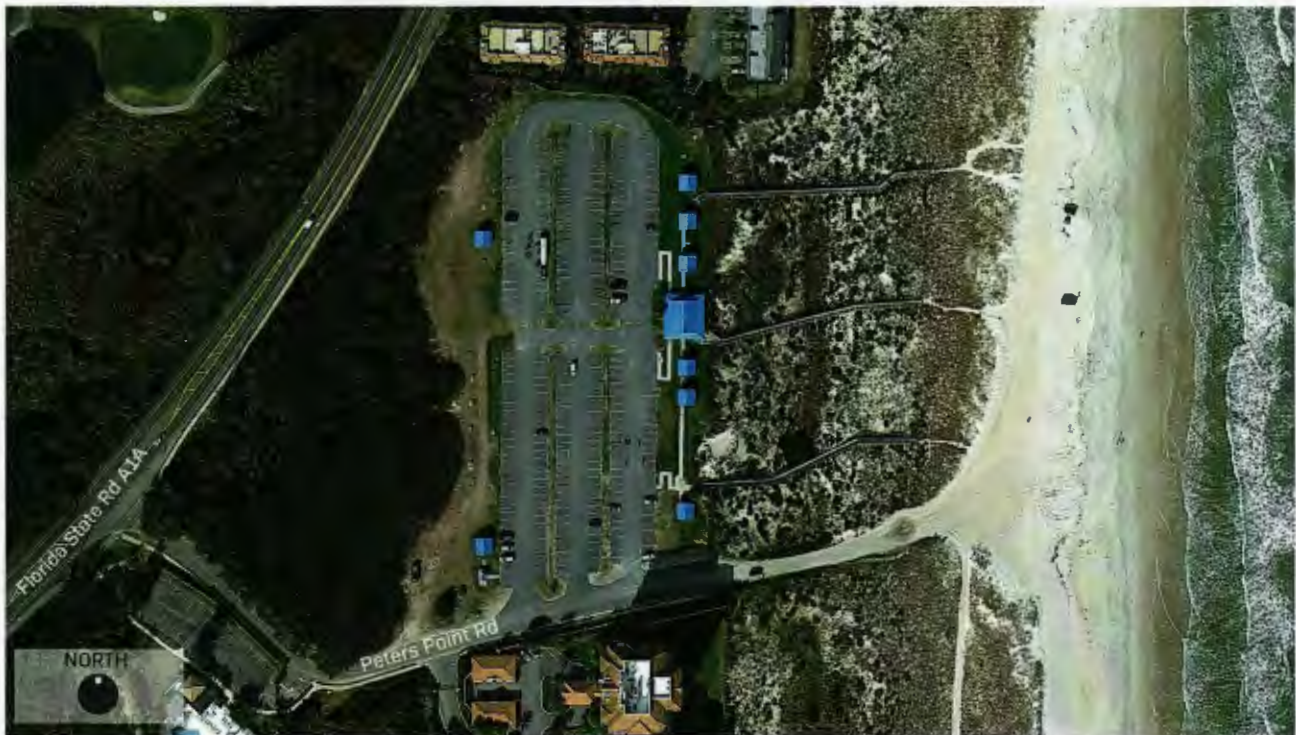


FIGURE 3.15 | Peters Point Beach Front Park Improvements Alternative 1

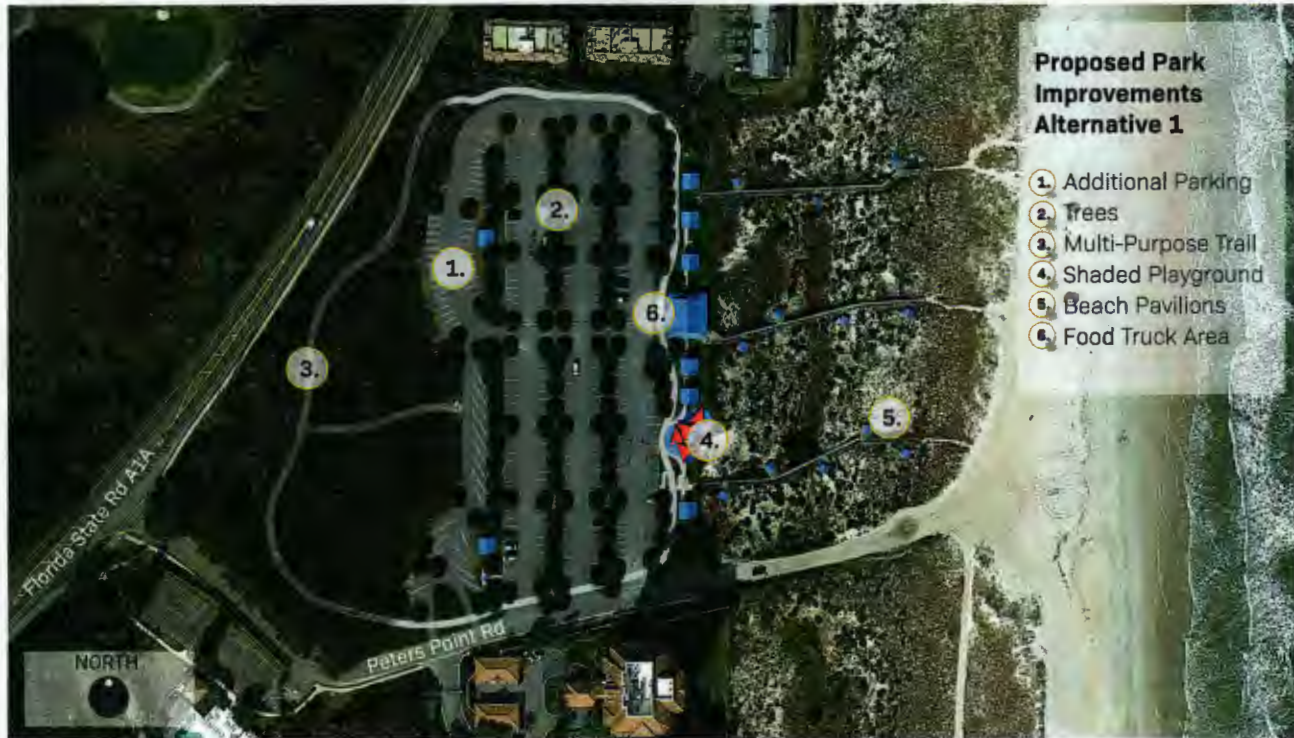
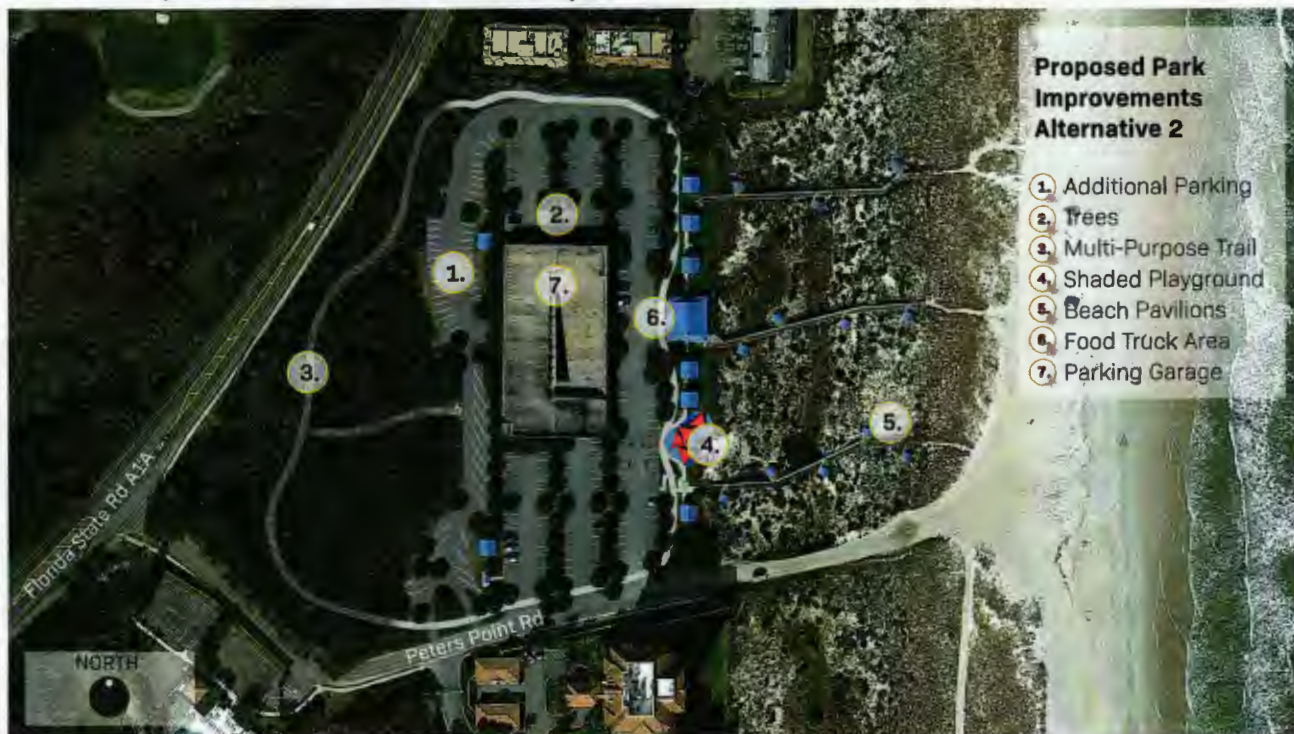


FIGURE 3.16 | Peters Point Beach Front Park Improvements Alternative 2



- Add restrooms;
- Replace grass with native trees and plantings
Add a small playground if space is available;

■ **Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex**

- Improve maintenance of fields and buildings;
- Renovate existing buildings;
- Provide more things to do, especially for visitors not involved in youth athletics;
- Determine if there are opportunities to expand the existing site boundaries;
- Prepare a site master plan to illustrate the potential of the site as a regional park;

■ **South End Dune Walk**

- Improve site furnishings, seating, signage to make the site more welcoming and attractive;
- Add informational/educational kiosk;
- Improve ADA access;

■ **Summer Beach Dune Walk**

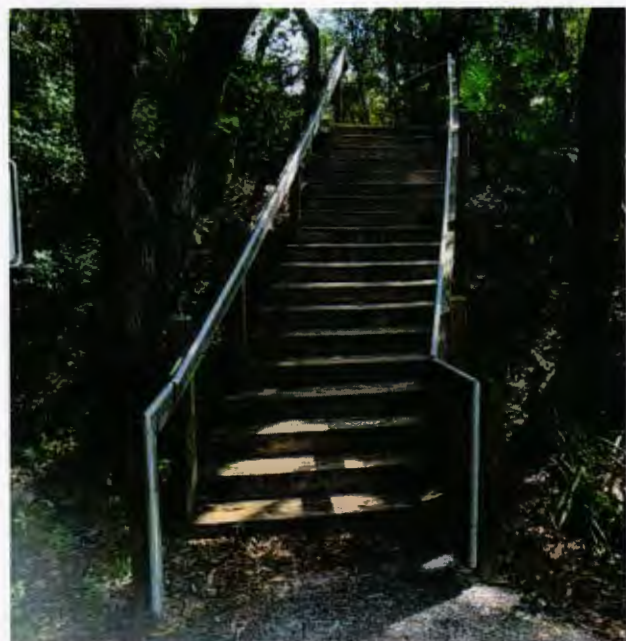
- Improve site furnishings, seating, signage to make the site more welcoming and attractive;
- Add informational/ educational kiosk;
- Improve ADA access;

■ **Yulee Sports Complex**

- Renovate existing buildings;
- Expand parking if possible;
- Provide more things to do, especially for visitors not involved in youth athletics;
- Determine if there are opportunities to expand the existing site boundaries; and
- Prepare a site master plan to illustrate the potential of the site as a regional park.



Buildings in need of repair at Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex



Challenging ADA access at South End Dune Walk



FIGURE 3.17 | Yulee Sports Complex Existing Conditions



FIGURE 3.18 | Potential Expansion of the Yulee Sports Complex into a Regional Park





2. NEW LARGE REGIONAL PARKS

Regional Parks are “those that serve mainly regional needs, which people can reasonably be expected to travel...to reach, and which cannot be reduplicated locally” (*Hise & Deverell*). Typical facilities could include athletics fields, dog parks, large playgrounds, tennis and pickleball courts, multi-purpose lawns, indoor recreation centers, aquatics centers, equestrian facilities, boat ramps, and kayak launches.

Currently, the County has only one regional park – the 19+ acre Goffinsville Regional Park on the Nassau River. The County’s future vision is to meet the majority of residents’ recreation needs through the development of an equitably-distributed network

of large, multi-use, +/-75-150 acre, regional parks (Equity Model). Every resident living in urban or suburban areas of Nassau County should be able to bike or drive to a Regional Park within 5 miles of their homes; every resident living in rural areas of Nassau County should be able to drive to a regional park within 10 miles of their home.

Figure 3.20 shows that approximately 12 regional parks will be required to fulfill the vision; they will also make a significant contribution to the County’s Comprehensive Plan goal of 14 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. Actual park locations will be based on existing and planned population growth areas, regional scale natural resources, location of wetlands and floodplain, and other state, federal, and private conservation and recreation areas.

FIGURE 3.19 | Potential Regional Park Prototype



Example Park Amenities

1. Rectangle fields
2. Diamond fields
3. Restroom + concession building
4. Pavilion
5. Playground + shade structure
6. Amphitheater
7. Overflow parking area
8. Basketball courts
9. Track + field
10. Tennis courts
11. Pickleball courts
12. Tennis + Pickleball Pro Shop
13. Dog Park
14. Multi-purpose trail
15. Fishing + paddling lake
16. Dock
17. Aquatic Center
18. Recreation Center
19. Multi-purpose open space

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FIGURE 3.20 | Potential Regional Park Locations



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3. NEW SMALL LOCAL PARKS

Local Parks are “those that serve mainly local needs and can be replicated in small and easily accessible units in every part of the Region” (*Hise & Deverell*). Typical facilities include a multi-purpose lawn/play field, walking path, playground, play courts, picnic shelters, restrooms, splashpad, and limited parking. **Figure 3.21** illustrates a prototype for a small local park. It is the County’s vision that local parks will be designed and constructed by community developers – rather than the County – in accordance with the

County’s prototype, which should be incorporated into the County’s Land Development Codes. It is also the County’s vision that the parks will be maintained and operated by the developer or a local Homeowner Association.

Consistent with the national 10-minute walk initiative led by The Trust for Public Land in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Urban Land Institute, every resident living in urban or suburban areas of Nassau County should be able to walk or bike on safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities to a Local Park located within one-half (1/2) mile of their home (approximately a 10-minute walk),

FIGURE 3.21 | Potential Local Park Prototype



Example Park Amenities

1. Pavilion + concession + restrooms
2. Playground + shade structure
3. Chess + checker table games
4. Outdoor foosball table
5. Outdoor ping-pong table
6. Multi-purpose open space
7. Picnic table(s)
8. Basketball/Tennis/Pickleball/Multi-purpose court
9. Pavilion

Park Context

10. Park zone traffic calming
11. Crosswalk
12. Neighborhood park access
13. On-street parking
14. Green Infrastructure
15. Park-oriented residential development

consistent with an Equity SDM. In other words, every resident should live within one-half (1/2) mile via bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities to a Local Park in urban and suburban areas. **Figure 3.22** illustrates the potential locations of future local parks.

Wherever possible, stormwater treatment facilities such as retention and detention ponds should also be designed as local parks, subject to adopted local park design standards. While a local park may include wetlands, natural areas, stormwater management facilities and other similar components, a minimum of six (6) acres shall be dry, flat, and free of any encumbrances that would inhibit establishment of active recreation facilities as defined by the Nassau County prototype. This includes, but is not limited to, areas subject to conservation easements, wetland or depression areas, utility, ingress/egress or drainage easements, and other similar encumbrances.

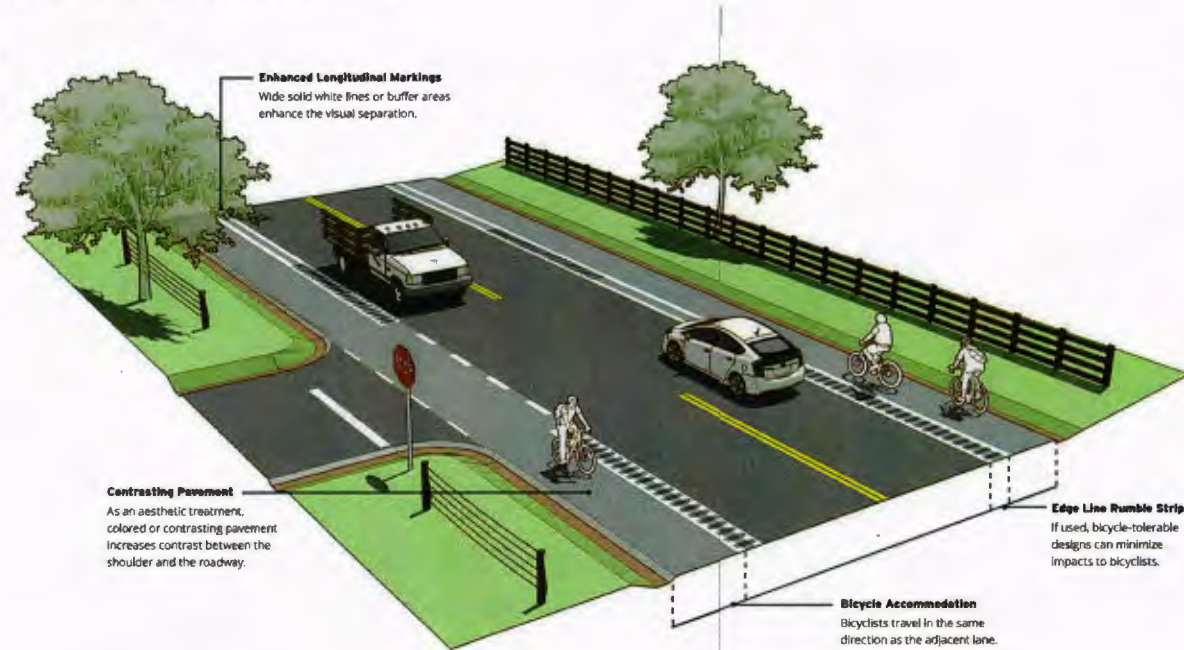
While adherence to the 10-minute walk for Local Parks in rural areas is not feasible due to the sparse development pattern, providing for Local Parks and the related amenities remains a critical component of providing high quality-of-life and facilitating social cohesion. As the Local Park network develops in rural areas, every resident should live within a five-mile bicycle ride of a park using safe, comfortable, and accessible facilities designed for multimodal transportation. The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration published a report titled ***Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks***. The report is adopted by reference and intended to assist County staff, policy makers and those developing land in Nassau County by providing guidance and innovative methods to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in rural areas (**Figure 3.23**). In the interim, while the County's

recreation system is being developed, every resident living in rural areas should be able to drive a distance not to exceed five (5) miles to access a Local Park. In other words, every resident should live within five (5) miles, by mode of transportation, to a Local Park. However, it is the intent of this report and Nassau County that within the next 18-24 months the transition to requiring multimodal accessibility become mandatory.

FIGURE 3.22 | Potential Local Park Locations



FIGURE 3.23 | Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Enhanced Longitudinal Markings
Wide solid white lines or buffer areas enhance the visual separation.

Contrasting Pavement
As an aesthetic treatment, colored or contrasting pavement increases contrast between the shoulder and the roadway.

Edge Line Rumble Strips
If used, bicycle-tolerable designs can minimize impacts to bicyclists.

Bicycle Accommodation
Bicyclists travel in the same direction as the adjacent lane.

Paved Shoulder

Paved shoulders on the edge of roadways can be enhanced to serve as a functional space for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel in the absence of other facilities with more separation.

BENEFITS

- Improves bicyclist experiences on roadways with higher speeds or traffic volumes.
- Provides a stable surface off the roadway for pedestrians and bicyclists to use when sidewalks are not provided.
- Reduces pedestrian "walking along roadway" crashes.
- Can reduce "bicyclist struck from behind" crashes, which represent a significant portion of rural road crashes.
- Provides advantages for all roadway users, by providing space for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles.

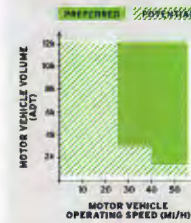
CONSIDERATIONS

- Enhancements with increased levels of striping and signs may interfere with the low-clutter character of a rural environment.
- Requires a wider roadway to provide an accessible shoulder space.

APPLICATION

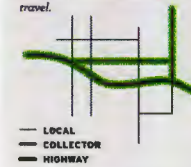
Speed and Volume

Appropriate on roads with moderate to high volumes and speeds and on roadways with a large amount of truck traffic. May function on multilane roads with heavy traffic but fails to provide a low-stress experience in this condition.



Network

Serves long-distance and regional travel.



Land Use

Appropriate outside and within built-up areas, near school zones and transit locations, and where there is expected pedestrian and bicycle activity. Walkable shoulders should be provided along both sides of county roads and highways routinely used by pedestrians.





4. VILLAGE CENTER PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Distinguishable from the prototypical Local Park are the communal spaces integral to creating vibrant, compact walkable village centers. These communal spaces contain all of the elements found in the prototypical Local Park, but are dispersed and

integrated within the fabric of the walkable village center in accordance with the Centralized SDM. On a case-by-case basis, Nassau County should evaluate the application of Local Park requirements within the context of a compact walkable village center common to Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) and similar urban development programs. Village center parks and open spaces should include plazas, greens, play-fields, playgrounds, and other elements of a local park, as well as other communal spaces customary of good urbanism (**Figure 3.24**).

FIGURE 3.24 | Village Center Parks and Open Spaces



Light Imprint Overlay Plan - Phase One

CASE STUDIES

Lockett - Plates

5. ATHLETIC FIELDS

Historically, the County and its municipalities have delivered athletic fields and programs through small ballfield complexes in Bryceville, Callahan, Hilliard, Yulee, and Fernandina Beach. Many of these were constructed and maintained by volunteers and youth sports associations as resources became available.

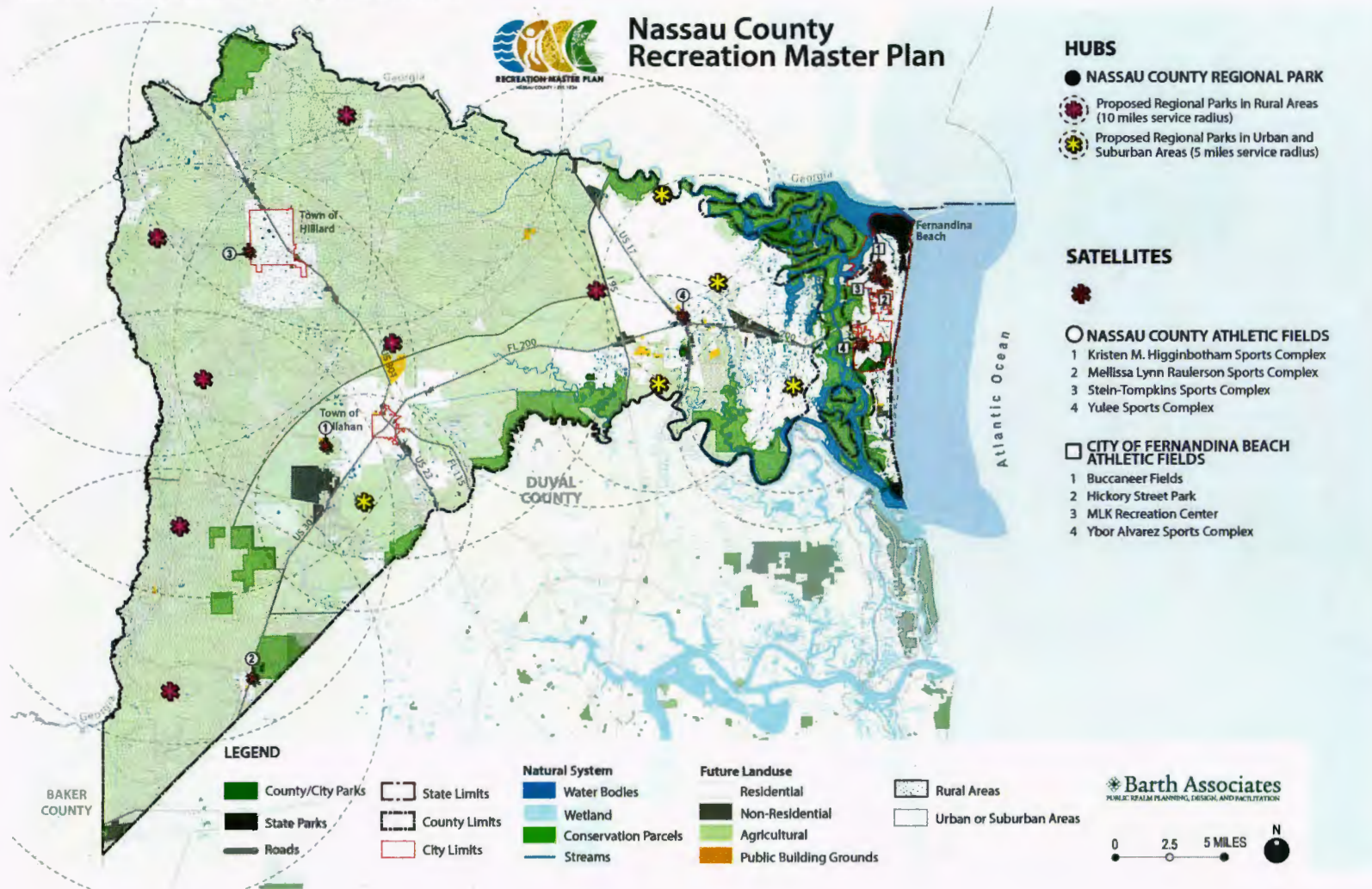
The County's future vision is to deliver new athletic fields through the large, regional, multi-use parks discussed above. Some of the existing ballfield

complexes could be expanded into regional parks where adjacent land is available for acquisition or lease. Others need to be master planned and upgraded to replace out-dated facilities. The resulting combination of large Regional Parks, and small local ballfield complexes, will result in a Hub & Spoke SDM for athletic fields; the Regional Parks will serve residents county-wide, particularly in the more densely populated urban and suburban communities, while the small complexes may continue to meet the needs of local residents in rural areas.



Yulee Ballpark

FIGURE 3.25 | Potential Athletic Fields and Regional Park Locations



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6. INDOOR RECREATION CENTERS

Currently, the County owns and manages several indoor rental spaces throughout the county, including the American Beach Community Center, Bryceville Community Building, Callahan County Building/Community Center, Callahan Multi-Use Facility/Auditorium, Hilliard County Building/Community Center, and the Yulee County Building. These are fairly small buildings (2,000 – 6,500 square feet), and do not provide the same facilities as the modern 25,000 – 50,000 s.f. recreation centers found in many other counties, such as classrooms, fitness centers, weight rooms, meeting space, and gymnasiums (for pickleball, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, and cheerleading). Also, the total square footage of approximately 19,000 square feet does not meet the industry standard of 1 – 2 s.f. of indoor recreation space per capita.

In addition to the County-owned buildings, many municipal and non-profit agencies provide indoor recreation space. These include the Nassau County School Board (Nassau County fairgrounds in Callahan); City of Fernandina Beach (Recreation Center, Peck Center, Atlantic Aquatics Center); Council on Aging (Fernandina Beach and Hilliard); Boys & Girls Club (Roberts Club in Fernandina Beach, Miller Club in Yulee); YMCA (Fernandina Beach and Wild Light); Florida State College Jacksonville in Yulee; and public libraries in Fernandina Beach, Bryceville, Yulee, Callahan, and Hilliard. Other publicly-accessible indoor recreation facilities include the Fernandina Beach Women's Club, the Kraft Tennis Center, the Fernandina Beach Golf Course Clubhouse, and the Rayonier Story Center.

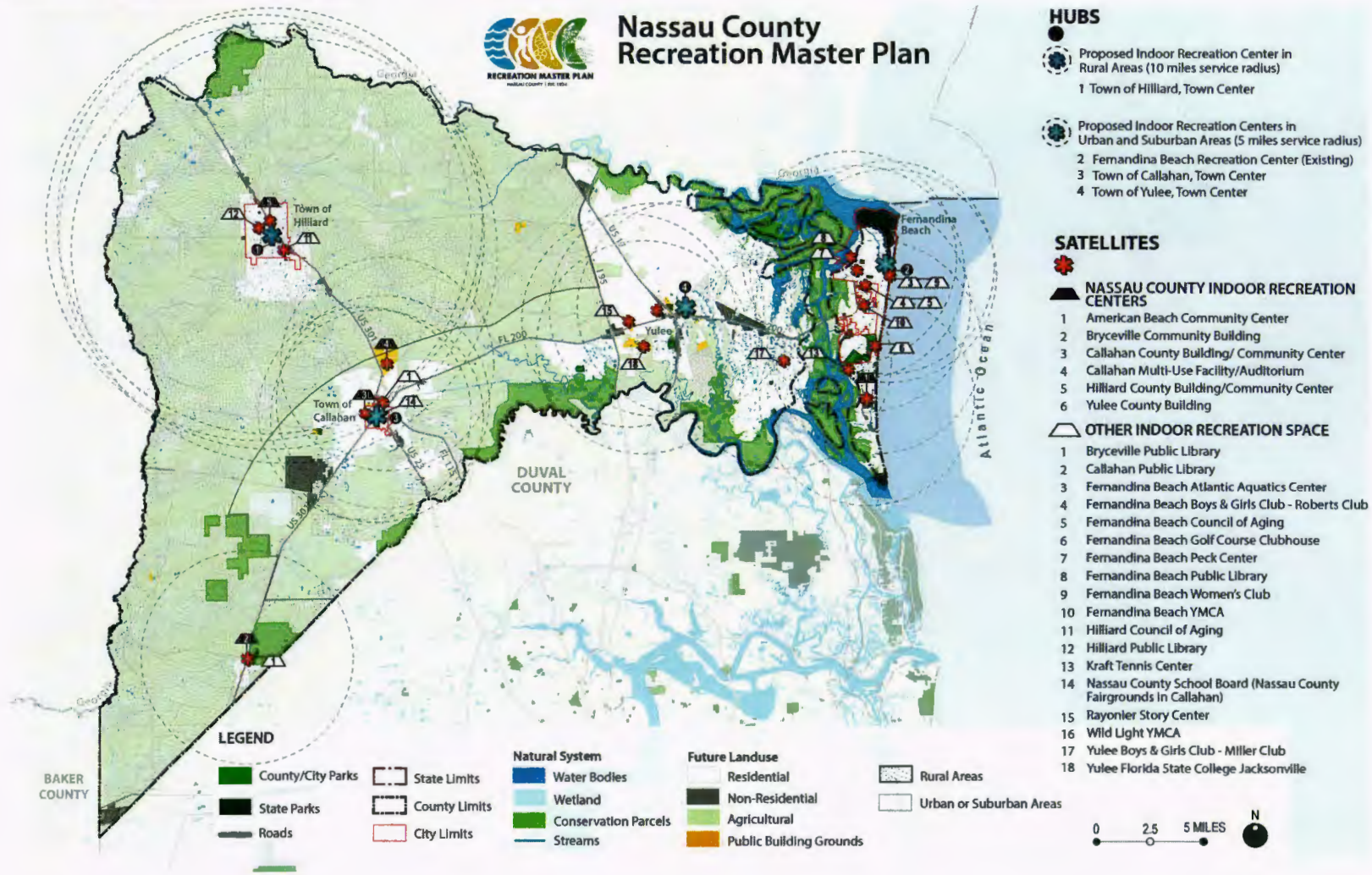
The County's vision is to use a Hub & Spoke SDM to provide over 200,000 s.f. of indoor recreation center space by the year 2045 to meet residents' needs. "Hubs" would include 2-3 large, 50,000 - 75,000 s.f. centers in the county's most populated areas (e.g. Yulee, Callahan, and Hilliard) - in addition to the existing Fernandina Beach Recreation Center – working in partnership with one or more of the other providers listed above. These could be constructed as stand-alone facilities, especially in areas such as Yulee where land costs are at a premium, or within the large Regional Parks as shown in **Figure 3.19** (Prototype). One idea, for example, is to build a new recreation center in conjunction with the redevelopment of the James S. Page Governmental Complex, or at the proposed location of the new governmental complex.



McArthur Family YMCA in Fernandina Beach
(source: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstCoastYMCAMcArthur/photos/a.10151864593177460/10157969466522460>)

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FIGURE 3.26 | Potential Recreation Centers Locations



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7. WATER PARKS AND SWIMMING POOLS

Currently, the County does not own or operate any swimming pools or water parks. Aquatics facilities are expensive to maintain, and cost-recovery ratio (revenues minus expenses) is typically very low. The City of Fernandina Beach's Atlantic Pool is open to all residents, but is consistently over-capacity. Other publicly-accessible pools in the county include the City of Fernandina Beach's MLK pool, the YMCA's McArthur Pool in Fernandina Beach, the Town of Hilliard pool, and the private Holistic Wellness Center pool in Fernandina Beach.

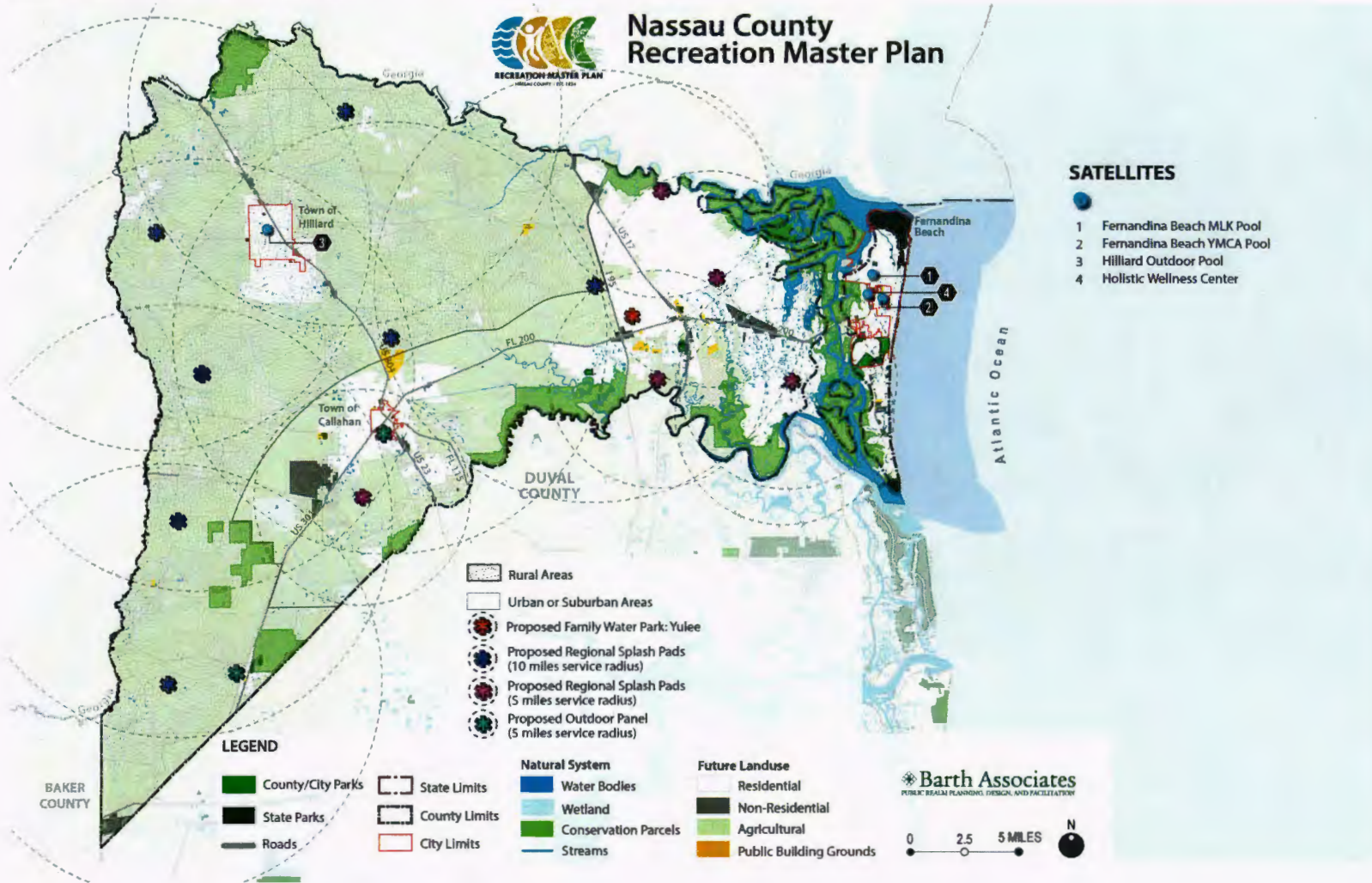
In response to residents' needs, the County's vision is to adopt a Hub and Spoke SDM featuring a new, centralized family water park in Yulee, to be constructed on the same site as the proposed recreation center. Elements of the water park could include a lazy river, lap swimming, competitive swimming, slides, spray pads, and other facilities (**Figure 3.27**). The park would be developed and managed in partnership with other agencies. "Satellite" facilities would include the existing pools in Fernandina Beach and Hilliard; new outdoor pools in Callahan and Bryceville; and splash pads at all of the County's regional parks. **Figure 3.28** illustrates the proposed aquatics vision.

FIGURE 3.27 | Water Park Example (Calypso Bay, Royal Palm Beach)



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FIGURE 3.28 | Proposed Aquatic Facility Locations



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8. NATURAL LANDS AND CONSERVATION AREAS (CONSERVATION HABITAT NETWORK)

County residents ranked Natural Areas and Nature Parks as their #3 priority in the statistically-representative, county-wide survey (**Section 2** of this report). Currently, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, only approximately 7% of the lands in Nassau County are protected for conservation by local, regional, state, federal or private agencies (<http://fnai.org/conservationlands.cfm>). Conversely, the statewide average for all 67 counties in Florida is 27% of County lands (**Figure 3.29**). Therefore, the County's vision is to preserve and protect 25 – 30% of its natural lands for wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, tourism, water quality, floodplain management, rural character, and resource-based recreation.

Figure 3.30 conceptually depicts the Conservation Habitat Network (CHN). The CHN boundary was derived from the location of jurisdictional wetlands (NWI/FLUCCS/SJRWMD Lands-use); Special Flood Hazard Area/100yr floodplain (V and A flood zones) as depicted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the most recent Federal Insurance Rate Map (FIRM); FNAI Rare Species Habitat; public and private conservation lands; local, State and National parks; and critical upland areas necessary to provide connectivity and create functional ecological corridors.

The CHN provides guidance for creating an interconnected system of natural areas that are critical to proper floodplain management and to protect the ecological functionality of natural systems. It is intended that the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code will be updated to include provisions necessary to protect the CHN and proactively address floodplain management.



John Muir Ecological Park

FIGURE 3.29 | Conservation Land by County in Florida



1018 Thomasville Road
Suite 200-C
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 224-8207
(850) 661-8264 Fax
www.fnai.org

Florida Natural Areas Inventory
ACRES OF CONSERVATION LANDS BY COUNTY
March 2020



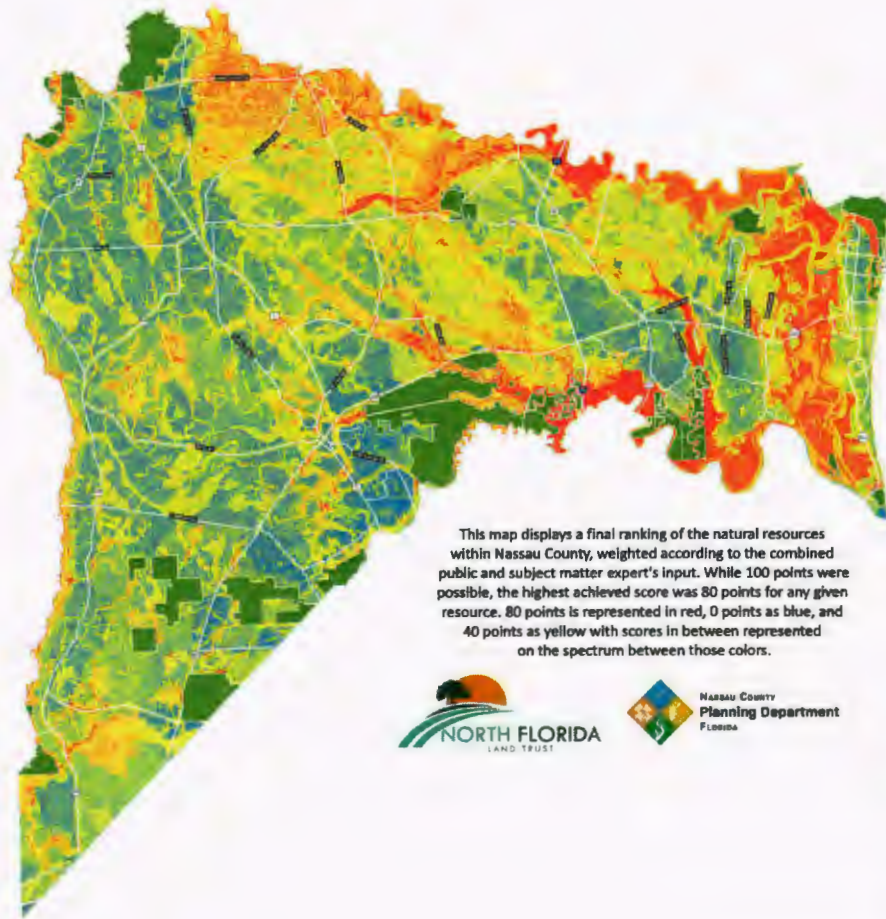
Conservation Lands are Categorized by Lead Managing Agency

COUNTY	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	TOTAL	COUNTY AREA	PERCENT OF COUNTY IN CONSERVATION
Alachua	30,540	87,430	180	5,270	113,420	529,380	20%
Baker	2,560	34,400	124,210	30	165,230	374,400	44%
Bay	2,840	31,200	39,110	6,280	79,430	488,800	14%
Bradford	150	3,970	20	640	10,980	187,520	6%
Brevard	19,360	158,280	83,060	2,680	270,310	681,820	42%
Broward	6,040	477,410	10	30	482,490	773,780	62%
Calhoun	0	5,860	910	90	6,920	382,880	2%
Charlotte	4,550	172,200	620	110	177,670	444,100	40%
Citrus	310	123,790	9,080	210	133,390	379,760	36%
Clay	1,160	129,850	0	15,430	143,440	384,640	37%
Collier	4,880	216,930	848,080	13,450	982,340	1,208,640	80%
Columbia	840	28,280	117,400	2,520	149,040	510,080	29%
DeSoto	220	48,070	3,080	400	49,740	467,890	12%
Dixie	0	104,940	27,500	0	132,440	455,580	29%
Duval	23,210	28,270	16,890	12,580	61,050	482,360	13%
Escambia	3,350	28,510	12,240	2,430	46,530	424,080	11%
Flagler	8,690	34,350	0	3,090	46,130	319,480	13%
Franklin	290	240,900	33,220	1,410	275,820	341,780	81%
Gadsden	230	16,360	0	2,900	19,490	330,240	6%
Glades	270	8,060	0	120	8,450	223,360	4%
Glenn	280	72,630	1,800	23,480	98,190	485,360	20%
Guilford	110	54,380	80	0	54,570	301,800	15%
Hamilton	0	24,380	480	140	25,000	328,800	8%
Hardee	0	10,850	0	480	11,330	407,800	3%
Henry	0	117,880	40,820	5,780	164,480	737,920	22%
Hernando	1,100	82,120	5,740	280	89,240	905,920	9%
Highlands	1,380	81,680	114,210	18,750	215,020	667,920	32%
Hillsborough	62,580	43,750	5,580	420	112,330	672,840	17%
Holmes	0	13,030	0	0	13,030	308,480	4%
Indian River	4,970	85,210	1,350	3,090	94,620	321,920	31%
Jackson	850	18,090	0	670	20,610	588,240	3%
Jefferson	60	70,510	6,230	35,650	112,450	347,520	33%
Lafayette	0	80,020	0	0	80,020	344,840	23%
Lake	10,150	110,010	84,300	3,430	207,890	609,920	34%
Lee	40,360	32,970	5,800	3,840	82,970	514,560	16%
Leon	4,470	24,180	108,040	29,010	165,700	428,580	39%
Levy	3,670	144,210	24,820	10	172,710	715,530	24%
Liberty	0	58,730	274,580	5,480	338,790	635,040	53%
Madison	0	17,910	0	470	18,380	362,880	5%
Manatee	26,540	32,860	1,080	1,500	62,980	474,240	13%
Marion	1,870	83,790	272,120	240	358,020	1,019,360	35%
Martin	2,570	87,070	4,340	1,770	95,750	325,840	27%
Nassau	10,560	261,820	345,430	13,290	651,100	1,244,800	52%
Monroe	1,860	15,770	495,250	920	613,800	638,080	96%
Neuse	320	22,870	10	6,310	29,910	417,280	7%
Okaloosa	310	72,080	244,530	0	317,920	599,040	53%
Oklawaha	0	88,020	16,720	2,510	107,250	485,360	22%
Orange	8,250	64,550	0	4,200	77,000	531,120	15%
Osceola	8,820	187,320	1,960	11,310	199,410	648,080	31%
Palm Beach	49,380	264,060	144,110	110	477,660	1,301,760	37%
Pasco	17,810	63,330	0	3,390	84,530	478,600	18%
Pinellas	16,680	1,680	150	0	18,510	179,200	10%
Polk	17,820	197,940	57,460	19,870	293,090	1,209,000	24%
Putnam	1,480	89,500	27,280	1,230	119,490	482,080	25%
St. Johns	140	181,390	72,840	5,820	260,390	659,240	39%
Sarasota	47,710	80,590	10	880	129,190	365,080	36%
Seminole	7,060	31,970	990	660	40,780	197,120	21%
St. Johns	4,350	67,030	300	5,720	77,410	369,760	21%
St. Lucie	10,730	20,980	80	2,810	34,600	388,080	9%
Sumter	0	111,980	0	110	112,070	345,440	32%
Suwannee	80	20,980	0	300	21,060	440,320	5%
Taylor	0	81,220	1,300	4,920	87,440	668,600	13%
Union	0	200	0	60	260	153,800	0%
Volusia	51,350	128,170	33,430	2,730	215,720	707,640	31%
Wakulla	350	12,270	238,250	3,480	254,350	368,480	69%
Walton	220	84,950	154,840	5,670	245,680	677,120	36%
Washington	0	51,430	0	720	52,150	371,200	14%

PLEASE NOTE: Conservation lands include public and some privately owned lands managed for conservation of their natural resources; public lands that are not managed for conservation (e.g., schools and prisons) are not considered conservation lands and are not included in this data set. Conservation lands acreage are tabulated by county from the FNAI FLMA GIS data layer. These totals do not include open water or FLMA boundaries. Additional acres of unregulated areas, tracked in FNAI's database with no GIS boundaries, are added for the final total. FNAI tracks some additional managed areas without definitive acreage-by-county information. These acreages are not reflected in this table. Recent acquisitions may not yet be reflected in acreage totals. County areas are derived from the National Association of Counties. *States* included lands managed by state agencies or water management districts. As of September 2013, FNAI tracks the permitless Wetlands Reserve Program and Grassland Reserve Program easements held and monitored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. These acreages are included in the "Federal" column.

FIGURE 3.30 | Conservation Habitat Network

Nassau County CLAM Ranking



CLAM Ranking

Value

	High : 80		Conservation Lands
	Low : 0		

All scores are provisional. Further review of scores will be done by staff after properties are nominated for environmental, legal and management conditions. No scores or property rankings will be finalized until after the public input process and committee review of those scores

N

0 2 4 8 Miles

C:\GIS\BOCC_Departments\Planning&EconomicOpportunity\Projects\Parks Master Plan\clam map.mxd

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9. MULTI-USE SIDEWALKS, BIKEWAYS, AND TRAILS

County residents ranked Multi-purpose Trails as their #2 priority in the statistically-representative, county-wide survey (**Section 2** of this report). A multimodal transportation system, connecting residents to their parks, is an important component of a Parks and Open Space System. The County's vision is for every resident living in urban and suburban areas to be able to walk or bike to recreation, education, employment, and retail/service facilities via a network of safe, shaded bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These facilities include but are not limited to sidewalks (as part of a complete streets network) and off-street multi-use trails. Wherever possible, existing public corridors such as drainage easements, utilities easements, and fire access roads should also be designed as multi-use trails.

While rural areas are not likely to include a bicycle and pedestrian network as elaborate as the urban and suburban areas, it is still expected that bicycle and pedestrian accessibility and safety will be at the forefront of all local transportation and recreation policies. As mentioned previously, in 2016, the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration published a report titled **Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks**. The report is a resource and idea book intended to help small towns and rural communities support safe, accessible, comfortable, and active travel for people of all ages and abilities. It provides guidance on bicycle and pedestrian design in rural areas; encourages innovation in the development of safe and appealing



Amelia Island Trail

(source: <http://ameliaislandtrail.org/newsarchive.html>)

networks for bicycling and walking in small towns and rural areas; and shows examples of peer communities and project implementation that is appropriate for rural communities (see **Figure 3.31**). The report is adopted by reference and intended to assist County staff, policy makers and those developing land in Nassau County by providing guidance and innovative methods to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in rural areas.

It is also intended that the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code will be updated to necessitate the application of complete streets principles and mandatory provision of multi-use trails. More specifically, it is intended that updates will require that all new road construction and reconstruction shall implement complete streets principles. Further, new private development will be required to extend, complete, and construct in whole or part existing and/or planned non-vehicular corridors and facilities. It is intended that providing for a safe, comfortable, and accessible multimodal network will guide public policy.

FIGURE 3.31 | Multimodal Case Study Excerpted from FHA's *Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks*

CHAPTER 4 | PHYSICALLY SEPARATED FACILITIES



CASE STUDY | SHARED USE PATH

Pickens and Easley, South Carolina

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



The Pickens "Doodle Line" Railway is a 7.4-mile railroad that previously connected the cities of Pickens and Easley for lumber and other freight travel. As freight and manufacturing in Pickens declined in the late 1990s, the private owner of the railway decided to explore options to sell the ownership rights and promote a rail to trail conversion. The Doodle Trail, a 7.4 mile rails-to-trails partnership between the City of Easley and the City of Pickens opened Memorial Day Weekend 2015.

The shared-use asphalt path provides a vital recreation and transportation corridor for visitors and residents alike, as well as major economic and regional impacts. Residents and governmental leaders saw the economic impacts of the Swamp Rabbit Trail, an over 20-mile rail-trail in neighboring Greenville and wanted to create a similar regional attraction, that also benefited the local community.

The City of Easley and City of Pickens jointly purchased the railway corridor, creating a cooperative partnership between the two cities.

Soon after the trail was completed in Spring 2015, residents of Easley saw the economic development potential of the shared use path and wanted it to extend to their businesses in downtown Easley, approximately 1 mile from the Doodle Trailhead. An extension of the path, from the trailhead to downtown, is currently in the design phase and construction is set to begin in Winter 2016.

DETAILS

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The City of Easley has a population of 20,300. The City of Pickens, located to the northwest, has a population of 3,150. Both cities are located within Pickens County.

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Fencing, landscaping, and roadway crossings were all designed and constructed to ensure a safe, attractive path between the two communities.

ROLE IN THE NETWORK

The shared use path serves as a transportation and recreation corridor for residents and visitors, and enhances connectivity between the two communities. The City of Pickens developed bike lanes to connect to downtown Pickens. The City of Easley is extending the trail into downtown and has provided bike lanes for alternate connections to Baptist Easley Hospital and cultural amenities.

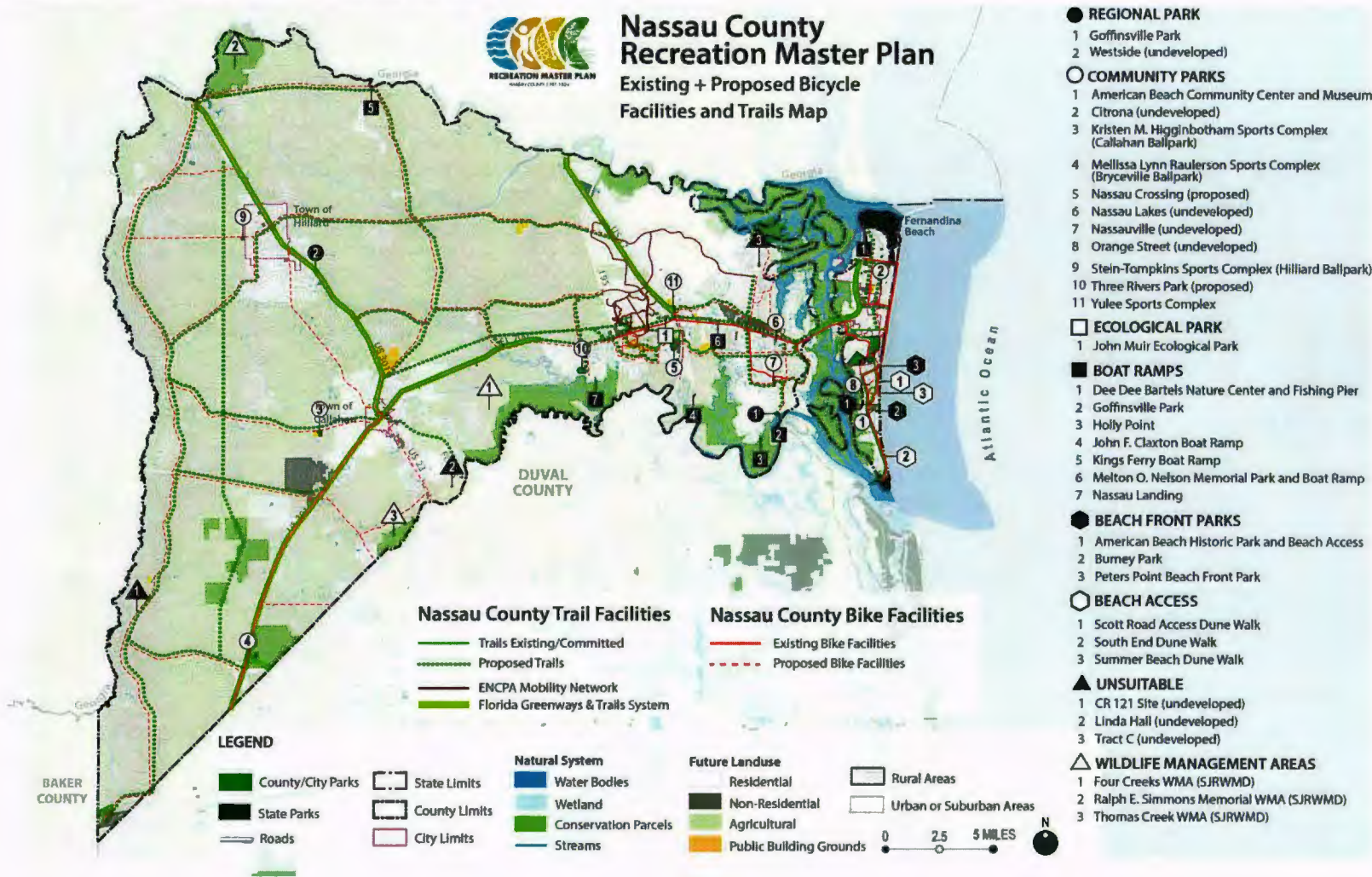
FUNDING

Both cities used separate General Obligation Hospitality Tax Bonds to fund the acquisition and construction of the trail. The City of Easley is currently using a General Obligation Bond to fund acquisition, design, and construction of the shared use path extension into Downtown. The federally-funded Recreational Trails Program administered through the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism funded the extension to Highway 8.

For more information, refer to the City of Easley and the City of Pickens:
<http://www.cityofeasley.com/>
<http://www.cityofpickens.com/>

4-9

FIGURE 3.32 | Proposed Multi-use Sidewalks, Bikeways and Trails System



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10. BEACH PARKS AND ACCESS

County residents ranked Beach Access their #1 priority in the statistically-representative, county-wide survey (**Section 2** of this report). However, it is not clear whether the need is for more parking, pedestrian access, beach shuttles, beach parks, or "all of the above." The County currently owns and operates six (6) beach accesses or parks - in addition to those owned by the City of Fernandina Beach - but anecdotal information indicates that beach parking areas fill up quickly on peak weekends and holidays, forcing residents or visitors to park further away from the beach or return at another time.

The County's vision is to work with the City and other partners to adequately provide access to all users, including residents and visitors, able-bodied and disabled. To that end, the vision includes all available techniques to increase access, which will become more challenging as the County's population increases. These may include:

- Additional pedestrian dune walkovers;
- Expansion of existing beach-parking areas;
- New beach-parking areas;
- Development of off-beach parking areas within a 5-minute walk (approximately ¼ mile) of existing and proposed beach accesses;
- Shuttle buses from large public/private parking areas further than ¼ mile from the beach, such as office parks and schools, on peak weekends and holidays;
- Smart-phone apps to inform beach-goers of the locations of available parking spaces on peak weekends and holidays;



Summer Beach dune walkover



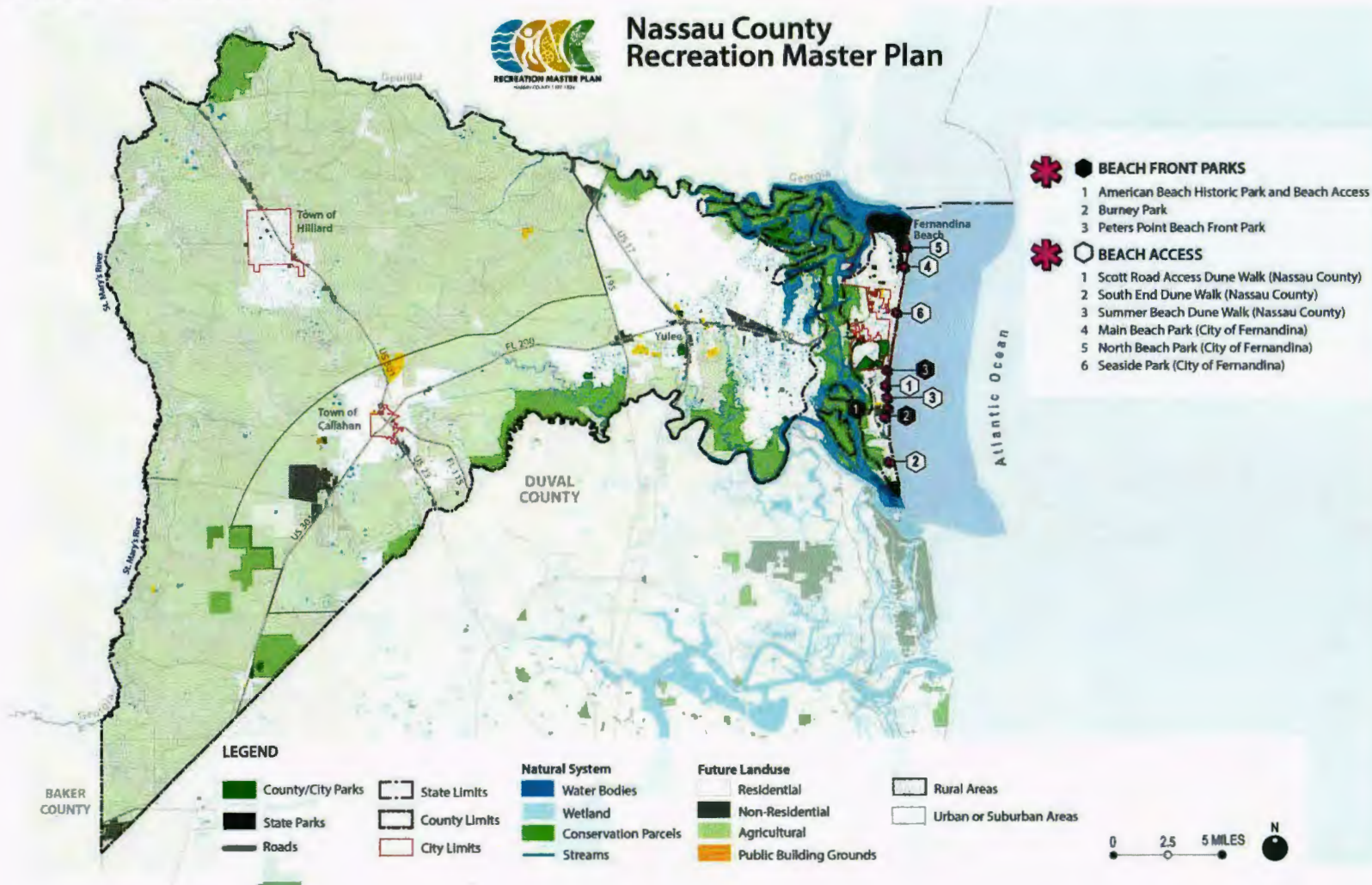
Parking at Peters Point

- Beach mats, carts, ramps, and sand-chairs to accommodate disabled users; and
- Beach parking fees - including reduced cost, annual passes for County residents - to generate additional revenues to meet beach parking needs.

Before the vision can be refined and implemented, the County needs to conduct a beach parking study to evaluate these alternative techniques, determine residents' and visitors' preferences, and make recommendations to County Commissioners.

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FIGURE 3.33 | Proposed Beach Parks and Access



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11. BOAT RAMPS, FISHING, AND KAYAK ACCESS

The county's land development patterns are defined by its rivers and creeks - including the St. Mary's River, Amelia River, and Nassau River - which provide numerous opportunities for motorized and non-motorized boating, and fishing. Currently, eight (8) of the County's parks provide boat ramps.

The County's vision is to continue providing and enhancing opportunities for accessing the county's rivers and creeks. In some cases, access capacity can be augmented by improving existing sites. For example, the popular Kings Ferry Boat Ramp on the St. Mary's River in northern Nassau County should be expanded to provide a second ramp, a kayak launch, additional parking, restrooms, a playground, and a waterfront picnic area.

Access opportunities can also be improved by reducing congestion at some sites and developing new access points. For example, the Melton Nelson Boat Ramp on Lofton Creek is heavily used by both motorized and non-motorized boaters, including local kayak clubs and outfitters. However, the site is significantly constrained, with very little space for staging and parking. Congestion could be relieved, in part, though the acquisition of the vacant parcel on Lofton Creek at Pages Dairy Road (County Road 200A), and developed as a kayak center, concession, and launch.

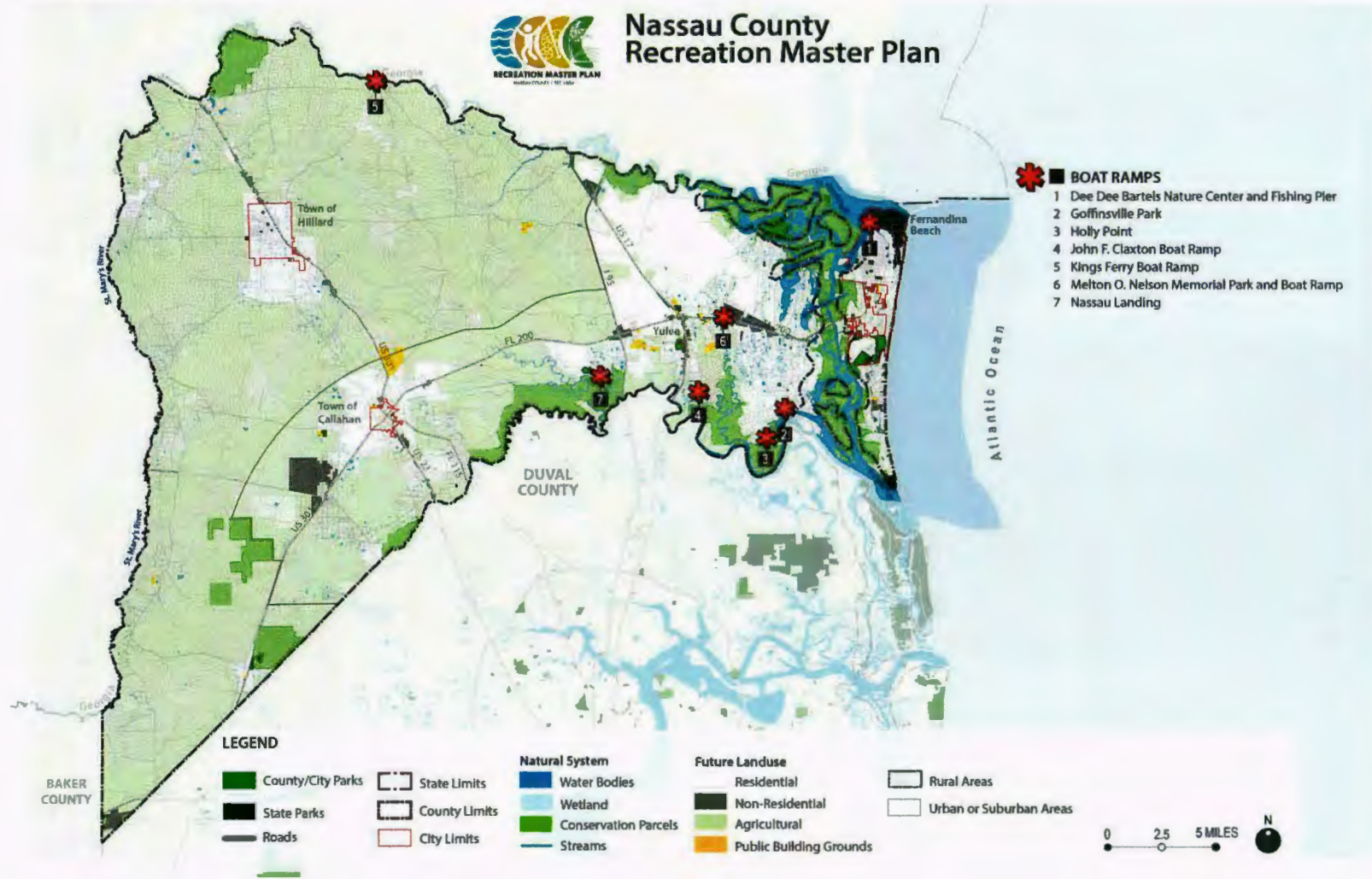
Fishing access could also be improved by identifying opportunities at all of the county's parks and boat ramps for both freshwater and saltwater bank fishing, docks, and piers. In many cases, a simple floating dock - located away from boat ramps to reduce potential conflicts - could significantly increase access.



Kings Ferry Boat Ramp

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FIGURE 3.34 | Proposed Boat Ramps



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12. INTEGRATION OF PARKS AND STORMWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

As the County, community developers, and other agencies develop the County-wide Parks and Open Space system, there is great potential to use Local and Regional Parks to improve water quality and reduce flooding through the integration of stormwater treatment facilities such as shallow water impoundments, rain gardens, and other dispersed water management techniques.

A case-in-point is the City of Kissimmee's signature Lakefront Park, which incorporated rain gardens and baffles to treat stormwater runoff, capture sediments, and intercept trash to improve the water quality of the adjacent Lake Toho (**Figure 3.35**). Another, more ambitious example is Atlanta's 17-acre Historic Fourth Ward Park, "a glistening oasis where there once stood little more than cracked asphalt, trash-strewn fields, and an empty promise of something more" (**Figure 3.36** on the following page). The park was designed as a stormwater detention basin to increase storm-sewer capacity, reduce the burden on the City's aging infrastructure, and minimize downstream flooding and property damage. It was also designed as a central gathering space to help stabilize the surrounding neighborhoods. Amenities include open lawns, two playgrounds, a splashpad, an outdoor amphitheater, a "world-class" skatepark, and a large, multi-use athletic field.

FIGURE 3.35 | Rain gardens at Kissimmee Lakefront Park



As in many transformative projects that increase local sustainability and resiliency, the Historic Fourth Ward Park also serves as a model of collaboration. Public and private partners included the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, Georgia Power utility, and BB&T bank. In addition to addressing flooding and stormwater issues, the project has significantly increased surrounding property values; stabilized surrounding neighborhoods; attracted thousands of residents and visitors for fitness, recreation, socialization, and special events; and saved the City more than \$15 million from the original plans to build a traditional, stand-alone stormwater facility. Additionally, ongoing irrigation and maintenance costs were reduced through the use of native plants, dynamic soils, and solar panels.

FIGURE 3.36 | Atlanta's Historic Fourth Ward Park



FIGURE 3.37 | Atlanta's Historic Fourth Ward Park, April 16, 2016 – 4" Rain Event



FIGURE 3.38 | Atlanta's Historic Fourth Ward Park, Three Days Later

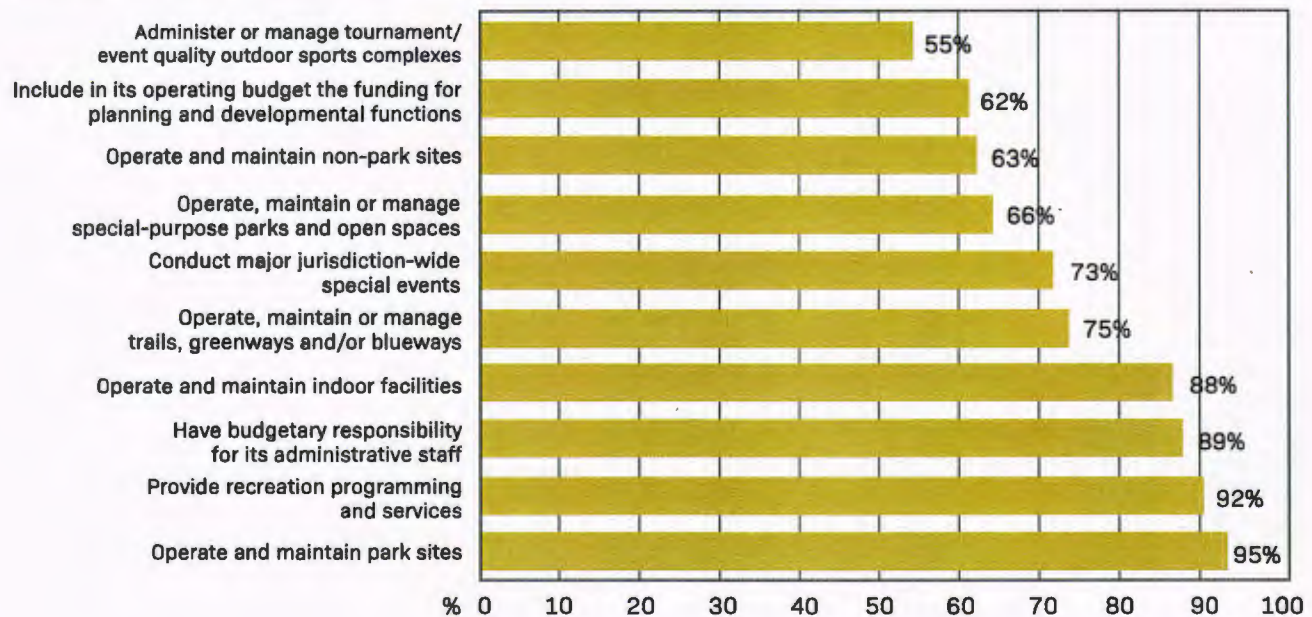


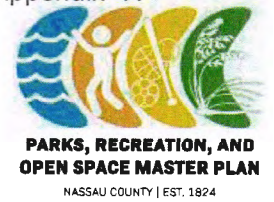
13. RECREATION, HEALTH, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The county-wide survey indicated that residents' top priority program needs include special events, fitness and wellness programs, environmental and nature education programs, movies in the park, arts and crafts programs, and water fitness programs. Currently, the Nassau County Parks and Recreation Department does not provide recreational programming, other than working with local youth athletic associations to offer youth sports in Yulee, Hilliard, Callahan, and Bryceville. However, several other agencies offer a wide variety of programs, including the Council on Aging, City of Fernandina Beach, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, County libraries, and private recreation providers.

The County's vision is to foster relationships with these and other agencies to meet residents' programming needs, acting as a programming "facilitator" rather than a "provider." The County's role, for example, might include providing space for other agencies' programs at County parks and buildings; publishing and promoting a comprehensive, on-line county-wide programs calendar that lists all of the agencies' program offerings; and providing seed money to initiate new programs to meet residents' needs. As program offerings and attendance continue to increase, the County may decide to hire its own programming staff – as many counties have done – or continue serving as a facilitator. **Figure 3.39** from the National Recreation and Park Association indicates that approximately 92% of parks and recreation agencies in the U.S. provide recreation programs and services.

FIGURE 3.39 | Key Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies) (source: NRPA)



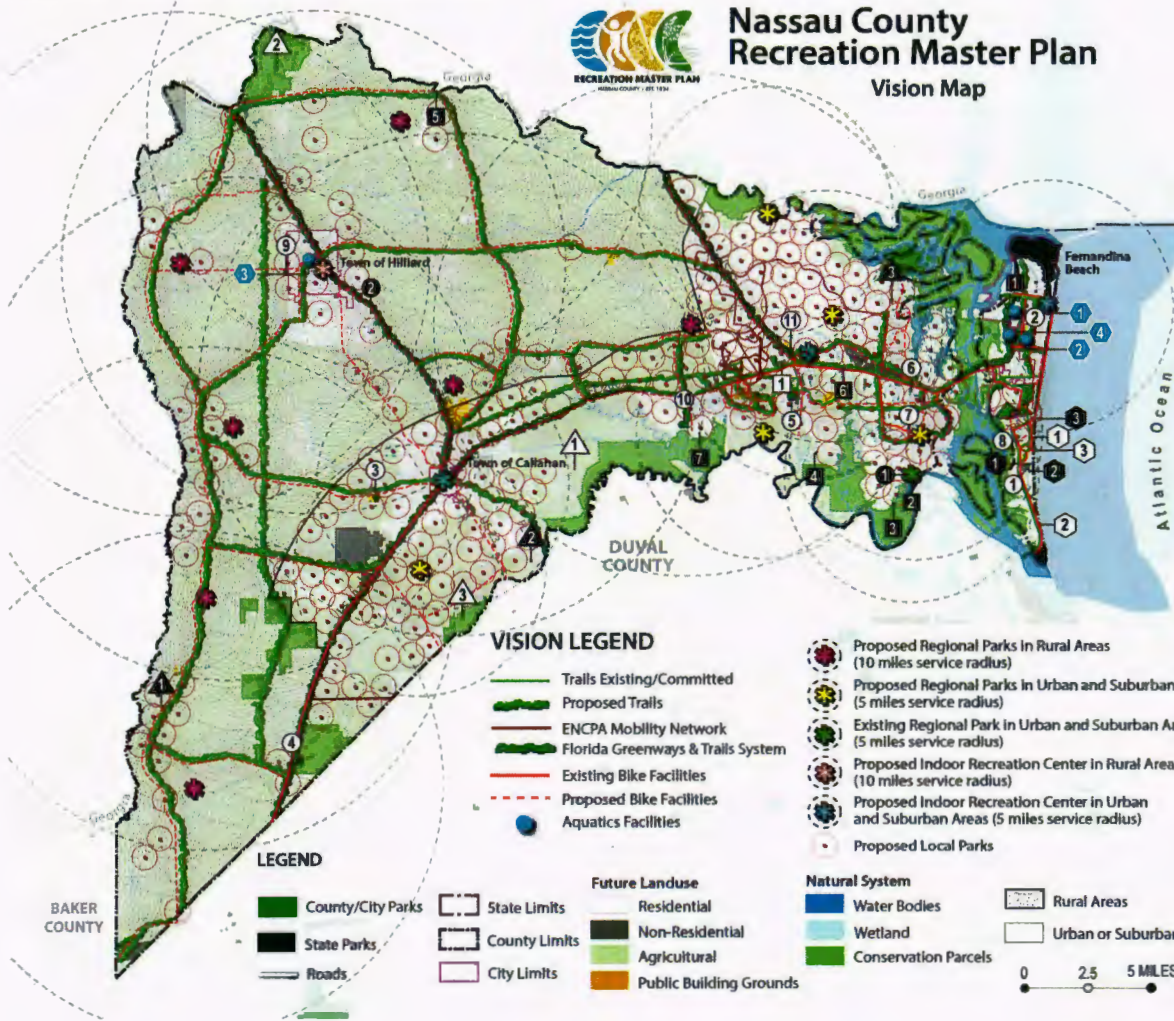


OVERALL LONG-RANGE VISION

Figure 3.40 illustrates the overall, long-range, County-wide parks, recreation, and open space vision for Nassau County.

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FIGURE 3.40 | Overall Long-Range Parks and Recreation Vision



- **REGIONAL PARK**
 - 1 Goffinsville Park
 - 2 Westside (undeveloped)
- **COMMUNITY PARKS**
 - 1 American Beach Community Center and Museum
 - 2 Citrona (undeveloped)
 - 3 Kristen M. Higginbotham Sports Complex (Callahan Ballpark)
 - 4 Melissa Lynn Raulerson Sports Complex (Bryceville Ballpark)
 - 5 Nassau Crossing (proposed)
 - 6 Nassau Lakes (undeveloped)
 - 7 Nassauville (undeveloped)
 - 8 Orange Street (undeveloped)
 - 9 Stein-Tompkins Sports Complex (Hilliard Ballpark)
 - 10 Three Rivers Park (proposed)
 - 11 Yulee Sports Complex
- **ECOLOGICAL PARK**
 - 1 John Muir Ecological Park
- **BOAT RAMPS**
 - 1 Dee Dee Bartels Nature Center and Fishing Pier
 - 2 Goffinsville Park
 - 3 Holly Point
 - 4 John F. Claxton Boat Ramp
 - 5 Kings Ferry Boat Ramp
 - 6 Melton O. Nelson Memorial Park and Boat Ramp
 - 7 Nassau Landing
- **BEACH FRONT PARKS**
 - 1 American Beach Historic Park and Beach Access
 - 2 Burney Park
 - 3 Peters Point Beach Front Park
- **BEACH ACCESS**
 - 1 Scott Road Access Dune Walk
 - 2 South End Dune Walk
 - 3 Summer Beach Dune Walk
- ▲ **UNSUITABLE**
 - 1 CR 121 Site (undeveloped)
 - 2 Linda Hall (undeveloped)
 - 3 Tract C (undeveloped)
- ▲ **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS**
 - 1 Four Creeks WMA (SJRWMD)
 - 2 Ralph E. Simmons Memorial WMA (SJRWMD)
 - 3 Thomas Creek WMA (SJRWMD)
- **AQUATIC FACILITIES**
 - 1 Fernandina Beach MLK Pool
 - 2 Fernandina Beach YMCA Pool
 - 3 Hilliard Outdoor Pool
 - 4 Holistic Wellness Center

*Barth Associates

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Implementation Strategy



Implementation Strategy

Implementation comes in many forms, including new capital improvements, additional staffing, new programs, and increased maintenance.

Other forms of implementation include updates to comprehensive plans or land development regulations; partnerships with other agencies, businesses, or nonprofit organizations; changes to the agency's organizational structure; refocused delivery of programs and services in response to the agency's mission or residents' priorities; and changes to maintenance and operations procedures. Accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) is another form of implementation.

Following is a summary of current initiatives and recommendations for other forms of implementation, including updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code; capital improvements funding; staffing, operations, and maintenance plan; and a step-by-step Phase One Action Plan.



Holly Point

4.1 Current Initiatives

Within the past year, the County has taken several important steps to implement the County's new vision for its parks and recreation system.

NEW PARKS

First, the County is currently planning several new parks that include sports fields and active recreational opportunities for youth and adults to enjoy. These include the following.

- **Tributary Regional Park**, located on Edwards Road just west of I-95. On February 21, 2020, Nassau County and GreenPointe Holdings, LLC celebrated the groundbreaking for construction of the forty (40) plus acre Tributary Park, a new regional complex for sports fans and outdoor



Tributary Park groundbreaking

(source: <http://www.thecountyinsider.com/home/tributary-park-ground-breaking-ceremony>)

enthusiasts of all ages. The park will feature 'a clover' of four new baseball fields and several multi-purpose sports fields that can be configured to accommodate both youth and adult competition soccer, concessions, dog parks, children's play equipment, a future kayak launch to the Nassau River, and a significant network of trails that will connect not only to existing and future neighborhoods but also a public school site located directly adjacent to the Tributary Regional Park. Completion of the park's first phase is anticipated in 2021;

- **Nassau Crossing Park**, located on William Burgess Boulevard in Yulee. On September 20, 2019, Nassau County and Matovina & Company along with the W.R. Howell Company celebrated the groundbreaking of the first phase of Nassau Crossing Park. The 58-acre property includes both preserve areas and areas for active recreation. The new public park will include two(2) multi-purpose sports fields that can be configured to support both youth and adult competition, children's play equipment, a splash pad, picnic areas, a community plaza for farmers markets, small festivals and other community



events, outdoor fitness equipment and a network of nature trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms and picnic areas. In addition, the plan includes over 2.5 miles of paved, 10' wide multi-purpose trails that will connect the park to existing and future neighborhoods; and

- **Westside Regional Park**, a 110-acre property located on US Hwy 1 between the Towns of Hilliard and Callahan. As part of the five-year capital improvement plan adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2018, a comprehensive conceptual plan of the park is to be completed in 2020 along with full construction plans for phase one portion of the park. Construction on phase 1 is planned to commence in 2021.

IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS

In addition to the three new public parks in the development process, Nassau County is actively improving existing parks so they better serve the public. Examples include the installation of new irrigation systems on athletic fields in Hilliard, Bryceville and Callahan; improving overall site drainage at the Callahan Community Park; grading, leveling, and installing new sod on multiple athletic fields; installing shade structures in numerous parks; and replacing beach walkovers.

UPDATED RECREATION IMPACT FEES

On October 14, 2019, Nassau County increased the recreation impact fee for a new single-family home from roughly \$580 to \$2,048.90. The Recreation Impact Fee is a onetime payment made by a developer/home builder when a new home/development is being constructed. Each new single-family home now has to pay a Recreation Impact Fee of \$2,048.90. The Recreation Impact Fee can only be used to purchase park land or construct new park amenities. Recreation Impact Fees cannot be used for maintenance of parks or for other non-recreation purposes.

CONSERVATION LANDS

Nassau County has partnered with the Trust for Public Land and the North Florida Land Trust to create a conservation land acquisition program. The program is approximately 50% complete and should be fully executed by late summer/early fall 2020. A strong, well-designed conservation land acquisition program provides for a well-rounded and more inclusive park and recreation system. Conservation lands have the potential to make available an abundance of passive recreational opportunities such as equestrian trails, multi-use paths and nature trails, camping, access to rivers for kayak and canoe launches, hunting, picnicking, social gatherings and other similar uses. When combined with parks intended for active recreation, conservation lands that allow passive recreational uses can be a contributing component of a public recreation system.

TRAILS

With strong citizen request and support, Nassau County recently completed construction of the Amelia River to Sea Trail (ARTS), a 2.1-mile paved multi-use trail on Amelia Island that runs from the Atlantic Ocean (PBA #30) to the Crane Island Public Park located on the Amelia River/ICW. The Crane Island Public Park is 5.7-acre park that includes trails, boardwalks, and a fishing pier. The Crane Island park and extension of the ARTS Trail was the results of a partnership with Jack Healen and the Crane Island development team.

Funded through a competitive federal grant and consistent with citizen request, a new 4.2-mile paved multi-use trail running parallel to the Amelia Island Parkway from 8th Street (A1A) to Fletcher Ave. will begin design in 2021. Construction is anticipated to be complete in 2023/24. The new trail segment will connect with the existing Amelia Island Trail, Amelia River to Sea Trail and the Timucuan Trail in Duval County.



Newly constructed Amelia River to Sea Trail (ARTS)
(source: <https://ameliaislandliving.com/fernandinabeach/2019/09/new-amelia-river-to-sea-trail-opening/>)



4.2 Updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan

The parks and recreation vision should be integrated into the comprehensive plan and reflected through its goals, objectives, and policies.

Specific recommendations for updates to the Recreation and Open Space (ROS) Element include:

- Policy ROS.01.03:** Revise the definitions to include only "Local/Neighborhood Parks" and "Regional Parks," describing and including the prototypes developed for this plan (**Figures 3.19 and 3.21**). The definitions should include the intended activities, programs, and service areas for each park type;
- Policy ROS.01.04:** Revise the level-of-service (LOS) requirements as outlined in the next section (4.3). For example, the chart below (**Figure 4.1**) shows separate LOS requirements for local and regional parks;
- Policy ROS.01.05:** Modify the policy to state that developers will be required to construct new local parks as community infrastructure, in accordance with the County's prototype

FIGURE 4.1 | Proposed New LOS Requirements

Type	Acres/1,000 Residents	Access	Minimum Size	Other Requirements
Local Parks	2 acres	1/2 mile	2 acres	Constructed by new community developers in accordance with County prototype; managed by HOA
Regional Parks and Facilities (incl. boat ramps and beach access)	12 acres	5 miles in urban, suburban; 10 miles rural	Varies, approx. 50-150 acres	



Goffinsville Park

and LOS standards, and provide for perpetual maintenance through homeowners associations or other entities;

- **Policy ROS.01.07:** Eliminate levels-of-service requirements for recreation facilities. These requirements are obsolete - based on a 20+ year-old State-wide plan - and the County should have the flexibility to respond to changing demographics, recreation trends, land development patterns, and lifestyles; and
- **Other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan:** In order to generate the most resiliency and sustainability benefits, the County's parks and recreation vision should also be integrated into other elements including Transportation, Public School Facilities, Public Facilities, Economic Development, Housing, Conservation, Coastal Management, Regional Coordination, and the Future Land Use Plan. For example, the County's parks and open spaces can be used to treat stormwater runoff and improve water quality; preserve significant wetlands and habitat; mitigate flooding; improve adjacent property values; preserve historical character; and catalyze economic development.

Appendix A4 outlines a preliminary approach to developing the new LOS requirements, which will need to be refined once the PROSMP is approved.



4.3 Updates to the County's Land Development Code

The County should also update its Land Development Code (LDC) to implement the revised Policy ROS.01.05, requiring developers to construct and maintain new local parks as community infrastructure in accordance with the County's prototype and LOS standards.

LDC Article III Subdivision requires that developers provide two and one-half (2½) acres of parkland for every one hundred (100) dwelling units, but doesn't specify the type of park (local or regional) to be provided; the minimum park size acceptable to the County; the percentage of the site that must be developable; the specific facilities or amenities to be constructed; and the required multi-modal access or roadway frontage required. There is also inconsistency between the acreage and facility LOS mandated in the Comprehensive Plan, and the requirements in the LDC. The LDC should also include the County's new Local Park Prototype (**Figure 3.21**), which prescribes the required facilities and amenities, and illustrates the relationship and interconnectivity between park elements.



Pavilion at Stein-Tompkins Park

4.4 Capital Improvements Funding

Parks and recreation funding generally falls into two categories: pay-as-you-go and borrowing.

Pay-as-you-go funding is based on incoming revenues such as ad valorem (property) taxes, impact fees from new development, sales taxes, special assessments, grants, impact fees, user fees, and other revenues regularly collected by local government. Funding for parks and recreation facilities, renovation, repairs, programs, and staffing may vary from year to year according to projected revenues. It is very difficult to rely solely on pay-as-you-go funding for parks and recreation capital improvements, operations, and maintenance because of its unpredictability from year to year and the difficulty of amassing sufficient funds for significant projects.

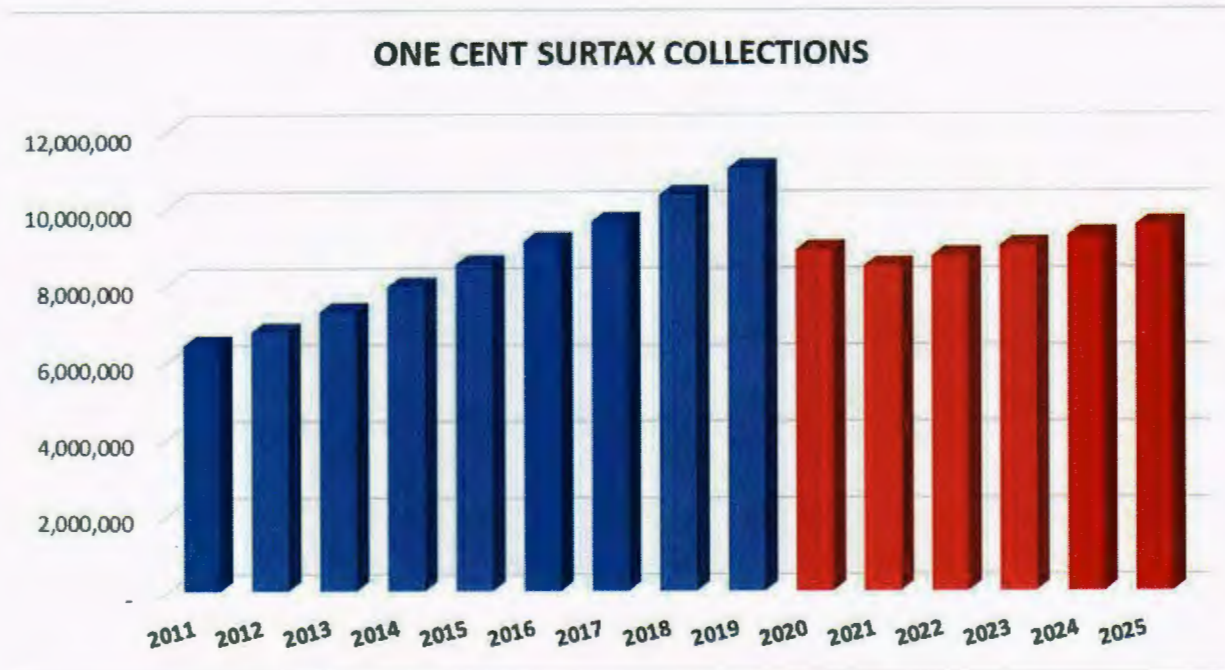
When pay-as-you-go measures are not adequate to fund proposed improvements, agencies may choose to borrow the money and pay it back over a period of time, usually 20 to 30 years. Bonds are issued and paid back through an existing revenue stream (such as utility payments) or through a voter-approved increase in ad valorem taxes for the life of the bond.

Estimated costs for the top priorities from the long-range Parks and Recreation Vision exceed \$139 million, while funding commitments specifically for recreation in the current five-year capital

improvement plan total just over \$10M from a combination of impact fees, sales tax revenues, and federal grant monies. The County has allocated funding on a pay-as-you-go basis to fund both new and existing parks and recreation needs, including just under \$4.5M from a combination of general revenue and impact fees to fund the West Side Regional Park; \$4M in Federal LAP funding for a multi-use trail project on Amelia Island; and \$1.75M from projected sales tax revenues to implement improvements to existing parks, beach accesses, and boat ramps. Although development is projected to continue at a rapid pace, impact fee collections will likely not increase at the same rate as overall new development due to sizeable recreation impact fee credits that were granted for the two developer-funded projects, Tributary and Nassau Crossing, that are mentioned above. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on sales tax revenues that are typically allocated to fund capital projects. Over the next five years, the County is projecting a loss of almost \$11M in one-cent surtax funds from pre-pandemic collections, with a full recovery not expected until well outside the five-year time horizon (see **Figure 4.2** on the following page).



FIGURE 4.2 | One Cent Surtax Collections



Competing priorities for capital needs coupled with constrained revenues over the foreseeable future will compound the difficulty with which the pay-as-you-go strategy can be used to fully implement a comprehensive parks and recreation strategy, and so alternative funding sources must be considered as part of the long-range planning process. The County has seen some success in obtaining transportation grants to fund trail projects, however a more robust approach to competitive grants should be included as part of the overall funding strategy for recreation; whether that be through external consultants, building an internal staff of grant writers, or a combination of both. External financing for long-term capital needs may also come into play as the County looks to implement the parks and recreation plan.

To that extent, Nassau County has contracted with a financial advising firm to assist with developing funding strategies to execute future capital projects. This could include a number of short and long-term financing options, including bonds and loans, to ensure that a sound, long-range financial plan is implemented. For example, the County may wish to include land acquisition for regional parks in the proposed conservation lands bond referendum.

Figure 4.3 outlines a potential 10-year, +/- \$140M first phase of implementation.

FIGURE 4.3 | Ten-Year, Phase 1 Estimated Costs

	10-YEAR TOTAL
1. UPGRADE EXISTING PARKS, +/- \$5.5M	
1.2. Update local and regional parks with "Basic Improvement" amenities - \$5M (19 parks, avg \$250k)	\$4.75M
1.3. Develop new parks master plans where needed (10 parks @ \$50k)	\$500k
Subtotals:	\$5.25M
2. ACQUIRE LAND FOR NEW REGIONAL PARKS, +/- \$60M	
2.1. Identify potential sites, conduct feasibility studies, negotiate contracts (12 sites @ \$100k each)	\$1.2M
2.2. Acquire land through fee simple acquisition, conservation easements, or donation (12 park sites @ avg 100 acres, avg. \$50k/acre)	\$60M
2.3. Construct low cost, initial improvements such as trails (allowance)	\$1M
Subtotals:	\$62.2M
3. IMPROVE BEACH ACCESS, +/- \$10M	
3.1. Conduct beach access study, select preferred alternatives (estimate)	\$100K
3.2. Develop design standards (estimate)	\$50K
3.3. Implement preferred improvements, such as acquisition of additional beachfront or off-beach land for parking; improvements to existing accesses; additional/ improved dune walkovers; peak weekend and holiday beach parking shuttles; real-time beach parking reports on peak weekends and holidays (allowance)	\$10M
Subtotals:	\$10.15M
4. IMPROVE FISHING ACCESS, +/- \$2M	
4.1. Conduct additional surveys, identify alternatives (in-house)	-
4.2. Design and improve access through floating docks, piers, shore access, etc. (allowance)	\$2M
Subtotals:	\$2M



	10-YEAR TOTAL
5. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HEALTH, FITNESS, RECREATION, AND SPECIAL EVENT PROGRAMS, +/- \$2.5M OVER 10 YEARS (\$250K/YR)	
5.1. Hire a Parks and Recreation Director/ Program Coordinator - \$75k + benefits	\$75k
5.2. Initiate pilot programs with partners, 5-year plan, county-wide calendar ("seed money")	\$150k
Subtotals:	\$225k
6. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RECREATION AND AQUATICS CENTERS, +/- \$40M	
6.1. Conduct a feasibility study for a new indoor recreation center and water park (in the Yulee area?), including capital, O&M costs, and projected revenues (estimate)	\$100k
6.2. Design and construct a 60,000+/- s.f. center and water park - \$40M + land costs	\$40M
Subtotals:	\$40.1M
7. DEVELOP OFF-ROAD BIKEWAYS AND TRAILS NETWORK, +/- \$20M	
7.1. Acquire corridors, build trails (top priorities from Bikeways and Trail Master Plan) (allowance)	\$20M
Subtotals:	\$20M
8. PROTECT AND ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS, BUDGET TBD	
8.1. Protect environmental lands through conservation easements, fee-simple acquisition, other protection (Bond Referendum November 2020)	TBD
Subtotals:	TBD
9. INTEGRATE PARKS WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, \$250K	
9.1. Develop a county-wide Stormwater Master Plan (one of the County's "Foundational Plans"), including opportunities to co-locate stormwater treatment facilities with new regional parks, and opportunities to co-locate stormwater conveyance corridors with trails and bikeways (allowance)	\$250k
Subtotals:	\$250k
TOTAL:	+/- \$140M

4.5 Staffing, Operations, & Maintenance

PROS Consulting evaluated the existing recreation programs and services offered by the County as well as other organizations such as the City of Fernandina Beach, Hilliard Parks and Recreation, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Nassau County Council on Aging.

As a result of this analysis, it was determined that the County needs to establish a parks and recreation department or division, including some level of dedicated staff, to focus on the following issues:

- Role of the County in providing parks and recreation services;
- Organizational structure;
- Programs to be provided directly or indirectly;
- Partnerships with other recreation service providers, to avoid duplication;
- Programming and activating existing facilities;
- County maintenance roles and responsibilities;
- Efficient and effective operations via key policy development; and
- Operations funding.

Following are recommendations for staffing, operations, and maintenance.

1. ROLE OF THE COUNTY

Currently, the County owns and operates a variety of parks and recreation facilities. County recreation facilities are managed by Public Works and primarily consist of small parks along local beaches and boat ramp access parks. These facilities have limited amenities at each site that primarily consist of parking for boat trailers, general parking, restrooms, small picnic shelters, and playgrounds. In addition, the County has several small meeting centers for group gatherings in their inventory, along with a small number of sports complexes for youth baseball, softball, soccer, and basketball, and undeveloped natural areas.



These park properties primarily have not been master planned and have not been driven by a set of program or design standards.

The County provides no direct programming on these sites; they are largely permitted to sports associations or offered on a first-come, first-served basis, such as for the use of the indoor and outdoor group gathering spaces and picnic shelters. Organizations such as the City of Fernandina Beach, Hilliard Parks and Recreation, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Nassau County Council on Aging provide some level of recreation programs to local residents, but all are limited by indoor and outdoor facility space. In addition, several youth sports associations provide programs for youth football, basketball, soccer, baseball, and softball at County-owned facilities, which they help maintain.

Discussions with the City Manager of Fernandina Beach revealed that a duplication of services may be occurring between City and County facilities, now and in the future. The City Manager suggested that the County should consider helping the City update their existing facilities in need of improvement prior to building new, similar facilities, as the City often supports the recreation needs of County residents.

Maintenance levels at parks visited for this analysis were at an average level of care for mowing, trash pickup, and restroom cleaning.

Going forward, a working park maintenance and program plan should be designed to guide operations for the next five years. This plan should determine which existing facilities should be updated and where new facilities are required. Partnership agreements need to be established for all existing recreation

service providers where they use County park facilities, and they should be updated yearly.

Existing parks owned by the County should have specific park site master plans, detailing additional amenities required to best support the needs of users. The park site master plans should include program plans to serve more users and provide more experiences. Some park sites need additional land for expansion to provide more than, for example, a boat launch site, fishing dock, and picnic area. Some sites have adjacent park areas owned by other agencies that could be combined as one site to provide a more enjoyable park experience.

Maintenance standards at all sites need to be updated for restrooms, trash pickup, trails, parking lots, signage to access the park, and in-park signage.

2. ORGANIZATION

To help accomplish implement the recommendations from this master plan, the County Parks and Recreation Department should have a Director of Parks and Recreation, a Recreation Program Manager, and an office manager. Additionally, existing park maintenance staff (members of the Public Works Department) should report to the new Director of Parks and Recreation. Two full-time park maintenance staff and three seasonal maintenance staff would be required to maintain existing County park sites, clean existing County park indoor facilities and grounds, and help recreation staff set up for special events and activities throughout the year.

New Staff Roles

Director of Parks and Recreation

The County needs to first hire a well-qualified and energetic Director of Parks and Recreation. The Director of Parks and Recreation needs to meet with other parks and recreation service providers in the county to establish a baseline of services currently offered and assess program gaps. It should be determined how the County can help support those under-served by park and recreation amenities, both in city and county locations. The new Parks and Recreation Director also needs to meet with all recreation and park services providers who use County parks to share the recommendations of this master plan.

Responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Director should include:

- Implement the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan and communicate their efforts to the County Commission and the community on a yearly basis;
- Meet with park and recreation service providers in the county and get to understand their goals and needs;
- Determine where future County parks should be located and determine how to acquire land for those parks;
- Evaluate budget and capital development each year regarding improvements to existing parks and developing new parks;
- Develop site master plans for existing and future parks;

- Focus on a county-wide trails plan to link County parks with City and town parks and also connect to major attractions in the county;
- Seek out all available funding sources to support the Department for the future; and
- Manage existing staff, volunteers, and partners to implement recommendations in the master plan.

Recreation Program Manager

A well-qualified, energetic Recreation Program Manager should likewise be hired by the County to help implement the vision for the parks system outlined in this master plan.

Responsibilities of the Recreation Program Manager should include:

- Develop a program plan for the County, working with other service providers as to not duplicate but rather compliment programs offered by others. Duplication will only occur when there is a need to do so. Other programs should be supported where appropriate;
- Utilize existing park areas to encourage more use and awareness;
- Develop an online program guide for people to learn about County recreation programs and services as well as other service providers;
- Develop a marketing strategy for the parks and recreation department;
- Develop a list of contract instructors to be available to teach classes and programs;



- Establish a volunteer program to help activate special events across the county;
- Develop at least six to eight special events a year for youth and adults at various beach sites or large open space sites that focus on food, entertainment, beach activities, running and cycling events, outdoor events, and sporting events;
- Develop partnership agreements with other service providers who use County property to provide programs to youth and adults. These programs would use contract instructors to teach these programs and pay them from user fees; and
- Create strategies for County programs in adult sports, wellness and fitness, camps, special events and competitions, outdoor adventure, and family-related programs.
- Manage the forestry elements of parks;
- Manage the mowing and cleaning of sports fields;
- Support program staff in the set-up and take-down of equipment used for special events;
- Work with park volunteers on clean-up and fix-up days in County parks;
- Manage signage, branding, parking lots, and park amenities in a consistent manner; and
- Establish costs for new park development and maintenance.

3. PROGRAMS

General Program Recommendations

The new Recreation Program Manager should assist existing program service providers in their specific communities where there is a need to deliver more programs to under-served residents. The Recreation Program Manager should also develop programs for County residents that primarily focus on the following.

- Develop a maintenance management system that focuses on set maintenance standards for all County parks, trails, sports fields, and natural areas;
- Hire contractors to clean parks;
- Teach, train, and manage maintenance staff (full-time, part-time, as well as seasonal) to clean, update, and manage park sites;
- Manage equipment assigned to parks staff and shop operations;
- Special events at beach sites;
- Competitions like running and cycling events;
- Food and entertainment events across the county where there is ample parking;
- Summer day camps for kids at community centers and in areas of the county that are under-served by summer camp programs;

Park Superintendent

This position should be under the new County Parks and Recreation Director, responsible for duties listed below.

- Focus on using contract instructors to deliver programs such as group fitness classes at County community meeting center sites and environmental education programs at natural area park sites;
- Expand adult sports where cities are not providing services at school district properties if available;
- Establish county-wide special events and competitions like kayak races along coastal waters or fishing tournaments for kids and adults at County park sites;
- Establish outdoor adventure programs using existing County park sites; and
- Coordinate other County-driven programs at city, town, and school district sites with the goal of uniting all residents through County programs and services. This can help increase awareness that the County is providing recreation services.

Programming at Existing Facilities and Beaches

The County should develop a program plan for each of their small group facilities and determine what is needed in areas of the County not served by other parks and recreation providers. Examples of programs that could be provided are as follows.

- Preschool programs for 3-6-year olds that involve parents as part of the program;
- Dance classes for youth and adults;
- Group fitness programs;
- Gymnastics types of classes for youth using mats;
- Environmental education programs for youth and adults;
- Training programs for volunteers;
- Movie nights;



*Tai Chi at Nassau County Council on Aging Fernandina Beach Life Center
(source: <https://www.nassaucountycouncilonaging.org/our-mission/senior-life-centers/>)*



- Meetings for youth sports groups and scouts;
- Senior education programs and small special events;
- Wellness and fitness programs for people with disabilities; and
- Teen e-sport nights for playing e-sport games.

The County should also determine the best programs for each beach area based on park size, parking spaces, and participant needs. Examples of beach programs include:

- Family camping nights on the beach;
- Weekly farmers' markets;
- Various types of events on the beach, such as:
 - New Year's Day Resolution Beach Run;
 - Beach running events every month;
 - Triathlon;
 - 'Over-the-Line' Softball Tournament (a three-person beach game which is very popular on the west coast, especially in San Diego);

- Sand bicycle races;
- Cross-country beach races;
- Paddle sport races;
- Special music events with a stage on beach parking lots;
- Half-marathon;
- 'Art-on-the-Beach' walk;
- Car shows such as a Low Rider Cruise night;
- Mud Day for kids on the beach;
- 4th of July beach parade;
- Beach events which include bocce ball, cornhole, and beach volleyball competitions;
- 25-mile beach ride highlighting Nassau County beaches;
- Beach Music Special Events with live entertainment playing beach type music; and
- Establish a river trails kayak program going from one Nassau County park to another.

All these types of events could have a strong economic impact for the county if provided on an annual basis.



Kayaking on the St. Marys River

(source: <http://jacksonvillekayakcompany.com/kayak-tours-jacksonville-amelia-island-st-marys-cumberland-island/kayaking-on-amelia-island-fernandia-beach/>)

4. COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

The new parks and recreation department should recognize what other service providers in the county are providing to the community. This would include reviewing and understanding their existing park and recreation master plans and what those plans recommend for their localities. The Director should meet with these other service providers on a regular basis and support their needs publicly when beneficial.

The Director should update the other service providers on how the County is progressing on elements in the PROSMP, such as updating existing park sites, adding new parks to the system, and developing needed amenities in under-served areas of the county for the future.

Another role of the new Recreation Program Manager should be to develop a matrix that shows programs offered by provider, location, frequency, time of year, and users to demonstrate unmet program needs for youth, adults, seniors, and families in the county.

This program plan should be done monthly and posted on the County's parks and recreation web site. This also offers the County an opportunity to build program awareness.

If there is a need to duplicate efforts of a city or town provider to an area of the county, the Recreation Program Manager will inform the other service provider of the program being offered, why and who the target market is, and if there is a fee.

5. EXISTING FACILITIES

The County needs to complete a full asset life-cycle assessment of regional facilities in partnership with the City or agency involved. This would include determining the current level of use, users, when utilized, and seasonal nature to determine if they need capital improvements. This also should identify the areas that need the most updating and what elements could be expanded to increase the level of use and increase operational revenue to offset operational costs. This would include capital improvement costs and what role the County should play in updating the facility financially, if any. This should apply to regional parks and facilities only.

In some cases, facilities that have the ability to recover a portion of their operational cost should establish a business plan regarding what needs to be updated, who benefits from the improvements, the costs entailed for updates, how it will be financed, and what level of cost recovery the facility can generate to offset operational cost. Examples of such facilities include a major sports complex, large community center, golf course, aquatic center, or tennis center.

6. MAINTENANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The County should financially support upgrading existing city- or town-owned regional park and recreation facilities by first helping improve the City facilities before building new for the County. Ideally,



the County, city and towns involved in providing recreation and park services should evaluate their providers' regional assets and determine their life cycle. Cost options should then be provided to update, expand, remove, or enhance these amenities and keep them well-positioned for the future to serve residents in the most cost-effective manner.

7. POLICIES

To operate in the most efficient and effective manner, there are five key policies that the Nassau County Parks and Recreation Department needs to have in place:

- A pricing policy classifying services as core essential, important, and value added. The policy is based on the level of public and private good a user or group receives over a general taxpayer. An example is when a user has exclusive private use of an amenity, they should pay a percentage of the cost to operate that facility for the time period involved, such as a private reservation of a group picnic shelter;
- A partnership policy that addresses public/public, public/not-for-profit, and public/private partnerships in developing community-based facilities and programs;
- A land use policy on how to develop and operate parks, natural areas, and greenway trail systems;
- An earned income policy on how to create earned income and keep the following sources in the budget to support operational costs of the Department. Examples include:

- Concessions;
- Permits;
- Sponsorships;
- User fees;
- Naming rights;
- Private fundraisers;
- Rentals;
- Boat launch fees;
- Food permits;
- Advertising; and
- Staffing and Human Resources Policies.

Key performance measures should also be established, such as cost recovery levels for programs, number of park user complaints resolved, number of programs the County offers that meet the minimum of users to hold the class or program, level of use at each park site, program standards met, maintenance standards met, and vandalism in parks.

8. ORDER OF MAGNITUDE OPERATING COSTS

The County should be obligated to provide sufficient funding for maintenance and operation of public recreation facilities. Developers of private Local Parks and private bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall be obligated to provide sufficient funding for maintenance and operation of private Local Parks.

PROS Consulting estimates that the County should initially increase parks and recreation operations spending to approximately \$45-50 dollars per capita, which equates to approximately \$4-4.5M per year.

4.6 Action Plan

Following are proposed actions for implementing the first phase of the long-range vision.

1. UPGRADE EXISTING PARKS TO MEET RESIDENTS' NEEDS

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager;
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval; and
- Hire/assign a Parks and Recreation Director as the first priority that has the level of experience and high energy level to deliver on the implementation of the PROSMP. The second hire should be a Parks Superintendent who understands all elements of what a quality park maintenance department looks like and who can deliver on that level of care for Nassau County Parks and Recreation.

Outline Scope:

1. Update local and regional park prototypes with "Basic Improvement Package" amenities (Parks Master Plan). Focus on park experiences for all age segments.
2. Determine which improvements are appropriate for each existing park (Parks Master Plan), prioritizing improvements that will service the widest age segment of appeal.

3. Develop design standards and details.
4. Develop new parks master plans where needed.
5. Estimate total costs for upgrades.
6. Prioritize improvements.
7. Determine Phase One, 5-year CIP Budget.
8. Determine construction-delivery method: in-house, design-build, and design-bid-build.
9. Secure funding sources for capital and for operational costs before construction begins.
10. Construct improvements over next 5 years.
11. Hold ribbon-cuttings as parks are upgraded.
12. Contract with program staff or other partners who can program the park to activate the spaces developed.

Required Resources:

- Project manager;
- Landscape architect; and
- Capital funding.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: Upgrade All Existing Parks with Basic Improvements



2. ACQUIRE LAND FOR NEW REGIONAL PARKS

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Refine parameters for new park sites, e.g. with or without recreation and aquatic centers (Parks Master Plan).
2. Refine conceptual plan to illustrate locations of sites (Parks Master Plan).
3. Estimate costs of land acquisition (Parks Master Plan).
4. Secure the money to buy the land, develop a master plan for the proposed site and to develop phase one construction of the approved master plan when finished.
5. Determine Phase One, 5-Year Budget.
6. Prioritize locations.
7. Identify candidate sites in collaboration with the Conservation and Land Acquisition Management Program.

8. Contact land owners re: interest, willingness to sell or donate.
9. Conduct due diligence, feasibility studies on top priority sites.
10. Negotiate and close purchase of sites.
11. Allow low-cost public access, such as trails.
12. Hold ribbon-cuttings.

Resources:

- Project manager;
- Director of Parks and Recreation;
- Landscape architect, engineer, ecologist, geotechnical, etc.;
- Land acquisition specialist, e.g. land trust or real estate agent; and
- Land acquisition funding.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: Acquire 3-5 Sites within the Next 5 Years

3. IMPROVE BEACH ACCESS

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Conduct beach access study to clarify the issues, identify alternatives (such as acquire additional beachfront or off-beach land for parking; improve existing accesses; add or improve dune walkovers; charge beach parking fees; provide peak weekend and holiday beach parking shuttles; provide real-time beach parking reports on peak weekends and holidays). Also identify applicable permitting requirements from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and other jurisdictions.
2. Select preferred alternatives, potentially working with partners such as Council on Aging (shuttles), commercial property owners (off-beach parking).

3. Develop design standards and details.
4. Estimate total costs for upgrades.
5. Prioritize improvements.
6. Determine Phase One, 5-year CIP Budget.
7. Determine construction-delivery method: in-house, design-build, or design-bid-build.
8. Construct improvements over next 5 years.
9. Hold ribbon-cuttings as accesses are opened, upgraded.
10. Re-survey the community annually (intercept, on-line, or mail surveys) to track resident satisfaction

Resources:

- Project manager;
- Parks and Recreation Director;
- Parking consultant; and
- Engineer, landscape architect.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: Complete Parking Study, Implement Top Recommendations



4. IMPROVE FISHING ACCESS

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Conduct additional surveys (intercept, on-line, or mail) to determine gaps in fishing access, piers, docks.
2. Identify potential projects to improve access, e.g. floating docks, piers, shore access, etc.
3. Develop design standards and details.
4. Establish a program plan for the park and budget to operate.
5. Estimate total costs for upgrades.
6. Prioritize improvements.
7. Determine Phase One, 5-year CIP Budget.
8. Determine construction-delivery method: in-house, design-build, or design-bid-build.
9. Construct improvements over next 5 years.
10. Hold ribbon-cuttings as accesses are opened or upgraded.

Resources:

- Project manager; and
- Engineer, landscape architect.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: 5 Fishing Access Improvement Projects over the Next 5 Years

5. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HEALTH, FITNESS, RECREATION, AND SPECIAL EVENT PROGRAMS

Initial Actions:

- Hire/assign a Recreation Program Manager;
- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Identify gaps in programs and special events desired by County residents, according to the needs assessment (Parks Master Plan).
2. Determine which programs and special events the County would like to provide or facilitate at County parks and facilities (Parks Master Plan).
3. Identify potential providers and partners that could fill the gaps, such as the City of Fernandina Beach, Council on Aging, YMCA, B&G club, etc.

4. Begin low-cost pilot program(s) to test response for 1 year; promote through social media, marketing, etc.
5. Develop a 5-year programming and marketing plan based on desired County roles, response to pilot program(s), partnerships.
6. Re-survey the community annually (intercept, on-line, or mail surveys) to track resident satisfaction.

Resources:

- Project manager;
- Program providers and partners; and
- Communications, social media, and marketing staff or consultant.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: Pilot Programs, Programming Plan



6. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RECREATION AND AQUATICS CENTERS

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Determine long-range vision for recreation, community, and aquatics centers, including the preferred service-delivery model and role(s) of the County (Parks Master Plan).
2. Prioritize locations, e.g. Yulee (Parks Master Plan).
3. Determine scope and budget for first project, e.g. 60,000 square feet indoor community center and water park, \$40M + land acquisition (note: Yulee location may be a stand-alone site, not located within a larger regional park, because of higher land costs).
4. Identify potential partners for capital investment, programming, operations and maintenance.
5. Conduct a feasibility study including the proposed development program, floor plan and elevations, estimated costs (capital and O&M), projected revenues, cost recovery.
6. Determine construction-delivery method: in-house, design-build, or design-bid-build.
7. Develop a master site plan, schematic design, design and construction documents.
8. Construct improvements over next 5 years.
9. Hold ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

Resources:

- Project manager;
- Partner agencies for capital, programming, operations and maintenance; and
- Full design and construction team.

PHASE ONE PRIORITY: Feasibility Study, Site Acquisition for Yulee Recreation and Aquatics Center

7. PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Initial Actions:

- Assign County project manager; and
- Prepare project charter and plan (scope and schedule) for approval.

Outline Scope:

1. Determine long-range vision for recreation, community, and aquatics centers, including the preferred service-delivery model and role(s) of the County (Parks Master Plan).
2. Prioritize locations, e.g. Yulee (Parks Master Plan).
3. Determine scope and budget for 1st project, e.g. 60,000 square feet indoor center + water park, \$40M + land acquisition (note: Yulee location may be a stand-alone site, not located within a larger regional park, because of higher land costs).
4. Identify potential partners for capital investment, programming, operations and maintenance.
5. Establish an economic impact model to demonstrate the economic value associated with a new community center and aquatic center facility
6. Conduct a feasibility study including the proposed development program, floor plan and elevations, estimated costs (capital and O&M), projected revenues, cost recovery.
7. Determine construction-delivery method: in-house, design-build, or design-bid-build.
8. Develop a master site plan, schematic design, design and construction documents.
9. Construct improvements over next 5 years.
10. Implement the start up of the management of the community center 6 months before it is open.
11. Pre-market the facility to the community to generate excitement and revenue before it is open.
12. Hold ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

Resources:

- Project manager;
- Partner agencies for capital, programming, operations & maintenance; and
- Full design and construction team.

Phase One Priority: Feasibility Study, Site Acquisition for Yulee Recreation and Aquatics Center



TOP 10 SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

The following short-term actions should be initiated within FY 2020/2021:

Staffing

- Hire a Certified Parks and Recreation Director; and
- Hire or Contract for Parks Planning, Landscape Architecture Services.

Planning, Feasibility, and Funding Studies

- Beach Parking and Access Study;
- Yulee Recreation and Aquatics Center;
- Comprehensive Plan and LDCs; and
- 10-Year Parks and Recreation Strategic/Funding Plan.

Capital Improvements

- Upgrade Existing Parks with the "Basic Nassau Package";
- Acquire Land for Regional Parks; and
- Improve Fishing and Kayak Access at Existing Parks.

Programming

- Develop and Implement a Pilot Programming Plan.

Appendices



Appendices

- A1 National & Regional
Recreational Trends Analysis**

- A2 Stakeholder/Focus Group
Interview Notes**

- A3 On-line Survey Results**

- A4 Preliminary Level-of-Service
Standards**

A1

National & Regional Recreational Trends Analysis



Following is a national and regional recreational trends analysis, developed by Barth Associates' sub-consultant PROS Consulting, Inc.

1.4 RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends as well as generational participation trends. Trends data used for this analysis was obtained from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). All trends data is based on current and/or historical participation rates, statistically valid survey results, or NRPA Park Metrics.

1.4.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN RECREATION

METHODOLOGY

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) *Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2019* was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- National Sport and Fitness Participatory Trends
- Core vs. Casual Participation Trends
- Participation by Generation
- Non-Participant Interest by Age Segment



The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2018 by the Physical Activity Council (PAC) resulting in a total of 20,069 online interviews. Surveys were administered to all genders, ages, income levels, regions, and ethnicities to allow for statistical accuracy of the national population. A sample size of 20,069 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of 5% has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.31 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 300,652,039 people (ages six and older). The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S.

CORE VS. CASUAL PARTICIPATION

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual vs. core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness and recreational activities more than 50 times per year. While for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year.

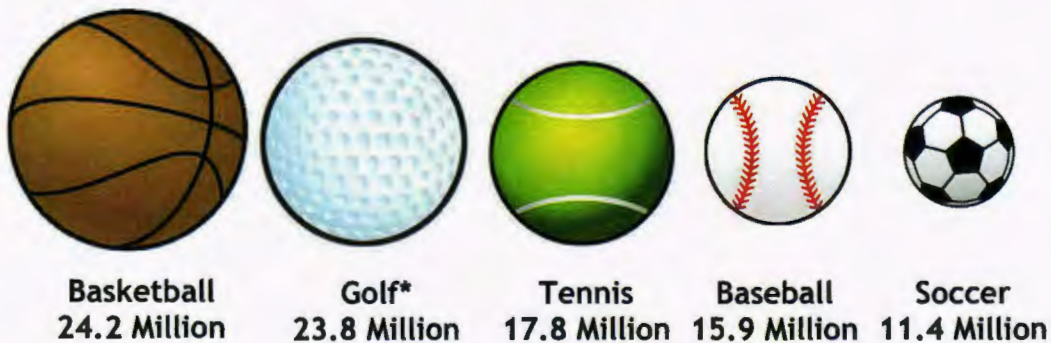
In a given activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The most heavily participated in sports in the United States were Basketball (24.2 million) and Golf (23.8 million in 2017) These have participation figures well in excess of the other activities within the general sports category and were followed by Tennis (17.8 million), Baseball (15.9 million), and Soccer (11.4 million).

Even though Golf has experienced a recent decrease in participation, it still continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a life-long sport. Basketball's success can be attributed to the minimum amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary. These factors make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at most American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game.



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Since 2013, Roller Hockey (33.6%) and Rugby (31.9%) have emerged as the overall fastest growing sports. During the last five-years, Baseball (19.5%), Cheerleading (18.7%), and Flag Football (17.1%) have also experienced significant growth. Based on the five-year trend, the sports that are most rapidly declining include Ultimate Frisbee (-46.6%), Touch Football (-22.7%), Tackle Football (-16.4%), Badminton (-11.4%), and Outdoor Soccer (-10.4%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

In general, the most recent year shares a similar pattern with the five-year trends: Pickleball (5.4%), Basketball (3.5%), and Baseball (1.5%) are experiencing the greatest increases in participation this past year. However, some sports that increased rapidly over the past five years have experienced recent decreases in participation such as Roller Hockey (-5.5%). Other sports including Squash (-13.9%) and Ultimate Frisbee (-13.3%) have also seen a significant decrease in participants over the last year.

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

Highly participated in sports, such as Basketball, Baseball, and Slow Pitch Softball, have a larger core participant base (participation at 13+ times per year) than casual participant base (participation at one to 12 times per year). While less mainstream sports, such as Ultimate Frisbee, Roller Hockey, Squash, and Boxing for Competition have larger casual participation base. These participants may be more inclined to switch to other sports or fitness activities, which is likely why they have all experienced a decline in participation this past year. *Please see Appendix A for full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.*



National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2013	2017	2018	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Golf (9 or 18-Hole Course)	24,720	23,829	N/A	N/A	N/A
Basketball	23,669	23,401	24,225	2.3%	3.5%
Tennis	17,678	17,683	17,841	0.9%	0.9%
Baseball	13,284	15,642	15,877	19.5%	1.5%
Soccer (Outdoor)	12,726	11,924	11,405	-10.4%	-4.4%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	6,868	7,283	7,386	7.5%	1.4%
Football, Flag	5,610	6,551	6,572	17.1%	0.3%
Badminton	7,150	6,430	6,337	-11.4%	-1.4%
Volleyball (Court)	6,433	6,317	6,317	-1.8%	0.0%
Football, Touch	7,140	5,629	5,517	-22.7%	-2.0%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,803	5,399	5,233	9.0%	-3.1%
Football, Tackle	6,165	5,224	5,157	-16.4%	-1.3%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,769	4,947	4,770	0.0%	-3.6%
Gymnastics	4,972	4,805	4,770	-4.1%	-0.7%
Track and Field	4,071	4,161	4,143	1.8%	-0.4%
Cheerleading	3,235	3,816	3,841	18.7%	0.7%
Racquetball	3,824	3,526	3,480	-9.0%	-1.3%
Pickleball	N/A	3,132	3,301	N/A	5.4%
Ultimate Frisbee	5,077	3,126	2,710	-46.6%	-13.3%
Ice Hockey	2,393	2,544	2,447	2.3%	-3.8%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,498	2,309	2,303	-7.8%	-0.3%
Lacrosse	1,813	2,171	2,098	15.7%	-3.4%
Wrestling	1,829	1,896	1,908	4.3%	0.6%
Roller Hockey	1,298	1,834	1,734	33.6%	-5.5%
Rugby	1,183	1,621	1,560	31.9%	-3.8%
Squash	1,414	1,492	1,285	-9.1%	-13.9%
Boxing for Competition	1,134	1,368	1,310	15.5%	-4.2%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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Figure 8 - General Sports Participatory Trends

NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance their quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to restrict a participant's entry. This provides a variety of options that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by most individuals. The most popular general fitness activities amongst the U.S. population include: Fitness Walking (111.1 million), Treadmill (53.7 million), Free Weights (51.3 million), Running/Jogging (49.5 million), and Stationary Cycling (36.7 million).



**Fitness
Walking**
111.1 Million



Treadmill
53.7 Million



**Dumbbell
Free Weights**
51.3 Million



**Running/
Jogging**
49.5 Million



**Stationary
Cycling**
36.7 Million

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years (2013-2018), the activities growing most rapidly are Trail Running (47.4%), Aerobics (24.8%), Barre (21.8%), Stair Climbing Machine (18.8%), and Yoga (18.2%). Over the same time frame, the activities that have undergone the biggest decline include: Dumbbell Free Weights (-12.0%), Running/Jogging (-8.7%), Fitness Walking (-5.3%), Traditional Triathlon (-4.2%), and Boot Camps Style Cross Training (-3.1%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

In the last year, activities with the largest gains in participation were Trail Running (9.4%), Yoga (5.1%), and Elliptical Motion Trainer (3.0%). From 2017-2018, the activities that had the largest decline in participation were Non-Traditional Triathlon (-15.5%), Running/Jogging (-2.6%), and Cross-Training Style Workout (-2.1%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

It should be noted that many of the activities rapidly growing have a relatively low user base. This allows for more drastic shifts in terms of percentage indication, especially for five-year trends. Increasing casual participants may also explain the rapid growth in some activities. All of the top trending fitness activities, for the one-year and five-year trend, consist primarily of casual users. This is significant, since casual users are much more likely to switch to alternative activities compared to a core user. *Please see Appendix A for full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.*



National Participatory Trends - General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2013	2017	2018	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Fitness Walking	117,351	110,805	111,101	-5.3%	0.3%
Treadmill	48,166	52,966	53,737	11.6%	1.5%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	58,267	52,217	51,291	-12.0%	-1.8%
Running/Jogging	54,188	50,770	49,459	-8.7%	-2.6%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	35,247	36,035	36,668	4.0%	1.8%
Weight/Resistant Machines	36,267	36,291	36,372	0.3%	0.2%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	30,410	32,283	33,238	9.3%	3.0%
Yoga	24,310	27,354	28,745	18.2%	5.1%
Free Weights (Barbells)	25,641	27,444	27,834	8.6%	1.4%
Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	24,454	24,183	N/A	-1.1%
Dance, Step, & Choreographed Exercise	N/A	22,616	22,391	N/A	-1.0%
Aerobics (High Impact)	17,323	21,476	21,611	24.8%	0.6%
Stair Climbing Machine	12,642	14,948	15,025	18.8%	0.5%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	13,622	13,338	N/A	-2.1%
Trail Running	6,792	9,149	10,010	47.4%	9.4%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,309	9,409	9,434	13.5%	0.3%
Pilates Training	8,069	9,047	9,084	12.6%	0.4%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,311	6,693	6,838	8.4%	2.2%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	6,911	6,651	6,695	-3.1%	0.7%
Martial Arts	5,314	5,838	5,821	9.5%	-0.3%
Boxing for Fitness	5,251	5,157	5,166	-1.6%	0.2%
Tai Chi	3,469	3,787	3,761	8.4%	-0.7%
Barre	2,901	3,436	3,532	21.8%	2.8%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	2,262	2,162	2,168	-4.2%	0.3%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,390	1,878	1,589	14.3%	-15.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 9 - General Fitness National Participatory Trends

NATIONAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate a contrast of growth and decline in participation regarding outdoor/adventure recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or within a group, and are not as limited by time constraints. In 2018, the most popular activities in terms of total participants from the outdoor/adventure recreation category include: Day Hiking (47.9 million), Road Bicycling (39.0 million), Freshwater Fishing (39.0 million), and Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (27.4 million), and Recreational Vehicle Camping (16.0 million).



Hiking
(Day)
47.9 Million



Bicycling
(Road)
39.0 Million



Fishing
(Freshwater)
39.0 Million



Camping
(<¼mi. of Car/Home)
27.4 Million



Camping
(Recreational Vehicle)
16.0 Million

FIVE-YEAR TREND

From 2013-2018, BMX Bicycling (58.6%), Day Hiking (39.2%), Fly Fishing (18.1%), Backpacking Overnight (16.2%), and Recreational Vehicle Camping (9.8%) have undergone the largest increases in participation.

The five-year trend also shows activities such as In-Line Roller Skating (-17.8%), Birdwatching (-12.8%), Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle (-6.3%), and Road Bicycling (-4.5%) experiencing the largest decreases in participation.

ONE-YEAR TREND

The one-year trend shows activities growing most rapidly being Day Hiking (6.6%), Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle (4.4%), and Fly Fishing (2.2%). Over the last year, activities that underwent the largest decreases in participation include: Adventure Racing (-12.4%), In-Line Roller Skating (-4.3%), and Overnight Backpacking (-4.0).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

A large majority of outdoor activities have experienced participation growth in the last five years. These include: In-Line Roller Skating, Birdwatching, Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle, and Road Bicycling being the only activities decreasing in participation. Although this a positive trend for outdoor activities, it should be noted that a large majority of participation growth came from an increase in casual users. This is likely why we see a lot more activities experiencing decreases in participation when assessing the one-year trend, as the casual users likely found alternative activities to participate in. *Please see Appendix A for full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.*



National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2013	2017	2018	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Hiking (Day)	34,378	44,900	47,860	39.2%	6.6%
Bicycling (Road)	40,888	38,866	39,041	-4.5%	0.5%
Fishing (Freshwater)	37,796	38,346	38,998	3.2%	1.7%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	29,269	26,262	27,416	-6.3%	4.4%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	14,556	16,159	15,980	9.8%	-1.1%
Fishing (Saltwater)	11,790	13,062	12,830	8.8%	-1.8%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	14,152	12,296	12,344	-12.8%	0.4%
Backpacking Overnight	9,069	10,975	10,540	16.2%	-4.0%
Bicycling (Mountain)	8,542	8,609	8,690	1.7%	0.9%
Archery	7,647	7,769	7,654	0.1%	-1.5%
Fishing (Fly)	5,878	6,791	6,939	18.1%	2.2%
Skateboarding	6,350	6,382	6,500	2.4%	1.8%
Roller Skating, In-Line	6,129	5,268	5,040	-17.8%	-4.3%
Bicycling (BMX)	2,168	3,413	3,439	58.6%	0.8%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,319	2,527	2,541	9.6%	0.6%
Adventure Racing	2,095	2,529	2,215	5.7%	-12.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 10: Outdoor / Adventure Recreation Participatory Trends

NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Swimming is deemed as a lifetime activity and is most likely why it continues to have such strong participation. In 2018, Fitness Swimming was the absolute leader in overall participation (27.6 million) amongst aquatic activities and is largely due to its broad, multigenerational appeal.



**Swimming
(Fitness)
27.6 Million**



**Aquatic
Exercise
10.5 Million**



**Swimming
(Competition)
3.0 Million**

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Assessing the five-year trend, all aquatic activities have experienced growth. Aquatic Exercise stands out due to an increase of 24.0% from 2013-2018. This is most likely due to the ongoing research demonstrating the activity's great therapeutic benefit and followed by Competitive Swimming (15.4%) and Fitness Swimming (4.6%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

Similar to the five-year trend, all aquatic activities also experienced growth regarding the one-year trend. Fitness Swimming (1.6%) had the largest increase in 2018, with Competitive Swimming (1.3%) and Aquatic Exercise (0.6%) not far behind.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2013	2017	2018	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Swimming (Fitness)	26,354	27,135	27,575	4.6%	1.6%
Aquatic Exercise	8,483	10,459	10,518	24.0%	0.6%
Swimming (Competition)	2,638	3,007	3,045	15.4%	1.3%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 11: Aquatic Participatory Trends

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

All aquatic activities have undergone increases in participation over the last five years, primarily due to large increases in casual participation (1-49 times per year). From 2013 to 2018, casual participants of Competition Swimming increased by 45.5%, Aquatic Exercise by 40.0%, and Fitness Swimming by 10.7%. However, all core participation (50+ times per year) for aquatic activities have decreased over the last five-years. Please see Appendix A for full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.



NATIONAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The most popular water sports / activities based on total participants in 2018 were Recreational Kayaking (11.0 million), Canoeing (9.1 million), and Snorkeling (7.8 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has long winter seasons or limited water access. Therefore, when assessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can greatly influence water activity participation.



Kayaking
11.0 Million



Canoeing
9.1 Million



Snorkeling
7.8 Million



Jet Skiing
5.3 Million



Sailing
3.8 Million

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years, Stand-Up Paddling (73.3%) was by far the fastest growing water activity, followed by Recreational Kayaking (26.4%), White Water Kayaking (19.4%), Boardsailing/Windsurfing (17.5%), and Sea/Tour Kayaking (4.1%). From 2013-2018, activities declining in participation most rapidly were Surfing (-21.4%), Water Skiing (-20.0%), Jet Skiing (-17.0%), Wakeboarding (-15.7%), and Rafting (-11.3%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

Contradicting the five-year trend, Surfing was the fastest growing of all water sports/activities increasing 7.2% in 2018. Recreational Kayaking (4.6%) and Stand-Up Paddling (3.8%) also had a spike in participation this past year. Activities which experienced the largest decreases in participation in the most recent year include: Wakeboarding (-7.0%), Snorkeling (-6.8), and Water Skiing (-5.9%)

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sport and activities. These factors may also explain why all water-based activities have drastically more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors. These high causal user numbers are likely why a majority of water sports/activities have experienced decreases in participation in recent years. *Please see Appendix A for full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.*

National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2013	2017	2018	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Kayaking (Recreational)	8,716	10,533	11,017	26.4%	4.6%
Canoeing	10,153	9,220	9,129	-10.1%	-1.0%
Snorkeling	8,700	8,384	7,815	-10.2%	-6.8%
Jet Skiing	6,413	5,418	5,324	-17.0%	-1.7%
Sailing	3,915	3,974	3,754	-4.1%	-5.5%
Stand-Up Paddling	1,993	3,325	3,453	73.3%	3.8%
Rafting	3,836	3,479	3,404	-11.3%	-2.2%
Water Skiing	4,202	3,572	3,363	-20.0%	-5.9%
Surfing	3,658	2,680	2,874	-21.4%	7.2%
Scuba Diving	3,174	2,874	2,849	-10.2%	-0.9%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,694	2,955	2,805	4.1%	-5.1%
Wakeboarding	3,316	3,005	2,796	-15.7%	-7.0%
Kayaking (White Water)	2,146	2,500	2,562	19.4%	2.5%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,324	1,573	1,556	17.5%	-1.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

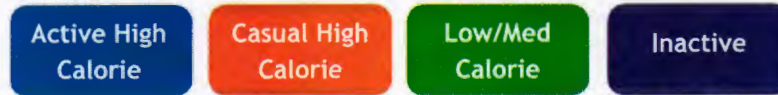
Figure 12: Water Sports / Activities Participatory Trends



1.4.3 PARTICIPATION BY GENERATION

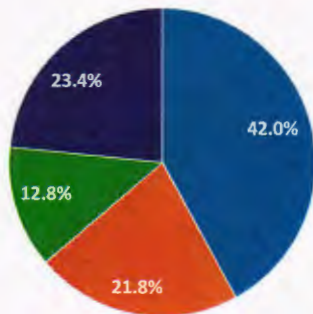
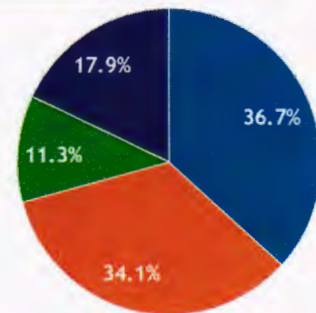
Analyzing participation by age for recreational activities reveals that fitness and outdoor sports were the most common activities across all generations. Breaking down activity levels by generation shows a converse correlation between age and healthy activity rates.

2018 PARTICIPATION RATES BY GENERATION
U.S. population, Ages 6+



Generation Z (born 2000+)

Generation Z are the most active, with only 17.9% of the population identifying as inactive. Approximately 81% of individuals within this generation were deemed high calorie burning participants in 2018. There are 36.7% active high calorie participants and 34.1% being casual high calorie participants.

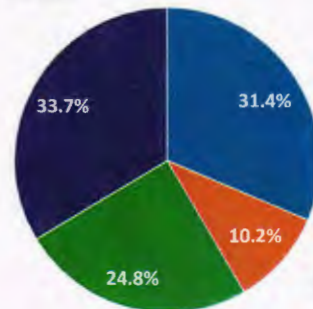
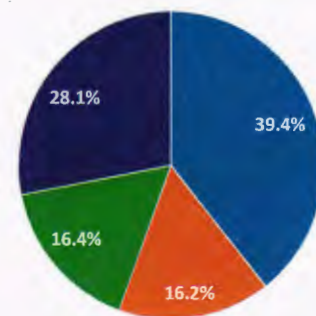


Millennials (born 1980-1999)

Almost half (42.0%) of millennials were active high calorie participants, while 23.4% claimed they were inactive. Even though this inactive rate is much higher than Generation Z's (17.9%), it is still below the national inactive rate (28%).

Generation X (born 1965-1979)

Generation X has the second highest active to a healthy level rate (35.0%) among all generations at 0.4% less than Millennials. At the same time, they also have the second highest inactive rate, with 28.1% that are not active at all.



The Boomers (born 1945-1964)

The Boomers were the least active generation with an inactive rate of 33.7%. This age group tends to participate in less intensive activities. Approximately 34% claimed to engage in casual high (10.2%) along with low/medium (24.8%) calorie participants.

Definitions: Active (three times per week), Casual (one two times per week), High Calorie (20+ minutes of elevated heart rate), Low/Med Calorie (>20 minutes of elevated heart rate), and Inactive (no physical activity in 2018)

1.4.4 NON-PARTICIPANT INTEREST BY AGE SEGMENT

In addition to participation rates by generation, SFIA also tracks non-participant interest. These are activities that the U.S. population currently does not participate in due to physical or monetary barriers, but they do have an interest to participate. Below are the top five activities that each age segment would be most likely to participate in, if they were readily available.

Overall, the activities most age segments are interested in include: Camping, Bicycling, Fishing, and Swimming for Fitness. All of which are deemed as low-impact activities, making them obtainable for any age segment to enjoy.

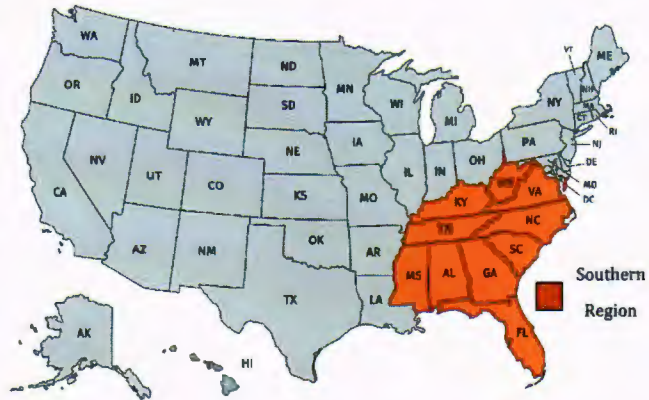




1.4.5 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMING TRENDS

PROGRAMS OFFERED BY PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES (SOUTHERN REGION)

NRPA's *Agency Performance Review 2019* summarize key findings from NRPA Park Metrics, which is a benchmark tool that compares the management and planning of operating resources and capital facilities of park and recreation agencies. The report contains data from 1,075 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. as reported between 2016 and 2018.



Based on this year's report, the typical agency (i.e., those at the median values) offers 175 programs annually, with roughly 63% of those programs being fee-based activities/events.

According to the information reported to the NRPA, the top five programming activities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies, both in the U.S. and regionally, are described in the table below (Figure 12). A complete comparison of regional and national programs offered by agencies can be found in Figure 13.

When comparing Southern Region agencies to the U.S. average, team sports, social recreation events, themed special events, health & wellness education, and fitness enhancement classes were all identified in top five most commonly provided program areas offered regionally and nationally.

Top 5 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies)	
Southern (% of agencies offering)	U.S. (% of agencies offering)
• Team Sports (88%)	• Themed Special Events (87%)
• Social Recreation Events (87%)	• Team Sports (87%)
• Themed Special Events (87%)	• Social Recreation Events (86%)
• Health & Wellness Education (80%)	• Health & Wellness Education (79%)
• Fitness Enhancement Classes (79%)	• Fitness Enhancement Classes (77%)

Figure 13: Top 5 Core Program Areas

Overall, Southern Region parks and recreation agencies are very similar to the U.S. average regarding program offerings. However, utilizing a discrepancy threshold of +/-5% (or more), Southern agencies are currently offering Safety Training, Aquatics, Performing Arts, and Golf programs at a lesser rate than the national average.

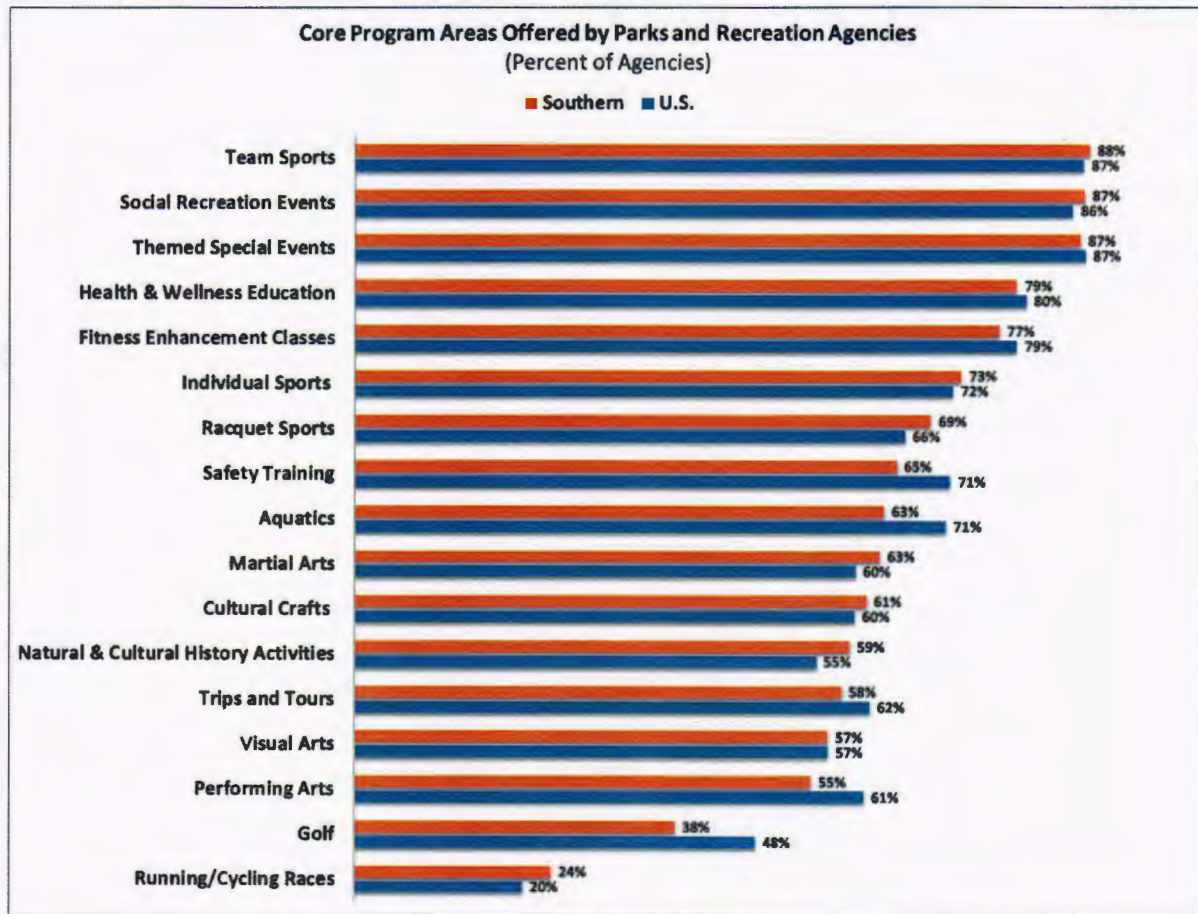


Figure 14: Core Program Areas Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies



TARGETED PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, SENIORS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

For a better understanding of targeted programs (programs that cater to a specific age segment, demographic, etc.), NRPA also tracks program offerings that are dedicated specifically to children, seniors, and people with disabilities. This allows for further analysis of these commonly targeted populations on a national and regional basis.

Based on information reported to the NRPA, the top three targeted programs offered by park and recreation agencies, nationally and regionally, are described in the table below (Figure 17). A complete comparison of regional and national targeted program offerings can be found in Figure 18.

Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Targeting Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities)	
Southern (% of agencies offering)	U.S. (% of agencies offering)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Camp (86%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Camp (82%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Programs (80%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Programs (78%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Programs (66%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After School Programs (77%)

Figure 15: Top 3 Core Target Program Areas

Agencies in the Southern Region tend to offer targeted programs at a lower rate than the national average. Southern agencies are currently offering After School Programs, Preschool Programs, and Before School Programs at a significantly lower rate than the national average.

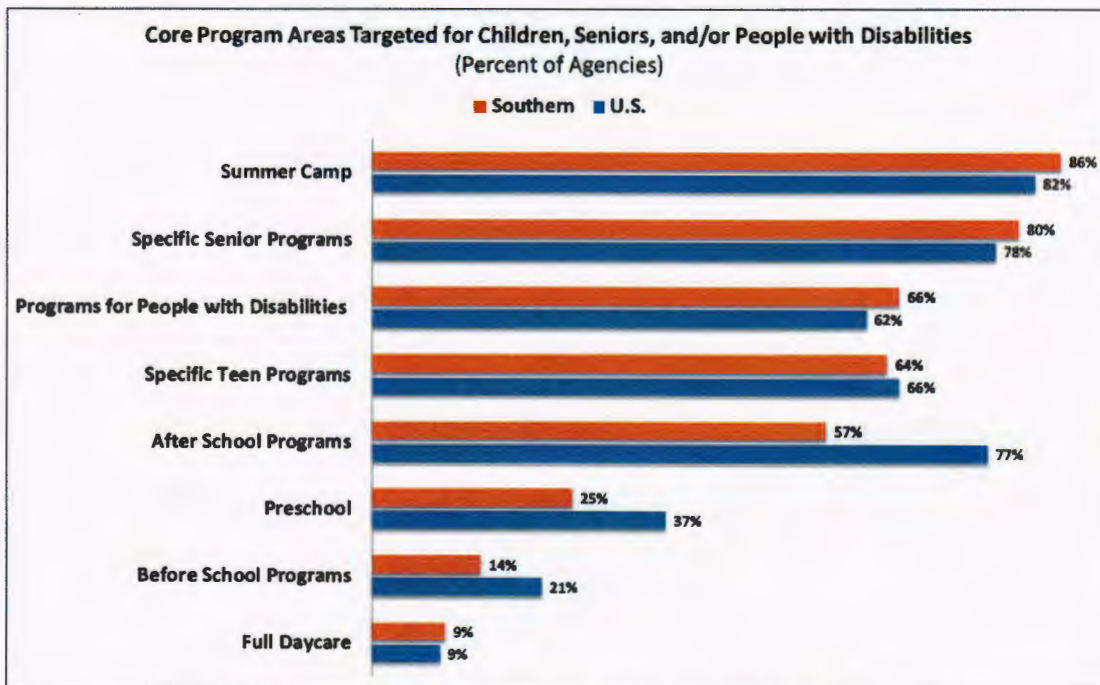


Figure 16: Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors, and People with Disabilities

1.5 APPENDIX A- CORE VS. CASUAL PARTICIPATION TRENDS

1.5.1 GENERAL SPORTS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Golf * (2011, 2015 and 2016 data)	25,682	100%	24,120	100%	23,815	100%	-7.3%	-1.3%
Basketball	23,708	100%	22,343	100%	23,401	100%	-1.3%	4.7%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	7,389	31%	7,486	34%	8,546	37%	15.7%	14.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	16,319	69%	14,857	66%	14,856	63%	-9.0%	0.0%
Tennis	17,020	100%	18,079	100%	17,683	100%	5.9%	-2.2%
Baseball	12,976	100%	14,760	100%	15,642	100%	20.5%	6.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,931	30%	5,673	38%	6,405	41%	62.9%	12.9%
<i>Core (13+ times)</i>	9,046	70%	9,087	62%	9,238	59%	2.1%	1.7%
Soccer (Outdoor)	12,944	100%	11,932	100%	11,924	100%	-7.9%	-0.1%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	6,740	52%	6,342	53%	6,665	56%	-1.1%	5.1%
<i>Core (26+ times)</i>	6,205	48%	5,590	47%	5,259	44%	-15.2%	-5.9%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,411	100%	7,690	100%	7,283	100%	-1.7%	-5.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,825	38%	3,377	44%	3,060	42%	8.3%	-9.4%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	4,586	62%	4,314	56%	4,223	58%	-7.9%	-2.1%
Badminton	7,278	100%	7,354	100%	6,430	100%	-11.7%	-12.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	5,092	70%	5,285	72%	4,564	71%	-10.4%	-13.6%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,185	30%	2,069	28%	1,867	29%	-14.6%	-9.8%
Volleyball (Court)	6,384	100%	6,216	100%	6,317	100%	-1.0%	1.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,553	40%	2,852	46%	2,939	47%	15.1%	3.1%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,831	60%	3,364	54%	3,378	53%	-11.8%	0.4%
Football, Flag	5,865	100%	6,173	100%	6,551	100%	11.7%	6.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,963	51%	3,249	53%	3,572	55%	20.6%	9.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,902	49%	2,924	47%	2,979	45%	2.7%	1.9%
Football, Touch	7,295	100%	5,686	100%	5,629	100%	-22.8%	-1.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,015	55%	3,304	58%	3,332	59%	-17.0%	0.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,280	45%	2,386	42%	2,297	41%	-30.0%	-3.7%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,505	100%	5,489	100%	4,947	100%	9.8%	-9.9%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,040	67%	3,989	73%	3,544	72%	16.6%	-11.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,465	33%	1,500	27%	1,403	28%	-4.2%	-6.5%
Football, Tackle	6,220	100%	5,481	100%	5,224	100%	-16.0%	-4.7%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,566	41%	2,242	41%	2,145	41%	-16.4%	-4.3%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	3,655	59%	3,240	59%	3,078	59%	-15.8%	-5.0%
Gymnastics	5,115	100%	5,381	100%	4,805	100%	-6.1%	-10.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	3,252	64%	3,580	67%	3,139	65%	-3.5%	-12.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,863	36%	1,800	33%	1,666	35%	-10.6%	-7.4%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,617	100%	5,117	100%	5,399	100%	16.9%	5.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,006	43%	2,347	46%	2,657	49%	32.5%	13.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,611	57%	2,770	54%	2,742	51%	5.0%	-1.0%
Track and Field	4,257	100%	4,116	100%	4,161	100%	-2.3%	1.1%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,820	43%	1,961	48%	2,040	49%	12.1%	4.0%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,437	57%	2,155	52%	2,121	51%	-13.0%	-1.6%
Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)		More Core Participants (56-74%)		Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)		More Casual Participants (56-74%) Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)	

*Golf participation figures are from 2015



National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Cheerleading	3,244	100%	4,029	100%	3,816	100%	17.6%	-5.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,514	47%	2,365	59%	2,164	57%	42.9%	-8.5%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,730	53%	1,664	41%	1,653	43%	-4.5%	-0.7%
Ultimate Frisbee	5,131	100%	3,673	100%	3,126	100%	-39.1%	-14.9%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,647	71%	2,746	75%	2,270	73%	-37.8%	-17.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,484	29%	927	25%	856	27%	-42.3%	-7.7%
Racquetball	4,070	100%	3,579	100%	3,526	100%	-13.4%	-1.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,572	63%	2,488	70%	2,451	70%	-4.7%	-1.5%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,498	37%	1,092	30%	1,075	30%	-28.2%	-1.6%
Pickleball	N/A	N/A	2,815	100%	3,132	100%	N/A	11.3%
Ice Hockey	2,363	100%	2,697	100%	2,544	100%	7.7%	-5.7%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,082	46%	1,353	50%	1,227	48%	13.4%	-9.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,281	54%	1,344	50%	1,317	52%	2.8%	-2.0%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,624	100%	2,467	100%	2,309	100%	-12.0%	-6.4%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,245	47%	1,198	49%	1,077	47%	-13.5%	-10.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,379	53%	1,269	51%	1,232	53%	-10.7%	-2.9%
Lacrosse	1,607	100%	2,090	100%	2,171	100%	35.1%	3.9%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	788	49%	1,153	55%	1,142	53%	44.9%	-1.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	819	51%	938	45%	1,030	47%	25.8%	9.8%
Roller Hockey	1,367	100%	1,929	100%	1,834	100%	34.2%	-4.9%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	875	64%	1,438	75%	1,419	77%	62.2%	-1.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	493	36%	491	25%	415	23%	-15.8%	-15.5%
Wrestling	1,922	100%	1,922	100%	1,896	100%	-1.4%	-1.4%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	965	50%	1,139	59%	1,179	62%	22.2%	3.5%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	957	50%	782	41%	717	38%	-25.1%	-8.3%
Rugby	887	100%	1,550	100%	1,621	100%	82.8%	4.6%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	526	59%	1,090	70%	1,097	68%	108.6%	0.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	361	41%	460	30%	524	32%	45.2%	13.9%
Squash	1,290	100%	1,549	100%	1,492	100%	15.7%	-3.7%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	928	72%	1,111	72%	1,044	70%	12.5%	-6.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	361	28%	437	28%	447	30%	23.8%	2.3%
Field Hockey	1,237	100%	1,512	100%	1,596	100%	29.0%	5.6%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	578	47%	773	51%	897	56%	55.2%	16.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	659	53%	739	49%	700	44%	6.2%	-5.3%
Boxing for Competition	959	100%	1,210	100%	1,368	100%	42.6%	13.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	769	80%	1,035	86%	1,168	85%	51.9%	12.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	190	20%	176	14%	199	15%	4.7%	13.1%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

1.5.2 GENERAL FITNESS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Fitness Walking	114,029	100%	107,895	100%	110,805	100%	-2.8%	2.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	35,267	31%	34,535	32%	35,326	32%	0.2%	2.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	78,762	69%	73,359	68%	75,479	68%	-4.2%	2.9%
Treadmill	50,839	100%	51,872	100%	52,966	100%	4.2%	2.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	22,248	44%	23,490	45%	24,444	46%	9.9%	4.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	28,591	56%	28,381	55%	28,523	54%	-0.2%	0.5%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	N/A	100%	51,513	100%	52,217	100%	N/A	1.4%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	N/A		18,245	35%	18,866	36%	N/A	3.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	N/A		33,268	65%	33,351	64%	N/A	0.2%
Running/Jogging	51,450	100%	47,384	100%	50,770	100%	-1.3%	7.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	21,973	43%	21,764	46%	24,004	47%	9.2%	10.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	29,478	57%	25,621	54%	26,766	53%	-9.2%	4.5%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	35,987	100%	36,118	100%	36,035	100%	0.1%	-0.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	18,265	51%	18,240	51%	18,447	51%	1.0%	1.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	17,722	49%	17,878	49%	17,588	49%	-0.8%	-1.6%
Weight/Resistant Machines	38,999	100%	35,768	100%	36,291	100%	-6.9%	1.5%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	15,383	39%	14,346	40%	14,496	40%	-5.8%	1.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	23,617	61%	21,422	60%	21,795	60%	-7.7%	1.7%
Stretching	35,873	100%	33,771	100%	33,195	100%	-7.5%	-1.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	8,996	25%	9,793	29%	10,095	30%	12.2%	3.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	26,877	75%	23,978	71%	23,100	70%	-14.1%	-3.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer*	28,560	100%	32,218	100%	32,283	100%	13.0%	0.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	13,638	48%	15,687	49%	15,854	49%	16.2%	1.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	14,922	52%	16,532	51%	16,430	51%	10.1%	-0.6%
Free Weights (Barbells)	26,688	100%	26,473	100%	27,444	100%	2.8%	3.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	9,435	35%	10,344	39%	10,868	40%	15.2%	5.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	17,253	65%	16,129	61%	16,576	60%	-3.9%	2.8%
Yoga	23,253	100%	26,268	100%	27,354	100%	17.6%	4.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	13,305	57%	15,486	59%	16,454	60%	23.7%	6.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	9,949	43%	10,782	41%	10,900	40%	9.6%	1.1%
Callisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	100%	25,110	100%	24,454	100%	N/A	-2.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	N/A	0	9,763	39%	10,095	41%	N/A	3.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	N/A	0	15,347	61%	14,359	59%	N/A	-6.4%
Choreographed Exercise	N/A	100%	21,839	100%	22,616	100%	N/A	3.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	N/A	0	14,158	65%	14,867	66%	N/A	5.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	N/A	0	7,681	35%	7,748	34%	N/A	0.9%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

*Cardio Cross Trainer is merged to Elliptical Motion Trainer



National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Aerobics (High Impact)	16,178	100%	21,390	100%	21,476	100%	32.7%	0.4%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,819	48%	11,801	55%	12,105	56%	54.8%	2.6%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	8,359	52%	9,589	45%	9,370	44%	12.1%	-2.3%
Stair Climbing Machine	12,979	100%	15,079	100%	14,948	100%	15.2%	-0.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,303	56%	9,332	62%	9,501	64%	30.1%	1.8%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	5,676	44%	5,747	38%	5,447	36%	-4.0%	-5.2%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	100%	12,914	100%	13,622	100%	N/A	5.5%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	N/A	N/A	6,430	50%	6,890	51%	N/A	7.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	N/A	N/A	6,483	50%	6,732	49%	N/A	3.8%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,477	100%	8,937	100%	9,409	100%	11.0%	5.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,053	60%	5,751	64%	6,023	64%	19.2%	4.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,424	40%	3,186	36%	3,386	36%	-1.1%	6.3%
Pilates Training	8,519	100%	8,893	100%	9,047	100%	6.2%	1.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,212	61%	5,525	62%	5,698	63%	9.3%	3.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,307	39%	3,367	38%	3,348	37%	1.2%	-0.6%
Trail Running	5,806	100%	8,582	100%	9,149	100%	57.6%	5.6%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,725	100%	6,899	100%	6,693	100%	-0.5%	-3.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,455	66%	4,760	69%	4,671	70%	4.8%	-1.9%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	2,271	34%	2,139	31%	2,022	30%	-11.0%	-5.5%
Boot Camp Style Training	7,496	100%	6,583	100%	6,651	100%	-11.3%	1.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,787	64%	4,484	68%	4,637	70%	-3.1%	3.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	2,709	36%	2,099	32%	2,014	30%	-25.7%	-4.0%
Martial Arts	5,075	100%	5,745	100%	5,838	100%	15.0%	1.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,207	24%	1,964	34%	2,021	35%	67.4%	2.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,869	76%	3,780	66%	3,816	65%	-1.4%	1.0%
Boxing for Fitness	4,831	100%	5,175	100%	5,157	100%	6.7%	-0.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,075	43%	2,678	52%	2,738	53%	32.0%	2.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,756	57%	2,496	48%	2,419	47%	-12.2%	-3.1%
Tai Chi	3,203	100%	3,706	100%	3,787	100%	18.2%	2.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	1,835	57%	2,245	61%	2,329	61%	26.9%	3.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,369	43%	1,461	39%	1,458	39%	6.5%	-0.2%
Barre	N/A	N/A	3,329	100%	3,436	100%	N/A	3.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	N/A	N/A	2,636	79%	2,701	79%	N/A	2.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	N/A	N/A	693	21%	735	21%	N/A	6.1%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	1,789	100%	2,374	100%	2,162	100%	20.8%	-8.9%
<i>Casual (1 times)</i>	616	34%	786	33%	754	35%	22.4%	-4.1%
<i>Core(2+ times)</i>	1,173	66%	1,589	67%	1,408	65%	20.0%	-11.4%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,075	100%	1,705	100%	1,878	100%	74.7%	10.1%
<i>Casual (1 times)</i>	341	32%	647	38%	749	40%	119.6%	15.8%
<i>Core(2+ times)</i>	734	68%	1,058	62%	1,129	60%	53.8%	6.7%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

1.5.3 OUTDOOR/ADVENTURE RECREATION

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Hiking (Day)	34,519	100%	42,128	100%	44,900	100%	30.1%	6.6%
Bicycling (Road)	39,790	100%	38,365	100%	38,866	100%	-2.3%	1.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	18,966	48%	19,244	50%	20,212	52%	6.6%	5.0%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	20,824	52%	19,121	50%	18,654	48%	-10.4%	-2.4%
Fishing (Freshwater)	39,002	100%	38,121	100%	38,346	100%	-1.7%	0.6%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	20,341	52%	20,308	53%	19,977	52%	-1.8%	-1.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	18,660	48%	17,813	47%	18,369	48%	-1.6%	3.1%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	31,454	100%	26,467	100%	26,262	100%	-16.5%	-0.8%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,903	100%	15,855	100%	16,159	100%	1.6%	1.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	8,316	52%	8,719	55%	9,332	58%	12.2%	7.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	7,587	48%	7,136	45%	6,826	42%	-10.0%	-4.3%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,000	100%	12,266	100%	13,062	100%	8.9%	6.5%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	7,251	60%	7,198	59%	7,625	58%	5.2%	5.9%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	4,749	40%	5,068	41%	5,437	42%	14.5%	7.3%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	13,535	100%	11,589	100%	12,296	100%	-9.2%	6.1%
Backpacking Overnight	7,933	100%	10,151	100%	10,975	100%	38.3%	8.1%
Bicycling (Mountain)	7,265	100%	8,615	100%	8,609	100%	18.5%	-0.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,270	45%	4,273	50%	4,389	51%	34.2%	2.7%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,995	55%	4,342	50%	4,220	49%	5.6%	-2.8%
Archery	7,173	100%	7,903	100%	7,769	100%	8.3%	-1.7%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	5,967	83%	6,650	84%	6,602	85%	10.6%	-0.7%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,205	17%	1,253	16%	1,167	15%	-3.2%	-6.9%
Fishing (Fly)	5,848	100%	6,456	100%	6,791	100%	16.1%	5.2%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	3,598	62%	4,183	65%	4,448	65%	23.6%	6.3%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	2,250	38%	2,273	35%	2,344	35%	4.2%	3.1%
Skateboarding	6,227	100%	6,442	100%	6,382	100%	2.5%	-0.9%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	3,527	57%	3,955	61%	3,970	62%	12.6%	0.4%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,700	43%	2,487	39%	2,411	38%	-10.7%	-3.1%
Roller Skating (In-Line)	6,647	100%	5,381	100%	5,268	100%	-20.7%	-2.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,548	68%	3,861	72%	3,853	73%	-15.3%	-0.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,100	32%	1,520	28%	1,415	27%	-32.6%	-6.9%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,861	100%	3,104	100%	3,413	100%	83.4%	10.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	856	46%	1,760	57%	2,039	60%	138.2%	15.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,005	54%	1,344	43%	1,374	40%	36.7%	2.2%
Adventure Racing	1,618	100%	2,999	100%	2,529	100%	56.3%	-15.7%
<i>Casual (1 times)</i>	672	42%	1,081	36%	899	36%	33.8%	-16.8%
<i>Core(2+ times)</i>	945	58%	1,918	64%	1,630	64%	72.5%	-15.0%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,189	100%	2,790	100%	2,527	100%	15.4%	-9.4%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)



1.5.4 AQUATICS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Aquatics								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Swimming (Fitness)	23,216	100%	26,601	100%	27,135	100%	16.9%	2.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	15,139	65%	17,781	67%	18,319	68%	21.0%	3.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	8,077	35%	8,820	33%	8,815	32%	9.1%	-0.1%
Aquatic Exercise	9,177	100%	10,575	100%	10,459	100%	14.0%	-1.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,785	63%	7,135	67%	7,222	69%	24.8%	1.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,392	37%	3,440	33%	3,237	31%	-4.6%	-5.9%
Swimming (Competition)	2,502	100%	3,369	100%	3,007	100%	20.2%	-10.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	1,065	43%	1,881	56%	1,664	55%	56.2%	-11.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,437	57%	1,488	44%	1,343	45%	-6.5%	-9.7%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over								
Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	More Core Participants (greater than 75%)		More Core Participants (50-74%)		Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)		More Casual Participants (56-74%)	
							Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)	

1.5.5 WATER SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2012		2016		2017		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Canoeing	9,813	100%	10,046	100%	9,220	100%	-6.0%	-8.2%
Kayaking (Recreational)	8,187	100%	10,017	100%	10,533	100%	26.7%	5.2%
Snorkeling	8,664	100%	8,717	100%	8,384	100%	-3.2%	-3.8%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	6,904	80%	6,945	80%	6,721	80%	-2.7%	-3.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,760	20%	1,773	20%	1,663	20%	-5.5%	-6.2%
Jet Skiing	6,996	100%	5,783	100%	5,418	100%	-22.6%	-6.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	5,125	73%	4,143	72%	3,928	72%	-23.4%	-5.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,870	27%	1,640	28%	1,490	28%	-20.3%	-9.1%
Sailing	3,841	100%	4,095	100%	3,974	100%	3.5%	-3.0%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,565	67%	2,833	69%	2,720	68%	6.0%	-4.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,276	33%	1,262	31%	1,254	32%	-1.7%	-0.6%
Water Skiing	4,434	100%	3,700	100%	3,572	100%	-19.4%	-3.5%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	3,122	70%	2,667	72%	2,575	72%	-17.5%	-3.4%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,312	30%	1,033	28%	997	28%	-24.0%	-3.5%
Rafting	3,756	100%	3,428	100%	3,479	100%	-7.4%	1.5%
Stand-Up Paddling	1,392	100%	3,220	100%	3,325	100%	138.9%	3.3%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,446	100%	3,124	100%	2,955	100%	20.8%	-5.4%
Scuba Diving	2,781	100%	3,111	100%	2,874	100%	3.3%	-7.6%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,932	69%	2,292	74%	2,113	74%	9.4%	-7.8%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	849	31%	819	26%	761	26%	-10.4%	-7.1%
Wakeboarding	3,368	100%	2,912	100%	3,005	100%	-10.8%	3.2%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,237	66%	2,017	69%	2,101	70%	-6.1%	4.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,132	34%	895	31%	903	30%	-20.2%	0.9%
Surfing	2,545	100%	2,793	100%	2,680	100%	5.3%	-4.0%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,544	61%	1,768	63%	1,705	64%	10.4%	-3.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,001	39%	1,024	37%	975	36%	-2.6%	-4.8%
Kayaking (White Water)	1,878	100%	2,552	100%	2,500	100%	33.1%	-2.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,372	100%	1,737	100%	1,573	100%	14.7%	-9.4%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,108	81%	1,449	83%	1,289	82%	15.3%	-11.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	264	19%	288	17%	284	18%	7.6%	-1.4%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (58-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (55-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)



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A2

Stakeholder/ Focus Group Interview Notes



Nassau County Parks and Recreation Master Plan Stakeholder Interview Questions

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 1

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? No
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Nothing to do for young people, older people (closing gaming facilities);
 - Boat ramps for motorized boats - City marina has been closed down;
 - Dog parks;
 - Trails – biking, walking, hiking;
 - Senior center – Council of aging doesn't offer a lot of programs;
 - Swimming pool – only pools in the County are Hilliard (tiny), Fernandina, YMCA;
 - Practice fields; and
 - YMCA will be built at Wildlight.
3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - Dog parks;
 - Kayak launches; and
 - Hiking/walking trails, connectivity.

- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- Funding (e.g. lack of community support for fees, core-essential vs. value-added);
 - How do we implement? Taking action?;
 - Equity for economically disadvantaged; and
 - Environmental education, protection.
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- St. Johns County Nocatee Community Park.
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Would support all options.

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 2

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Behind the curve in providing recreation facilities;
 - Radiant was going to provide \$50M in recreation facilities;
 - Breakwater at Goffinsville Park Boat Ramp;
 - Tributary ball park lighting (old Three Rivers DRI);
 - Calculate beach parking capacity, require permits, charge fees for beach camping;
 - Motorized access to St. Mary's River, e.g. Rainer closed Crandall Boat Ramp, looking at acquiring 35-acre Allison parcel;
 - Practice fields, e.g. multi-purpose fields at William Burgess (under construction);
 - Private development to provide interior (small, local, private) parks, and contribute to larger "exterior" regional parks;
 - First park will define future trust, credibility;
 - Need to dedicate funds for central regional parks;
 - Consider using North Florida Land Trust for land acquisition; and
 - Trails – find maps of old tramways, railroad corridors.
3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - 35 acres on St. Marys;
 - Land for regional parks; and
 - Goffinsville breakwater.

- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- Multi-use parks that consider parking, things for everyone to do, as diverse as possible.
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Would support all options (except SPLOST); and
 - Need to charge leagues to use fees.

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 3

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? No
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Don't want any more taxes;
 - A few want more soccer fields;
 - Residents in the future will not be the same as today; growing, new homes;
 - Summer camp, things for kids to do;
 - Town of Hilliard has small recreation center and pool with YMCA;
 - Need for after-school programs; kids just walk across the street to the library after school;
 - Money for programs for libraries;
 - Horse trails: Carey State Forest, Simmons State Forest;
 - Connectivity to bike trail on Otis Road;
 - Bike lanes;
 - Upgraded boat ramps;
 - Kayak launch, e.g. public ramp at campground in NW corner of county off of US1;
 - Re-build fishing pier at Ft. Clinch State Park, other parks such as boat ramps;
 - ATV trails, but not sure if County wants to provide;
 - Partner with 4-H, kayak programs; and
 - Fitness/ wellness centers, programs.
3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - Motorized boat access;
 - Non-motorized boat access;

- Multi-use trails;
 - Summer camps;
 - Teen programs; and
 - Before and-after school programs.
- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- Opioid/ vulnerable populations.
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- Parks like Cascades, Historic 4th Ward, especially in place like Crawford Diamond, Callahan, other urbanizing, higher density areas.
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- ~~General Fund/ CIP~~ – Not supportive – would rather future residents pay through impact fees, bonds, etc.
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees – OK for out of town residents, not for residents. Program fees would need to be very low or subsidized
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

7. Other: Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

- Could TPL/ NFLT start looking for willing sellers to donate land for parks, tax credits, naming rights, etc?



STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 4 – *No Show*

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 5

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
 - Need to incorporate needs assessment from Western Nassau Vision Plan, SR 200 projects; and
 - Is Commission supportive.

2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Yulee – save the few historic places we have, including buildings and history – don't have an historic preservation program, no regulatory program; doing historic resource survey, to be completed by June; will make recommendations for preservation framework. Yulee Historic Council owns 4 acres property next to John Muir; want to do living museum, including historic homes and buildings;
 - Preserve the history; older buildings (homes, commercial bldgs.) are getting torn down;
 - Yulee, Callahan and Bryceville needs a recreation center, have one in Hilliard;
 - Need a home for the Bluefire Theater. Old Yulee Junior High auditorium is available, but not useable. Currently use Nassau room at FSCJ;
 - Partnerships for western area of the County;
 - Need a bandshell, outside performance stage; museum is landlocked; need larger event space that allows food and alcohol; the Rendezvous at American Beach could be a venue;
 - Need meeting space in general; and
 - Need a mini-botanical garden, including Gerber azalea and camelia history.

3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?

4. **Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?

5. Benchmark Communities: As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?

6. Funding/ Implementation: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

7. Other: Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 6

Discussion re: role of private developers:

- Different need between rural, existing residents and new residents;
- Not one pool for any of the residents out west;
- Difficult to meet proposed code for smaller subdivisions;
- Difficult to keep homes affordable;
- Resident's needs have changed: want tot lots, dog parks, open space, etc.;
- Amenities of local park should be scaled back based on affordability, # of units: core-essential vs. value-added;
- Issues with parks and other public infrastructure; not heavily-used, galling that they're not be used;



- Co-location with schools, stormwater;
 - Urban parks with density are working;
 - Need to give credit for passive recreation, walking trails, etc.;
 - Local parks should not include "nuisance uses" such as restrooms, basketball courts; and
 - 14 acres/1000 LOS is offset by higher density; eating up all impact fee credits with higher density. For example, County should not accept smaller park within subdivision; accept impact fees instead.
1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
 2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Make sure you have density to support new urban parks;
 - Large pavilion/ amphitheater (off-island);
 - Aquatics center;
 - Recreation center;
 - Auditorium;
 - Wedding/ events space, civic center – only place is Baptist Church;
 - Organized sports fields;
 - Markets: first-time home buyer, first time move up; custom home for 2nd homes, retirees – want heated pools, tennis; and
 - Start with one regional park in east side, west side.
 3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 4. **Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
 5. **Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?

- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 7

- 1. Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
 - Has County Commission agreed to underlying philosophy? Yes, local parks that meet day-to-day needs, plus regional parks, plus connectivity; codifying local park as infrastructure; County to focus on large regional parks and trails.
- 2. Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Kailey is bikeway and trails coordinator.
- 3. Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - Powerline corridor in Yulee;
 - Maintenance; and
 - Overall County-wide plan.



4. **Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
5. **Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
6. **Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

7. **Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 8

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?

- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- County-wide MSTU/ MSBU OR 30 year general obligation bond, e.g. say \$30 million (under \$50/ year). MSTUs and park districts could potentially generate more revenues than bonds;
 - Impact fees – say \$20 million; less credits, say \$5 M land+ \$5M capital; 1,000 units per year;
 - Contract with North Florida Land Trust, naming rights, identify parcels;
 - First parks; William Burgess, Westside;
 - Talk with Megan re: funding projections; and
 - Update impact fees in 5 years.

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 9

- 1. Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
 - Town of Callahan wants to donate 9 acres, wants B&G Club or YMCA to come in to build recreation center.
- 2. Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Baseball fields, soccer fields, lighting;
 - Trails;
 - Indoor community space, auditorium;
 - Programs; and
 - Pool.
- 3. Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - Indoor recreation facility;
 - Fields; and
 - Trails.
- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
 - Affordable housing;
 - Flooding; and
 - Activities for seniors to replace internet cafes, e.g. trails, pools, pickleball, etc.
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
 - Cascades Park.

6. Funding/ Implementation: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- All of these should be on the table:

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

7. Other: Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 10

1. Review of Scope/ Schedule: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?

2. Needs: Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)

- Nassau is a tale of two cities;
- Westside is different, make parks uniquely rural: equestrian centers, large lot subdivisions, etc.;
- How do we maintain stormwater/ wildlife corridors?;
- Rural recreation prototype – local parks made up of ballfields, meeting space, playground, barbecues, etc.;
- How do you create the local park in phases? Acreage + access + trigger;
- What would prototype mandate? Could there be flexibility in size, amenities, etc.?; and
- County should focus on larger parks.



3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
4. **Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
5. **Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
6. **Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

7. **Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 11

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Critical that all parks be developed around existing ecosystems;
 - Need more parks in unincorporated area of Amelia Island; protect remaining natural areas;

- Yulee could use a huge recreation area with an amphitheater, art exhibits, cultural facilities, classes, library, place to come together;
 - No real identity in Yulee, unincorporated but sense of identity; and
 - Need to keep tree canopy, maintain natural beauty.
- 3. Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
- Maintain existing tree canopy, environmental character, ecosystems;
 - Park, recreation center, amphitheater, gathering space in Yulee; and
 - Protect conservation lands both on and off island.
- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- Dave – Martin County; and
 - New Town Park in Johns Creek, Georgia.
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 12

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? No
2. **Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Need more multi-purpose fields; fields are full;
 - Conservation of remaining land on island;
 - Trails;
 - Smart growth (Yulee is an example of poor planning);
 - Program;
 - School/park site; and
 - More recreation opportunities.
3. **Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
 - Acquiring land;
 - More multi-purpose fields soccer fields, fields are full; and
 - School/park sites.
4. **Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
 - Crime (primarily drugs);
 - Stormwater;
 - Boys & Girls Club in Yulee is under-used; and
 - Parallel road south of SR 200 connecting Amelia to Concourse across Lofton Creek.

- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?
- 6. Funding/ Implementation:** Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Would support all sources below:

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- ~~SPLOST Already used for something else~~
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- Special Assessments
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Others (pls specify)

- 7. Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

STAKEHOLDER/FOCUS GROUP 13

- 1. Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? No
- 2. Needs:** Based on what you know, see and hear about Nassau County, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs (i.e. facilities and/or programs that are important, but not being provided adequately)? (see list on pp 2-3 for reference)
 - Event space for concerts, etc.;
 - More parking at Main Beach to sit in car, look at ocean;
 - Parks in Yulee, with music, food, entertainment; different things every week;
 - Busses, public transportation (Nassau Transit is under COA, have to reserve Para-Transit 3 days in advance, M-F, ends at 2:15 every day; also have a bus that runs from Yulee to Jacksonville; Island Hopper runs on weekends, but doesn't go off-island);



- Safe bike trails, including SR 200 bridge, East Coast Greenway;
 - Boating access;
 - Community gardens;
 - Fishing pier;
 - Dog parks;
 - Another senior center (COA has a smaller center in Hilliard, considering expansion; also need one in Yulee);
 - Petanque;
 - Park benches and seating;
 - Affordable community houses;
 - More pickleball courts;
 - Currently do a lot of programs at COA;
 - Multiuse trails;
 - Parks;
 - Everything on list; and
 - More aquatic.
- 3. Priorities:** Of the needs listed above, what are your top 3 priorities?
- 4. Broader City/County Needs:** Parks, trails, roads, and other elements of the public realm can often generate community-wide benefits beyond recreation. Thinking more broadly about your community and constituents, what do you believe are the top priority social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?
- 5. Benchmark Communities:** As we analyze and plan Nassau County's parks and recreation system, are there any communities we should try to emulate?

6. Funding/ Implementation: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify hundreds of millions of dollars in desired/needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

Pay as You Go:

- General Fund/ CIP
- SPLOST Already used for something else
- Park Impact Fees
- Grants
- User Fees
- **Special Assessments**
- Others (pls specify)

Borrowing:

- **General Obligation Bonds**
- ~~Revenue Bonds~~
- Others (pls specify)

7. Other: Is there anything else you would like to discuss?



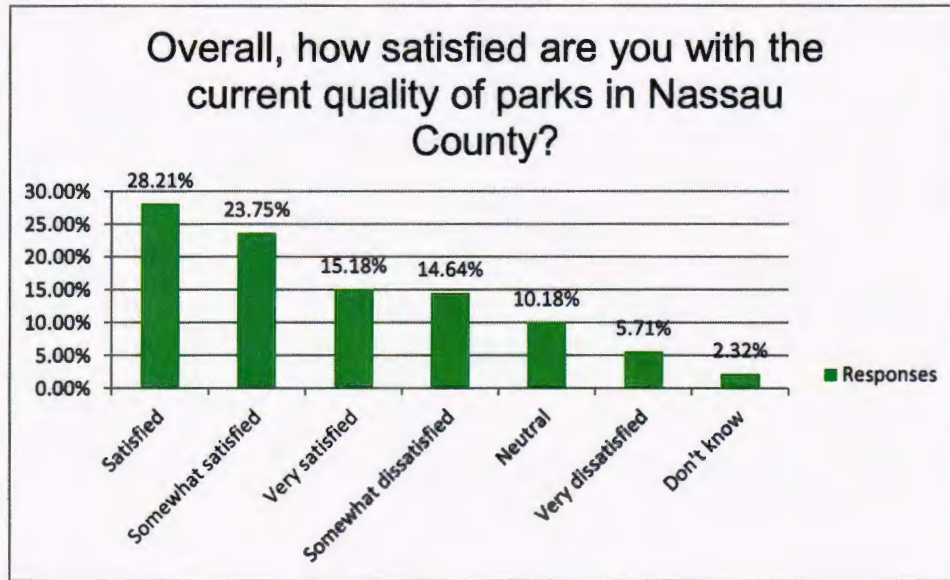
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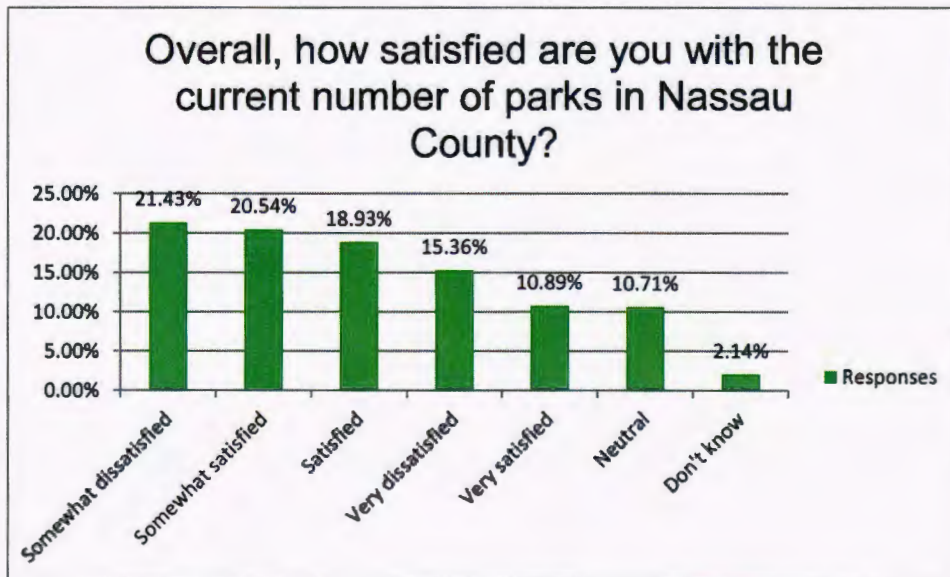
On-line Survey Results



Question 1.



Question 2.

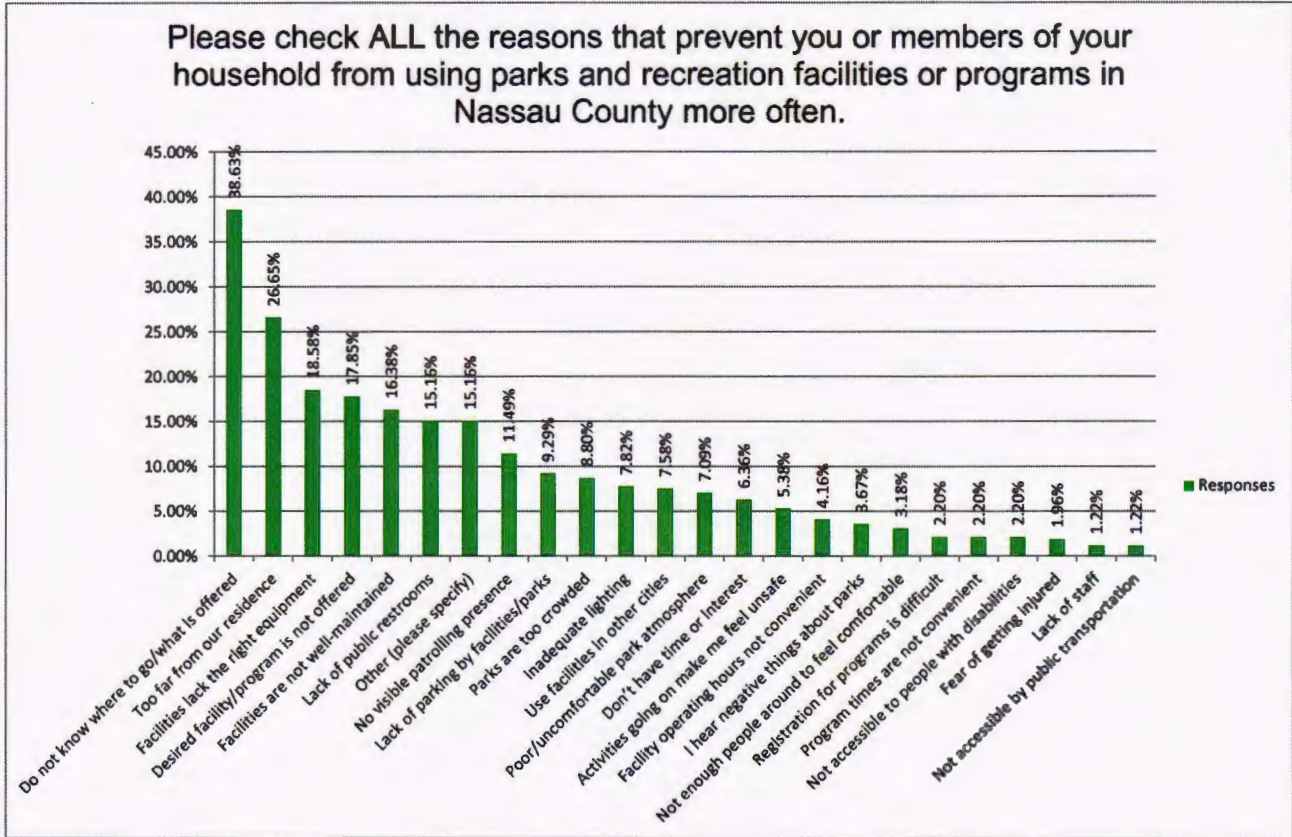


Question 3.

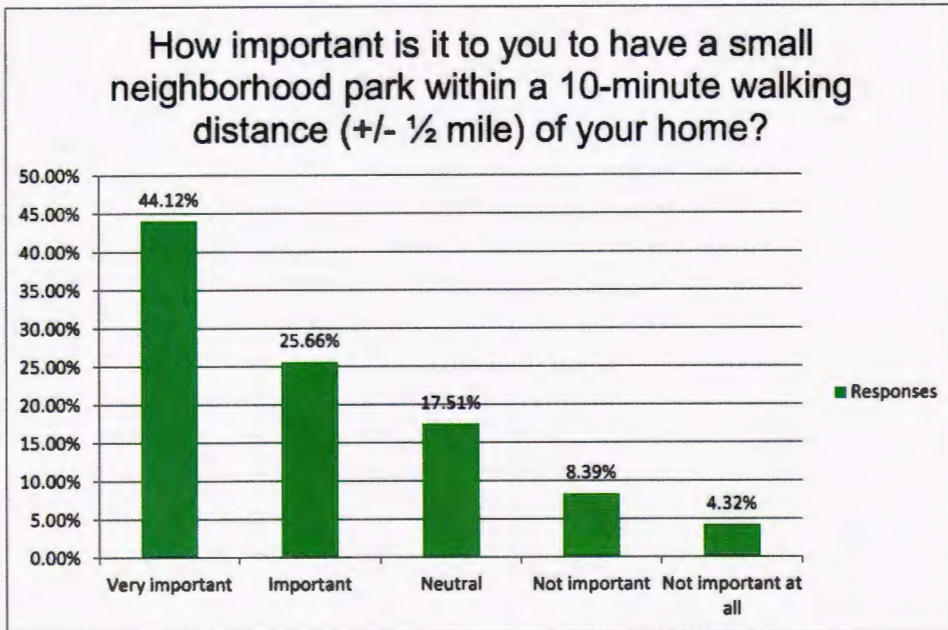




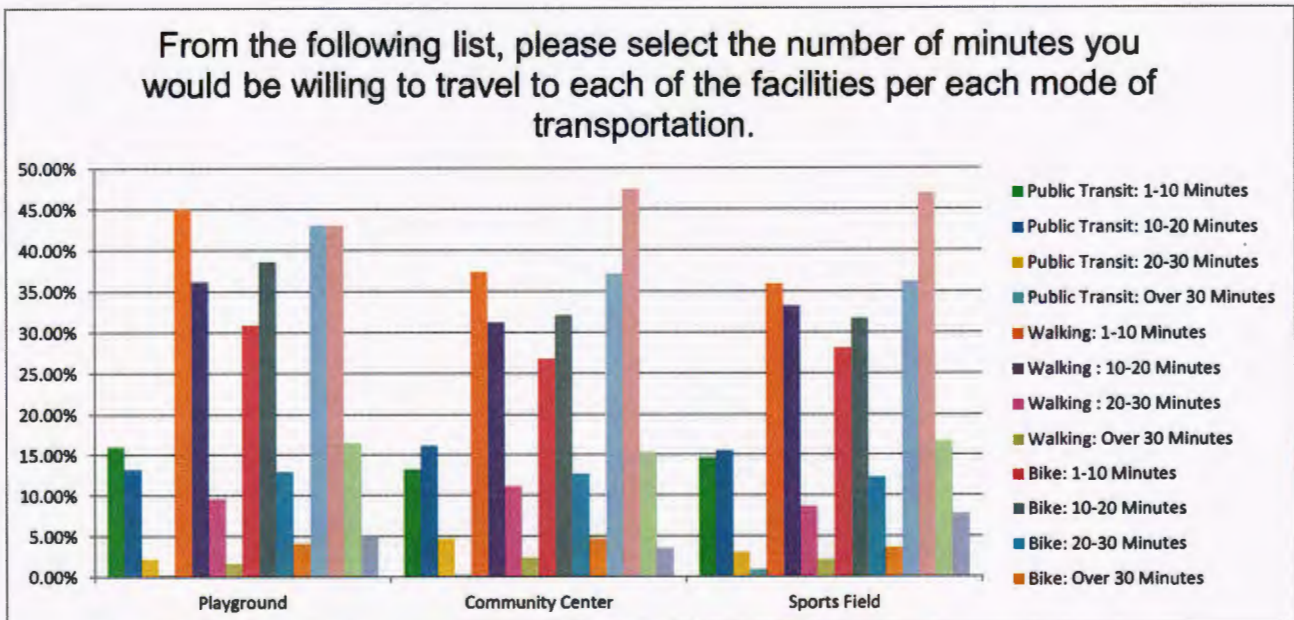
Question 4.



Question 5.

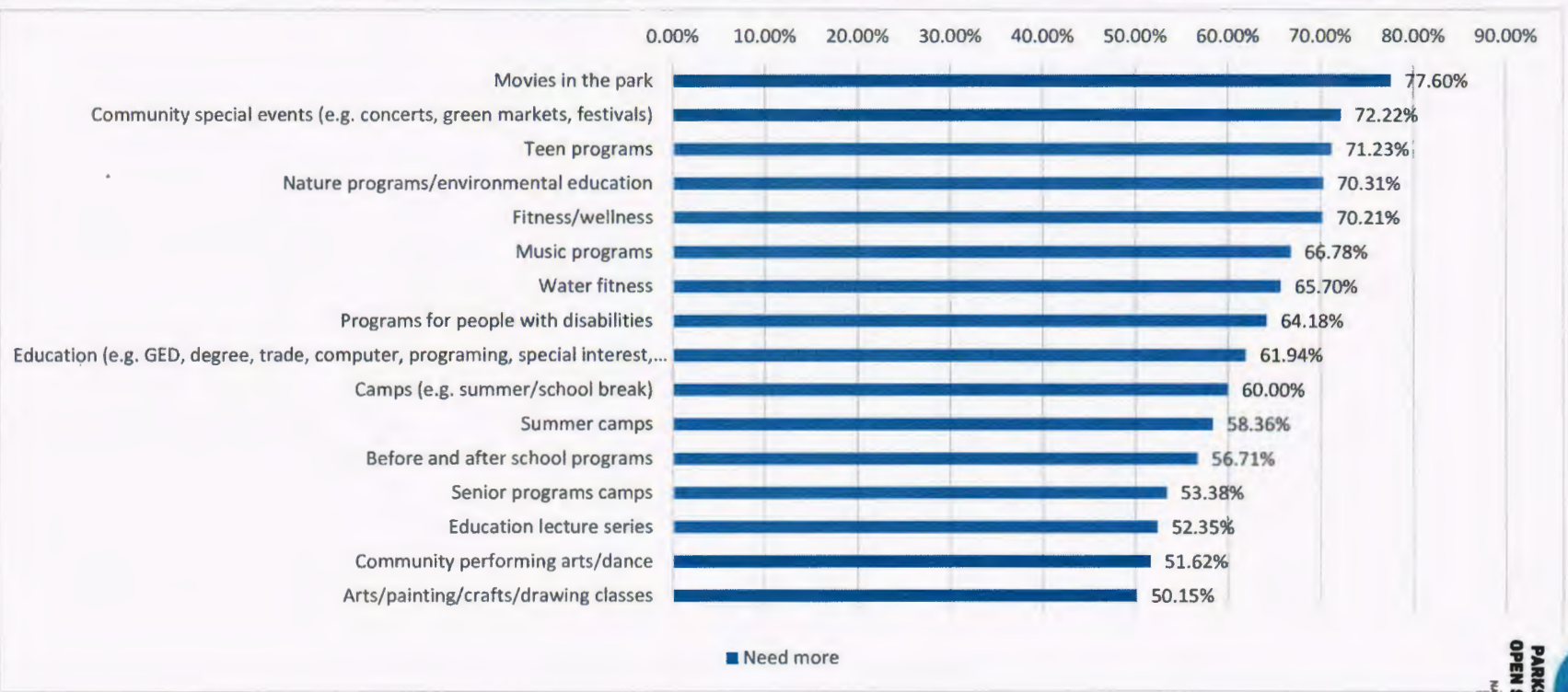
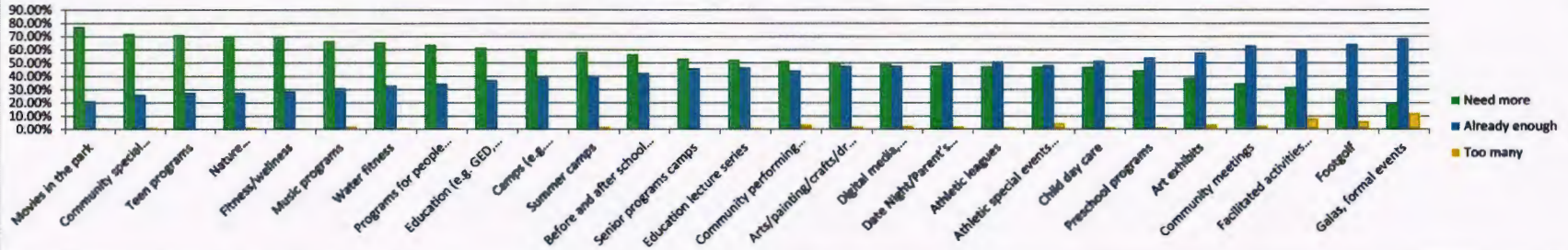


Question 6.

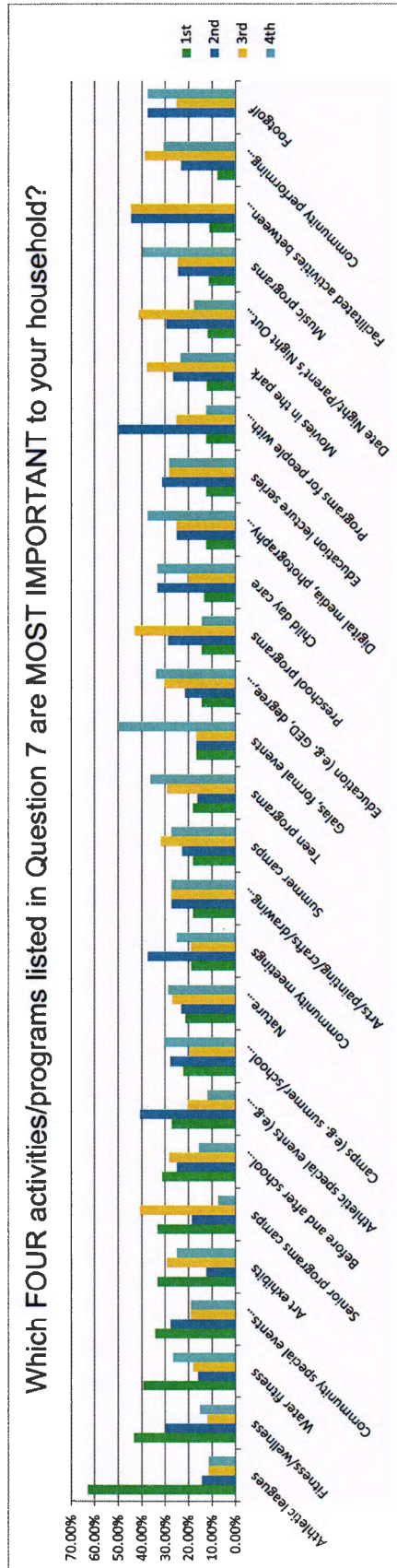


Question 7.

Below please find a list of Parks and Recreation activities/ programs. Please indicate if you or any member of your household NEED MORE, if there are ALREADY ENOUGH, or if there are TOO MANY of the type of Parks and Recreation amenities listed below.

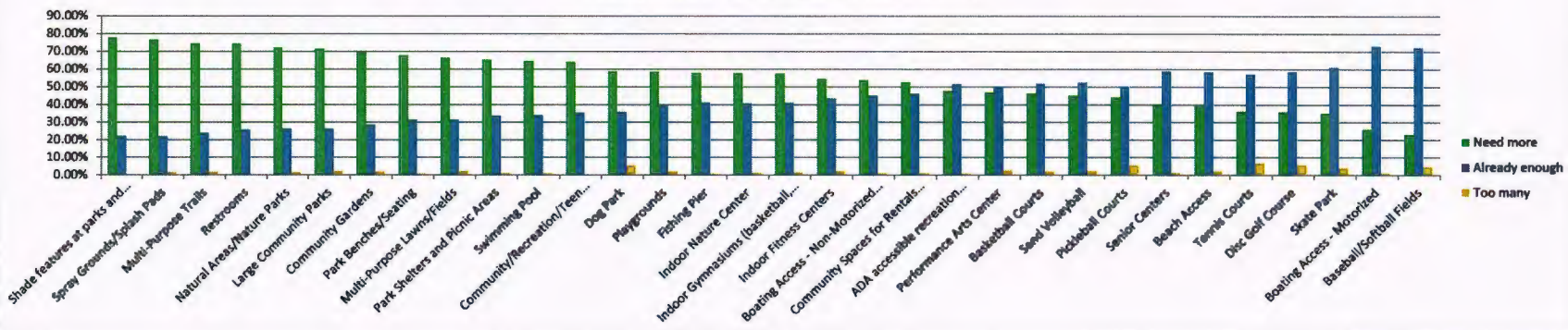


Question 8.



Question 9.

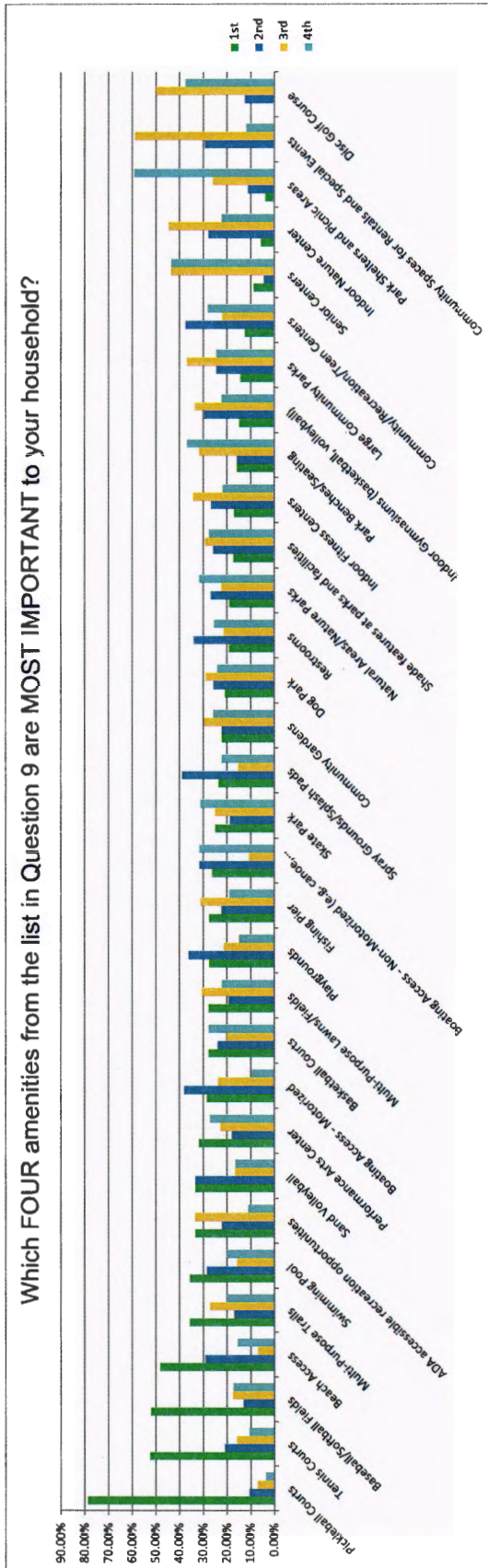
Below please find a list of Parks and Recreation amenities. Please indicate if you or any member of your household NEED MORE, if there are ALREADY ENOUGH, or if there are TOO MANY of the type of Parks and Recreation amenities listed below.



Need more

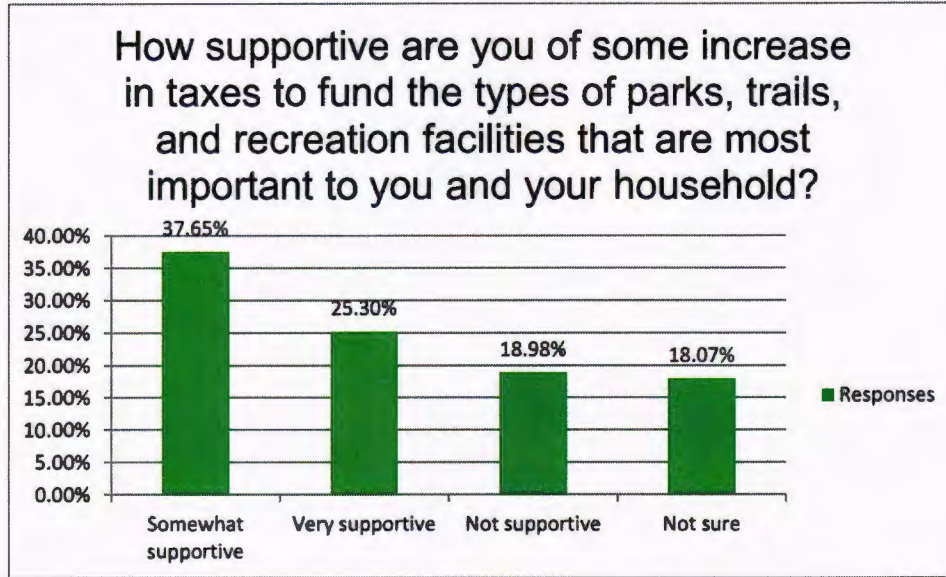


Question 10.

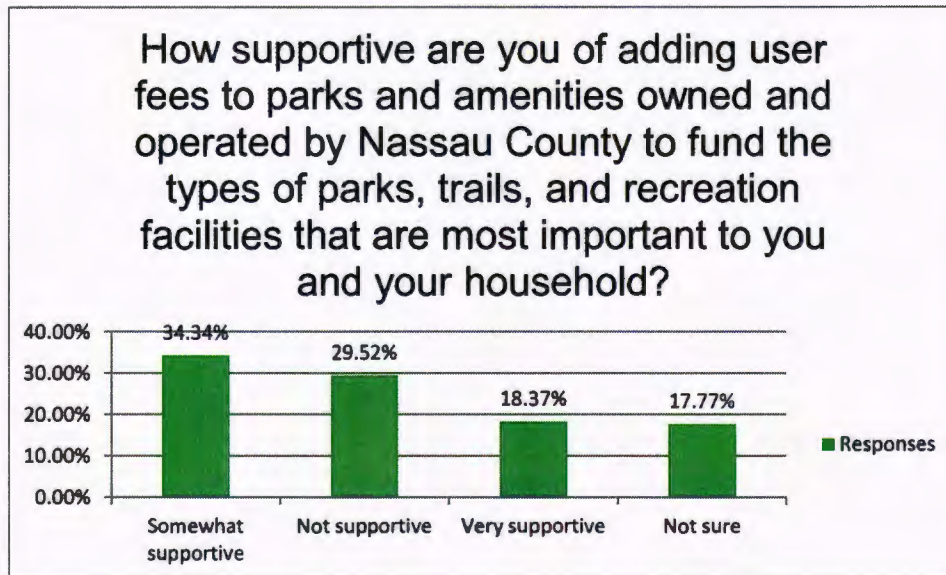




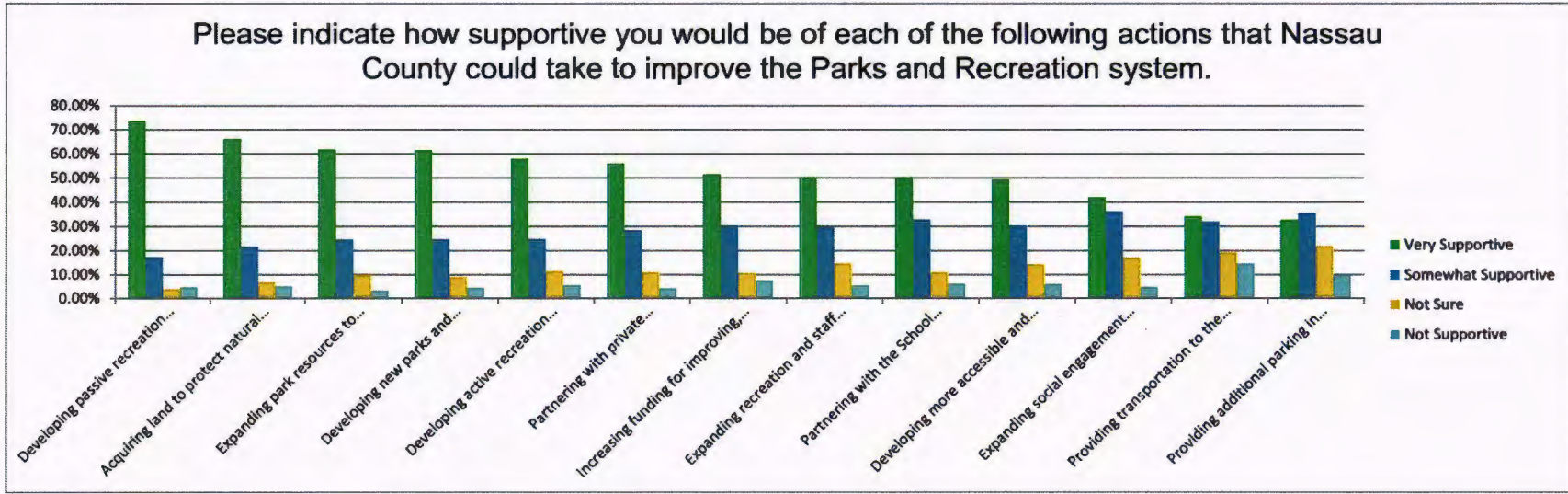
Question 11.



Question 12.

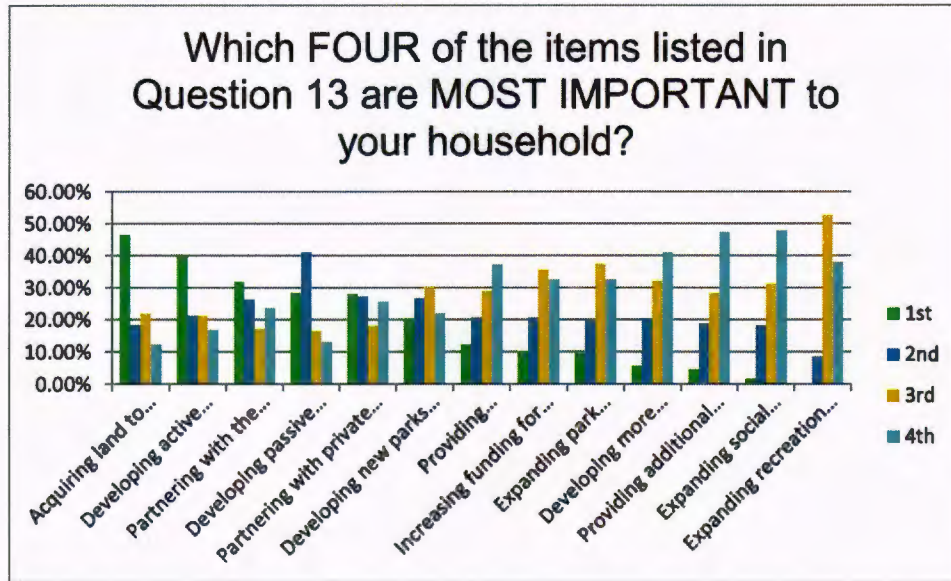


Question 13.

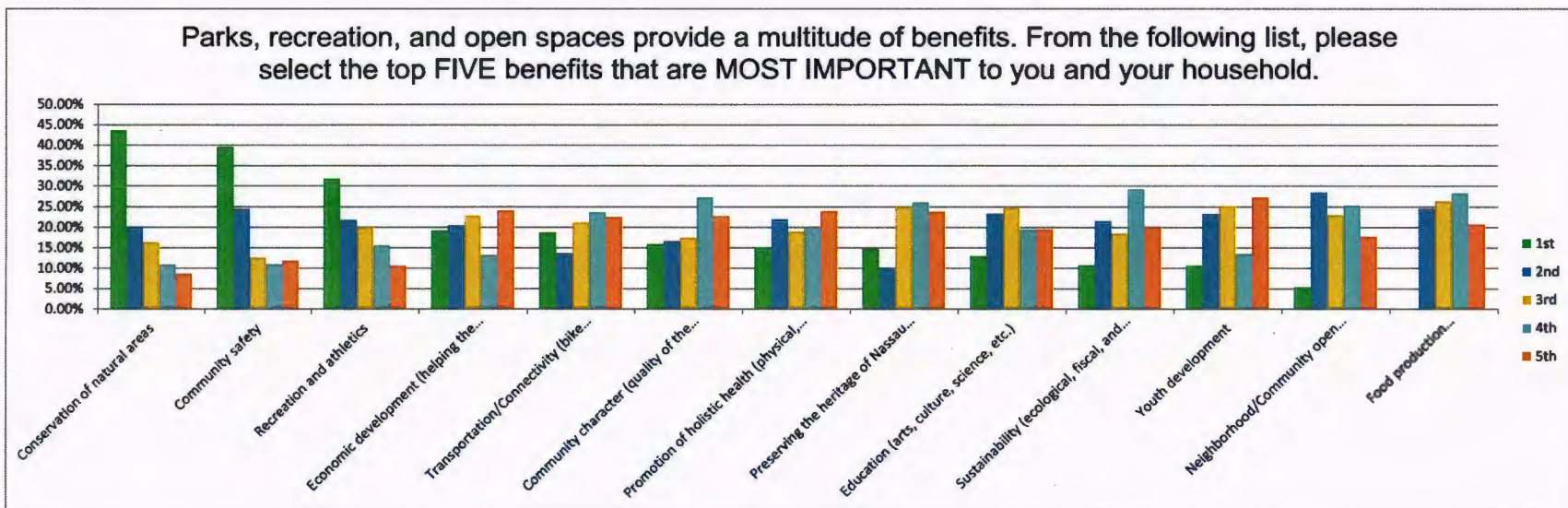




Question 14.



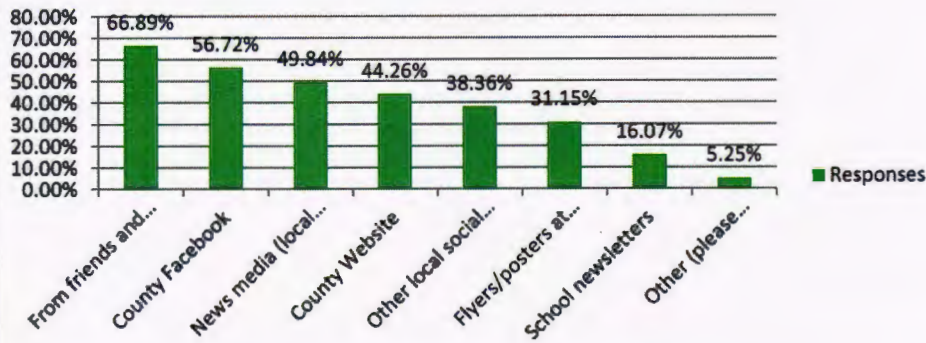
Question 15.





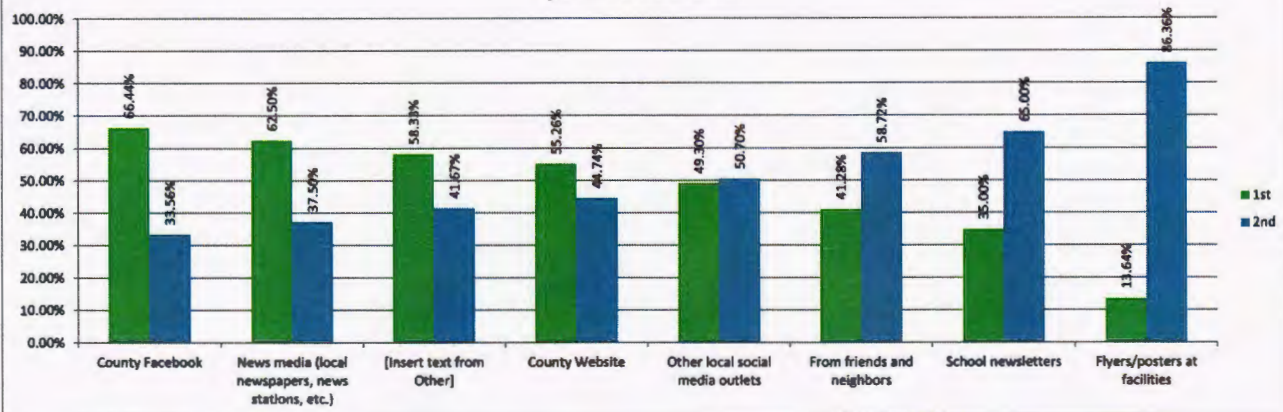
Question 16.

From the list, please check ALL the ways you learn about Nassau County parks and recreation programs, activities, and events. Check all that apply.

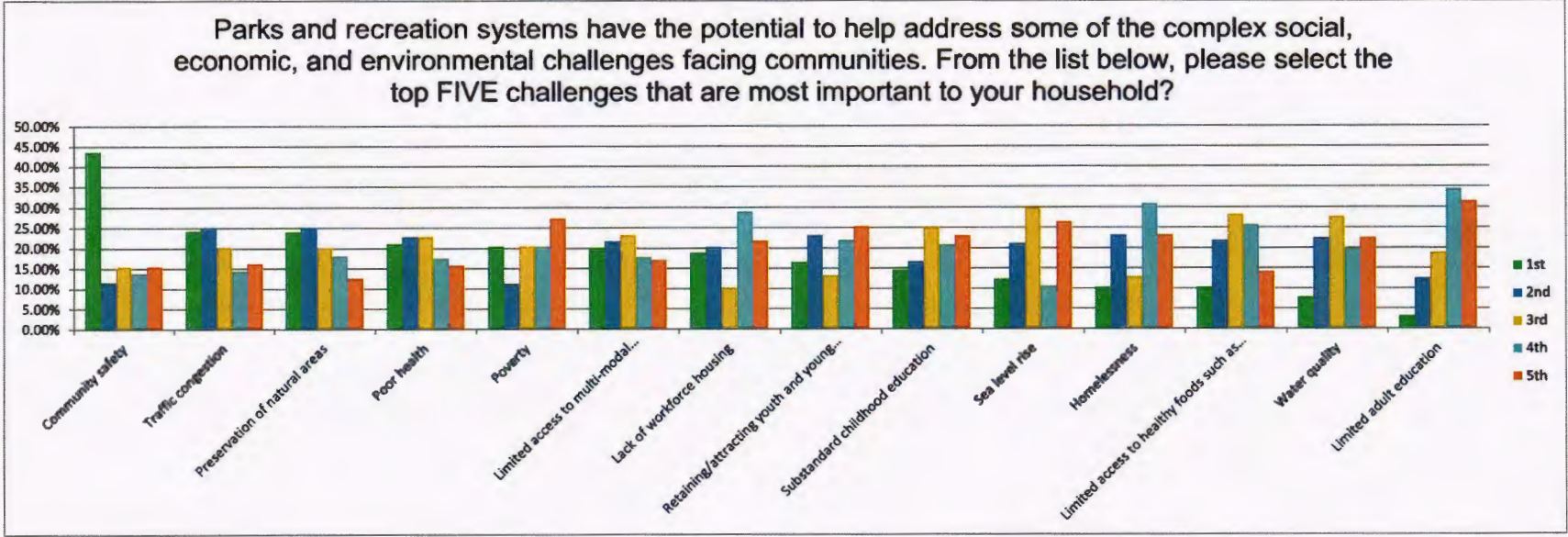


Question 17.

Which TWO of the methods from the list in Question 16 are MOST PREFERRED by your household?



Question 18.



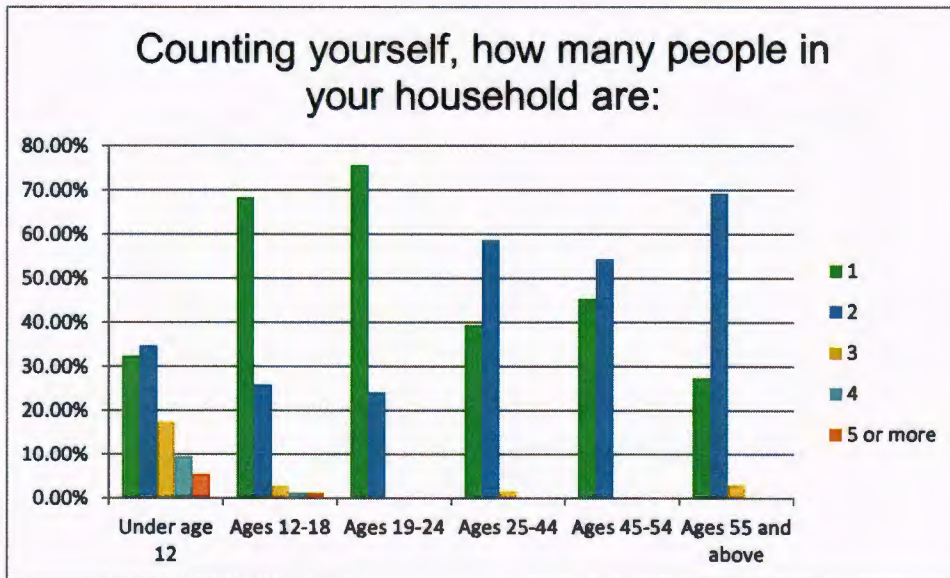


Question 19.

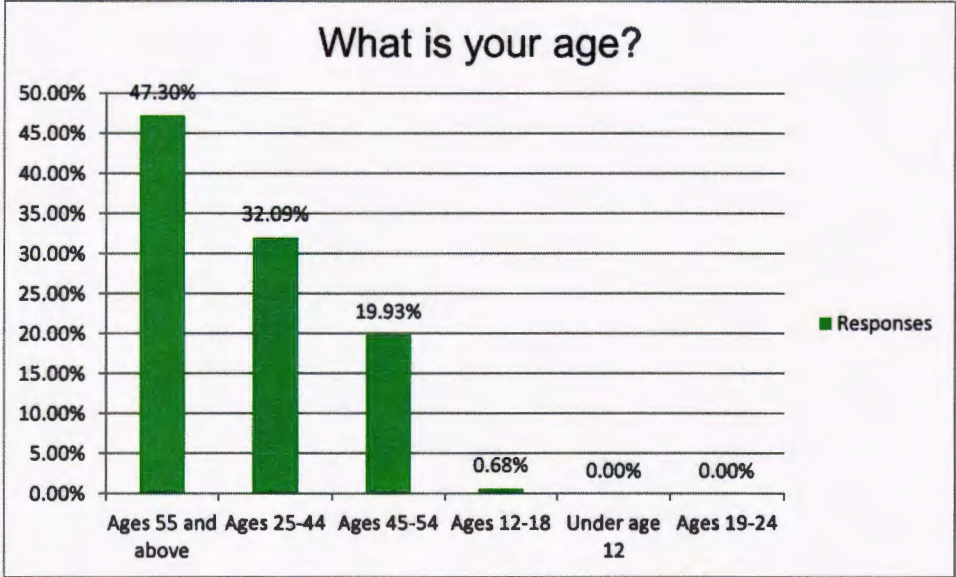
Please provide the name of the general area, neighborhood or subdivision where you reside.

Downtown Fletcher Wilson Neck Simmons Rd Ocean Highland
 Amelia Concourse Dunes North Hampton Blackrock Rd island
 Fernandina Rd Amelia Walk Amelia South end near Beach
 Amelia Island Lakewood Callahan Park
 Fernandina Beach FB Yulee Area
 Nassauville Hilliard North Nassau City Ratliff Flora Parke
 Barnwell Road Plantation Piney Island road Marsh Lakes Summer Beach
 American Beach Lumber Creek Creek Amelia Park Landing Bryceville

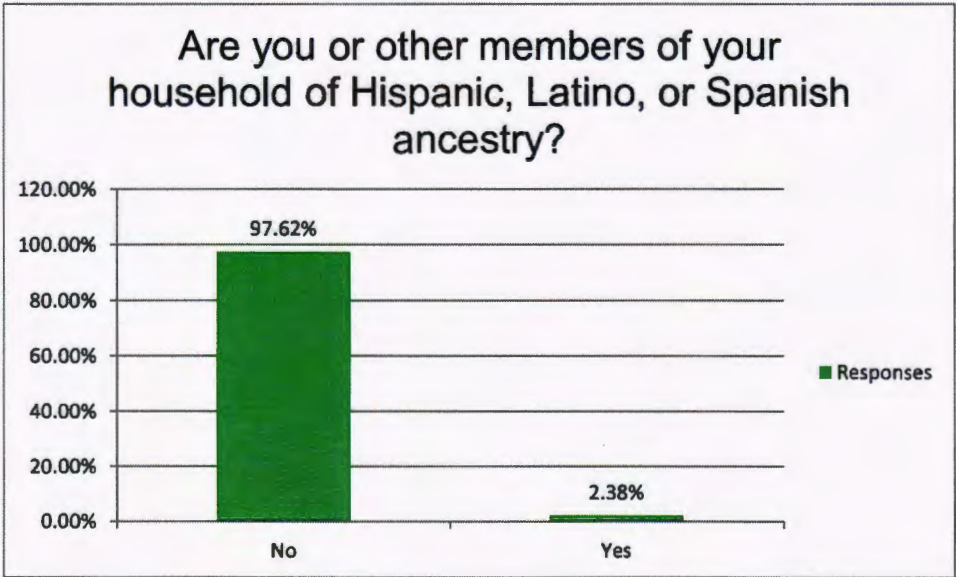
Question 20.



Question 21.

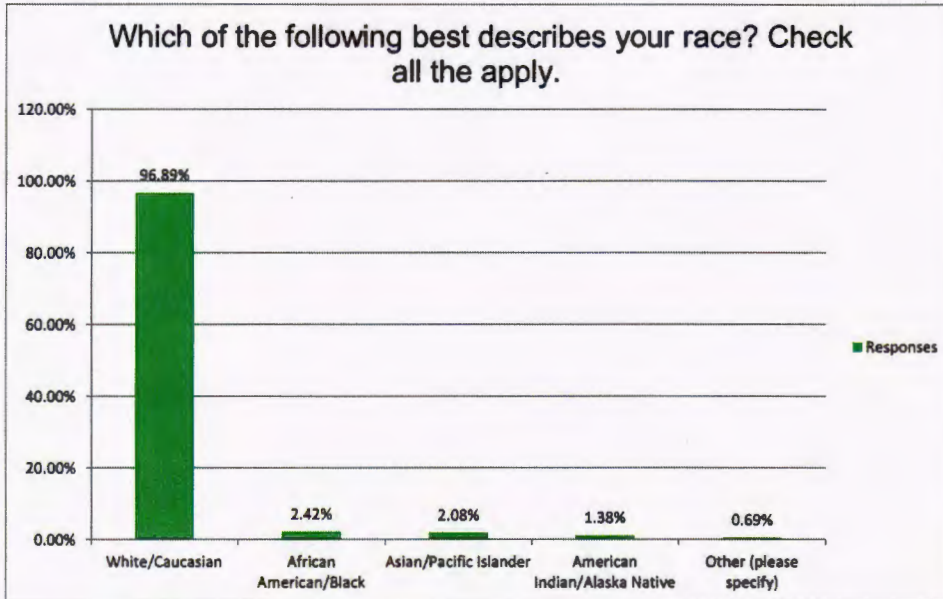


Question 22.

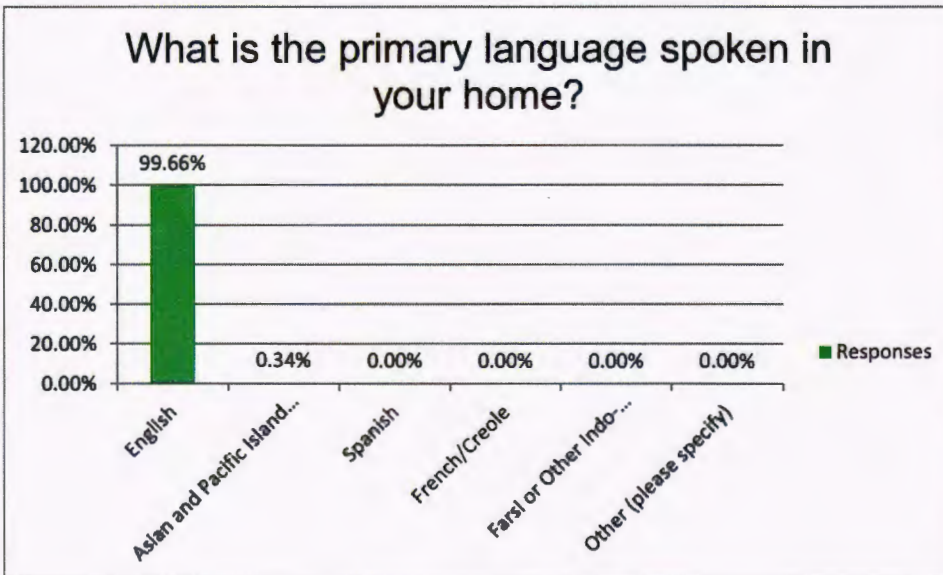




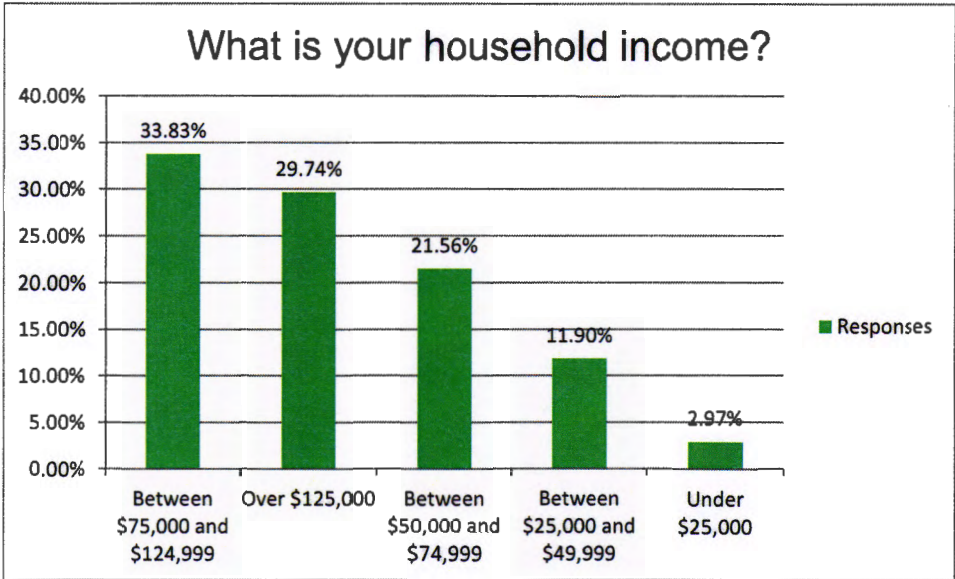
Question 23.



Question 24.



Question 25.





**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

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A4

Preliminary Level-of-Service Standards



PRELIMINARY LEVEL-OF-SERVICE STANDARDS

As stated in the Long-Range Vision, the County should focus on the development of trails, large regional parks, and other County-wide facilities, while developers should be responsible for the development and perpetual maintenance of small local parks. Following are recommended LOS standards for the County to consider.

LEVEL-OF-SERVICE (LOS) METRICS

1. Regional Park LOS

a. Regional Park Acreage LOS

- i. Fourteen (14) acres of developed Regional Park land per 1,000 County-wide residents which are designed and constructed in accordance with County standards and prototypes.
- ii. Satisfaction of Regional Park Acreage LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Regional Park Access LOS. See **Section 2.4** of this report for LOS calculations.

b. Regional Park Access LOS

Notwithstanding the Regional Park Acreage LOS, the Regional Park Access LOS shall be reviewed based on the following standards.

- i. Three (3) - Five (5) mile walk, bicycle, or drive access on safe streets or multi-use trails to a large multi-use Regional Park in suburban and urban areas. In other words, every resident should live within three (3) to five (5) mile bicycle ride or automobile trip on safe streets or multi-use trails to a Regional Park in suburban and urban areas.
- ii. Seven (7) - Ten (10) mile driving access to a large multi-use Regional Park in rural areas. In other words, every resident shall live within seven (7) - ten (10) mile driving distance to a Regional Park in rural areas.

- iii. Satisfaction of Regional Park Access LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Regional Park Acreage LOS. See **Section 2.4** for LOS calculations.

2. Local Park LOS

a. Local Park Acreage LOS

- i. Two (2) acres of developed Local Park per 1,000 residents which are designed and constructed in accordance with the County standards and prototypes.
- ii. Satisfaction of Local Park Acreage LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Local Park Access LOS. See **Section 2.4** for LOS calculations.

b. Local Park Access LOS

Notwithstanding the Local Park Acreage LOS, the Local Park Access LOS shall be reviewed based on the following standards.

- i. Half (½) mile walk or bike on safe, comfortable bicycle and pedestrian facilities, meeting the minimum standards of Nassau County, to a Local Park in suburban and urban areas. In other words, every resident shall live within a ½ mile walk and/or bicycle ride to a local park.
- ii. Five-mile bicycle ride on bicycle ride on safe, comfortable, and accessible facilities designed for multimodal transportation consistent with the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's 2016 publication, Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks. However, in the interim, while the County's recreation system is being developed, every

resident living in rural areas should be able to drive a distance not to exceed five (5) miles to access a Local Park. In other words, every resident should live within five (5) miles, by mode of transportation, to a Local Park. However, it is the intent of this report and Nassau County that within the next 18-24 months the transition to requiring multimodal accessibility become mandatory.

- iii. Satisfaction of Local Park Access LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Local Park Acreage LOS. See **Section 2.4** for LOS calculations.

3. Conservation Areas LOS (Conservation Habitat Network)

At least 27% of the County's land area should be protected for water quality, stormwater treatment, floodwater storage, floodplain management, and/or wildlife habitat. All new development and re-development located within the boundary of the Conservation Habitat Network (CHN) shall be required to demonstrate consistency with the provisions adopted in the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code providing the necessary standards to protect the ecological functions of the CHN and mitigate impacts of flooding through active floodplain management.



4. Multi-use Trails, Sidewalks and Other Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities LOS

All suburban and urban areas of the County to be fully accessible via safe and functional bicycle and pedestrian facilities. All new road construction and reconstruction shall implement complete streets principles. Further, new private and public development shall be required to construct, extend and/or complete existing, planned and potential non-vehicular.

5. Indoor Recreation Space and Aquatic Centers

The County has identified an aspirational LOS of two (2) square feet of indoor recreation space and aquatic center per resident. However, at this time, the LOS is only an aspirational benchmark and not mandated.

6. Operating Expenditures LOS

The County shall be obligated as a self-imposed LOS to provide sufficient funding for maintenance and operation of public recreation facilities. Developers of private Local Parks and private bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall be obligated as a LOS standard to provide sufficient funding for maintenance and operation of private Local Parks. Nassau County may as deemed necessary by the Board of County Commissioner assess residents served by Local or Regional Park for the cost, or a portion thereof, to construct, operate and maintain the facility.

GENERAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Role of Nassau County

Nassau County's role in implementing the Parks and Open Space Vision includes:

- i. Updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan to reflect the County's Parks and Open Space, vision, roles and responsibilities for implementation, and level-of-service metrics; and,
- ii. Planning, acquisition, development, and maintenance of Regional Parks and public Local Parks, multi-use trails, and publicly held Conservation Lands; and,
- iii. Regulating and ensuring private Local Parks are constructed by new development or ensuring monies are collected to construct public Local Parks; and,
- iv. Planning and facilitation of indoor recreation space and aquatic centers through public and/or private partnerships; and,
- v. Administration of an Impact Fee Ordinance or other fee-based exaction mechanism(s) for new development to share in the costs of new Regional Parks, multi-use trails, conservation land acquisition/maintenance, indoor recreation space and aquatic centers and, in some cases, Local Parks required to meet the needs of new residents; and,
- vi. Acquisition development, and maintenance of Conservation Lands; and,

- vii. Planning, constructing, funding and/or ensuring through regulatory means that bicycle and pedestrian facilities such as multi-use trails, sidewalks, bicycle lanes are constructed with new development and existing communities are retrofitted to provide non-vehicular accessibility.

More specifically, the County will plan, design, build, and maintain the following facilities, with developer contributions through impact fees or other fee based exaction mechanism:

- i. Public Local Parks in existing neighborhoods where Local Park LOS is not met, to be maintained by MSTUs, MSBUs, HOAs, CDDs, Stewardship Districts, County, or other similar entity, and;
- ii. Regional Parks, and;
- iii. Multi-use Trails and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and;
- iv. County-wide Conservation Lands (acquisition, protection, and management).

2. Role of Developers

Developers' role in implementing the vision, as outlined in the County's Land Development Regulations, includes:

- i. Planning, designing, and building new Local Parks in accordance with the County's adopted standards and prototype, to meet the needs of new residents, or in some cases, contribution of monies to construct new Public Local Parks and;
- ii. Maintaining the new Local Parks, and/or delegate responsibility to a HOA, POA, CDD, stewardship district or other similar entity, and;

- iii. Protecting the Conservation Habitat Network through avoidance, cluster development, natural buffers, implementation of Low Impact Development and conservation communities principles, transfer of development rights, and other mechanisms to ensure the long-term ecological functionality and connectivity of the CHN, and;

- iv. Ensure a safe and interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to serve all residents. This includes implementation of complete streets principles for all new road construction and reconstruction. Construct new, extend, and /or complete existing, planned and/or potential non-vehicular corridors and facilities, and;
- v. Dedicating a proportionate share of land and/or funds to mitigate new demand on Regional Parks created by new residents within the proposed development.

More specifically, developers will design, build, maintain and protect the following facilities/lands, in accordance with the County's design standards and prototypes:

- i. Local Parks in new developments or on lands in proximity to new development to meet LOS standards. Local Parks shall be consistent with the standards and prototypes defined in this report. In some cases, monies shall be contributed to constructing public Local Parks, and;
- ii. Sidewalk, multi-use trails, complete streets and transit facilities necessary to meet accessibility LOS standards, and;
- iii. Conservation Lands within the CHN.



3. Maintenance

- i. Maintenance of a Regional Park may be provided by the County, HOA, POA, community development district, stewardship district, non-profit agency, or other entity. Maintenance may also be provided by agreement between entities.
- ii. Maintenance of a public Local Park may be provided by the County, HOA, POA, community development district, stewardship district, non-profit agency, or other entity. Maintenance may also be provided by agreement between entities.
- iii. Maintenance of a private Local Park may be provided by an HOA, POA, community development district, stewardship district, non-profit agency, or other entity. Maintenance may also be provided by agreement between entities.
- iv. Nassau County may, as deemed appropriate by the Board of County Commissioners, assess the properties served by a Local Park, Regional Park, publicly held Conservation Land, multi-use trails or other recreation facility to provide maintenance. This includes but is not limited to establishing one or more MSBUs, MSTUs, or allocating a portion of ad valorem taxes collected.

SATISFYING LEVELS OF SERVICE/ LEVELS OF SERVICE CALCULATIONS

1. General

a. Satisfying LOS

Satisfying LOS will be realized through the use of a variety of tools including, but not limited to, any combination of the below:

- i. Dedication of land
- ii. Construction of facilities
- iii. Contribution of monies
- iv. Establishing conservation easements
- v. Designing for "cluster developments" and "conservation communities"
- vi. Preserving natural buffers and ecological corridors
- vii. Protecting natural and cultural resources
- viii. Applying complete streets principles
- ix. Constructing multi-use trail, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and other similar non-vehicular facilities
- x. Maintenance and operation of parks, facilities and natural areas
- xi. Assessments for construction, operation and maintenance of facilities
- xii. Credit for existing facilities

b. Persons per Household

The persons per household multiplier utilized to calculate the Regional and Local Park Acreage LOS shall be the average household size for Nassau County as defined in the latest publication of the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). In years when the Decennial Census data is published by the US Census Bureau, the data in the Decennial Census shall control.

c. County Population

Where County-wide population is needed for LOS calculations, the latest Population Estimates from the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) shall be utilized.

d. Measuring Distance

Where distance is used in assessing Access LOS the distance shall be measured by most direct route of land transportation by mode. For vehicular travel distance shall be measured along the most direct, legally accessible, roadway. For travel by bicycle or foot, distance shall be measured by the most direct, legally accessible, bicycle and pedestrian facility conforming to Nassau County standards. Where no bicycle and pedestrian facilities exist, or the facilities are substandard, then access does not exist.

e. Measuring Service Radii

When measuring the service radii of a park, it shall be measured from the boundary of the park.

f. Physical Impediment

Where a physical impediment is referenced in relation to Access LOS it shall have the meaning of being any physical impediment to safe bicycle and/or pedestrian

travel. This includes, but is not limited to, physical barriers such as fences, walls, buildings, structures, natural areas, bodies of water, roadways with four travel lanes or fewer without cross-walks/bicycle facilities meeting minimum Nassau County standards and/or roadways with more than four travel lanes without an elevated pedestrian overpass. It shall also mean any roadway without bicycle and pedestrian facilities meeting the minimum standards of Nassau County.

g. Legal Impediment (Non-Physical Impediment)

Where a legal impediment is referenced in relation to Access LOS it shall have the meaning of being any legal impediment to safe bicycle and /or pedestrian travel. This includes, but is not limited to, covenants and restrictions, private property boundary's (marked or unmarked), easements of any type, deed restrictions, lack of an affirmative right to ingress/ egress, or any other mechanism that would impede safe bicycle and pedestrian ingress/egress.

h. Master Planned Developments

Any development with a unified development plan including, but not limited to, any multi-phased project whether approved via separate Development Order or not, any Planned Unit Development, Development of Regional Impact, Sector Plan or any other development whose development program is defined in a Development Order approved, or to be considered, by Nassau County shall be viewed in whole for impacts to the public recreation system and means of mitigating new demand created. Nassau County shall not approve a new Preliminary Binding Site Plan, Site Engineering Plan, Subdivision Plat, or Development Order which places additional demand



on the public recreation system without addressing, as part of the Development Order or Development Review Committee approval, how the new demand placed on the public recreation system will be mitigated. All mitigation shall be consistent with the standards defined by Nassau County.

2. Regional Park LOS

a. *New Residential Development's Share of Land and/or Funds*

All new development containing a residential component shall dedicate a proportionate share of land and/or funds to mitigate new demand on Regional Parks created by new residents within the proposed development according to the calculation and credit methodology defined in **Section XX**.

b. *County's Discretion*

It shall be the County's sole decision to require dedication of land and construction of facilities or accept funds to mitigate new demand placed on the Regional Park system. The following shall be used to guide the decision making process.

- i. Any development located within the boundary, or within a quarter mile of the boundary, of a Regional Park target area as depicted in **Figure XX**, shall partner with Nassau County to locate, plan and build new Regional Parks and facilities.
- ii. Any development adjacent to the boundary, or within a quarter mile of the boundary, of an existing or planned County Park/Preserve, State Park, State Forest, National Forest, or other

similar publicly held recreation or conservation lands shall partner with the County to expand, or prepare for the logical expansion of, the public holding and related facilities. This may include creating linear based ecological corridors.

- iii. Any development or redevelopment with frontage or access on a navigable water way, river shores, or the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean shall partner with Nassau County to locate, plan and build new Regional Parks and facilities providing access to waterways, shores and beaches.
- iv. Any development or redevelopment not located within the boundary, or within a quarter mile of the boundary, of a Regional Park target area, planned County Park/Preserve, State Park, State Forest, National Forest, or other similar publicly held lands, or does not have frontage on or access to a navigable water way, river shores, or the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean, shall contribute money via an impact fee ordinance, proportionate fair share agreement, or other similar fee based exaction mechanism as deemed appropriate by Nassau County and further defined in **Section XX XX LDC**.

c. Calculating Regional Park Demand

Calculating demand on the Regional Park system created by new residential development based on the adopted LOS of fourteen (14) acres per 1,000 residents.

First, multiply the proposed number of dwelling units in the new development by the average persons per household to arrive at the total number of persons projected to live in the new development.

# of dwelling units (du)	x	persons per household (pph)	=	# of people
	x		=	

Second, multiply the total number of persons projected to live in the new development by fourteen-thousandths (14/1000) [14/1000 in decimal format is 0.014]:

# of persons	x	14 Acres per 1,000 persons	=	Required acreage
	x	0.014	=	

Example Project Calculation (Jan. 2019):

The hypothetical development is a proposed subdivision with 500 dwelling units:

$$500\text{du} \times 2.54\text{pph} = 1,270 \text{ persons}$$

$$1,270 \text{ persons} \times 0.014 = 17.78 \text{ acres}$$

In this example, the new demand for Regional Park Acreage LOS created by the proposed development is 17.78 acres of developed Regional Park land.



d. Calculating Regional Park System Capacity

The capacity for the Regional Park system is derived from the County-wide population and the Regional Park Acreage LOS of fourteen (14) acres per thousand residents.

First, multiply the total population of the County by fourteen-thousandths (14/1000) to determine the total acres of developed Regional Park land needed to meet the adopted fourteen (14) acres per 1,000 residents LOS.

County population	x	14 Acres per 1,000 persons	=	Required acreage
	x	0.014	=	

Second, divide the total acreage of developed Regional Park land required to meet the County's adopted LOS by the total existing developed acres of Regional Park land to arrive at the current operating capacity of the Regional Park system.

Needed developed Regional Park Land per LOS	/	Developed Regional Park acres	=	Regional Park operating capacity
	/		=	

Example Regional Park Capacity Calculation (Jan. 2019):

Using the 2018 population of Nassau County (82,748), to meet adopted Regional Park LOS standard, the County would need 1,158 acres of Regional Park lands developed consistent with the County's adopted standards and prototypes. [2018 population = 82,748; 82,748 X 0.014= 1,158].

Currently, Nassau County only has 175 acres of developed Regional Park land.

As such, the Regional Park system is operating at 662% capacity. Currently, there is no excess capacity (developed acres of Regional Park land in excess of the minimum needed to meet demand at adopted LOS) that can be used by new development to offset impacts.

e. Credits for Excess Capacity in the Regional Park System

Excess capacity in the Regional Park system may be applied to new development for the purpose of satisfying Regional Park Acreage LOS standards for new development only if;

- i. There is available excess capacity in the County-wide Regional Park system, as determined by Nassau County, and;
- ii. The proposed development seeking Regional Park Acreage LOS credits meets the Regional Park Access LOS standards defined in **Level-of-Service Standards 1b**.

Example (Jan. 2019):

An applicant proposes a new residential development in an urban or suburban area. Nassau County determines that excess capacity exists in the County-wide Regional Park system. However, there is no Regional Park within a five (5) mile drive from the proposed development. In this case, the proposed development would not be eligible to receive any Regional Park Acreage or Access LOS credits.

3. Local Park LOS

a. Local Park Acreage LOS Basis

- i. The Local Park Acreage LOS has two components. The first, an acreage LOS of two (2) acres of developed Local Park land per 1,000 residents. The second, a bicycle and pedestrian access LOS requiring non-vehicular transportation facilities to serve the residents

within a ½ mile of the Local Park. The Local Park Access LOS standards are further defined in **Level-of-Service Standards 2b**. The two components of the adopted Local Park LOS are interdependent.

- ii. On average (in theory), one (1) Local Park a minimum size of six (6) to ten (10) acres should be located approximately every square mile of low-density residential development area. As such, in theory, every resident will be within a ½ mile (10 minute walk) of a Local Park. Each Local Park will contain the similar base amenities that meet general demands of residents of all ages, interests and abilities.
 - a. Six acres is the minimum land area necessary to build the Nassau County prototypical local park as defined in **Section 3.5** of this report.
 - b. Based on the Nassau County Comprehensive Plan and predominant development pattern, a low-density residential development pattern produces approximately two (2) dwelling unit per acre of land.
 - c. A square mile is equivalent to 640 acres.
 - d. On a gross density basis [ref. Comprehensive Plan Policy FL1.02.05], approximately 3,250 residents will live in a typical square mile developed with a low density development pattern [640 acres @ 2 dwelling units/ acre = 1280du; 1,280du x 2.54 residents per du = 3251 residents].
 - e. Correlating the ½ mile walk with the typical low density development pattern and minimum size of six acres for the Nassau



County prototypical Local Park results in a demand to produce two (2) acres of developed Local Park land for every 1,000 residents. [3,250 residents x (2ac/1000 residents) = 6.5 acres]

- iii. The exact distribution of Local Parks will vary based on physical constraints, development patterns, accessibility and other variables. In areas with higher residential densities additional Local Parks, or Local Parks with additional acreage, will be necessitated to accommodate the increased demand and maintain the minimum Local Park Acreage and Access LOS.

b. Local Parks and New Development

All new development containing a residential component shall plan, design, and build new Local Parks in accordance with the County's adopted standards and prototype, to meet the needs of new residents.

c. New Private Local Park Maintenance

New private Local Parks shall be maintained and operated by the developer and/or delegate responsibility to a HOA, POA, CDD, stewardship district or other similar entity. Two or more developers may partner to construct a consolidated Local Park provided all Local Park LOS standards are met.

d. Construction of Public Local Parks

Nassau County may construct public Local Parks in existing neighborhoods where Local Park LOS are not met or where monies have been collected for

construction of a Local Park pursuant to **Section XX**. Public Local Parks are to be maintained and operated by/through MSTUs, MSBUs, HOAs, CDDs, Stewardship Districts, County, or other similar entity or combination of entities/mechanisms.

e. Inadequate Demand generated for the Development of a Local Park

If generated Local Park demand of an individual development is too small to accommodate the minimum characteristics of a prototype Local Park as defined in **Section 3.5**, the developer shall contribute monies to Nassau County to offset proportionate costs of developing a Local Park for new residents based on land value and per-acre development cost of prototypical Local Park. **Section g.** that follows provides the calculation methodology.

f. County's Discretion

It shall be the County's sole decision to require dedication of land and construction of facilities or accept funds to mitigate new demand placed on the Local Park system. The following shall be used to guide the decision-making process.

- i. If the development site is situated in such a manner as to potential expand an existing Local Park, Regional Park, conservation area or has the potential to create a linear component of a greater network of recreational opportunities for citizens.
- ii. The siting of a Local Park within the proposed development has the opportunity preserve a cultural or archaeological resource deemed of value by Nassau County
- iii. Quality of ingress/egress to a potential Local Park

g. Calculating New Demand on Local Parks

First, multiply the proposed number of dwelling units in the new development by the average persons per household to arrive at the total number of persons projected to live in the new development.

# of dwelling units (du)	x	persons per household (pph)	=	# of people
	x		=	

Second, multiply the total number of persons projected to live in the new development by two-thousandths (2/1000) [2/1000 in decimal format is 0.002] to arrive at the requisite amount of developed Local Park land.

# of persons	x	2 Acres per 1,000 persons	=	Required acreage
	x	0.002	=	

Example Project Calculation (Jan. 2019):

The hypothetical development is a proposed subdivision with 500 dwelling units:

500du X 2.54pph = 1,270 persons

1,270 persons X 0.002 = 2.54 acres

In this example, the new demand for Local Park Acreage LOS created by the proposed development is 2.54 acres of developed Local Park land. However, because the 2.54 acres does not meet the minimum standards of the adopted prototypical Local Park, the developer/applicant cannot satisfy the Local Park Acreage LOS by simply building a 2.54 acre Local Park.



h. Satisfaction of Local Park Acreage LOS

Satisfaction of Local Park Acreage LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Local Park Access LOS. Acreage LOS credit will not be given towards the Local Park Acreage LOS if the Local Park being considered does not meet the Local Park Access LOS standards. This includes, among other standards defined in this report, the Local Park must be legally accessible, by a means acceptable to Nassau County, by the population seeking Local Park Access LOS credit.

- i. Example 1, if a private Local Park in development X is not legally and/or physically accessible to the residents of development Y then the demand created by development Y cannot be mitigated by the Local Park provided in development X.
- ii. Example 2, Nassau County builds a Local Park that is open to the public and has unused/available capacity based on the minimum Local Park Acreage LOS of two (2) acres of developed Local Park land per 1,000 residents. However, there is no conforming sidewalk, multi-use trail or other acceptable bicycle and pedestrian connection between the public Local Park and development X. As such, development X cannot utilize the available capacity at the public Local Park to satisfy the Local Park Acreage LOS as the connection between development X and the public Local Park does not meet the Local Park Access LOS standards.

i. Calculating Capacity for a Local Park

Each Local Park is calculated independently based on Access LOS and Acreage LOS. The capacity for a Local Park is derived from a combination of existing population and number of approved but unbuilt building sites relative to the ½ mile access LOS and two (2) acres per 1,000 persons acreage LOS.

First, Nassau County will determine the number of existing residents within the ½ mile service radii of the Local Park using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and data from the Property Appraiser's Office. Nassau County will then analyze the ½ mile service are to determine the number of undeveloped building sites. The equation is:

$$\text{(Population within ½ mile of Local Park + (undeveloped building sites within ½ mile of a Local Park X persons per household)) X 0.002 = Required Acreage to Serve Population within ½ mile of Local Park under review}$$

Second, divide the acreage of developed Local Park land required to meet the County's adopted LOS by the total existing developed acres of Local Park land within the ½ mile radius to arrive at the current operating capacity of the subject Local Park.

Needed developed Local Park Land per LOS	/	Developed Local Park acres	=	Local Park operating capacity in 1/2 mile service radii
	/		=	

Example Local Park Capacity calculation (Jan. 2019):

The Example Park:

- This example utilizes a hypothetical six (6) acre park constructed in accordance with the adopted prototype Local Park. The Local Park was constructed by Nassau County and is open to the public.



- Within a ½ mile of the park there are 1,287 existing residents.
- Within a ½ mile there are 580 undeveloped building sites.
- The number of future residents to live on those 580 undeveloped building sites is 1,473. (580du * 2.54pph = 1,473 persons)
- The total existing capacity reservation for the subject Local Park is 2,760 residents.
- 2,760 residents necessitates 5.52 acres of Local Park meeting Access and prototype standards.
- The existing publicly accessible Local Park measures six (6) acres and has capacity to serve 3,000 residents
- The subject Local Park is operating at 92% capacity.
- As such, the subject Local Park has capacity to provide service an additional 240 residents (94 dwelling units).

The Example Development:

In light of the parameters for the above example, a new development is proposed with the following parameters:

- Will include 50 dwelling units
- The proposed development is within a ½ mile of the subject Local Park.
- The developer is proposing to connect the new development to the subject Local Park via a multi-use path.

The Example Conclusion:

Given the example parameters, the proposed new development would be eligible to receive credit against the Local Park Acreage and Access LOS based on the criteria for issuance of credit defined in **Section j**. In this scenario, the owner of the proposed new development would not be required to construct a Local Park or contribute monies to constructing a Local Park.

j. Credits for excess capacity at Local Park

Excess capacity at a Local Park may be applied to new development for the purpose of satisfying Local Park Acreage LOS standards for new development only if;

- i. The Local Park is designed and constructed in accordance with County standards and prototypes; and,
- ii. The Local Park proposed to off-set new development has excess capacity, as determined by Nassau County; and,
- iii. All Local Park Access LOS standards are met.

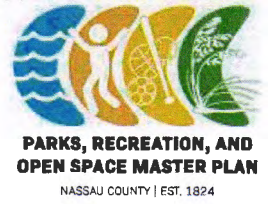
k. Local Park Access LOS

Notwithstanding the Local Park Acreage LOS, the Local Park Access LOS shall be reviewed based on the following standards.

- i. Half (½) mile walk or bike on safe, comfortable bicycle and pedestrian facilities, meeting the minimum standards of Nassau County, to a Local Park in suburban and urban areas. In other words, every resident shall live within a ½ mile walk or bicycle ride in suburban and urban areas.
- ii. Five-mile bicycle ride on safe, comfortable, and accessible facilities designed for multimodal transportation consistent with the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's 2016 publication, Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, in rural areas. However, in the interim, while the County's recreation system is being developed, every resident living in rural areas should be

able to drive a distance not to exceed five (5) miles to access a Local Park. In other words, every resident should live within five (5) miles, by mode of transportation, to a Local Park. However, it is the intent of this report and Nassau County that within the next 18-24 months the transition to requiring multimodal accessibility become mandatory.

- iii. Satisfaction of Local Park Access LOS is interrelated and dependent upon the Local Park Acreage LOS. Credit will not be given towards the Park Access LOS if the Local Park being considered for LOS satisfaction does not meet the Local Park Acreage LOS standards and/or is not legally accessible, by a means acceptable to Nassau County, by the population seeking credit. See examples in the preceding **Section h.**, Satisfaction of Local Park Acreage LOS.



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**PARKS, RECREATION, AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

NASSAU COUNTY | EST. 1824

