



MIAMI PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES MASTER PLAN



MAY 2007 | THE CITY OF MIAMI
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PREPARED BY GOODY CLANCY
WITH DODSON ASSOCIATES | GREENPLAY LLC, | LEISURE VISION | ROSENBERG GARDNER DESIGN



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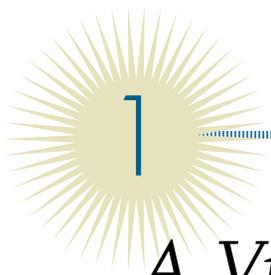
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A Vision For Miami's Twenty-first Century Parks And Public Spaces

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES IN MIAMI 21

An urban renaissance is remaking the City of Miami as new residents, new visitors, and new investment transform Miami into America's next great international city. Miami's leaders have recognized that this regenerative growth must be shaped and planned to ensure the highest quality of life for residents and visitors. To further that goal, Mayor Manny Diaz launched "Miami 21" in April 2005, an ambitious citywide planning program that includes revision of the city's zoning code coupled with transportation and economic development planning. The Mayor also understood that in the new Miami—with new residents in downtown high-rises, neighborhoods in renovation, dynamic and changing immigrant communities, and a continuing commitment to serve its residents of modest incomes—excellent parks and public spaces are a critical ingredient of a thriving urban center. This master plan for the city's parks and public spaces is part of the overall Miami 21 initiative.



The new Miami requires new ways of thinking about its public realm—the shared spaces, public and semi-public—that define a cosmopolitan city. The public realm includes everything from parks and plazas to streets, sidewalks, drainage swales, and highway edges. Although this master plan focuses on the city's parks, it is not limited to a traditional Department of Parks and Recreation master plan. The city recognized that the park system must be analyzed, understood and planned within the larger context of the public realm. This plan approaches Miami's park system from multiple perspectives—nature and environment, park and urban design, recreation, community development, culture and cultural identity, and changing demographics.

The plan was developed through an extensive community participation process that resulted in a vision for the city's entire park and public space system as well as a neighborhood vision for each of Miami's thirteen Neighborhood Empowerment Team (NET) Areas. As a citywide master plan, the plan does not focus on the design or redesign of specific park properties, except for illustrative purposes. The plan makes recommendations for system-wide policies, guidelines, procedures and programs, as well as for different categories of parks and public spaces. More detailed design master plans are being developed during 2005–2007 for the city's major waterfront parks—Bicentennial/Museum Park, the Coconut Grove Waterfront, Virginia Key, and Bayfront Park—and the Downtown Development Authority is developing a Downtown master plan. The citywide parks and public spaces master plan was developed in coordination with these planning processes.

MIAMI'S VISION FOR TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

The City of Miami has an unparalleled opportunity to create a great twenty-first century system of parks and public spaces and become a leader in the burgeoning national movement to revive and transform city parks. In May of 2006 the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) issued *A Call to Action: A National Agenda for Urban Parks and Recreation in America* advocating federal, state and local action to create “a national renaissance for America's urban parks,” based on the critical role played by urban parks in promoting health, enhancing community and economic development, protecting the environment and educating, protecting and enriching youth. The NRPA's agenda for local governments and communities focuses on promoting health through physical activity; partnerships with the private sector; providing an equitable distribution of park resources; protecting environmentally sensitive areas and the urban forest; and youth education and development.¹

The Miami vision for a great park and public space system incorporates and expands on these goals. The vision emerged from extensive community participation in the master plan process, an analysis of Miami's needs, and best practices in park, recreation and public space planning. Four themes and four commitments underlie the Miami parks and public spaces vision:

¹ See <http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=4232>.

THEMES



Connection

A connected system of parks and public spaces, rather than a collection of isolated sites, frames the civic life of the city. Greenways and blueways—pedestrian routes and accessible waterways—will connect parks and public places all over the city, extending into every neighborhood and into the region.

Community

Parks and public spaces are the gathering places for community, where Miamians can experience the cosmopolitan diversity of an international city. The city has dynamic immigrant streams that can transform neighborhoods in ebbs and flows. Parks and public spaces will support and celebrate neighborhood cultural identity but also serve as the meeting place for people of all cultures.



Play

Miami's parks will provide recreation for children, teenagers and adults. Sports facilities and programmed recreation will be balanced by opportunities for self-directed activities and enjoyment of landscaped and passive green spaces.



Nature

Miami will be one of the nation's greenest and bluest cities. With tree-lined streets, well-planted parks, conservation areas and environmental education programs, and healthy waterways and shorelines, the city will be a model of sustainable management of parks and natural places.



COMMITMENTS



A COMMITMENT TO STEWARDSHIP

Miami will adopt a no-net-loss policy for city park lands and provide adequate funding to support parks. Park lands will be preserved and maintained as green, open space, recreational and cultural areas, with structures only to further this primary mission. All park properties will be maintained and programmed to excellent standards of function, safety, cleanliness, and environmental health.

A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Miami will serve the diversity of community needs with a balance of facilities and programs and monitor community needs and desires through regular reviews and periodic surveys. The city will provide meaningful opportunities for community input on the park and public space system and specific public realm improvements.



A COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIPS

Through enhanced partnerships with schools, public agencies, private developers, and nonprofit institutions, Miami will add park and recreation resources and other public spaces without acquiring land. In addition, like every successful park system in America, Miami will develop strong partnerships with volunteer groups, foundations, nonprofit organizations, resident and business organizations. These partnerships will support the park system with advocacy, programming, funding and visibility.

A COMMITMENT TO DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Miami will foster excellent design for parks, plazas and other public spaces, encompassing beauty, function and durability. Excellent design creates environments that are safe, comfortable, interesting, delightful, and long-lasting, providing an arena for people to enjoy and express themselves. Public art and innovative design that promotes interaction will be encouraged.



Key elements of the Vision

Miami's Vision for 21st-Century Parks and Public Spaces

Twenty-first century Miami will have a connected system of new and renewed parks and public spaces to meet the needs of its diverse citizenry, with more ways to experience water, more places to play, greener and safer routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, and more nature in the city. Every resident will be able to walk safely and comfortably to a park. An array of recreational programs and facilities will serve people of all ages and abilities. Public spaces will incorporate celebration of Miami's tropical and international identity. Design excellence, sustainable management, effective partnerships and a high level of service to the community will be the hallmarks of Miami's parks and public spaces.

Miami's Vision for 21st-Century Parks and Public Spaces



NEW AND RENEWED PARKS

► **Goal: Acquire land so that there is a park within a quarter mile of every resident.**

People are most likely to use the parks that are close to where they live, regardless of park size. In acquiring new park land, the City should work toward making it possible for every resident to walk safely and comfortably to a park. The long-term goal should be no more than a ten-minute walk from every home to a park—about one-quarter of a mile.

► **Goal: Make the most of what we have; preserve and enhance existing park land.**

Miami's existing park land is a precious legacy from the past that belongs to all the citizens of the city. All of Miami's parks should be safe, well-maintained, attractive, and programmed to fulfill their potential within the city's network of public spaces.



MORE WAYS TO EXPERIENCE WATER

► **Goal: Enhance and ensure public access to water.**

Miami's genesis and identity are inextricably linked to its tropical waterfront location. Everyone wants more and better access of all kinds to Biscayne Bay, to the Miami River and the Little River, to canals and lagoons, to the Picnic Islands, and to the cooling effects of water parks, spray play areas, and swimming pools.



MORE NATURE IN THE CITY

► **Goal: Promote environmental sustainability and education in parks and public spaces.**

Miami's development has obscured its connections to the natural environment. More trees and plantings in parks, on streets, in public plazas, and in "lost spaces" like highway embankments should be accompanied by more support for conservation areas and environmental education, as well as sustainable management practices.



GREEN STREETS TO LINK PEOPLE TO PARKS

► **Goal: Create green connections across the city and into the region.**

Greenways and a network of tree-shaded streets safely linking parks and public spaces to one another and to other city and regional destinations invite people to walk and bike, making Miami a healthier and more pleasant city to live in.



MORE PLACES TO PLAY

► **Goal: Refocus on priorities for recreation.**

Recreation needs and desires change as the population changes and as new activities come into prominence. The City should continue strong youth programs while focusing on key priorities to serve residents of all ages and abilities, enhancing partnerships for additional recreation opportunities.

A Community Dialogue on Parks and Public Spaces

The parks and public spaces of any community are there for people to enjoy and use. For this reason, it was essential that the public be part of the master planning process. In the future, an ongoing and systematic process of community participation should become second nature in decision making about parks and public spaces.

An extensive community dialogue on parks and public spaces took place in 2005–06 during the master planning process. The planning team employed a number of different methods to keep the public up to date on the progress of the plan and offered a variety of ways for citizens to make their opinions and priorities known. These activities included participation in citywide Miami 21 presentations, a project website, a public opinion survey, a customer-satisfaction survey, two public meetings in each of the 13 Neighborhood Empowerment Team (NET) Areas, and a citywide forum on parks and public spaces.

Each one of these activities provided a somewhat different perspective on the way that Miami residents use parks now and what they would like to see in the future. The public opinion survey provided a broad snapshot of attitudes about current and potential park and public space issues from a random sample of over 1,000 residents. It captured the preferences of the approximately one-third of households that say they do not visit or use city parks, as well as the sentiments of more regular park users. The survey's main disadvantage was an absence of open-ended questions, which limited the diversity of the answers it elicited. Its great strength, however, was its generation of a statistically significant and geographically representative overview of resident attitudes about parks.

In contrast, the public meetings attracted people with a stake in particular neighborhoods—as residents, park users, or property owners and business people. It also attracted activists with an interest in the park system as a whole. Meeting attendees were not as directly representative of the city as the survey respondents were and included some one-issue advocates, but participants were often very knowledgeable about the parks. The hands-on activities and more freewheeling discussions that took place in these meetings produced more detailed and nuanced comments than were possible from the surveys. Both kinds of community input were invaluable for crafting the master plan.

THEMES FROM THE COMMUNITY SURVEY AND THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

Certain themes emerged repeatedly in the survey and in the public meetings, as residents considered the park system today and what they would like it to be in the future.

MIAMI NEEDS MORE PARKS.

- The overwhelming majority of survey respondents (91%) believe that Miami needs more parks, and two-thirds agree that parks provide economic benefits to the city. Half of the respondents said that there are not enough parks within walking distance. In the survey, the highest need was expressed for small neighborhood parks, walking and biking trails, large community parks, large group picnic areas, and beach access areas.
- In the public meetings, participants emphasized a need for more park land to serve future residents of new development, and a need for new parks in underserved areas, especially Wynwood/Edgewater, Little Havana, Little Haiti, Model City, West Flagler, and Coral Way.

MIAMI RESIDENTS WANT MORE ACCESS TO WATER—THE BAY, RIVERS, AND PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS.

- Between 20% and 40% of survey respondents, when given a list of various park and recreation facilities, expressed a need for water-related activities, including fishing areas; canoe, kayak and small-boat water access; indoor pools for recreational swimming; outdoor pools and water parks; and beach-access parks. These percentages correspond to an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 households in Miami. In the survey, almost two-thirds of respondents judged year-round pools to be very or somewhat important.
- In the NET Areas with frontage on Biscayne Bay or on the Miami or Little rivers, there was considerable discussion about improving conditions at existing waterfront parks and about enhancing public access to the water. Ideas for enhanced access included creating beaches and providing new ways to get to the Picnic Islands.

MIAMI NEEDS MORE TREES AND SHADE.

- Participants in public meetings and in interviews repeatedly mentioned the need for more trees and more shade. Children's play structures without shade are unusable on hot days for half the year. The availability of shade is an essential ingredient in creating comfortable walking routes to parks.

MIAMI NEEDS TO BECOME MORE PEDESTRIAN- AND BIKE-FRIENDLY.

- Over half of the survey respondents expressed a need for walking and biking trails (which translates to nearly 74,000 households), and half of them see their needs for trails currently being met 50% of the time or less. Survey respondents would allocate 15% of all park capital funds specifically to acquisition and development of new walking and biking trails.
- During the public meetings there was much discussion about the importance of dedicated pedestrian and bicycle trails and routes. Everyone supported the Riverwalk, Baywalk, and FEC Corridor Greenway concepts and expressed a strong desire to see them completed. Participants also wanted better pedestrian and bicycle connections from neighborhoods to parks and other public spaces—“better” here being defined as more numerous connections that are safe, comfortable, well-lit, and attractive for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

MIAMI MUST TAKE CARE OF THE PARKS IT ALREADY HAS.

- Survey respondents would allocate over one-third of capital funds to making improvements in existing parks and over one-third of program and operating funds to maintenance of existing facilities.
- Participants in the public meetings offered many suggestions for improved maintenance and ways to make existing underutilized parks more successful. They pointed out that in some neighborhoods, parks without staff saw less use due to security concerns.

MIAMI'S PARKS MUST SERVE A VARIETY OF NEEDS FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES, BALANCING ACTIVE AND PASSIVE USES.

- Survey respondents expressed greatest need for small neighborhood parks, walking and biking trails, large community parks, large group picnic areas, and beach access areas. Even though the survey indicated preferences and needs for certain general categories of parks and activities, it is significant that at least 20% of respondents—corresponding to an estimated 27,600 households—expressed a need for 19 types of parks and facilities out of 24 offered in one of the survey questions. (Respondents could indicate multiple choices.) These facilities range from senior centers and fishing areas to indoor fitness centers, off-leash dog parks, and a nature center and trails.

- In the public meetings, the diversity of needs and preferences for parks and recreational activities was very clear. Low- and moderate-income parents were most interested in programs at staffed parks where they could feel confident that their children were safe and engaged in fun, interesting, and educational activities. Young families also wanted to be able to walk to play areas with their children. Many adults wanted more opportunities for improving fitness—through outdoor walking and biking trails, indoor fitness centers, or improved lighting and safety where they walk in existing parks. Other adults advocated for more passive green space and garden-like parks to balance dense residential development. In some neighborhoods there were strong constituencies for off-leash dog parks. Although the majority of households are not involved in organized sports, youth and adult sports leagues are very important to some neighborhoods and to some segments of the population. Current recreation programs were perceived as inadequately serving girls, middle school and high school youth, adults, and seniors.



PROJECT WEBSITE

The consultants designed and managed a website dedicated to the project, with links to the Miami 21 website. The site provided an overview of the project, schedules, and project documents and maps. It also allowed interested residents to contact the consultants and the city.

MIAMI 21 PRESENTATIONS

The consultants for the parks and public spaces plan participated in Miami 21 presentations that were designed to introduce the project and provide progress reports to the public. These presentations occurred in April 2005, July 2005, and March 2006.

NET AREA WORKSHOPS AND OPEN HOUSES

Both a public workshop and a public open house were held in each of the city's 13 NET Areas between August 2005 and February 2006. These meetings—held in the evening to encourage resident participation—generally took place in a recreation building or a park in the NET Area, although some took place at a NET office or other location. With the assistance of the City, the consultant team also met in advance with leaders of neighborhood associations or other local groups to discuss park issues. Outreach for the meetings included messages to e-mail lists, requests for neighborhood associations to inform their members, requests for park managers to inform park users, flyers distributed

to park managers, and schedules posted on the project website and the Miami 21 website. Participation in the meetings varied considerably, with some meetings well attended and others with fewer participants.

The workshop provided a hands-on discussion in which groups of participants worked with members of the consultant team to identify park and public space priorities for their NET Area. At the open houses, which followed a few weeks later, the consultant team presented a vision and priorities for the NET Area based on the workshop results and asked attendees to comment on them. The purpose of the open houses was to make sure that priorities and ideas that emerged from the workshops were understood, and to get feedback on additional ideas proposed by the consultants. The project website posted materials presented at each open house along with an aerial map and a land use map of that NET Area. Chapter 5 presents these NET Area visions in detail.

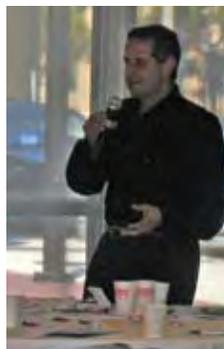
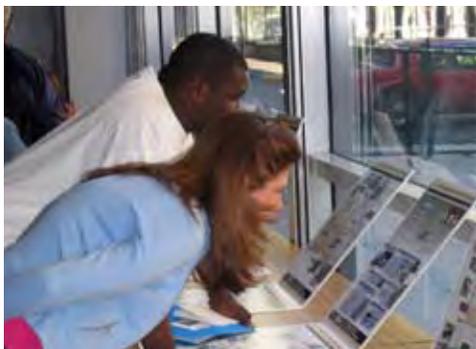
CITYWIDE PARKS FORUM

A daylong citywide forum on parks and public spaces took place on March 25, 2006. The purpose of this meeting was to report to the public on the NET Area visions and other work to that point on the plan, including the proposed planning framework, overall goals and principles, and strategies for reaching the goals. The participants also worked in small groups on three themes: recreation and culture, connections, and the ideal park. In their forum packages, participants received \$200 in “Greenspace Greenbacks”—replica money that they were asked to “spend” on a set of alternative budget areas in two categories, capital improvements and operations/programming. This exercise duplicated a question in the public opinion survey.

Speakers Sherry Kafka Wagner, Michael Singer, and Mary Eysenbach provided participants with national perspectives on park systems.

- Wagner’s work focuses on how different people and communities perceive and use parks, emphasizing community needs and intentions as the basis for park design, interpretation, and programming. Among the projects she

Mayor Diaz and Miami residents participated in the citywide parks forum.



has been involved in are the San Antonio Riverwalk, several urban national parks, and Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco. Wagner spoke about the importance of understanding the diverse cultural identities of park users and ensuring that park design and programming are consistent with the way different groups use parks. As the shared spaces within a community, successful parks and public spaces reflect the diversity of the communities in which they are located.

- Singer, an environmental artist and designer who is an Eminent Scholar in the Arts and Humanities at Florida Atlantic University, has helped transform public art, architecture, landscape, and planning projects into models for urban and ecological renewal across the United States in Europe; his work includes the West Palm Beach Waterfront Commons. He showed examples of how the design of nuts-and-bolts public infrastructure—transfer stations, water treatment facilities, and wastewater treatment plants—can provide exciting, environmentally-sustainable public spaces that are beautiful and educational.
- Eysenbach, former executive director of the City Parks Forum of the American Planning Association, focused on the social benefits of parks, particularly their role in community building. Well-managed parks contribute to public health, reduce crime, educate, and support economic development. Parks are integral to community identity. The City Parks Forum identified key factors for success in using parks to build community, including citizen participation, partnerships, timing, design, programming, and a maintenance plan to make sure parks are clean and safe.

A general conversation among the speakers and meeting participants and the small group discussions generated a variety of ideas. Some of the day's ideas reflected themes developed in the NET Area meetings and expressed in the survey, and some represented new perspectives. Major ideas that emerged include:

- The city needs programming that involves access to the water, particularly the bay and river.
- Many parks need exercise programs for adults.
- Each area has specific needs; getting the right activities for the right parks in the right places is important.
- Parks need public art to reflect the city's identity. Revolving art exhibitions in parks can provide an opportunity for different cultures in different neighborhoods to get to know one another. For example, art by African-Americans should not be thought of as just for the African-American neighborhoods.
- Every bridge over the Miami River should be made friendly to pedestrians.
- Walking will not become more popular in Miami until people can feel

- safe; intersections are designed with signals and crosswalks that allow pedestrians to cross safely; and drivers are educated to respect pedestrians.
- Greenways, walking paths, and bike paths need to feel more secure, with more locations providing “eyes on the street.”
 - Corporate and institutional sponsorship helped revitalize New York’s parks and can do the same for Miami.
 - Areas of historic and cultural importance should be included in the master plan.
 - Miami has too much concrete; green spaces should be planted to reinforce the city’s tropical identity.
 - Neighborhoods must be involved in deciding the location and design of new parks.

SURVEYS OF THE PUBLIC

The planning process included two surveys designed to solicit information from the public on current use patterns in the city’s parks and recreation facilities, users’ needs and their priorities for the system, and the level of user satisfaction with the system. The surveys were administered by Leisure Vision.

SURVEY 1: COMMUNITY ATTITUDE AND INTEREST SURVEY

Miami residents value their park system. This survey showed that over the course of the previous year about one-third of city residents did not use any of the parks and an even larger group, 85%, had no household members who participated in city recreation programs. Of those who participated, however, satisfaction was quite high—80% found the programs good or excellent. Residents generally think that parks and recreation are very important, bringing quality of life and economic benefits to the city that are worth paying for. Although unmet parks and recreation needs remain, the top two priorities are walking and biking trails and small neighborhood parks.

Survey Methodology

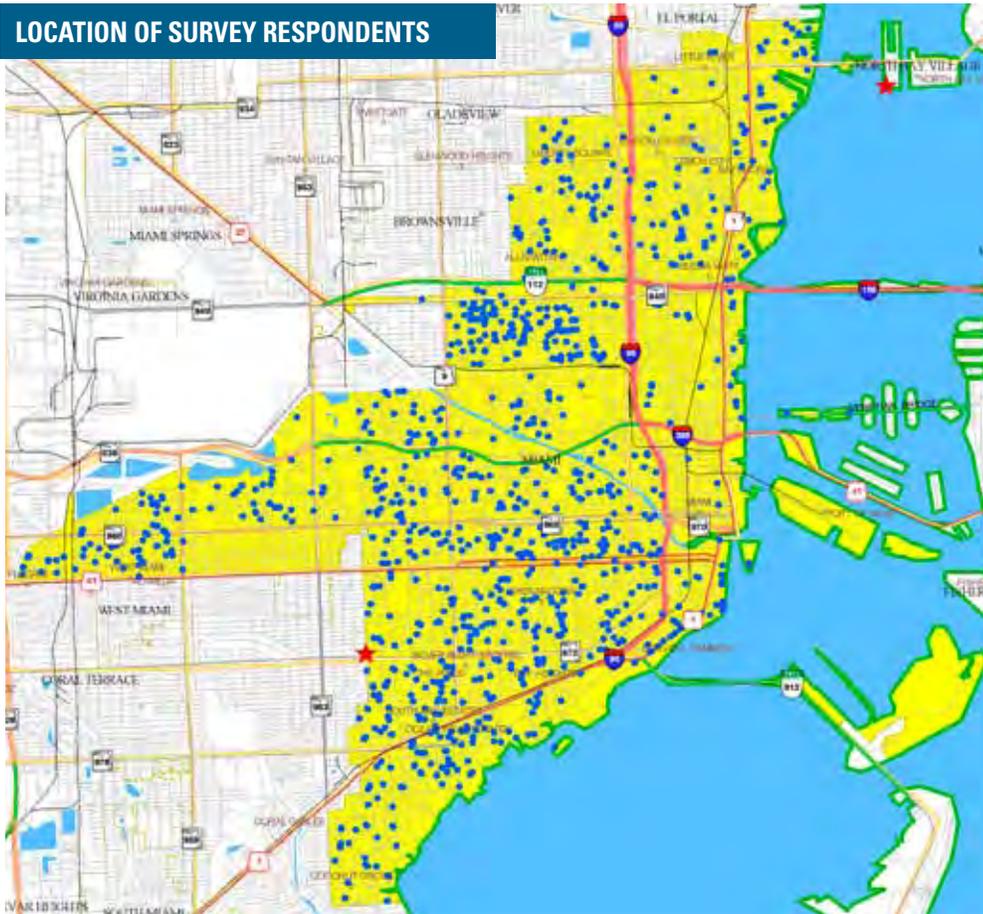
Survey 1 was conducted during March and April of 2006 to help establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone in English, Spanish, and Kreyol. In March 2006, surveys were mailed to a random sample of 5,000 households in Miami. Approximately three days after the mailing, the survey team delivered an electronic voice message to each household encouraging completion of the survey. About two weeks after the surveys were sent, the survey team contacted the

RESIDENTS’ USE OF PARKS AND FACILITIES AT LEAST ONCE IN 12 MONTHS

	%
small parks	61
large parks	55
trails	44
Virginia Key Beach	27
youth athletic fields	22
outdoor pools	19
adult athletic fields	18
community centers	17

Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan Survey, 2006

LOCATION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



households again by phone, either to encourage completion of the survey or to administer the survey by phone.

The survey drew 1,140 responses, well beyond its goal of 1,000. The results of the random sample have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of +/- 2.9%. Survey 1 was geographically representative and demographically representative by income, ethnicity, race, age, and gender.

The large sample size for the survey—more than 1,100 households from around the city responded—provided a broad and statistically reliable sampling of opinion. Each dot represents a respondent.

Small Neighborhood Parks, Walking/Biking Trails, and Large Parks

Asked to indicate which of 24 parks and recreation facility types they need, over 40% of respondent households chose small neighborhood parks, walking and biking trails, large community parks, large group picnic areas and shelters, and beach access parks—an estimated number of households ranging from 57,000 to 89,000. Between 20% and 40% of respondents (corresponding to 27,000 to 47,000 households) indicated a need for a wide variety of other kinds of park and recreation areas, demonstrating the diverse interests and needs of Miami's complex community.

People Who Use Parks Think They Are Good

The majority of people who use parks in Miami think they are good or excellent. Of the respondents asked to rate overall quality of the areas they have used in the last twelve months, 43% rated them as "good" and 9% found them "excellent." Another 19% said they were "fair" and only 9% said they were "poor." Another 21% said that they "didn't know"; this group probably comprised residents who do not use parks.

Park and Recreation Facilities Do Not Meet Needs

Using the same list of 24 types of facilities, respondent households that indicated a need for facilities were asked how well each type met their needs. No facility type drew more than 35% of responses indicating that it completely meets household needs. In the areas of indoor, water-based, and specialized facilities—indoor sports and fitness, senior centers, boating and fishing facilities, dog parks, and skateboard parks—even higher percentages said that existing facilities did not meet most of their needs.

The Most Important Park and Recreation Facilities Include Small Neighborhood Parks and Walking and Biking Trails

From the list of 24 types of facilities, respondents were asked to select the four most important to the members of their household. Small neighborhood parks ranked highest (36%) as one of the four most important types, and this category was also selected most frequently by respondents as their first choice. Respondents also frequently chose walking and biking trails (31%) and large community parks (22%) as among the four most important types of facilities.

Miami Needs Development of Both Small Neighborhood Parks and Large Community Parks

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents feel the City of Miami should place equal emphasis on the development of small neighborhood parks and large community parks. However, 24% of respondents would like the City to place more emphasis on small neighborhood parks, and 15% prefer to focus on large community parks. Only 9% of respondents indicated that no new neighborhood or community parks are needed.

NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, BY TYPE		
	% YES	% NO
small neighborhood parks	64	36
walking and biking trails	55	45
large community parks	53	47
large group picnic areas and shelters	46	54
beach access parks	41	59
nature center and trails	34	66
outdoor swimming pools/ water parks	34	66
indoor fitness and exercise facilities	33	67
playground equipment	30	70
indoor running/ walking track	28	72
indoor pools for recreation	24	76
outdoor amphitheaters/ bandstand	24	76
outdoor tennis courts	24	76
canoe, kayak and small water boat access	23	77
fishing areas	22	78
off-leash dog parks	21	80
senior center	20	80
indoor exercise swim lap lanes	20	81
indoor basketball/ volleyball	20	81
youth baseball and softball fields	18	82
youth soccer fields	15	85
youth football/ lacrosse/ rugby	13	87
adult softball fields	12	88
skateboarding parks	11	89

Source: Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan Survey, 2006
 DUE TO ROUNDING, PERCENTAGES FOR SOME ANSWERS TOTAL MORE THAN 100%.

Improving Swimming Pools and Aquatic Facilities Is Important

Access to swimming and water is important for everyone in Miami's climate, and improving aquatic facilities is a focus for the Parks and Recreation Department. The survey included several questions about such facilities.

- From a list of nine potential improvements to outdoor aquatic facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which three they and members of their household would use most often. The largest proportion of respondents, 33%, chose a leisure pool with a gently sloped entry. A range of facilities won similar levels of support—between 23% and 27% of respondents. This group included water sprays with interactive play features; water slides; lap lanes for exercise, lessons and lap swimming; a shallow pool for infants or toddlers; a “lazy river” allowing for rafts or floats; and deck areas for sunbathing and lounging.
- Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents felt that it is either very important (37%) or somewhat important (25%) for the City of Miami to operate swimming pools throughout the year. While 22% were “not sure” about this need, only 15% of respondents felt it is not important.

Many Residents Support Increasing Fees for Recreation Facilities, Programs, and Services

Nearly half of respondents were either very supportive (21%) or somewhat supportive (26%) of increasing the fees for recreation facilities, programs, and services they use. A quarter was “not sure,” while 26% of respondents did not want fees to be increased.

Improved Parks and Recreation Services Are Important Compared to Other Priorities

A large proportion of respondents indicated that improvements in parks and recreation services are either very important (48%) or somewhat important (34%) compared to other priorities in Miami. Only 6% of respondents described improvements as not important; 9% were “not sure.”

Barriers to Park and Recreation Use Include Lack of Information

From a list of 18 options, respondents were asked to select reasons that they and members of their household do not use parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City of Miami more often. The highest percentage of respondents (41%) were “too busy or not interested” in using municipal facilities and programs more often. The other most frequently mentioned reasons included ignorance of program offerings (22%), insufficient security (17%), distance (16%), and poor maintenance (16%).

More Walking and Biking Trails Are Needed on Virginia Key

Because preparation of a detailed plan for Virginia Key is under way, the survey included several questions about it. Key findings include:

- Thirty-one percent of respondent households had visited Virginia Key during the past two years.
- At least 35% of respondents were very supportive of four (out of nine) potential improvements or new facilities there: walking and biking trails (39%), picnic areas and shelters (36%), natural areas for environmental education/nature center (36%), and beaches for day trips (35%). The addition of “somewhat supportive” responses boosted support for each of these options above the 50% mark. Thirty percent or more were not supportive of marinas or low-impact ecotourism with cabins on Virginia Key (although camping areas were slightly more favorably viewed).
- Walking and biking trails were selected by the highest percentage of respondents (33%) as one of the three improvements/new facilities they would use the most at Virginia Key, and this improvement received the most first-place designations. Other improvements/facilities that received relatively high levels of support included beaches for day trips (27%), picnic areas and shelters (25%), and natural areas for environment/nature center (20%). Less than 10% of respondents included among their top three choices the use of active recreation areas such as sports fields, a museum for Virginia Key Beach Park, camping areas, marinas, or low-impact eco-tourism.



Beaches, picnic tables, and nature-based recreation were preferred for Virginia Key.

SURVEY TWO: RECREATION PROGRAMS AND PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

A second survey was designed to focus more specifically on recreation programs. Originally intended as a customer-service survey of people using city recreation programs, problems with program enrollment records prevented targeted distribution to program users. Instead, surveys were mailed in August 2006 to a random sample of 3,000 households in the city. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed, the survey team delivered an electronic voice message to each household encouraging completion of the survey. In addition, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed, the survey team began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone. The total of 614 surveys completed slightly surpassed the goal of obtaining 600 completed surveys. The results have a 95% level of confidence, with a precision of at least +/-4.0%.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Responses to this survey show the diversity of recreation needs in Miami, but with a repeated emphasis on adult fitness activities. The most-needed park improvements were practical amenities like restrooms and drinking fountains. Other notable results include the fact that nearly half of the respondent households report using walking and biking trails. Highlights of the survey results are below:

Adult fitness programs are a focus of interest.

Respondents were asked to indicate which of 21 programs are needed by members of their households (including themselves).

- > Five recreation programs surpassed a 25% level of responses, with respondent households expressing a need for adult fitness and wellness programs (38%), citywide special events (30%), nature programs (27%), water fitness programs (26%), and adult sports programs (25%). This corresponds to an estimated 35,000 households or more. However, an estimated 25,000–35,000 households also had a need for a range of other programs, including martial arts; youth art, dance and performing arts; youth summer camp; before- and after-school programs; youth learn-to-swim programs; boating and sailing; youth fitness and wellness; adult art, dance and performing arts; youth sports; and programs for seniors.

Many recreation needs are not being met.

Respondent households that have a need for programs were asked to indicate how well each item on a list of 21 recreation programs meets their needs.

- > Fewer than 55% of respondents indicated that any of the 21 programs completely meets the needs of their households. For example, between 20,000 and 30,000 households have needs for adult fitness and wellness programs, nature programs, citywide special events, and adult sports programs that are being met only 50% or less.
- > Respondents were asked to rank the four programs that are most important to them. Based on the sum of these four choices, the programs that are most important to respondent households are: adult fitness and wellness (22%), youth sports (14%), senior adult (12%), nature (11%) and citywide special events (11%). Among all 21 types of programs, adult fitness and wellness was most frequently chosen as the most important kind of program.

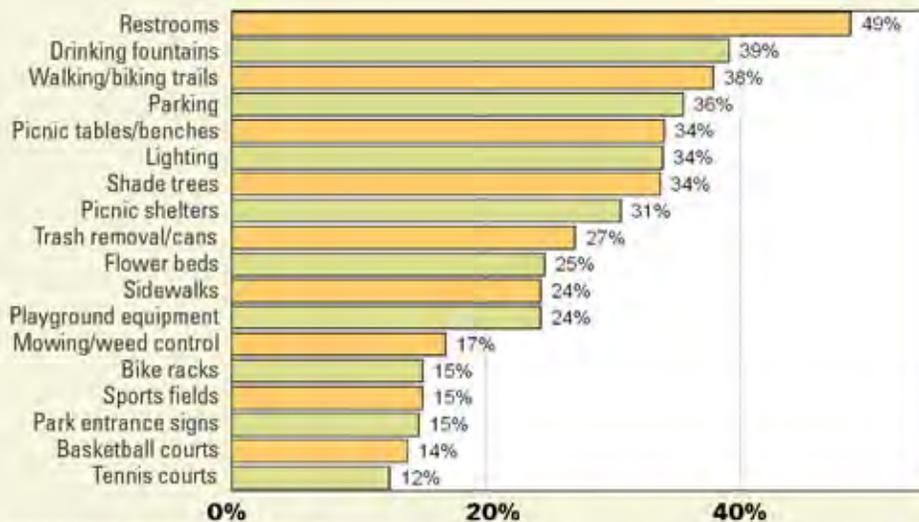
Most people visit a city park at least once a year.

As in the earlier survey, a majority of respondents reported visiting a city park over the previous year, with 43% reporting at least six visits in the year. Over a third (37%), however, had not visited a city park at all; an additional 2% did not answer.

Improvements Respondents Would Like To See In The Park They Visit Most

RESULTS FROM SURVEY

Ranked by percentage of respondents who chose each area (multiple choices could be made)



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (October 2006)

Park restrooms and drinking fountains are high priorities.

From a list of 18 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the improvements they would like to see made in the city park they visit most often.

- > Improvements in amenities that make park visits more comfortable and pleasant topped this list: restrooms (49%), drinking fountains (39%), walking/biking trails (38%), and parking (36%). Close behind this cluster came another set of amenities in which respondents listed improved picnic tables and benches, lighting, shade trees, and picnic shelters.

Walking and biking trails are used often.

Respondents were asked to indicate how often their household currently uses walking and biking trails in the City of Miami.

- > Nearly half of the respondent households (48%) used walking and biking trails, and a quarter (24%) used them at least once a week.

Few people use trails for transportation.

From a list of five options, respondents were asked to indicate the two reasons their household used walking and biking trails in the City of Miami.

- > Respondents named exercise/fitness (45%) and enjoying the outdoors/nature (32%) as their top reasons for using trails. Only 2% used the trails for transportation.

Athletic fields and youth programs elicited the highest levels of satisfaction.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with each of a list of 19 park and recreation services provided by the City.

- > The services that won the highest levels of satisfaction were quality of outdoor athletic fields (25%), number of baseball/softball fields (25%), number of city soccer fields (24%), quality of indoor athletic fields (23%) and city youth programs (23%).
- > Respondents were least satisfied with programs for seniors, the number of nature conservation areas, and the availability of information on city programs and facilities. (“Don’t know” responses were excluded.)

Maintenance, more parks, and more walking/biking trails should be the focus.

- > From the list of 19 park and recreation services provided by the City, respondents were asked to select the three they felt should receive the most attention from the City over the next two years.
- > They most frequently chose parks maintenance (29%), number of parks (21%), and number of walking/biking trails (21%). Maintenance was selected by the highest percentage of respondents as their first choice.

HOW SHOULD MIAMI DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FOR PARKS?

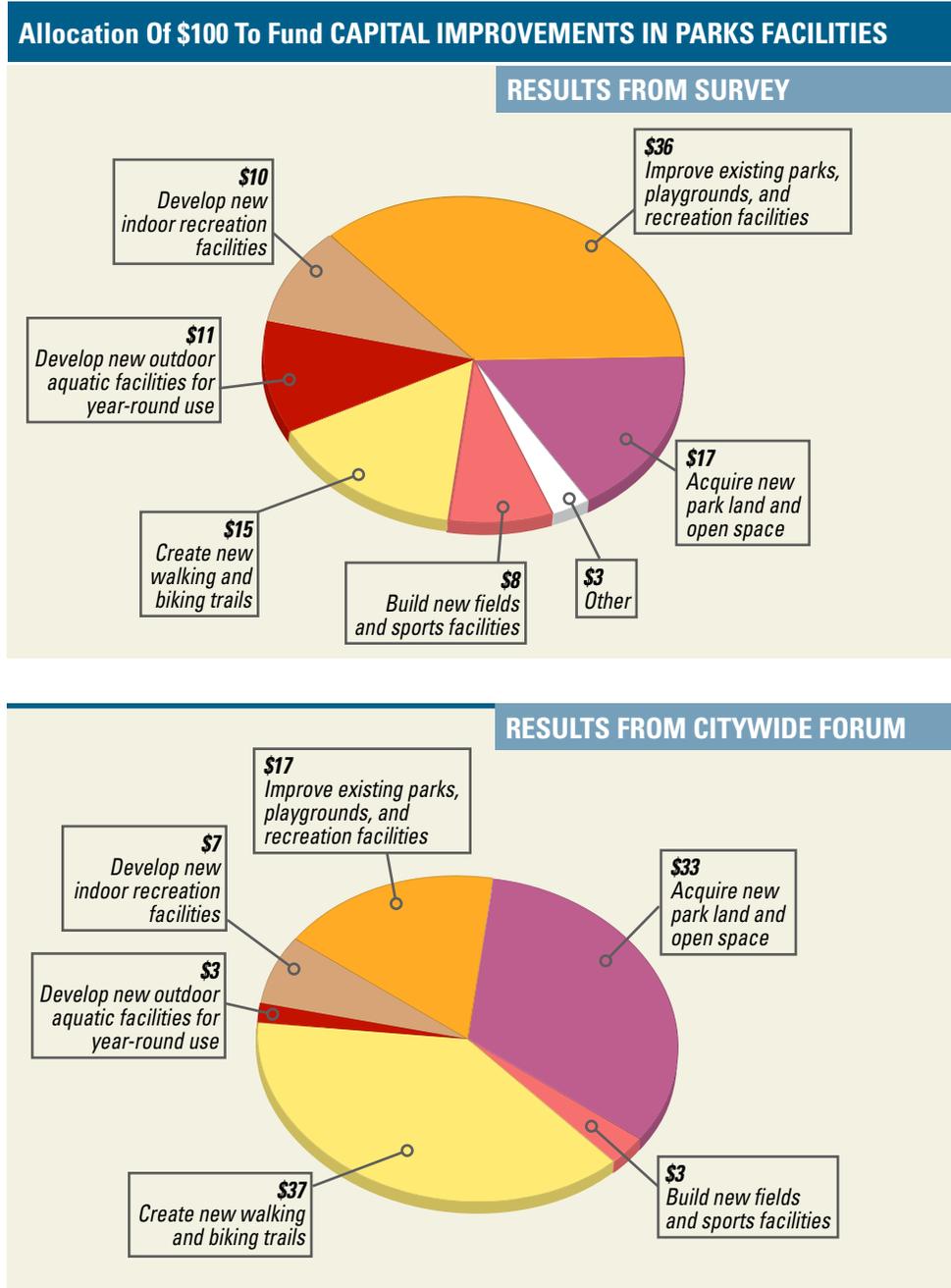
In both the citywide forum and the first survey, participants were asked to allocate \$100 for capital improvements in parks and \$100 for operations and programming among a specified number of alternatives. Graphs displaying the results of these questions appear on pages 21 and 22.

Capital Improvements

The results of the allocation exercises for capital improvements show that the participants at the citywide forum were much more focused on acquisition of new parkland and walking and biking trails than were the survey respondent population. The citywide forum group would allocate 71% of capital funds to acquisition while the survey group would allocate 32%. Both groups wanted new parks, but the survey group wanted to invest more capital funds in existing facilities.

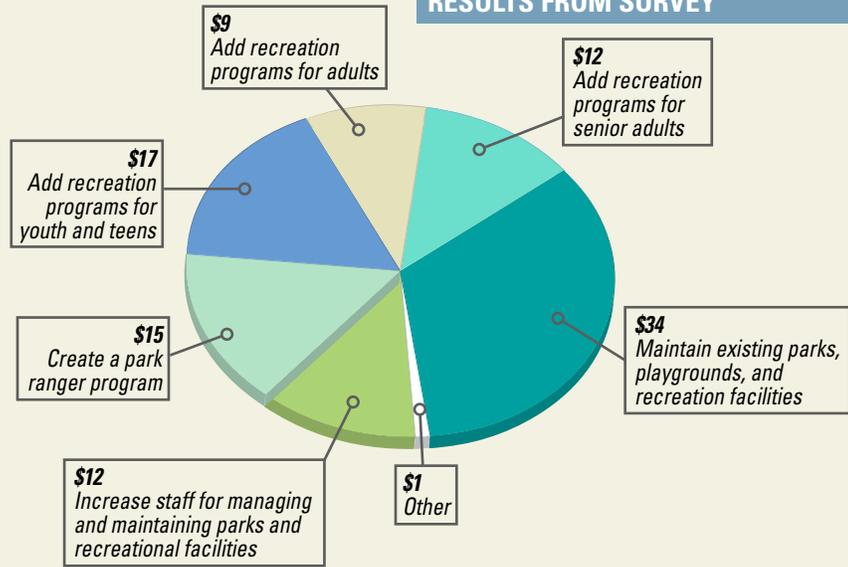
Programs and Operations

Compared to the survey group, participants in the citywide forum allocated more funds to maintenance and staff than to programming.

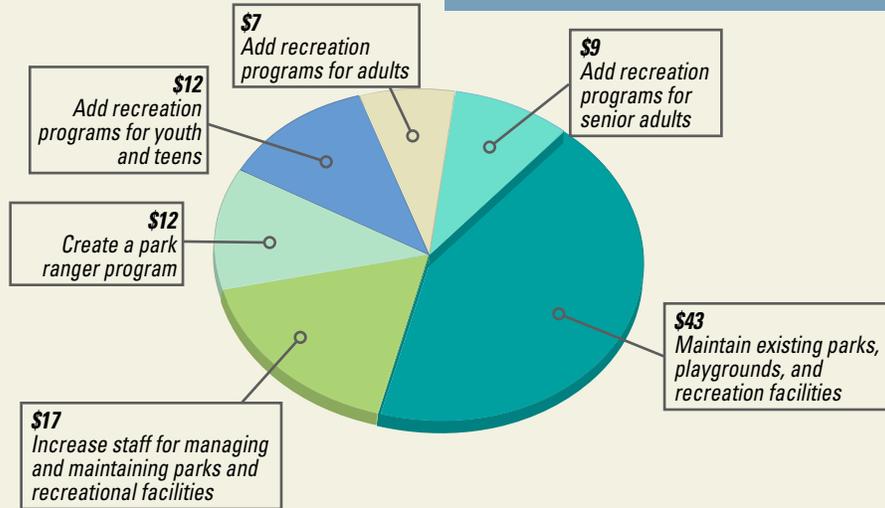


Allocation Of \$100 To Fund PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS

RESULTS FROM SURVEY



RESULTS FROM CITYWIDE FORUM



3

Miami's 20th-Century Park System

Miami's park system was created in the twentieth century in a local economy based on real estate development and tourism, unlike the Olmsted park systems of the nineteenth century that were created to balance the social and environmental problems of industrial cities. Most of the major parks in Miami today were in place by the 1940s and the vast majority of today's parks were created by 1982.

THE CREATION OF MIAMI'S PARK SYSTEM

MIAMI'S EARLIEST PARKS

At its beginnings, the city of Miami was a farm and market town, surrounded by water and the Everglades. When Henry Flagler extended the Florida East Coast Railroad to Miami in 1896 and built the Royal Palm Hotel on Julia Tuttle's land at the mouth of the Miami River, the history of modern Miami began. The Royal Palm Hotel also began the history of Miami's parks. Early community events were held in the extensive bayfront grounds of the Royal Palm Hotel, making it Miami's first de facto park. Planted with palms and other tropical plants, the park also included a pavilion/band shell, baseball field, and track. By the 1920s, the City of Miami had entered into a lease agreement to pay Flagler's company \$1.00 per year for public access.

Community baseball game on the grounds of the Royal Palm Hotel in 1918.



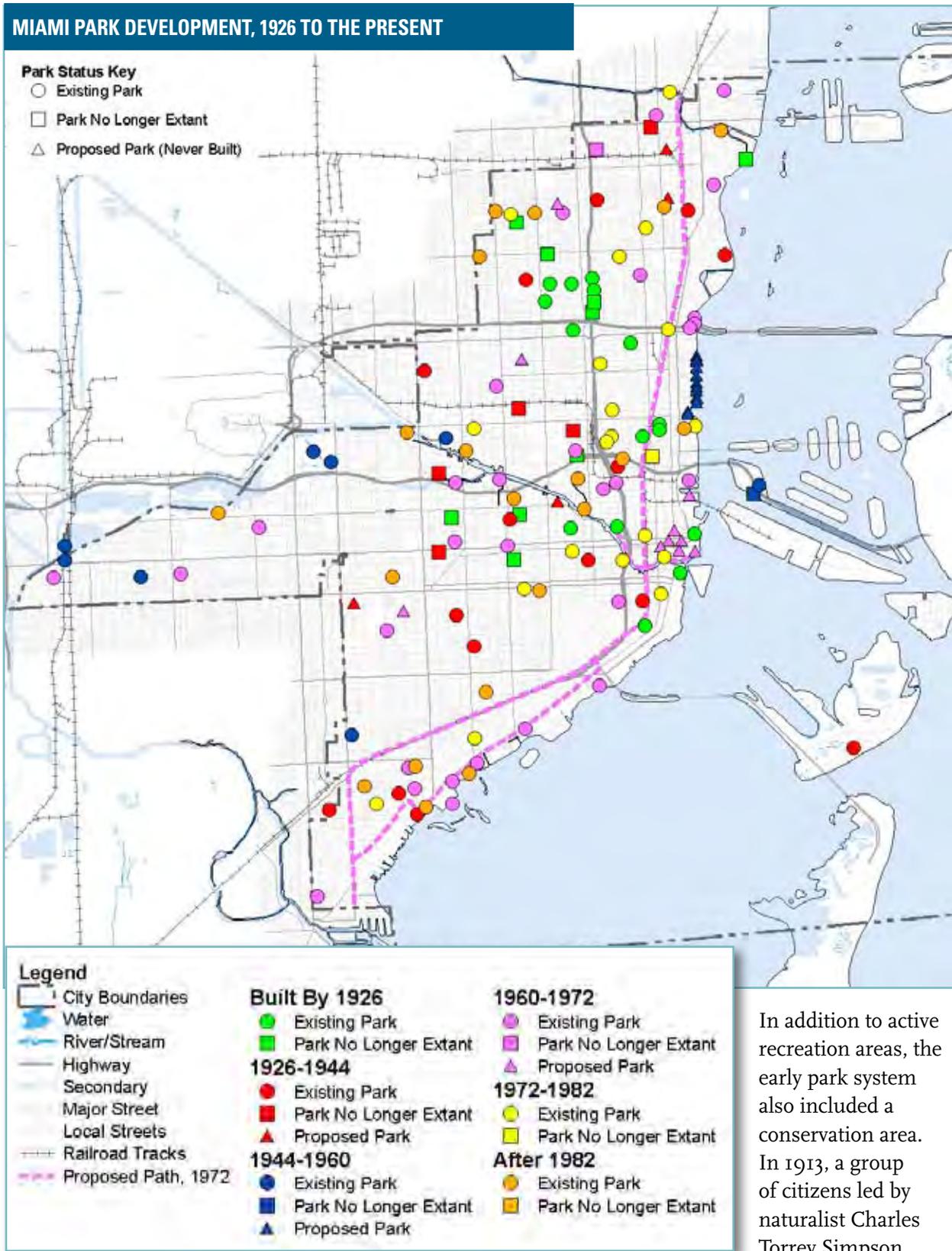
The 1910s and 1920s were boom decades for Miami, as its population grew from approximately 5,500 people in 1910 to 110,637 in 1930. In addition to these permanent residents, seasonal visitors packed the city's hotels, rooming houses, and cottages. Miami developed a fledgling park system that both loosely followed and prompted the development of residential subdivisions. In 1909, the City purchased a tract of land west of downtown near the Miami River with the intent of developing a city recreation area. Lummus Park, named after one of the city's early mayors, became the catalyst for a new neighborhood and, similarly, Mary Brickell designated one of the parcels in her 1910s Riverside subdivision south of the Miami River as a community park, with playing fields and a neighborhood playground (the park no longer exists).



Lummus Park, one of Miami's oldest parks, was built as an early recreation center near downtown.

BOTH IMAGES: FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF THE FLORIDA STATE ARCHIVES

MIAMI PARK DEVELOPMENT, 1926 TO THE PRESENT



In addition to active recreation areas, the early park system also included a conservation area. In 1913, a group of citizens led by naturalist Charles Torrey Simpson

became alarmed at the rapid loss of Miami's natural landscape and petitioned the City to purchase property south of the Miami River and preserve it in its natural state as a new city park. In 1914, Mary Brickell sold the City 5.5 acres of land along South Miami Avenue for Jungle Park, which was to be left as a remnant of the

native coastal hammock. In the 1920s a beautification group decided to “improve” the park by introducing exotic plant species to the hammock. Fortunately for the naturalists, the 1926 hurricane that devastated Miami provided the opportunity to eliminate all of the exotic species and return Jungle Park (now Simpson Park) to its original condition.

By early 1926, the system included 110 acres of park land in 36 parks, which ranged from very small open spaces in residential neighborhoods (such as traffic islands) to a large park at the city waterworks site at NW 36th Street and 7th Avenue. At least 15 of these parks were located outside of today’s city limits, and several of the larger parks no longer exist.

Miami faced the loss of its major downtown park when Flagler’s company made plans to sell some of the Royal Palm’s grounds for development. The City purchased a strip of waterfront land and a pier and in 1924 began to fill in the bay. The City decided that the new 39-acre Bayfront Park should be a beautiful passive downtown retreat that would include a yacht center on the northern end and a community band shell on the southern end. Between these two anchors, the fill was to be richly landscaped with numerous palm trees, shade trees, and shrubs. Additional amenities included winding walkways, bayfront seating, and secluded nooks, such as the Rock Garden and its goldfish pond. Despite construction delays resulting from the 1926 hurricane, Bayfront Park was open to the public by 1927 and soon became the centerpiece of Miami’s growing park system.

In addition to caring for the city’s parks and providing recreation programs, the city’s Park Division planted street trees and maintained three city nurseries, the largest at Biscayne Park next to the city cemetery. In order to encourage Miami’s residents to make their new neighborhoods greener, the Park Division in the 1920s gave away free trees and shrubs for planting on residential property, distributing more than 18,000 plants in 1926 alone. The Park Division that had only five workers before 1922 expanded rapidly over the next four years to include a superintendent, an assistant superintendent, five foremen, twelve park tenders, seven truck drivers, four park policemen, four nurserymen, one carpenter, one storekeeper, one stenographer, and 75 to 100 day laborers. In 1926 play supervisors were first hired for most playing fields and playgrounds.



BOTH IMAGES: FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF THE FLORIDA STATE ARCHIVES

Tennis courts at Moore Park—one of Miami’s oldest recreational facilities—in 1935 (upper photo). The lower image, from the late 1920s, shows residents and visitors enjoying then-new Bayfront Park’s waterfront setting.

MIAMI’S EARLIEST PARKS: BEFORE 1926 (OLDER NAME IN PARENTHESES)

- > Lummus Park—6 acres
- > Biscayne Park—8 acres
- > Simpson (Jungle) Park—5.5 acres
- > Riverside Park (defunct)—3 acres
- > Roberto Clemente (Wyndwood) Park—3 acres
- > Henderson Park—3 acres
- > Dorsey (City) Park—2 acres
- > Moore (Waterworks) Park—19 acres
- > Miami Field (defunct)—15 acres
- > Royal Palm Park (leased only; defunct)

PARKS CREATED 1926–1944
(OLDER NAME IN PARENTHESES)

- > Bayfront Park
- > Athalie Range (Edison Center) Park
- > Hadley (Manor) Park
- > Little River Park (defunct)
- > Morningside Park
- > Southside Park
- > Highland Park (defunct)
- > Shenandoah Park
- > Armbrister (Grand Avenue) Park
- > Peacock (Coconut Grove Bayfront) Park
- > Kirk Munroe (Oak) Park/Tennis Center
- > Bryan Park
- > Jorge Mas Canosa (Riverside) Park

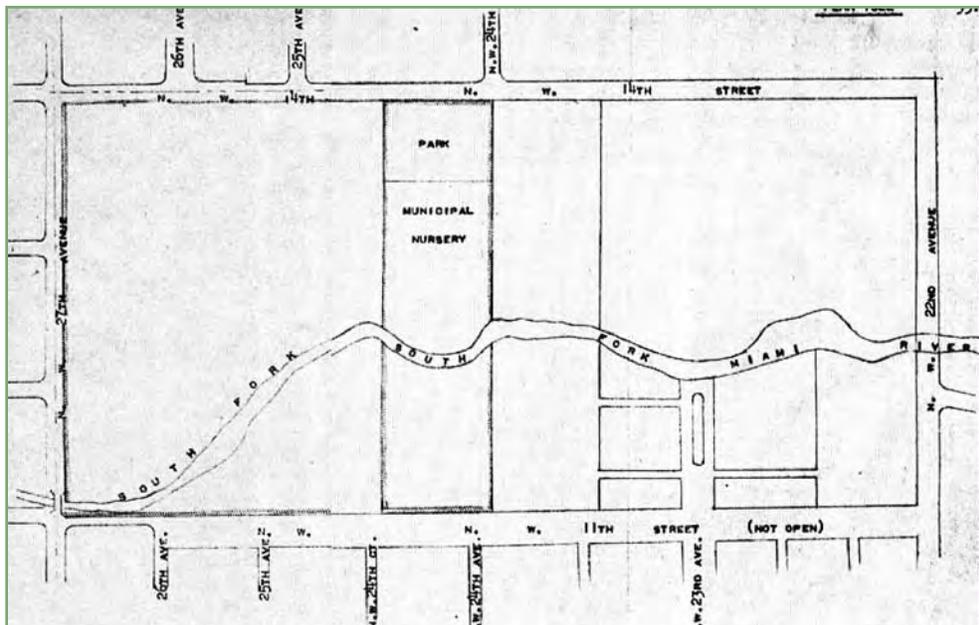
EXPANSION AND RECREATION

Although the 1926 hurricane devastated many parts of Miami and brought an end to overheated real estate speculation, the city continued to grow, bringing new parks to new neighborhoods and focusing especially on providing active recreation opportunities for all ages. During the 1930s and early 1940s, the Park Division built many parks throughout the city, almost all of which included playfields and community centers intended to be used by neighborhood residents of different ages.

An ambitious 1944 park improvement plan heavily promoted expansion of existing parks and acquisition of land for new parks. The biggest proposal in the 1944 plan envisioned that the City’s nursery property at the current location of Fern Isle Park would become a 64-acre horticultural and botanical garden straddling the South Fork of the Miami River.

Although the present Fern Isle Park eventually evolved out of this large property, the plans for a “central park” in the form of a large garden center never materialized. Out of 38 park properties proposed for improvements in 1944, 14 were slated for expansion. In some cases, this involved acquiring a few lots around the park in order to create a new playing field or provide a site for a recreation building, but other plans involved much larger expansions. Plans were also advanced for the development of five new parks from 8 to 29 acres in size, dispersed around the city. Only two of these actually were built: Curtis Park and West End Park (but at less than half of its proposed size).

A 1944 plan promoted creation of a large botanical garden around the City’s plant nursery on the South Fork of the Miami River.



SOURCE: MIAMI DIVISION OF PARKS' POSTWAR PLANS IN THE MIAMI METROPOLITAN ARCHIVE

SOURCE: FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF THE FLORIDA STATE ARCHIVES

During the 1950s, Miami's growth slowed significantly. The pace of park development mirrored this slow-down, and few new parks were built during the 1950s. However, the Park Division continued to acquire land for new parks, mostly in the city's growing western neighborhoods. The old city nursery at Fern Isle became a much smaller park than originally proposed and the City expanded Morningside and Peacock parks and acquired Watson Island and part of Virginia Key. The focus of the 1950s park system was on creating and adding to large neighborhood and citywide park spaces rather than building new, smaller parks in existing and expanding neighborhoods.



Dupont Plaza parking lots on the bayfront and river, 1955. The City's plan to acquire this underutilized property and create an extension of Bayfront Park never materialized.

Miami's 1959 City Master Plan and its 1960 recreation plan focused on deficiencies within the system by comparing Miami's recreation facilities with national recreation standards that had been developed for the burgeoning suburbs of post-World War II America. According to the master plan, Miami's 642 acres of park and recreation space, which included school grounds, was half the national standard for a city of Miami's size (1,300 acres).

Despite a discussion of Miami's special role as a tourist Mecca that needed "recreation facilities—public and private—to entice visitors here who might go elsewhere," the plan emphasized the need for neighborhood-focused parks within walking distance of residents. Using national standards, the plan found many deficiencies in the number of recreation facilities and recommended collaboration with the county Board of Education to allow neighborhood residents to use school playing fields and recreation areas after school hours and on weekends. Maps created for the 1960 recreation plan show a lack of playgrounds in all areas of the city, and playfields were noticeably absent in a large portion of West Flagler, Coral Way, Little Havana, and the northern portion of the Upper Eastside.

During a ten-year, \$10.5 million capital improvement program sparked by the 1960 recreation plan, a number of new park properties were added to the system. Many of these were small parks meant to provide neighborhood play facilities, but several larger parks were created in different areas of the city. Although land condemnation for the construction of Miami's expressway system presented opportunities for new open space and recreation areas adjacent to and under the new highways, the location of these new parks did not meet the 1960 plan's criteria for neighborhood locations with good pedestrian access. Almost all of the new parks, however, adhered to the 1960 recreation plan's call for the development of active recreation areas. Most provided play-

**PARKS CREATED 1944–1960
(OLDER NAME IN PARENTHESES)**

- > Curtis Park
- > West End Park
- > Douglas Park
- > Grapeland Heights Park
- > Melreese (Le Jeune) Golf Course
- > Fern Isle
- > Watson Park (defunct except for Ichimura Japanese Garden)

PARKS CREATED 1961–1972 (OLDER NAME IN PARENTHESES)

- > Legion Park
- > Belle Meade Mini-Park
- > Oakland Grove Mini-Park
- > Belafonte-Tacolcy Center
- > Range Park #2 (now relocated)
- > Range Park #3 (closed)
- > Stearns Park
- > Magnolia Park
- > Martell Park
- > Margaret Pace Park
- > Juan Pablo Duarte (Alapattah Comstock) Park
- > Range Park #1
- > Bicentennial Park (FEC Yards) land acquisition
- > Wainwright Park (partial)
- > Merrie Christmas Park
- > Blanche Park
- > Dinner Key Marina
- > Virrick Park
- > Triangle Park
- > Coral Gate Park
- > Sewell Park
- > Orange Bowl Playground
- > Grove Mini-Park
- > Elizabeth Steele Mini-Park
- > Glen Royal Mini-Park
- > Robert King High Park/Carlos Arboleya Campground
- > Flagami Mini-Park (closed)
- > Kinloch Park
- > Bay of Pigs (Flagler Terrace) Mini-Park

grounds and playfields for all ages, with the exception of Sewell Park, which was purchased in 1965 with the intent of creating a passive recreation area that would preserve native riverfront vegetation, much as Simpson Park was formed to conserve Miami’s natural hammock.

PARKS FOR PEOPLE BOND

After the successful parks capital improvement program of the 1960s, parks advocates sought additional improvements in the system, and in 1972 they backed a \$40 million municipal bond that would provide financing for new open space acquisition and recreation improvements. This “Parks for People” bond proposed improvements at over 60 facilities throughout the city and some large projects (several of which will be recognizable to Miamians today): a 13-mile FEC Corridor bicycle path connecting to a trail loop in Coconut Grove; a 1-mile Riverwalk along the north bank of the Miami River; creation of the bayfront Bicentennial Park; and the purchase of three major properties: the bayfront/riverfront Dupont Plaza parking site, Parcel B, and a site for a large community park in West Flagler. The intent behind the purchase of the two bayfront parcels was to combine them with the existing Bayfront Park and future Bicentennial Park properties to create a continuous “total park” along

Biscayne Bay. The bond also proposed the creation of smaller parks, such as six pocket parks in downtown Miami and new neighborhood parks in Alapattah, Model City, and Little Haiti.

The “Parks for People” bond was passed in March 1972. The most visible result of the bond was the development of Bicentennial Park, but the bond funds also went to the planning



SOURCE: HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTH FLORIDA

and development of two significant neighborhood parks: José Martí Park and Alice Wainwright Park (completed under the bond). Monies also went to refurbish facilities and equipment at most parks in the system. Most of the new facilities were small parks containing neighborhood playgrounds and, in some cases, a playfield. However, many of the Parks for People initiatives remained unrealized or were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons.

STABILIZATION AND RETRENCHMENT

Municipal financial difficulties in the 1980s and 1990s led to declining budgets and retrenchment for the parks system. A 1982 inventory of Miami's parks and recreation facilities shows that by this time, the park system had essentially taken on its current form. Only a few of today's park properties were not in existence then, and most of the newer parks were under two acres in size. The most significant park property developed between 1982 and 2000 is Antonio Maceo/Blue Lagoon Park (3.65 acres). Although the 1960 recreation plan recommended development of a regional park in the Blue Lagoon area, Dade County never chose this site for a new park.

NEW ENERGY FOR PARKS IN A NEW CENTURY

In 2001, voters approved a \$255 million Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement Bond that included \$127 million for parks and recreation improvements in the city of Miami. The capital improvement program was developed without the benefit of a comprehensive vision for the city's park and public space system because there had been no parks master plan for more than 30 years. However, a set of several major projects accounted for three-fourths of the parks capital improvement program, including initiatives for the city's waterfront parks; Virginia Key; a new park in Little Haiti; major improvements at Jose Martí, Margaret Pace, and Fern Isle parks; development of a soccer complex; and Marine Stadium and Orange Bowl improvements. Almost a quarter of the funds were designated for neighborhood park improvements and acquisition. This backlog of repairs and basic improvements, resulting from years of constrained budgets, became the de facto basis of this part of the capital improvement program.

The 2004–2005 capital plan provided for a variety of repairs, replacement and improvements at many parks in the system, including Athalie Range; Belafonte-Talcocy; Bryan; Curtis; Duarte; Domino; José Martí; Gibson; Hadley; Kennedy; Kinloch; Lemon City; Lummus; Watersports Center; Moore; Reeves; Riverside; Southside; Triangle; Virginia Key Beach; West Buena Vista; West End; and Williams parks.



Homeland Defense Bond improvements at Williams Park.

The city's 2005–2006 Multi-Year Capital Plan includes a parks and recreation fund of \$141.3 million, the second largest component of the overall plan, after streets and sidewalks. The major projects in this plan include:

- *Grapeland Park*: remediation of soil contamination; new water theme park; baseball fields; community center; amenities and parking
- *Little Haiti Park*: completely new park with a full range of recreation and cultural programs, including two soccer fields, a recreation building, playground, domino park, Vita Course, picnic areas, shelters, and splash park
- *Jose Marti Park*: new gymnasium
- *Fern Isle Park*: remediation of soil contamination; new recreation fields and facilities
- *Athalie Range Park*: replacement of baseball/softball fields with a soccer complex
- *Museum/Bicentennial Park*: seawall rehabilitation
- *Systemwide improvements*, including playgrounds, sports fields, landscaping; sports courts; lighting; building renovations; and other site improvements

The capital funds also supported the costs of the system master plan and detailed master plans for Bicentennial/Museum Park, the Coconut Grove waterfront, and Virginia Key.



Master plan created for the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust.

Over the last generation, Miami has kept alive a vision for continuous public spaces along the city's waterfronts, a connected baywalk and riverwalk, and a greenway trail along the FEC corridor. The Miami River Commission, created by the state legislature in 1997 to "conduct a comprehensive study and review of restoration and enhancement of the Miami River and Biscayne Bay," sponsored the Miami River Greenway Action Plan in 2001. A city plan for the FEC Corridor included a bike trail and proposals for neighborhood parks. Established by the

City Commission in 2002, the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust has sponsored planning and moved forward on renovating the beach and creating a museum about the history of South Florida's only public beach for African-Americans during the era of segregation. The Trust for Public Land worked with community groups to create the Overtown Greenprint Plan and, more recently, the East Little Havana Greenprint Plan. City officials, representatives of various agencies and nonprofit groups, and many Miami residents brought these visions to the creation of this master plan.

THE CITY OF MIAMI PARK SYSTEM TODAY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE PARK SYSTEM

Miami’s system of public parks and plazas is relatively small for a city of its population size and density. Moreover, the Miami park system developed without the guidance of one of the Olmsted-style master plans that created many of America’s best-known municipal park systems between 1860 and 1930. These park plans united neighborhood parks, larger citywide parks, and natural areas into integrated systems connected by a network of landscaped parkways, boulevards, riding trails and walking paths. Many such plans were driven by the need to deal with stream flooding and storm drainage, clean up wasteland areas (known today as “brownfields”), and resolve circulation issues. Exemplified by Boston’s “Emerald Necklace,” and followed in cities as diverse as Baltimore, Minneapolis, Denver and Portland, this networked approach recognizes that the value of individual parks is greatly magnified when they are connected to each other and to every neighborhood in the city. Today, Miami’s parks are united by a common administrative system, but they lack the connections that would allow them to function as a physical system, where each piece is connected to the others, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Current and Future Trends in Population and Development

Since the late 1990s, the City of Miami has been experiencing unprecedented development. At the time of the 2000 Census, the population of the city was

2000 Census: City of Miami Population and Median Income by NET Area								
NET AREA	POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS	FAMILIES	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	PERCENT HISPANIC	PERCENT AFRICAN-AMERICAN	WHITE, NON-HISPANIC	OTHER, NON-HISPANIC
ALLAPATTAH	40,406	12,508	8,224	\$19,141.53	72.23%	18.33%	6.89%	2.55%
CORAL WAY	55,951	21,363	14,105	\$37,168.89	81.10%	0.41%	17.28%	1.21%
DOWNTOWN	13,932	6,379	2,633	\$38,702.66	64.27%	9.17%	23.08%	3.49%
LITTLE HAVANA	49,206	19,341	11,266	\$15,213.16	90.08%	3.79%	5.14%	0.96%
FLAGAMI	38,691	13,896	10,141	\$26,641.30	90.08%	1.85%	7.68%	0.36%
LITTLE HAITI	29,128	9,368	6,181	\$18,887.49	14.74%	64.92%	4.78%	15.56%
MODEL CITY	23,009	7,772	5,428	\$18,809.87	3.04%	94.69%	0.59%	1.68%
N.E. GROVE	9,812	5,113	2,221	\$63,617.82	35.24%	2.25%	60.96%	1.55%
OVERTOWN	10,029	3,646	2,128	\$13,211.99	19.90%	74.77%	3.27%	2.05%
S.W. GROVE	9,141	3,477	2,082	\$67,063.36	14.80%	48.27%	35.27%	1.66%
UPPER EASTSIDE	15,056	6,263	3,167	\$35,196.16	28.60%	40.10%	25.09%	6.21%
WEST FLAGLER	41,012	14,810	10,490	\$26,176.70	90.73%	1.15%	7.61%	0.49%
WYNWOOD	14,819	6,221	2,987	\$11,293.93	58.51%	17.51%	21.55%	2.42%
	350,192							

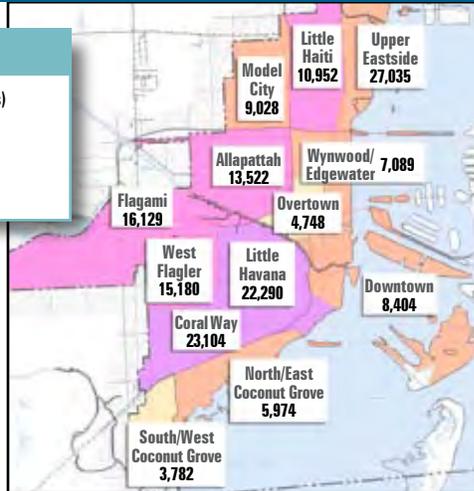
Source: City of Miami Planning Department, based on Census 2000 data

EXISTING AND PROJECTED HOUSING UNITS BY NET AREA

EXISTING UNITS IN 2000

NET Area (Census 2000 housing units)

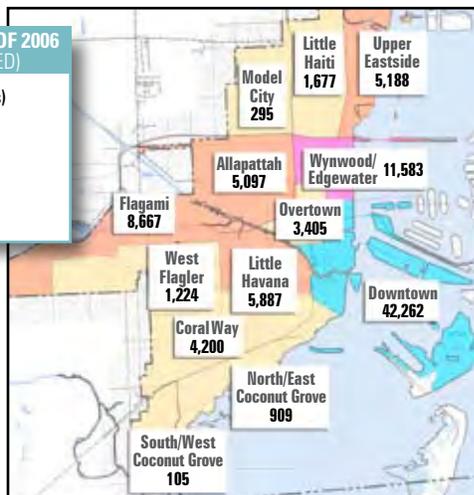
- Under 5,000 housing units
- 5,000–9,999 housing units
- 10,000–19,999 housing units
- Above 20,000 housing units



PROJECTED NEW UNITS AS OF 2006 (BUILT, PERMITTED, OR PROPOSED)

NET Area (Census 2000 housing units)

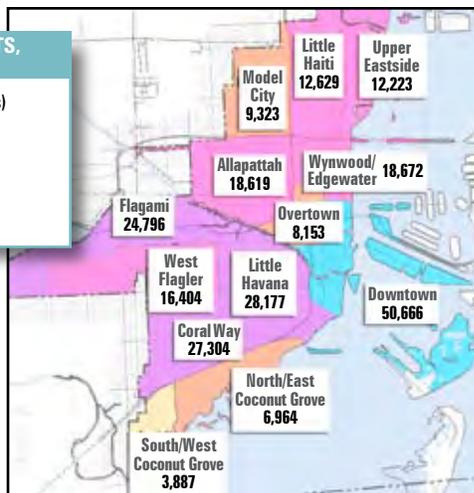
- Under 5,000 housing units
- 5,000–9,999 housing units
- 10,000–19,999 housing units
- 20,000–29,999 housing units
- Above 30,000 housing units



EXISTING + PROJECTED UNITS, AS OF 2006

NET Area (Census 2000 housing units)

- Under 5,000 housing units
- 5,000–9,999 housing units
- 10,000–19,999 housing units
- 20,000–29,999 housing units
- Above 30,000 housing units



approximately 360,000 and has been estimated at 384,000 in 2005. Detailed population by neighborhood is available only for 2000.

Since the 2000 Census, many new housing units have been built, permitted or proposed. If all of these units are completed and occupied, there will be a very significant increase in the number of residents in downtown, Wynwood-Edgewater, and neighborhoods near the Miami River. Even if some of these residents are seasonal, these neighborhoods will contain many more people.

Income and Poverty

Although Miami's growth has brought investment and new residents, the city still has a high proportion of low-income residents. The 2000 Census reported that the City of Miami had the nation's highest poverty rate; in 2004 it had the lowest median income for cities with 250,000 people or more, and in 2006, Census estimates ranked the city as the third-poorest in its size category. Whatever the city's standing, it is clear that it remains a place where many households and families survive on low incomes.

The Challenge for Miami's System of Parks and Public Spaces

Miami's system of parks, public spaces, and recreation programs faces complex challenges. The city's resurgent economy and the changing face of downtown have revived the focus on creating signature parks and public spaces along the waterfront and advancing the Riverwalk and Baywalk. There

is new demand for park and recreation opportunities for both young families and households without children. At the same time, the system must continue to serve the core of its constituency in recent years, children and families in less affluent parts of the city.

CITY PARK LANDS

To ascertain the precise total acreage of park land owned or managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation would require land surveys, which were not part of the present study. Some documents set the park acreage at over 1,000 acres by including all of Virginia Key's 486-plus acres as park land. In fact, the Department of Parks and Recreation manages the beach and nature areas on Virginia Key, which comprise somewhat more than 80 acres. A conservative inventory, based on city acreage figures for individual parks, appears in the chart at left.

ACREAGE	TYPE OF PARK
684.92	Community, neighborhood, mini, plazas, golf course, waterfront
10.00	City cemetery
98.50	Picnic/Spoil islands
6.00	Watson Island future public park
82.50	Virginia Key historic beach
881.92	TOTAL

The State of Florida and Miami-Dade County also own some park and open space land. The state owns The Barnacle historic site, which contains approximately 40 acres. County-owned park properties within the city limits include:

- Vizcaya Museum, which has ten acres of gardens and a coastal hammock
- Miami Museum of Science Wildlife Center, with 3 acres
- Alonzo Kelly Park, a mini-park in Liberty City, with less than an acre
- Government Center Park, adjacent to the Miami-Dade Stephen P. Clarke Government Center in downtown Miami
- Miami-Dade County Auditorium, which is on 9 acres of land (including parking lots)
- 35 acres on Rickenbacker Causeway (some of which is outside the city limits)

Private developments, such as Wachovia Plaza downtown, provide attractive open spaces as part of the public realm.

If all of the properties owned by city, county and state park agencies are included, there are approximately 1,000 acres of park properties in the City of Miami.

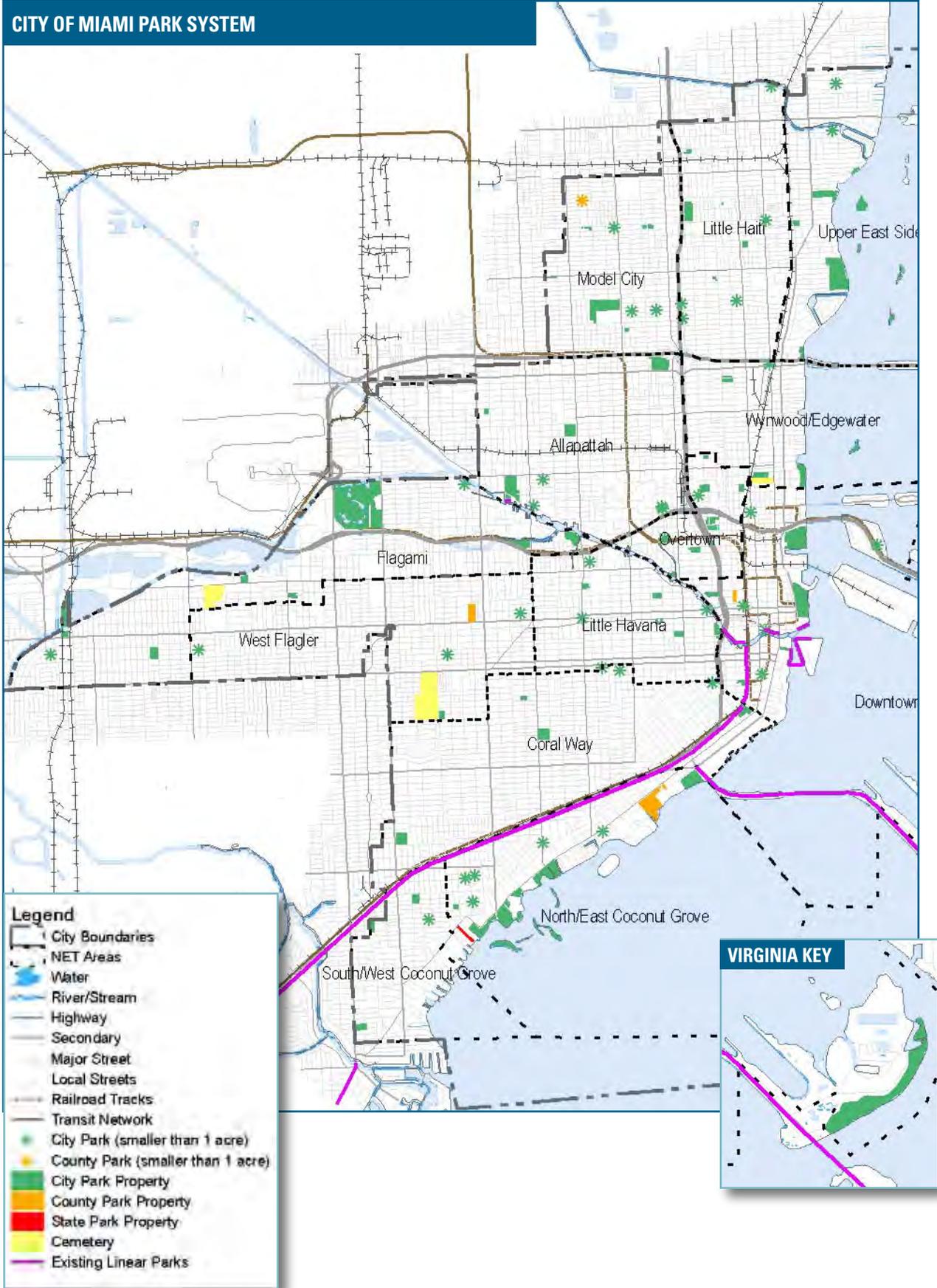
There are additional open space areas in the city that are not parks or managed by a park agency, including open space associated with transportation and other infrastructure (such as the M-Path, and highway verges) and building plazas (such as Wachovia Plaza downtown).



Citywide Level-of-Service Issues

From the mid-twentieth century, park systems have typically been judged on the basis of the number of acres per 1,000 population in a system developed by the National Recreation and

CITY OF MIAMI PARK SYSTEM



Parks Association and focused primarily on newly developed areas, rather than existing urban environments. Compared to many other high-density cities, Miami has low park acreage per 1,000 residents.

In a 2003 study by Peter Harnik, The Trust for Public Land examined twelve high-density cities and found that Miami's parks system fell behind eleven cities in park acreage per capita and percent of city area devoted to parks.¹ With a 2000 population of 362,470 and an area of 22,830 acres, the smallest population and land area of the cities studied, Miami was listed as having approximately 1,100 acres of park land at the time of the study, including park land owned by the County and other public entities. (The acreage number was based on approximate information.) This translates to a ratio of about 3 acres of park land per 1,000 persons, which places Miami at the bottom of the cities studied. The average among the study cities is 8.025 acres per 1,000 persons. If two cities with exceptionally large amounts of open space (Minneapolis and Washington, D.C.) are removed from the computation, the average among the remaining ten cities is 6.8 acres per 1,000 persons, a figure that is still more than double Miami's acreage. About 5 percent of Miami's total land area, 22,830 acres, is devoted to park land.² The average among high-density cities is 13.1 percent of total land area, putting Miami again at the bottom of the list of twelve high-density cities.

New construction is changing the face of Miami. With greater density comes the need for neighborhood open spaces.



However, this very general rule of thumb is inadequate as a way to evaluate urban park systems. The provision of a distributed hierarchy of park types to population groupings and the ability of residents to get to park land is increasingly viewed as more important in an urban setting than average number of acres per 1,000 persons citywide. Large parks on the perimeter of a city may provide a level of service that seems good on a citywide basis, but if significant numbers of the population cannot get to them easily, or can visit only infrequently, these parks do not serve the population well.

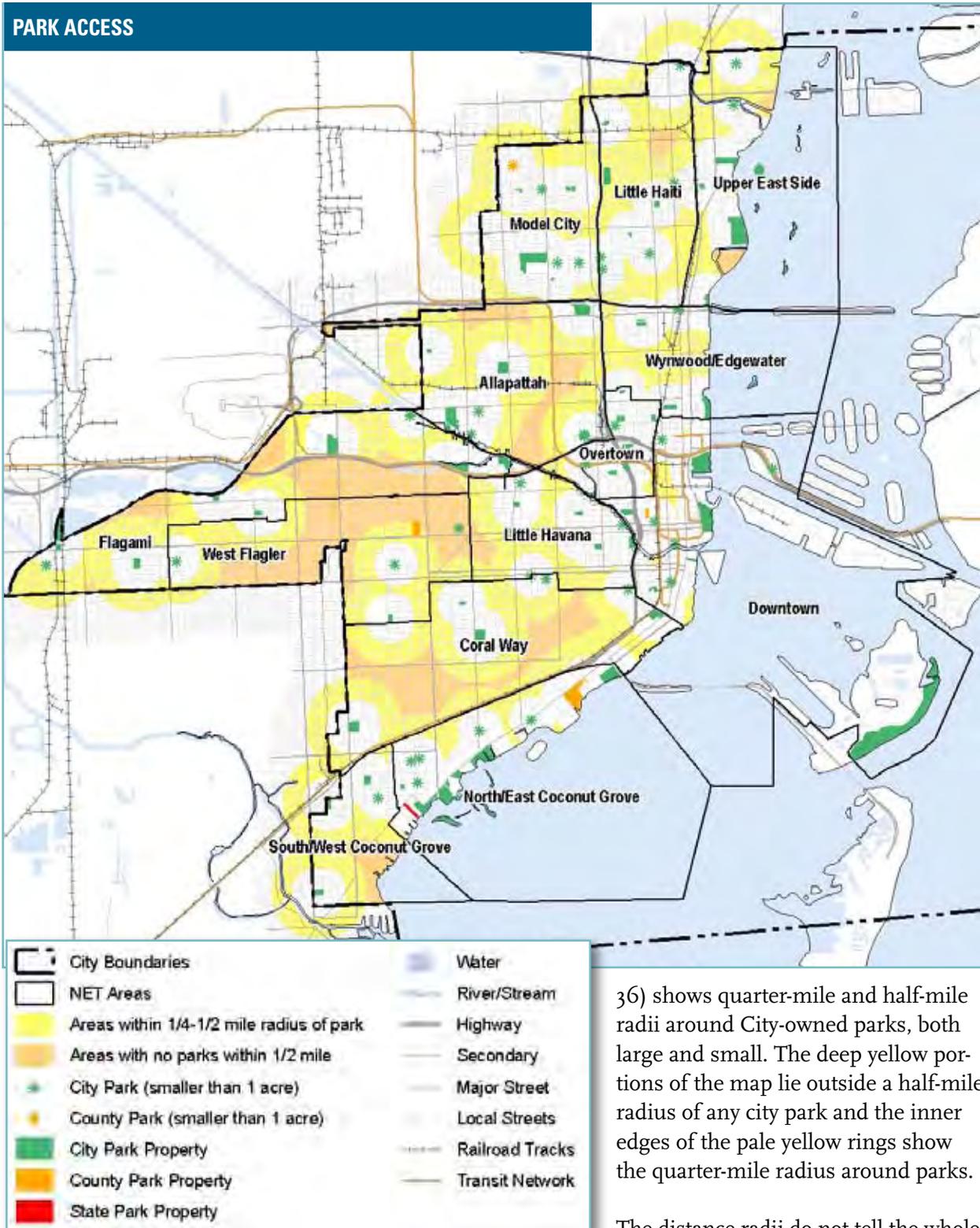
Access to Parks

Good access depends on two fundamental characteristics: location and ease of mobility to the location. In Miami, parks are not equally distributed around the city, particularly taking into account population in different areas. Certain areas of Miami are very underserved, especially parts of the West Flagler, Coral Way, and Flagami NET Areas. Most people are willing to walk a quarter mile to a desired destination, and many will walk a half mile. The park access map (page

¹ Peter Harnik, *The Excellent City Park System* (Washington, DC: The Trust for Public Land, 2003), Appendices III, IV.

² This also includes all park land within the city owned by another entity.

PARK ACCESS



36) shows quarter-mile and half-mile radii around City-owned parks, both large and small. The deep yellow portions of the map lie outside a half-mile radius of any city park and the inner edges of the pale yellow rings show the quarter-mile radius around parks.

The distance radii do not tell the whole story, however. In many cases, these radii contain very significant barriers to access. If a resident needs to walk on unshaded sidewalks along heavily traveled streets, must cross without signals or crosswalks, must pass through a gatehouse, or needs to detour to cross the river—then the access shown on the map is effectively and significantly compromised.

Access for children and seniors

Park access is particularly important for children and senior citizens. Safe walking and bicycle routes to nearby parks widen opportunities for children to engage in organized recreational activities and free play. Parks provide seniors with opportunities for health-enhancing exercise, socializing, and recreational activities. The Park Access for Children and Seniors maps show the relationship between park-access radii and the percentage of children, youth, and seniors in census tracts at the time of the 2000 Census. Although these data provide a snapshot of areas where these age groups are more or less present, the rapidly changing nature of Miami's demographics means that these maps may look quite different after the 2010 census.

PARK ACCESS, PARK FACILITIES, AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

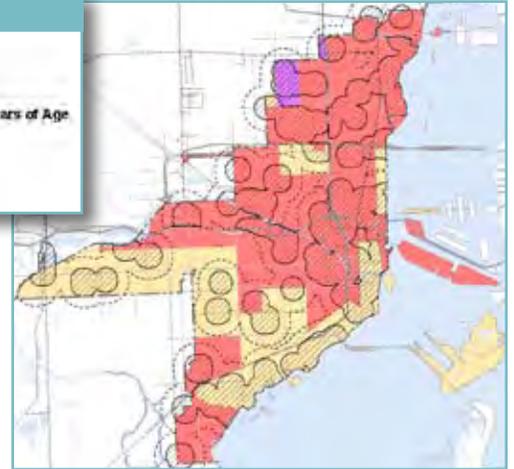
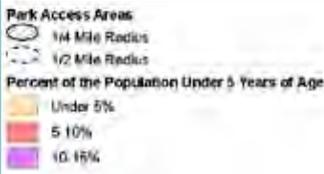
In creating the population and access maps, we used the best available population data at the neighborhood level, which is still census data from 2000. However, information on development trends, presented earlier, makes it clear that Miami's population numbers and composition are very dynamic, matching the real estate environment. Miami's changing demographics and incomes will bring both new demands and new opportunities for parks, recreation, and public spaces.

New development and areas of high residential density

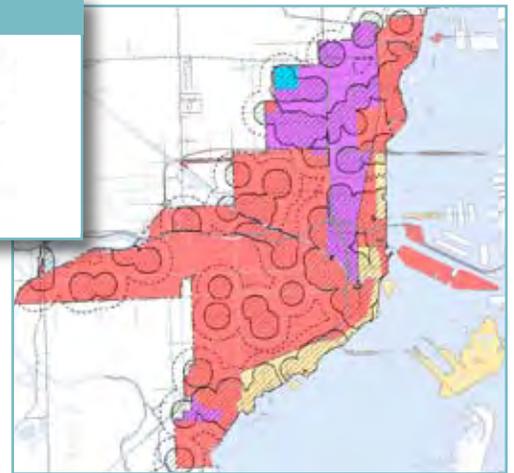
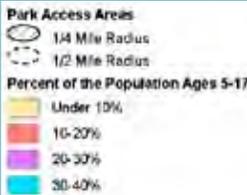
At the time of the 2000 Census, the Little Havana NET Area had the highest population density in the city, with 40 or more people per acre. Moreover, because this neighborhood has many

PARK ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND SENIORS BY 2000 CENSUS TRACT

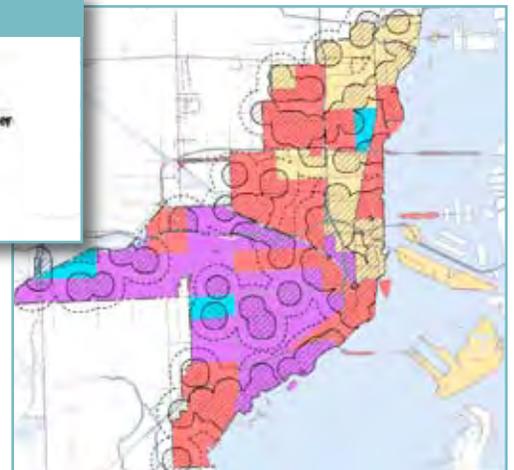
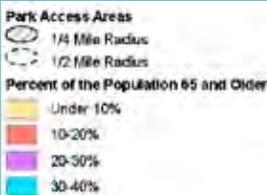
UNDER 5 YEARS OLD



5-17 YEARS OLD



65 AND OLDER



recent immigrants, it is likely that the population was undercounted and population density may be even higher. With the construction of significant numbers of high-rise apartment units downtown, along the Miami River, at Midtown Miami, and in parts of Edgewater and the Upper Eastside, however, by the time of the next census these neighborhoods will have much higher densities than they do now. New higher-density, multifamily development is also under way for sites in other parts of the city, including Little Havana.

This new development will produce substantial new demand for parks and public open space, but clear projections are difficult because of a number of uncertainties about the number and types of households that will occupy those units. Several factors are likely to influence the demand for parks:

- Most of the units are designed for small households. Although there will undoubtedly be some families in these buildings, the majority of the units are likely to be occupied by single persons or couples. The Miami-Dade School District uses 0.25 children per high rise unit as a rule of thumb.
- A substantial number of the units are likely to be occupied seasonally. This means that the demand for parks from North American and European residents is likely to be higher between November and March. Residential patterns of part-time residents from Latin America are less likely to be directly seasonal.
- Most high-rise luxury developments include on-site recreational facilities such as swimming pools, exercise facilities, and gardens.
- In some neighborhoods, such as Little Havana, increases in the density of housing units may not affect overall population density because the average household size in the new units will likely be smaller than in current housing. New development may yield higher densities in other Miami neighborhoods as immigrants and others seek more affordable housing.

Taking these factors into account, we can expect that most of the demand for parks, recreational facilities, and public spaces resulting from new city residents in high-rise buildings will be for green open space to contrast with higher neighborhood densities and for adult activities rather than for youth recreational programs. Opportunities for safe walking and running; areas for informal play, such as with Frisbees; rentals of canoes, kayaks, and other water sports equipment such as sailfish; areas for off-leash dogs; and similar self-organized recreational activities are likely to be of interest. Some new residents may also add to the pool of adults interested in tennis, soccer and rugby, softball, and other games—whether pickup matches or in organized leagues.

In many cases, the kinds of demand for parks and recreation that can be expected from residents of the new high-rise neighborhoods are completely congruent with the interests expressed by Miami's current residents in the master plan survey.

Generational turnover

Another demographic change that appears to be occurring is the generational turnover in some single-family-home neighborhoods. Census tracts that showed high numbers of senior citizens in the 2000 Census, such as many parts of the West Flagler and Flagami NET Areas, are beginning to see younger families moving in. Although these NET Areas are not as densely populated as, for example, Little Havana, from an access point of view they are among the most underserved in the entire city. As younger families move in, demand will grow for “walk-to” parks with children’s play areas. Although many families in these neighborhoods elect to pay for recreational programs in nearby Coral Gables, more children in these neighborhoods will likely increase demand for the City’s youth recreation programs.

Incomes and parks, recreation, and public spaces

The residents of Miami’s new luxury condominium towers and other new development with higher-than-average incomes will look to the park system for adult recreational opportunities and green open spaces, but Miami’s large population of moderate- and low-income households will continue to need the youth-oriented park and recreation programs that have been the City’s focus. Adolescents and seniors, who are currently underserved, will also remain an important constituency for park and recreation activities.

MIAMI COMPARED TO OTHER CITIES

For decades, Miami has served a larger population in a smaller area than comparable Florida cities. For this plan, Miami was compared with four other waterfront, tourist-oriented cities, three in Florida and Honolulu, Hawaii. Although one of the smallest cities in this group, at 35.7 square miles, in 2000 Miami had the largest population and double the population density of the next closest city. Miami was also more culturally diverse than the other cities. Although rich in diversity and culture, Miami had the highest level of unemployment (11.7%), the greatest percentage of population under the poverty line (28.5%), and the lowest median annual household income (\$23,483) of the benchmark cities. The residents of the city not only have a great need for the services and activities provid-

CITY	2004 POPULATION	2000 LAND (SQ. MILE)	2000 POPULATION DENSITY (PER SQ. MILE)	2000 % AFRICAN-AMERICAN	2000 % HISPANIC OR LATINO	1999 % BELOW POVERTY LINE	1999 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2000 % UNEMPLOYMENT
FORT LAUDERDALE	164,578	33.0	4,618	28.9%	9.5%	17.7%	\$37,887	3.9%
HONOLULU	378,155	85.7	4,337	1.6%	4.4%	11.8%	\$45,112	5.9%
MIAMI	379,724	35.7	10,153	22.3%	65.8%	28.5%	\$23,483	11.7%
ST. PETERSBURG	249,090	59.6	4,165	22.4%	4.2%	13.3%	\$34,597	5.2%
TAMPA	321,772	112.2	2,707	26.1%	19.3%	18.1%	\$34,415	8.6%

ed by the Department of Parks and Recreation, but these needs are wide-ranging due to the breadth of economic and cultural backgrounds within the community.

DESIGN, FUNCTION AND CONDITION OF MIAMI'S PARKS

Every Miami park was visited during the preparation of this master plan, and the condition and functionality of the parks varied considerably. The plan was prepared over the course of a year with several destructive hurricanes, but the impact of the hurricanes was separated from other park conditions. In addition, the capital improvement program funded by the Homeland Defense/ Neighborhood Improvements Bond was under way and some programmed improvements had not yet been implemented when some parks were visited.

Given the challenging budget and staffing conditions that have faced the park system for many years, however, it is not surprising that an informal “triage” system seems to have been in place, and under that system design issues have often been neglected. Most parks receive a basic level of maintenance and care, with more resources focused on the larger, staffed parks that serve more people. A few parks that have been transferred to the Department of Parks and Recreation over the years—notably those created as part of public housing projects, such as Athalie Range Park #2 near Village Homes and Rainbow Village Park—appear to receive almost no care. Piecemeal park improvements made in recent years were often carried out without careful consideration of overall park design or functionality. For example, Vita Course installations in some parks are clustered in one spot rather than ranged along a route around or in the park. Similarly, new handicapped-accessible play structures or other facilities are sometimes not connected to accessible paths.

USE OF PARK LAND FOR NON-PARK ACTIVITIES

Miami's financial difficulties in the last two decades exacerbated the tendency common to many municipalities to look at park land as “free” land for municipal buildings and other activities. Miami's relatively small amount of park land has been diminished over the years by the siting of buildings for other municipal uses as well as other activities. Listed below are land and buildings nominally under control of the Department of Parks and Recreation but partially or fully occupied by other municipal departments or activities:

- Shenandoah Park (day care, library, and temporary fire station)
- Gibson Park (library)
- Athalie Range Park (library)
- Range Park #2/Victory Homes (Head Start building)
- Police Simulator Site
- Flagami Mini-Park (used as community parking)
- Orange Bowl Playground (parking)

- Virrick Gym (storage)
- Miami River Rapids Mini-Park (leased to a home for troubled adolescents and not open to the public)
- Moore Park (day care)
- Eaton Park (day care)
- Lemon City Park (day care)
- Fort Dallas Park (historic building)
- Lummus Park (historic buildings and police horse stables)
- Carlos Arboleya Campground (police maneuvers)
- Brickell Park (temporary use as construction staging area)
- Martell Park (temporary use as construction staging area)
- Curtis Park (Allapattah NET Area office)
- Peacock Park (N/E Coconut Grove NET Area office)
- Roberto Clemente Park (Wynwood/Edgewater NET Area office)
- Legion Park (Upper Eastside NET Area office)

Proposals for additional non-park uses

- Shenandoah Park (permanent fire station)
- Virrick Park (branch library)

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SPACES IN MIAMI

In addition to formal parks and recreation areas, Miami’s public realm includes a variety of other spaces open to public use. Some of these are publicly owned, while others are privately owned but open to the public—for example, building plazas and segments of the Miami Riverwalk that are required for public access in zoning but remain privately owned.

Private plazas along Brickell Avenue enhance the city’s public spaces.

In downtown Miami and Brickell there are a number of public plazas associated with office buildings, such as the Wachovia Bank plaza; with institutions, such as the Miami-Dade College Wolfson Campus plaza; and with government agencies, such as the Government Center plaza and the Cultural Center plaza. On Brickell Avenue, many of the high-rise banks, office buildings, and hotels have plazas and wide sidewalks. The new Mary Brickell Village retail development includes generous plaza space.



The Plaza de la Cubanidad design protects users from the impact of a high-traffic intersection, but it needs updating. The Cuban Memorial Plaza and walkway (far right) needs marked pedestrian crossings or raised intersections to make it safer for pedestrians.



The Latin Quarter Plaza connects neighborhoods to the lively activity of Domino Park and Calle Ocho (SW 8th Street).

Some downtown plazas are successful, attracting office workers and others at lunchtime, and they presumably will continue to attract more use from visitors and residents as downtown Miami continues to develop. The successful plazas tend to adhere to well-known principles of good design, management, and programming for public places: they are accessible, provide visibility and security, have comfortable places to sit, are clean and cared for, and provide attractive amenities or activities. Others have not been successful because they do not adhere to one or more of these basic principles. On Brickell Avenue, nonresidential buildings tend to function as fortresses, each sited on a plaza disconnected from its neighbors. With additional residents in new high rises in the Brickell Village area and the increasing presence of ground-floor uses like restaurants, the value of a continuous, pedestrian-friendly expanse of plazas along Brickell Avenue will become more obvious.

Outside of downtown, most plazas tend to be associated with privately-owned retail development. However, the many Miami residents of Latin American origin are accustomed to the social uses of public plazas—that is, defined areas that are predominantly paved, surrounded on at least two sides by structures and including amenities such as trees and shrubs in planters, seating areas, and water features. A successful example is the Latin Quarter Plaza at SW 8th Street and 15th Avenue, next to Domino Park. A few other parks also contain plaza-like spaces. The Cuban Memorial Plaza and walkway in the median of SW 13th Avenue south of SW 8th Street is less successful because it does not provide well for pedestrian crossing of intersections. The Plaza de la Cubanidad, on SW 17th Street, also needs updating and improvements to make it more inviting. As demonstrated in the master plan survey's results, there is great demand for gathering spaces, such as large picnic areas and shelters, where residents can enjoy themselves informally with large groups of family and friends.

CITY PARKS AS PART OF A REGIONAL SYSTEM

Miami parks function as a system for administrative purposes, but they lack the physical connections to function as a physical system. In a true system, each park would be part of an interconnected and recognizable whole—a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Likewise, while there are parks and greenway trails in surrounding communities, a few of which extend into the City of Miami, there is little continuity and connection to the city’s parks.

EXISTING TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

The Riverwalk and Miami River Greenway

The Riverwalk concept dates at least to the 1972 Parks for People effort. The 2001 *Miami River Greenway Action Plan* serves to guide ongoing implementation efforts and has been updated twice, most recently in February 2005.³ As part of the action plan, existing conditions along the river were mapped, and these uses, along with user groups, were defined as a series of “greenway themes”:

- The river is home to a diverse, multicultural population.
- It is a working river whose businesses handle 2 million tons of cargo every year and collectively serve as one of the largest employers in downtown Miami.
- The river is a potential destination landscape for tourism.
- It is an important environmental resource at risk from pollution and overdevelopment.
- It is an economic resource, the improvement of which will catalyze development of residential, commercial, and retail development in adjacent neighborhoods.
- The river is part of the city’s heritage as a focus of human activity for more than 2,000 years.



The Miami River is a major environmental, economic, and recreational resource.

The City requires a 50-foot setback to accommodate the Riverwalk for all development along the river up to the new 5th Street Bridge. Design standards and guidelines have been prepared for the Riverwalk to promote design continuity. The City and the Miami River Commission promote and oversee implementation of the Riverwalk. Substantial segments exist or are under construction downtown;

³ Sponsored by the Miami River Commission and prepared by the Trust for Public Land and Greenways, Inc.

where new development is under way elsewhere along the river; and at public locations like Curtis Park. The Greenway concept also includes on-road segments, many of which have seen improvements downtown and in Little Havana.

The Baywalk

Like the Riverwalk, the Baywalk has been the subject of planning and discussion for decades. Conceived as a continuous pedestrian corridor along the waterfront, many segments, such as the promenade at Bayfront Park and a waterfront walkway at Margaret Pace Park, already exist. Other areas, such as Bicentennial/Museum Park, are currently being redesigned to accommodate the Baywalk, including a connector across the boat slip to Parcel B east of American Airlines Arena that will link the entire downtown waterfront. A critical connection between the Baywalk and the Riverwalk/Greenway is being developed as new mixed-use construction continues at the mouth of the Miami River.

The Commodore Trail

The Commodore Trail was named after Commodore Ralph Munroe, a Coconut Grove pioneer whose home, The Barnacle, is now a state historic site. It already exists in the form of sidewalks, pathways, and on-road bike lanes in a variety of conditions, and residents have been pushing for several years to advance trail upgrades. The trail begins in the south at Cocoplum Circle (the end of the Old Cutler Road Bike Path) and extends to the intersection of Miami and Brickell avenues. From there, cyclists can continue across the Rickenbacker Causeway to Key Biscayne. The trail is probably the most heavily-used bike route and jogging path in Miami, connecting all the waterfront parks and civic features in Coconut Grove and already connecting fairly easily with neighboring communities. A concept plan detailing proposed improvements was completed in March 2004.

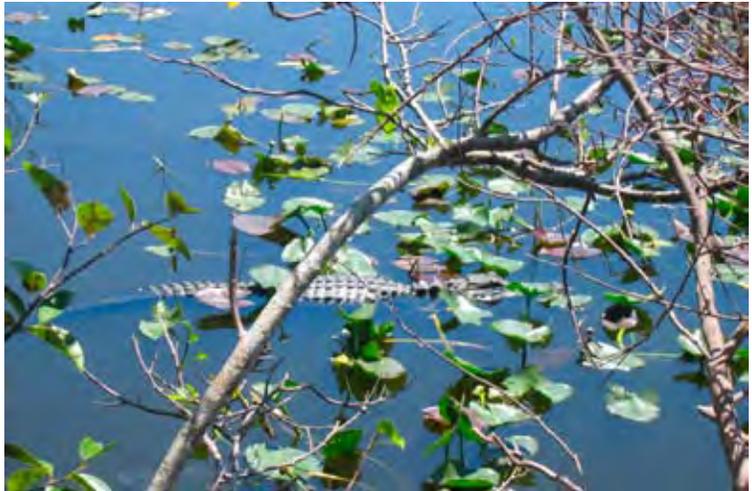
The M-Path

The M-Path is an existing paved bicycle/pedestrian path that follows portions of the MetroRail right-of-way. It provides a neighborhood pedestrian connection to the MetroRail stations, and serves as a green landscaped buffer to Route 1. Its functionality as a long-distance bike trail is limited by a large number of street crossings and the fact that it dead-ends at the Miami River. In addition, residents report concerns about maintenance, poor lighting, and lack of “eyes on the street” to enhance security.

As important as these growing greenway links are to the future of the Miami park system, they are only part of a larger potential network extending throughout the city. This citywide system of parks and greenways could in turn be linked to greenways in neighboring communities to create a regional system that would rival any in the world.

CITY PARKS AS PART OF A NATURAL SYSTEM

In a little over 100 years, Miami has been transformed from a city with “too much nature,” to one where nature has been marginalized. For much of its early history, the wilderness surrounding Miami was treated as an obstacle to progress: the Everglades needed to be filled in and tamed as soon as possible so that the city could grow and prosper. The dynamiting of the Miami Rapids and conversion of the Miami River from a free-flowing bayou to a shipping and drainage canal symbolizes this approach, and is part of the larger tale of the development of South Florida.



Today, however, Miami may be unique among American cities, with a continuous urban grid surrounded by near-wilderness, the protected Everglades and Biscayne national parks. From the “river of grass” at the west to the shining waters of Biscayne Bay at the east, these dramatic contrasts have always been an important part of the image of Miami, celebrated in postcard views of the skyline from the bay and alligators swimming in the Everglades. It is a theme that can and should be celebrated throughout the park system.

The city is not far from the natural world of the Everglades.

While nature can be most readily found at the edges of the city, some natural systems survive within Miami. The most significant remaining natural systems follow the waterways that connect the Everglades to Biscayne Bay. The best-known of these, the Miami River, has been well documented as habitat for the manatee, and is a key link uniting remaining natural areas from Biscayne Bay to Palmer Lake. Branching off the Miami River, the Tamiami Canal connects an even larger collection of natural sites, from Fern Isle Park to the Blue Lagoon Ponds. At the northern border of the city, the Little River lacks the extensive development that lines the banks of the Miami River and is wrapped for much of its length in a thick growth of vegetation.

NATURAL AREAS IN CITY PARKS

Several city parks have conservation areas designated for preservation of Miami's natural landscape: Simpson Park and Nature Center, Wainwright Park, and the Virginia Key Nature Area and Trail. Simpson is the only park given over entirely to nature. Set aside in 1913 to preserve a small piece of the hardwood hammock that was fast disappearing from Miami and originally called Jungle Park, it was later renamed in honor of conservationist Dr. Charles Torrey Simpson. It has endured ups and downs over the years (including the hurricanes of 2005) but is now one of two parks that are the focus of the City's efforts to restore natural ecosystems. The other large restoration project has been on Virginia Key. There, the City's parks naturalist and his staff have been



The City is working to restore the native plant community in Virginia Key's conservation area.

removing Australian pine and other invasive species and restoring the native plant community. This conservation area includes examples of all three South Florida ecosystems—coastal hammock, dunes, and mangroves—and is home to several endangered plant species, such as the beach star and Biscayne prickly-ash. An interpretive trail provides education about Miami's native ecosystems, as well as a practical primer on restoration techniques. In addition, Miami-Dade County's Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) has been actively restoring native plants on the spoil islands and working to preserve the sea grass beds in Biscayne Bay.

Many of the other city parks, especially those along the rivers or the bay, include significant natural areas. Along the Miami River, Sewell Park and Fern Isle Park both contain a mix of large and small trees and ground covers—though

both also include introduced exotic species. Upstream from Fern Isle Park along the South Fork of the Miami River, the Tamiami Canal borders the Melreese Golf Course, which has extensive grasslands and wetland habitat. Continuing west along the same water system, Robert King High Park and the adjacent Carlos Arboleya Campground contain some significant natural areas along their edges. Along Biscayne Bay, several parks retain some natural landscape, including mangroves. These include Morningside Park in the Upper Eastside and Kennedy Park in Coconut Grove. Each of these parks has a long history of multiple uses in which nature tends to get squeezed out, but each also presents many opportunities to include restoration of natural areas in future enhancements.

URBAN WILDS

Small pockets of “urban wilderness” can be found throughout the city, including vacant lots, rail corridors, and neighborhood drainage corridors. Often comprising leftover spaces around the edges of larger properties and public institutions, these areas lie in a mix of public and private ownership and often are not big enough or continuous enough to use for development or parking lots. One substantial area includes the grass surfaces surrounding the airport runways and service roads. Other natural zones often overlooked are the extensive highway medians and embankments along the interstate highways that traverse the city. These areas form a network connecting the bay to the interior, and intersect and parallel the river and canal corridors. Largely free from human disturbance—except for the cars that run through them—they contain many wetlands and drainage areas that have grown up with natural vegetation.



The grassy areas around the airport are among the “urban wilds” that can contribute to a network of natural places in Miami.

Finally, thousands of street trees create, in many areas of the city, a continuous canopy of vegetation that provides rich habitat for a range of animal life. Protecting and expanding this “urban forest” is a simple way to bring many native species back to the city, as well as provide shelter for many that are just passing through.

PARK CATEGORIES AND TYPES

The purpose and value of creating a hierarchy of different park categories is to assist in planning, design, and maintenance of parks. Different types of parks can provide green space, facilities, and programs to different population groups and users. The Department of Parks and Recreation currently categorizes parks as community, neighborhood, mini, and specialized parks, following common practice among park and recreation professionals. Although size and facilities are among the criteria for assignment to specific categories, there is some inconsistency in the way that parks are assigned to categories in park documents, and the usefulness of this hierarchy and the park assignments is questionable. At the same time, the City’s new impact fee ordinance uses different criteria to separate the parks subject to development impacts that can be eligible for funding from impact fees.

CURRENT PARK CATEGORIES

Community Parks

Twenty-one parks fall in this category, and most have on-site managers and offer active recreation and computer access programs for children and adults (“eParks”). Ten of these parks have swimming pools. One is the Virrick Gym/ Bayshore Gym that is rented to the Shake-a-Leg youth sailing program. They range in size from the 3-acre Belafonte-Talcolcy Park to 42-acre Morningside Park, though most are among the larger recreational parks in the system.

Neighborhood Parks

Twenty-one parks are classified as neighborhood parks, ranging in size from 0.3 acres at the Coconut Grove Tennis Courts to 8.41-acre Fern Isle Park. Almost all of these parks have at least a play structure for children, though most have at least one other recreational resource as well, such as a basketball court.

Mini-Parks

Twenty-eight parks are classified as mini-parks, but not all of these are maintained or open for public use. Many mini-parks have play structures for children, but some are passive green spaces. Two are closed, four are not maintained by the city, and two function as median strips. They range in size from 0.11 acres at Range Park #1 to the 5.4-acre Stearns Park.

Specialized Parks

The remainder are categorized as “specialized parks,” with the following sub-categories:

- **Dog Parks:** 2 (portions of Kennedy and Blanche parks)
- **Nature Parks:** 8. These include the three city parks with conservation land, Sewell, Simpson, and Wainwright; the spoil islands known as “Picnic Islands” off Dinner Key and off Pace, Legion, and Morningside parks; David Kennedy Park; and Antonio Maceo/Blue Lagoon Park. Brickell Park is also sometimes classified as a nature park. Brickell, Kennedy, and Antonio Maceo parks appear to have been designated as nature parks because they do not have active recreation, but other parks that are also passive parks, such as Baywood Park, do not appear as nature parks.
- **Special Use Parks:** 7 properties, most which are under the control of other entities. These are the Police Simulator Site, which does not function in any way as a park; Allen Morris (AMCO) Park, which is managed by the abut-

ting Perricone’s restaurant; Bayfront Park, managed by the Bayfront Trust; Bicentennial Park, being planned by the City’s Planning Department as Museum Park; Paul S. Walker/Flagler Street Park downtown, a passive park with a sculpture; Miami River Rapids Park, leased to a youth-development program; and Watson Island, which includes the small Ichimura Japanese Garden (managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation) and which will have an approximately 6-acre public park as part of a planned resort and mega-yacht development.

IMPACT FEE ORDINANCE CATEGORIES

For the purposes of the City’s recently enacted change in impact fees assessed on residential development, certain parks and facilities are characterized as “citywide” and eligible to receive impact funds for improvements related to development impacts. The criteria used to designate “citywide parks” are that they be at least 3 acres in size and include active recreation facilities and/or buildings with recreation programs. The waterfront parks, including trails linking waterfront parks, the city swimming pools, and future gymnasiums, were also designated in the impact fee ordinance as facilities serving a citywide constituency and are therefore eligible for impact fee improvements. A total of 40 parks and pools are included in the “citywide” category: 21 community parks, 8 neighborhood parks, 4 nature parks, and 7 waterfront parks. The designation of what constitutes a “waterfront park” seems somewhat arbitrary, including as it does Antonio Maceo, Bayfront, Bicentennial/Museum, Kennedy, Myers, Virginia Key and Watson Island, but not Peacock, Wainwright, Morningside, Legion, or other parks located on Biscayne Bay or the Miami River. However, these parks are designated as “citywide parks.”

PARK SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

The Department of Parks and Recreation endured many years of tight and reduced budgets while its responsibilities increased through the acquisition of land and demands on its staff to support other City initiatives. The department staff made do with limited resources, but programs and services were strained. Fortunately, in recent years the City’s circumstances have improved considerably. Since 2003 the department has been under the leadership of a new director, and its annual budget nearly doubled. The City’s improved circumstances allow for a redefinition of level-of-service standards to match citizens’ desires and expectations and new management practices.

The strengths of the Department of Parks and Recreation include new leadership with a focused mission, a dedicated staff committed to serving Miami residents, and improved technology. After many challenging years, the department can point to many recent accomplishments:

Operations, facilities, and programs

- New free programs, including eParks, which makes computers available to the community
- New or expanded programs; more quality special events in parks; expanded programs for seniors
- New or renovated facilities: indoor buildings, gym, and theater; state-of-the-art physical improvements to keep up with trends; shade structures; new rowing facility on Virginia Key; poured-in-place surfaces versus sand in playgrounds
- New accessibility equipment (wheelchairs)
- New restoration program for the natural environment on Virginia Key
- Management of golf course operations at Melreese Golf Course

Service delivery and communications

- New director with open-door policy
- Increased operating budget with a lesser percentage devoted to staff salaries
- Increased production of a program guide from once a year to 3–4 times per year
- Upgraded department Web page
- Increased frequency of staff meetings to twice monthly with directors, division heads, senior staff
- Employee newsletter and employee-of-the-month recognition
- New logo, mission statement, and department slogan
- New, consistent signage in parks with new image
- Progress toward performance measurements

Support services

- New staff, including public relations and information technology positions
- Technology for park managers, providing computers, e-mail, printing, and copying capabilities

Parks and Recreation Department budgets have improved since the early 2000s. In comparison to Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Saint Petersburg, and Honolulu in 2004, the Department of Parks and Recreation served the largest population but had the smallest annual budget (\$11.85 million). Miami had a budget of \$31 per resident, compared to the other cities, which had an average per capita budget of \$130. A comparable budget for Miami's estimated 2005 population of 384,000 would be \$49,920,000, a little more than Tampa's 2004 budget. Moreover, in comparison to the other cities, the department brings in

PARK SYSTEM COMPARISONS							
CITY	PARKS & RECREATION ACREAGE	2004 TOTAL P&R BUDGET	BUDGET PER CAPITA	2004 P&R ANNUAL REVENUE	P&R FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	P&R PART-TIME EMPLOYEES	P&R CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES
FORT LAUDERDALE	973	\$26,327,074	\$156	\$8,110,116	232	101	n/a
HONOLULU	6,108	\$47,216,334	\$125	\$21,012,000	839	23	244
MIAMI	800	\$11,850,384	\$31	\$3,308,314	190	482	n/a
ST. PETERSBURG	2,400	\$24,878,000	\$100	\$6,509,000	159	23	n/a
TAMPA	1,774	\$44,066,000	\$137	\$6,689,000	n/a	n/a	n/a

the smallest amount of annual revenue because it charges very low or no fees for services. In the other cities, revenues represented from 16% (for Tampa) to 44% (for Honolulu) of the annual budget. Miami’s Department of Parks and Recreation ranks at the high end of the range for full-time employees per acre of land, and it is also at the top of the range in terms of full-time employees as a percentage of its budget, leaving limited funds with which to respond to resident needs and desires. The budget has increased substantially since 2004 to \$20 million in 2007. However, this is still only about \$50 per person, well below comparable cities.

Capital improvements for park properties are overseen either by the Department of Parks and Recreation’s Support Services Division or by the City’s Transportation and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Transportation Department. Smaller-scale improvements are designed and installed by the parks department, while CIP manages larger projects that typically require contracting with outside designers.

Several of Miami’s park and open space resources are managed by separate park trusts created by the Miami City Commission or the State of Florida to provide special oversight of key properties. The Bayfront Park Management Trust, founded in 1987 and comprising nine board members, manages facilities and events in Bayfront Park and Bicentennial/Museum Park. The Virginia Key Beach Park Trust was formed in 1999 to guide the restoration of the City’s historic Virginia Key Beach property. Similarly, the Florida Legislature created the Miami River Commission (MRC) in 1997 to study and address environmental and development issues along the Miami River, including dredging, improving water quality, and creating new riverfront public spaces. Today the MRC serves as a strong advocate for pollution reduction, sensitive riverfront development that preserves public water access, and preservation of small maritime industries that continue to make the Miami River a working river.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PARK DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

Created in 2002, Miami's Parks Advisory Board is one of many boards that advise the City Commission. The board is made up of 13 voting members and 6 or more nonvoting members. Voting members are appointed by the mayor (1), the city commissioners (2 each), and by the board's membership (2). The standard qualifications for City boards apply: a designee must be a permanent resident, a property or business owner, or an employee in the city, and must have "demonstrated interest" in the topic of the board. Each of the two voting members appointed by other members of the board must be a "professional, city resident or a student" and a "citizen with professional knowledge of local history." The six nonvoting members of the board include the Director of Parks and Recreation or his/her designee; a landscape architect chosen by the board; an educator chosen by the board; a recreation specialist chosen by the board; and two or more representatives of nonprofit organizations chosen by the board. The board term is one year and no one can serve more than five consecutive years (but former members can return to the board after a two-year hiatus). The board membership system appears to be organized so that the nonvoting members with specialized knowledge will serve as *pro bono* staff or advisors to the board. It is notable that a local history specialist is required among the voting members but not a landscape architect, recreation specialist, or open space professional.

The city ordinance creating the board gives it many responsibilities:

- Advise the City Commission.
- Periodically review budget, programming, beautification, security, and physical improvements for City-owned or -managed parks, recreational facilities, and public spaces.
- Conduct an annual public review meeting.
- Present an annual written report for the mayor, commissioners, and city manager at a City Commission meeting.
- Conduct regular site visits to parks and consult with schools and neighborhood groups on park issues.
- Seek outside funding for park and recreation resources and improvements
- Oversee the creation and function of a Miami Park Trust, if created by the commission, to receive donations for specific park projects.
- Hold periodic meetings and public programs to encourage public participation.
- Assure that park design appeals to persons of both genders, all ages, and diverse class and cultural backgrounds.
- Assure that adequate park space is provided pursuant to the City's master plan.

These myriad responsibilities are not clearly related to actions that the City might take. The board is completely advisory and there are no requirements that the City Commission seek its advice before taking specified actions. The board has no meeting requirements except the annual public review and report to the City Commission. Because the board is completely advisory and the annual report is the only structured way for it to give advice, it cannot fulfill its responsibilities. For example, it is impossible for the Parks Advisory Board to “assure that adequate park space is provided pursuant to the City’s Master Plan,” since the board does not make final decisions on park acquisition issues. These difficulties in the structure and responsibility of the board have resulted in diminished participation by members and have limited its effectiveness.

FRIENDS GROUPS

Several parks, such as Legion Park and Blanche Park, have organized “friends” groups of park users—usually, but not exclusively, comprising residents of neighborhoods around the park. They advocate for the parks, organize events, and sometimes raise money for park improvements. Especially in the case of parks that do not have a park manager, volunteers have found it hard to coordinate with the parks department. No one in the Department of Parks and Recreation is directly responsible for working with volunteer groups.



The Friends of Blanche Park sponsors events to help fund park maintenance and improvements.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach about park improvements and activities has been irregular in the past but is becoming more consistent. In some cases, such as the redesign of Virrick Park and its gym, community members report a high degree of community involvement in planning the park improvements and design. In other cases, park needs have been assessed on a piecemeal basis or specific segments of the park-user population and neighborhood residents consulted, with the result that park improvements have sometimes occurred without a more holistic understanding of a park’s community role and needs. In addition, the capital plan now being implemented as part of the Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement Bond funding was not informed by a process of community discussion. Current departmental management is consulting more frequently and in advance of decisions on improvements and changes. This master plan process also included a systematic effort to survey and engage the community.

ADVOCACY GROUPS

Several groups see their role as advocating for parks on a systemwide basis: The Trust for Public Land, Miami Neighborhoods United, the Urban Environmental League, and Citizens for a Better South Florida.

- *The Trust for Public Land* is a national nonprofit with programs that focus on urban parks. Its South Florida office has emphasized providing parks and greenways in underserved neighborhoods like Overtown and Little Havana, as well as the recuperation of underused resources for park and recreation use, most notably in the Miami River Greenway project.
- *Miami Neighborhoods United* has been active in promoting acquisition of new park land, park improvements, and passive parks. MNU tends to focus more on the parks in the eastern part of the city and has less of a presence in Miami's central and western neighborhoods.
- *The Urban Environmental League*, a regional advocacy group, has advocated for the parks master plan and for preserving park land from encroachment by other uses. In 2005–2006, UEL focused much of its energy on preserving the Miami-Dade urban development boundary.
- *Citizens for a Better South Florida* is a community-based environmental education and action organization. Its programs include Community Science Workshop, an after-school environmental sciences program at Virrick Park and two elementary schools. The organization also promotes planting of shade trees and native plants through its Urban Greening Program and Native Plant Nursery. The group produced *Go Native! Hazlo nativo!*, a guide to native plants that the City supported through funding and through distribution by NET offices.

THE CHALLENGE: PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES FOR A CHANGING MIAMI

Parks and public spaces in Miami have already entered a new era of improvement and expansion. Implementation of a significant capital improvements program, a slowly growing budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation, a new impact-fee ordinance with significant park benefits, contributions by development projects to creation of the Riverwalk and other new public spaces, new management and leadership at the parks department—as well the master plan process—have all created new momentum. But much remains to be done for Miami to achieve its potential to have one of the most distinctive systems of parks and public spaces in the country.

There are many challenges. Miami's rising profile as an exciting center of growth, culture, and international business continues to attract residents to new high-rise buildings and emerging neighborhoods, as well as visitors to cultural and other events. At the same time, the city remains home to a large number of low- and moderate-income households. The ever-increasing diversity of the city, therefore, will require an even greater variety of parks, public spaces and recreation opportunities. Acquisition of land for new parks in a densely-populated city will always be complex, and even with new parks, the city's park system will continue to be relatively small. Municipal government has too often used park land to site other facilities. The per capita budget of Miami's system is still well below the average of other city park systems. Parks and other public spaces are poorly linked, creating barriers to access. To meet and overcome many of these challenges, Miami needs to take advantage of every opportunity to create a strong network of resources that goes beyond the traditional parks and recreation system to create an exciting tropical public realm worthy of a city of international importance.



4

A Parks and Public Spaces System for Tomorrow

THE PUBLIC REALM: SYSTEMS THINKING FOR PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Parks and plazas are part of the system of shared spaces within the city that we call the “public realm.” The other major components of the public realm are streets and sidewalks. It is the public realm that gives a city its sense of place and creates the arena for people to experience the world around them. If the public spaces of a city are isolated, uncomfortable, and dominated by traffic and vehicles, it will provide a very different experience from one where the public realm is a linked series of safe, comfortable and appealing areas where people can orient themselves; gather with friends, family and strangers; participate in activities, or relax.

The public realm reflects the infrastructure of a city. Some of that is “gray infrastructure,” the roads, utility lines, communications installations, water and wastewater facilities, and buildings for schools, libraries, hospitals and so on. This infrastructure is planned and built in systems, not in isolated pieces. Today, we also talk about “green infrastructure.” These are the parks, tree-lined streets, bike trails and pedestrian paths, river and stream corridors, waterfronts, and urban wilds of the city. They too must be planned, created, maintained and restored as a system. A green public realm network can become the identifiable framework of city life, framing the built environment, helping to define the city’s visual character, and enhancing the daily experience of residents and visitors.

In Miami, the multiple benefits of planning for a system of parks—connected by greenways and green streets and continuous with the public realm shaped by buildings and plazas—are already evident in efforts like the Miami Baywalk and Riverwalk. Networks provide recreational value, for example, when areas where activity was formerly limited to sitting at the river’s edge are connected into continuous trails for walking and biking. These connections encourage people to walk to local shops and restaurants and enhance the quality of life for residents in adjoining neighborhoods. The result is direct economic value, both in generating opportunities for businesses to service greenway users and neighborhood residents, and in overall increases in property values. The eco-

logical value of a systemic approach is equally important. Many native species, from manatees to butterflies, cannot thrive without a certain amount of habitat. While large wild areas will never return to Miami, greenways can link existing natural areas into networks that are more likely to support successful populations of native plants and animals. Finally, a linked park *system*, rather than a set of independent park sites, has conceptual value for understanding the city experience. As people move around the city and come upon a park, greenway or boulevard, they are able to orient themselves not just to a single landmark, but to the city-wide system of which it is a part.

By focusing on linking parks, other open spaces, and public spaces into a connected system, parks that are close to one another but not contiguous can function like a single large park. This is the vision for the downtown waterfront “park of parks” or “total park” linked by the Baywalk from Margaret Pace Park to the Riverwalk. Similarly, Miami can have its own “Central Park” focused on the South Fork of the Miami River by connecting Curtis, Fern Isle, and Sewell parks, a blueway and a greenway. Acquisition of the Police Benevolent Association land on the South Fork to enlarge Fern Isle Park could make the quiet South Fork into a center for kayaking and canoeing, connecting the new Fern Isle/South Fork Park by the Miami River with nearby Sewell Park, a passive park, and with Curtis Park, an active recreation park with fields and a swimming pool. With completion of the Miami Riverwalk and provision of safe and comfortable pedestrian crossing of the 22nd Avenue Bridge, there would also be a land link. These connected parks, greenway, and blueway would form complementary elements of Miami’s Central Park. Similarly, all the parks on the Coconut Grove waterfront, combined with a new signature open space on the site of the obsolete convention center, would be linked by parks, bike routes, and bay boat routes to form the Coconut Grove Waterfront Greenway.

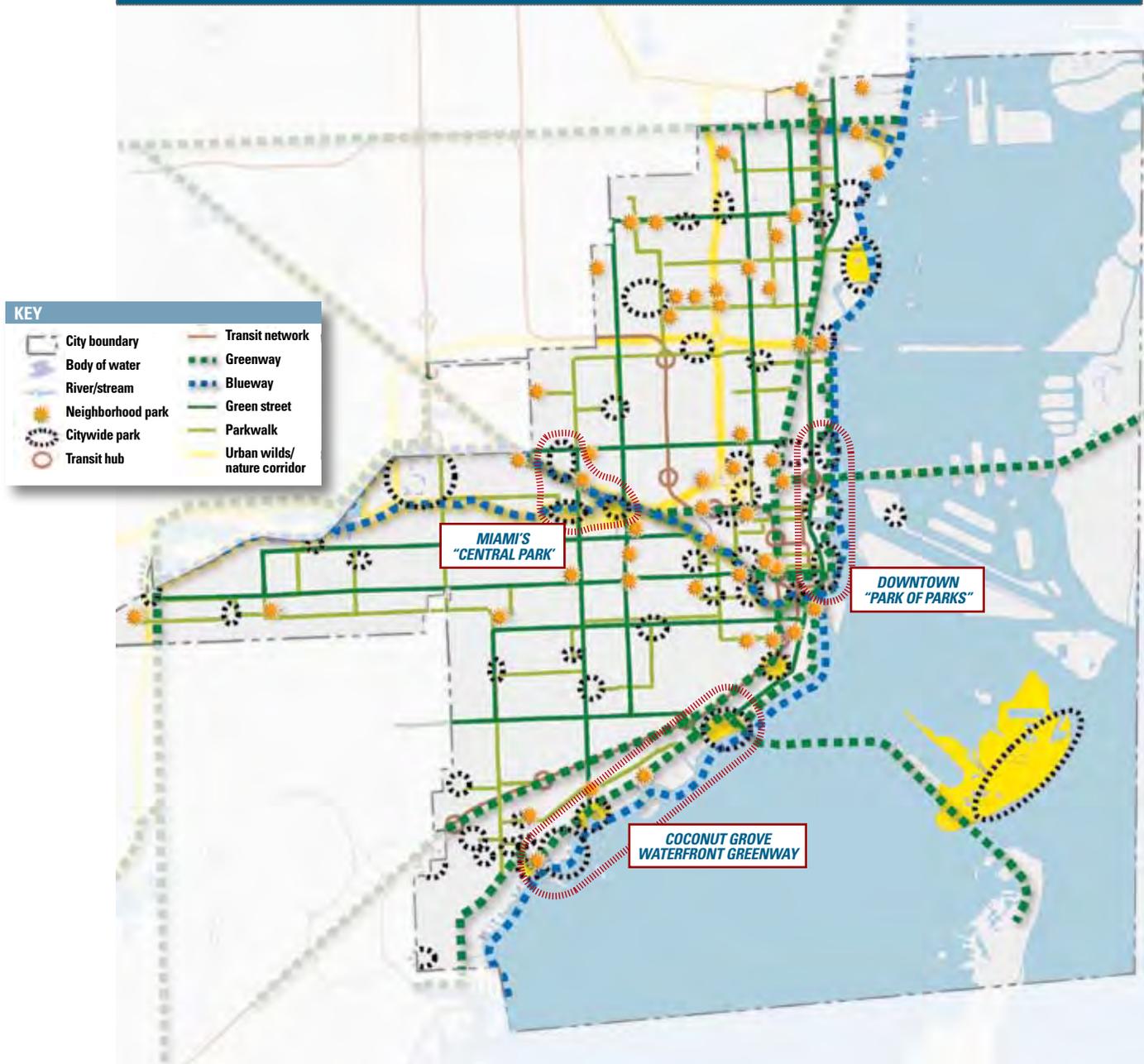
This chapter sets out recommendations for Miami’s parks and open space as a system. Recommendations for specific parks can be found in the discussion of neighborhood visions in Chapter 5. The system-wide recommendations here revolve around eight principles:

- Balance acreage and access for level of service.
- Preserve and enhance existing parks and open spaces.
- Expand resources without acquiring more land.
- Acquire land for new parks and open spaces in underserved areas.
- Make Miami’s park system the greenest and most sustainable in the U.S.
- Make access real through strong connections.
- Enhance community participation and partnerships.
- Improve management and operations.
- Diversify funding for capital and operations improvements.

MIAMI'S PARK SYSTEM TOMORROW: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In the second half of the twentieth century, when cities were losing population and struggling with declining funds, urban park systems faced the challenge of doing more with less and less. Today, Miami, like many other cities, is experiencing a resurgence of investment and population. City leaders understand

A 21st-Century Vision for Miami's Parks and Open Spaces



that parks are critical to a high quality of life and bring economic benefits, and that signature parks contribute to the identity and visibility of the city. Miami residents agree: the majority of respondents to the public opinion survey for this master plan think that parks and recreation improvements are very important in relation to other city needs and that parks provide economic as well as quality of life benefits to the City.

A. BALANCING ACREAGE AND ACCESS: LEVEL OF SERVICE IN A CITY PARK SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Pursue a medium-term goal of a park within one-half mile of every resident and a long-term goal of a park within one-quarter mile of every resident by acquiring land in underserved areas.
- > Seek a balance among passive and active uses of parks and public spaces.
- > Establish a new hierarchy for the park system that reflects Miami conditions.
- > Survey city residents regularly to monitor preferences, needs, and satisfaction with the park and recreation system.
- > Establish networks of pedestrian-friendly public spaces.
- > Ensure that public spaces provided on private property remain open to the public.

Level of Service for Urban Parks

As the 21st-century revival in city living has returned attention to urban park systems, park planners are recognizing that the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards for park hierarchies and park level of service are not suitable for park systems in established urban centers. Peter Harnik, Director of the Center of City Park Excellence at the Trust for Public Land and the author of the 2003 study that highlighted Miami's small number of park acres per 1,000 people, in 2006 told the NRPA Urban Park and Recreation Summit that "I used to think that acreage and facilities were most important, but it appears that city park excellence is more tied to spending.... How much greenspace should cities have and what form should it take? What is the proper level of service for recreation in the city? In years past the National Recreation and Park Association gave a great deal of thought to this topic and came up with some good guidelines for suburban areas, but no one has yet done it for cities."¹ Harnik further described the evolution in his thinking:

¹ Peter Harnik, "Beyond the Numbers: The State of America's City Parks Today," Presentation to the National Recreation and Park Association Urban Park and Recreation Summit, Chicago, May 2006. <http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=3573>.

“Parks need to be located where the people are, and housing should [be] clustered near parks.... I believe our cities are not rich enough to provide large areas of green space that only serve very low densities of residents who live around them in single-family houses on large lots. If a neighborhood already looks and feels like a park, the real park has much less purpose, need and value.... If you don't have a critical population mass to support transit and you don't have enough people within walking and bicycling distance to fill the park, you become reliant on cars.... Either you end up devoting a large amount of parkland to parking, or you create a parking problem in the neighborhood around the park.”²

As Harnik emphasized, in urban situations, park acreage is less important than park access. Research repeatedly has shown that the most important variable in how much and how often people use a green space is distance—especially walking time—from home.³ They will travel from time to time to use large, unique open spaces of regional importance, but for everyday use, parks need to be close by.

As a densely-populated city where the 2000 census found that over 35,000 people had no access to a private vehicle and where new high-rise neighborhoods are under construction, Miami needs to focus on access—particularly “walk-to” access—more than total acreage in creating new parks. People will easily walk about a quarter mile to get to a destination, and if the walk is reasonably pleasant and the destination sufficiently compelling, they are often willing to walk half a mile. This is the standard used in some of the country's best park systems. Minneapolis has already attained the half-mile goal.



New parks within walking and biking distance of residents' homes can provide more access to green space.

Balance Passive and Active Uses Of Parks and Public Spaces

All park systems need to provide a balance of passive and active green spaces. The master plan survey found that although the majority of current Miami residents are most interested in using parks for unprogrammed activities, such as fitness walking and enjoying green spaces, there are many households with a strong interest in sports and other recreation programs for children, youth and adults. Finding the proper balance can be difficult as multiple user groups vie for the same spaces. This is an ever-present dilemma in cities and suburbs throughout the country.

² *Ibid.*

³ Ann Forsyth, “People and Urban Green Areas: Perception and Use,” University of Minnesota Design Center for American Urban Landscape Design Brief, 4 (June 2003) pp. 2, 5.

Of course, the master plan survey did not reflect the preferences of the future residents who will occupy the new housing now under development in Miami, which highlights the importance of regularly surveying residents for changes in their preferences and needs for parks and recreation. Organized sports leagues and similar groups tend to be more effective in expressing their park and recreation needs on a regular basis than people who are looking for a passive park experience or members of the general public overall. For that reason, it is always important to make room for passive park experiences in park designs. Careful design of parks coupled with efforts to share playing fields and other resources for active sports and new technologies, such as artificial turf that allows for more intensive use of sports fields, can help balance demands for active and passive activity areas. Even small parks can be designed to include quiet, landscaped sections as well as areas for children's play equipment or a half-basketball court.

A New Hierarchy of Parks

Miami needs a new park hierarchy that reflects its specific conditions. The proposed new park hierarchy emphasizes the importance of different levels of access, as well as resources, in the city park system. This hierarchy also reflects the analysis underlying the city's new impact fee system which distinguishes between two categories: *Citywide Parks* that serve the city as a whole or many neighborhoods because they contain unique or scarce resources or programs and attract users who live too far to walk to the park, and *Neighborhood Parks* that are designed to serve local neighborhoods. The proposed new parks hierarchy preserves this basic distinction:

- **Citywide Parks** include destination parks, community parks, and linear parks. The destination parks have unique resources or specialties:
 - > **Destination Parks**
 - + *Conservation Parks*: Simpson Park and Nature Center, Wainwright Park conservation area, Virginia Key nature trail and conservation area, Picnic and Spoil Islands
 - + *Waterfront Parks*: All the parks over 3 acres in size on Biscayne Bay, the Miami River, the South Fork of the Miami River, and the Little River
 - + *Sports Complex and Aquatic Parks*: All parks with swimming pools and sports parks with unique resources such as Moore Park's tennis center
 - + *Specialty Parks*: Parks with unique programs, such as Kinloch Park's program for people with disabilities; with historic resources, such as Fort Dallas; or for special activities, such as domino parks.

A NEW HIERARCHY OF CITY PARKS: CITYWIDE PARKS

TYPE OF PARK	NAME OF PARK	ACRES	RESOURCES/SPECIALTY	NET AREA
DESTINATION (CONSERVATION)	Simpson Park	8.2	conservation	Coral Way
	Virginia Key	85.2	conservation; beach	Downtown
	Wainwright Park	21.4	conservation	North/East Coconut Grove
DESTINATION (WATERFRONT)	Bayfront Park	61.3	waterfront	Downtown
	Museum Park	30.3	waterfront	Downtown
	Antonio Maceo Park	3.65	waterfront	Flagami
	Fern Isle Park	8.4	waterfront	Flagami
	Sewell Park	10.3	waterfront	Flagami
	José Marti Park	5.6	waterfront; pool	Little Havana
	Kennedy Park	20.9	waterfront; dog park	North/East Coconut Grove
	Peacock Park & Spoil Islands	9.4	waterfront	North/East Coconut Grove
	Baywood Park	1.9	waterfront	Upper Eastside
	Legion Park & Picnic Islands	13.7	waterfront	Upper Eastside
	Magnolia/Pallot Park	3	waterfront	Upper Eastside
	Morningside Park & Picnic Islands	42.4	waterfront; pool	Upper Eastside
	Stearns Park	5.4	waterfront	Upper Eastside
	Margaret Pace Park	12	waterfront	Wynwood/Edgewater
DESTINATION (SPORTS COMPLEX/ AQUATIC CENTER)	Gerry Curtis Park	27.7	sports complex; pool	Allapattah
	Moore Park	19.6	tennis center	Allapattah
	Bryan Park	2.1	tennis center	Coral Way
	Shenandoah Park	10	pool	Coral Way
	Melreese Golf Course	132	golf course	Flagami
	Grapeland Heights Park	20	water park; sports complex	Flagami
	West End Park	6.9	pool	Flagami
	Athalie Range Park	11.9	pool	Little Haiti
	Hadley Park	29.7	pool	Model City
	Coconut Grove Tennis Courts	0.3	tennis courts	North/East Coconut Grove
	Kirk Munroe Park & Tennis Center	1.4	tennis center	North/East Coconut Grove
	Gibson Park	8	pool	Overtown
	Overtown Youth Center	5	gymnasium	Overtown
	Williams Park	5	pool	Overtown
	Virrick Park	4.7	pool and gymnasium	South/West Coconut Grove
DESTINATION (SPECIALTY)	Gomez/Domino Park	0.1	domino park	Coral Way
	Fort Dallas Park	1.4	historic resources	Downtown
	Ichimura Japanese Garden (Watson Island)	N/A	designed garden	Downtown
	Lummas Park	5.9	historic resources	Downtown
	Kinloch Park	3.5	programs for disabled	Flagami
	Blanche Park	1.5	dog park	North/East Coconut Grove
	Coconut Grove Sailing Center	N/A	sailing facility	North/East Coconut Grove
	Virrick Gym/Shake-a-Leg	4.5	children's boating programs	North/East Coconut Grove
	Billy Rolle/C. Grove Mini-Park	0.2	domino park	South/West Coconut Grove
City Cemetery	10	historic resources	Wynwood/Edgewater	
COMMUNITY PARKS	Juan Pablo Duarte Park	9.2		Allapattah
	Douglas Park	10		Coral Way
	Robert King High Park & Carlos Arboleya Campground	17		Flagami
	Henderson Park	3.5		Little Havana
	Jorge Mas Canosa/Riverside Park	3.5		Little Havana
	Belafonte-Talcocy Center and Park	3.1		Model City
	Reeves Park	3.4		Overtown
	Armbrister Park	5.1		South/West Coconut Grove
	Merrie Christmas Park	5.4		South/West Coconut Grove
	Eaton Park	6.2		Upper Eastside
	Coral Gate Park	3.6		West Flagler
	Roberto Clemente Park	4.9		Wynwood/ Edgewater
Biscayne Park	7.3		Wynwood/ Edgewater	
LINEAR PARKS	Cuban Memorial Plaza	0.2		Coral Way
	Riverwalk	N/A		Downtown

A NEW HIERARCHY OF CITY PARKS: NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

TYPE OF PARK	NAME OF PARK	ACRES	RESOURCES/SPECIALTY	NET AREA
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	Allapattah Mini-Park	0.4		Allapattah
	Melrose Park	2.6		Allapattah
	Pine Heights Mini-Park	0.3		Allapattah
	Unity Park	N/A		Allapattah
	Broward Circle Mini-Park	0.3		Allapattah
	Triangle Park	0.5		Coral Way
	Allen Morris Mini-Park	0.1		Downtown
	Brickell Park	2.2		Downtown
	Central Miami Mini-Park *	N/A		Downtown
	Flagler St./Paul S. Walker Mini-Park	0.1		Downtown
	Southside Park	2.2		Downtown
	Flagami Mini-Park *	1		Flagami
	Miami River Rapids Mini-Park †	0.9		Flagami
	Range Park #2	N/A		Little Haiti
	Buena Vista Park	1.2		Little Haiti
	Lemon City Park	2.3		Little Haiti
	Little River Commerce Park *	0.5		Little Haiti
	North Bay Vista Park	0.5		Little Haiti
	Oakland Grove Mini-Park	0.2		Little Haiti
	Pullman Mini-Park	0.4		Little Haiti
	South Bay Vista Park	0.2		Little Haiti
	Ernesto Lecuona Park	0.3		Little Havana
	Grove Mini-Park	0.5		Little Havana
	Orange Bowl Playground	N/A		Little Havana
	Plaza de Cubanidad	0.3		Little Havana
	African Square Park	1.2		Model City
	Crestwood Park	1		Model City
	Miller Dawkins Mini-Park	1		Model City
	East Bay Vista Park	N/A		Model City
	Simonhoff Park	1.5		Model City
	Twelfth Avenue Mini-Park	N/A		Model City
	West Buena Vista Park	1.1		Model City
	Elizabeth Steele Mini-Park	0.5		North/East Coconut Grove
	Lincoln Park	0.2		North/East Coconut Grove
	Douglas/Silver Bluff Mini-Park	0.5		North/East Coconut Grove
	Dorsey Park	2.5		North/East Coconut Grove
	Range Park #1	0.1		Overtown
	Rainbow Village Park	1.5		Overtown
	Second Avenue Mini-Park	0.6		Overtown
	Spring Garden Point Park	1.1		Overtown
	Town Park	0.9		Overtown
	Baywood Park	1.9		South/West Coconut Grove
Belle Meade Mini-Park	0.4		Upper Eastside	
Biscayne Heights Mini-Park	0.4		Upper Eastside	
Coral Nook Park	0.3		West Flagler	
Flagler Terrace Mini-Park	1		West Flagler	
Glen Royal Mini-Park	0.2		West Flagler	
Elizabeth Martell Park	0.6		Wynwood/Edgewater	
Woodson Mini-Park	0.4		Wynwood/Edgewater	

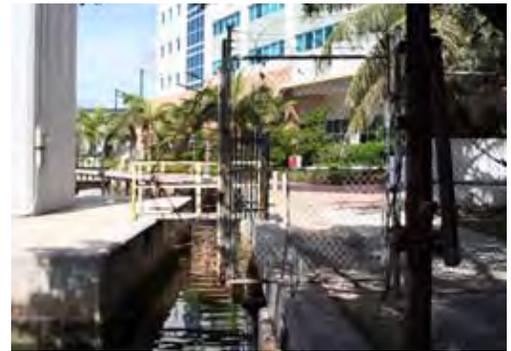
* Park is now closed

† Leased facility



- > **Community parks** are parks over 3 acres in size that have active recreation facilities. Because demand for these facilities is greater than supply and they serve programs and leagues that operate citywide, these parks attract users beyond the neighborhood in which they are located and need to accommodate parking.

- > **Linear Parks** are the greenways and trails that link different parts of the city together. Not all of these will be under the ownership and management of the Parks and Recreation Department. However, even in those cases, the Department should be involved in monitoring the use and value of these resources for linking parks and for promoting healthy lifestyles. For example, private property managers charged with maintaining public spaces like Riverwalk segments sometimes close access in a misguided effort to guarantee more security for their buildings. City departments must collaborate with each other and with the owners to assure both security and public access. The most important of these linear parks are the Baywalk, Riverwalk, M-Path, and the future Flagler Trail/FEC Corridor Greenway. Effective linkages of these linear parks with city park and recreation resources is essential and will require attention from the Parks and Recreation Department.



Fences on the Riverwalk block continuous passage.

- **Neighborhood Parks** are the local parks that primarily serve people who live and work in the immediate vicinity. They include all the existing mini-parks and parks under 3 acres in size that do not fit in one of the Citywide Park categories. Many, but not all, have play structures for children or a few picnic tables. Some function as squares and pocket parks, offering visual relief and passive green space, and primarily serve people who arrive on foot.

New Networks of Pedestrian-Friendly Public Spaces

In addition to parks and green spaces, Miami should have a robust network of pedestrian precincts, such as plazas, as well as the streets and trails discussed earlier. The new form-based zoning framework for the city is expected to formalize requirements for development that enhances the pedestrian environment and to provide guidelines for plazas, arcades, courtyards and other spaces open to the public, whether in public or private development.

Public spaces to be provided by private development should adhere to the principles recently developed by a researcher who reviewed four decades of plazas, pocket parks, atriums and cross-block corridors built and maintained on private property in return for zoning bonuses in New York City.⁴ An ex-

⁴ Jerold Kayden, *Privately-Owned Public Spaces in New York City* (New York, 2000).

amination of all these spaces found that many were either inaccessible to the public, unusable by the public, or privatized. In many spaces, the public was effectively denied access by physical barriers, lack of signage announcing public use, and diminution of required amenities as seating became unusable or was taken out, plantings were not maintained, and so on. Privatization also often occurred in the more attractive and amenity-filled spaces, where adjacent private uses took over the public space (characterized as “café creep”). The public should not be required to make a purchase in order to enjoy a space created as a public benefit in return for development capacity. To ensure that public uses remain public, privately developed spaces should have:

- Signage announcing public use and hours of operation
- Amenities—such as seating, drinking fountains, and bike racks—that invite public activity and use
- Periodic public monitoring and inspection
- A public information campaign so that people know these spaces exist.⁵

Some of the problems found in New York are already evident on parts of the Miami Riverwalk. As Miami sees more of these kinds of public uses on private land, maintenance and access obligations should be spelled out in building permits or other legal agreements and monitoring for barriers to access and for privatization should be undertaken on a regular schedule.

B. PRESERVING AND ENHANCING EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Define public parks in the zoning ordinance as “Civic Space–Public Park.”
- > Define conservation parks in the zoning ordinance in a separate zoning district from other types of open space.
- > Define limits on by-right accessory uses and structures.
- > Adopt a “no net loss” policy for park land in city zoning and ordinances.
- > Provide appropriate staffing, services, equipment, and maintenance at all parks.

Miami needs to make the most of the parks it has. Miami’s park system is not large, acquisition of new park land is challenging, and limited operational budgets over many years reduced the City’s ability to maintain its park land, so that some parks have received little attention over time. At the same time, increasing residential density will intensify demand for parks, both as open space relief from buildings and as recreational resources. Preserving Miami’s existing park and recreation resources means making sure that park land is not used for other uses.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Current Zoning for Parks and Open Spaces

Miami’s current zoning ordinance has two categories that cover parks: CS—Conservation and PR—Parks, Recreation and Open Space.

CS zoning is quite restrictive and intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas kept in “an essentially natural state.” The apparent oddity of allowing single-family residential development on a minimum of five acres as a conditional use presumably derives from the fact that Vizcaya and The Barnacle are zoned CS. The other areas zoned CS are Sewell Park, Simpson Park, and Wainwright Park; the northeastern, eastern and southeastern parts of Virginia Key, where there are extensive mangroves; and the spoil islands in Biscayne Bay off Dinner Key and the Picnic Islands off the shores of the Upper Eastside and Edgewater. Sewell, Simpson and Wainwright parks have designated conservation areas, though only Simpson has educational signs and a nature center to interpret the native hammock vegetation for visitors. Virginia Key is the site of the city’s nature trail and native plant nursery. The CS zone permits accessory uses only by Special Exception and off-street parking only if a Special Exception finding is made that it does not have adverse environmental impacts.

All other parks, as well as the Dinner Key Marina, the open space on the 79th Street Causeway and most of Watson Island, are zoned PR. This is a much more permissive zone that allows for these uses:

- Principal uses
 - > Public and private parks
 - > Recreational facilities
 - > Existing marinas
- Conditional principal uses
 - > Educational and cultural facilities
 - > Marine and marina facilities
 - > Entertainment facilities
 - > Social and health-related service facilities
 - > Public safety and City of Miami administrative facilities, including authorities and agencies thereof
 - > Parkways
 - > Scenic corridors
 - > Camping facilities

The conditional uses, which require city commission approval, allow for a wide range of uses and structures to be located on park land. The zoning language is somewhat ambiguous about limits on the size of these facilities and requires findings that major structures may be permitted if “the intent of the district is adhered to” or, for a variety of other uses, nominally requires that they “are an

integral part of the park’s design or of the recreational function.” The PR zone also requires one off-street parking space for each employee and one space for each 500 square feet of building space.

Miami 21 Zoning for Parks and Open Spaces

The SmartCode zoning method used in the Miami 21 rezoning of the city (under way while this plan is being written) provides for parks and open space through a zoning category called Civic Space (CS) described predominantly by physical character: parks, greens, squares, plazas and playgrounds. The descriptions of parks, greens and squares emphasize green landscapes and “unstructured recreation,” while plazas are described as predominantly hardscape and “available for civic purposes and commercial activities.” Only the playground type provides for active recreation.

Zoning categories and requirements written with the nuances of Miami’s park and open space issues in mind can help the City protect and enhance its present and future parks. There are four major issues that should be addressed in revising zoning for parks and public spaces:

What constitutes a public park?

Although Miami has not seen much dedication of private land to public park uses in the recent past, this condition may change with the new public-benefits elements of Miami 21 zoning.

Suggested language for such a definition is below:

A Public Park is an area owned or controlled by a public entity that is intended for public use, open to the sky, and designed for environmental, scenic, recreational, or cultural purposes. If the area is not owned by a public entity, it may remain in private ownership but be protected for public use by means of a permanent easement, restriction or other similar legal device acceptable to the city. A Public Park may include, but is not limited to, lawns, trees, active and passive recreation areas, playgrounds, fountains, ornamental plantings, walkways, public performance areas, and plazas. Accessory buildings and structures that support and contribute to the public open and recreational space uses may be included, including, but not limited to, buildings for recreation programs, gymnasiums and exercise centers, locker rooms, ticket booths, amphitheaters, recreation staff offices, restrooms, and food service concession areas. Other uses, such as permanent administrative, public safety, school, social or health facilities are not permitted in Civic Space-Public Park Zones.

Should we distinguish in zoning between open space for conservation and other park open space?

Conservation areas intended to protect areas of natural vegetation are distinct from other kinds of parks and should receive extra protection. The areas currently in CS zoning should be retained as Conservation Parks as a category of Civic Space or the rural T-1 zone of the SmartCode system. In any case, the zoning should continue to be extremely restrictive. It would be beneficial to ensure that the land is permanently protected by conservation easements.

What kinds of uses and structures, and what sizes of structures, should be permitted on public open spaces as accessory to the open space use?

Accessory structures and uses that further the open space and recreational mission should be permitted by right, up to certain limits. Such uses and structures may include, but are not limited to, swimming pools, gymnasiums, recreation program buildings, field houses, restrooms, shade structures, picnic pavilions, equipment rental buildings, concession buildings, service areas, and parking areas. Accessory buildings should be permitted by right as long as the total footprint of all buildings will cover no more than 25 percent of the public park. Recreation-related buildings that will cover a greater area should be subject to review by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Planning Board, both of which should make a recommendation to the City Commission for the Commission's final decision.

What kinds of limits and criteria should be established for conversion of park and public open space land to other uses (public or private)? What procedures should be put in place to approve changes to park land?

Miami's limited amount of existing park land combined with the limited availability and high cost of land for new parks means that preserving existing park land and adopting a "no net loss" policy is essential. The previous chapter listed the many parks that have had other municipal uses located on them over the decades. The City should establish criteria and a deliberative process before any existing park land can be taken out of park and recreation use. This process should be included or referenced in the zoning code.

The process for any conversion of park land should include the following requirements:⁵

- *A requirement for an "alternatives analysis."* The entity that wishes to take the park land for another use must perform an alternatives analysis (including a no-build alternative). The City Commission must find that there is no feasible alternative to using the park land on the basis of criteria other than cost alone.
- *A requirement for a public hearing.* The Planning Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board must each hold a public hearing on the proposed

⁵ Recommended procedures based on the discussion by Robert H. Levin, "When Forever Proves Fleeting: The Condemnation and Conversion of Conservation Land," *NYU Environmental Law Journal*, 9 (2001), pp. 592-637.

-
- conversion of park land, at a time and place convenient for public comment. Each board must make a written recommendation to the City Commission.
- *A requirement for replacement.* Any park land taken for other uses, including other municipal uses, must be replaced by land with similar park, recreation or conservation value in terms of usefulness and location. If the land is not available, funds must be deposited in the Parks and Open Space Trust Fund that would be sufficient to buy replacement land at fair market value. The land taken for other uses must be rezoned and taken out of the Public Parks category.
 - *A requirement for a supermajority vote of the City Commission.* The City Commission must approve the conversion of land by a supermajority vote.

Appropriate Support for All Parks

Parks will not be used if they are not maintained and if people do not feel secure in them. Each type of park needs the kind of maintenance, staffing, equipment and programming that is appropriate to its role in the park and recreation system and its size. Parks that are not well-maintained send a message of neglect and insecurity, making people reluctant to use them. In a number of communities, the parks department has worked with other professionals or with citizen groups to develop criteria for park maintenance and create easily understood standards to help park staff recognize and meet the standards. Information on these systems is available in the Technical Appendix.

While small neighborhood parks may need no more than regular maintenance, trash pickup and periodic review for improvements or replacement of play equipment, larger and more specialized parks need on-site staff and programming in addition to the basics of maintenance, upkeep and improvement. Programs attract people to parks and provide healthy and fun activities for children and adults. When parks are full of people, that sends a message that the park is a safe, welcoming place to be.

C. EXPANDING RESOURCES WITHOUT ACQUIRING MORE LAND

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > **Develop policies for City use of nonpark land for parks and recreation: criteria and conditions, leases, and contributions of equipment and maintenance.**
- > **Create a School–Park Working Group with City and school district staff to develop a framework for resource-sharing —equipment, maintenance, security—and approach principals of schools with identified potential.**
- > **Designate liaisons with transportation agencies, public works, public housing, cemeteries and so on, to pursue and work out sharing of land, programming, and resources.**

The Parks and Recreation Department has the opportunity to be the policy leader for open space development and recreation programming for the entire city—but without having to control all the resources needed to further these policies. There are a number of existing and potential open space and recreation resources in Miami that are not owned or managed by the City. They include public school sites, housing authority land, church and cemetery land, county properties, and lands associated with transportation and drainage



infrastructure. In some cases, the City and the Parks and Recreation Department should create long-term agreements with these entities for public use, including agreements over contributions for equipment and maintenance (based on data about maintenance costs). The City could work with owners of cemeteries and churches that have land and resources to promote programs such as walking programs in landscaped cemeteries. In other cases, the City should work with public agencies with responsibility for infrastructure projects, to make sure that, where possible, they include green elements, walkways, or other enhancements.

Historic cemeteries with landscaped grounds, like Miami's Woodlawn, offer the potential for walking programs and green open space in neighborhoods with few parks.

In order to be effective, programs for shared resources should be developed based on an understanding of the costs and benefits to each party. Once the Park and Recreation Department has established a better understanding of the unit costs of operations and programming, a set of evaluation criteria and policies on practical issues such as lease conditions, contributions and receipts for shared resources, maintenance and operational costs, and so on, can be developed. In addition, criteria to evaluate the potential of agency collaborations should be developed to make sure that partnerships are designed to meet the park system's priorities in terms of geographical and programming equity, potential to provide resources and programming that otherwise would not be available, and similar criteria. Sharing resources can be a cost-effective way to provide pilot programs and test public interest. The department should designate a liaison to work with the Miami-Dade school system, individual school principals, the housing authority, and other public agencies that control lands which could be used for park and recreation purposes.



A large, underused school play area and field are located next to Lemon City Park.

School-park partnerships already exist to some degree but should become more systematic for mutual benefit. In cases where schools do not have their own open space, the school district is already using city parks for school recreation

and athletics, making some payment to the City for that use. Elsewhere in the city, school sites are fenced and inaccessible outside of school hours. The playgrounds and athletic fields at schools should be available to the community as a whole when the schools are not using them. Payments or assignment of staff for the use of parks



The Robert King High housing complex has a walkway and green area along the Miami River that can become part of a connected river greenway.

or school lands should be related to the actual additional cost of providing the service. School system payments to the Parks and Recreation Department for use of parks should go to the Parks and Recreation Department budget and not to the general city budget.

In addition to creating school district-parks department partnerships, the Parks and Recreation Department should also open discussions with the

public housing authority about potential greenway and mini-park uses at Robert King High Homes along the river and the Smathers Senior Housing site in West Flagler; St. Michael's Church and the Miami-Dade Auditorium in West Flagler about mini-park uses; and with cemetery owners about walking programs. Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta has many innovative programs and could serve as a model. The Parks Department should also create a liaison to the transportation and public works departments to create regular dialogue on the potential for parks and green spaces associated with infrastructure projects.

D. ACQUIRING LAND FOR NEW PARKS AND OPEN SPACES IN UNDERSERVED AREAS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Focus acquisition efforts on waterfront areas, identified underserved neighborhoods, and potential linear park segments.
- > Acquire neighborhood parks in underserved areas by identifying infill lots that may be available through tax title or condemnation.
- > Use infrastructure improvements to create new linear parks.
- > Encourage redevelopment of surface parking lots to include parks with public access.

Acquisition and Expansion

All observers acknowledge that Miami's park system is relatively small for its size and population density. While land was relatively inexpensive, the City had very few resources. Now that Miami has begun attracting more investment, the City faces rising land prices, in addition to the always-complex issues of creating new open spaces in a built-up community where new parks could mean dislocation of businesses or residents. As the City makes acquisitions to meet the interim goal of a park within a half-mile of every residence, it should then continue its efforts, advancing towards the goal of a park within one-quarter mile of every Miami home. There are a variety of ways for the City to acquire new park land, including conversion of public land, outright purchase, tax title, infrastructure projects, eminent domain and developer contributions.



All streets that terminate at Biscayne Bay should include public spaces.

Conversion of Public Land to Parks

There are several areas in Miami where land in public ownership could be converted into small park and open space amenities. Every street that ends at Biscayne Bay should have a public space overlooking the bay. On small streets a bench and attractive railing can provide a place to sit and look at the water. On larger streets a bigger area could be designated as a public space, with the potential for a belvedere or platform overhanging the water, or a pocket park. Consolidation of existing public right of way into small parks also may be possible in certain residential areas, such as in Flagami on NW and SW 2nd streets and NW and SW 66th Avenue, where there are small traffic circles. There is more right of way than is being used or is needed, leaving the possibility of creating small parks, possibly with pedestrian cut-throughs, and rerouting traffic around them.

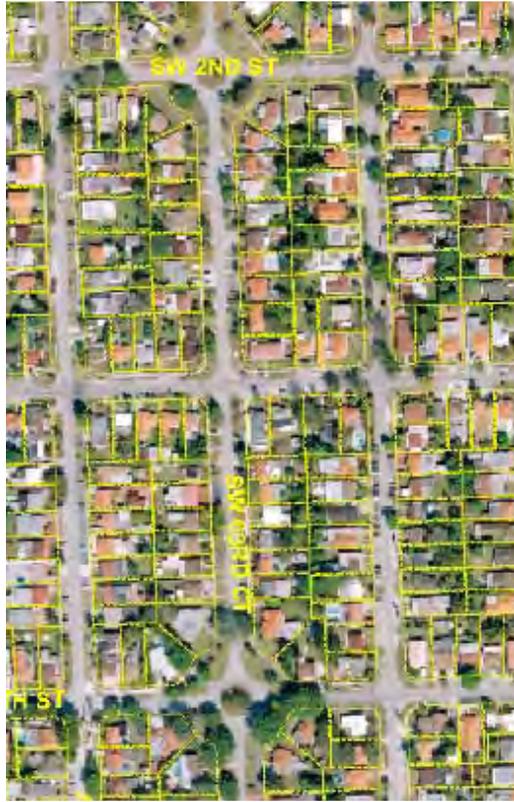
Purchase

Purchase of land for parks should be considered both for citywide parks and for neighborhood parks. High-priority locations or types of park land, based on community preferences, are:

- land with water views or water access;
- new walk-to parks in underserved areas of the city;
- expansion of existing community parks; and
- land for expansion or creation of linear parks.



In Flagami, streets could be reconfigured to create new neighborhood mini-parks at locations with traffic circles or wide intersections.



Land occupied by a trailer park was recently acquired for Little Haiti Park and the Caribbean Cultural Center at a cost of \$6.6 million. The 2005 Tischler-Bise impact fee study adjusted that price upward to \$8.0 million, or \$50 per square foot, to reflect market changes. Although the real estate boom in Miami has moderated somewhat as of this writing, the cost to the City of

acquiring large amounts of land for parks may be substantial. Potential sources of acquisition funds include impact fees, developer public benefit payments, bonds, designated fees or taxes, grants, infrastructure projects, and foundations.

Redevelopment, Land Assembly and Land Swaps

Land use transitions in some of the city’s industrial or commercial areas may bring more residential uses. In those cases, the new residents will need access to parks and recreation. The City can assist in assembling land parcels for important development projects. As part of that assistance, it should require open space contributions that include both small passive parks and multi-purpose community parks. The City can also facilitate land swaps in order to make land available for park uses.

Surface Parking Lot Conversions

Many acres in Miami are covered by surface parking lots. As Miami’s land has become more valuable, it becomes possible for new residential and other development projects to carry the costs of underground or structured parking. Using some of the land that is liberated from car storage for parks, plazas and other open spaces will enhance the value of lands around the public spaces while providing opportu-

⁶ See www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/Drainage_&_Sewer_System/Natural_Drainage_Systems/Street_Edge_Alternatives/index.asp



nities for residents. An example of the possibilities inherent in large parking lots is the potential redevelopment of the Flagler Dog Track on NW 7th Street.

The Flagler Dog Track is surrounded by acres of parking. Redevelopment could provide for a public park on NW 7th Street or elsewhere on the site.

Infrastructure Projects

Infrastructure improvement projects for transportation, stormwater and drainage offer the potential to expand existing parks, create new ones, and provide natural green areas. Street and highway projects should always be scrutinized for their potential to enhance the parks and open space system. Efforts to minimize runoff and treat stormwater close to the source, driven by EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations, will incorporate green strips and mini-parks in streets, stormwater parks, biofilters, and naturalized infiltration areas. Whether large or small, these areas can help in flood control while making a place for both people and nature. Cities such as Seattle are developing model programs of natural drainage with attractive green plantings on neighborhood streets.⁶

A greenway along the Little River could be created through a combination of public acquisition and redevelopment.

Developer Contributions

Developer contributions to create new parks and public spaces can come about in a variety of ways. Miami's new zoning is expected to include provision for bonus floor development in return for payments for parks and other public benefits. Parks and public spaces can also be created through negotiation; for example, when the City facilitates site assembly through closing alleys it should require park or other public space amenities that are comparable to the area being given up.



Tax Title, Eminent Domain and Similar Acquisition

Although eminent domain is normally an acquisition method of last resort, it may be appropriate in cases where abandoned property, property with repeated and extreme code violations, or undesirable land uses occupy land that would be suitable for parks. When the City has the opportunity to acquire land in tax title or similar methods, the property should be evaluated for its potential use as park land.

Donations

Land has historically been donated for parks in Miami and other communities. For example, the Ichimura Japanese Garden was a donation to the city. The City should encourage donations, especially to meet the park priorities outlined in this plan. Because every future park comes with ongoing maintenance costs, potential donations should be evaluated for both benefits and costs.

Transfer of Development Rights

As an incentive for park and public space creation, the City should make it possible for private organizations (nonprofit as well as for-profit) that provide park resources open to the public to sell their development rights to developers in zoning districts where bonus floors are available. A valuation system would need to be created to make this work and sale of the development rights would require a deed restriction for permanent protection for public open space access.

E. MAKING ACCESS REAL THROUGH STRONG CONNECTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > **Complete the Riverwalk and the Baywalk and expand the public access setback requirement along the entire river.**
- > **Continue to implement sidewalk and shade tree planting programs along major arterials that connect to parks and other community destinations.**
- > **Create a “ParkWalks Program” of marked and signed safe pedestrian routes through neighborhoods in order to link residents to their local parks and promote healthy lifestyles through walking.**
- > **Encourage residents to create linear parks on residential street swales by providing guidance and collaboration with the Departments of Planning, Parks, Transportation and Public Works.**
- > **Make blueway connections real by expanding recreational boating programs, providing public shuttles to the islands, and exploring ways to make creeks and canals navigable.**

- > Enhance and redesign the M-Path for greater safety, security, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods, the Riverwalk/Greenway, and to cross the Miami River to connect with the Commodore Trail.
- > Build the Overtown Greenway to link downtown to the river through Overtown.
- > Build the Flagler Trail along the FEC Corridor from downtown to the Upper Eastside.
- > Explore the potential for a Tamiami Greenway to follow the Tamiami Canal from the Miami River to the Blue Lagoon.
- > Create the Venetian Connector to Miami Beach for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- > Pursue links to regional trails in partnership with Miami-Dade County and neighboring communities.

Without connections, parks and public spaces cannot function as a system. The connective tissue of a park system is made up of the streets, paths, trails and waterways that let people reach their parks and other open spaces. The master plan survey and workshops made it clear that Miami residents would like more opportunities for safe and appealing walking and biking throughout the city. They want more access to the water—and to the park lands that can only be reached by water. They want more parks they can walk to, but they need comfortable connections, protected from traffic and with safe intersection crossings, shady during the heat of the day, and well lit in the evening and at night.

Complete the Baywalk and the Riverwalk

The vision for a connected Miami Riverwalk and Baywalk has been kept alive for decades and, with segments of both in existence and under construction, the vision is approaching reality. Many resources have been expended and committed to both, and the value of these continuous public connections along the waterfront in downtown is well understood.

The Baywalk

The vision for the Baywalk is a continuous waterside pathway from Margaret Pace Park to the Riverwalk. Less discussed is the potential for a Baywalk continuation along Brickell to Coconut Grove. Connecting from Margaret

Pace south to the future Museum Park is physically viable, but will require access across several private developments, including the Miami Herald site, and negotiation across or beneath the Venetian and MacArthur causeways. Likewise, extension of the Baywalk south along the Brickell waterfront to Coconut Grove



Connecting the Baywalk and the Riverwalk is a high priority.

is feasible using a combination of existing waterfront parks, private lands and public sidewalks. For instance, a little-used pedestrian underpass beneath the Rickenbacker Causeway allows access to the waterfront in Wainwright Park.

The Riverwalk

The downtown segments of the Riverwalk are taking shape as redevelopment occurs under the City's requirement for a minimum 50-foot building setback with public access up to the NW 5th Street Bridge. Farther up the river, residential redevelopment is occurring alongside more traditional maritime uses,



San Antonio's Riverwalk is a defining element of the city.

which remain important to Miami's economy. The Miami River Greenway Plan proposes a continuous route through the use of on-street routes at many points. Although current maritime and nonresidential uses may be developed in ways that make public access impractical or dangerous, the goal of public access to the water along the length of the river should remain. The City's 50-foot setback requirement should be expanded to include the entire length of the river, so that, as redevelopment occurs, continuous public access to the river

is assured. Examples of industrial and maritime uses that accommodate public access can be found in other waterside locations. The tremendous success of the San Antonio Riverwalk is a testament to the benefits of a continuous river walkway, and Granville Island in Vancouver, British Columbia, shows how an industrial plant can continue to operate next to redeveloped properties with public activity. Property owners should be able to request a waiver for areas on their property where public access is inappropriate, but these waivers should be kept to a minimum and alternate accommodations provided.

Connecting the Baywalk and Riverwalk to neighborhoods

Just as a river will dry up if it no longer collects drainage from a significant watershed, so the Baywalk and Riverwalk may fail to thrive if they are not the focus of a large enough collection area—the neighborhoods around them. The Miami Greenway Action Plan recommended points of public entry in existing parks and “neighborhood gateways” at key locations; a primary system of trails, bikeways, and walkways lining the river from Biscayne Bay to Palmer Lake; improvements to existing parks to enhance access to the river; improvements to bridges and roadways to enhance movement of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians; and finally, river dredging and bank stabilization to improve navigation

and restore native vegetation. It will be up to the Miami Parks and Recreation Department and other city departments to extend the core greenways and create the connecting links to each of Miami's neighborhoods. Bridging the key gaps in the system and making small but critical connections at neighborhood edges can be difficult and time-consuming but they are critical to the vitality of the whole system.

Connect People to Parks by Green Streets

Miami has a tradition of street trees and median plantings, and some of the traditional green streets remain, notably Coral Way, parts of South Miami Avenue, and many streets in Coconut Grove. One of the first park improvements in Miami was the 1929 planting of trees along Coral Way. Aerial photos clearly show the difference between Coconut Grove, where lush plantings and tree cover predominate on both public and private property, and many other neighborhoods, where trees are the exception



Coral Way's median trees exemplify a tradition that Miami is reviving.

rather than the rule. In recent years, the City has begun a program to repair its urban tree canopy, planting shade trees as well as decorative palms as part of new streetscape projects. The county also has a street tree master plan. The continued implementation of this tree planting program is essential to creating shady, comfortable and attractive links between neighborhoods and city destinations, including parks. The Miami 21 zoning plan includes a series of streetscape criteria for different street types, including tree planting.



Tree-lined "Green Streets" create shaded pedestrian links to parks.

Create a “ParkWalks” program

A park within a five to twenty minute walk of every resident is a major goal of this plan. Success requires creation of safe and comfortable walking routes to the parks. Miami’s grid of arterial routes at first view seems to provide a logical network for pedestrian routes to parks but in fact, a number of these arterials have very narrow sidewalks and carry very large volumes of traffic, especially during rush hours. Making some of these streets into attractive, tree-lined walking environments will be a complex, long-term project. While the greening of Miami’s arterial streets is under way, planning and creating a set of neighborhood routes to parks, called ParkWalks, as part of a combined public health and street improvement initiative is a more rapid way to focus resources to enhance residents’ access to parks.



The South Providence Neighborhood Ministries developed a marked “Path to Health” and 25 walking clubs have been formed.

The ParkWalks Program should be developed with the collaboration of neighborhood residents and park user groups to identify appropriate routes that can be upgraded with trees, sidewalks, lighting, and intersection safety and beautification improvements at pedestrian crossings of major arterials where the routes require those crossings. Routes near schools and senior centers are especially desirable. Alley and mid-block pedestrian connections may be part of these routes where opportunities exist. However, in all cases, safety and comfort must be paramount. Good lighting that enhances safety while remaining appropriate to a neighborhood context is essential because so much use of the parks occurs in the evenings and at night. The ParkWalks program should also be conceived as a public health program that encourages walking. As a public health program, ParkWalks could attract funding for community process, design, improvements, maps and signage. This is what happened in a low-income neighborhood of Providence, Rhode Island, where a nonprofit alliance received foundation funding to develop signed pedestrian routes, maps, and walking clubs to encourage walking for health.⁷



Neighborhood walking routes to parks should be identified with signs.

Encourage neighborhood-based linear parks in swales

In neighborhoods where wide green swales, rather than curb-and-gutter combinations, process stormwater, the swales have the potential to function as small linear parks. There are some streets now where residents plant and care for gardens in the swales. In interviews and at a few NET Area meetings, residents expressed a willingness to plant and care for trees in the swales of their own streets, but said that they were unsure about what trees to plant, city

⁷ See www.spmn.org

regulations, or where they could find guidance on these matters. In other neighborhoods, parking constraints result in regular parking on grass swales or paving over the swales. The city's Planning, Parks, Transportation and Public Works departments could collaborate in encouraging residents to value the unpaved swales as linear parks and provide guidance on planting and care of plants in the swales. This program could be integrated with the ParkWalks Program, encouraging residents to see planted swales along ParkWalks routes as an extension of the park system.



Planted swales in Coconut Grove.

Expand Existing and Create New Greenways and Trails

The M-Path and the regional transit system

The M-Path Trail should be enhanced and, where necessary, redesigned to ease road crossings and tie into surrounding neighborhood sidewalks and trails. In the short term, the focus should be on connecting the M-Path to the Miami River Greenway. Over the long term, coordination of the park system and the pedestrian connections recommended in this plan with the regional public transit system is an important opportunity to benefit park users as well as potentially increase transit ridership. Existing Metrorail stations are important nodes in the future system of greenways and pedestrian routes and can be linked relatively easily with the system of greenways, green streets, and ParkWalks pedestrian routes. Miami's new Intermodal Center, designed to promote many alternatives to automobile travel by making public transit and non-motorized travel easier, will connect the airport with regional rail and bus lines, and ease vehicular congestion at the airport with a centralized rental car facility. Finally, future extensions of the rail system to the south, and more complete transit within the city provided by the proposed street rail system, will make pedestrian and bicycle routes through the neighborhoods to the transit stops even more important. The value of these major investments in public transit will be increas-



M-Path conditions can be unattractive to walkers and runners.

ingly apparent if, as projected, Miami-Dade’s population grows from 2.3 million to over 3 million over the next twenty years. How much more valuable would this transit system be if each station is fully integrated with the public realm?

Commodore Trail

The City should make implementation of the 2004 improvement plan for the Commodore Trail a high priority in its work with the regional transportation planning organization (the MPO—Metropolitan Planning Organization). The next stage is to identify a way to provide a safe, convenient crossing of the Miami River to link the Commodore Trail to the Baywalk. It may be possible to coordinate this linkage with Riverwalk improvements.

The Flagler Trail (FEC Corridor Greenway)

A pedestrian and bicycle greenway along the FEC Corridor is another long-term vision that has been kept alive over the decades. Planning for commuter rail use of this corridor is ongoing, but it is important that the opportunity to make this a multi-modal corridor not be lost. The great advantage of a trail along the FEC is that it would provide a safe and continuous route through the entire Northeast quadrant of the city, connecting Downtown, Overtown, Wynwood, Edgewater, Little Haiti and the Upper Eastside. Because of its location at the seam between different neighborhoods, the Flagler Trail would be a true shared city-wide resource for thousands of residents. In some locations, the corridor may be wide enough to incorporate small parks and fields for active recreation, as well as a multi-use trail and the commuter rail line. All the neighborhoods in the east side of the city should be linked to the Flagler Trail by a series of east-west connections that would gradually evolve in response to development projects and neighborhood street-greening improvements.

Overtown Greenway

The Overtown Greenway plan that emerged from the Trust for Public Land’s Overtown Greenprint should be implemented to link the Miami River through Overtown to Downtown.

Potential Tamiami Greenway

The Tamiami Canal is an overlooked resource that could expand connections within the city. Possible routes for a Tamiami Greenway to follow the Tamiami Canal from the Miami River to the Blue Lagoon should be explored.

Make “Blueways” a Reality With More Public Boating Opportunities

Miami has many parks and open spaces that are accessible by water, but today there are few opportunities for those who do not have access to private boats to get on the water and visit public areas. “Blueways” are designated water routes that can connect park lands. However, a blueway trail following the entire Biscayne Bay shore-

line and extending up the Miami River is easy to draw on the map, but harder to make into an active public amenity. Public boat launches are already available at several key locations, including Coconut Grove, Morningside Park, and Antonio Maceo Park, and one is planned for Sewell Park. The Parks and Recreation Department also offers a sailing program in Coconut Grove. This is just the beginning for a real blueway system.



The Picnic Islands lie tantalizingly out of reach for Miami residents who lack access to a private boat.

The islands off the Biscayne Bay shoreline known as the Picnic Islands and the Dinner Key Islands make up a significant part of the Miami park system and can provide important opportunities for access to water, yet very few Miami residents visit them. The Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Restoration and Management (DERM) has completed improvements to many of the picnic islands, including boat docks or reinforced shoreline areas suitable for beaching a kayak or canoe. This work will soon be finished with the completion of improvements to the islands off Dinner Key Marina, which are currently in planning and construction.

Expand recreational boating programs

Recreational boating programs at the parks with frontage on the bay and the river, including the South Fork of the Miami River, should be expanded. Bayfront Park, Morningside Park, Sewell Park and an expanded Fern Isle/ South Fork Park should all have organized boating education and adventure programs, with kayak and canoe rentals. With the existing sailing program in Coconut Grove, this would provide public water access in each of the four principal areas of the waterfront. Shake-a-Leg works with the City and County to offer programs that serve over 5,000 people annually, with a focus on teaching sailing and kayaking to disabled people, at-risk youth, students and families. Shake-a-Leg’s vision for an expanded City of Miami Water Sports Park and Recreation Center on the Coconut Grove waterfront will allow programs to serve an even wider audience.



Fern Isle Park (top photo), Sewell Park (middle), and Curtis Park (bottom) can be connected by canoe and kayak blueway routes on the South Fork and the Miami River to create a linked “Central Park.”

The County-sponsored Eco-Adventures Program offers guided canoeing and kayaking trips from Matheson Hammock to the Gables Waterway, at Crandon Park on Key Bis-

ayne, and at Greynolds Park on the Oleta River, among others. Canoe rentals are available at Biscayne National Park, Everglades National Park and the Oleta River State Recreation Area, and all three have mapped touring routes. Overnight camping is available in the national parks. Similar designated routes and guided trips could be created within the city.

Create a weekend shuttle to the islands

Public access to the Picnic Islands and Dinner Key Islands on weekends could be provided by contracting for a small boat shuttle from Bayfront or Museum Parks and Dinner Key Marina. A small shuttle program would assure that the islands would not be overwhelmed by too many visitors, yet still allow public access. A tour of the bay and the islands would be attractive to Miami visitors as well as residents who want to visit the islands. As the City develops a water taxi program, the waterfront parks and the islands should be incorporated into water taxi routes.

Explore new blueways routes

Miami's water resources are not limited to the bay and the river. The Little River, Wagner Creek, and the canals are all potentially navigable to boats of different sizes. As the already identified blueways become better understood and more usable, the City should work with partners, including the South Florida Water District, to explore ways to bring recreational boaters to these waterways. In the case of the canals, this will mean identifying and providing portage sites at locations along the route.

Promote blueways routes to the public and the boating industry

To make the blueways concept a reality, boat tour routes need to be mapped in detail and promoted to the public and the recreational boating industry. Non-profit groups, the County and the City can all work together on planning and mapping of tour routes, outreach to potential partners, and coordination with the recreational boating industry.

Plan Connections to Proposed Regional Trails

Both the City and Miami-Dade County have long discussed opportunities for connecting the Miami greenway system to trails in neighboring communities. These trails are close to forming a regional greenway network throughout South Florida that could link Biscayne Bay to the Everglades in multiple locations, while providing north-south connections on former railroad beds. The City should make sure that it is part of that network by understanding how these regional connections can be linked to the city's green streets, paths and trails, and to parks and public spaces.

- **The Venetian Connector** is conceived as a bike path across the Venetian Causeway, providing a safe link from downtown Miami to Miami Beach's

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- extensive network of bike routes, greenways and pedestrian systems.
- **The Unity Trail** will follow an east-west section of the FEC rail corridor, parallel to NW 72nd street. It would provide an important link across the northern tip of the city to Hialeah.
 - **The Perimeter Trail** was conceived as a greenway on little-used perimeter roads and/or rail corridors at Miami International Airport. It will link connecting trails from the south and west to the Miami Intermodal Center and the Miami River Greenway.
 - **The Ludlum Trail** will follow former rail corridors south from the west end of Flagami at Robert King High Park, providing a connection to several county parks and ultimately the South Dade Trail all the way to the Everglades.
 - **The East-West Trail** would extend from the Airport Perimeter Trail west to Florida International University and Tamiami County Park.

As part of its 2030 plan, the Miami-Dade MPO designated many proposed greenways, or portions of them, as “cost-feasible plan projects.” These include the Miami River Greenway, Baywalk and Commodore Trail, as well as the M-Path Trail, the Flagler/FEC Trail, the Ludlum Trail and the Unity Trail. The City should continue to advocate for funding to move these trails forward.

F. MAKE MIAMI’S PARK SYSTEM THE COUNTRY’S GREENEST AND MOST SUSTAINABLE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Continue native plant restoration and elimination of exotic plants as well as nature education programs at Simpson Park and the Virginia Key nature area and expand to the conservation area at Wainwright Park.
- > Restore native vegetation in woodland, shoreline and streamfront edges and other areas of parks where possible.
- > Create satellite nature education programs in the larger city parks, potentially with coastal hammock exhibits.
- > Establish native plantings in public road, rail, drainage, and utility corridors that are unsuitable for pedestrian and recreation access.
- > Create an urban forestry program that incorporates the concept of the tree canopy as habitat.
- > Promote public awareness of the benefits of plantings in private as well as public property.
- > Introduce sustainable methods in park maintenance and operations.
- > Incorporate green building methods and green roofs in new park structures and employ life-cycle costing to evaluate costs.



Miami parks and green spaces provide habitat for many bird species.

A central role of city parks has always been to allow urban dwellers to enjoy nature close to their homes or places of work. Most large city park systems incorporate nature in two kinds of parks: traditional parks, where nature is managed in designed landscapes or shaped around recreational activities, and conservation areas where nature exists on its own terms. While both kinds of parks exist in Miami, in most the native natural environment is barely present. Many residents

lack the opportunity to experience nature first hand and learn about the native environment of South Florida. At the same time, anyone who spends time on foot in Miami will find that nature can be found in the midst of the city—plants burst from the seams of paving and bird song fills isolated groups of trees surrounded by asphalt. Moreover, as our society increasingly understands the importance of conserving energy, reducing greenhouse gases to slow down climate change, and eliminating toxic materials, cities are finding that parks and public spaces represent one of the most important arenas for showing leadership in exemplifying and promoting sustainable and energy-efficient management practices.

These two issues—bringing more nature into the city and implementing sustainable practices—are linked in the park and public space system, combining planning, management, and public education efforts. Parks and trees are the lungs of the city, bringing myriad benefits, from improving air quality to reducing the urban “heat island” effect exacerbated by reflective, hard surfaces. Environmentally-sensitive best practices can be modeled in city facilities and in the park system so that residents and property owners can see how they work. Environmental education about South Florida’s climate and ecosystem can become part of the recreation programs in city parks.

Enhance and Extend Natural Areas Within the Park System And the City

Because of the multiple purposes served by the city park system, complex issues must be resolved and diverse interests must be balanced in any program to enhance and extend natural areas in the parks. Park management and maintenance decisions, driven by the need to work within limited budgets, often make it difficult to maintain natural areas. Mowing to allow recreational use, and clearing and pruning of trees to simplify maintenance tend to eliminate the ground covers and understory vegetation that would be present in a natural ecosystem. Hurricane damage and the threat of future storms understandably encourage aggressive clearing and pruning. Similarly, public safety concerns also often conflict with native species restoration. The need to provide security has driven the decision to limb up trees and cut down understory shrubs to eliminate hiding places and allow easier surveillance by a limited staff. An example is the recent clearing at Sewell Park to open up views from the parking lot to other areas of the park.

Conversely, a walk through some of the more remote areas of Wainwright Park demonstrates how difficult it is to secure areas that are heavily vegetated.

Finally, decisions about what to plant and what to cut down over the long history of many parks in Miami have eliminated some native species, such as mangroves, while introducing outsiders like the banyan tree, which, while more useful perhaps in a park context, do not fit in very well with the native ecosystem. The introduction of exotic species, both accidentally and on purpose, can drive out native species and encourage the growth of a monoculture. For example, Australian Pines, which were introduced in 1898 for use as windbreaks, now dominate many areas to the exclusion of native plants.

The city's current restoration work should continue to focus on conservation areas at Virginia Key and at Simpson Park and expand to other parks that include natural areas, such as Wainwright Park. The priority for these efforts should be those parks that retain the largest natural areas and which are linked by open space corridors like the rivers, canals, and possibly even highway rights-of-way. In each case, these projects should follow several parallel tracks: first, to restore natural ecosystems by removing exotic species and replanting with natives; and second, to celebrate nature through educational programs and public participation.

At Simpson Park and the Virginia Key nature area, interpretive trails, programs and signs help explain the importance of the natural landscape. Similarly, there are signs at the city's boat launches about the state's manatee protection program. Interpretive signage should also be installed in other parks where there are remnants of natural vegetation. The restored Picnic Islands are a natural candidate for this kind of treatment, but the remaining mangrove areas in parks along Biscayne Bay are just as important locations. Many people use the bay parks, and in public meetings users sometimes complained about the mangroves and expressed a preference for palms instead. Signs can help raise public awareness about the value and importance of mangroves for the environmental quality of the bay. In community parks, the park naturalist and his staff could create small educational coastal hammock gardens with native species from the Virginia Key native plant nursery.

The Coastal Hammock Interpretive Trail at Virginia Key.



The current efforts at Virginia Key and Simpson Park are proof that degraded areas can successfully be reclaimed, and should be the model for an expanded program of restoration. With trained core staff and excellent leadership in place, this program can easily be expanded to other parks in the city:

- The **Wainwright Park conservation area** should be restored like Simpson Park. Elimination of exotics and restoration with native species could

increase visibility for security purposes and fit well with the quiet neighborhood that surrounds the park.

- **Morningside Park**, though dominated by introduced species like the banyan, includes a significant wetland area that could be linked to its extensive shoreline. The wetland and shore areas should be restored with native species.
- Coconut Grove's **Kennedy Park** is being redesigned to be more efficient and usable. Part of that redesign should focus on replanting areas not needed or suitable for human use.
- As the jewel of the Miami River parks, **Sewell Park** should be the focus of restoration designed to bring back native species while incorporating spaces for recreation and maintaining visual corridors for security.
- The proposed **Fern Isle/South Fork Park** can bring back the ecological health of the South Fork through restoration of native vegetation and habitat areas and sensitive siting and design of a bridge and boating areas.
- **Restoration of the South Fork should extend up the Tamiami Canal** to the Melreese Golf Course and the Blue Lagoon lakes. Each of these is now largely edged with mowed lawns, which could easily be replanted with native species. Where visibility or flood flows are required, grasses and perennial plants could provide natural habitat.
- **Robert King High Park** and the adjacent **Carlos Arboleya Campground** include extensive natural areas suitable for restoration with native species. Already an important recreational space, this area would be a good location for nature education programs.
- **Juan Pablo Duarte Park** is one of the few community parks with active recreation that has room for nature. The drainage swale that traverses the park could be restored with native plants and used as the focus of a nature education program.

Reintroducing nature while improving infrastructure

As discussed earlier, public rights-of-way and infrastructure corridors represent an opportunity to expand the park system throughout the city without additional acquisition costs. Since many of these linear connectors are not suitable for pedestrian access, they are ideal places to reintroduce native plantings. Because native communities are better adapted to local conditions, in the long term they require less maintenance than the typical lawns and shrub borders. Birds and insects adapted to these areas will soon rediscover them. By replanting public road, rail, drainage and utility corridors with native species, the city can reconnect the remaining fragmented natural areas and provide habitat for the movement of animals that are now isolated from each other.

Green streets as natural habitat

While the Green Street concept described elsewhere is primarily intended to create shaded pedestrian routes, it will also create a continuous canopy of trees that will be of great benefit to a variety of native birds and insect species.

Whether for people or wildlife, concern for protection of the street tree canopy has become an important topic in recent years, and resulted in the adoption of a street tree ordinance. The City should incorporate this effort into a larger urban forestry program that would be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the tree canopy throughout the public realm. The public program could become a model for private landowners as they manage trees and other vegetation on their own properties.

A nature park along the highways

Just as the city streets dominate Miami residents' daily experience, so the regional highway system is the visual focus for those visiting Miami by way of the interstates or airport. With limited public access, the highway verges and medians are also some of the largest "natural" areas left in many of the city's neighborhoods. With careful planning, landscaping could be improved on the entire highway system in Miami, providing benefits to wildlife and enhancing the beauty of the city. Limited human disturbance guaranteed by restrictions on pedestrian access, combined with selection of native species and management of grassland areas for rare butterflies and other insects could create a unique kind of nature park. Support for such projects is growing at the Florida Department of Transportation, which spends nearly \$30 million every year on highway landscape improvements. A group of researchers associated with the University of Florida is surveying and mapping rare plants along FDOT rights of way in Miami-Dade County. Meanwhile, the Florida Highway Beautification Council provides \$3 million in annual grants for highway beautification projects.

The potential for stormwater parks

At the scale of the city's larger districts, stormwater management will continue to include major street drainage systems and outfalls into the canal system. However, opportunities for stormwater parks should be explored. For example, if an outfall needs to be reworked to eliminate direct discharge into the Miami River, it may be more cost-effective to design the area as a naturalized stormwater park than to bury the system under tons of concrete. Partnerships at this scale will require collaboration between the city, Miami-Dade County, and the South Florida Water Management District, but hold great promise for creating more green space while improving water quality and flood control.

Implement Sustainable Management Practices

Parks are among the city's long-term assets. Increasingly, cities are pursuing more sustainable ways of managing all their assets, and parks should be no exception. By focusing sustainable management in the park system, the City will also provide an educational example to private property owners of how to manage their landscapes. The City should include green and sustainable features among the design objectives of new recreation and park structures. Over time, as the Parks and Rec-

reation Department increases the efficiency of its management systems, it should institute sustainable and nontoxic practices in the following areas:

- **Water use and irrigation:** Install irrigation so that water use can be monitored for efficiency. Consideration should also be given to irrigation systems that can recycle stormwater and graywater. As South Florida faces water constraints, it is important to conserve potable water for drinking purposes.
- **Natural turf:** Choose turf varieties that require lesser amounts of fertilization, irrigation and mowing.
- **Use of artificial turf for intensively used athletic fields:** Artificial turf cuts down wear and tear on natural areas and allows for more efficient use of fields. This means that fewer fields can be used for more games because fields do not have to be rested frequently between uses.
- **Use of herbicides and pesticides:** Employ integrated pest management and natural alternatives for management of golf courses and other areas.
- **Natural lighting and ventilation of structures:** In Miami's climate, air conditioning is a necessity for use of recreation buildings during the hottest months. There are many months of the year, however, when air conditioning would be less needed if the design of recreation buildings incorporated natural ventilation. Similarly, although many of Miami's parks and recreation buildings are heavily used in the evening and at night, the need for interior lighting during the day can be reduced if natural lighting becomes a design objective for new and renovated structures.
- **Sustainable materials for walls, paving, and recreational equipment:** Calculation of life-cycle costs at the time of design and specification of materials can make the long-term benefits of sustainable materials clearer. This would include the use of recycled and recyclable materials.
- **Solar power:** Miami's tropical location makes it an obvious place to implement solar power, and park and recreation sites offer many opportunities to innovate and save money. Solar panels could be incorporated in shade structures,

Solar panels on overpasses could power lighting for recreation activities below.



picnic shelters, in parking areas and for night lighting on paths and sports fields. The intense use of many Miami parks after dark could make use of solar panels an important way to reduce electricity costs. Solar panels could also be attached to highway overpass structures where recreation areas or parking lots exist below, for example Athalie Range Park #1 and José Martí Park.

- **Green roofs:** Green roofs are planted roofs that absorb stormwater and reduce the heat effect of hard surfaces. Many municipalities are installing green roofs on their public buildings; Chicago offers the best-known example. Using green roofs on recreation buildings is another way to enhance the beneficial effects of green spaces.

The initial cost of transition to more sustainable energy and design may be somewhat more than simply continuing with existing methods. However, on a life-cycle basis, green systems can bring significant savings. If the park system makes a commitment to becoming the most sustainably managed park system in the country, it may be able to obtain grants and other assistance to plan and begin implementing the program.

G. EVERY PARK SYSTEM NEEDS MANY FRIENDS: ENHANCE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > **Create a new Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to replace the current Parks Advisory Board.**
- > **Hire a volunteer coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department to develop and manage a network of “friends” groups for individual parks.**
- > **Create a citywide parks foundation.**
- > **Keep records of recreation program users.**
- > **Survey park users regularly to monitor needs and interests, including a scientific survey once every ten years.**
- > **Designate a liaison from the Parks and Recreation Department to work with government agencies and nonprofit groups to expand park and recreation opportunities.**
- > **Establish a system of community consultation for the redesign of existing parks and design of new parks.**

Successful urban park systems—such as those in Chicago, New York, and Seattle—have developed strong constituencies and successful nonprofit partnerships. Their constituencies are based on making sure that the park system communicates with residents and park users and includes them in planning for park and program improvements. The partnerships mobilize additional resources to enhance the system, drawing on philanthropic and corporate understanding of the value to city life of an excellent park and recreation system.

This master plan was developed with the benefit of the systematic program of public participation described in Chapter 2. Meaningful community participation benefits the park system by creating a strong parks and recreation constituency. It is important at several different levels:

- Systemwide policy and priority-setting
- Systemwide surveys of changing user needs
- Location-specific input into improvements and design by user groups and neighborhoods
- Regular updates of the system master plan.

Systemwide Policy: Create a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

As noted earlier, the Parks Advisory Board as currently organized has an overbroad set of responsibilities coupled with a lack of any systematic, defined role in the development and management of city parks and recreation programs. The board should be reorganized as the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, with new membership criteria and clear responsibilities. Adding “Recreation” to the name and the responsibilities of the board makes it clear that park issues include the balancing of recreational and other uses of park lands. The membership should be geographically representative and also include people with expertise in park and recreation issues. Board responsibilities should be focused on citywide parks and recreation policy matters.

Board membership

All Park and Recreation Advisory Board members should be residents of Miami. Although Miami ordinances currently allow people who do not live in the city but who work or own property in the city to serve on boards, it is important that the members of this board have a direct interest in the city’s parks. An effective board made up of residents will help expand and strengthen the city’s constituency for parks. A board of 13 resident members with the Director of Parks and Recreation or his designee as an ex officio member could effectively represent both residents at large and residents with park and recreation expertise. Suggested membership in the organization is as follows:

- The mayor appoints two members who are residents at large.
- Each commissioner appoints one member resident in his or her commission district.
- The city manager appoints the remainder, including people with the following expertise or experience:
 - > landscape architect;
 - > team sports representative;
 - > park “friends” group representative;
 - > if there is a Miami Parks Foundation, a resident member of the foundation; and
 - > park recreation program user.

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- Director of Parks and Recreation or designee (not to be the same person who staffs the board)

The board would be staffed by the Department of Parks and Recreation, and liaisons from the Planning Department, Department of Public Works, Capital Improvements and Transportation Department would be appointed by those department directors and be made available to inform the board, as needed, about opportunities for collaboration.

Board responsibilities

The board would be responsible for advising the mayor and the commission, as well as the rest of city government, on citywide parks and recreation policy matters, park and recreation needs and priorities, and the board's members would serve as the stewards of the master plan. The board should meet at least four times a year. Board meetings should be held at night so that members of the public can attend.

Every year the board should review progress on implementing the master plan, based on staff reports; hold a meeting devoted to hearing from the public on parks issues; review capital plans and designs in relation to the master plan and the needs expressed in public meetings and provide written advice to the commission; and submit a report to the commission on implementation of the plan and any change in conditions that warrant changes in the plan. In addition, the board should hold a public hearing and advise the commission in writing on proposals to cover more than 25% of park space with building footprints, convert park land to other uses, accept donated land for parks, or sell city land that may be suitable for parks. The board also should submit an advisory recommendation to the commission on expenditures greater than \$50,000 for park land acquisition before the commission takes action.

Systemwide community surveys

The Parks and Recreation Department should more systematically collect information on park and recreation program users, their current level of satisfaction, and needs for new park resources or programs. Surveys at the end of recreation programs; focus groups; and informal, Web-based surveys can provide direction between scientific surveys, which should be repeated every ten years.

Community input in park design

Whenever design starts on park improvements or new parks, park users and community members should be invited to a series of meetings: the first to gather information on issues and concerns; the second to present a conceptual design for discussion; and the third to present the detailed design for discussion.

Regular updates for the master plan

The parks and public spaces master plan should be updated every ten years. As the City meets some of its goals and as conditions change, the plan will need to be modified to continue to guide decision making about the parks system. The master plan update should be coordinated with the survey.

Partnerships

Create a Miami Parks Foundation

Miami's park system needs a nonprofit partner to focus attention, raise money, attract volunteers, and enhance the constituency for the city's parks. All the successful park systems in the United States have strong partnerships with other government agencies, with community groups, and with a parks foundation or other nonprofit focused on helping the city's parks be successful. Examples include the Seattle Parks Foundation, the San Diego Friends of Parks and Recreation Foundation, the Boulder Parks and Recreation Foundation, Philadelphia Green, and the Emerald Necklace Conservancy in Boston. In these and other cities, the philanthropic community and the business community have recognized that a thriving and successful park system benefits the whole city. Some of these organizations are actively involved in management and maintenance of parks. Others raise funds for capital improvements and programs. Many coordinate the activities of volunteers and neighborhood parks groups.

New York has a number of parks organizations that exemplify different approaches to park partnerships:

- > The **Central Park Conservancy** may be the best-known nonprofit park organization in the country. With a large endowment (\$90 million in 2005) and fund-raising capacity, the Conservancy has a management contract with the City of New York and provides more than 85% of Central Park's operating budget. The Conservancy is responsible for maintenance, public programming and capital improvements in the park and the City pays an annual fee for these services according to formulas related to the Conservancy's fund raising and expenditures for the park. The City's main role is to set policy for the park, and it has final approval on the Conservancy's capital improvements recommendations. The Conservancy has a staff of 250 and over 1,200 volunteers.



Volunteers in New York's Riverside Park have planted and maintained fenced perennial gardens for many years.

- > The **Prospect Park Alliance** focuses on fund raising and advocacy for Prospect Park in Brooklyn. In 2005, the Alliance received \$4.5 million in donations and \$2.2 million in fees for services and events; it spent \$6.3 million on programs, services and capital improvements. The president of the Alliance is also the administrator of the park, a city employee.
- > The **City Parks Foundation** is an umbrella group that facilitates partner-

ships between the city's Department of Parks and Recreation and some 250 parks groups and 1,800 neighborhood/civic groups. One of its programs, Partnerships for Parks, provides small grants and technical assistance to community-initiated projects in neighborhood parks. The foundation coordinates volunteer activities and offers free arts, sports, and education programs. The majority of the staff are city employees.

- > Modeled on the Central Park Conservancy, the **New York Restoration Project** was founded by the entertainer Bette Midler with a mission to “reclaim, restore, and redevelop underserved park spaces throughout New York City.”

The organization has collaborated with the Americorps program and has environmental education programs, community activities and fund raising events.

Miami already has several public authorities that focus on specific park properties or public spaces: the Bayfront Trust, the Virginia Key Beach Trust, and the Miami River Commission. What the City and the Parks and Recreation Department need is a non-profit partner that will look at all the parks and recreation resources in Miami as a whole, working with the City to strengthen the parks as a system, rather than contributing only to specific signature parks. Chicago's partnership organizations may be a good model. Chicago Friends of the Parks gives technical assistance to parks advisory councils, raises funds for park projects, develops pilot programs, holds public workshops and events, organizes a volunteer program and coordinates with universities for environmental education programs.

Hire an ombudsman and volunteer coordinator to organize a network of “friends” groups for individual parks

A few parks in Miami already have “friends” groups that support particular parks and organize events, but residents often do not know where to go for information and assistance. The Parks and Recreation Department needs to have a staff member who will serve as the parks ombudsman and coordinate volunteer activities with department activities.



The Woodson Mini-park (Design District Park) on NE 2nd Avenue can become an exciting gateway to the Design District through a partnership with the design community.

Develop partnerships with other government agencies and nonprofit groups

In order to take advantage of the opportunities for development of parks and open space through infrastructure improvements, discussed earlier, there must be a mechanism for regular communication and collaboration between the Parks and Recreation Department and the policy makers, planners, engineers, architects, landscape architects and maintenance staff of multiple City departments. The Parks and Recreation Department should invite appropriate staff from the Public Works, Capital Improvements and Transportation, General Services, and other departments to join a working group on park and open space opportunities. This group should be made familiar with the priorities and recommendations of this master plan so that, as they do their work, they are aware of opportunities to enhance the city's park system. As mentioned earlier, the Parks and Recreation Department should also assign liaisons to work with County departments, the Miami-Dade County School District, and the housing authority to strengthen existing and develop new partnerships that can expand park and recreation resources for Miami residents.

Another important ally for the Parks and Recreation Department is the public health community. Residents' priorities as expressed in the survey are very much focused on fitness. By creating relationships with the public health community, the Parks and Recreation Department can gain support for and access to funding and programming for fitness resources and programs in Miami.

H. IMPROVING MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > **Review and expand the Department of Parks and Recreation vision and mission statement to include the public realm role of the parks system in addition to the role of recreation provider.**
- > **Establish core services, programs, and fees/charges policy according to level of benefit to the community.**
- > **Improve management and employee accountability.**
- > **Establish preventive maintenance and permanent programs.**
- > **Improve management and establish policies and systems for program partner and sponsor groups.**
- > **Strengthen support services.**
- > **Enhance the image of the department and city parks.**

As part of this master plan, a detailed management assessment report was prepared by Greenplay LLC that focused on operations, facilities and programs; service delivery and communications; support services; and fees, charges and revenues. This section summarizes the recommendations of their report.

During the last few years, while the Parks and Recreation Department has been recovering from years of reduced and restricted budgets, many improvements have begun. There remain several areas, however, that need more focused attention.

Review and Expand the Department’s Vision and Mission Statement

The long-term vision of the department states that the “goal of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to serve all of the residents of the City of Miami by providing safe, clean, and wholesome recreational, educational and cultural activities in order to promote a sense of community.” The more recently-created mission statement is “to provide state of the art park facilities and offer leisure, educational, cultural and physical activities to the residents and visitors of our community while enhancing their quality of life and inspiring personal growth, self esteem, pride and respect for the urban environment.”

Much of the focus of this master plan has been on how Miami can provide sufficient park and green space for a growing population in a built-up city. The vision and mission of the Parks and Recreation Department currently does not include any emphasis on parks as part of the city’s public realm or protection of greenspace and natural areas. Rather, the department goals and mission emphasize the provision of recreational services. The vision and mission should be reviewed with department staff and modified to incorporate the concept of the importance of parks as part of the city’s overall public realm system.

Establish core services according to level of benefit to the community

The department should establish the core services it will offer, using a system that identifies where programs lie on a continuum from providing benefits to the community as a whole to providing benefits that mostly accrue to the individual. This framework can also aid in creating a consistent policy on charging fees for programs and activities. The department must fully identify its costs and use that information to decide which services and programs should be free and how fees should be set for others. When this framework is communicated to the public and city decision makers, it will help develop consensus around how services should be provided and priced in the city park and recreation system.

- **Community benefit:** Services and programs that create benefits for the community as a whole include those that provide safety, address social needs, enhance quality of life and increase property values. These are the basic services that the department should offer free or for minimal fees.
- **Community/individual benefit:** These services benefit both the community and the individual and are typically the traditional recreation programs

at beginner levels. Fees are partially subsidized because of the community benefits and partially paid by the program participant. These services typically might include special needs programs and clubs, leagues and camps for youth.

- **Individual/community benefit.** At this level the services promote more individual than community benefit, typically providing intermediate levels of recreation skills, with fees to reflect less community subsidy. Examples of this level of service might include rentals of facilities and equipment for youth programs and nonprofits, and fitness and wellness programs for adults and seniors.
- **Mostly individual benefit.** Services at this level are for specific groups and benefit their participants more than the community as a whole. Examples include adult team athletics and sports, facility and equipment rentals for adults and nonprofits, and special events organized by private promoters. Fees for these services can be set to recover all direct and indirect costs.
- **Highly individual benefit.** Services at this level—such as facility and equipment rental to for-profit or private groups—have the potential to produce revenue and should be priced accordingly.

When the cost to provide a program is consistently and fairly applied based on who benefits from the program, the value of the program and commitment to the program by participants tends to increase. Of course, some groups and individual participants may not be able to afford fees. Currently, there is no consistent policy for fee waivers and the case-by-case process for sponsorship groups now in place tends to leave the impression that exceptions are the norm. Policies and criteria should be established to clarify who is eligible for reduced or waived fees. Similarly, policies and criteria for individual fee reduction should be established based on ability to pay, rather than a blanket approach based on assumptions about entire communities.

Improve Management Accountability

Systems that both empower employees and make them more accountable should be established. The department's annual work plan and performance measures should be clearly tied to its vision, while decision-making responsibilities should be expanded to encourage and support empowerment, trust, risk taking, improved judgment and professional growth in department staff. The department should create a "no excuse" task force of employees to provide rapid resolution of relevant issues; this group can hold retreats and regular gatherings of employee groups to discuss topic-specific goals, concerns and issues.

Establish Preventive Maintenance and Replacement Programs

In order to sustain operations, the department needs to develop maintenance level of service standards, identify associated costs, and address funding those costs prior to taking on new assignments. Replacement programs for facilities,

equipment and vehicles also need to be established and funded. A clear understanding of costs and their relationship to meeting the standards expected by the public will help the department gain support for appropriate funding levels.

Improve Management and Establish Policies and Systems for Program Partner and Sponsor Groups

Many organizations and groups sponsor programs that use Miami park and recreation facilities. Formal policies for working with these groups should be established, as well as consistent systems that track participation, expenditures, revenues and in-kind support to establish target goals for cost recovery.

Strengthen Support-Services Assistance

A variety of administrative and support services need improvement, including purchasing decisions and better use of information technology to support programs, services and efficiency.

Enhance the Department's Image

In the last few years, the Parks and Recreation Department has begun marketing and branding its programs and image, and these efforts should continue to bolster the credibility and awareness of the City's parks and recreation effort among the public. In the survey, many residents expressed lack of knowledge about what the park system has to offer, and in public meetings, some residents assumed that all programs were provided by partner organizations. Statistical information and narratives that tell the story of the department, as well as accreditation and professional certification for park staff, should be part of that effort. In addition, development of strong relationships with a new Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and a Miami Parks Foundation will assist the department in upgrading its image.



New signs promote a new image.

I. DIVERSIFYING FUNDING FOR CAPITAL OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > **Seek grants and other funding for new resources and activities.**
- > **Identify costs of maintenance and support functions and apply to requests for services.**
- > **Allow the Department of Parks and Recreation to recapture costs from fees and event revenues.**

- > Provide general fund support for the parks system with the standards and levels of service expected by the public for resources and programs that benefit the community.
- > Work toward creating a dedicated funding source for the park system.

Compared to other Florida cities, for many years Miami has served a larger and denser urban population on much smaller budgets and has received much less revenue because of very limited fees and charges. As noted in the previous chapter, Miami’s annual parks budget should be more than twice its current size to meet per capita expenditure standards of similar cities. At a minimum, the budget should be at least \$100 per capita.

In recent years, the City has increased the Parks and Recreation Department budget and bond-funded capital improvement programs are bringing many upgrades to the park system. In November 2004, the City Commission approved creation of the Heart of Our Parks Fund, managed by the Dade Community Foundation, with an initial endowment of \$929,919 to fund park program-

CITY	PARK & REC ACRES	2004 PARK & REC BUDGET	BUDGET PER CAPITA	2004 PARK & REC REVENUE
MIAMI	892	\$12,000,000	\$31	\$3,300,000
FORT LAUDERDALE	973	\$26,000,000	\$156	\$8,100,000
TAMPA	1,774	\$44,000,000	\$137	\$6,700,000
ST. PETERSBURG	2,400	\$25,000,000	\$100	\$6,500,000

ming. The Department of Parks and Recreation has also received \$1 million to \$2 million in recent years in grants and donations. The Bayfront Trust manages and funds operations and improvements for that park, and the Virginia Key Beach Management Trust

is charged with revival of Virginia Key Beach. The City also makes contributions to several specific park programs.

There are two fundamental budget categories for parks: 1) capital improvements and 2) maintenance, operations and programming. It is often easier to obtain dollars for acquisition and design of new parks than it is to obtain additional funding for maintenance, operations and programming. Creating new parks is exciting and attracts attention, but the more prosaic work of maintaining, operating and programming parks is essential. Every new park, like every old park, implies a commitment to maintain and operate it as a safe and attractive public space forever. Parks that are poorly maintained, seem unsafe, and lack activities will not be used.

Funding sources for acquisition and design include general fund tax revenues; impact fees; public bond issues; transportation and other infrastructure funding; public and private grant funds; developer contributions; and other donations. In recent years Miami has used general fund and bond funding more than other sources. The City’s impact fees were dramatically revised upward in 2005 and made much more flexible and applicable to more parks. The City Commission

is expected to revisit the fees annually for adjustment. The Miami 21 rezoning is expected to include developer payments for bonus floors as another source of funding. As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the City also needs to pursue opportunities for new park and open space acquisition through infrastructure projects (funded primarily with state and federal dollars), and promote the formation of a Miami Parks Foundation that can tap private donors for funding.

Potential funding sources for maintenance, operations and programming include annual tax revenue general fund allocations; fees for use and programs; in-kind and money donations (stewardship groups, volunteers, etc.); special events fees; concessions; special assessment or benefit districts; endowments for special parks; and grant funds. Miami today depends mostly on annual allocations for its parks operations budgets, although it is increasing efforts to win grant funding. Any fees generated by parks and recreation programs go to the general fund. As the discussion on management improvements makes clear, some maintenance, operations and programming costs could be recovered through a clear identification of costs and a recalibration of fees to reflect relative benefits to the community and to individuals. To make this fully effective, the department budget should receive the benefits of cost reductions and of increased revenues.

Miami should also work towards creating a dedicated funding source for the park system. Miami's Parks and Recreation Department received 3.2% of the general fund in FY 2004–2005. In contrast, one of the best-funded parks and recreation departments in the country, in Portland, Oregon, received approximately 10% of that city's general fund discretionary monies in 2005. The best urban park systems have dedicated funding sources, which are generally a portion of the property tax or the sales tax. In Minneapolis, \$1.20 per \$1,000 of tax revenue in 2005 went to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, a semi-autonomous, elected board created in 1883 to maintain and develop the city's extensive park system. In 2005, the Park Board received 9% of tax revenue. In Seattle, a 2000 parks levy was approved at \$0.35 per \$1,000 additional property tax to be used mainly for acquisition and development of 18 new neighborhood parks in underserved neighborhoods. The Chicago Parks District receives dedicated property tax funds, which account for over 50% of the government revenues that go to its parks. Here in Florida, Pinellas County uses a portion of its sales tax to fund parks and estimates that 40% of sales taxes are paid by seasonal residents and tourists. Boulder, Colorado, has both a sales tax-supported Open Space Fund and a property tax-supported Parks and Recreation Fund.

The Parks and Open Space Trust Fund

Miami has a Parks and Open Space Trust Fund whose stated purpose is to acquire new parks and open space, with 80% of the funds targeted towards acquisition. This trust fund would be the appropriate destination of developer

bonus payments and other funds dedicated to parks and open space uses. As currently written, the establishing ordinance contains limitations that could prove to be excessively constraining. There are advantages to making the fund as flexible as possible so that these monies can be used to take advantage of unanticipated opportunities.

- It would be beneficial to explicitly permit expenditures for park and public space-related amenities that are included in the Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan, such as acquisition for trails/paths and plazas, and investment in green streets that serve as pedestrian access routes to parks.
- The ordinance appears to say that the money added to the fund has to be spent within two years. This would make it difficult to accumulate funds for major purchases. This period should be extended, perhaps to the six-year period used for the impact fee funds.
- All expenditures for acquisition of new park land should require written recommendations from the Parks and Recreation and the Planning departments, and these recommendations must indicate how the proposed expenditure relates to the goals and recommendations of the Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan and other relevant City planning documents.
- The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board should submit an advisory recommendation on expenditures over \$50,000 for acquisition before the commission takes action.

PUBLIC REALM INTO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Miami's parks, waterfronts, and public spaces must be understood as a system of green infrastructure that is both internally integrated and linked to a wider regional system. This networking of all the existing and potential elements of the public realm into a system of green infrastructure is more than an abstract concept. Miami residents, in the surveys and public meetings, voiced their desire for a greener Miami and better access to and connections among parks. They understood how lack of connections that provide comfortable, secure and attractive environments can result in underused parks. They asked for more walking and bicycling paths and routes.

In a growing city, a strong network of green infrastructure creates a robust framework for growth and a high quality of urban life. The elements of this green infrastructure system are owned and managed by a variety of agencies for the benefit of the whole community. An effective system of green infrastructure requires that all these management entities understand the role that they can play within this connected network and how their piece of the network contributes to the whole. In addition, strong community and nonprofit partners have a critical role to play in keeping the idea of green infrastructure alive and in working with management agencies to make it a reality in Miami.



*Visions for Downtown and for City Neighborhoods**

The previous chapters set out the features of the citywide vision of a linked open space system. This system will give Miami a framework for the individual parks and public spaces that residents experience in their neighborhoods and as they travel around the city. The citywide vision grew out of the neighborhood visions that emerged from the workshops held in every NET Area, from interviews with neighborhood leaders, from visits to every park in Miami, and from open houses where the preliminary visions were reviewed and discussed by residents.

In this chapter, the master plan gets down to particulars. For each NET Area there is a summary of what people said about the existing parks and public spaces in their neighborhoods; their perceptions of assets, problems and opportunities; and their hopes for the future. Drawings and photographs express the potential for park improvements and potential new parks. A map shows the parks and open spaces that exist now, indicates opportunities for shared spaces or new parks, and suggests how the concepts of green streets, blueways and greenways, and other connections can be implemented on the neighborhood level.

There are many well-loved parks in Miami and many different reasons why people love them. But Miamians also know that most of their parks could be better and that more parks would make the city a better place to live. Although each neighborhood is unique, many common themes emerged across the city. Each NET Area vision plan should be viewed as both a local plan and as part of the grander vision for parks and public spaces—for people, in community, and connected to nature.

** A large-format (11x17) version of this chapter is available as Appendix II.*

DOWNTOWN

NET Area: Brickell/Central Business District/Riverside/Park West

Two well-attended workshops were held in the Downtown NET Area: a workshop for the business community and a more general meeting for residents and other stakeholders. Both participant groups are very concerned about waterfront access, and both want to see the Riverwalk and Baywalk brought to completion. The workshops explored several options for connections between the downtown commercial area, residential neighborhoods, and the bay. Business

owners and residents alike favor establishing a connected system of bayfront parks that stretches from the mouth of the Miami River north to Bicentennial/Museum Park and Margaret Pace Park. Participants in both workshops stressed the need for creating engaging activities in this “park of parks” and connecting it to the Riverwalk. In addition, neither workshop group liked Bayfront Park in its current configuration and both sessions produced many suggestions for its redesign.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Stakeholders see parks and green spaces as attractions that can draw visitors from around the region, the city, the neighborhood—and the world.

> **Parks framing the CBD and Park West**—a grand waterfront of connected parks on the east, a

series of linear parks along NW 1st Avenue and a network of green, east-west streets linking the waterfront and the linear parks.

> **A continuous, linear Riverwalk** punctuated by important parks

and historic sites at Miami Circle, Fort Dallas Park and Lummus Park.

> **New neighborhood-serving parks in the heart of Brickell** as part of the redevelopment of Brickell Village.

PROVIDE MORE VISUAL AND PHYSICAL ACCESS TO WATER

Direct views to the bay • Opportunities for water play

The Vision



- > A grand waterfront park of parks downtown
- > Redesign Bayfront Park to provide direct water views from Biscayne Blvd. and eliminate fixed theaters and other

elements that obstruct views

- > Flat and open multiuse spaces for performances and informal recreation at Bayfront Park
- > “Bayfront Beach” with an expanded sandy beach, water features that invite people to touch the water, and handicap-accessible areas
- > Use of the Museum Park boat slip for art and recreational boating and kayaking

- > Platforms or floating docks at the water end of streets along the Brickell waterfront
- > Handicap-accessible beach access at Virginia Key



CREATE AND STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS

Connect waterfront parks to neighborhoods and the city with an east-west grid of green streets • Connect waterfront parks to one another • Connect the Baywalk and the Riverwalk

The Vision

> Tree-lined, shady streets from the waterfront to Government Center and neighborhoods



- > A pedestrian walk along the length of the waterfront parks
- > Water taxi service to parks and other destinations along the waterfront
- > Pursue a boardwalk or cantilevered walkways if needed to complete the Baywalk and Riverwalk
- > Connect Lummus Park to Lummus Landing
- > Extend and strengthen the greenways under MetroRail and the MetroMover

- > A bike, pedestrian and rollerblade path along the FEC corridor into downtown



CREATE MORE GREEN LANDSCAPES AND SHADE

More plants • Fewer hard surfaces • More shade

The Vision



- > Shade trees along streets and paths where people walk
- > Shelters, trellises and other shade structures
- > A South Florida plant garden at Parcel B/ Museum Park
- > Gardens in every waterfront park and Brickell Park

- > A new downtown park over underground parking framed by the Federal Courthouse, MetroRail and new development



PROVIDE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION FOR RESIDENTS

Play areas for children • Athletic fields • Dog parks • Informal recreation areas • Bike paths and rollerblade paths

The Vision

- > Space in the waterfront parks for athletic fields and informal play (kites, Frisbee)
- > Athletic fields between NW 6th and 9th streets west of the Miami Arena to serve Downtown, Park West and Overtown residents
- > A new Brickell Village park to serve existing and new residents in all parts of Brickell with play areas for children, a dog park, and an athletic field

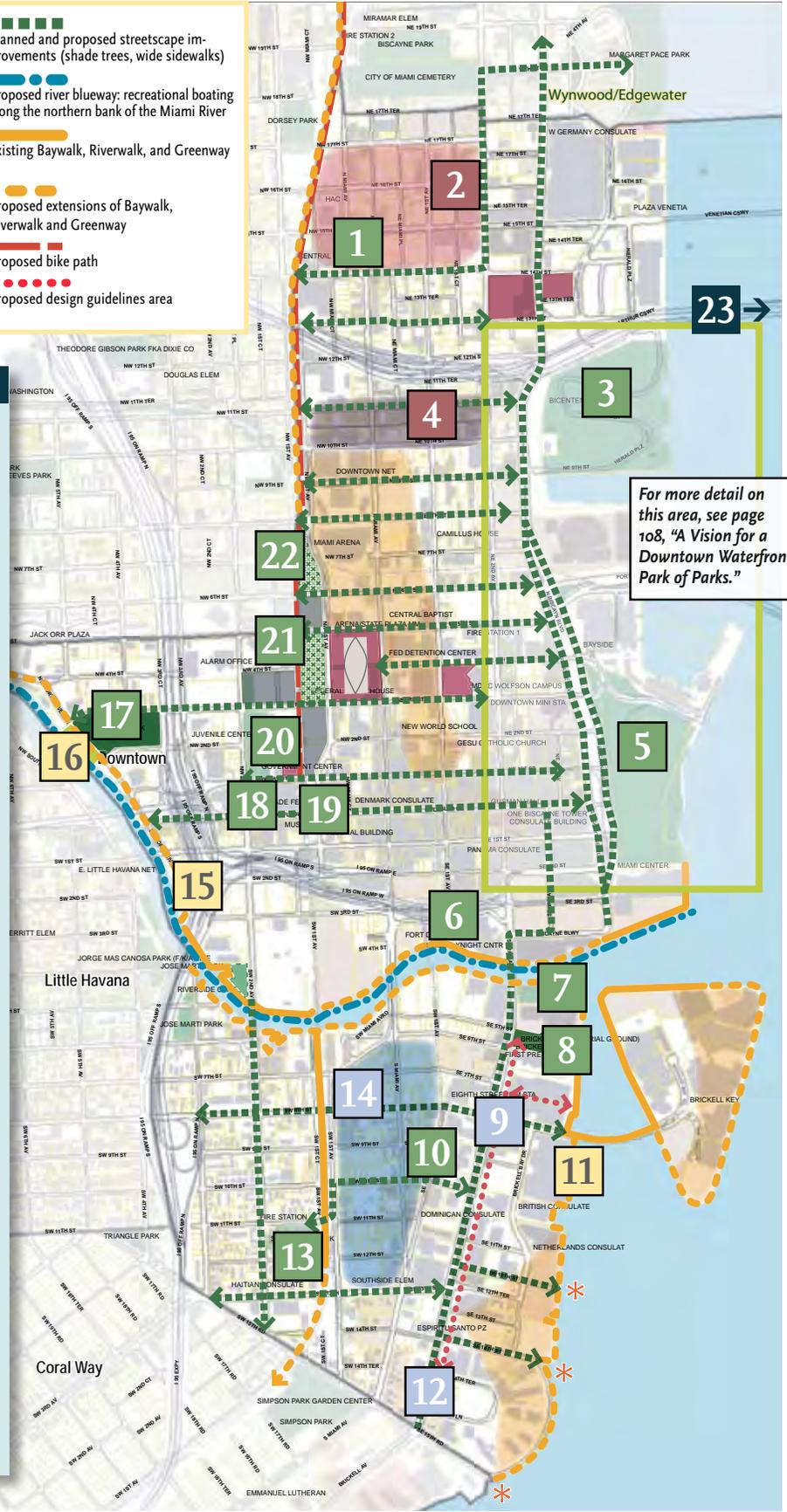


- > Physical improvements and enhanced maintenance at heavily-used Southside Park

- > Upgrades of MetroRail greenway paths for safe rollerblade use



-  Plazas
-  Pursue opportunities to create parks in these underserved areas
-  Proposed platforms/docks at the end of east-west streets
-  Planned and proposed streetscape improvements (shade trees, wide sidewalks)
-  Proposed river blueway: recreational boating along the northern bank of the Miami River
-  Existing Baywalk, Riverwalk, and Greenway
-  Proposed extensions of Baywalk, Riverwalk and Greenway
-  Proposed bike path
-  Proposed design guidelines area



For more detail on this area, see page 108, "A Vision for a Downtown Waterfront Park of Parks."

JUST OFFSHORE...

VIRGINIA KEY

- Public beach
- Historic African-American beach undergoing restoration by the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust
- Important conservation area with several rare species
- Potential ecological adventure area (EDSA plan to be completed in 2007)
- National Park Service interested in operating nature trail



WATSON ISLAND

- Ichimura Miami Japanese Garden now open on weekends
- 5.5-acre public park to be created by new development

VENETIAN CAUSEWAY

- Residential neighborhood with single-family homes and condominiums
- More than two acres of undeveloped waterfront open space owned by Miami-Dade County on Biscayne Island
- Two green traffic islands owned by Miami-Dade County on San Marco Island



EXISTING PARKS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 CENTRAL MIAMI MINI-PARK (CLOSED)**
- 2 PERFORMING ARTS DISTRICT**
 - > Seek public, landscaped spaces and plazas for cafés and other entertainment-related uses.
- 3 BICENTENNIAL PARK/MUSEUM PARK (DETAIL ON NEXT PAGE)**
 - > Design in public review.
- 4 PARK WEST ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT**
 - > Create a club-area identity with unique streetscape design.
- 5 BAYFRONT PARK (DETAIL ON NEXT PAGE)**
- 6 FORT DALLAS PARK**
- 7 MIAMI CIRCLE**
 - > Protect archaeological features while providing reasonable public access to this historic property.
- 8 BRICKELL PARK**
 - > Design gardens and paths to enhance this passive park.
 - > Seek corporate sponsorship to support improvements and passive activities.
- 9 BRICKELL AREA**
 - > Create a green grid of landscaped streets to connect the water with the MetroRail greenway and extend the greenway.
- 10 ALLEN MORRIS MINI-PARK**



- 11 BAYWALK**
 - > Complete Baywalk access with platforms at ends of streets
 - > boardwalks or cantilevered walks
- 12 PERFORMING ARTS DISTRICT**
 - > Create design guidelines for Brickell Avenue plazas to create a continuous pedestrian promenade with plantings, seating, fountains, cafés, and programming such as concerts.
- 13 SOUTHSIDE PARK**
 - > Upgrade and repair facilities.
 - > Improve maintenance.
- 14 BRICKELL VILLAGE**
 - > Create new neighborhood-serving parks and plazas in coordination with retail and mixed-use development in the heart of the neighborhood
 - > Include sports field, dog park, tot lot, benches, picnic tables and gardens.
- 15 RIVERWALK**
 - > Complete Riverwalk access and remove existing barriers.
- 16 PROPOSED LUMMUS LANDING WATERFRONT PUBLIC SPACE**
- 17 LUMMUS PARK**
 - > Redesign the park and expand across the street to Lummus Landing.
 - > Create a water-play area.

- > Explore potential for youth educational programs with police horse stables.
- > Create a major historic interpretation area to start the historic trail.

- 18 MIAMI-DADE CULTURAL CENTER PLAZA**
 - 19 WALKER MINI-PARK/FLAGLER STREET PARK**
 - 20 GOVERNMENT CENTER**
 - > County-owned plaza and green space
 - > Well-maintained
 - 21 U.S. COURTHOUSE DISTRICT**
 - > New active and passive parks above underground parking and framed by development
- 
- 22 MIAMI ARENA AREA**
 - > New park with athletic fields to serve residents
 - 23 VENETIAN CAUSEWAY**
 - > Work with Miami-Dade County to preserve traffic islands as neighborhood parks and install play equipment, where appropriate.
 - > Work with Miami-Dade County to enhance waterfront parcel on Biscayne Island as a passive park.





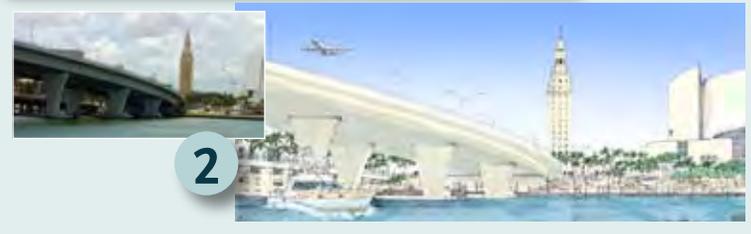
Museum Park should celebrate art, nature, and city life, on land and water.



Connect the waterfront across the boat slip.



Connect the waterfront from the arena to the marina.



Connect the waterfront by water taxi.



A redesigned Bayfront Park for residents, downtown workers, and visitors.



Connect the riverfront and the bayfront.



- Proposed Baywalk
- Future Riverwalk

OVERTOWN

NET Area: Southeast Overtown/Northeast Overtown/Rainbow Village/Town Park/Culmer/Spring Garden/Highland Park

Although a small number of community members attended the workshop, many residents came to the open house. Several of these represented the Overtown Optimist Club and the Overtown Youth Center. The consultant team also interviewed representatives from Crosswinds, the Overtown Advisory Board, and the Trust for Public Land prior to the workshop. At both public meetings, participants were more concerned with improving park

programs than finding new park space in the Overtown area. Residents like Gibson Park and Williams Park but find that ongoing renovations limit their use of the parks. Park safety is also a major concern. Most residents agreed that a swimming program is needed for area children and that city pools should be open year-round. In addition, more programs are needed for girls, and all park programs should be inexpensive.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Offer year-round, affordable recreation programs for all ages.

- Have structured swimming programs for Williams Park Pool and Gibson Park Pool.
- Keep Williams Park Pool and Gibson Park Pool open all year.

Institute after-school tutoring programs at all neighborhood/community parks.

Open a community fitness and wellness center on County-owned land between NW 10th and 11th streets near Range Park.

- Offer a variety of activities, not just a weight room.

Enhance safety in parks and public spaces.

- Increase park staff presence and maintain or provide park fencing.

- Increase police patrols to reduce drug activity in Reeves and Rainbow Village parks.
- Program events for public spaces, such as the 9th Street Mall, to draw more users and provide “eyes on the street.”

Provide connections among Overtown’s public spaces and to downtown.

- Connect 9th and 11th streets to the Entertainment District.
- Provide pedestrian-friendly connections between parks, the proposed Overtown Greenway, and public transportation.
- Transform the FEC rail corridor into a greenway and bikeway.
- Create a new greenway that connects Overtown to downtown if FDOT depresses I-395.

Improve and create new parks.

- A mini-park in the Highland Park area with a play area for children will help create community identity.
- Make improvements in the Range Park underpass, such as adding a recreation building, domino area, and parking lot.
- Provide more public art in the underpass areas.
- Build a playground near the YWCA.

Provide better maintenance of parks and public spaces.

- Ensure ongoing maintenance as the Trust for Public Land’s Overtown Greenprint is implemented.
- Improve current maintenance of linear parks and public spaces.

LYRIC PLAZA

The community gathering space of Historic Overtown

The Vision

A public plaza next to the Lyric Theatre to celebrate Overtown's heritage.

TODAY



COMPREHENSIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM

The Vision

- > Keep swimming pools open year-round.
- > Provide swimming lessons for every child in Miami.



NEW PARKS

The Vision

- > River parks at Spring Garden Point and at NW 12th Avenue and the river.
- > Playground on County land by the YWCA on NW 5th Street.

PROPOSAL FOR RIVER PARK AT SPRING GARDEN POINT



RAINBOW VILLAGE PARK

The Vision

- > Seek nonprofit partners for a gardening/horticulture program for Rainbow Village residents.
- > Create a Rainbow Village Park stewardship program.



A FRAMEWORK OF PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS...

...to connect Overtown's parks, community destinations, and downtown

The Vision

Overtown Greenway

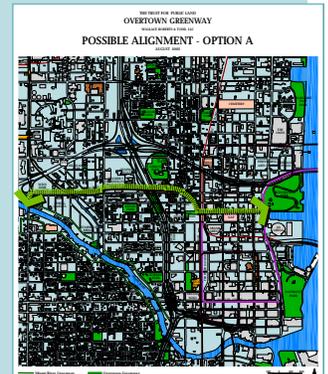
- > Implement the Greenway Plan developed with the Trust for Public Land (TPL).
- > Link Overtown with the Miami Riverway and the Baywalk.
- > Create safe walk-to-school routes.
- > Link Booker T. Washington High School, currently isolated, to the community.

Overtown Pedestrian Mall

- > Renew the Overtown Pedestrian Mall; connect it to downtown.

Green Streets

- > Safe, shady, tree-lined, well-lit streets.
- > North-South: NW 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th avenues.
- > East-West: NW 20th, 14th, 11th, 5th streets.



AN ART-FILLED RANGE PARK FOR THE DOMINO CLUB

The Vision

Enhance planned improvements for a domino park with:

- > Public art under the overpass.
- > Landscaping and beautification.
- > Lighting in the park under the elevated road and on routes to the park.
- > Explore using solar panels on the road structures to light the park sustainably.



TODAY



The Overtown Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Southeast Overtown/Northeast Overtown/Rainbow Village/Town Park/Culmer/Spring Garden/Highland Park



	Park and open space opportunities		Pedestrian-friendly green streets to connect neighborhoods with shade trees
	Public space or recreational facility		Greenways: Proposed FEC Greenway, Riverwalk, Overtown Greenway
	Neighborhood gateway marker: • sculpture • plantings • signs		Black Heritage Trail

WYNWOOD/EDGEWATER

NET Area: Edgewater/Midtown/Old San Juan/Fashion District/Wynwood Industrial District

Many residents attended the workshop and open house. Most participants were homeowners from the Wynwood community who expressed concern that high-rise development in Edgewater will encroach upon their neighborhoods. These residents primarily use Roberto Clemente Park and would like to see its children's programs strengthened by an after-school program that would include homework help and active recreation programs. Residents do not want to see the park expanded, but would like to

have the park's playing fields made more available for informal sports. The same group of residents would also like to see streetscape improvements and the creation of a new public plaza along NW 2nd Avenue that would provide a small gathering space and an area for a community garden. Residents from other parts of the NET Area emphasized the need to provide waterfront connections at the ends of streets, bike paths, and pedestrian and bicycle connections to downtown.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Create new public spaces to enhance the identity of Wynwood-Old San Juan:

- Add a plaza in the heart of the neighborhood on vacant school district property.
- Reinforce streetscape identity along NW 2nd Avenue between 29th and 36th streets

Connect neighborhoods with green, pedestrian-friendly routes,

- Safe and attractive east-west connections among Wynwood, Midtown Miami, and Edgewater.

Park safety is a concern in Wynwood.

- Lock parks at night.
- Provide benches designed to prevent people from sleeping on them.

Open green spaces at public schools for community use.

- School fields and green areas can serve neighborhoods outside of school hours.

Bring more diverse recreational programming back to Roberto Clemente Park.

- Add programs such as ballet, art, karate, and soccer.
- Introduce preschool and after-school programs.

Use Margaret Pace Park as a model for a successful park.

- It offers a variety of options for passive and active recreation in a well-maintained park.

PLACITA SAN JUAN

Neighborhood plaza with trees and plants for sitting, talking, chess, dominoes, concerts, art events

The Vision



DOG PARK AT ELIZABETH MARTELL PARK

The Vision

- > Create a dedicated use for a needed park in a special location.



PUBLIC PLACES WHEREVER A STREET MEETS THE WATER

Three types of overlooks in Edgewater

The Vision

- > Create three kinds of public overlooks where streets end on the water.



Simple benches for looking at the bay at the ends of small streets



Belvederes at the ends of larger streets



Pocket parks where small plots of public land or donated private land are identified

STREETScape AND GREEN PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

Within and connecting neighborhoods

The Vision

- > East-west green routes to link old and new neighborhoods
- > A greenway along the FEC corridor
- > Gateway landscape elements in medians, street trees, and planters
- > Unique streetscape identity for neighborhoods along NW 2nd Avenue



COMBINE BISCAYNE PARK AND THE HISTORIC CEMETERY INTO A LARGE, MULTI-USE PARK

The Vision

- > Redesign to link the two areas, with Biscayne offering more active recreation and the cemetery offering walks among beautiful landscaping and Miami history.
- > Provide access from North Miami Avenue.

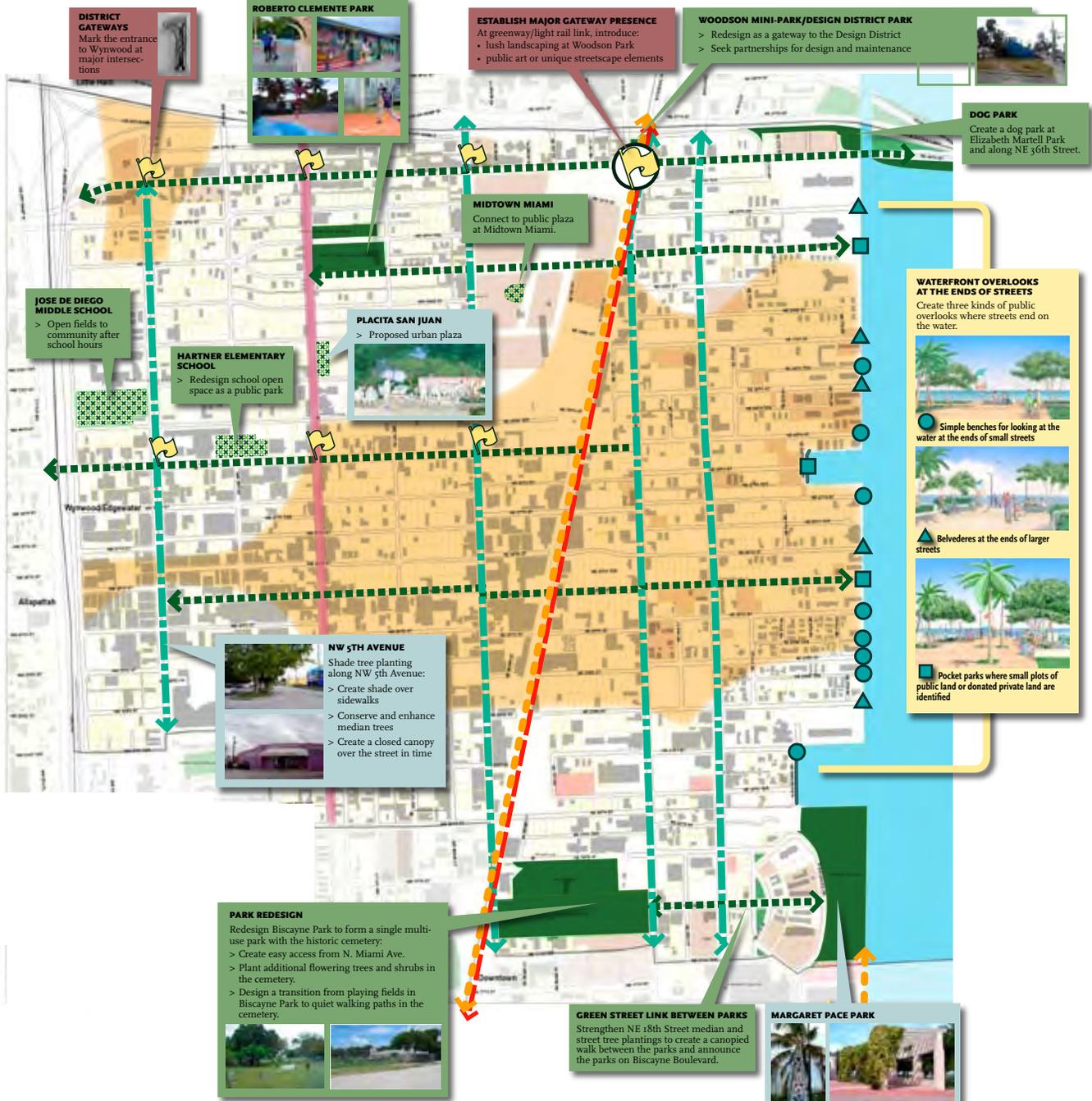


Mt. Auburn Cemetery (below) was one of the first designed landscapes in the U.S. Today it also functions as a park.



The Wynwood/Edgewater Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Edgewater/Midtown/Old San Juan/Fashion District/Wynwood Industrial District



DISTRICT GATEWAYS
Mark the entrance to Wynwood at major intersections

ROBERTO CLEMENTE PARK
[Image of park area]

ESTABLISH MAJOR GATEWAY PRESENCE
At greenway/light rail link, introduce:
• lush landscaping at Woodson Park
• public art or unique streetscape elements

WOODSON MINI-PARK/DESIGN DISTRICT PARK
> Redesign as a gateway to the Design District
> Seek partnerships for design and maintenance

DOG PARK
Create a dog park at Elizabeth Martell Park and along NE 36th Street.

JOSE DE DIEGO MIDDLE SCHOOL
> Open fields to community after school hours

HARTNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
> Redesign school open space as a public park

PLACITA SAN JUAN
> Proposed urban plaza
[Image of plaza]

MIDTOWN MIAMI
Connect to public plaza at Midtown Miami.

WATERFRONT OVERLOOKS AT THE ENDS OF STREETS
Create three kinds of public overlooks where streets end on the water.

- Simple benches for looking at the water at the ends of small streets
- ▲ Belvederes at the ends of larger streets
- Pocket parks where small plots of public land or donated private land are identified

NW 5TH AVENUE
Shade tree planting along NW 5th Avenue:
> Create shade over sidewalks
> Conserve and enhance median trees
> Create a closed canopy over the street in time
[Image of tree planting]

PARK REDESIGN
Redesign Biscayne Park to form a single multi-use park with the historic cemetery.
> Create easy access from N. Miami Ave.
> Plant additional flowering trees and shrubs in the cemetery.
> Design a transition from playing fields in Biscayne Park to quiet walking paths in the cemetery.
[Image of park area]

GREEN STREET LINK BETWEEN PARKS
Strengthen NE 18th Street median and street tree plantings to create a canopied walk between the parks and announce the parks on Biscayne Boulevard.

MARGARET PACE PARK
[Image of park area]

Park and open space opportunities	East-west pedestrian-friendly green streets to connect neighborhoods with shade trees
Pursue opportunities to create mini-parks in these underserved areas	North-south streetscape improvements with shade trees
Neighborhood gateway markers: • sculpture • plantings • signs	Proposed FEC Greenway and proposed Baywalk connection
	Proposed bike path
	Streetscape design unique to the neighborhood

UPPER EASTSIDE

NET Area: Shorecrest/Haynesworth/Belle Meade/Belle Meade West/Bayside/Palm Bay/Palm Grove/Legion Park/Morningside/Baypoint/Magnolia Park/Biscayne Plaza

The Upper Eastside Workshop and Open House drew many area residents. The majority of participants focused on Morningside Park or Legion Park, but others provided comments on smaller and/or lesser-used parks in the area. Residents of the Morningside neighborhood value Morningside Park, but many participants from elsewhere in the area also travel to the park. All agreed that improvements are needed throughout the park, particularly for its playing fields, playground, pool, programs and waterfront area. Many participants were interested in a dog park in the shaded area of Legion Park, along with a new walkway that loops throughout the

park. Other points of concern were the lack of a Biscayne Boulevard entrance to Legion Park and the need for more amenities on the waterfront. Residents would also like physical improvements in the smaller bay parks, such as benches, walkways, lighting, and more shade. These smaller parks were also mentioned as potential dog parks, since they are located near new high-rise development. Most participants favor streetscape improvements and believe that the Upper Eastside needs more connectivity between its parks, safer pedestrian access to these parks, and new pocket parks for neighborhoods that contain an increasing number of young families and high-density development.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Dog parks are a high priority.

- Dog parks were suggested for almost all existing parks in the Upper Eastside.

More shaded areas and better lighting are high priorities in parks.

- Plant shade trees.
- Provide pavilions.
- Improve lighting in Legion and other parks that stay open at night.

Create a greenway and blueway along the Little River.

- Include green areas and walking paths as part of mixed-use redevelopment of Biscayne Plaza and other riverside nonresidential properties.

- Connect to a new “Little River Reserve” on the other side of the river.
- Enhance kayaking opportunities with river cleanup and launch points.

Seek new parks in the Shorecrest area.

- Assess opportunities for mini-parks.
- Preserve current elements of Biscayne Heights Park.

Enhance public access to Biscayne Bay where possible.

- Developer-donated waterfront land will become a baywalk at NE 80th Street and Bayshore Court.
- Undertake regular maintenance to clean up shoreline trash.

Expand public access to the Picnic Islands.

- Develop water taxi service, boat rentals or other means of access for people without private boats.

Connect neighborhoods to parks and each other with green, pedestrian-friendly routes.

- Add shade trees and streetscape improvements

Make parks more welcoming.

- Target the Legion Park entrance at Biscayne Boulevard.
- The Morningside Park sign should say “open to the public.”

NEW PARKS FOR THE SHORECREST AREA

The Vision

- Little River Greenway, bay park, and mini-parks:
 - > Riverside greenway as commercial properties are redeveloped, and kayaking along the river
 - > New park at NE 79th and Bayshore Drive
 - > New mini-park on unbuildable lots or City land



REDESIGN LEGION PARK, STARTING WITH LIGHTING AND THE BISCAYNE BOULEVARD ENTRANCE

The Vision

- > Improve lighting for nighttime use and safety.
- > Open the Biscayne Boulevard entrance to cars and pedestrians and the pedestrian entrance from NE 7th Court.
- > Remove the asphalt drive and replace it with a new pathway system with permeable surfaces.



BAYWOOD PARK—MORE SHADE AND AMENITIES

The Vision

The park (left) is too stark. Margaret Pace Park (right) offers a good model for improvements.



DOG PARKS AND DOGS IN PARKS

The Vision

- > Dog parks in larger parks: Morningside and Legion
- > Amenities and rules for dogs in smaller parks: Albert Pallot, Baywood, Eaton, Belle Meade, Biscayne Heights



ALBERT PALLOT/MAGNOLIA PARK

The Vision

- Maintain and upgrade the park:
 - > Add shade around the perimeter.
 - > Maintain open area for informal sports.
 - > Add limited on-street parking.
 - > Upgrade or remove fence.



MORNINGSIDE PARK

The Vision

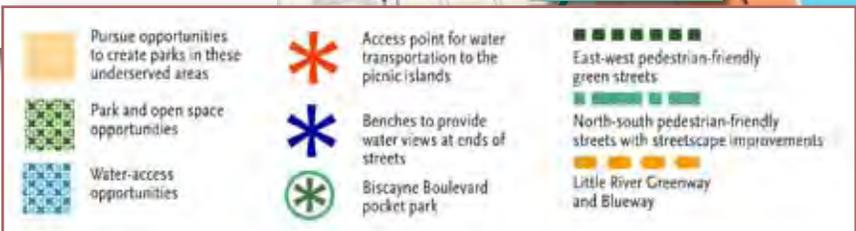
- Maintain and upgrade the park:
 - > Balance active and passive recreation.
 - > Improve pool environment and access.



The Upper Eastside Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

SEPTEMBER 2005

NET Area: Shorecrest/Haynesworth/Belle Meade/Belle Meade West/Bayside/Palm Bay/Palm Grove/ Legion Park/Morningside/Baypoint/Magnolia Park/Biscayne Plaza



The Upper Eastside Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Shorecrest/Haynesworth/Belle Meade/Belle Meade West/Bayside/Palm Bay/Palm Grove/ Legion Park/Morningside/Baypoint/Magnolia Park/Biscayne Plaza



A small number of residents and several representatives of community service groups attended the public meetings. Most of the residents came from Buena Vista East and Oakland Grove. Although few Haitian residents came to the workshop or the open house, the consultant team interviewed several Haitian community service providers and a neighborhood association leader prior to the workshop. Few comments were made about specific parks in the Little Haiti area, primarily because participants agreed that more parks are

needed there. Some residents go to parks in the Upper Eastside area, but many find these difficult to get to. Residents are looking forward to the development of Little Haiti Park and would like to see another large park created in the area, such as on NW 71st Street. More small parks and children's programs also are needed to serve the changing population, as many families are moving into the area. Participants also agreed that streetscape improvements are needed throughout the Little Haiti area in order to create a pedestrian-friendly environment.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Create a greenway along the Little River.

- Include natural areas and walking paths on both sides along the river.

Make Range Park #2 more welcoming and usable.

- Distinguish private from public space at the adjacent Victory Homes.
- Add trees and shade.
- Add recreation amenities at the neighborhood edge.

More park programs are needed, especially for teens.

- Swimming lessons, cheerleading, chess, computer classes

Create a new park adjacent to the electric substation on NW 71st Street.

- New athletic fields to serve the neighborhood and beyond
- Incorporate play spaces for children, including a splash park.

Support the new Little Haiti Park with new mixed-use development.

- Encourage mixed-use development near the park to create neighborhood stewardship for the park and provide housing for employees of area businesses.

Make Pullman Park more usable.

- Add shade to the play structure.

Improve safety and amenities at Buena Vista Park.

- Experiment with night closings of the park.

Connect neighborhoods with green, pedestrian-friendly routes.

- Target major north-south routes, such as NE 1st, Miami, and NW 2nd avenues, that need trees, streetscape improvements, crosswalks, and signals to enhance safety.
- Connect major park/recreation destinations on 79th, 71st, 62nd, and 54th streets with pedestrian-friendly east-west routes.
- Create neighborhood connections to the planned FEC Greenway.

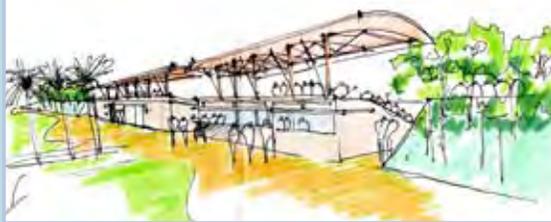
Open public school green spaces for community use.

- School fields and green areas can serve neighborhoods outside of school hours.

FUTURE LITTLE HAITI PARK

The Vision

- > Multi-use park with athletic fields, children's play areas, picnic and domino parks, and a community center



LITTLE RIVER RESERVE

Public greenway along the Little River

The Vision



TODAY

STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS ON ALL MAJOR STREETS

The Vision

Promote walking between parks and other community destinations by adding:

- > shade trees
- > wide sidewalks
- > safe pedestrian crossings



TODAY

EDISON/CARVER ATHLETIC CENTER

The Vision

Athletic center and community park at NW 71st Street:

- > Athletic fields available for citywide use
- > Park amenities for neighborhood: plaza with trees and plants for sitting and talking, games of chess or dominoes, concerts, art events



NEW AND IMPROVED MINI-PARKS FOR CHILDREN

The Vision

- > Shade for Pullman Mini-Park
- > Shade for other children's play areas
- > Pursue opportunities for new neighborhood play areas



The Little Haiti Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Little River/Edison/Little Haiti/Lemon City/Buena Vista/Design District





Only a small number of residents and leaders of community associations attended the Model City workshop and the open house. Much of the input was obtained from the park manager and dance studio manager at Hadley Park, the president of the Model City Optimist Club, and the Model City NET Administrator. The consultant team also interviewed a member of the Martin Luther King Economic Development Corporation about revitalization plans in the area. An additional meeting with many senior residents of the area took place in January 2006. At the workshop and open house, residents spoke favorably about Belafonte-Talcocy Park, but comments focused primarily on Hadley Park. Most agreed that its facilities and programs need improvements. Participants feel that the recreation building would be of more use to the community if it were expanded to include community meeting rooms, a gym with locker rooms, and a computer lab. Some program leaders believe that security needs to be increased inside the recreation building and throughout the entire park. These leaders also advocated improvements in many of Hadley's outdoor facilities, such as restrooms at

the playing fields, water fountains throughout the park, rain shelters, and better field maintenance. A few residents wanted to acknowledge adults and seniors as park users by creating passive open space and adult programs. Participants in the senior citizens' meeting also concentrated on Hadley Park. Most believe that it needs physical improvements, such as better walkways, more lighting, more handicapped parking spaces, an expanded fitness center, and more community meeting rooms. Many expressed concern about broken equipment and the length of time required to repair it. Participants also wanted to see more programs for seniors, such as language, sewing and other crafts classes, and music programs. They also thought that introducing a shuttle service would enable senior citizens to get to Hadley and other parks in order to participate in senior programs.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Hadley Park is a heavily-used center of community activity.

- It draws users from across the city as well as the neighborhood.
- Demand for meeting space is high.
- Numerous improvements are desired:
 - > Gym with locker facilities for basketball and gymnastics programs.
 - > Rain shelters, restrooms and water fountains near the football field.
 - > Bike racks in front of the recreation building.
 - > Skating-area repairs.
 - > Lighting on the walking course for early-morning users.
 - > More programs for seniors.

Belafonte-Talcocy is a very successful park.

- Activities and nearby police station make it very safe.
- It has many programs for kids and seniors.

- It is well managed and maintained.
- Its design is attractive, with plantings and sufficient shady areas.

Safer and more attractive street connections to parks are needed for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Many residents are reluctant to walk more than a block or two to parks.
- Children ride bikes to parks.
- A mid-block pedestrian crossing is needed near the entrance to Hadley Park.
- Better lighting is crucial for pedestrian safety.
- Pedestrians use 9th and 11th avenues.

Park safety continues to be a concern for some people. Consider:

- Installing security cameras in and near parks.
- Providing benches designed to prevent people from sleeping on them.

- Locking parks at night.

Coordinated programs for adults and children will encourage family recreation.

- Offer a variety of programming that will encourage family members to use the park at the same time.
- Provide sitting areas for adults to watch children playing.
- More programs are needed for girls, seniors, and adults.

Neighborhood streets and vacant lots need a beautification program.

- Create green, landscaped medians throughout the area.
- Provide landscaping at major intersections and on the public edges of vacant lots.

Buena Vista West Mini-Park needs more adult-oriented passive uses.

- Neighborhood residents are mostly adults and seniors.
- Adding a restroom building would increase park use.

EXPANDED AND IMPROVED AFRICAN SQUARE PARK

THE PARK TODAY

The Vision

- > Redesign the amphitheatre space for safety and multiple uses.
- > Expand the park to the entire block to provide a field for informal sports.
- > Reestablish the computer lab and after-school tutoring program.



HADLEY PARK

Introduce family-friendly programs and facilities.

The Vision

- > More community meeting rooms
- > Spaces for passive recreation by adults while children use active recreation areas
- > More picnic areas with grills and improved pavilions
- > Programs for all ages, including seniors
- > Improved computer lab



GREEN, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS

Provide safe connections to the parks.

The Vision

- > Introduce streetscape improvements, street trees, and pedestrian lighting along major corridors: NW 62nd Street; NW 54th Street; NW 17th Avenue; and NW 12th Avenue.
- > Upgrade lighting and walking conditions on pedestrian corridors like 9th and 11th avenues.



IN ANY FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT, MORE USABLE GREEN SPACE AT LIBERTY CITY

The Vision

- > Distinguish between public and private green space.
- > Provide both passive green space and active recreation fields and courts.



The Model City Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Hadley Park/Flora Park/Orchard Villa/King Heights/Liberty Square/Northwestern Estates



Although the Allapattah Workshop and Open House did not draw a large crowd, participants were able to provide information about the entire NET Area and make suggestions for many of its parks. Residents of Allapattah use Curtis Park heavily, and much of the comment focused on ways to improve it. A major concern is how to ensure the safety of children crossing the street to the pool within the park.

Several participants recommended a pedestrian-activated signal and a crosswalk; others were in favor of closing the street entirely. Another recommendation for Curtis Park involves expanding it as a sports center by developing new regulation-sized playing fields. Duarte Park is well-liked by residents, but fewer

suggestions were made for its enhancement. A key suggestion was to investigate ways in which the City and School Board can work together to permit public use of the school athletic fields adjacent to Duarte Park. In addition, participants focused on the need for streetscape improvements throughout the area and ways in which connections can be made among neighborhoods, parks, and the Miami River.



What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Allapattah has three large parks with many activities and strong constituencies.

- Curtis Park, Pool and Sports Complex
- Juan Pablo Duarte/Comstock Park
- Moore Park and Tennis Center

Allapattah has few smaller parks to serve neighborhoods.

Public school green spaces should be open to community use.

- School fields and green areas can serve neighborhoods outside of school hours.
- Baseball practice fields and soccer fields are needed.

Connect Curtis Park Pool with the rest of the park.

- Close the street and reroute traffic along NW 22nd Avenue and NW North River Drive.

- A green plaza along NW 20th Street at Curtis Park will enhance the commercial area.

More public access to the river is needed.

- Explore using barges for park and recreation uses.

Enhance and expand the linear park under MetroRail.

- Provide bike paths.

Increase park funding and support.

- Support more programs.
- Provide more access to programs through transportation (vans based at Curtis) and other support.
- Enhance maintenance.

Create a community-garden program for youth.

- Provide horticulture training.
- Provide summer and part-time jobs in park maintenance.

Neighborhoods should connect better with one another and with the river by green, pedestrian-friendly routes.

- Focus on these north-south routes: NW 12th, 17th, and 22nd avenues.
- Focus on these east-west routes: NW 20th and 36th streets.
- Improve the pedestrian environment in the Industrial District.

Designate a “Children’s Empowerment Zone” for safe play in SE Allapattah centered around children’s institutions and play areas at Pine Heights and Broward Circle.

MORE ACCESS TO THE RIVER AND A NEW PARK

The Vision

- > Extend 50-foot setback and public access requirement for all redevelopment along the river. Allow variances from the requirement only for maritime uses that can demonstrate safety or security problems resulting from public access.
- > Create a new Unity Park.
- > Provide direct access to the river at the unused marina site near NW 19th Avenue.
- > Provide park connections in any redevelopment of the affordable housing site.



SITE OF THE PROPOSED UNITY PARK TODAY

CURTIS PARK

Create a new "Central Park" by connecting Curtis Park by water and pedestrian links to an enlarged Fern Isle/South Fork Park and Swewll Park

The Vision



GREEN STREETS AND A CURTIS PARK PLAZA ON 20TH STREET

The Vision

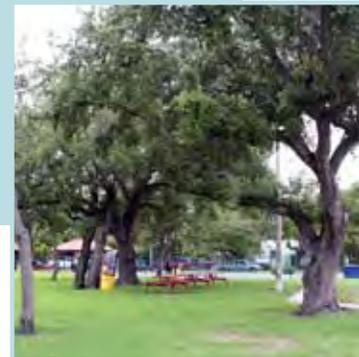
20TH STREET TODAY



ACTIVELY SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The Vision

Areas with no parks within walking distance need mini-parks for neighborhood play.



The Allapattah Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Melrose/Santa Clara/Curtis Park/Civic Center/Allapattah Industrial District/36th Street Strip



LITTLE HAVANA

NET Area: Little Managua/East Little Havana/Orange Bowl/Latin Quarter/Citrus Grove/South Sewell Park

Both the workshop and the open house were well-attended by residents and some community service providers. Many residents came with a specific focus on either Henderson Park or José Martí Park, and these groups tended to concentrate on “their” park and see other parks as problematic. Other participants provided general comments on parks and public spaces throughout the Little Havana NET Area. The group of Henderson Park users focused primarily on the idea of having Henderson Park become an arts and cultural center for the Hispanic community of Little Havana. A dance program and orchestra program already exist in the park, and residents would like to see this cultural programming expanded and

an open-air stage constructed to enhance these programs. In addition, participants support the construction of a small community center within or near Henderson Park. José Martí Park’s users believe that the park is well-managed, but they would like to see more programming for teenagers, increased park security, better use of the space under the freeway, and upgraded facilities that would provide more opportunities for family activities. Most participants also expressed concern about the lack of park space in the southern and western portions of Little Havana and how understaffed parks can feel unsafe. Overall, residents would like to see the creation of small parks and greener and safer streets for pedestrians throughout Little Havana.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

José Martí Park is a successful waterfront multipurpose park.

- Residents from all over Little Havana use it heavily.
- The pool is open year-round.
- It offers many programs for elementary-age children...
- ...but fewer programs are available for teens and adults.
- Connections are poor between the main park and the under-highway area.
- Improvements and expanded programming are needed to meet demand for more activities for the whole family.

Henderson Park has inadequate facilities for desired neighborhood activities.

- A soccer field, tennis courts, and a playground exist, as well as dance and music programs, but there is no park building.
- There is strong community support for more arts programs to celebrate Latin American culture.

- Build an open-air stage and community center to make the park a cultural center for Little Havana.
- Increased activity will deter undesired uses.

Jorge Mas Canosa/Riverside Park is underused.

- There are reports of crime problems; perceived as unsafe.
- Adding a park building, organized programs, and staffing would attract use by families.

New park space is needed.

- There is a severe deficit of parks west of 12th Avenue.
- Few public or private vacant lots are available for new open space.
- New development could be required to provide open space.
- Open space could be created on government properties such as Robert King High Homes and the Orange Bowl.

Streetscape improvements should be made along major corridors.

- Target 8th, 12th, 17th, and 22nd

avenues; NW South River Drive; and NW 2nd, West Flagler, SW 1st, 7th, and 8th streets.

- Plant street trees to provide shade and improve the pedestrian environment to encourage walking to the parks.

Park safety concerns many residents.

- Provide staff at Henderson and Jorge Mas Canosa/Riverside parks.
- Speed-zone signs and traffic calming near parks would protect children.
- Add programs for adults to increase “eyes on the park.”
- Improve lighting.
- Keep fences.
- Provide secure bike storage.

Parks need programming and facilities that will encourage family use.

- Provide programs that will allow adults and children to use the park simultaneously.
- Create passive areas that adults can use while their children play.
- Improve picnic areas.

AN ARTS AND CULTURE CENTER AT HENDERSON PARK

The Vision

- > Build an open-air stage and a community center to house a variety of arts programs for children and adults.
- > Work with community organizations to provide programming.
- > Make the park home to regular area cultural festivals.



TODAY

A NEW WATERFRONT PARK AT ROBERT KING HIGH HOMES

The Vision

- > Transform open space at Robert King High Homes into a riverside park.
- > Provide boat access and a pedestrian path along the river.



TODAY

SAFE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY PARKS

The Vision

- > Expand staff and programs to underused parks to meet some of the demand now focused on José Martí Park.
- > Ensure that programming is offered simultaneously for a variety of ages.
- > Lock parks after hours.
- > Improve facilities to promote family activities in the parks.



PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS TO THE RIVERFRONT

The Vision

- > Extend setback and public access requirement for all new development on the south side of the river.
- > Provide water access at riverfront parks.
- > Introduce a series of benches or belvederes at the ends of streets that terminate at the river.



NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND PLAZAS

The Vision

- > To alleviate the severe lack of parks in western Little Havana:
 - Pursue opportunities to acquire vacant lots or other suitable properties to create mini-parks with play structures; work with surrounding neighborhoods to create local stewardship of these spaces.
 - As redevelopment occurs, require developer contributions to neighborhood public green spaces.



The Little Havana Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Little Managua/East Little Havana/Orange Bowl/Latin Quarter/Citrus Grove/South Sewell Park



No area residents attended the Flagami workshop, but a few parents of children using the park stopped by the open house. Comments about the Flagami area were provided primarily by West End Park staff; additional information emerged at the workshop in the West Flagler NET Area. West End Park appears to be a significant and safe facility for the Flagami area. The park, however, needs many improvements, such as a pool renovation, field upgrades, and lighting. In addition, more programs should be offered for girls and adults and the pool should be open for year-round use. Residents from other NET Areas spoke

highly of Antonio Maceo Park, commending the quality of its management and its appearance. The park manager at Robert King High Park was also seen as being energetic and working hard to promote many recreational activities for all ages. Residents agree that park improvements at Robert King High Park will greatly increase the use of this park. Most Flagami parks, however, face pedestrian-access issues on several wide and dangerous streets nearby, such as Flagler and NW 7th Street. Streetscape improvements and pedestrian safety are issues that need to be addressed by the parks plan.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

West End Park is a safe, multipurpose park that is heavily used by children.

- The park draws residents from the immediate neighborhood and the larger area.
- Parents feel safe letting their children walk to the park.
- The pool is heavily used in the summer months and should be open year-round.
- Few programs are offered for adults other than sport leagues.
- Many improvements desired:
 - > Pool renovations
 - > Lighting for the playground
 - > Expansion of the park building
 - > New fencing for perimeter of the park and baseball backstop
 - > Batting cage

Antonio Maceo Park is a successful passive park.

- Waterfront access and boat ramp
- The walking path is well-used
- Family picnic area and shade shelters
- Difficult to reach on foot from the south because NW 7th Street is wide and dangerous

Robert King High Park has many activities, but inadequate facilities.

- Programs for children and adults.
- New air-conditioned recreation building to be constructed in 2006.
- Field and court improvements are needed.

Streetscape improvements are needed along major corridors.

- West Flagler, NW 7th Street, NW 57th and 37th avenues

- Plant street trees to provide shade for pedestrians

New park space should be created in Flagami.

- Connect the property owned by the Police Benevolent Association to Fern Isle Park
- **Mini-parks are needed** for underserved areas in Flagami

More programs for girls are needed at all parks:

- Dance and cheerleading
- Music
- Swim teams
- Tennis

The Flagami-West Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Flagami/Le Jeune Gardens



The Flagami-East Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Le Jeune Gardens/West Grapeland Heights/North Grapeland Heights/South Grapeland Heights/South Sewell Park/North Sewell Park



RECLAIM FLAGAMI MINI-PARK FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLAY

The Vision

- > Re-open the park building as a small community center.
- > Eliminate use as a neighborhood parking lot.
- > Remove the asphalt pad behind the building and install a small play structure.



MAKE WEST END PARK SUCCESSFUL FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

The Vision

- > Make major renovations to the pool area.
- > Open the pool for year-round use by all ages.
- > Provide adequate lighting to enable children to use the park in the evenings.
- > Offer new programs for adults, seniors, and girls.



EXTEND THE MIAMI RIVER BLUEWAY

The Vision

- > Explore canoe/kayak opportunities along the Tamiami Canal to the Blue Lagoon.
- > Explore canoeing potential to the caves by the Miccosukee land.
- > Explore canoe/kayak potential on the South Fork of the Miami River to the Blue Lagoon, with portage at dams.



A NEW FERN ISLE/SOUTH FORK PARK

The Vision

- > Connect the open space behind the Police Benevolent Association property to Fern Isle Park via a footbridge.



WEST FLAGLER

NET Area: Flagami/South Grapeland Heights/Auburndale/La Pastorita/Parkdale North/Citrus Grove/South Sewell Park

Residents who attended the West Flagler Workshop and Open House provided information about the few parks in the NET Area and the neighborhoods around Coral Gate Park and Kinloch Elementary and Middle Schools. All participants agreed that both the physical facilities and recreation programs at Coral Gate Park need significant improvements. Safety is also a concern—residents would like to see better lighting and increased

police patrols in the park. Since West Flagler has a deficit of park space, residents believe that more parks are needed in order to provide children with safe places to play. Many residents drive to parks in other NET Areas when they are not working, but children need more parks within walking distances of their homes. There are, however, few easy opportunities for creating new parks in the area.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Coral Gate Park is heavily-used, but it needs many facility upgrades and program improvements.

- Baseball field, basketball court, tennis court, playground, and picnic area.
- Multiple fields and courts of each type are needed.
- Recreation building will be upgraded; expanded facility should include meeting rooms for community activities.
- Bathrooms and water fountains should be accessible to park users.
- Improve parking lots, add bike racks, and increase greenery around the perimeter.

Safety is a major concern in/around Coral Gate Park.

- Angled parking at the park creates a traffic hazard, since cars must back out directly onto SW 32nd Avenue.

- The intersection of SW 16th Street and SW 32nd Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians trying to cross to the park.
- Lighting in the park does not illuminate the parking lot.
- More police patrols are needed to reduce nighttime drug activity in the park.

Many West Flagler residents use parks outside of the area.

- People travel to Kennedy, Antonio Maceo, and Shenandoah parks.
- Many residents use Coral Gables' recreation facilities, such as golf courses, the Venetian Pool, and recreation programs.

More greenspace is needed.

- Locate new parks in underserved areas, such as the western part of West Flagler.

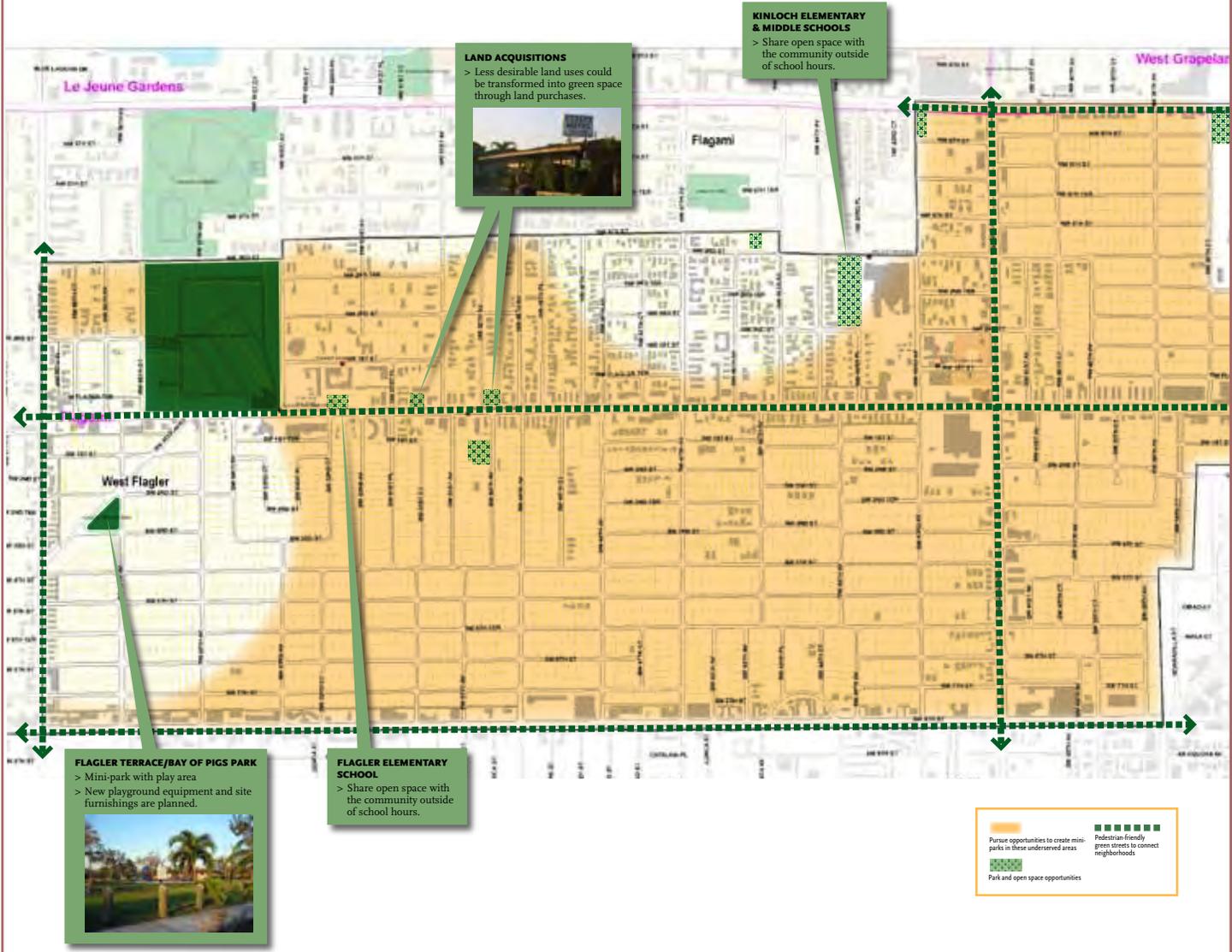
- Mini-parks are particularly needed, since young families are moving into the area.
- New open space should be within walking distance for older residents.
- A domino park would be well-used.
- Program school space for community recreation after school hours.

West Flagler needs many streetscape improvements in order to create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

- The area has many senior citizens and low-income residents who walk to destinations.
- Sidewalk repair, street trees, and better lighting are needed for comfort and safety.
- Improvements are especially needed on West Flagler Street and around area schools.

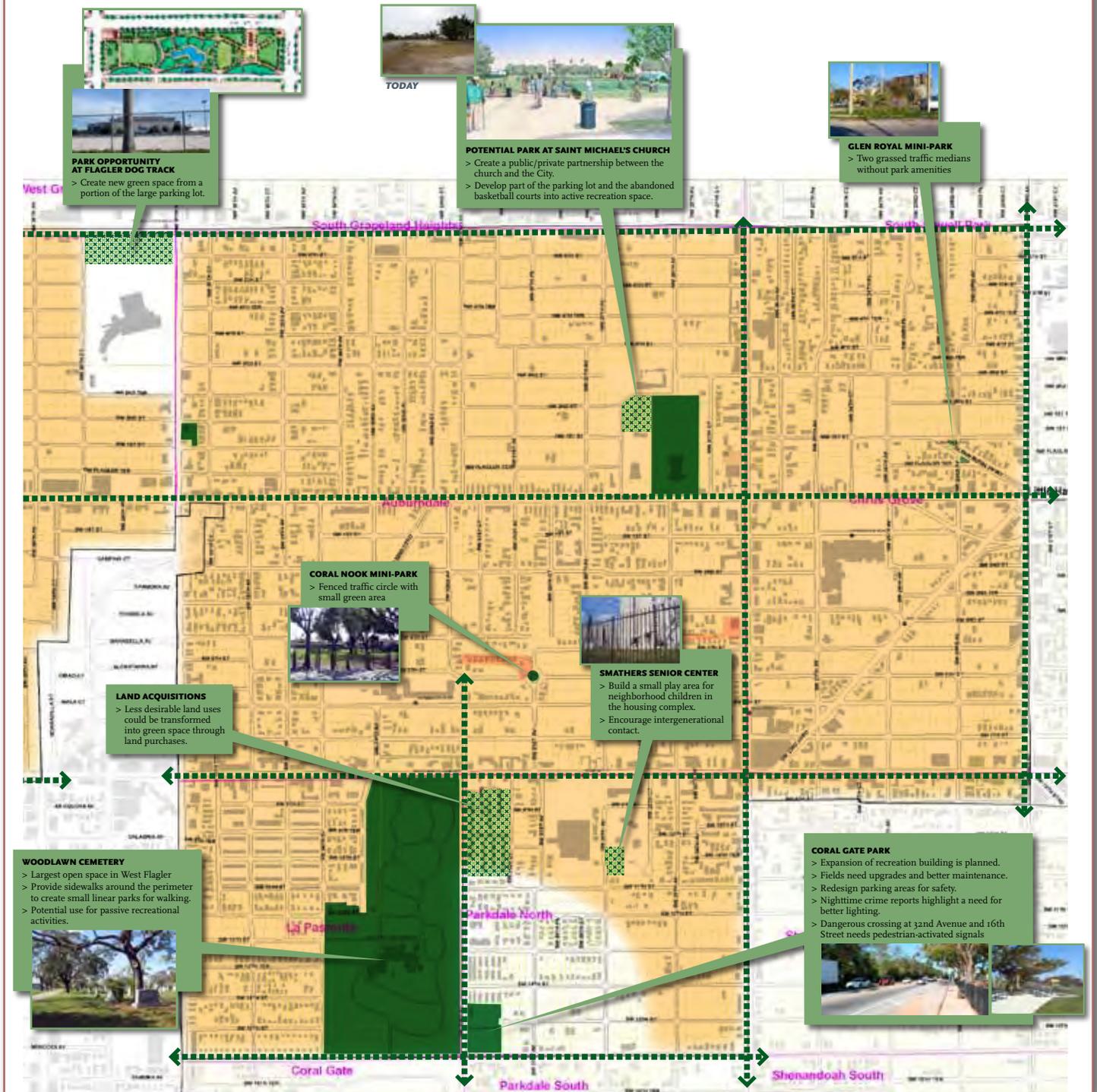
The West Flagler Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Flagami/South Grapeland Heights/Auburndale/La Pastorita/Parkdale North/Citrus Grove/South Sewell Park



The West Flagler Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Flagami/South Grapeland Heights/Auburndale/La Pastorita/Parkdale North/Citrus Grove/South Sewell Park



A NEW PARK WITHIN THE SAINT MICHAEL'S CHURCH COMPLEX

The Vision



- > Establish a public-private partnership between the City and Saint Michael's and work together to improve the former play area between the church and the school.
- > Restore the basketball court and create a playground and playing field.



TODAY

FLAGLER DOG TRACK
Add green space within the dog track complex

The Vision

Make a portion of the track's northern parking lot along NW 7th Street a green area that serves Grapeland Heights.



USE WOODLAND PARK CEMETERY AS A PASSIVE PARK AREA

The Vision

- > Build sidewalks along all sides of the cemetery and landscape them to create a pleasant walking trail.
- > Encourage use of the cemetery grounds for passive activities by individual users.
- > Work with the cemetery to create group recreational programs, such as walking tours.



COMMUNITY GREENSPACE WITHIN THE SMATHERS SENIOR CENTER

The Vision

- > Build a small playground in the open area of the senior housing complex.



GREEN, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS...
...and additional mini-parks

The Vision

- > Provide street trees and lighting along major corridors.
- > Introduce green medians.
- > Ensure that street furniture is adequately shaded.
- > Install pedestrian-activated signals at busy intersections.
- > Acquire vacant lots in underserved neighborhoods for creation of mini-parks.



Many residents, along with Commissioner Regalado, attended the Coral Way Workshop. Comments focused primarily on Shenandoah Park, Bryan Park, and streetscape issues. Overall, residents like Shenandoah Park and most agreed that its appearance and atmosphere have improved under new managers. The park, however, lacks facilities and programs for adult users, such as a Vita Course, a walking path, and passive recreation areas. In addition, the pool needs renovation and should stay open both longer hours and year-round. Residents seek a park with hours and facilities that will permit family use in the evenings and on weekends. Most participants opposed making Bryan Park exclusively a tennis center, pointing out that the loss of its passive space would be detrimental to users of all ages who live within

walking distance. Participants also believed that more residents would walk to nearby parks if street trees were planted and traffic-calming measures implemented. Most wanted new mini-parks created within the Coral Way area, but all acknowledge that few park opportunities exist. Wolfarth



Park—two lots on SW 24th Street owned by the City and formerly zoned for parks use—has potential. In addition, participants would like to see the City negotiate with the School Board to allow shared use of school playing fields.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Shenandoah Park is a successful multipurpose park that needs many improvements.

- Pool, playing fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, racquetball courts, and playground
- There are few programs for adults and seniors.
- Parking is limited.
- Planned improvements include a pool renovation, new basketball courts, and upgraded fields.
- The playground needs shade, a different surface, and water fountains.
- The pool needs to be more accessible to adults.
- Passive space is needed for adults and young families.
- The park should have a walking/bike/skate path.

Bryan Park serves as an important central green space for its neighborhood.

- Tennis courts, basketball courts, playing field, and playground
- The park is used by all ages.
- Expansion of a successful youth tennis program by adding courts is controversial.
- A perimeter walkway with benches is needed.

- The building needs some limited additional space.
- Parking is limited.
- Maintenance issues include trash inside and outside the park.

Douglas Park is a large park scheduled for many improvements.

- Playing fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, and playground
- A new recreation center, parking lot will be built.
- Planned improvements could include a dog park.

Many residents use parks outside of Coral Way.

- They travel to Kennedy, José Martí, and Coral Gate parks.

More green space is needed.

- Create Wolfarth Park on vacant lots formerly zoned for parks use.
- The Silver Bluff, Roads, and Parkdale neighborhoods need mini-parks.
- Few public or private lots are available for new open space.

Park accessibility is a problem and discourages park use.

- Many parks offer limited parking.
- Many park areas do not meet ADA standards.

- Parking on sidewalks makes walking to Shenandoah Park difficult.
- Lack of shaded streets discourages many people from walking to parks.
- Speeding traffic near parks makes them hazardous for pedestrians.
- Major corridors are difficult to cross on a bicycle or on foot.

Streetscape improvements should be made along major corridors.

- Target SW 12th, 17th, 22nd, 27th, 32nd, and 37th avenues, and SW 11th and 16th streets.
- Plant street trees to provide a shaded environment that will encourage walking to parks.

Parks need to provide recreation opportunities for all ages.

- Many programs are offered for children, but fewer exist for adults and seniors.
- Programs for adults and seniors should be publicized and scheduled at convenient hours.
- Create passive space for adults to use while their children play.
- Parks should have programs and policies that encourage families to use the parks together.

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD MINI-PARKS, STARTING WITH WOLFARTH PARK

The Vision

Create small parks on two vacant lots.



TODAY



SAFE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PUBLIC SPACES

The Vision

- > Introduce midblock crossings and “countdown” signals at pedestrian crossings to promote safety.
- > Post and enforce speed zone signs near parks and schools.
- > Prevent parking on sidewalks at parks.
- > Provide safer crossings between blocks of the median walkway in the Cuban Memorial Plaza on SW 13th Avenue.



TODAY



GREEN, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS

The Vision

- > Provide street trees along major corridors.
- > Introduce green medians.
- > Ensure that street furniture is adequately shaded.



PARKS FOR ALL AGES

The Vision

- > Provide programs for different ages at times that will allow adults and children to use the parks simultaneously.
- > Create passive areas for adult use.
- > Provide adequate publicity for parks programs for adults and seniors.



The Coral Way Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Douglas Park/Coral Gate/Parkdale South/Silver Bluff/Shenandoah North & South/Roads/Brickell



NORTH/EAST COCONUT GROVE

NET Area: Bird Grove East/Grove Center/S. Grove Bayside/North & East Grove/Fair Isle/Bay Heights/Vizcaya/Miami Avenue/Brickell Residential District

A large number of residents from different neighborhoods in Coconut Grove attended the workshop, and most use more than one park in the NET Area. Many wanted to discuss the waterfront parks in detail.

Participants generally believed that renovation of the western part of the Peacock Park is key to creating a successful connection between the waterfront and the Coconut Grove retail area. Residents like Kennedy Park but find that its use is hampered by a lack of parking, particularly on weekends. In addition, the park is difficult to get to on foot because South Bayshore Drive has no sidewalks with safe pedestrian access. Fewer residents use Alice Wainwright Park, even though it has bay access; participants felt that its location and removal of much of its parking make it unwelcoming. Some people commented that the limited number of users makes them safety-conscious. Increased use could make the park feel safer.

Blanche Park and the Kirk Munroe Tennis Center serve as social centers for residents who bring their dogs to the park. Residents believe the Blanche Park dog park needs more maintenance attention because of high use. Many parents with young children use the tot lot in Blanche Park and would like more amenities, such as benches and water fountains. The parents and the dog park users formed a “friends” group to improve the park. Tennis players would like to see at least two new courts at Kirk Munroe and better use of its recreation building. Other park users want enhanced green space and additional lighting, and they oppose additional tennis courts.

There was strong interest in improving the pedestrian-friendliness of streets in Coconut Grove, especially busy Tigertail, Bird, and 27th avenues. In addition, safety could be increased through better street lighting and bike paths for cyclists. Many participants also would like to see swales landscaped so as to create small linear parks.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Major waterfront parks: Master planning is under way to enhance the waterfront park system and make connections to neighborhoods, retail areas, the bay and islands.

- **Peacock Park:**
 - > Activate the western park to link the retail center with the waterfront.
 - > Add programs to attract adults.
 - > Enhance bay views and provide boating access.
- **David Kennedy Park** is heavily used:
 - > Enhance and better maintain landscaping and playground areas.
 - > Improve pedestrian access and add parking.
 - > Enhance water views.
- **Kenneth Myers Park** links Peacock Park and Dinner Key Marina with walkways and public art and needs landscape improvements.

Alice Wainwright Park has beautiful bay views and a conservation area but is underused.

- Difficult access and constrained parking limit use and create safety concerns.

Blanche Park’s tot lot and dog park are heavily used and function as social centers for different user groups. Joint needs include:

- Increased shade, lighting, and sidewalks around the park
- Water fountain, more seating at the tot lot and “children playing” signs on the street
- Better “disease maintenance” and grassy areas in the dog park
- Dog park users and tot lot mothers joined to form the Friends of Blanche Park to make improvements; they desire better communication with the City.

The Kirk Munroe Tennis Center serves as Coconut Grove’s public tennis facility.

- Tennis players want another court to accommodate junior programs and neighborhood users.
- Residents who use grassy areas to walk dogs do not want to lose that space.
- More parking and better lighting are needed.

The area’s mini-parks need improvements that would encourage use.

- Elizabeth Steele Mini-Park and Lincoln Park need playground equipment and landscaping improvements.
- Douglas/Silver Bluff Mini-Park needs restroom facilities and more benches and tables for picnics.

Streetscape improvements are needed throughout the area to promote bicycle use and walking.

- Provide continuous sidewalks and adequate street lighting for pedestrian safety.
- Improve and expand existing bike paths and routes (South Bayshore Drive, Wainwright Park and Vizcaya areas).
- Swales could be landscaped to create attractive linear greenspaces along residential roads.
- Create a grand landscaped median as a gateway to the Center Grove on South Bayshore Drive.

A WEEKEND PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ZONE AT THE WATERFRONT

The Vision



- > Close one side of South Bayshore Drive to cars from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays to provide additional waterfront space for recreation activity.
- > Pedestrians, rollerbladers, and cyclists would be welcome to use the closed street.
- > Increased activity would generate more interest in waterfront parks and businesses.



SAFE STREETS FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

The Vision



- > Connect sidewalks throughout Coconut Grove.
- > Install pedestrian-activated signals at major intersections and parks.
- > Demarcate the bike lane on South Bayshore Drive.
- > Create a bike path to provide south-bound access for cyclists along South Bayshore Drive.
- > Provide adequate lighting along streets.

A COCONUT GROVE WATERFRONT GREENWAY

The Vision



- > Create a formal baywalk extending from Peacock Park to the parking lot at Virrick Gym.
- > Negotiate with private property owners for limited public waterfront access.
- > Pedestrian activity could continue along South Bayshore Drive to Kennedy Park.
- > Negotiate with Mercy Hospital to create another waterfront walk at the hospital complex.
- > Demolish the Convention Center and replace it with a new park and waterfront public spaces and activity areas.
- > Ensure connectivity between waterfront public spaces and areas across S. Bayshore Drive.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO ALICE WAINWRIGHT PARK

The Vision



- > Promote park use by building additional parking spaces.
- > Create a bike path along Brickell Avenue by the park that extends to Vizcaya and possibly along the bay at the Mercy Hospital complex.
- > Erect directional signs on South Miami Avenue that say "Alice Wainwright Park: Open to the Public."
- > Create nature trails and interpretive signs for the conservation area and provide nature education programs to encourage use and safety.

ENHANCING MINI-PARKS FOR USE AS SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES

The Vision

- > Provide play structures, benches, and water fountains in all mini-parks.
- > Increase shade around play areas.
- > Ensure adequate lighting and safe sidewalks around the parks.
- > Construct restrooms if enough space exists.



The North/East Coconut Grove Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Bird Grove East/Grove Center/South Grove Bayside/North Grove/East Grove/Fair Isle/Bay Heights/Vizcaya/Miami Avenue/Brickell Residential District



The North/East Coconut Grove Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Bird Grove East/Grove Center/South Grove Bayside/North Grove/East Grove/Fair Isle/Bay Heights/Vizcaya/Miami Avenue/Brickell Residential District



SOUTH/WEST COCONUT GROVE

NET Area: Bird Grove West/West Grove/South Grove/South Grove Bayside

Few residents attended the South/West Coconut Grove Workshop and Open House, but those who did were community leaders who were knowledgeable about neighborhood concerns and park issues. Much of the conversation focused on Virrick Park, which is perceived as a vital facility for the community. Residents generally are satisfied with the programming offered to elementary-school children but believe that the park should expand its offerings for adults, seniors, and, particularly, teens. Participants felt that the heavily used park has maintenance issues and major improvements are needed. Armbrister Park also sees significant community use, particularly because its sports fields can be used for football and baseball. This park,

however, needs a larger recreation building to accommodate locker rooms for sports teams, classrooms for after-school programs, and improved storage space. Connections should be made between Armbrister Park and the Barnyard Center, a neighborhood recreation center that offers after-school programs and has several playing courts. Many residents use Billy Rolle/Coconut Grove Mini-Park for domino and chess games. Children and adults in South/West Coconut Grove frequently ride bicycles and walk throughout the area. Workshop participants believe that the pedestrian and cycling experience could be enhanced by the creation of continuous sidewalks, bike paths, and improved street lighting throughout Coconut Grove.

What we heard from the community about parks and public spaces:

Virrick Park is a heavily used center of neighborhood activity.

- Seniors use the park to walk and swim; additional senior programming is desired.
- Needs include fields for open play and a clubhouse for teen fitness, music, and dance programs.
- Simultaneous activities for different age groups create space conflicts.
- The gym and pool have many ongoing maintenance issues.
- More pool access is needed for disabled persons and seniors.
- More parking is needed to serve the pool area.
- Although lighting in the park is good, the park should have a security guard.

Armbrister Park has sports fields with seasonal opportunities not found at Virrick.

- Neighborhood children and sports leagues use the park for baseball and football play.
- Soccer demand is low.

- The recreation building lacks adequate storage and lockers for teams and classroom space for after-school programs.
- An outdoor track would attract the many people who walk the perimeter of the park.
- Park facilities could be linked to recreation space at the adjacent fire college and the Barnyard Center.
- The playground area needs improvements.
- Many families use the park in the mornings; family-oriented spaces and activities should be created.

Merrie Christmas Park is a passive park with a play structure.

- Residents who do not live near the park do not drive to use it.

Billy Rolle/Coconut Grove Mini-Park is a domino park.

- Users come throughout the day.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation provides no supervision.
- There have been some reports of drug activity.
- The park needs better maintenance.

Streetscape improvements are needed areawide.

- Lack of continuous sidewalks and adequate street lighting affects safety for the many residents who walk to area destinations.
- Improve the pedestrian environment along main roads that connect to the U.S. 1 corridor and the MetroRail station.

Many residents ride bicycles, but local streets are unsafe for cyclists.

- Children and adults ride to parks and other locations.
- Many people ride on the sidewalks of Grand Avenue, creating conflicts with pedestrians.
- Lack of designated bike lanes or separation between bicycles and cars on most roads creates safety hazards.

More greenspace is needed throughout the area.

- Locate new mini-parks in underserved areas, such as South Grove.
- Opportunities for pocket parks exist in West Grove.

A REVITALIZED ARMBRISTER PARK

The Vision

- > Expand the recreation building and upgrade the field in order to facilitate organized sports.
- > Provide more shade and places to sit around the playground and basketball areas.
- > Create connections between Armbrister's facilities and the Barnyard Center.

TODAY



NEW PARKS ALONG GRAND AVENUE

The Vision

- > Create small parks at the corner of Hibiscus Street and Grand Avenue and the corner of Plaza Street and Grand Avenue.
- > Place a play structure, benches, tables, a water fountain, and grassed areas in each park.
- > Landscape the parks with trees and flowering plants in mini-gardens.



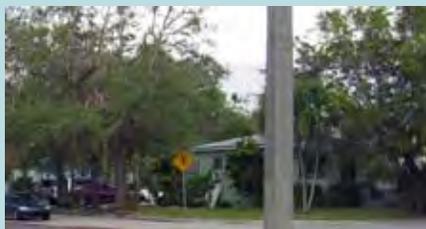
TODAY



SAFE STREETS FOR BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

The Vision

- > Provide continuous sidewalks and adequate pedestrian-scale lighting throughout Coconut Grove.
- > Create bike routes with signage along major corridors and residential streets.
- > Create a bike-travel safety campaign, including signs, for cyclists and drivers in Coconut Grove.



PARKS FOR ALL AGES

The Vision

- > Offer a range of programs for all user groups, particularly seniors and teenagers.
- > Continue to improve programs for elementary-school children.
- > Create passive park areas for adult use.
- > Provide park spaces and programs that will encourage families to use parks together.



The South/West Coconut Grove Vision for Parks & Public Spaces

NET Area: Bird Grove West/West Grove/South Grove/South Grove Bayside





Design Counts

Good design is essential to making the most of a park system, especially in urban areas. Good design creates highly functional, environmentally sensitive, and durable parks that also bring beauty and delight to their users.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PARKS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Hire a staff landscape architect for the parks department.
- > Involve the public and park managers in the redesign of existing parks and the design of new parks.
- > Apply design guidelines when redesigning existing parks or designing new ones.

Successful parks and public spaces are where the people are. This is an apparent tautology but it emphasizes the point that parks are for people and people are drawn to places where other people seem to be enjoying themselves. A successful park is located in a place where a park is needed; it provides for activities that people are interested in doing, where they can see others and be seen; and it is linked to other parts of the public realm. The design of the space can attract people or it can repel them. Parks professionals who were interviewed in a recent publication about the best parks in their park districts mentioned the same basic ingredients over and over again: “open space, water, shady places, strolling, fun people places.”¹

As Miami renovates existing parks and creates new ones, it has the opportunity over time to create distinctive park environments. The major park redesigns and new park designs underway as part of the current capital improvements program will make a very significant difference in the design quality of those parks. However, many smaller design projects that affect the parks every year receive much less design attention. During the recent period of very tight budgets, facility improvements or equipment upgrades were made without sufficient attention to overall park design. The Department of Parks and Recreation has not had an in-house landscape architect for decades. It is imperative that the department add a staff landscape architect to work closely with park management and staff—and with the public. Nearby residents and other park users should be involved in the development of improvement programs and master plans for design and renovation of parks.

¹ Bernie Dahl and Donald J. Molnar, *Anatomy of a Park*, 3rd edition, (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2003), 151.

Park Context and Edges

- Provide access to parks from the street on at least two sides, if possible.
- Orient adjacent buildings to face the park with windows to frame the park and provide “eyes on the park.”
- Where there are high-traffic streets at the park edge, buffer those edges to minimize entry of noise and pollution from the street into the park.
- Evaluate the need for fences and remove or reduce fencing if it is not needed for security or aesthetic purposes. Attractive fences that allow views into a park while controlling entry can be aesthetically pleasing by providing an edge between the green world of the park and the hard surfaces of the street. Many of Miami’s parks have high, turquoise-blue fences of closely-spaced stakes. Both the color and the structure of these fences obscure the view of the park from outside. Because crime, especially at night, remains a concern for some park users, it is important to experiment with different levels of openness before making a final decision to eliminate fences altogether.



Signs and maps at the entry to parks help orient people, as in this San Antonio park.

Sense of Place and Entry

- Strive for a sense of place and individual character in park design. Special landscape, historic, or cultural elements should be identified and preserved. Thematic unity expressed through architectural design and details, colors and materials, site furnishings and equipment, and plantings should be encouraged.
- If possible, locate the main entry to paths near crosswalks or bus stops.
- Clearly define points of entry with arches, decorative gates, signed entry features, and/or special landscape massing.
- Avoid tall fences along street edges. Decorative fencing and berms, buffered by low hedges, for example, provide definition, safety and security for the park. The removal of fences around parks should be discussed with park users and evaluated in light of crime and other security concerns.
- In larger parks, provide signs and maps to orient users.

Access

- Safe, comfortable, well-lit walkways should extend from neighborhoods to parks. Sidewalks should be shaded and the pavement should be in good condition. Designated routes that avoid major arterials and intersections should be created with signage, as recommended in the discussion of the ParkWalks program in Chapter 3. Where crossing of arterials and highly-trafficked



Shady, tree-lined streets like this one provide pleasant walking routes to parks and other destinations.

intersections is necessary, crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals should be provided at a minimum, with consideration given to installing raised intersections or similar traffic-calming devices to ensure that vehicles will slow down.

- Connect pedestrian paths to all activity areas in a park. Multiple use paths to accommodate walkers, joggers, rollerbladers, and so on should be at least 8 feet wide,

increasing to 10 or 12 feet where heavy use is expected. These paths should have gentle curves so they can also serve as access ways for park vehicles and, in larger parks, police patrol cars.

- As Miami implements its ADA program to make parks accessible, ensure that when handicap-accessible equipment is provided, access from adjacent sidewalks, other areas of the park and parking areas is also provided.

Landscape Design

The foundation of a park's design, even for a park primarily dedicated to sports activities, is the grouping of trees and palms. Shade trees provide much-needed relief from the sun in Miami's climate, and all kinds of plantings provide a green environment to contrast with buildings in urban neighborhoods. Ideally, park sites will be selected and developed to preserve existing stands of trees. However, in many areas, the site will be devoid of trees and the entire landscape will have to be created. Tree planting should be one of the first implementation activities in building or renovating a park. Parks without trees, and the shade and beauty they provide, are not fulfilling one of their prime reasons for being; it takes ten or more years for trees to grow to serve their intended function.

- Group trees to define spaces, separate incompatible uses, or visually enhance and direct views of scenic features.
- Plant trees for shade. Shade is essential adjacent to all gathering areas. Shaded areas for spectators to watch ball games and other sports activities are especially appreciated in Miami's climate. Picnicking and trees go hand in hand. Walkways and sitting areas should be shaded. Shade over play equipment is critical.
- Plant special accent plants, such as groupings of tall palms or flowering trees, to direct the eye and enhance park entrances, or subtly guide visitors along paths. Accent plants can be focused in planters to assist in maintenance, and the edges of planter boxes can be made wide enough to serve as seating areas.



A donated tree in Kenneth Myers Park.

[Landscape Design text continues on page 154.]

Why Margaret Pace Park Is Successful



Places to sit—walls, benches, picnic tables, steps



Open areas for relaxation or free play



Shade



Security



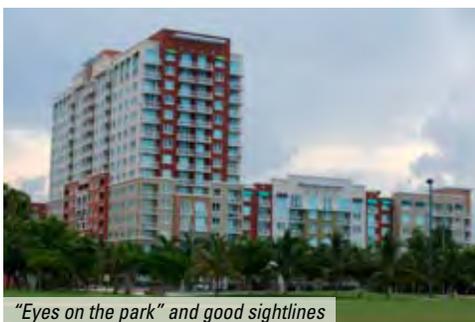
Places for dogs



Amenities for picking up after dogs



Art and culture



"Eyes on the park" and good sightlines



Basketball, volleyball, and tennis

Why Juan Pablo Duarte Park Is Successful



A building designed to fit with the neighborhood



A circulation loop for walking and biking



Art and culture



Places to sit in the shade



A baseball diamond and informal soccer field



Fun activities for kids



Places to gather—large picnic shelters



A play area and bridge over a remnant of nature



Flowering plants, like these at the entrance to José Martí Park, should be incorporated more often into park design.

- While most trees, shrubs, and ground cover in parks should be low-maintenance, drought-tolerant or native species, consider specimen trees and unique plants for high-visibility spots. Some very large-growing trees, flowering trees (that may be considered messy), and other species that may not be recommended for use along streets or on residential properties can be successful in parks. Parks should be areas to display unusual, special tree species, since they usually have the space to allow for their growth. The Department of Parks and Recreation should work with the Fairchild Botanical Garden to identify trees that could be suitable. The Miami Parks Foundation

recommended in Chapter 4 could facilitate donations and maintenance of unusual plants.

- Limit dense shrub masses to park edges that abut residential properties, to provide a buffer for them, or to areas that abut incompatible or unsightly activity such as industrial uses. For safety and security reasons, avoid planting shrub masses that can block views into a park from surrounding streets or between areas within the park.
- Place trees in coordination with underground and overhead utilities, as well as park lighting, to avoid conflicts.
- Unless the design layout of a park dictates the use of formal rows of one species to enhance a geometric space within the park, avoid this approach. Tree groves or loose groupings of more than one species will not lose their effectiveness as a mass if some are lost due to storm damage or disease.
- In active areas, where people gather and children play, plant trees that are at least 12 feet tall.
- Where mangroves and wetland areas exist, install interpretive signs to explain their environmental value.
- Develop a small coastal hammock landscape design for replication in a variety of parks for environmental education.
- Install irrigation systems except in natural areas and areas that have masses of mature trees that are shading out grasses. All grass areas, especially those that are used for free play sports, must be irrigated to withstand wear and help them regenerate. Equipment brands should be standardized, so that park personnel can be trained on one operating system and spare parts can more easily be kept in stock.

- Install artificial turf on high-use athletic fields so that the fields can be used more efficiently.

Proper Placement of Facilities and Activities

- Where possible, design multi-use active areas that can be available for different sports on the same space.
- Locate park uses to be compatible with adjacent land uses.
 - > Locate noisy activities such as basketball, ball fields, and group picnic shelters away from adjacent residences.
 - > Provide adequate space from errant balls to adjacent properties or streets, or high fences to contain fly balls.
 - > Avoid spill-over of field and court lights into adjacent residential properties by use of cut-off luminaires.
- Locate park uses to be compatible with adjacent uses within the park.
 - > Group activities that generate large concentrations of users, noise, and high-intensity lighting together, away from quiet, passive areas.
 - > Place recreation buildings near most intensely-used activity areas to facilitate the park manager’s ability to observe and monitor activities. Larger buildings that can house large groups of people should provide a convenient vehicular drop-off area and nearby parking, if possible.
- Preserve natural features such as groups of trees to buffer active park uses from residential areas, at street edges to present attractive views into the park, or near special views, such as waterfronts.
- Shade is a critical component of park design in Miami. Whether by canopy trees, shelters and pergolas, shade sails (fabric canopies), or other means, shade should be available at or near all activity areas in a park. In new parks or park redesigns, shade trees should be planted to the south and west of playgrounds.



Pullman Mini-Park in Little Haiti lacks shade over the play structure and appropriately placed seating nearby.

Ideal Groupings of Facilities

- Group certain activities together to generate enough users to justify the inclusion of support facilities.
 - > Ballfields and football/soccer fields, in groups of three to five, can support a restroom/concession building, usually operated by an organized league.
 - > Tennis courts, in groups of six or more, can support a restroom/tennis pro shop that can serve as a base for a tennis court manager/instructor. This attracts more players per court. The “club” atmosphere provides a social setting, where finding a playing partner is more likely, and a game can be scheduled in advance by the manager. The typical two-court facility

traditionally installed in a small neighborhood park (to provide “equal” access to all), is usually not well used.

- Locate picnic facilities near large passive areas and adjacent to special natural features such as waterfronts. Be sure they are well shaded. A nearby open play area for pick-up ball games is an excellent adjunct to picnic grounds.
 - > Small neighborhood parks, if well-shaded and aesthetically pleasing, can also serve as picnic areas, especially in densely-developed urban areas where apartment dwelling prohibits at-home barbecues.
 - > Provision of picnic tables next to tot lots or other active recreation facilities is useful for parents to provide snacks or lunch to their children, but do not qualify as a quality picnicking experience.
 - > If possible, group picnic shelter areas should be separated from individual picnic table areas. Group picnics are generally noisy and not compatible with family picnickers who are seeking more communion with nature.
- Provide seating in different ways, so that some seating is in high-traffic areas and is arranged to promote more social contact and other seating is scattered to allow for more solitary enjoyment of the park.
- Where possible, provide separate spaces where young children, teenagers and seniors can congregate for social interaction.



Colorful painted basketball courts and a tree-shaded, paved slope for sitting and watching games combine to make a simple, attractive, and functional space at Belafonte-Talcolcy Park.



Buildings, Site Furniture, and Materials

- Incorporate art into the design of every major park.
- Minimize building footprints by using two-story structures where feasible.
- Incorporate green building practices, natural ventilation and light, and energy efficiency by promoting adherence to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) standards developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

- Make site furniture consistent within parks, including trash barrels, which should match site furniture.
- Locate benches to maximize shade in summer and provide sun in winter; to avoid conflicts with pedestrians on paths; and with backs to walls or plantings, to enhance a sense of security.
- Choose building, wall, and fence materials for durability, weather resistance, and energy efficiency.
- Use of paint and mosaic tiles, as in Virrick Park and Belafonte-Talcolcy Park, can add interest to otherwise very simple materials.
- As appropriate, incorporate community cultural traditions and South Florida traditional design in the design of park and recreation buildings, particularly as tropical building types were developed to provide light and ventilation.
- Incorporate recycled and recyclable materials as much as possible.



Bench at Virrick Park.

Dog Parks

- Place dog parks away from high-value and sensitive areas, such as waterfronts, and from high-intensity uses, such as sports facilities.
- The ideal location is a grassy area with adequate drainage.
- A four- to six-foot fence should surround the park, preferably with a double-gated entry.
- Shade and water should be provided for both owners and dogs, and seating should be provided.
- Supplies for cleaning, covered garbage cans, waste bags and pooper-scooper stations should be provided.
- Signs with rules and regulations should be posted.



The Kennedy Park dog park is inappropriately located at the waterfront.



Evening play at Shenandoah Park.

Lighting

- Miami's successful parks are full of people at night. Lighting at parks and on access routes to parks is a very important aspect of park design in the city. It should be appropriate to the activity in terms of quantity and also be judged for its energy efficiency, minimum glare and spillover, and attractiveness. As noted earlier in this report, the park system should move to solar energy sources as lighting is upgraded.
- Isolated areas that are not intended for use at night should not be lit, in order to discourage entry.

Parking

- When designing a specific park, survey potential users to determine how they expect to access the park.
- Provide parking adequate to serve the activities provided in the park, but keep it to a minimum so precious park land is not taken up by paved parking spaces. Where there is a choice, vehicular access to a park should be from the street that will create the least impact on neighboring residences. Small walk-to parks can be adequately served by on-street parking.
- Encourage park users to walk, bicycle or take public transportation to parks, if possible. Provide bike racks near park and building entrances so that bicyclists can park and lock bikes.
- Share parking areas, such as adjacent school parking lots that may be empty during peak park activity times, to accommodate activities that generate large groups of users.
- Where possible, provide vehicular drop-off areas adjacent to large buildings and areas for activities such as group picnicking, baseball, and so on that require bringing equipment.
- Use grass-pave or other types of planted pavers that allow for parking in areas that may be needed at peak times for parking but could be used for other purposes most of the time.

Crime Prevention Through Design

Design the park to promote crime prevention. Provide views into, through and out of the park along paths or in other ways, in order to promote the ability of park users and people in the surroundings to see what is happening in the park and limit opportunities for concealment.



Implementation: Making it Happen

It will take the efforts of a broad alliance of public, nonprofit, and private stakeholders to reach Miami's tremendous potential to create a model 21st-century urban network of green and blue public spaces. While the city park system is the foundation of this network, the Department of Parks and Recreation is simply one of numerous stakeholders, each of which has a part to play in creating and sustaining Miami's green infrastructure network: other city agencies, county and state agencies, nonprofit groups, private developers and private citizens.

This implementation plan focuses on the role of city decision makers and agencies, noting when other agencies and groups must be included. Many of the implementation actions listed here are organizational or managerial. Because this master plan envisions a network of public parks, greenways and blueways, green streets, and public spaces, the implementation of the plan will require the creation of new relationships or strengthening of existing ones among agencies, nonprofits, and the citizenry. The Department of Parks and Recreation can take the lead on some aspects of the plan, while other departments are more appropriate in other situations.

In order to forecast future funding requirements for the Department of Parks and Recreation, certain management tasks must be completed first. We know that, despite improved budget allocations in recent years, the department is still underfunded on a per capita basis compared to cities with strong park and recreation systems. The department must analyze its activities to identify core services, the costs of existing services, the costs of providing services to the standard desired by the public, and the potential for recapturing some costs, where appropriate, through fees and charges. Once these issues are fully understood, the department will be able to forecast its needs more accurately and, just as important, explain to Miami residents what they will receive in return for enhanced budgets. Also, as discussed earlier in this report, creation of a robust network of "friends" groups, along with a citywide parks foundation, is essential if the Miami park system is to reach its potential.

PLANNING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The City is completing a program of bond-financed capital improvements to the park system that includes hundreds of millions of dollars of repairs and replacements, new facilities, and new designs for signature waterfront parks.

Although these welcome investments are already making a significant difference in the park system, the improvement program was not based on a systematic evaluation of needs or a broad conception of the overall role of the park system in the city. In the future, asset management, preventive maintenance, and capital planning should be ongoing or annual processes based on the principles and goals of this master plan.

Currently, small-scale capital improvements are overseen by the Department of Parks and Recreation Support Services Division and larger projects that require contracting by outside designers are overseen by the city's Transportation and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) departments. A new, systematic approach to capital improvements for the park and public space network and related green systems should be established. This approach should include information and input from a wide range of stakeholders both within and outside of city government, including park maintenance staff, park managers, park users and friends groups, neighborhood residents, and representatives of other city departments. Closer coordination between CIP and the parks department about the implementation of capital improvements will ensure that the improvements reflect the experience and operational needs of the parks department. If, as recommended, a landscape architect with parks experience is added to the department's staff, this professional can take over more of the capital improvements planning and design for the park system.

The capital improvements process internal to the Department of Parks and Recreation should include the steps below. As the system is put into effect, park managers and other staff who will be asked to implement it should be given training to help them be effective.

- **Create a capital improvements committee.** The committee should include relevant departmental staff. To prepare for the committee's work, information from park user surveys, repair records, grant and outside funding opportunities, and other relevant information should be compiled and analyzed. Once the initial project list has been prepared, the committee should meet with members of the CIP Department.
- **Refine and update the inventory of existing facilities.** The inventory and evaluation accompanying this master plan can serve as a starting point. It is organized as a spreadsheet database linked to GIS and photo resources. However, the inventory took place during a season of several hurricanes and while the existing capital improvement plan was in process, so it does not reflect replacements and improvements undertaken after the inventory date. Each year on a regular schedule the inventory should be updated. A form should be prepared for use by park managers for staffed parks and by park

maintenance staff for unstaffed parks. An efficient way for park staff to create and update the inventory would be by using a PDA to enter information while walking around the park and then downloading the information to a departmental database. The inventory can be relatively simple, with information on the year the facility or equipment was put in service, the date of last improvement, condition (poor, fair, good), level of use (light, moderate, heavy), and any scheduled improvements. Because many improvements and upgrades have recently been made or are currently being implemented, establishing this annual inventory of facilities would provide the parks department with an excellent way to monitor the effectiveness of new designs and durability of new equipment, identifying any issues to be addressed in future capital improvement programs.

- **Review the status of previously approved projects.** This review will inform the committee about which projects are complete and which are still in process. In addition, it will provide information on any projects completed at lower or higher cost than originally budgeted.
- **Solicit project proposals.** Park senior staff and managers should prepare project proposals and be asked to justify and assign priority rankings to their proposals. A form should be created for this purpose that includes a project description, reason for the project, likely useful life of the project, and its likely impact on operational costs.
- **Establish evaluation criteria, evaluate project proposals, and rank projects.** The committee should evaluate the project proposals according to objective criteria based on the principles and policies in this master plan and other relevant plans, responsiveness to resident needs, benefits to neighborhood and citywide residents (as appropriate to the type of park), project cost and future operational costs, and availability of grant funds or other external funding. During this phase it is important to seek information from other city agencies and the CIP Department in order to evaluate whether the value of proposed park improvements can be leveraged with other City investments. For example, green streets projects that improve pedestrian access to parks can be coordinated with park improvements, so that the benefits of the improvements are enhanced by the fact that access will be better. These combined benefits can then be marketed to the public.

If major capital improvements projects for the park system continue to be centralized in the CIP Department, it is essential that parks and recreation staff be included throughout the design and construction process for all capital projects. Including these staff members will enhance the cost-effectiveness of projects because they are intimately familiar with how facilities are used and can influence design to ensure greater functionality and durability of new facilities and equipment.

IMPLEMENTATION CHARTS

The implementation charts that follow are organized according to categories used earlier in this plan. The chart headings include:

- **What**—the task to be accomplished
- **How**—activities to be undertaken to accomplish the task
- **Who**—the entities primarily responsible for accomplishing or initiating the task
- **When**—a time line for accomplishing the task, which may be a specific year, if appropriate, or more generally: short term (up to 5 years); medium term (5 to 10 years); long term (10 or more years)
- **How much**—type or amount of expenditures, if known or capable of estimation

The implementation charts are presented in two sets. The first covers system-wide issues as presented under 13 different section or chapter headings earlier in this report. The second set focuses on the 13 NET Areas and addresses issues specific to particular parks and neighborhoods.

SYSTEMWIDE TASKS AND ISSUES

LEVEL-OF-SERVICE TASKS				
WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Pursue a medium-term goal of a park within one-half mile of every resident and a long-term goal of a park within one-quarter mile of every resident by acquiring land in underserved areas.	Disseminate information on target areas for new parks to all relevant city departments to encourage consciousness of park needs. Identify and keep a list of potential properties.	City offices and departments: Mayor and Commission; City Manager; Parks; Planning; Public Works; Transportation	Immediate and ongoing	Variable
Seek a balance among passive and active uses of parks and public spaces.	Design areas for safe passive use in all parks.	Parks and CIP departments	Immediate and ongoing	
Establish a new hierarchy for the park system that reflects Miami conditions.	Use the new hierarchy internally and in public materials.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
Survey city residents regularly to monitor preferences, needs and satisfaction with the park and recreation system.	Use Web surveys every two to five years; commission scientific survey every 10 years.	Parks Department	Beginning 2008	\$25,000–50,000 for scientific survey
Establish networks of pedestrian-friendly public spaces.	Require good pedestrian conditions and links in public and private development projects.	Planning and Parks departments	Ongoing	Variable
Ensure that parks and public spaces provided on private property remain open to the public.	Annual or biannual reports by owners on accessibility and condition of public spaces on private property and periodic monitoring by the city.	Agreement with property owners at the time of permitting; Planning	2007 and ongoing	Variable—development bonuses in return for public space benefits.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES				
WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Revise the zoning code to define and protect conservation areas and public parks.	Include in Miami 21 rezoning process.	City Commission	2007	Miami 21 staff time
Adopt a “no net loss” policy for park land in city zoning and ordinances.	Include in Miami 21 rezoning process and/or separate ordinance.	City Commission	2007	Miami 21 staff time
Provide appropriate staffing, services, equipment and maintenance at all parks	Include costs in annual and capital budget requests.	Parks Department	Short term	Dependent on program

EXPAND RESOURCES WITHOUT ACQUIRING MORE LAND

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Develop policies for City use of nonpark land for parks and recreation.	Identify direct and indirect costs and benefits to evaluate when and how to use other resources.	Parks Department	By 2008	Staff time
	Develop policies for leases, conditions, contributions of equipment and maintenance.	Parks Department	By 2008	Staff time
Create a School-Park Working Group about sharing of recreational resources.	Identify and evaluate all current relationships in light of program and area needs.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	Start discussions with principals of schools identified in the parks master plan as of potential interest.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	With principals and school department representatives, develop a framework for resource sharing.	Parks Department	By 2008	Staff time
Designate liaisons with transportation agencies, public works, public housing, cemeteries and so on, to pursue resource sharing.	Pursue opportunities identified in the NET Area Visions and develop methods to share resources such as land and programming.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time

ACQUIRE LAND FOR NEW PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Focus acquisition efforts on waterfront areas, identified underserved neighborhoods, and potential linear park segments.	Seek public space benefits in waterside development.	City Manager's office; Planning and Parks & Recreation departments	Immediate and ongoing	Staff time; variable cost
	Identify lots for citywide and neighborhood parks that may be available through tax title, condemnation, or purchase, using the master plan as a foundation.	City Manager's office; Planning and Parks & Recreation departments	Ongoing	Staff time; variable cost
Use infrastructure improvements to create new linear parks.	Incorporate open space and park enhancements in city infrastructure projects; ensure consideration of park and open space enhancements in development of county- and state-funded infrastructure projects.	City Manager's office; Planning and Parks & Recreation departments	Immediate and ongoing	Staff time; variable cost
Encourage redevelopment of surface parking lots to include parks with public access.	Review proposed projects for possible conversion of surface parking to park uses.	Planning and Parks Department	Immediate and ongoing	Staff time; developer contributions

MAKE ACCESS REAL THROUGH STRONG CONNECTIONS

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Expand the public access setback requirement along the entire river to complete the Riverwalk.	Revise city ordinances.	City Commission acts on Planning Department advice	2007	Staff time
Complete the Baywalk.	Ensure public access as redevelopment and public projects occur along the bay from Margaret Pace Park to the Riverwalk.	Planning Department	Short-medium term	Staff time; developer contributions; public project contributions
Continue to implement sidewalk and shade tree planting programs along major arterials that connect to parks and other community destinations.	Give priority for tree-planting to streets that provide access to parks.	Parks and Planning departments make recommendations to CIP.	Ongoing	Variable
Create a “ParkWalks” program of marked and signed safe pedestrian routes through neighborhoods in order to link residents to their local parks and promote healthy lifestyles through walking.	Identify likely routes and hold community meetings to review and discuss routes; create and install signage; create maps and walking programs.	Parks Department; consultants; public health organizations	Short to medium term	Seek funding from foundations and groups promoting healthy lifestyles.
Encourage residents to create linear parks on residential street swales.	Provide guidance information and a liaison in the Planning or Public Works departments.	Planning, Parks, Transportation and Public Works departments	Medium term	Seek funding from environmental organizations to support creation of guidance documents and training.
Make blueway connections real.	Expand recreational boating programs to additional waterside parks, potentially through contracts with existing nonprofit programs.	Parks Department	Short to medium term	Seek funding from supporters of boating and environmental education.
	Provide public shuttles to the islands on weekends, potentially by contract with private company and City support with publicity and programs.	Parks Department; Transportation Department	Short to medium term	Fee for service with city oversight of shuttle fee as part of contract
	Explore potential to make creeks and canals navigable to kayaks and canoes through discussions with nonprofits such as TPL and with the South Florida Water District.	Parks Department	Long term	Staff time to begin discussions

MAKE ACCESS REAL THROUGH STRONG CONNECTIONS (CONTINUED)

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Enhance and redesign the M-Path for greater safety, security, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods, to the Riverwalk/Greenway, and across the Miami River to connect with the Commodore Trail.	Work with users and neighborhoods to identify areas needing better security and appropriate connections.	Parks and Planning departments promote connectivity to Transportation Department, MPO, and MetroRail	Medium term	Staff time to begin discussions
Create and enhance pedestrian and bicycle paths and trails within the city and advocate for implementation of regional trail systems within and connecting to the city: Overtown Greenway, Commodore Trail, Flagler Trail, Venetian Connector.	Designate a staff person in a city department to be responsible for coordinating resources for paths and trails and working with users, neighborhoods, Miami-Dade County, and nonprofits.	Planning, Parks, or Transportation department takes the lead	Short to long term	Staff time; state funding
	Explore the potential for a Tamiami Greenway to follow the Tamiami Canal from the Miami River to the Blue Lagoon.	Designated staff to work with Transportation Department	Medium to long term	Staff time

MAKE THE PARK SYSTEM THE GREENEST AND MOST SUSTAINABLE IN THE COUNTRY

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Continue native plant restoration and elimination of exotic plants as well as nature education programs at Simpson Park and the Virginia Key nature area and expand to the conservation area at Wainwright Park.	Seek collaboration for volunteers and projects from the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society; the Institute for Regional Conservation; Citizens for a Better South Florida.	Parks Department naturalist and staff	Ongoing; expand in short term	Additional staff
Restore native vegetation in woodland, shoreline, and streamfront edges and other areas of parks where possible.	Seek collaboration for volunteers and projects from the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society; the Institute for Regional Conservation; Citizens for a Better South Florida.	Parks Department naturalist and staff	Ongoing; expand in short term	Additional staff
Create satellite nature education programs in the larger city parks, potentially with coastal hammock exhibits.	Expand the Community Science Workshop (CSW) program at Virrick Park to more parks.	Parks Department works with Citizens for a Better South Florida CSW program	Short to medium term	Funded by grants
Establish native plantings in public road, rail, drainage and utility corridors that are not suitable for pedestrian and recreation access.	Seek information and collaboration from the Institute for Regional Conservation and University of Florida project on state rights of way in Miami-Dade County.	Transportation and Public Works departments	Medium to long term	Incorporate in road and utility project design
Create an urban forestry program that incorporates the concept of the tree canopy as habitat.	Recruit an urban forester as a new member of the Parks & Recreation staff	Parks Department	Short to medium term	Professional salary
Promote public awareness of the benefits of plantings on private as well as public property.	Collaborate with organizations such as Citizens for a Better South Florida, the Native Plant Society, and the Institute for Regional Conservation to provide displays, seminars and native plant giveaway events at parks.	Parks Department with nonprofits	Short to medium term	Staff time and grants
Introduce sustainable methods in park maintenance and operations.	Evaluate current activities according to the ISO 14001 environmental management standard; implement best management practices such as integrated pest management, water conservation, chemical management, etc.	Operations Division of Parks Department	Short term for audit; medium term for implementation	Staff time; incremental
Incorporate green building methods and green roofs in new park structures and employ life-cycle costing to evaluate costs.	Require designers to incorporate energy- and water-efficient systems in new structures and seek LEED certification.	Parks and CIP departments	Short to long term	Staff time; possible higher construction costs offset by lower operational costs

ENHANCE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Create a new Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to replace the current Parks Advisory Board.	Amend current ordinance as proposed in master plan.	City Commission with recommendation of Parks Department	2007	Staff time
Develop and manage a network of "Friends" groups for individual parks.	Hire a volunteer coordinator.	Parks Department	2007 and ongoing	Professional salary
Create a citywide parks foundation.	Convene a meeting of potential supporters.	Mayor, Commission and Parks Director	2007	Time
	Provide seed money for the foundation from the city.	Mayor and Commission	2007	\$500,000
	Seek foundation support for initial funding.	City leaders	2007	\$500,000
Keep records of recreation program users.	Record user information in a central database; require organizations that use park resources to provide records on users and user satisfaction.	Parks Department	2007 and ongoing	Staff time
Survey park users regularly to monitor needs, interests, and satisfaction.	Survey program users after program completion with a common survey instrument for all programs; use Web surveys every two to five years; commission a scientific survey every ten years.	Parks Department	Immediate for program users; 2008 for other surveys	Staff time; \$25,000–\$50,000 for scientific survey
Designate a liaison from the Parks & Recreation Department to work with government agencies and nonprofit groups to expand park and recreational opportunities.	Select an appropriate staff member (or members).	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
Establish a system of community consultation for the redesign of existing parks and design of new parks.	Ensure that designers meet with park managers and staff; hold at least two meetings with the public—to discuss design needs and to review proposed design when changes are still possible.	Parks and CIP departments	Ongoing but improve	Staff time; include in designer contracts

DESIGN COUNTS

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Hire a staff landscape architect for the Department of Parks & Recreation.	Recruit a landscape architect with parks experience.	Parks Department	2007	Professional salary
Apply design guidelines when redesigning existing parks or designing new ones.	Require written memorandum from designer on how the design meets the spirit of the guidelines and if not, the benefits of alternative approaches.	Parks Department	Immediate and ongoing	Staff time

IMPROVE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS				
WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Revise and expand the Department of Parks & Recreation vision and mission statements to include the public realm role of the parks system in addition to the role of recreation provider.	Revise through discussion with staff to ensure understanding of the significance of the change.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
Establish core services/programs and fees/charges policy according to level of benefit to the community.	Series of workshops for recreation superintendent and park managers.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time; 3 consultant workshops totaling \$25,000–30,000
Improve management and employee accountability.	Create an annual work plan tied to the vision, mission and annual budget process with assignments for senior staff.	Parks Department	2007, then annually	Staff time
	Create a task force for rapid resolution of issues.	Parks Department	Immediate, then ongoing	Staff time
	Involve supervisors in recruitment, hiring and evaluation.	Parks Department	As part of task force	Staff time
	Establish monthly meetings for park managers to discuss goals, concerns and issues.	Parks Department	Immediate, then ongoing	Staff time
Establish preventive maintenance and replacement programs.	Refine and update master plan inventory; inventory and evaluate condition of all major equipment and vehicles and funding needed for timely replacement.	Parks Department	Short term	Staff time
	Establish preventive maintenance program and funding need.	Parks Department	Short term	Create a facility asset manager position or contract this service (operating budget minimum \$80,000).
Improve management and establish policies and systems for program partner and sponsor groups.	Review and revise application process for special events and all other users, regardless of whether fee is applied or waived.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	Define the purpose and rationale for program partnerships and sponsorships and establish formal policies.	Parks Department	Short term	Staff time

IMPROVE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Strengthen support services.	Align revenue and expenditures on a program budget basis with accounting software.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	Create an IT strategic plan to integrate systems.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	Require staff training on computer applications.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time; possible training services contract
Enhance the image of the department and city parks.	Create a marketing plan.	Parks Department	By 2008	Staff or contracted
	Produce an annual report.	Parks Department	End of 2007, then annually	Staff and printing costs

DIVERSIFY FUNDING FOR CAPITAL, OPERATIONS, AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

WHAT	HOW	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Seek grants and other funding for new resources and activities.	Identify state and federal funds for projects that can include park, recreation and open space resources	Parks, Transportation, and Public Works departments	2007 and ongoing	Staff time
	Identify grant sources from funders not specifically oriented towards parks but who are focused on related issues such as public health, environment, and culture.	Parks, Transportation, and Public Works departments	2007 and ongoing	Staff time
	Work with friends groups and a parks foundation partner to support fundraising for park needs.	Parks Department	Short to medium term	Staff time
Identify costs of maintenance and support functions and apply to requests for services.	Track time and materials costs to determine average costs for services.	Parks Department	2007	Staff time
	Seek payment or budget allocation for costs incurred providing services to non-departmental users.	Parks Department	Short term	Staff time; service charges will offset the cost of providing the service
Allow the Department of Parks and Recreation to recapture costs from fees and event revenues, including, where appropriate, additional funds for cross subsidy of needs that do not generate revenue.	Assign revenues generated by the Department of Parks and Recreation to the departmental budget.	City Manager; City Commission	Short term	Staff time
Provide general fund support of the parks system with the standards and level of service expected by the public for resources and programs that benefit the community.	Develop annual budgets that clearly explain the rationale behind the standards and level of service; the costs of meeting those standards; and the per capita budget compared with similar cities.	Parks Department	Short term and ongoing	Staff time
	Provide sufficient funding. Develop a scholarship and fee-waiver program with clear criteria and application procedures for individuals and groups who cannot afford fees.	City Manager recommendation for City Commission action	Short term and ongoing	Amount dependent on annual review
Revise the Parks and Open Space Trust Fund to make it more flexible.	Amend the ordinance as proposed in the master plan.	City Commission with staff recommendation	2007	Staff time
Create a dedicated funding source for the park system, such as a percentage of property tax to support parks and public spaces.	After clarification of costs to support standards and level of service, review options used in other cities and develop appropriate program and amount for Miami.	Parks Department; park advocate organizations	Medium term	Staff time

NET AREA IMPLEMENTATION TASKS AND PARK OPPORTUNITIES

Park visits and inventories were performed during and after the 2005 hurricane season and in the midst of implementation of the Homeland Defense/ Neighborhood Improvement Bond capital improvement program. The implementation charts below do not include tasks, actions, or needs related to hurricane damage repairs, nor do they include the capital improvements that have already been approved.

In general, staffed citywide parks with numerous sports and recreation activities are well-maintained and amenities such as restrooms and drinking fountains were found to be in good working order. Facilities used by organized groups, athletic fields and equipment, and sports courts were usually in good, if not excellent, condition. Areas for free play, self-directed recreation, and passive use, however, seem to receive less attention. They often have little in the way of design except grass and randomly planted trees, while shade is lacking at activity and seating areas. The number and distribution of picnic tables and benches often bears little relation to the size and design of the park. Vita Course equipment, which is designed to be installed along a “course”—a jogging path—is repeatedly installed in groups rather than along a course. It is also a too-common occurrence that handicap-accessible play structures are not properly linked to the rest of the park by handicap-accessible paths. The city has an ADA plan for making parks accessible. Large improvement projects will include ADA upgrades as a matter of course, but care should be taken with smaller projects, such as equipment replacement, to make sure that accessibility is upgraded at that time. Another critical issue is lighting. Many residents use parks in the dark. They are up early in the morning to jog or walk, or they and their families participate in programs and games in the evening or at night. Good lighting at the parks and on routes to the parks is essential. Finally, all swimming pools should be open all year for swimming instruction, water access, children’s swim periods, and adult swim periods. As pools are redesigned, there should be efforts to create attractive decks for family outings at the neighborhood pool.

In addition to action items related to existing parks, the charts for each NET Area include items from the master plan recommendations that may not be under the jurisdiction of the Department of Parks and Recreation. The implementation matrix shows once again how important it is to understand the park and open space opportunities that may be available through the work of many agencies. Leveraging these opportunities for the benefit of the city will require coordination.

Downtown

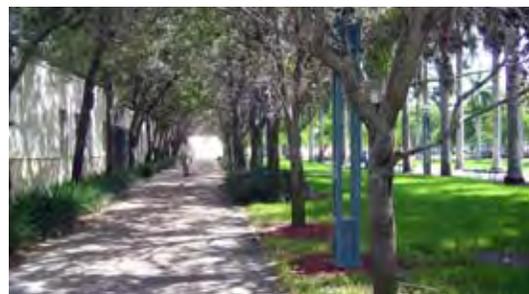
DOWNTOWN				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Waterfront connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue a connected Baywalk from Margaret Pace Park to the Riverwalk through park design, setback requirements, and floating or hanging walkways. Commission temporary floating art displays in the water. Establish water taxi service to parks and other waterfront destinations.. 	Planning and Transportation departments in collaboration with public and private interests	Ongoing	
Biscayne Boulevard connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the Downtown Development Authority Plan to put Biscayne Boulevard median parking underground and expand park acreage along Biscayne Boulevard. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short term	
Bayfront Park redesign	<p>Redesign Bayfront Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize visual and physical connection to the bay. Create “Bayfront Beach” with expanded sandy area, interactive water features and handicap-accessible areas. Remove fixed amphitheater and use temporary stage and seating for events. Replace excessive amount of hardscape with green, planted, and shaded areas. Replace fountain with a creative, interactive water feature. 	Bayfront Park Trust	Medium term	
Fort Dallas Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide historic interpretation signage and map. 	Planning Department; Historic Preservation Office	Medium term	
Miami Circle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide views and interpretive signage from the Riverwalk. Avoid excessive fencing while protecting the site. 	State of Florida	Short to medium term	
Brickell Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore park with Baywalk, benches and pedestrian amenities, paths and gardens with flowering plants. 	Developer restoration; oversight by Parks Department	Short term	Seek corporate sponsorship to support improvements and programming of passive activities.
Allen Morris Neighborhood Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue successful arrangement with Perricone’s Restaurant. 	Partnership with abutter	Ongoing	
Southside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade and repair facilities. Improve trash pickup and maintenance. Review Vita Course placement. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Lummus Park and Lummus Landing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the park over the road to “Lummus Landing.” Create a fountain/water play area. Establish a youth education program with police horse stables. Preserve historic buildings, provide interpretation, and open them to the public. Remove all chain link fencing; if fencing remains necessary, replace with historically-compatible fencing. 	Planning, Transportation, Parks, and Police departments; Historic Preservation Office	Short to medium term	

Downtown (continued)

DOWNTOWN				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Miami-Dade Cultural Center Plaza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate the plaza with restaurants, concerts, artisan fairs and weekly programmed events. • Aggressively publicize events. • Provide visible police oversight. 	Miami-Dade County	Short to medium term	
Government Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and maintain the park and its shady pathways. • Consider events to promote more use of this attractive park. 	Miami-Dade County	Short to medium term	
Courthouse District	Create a new downtown park over underground parking framed by the courthouse, MetroRail and high-rise development.	Planning Department	Medium term	
Miami Arena Area	Establish a new park with athletic fields in area between the arena and the FEC train tracks to serve nearby residents.	Planning and Transportation departments	Long term	
Central Miami Neighborhood Park	Restore and reopen the park in conjunction with historic Fire Station #2 when there are people living in the area and/or when there is programming for the park, perhaps as part of the Performing Arts District.	Parks Department	Medium to long term	
Brickell Avenue plazas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezone Brickell Avenue to require pedestrian-friendly continuity of plazas when Brickell Avenue sites are redeveloped. • Provide safe mid-block crossings for pedestrians. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	
Brickell waterfront walkway and overlooks	Create platforms, boardwalks, cantilevered walks or floating docks for viewing the water.	Planning Department	Medium term	
Virginia Key	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore Virginia Key Beach Park following the VKBP Trust's plan. • Continue and expand native plant restoration and nature trail programs. • Make the beach handicap-accessible. 	Virginia Key Beach Park Trust; Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Watson Island	Ensure public access is maintained to all parts of the future public park and public realm along the water without requiring purchases.	Planning Department	Medium to long term	
Green streets	Plant trees and make streetscape improvements to east-west connections between the FEC Corridor/Overtown and major attractions including Bayfront Park, Bayside, American Airlines Arena, Bicentennial/Museum Park, and the Performing Arts Center; connect West Brickell with Brickell Avenue and the water.	Planning and Transportation departments	Ongoing	



Activate **Cultural Center Plaza** with programmed events.



The **Park at Government Center**: a good model for shady walkways.

Overtown

OVERTOWN				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Williams Park and Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the pool year round. Add shade to the playground. Add program space. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Gibson Park and Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the pool year round. Establish comprehensive swimming program. Preserve and enhance the weight room. Redesign park layout to improve circulation. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Highland Park	Consult with neighborhood on potential need for a play structure in the park.	Parks Department	Short term	
Rainbow Village Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create community gardens for residents. Establish a park stewardship program for residents. 	Parks Department; nonprofit Partners for Community Gardens program	Short term	
Gateway and trail markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark the entrance to historic Overtown at NW 2nd Avenue and NW 20th Street. Install markers for the Black Heritage Trail and the Overtown Greenway. 	Planning Department	Short term	
Dorsey Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add exercise equipment. Add a new baseball field. 	Parks Department	Medium term	
Reeves Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add programming. Increase security. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Range Park #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For new domino park, use solar lighting. Add plantings. Add art. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Spring Garden Point Park, Phase II	Seek funding for Phase II—park building, restrooms, and park entry in Canal House style.	Parks Department; CIP	Medium term	
New park at river and NW 12th Avenue	Create a riverside pocket park.	Parks Department	Medium term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect 11th and 9th streets to Bicentennial/Museum Park with trees and streetscape. Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Create a new domino park with art, plantings, and solar lighting at **Range Park #1**.



Rainbow Village Park could benefit from a stewardship program for complex residents.

Wynwood-Edgewater

WYNWOOD-EDGEWATER				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Roberto Clemente Park	Install shaded seating near play areas.	Parks Department	Short term	
Plaza— “Placita San Juan”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate with school district to gain control of parcel on NW 2nd Avenue at 32nd Street. Design as a plaza with hardscape, trees and shrubs in planters, shade, and areas for sitting. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Waterside overlooks	Establish benches, overlooks or small parks at the ends of streets at the waterfront.	Planning Department	Short term	
Biscayne Park and City Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a landscaped edge to Biscayne Park and connect it as a gateway to the cemetery. Create historic programming for the City Cemetery. Create walking programs for the cemetery. 	Parks Department with historic organization partners	Short to medium term	
Biscayne–Margaret Pace green connection	Create a green streetscape connection between Biscayne Boulevard and Margaret Pace Park.	Planning and Transportation departments	Short term	
Margaret Pace Park	Provide shade over playground seating.	Parks Department	Short term	
Elizabeth Martell Park	Work with neighbors to see if this park and adjacent land should be a dog park.	Parks Department	Short term	
Wynwood district gateways	Continue enhancing Wynwood gateways with sculpture and other indications of its role as an arts district.	Planning Department	Short term	
Woodson/Design District Park	Redesign the park as a major gateway to the Design District and Midtown Miami, providing art and more places to sit.	Planning and Parks departments	Short term	Seek funding partnerships from Design District businesses.
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create shady routes connecting parks, neighborhoods and the waterfront. Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Planning Department	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Upper Eastside

UPPER EASTSIDE				
TASK/ OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
New parks for Shorecrest area on the Little River at Biscayne Plaza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On redevelopment of Biscayne Plaza, obtain a public park on the Little River, connecting to park land on the other side of the river. Seek new neighborhood parks on unbuildable lots or city land. 	Planning and Parks departments	Short to medium term	
Little River Greenway and Blueway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rezone commercial riverside properties to require a setback for a greenway as parcels are redeveloped. Provide kayak launch sites and clean the river as appropriate. 	Planning and Parks departments	Medium term	
Biscayne Boulevard neighborhood parks	Create pocket parks where vehicle access has been blocked at residential streets that are closed to vehicle traffic with benches, bus pull-outs and shelters.	Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	
Waterfront overlooks	Create public overlooks with benches or pocket parks at the ends of streets on the bay.	Planning Department	Short term	
Legion Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the Biscayne Boulevard entrance to pedestrians. Redesign pathways with permeable materials. Identify an area for a dog park. Provide shade for the tot lot. Redesign the park to improve placement of courts, pedestrian circulation for fitness paths, and water views and to enhance buildings. Improve lighting for evening use. Open the pedestrian entrance at NE 7th Court after consultation with neighborhood. Renovate the park building to reflect its historic character. 	Parks Department	Short to long term	
Baywood Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant shade trees but preserve water views. Add more benches and site furniture. Landscape southern edge to screen parking lot chain link fence. Maintain mangrove area to avoid trash build-up and provide interpretive signage on the value of mangroves. 	Parks Department	Short term	
NE 79th Street	Make NE 79th Street pedestrian-friendly to connect the Little River area to the bay.	Planning and Transportation departments	Short term	
Picnic Islands	Provide public access through weekend contract boats and kayak rentals at nearby parks.	Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	
Albert Pallot/ Magnolia Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add shade around the perimeter of the park. Maintain an open area for informal sports. Add limited on-street parking. Upgrade or remove the fence. 	Parks Department	Short term	

Upper Eastside (continued)

UPPER EASTSIDE				
TASK/ OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Morningside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to sign on Biscayne Boulevard: "open to the public." Research design history and incorporate in current design if practical. Upgrade the pool and pool programs for year-round use. Upgrade kayak rental programs. Assess use of baseball diamond and fields and redesign areas for sports most in demand. Preserve areas for informal play. Consider planting more shade trees in groups. Identify potential for a dog park in an inconspicuous location. Manage the pond and wetland to create a nature trail with interpretive signage. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Stearns Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage neighborhood use with safe access. Evaluate potential for a small dog park. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Biscayne Heights Park	Provide dog clean-up bags.	Parks Department	Short term	
Eaton Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add trees along park edges, especially NE 5th Avenue. Partner with the adjacent library for programming. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the connection between Legion Park and Morningside School. Plant shade trees to make major streets pedestrian-friendly. Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Evaluate the potential for creating a small dog park at **Stearns Park**.



Add trees around the edges of **Eaton Park** for more shade.



Plants trees for shade, but preserve bay views at **Baywood Park**.



New Biscayne Boulevard mini-parks: Create pocket parks at closed street ends.

Little Haiti

LITTLE HAITI				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ISSUES/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
“Little River Reserve”	Create a passive park on the Little River with trails and a kayak/canoe launch.	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Edison/Carver Athletic Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a destination athletic center at NW 71st Street—easy access for citywide recreation. • Include neighborhood amenities, such as a plaza with trees and plants for sitting and talking, games or chess or dominoes, concerts and art events. • Share resources with the adjacent child-care center. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Little River Commerce Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether office workers and the community would use the park if reopened and, if so, seek a business sponsor. • If park would not be used, seek to exchange parcel with a better-located park opportunity in northern Little Haiti. 	Parks Department	Medium term	
Range Park #2/ Victory Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish public from private space at Victory Homes. • Add trees and shade. • Explore potential for community garden plots. • Add amenities at the neighborhood edge—NW 75th Street. 	Parks Department; nonprofit partners for community gardens (such as Coalition for a Better South Florida)	Medium term	
Buena Vista Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tables for shelters. • Add shade. • Consider closing gates at night for safety. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Pullman Neighborhood Park	Add shade to the play structure and benches positioned by the play structure.	Parks Department	Short term	
Neighborhood park needs	Seek neighborhood park opportunities in the Design District and other underserved areas.	Parks Department	Short term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make major north-south and east-west connections pedestrian-friendly, especially NE 2nd Avenue and NW 2nd Avenue. • Make Miami Avenue into a boulevard. • Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. • Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Close Buena Vista Park's gates at night for security.



Add street trees to make NE 2nd Avenue more pedestrian-friendly.

Model City

MODEL CITY				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
African Square Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign the amphitheater space to eliminate the below-grade area and provide for multiple uses or a water playground. Expand the park to the entire block to provide a field for informal sports. Reestablish the computer lab and afternoon tutoring program. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Hadley Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a gymnasium and indoor fitness center. Provide rain shelters, restrooms and water fountains by sports fields. Install bike racks in front of the recreation building. Expand space and programming for seniors. Consult with park users about repairing the skating area or using it for other purposes. Provide lighting on the walking course for early morning users. Install more grills and pavilions for picnics. Improve the computer lab to meet demand. 	Parks Department	Short to long term	
Belafonte–Talcolcy Park	Rehabilitate and improve the community garden project.	Parks Department	Short term	
Liberty City green space redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In any future redevelopment, consolidate green space at Liberty City to provide usable space for both active and passive activities. Distinguish between private and public space. 	Planning Department	Medium to long term	
Alonzo Kelly Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In any future redevelopment of this area, consider donating this park land to add to a larger area of usable green space. In the interim, maintain and upgrade the park. 	Miami-Dade County	Medium to long term	
New 12th Ave and New 62nd Ave green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape the edges of vacant lots in prominent locations. Provide lighting, benches and plantings at the southwest corner lot with bus stop. 	Planning and Parks departments	Short term	
Crestwood Park	Provide benches and tables for adult use.	Parks Department	Short term	
Dawkins Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide benches and tables for adult use. Provide a restroom in one of the three small parks. 	Parks Department	Short term	
West Buena Vista Park	Provide benches and tables for adult use.	Parks Department	Short term	
New parks in underserved areas	Seek properties for neighborhood parks.	Planning and Parks departments	Medium term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make major streets pedestrian-friendly. Develop ParkWalks routes and bike lanes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Planning and Parks departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.

Allapattah

ALLAPATTAH				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Curtis Park redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect the park and the pool area by NW North River Drive, redirecting traffic and relocating some parking. • Redesign park entrances and pathways to make park organization clearer. • Add more shade and plantings. • Create a pedestrian plaza on NW 20th Street. • Install a pedestrian-activated crossing signal for NW 20th Street at the northwest corner of the park. • Replace tennis nets. 	Planning and Transportation departments	Short term	
Unity Park	Design and create a neighborhood park.	Parks Department	Short term	
Riverwalk areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the 50-foot setback and public access requirement for all river redevelopment, with variances for qualified maritime uses. • Explore acquisition of a river-access site at the former marina near NW 19th Avenue. 	Planning and Parks departments	Short to medium term	
Moore Park redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate the day care center to open a more contiguous recreational area. • Passive space needs paths and plantings to enhance design. • Provide ADA upgrades and more shade in the play areas. • Keep tennis center courts in excellent condition. • Consider adding another clay court and a two-sided hitting wall in the tennis center. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Juan Pablo Duarte Park	Negotiate with Comstock Elementary School to share open areas for recreation.	Parks Department	Short term	
Wagner Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up the creek. • Identify and create public access points. 	Planning and Public Works departments	Short to medium term	
Children’s “Empowerment Zone” play areas	Develop play programs in play areas near the children’s medical area.	Parks Department and medical institutions	Short to medium term	
Interchange pond	Explore potential for walking and biking trails, a skateboard park, or other active uses.	Parks Department	Medium to long term	
MetroRail Linear Park	Extend the park where feasible and incorporate bike trails.	Planning Department; MetroRail	Ongoing	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. • Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.

Little Havana

LITTLE HAVANA				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Henderson Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build an open-air stage and community center for arts programs. Work with the adjacent clinic and community organizations on regular cultural programs and festivals. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Robert King High Homes new riverfront park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transform open space at the river into a riverside park. Provide boat access and a pedestrian path. 	Parks Department; Housing Authority	Medium term	
Waterfront overlooks and riverwalk	Establish river overlooks and pocket parks.	Parks Department; community groups	Medium term	
Neighborhood parks for western Little Havana	Seek neighborhood park opportunities in underserved areas.	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Soccer fields at Orange Bowl overflow parking areas	Prepare overflow parking areas for use as soccer fields when parking is not needed.	Parks Department	Short term	
Plaza de la Cubanidad	Update and refresh design.	Parks Department	Medium to long term	Seek sponsors to fund costs.
Jorge Mas Canosa/ Riverside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a bike/skate path. Add a small, staffed building. Create an organized baseball program. 	Parks Department	Medium term	Park manager salary
José Martí Park and Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer more programs for teens and adults. Upgrade the pavilion for picnics and parties. Improve connections between the two parts of the park. Provide more shade at the pool. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Significant open space provides an opportunity for a new riverfront park at **Robert King High Homes**.



Improve under-the-freeway connections between the two parts of **José Martí Park**.

Flagami

FLAGAMI				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Flagami Neighborhood Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the asphalt pad and install a play structure. Rehab and open the building for community meeting space. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Antonio Maceo Park	Design a new building on a minimum of existing green space and provide visual connection through the building to the water.	Parks and CIP departments	Short term	
West End Park and Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovate the pool and pool area. Open the pool for year-round use. Improve lighting. Offer new programs for girls, adults and seniors. Add shade. Provide paved walks and paths. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
New mini-parks	Evaluate opportunities at neighborhood traffic circles with large rights of way for park creation and redirection of circulation.	Parks, Planning, and Transportation departments	Medium term	
Miami River Rapids Park	Consider relocating the juvenile program and returning the site to public park use.	Parks Department	Medium to long term	
Kinloch Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shade for bleachers. Plant trees to screen the power station. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Fern Isle Park expansion with Police Benevolent Association site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire the PBA site. Design to connect to Fern Isle. Manage the South Fork to provide canoe and kayak programs while preserving habitat. 	City Manager's office; Parks and Planning departments	Short to long term	
Sewell Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over time, eliminate invasive exotics and restore native plants. Incorporate accessibility where possible. 	Parks Department	Medium term	
"Central Park" connections	Create small boat launch opportunities at Sewell, Fern Isle/South Fork, and Curtis parks.	Parks Department; South Florida Water District	Medium term	
Blueways	Explore Tamiami Canal boating opportunities.	Parks Department	Long term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning, and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Fern Isle Park: Provide canoe/kayak programs on the South Fork while preserving wildlife habitat.



At Kinloch Park, plant trees along the perimeter to screen the power station.

West Flagler

WEST FLAGLER				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Seek neighborhood park sites	Evaluate potential park sites identified in the master plan.	Parks and Planning departments	Short to long term	
St. Michael's Church/Miami-Dade Auditorium site	Discuss joint neighborhood park development and use with St. Michael's and the County.	Parks and Planning departments	Short term	
Smathers Senior Center site	Discuss potential for a neighborhood tot lot on housing authority land.	Parks Department	Short term	
Flagler Street sites (less desirable land uses)	Evaluate problem properties for potential park use.	Parks and Planning departments	Short term	
Woodlawn Cemetery program opportunities	Discuss opportunities for walking programs with cemetery and public health groups.	Parks Department	Short term	Seek funding from public health foundations such as Robert Wood Johnson.
Coral Gate Park	Review parking and intersection safety issues.	Parks and Transportation departments	Short term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning, and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



Discuss the potential for a neighborhood tot lot in the **Smathers senior housing complex**.



Consider using **Woodlawn Cemetery** for neighborhood walking programs.



Seek opportunities to create **new neighborhood parks**.



The current parking configuration creates safety issues at **Coral Gate Park**.

Coral Way

CORAL WAY				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
New Wolfarth Park	Develop a neighborhood park with a shaded play structure, benches, and picnic tables on existing City-owned land.	Parks Department	Short term	
Bryan Park	Evaluate potential for active programming that does not require full transformation into a tennis center and potential to put a tennis center in a larger park.	Parks Department	2007	
Cuban Memorial Plaza	Install raised crosswalks along the pedestrian pathway at street crossings.	Transportation Department	Short term	
Simpson Park	Continue nature center use and programming.	Parks Department	Ongoing	
Triangle Park	Continue current use.	Parks Department	Ongoing	
Shenandoah Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient continuous passive space for a park of this size—do not further reduce by building more facilities. • Redesign to reorganize space. 	Parks Department	Medium to long term	
Douglas Park	Review Vita Course placement.	Parks Department	Short term	
Seek neighborhood park sites	Evaluate problem properties, redevelopment projects, tax title properties, etc., for potential park use.	Planning, Parks, Transportation, and Public Works departments	Ongoing	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. • Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning and Transportation departments	Short to medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.

South/West Coconut Grove

SOUTH/WEST COCONUT GROVE				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Armbrister Park	Add more shade trees.	Parks Department	Short term	
New Grand Avenue parks	Create new neighborhood parks at Grand Avenue.	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Virrick Park	Avoid building on green space for a neighborhood library addition.	Parks and CIP departments	Short term	
Merrie Christmas Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add shade to the playground and benches. • Widen paths. 	Parks Department	Short to medium term	
Bike lanes	Create marked bike lanes and bike routes connecting parks and public spaces.	Transportation Department	Short to medium term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. • Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning, and Transportation departments	Medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.

North/East Coconut Grove

NORTH/EAST COCONUT GROVE				
TASK/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIONS/NEEDS	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH
Weekend waterfront bike zone	Close off the south two lanes of South Bayshore Drive on Sundays for biking, rollerblading and walking.	City Manager's office; Transportation Department	2007	Police detail
Peacock Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide restrooms. • Provide paved access to the playground. 	Parks Department	Short term	
David Kennedy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate the dog park to a more suitable spot. • Provide interpretive signage for the mangrove area. • Keep the shoreline free of debris and trash. • Provide an accessible connection to the play structure. • Provide shade at sitting areas by the playground. 	Parks Department	Short term	
Coconut Grove Baywalk	Work with public and private property owners to create a Baywalk from Wainwright Park to Peacock Park.	Planning and Parks departments	Short to long term	
New signature waterfront park	Demolish the old convention center and create a new waterfront park and plaza.	City Manager's office; Parks and Planning departments	Short to medium term	
Alice Wainwright Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional parking and make existing parking as efficient as possible. • Eliminate exotics from the conservation area and restore native plant species. • Install interpretive signage and develop programs for the conservation area. • Provide paths to connect to the tot lot sitting area and the bay. • Provide access to the water's edge for the handicapped and elderly. • Provide shade for some waterfront benches. 	Parks Department	Short term (parking); medium to long term (conservation area)	
Douglas/Silver Bluff Mini-Park	Repair and renovate, applying guidelines.	Parks Department	Medium term	Seek neighborhood group participation and care.
Lincoln Park	Repair and renovate, applying guidelines.	Parks Department	Medium term	Seek neighborhood group participation and care.
Blanche Park	Work with the Friends group to make improvements.	Parks Department	Ongoing	
Elizabeth Steele Neighborhood Park	Work with the neighborhood on passive design: plantings, paths, benches, shade.	Parks Department	Medium term	Seek neighborhood group participation and care.
Kirk Munroe Tennis Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide shade for seating by the courts. • Provide a walkway in the passive area. • Reposition the practice wall to maximize passive area. 	Parks Department	Medium term	
Green streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ParkWalks routes with neighborhood and parks users. • Install lighting for safety along ParkWalks routes. 	Parks, Planning and Transportation departments	Medium term	Seek grant funding for ParkWalks.



MIAMI PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

MASTER PLAN

MAY 2007 | APPENDIX 1

Technical Appendix

MAY 2007
THE CITY OF MIAMI
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PREPARED BY **GOODY CLANCY**
WITH DODSON ASSOCIATES | GREENPLAY LLC | LEISURE VISION | ROSENBERG GARDNER DESIGN



Technical Appendix

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A. Existing Conditions Inventory

During the course of the planning process in 2005-2006, the consultant team visited every park in the system to inventory and assess conditions at the park. The Miami landscape architecture firm of Rosenberg Gardner Design created the assessment tool and performed the inventory and assessment. This process was complicated by two factors. First, this was a year of significant hurricane activity and park inventory visits occurred, in many cases, after hurricane damage. The consultants attempted to take these conditions into account. Second, the inventory also occurred in the midst of implementation of a series of capital improvement bond projects that had been previously programmed. This means that, in some cases, the inventory and assessment occurred before programmed improvements were implemented. Therefore, the inventory and assessment should be viewed as a snapshot in time and as a preliminary model that should be refined. Ultimately, the inventory and evaluation should be conducted regularly by park managers and park staff as part of their regular activities. Use of a handheld computer to enter information, with downloads to the central inventory database, would be the most efficient way to continue this system.

An inventory and assessment was performed on the parks except for:

- Parks with extensive improvement plans (e.g., Grapeland)
- New parks to be constructed (e.g., Little Haiti)
- Parks undergoing individual master planning (Museum, Parcel B, Bayfront, Coconut Grove Waterfront, Virginia Key)

As part of this project the Parks and Recreation Department will receive an Excel spreadsheet database connected to GIS data and digital photos. In the future, the Parks Department could connect information on its Web page to the Google Earth system, which would provide park users quick access to orthophotos and location information.

EXPLANATION OF ASSESSMENT AND RATING FACTORS

The purpose of rating the quality of each park element is to provide guidelines that the Parks & Recreation Department can use internally in planning for improvements to these elements.

The ratings can be used to evaluate which specific facilities throughout the park system are in most need of attention, or which facilities within individual parks need upgrading. For instance, virtually all of the parks were rated low in

the category “Surrounding Environment,” while most parks were rated fairly high in the quality of playgrounds. More specifically, lack of shade in parks was very evident, and contributed to lowering quality scores for several elements.

For each element, an effort was made to list specific factors which are deemed important to providing a quality product. Obviously, there is some subjectivity in assigning potential values for each factor. The amount of numerical points given to a particular factor is related to the relative importance of that factor to the overall usability of the element. For instance, the condition of the grass area of a football field can be given up to 30 points out of a possible total of 100. Having bleachers, while nice, is not necessary and, therefore, can account for only five of the possible 100 points. In many of the elements, provision of shade was considered of significant importance (e.g., in playgrounds, passive areas, and adjacent to court games). Lighted court games and field games factored heavily, since having lights substantially increases the period of availability for play.

Some elements, such as “Surrounding Environment” and “Passive Space,” were more difficult to assess objectively. For example, in the “Passive Space” element, the rating of the “Aesthetic Quality” factor includes some subjective evaluation. Many parks appeared to have had facilities added over a long period of time, with lack of a coherent overall master plan or consistent architectural theme as new buildings were added. Inadequate tree cover, lack of irrigation for field and grass areas, and spotty maintenance contributed to less-than-ideal visual appeal in many parks. Some newer or recently refurbished parks were much more attractive and user-friendly, which indicates that current practices in park design in the city have improved.

Below is an explanation of how factors were evaluated and some observations on how elements fared in their ratings. Three individuals were assigned to undertake the ratings. Each visited a separate group of parks. All jointly evaluated two parks that contained most of the elements to be rated and discussed the interpretation of each factor to be considered, so that each would give roughly the same rating score for the factors. Some cross-checking of scores was done to try to eliminate particular biases in each individual’s ratings.

- **Football/Soccer:** Most of the fields are actually the outfield areas of baseball diamonds. While the condition of a field like this may be good, it would not be rated as highly as a field specifically designed for football or soccer since lighting is not designed specifically for that use, bleachers are not provided, or part of the field might intrude into the skinned area of the infield.
- **Baseball/Softball Field:** In several parks, sod is unevenly worn. Where the outfield is used for football/soccer, overuse often contributes to uneven, worn patches. Lack of irrigation is clearly a factor in the poor condition of many fields.

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- **Basketball:** Most basketball courts are in good condition and received high ratings. Most are lighted for night use. Most, however, lack shaded areas near the courts where users can stop to cool off or spectators can watch in comfort.
 - **Tennis Courts:** Most of the courts and surfaces are in good condition. In some parks, fences were damaged by hurricanes and windscreens were missing. Again, lack of shaded sitting areas was noted in several parks. Tennis is a “social” game, where players gravitate to places where they can be assured of finding a playing partner, have a reserved time to play, and perhaps have a lesson. It takes at least six courts to generate enough use to feasibly provide a tennis building with rest rooms, a manager and/or teaching professional to take reservations. Groups of six or more courts were observed to be in use at virtually any time of the day. One- or two-court facilities often were not in use when visited.

The number of courts provided at a park was not factored into the ratings, but we strongly recommend that whenever possible, tennis centers should be built, rather than the token one or two courts that are often provided in every neighborhood park.

- **Bathrooms:** In some parks, the bathrooms were locked, so we were unable to rate cleanliness/level of repair. Aesthetic quality was based on the architectural design of the bathroom building. Most stand-alone bathroom buildings are very utilitarian, with very little effort given to architectural embellishment. Bathrooms located in a recreation building may be rated more highly if the recreation building itself was considered to be aesthetically pleasing. Bathrooms placed near areas where the most park users could easily reach them, such as next to sports fields where large crowds gather, would receive a higher rating than bathrooms in out-of-the-way areas. Hours of operation, where no park staff was available to question, were estimated. If the restrooms are in a staffed recreation building, we assumed a high rating on hours open. If the bathroom specifically serves a football stadium, we assumed that it would be open during game times and gave it a high rating for hours open. In most parks, bathrooms were open during the primarily weekday hours that the rater visited. We assumed that these would remain open during park operating hours. Most free-standing bathrooms are old and not very inviting to visit.
- **Recreation Buildings:** The sizes of recreation buildings were paced off in the field, so square footages are approximate. Activity rooms are those that were not being used as office or storage space at the time of the raters’ visit. Variety of programs offered, where staff was available to give information, related to the range of age groups that programs serve. Where no one was

available to answer questions, the rater observed types of equipment in the building and any posters or notices announcing activities, to try to determine the range of activities. To identify hours of operation where no one was there to verify that information, the rater would see if park hours were listed on a sign, and assumed, if the building was open, that building hours of operation corresponded to park hours.

- **Water Fountains:** The raters walked the parks to find water fountains and tested them to see if they were working. Many were not working or barely provided water. In some cases the water fountain is inside a building, thus serving users only when the building is open. Several small parks have no water fountains. Many lack fountains near high-intensity activities such as basketball and tennis courts or baseball and football fields.
- **Swimming Pools:** At the time of year that the parks were visited (winter, early spring), the pools were closed, so the raters could not evaluate how the pools were being utilized. The pools appear to be built to serve as utilitarian facilities to teach swimming and swim laps, not as user-friendly places to visit and relax around. Most pools are hot, uninviting spaces, devoid of aesthetic appeal. Many provide minimal space for families to lounge; shaded areas for those who wanted to avoid the sun are almost always missing. Pools generally lack surrounding landscaped areas.

The quality of a pool was determined only by observing the smoothness and color (lack of staining) of the pool surfaces and the repair of the tile on the coping. Most pools are in good condition.

The rating for the patio areas included several factors. Sufficiency of size was based on the assumption that ample space should be available for chaise lounges so that families could relax around the pool in groupings. Several pools have just enough space for one continuous row of lounges with minimal space between the lounges and the edge of the pool; they earned a low rating for that factor.

Pavement quality was judged on the basis of general surface repair (well-drained, no cracks or spalled area, not slippery). Shaded areas to provide relief from the sun was deemed an important feature. Very few pools provide even a small area of shade.

Aesthetics of the pool area combined an assessment of the shape of the deck (stark rectangular decks are boring), the type of deck finishes (plain concrete vs. textured, colored concrete or nicer materials such as tiles, pavers), type of surrounding fence (chain link vs. picket fencing), landscaping, and so on.

Most bathhouses were closed, so the raters could not evaluate the repair and cleanliness of the interiors. Aesthetically, most bathhouses appear utilitarian and have little architectural appeal.

Having facilities such as a kid's pool, diving area, or water play apparatus (sprays, slides, etc.) would give extra rating points. All of the pools would benefit from adding water-play apparatus areas, which are now hugely popular.

- **Playgrounds (Tot Lots):** The number of individual elements was evaluated relative to the size of the park. Larger parks with a wide variety of activities that would attract larger numbers of visitors should have larger playgrounds, with more apparatus.

Most playgrounds have sand play surfaces. A cushioned surface is preferable.

Handicap accessibility is not provided in most parks. While a handicap pad adjacent to the equipment was generally provided, a handicap-accessible path leading to the apparatus from the parking area or park entrance usually is not present.

Equipment is properly spaced and adequately set back from playground edges. Smaller playgrounds may not have clear separation of equipment by age group, but in larger facilities that was done by having clusters of equipment sized for pre-schoolers and others for older children. Few parks have separate playgrounds for each age group.

Some parks have welcome shade over the play apparatus (usually from trees). Many playgrounds have no shade. This is a major deficiency in our climate. Most playgrounds have adequate seating for parents, but many are not adequately shaded.

- **Parking/Access Around the Site:** The adequacy of parking is related to the type of facilities and activities provided. Ball fields that are used by leagues generate significant numbers of users and family members arriving by car. One baseball field (not including those used by high schools) can attract as many as 30–40 cars. When the park manager was available to ask, the rater used his or her assessment of adequacy. Otherwise, the rater tried to relate the number of parking spaces to the type and number of facilities. It was generally assumed that smaller parks with few active recreation facilities have sufficient space for parking along adjacent streets. The closeness of a parking lot to the major use generator was considered as well.

Buffering between the parking lot and surrounding streets (i.e., hedges or walls) was considered to be of importance for aesthetic reasons and because it is required by the City's landscape code.

Another factor in access was the provision of pathways leading to the park from the neighborhood and paths within the park. The raters did not canvas the full neighborhood that the park was to serve to determine the adequacy of walkways, but observed if any were available at the park edges.

Within the park, access via paved paths to all facilities would garner the highest rating. Paths should be at least eight feet wide to allow for combination uses (i.e., bicycles and pedestrians), and pavement should be smooth and unbroken. If the park was open for evening use, adequacy of lighting was evaluated. The rater did not visit at night to measure light but observed whether light fixtures were located where they could shed light on paths and fixture spacing and height.

Shade over pavements (walkways and parking), was another important factor in overall quality. In many parks, shade was lacking. Damage from hurricanes caused this deficiency in some parks, but not most.

One item of note was the improper use of Vita-Course stations in several parks. In some parks, stations are grouped within a few feet of each other, rather than spaced at least 100 or more feet apart along a long path, as generally intended. It appeared that an attempt was made to give every neighborhood “something,” even if the space was not appropriate.

- **Passive Space:** Passive spaces are those that generally provide opportunities for nature study, sitting, leisurely strolling, jogging, cycling, picnicking, or just enjoying good views (e.g., waterfront spaces).

Boat ramps, marinas, group picnic shelters, and nature preserves were counted as passive spaces. Paved plazas and open, unprogrammed grass areas also were included. Small buffer areas between active facilities and property lines or setbacks from buildings or parking to streets usually were not counted unless these areas were large enough to create a feeling of isolation from the adjacent use.

The size of the space was estimated by pacing off the area. Some parks with minimal facilities (e.g., a tot lot only) and others with limited facilities but a passive-use orientation, such as Margaret Pace Park, were counted as fully passive. In a park such as Morningside, all but the formal ball field, tennis complex, and soccer field would be considered passive.

Aesthetic quality relates to other factors, such as the quality of the ground area, adequacy of shade and health of trees, degree to which the spaces are buffered from incompatible uses such as noisy streets, ball fields, and so on. How well the area provides visual and actual access to prime views, such

as waterfronts, was considered. At Kennedy Park in Coconut Grove, prime waterfront space is fenced and given over to dog park, separating most park users from that prime area, except for a narrow sliver of land between the dog park and the water's edge.

Several parks have banks of picnic tables very close together, almost cafeteria-style. This does not provide an optimal picnic environment. The raters were unsure whether these areas were purposely set up for large, organized group functions that occur on a regular basis

- **Surrounding Environment:** This category also involved a subjective evaluation. Many parks, because of their small sizes and the need to add as many uses as possible to serve the neighborhood, do not provide adequate visual buffering to or from adjacent uses. Parks may include visual buffers from busy streets, but views into parks may be more of a benefit for safety reasons and for the visual relief offered to passersby. In many parks, a tall chain-link fence provides the buffer from streets or adjacent residences, without any visual softening by landscaping. Lack of sufficient space between park elements such as ballfields and a park perimeter often was a problem.

PARK INVENTORY QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

Each Park Element was evaluated and assigned a numerical value, with a maximum of 100 points per element. For each Park Element, a list of items to be rated was developed and a maximum-minimum score assigned. The selective weight or importance of an item to the overall quality of a Park Element determines the numerical value assigned (e.g., field condition of a ballfield may be valued from 2 to 20, whereas backstop condition may be valued from 0 to 6).

In the case of Park Elements with more than one component (e.g., two baseball fields), each was rated individually, and the ratings were averaged. A total rating for the park was derived by adding the scores of all rated elements and dividing them by the number of elements rated. Thus, the quality of a park with ten elements can be directly compared with the quality of a park with only five elements.

CITY OF MIAMI PARKS INVENTORY AND QUALITY RATING FOR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

NET DISTRICT	PARK NAME	PARK ADDRESS	TOTAL ACRES	COMMISSION DISTRICT	FOOTBALL/SOCCER No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASKETBALL No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	TENNIS No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	PARKING ACCESS	AVERAGE RATING	PASSIVE SPACE Acres	AVERAGE RATING	BATHROOMS No. of Bathrooms	AVERAGE RATING	RECREATION BLDGS. Estimated Sq. Ft.	AVERAGE RATING	PLAYGROUND No. of Playgrounds	AVERAGE RATING	SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	AVERAGE RATING	SWIMMING POOL	AVERAGE RATING	WATER FOUNTAINS No. of Fountains	AVERAGE RATING	OTHER ELEMENTS I.e. beach, boat ramp, skateboard park	TOTAL ALL ELEMENT RATINGS	DIVIDED BY # OF PARK ELEMENTS Quantity Elements Rated	TOTAL AVERAGE PARK RATING
Allapattah	MOORE PARK AND THE MOORE/ASHE-BUCHOLTZ TENNIS CENTER	765 NW 36th Street	19.6	5,1	1	60	1	77	2	66	11	94	1	34	2.0	48	2	72	2000	75	2	68		25		1	60		679	10	68	
Allapattah	ALLAPATTAH COMSTOCK/JUAN PABLO DUARTE PARK	2800 NW 17th Avenue	9.2	1	0		1	72	1	68	2	80	1	81	8.2	65	2	100	3000	85	1	74		70		3	70		765	10	77	
Allapattah	MELROSE PARK	NW 30th St. & 25th Ave.	2.6	1					1	55			1	55	1.5	63					1	56		25					254	5	51	
Allapattah	ALLAPATTAH MINI RESIDENTIAL(SHRINE PARK)	1500 NW 16th Ave.	0.3	1											0.3	15												Roadway Median	15	1	15	
Allapattah	GERRY CURTIS PARK, POOL, AND SPORTS COMPLEX	1901 NW 24th Ave.	27.7	1	1	91		79	3	65	4	72	2	62		75	7	65		89	3	92		80		26	1	75		871	12	73
Allapattah	ALLAPATTAH MINI PARK SITE/ALLAPATTAH MINI PARK (PARK #1)	1935 NW 21st Ave. and N.W. 19th Terr..	0.7	1					1	68					0.7	10					1	59								137	3	46
Allapattah	PINE HEIGHTS (MINI) PARK	NW 16th St. b/n 8th Ave & 8th Ct.	0.3										1	15	0.3	39					1	21		5						80	4	20
Allapattah	BROWARD CIRCLE MINI PARK	NW 8th Ave. & 15th St.	0.3	1											0.25	47														47	1	47
Allapattah	POLICE SIMULATOR SITE	2301 NW 23rd St		1														5000		12										12	1	12
Coral Way	BRYAN PARK	2301 SW 13th St.	2.1	4	1	25					3	60	1	47	0.2	59	2	80			1	67		45			1	100		483	8	60
Coral Way	TRIANGLE PARK	SW 15th Rd. & SW 11th St.	0.5	3					1	49			1	27	0.3	79					1	65		40						260	5	52
Coral Way	SHENANDOAH PARK & POOL	1800 SW 21st Ave.	10.0	4	1	49	2	58	2	50	4	93	1	37	0.2	43	2	83	1300	81	2	32		45	1	32	3	60	4 racquetball courts	663	12	55
Coral Way	DOUGLAS PARK	2755 SW 37th Ave.	10.0	2	1	17		63	2	55	3	55	1	44	0.2	49	2	68	2500	54	2	76		15			4	15		511	8	64
Coral Way	CUBAN MEMORIAL PLAZA	999 SW 13th Ave.	2.2	3											2.2	47								5						52	2	26
Coral Way	SIMPSON PARK	85 SW 17th Rd.	8.2	2										55	8.2	91	1	100	2500	65				150						461	5	92
Downtown	LUMMUS PARK	404 NW 3rd St.	5.9	5									1	83	2.0	81	2	58	1500	82	1	53		65			4	40		462	7	66
Downtown	CENTRAL (MIAMI) MINI PARK (Closed)	1417 N Miami Ave.	0.5	2											1.0	25														25	1	25
Downtown	PAUL S. WALKER (MINI) PARK/FLAGLER STREET PARK	46 W. Flagler St.	0.1	2 (5)									1	47	0.7	78								25						150	3	50
Downtown	FORT DALLAS PARK/MIAMI RIVERWALK	60 SE 4th St. (Butler Building); SE 2nd Ave to Brickell Bridge	1.4	2											0.3	83	1	52						40						175	3	58
Downtown	TORCH OF FRIENDSHIP	100 Biscayne Blvd.		2											1.0	43														43	1	43
Downtown	ALLEN MORRIS/AMCO/BRICKELL PLAZA MINI PARK	SE 1st Ave. (Brickell Plaza) & SE 10th St.	0.1	2											0.1	87								65						152	2	76
Downtown	BAYFRONT PARK (Not Rated - Managed by the Bayfront Trust)	100 Biscayne Blvd.	61.3	2																												
Downtown	MUSEUM/BICENTENNIAL PARK (Not Rated - Design Completed 2007)	1075 Biscayne Blvd.	30.3	2																												
Downtown	WATSON ISLAND (Not Rated; Future public park related to development)	McArthur Causeway	52.0	2																												
Downtown	ICHIMURA JAPANESE GARDEN (open weekends)	McArthur Causeway (Watson Island)	1.0											81	0.3	88	1	76									1	100		345	4	86
Downtown	VIRGINIA KEY - NATURE AREA AND BEACH (Not Rated)	E of Biscayne Bay, N of Rickenbacker Cswy.	85.2	2																												
Downtown	SOUTHSIDE PARK	100 SW 11th St.	2.2	3	1	24			1	48			1	33	1.4	28					1	44		30						207	6	35
Downtown	BRICKELL PARK	501 Brickell Ave.	2.2	2											1.8	71								60						131	2	66
Little Haiti	ATHALIE RANGE PARK AND POOL COMPLEX	525 NW 62 St.	11.9	5	1	64	2	72	3	79	2	77		71	5.0	89	1	84		48	2	76		80	1	59	3	90		889	12	74
Little Haiti	LEMON CITY PARK	27 NE 58th St.	2.3	5					3	68			1	80	1.2	86	2	73			1	90		50			3	50		497	7	71
Little Haiti	BUENA VISTA	200 NW 53 St.	1.2	5					3	62					0.7	65	2	74	1500	45	1	58		53						357	6	60
Little Haiti	NORTH BAY VISTA PARK/RECREATIONAL PARK #140/BAY VISTA PARK "9D"	4850 NW 6th Ave.	0.5	5										22	0.4	71					2	61								154	3	51
Little Haiti	PULLMAN MINI PARK	No. Miami Ave & NW 49th St.	0.4	5											0.4	75					1	60								135	2	68
Little Haiti	SOUTH BAY VISTA PARK	NW 6th Ave. b/n 46th St. and 47th St. (a triangle park)	0.2	5											0.2	51								21						72	2	36
Little Haiti	LITTLE RIVER COMMERCE PARK (CLOSED)	8024 NE 2nd Ave.	0.5	5										5	0.2	67								65						137	3	46
Little Haiti	ATHALIE RANGE PARK #2/RANGE PARK #2/VICTORY HOMES RECREATION AREA	NW 75th St. b/n 5th Ct. & 4th Ave.		5	1	63			1					65	0.3	47					1	71		47						293	7	42
Little Haiti	OAKLAND GROVE MINI PARK	NE 3rd Ave. & 84th St.	0.2	5											0.1	81					1	67								148	2	74
Little Haiti	LITTLE HAITI PARK (Not Rated; Under construction)	NE 2nd Ave. & NE 62nd St.	12.0	5																												
Flagami	MIAMI RIVER RAPIDS (MINI) PARK	2900 NW South River Dr.	0.9	1									1	41	0.4	37								35						113	3	38
Flagami	E.G. SEWELL PARK	1800-1825 NW South River Dr.	10.3	1									1	21	4.0	63					1	60		65						209	4	52
Flagami	ANTONIO MACEO PARK/BLUE LAGOON PARK	5115 NW 7th St.	3.7	1									1	56	2.0	76	2	65			1	74		27			1	50	Boat Ramp	348	6	58
Flagami	MELREESE GOLF COURSE/INTERNATIONAL LINKS MIAMI (Not Rated; Management returned to department after inventory period)	N. LeJeune Rd. & NW 14th St.	132.0	1																												
Flagami	KINLOCH (MUNICIPAL) PARK	455 NW 47th Ave.	3.5	1	1	33	2	49	2	38			1	16	2.0	56					1	54		50			1	50	Handball	346	8	43
Flagami	ROBERT KING HIGH PARK/CARLOS J. ARBOLEYA CAMPGROUND (Not Rated; Under design)	7025 W. Flagler St.	17.0	4																												
Flagami	FLAGAMI (MINI) PARK	7121 SW 3rd St.	1.0	4										62	0.7	81					1	51		47						241	4	60
Flagami	WEST END PARK & POOL	250 SW 60th Ave.	1.0	4	1	40	1	40	3	43	2	40	1	36	0.1	10	2	65	2000	48	1	70		50	1	32	1	75		549	12	46
Flagami	GRAPELAND (HEIGHTS) PARK AND THE STEVEN P. CLARK BUILDING (Not Rated; Under Construction)	1550 NW 37th Ave.	20.0	1																												
Flagami	FERN ISLE PARK/SOUTH FORK PARK (Not Rated; Under Remediation and Construction)	2201 NW 11th St.	8.4	1																												
Little Havana	JOSE MARTI PARK AND POOL	362 SW 4th St.	5.6	3,5	1	88	1	77	2	84	2	74	1	67	2.0	79	2	66	2000	90	1	64		78	1	58	1	40		865	12	72
Little Havana	GROVE MINI PARK	NW South River Dr. at 16th Ave.	0.5	3											0.1	82					1	78		40						200	3	67



CITY OF MIAMI PARKS INVENTORY AND QUALITY RATING FOR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

NET DISTRICT	PARK NAME	PARK ADDRESS	TOTAL ACRES	COMMISSION DISTRICT	FOOTBALL/SOCCER No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASKETBALL No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	TENNIS No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	PARKING ACCESS	AVERAGE RATING	PASSIVE SPACE Acres	AVERAGE RATING	BATHROOMS No. of Bathrooms	AVERAGE RATING	RECREATION BLDGS. Estimated Sq. Ft.	AVERAGE RATING	PLAYGROUND No. of Playgrounds	AVERAGE RATING	SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	AVERAGE RATING	SWIMMING POOL	AVERAGE RATING	WATER FOUNTAINS No. of Fountains	AVERAGE RATING	OTHER ELEMENTS I.e. beach, boat ramp, skateboard park	TOTAL ALL ELEMENT RATINGS	DIVIDED BY # OF PARK ELEMENTS Quantity Elements Rated	TOTAL AVERAGE PARK RATING
Little Havana	HENDERSON PARK	971 NW 2nd St.	3.5	3					1	65	3	79		36	2.0	54					1	52		65						351	6	59
Little Havana	ERNESTO LECUONA PARK/MANUEL ARTIME	900 SW 1st St.	0.3	3									1	84	0.3	86					1	76								246	3	82
Little Havana	JORGE MAS CANOSA PARK/RIVERSIDE PARK	SW 8th Ave. & 3rd St.	3.5	3			1	69	2	75			2	55		2	71				1	66		45			1	19		400	7	57
Little Havana	DOMINO PARK	1444 SW 8th St.	0.1	3											0.2	82								47						129	2	65
Little Havana	PLAZA DE CUBANIDAD	Flagler St. & 17th Ave.	0.3	3										44	0.3	71								9						124	3	41
Little Havana	ORANGE BOWL PLAYGROUND	NW 17th Ave. & NW 4th St.		3			1	37						17	1.0	41					1	66								161	4	40
Model City	BELAFONTE-TACOLCY CENTER AND PARK	6161 NW 7th Ave.	3.1	5					2	71			2	63	1.0	79	2	72	1300	80	1	156		55			3	60		636	8	80
Model City	TWELFTH AVENUE MINI PARK	NW 12th Ave. & NW 62nd St.		5									1	64	1.0	59					1	46		68					237	4	59	
Model City	AFRICAN SQUARE PARK	1400 NW 62nd St.	1.2	5					2	64	2	86		1	66	0.6	85	2	69	2000	69	1	64		73				576	8	72	
Model City	SIMONHOFF PARK/54TH STREET MINI PARK	NW 54th St. & 18th Ave.	1.5	5									1	66	1.5	73					1	60		75			1	50		324	5	65
Model City	CHARLES HADLEY PARK/MANOR PARK AND THE HADLEY/M. DAWKINS SWIMMING COMPLEX	1300 NW 50th St.	29.7	5			1	82	4	82	6	86	6	76	5.0	79	2	93	24000	100	1	50			1	77	4 handball courts; skating area	725	8	91		
Model City	CRESTWOOD PARK	NW 11th Ave. & 48th St.	1.0	5					2	77			1	58	0.8	71					1	66		51			1	50		373	6	62
Model City	MILLER DAWKINS MINI PARK/EAST BAY VISTA PARK	NW 8th Ave. & 47th Terrace	1.0	5									1	62	0.3	73					1	71		63			1	50		319	5	64
Model City	WEST BUENA VISTA PARK	NW 45th St. & 11th Ct.	1.0	5									1	76	0.5	72					1	66		65			1	68		347	10	35
North/East Coconut Grove	LINCOLN PARK	2950 Jackson Ave.	0.2	2										32	0.2	64														96	2	48
North/East Coconut Grove	BLANCHE PARK (DOG PARK AND TOT LOT)	(3045 Shipping Ave; between Allamanda and Virginia St.)	1.5	2									1	70	1.0	82														232	3	77
North/East Coconut Grove	KENNETH MYERS (MEYERS) (BAYSIDE) PARK (Not Rated; Under Design)	27th Ave. & Bayshore Dr.	10.0																													
North/East Coconut Grove	ELIZABETH STEELE (MINI) PARK	S. Bayshore Dr. & Hiawatha	0.5	2										35	0.5	71								70						176	3	59
North/East Coconut Grove	MAJORIE STONEMAN DOUGLAS PARK/SILVER BLUFF MINI PARK	2901 SW 22 Ave.	0.5	2										32	0.5	77					1	61		70						240	4	60
North/East Coconut Grove	KIRK MONROE PARK & TENNIS CENTER	3101 Oak Ave.	1.4	2							5	85	1	60	0.6	58	2	100	3000	70				55			1	75	Handball court in middle of open passive area.	503	7	72
North/East Coconut Grove	PEACOCK PARK	2820 MCFARLANE RD.	9.4	2			1	69	1	55			2	55	4.1	86	0	0			1	64		70			2	50	Skateboard Area	449	7	64
North/East Coconut Grove	DAVID T. KENNEDY PARK	2400 So. Bayshore Dr.	20.8	2									2	66	18.0	90	2	70			1	47		100			8	50		423	6	71
North/East Coconut Grove	ALICE C. WAINWRIGHT PARK	2845 Brickell Ave.	21.4	2					1	44			2	47	17.0	100	2	60			1	75		95			1	10		431	7	62
North/East Coconut Grove	VIRRRICK GYM/BAYSHORE GYM (Not Rated; Shake-A-Leg Program)	2600 S. Bayshore Dr.	4.5	2																												
North/East Coconut Grove	DINNER KEY PICNIC ISLANDS #4, #5, AND #6/SPOIL ISLANDS (Not Rated)	Biscayne Bay at Pan American Dr	56.7	2																												
North/East Coconut Grove	COCONUT GROVE TENNIS COURTS	2975 Oak Ave.	0.3	2							1	86	1	58	0.1	77					1	73		68						362	6	60
North/East Coconut Grove	SAILING CENTER	2400 S Bayshore Drive 9 (next to Kennedy Park)		2										60	0.5	88								95						243	3	81
Overtown	RAINBOW VILLAGE PARK	2001 NW 4th Court	1.5	5										20	1.0	71					1	57		75						223	4	56



CITY OF MIAMI PARKS INVENTORY AND QUALITY RATING FOR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

NET DISTRICT	PARK NAME	PARK ADDRESS	TOTAL ACRES	COMMISSION DISTRICT	FOOTBALL/SOCCER No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASKETBALL No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	TENNIS No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	PARKING ACCESS	AVERAGE RATING	PASSIVE SPACE Acres	AVERAGE RATING	BATHROOMS No. of Bathrooms	AVERAGE RATING	RECREATION BLDGS. Estimated Sq. Ft.	AVERAGE RATING	PLAYGROUND No. of Playgrounds	AVERAGE RATING	SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	AVERAGE RATING	SWIMMING POOL	AVERAGE RATING	WATER FOUNTAINS No. of Fountains	AVERAGE RATING	OTHER ELEMENTS I.e. beach, boat ramp, skateboard park	TOTAL ALL ELEMENT RATINGS	DIVIDED BY # OF PARK ELEMENTS Quantity Elements Rated	TOTAL AVERAGE PARK RATING	
North/East	TOWN PARK	1686 NW 4th Ave.	0.9	5					1	77			1	60	0.2	72					1	66					1	50		325	5	65	
Overtown	WILLIAMS PARK AND POOL	1717 NW 5th Ave.	5.0	5	1	20			1	84				80	3.0	47	2	77	4000	89	1	81			33	1	53	2	75	639	11	58	
Overtown	THEODORE R. GIBSON PARK AND POOL	401 NW 13th St.	8.0	5	1	70	2	75	2	80	3	82	1	54	4.0	69	2	86			1	52			61	1	55	2	50	734	11	67	
Overtown	HENRY REEVES PARK	600 NW 10th St.	3.4	5					2	43			1	34	2.0	53					2	48					1	50	295	6	49		
Overtown	HIGHLAND CIRCLE MINI PARK	NW 8th Ave. & 13th St.	0.3	5										0.1	69						1	65					1	60	241	4	60		
Overtown	CULMER MINI PARK/SECOND AVENUE MINI PARK	NW 2nd Ave. b/n 10gth St. & 11th St.	0.6	5										0.2	77						1	65							199	3	66		
Overtown	DORSEY PARK	1701 NW 1st Ave.	2.5	2	1	55	1	75	1	full; 2 single-goal	70		1	61	0.8	79	2	65	3000	82	1	58						1	50	Handball courts	666	11	61
Overtown	ATHALIE RANGE MINI PARK #1 (Not Rated; To Be Redesigned)	Under I-95 (?) b/n NW 10th St. & NW 11th St. & 3rd Ave & 4th Ave	0.1	5																													
Overtown	SPRING GARDEN POINT PARK & THE SEYBOLD CANAL HOUSE	601 NW 7th St.	1.1	5									1	53	1.1	73													202	3	67		
Overtown	OVERTOWN YOUTH CENTER	450 NW 14th St.	5.0	5					4	93			1	83	1.0	59	2	100	1800	100	1	15					1	50	562	8	70		
South/West	MERRIE CHRISTMAS PARK	Lejeune Rd. & Barbarosa St.	5.4	2										55	0.1	85					1	61							336	5	67		
South/West	COCONUT GROVE MINI PARK/BILLY ROLLE MINI PARK	Grand Ave. & Elizabeth St.	0.2	2									1	95	0.3	100	1	100										1	100	485	5	97	
South/West	ESTHER ARMBRISTER PARK/GRAND PARK	236 Grand Ave.	4.7	2	1	77								67	3.0	83	2	74	2000	94	1	88					4	50	594	8	74		
South/West	ELIZABETH VIRRICK PARK AND POOL	3255 Plaza St.	4.7	0						3 (one indoor court)	65		2	68	3.0	79	1	89	2000	93	1	64			1	67	4	50	643	9	71		
Upper Eastside	BISCAYNE HEIGHTS MINI PARK	E. Dixie Hwy & NE 84th St.	0.0	2										0.3	70														70	1	70		
Upper Eastside	BELLE MEADE MINI PARK	768 NE 77th St.	0.4	2									1	47	0.1	71					1	73							258	4	65		
Upper Eastside	BAYWOOD PARK	890 NE 69th St.	1.9	2									1	60	1.0	75													196	4	49		
Upper Eastside	LEGION (MEMORIAL) PARK	6447 NE 7th Ave.	13.7	2					1	58	1	55	1	64	4.0	80	2	85	3000	80	1	65					2	75	Boat Ramp	657	9	73	
Upper Eastside	MORNINGSIDE PARK, POOL, AND TENNIS CENTER	750 NE 55th Terrace	42.4	2	1	65			1	80	7	75	4	62	20.0	63	6	73	6000	67	1	73			100	1	47	6	40	Boat House & Boat Ramp	745	12	62
Upper Eastside	PICNIC ISLANDS PARCELS 1-5 (Not Rated)	Biscayne Bay off Upper Eastside	30.9	2										11.5																			
Upper Eastside	EATON PARK	6015 NE 4th Ct.	6.2	5	1	9			2	76			2	64	3.0	69					1	64							317	7	45		
Upper Eastside	ALBERT PALLOT PARK/MAGNOLIA PARK	NW of 6th Ave. b/n 38th St. & 39th St.	3.0	2										17	1.0	62													139	3	46		
Upper Eastside	STEARNS PARK	NW exit of Tuttle Causeway	5.4	2										5.4	61														121	2	61		
West Flagler	FLAGLER TERRACE (MINI) PARK/BAY OF PIGS PARK	SW 3rd St. & SW 55th Ave. Rd.	1.0	4										0.2	73						1	65							138	2	69		
West Flagler	CORAL GATE PARK	1415 SW 32 Ave.	3.6	4			1	79	1	74	1	73	2	82	1.0	83	1	85	1300	93	1	67					1	60	779	10	78		
West Flagler	GLEN ROYAL (MINI) PARK	NW 23rd Ave./Flager Terr at NW 1st St	0.2	3										0.2	67														67	1	67		
West Flagler	CORAL NOOK PARK	SW 31st Ave. & 5th St.	0.3	4										0.2	73						1	54							205	3	68		
Wynwood/Edgewater	ROBERTO CLEMENTE PARK/WYNWOOD PARK	101 NW 34th St.	4.9	2			2	53	4	57			1	56	1.0	53			2500		1	70			1	8	1	20	Splash park	362	8	45	
Wynwood/Edgewater	BISCAYNE PARK	NE 19th St. & 1st Ave	7.3	2										4.0	77														147	3	49		
Wynwood/Edgewater	2 HALF CIRCLE PARKS	Just W. of Margaret Pace Park	0.2	2										0.4	30														30	1	30		
Wynwood/Edgewater	PICNIC ISLANDS PARCEL 6 (Not Rated)	S of Julia Tuttle Causeway	11.0	2																													
Wynwood/Edgewater	HISTORIC CITY CEMETERY (Not Rated)	1800 NE 2ND Ave.	10.0																														
Wynwood/Edgewater	WOODSON/DESIGN DISTRICT MINI PARK	NE 36th St. & NW 2nd Ave	0.4	2										0.4	56														104	2	52		
Wynwood/Edgewater	ELIZABETH MARTELL PARK	NE 36th St. & 7th Ave. (along Bay, just S of Julia Tuttle Cswy)		2										2.0	80														80	1	80		
Wynwood/Edgewater	MARGARET PACE PARK	No. Bayshore Dr. b/n 17th Terrace & 20th St.	12.0	2	2				1	100	2	95		71	4.0	93	2	100			1	86					1	75	2 beach volleyball areas	720	8	90	
	Total No. of Acres/Facilities		940.1		19	850	20	1077	67	2399	66	1485	67	3778	188.8	6400	70	2650		1791	73	4137	0	4572	10	514	79	2262	31915	513			



CITY OF MIAMI PARKS INVENTORY AND QUALITY RATING FOR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

NET DISTRICT	PARK NAME	PARK ADDRESS	TOTAL ACRES	COMMISSION DISTRICT	FOOTBALL/SOCCER No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL No. of Fields	AVERAGE RATING	BASKETBALL No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	TENNIS No. of Courts	AVERAGE RATING	PARKING ACCESS	AVERAGE RATING	PASSIVE SPACE Acres	AVERAGE RATING	BATHROOMS No. of Bathrooms	AVERAGE RATING	RECREATION BLDGS. Estimated Sq. Ft.	AVERAGE RATING	PLAYGROUND No. of Playgrounds	AVERAGE RATING	SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	AVERAGE RATING	SWIMMING POOL	AVERAGE RATING	WATER FOUNTAINS No. of Fountains	AVERAGE RATING	OTHER ELEMENTS I.e. beach, boat ramp, skateboard park	TOTAL ALL ELEMENT RATINGS	DIVIDED BY # OF PARK ELEMENTS Quantity Elements Rated	TOTAL AVERAGE PARK RATING			
SIGNIFICANT COUNTY, STATE AND OTHER PARKS OR OPEN SPACES																																			
COUNTY-OWNED																																			
Downtown	GOVERNMENT CENTER PARK			2																															
Downtown	RICKENBACKER CAUSEWAY OPEN SPACE	Rickenbacker Causeway		2																															
West Flagler	MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AUDITORIUM SITE	West Flagler Street	9.0																																
Model City	ALONZO KELLY PARK (County-owned)	1455 NW 67th St.	1.0	5																															
North/East Coconut Grove	VIZCAYA COUNTY PARK	S Miami Ave & Shore Dr N.	10.0	2																															
North/East Coconut Grove	MIAMI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE	3280 S Miami Ave.	3.0	2																															
Upper Eastside	PELICAN HARBOR MARINA	1275 NE 79th Street		2																															
STATE-OWNED																																			
North/East Coconut Grove	THE BARNACLE STATE PARK	Main Hwy between McFarlane & Munroe	40.0	2																															
CEMETERIES																																			
West Flagler	FLAGLER MEMORIAL PARK	W. Flagler St. & NW 53rd Ave.		4																															
West Flagler	WOODLAWN MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY	Just W of Coral Gate Park; SW McDonald Rd. & SW 16th St.		4																															
Flagami	MOUNT NEBO CEMETERY	NW 53rd Ave. & NW 7th St.		1																															
MEDIANS AND CIRCLES - STREET ROW OPPORTUNITIES																																			
Flagami	GROVE PARK/MEDIAN STRIP	NW South River Dr & 16th Ave.		1																															
Flagami	PARK 46 "A"	NW South River Dr & 18th Ave.		1																															
Flagami	PARK 50 "A"	W. Flagler St. & 63rd Ct.		4																															



B. Opinion Surveys

As part of the planning process, two public surveys were conducted by Leisure Vision/ETC Institute, a firm specializing in park and recreation surveys:

- A *Public Opinion* survey on Miami residents' views about the park system and their park and recreation needs
- A *Customer Service* survey focused on the experience of residents who have used the city's park and recreation programs

The executive summaries of the two surveys appear in this appendix. The full reports, including cross-tabulations, are separate documents available for review in the Parks and Recreation Department and the Planning Department.

SURVEY 1, COMMUNITY ATTITUDE AND INTEREST: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

The City of Miami conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during March and April of 2006 as part of a Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan to help establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services. The survey—designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the city—was administered by a combination of mail and phone contacts.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with City of Miami officials as well as the Goody Clancy project team to develop the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to plan the future system effectively.

In March 2006 surveys were mailed to a random sample of 5,000 Miami households. Approximately three days after the mailing, each household that received a survey received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. About ten days later, Leisure Vision began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone.

The goal of obtaining at least 1,000 completed surveys was far exceeded, with a total of 1,140 surveys having been completed. The results of the random sample of 1,140 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-2.9%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings.

FREQUENCY OF USE OF VARIOUS PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

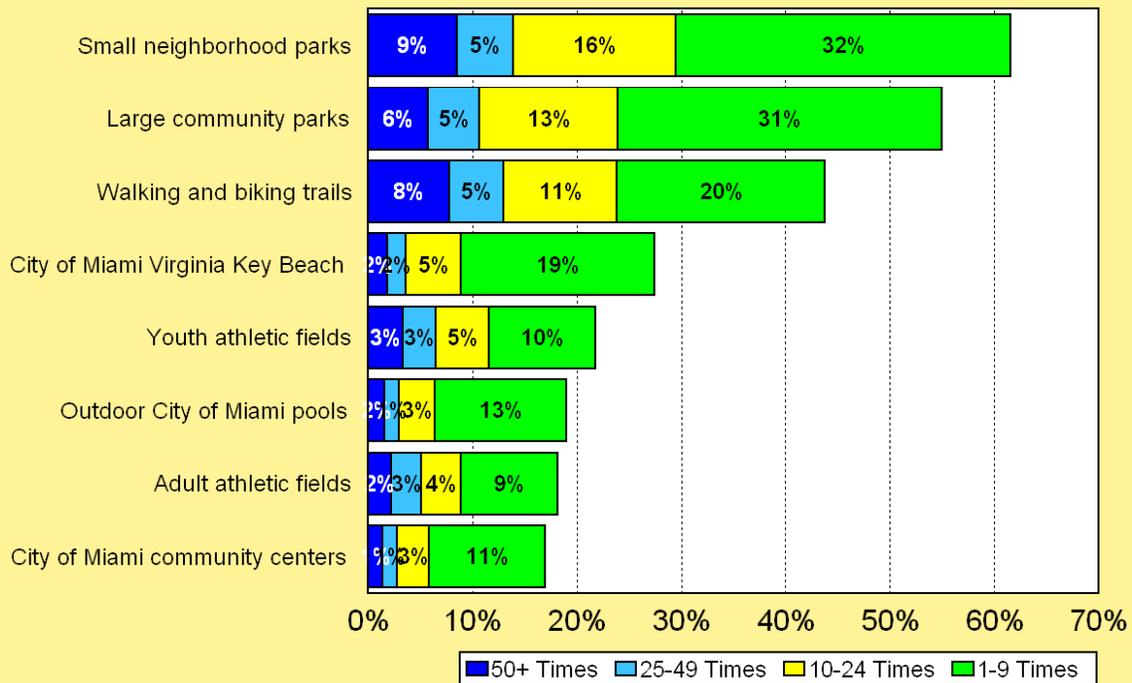
From a list of eight types of parks and recreation areas operated by the Miami Parks and Recreation Department, respondents were asked to indicate how often they and members of their household had used each type during the previous twelve months.

Key findings:

- > The highest percentages of respondent households reported at least one use during the previous twelve months of small neighborhood parks (62%), large community parks (55%), and walking and biking trails (44%).

Q3. How Often Respondent Households Have Used Various Parks and Recreation Areas During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents (graph does not show "never" responses)



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

QUALITY OF PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

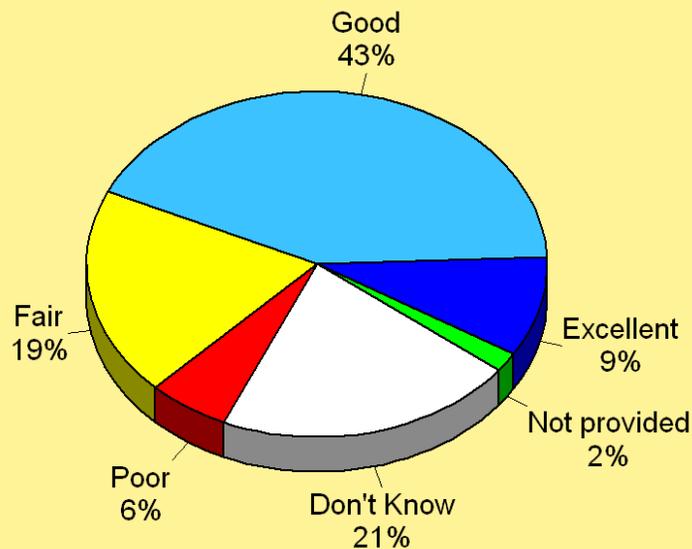
From the list of eight types of parks and recreation areas operated by the Miami Parks and Recreation Department, respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of the areas they and members of their household had used during the previous twelve months.

Key findings:

- > Fifty-two percent (52%) of respondent households rated the quality of parks and recreation areas they had used as either excellent (9%) or good (43%). An additional 19% of respondents rated the facilities as fair, and 6% rated them as poor. The remaining 21% chose “don't know.”

Q4. How Respondents Rate the Overall Quality of the Parks and Recreation Areas Listed in Question #3 They Have Used During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

WAYS RESPONDENTS TRAVEL TO USE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

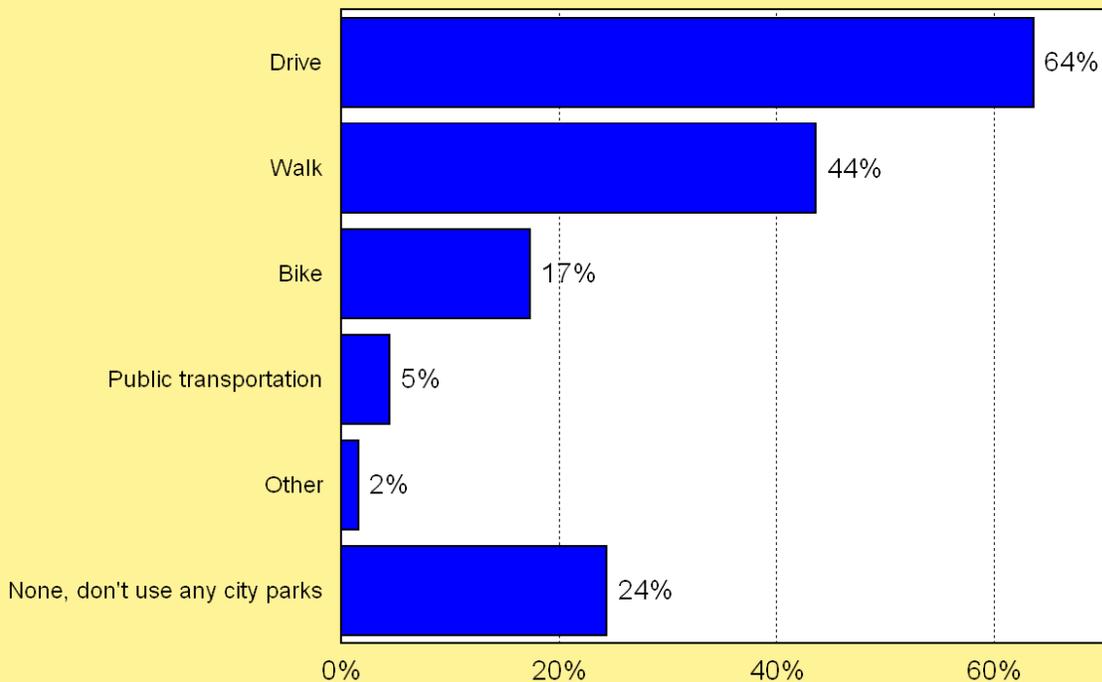
From a list of four options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ways they travel to parks and recreation facilities.

Key findings:

- > The most frequently mentioned ways respondents reported traveling to use parks and recreation facilities were driving (64%) and walking (44%).

Q5. Ways Respondent Households Travel to the Parks and Recreation Facilities They Use

by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)



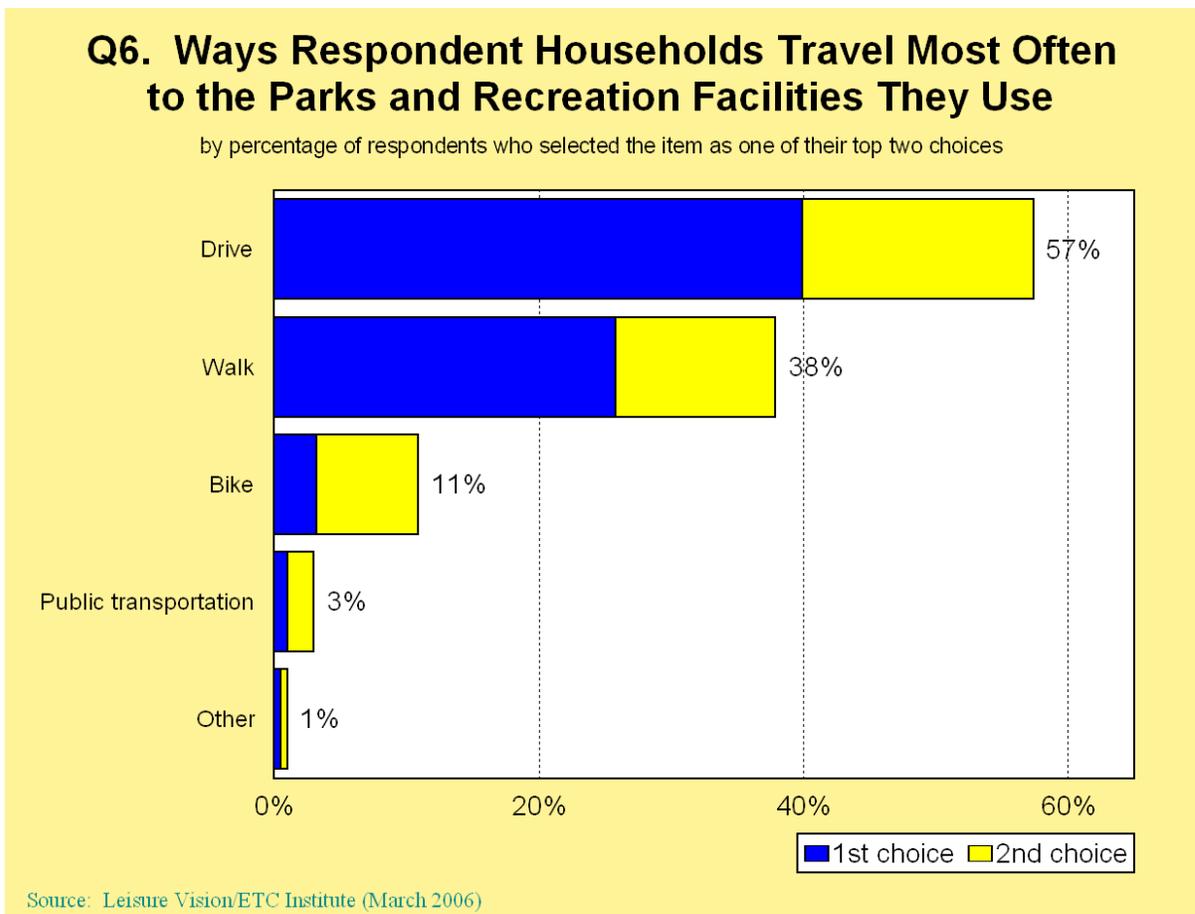
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

WAYS RESPONDENTS TRAVEL MOST OFTEN TO USE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

From the list of four options, respondents were asked to indicate the two ways they used most often to travel to parks and recreation facilities.

Key findings:

- > Respondents selected driving (57%) and walking (38%) most often as one of the two ways they most frequently travel to parks and recreation facilities.



PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE

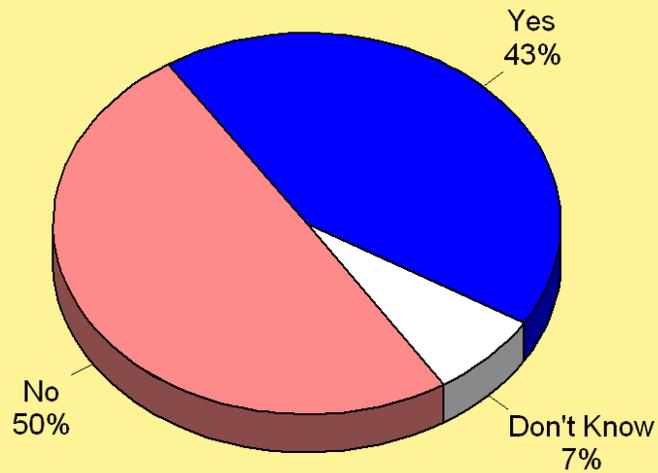
Respondents were asked if they feel that there are enough parks and recreation areas within walking distance of their residence.

Key findings:

- > Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents feel that there are enough parks and recreation areas within walking distance of their residence.

Q7. Do Respondents Feel There Are Enough Parks and Recreation Areas Within Walking Distance of Their Residence

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PROVIDING ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE CITY OF MIAMI

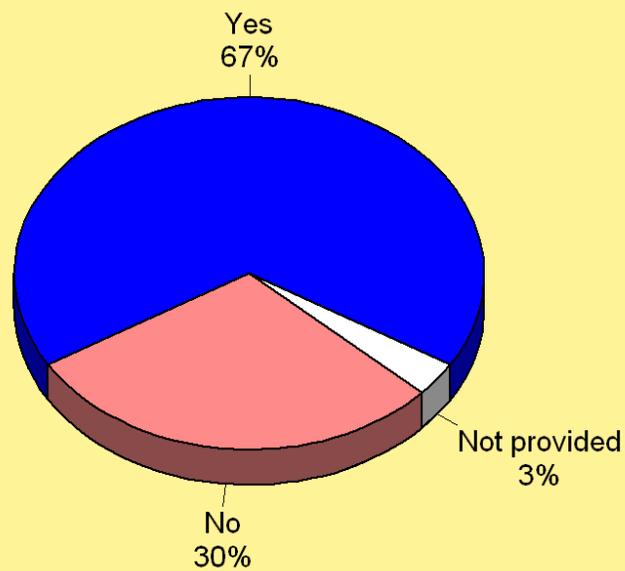
Respondents were asked if they think parks and open space provide economic benefits to Miami.

Key findings:

- > Sixty-seven percent (67%) of respondents feel that parks and open space do provide economic benefits to the city.

Q8. Do Respondents Feel That Parks and Open Space Provide Economic Benefits to the City of Miami

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

PARTICIPATION IN CITY OF MIAMI RECREATION PROGRAMS

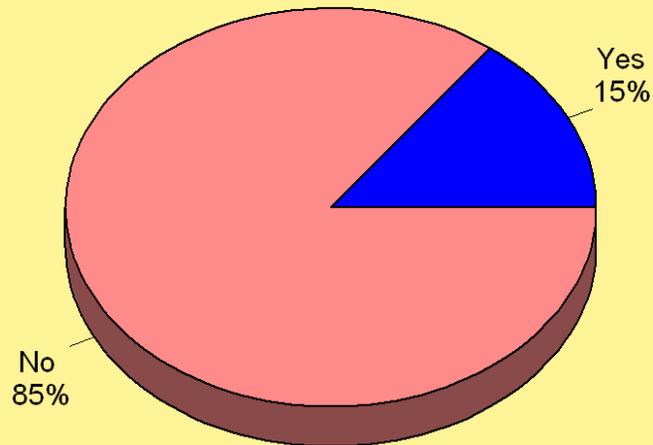
Respondents were asked if they or other members of their household had participated in any recreation programs offered by the City during the previous twelve months.

Key findings:

- > Fifteen percent (15%) of respondent households had participated in recreation programs offered by the City during the previous twelve months.

Q9. Have Respondent Households Participated in Any Recreation Programs Offered by the City of Miami During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION IN CITY OF MIAMI RECREATION PROGRAMS

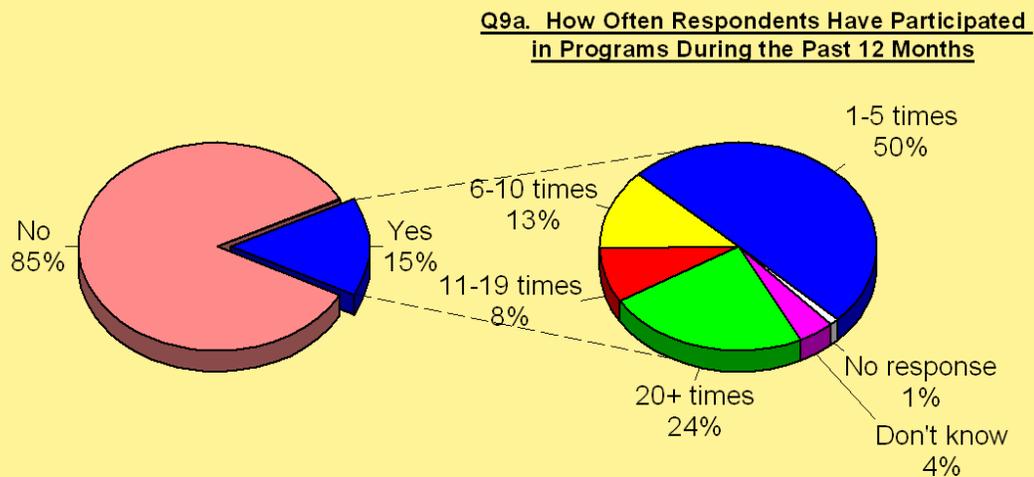
Respondent households that reported participating in recreation programs offered by the City during the previous twelve months were asked to indicate how often they had participated in those programs during that time.

Key findings:

- > Of the 15% of respondents that reported participating in City recreation programs during the previous twelve months, 45% had participated at least six times during that period. An additional 50% of respondents had participated in programs one to five times during the previous twelve months.

Q9. Have Respondent Households Participated in Any Recreation Programs Offered by the City of Miami During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

QUALITY OF CITY OF MIAMI RECREATION PROGRAMS

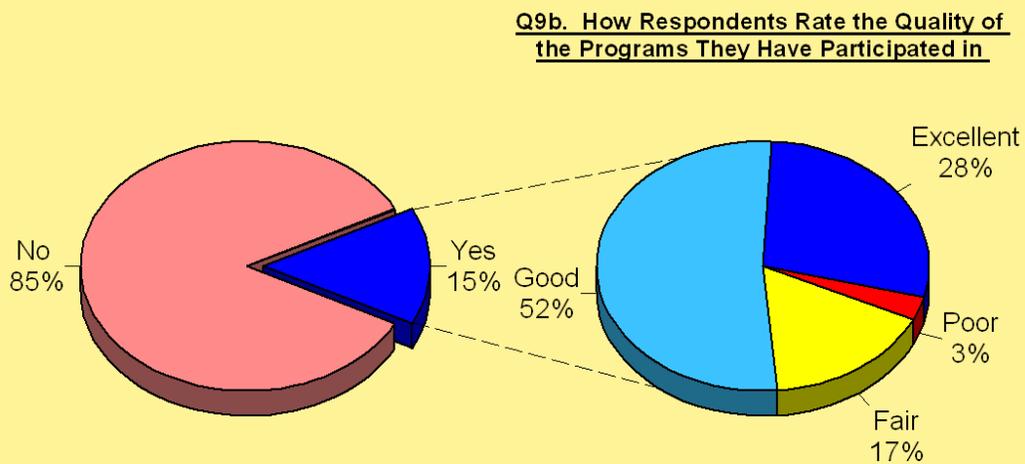
Respondent households that had participated in recreation programs offered by the City during the previous twelve months were asked to rate the quality of the programs they participated in.

Key findings:

- > Of the 15% of respondents that had participated in City of Miami recreation programs during the previous twelve months, 80% rated the programs as excellent (28%) or good (52%). In addition, 17% of respondents rated the programs as fair, and 3% rated them as poor.

Q9. Have Respondent Households Participated in Any Recreation Programs Offered by the City of Miami During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents



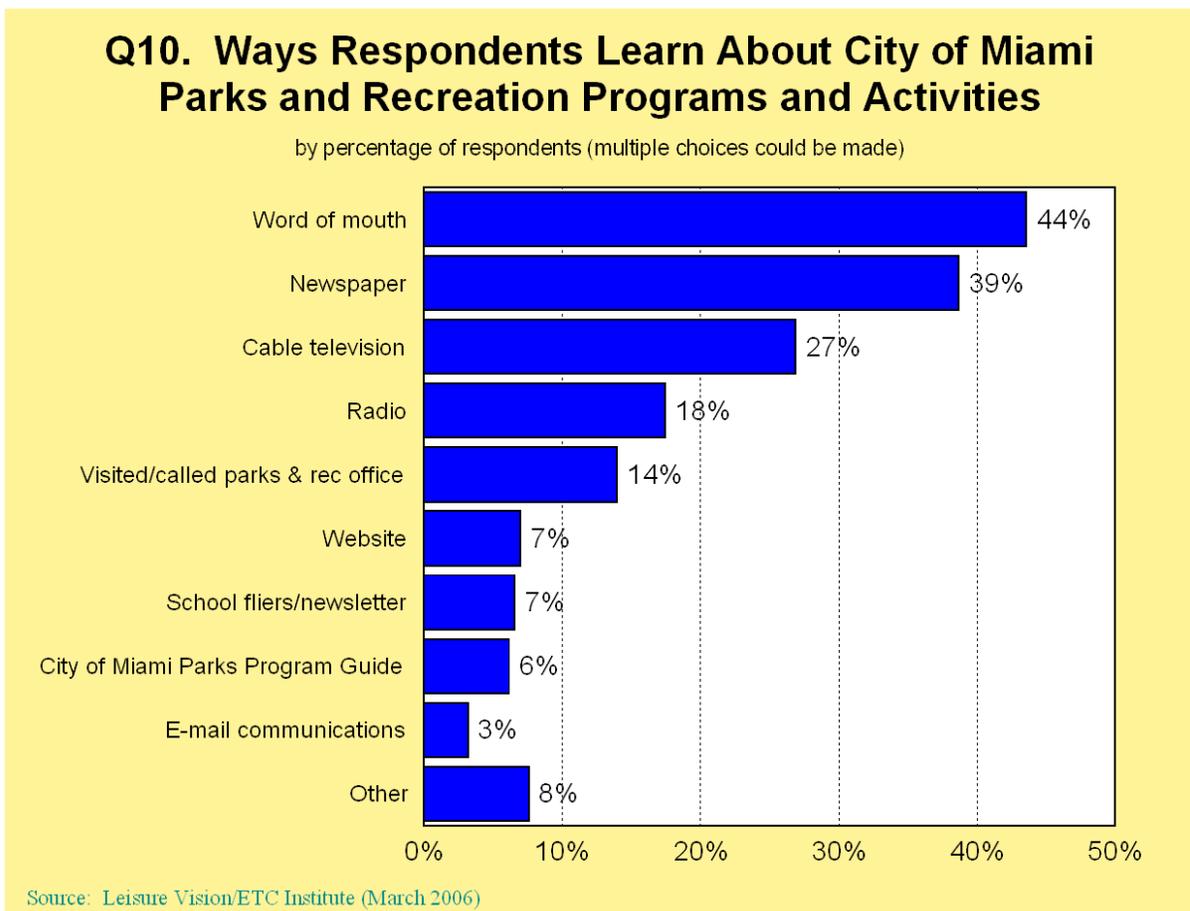
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

WAYS RESPONDENTS LEARN ABOUT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

From a list of nine options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ways they learned about Miami Parks and Recreation programs and activities.

Key findings:

- > **Word of mouth (44%)** was the most frequently mentioned way that respondents reported learning about City of Miami programs and activities. Two other ways earned more than 25% of responses: newspapers (39%), and cable television (27%).



REASONS PREVENTING THE USE OF PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS MORE OFTEN

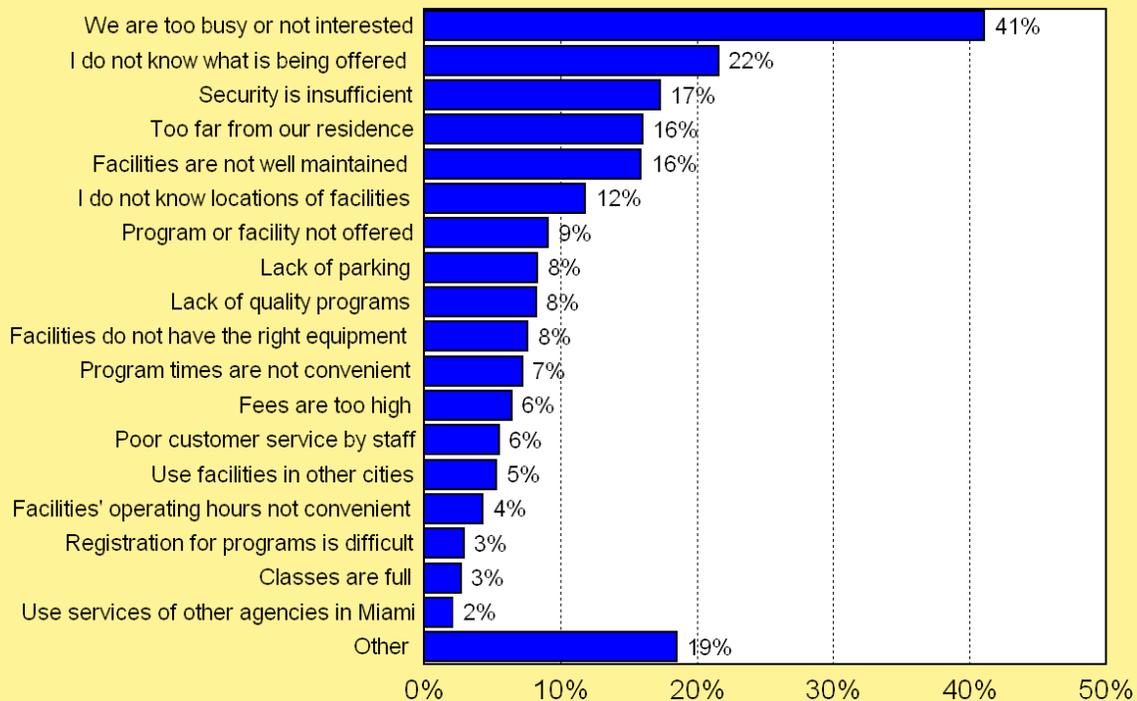
From a list of 18 options, respondents were asked to select all of the reasons that prevent them and members of their household from using parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City of Miami more often.

Key findings:

- > **“We are too busy or not interested” (41%) is the reason preventing the highest percentage of respondent households from using parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City of Miami more often.** Of the other reasons chosen, mentioned most frequently were “I do not know what is being offered” (22%), “Security is insufficient” (17%), “Too far from our residence” (16%) and “Facilities are not well maintained” (16%).

Q11. Reasons Preventing Respondent Households From Using Parks, Recreation Facilities and Programs More Often

by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

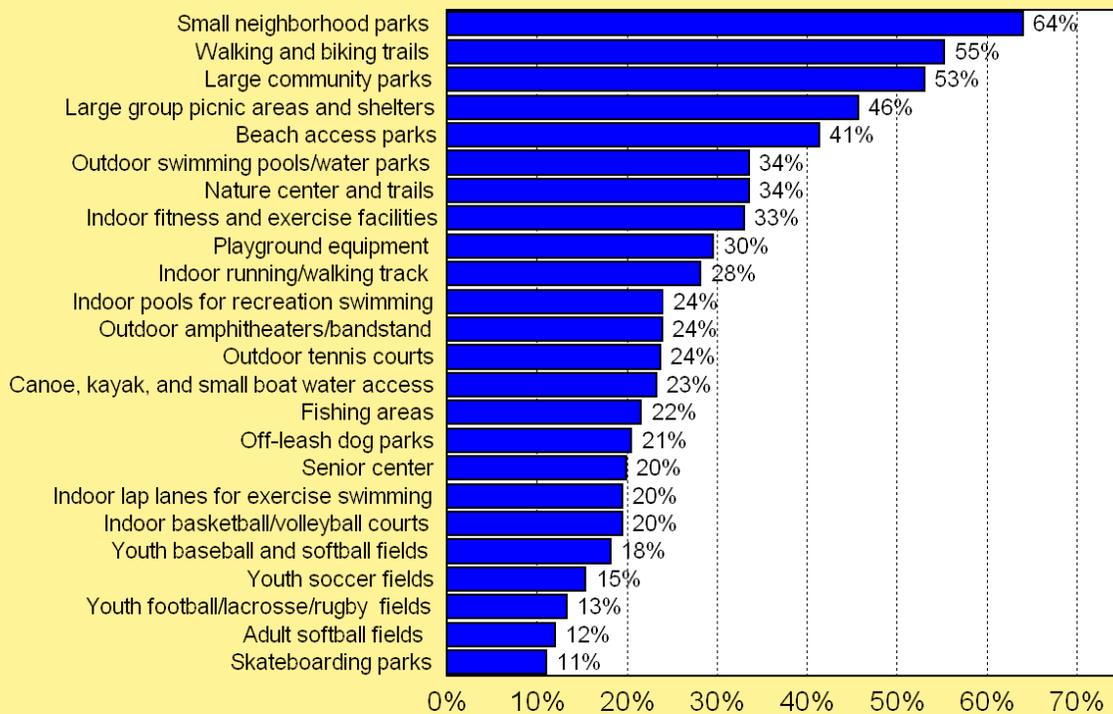
From a list of 24 types of parks and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for.

Key findings:

- > Among all 24 choices, five types of parks and recreation facilities were chosen by more than 40% of respondents: small neighborhood parks (64%), walking and biking trails (55%), large community parks (53%), large group picnic areas and shelters (46%), and beach access parks (41%).

Q12. Percentage of Respondent Households That Have a Need for Various Parks and Recreation Facilities

by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)



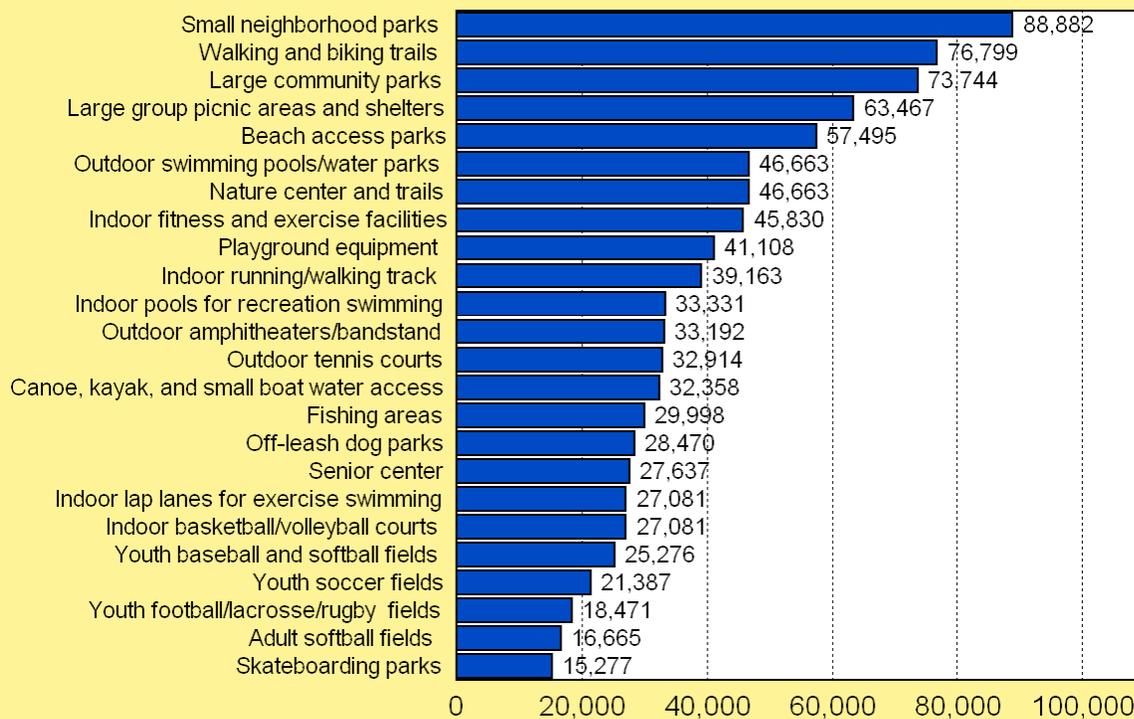
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN MIAMI

Working from the rates at which respondents selected each of the 24 types of parks and recreation facilities as facilities for which they or members of their households have a need, Leisure Vision calculated total demand for each category. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in Miami with a need for each type of facility, based on 138,877 households in the city.

Q12. Estimated Number of Households in Miami That Have a Need for Various Parks and Recreation Facilities

by number of households based on 138,877 households in the City of Miami



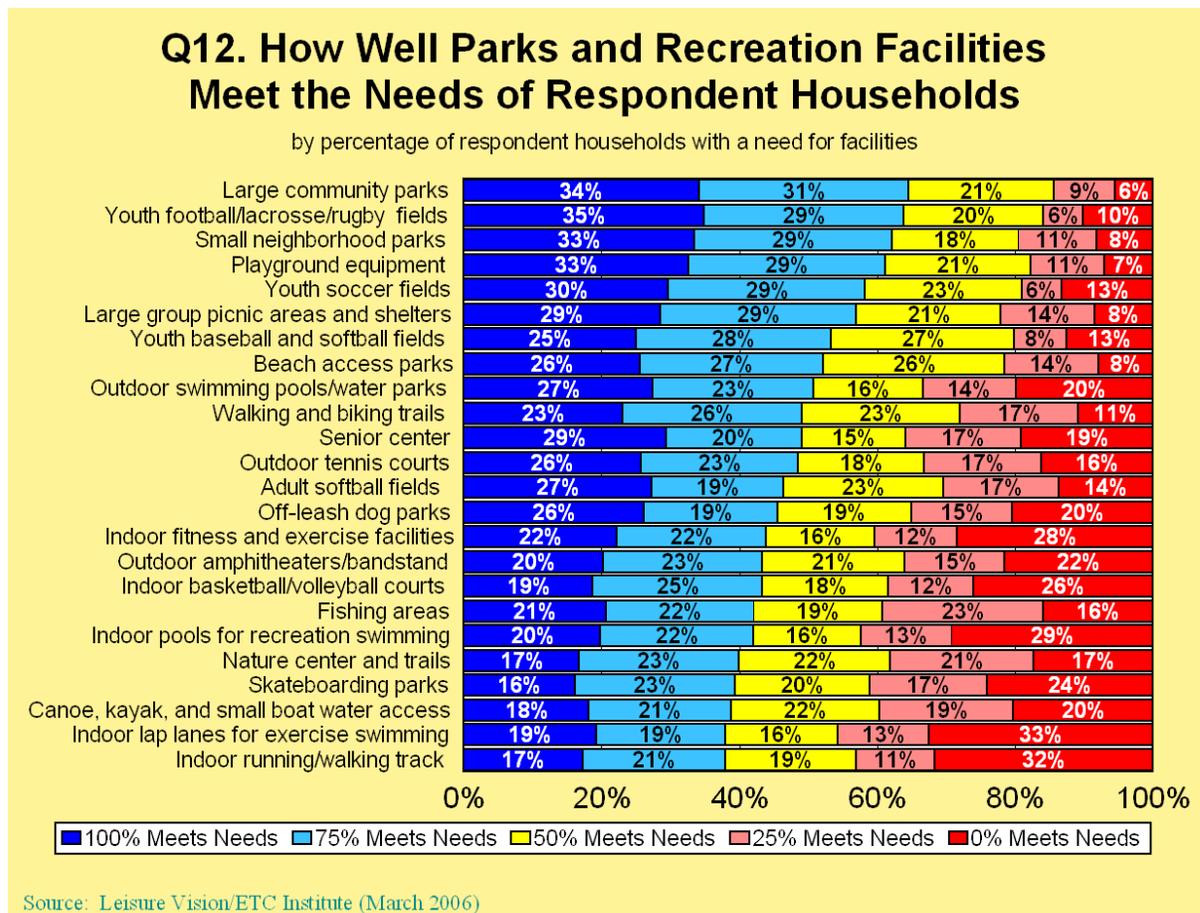
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

HOW WELL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MEET NEEDS

From the list of 24 parks and recreation facilities, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those facilities meet their needs.

Key findings:

- > Fewer than 35% of respondents reported that any one facility type completely meets the needs of their household.

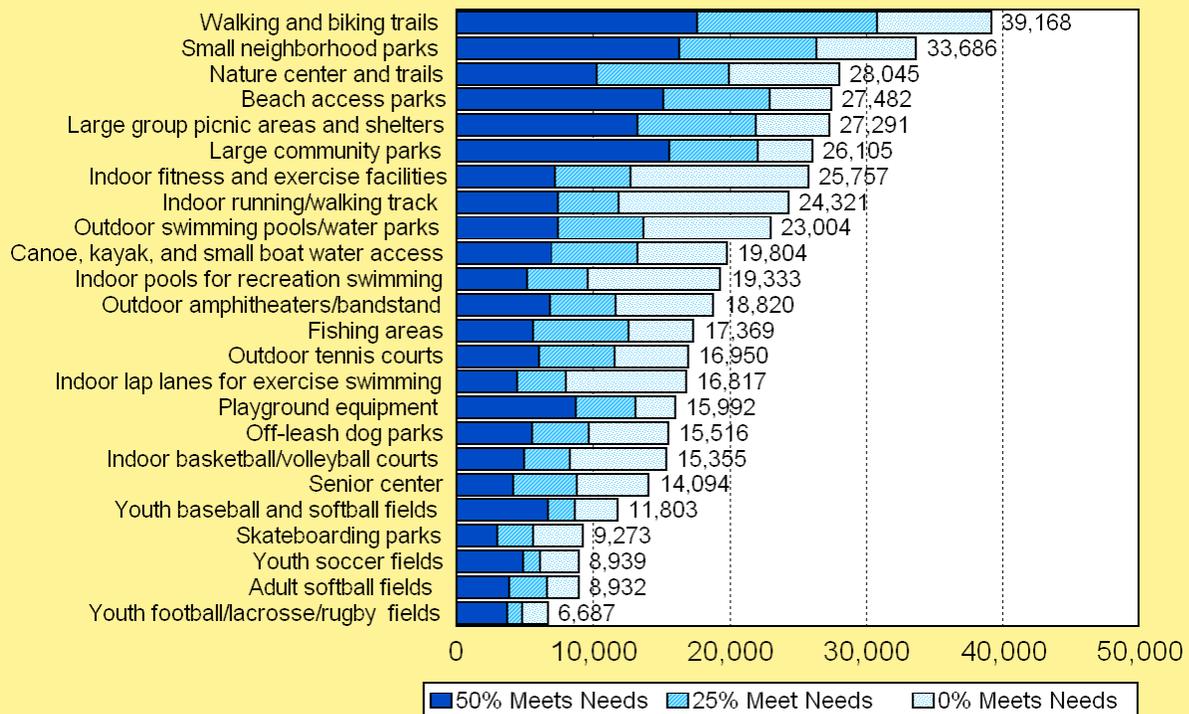


MIAMI HOUSEHOLDS WITH THEIR FACILITY NEEDS BEING MET 50% OR LESS

Respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well each of the 24 types of parks and recreation facilities meets their needs. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in Miami whose needs for facilities are only being met 50% or less, based on 138,877 households in the city.

Q12. Estimated Number of Households in Miami Whose Needs for Parks and Rec Facilities Are Only Being 50% Met or Less

by number of households based on 138,877 households in the City of Miami



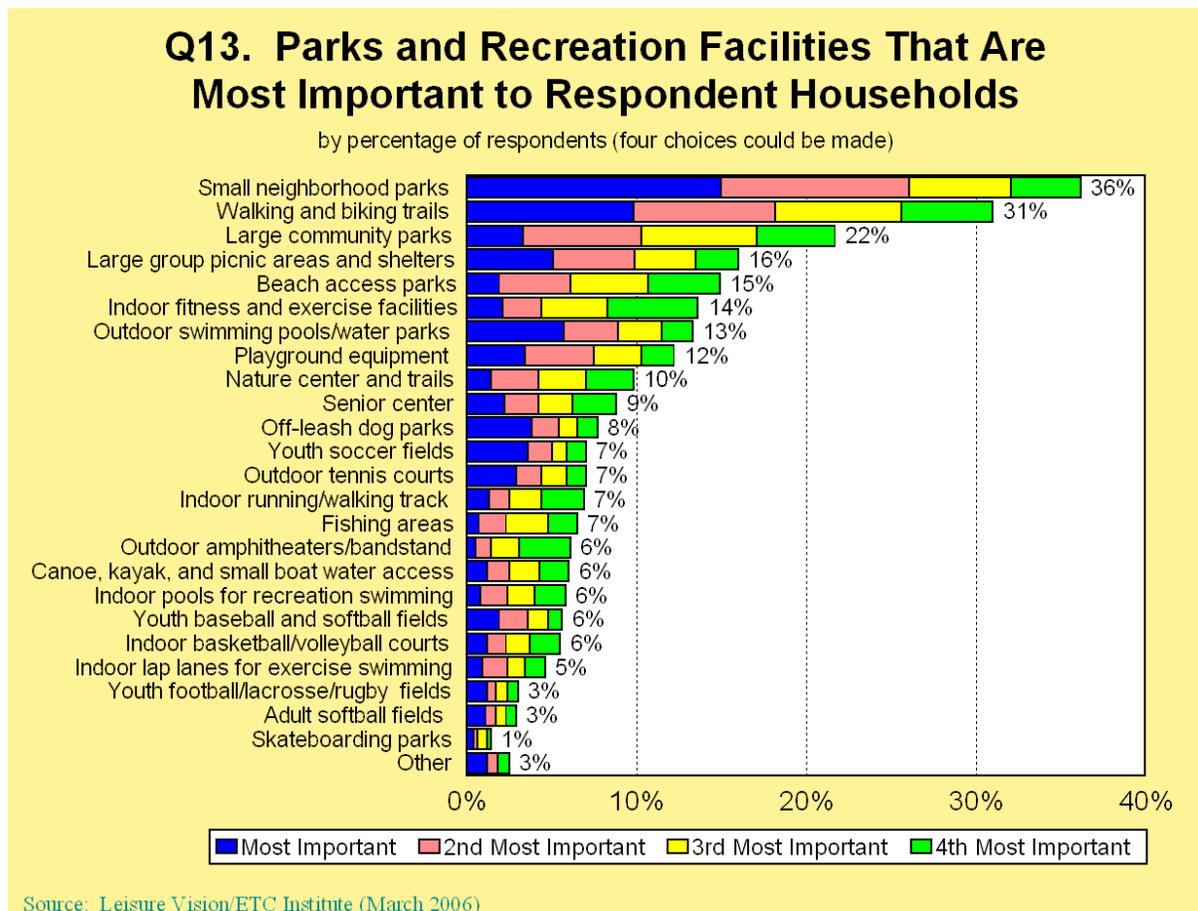
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

MOST IMPORTANT PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

From the list of 24 parks and recreation facility types, respondents were asked to select the four facilities that are most important to them and members of their household.

Key findings:

- > Respondents most frequently chose small neighborhood parks (36%) as one of the four most important facility categories. Only two other types received more than 20% of selections: walking and biking trails (31%) and large community parks (22%). It should also be noted that small neighborhood parks had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important facility.



VISITS TO VIRGINIA KEY

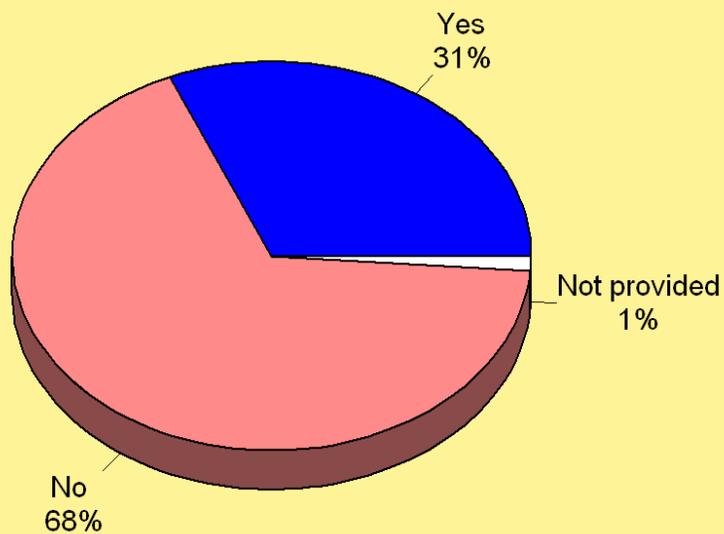
Respondents were asked if they or other members of their household had visited Virginia Key during the previous two years.

Key findings:

- > Thirty-one percent (31%) of respondent households reported visiting Virginia Key during the past two years.

Q14. Have Respondent Households Visited Virginia Key During the Past Two Years

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND NEW FACILITIES FOR VIRGINIA KEY

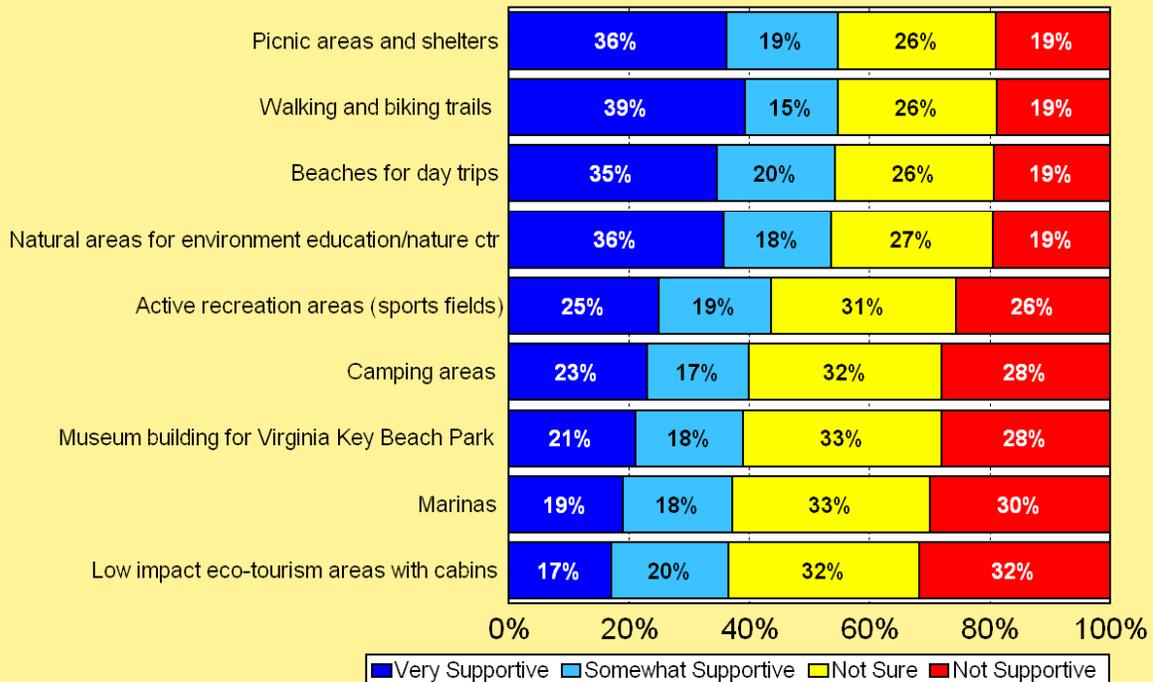
From a list of nine options, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for various improvements and/or new facilities that could be added to Virginia Key.

Key findings:

- > Of nine potential improvements and/or new facilities that could be added at Virginia Key, four received strong support from at least 35% of respondents: walking and biking trails (39%), picnic areas and shelters (36%), natural areas for environment education/nature center (36%), and beaches for day trips (35%). It should also be noted that six of the nine possible improvements had at least 40% of respondents indicate being either very or somewhat supportive of them.

Q15. Level of Support for Various Improvements and New Facilities for Virginia Key

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

IMPROVEMENTS/NEW FACILITIES RESPONDENTS WOULD USE MOST AT VIRGINIA KEY

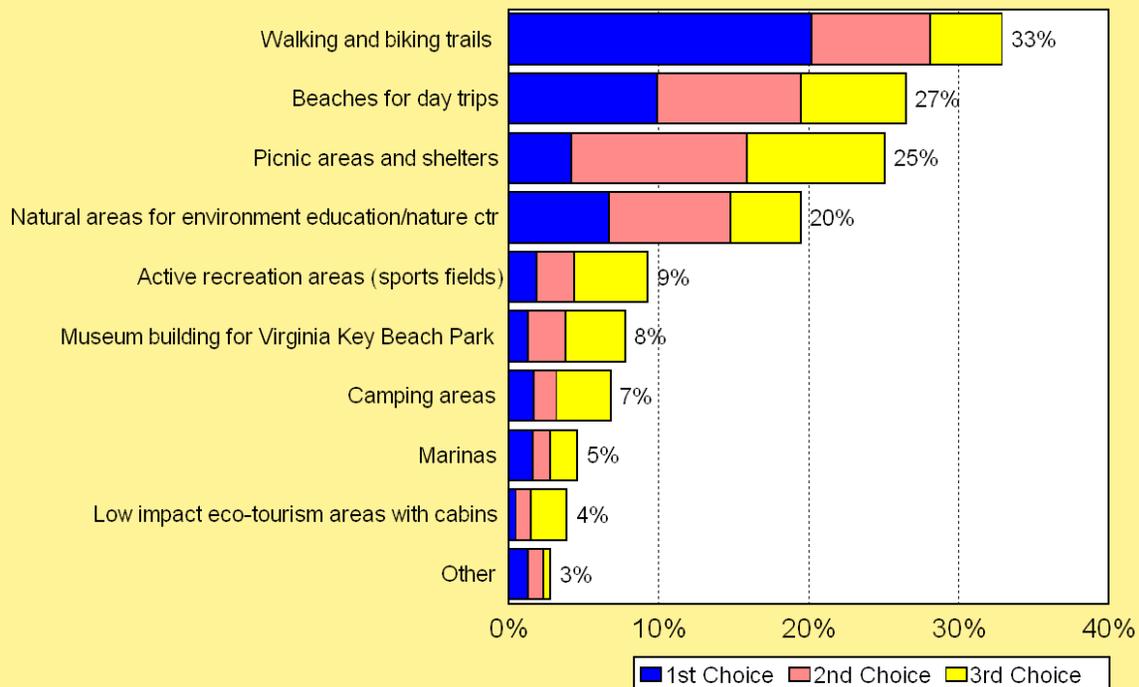
From the list of nine options, respondents were asked to indicate the three improvements and/or new facilities they would use most often at Virginia Key.

Key findings:

- > Respondents most frequently chose walking and biking trails (33%) as one of the three improvements/new facilities they would use most at Virginia Key. Other improvements/facilities selected at high rates include beaches for day trips (27%), picnic areas and shelters (25%), and natural areas for environment/education/nature center (20%). It should be noted that walking and biking trails garnered the most first-choice selections as the improvement/facility respondents would use most.

Q16. Improvements and New Facilities Respondents Would Use Most Often at Virginia Key

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



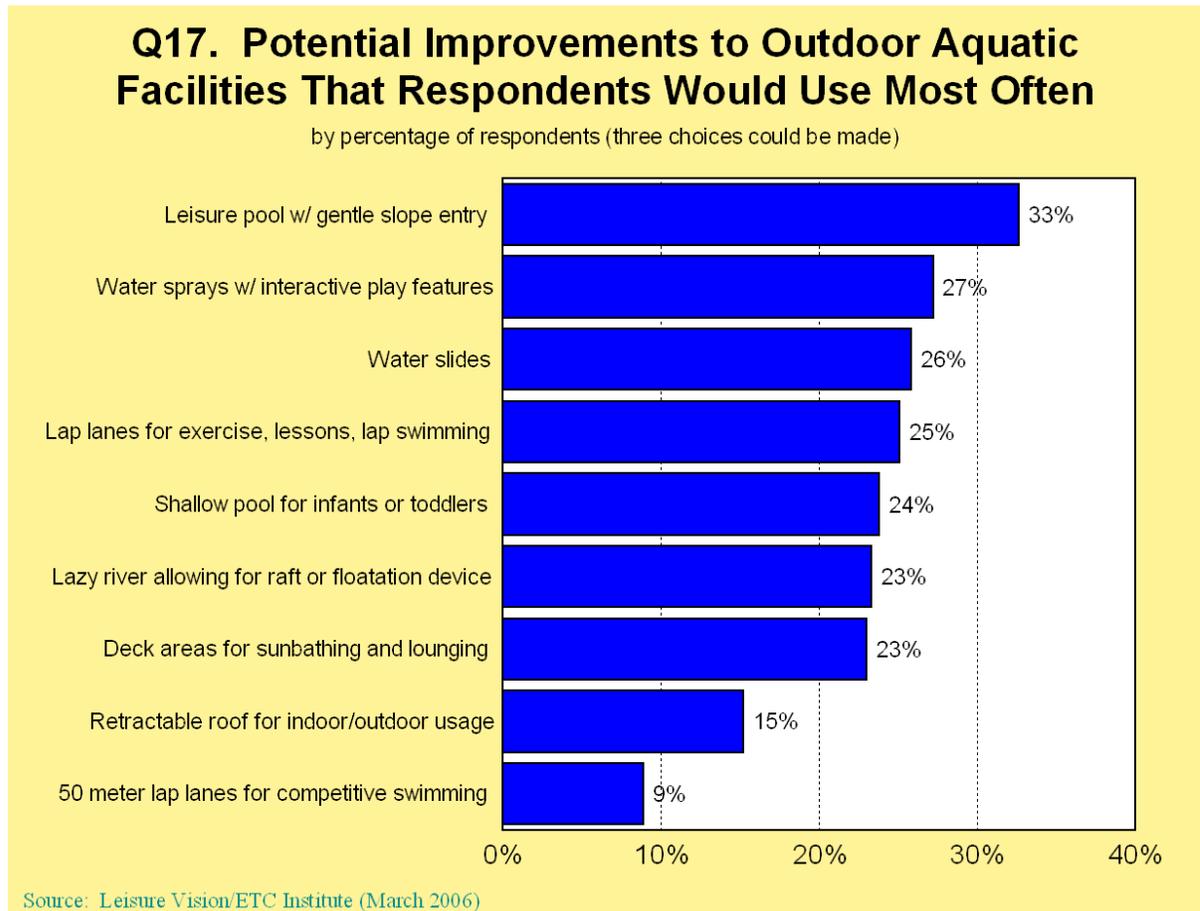
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN OUTDOOR AQUATIC FACILITIES

From a list of nine potential improvements to outdoor aquatic facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which three they and members of their household would use most often.

Key findings:

- > A leisure pool with a gently sloped entry (33%) is the outdoor aquatic facility that the highest percentage of respondent households would use. Note that opinion divided fairly evenly among the choices: respondents chose six of the remaining eight potential improvements at rates of between 23% and 27%.



IMPORTANCE OF OPERATING OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOLS YEAR ROUND

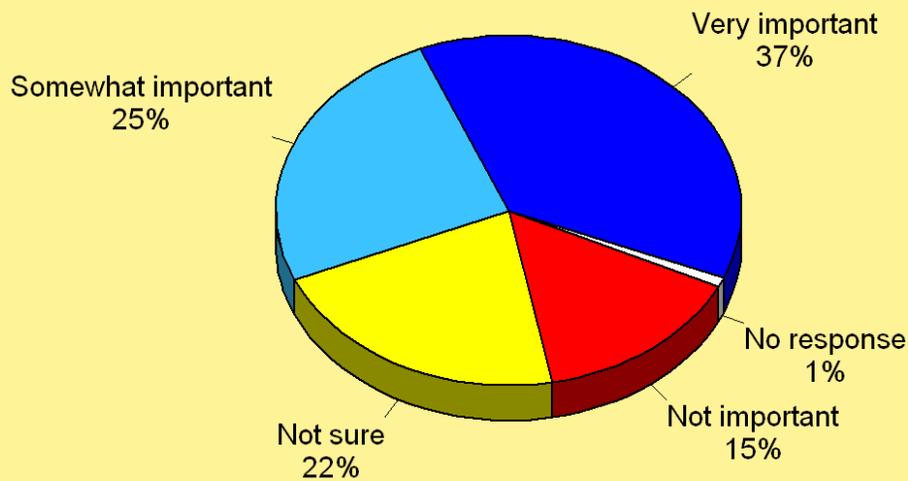
Respondents were asked to indicate how important they think it is for the City of Miami to operate outdoor swimming pools year round.

Key findings:

- > Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents indicated that it is either very important (37%) or somewhat important (25%) for the City to operate swimming pools year round. In addition 15% of respondents feel it is not important; 22% were not sure.

Q18. Importance of the City of Miami Operating Outdoor Swimming Pools Year Round

by percentage of respondents



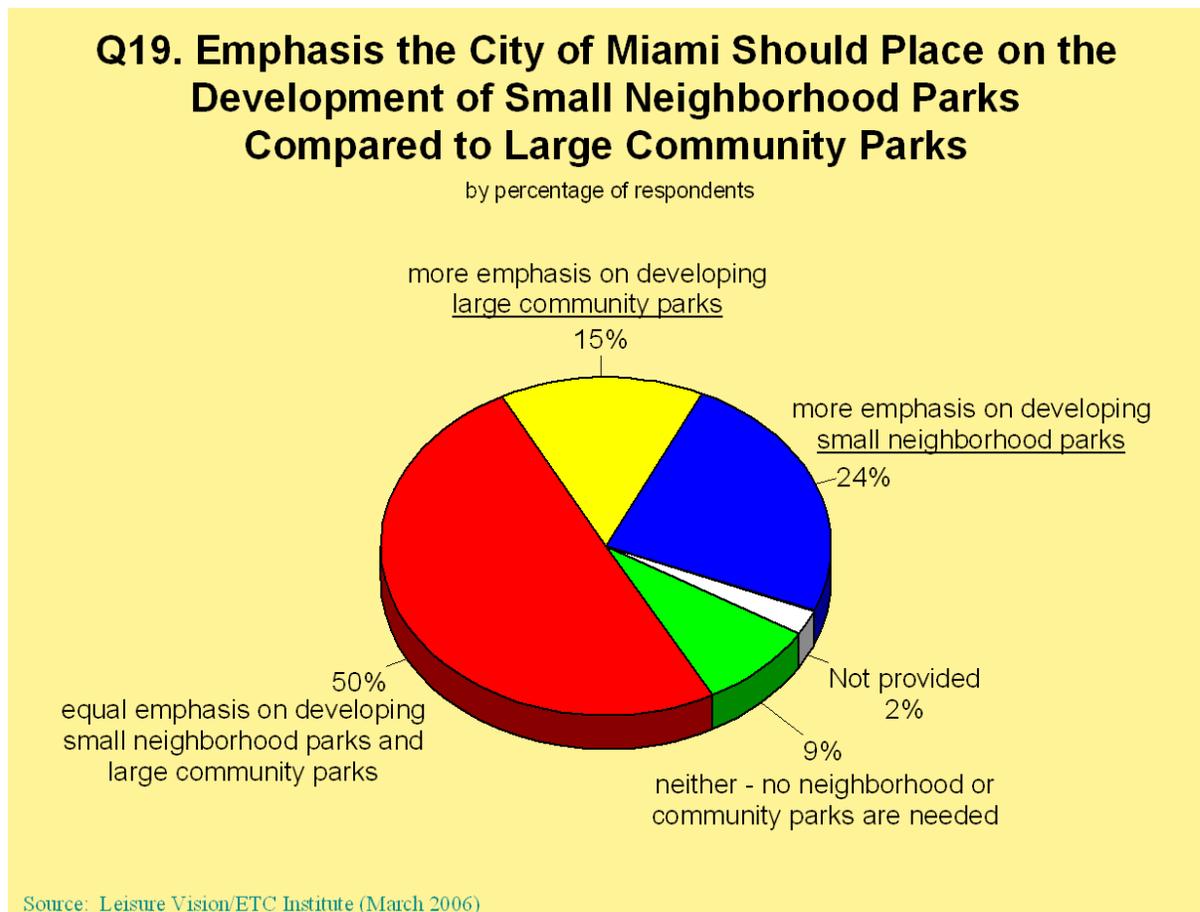
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

EMPHASIS TO PLACE ON DEVELOPING SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND LARGE COMMUNITY PARKS

From a list of four options, respondents were asked to indicate which statement best describes the emphasis the City of Miami should place on development of small neighborhood parks as compared to large community parks.

Key findings:

- > Fifty percent (50%) of respondents feel the City should place equal emphasis on developing small neighborhood parks and developing large community parks. In addition, 24% of respondents feel the City should place more emphasis on small neighborhood parks, and 15% feel the City should place more emphasis on large community parks. It should also be noted that only 9% of respondents indicated that no new neighborhood or community parks are needed.



SUPPORT FOR INCREASING FEES FOR RECREATION, FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

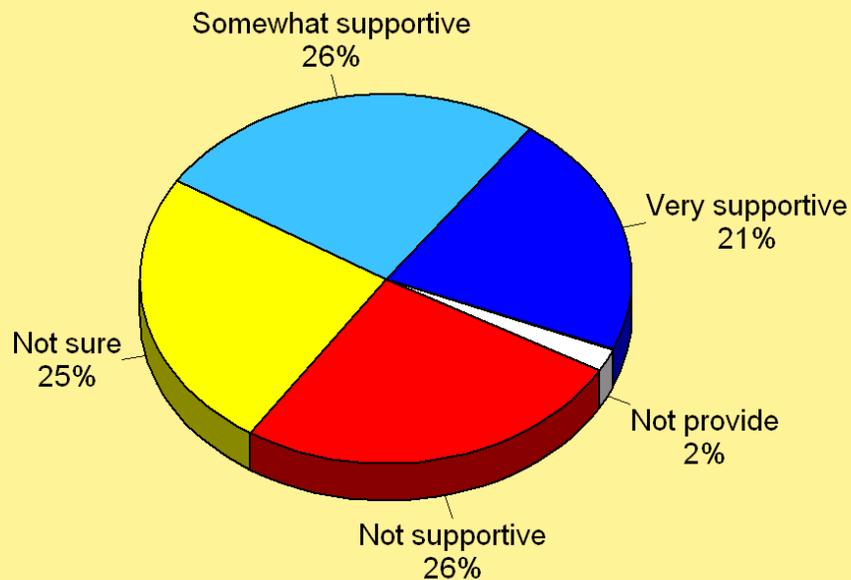
Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for increasing fees for the recreation, facilities, programs and services that they use to help pay for increased operating expenses.

Key findings:

- > Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents indicated being either very (21%) or somewhat supportive (26%) of raising the fees for recreation facilities, programs and services that they use. In addition, 26% of respondents did not support increasing fees, and 25% were not sure.

Q20. Level of Support for Increasing the Fees for Recreation Facilities, Programs and Services That Respondents Use

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

ALLOCATION OF \$100 FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO PARKS AND FACILITIES

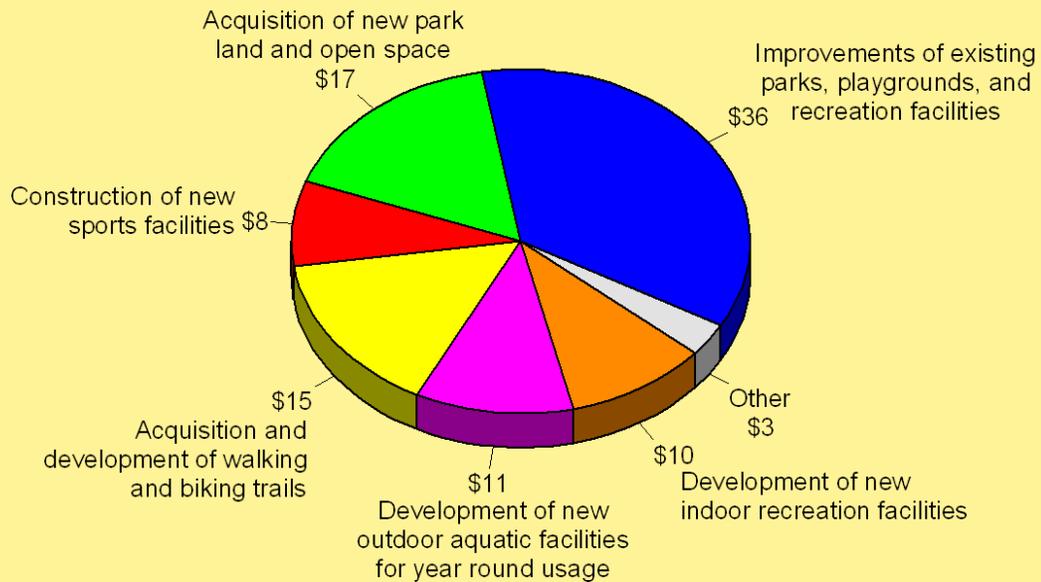
Respondents were asked how they would allocate \$100 among six categories of capital improvements for Miami parks and facilities.

Key findings:

- > Respondents reported they would allocate \$36 out of every \$100 to improving existing parks, playgrounds, and recreation facilities. They would divide the remaining \$64 among acquisition of new park land and open space (\$17); acquisition and development of walking and biking trails (\$15); development of new outdoor aquatic facilities for year-round usage (\$11); development of new indoor recreation facilities (\$10); and construction of new sports facilities (\$8). Respondents would allocate the remaining \$3 to “other.”

Q21. Allocation of \$100 to Fund Capital Improvements to City of Miami Parks and Facilities

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (January 2006)

ALLOCATION OF \$100 FOR PROGRAMS AND OPERATING COSTS TO PARKS AND FACILITIES

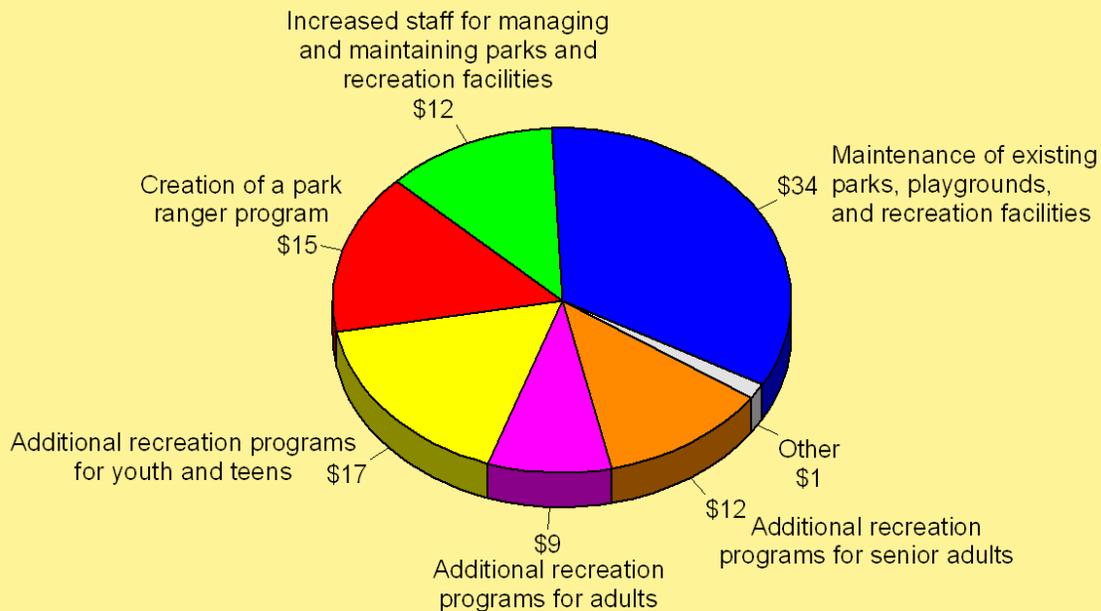
Respondents were asked how they would allocate \$100 among six categories of programs and operating costs for Miami parks and facilities.

Key findings:

- > Respondents said they would allocate \$34 out of every \$100 to maintaining existing parks, playgrounds, and recreation facilities. They would divide the remaining \$66 among additional recreation programs for youth and teens (\$17); creation of a park ranger program (\$15); increased staff for managing and maintaining parks and recreation facilities (\$12); additional recreation programs for seniors (\$12); and additional recreation programs for adults (\$9). They would allocate the remaining \$1 to “other.”

Q22. Allocation of \$100 to Fund Programs and Operating Costs to City of Miami Parks and Facilities

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (January 2006)

IMPORTANCE OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES COMPARED TO OTHER PRIORITIES

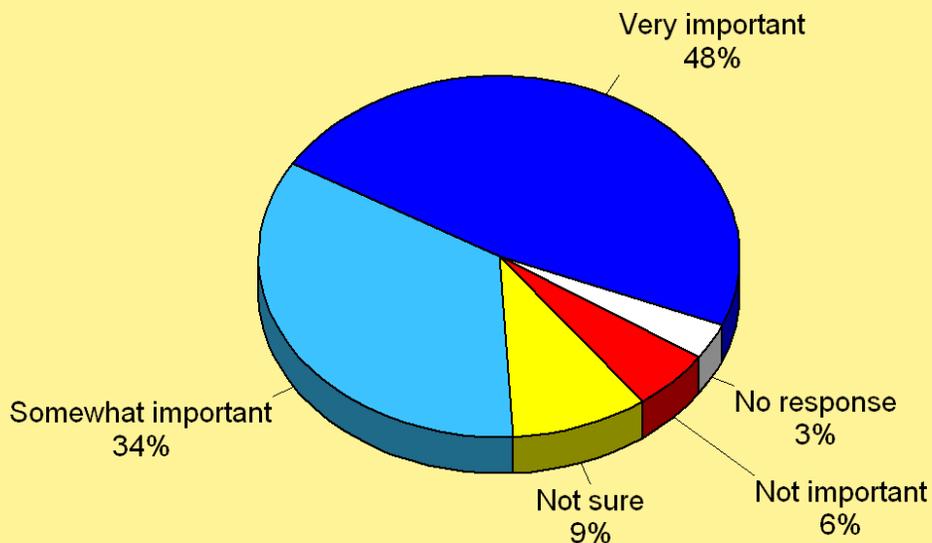
Respondents were asked to indicate how important it is for the City of Miami to make improvements in parks and recreation services compared to other priorities, such as law enforcement, fire, and streets.

Key findings:

- > **Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents deemed improvements in parks and recreation services either very important (48%) or somewhat important (34%) compared to other priorities for the City.** In addition, only 6% of respondents deemed them not important, and 9% indicated “not sure.”

Q23. Importance of Improvements to Parks and Recreation Services Compared to Other Priorities for the City of Miami

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (March 2006)

SURVEY 2, CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

The City of Miami conducted a Parks and Recreation Customer Satisfaction Survey during August and September of 2006 as part of a Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan to help establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the community. The survey—designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the city—was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with City of Miami officials as well as the Goody Clancy project team to develop the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance for planning the future system effectively.

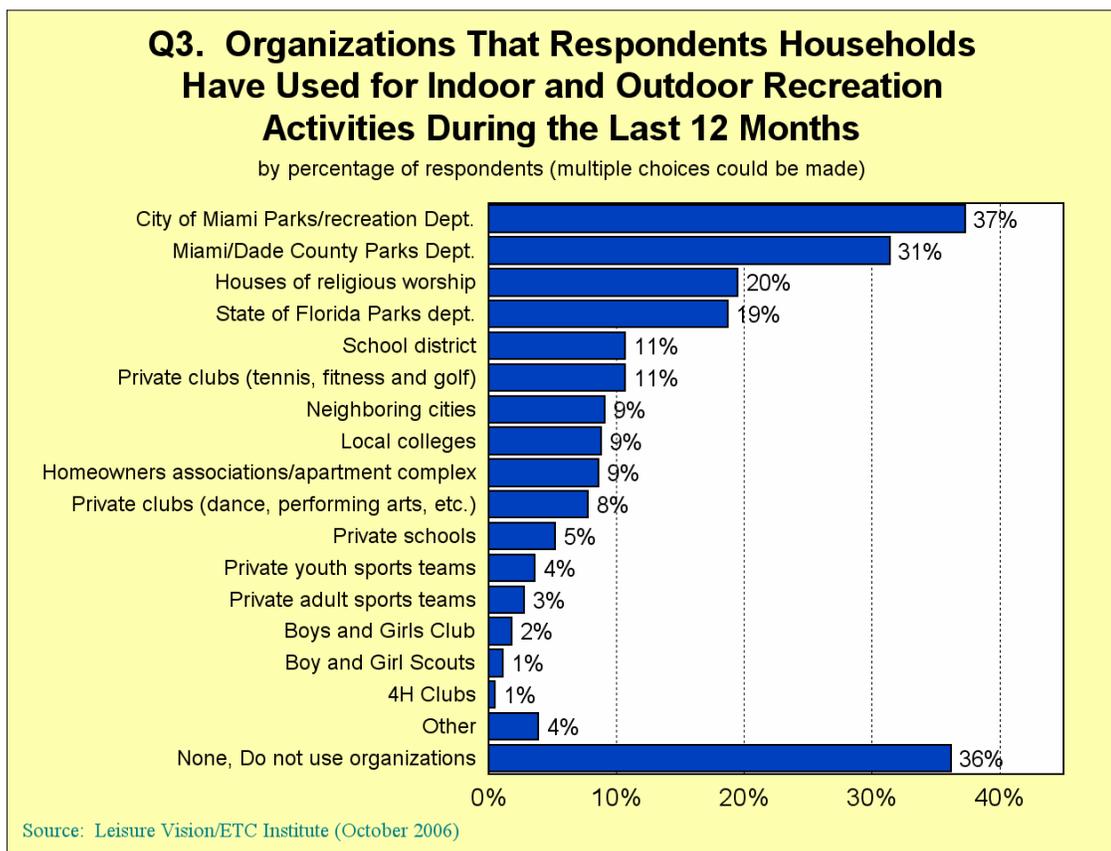
In August 2006 surveys were mailed to a random sample of 3,000 Miami households. Approximately three days after the mailing, each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. About two weeks later, Leisure Vision began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone.

The goal was to obtain a total of at least 600 completed surveys. This goal was reached; a total of 614 surveys were completed. The results of the random sample of 614 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 4.0%

Organizations Used for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities

From a list of 16 options, respondents were asked to select all of the organizations their household has used for indoor and outdoor recreation activities during the last 12 months. The following summarizes key findings:

- **The organizations used by the highest percentage of respondent households are: City of Miami Parks and Recreation Department (37%), Miami/Dade County Parks Department (31%), houses of religious worship (20%) and State of Florida Parks Department (18%).**

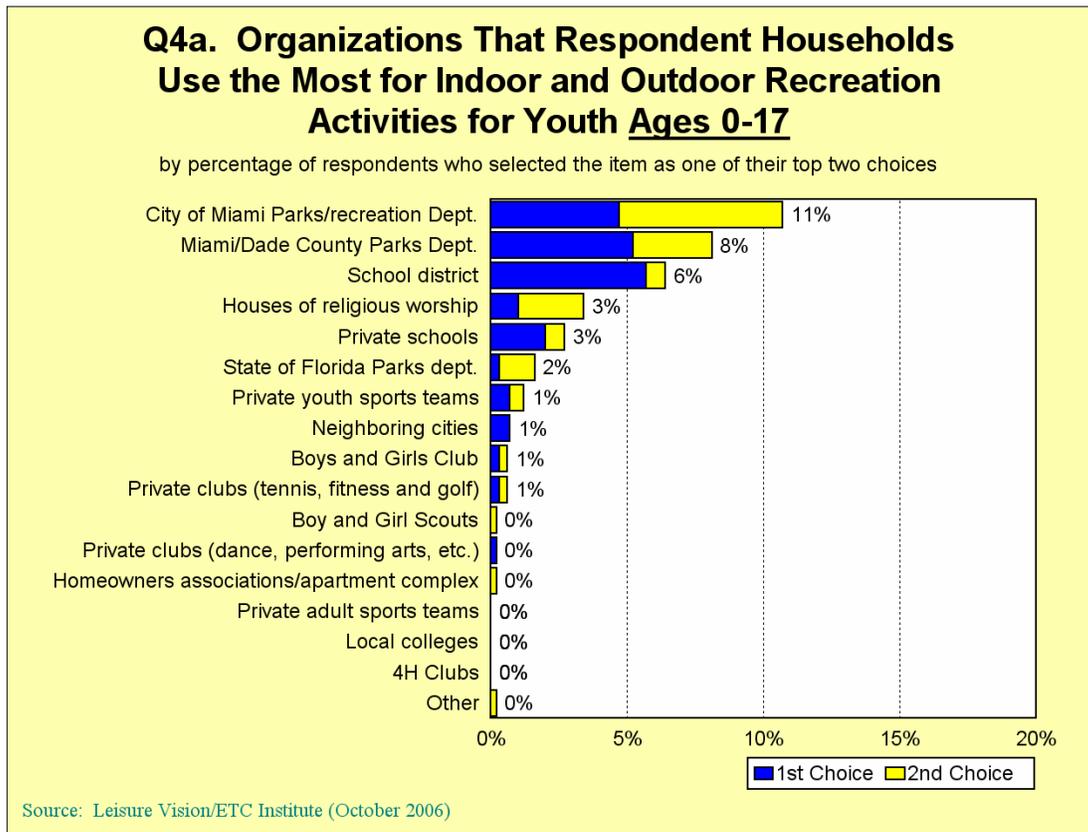


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Organizations Used Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities for Youth Ages 0-17

From the list of 16 options, respondents were asked to select the two organizations their household use the most for recreation activities for youth ages 0-17. The following summarizes key findings:

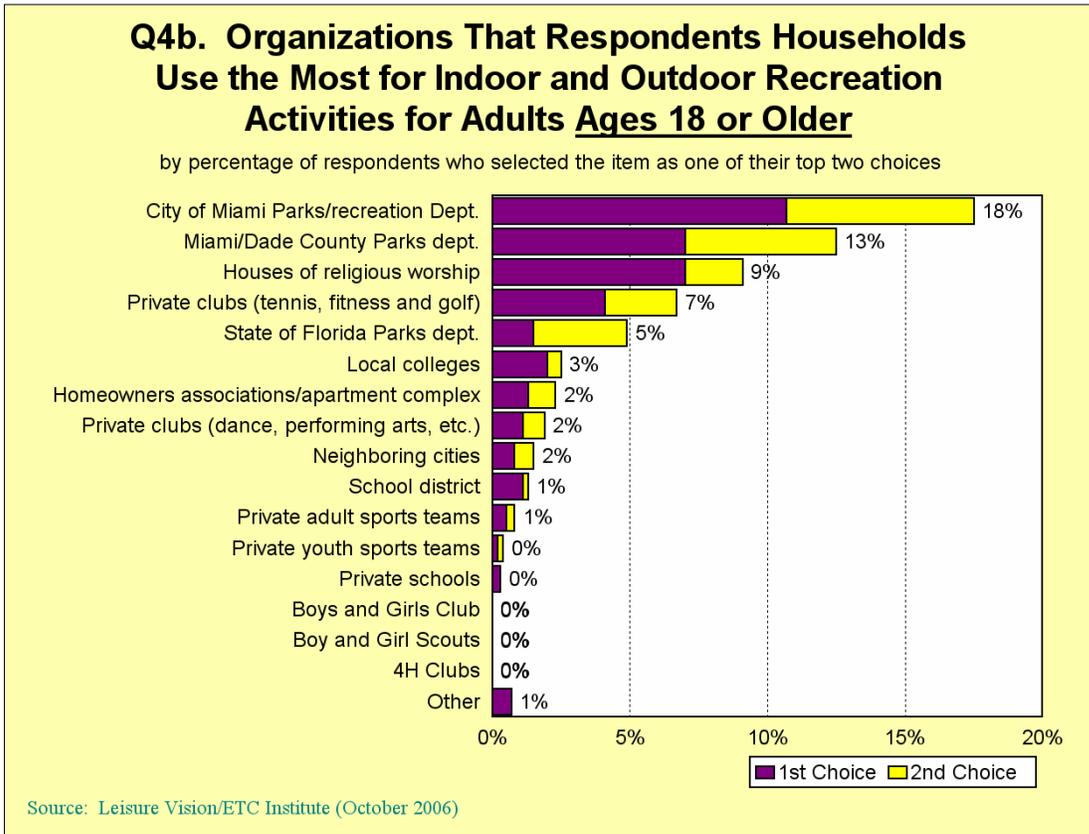
- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the organizations that respondents use the most for youth ages 0-17 are: City of Miami Parks and Recreation Department (11%), Miami/Dade County Parks Department (8%) and School District (6%).**



Organizations Used Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities for Adults Ages 18+

From the list of 16 options, respondents were asked to select the two organizations their household use the most for recreation activities for adults ages 18 or older. The following summarizes key findings:

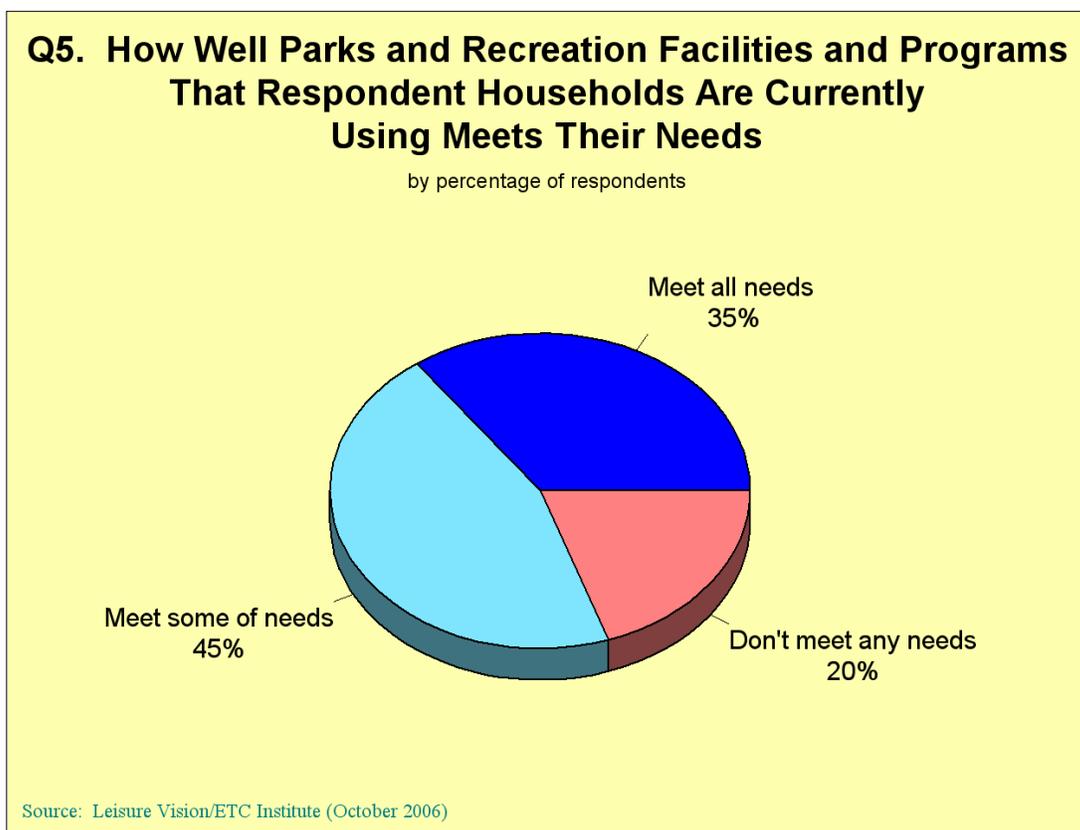
- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the organizations that respondents use the most for adults ages 18 or older are: City of Miami Parks and Recreation Department (18%), Miami/Dade County Parks Department (13%) and houses of religious worship (9%).**



How Well Parks & Recreation Facilities Meet Respondent Household Needs

From a list of three options, respondents were asked to indicate how well the parks and recreation facilities they are currently using meet the needs of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

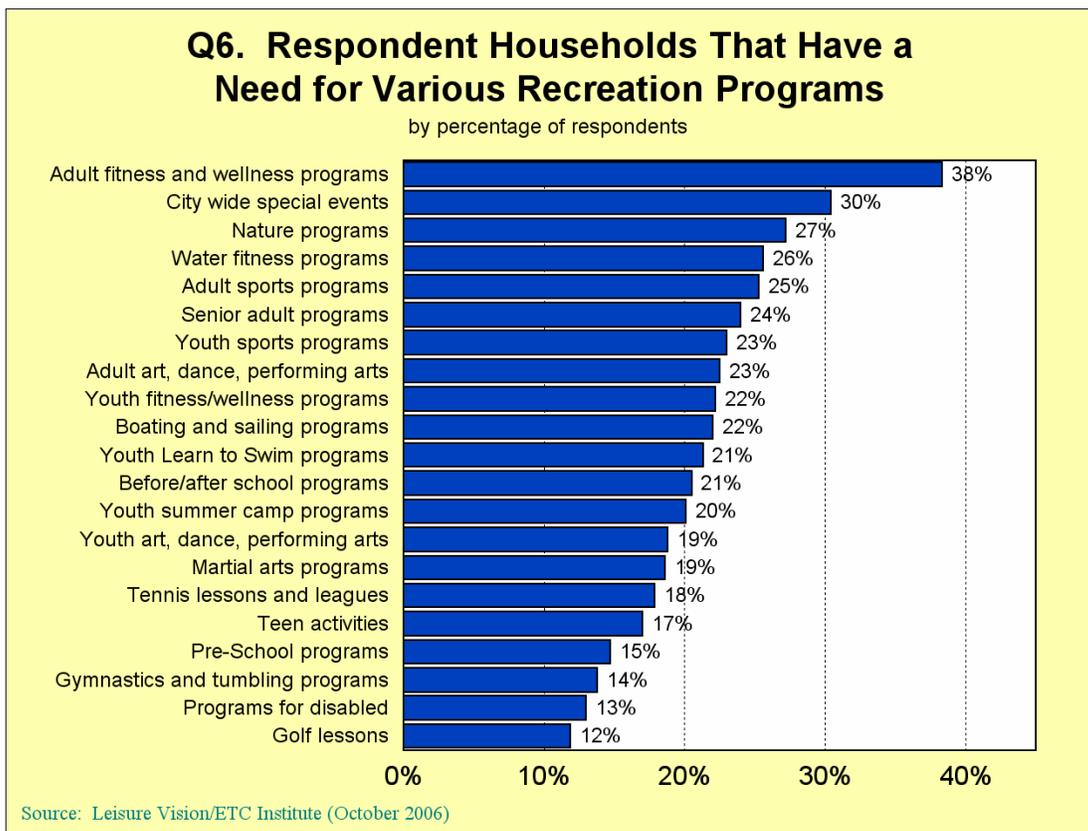
- **Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents indicated that the parks and recreation facilities and programs they are currently using meet some of their needs.** In addition, 35% of respondents indicated that the parks, facilities and programs meet all of their needs, and 20% indicated they do not meet any of their needs.



Need for Recreation Programs

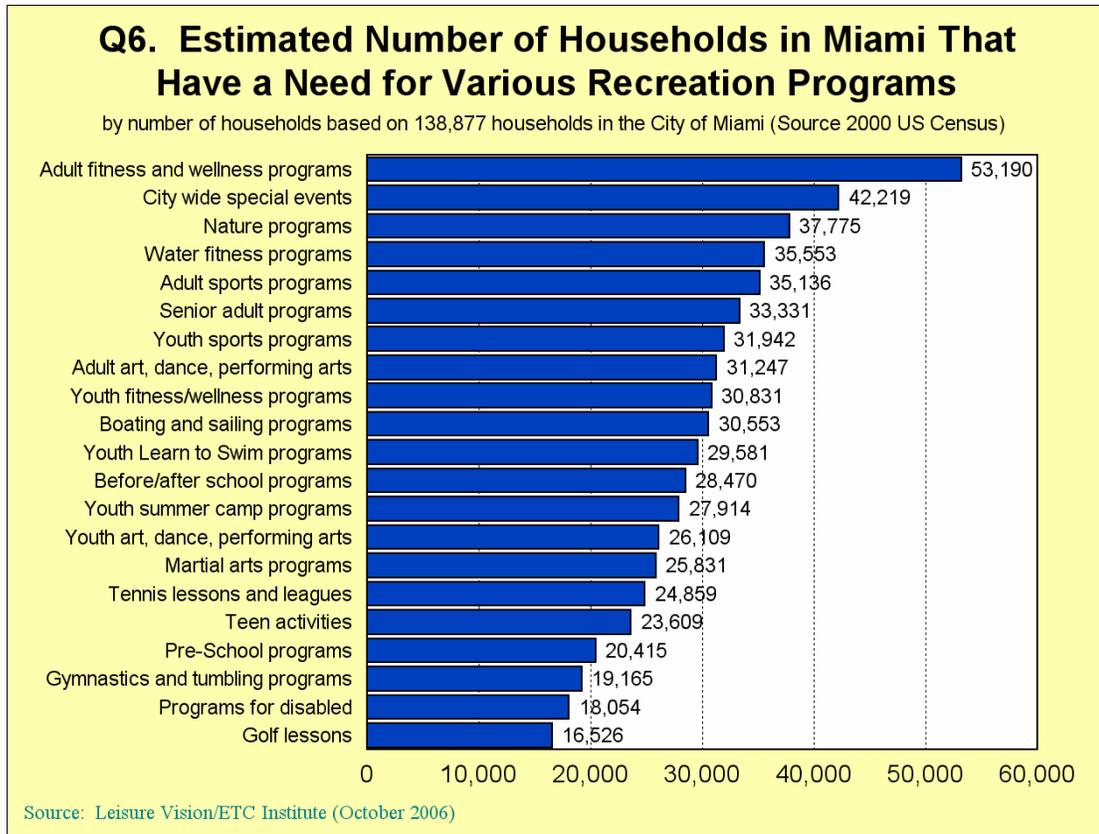
From a list of 21 recreation programs, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

- **There are five recreation programs that at least 25% of respondent households have a need for: adult fitness and wellness programs (38%), City-wide special events (30%), nature programs (27%), water fitness programs (26%) and adult sports programs (25%).**



Need For Recreation Programs in Miami

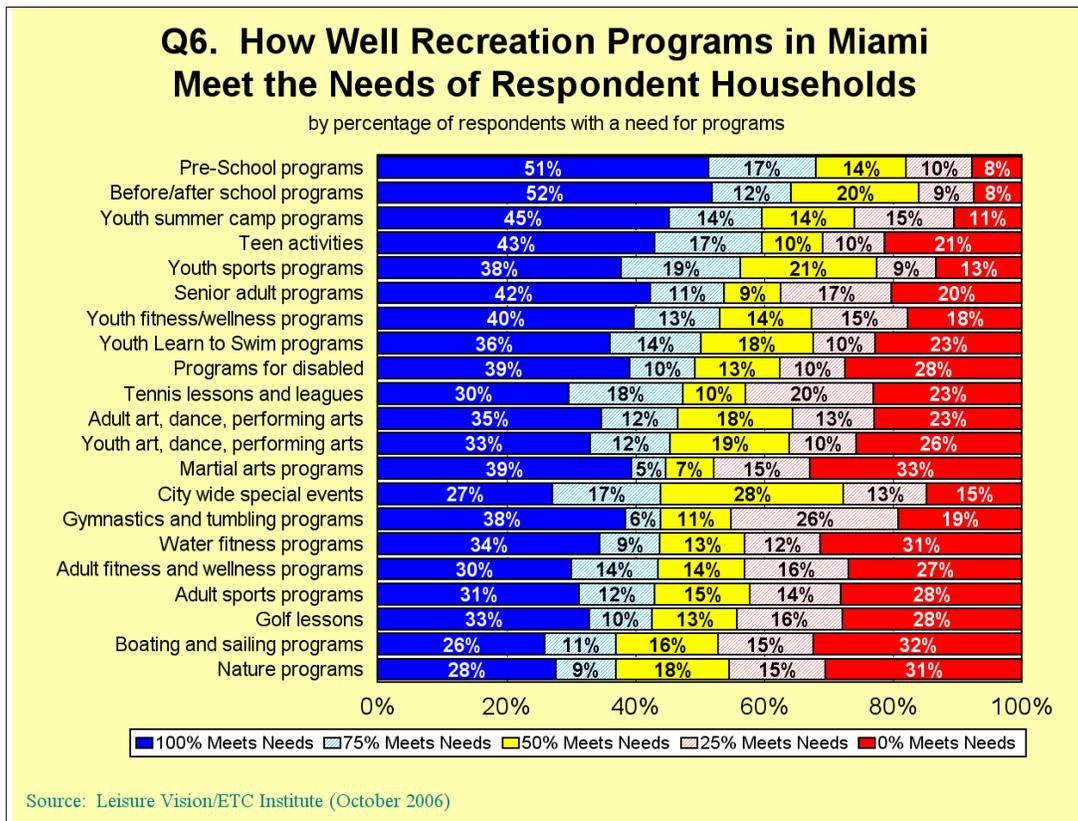
From the list of 21 recreation programs, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in the City of Miami that have a need for various recreation programs, based on 138,877 households in the City.



How Well Recreation Programs Meet Needs

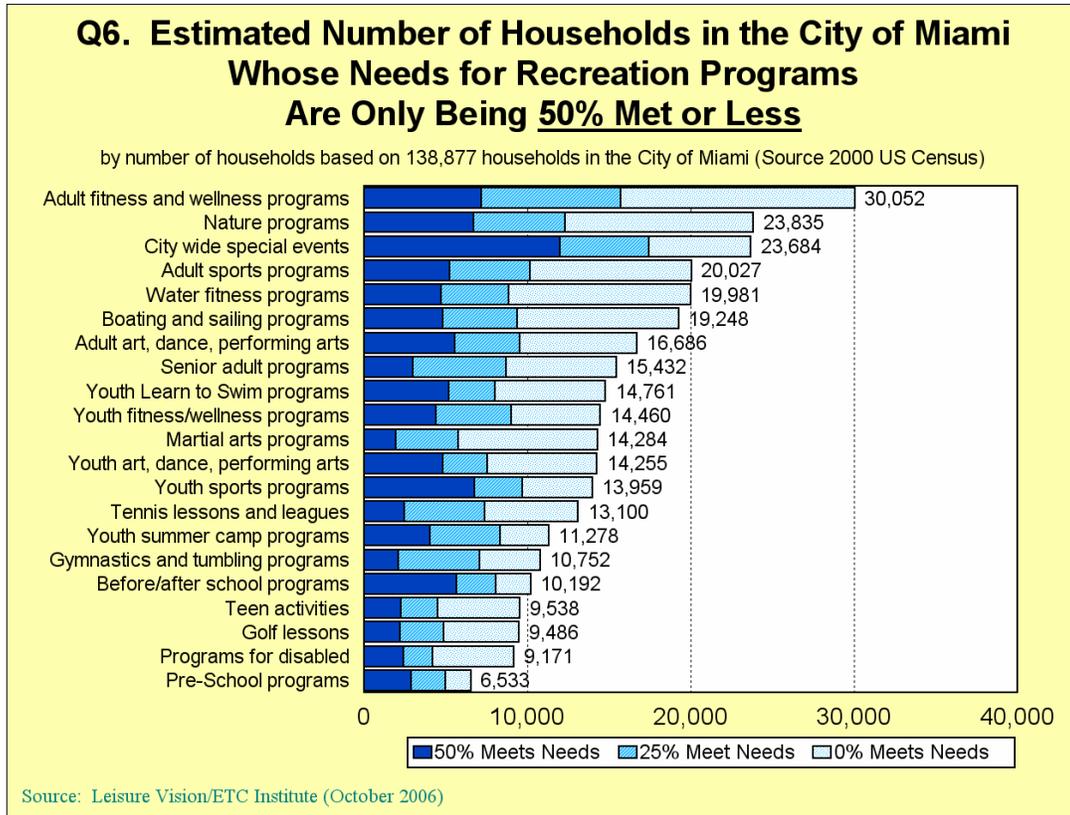
From the list of 21 recreation programs, respondent households that have a need for programs were asked to indicate how well those programs meet their needs. The following summarizes key findings:

- All 21 programs have less than 55% of respondents indicate the program completely meets the needs of their household.



Miami Households with Their Program Needs Being 50% Met or Less

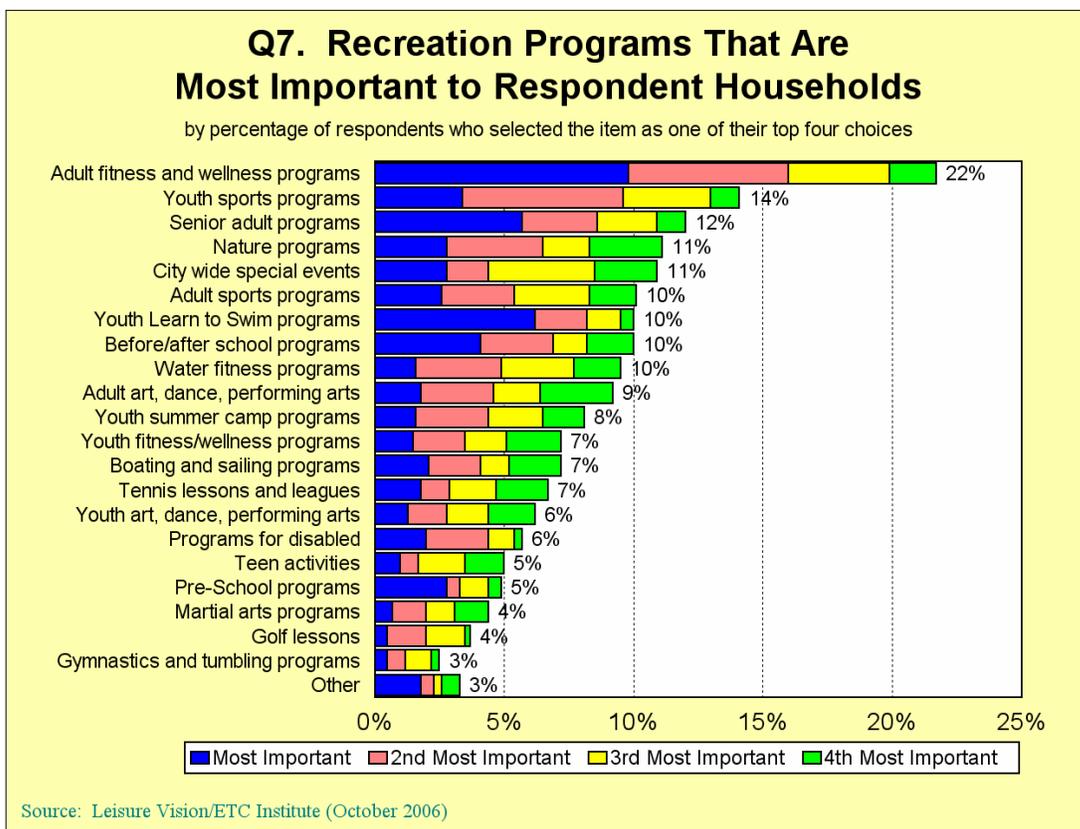
From the list of 21 recreation programs, respondent households that have a need for programs were asked to indicate how well those programs meet their needs. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in the City of Miami whose needs for programs are only being 50% met or less, based on 138,877 households in the City.



Most Important Recreation Programs

From the list of 21 recreation programs, respondents were asked to select the four that are most important to them and members of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

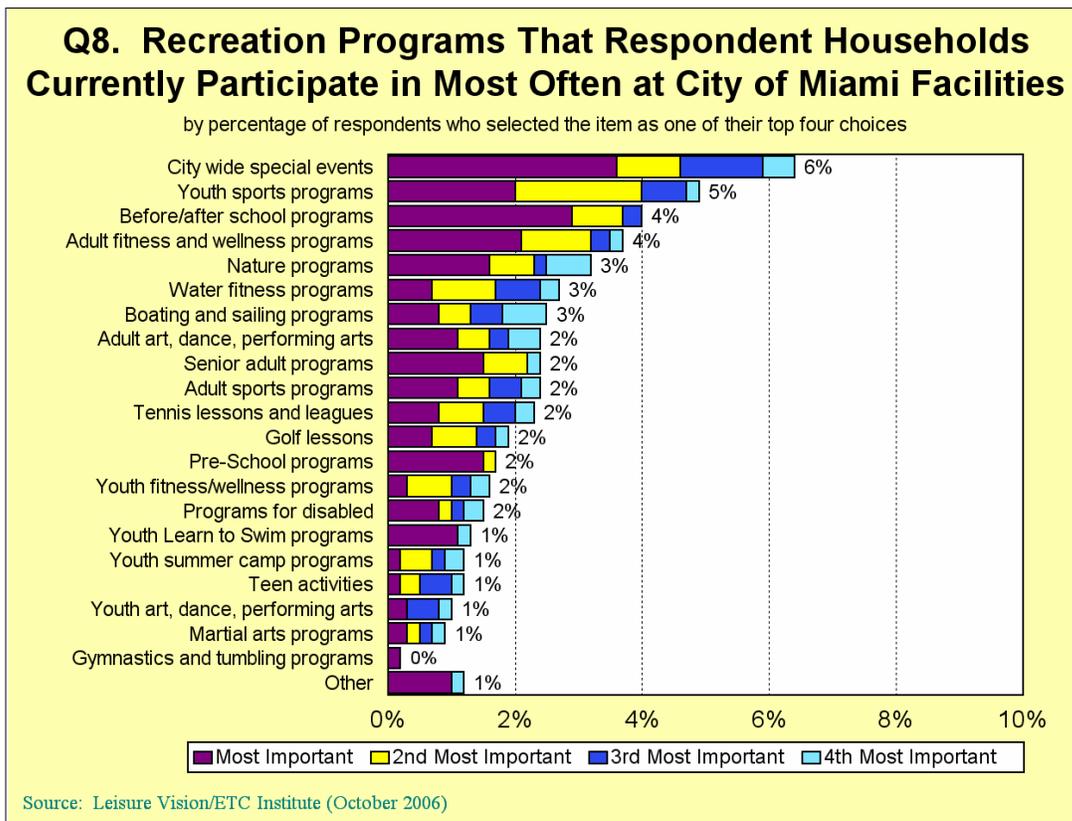
- **Based on the sum of their top 4 choices, the programs that are most important to respondent households are: adult fitness and wellness programs (22%), youth sports programs (14%), senior adult programs (12%), nature programs (11%) and City-wide special events (11%).** It should also be noted that adult fitness and wellness programs had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important program.



Recreation Programs Respondents Currently Participate in Most Often

From the list of 21 recreation programs, respondents were asked to select the four that they and members of their household currently participate in most often at City of Miami facilities. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Based on the sum of their top 4 choices, the programs that respondent households currently participate in most often at City of Miami facilities are: City-wide special events (6%), youth sports programs (5%), before/after school programs (4%) and adult fitness and wellness programs (4%).** It should also be noted that City-wide special events had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the program they currently participate in most often at City of Miami facilities.

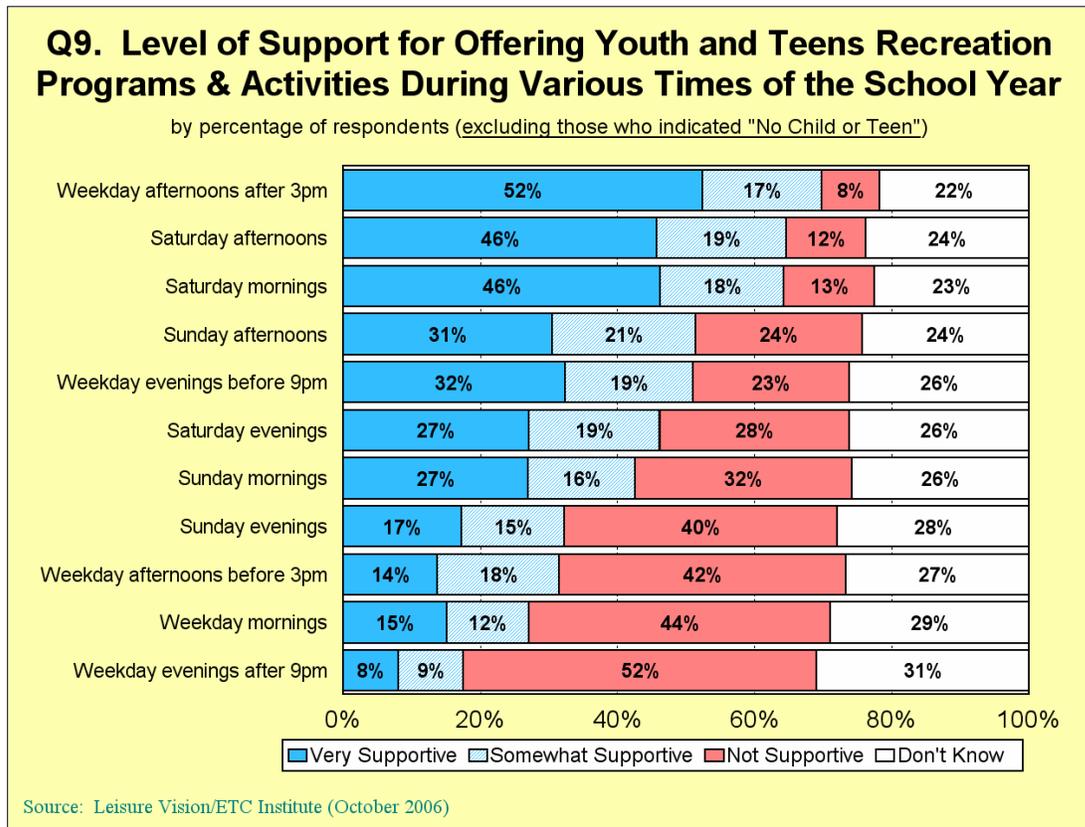


Support for Times Programs & Activities Can Be Offered to Youth & Teens

From a list of 11 various times that recreation programs and activities could be offered to youth and teens during the school year, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each time. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below includes only those respondents who have at least one child or teen in their household.)

- **The times that the highest percentage of respondents are very supportive of programs and activities being offered are: weekday afternoons after 3pm (52%), Saturday afternoons (46%) and Saturday mornings (46%).** It should also be noted that over 45% of respondents are either very supportive or somewhat supportive of 7 of the 11 times that programs could be offered.

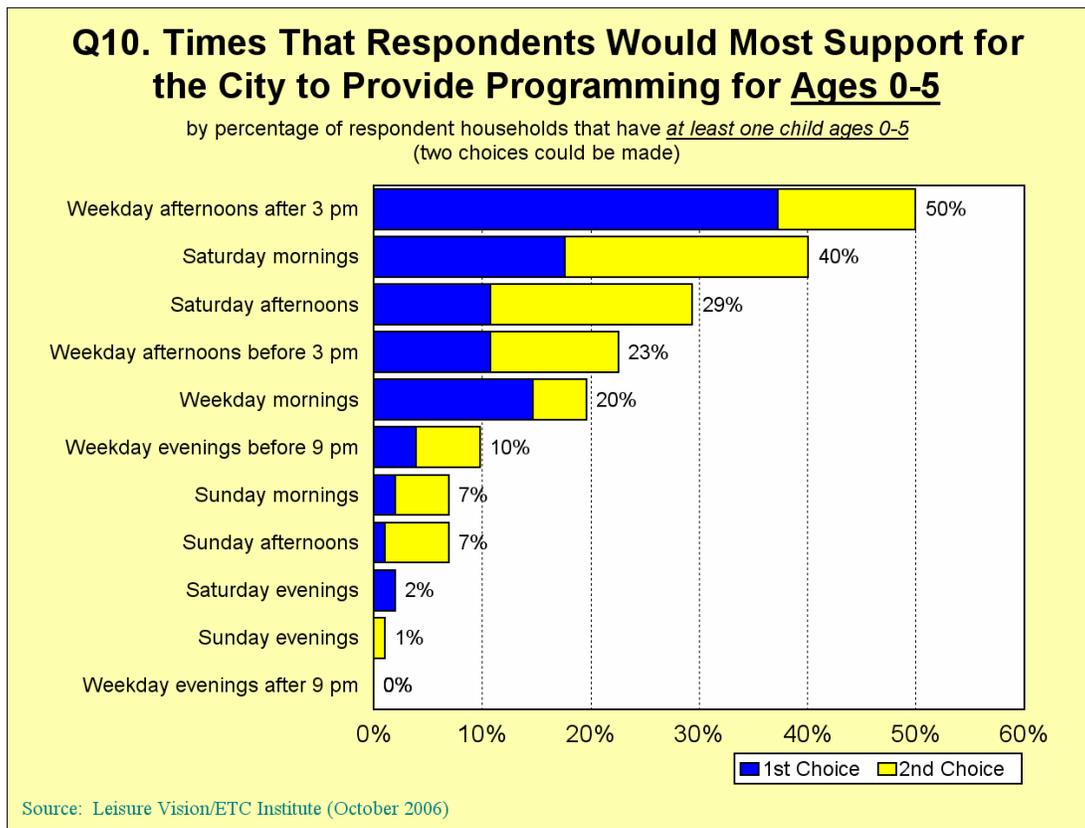


Most Supported Program Times for Youth Ages 0-5

From the list of 11 various times that programs and activities could be offered to youth and teens during the school year, respondents were asked to select the two times they would most support for youth ages 0-5. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below includes only those respondents who have at least one child ages 0-5 in their household)

- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the times that respondents most support for programs for children ages 0-5 are: weekday afternoons after 3pm (50%), Saturday mornings (40%), Saturday afternoons (29%) and weekday afternoons before 3pm (23%).** It should also be noted that weekday afternoons after 3pm had by a wide margin the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the time they most support.

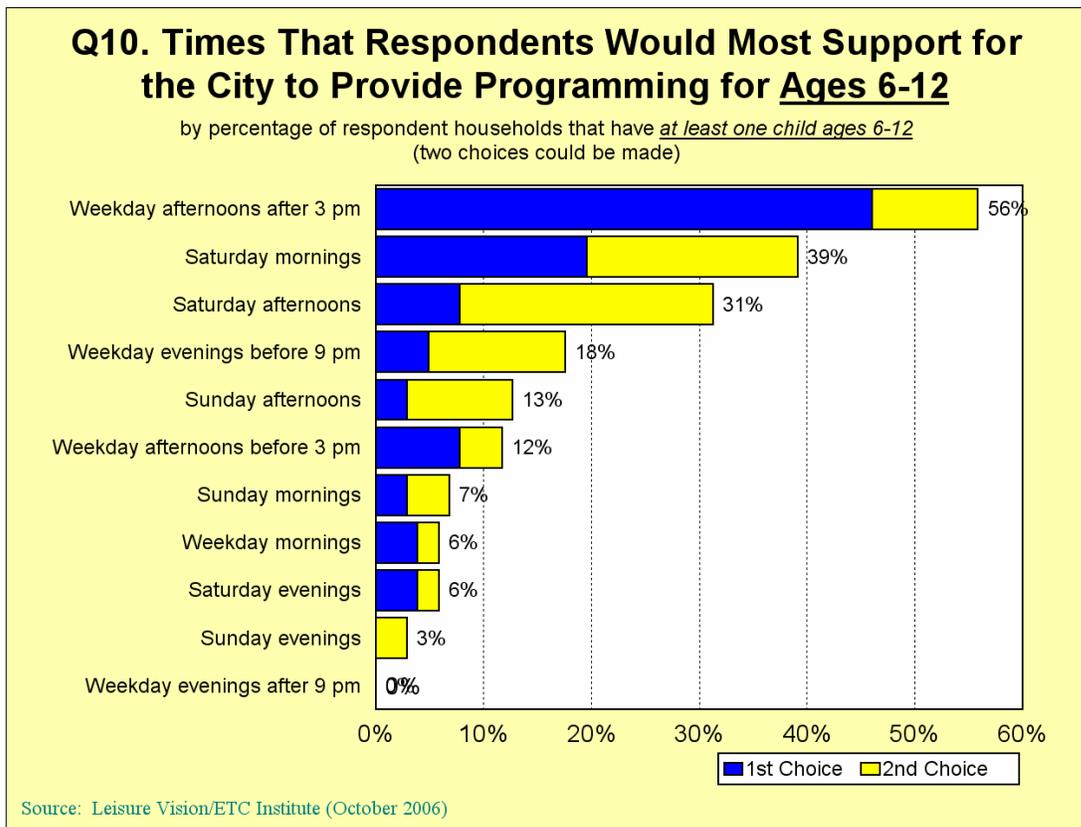


Most Supported Program Times for Youth Ages 6-12

From the list of 11 various times that programs and activities could be offered to youth and teens during the school year, respondents were asked to select the two times they would most support for youth ages 6-12. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below includes only those respondents who have at least one child ages 6-12 in their household)

- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the times that respondents most support for programs for children ages 6-12 are: weekday afternoons after 3pm (56%), Saturday mornings (39%), Saturday afternoons (31%) and weekday evenings before 9pm (18%).** It should also be noted that weekday afternoons after 3pm had by a wide margin the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the time they most support.



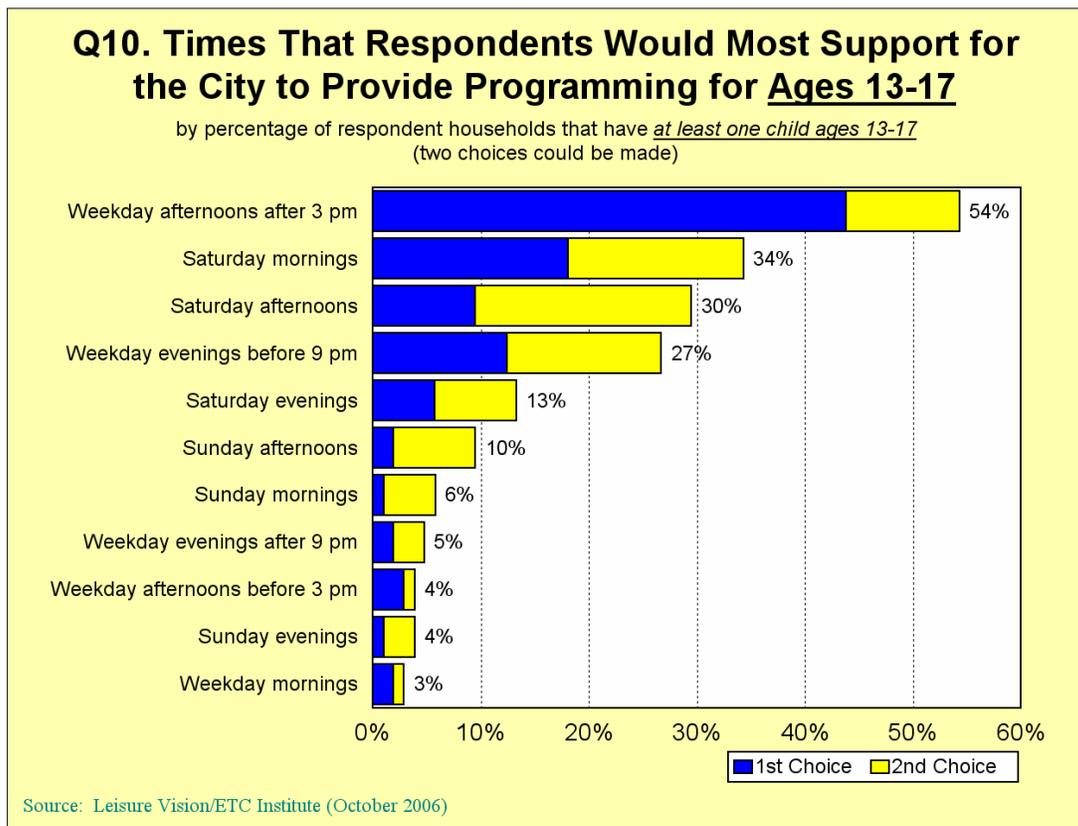
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Most Supported Program Times for Youth Ages 13-17

From the list of 11 various times that programs and activities could be offered to youth and teens during the school year, respondents were asked to select the two times they would most support for youth ages 13-17. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below includes only those respondents who have at least one teen ages 13-17 in their household)

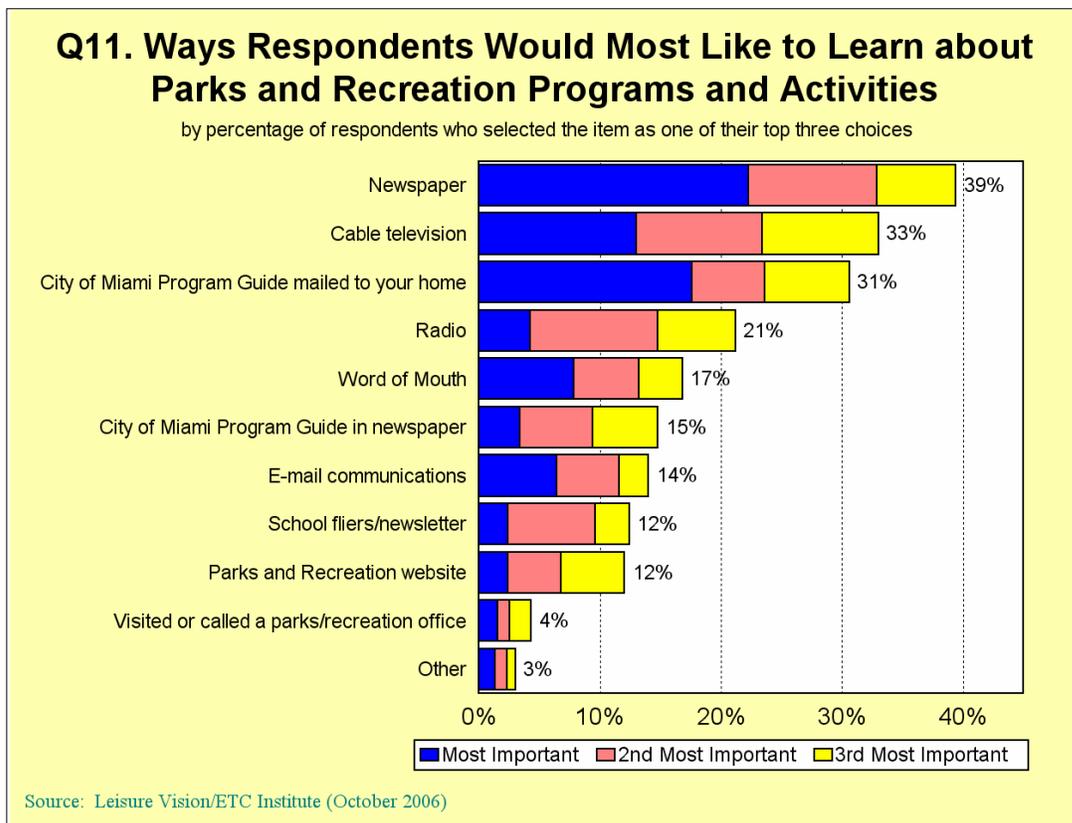
- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the times that respondents most support for programs for teens ages 13-17 are: weekday afternoons after 3pm (54%), Saturday mornings (34%), Saturday afternoons (30%) and weekday evenings before 9pm (27%).** It should also be noted that weekday afternoons after 3pm had by a wide margin the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the time they most support.



Ways Respondents Prefer to Learn About Programs and Activities

From the list of 10 options, respondents were asked to indicate the three ways they would most like to learn about parks and recreation programs and activities. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Based on the sum of their top 3 choices, the ways respondents would most like to learn about parks and recreation programs and activities are: newspaper (39%), cable television (33%) and City of Miami Program Guide mailed to their home (31%).** It should also be noted that the newspaper had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the way they would most like to learn about programs and activities.

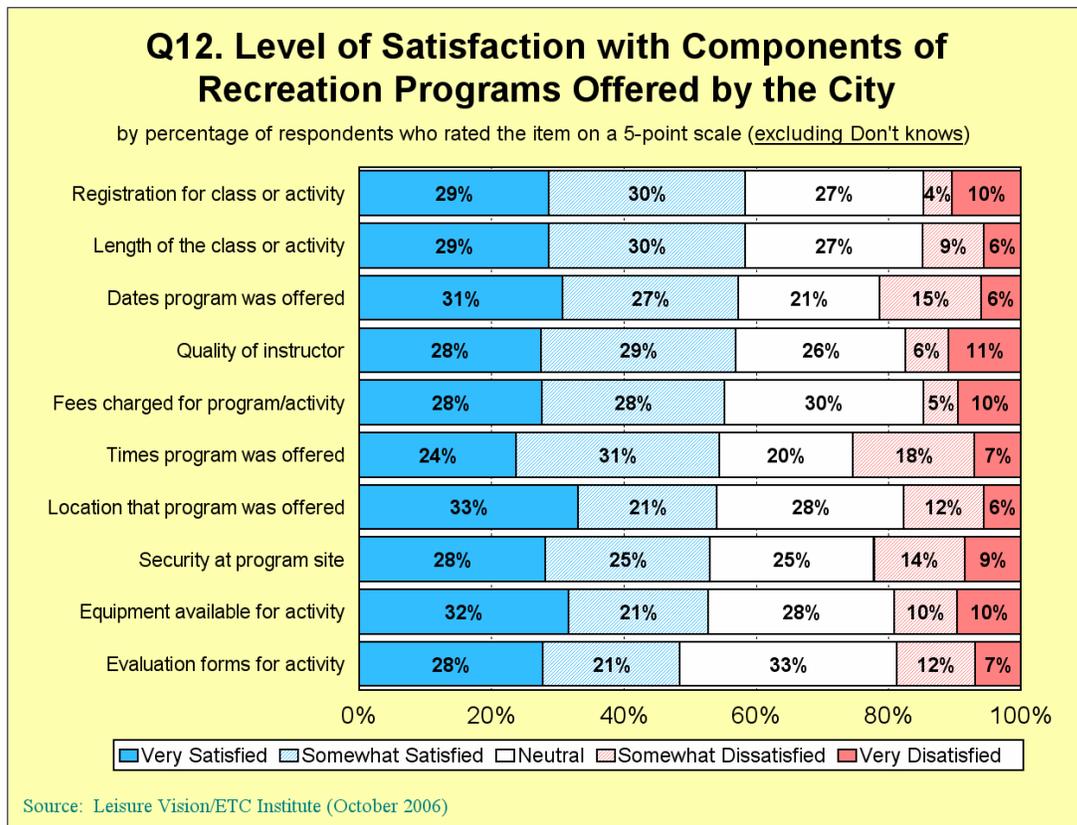


Satisfaction with Various Components of City Recreation Programs

From a list of 10 components of recreation programs offered by the City, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with each one. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below excludes “don’t know” responses)

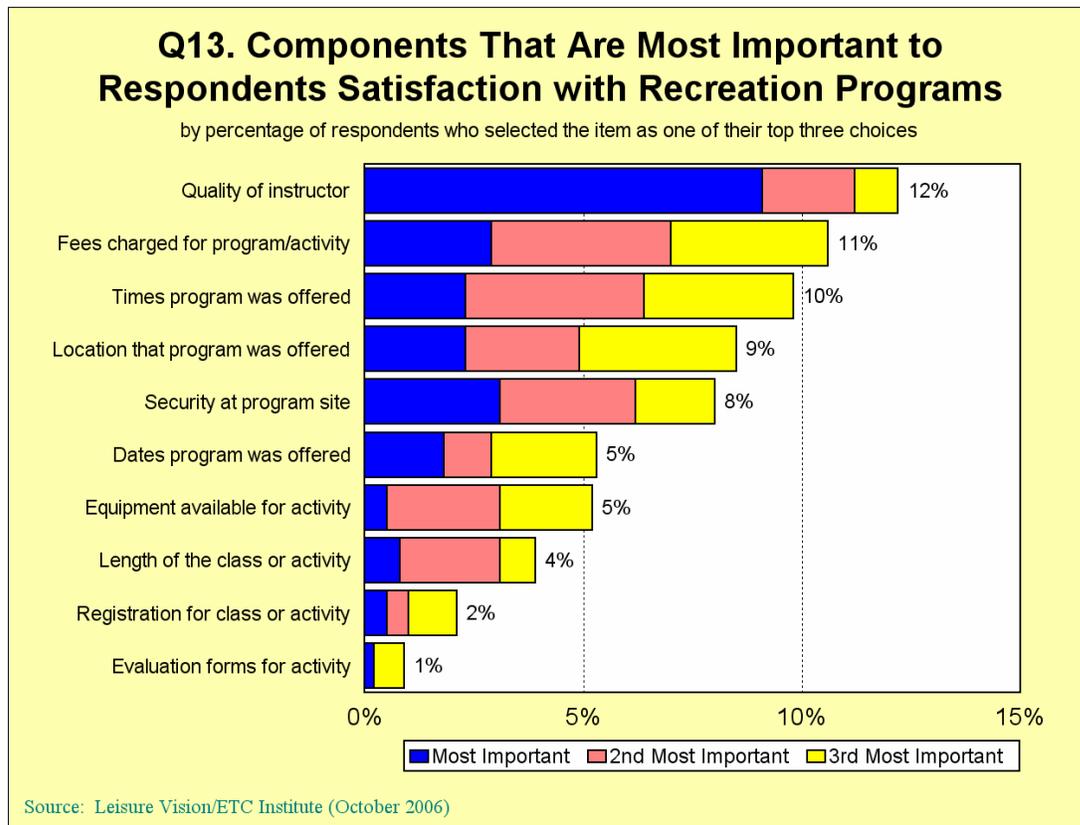
- The program components that the highest percentage of respondents are very satisfied with are: location that program was offered (33%), equipment available for activity (32%) and dates program was offered.** It should also be noted that all 10 program components had between 49% - 59% of respondents being either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with them.



Most Important Components of City Recreation Programs

From the list of 10 components of recreation programs offered by the City, respondents were asked to select the three components that are most important to their satisfaction with recreation programs. The following summarizes key findings:

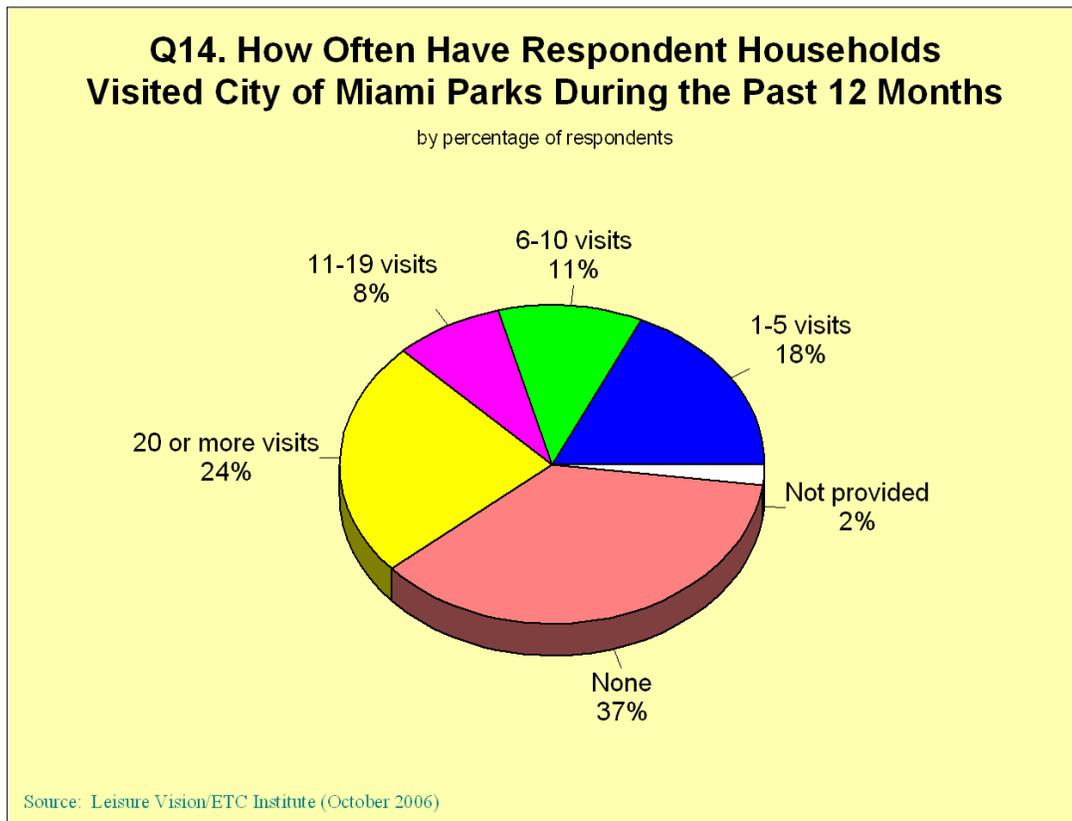
- **Based on the sum of their top 3 choices, the components that are most important to respondents' satisfaction with programs are: quality of instructor (12%), fees charged for program/activity (11%), and times program was offered (10%).** It should also be noted that quality of instructor had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important program component.



Frequency of Visits to City Parks

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they and members of their household have visited City of Miami parks over the past 12 months. The following summarizes key findings:

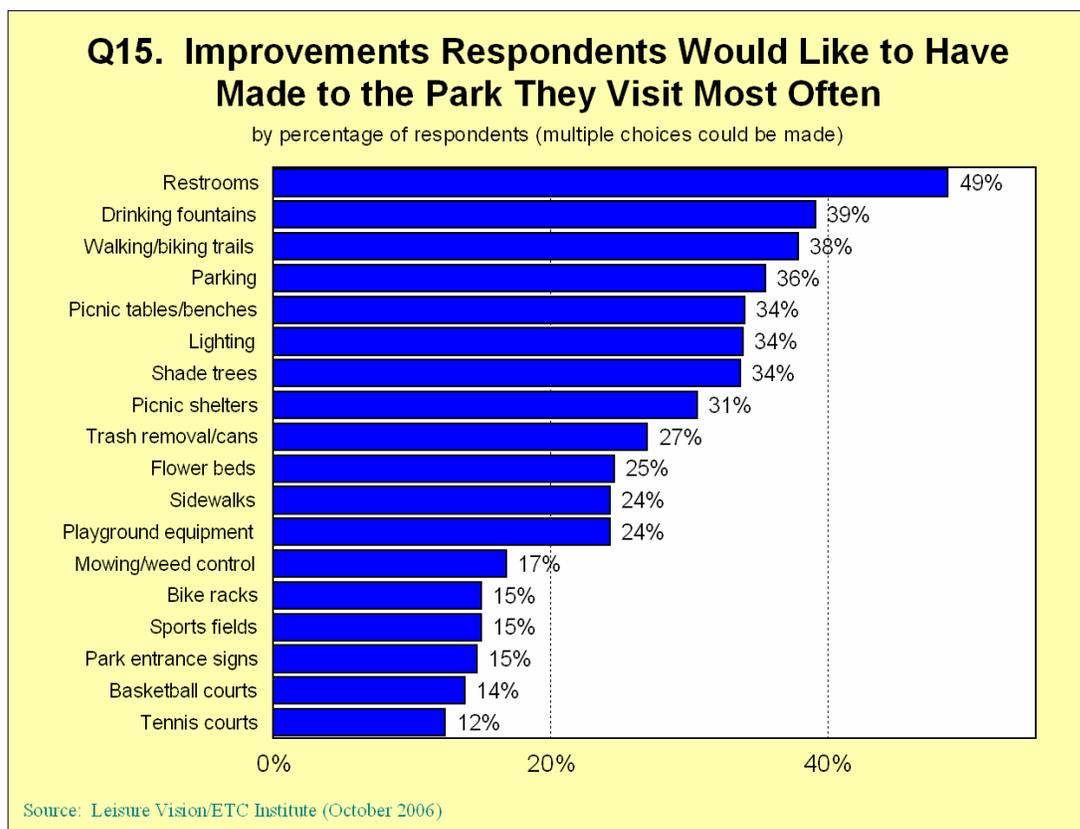
- **Sixty-one percent (61%) of respondent households have visited City of Miami parks at least once over the past 12 months.** In addition, 43% of respondents have visited City parks 6 or more times during the past year.



Potential Improvements to City Parks

From a list of 18 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the improvements they would most like to have made to the City of Miami park they visit most often. The following summarizes key findings:

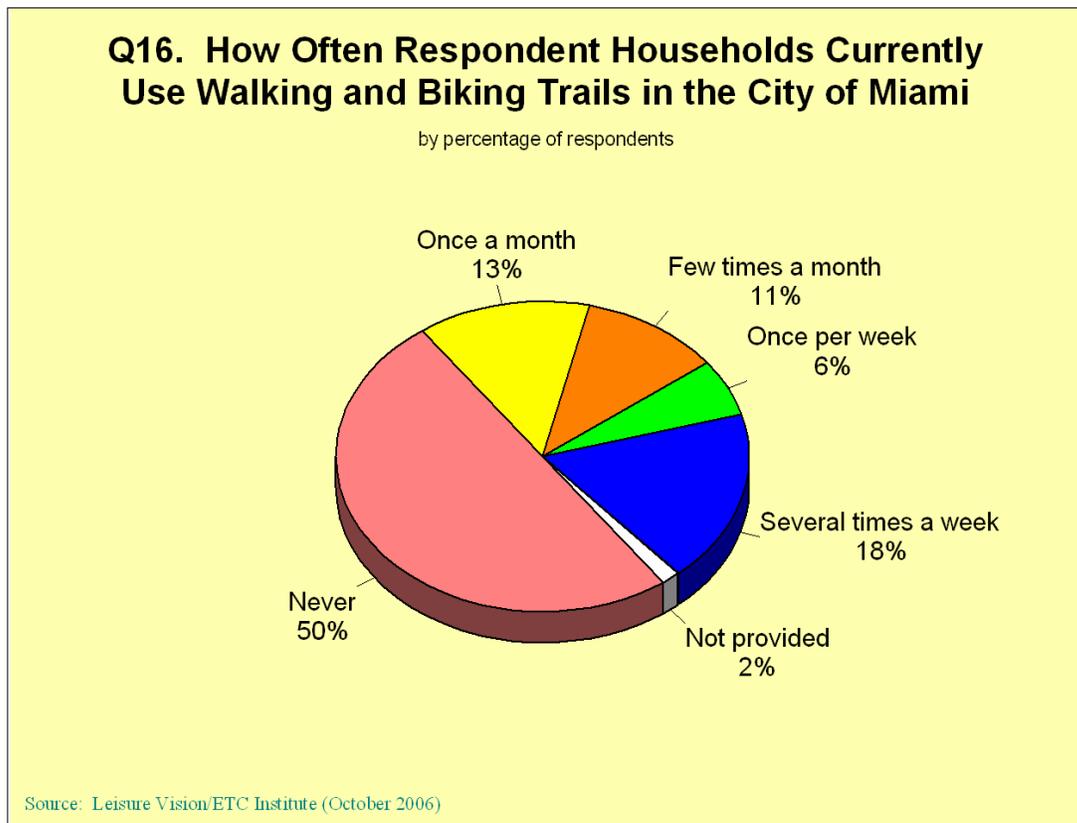
- **The improvements that respondents would most like to have made to the City park they visit most often are: restrooms (49%), drinking fountains (39%), walking/biking trails (38%), and parking (36%).**



Frequency of Use of Walking and Biking Trails

Respondents were asked to indicate how often their household currently uses walking and biking trails in the City of Miami. The following summarizes key findings:

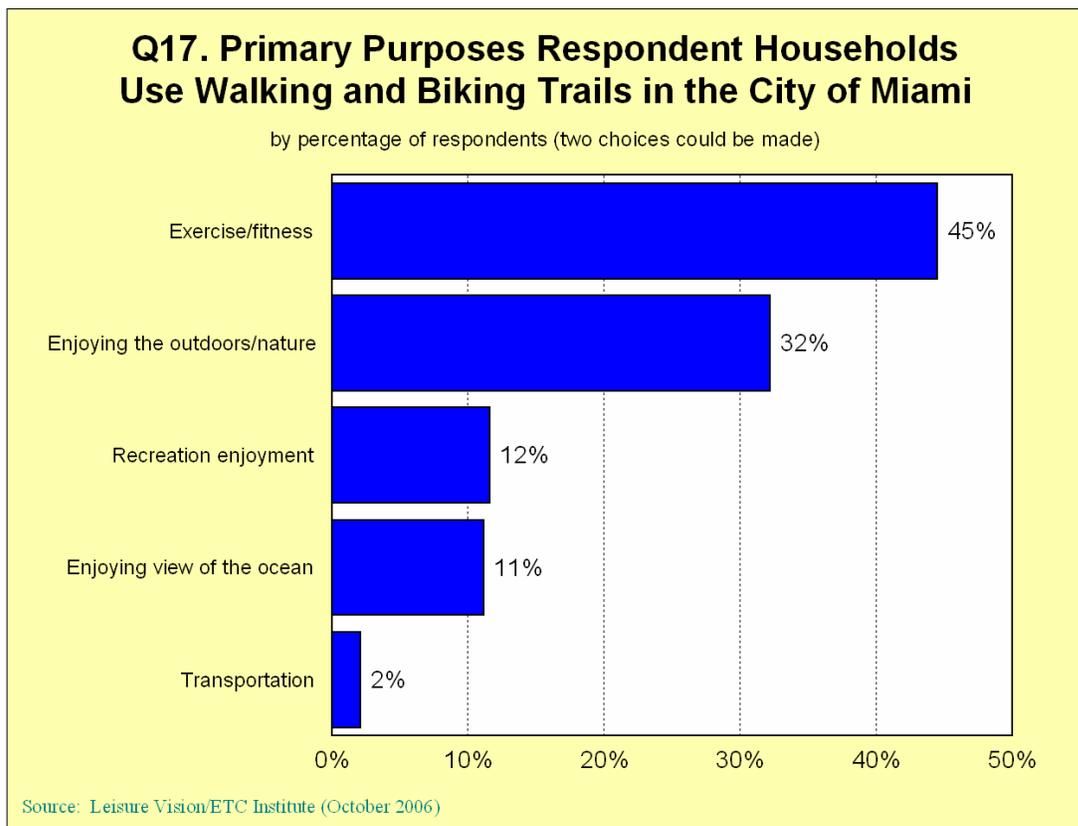
- **Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondent households currently use walking and biking trails in the City of Miami.** In addition, 24% of respondent households currently use walking and biking trails at least once a week.



Reasons for Using Walking and Biking Trails

From a list of 5 options, respondents were asked to indicate the two reasons their household uses walking and biking trails in the City of Miami. The following summarizes key findings:

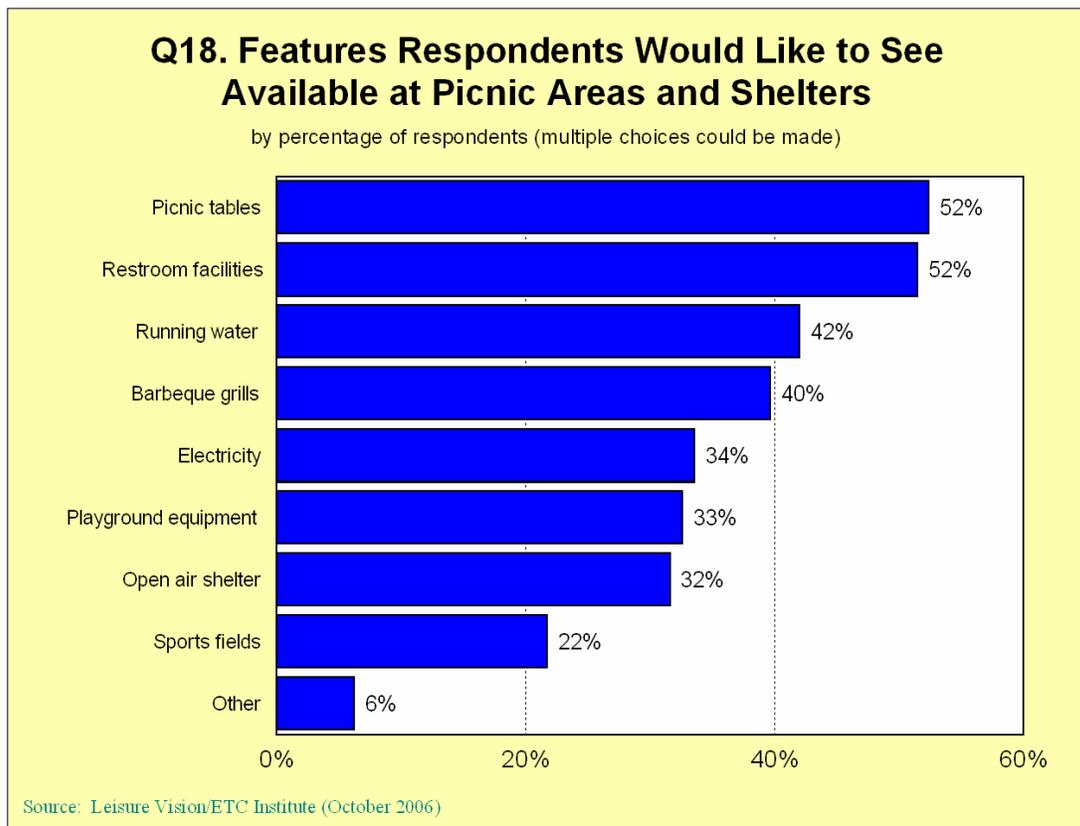
- **Based on the sum of their top 2 choices, the top reasons that respondent households use walking and biking trails in the City of Miami are: exercise/fitness (45%) and enjoying the outdoors/nature (32%).**



Features Respondents Would Like to See Available at Picnic Areas/Shelters

From a list of 8 options, respondents were asked to select all of the features they would like to see available at picnic areas and shelters. The following summarizes key findings:

- **The features that respondents would most like to see available at picnic areas and shelters are: picnic tables (52%), restroom facilities (52%), running water (42%) and barbeque grills (40%).**

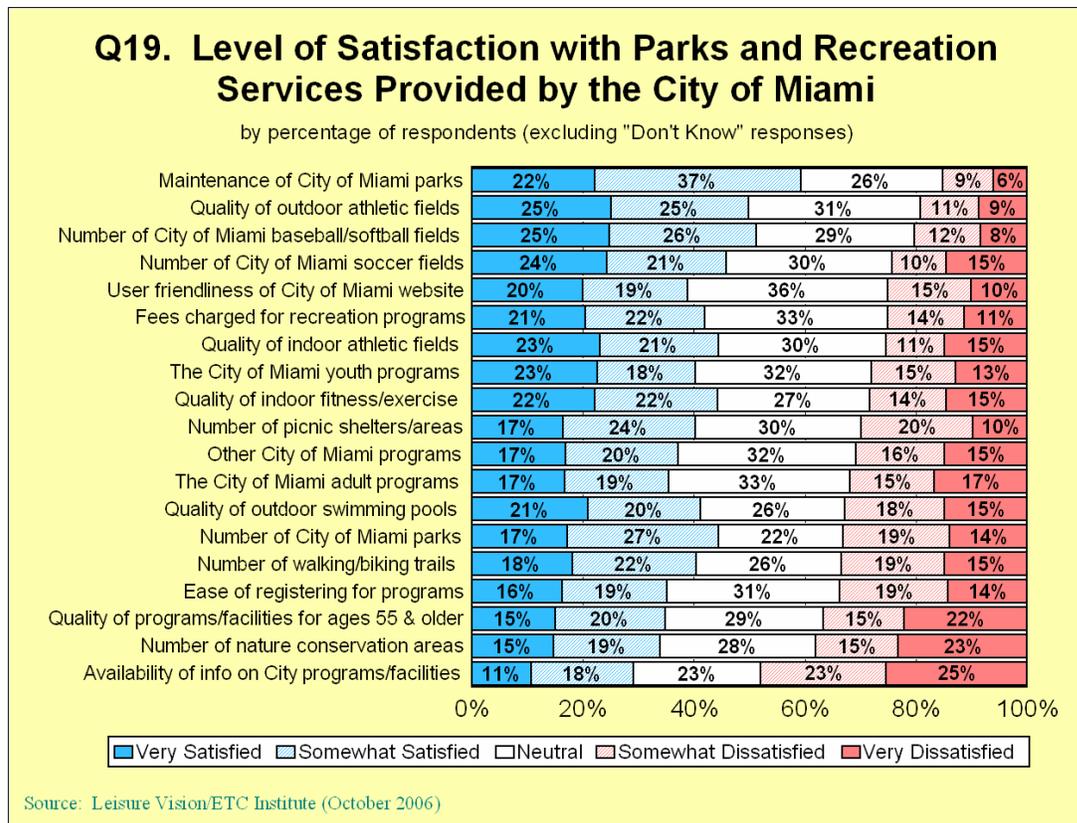


Level of Satisfaction with Various Parks and Recreation Services

From a list of 19 various parks and recreation services provided by the City of Miami, respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with each one. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: graph below excludes “don’t know” responses)

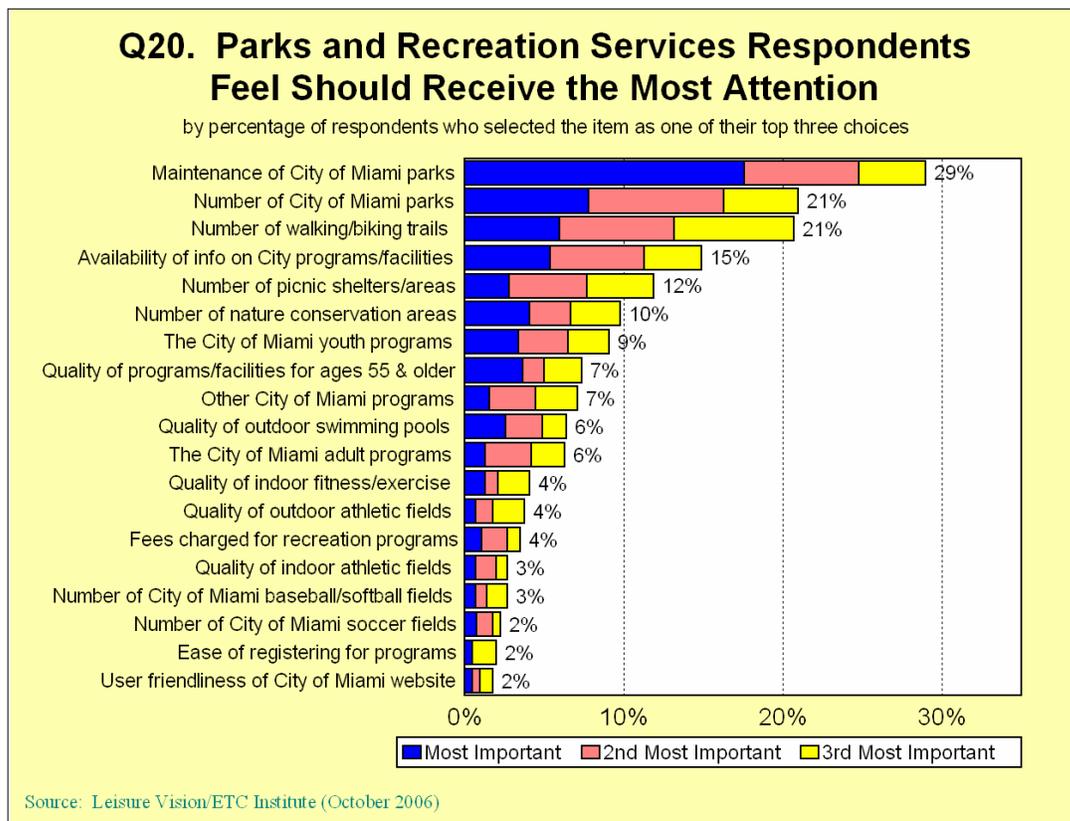
- The parks and recreation services that the highest percentage of respondents are very satisfied with are: quality of outdoor athletic fields (25%), number of City of Miami baseball/softball fields (25%), number of City of Miami soccer fields (24%), quality of indoor athletic fields (23%) and the City of Miami youth programs (23%).



Parks and Recreation Services that Should Receive the Most Attention

From the list of 19 various parks and recreation services provided by the City of Miami, respondents were asked to select the three they feel should receive the most attention from City of Miami officials over the next two years. The following summarizes key findings:

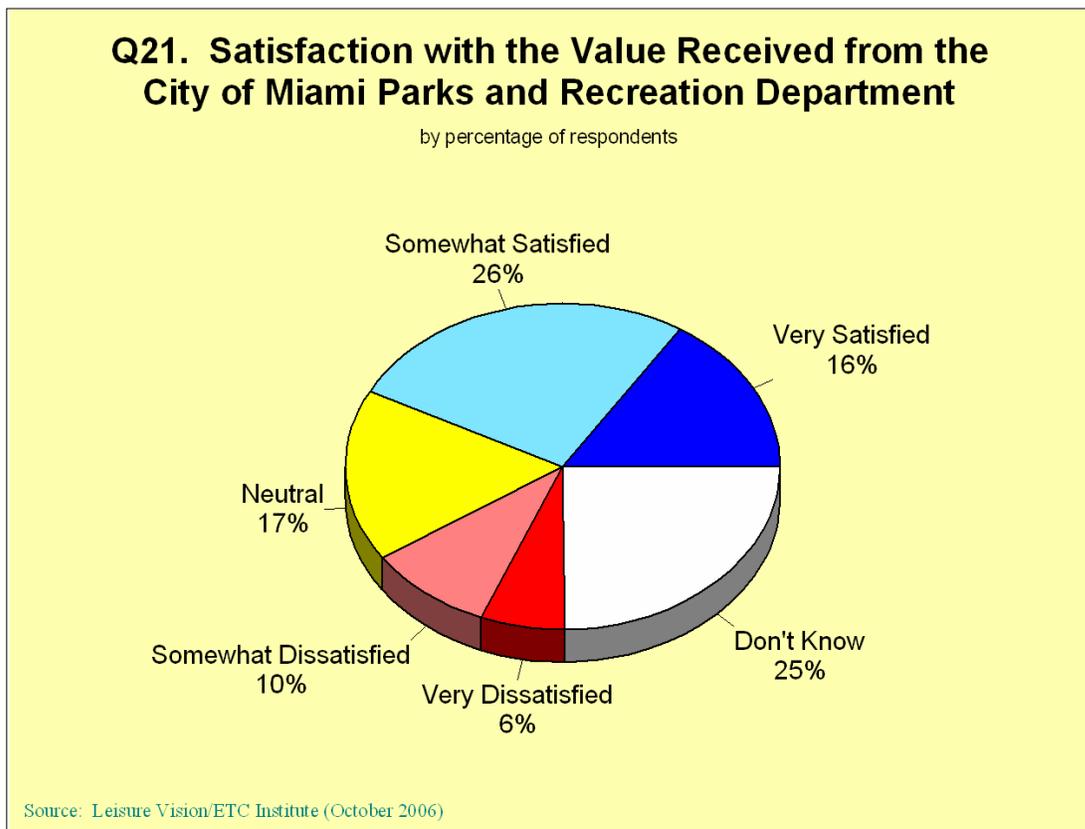
- Based on the sum of their top three choices, the parks and recreation services that respondents feel should receive the most attention over the next two years are: maintenance of City of Miami parks (29%), number of City of Miami parks (21%) and number of walking/biking trails (21%).** It should also be noted that maintenance of City of Miami parks had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the parks and recreation service that should receive the most attention over the next two years.



Level of Satisfaction Received from the Parks & Recreation Department

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the overall value their household receives from the City of Miami Parks and Recreation Department. The following summarizes key findings:

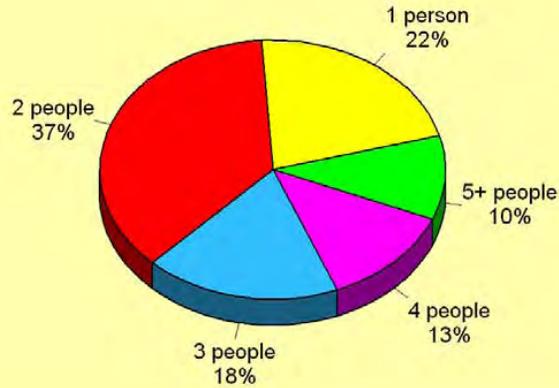
- **Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents indicated being either very satisfied (16%) or somewhat satisfied (26%) with the overall value their household receives from the City of Miami Parks and Recreation Department.** In addition, 16% of respondents indicated being either very dissatisfied (6%) or somewhat dissatisfied (10%) with the value received from the Parks and Recreation Department. An additional 17% of respondents indicated “neutral” and 25% indicated “don’t know”.



Demographics

Q1. Demographics: Number of People in Household

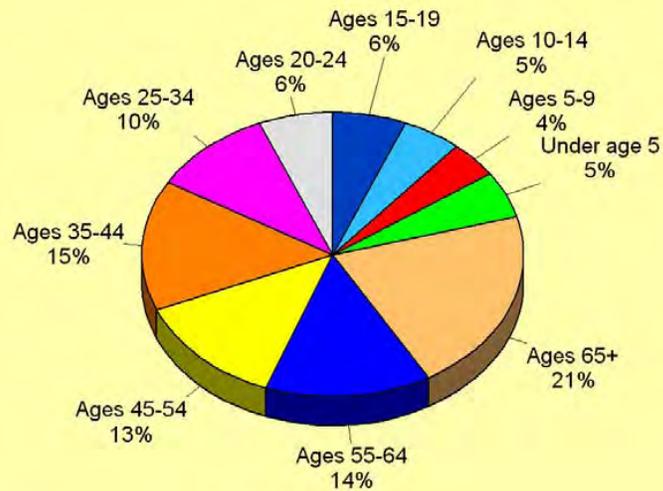
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (October 2006)

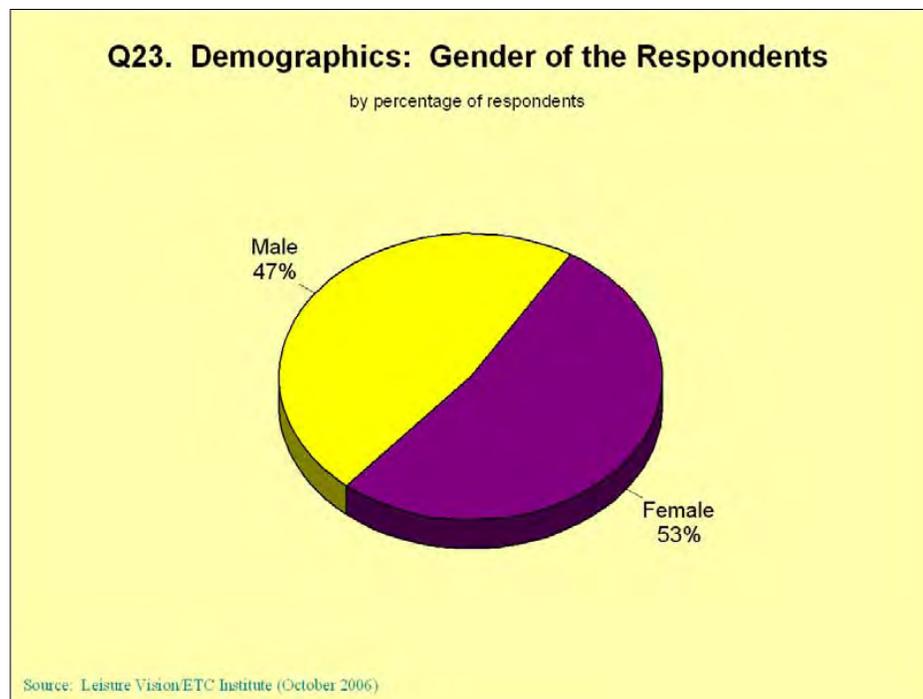
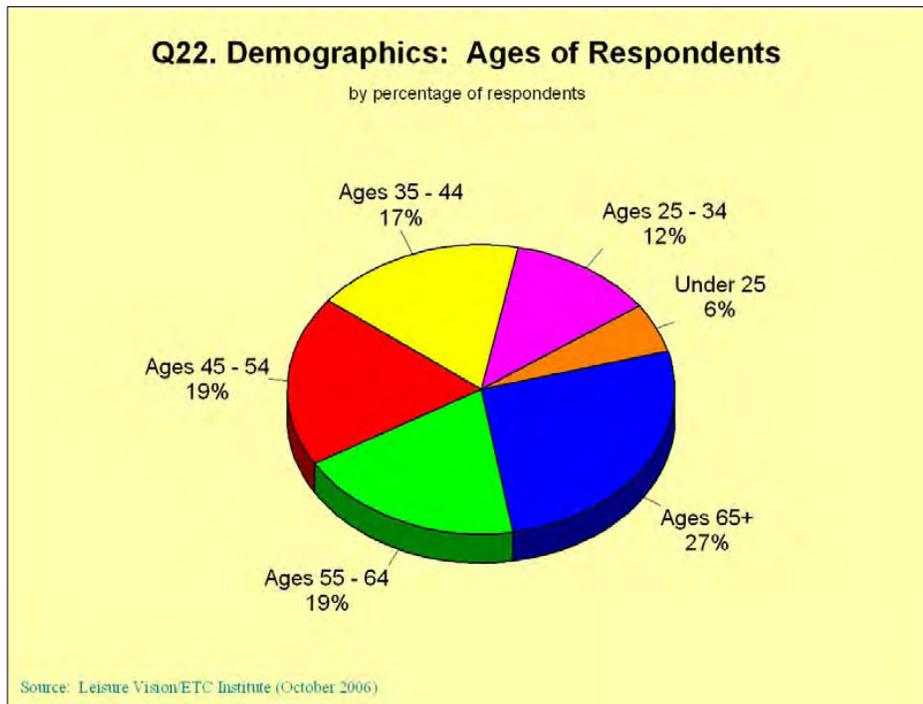
Q2. Demographics: Ages of Household Occupants

by percentage of persons in households

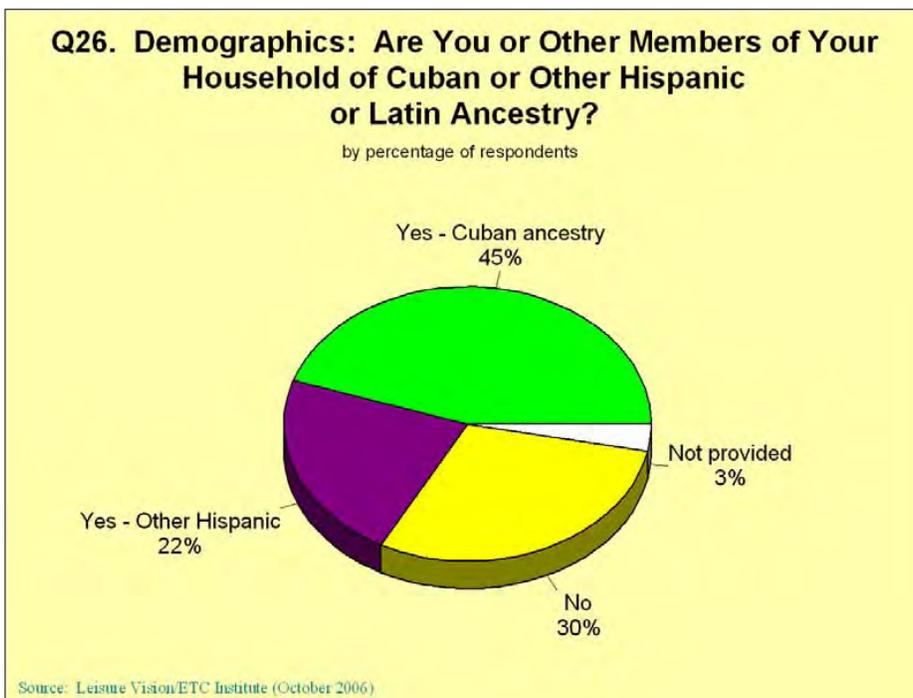
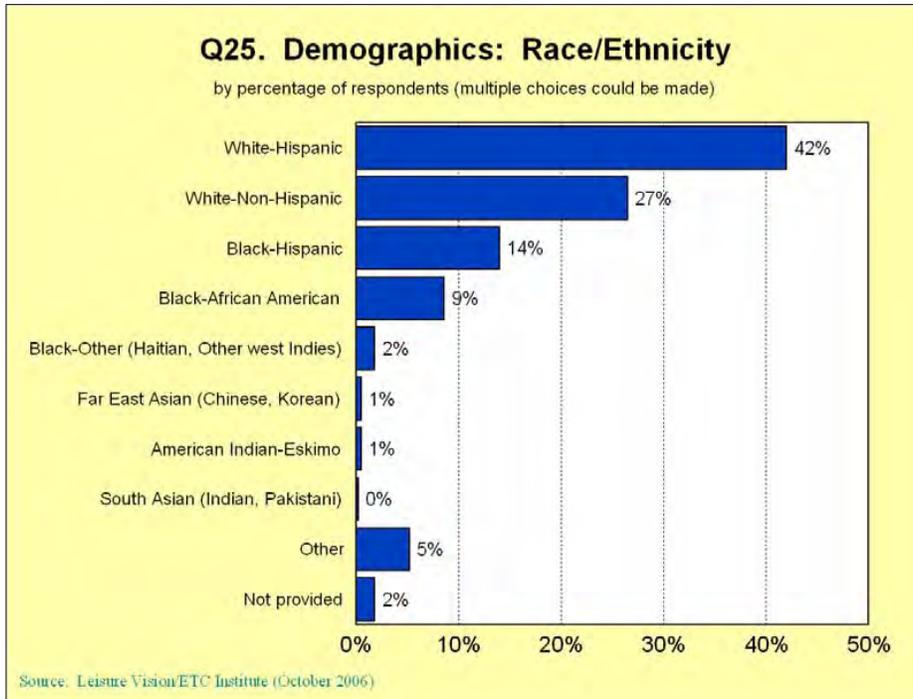


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (October 2006)

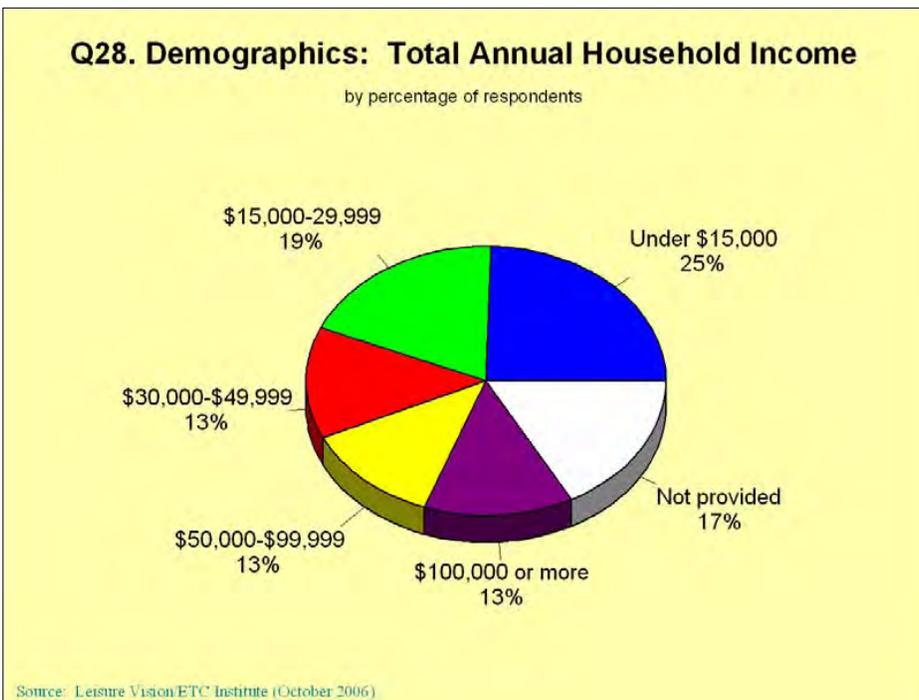
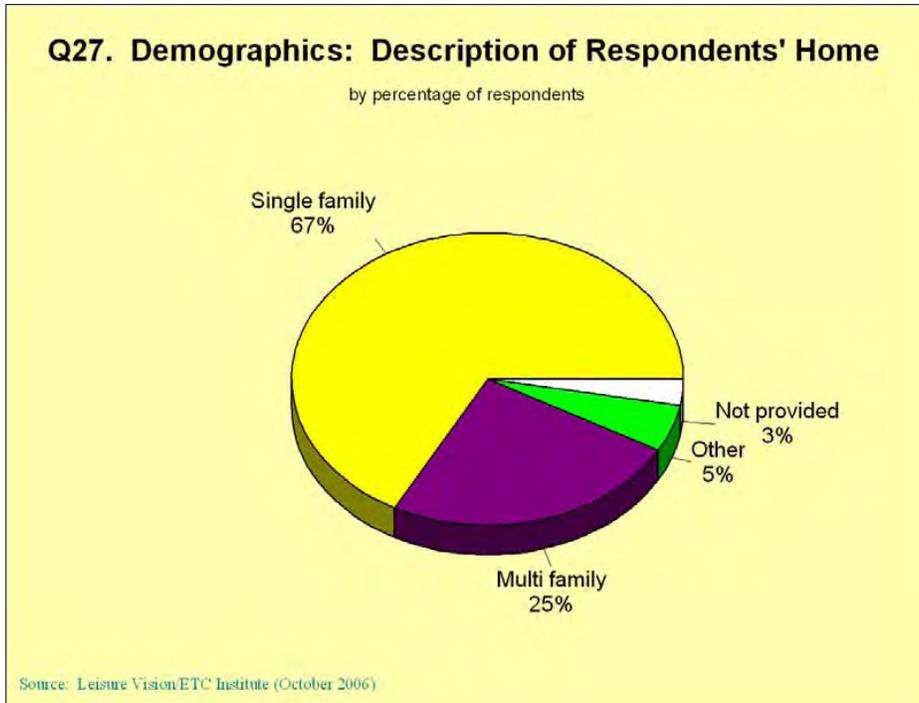
Demographics (Continued)



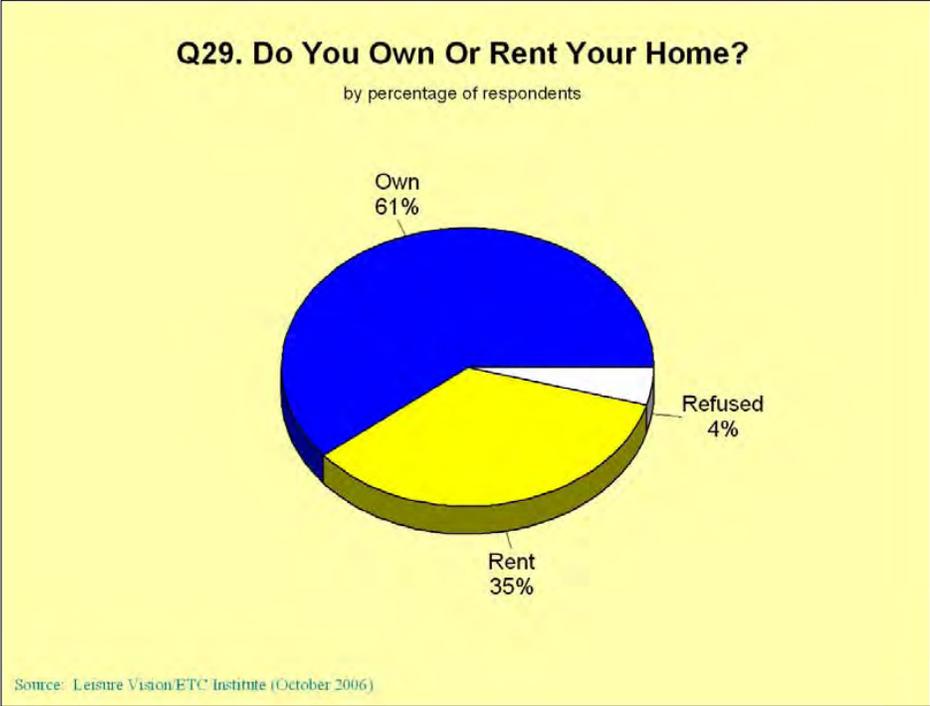
Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



C. Management and Operations Review

As part of the consultant team, GreenPlay LLC performed a review of management and operations in the City of Miami Department of Parks and Recreation.

MIAMI PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2005, the GreenPlay consultant team conducted a *Management Assessment* that focused on:

- Operations, Facilities and Programs
- Service Delivery and Communications
- Support Services
- Fees, Charges and Revenues

This effort involved an assessment of current parks, facilities and programs; current and potential park and recreation programs; customer service and marketing efforts; “best practices” for the delivery of park and recreation services and facilities; fees and charges, and revenue sources. The result is a set of prioritized recommendations and a framework to guide future decision making.



METHODOLOGY

In order to effectively assess these focus areas, the consultants pursued the following:

- Understanding and clarification of the mission of the department and its recent history
- Involvement and engagement of the Parks and Recreation Department staff through interviews, site visits, and work sessions regarding what is working effectively and challenges facing the department
- Tour and inventory of the parks and facilities
- Discussion regarding Department services, programs delivered, and the administrative processes of providing these for the community

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- Gleaning information from public open houses and participant input
 - Solicitation of broad citizen input regarding awareness, participation and satisfaction levels through a citizen survey conducted in March 2006.
 - Identification of “best practices” and opportunities for pursuing them
 - Formulation of recommendations for changes in policy, and processes to improve service delivery and satisfaction levels of the community and staff

DEPARTMENT VISION AND MISSION

Staff has been guided by a long-term vision:

The goal of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to serve all of the residents of the City of Miami by providing safe, clean, and wholesome recreational, educational and cultural activities in order to promote a sense of community.

Staff recently crafted a mission statement and adopted a new logo to help focus its efforts and promote awareness of the Parks and Recreation Department offerings. This new image and branding effort, along with implementation of performance measurement goals for the department, tremendous growth in the city, and related additional funding, give the department a promising future.

The mission of the department is:

To provide state-of-the-art park facilities and offer leisure, educational, cultural and physical activities to the residents and visitors of our community while enhancing their quality of life and inspiring personal growth, self-esteem, pride and respect for the urban environment.

Staff provided further clarification of the meaning of the stated mission:

- To provide optimal public recreation service for the community, providing the best facilities and equipment to support programs
- To provide a comprehensive, affordable program for citizens for all ages, from cradle to grave
- To provide recreational outlets that are not available at home; to relieve the stress of everyday life by helping residents relax and escape from work stresses
- To provide a conscientious staff to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood communities
- To provide appropriate resources to staff to perform their assignments
- To present a departmental image to the community, policy makers, and other departments that is credible, resourceful and effective

With a growing population and a limited land area, it will become increasingly important that the City pay special attention to strategic development and the conservation of greenspace and natural resources. The Department's mission and staff clarification of the mission illustrate that currently there is limited focus on the conservation of the City's remaining natural areas. In the future it will become increasingly important to reinforce the message that the Miami park system is also a public space system and not just responsible for the provision of recreation services.

RECENT HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department had been through many years of tight and reduced budgets while the responsibilities of the department increased through the acquisition of land and demands on the department for staff to support other City initiatives. More recently, park land has been diminished to provide space for non-park purposes, even though citizen demand for park and recreation services has heightened.

Staff learned to make do with limited resources, but programs and services were strained. This admirable trait served the department and the community well during this challenging economic time period, but fortunately the circumstances of the City have improved considerably. The Department is under the leadership of a new Director, and its annual budget has increased from approximately \$11 million to \$18 million over the 2003–2005 period since his arrival. The new Director has made the creation of a master plan for its parks and recreation lands, facilities and services a high priority to provide a framework for action for the next ten years.

These changes require a new staff mindset for increased risk-taking, resolve to address problems, accountability and professionalism in order to build services and programs, and to redefine its level of service standards to match the desires and expectations of the citizens of Miami.

HOW THE CITY OF MIAMI COMPARES TO SIMILAR CITIES

To develop a complete picture of the Miami's Parks and Recreation Department resources, demographics, and needs in comparison to other communities, the city was benchmarked against nearby and similar cities, including Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Honolulu.

CITY	2004 POPULATION	2000 LAND (SQ. MILE)	2000 POPULATION DENSITY (PER SQ. MILE)	2000 % AFRICAN-AMERICAN	2000 % HISPANIC OR LATINO	1999 % BELOW POVERTY LINE	1999 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2000 % UNEMPLOYMENT
FORT LAUDERDALE	164,578	33.0	4,618	28.9%	9.5%	17.7%	\$37,887	3.9%
HONOLULU	378,155	85.7	4,337	1.6%	4.4%	11.8%	\$45,112	5.9%
MIAMI	379,724	35.7	10,153	22.3%	65.8%	28.5%	\$23,483	11.7%
ST. PETERSBURG	249,090	59.6	4,165	22.4%	4.2%	13.3%	\$34,597	5.2%
TAMPA	321,772	112.2	2,707	26.1%	19.3%	18.1%	\$34,415	8.6%

Miami is geographically one of the smallest cities among those benchmarked against, with 35.7 square miles within its jurisdiction. It has the largest population, however, and, with 10,153 people per square mile, double the population density of the next closest city. With a growing population and a limited land area, it will become increasingly important for the City to pay special attention to strategic development and the conservation of greenspace.

Miami is an extremely diverse community that celebrates its culture. According to the 2000 Census, the city's composition is 65.8% Hispanic or Latino (of any race) and 22.3% black. Although the city is rich in diversity and culture, it has the highest level of unemployment (11.7%), the greatest percentage of population under the poverty line (28.5%), and the lowest median annual household income (\$23,483) of those cities it was benchmarked against. These demographics provide both a positive aspect and challenge for the department. The residents of the city not only have a great need for the services and activities provided by the department, but these needs are fairly wide-ranging due to the breadth of economic and cultural backgrounds within the community.

Miami's Parks and Recreation Department has had to work with extremely tight budgets in recent years. This is illustrated by the fact that, of the cities benchmarked, the department is working to serve the largest population but had the smallest annual budget in 2004 (\$11.85 million). This is further exemplified by Miami's per capita budget of \$31 per resident, compared to the other cities which had an average per capita budget of \$130. However, in comparison to the other cities the department brings in the smallest amount of annual revenue, because they charge either minimally or not at all for their services.

PARK SYSTEM COMPARISONS

CITY	PARKS & RECREATION ACREAGE	2004 TOTAL P&R BUDGET	BUDGET PER CAPITA	2004 P&R ANNUAL REVENUE	P&R FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	P&R PART-TIME EMPLOYEES	P&R CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES
FORT LAUDERDALE	973	\$26,327,074	\$156	\$8,110,116	232	101	n/a
HONOLULU	6,108	\$47,216,334	\$125	\$21,012,000	839	23	244
MIAMI	800	\$11,850,384	\$31	\$3,308,314	190	482	n/a
ST. PETERSBURG	2,400	\$24,878,000	\$100	\$6,509,000	159	23	n/a
TAMPA	1,774	\$44,066,000	\$137	\$6,689,000	n/a	n/a	n/a

The Department has approximately 800 acres of park and recreation land; however, approximately half of this acreage comprises natural areas and islands not currently easily accessible to the public. Therefore, park land and green-space are quite limited within the city. This is an issue of concern to residents, who are requesting conservation of these kinds of areas. The 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey indicated that 55% of respondents do not feel that there are enough parks and recreation areas within walking distance of their residence. The Department falls at the high end of the range for full-time employees per acre of land among the benchmarked cities. It is also at the top of the range in terms of full-time employees as a percentage of its budget, leaving minimal dollars with which to work to respond to residents' needs and desires.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT

Operations, Facilities and Programs

- Introduced new free programs, including “eParks,” making computers available to the community
- Added and expanded programs; more quality special events in parks; programs for seniors
- Built or renovated facilities: indoor buildings, gym, and theater; state-of-the-art physical improvements to keep up with trends (shade); rowing facility on Virginia Key; poured-in-place surfaces versus sand in playgrounds
- Added accessibility equipment (wheelchairs)
- Launched restoration program for the unique hammock on Virginia Key
- Reclaimed management of golf course operations at Melreese Golf Course

Service Delivery and Communications

- Increased operating budget, with a lesser percentage devoted to staff salaries
- Increased frequency of activities guide, from once yearly to three or four times per year
- Upgraded the department's Web page
- Hired new director with open door policy
- Held staff meetings twice per month with directors, division heads, senior staff

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- Created employee newsletter and employee-of-the-month recognition
 - Developed new logo, mission statement, and Department slogan
 - Developed consistent signage in parks incorporating new image
 - Began moving toward measuring performance

Support Services

- Added staff, including public relations and information technology positions
- Provided technology to park managers, including computers, e-mail, printing, and copying capabilities

Fees, Charges and Revenues

- Increased funding for capital projects through bond issues and state and other grants

Strengths of the department

- Leadership
 - > New director and new direction that builds on the strengths of the department
 - > Leadership vision
 - > Consideration of employees
- Focus through articulated mission statement
- Hopefulness
- Technology improvements
 - > Computers to link all staff
 - > Computers in parks for public use
 - > Implementation of Oracle
- Spirit of cooperation
- Staff dedication
 - > Commitment from employees
 - > Perseverance
 - > Adaptability
 - > Passionate staff, dedicated to serving residents
- Resources
 - > Existing facilities

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These preliminary findings and recommendations are based on the detailed analysis of operations, facilities and programs that follows. It is also informed by citizen input gained through the citizen survey carried out in February and March of 2006.

Although many things are moving forward very well, several items currently hamper the efforts of the department. These areas of focus are listed in a prior-

ity order, with a general implementation timeline. However, there are many items identified within the detailed analysis for each area of focus that could be moved forward simultaneously. The priority ranking is recommended based on placing those first that will have a positive impact on the implementation of others that follow.

1. Improve Management Accountability (Immediate)

Tie the department’s annual work plan and the performance measures to the department’s mission and vision; push decision making responsibilities down in the organization to encourage and support empowerment, trust, risk-taking, improved judgment and professional growth; create a “no-ex-cuse” task force of employees to provide for rapid resolution of relevant issues; hold retreats and regular gatherings of employee groups to discuss topic specific goals, concerns and issues; make recruitment, hiring and evaluation a participatory process for supervisors.

2. Assure Sustainability (Immediate)

In order to sustain operations, develop maintenance level of service standards, identify associated costs, and address funding those costs prior to taking on new assignments. Replacement programs for facilities, equipment and vehicles also need to be established and funded.

3. Solidify Programming (Immediate)

In order to establish core services of the department and guide programming choices, use suggested Pyramid Methodology to determine desired program outcomes (physical activity opportunity, social interaction, environmental, economic, etc.). For management and marketing purposes, track participation statistics, develop a program registration database, and regularly solicit citizen input.

4. Validate Capital Development Priorities (Immediate)

Determine citizen priorities and willingness to fund capital projects; develop criteria for prioritizing capital projects so that they meet the service needs of the department and desires of the citizens; establish multiple opportunities for staff input throughout design and construction process to address functionality, scheduling, and future maintenance considerations.

5. Strengthen Credibility with Other Providers (Programs and Events) (Immediate)

Require applications from all users, extend time frame for application process (currently 60 days) to allow adequate lead time; track participation, expenditures, revenues and in-kind support to establish target goals for cost recovery; define rationale for partnerships and establish formal partnership and sponsorship policies.

6. Strengthen Support Services Assistance (Mid-term)

Push purchasing decisions based on approved budgets down in the organization to encourage and support empowerment, trust, risk-taking, improved judgment and professional growth; use Oracle system to align revenue and expenditures on a program budget basis to aid management decision making; create an IT Strategic plan that integrates existing hardware and software systems with accounting software (Oracle); require training for staff on all computer programs, applications, e-mail etiquette and shared and private filing.

7. Enhance the Department's Image (Long-term)

Create a Marketing Plan and other plans to bolster credibility and awareness of the parks and recreation effort, upgrade printed materials, and "brand" the department's image; reinvent the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to become a champion for parks and recreation; generate statistical data to "tell the story" of Department successes; seek NRPA Accreditation; encourage professional certification.

8. Establish Fees and Charges Rationale and Policy (Long-term)

Use the suggested Pyramid Methodology to assign progressive cost recovery to programs and services as they move from a community-wide benefit to a highly individualized benefit; align and track expenditures and revenues to determine current cost recovery and set future goals for the department; establish criteria for fee reductions and waivers.

ANALYSIS OF OPERATIONS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT STAFFING

The various categories of Miami Parks and Recreation employees and their descriptions are as follows:

- **C = Classified:** This position is a civil service position that may be hourly or salaried, depending on classification. This position may be covered by one of the bargaining units, or may be managerial/confidential in nature. This is a benefit earning position.
- **E = Executive:** This is a salaried position that serves at the option of the City Manager. This position is not civil service, nor is covered by bargaining units. This is a benefit-earning position.
- **U = Unclassified:** This is a salaried position that serves at the option of the City Manager. This position is not civil service, nor is covered by bargaining units. This is a benefit-earning position.
- **PT = Part-Time:** This is an hourly position that serves at the option of the City Manager. This position is not civil service, nor is covered by bargaining units. The work week is typically 35 hours a week or less, and no benefits are accrued.

- **T = Temporary:** This is an hourly position that serves at the option of the City Manager. This position is not civil service, nor is covered by bargaining units. The work week is typically 40 hours a week or less, and no benefits are accrued. This position receives paid holidays.

OPERATIONS

The Operations Division (Operations) of the Parks and Recreation Department handles the maintenance of most outdoor park and athletic facilities provided by the City of Miami, (mini-park maintenance is outsourced), including routine maintenance and cleanliness, and seeking to provide an equal level of service throughout the city. Major repair and maintenance of physical buildings is accomplished through the General Services Administration (GSA) by work order process. Operations are divided into five districts: north, south, east, west and beaches.

Park Operations

Facilities include parks, bike trails, athletic fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, racquetball courts and a roller hockey park. The following table provides additional detail:

TABLE 1: OPERATIONS FACILITIES

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
Park Land	approximately 800 acres/ 111 park sites (includes athletic fields)
Bike Trails	N/A
Playgrounds	68
Baseball/Softball Fields	25
Football/Soccer Fields	16
Basketball Courts	70
Tennis Courts	60
Racquetball Courts	20
Swimming Pools	12
Roller Hockey Park	1

For purposes of maintenance a loose classification system created by department staff categorizes Miami parks as:

- **Citywide Parks** have a wider community draw as a result of containing recreation facilities and amenities that may not be found in smaller neighborhood or “mini-parks.”
- **Active Parks** have active recreation components such as athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and the like. This classification assists in identifying the types of maintenance tasks that may need to be performed.

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- **Passive Parks** have no active recreation components but may include playgrounds. In most cases passive parks require only landscaping and playground maintenance.
 - **Mini-Parks**—There are 14 mini-parks located throughout the city. These parks are normally less than one acre and only require turf maintenance operations. For efficiency, all turf operations for mini-parks are contracted to outside vendors instead of requiring parks operations staff to travel from location to location with labor, equipment and vehicles.

A second classification system based on use distinguishes the various types of parks, natural resources, and outdoor facilities within the department's jurisdiction. Its categories include:

- Community/Neighborhood Parks (32)
- Specialized Parks
 - > Dog Parks (4)
 - > Nature Parks (8)
 - > Mini-parks (27)
 - > Special Use Parks (6)
 - > eParks (30)
- City Cemetery (nearly 10,000 plots)
- Virginia Key (82-acre barrier island)

Division Responsibilities

The Operations Division has a fairly detailed list of weekly maintenance tasks—such as litter control, park inspection, mowing, edging, and grooming ball fields—that need to be accomplished by park and by district. There are, however, no accompanying level-of-service standards. Mini-parks maintenance is contracted. All other park maintenance is handled by Operations. Standard responsibilities and schedules for both City of Miami and contracted park maintenance include:

- Litter control, new trash can liners—daily
- Restroom cleaning and replenishing of dispensers—daily
- Inspection and cleaning of equipment—daily
- Ball fields grooming—daily
- Park inspection—daily
- Mowing (once a week—May through September and once every two weeks—October through April)
- Leaf raking—twice weekly
- Blowing debris from courts and parking lots—weekly
- Edging/weed-eating—weekly

Resources

Staffing of the Operations Division includes full-time and temporary personnel, as well as contracted vendors that provide specific services, such as maintenance of mini-parks and trimming of trees less than 6' tall. Employees are represented by AFSCME Local 1907 AFL-CIO. The Miami Parks and Recreation employees are categorized as Classified, Unclassified, Executive, Part-time, and Temporary. Descriptions of these categories are listed above. Operations has seen a dramatic increase in budget appropriation from FY 2004 to FY 2005. This increase has helped the division purchase new equipment and increase temporary staff personnel.

This table presents budget levels for the last three years:

TABLE 2: BUDGET (INCLUDES BEACH OPERATIONS)

	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Salaries/wages/benefits	\$3,133,349	\$3,353,917	\$3,848,627	\$4,214,154
Operating—fixed	\$938,371	\$859,557	\$1,436,773	\$1,510,394
Operating—variable	\$371,185	\$432,338	\$606,400	\$830,592
Capital Outlay	\$6,155	\$0	\$153,155	\$38,854
Total	\$4,449,060	\$4,645,812	\$6,044,955	\$6,593,994
% Change	N/A	+4.2%	+23.1%	+8.3%

As with the rest of the department, park maintenance has made do with limited resources for many years. The park maintenance budget increased substantially (23.1%) from 2004 to 2005, when the department budget increased from \$11 million to \$12 million. The park maintenance budget increased another 8.3% from 2005 to 2006.

The primary budget increases came in the form of “Operating Fixed Dollars” or new maintenance equipment, which was badly needed. Staffing and wage budgets have also seen a healthy increase (approximately \$850,000) in the past two years.

Sprinkler Systems

The majority of the sprinkler systems are Buckner Key systems and are, on average, ten years old. As new athletic fields are coming online, new automated sprinkler systems (a total of six so far) are being installed. Primary maintenance of the sprinkler systems is the responsibility of General Services Administration (GSA) but it is staff’s hope that Operations can take over as there are two full-time irrigation specialists budgeted for 2006.

Past budgets have been inadequate for an equipment replacement program and most maintenance equipment is approaching 10 to 20 years old. As with

the sprinkler system, major maintenance and repair is handled by GSA in the form of Work Order requests. There is no life-cycle assessment/costing program in place and this would have to be undertaken in conjunction with GSA. Preventative maintenance tasks such as oil changes, blade sharpening and minor maintenance is handled by Operations. Currently most new equipment is purchased rather than leased.

Beach Operations

The Department is responsible for approximately 50–60 acres of land on Virginia Key Island, a sanctuary for sea turtles, manatees, saltwater alligators and giant South American seastars. Adjacent to the City-operated beach is an area owned by the City but operated by the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust. This area has historical significance: it was the only beach that the African-American community could visit prior to the Civil Rights movement. Currently the Trust is restoring this area to reflect its historical importance. Although Beach Operations and Park Operations share an expense budget, there are some key differences:

- Beach Operations generates \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year in user fees. Parks Operations does not generate any revenue. (These revenues go to the City's general fund.)
- Beach Operations has two unarmed security staff at all times to help enforce rules and regulations. Security staff has limited enforcement powers and may seek support from Key Biscayne, City of Miami or Marine Patrol police forces as needed. Parks Operations does not have security staff.

OPERATIONS CONCERNS

Discussions with the Operations Division staff make it clear that they work well together and use limited resources efficiently. Several issues have an impact on their ability to provide an adequate level of service to the department and, more important, to the citizens of Miami. Budgets and staff levels are already stretched in an effort to approach the level of service desired by the department. Overuse in many parks further compounds the situation.

Some of the maintenance challenges that the department faces include:

- **Lack of maintenance level-of-service standards and associated costs**
An important tool for managing agencies is an examination of “level of service” (LOS) that allows for analysis of the inventory, location, and distribution of and access to various public amenities. These offerings are categorized by “relevant” components that can be examined further, as needed, for any future planning process or analysis. It is important to track both the quantity and the quality of amenities and components of a community's public spaces infrastructure.

The Operations Division does not track cost per acre or per square foot for outdoor and indoor maintenance tasks. Additional resources need to be allocated as parks and facilities are added to the system; dividing the existing budget among a larger group of facilities will degrade levels of service across the system.

- **Lack of resources to maintain the facilities, parks, natural areas, and recreation sites under the jurisdiction of the department**

Several spoil islands in Biscayne Bay—lying off Morningside, Legion and Pace parks and known as “Picnic Islands”—account for approximately 40 acres of park land. Miami-Dade County’s Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) has a revegetation program on the islands. The division has responsibility for maintaining the islands, but it has no boat to get there. These islands could provide opportunities for educational programming, but without maintenance or transportation resources they remain unusable and inaccessible.

- **Public Input—Operations and Maintenance Concerns**

Goody Clancy worked extensively to gain input from Miami residents on a wide variety of issues that affect the future operations, maintenance, funding, and programming of the department. In the 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey, 43% of respondents rated the overall quality of Miami’s parks and recreation areas as “good,” 19% as “fair,” and 6% as “poor.” The remaining 21% indicated “don’t know.” These ratings suggest that the public feels there is room for improvement in the quality and condition of Miami’s parks and recreation facilities.

The public understands that the department has limited funding, but residents also feel that there is a great need to improve the aesthetics of parks and parks facilities. The following are some of the key themes identified by residents at public discussions in regard to the department’s operations and maintenance.

Operations

- > Hours of operation: some people want early-morning and later-evening access to parks for walking and exercise and requested extended hours of operation. There were also comments that hours of operation are inconsistent.
- > Inconsistent communication (signage, etc.) on park hours of operation.
- > Need for more staff at parks and to run programs.
- > Parking at some parks is an issue: residents feel that there is not enough, that they should not have to pay, and that existing parking lots need to be maintained.

Maintenance

- > Need to maintain what is already built
- > Many parks need renovations and upgrades (water fountains, benches, trash cans, athletic fields, playgrounds, etc.)
- > Need more funding for maintenance, landscaping, and beautification
- > Need for landscaping, shade, aesthetics, and native vegetation
- > Need better lighting, streetscapes, and street furniture
- > Need to clean up trash and littering in parks, along trails, and on beachfront.
- > Need more signage and historical markers for parks
- > Need better irrigation systems

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- Inventory types of lands in the system by categories of level of maintenance required (e.g., undeveloped, passive/natural, moderately developed, highly developed, athletic fields).
- Inventory the number and type of buildings, including approximate square footage, to identify cost of building maintenance, identify and schedule preventative maintenance, and project cost of new operations.
- Develop criteria for preparing for emergency situations (e.g., hurricanes).
- Develop criteria for hurricane clean-up (standards, priorities, time targets).
- Develop comprehensive maintenance level-of-service standards. Give consideration to unique situations that may dictate modifications of the standard. Standards could include:
 - > Mowing—height, grass-collection method, frequency
 - > Fertilization—applications per year, timing, fertilizer type (granular or liquid and NPK formula)
 - > Aeration and overseeding—timing and frequency, mixtures needed for soil composition, and irrigation capabilities
 - > Infield preparation—depth and direction of dragging, condition of transition with the turf area and the edge of infield
 - > Irrigation system—repair and replacement, water (frequency, amount, and timing)
 - > Other considerations for developing maintenance standards may include top-dressing, weed and insect control, surface repairs
- Identify costs (staff labor, contracted services, supplies and equipment) of maintaining lands by level of maintenance required to allow cost projections for potential new lands for which the department will be responsible.
- Document and monitor labor and material costs for maintenance.
- Include procurement of transportation to the “Picnic Islands” on the list of funding needs, so as to enable appropriate maintenance of this department resource.

Note: Park Maintenance Staffing Standards

Very limited information exists about labor ratios for park maintenance. In *Municipal Benchmarks: Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards*, David N. Ammons reports that “although every municipality may wish to design its own standards to reflect local preferences and conditions, it need not start from scratch.” He further suggests that the labor ratio guidelines devised by the NRPA (see table below) may be useful to a community deciding on its own standards, procedures, and resource requirements.

TABLE 3: LABOR RATIOS FOR SELECTED MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

TASK	LABOR HOURS
MOWING 1 ACRE, FLAT MEDIUM TERRAIN AT MEDIUM SPEED	
20" walking	2.8 per acre
24" walking	2.2 per acre
30" riding	2.0 per acre
72" (6-foot) riding	0.35 per acre
Bush hog	0.5 per acre
TRIM	
Gas-powered (weed trimmer)	1.0 per 1,000 linear ft.
PLANTING GRASS	
Cut and plant sod by hand (1.5' strips)	1.0 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Cut and plant sprigs by hand (not watered)	10.9 per 1,000 linear ft.
Seed, by hand	0.5 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Overseeding, reconditioning	0.8 per acre
FERTILIZE TURF	
24" sifter spreader	0.16 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Hand-push spreader 36"	2.96 per acre
Tractor-towed spreader 12"	0.43 per acre
Weed control	
Spraying herbicide with fence-line truck, tank sprayer 2 ft. wide (1" either side of fence)	0.45 per 1,000 sq. ft.
LEAF REMOVAL	
Hand-rake leaves	0.42 per 1,000 sq. ft.
Vacuum 30"	0.08 per 1,000 sq. ft.
PLANTING TREES	
Plant tree 5–6 feet in height	0.44 per tree
Plant tree 2–3.5 inches in diameter	1.0 per tree
TREE REMOVAL	
Street tree removal	13.0 per tree
Street tree stump removal	3.5 per tree
Park tree removal	5.0 per tree
Park tree stump removal	2.0 per tree

Ammons also indicated that a report “prepared by a management analysis team in Pasadena, California, concluded that a ratio of one park maintenance employee for every 7–10 acres should produce ‘A-Level’ service—in other words, ‘a high-frequency maintenance service’ (City of Pasadena [CA] Management Audit Team, 1986, p. 9.4).” However, he was quick to point out that “standards of the maintenance-employee-per-park-acreage variety and corresponding statistics reported by individual cities are complicated by the question of developed versus undeveloped park acreage ... and therefore should be interpreted cautiously.” Among ten cities he examined, ratios of 10.6 to 84.7 acres maintained per maintenance employee were reported.

- **Maintenance implications of new park and facility development/renovations**
There is currently a one-shot opportunity at the beginning of project development, through Support Services staff, to influence a project in regard to the long-term cost of maintenance.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- Establish a formalized approach to project review that includes direct involvement of Operations staff at multiple decision points (conceptual plan, schematic design, design/document development, construction documents, finish levels, material selection, functionality reviews, coordination of purchasing delivery, and project schedule) to address future maintenance considerations.
- Establish a position for a landscape architect within the department. Position responsibilities will include ensuring that renovation and new facility designs take into account the maintenance implications, creating designs for projects done in-house, and overseeing the design work of contract designers.

- **Staffing resources are stretched**

Staff feels that to increase and maintain the level of service desired for park facility maintenance, an additional 10 to 25 employees are needed. “Windshield” time (or the amount of time it takes to travel from the main shop to a work destination, procure parts, return to the work site, and then travel back to the shop) cuts significantly into available labor hours.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- The department should work to refine the system and fix the systemic problems first. Once this is accomplished, staffing levels should be re-evaluated. If they are not adequate, hiring additional staff should be considered by the department administration.
- Costing of maintenance standards for existing and new assets is critical to addressing this issue, as discussed above. Justification for staff positions must be based on the level-of-service standards.



- Outsourcing work to private contractors could benefit the department and help manage the overall maintenance budget. Maintenance operations that should be reviewed and considered for privatization include those that occur infrequently (one to two times per year or less) or require specialized equipment, such as fertilization, aeration, weed/insect control, topdressing.
- Develop satellite facilities to house equipment and staff (at the Grove at Kennedy Park in the South District; at Robert King High in the West District; and on Watson Island in the East District) to increase efficiency and reduce maintenance crew travel times.
- Develop an alternative to the City’s Kronos system for Beach Operations staff who must travel first to a City office to punch in, then travel to the Virginia Beach site for work, and then reverse the process to punch out at the end of their shifts.

• **Lack of coordination with other staff groups**

Hours of operations for park managers and the Operations staff differ to some degree. This creates issues when there is a need to gain access to park facilities that house maintenance equipment and the only key is in the hands of a manager who has not yet reported to work. Operations staff rely on park managers to report maintenance issues (which at times are let go too long before reporting occurs).

Operations often receives last-minute requests to set up or tear down events, transport special equipment such as tents and chairs, or perform other “need it right now” tasks. Accommodating these unplanned requests diverts Operations staff and equipment such as trucks from regular duties.

- Best Practices/Options to Pursue**
- Include the Operations Division in the special events planning process and supply them with copies of permits or park schedules on a timely basis for manpower and equipment allocation planning.
 - Establish a formalized approach and opportunity for coordination for scheduling maintenance/activities/special events/construction to avoid conflict.
 - Necessary keys should be available to Operations staff to access facilities for maintenance purposes.

• **Repair process is inefficient, equipment storage is inadequate, and there is no formal equipment replacement program**

The Operations Division relies on GSA for equipment repairs. Unfortunately, a high-priority repair for the department may not be a high-priority for GSA. When this situation occurs, needed equipment is taken out of service, a practice that affects the level of service that can be provided for park maintenance. As with Park Operations, equipment needed to maintain the beach

is outdated and there are no funds budgeted for equipment replacement. Currently, equipment is stored in trailers that are vulnerable to burglary.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- Establish a formalized approach and criteria for a preventative maintenance program (this will need to be in conjunction with GSA).
- Establish a Beach Operations on-site storage and maintenance office.
- Establish a formalized and funded equipment-replacement program based on current conditions and anticipated life expectancy.

• **Work order and purchasing systems need to be updated**

- 1) A protracted process requires senior-level management approval of all work orders. The current system has no capability to track or easily follow up on the status of work orders (yet other departments use MP2 software to track property maintenance). Work orders often are set aside when it is unclear who has responsibility for the task. Maintenance and repair work orders sent through GSA are not always addressed in a timely manner. The department recently investigated purchasing software that would maintain an inventory of supplies and track work schedules, warranties and work orders. The department has also considered establishing a dedicated position to oversee and track work orders. No action has been taken to date on either initiative.
- 2) Requisitioning supplies from the warehouse also entails an involved process. At times, staff members purchase small-ticket items such as cans of oil, nuts, bolts and similar supplies with their own money. Beach staff also does minor painting, light carpentry, tarring and graffiti removal.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- The issues of work orders and procurements should both be considered candidates for the recommended Rapid Resolution of Relevant Issues Task Force. The task force should involve all relevant stakeholders, such as GSA, Public Works, and any other appropriate departments to identify effective, accountable, and compatible solutions.
- An Operations Division repair shop could be used for non-certified or non-licensed facility repairs.
- A new administrative process and tracking system should be put in place to increase the efficiency of responses to work orders. Potential compatibility with other City departments' systems, such as MP2, should be taken into account when choosing this system.
- Push all decisions as far down the chain of command as possible as long as they fall within the budgeting parameters.
- Create clear areas of responsibility and apply a Facility Troubleshooting Guide as a method for dealing with minor emergencies and repairs.

- **Lost Revenue Opportunities—Virginia Key Beach Operations**

There is a gate fee to enter the beach—\$10 for buses, \$3 for cars, and \$1 for walkers and bikers—but it is not clear that Beach Operations has a particular revenue-generation target. The resident/nonresident fee distinction is not enforced due to the delay that would be created by checking driver’s licenses at the gate to determine residency status. Staff members identified another lost revenue opportunity: many beach visitors take advantage of a loophole in the entry fee structure by claiming that they are going to Jimbo’s (a privately run restaurant); they are allowed through the gate at no charge. More potential revenue is lost through an understanding between the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County that allows the County to use beach parking for free for special events that draw large crowds that need to be shuttled.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- Quantify the revenue loss that occurs when the County uses the beach parking lot for special events. Review the understanding between the City and the County, in light of the mission of the Parks and Recreation Department and the type of events being supported, to determine whether consideration should be given to charging the County for this use or charging individual patrons directly for parking.
- Consider a pay-as-you-exit parking fee and establish a parking-validation system for patrons of Jimbo’s restaurant. The complexity of such a system may outweigh its advantages, but it merits examination.
- If use by out-of-city, out-of-county or out-of-state patrons appears significant enough to warrant a discount for residents, investigate the possibility of charging resident and non-resident fees based on either driver’s licenses or license plates.

GREENSPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES OPERATIONS

Miami Parks and Recreation oversees approximately 800 acres of parklands and natural areas. The system includes 32 community/neighborhood parks, 4 dog parks, 8 nature parks, 27 mini park locations, and 6 special use parks. With Miami’s small land base, high population density, and growing population, the preservation and proper care of these areas will become increasingly important both to the quality of life provided for residents and the health of these invaluable environmental resources.

The Virginia Key Hammock, a specialized natural area within the Miami Parks and Recreation system, is categorized as endangered vegetation—part of only 128 acres of coastal hammock ecosystem that remain in the United States. Three types of vegetation (mangrove, coastal and dune) coexist in the hammock. The park naturalists have been successful in removing invasive

exotic plants and re-introducing native species. This rare vegetation provides a unique opportunity for an unforgettable environmental education experience within five minutes of urbanized Miami. Approximately 31% of 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey respondents have visited Virginia Key in the past two years. The survey also indicated that there is very strong support for making improvements in the walking and biking trails, natural areas, beaches, picnic areas and shelters on Virginia Key.

- **Public Input—Greenspace and Natural Resource Concerns**

The feedback provided by residents at the public meetings indicates that the public has great concern about the need for preservation of greenspace, the addition of parks in certain neighborhoods, and the opportunity to experience nature. Participants made these general comments about Miami greenspace:

- Acquire land to create mini-parks and greenspace
- Need more greenspace for children to play, so they are not playing on the streets
- Place greenspace and recreational facilities on top of parking garages, or build garages underground
- Create a list of government-owned parcels of land that have the potential to be used as park space
- Start a program that encourages residents to plant trees and create greenspaces

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- Coastal hammock and nature parks—The potential exists to create partnerships to help manage and maintain these areas. Partners could include:
 - > University of Miami (has conducted research on endangered species; over half of the identified species are found in the Miami parks)
 - > Friends groups—Volunteers could work to keep invasive plants cleared
 - > Mabel Miller
 - > Citizens for Progress
 - > Hands On Miami
 - > Continued science programming with schools to increase understanding of natural areas and improve FACT scores
- Coastal hammock—Revenue opportunities might include:
 - > Organized ecotourism trips between hotels on Miami Beach and downtown Miami
 - > Production site for growing photography, film and television industries
 - > Opportunity to expand on current grant opportunities as partners with schools and nonprofit organizations

FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Recreation Programming

The Recreation Division includes the creation, management and operational responsibility for a variety of community facilities, pools, programs and events.

The following organizational program divisions (and corresponding facilities) are responsible for the recreation services provided by the department:

- Recreation—15 parks with community facilities generally serving the surrounding neighborhoods, 14 after-school program sites, general programming and athletics, and aquatics (12 pools)
- Child day care—at four facilities: Moore, Eaton, Lemon City and West End parks
- Day camps—served 3,000 children in 2004 and 6,000 children in 2005
- Disabilities program and the Sandra DeLuca Center
- Film, Art, Cultural, Entertainment (FACE) special event program—now a part of Parks and Recreation, this program was originally created by the Mayor's Office and generally hosts one major event a month
- Miami Love—youth-at-risk programming
- Grant-funded programs
- Rowing facility (newly acquired)—programming and staffing to be determined
- 30 of 32 park locations with various recreational amenities and programmed, passive and active areas
- Sailing Center

2004–2005 Youth Activities

The Recreation Division offers a limited variety of youth programming, mainly to children under 14 years old. Department-sponsored and/or -managed programs occur in community park facilities and pools, generally as an enhancement to the after-school programs. Most often the park manager determines the additional programming. Park managers often recruit teachers for various programs, but program ideas also come from special-interest and nonprofit groups, or from an agreement that has been crafted by the City leadership. Teachers' pay may come from the City itself, from grants, or from other sources.

Outside groups—such as the Optimist Club, Police Athletic League, health centers, private baseball programs, and so on—sponsor and manage many programs. (Please see the section titled *Outside User Groups* for recommendations.) The private groups often do not see why they should contribute to upkeep of the facilities they use.

Types Of Programs

Specific youth programs may be sorted into similar, manageable categories to begin to establish core programming. (Note: this list is not all-inclusive.)

After-School/Out-of-School Programs

- Heart of Our Parks Out-of-School Program
- Youth Experiencing Success After School
- Arts for Learning Component of Heart of Our Parks
- After-School program

Camps

- Non-Sports Camps
 - > Holiday camp
 - > Summer camp (free summer supervision program)
 - > Super camp (fee-based, structured summer camp)
 - > Mayor's Band Camp
 - > Camp for children with disabilities
- Sports Camps
 - > Kiwanis baseball camp
 - > Sailing camp
 - > Basketball camp
 - > Tennis
 - > Miami Boys Baseball Academy (permitted through Miami)

Team Sports

- Youth swim team
- Girls' basketball (teen instructional league)
- Blacktop Basketball Under 18
- Junior NBA/Nike Basketball League

Instructional Athletics

- Judo for Kids
- Fitness for Kids
- Soccer classes
- Basketball classes
- Volleyball
- Tennis lessons
- Track and field
- Shenandoah Golden Panther Cheerleaders
- Flag football
- T-ball
- Learn to Swim for Children
- Karate for Kids
- Union Dojo Karate
- Table tennis

Arts, Culture, and Education

- Ballet for Kids
- Arts and crafts—all parks
- Latin and Classical Orchestra
- Parks Dancers
- Sewing program
- Sailboat Building
- Checkmate in the Park
- Drumming for Kids
- Palmar de Junco (permitted through Miami)
- RESPECT Program (Miami Love)—outreach/empowerment program
- Junior Park Ranger Program (suggested new program)

Clubs

- 4-H Club

Special Events

- Parks Talent Show
- Parks king/queen contest

2004–2005 Adult Activities

The Recreation Division offers a limited variety of programs for adults and few programs for seniors. These programs generally occur within community park facilities and pools. The list includes the large Adults with Disabilities Program Division, housed in the Sandra DeLuca Center. The choice of adult programming is determined by individual park managers.

Types Of Programs

Specific adult and senior programs also can be sorted into similar, manageable categories to begin to establish core programming. (Note: This list is not all-inclusive.)

Instructional Wellness and Fitness

- Aerobics for Adults
- Water Aerobics for Seniors
- Senior Wellness
- Senior Aerobics
- Senior Learn-to-Swim
- Checkmate in the Park
- Learn-to-Swim for Adults
- Women's Self Defense

Team Athletics/Sports

- Volleyball for Adults
- Blacktop Basketball Over 18
- Adult Tennis League

Arts, Culture, and Education

- Instructional
 - > Senior Line Dancing
 - > Computers for Seniors
 - > Senior Oil Painting Class
 - > Adult Dominoes
- Special Needs
 - > Adult Day Training—Disabilities
 - > Living Independently for Today
 - > Non-Residential Support Services (NRSS)
 - > Project Lift
- Clubs
 - > Senior Group—Range Park
 - > Virrick Group Park Walkers
 - > Moore Park Walkers

Services

- Kayak rentals
- Cardio Fitness/Wellness Center for 18 and older
- Adult open swim
- Other rentals

Community Special Events

- City-sponsored
- Private promoters

eParks

The Parks and Recreation and Information Technology departments have collaborated to bring Technology Learning Centers to all 21 neighborhood parks. The overall mission of eParks is to bridge the “digital divide” by providing “technology learning” environments to city residents. The program targets all Miami residents who do not have access to a computer and Internet technology, in essence bridging the gap between those with computers and those without them.

Currently, eParks gives priority to children during after-school hours, after which time the computers are accessible to all residents. Staff feels that part of the challenge in gaining high participation numbers is that most residents have a computer and those who do not are unfamiliar and uncomfortable with

the technology. The program is loosely evaluated by some park managers, who are encouraged by the department's administration to log the daily use of computers to help document the program's participation levels.

FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING CONCERNS

- **Core programming is not defined**

There is a lack of consensus or understanding among programming staff as to programming priorities, as well as what the City should offer and for what private providers should be responsible. Core programming appears to revolve around youth sports. Staff has expressed their concern for the lack of non-sport youth activities, activities for “tweens” and teens, activities for girls, activities for seniors, and adult programming at night in facilities. This perception tends to reinforce a statistic from the 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey, in which 85% of respondents (and their households) reported not having participated in any programs provided by the Parks and Recreation Department in the previous 12 months. It is also important to note that 80% those who did report participating rated the overall quality of programs “good” to “excellent” (yet there was room for improvement, with 20% rating programs as “fair” to “poor”).

Additional transportation may be warranted as well as methods to provide coordinated field trips among several park sites. Security of facilities and the safety of participants are also a source of concern. Homeless and vagrant persons often wander in and around the parks; overdoses, drug transactions and even deaths have occurred. Concern was expressed about the seemingly long response time of emergency services.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Utilize Pyramid Methodology, incorporating public and staff input, to identify key programming and priorities (see below).
- Collaborate with the Police Department on increased security measures, drive-bys, program involvement and improved response time.
- Establish a Park Ranger Program in conjunction with the Miami Police Department to promote safety, educate the public on the history and proper use of city parks, and help maintain the beauty of the city's treasured natural resources. To view “best practices” models of successful, well-established park ranger programs, visit websites for the City of Santa Barbara, CA (www.santabarbaraca.gov/ResidentCommunity/Parks_and_Beaches/Park-Rangers.htm) or the City of Parkland, FL (www.cityofparkland.org/ParksRecreation/AboutParksRec/ParkRanger.htm).
- Establish a Junior Park Ranger Program to allow children between the ages of 9 and 12 to explore, be educated through interpretive programs, and help protect the natural environment provided by Miami's parks and natural resources. Upon completion of each themed educational program, the

child receives a certificate, official Junior Ranger badge, and the inspiration to act as stewards for these resources. The City of Altamonte Springs, FL, has a noteworthy “best practices” model of a successful, well-established junior park ranger program. Details can be viewed at www.altamonte.org/departments/leisure/index.asp?ACTION=viewsub&ID=239).

Core Programming Identified (Pyramid Methodology)

Based on the mission of the City, all programs, services and facilities were sorted into categories, which were further sorted into the five levels of the Pyramid based on whom they benefited (the “benefit filter”). Categories ranged from programs and services that benefit the community as a whole to those that serve only an individual benefit. There will also need to be consideration of additional filters (discussed later in this document), which often hold a secondary significance.

The categories suggested by the consultant team are:

Youth:

- After-School/Out-of-School Programs
- Camps
 - > Non-sports camps
 - > Sports camps
- Team sports
- Instructional athletics
- Arts, culture, and education
- Clubs
- Special events

Adult:

- Instructional wellness and fitness
- Team athletics/sports
- Arts, culture, and education
- Instructional
- Special needs
- Club

Other:

- Services
- Community special events
 - > City-sponsored
 - > Private promoters

Please review the consultants’ application of the Pyramid Methodology and the outcomes that are detailed in the Recommendations and Management Tools section at the end of the report.

- **Programming needs to be equitable, not equal, and based on desired outcomes**

There is a need to provide a consistent quality leisure experience for all park users, not the same programming and services, but rather a variety based on what the surrounding community, demographics and user preferences dictate while fulfilling certain outcomes.

- **Public Input—Programming Concerns**

The feedback provided by residents at the public meetings reiterates some of the concerns identified by staff. Residents wish to celebrate their cultures and diversity, as well as provide for needs of each community's youth. The following is a list of the themes of programming issues raised by participants:

General

- > Conflicts by user groups for fields with lights
- > Generally need more programming in parks
- > Need for more cultural programming (ceramics, chess, etc.)
- > Need for passive spaces as well as high-activity, programmed spaces

Special Events

- > Need more attractions in parks, such as free concerts and events
- > Could use concessions in parks
- > Programs and activities celebrating diverse cultures (Caribbean, Haitian)
- > Start new events such as farmers markets, music festivals, and art exhibits.

Youth

- > Need more programming for youth (soccer, arts, dance, tutoring, nutrition, swimming, cheerleading)
- > Need for teen programming (sports, computer classes, chess)
- > Need programming for changing demographics
- > Parks could host sports events and tournaments
- > Need more programs for underserved residents (e.g., girls, seniors, etc.)

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Use a citizen survey to determine what services the public desires and analyze results by location and demographics; monitor changing needs; conduct informal community- or neighborhood-based surveys, hold open houses and introduce suggestion boxes for programming and feedback.
- Determine desired program outcomes to guide programming choices.
- Conduct customer satisfaction inquiries or intercept polling; develop and implement a “secret shopper” program as part of quality assurance (see example of short questionnaire or contact www.amusementadvantage.com to contract this service).
- Do end-of-program evaluations (see example of swim lesson evaluation form).

-
- Evaluate staff conducting programs.
 - Track participation statistics and develop a program registration database.
 - Identify alternative providers of recreation services and determine best providers for various types of services, focusing on unmet needs.
 - Establish core services of the department (see the provided Pyramid Methodology for a suggested starting place of services for discussion).
 - Train staff on inclusion issues for those with special needs.
 - Evaluate the efficiency of security systems in parks and establish more effective relationships with the Police Department and the potential development of a Park Ranger Program.

Outside User Groups

Outside rentals and activities have an impact on the department's assets and resources:

- Promoter-brokered special events arranged through the City
- Agreements with other county or local agencies that may or may not be known to the staff
- Last-minute requests for assistance in parking
- Conflicts in priority for use or scheduling between outside agencies and departmental programming

Outside User Group Concerns

The majority of outside user groups pay for permitted use of Miami's parks and recreation facilities. There are a few programs, like Arts for Learning, with which the department contracts to run City programs in parks. The permitting fees collected from use of the City's facilities total approximately \$400,000 annually, yet they go into the general fund and not back to the department, where they could be used to cover maintenance costs resulting from the wear and tear of these permitted activities.

- **There is no formal partnership or sponsorship policy**
Criteria and methodology are needed for guiding the use of City assets to outside groups, determining what types of activities are appropriate, defining which assets and resources (facilities, maintenance, and other) should be made available, and establishing the costs (if any) to other providers of recreation programming. At times, outside providers use the children in day camp and after-school programs for their activities, and this can create differing levels of service from park to park; more cooperative programming and planning is necessary. Outside activities often displace City programs.

Outside providers and users include the following nonprofit and private organizations:

- 4-H Club-in four parks
- AARP
- Adult Open Swim—José Martí Park
- American Children's Orchestra
- Amigos for Kids
- Barnyard Center
- Boys & Girls clubs—also hold camps in parks
- Children's Trust
- DAGA/First Tee Miami
- Florida Lions Athletic Association
- Focal
- Girl Power
- Greater Miami Tennis Foundation
- Gumdrop Books
- Hands on Broward
- James E. Scott Agency
- Jobs for Miami—funded through the Children's Trust
- Junior NBA
- Kiwanis Club of Little Havana
- Knights of Columbus #5110
- Liberty City Family Empowerment Connection
- Little League—14 Baseball Academies
- Mater Academy
- Miami Boys Baseball Academy
- Miami Dade College
- Miami Heat
- Nike
- Optimists—Liberty City and Overtown (football, basketball, baseball)
- Police Athletics League (PAL)
- Shake-A-Leg
- Shakespeare in the Park—Miami
- Small World Soccer
- Uniroyal—youth/adult soccer in 9-10 parks
- Urban League Rainbow Club

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Define a rationale for partnerships and establish formal partnership and sponsorship policies that address who is responsible for what at what cost or level of support; who gets priority; and what happens with maintenance, cleanup and damage. The rationale should also explain how the partnership fulfills the mission and enhances the provision of core services.
- Involve the park managers in negotiations for enrichment and enhancement of programs and services for day camp and after-school programs.
- Monitor the quality of programs and review agreements annually (as partnerships are a reflection of the department's service delivery).
- Have staff track participation, expenditures generated by program or program area, including maintenance costs and any revenue, grants, sponsorships, partnerships, volunteers and in-kind donations. Use this information to determine existing cost recovery and as a decision-making criterion for evaluating the cost of partnerships and/or the in-house provision of services.

Permitting of Facilities

Permitting of events is accomplished from several offices and venues:

- Park managers/supervisors issue short-term permits for events that will last less than one month and involve fewer than 150 participants at individual parks.
- Special Events Office staff issue long-term permits for events with larger number of participants.
- Recreation Office staff issue permits for pool facilities.

According to the *Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations Policy Manual*, all groups are required to have liability insurance that names the City of Miami as an additional insured and that has been accepted by the Risk Management Department prior to use of any facility. This is handled through the Special Events office for larger events.

The 2005 *Policy Manual* states that “all department-sponsored activities shall take precedence over any other authorized use of a facility” (page 28, item 6.05, Guidelines and Regulations for Group Use of Municipally Owned and Operated Swimming Pools under A. Insurance 2). This is the only place where priority of uses and users are discussed.

Permitting of Facilities Concerns

- **Staff is overly accommodating, leading to inefficiency**
The Special Events Division (and potentially the entire department) leans toward being very accommodating to those wishing to use facilities to the extent of not being able to deliver the best service.

- **Consistency is needed in the application process**

“City-sponsored” activities do not pay for some equipment rentals, including showmobiles, bleachers, and public address systems, and little consideration is given to the cost of labor, equipment repair, or replacement. When an event or activity sponsored by a charitable or non-profit organization is deemed to have a significant positive impact on the cultural and/or economic well-being of the city, the sponsor pays a reduced rate for equipment, without any consideration of the cost of labor or other associated expenses.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Require applications from all users, regardless of the ultimate decision to waive fees based on the type of requesting organization or type of use proposed. Extend the time frame for the application process (currently 60 days) to allow adequate lead time to gain an understanding of an organization’s request, work out details, coordinate with Parks and Recreation divisions and other City departments, and make a commitment about dates and times.
- Research fees and processes for use of facilities from nearby cities (Fort Lauderdale for competitive understanding and Tampa for best practices).
- Develop fee recommendations based on market comparables that focus on the value of the use and who benefits from the event or exclusive use.
- Determine the impact of the labor costs associated with collection of materials for an event (e.g., chairs from multiple locations) and set-up and tear-down of equipment (versus rental fees from an outside vendor).
- Define and clarify terminology, including *city-sponsored*, *significant positive impact upon the cultural and/or economic well-being of the city*, *youth-serving not-for-profit organizations* and *direct and indirect costs*.

- **Overuse of athletic fields**

Many park and athletic fields are being used beyond capacity with no resting periods, including Gibson, Hadley, Peacock, Curtis, Moore, Range, Armbrister, Douglas, Juan Pablo Duarte, Lemon City, Margaret Pace, Morningside, Clemente, Shenandoah and Williams.

Soccer is increasingly popular with immigrant and other communities in Miami, but staff is hesitant to rent or permit fields, because soccer inflicts heavier wear on fields than other types of uses. Irrigation operations and maintenance costs, as well as the potential cost savings and benefits of synthetic fields, should be investigated and compared against each other to pave the way for a long-term solution.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue

- A capacity level should be determined for each athletic field that would establish a limit on permitted use for the field. Standards that take into account the level of play, the level of care, and the level of satisfaction required by the user should define capacity. Operations staff in conjunction with those responsible for permitting of fields (park managers and Special Events staff) would have the ability to adjust usage based on a field's current condition.
- Create a field use policy.
- Detail guidelines for lining a field and the cost if the City is responsible.
- The department should track maintenance costs resulting from permitted programs and request that permit fees cover those costs, rather than placing all monies into the general fund.
- Distinguish between use of parks for events and by neighborhood residents when requiring a certificate showing liability coverage that names the City as an additional insured. Neighborhood residents should be able to reserve space for one-time use (non-special events for which no registration or fee is involved) through a simple waiver-of-liability form.

SERVICE DELIVERY AND COMMUNICATIONS

IMAGE OF THE DEPARTMENT

Miami won the NRPA Class I Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management (for cities with a population greater than 250,000) in 1979. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the department faced serious challenges due to the City's economic straits. With an improved economic picture, the time has come to reposition the Parks and Recreation Department to reclaim its national reputation.

With a new mission, logo, and slogan, a transformation of the overall image and brand identification of Miami Parks and Recreation has begun. The emphasis should remain on raising expectations for performance standards, level of service, quality of facilities, and programs and services.

- Safe places and activities for children place the department's focus on prevention rather than incarceration.
- Activities for youth, adults and seniors place the focus on healthy and active wellness lifestyles rather than disease.
- A variety of offerings for everyone place the focus on life-long learning rather than diminished learning with aging.
- Volunteerism and mentoring opportunities place the focus on community service and quality of life.
- Greenspace and natural areas place the focus on experiencing nature within the City.

Departmental Image Concerns

The new director of the department has brought hopefulness and professionalism back into the organization. The entire department now needs to believe in itself and begin behaving like a credible entity, capable of a reputation for excellence in the 21st century.

- **The department’s self-image betrays a lack of self-confidence**

The department has suffered from a lack of confidence in its ability to manage and deliver services, largely due to inadequate funding. This is reflected in the proliferation of services provided by outside user groups and park trusts. The department struggles to secure an appropriate share of City funding because it is unable to express clearly its contributions to the community and the return on its investment. Although staff morale has improved significantly, a less-than-desirable self-image lingers. Improving that self-image should begin with an effort to empower employees to maximize their capabilities and feel confident in “telling the story” of the department based on documented facts.

- **Low public awareness of the department**

The 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey indicated that the second-highest reason (22%) for respondents’ not using the City’s parks, recreation facilities, and programs is because that they “do not know what is being offered.” It is highly likely, therefore, that the larger public remains unaware of the department’s use of volunteers, its leveraging of resources through partnerships, and the benefits of parks and recreation, because the department is not tracking and measuring that information. Compounding this problem is the fact that there is little momentum for citizen advocacy until the department can reposition itself.

- **The department needs to be viewed as a “player at the table”**

Many department staff members feel that the department is the first to be assigned extra duties (e.g., responsibility for undesirable parcels of land that no one else will take care of or requests for support and assistance) and the last to receive additional funding to help cover associated costs. The department has difficulty calculating costs for individual services and requesting appropriate compensation; in addition, the belief is widely held that other City departments are first in line to be compensated and the department’s costs for a particular activity would make it infeasible. The Department needs to be viewed as a “player at the table” among other City departments and community organizations.

- **Public input—concerns about the department’s image**

The public also brought to light concerns about the image of the department. These, however, were more focused on the condition and safety of

parks, facilities, and resources than on the department's "professional" image. Both, however, contribute to the staff's and department's sense of ownership, pride, and dedication. Residents raised these issues at the public meetings:

- > Fences at parks make them look uninviting and dangerous
- > Parks seem to have common image for drug dealing, crime
- > Safety is a major issue of concern for park users
- > Need to protect neighborhood character
- > Homeless issue in parks, along the rail corridor, and beaches
- > Drug use is very high in many parks
- > Concerns about children's safety and crime activity
- > Police need to be used to reduce crime at parks
- > A park ranger program could be developed to increase safety

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Create a style guide for all flyers and other printed materials that serves as the department standard (see example).
- Rewrite the *Rules and Regulations Policies Manual*.
- Create a facility procedure manual (see example Table of Contents for topics to consider including).
- Create a marketing plan (see example). Explore advertisement options of billboards, electronic signs, marquees, street banners, and direct resident mailings.
- Restructure the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to meet monthly and become champions for the parks and recreation effort.
- Establish methods for tracking volunteer labor hours; recovering costs for services, events, and programs; and leveraging resources in grant applications and partnerships.
- Seek NRPA accreditation.
- Secure a nomination for the NRPA Gold Medal Award.
- Establish monthly meetings with other select City departments in order to increase communication, build relationships, and encourage collaborative efforts.
- Create joint ownership with the Police Department of park safety issues and seek solutions. Measure the perception of park safety and security through a citizen survey.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Staff members had become accustomed to funding problems and some suffer from low morale, with concerns about low pay, turnover, and being stretched thin. New direction has brought optimism into the work environment. Department staff struggle with the scope and volume of requests and responsibilities. A strong desire to cooperate with other organizations that provide recreation

services, event promoters, and other municipal departments, has led staff members to be accommodating above what is reasonable. Pride for the whole and not turf issues; tenacity and creativity; and solution-based approaches are traits and practices needed to achieve the new vision.

General Management Concerns

- **Lack of accountability is cultural issue in the department**

Some staff members seem uncertain as to what constitutes a “mandate” and whether they are required to continue what is started, follow procedures, cooperate, and communicate. Few consequences exist for failure to perform job-related tasks, such as participation in appropriate projects and programs and attendance at “mandatory” meetings. There is a need for empowerment leading to accountability for departmental employees.

- **Internal issues are not addressed in a timely fashion**

There are entrenched beliefs about how things run or need to run, without questioning to provide the most logical and effective way to do things (with some exceptions). As a result, resolvable issues often are left to fester and serve as a source of complaint.

- **Employees do not consistently “own” performance measures**

Some department employees resist the implementation of performance measure policies. There may be an underlying apprehension of the accountability that would result from the implementation of these measures. These employees need to gain a better understanding of the positive outcomes that would result from these policies, as well as the broad use of performance measures by the large majority of municipal departments. Use of performance measures will enable individuals to be rewarded for hard work and efforts, will help employees to gain ownership and confidence in the department, and will enable the department to “tell its story.” There is some concern, however, that without support from the union, these performance measures will be difficult to implement effectively.

- **Public input—general management concerns**

The public recognizes that political considerations often affect management. It is important, however, that the department overcome political issues and promote the services of the department. These management issues are perceived as problems by residents:

Management Decision-Making Criteria

- > Changes in administration have halted the implementation of past planning
- > Parks and Recreation administrative employees often override park managers on maintenance issues

Marketing

- > Direct mail should be used to increase public knowledge/participation

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Tie the department’s annual work plan and the performance measures to the department’s mission and vision, and have general goals or assignments for senior staff. Those assignments should become the staff’s goals and objectives to oversee, with specific tasks becoming subordinate staff’s goals. Senior staff should hold responsibility for ensuring that these goals and objectives are met.
- Push decision-making responsibilities as far down the organizational chain of command as possible to encourage and support empowerment, trust, risk-taking, improved judgment and professional growth. This also frees senior management for bigger decisions that affect the department’s larger vision.
- Staff needs to present possible solutions to identified problems.
- Create a task force of employees to provide for “Rapid Resolution of Relevant Issues”—a “no excuses” group that is empowered to seek reasonable responses and make recommendation for funding if necessary.
- Define “mandatory” attendance at meeting and events and provide consistent rewards and consequences.
- Reward creative questioning, solution-based problem solving, and risk-taking.
- Park managers should meet on a monthly basis to discuss topic-specific goals, concerns and issues. Regular staff meetings produce open communication, improved problem solving, consistent customer experiences, and quality assurance. At minimum, organize these meetings by north and south manager-responsibility divisions.
- Each park manager should conduct staff meetings for on-site staff—including lifeguards and operations staff—and not rely solely on direct reports.
- Management should host a session with staff and provide information on the proposed performance-measure evaluation system to increase employee knowledge and reduce fears or misunderstandings about the program. Additionally, management could initiate a employee recognition and benefit program associated with high performance-measure evaluations.

SUSTAINABILITY

The department must be guided by strong policy in order to be able to provide excellent long-term service.

Sustainability Concerns

- **The City has lost valuable park land to other uses.**
- **The City has not developed adequate programs for replacing lost parkland.**

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- **City staff routinely is asked to take on additional maintenance and support service functions without receiving funding for these new tasks.**
 - **As identified through public input, conservation of greenspace is a high priority for Miami residents.** Based on the City’s limited land base and population growth, the department needs to identify opportunities for land acquisition.
 - **Provision of services for people of all abilities will support the department’s long-term success.**
 - **Public input—sustainability concerns**
Miami residents value their parks and recreation resources and have concerns about the future of these amenities. This city has little greenspace, making it important for the department to protect green areas. In addition, residents are concerned with the accessibility of these resources. These are public’s concerns about the department’s sustainability:
 - > More greenspace, parks, and areas for recreation are needed. This could include creative use of limited space, such as greenspace on top of parking garages, parks on barges, and so on.
 - > More land should be acquired from private owners.
 - > Greenspace and conservation should receive priority over development.
 - > Parks should be accessible to all and meet ADA requirements. Accessible beaches are needed for the disabled and the elderly.
 - > The FEC rail corridor should be converted into a pedestrian and bicycle trail.
 - > Miami’s parks need better irrigation.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Adopt a policy to protect the park system from any net loss of park land without replacement.
- Establish and fund a preventative maintenance program.
- Establish and fund equipment- and vehicle-replacement programs.
- Establish methodology to determine the cost of maintenance and support tasks and apply these costs to each request for service.

SUPPORT SERVICES

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

The department has received considerable bond funding in the past several years for capital projects, including approximately \$75 million from the Homeland Security Defense Bond series (of which \$23 million has been received to

date). These projects are managed by the City’s Capital Improvement Program, with limited input from Parks and Recreation Support Services staff and little means for tracking of ongoing project spending.

Capital Development Concerns

- **There is a perceived need for additional capital facilities**
Staff has expressed a citywide need for more gyms, multipurpose classrooms, weight and fitness areas, heated pools and warmer-water therapy pools. In general, facilities and pools need to be updated and receive additional maintenance. Smaller parks need small community buildings if they host after-school or day camp programs; in addition, the smaller parks need shelter and shade. Virrick Park has the only City-owned gym in Miami, although a new gymnasium will be constructed at José Marti Park. There is also a need for improved access to public spaces on the bay, rivers, tributaries, and islands; safe pedestrian and bike routes; and better connections to the natural environment.
- **Efforts should be made to maximize the use of every existing park**
Some parks are infrequently used, which suggests they may not be meeting the needs of the surrounding communities. These parks should be evaluated for different uses. This is not to say that every park should be completely “developed”; passive and natural areas should receive equal consideration in development planning.
- **There is a lack of acceptable criteria for implementation of capital projects**
The criteria for prioritizing capital projects is unwritten and appears to be based on financial considerations and GSA efficiencies without regard for scheduling conflicts and service needs for the department.
- **Public input—capital development concerns**
Two of the areas of greatest concern for Miami residents are the funding of new park and recreation resources and improvements in current lands and facilities. When respondents to the 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey were asked how they would allocate funding to various capital improvements, programs, and operating costs, the areas that drew the greatest funding (35%) were improvements in and maintenance of existing parks. Public comments produced this list of needs and requests for future capital development:

Better access to water

- > More bike and rollerblading paths along the water
- > More public swimming beaches
- > Parks should have mini-gardens
- > Every park should have a shelter
- > More “tot lots”

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- > Need for more dog parks and water parks
 - > More athletic fields and programs (soccer, basketball)
 - > Recreation center with fitness equipment and programming
 - > Better water access for recreation (kayaking, boating, etc.)
 - > More bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, and increased connectivity

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Test capital needs with the community through the citizen survey to determine priorities and willingness to fund.
- Build in multiple opportunities for input throughout the design process for new development/renovation to address functionality, scheduling, and future maintenance considerations.
- Develop criteria for assigning relative priorities to capital projects so that they meet the service needs of the department and desires of Miami residents.

HUMAN RESOURCES

An AFSCME labor agreement governs classified staff, but job-basis positions are held by salaried, non-AFSCME staff (FLSA-exempt). The hiring process is described as cumbersome, but the department is doing a much better job of hiring qualified individuals than in the past. Volunteers are used in the department on an informal basis.

The hiring process, pay scales, and benefits for classified employees (union and non-union) are generally the same. The hiring/promotional process adheres to this procedure:

1. Recruitment is carried out through register announcements.
2. Eligible registers with qualified applicants are established.
3. Structured interviews are carried out in coordination with the Department of Employee Relations.
4. Candidates undergo background/medical evaluations (for new employees or current employees being promoted to sensitive areas, positions, etc.).
5. Unclassified/Executive (at-will) positions can be filled without announcement or use of the eligible registers, and interviews for these positions can be less structured. However, candidates for these positions still must undergo background and medical evaluations.

The pay scales of union employees are driven by pay steps that are typically 5% apart. Other employees—non-union, unclassified, executive, part-time, and temporary—have pay scales in which increases are awarded within a range. Benefits packages for union and non-union employees are very similar and include paid vacation, insurance, paid holidays, paid sick leave, and pension/401K.

Human Resources Concerns

- **There is a lack of empowerment in the department in regard to accountability for subordinate employees**

Some staff members do not appear to be fully prepared or qualified for the positions they hold. It is important that staff assigned to neighborhood parks and creating recreational programming speak the immediate community's language or identify with the surrounding culture. This may be a determining factor for job selections, as there are many language and cultural barriers in the community. The employee evaluation process is perceived as not being completed "honestly" by supervisors. This could result from employee's feeling disempowered to correct poor performance or from a "tenure" mentality. Language, skill, and education barriers, and promotions of staff or positions' being made full-time without regard to skill levels may also account for the lack of honesty in the evaluation process.

- **Specialized programming is often best provided by hourly employees or contracted services**

Staff members running camp programs are generalists in the field of recreation and should be trained in day-camper management, safety, general activities, games and crafts. They are not—nor need they be—specialists in enrichment or specialized programming. Generally, recreation programs are staffed by a variety of specialized instructional staff in hourly positions. It is impossible to train all park managers and their staff in specialized programming if they have not studied an enrichment area, or have little talent or aptitude for a particular art, subject or skill.

- **Volunteer labor hours need to be tracked**

Tracking volunteer labor hours and activities is essential for cost-effective services, events and programs; citizen advocacy; and leveraging resources in grant applications and partnerships. According to the 2004 Occupational and Employment Wage Estimates prepared by the US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), the average hourly wage for recreational workers in the state of Florida is \$9.45–\$10.20 per hour; the estimated range for metropolitan Miami is a little higher at \$9.88–\$10.70 per hour. The Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org) estimates the value of volunteer time from 2004 at \$17.55 per hour. In 2002, the value of volunteer time in the state of Florida was \$14.58 per hour. Whichever multiplier the City chooses to use, it is clear that the use of volunteers saves the department substantial money. This resource and its monetary value must be accounted for and leveraged for gaining credibility and winning philanthropic support.

- **Public input—human resources concerns**

Members of the public clearly feel that staffing is not adequate, and they recognize that this is largely due to inadequate funding. Residents raised these concerns were raised by residents at the public meetings:

- > Lack of adequate staffing at parks
- > Park managers do not seem available to the public
- > Park employees should be paid living wages
- > Good parks have good management

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Recruitment and hiring should be a participatory process for supervisors, with direct involvement in writing job descriptions, interview and selection decisions.
- Evaluate all employees' job performances and hold them accountable to performance standards, goals and objectives. This should include part-time and seasonal staff. Use incentives to reward desired performance and behaviors, and give supervisors/administrators the authority to terminate for poor performance and for cause.
- Staff should become certified parks and recreation professionals and attend continuing education conferences, workshops and seminars.
- The department should educate and work with the City's Human Resources Department to allow multiple hourly positions for specialized programming.
- Standardize processes related to parks volunteers. Establish job descriptions, recruitment procedures, a training program, and an appreciation method for good job performance.

FINANCE/BUDGET

The department is making great strides in positioning itself to use its financial systems for management purposes. It is in the process of implementing *Oracle*, a financial management system, which will allow the department to:

- Ensure division heads' awareness of purchase requisitions being charged against their budgets
- Better track the status of requisitions in the system
- Have greater efficiency in requesting award and budget establishment for a project
- Improve ability to track journal entries
- Better monitor reimbursements from granting agencies
- Expedite payments to suppliers of goods and services
- Improve monitoring of fixed assets
- Allow departments/divisions to generate their own reports

Finance/Budget Concerns

- **The current financial-management system is not adequate**

There appears to be no system in place for tracking expenditures, accounting for revenues, or determining cost recovery, dollars spent per participant, expenses per square foot or other performance measures. Not all staff has the same level of understanding of the budgeting process, revenue generation, or forecasting and tracking expenditures. A mechanism exists to create special revenue funds, but there are no written criteria for establishing such funds. The cumbersome procurement process requires senior management to approve all stockroom requisitions, purchases, and expenditures—even those already approved within the budget structure.

- **Public input—finance/budget concerns**

Miami's residents understand that funding for parks and recreation is limited and that there is a need for alternative funding sources. They have voiced concern, however, about the City's current revenue structure and raised these finance and budgeting issues at the public meetings:

Revenue

- > Keep department revenue within the department
- > Raise impact fees

Alternative Funding

- > Educational institutions and private institutions should pay to use parks facilities
- > Recruit corporate sponsorships
- > Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) could potentially fund parks

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Use the new Oracle system to align revenue and expenditures on a program budget basis.
- Allow purchasing decisions based on approved budgets as far down the organizational chain of command as possible to encourage and support empowerment, trust, risk-taking, improved judgment and professional growth.
- Cash-handling procedures are not customer- or user-friendly. Payments and deposits must be turned into the park manager/supervisor, processed and taken to the main office within five working days of being collected. Programs, permits, activities, admission and rentals fees must be paid for with cashier's checks, bank drafts or money orders; there is no provision for paying by personal or company checks or cash. The department should investigate the use of credit cards to pay fees, as well as the possibility of providing purchasing credit cards for staff to allow better tracking and control of spending for field trips and miscellaneous expenses.

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- Securing alternative funding takes a dedicated effort, but it should eventually pay for itself. The department should devote staff resources to this activity at a time in the future when other systems have a better foundation.

TECHNOLOGY

Recent improvements in technology have been implemented. Department staff have various levels of computer literacy and proficiency. A focus on training is imperative to maximize use of computer technology for communicating (e.g., e-mail and scheduling to avoid conflicts). The department should be working toward a level of proficiency for all employees to have a working knowledge of the e-mail and scheduling systems, as well as Microsoft Word and Excel.

Technology Concerns

- **Hardware and software systems are not fully integrated, interactive, and efficient**

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Create an IT strategic plan that integrates existing hardware and software systems with accounting software (Oracle) that meets the needs for park and recreation data management, cost accounting, cash handling, client management, asset management, and maintenance. Include a phased implementation process for a capital improvement or purchase request within the plan.
 - > Research installation of a Point of Sale at each park with programs.
 - > Research integrated program registration software for activities and membership- or pass-management software for camps.
- Require training for staff on all computer programs, applications, e-mail etiquette and shared and private filing.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Department's *Rules and Regulations Policies Manual* contains some helpful information, but it lacks necessary detail and is written from a reactive perspective in a negative tone. Forms are referred to but there are no instructions on how to complete them.

Risk-management Concerns

- **In general, policies are lacking and, where given, process for dealing with emergencies seems cumbersome and inefficient**
 - There are no emergency procedures for dealing with bomb threats, hurricanes, fires, suspicious persons and objects, incident/accidents, or employee injuries.

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- There is no process for tracking and dealing with minor repairs; the work order process is neither timely nor efficient, especially for emergencies; and the chain of command prevents the expediting of internal service.
 - Presently, staff is directed not to “discuss an injury or an accident until first seeking legal advice from the Law Department/Claims Division,” but they are also directed to “forward all inquiries to the Director,” which can be confusing.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Create a more in-depth emergency procedures manual (see example); conduct emergency and evacuation drills monthly; conduct fire extinguisher practice sessions; perform monthly safety audits; and revise incident/accident forms (see example).
- With computerized point-of-sale and recreation registration and membership software, create more detailed cash-handling procedures so monies are accounted for by transaction and are deposited daily.
- Provide credit cards for park managers to use when paying admission fees. Approved petty cash items will eliminate the need for reimbursement and provide greater accountability, control and tracking.
- Create a *Facility Maintenance Troubleshooting Guide* for minor repairs (see example).
- Computerize processing of forms to eliminate timeliness issues. The processing can notify the main office and other City providers.
- Allow only one point of contact for disaster or critical incident, injuries and accident discussions by removing conflicting information in the policies manual.

FEES, CHARGES AND REVENUES

The incentive behind charging for recreation programs and services is unclear because revenues go directly into the general fund. Since the City is unable to calculate the cost of providing services and revenues generated, it is unrealistic at this time to set a goal for the department’s subsidy to be reduced by the use of increasing fees or pursuing alternative funding sources.

However, in consideration for long-term strategic planning, based on the 2006 Miami Parks Community Survey, the public generally supports increasing fees for recreation facilities, programs and services to help pay increased operating expenses. 47% of respondents indicated either strong (21%) or moderate support (26%) for increasing the fees for recreation facilities, programs and services they use. In addition, 26% of respondents did not support increasing fees, and 25% indicated that they were “not sure.”

- **There is no consistent policy for determining whether fees are charged for programs/activities**

Charging fees for programs (or not) appears to be inconsistent and based on the perceived socio-economic conditions of an entire community rather than individual needs. Perceived value of the program and commitment to participation increases when the cost for providing the program or service is consistently and fairly applied based on who benefits from the programs.

- **There is no consistent policy for fee waivers**

The city manager approves all fees negotiated or waived for programs; field rentals for youth-serving not-for-profit organizations; and field use by schools, the stadium complex and track, and City-sponsored leagues. Case-by-case negotiated fees and waivers are recommended by the director. By resolution, the city manager also negotiates fees for Virrick Park Gym rentals. Policy and criteria for exceptions and waivers are unclear, leaving the perception that exceptions are the norm, which can create issues of credibility and perceived favoritism, both internally and externally.

Best Practices/Options to Pursue:

- Explore with the city manager and city commission the option of approving the philosophy, policy and overall departmental or program area budget rather than approval of each individual fee.
- Using the Pyramid Methodology, assign a progressive percentage of cost recovery to programs and services as they move from a community-wide benefit (like after-school programs) to a highly individualized benefit (like exclusive use of a facility, and move toward implementation of this philosophy. Define “direct and indirect” costs; cost recovery; full, partial and market fees; and other terminology used to explain cost allocation, revenue and expenses.
- Align and track expenditures and revenues to determine current cost recovery, then set future goals for the department.
- Establish eligibility criteria for reduced or waived fees due to partnership agreements for the provision of service.
 - > Define what responsibilities the renter/user has for care, maintenance, and wear and tear.
 - > Identify which users have priority of use by establishing a master calendar of activities for each park site.
- Create a consistently applied, citywide fee-reduction policy based on ability to pay. This will allow those who can afford to pay a full or partial fee to contribute their share, rather than having the City subsidize everyone in a blanket approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

RECREATION AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

Recreation and cultural opportunities are made possible through the system of park sites in Miami. From a neighborhood perspective, the goal of this master planning effort is to make these opportunities available within one-quarter mile (long-term goal) or one-half mile (short-term goal) of each residence in the city. From a community perspective, special facilities—such as designated athletic fields, gymnasiums, unique natural features, and swimming pools—should be located where land is adequate. Sufficient parking and other support facilities, including restrooms, should be a goal. To maximize the availability of the park system, these park sites should provide for the following priorities:

1. neighborhood gathering space, passive spaces for contemplation, areas for exposure to activities/skills;
2. special facilities and unique resources (natural or built) where land is adequate; and
3. increased awareness of unique resources throughout the park system and sharing these resources among park sites (which will create a need for transportation resources).

Care should be taken to provide a welcoming environment for passive and active recreation in parks and indoor facilities based on these values:

Safety

Parks are open and inviting. The well-maintained and appropriately lit surroundings convey a sense of security, ownership and pride. Park rangers serve as park ambassadors and, through a primarily educational focus, promote and maintain order.

Appropriate actions must be taken first to make parks safe and then to promote safe parks in Miami.

Good Maintenance

The physical infrastructure—including outdoor activity spaces, buildings and indoor activity spaces, landscaping and natural areas—functions as intended, is in good condition and is well-kept. The recreation program is consistent, of high quality, and is led by qualified individuals. The department should take advantage of instructional expertise to bring excellence to the program.

Openness	Parks and outdoor and indoor activity areas are not shut off from the community by fences. Hours of operation meet the needs of the residents, accommodating after-school, evening and weekend, and holiday use, when many residents have leisure time.
Balance	Parks and recreation facilities accommodate a balance of passive and active pursuits through a variety of activities serving all groups.
Connection	Parks and recreation facilities are connected to each other through trails systems and greenways or through other transportation mechanisms designed to connect the system, such as recreation vans for transporting participants to destination amenities (e.g., pools and gymnasiums). The park system is connected to other public recreation opportunities, such as those available through the school system and other providers, maximizing the use of these public resources.

THE PYRAMID METHODOLOGY

Understanding the concept and benefits of having a core services and cost-recovery philosophy—and an introduction to building the philosophy through a pyramid model—is the basis for the consultant team’s recommendations to the City.

Critical to this philosophical undertaking is the support and understanding of elected officials and, ultimately, citizens. Whether or not significant changes are called for, the organization wants to be certain that it is philosophically aligned with its residents. The development of the core services and cost recovery philosophy and policy is built on a very logical foundation, using the understanding of who is benefiting from parks, recreation and natural resources service to determine how the costs for that service should be paid.

- Step 1—Building on your agency’s mission
- Step 2—Understanding filters/the Benefits Filter
- Step 3—Sorting services
- Step 4—Understanding other filters
- Step 5—Determining current subsidy/cost-recovery levels
- Step 6—Assigning desired subsidy/cost-recovery levels
- Step 7—Adjusting fees as needed to reflect your comprehensive pricing philosophy
- Step 8—Using your efforts to your advantage in the future

It is often easier to integrate the values of the organization with its mission if they can be visualized. An ideal philosophical model for this purpose is the pyramid. In addition to a physical structure, *Webster's Dictionary* defines a *pyramid* as “an immaterial structure built on a broad supporting base and narrowing gradually to an apex.” Parks and recreation programs are built with a broad supporting base of core services and enhanced with more specialized services as resources allow. Envision a pyramid divided horizontally into five levels.

The Pyramid Pricing Model illustrates a pricing philosophy based on establishing fees commensurate with the benefit received. Descriptions of each level of the pyramid are provided, but the model is intended as a discussion point and depends on agency philosophies to determine what programs and services belong on each level. Cultural, regional, geographical, and resource differences play a large role in this determination.

The pyramid diagram below graphically represents this concept. The foundational level of the pyramid represents the mainstay of a public parks and recreation program. It is the largest service level and most heavily tax-supported. Programs appropriate to higher levels of the pyramid should be offered only when the levels below are full enough to provide a foundation for the next level. This is intended to represent the public parks and recreation mission while reflecting the growth and maturity of an organization.

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Critical to the development of a cost-recovery philosophy is common understanding—understanding the mission and vision of the organization as well as having a common language. The development of the cost-recovery philosophy was broken down into the following steps:

Step 1. Building on the City of Miami's Mission

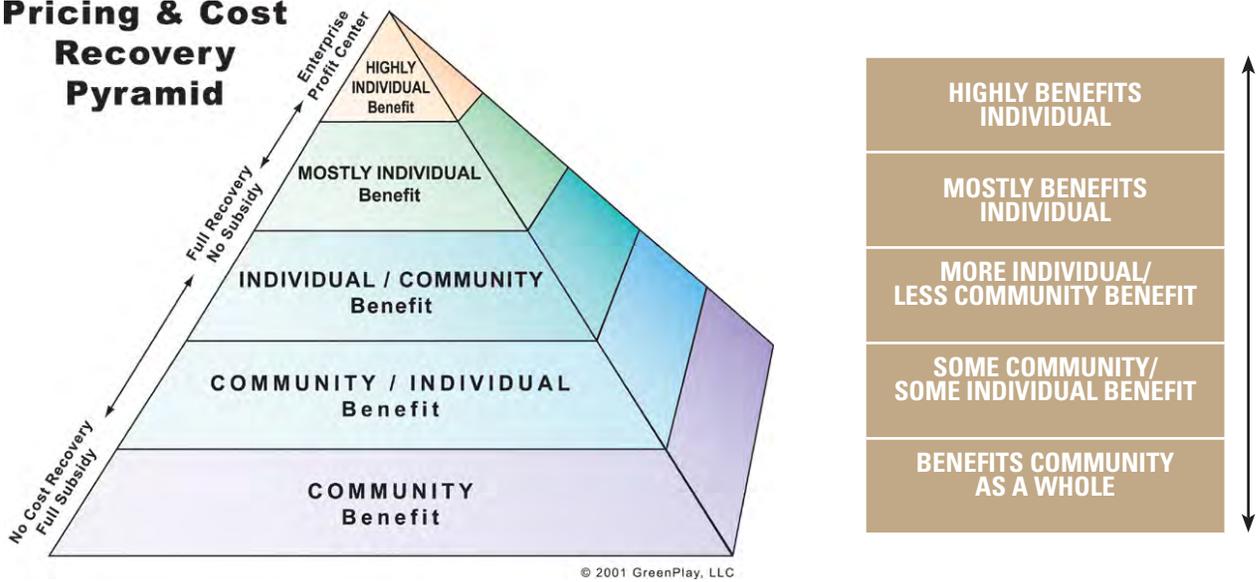
The long-term vision is:

The goal of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to serve all of the residents of the City of Miami by providing safe, clean, and wholesome recreational, educational and cultural activities in order to promote a sense of community.

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department is:

To provide state-of-the-art park facilities and offer leisure, educational, cultural and physical activities to the residents and visitors of our community while enhancing their quality of life and inspiring personal growth, self esteem, pride and respect for the urban environment

Pricing & Cost Recovery Pyramid



The entire premise for this process is to help equitably fulfill the City of Miami’s vision and mission. It is important that the organizational values be reflected in the mission. Mission statements often serve as a starting point and require further work to create a more detailed common understanding of the mission. This is accomplished through involving staff in a discussion of a variety of filters.

Step 2. Understanding the Pyramid—Filters and the Benefits Filter

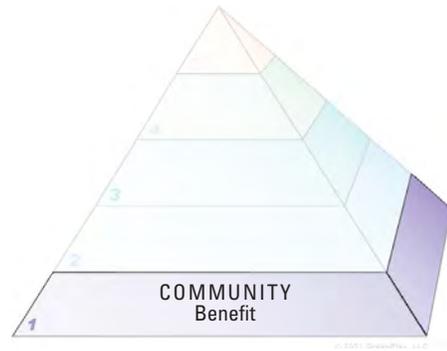
Each filter is a continuum covering different ways of viewing service provision. Primary filters are described below; however, the benefits filter is the foundation of a pyramid model and is used here to illustrate a pricing philosophy for a parks and recreation organization. Other filters will be described in subsequent sections.

The Benefits Filter

The most fundamental of the filters is the benefits filter. It is shown first as a continuum and then in the Pricing Philosophy Pyramid Model.

Conceptually, the foundation level of the pyramid represents the mainstay of a public parks and recreation program. Programs appropriate to higher levels of the pyramid should only be offered when the lower levels are full enough to provide a foundation for the next level. This foundation and upward progression is intended to represent the public parks and recreation core mission, while also reflecting the growth and maturity of an organization as it enhances its program and facility offerings.

Community Benefit—The foundation of the pyramid is the largest level and includes those programs, facilities and services that benefit the **community** as a whole. These programs, facilities and services can increase property values, provide safety, address social needs, and enhance quality of life for residents. These services are offered to residents at minimal or no fee. A large percentage of the tax support of the agency would fund this level of the pyramid.



Examples of these services could include

- instructional programs and special events (youth and City-sponsored);
- after-school and school non-contact day activities; and
- facility drop-in use (youth).

Community/Individual Benefit—The second, smaller level of the pyramid represents programs, facilities and services that promote individual physical and mental well-being, and provide recreation skill development. They generally represent more traditionally-expected services and beginner instructional levels. These programs, services and facilities are typically assigned fees based on a specified percentage of direct and indirect costs. These costs are partially offset by both a tax subsidy to account for the **Community Benefit** and participant fees to account for the **Individual Benefit**.



Examples of these services include

- special needs; and
- clubs, leagues and camps (youth).

Individual/Community Benefit—A third and yet smaller level of the pyramid represents services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide an intermediate level of recreational skill development. This level provides more **Individual Benefit** and less **Community Benefit**



and should be priced to reflect this. The individual fee is higher than for programs and services that fall within the lower levels of the pyramid.

Examples of these services could include

- facility and equipment rentals (youth and non-profits);
- fitness and wellness (adult and senior); and
- drop-in facility use (adults).

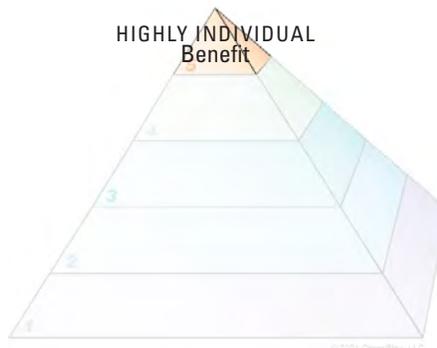
Mostly Individual Benefit—The fourth and even smaller level of the pyramid represents specialized services generally for specific groups, and may have a competitive focus. In this level, programs and services may be priced to recover full cost, including all direct and indirect costs.



Examples of these services could include

- team athletics/sports (adults);
- facility and equipment rentals (nonprofits and adults); and
- special events (City-supported, private promoter).

Even More Highly Individual Benefit—At the top, the fifth and smallest level of the pyramid represents activities that have potential to function as a profit center and may even fall outside of the core mission. In this level, programs and services should be priced to recover full cost plus a designated profit percentage.



Examples of these activities could include

- food, beverage and merchandise for resale; and
- facility and equipment rental (“for profit” or private groups).

Step 3. Sorting the City of Miami’s Services

It is critical that this sorting step be done with staff and with governing bodies and citizens in mind. This is where ownership is created for the philosophy, while participants discover the current and possibly varied operating histories, cultures, missions and values of the organization. It is the time to develop consensus and get everyone on the same page. This effort must reflect community desires and must align with the thinking of policy makers.

Outcomes

Identifying Core Programs

Miami Parks and Recreation Department can use the Pyramid Methodology to identify its **Core Programs**, which are the programs that are desired more often and throughout the entire city. Then the department must ask itself these questions: Who benefits from these programs? Who pays for them? The answer to these questions is simple: Whoever benefits—pays! The tax subsidy is used in greater amounts at the bottom levels of the pyramid, reflecting benefits to the community as a whole. At higher levels of the pyramid, the percentage of tax subsidy decreases; at the top it may not be used at all, reflecting the Individual Benefit.

LEVEL 1: COMMUNITY BENEFIT

This level includes support services, promotional programs and facilities commonly found in the public sector that provide benefits to all constituents, such as parks, trails, rivers and lakes; non-guarded beaches; fishing piers; general picnic areas; nature centers and visitor centers; play areas; boat-access areas; and gardens. They are facilities that visitors may use without purposefully interacting with staff. A target of 0% direct cost recovery and is considered feasible. The operation of these areas is at full subsidy and types of services include:

- Instructional (youth)
 - > Junior park ranger program
 - > Environmental education
- Special events (youth, city sponsored)
- Non-contact day activities (youth)
- Facility drop-in swim (youth)

LEVEL 2: COMMUNITY/INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT

The operation of recreation facilities as a whole is considered part of the second level of the pyramid, where a partial subsidy is anticipated. This enhances and expands upon the base level, where the existence of the facility resides. This includes facilities commonly found in the public sector that provide value-added services with extraordinary costs, as well as programs that provide education or experiences to groups and individuals.

Fees and charges recommendations for various programs and services independent of, or within the operation of the facilities may fall in different levels of the pyramid depending on the nature of the service. A target cost recovery is set at 50% of direct costs and is considered feasible. These types of services include fees for:

- Special needs
- Clubs (youth)

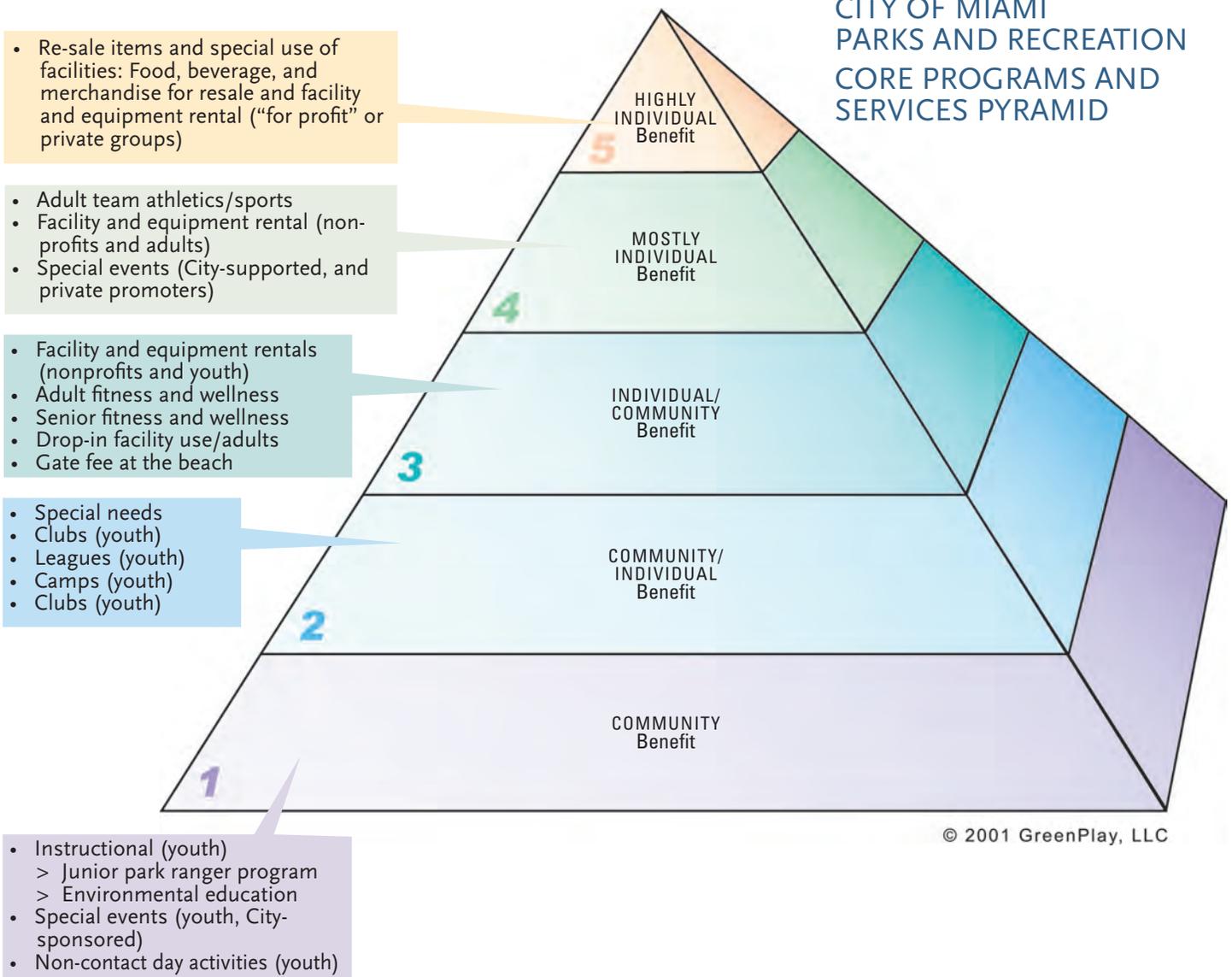
- Leagues (youth)
- Camps (youth)
- Clubs (youth)

LEVEL 3: INDIVIDUAL/COMMUNITY BENEFIT

This level includes equipment rentals and recreation lessons at nonspecial-revenue facilities. Target cost recovery is set at 75% of direct costs and is considered feasible. The categories for these services include fees for:

- Facility and equipment rentals (youth nonprofit)
- Adult fitness and wellness
- Senior fitness and wellness
- Drop-in facility use by adults
- Gate fee at the beach

**CITY OF MIAMI
PARKS AND RECREATION
CORE PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES PYRAMID**



LEVEL 4: MOSTLY INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT

This level includes facilities that are also commonly found in the private sector and that typically generate revenues beyond direct costs, such as golf courses, ski and snowboard areas, and facility rentals. It also includes lessons at special-revenue facilities and leagues/competitions. Target cost recovery is set at 105% of direct costs and is considered feasible. The categories for these services include fees for:

- Adult team athletics/sports
- Facility and equipment rental (“non-profit” adults)
- Special events (City-supported, private promoters)

LEVEL 5: HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT

This level includes products that may be purchased and special use of facilities for commercial purposes. Target cost recovery is set at 120% of direct cost and is considered feasible. The categories for these services include fees for:

- Facility and equipment rental (“for profit” or private groups)

This diagram offers a starting point for discussion of how the City of Miami might sort its core services.

Step 4. Understanding the Other Filters

Inherent in sorting programs into the pyramid model using the benefits filter is the realization that other filters come into play. This can result in decisions to place programs in other levels than might first be thought. These filters also follow a continuum, but do not necessarily align with the five levels of the benefits filter. In other words, a continuum may fall totally within the first two levels of the pyramid. These filters can aid in determining which programs are core and which are ancillary. These filters represent a layering effect and should be used to adjust an initial placement in the pyramid.

The Marketing Filter: What is the effect of the program in attracting customers?



The Commitment Filter: What is the intensity of the program? What is the commitment of the participant?



The Trends Filter: Is the program or service tried and true, or is it a fad?



The Obligation Filter: Is it your role to provide? Is it legally mandated?



Other filters may also come into play.

Who You Serve: Are you targeting certain populations?



The Political or Historical Filter: What is out of your control?

This filter does not operate on a continuum: it is a reality, and will dictate from time to time where certain programs fit in the pyramid.

Cost-Recovery Philosophy

Step 5. Determining Current Subsidy/Cost-Recovery Levels

Subsidy and cost recovery are complementary. If a program is subsidized at 75%, it has a 25% cost recovery, and vice-versa. Working through this exercise is more powerful with the focus is where the tax subsidy is used rather than the cost recovery total. When it is complete, you can reverse your thinking to articulate the cost-recovery philosophy, as necessary.

The overall subsidy/cost-recovery level comprises the average of everything in all of the levels taken as a whole. The Parks and Recreation Department should determine what the budgeted subsidy level is for the programs sorted into each level. There may be quite a range in each level, and some programs could overlap with other levels of the pyramid. This will be rectified in the final steps.

Criteria for Establishing Fees and Charges

LOW OR NO COST RECOVERY/HIGH OR FULL SUBSIDY:

This category should apply to most of the Community Benefit level of the pyramid. The following criteria help to determine if a service should be included in the category; remember that a service does not have to meet every criterion:

- The service is equally available to everyone in the community and should benefit everyone.
- Because the service is basic, it is difficult to determine benefits received by one user.
- The level of service attributable to a user is not known.
- Administrative costs of imposing and collecting a fee exceed revenue expected from the fee.

-
- Imposing the fee would place the agency at a serious competitive disadvantage.
 - The service is provided primarily by the public sector.

PARTIAL COST RECOVERY/PARTIAL SUBSIDY:

These categories should apply to the Community/Individual Benefits and Individual/Community Benefits levels of the pyramid. In these categories, users fee levels may reflect particular department policies. They may recover only part of the cost: of services for which the agency desires to manage demand; from users who cannot pay full cost due to economic hardship; and/or if competitive market conditions make full cost recovery undesirable.

The following criteria help to determine if a service should be included in this category; remember that a service does not have to meet every criterion:

- A service benefits the people who participate, but the community at large also benefits.
- The level of service use attributed to a user is known.
- The administrative costs of imposing and collecting the fee are not excessive.
- Imposing a full-cost fee would place the agency at a competitive disadvantage.
- The service may be provided by the public sector, but it may also be provided by the private sector.

FULL COST RECOVERY/NO SUBSIDY

This category should apply to the Mostly Individual Benefit level of the pyramid. User fees in this category should recover the full cost of services that benefit specific groups or individuals, and they should recover the full cost of services provided to people who generate the need for those services.

The following criteria help to determine if a service should be included in this category; remember that a service does not have to meet every criterion:

- The individual or group using the service is the primary beneficiary.
- The level of service use attributed to a user is known.
- Administrative costs of imposing and collecting the fee are not excessive.
- Imposing a full cost fee would not place the agency at a competitive disadvantage.
- The service is usually provided by the private sector, but may also be provided by the public sector.

“PROFIT” CENTER

This category should apply to Highly Individual Benefit level of pyramid. Fees in this category could recover more than full cost for a service in order to subsidize other services provided to the community.

The following criteria help to determine if a service should be included in this category; remember that a service does not have to meet every criterion:

- Individuals or groups benefit from the service, and there is little community benefit.
- The level of service use attributable to a user is known.
- Due to excess demand, allocation of limited services is required.
- The administrative costs of imposing and collecting the fee are not excessive.
- The service is provided at market price by the private sector.

Step 6. Assigning Desired Subsidy/Cost Recovery Levels

Next, the department must identify the optimal level of funding and tax subsidy for each level. This effort must reflect the community; align with the thinking of the policy makers; reflect what the community thinks is reasonable; and reflect the value of the offering. Seeking to reduce dependence on tax dollars, many departments use fees to offset indirect and direct costs. Department subsidy levels vary from minimal dependence on fees to a complete fee-based program that covers all costs. In some respects, departments fund their entire operations independently from the government budget.

Miami's Parks and Recreation Department currently recovers a small percentage of its recreation and parks expenses—including park maintenance costs—through user fees and alternative funding. The U.S. average is typically 25% to 50%. This may reflect the City's high financial commitment and the department's historical mission and fee structure. Efforts to increase cost recovery could enhance the ability to generate revenue while maintaining or increasing the participation needed to generate new dollars.

It is recommended that the department develop both a policy and a plan for cost recovery. Both should take into account the funding philosophies that will guide future pricing and allocation of resources.



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THE TECHNICAL APPENDIX.**

D. Maintenance Standards And Guidelines

Every public park property comes with an implicit promise to maintain the park forever. Although Miami residents would like to see new parks, they also made clear in the master plan survey and the public meetings that maintenance of existing parks is very important to them. Parks that are not well cared for start to attract problem activities, and then neighborhood residents start to avoid those parks—a particularly problematic situation in a city where the total amount of parkland is limited. By developing and implementing explicit guidelines and standards for maintenance of parks and open spaces, the Miami Parks and Recreation Department will provide a systematic way to fulfill its stewardship responsibilities.

Maintenance standards are beneficial for three groups: park managers and employees, the public, and city decision makers. Moreover, the guidelines and standards can only be useful and successful if representatives of all three groups are involved in developing them. The public has expectations about the condition of parks; city decision makers provide funding for maintenance operations; and park managers and employees have to try to meet the expectations with the amount of funding support and training made available to them. The intersection of public expectations, funding, and departmental capacity provides the park system with a way to set priorities and allocate resources for maintenance. Efforts to implement standards can also demonstrate if expectations, funding and capacity are misaligned and lead to necessary adjustments.

Each parks department needs to craft standards that fit its park system and climate, make sure that decision makers know the cost of the standards, and train employees to implement them. Crafting maintenance standards requires up-front cost and time, because it requires employee training and supervision, some attention to compliance, inspections and rewards for achieving standards. But the returns include reduced supervision time and costs and improved staff performance, public image and support, and employee morale. Maintenance standards address the overall objectives of maintenance—cleanliness, safety, usability, health, and user appreciation. Maintenance standards identify:

- The condition (look, appearance, and usability) of a facility or area following satisfactory maintenance work. This should be a condition that is ready to present to the world.
- The tasks required to achieve that desired state.
- The procedures for completion of the tasks.
- The equipment and materials necessary to perform the tasks.
- The time and staff required to complete the tasks.

These simple elements will provide the basis for planning, conducting and evaluating maintenance efforts.¹

The basic series of actions needed to set up and implement a maintenance standard system includes:

- Inventory the features to be maintained.
- Develop work activity guidelines.
- Establish work measurement units and productivity standards.
- Determine levels of service.
- Develop a work program and budget, including unit cost data, the total cost of the work program, and fixed and seasonal work activities.
- Establish a level workload with variable work activities.
- Determine staffing requirements.
- Create a daily work schedule/report, including activity, location, and employee/equipment hours.
- Create clarity by providing only two options: “Meets Standard—Acceptable” or “Does Not Meet Standard—Unacceptable.”
- Use photos, when possible, to show what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

When implemented, the maintenance program should be summarized in monthly and quarterly performance reports that compare planned with actual expenditures, work quantities, and productivity. As the program continues, the inventory and maintenance records should be updated and analyzed and new budgets created based on the data. Problem areas and issues can be identified by activity and location and reports on corrective action required, so that trends and improvements can be tracked. Handheld PDAs or computers are efficient tools for recording inspections and transferring data.²

Examples of different approaches to this challenge—from Denver, San Francisco, Boulder (CO), College Station (TX), and Longmont (CO)—appear at the end of this section.

The Denver standards illustrate the use of both qualitative and quantitative standards, along with a park inspection checklist and schedules for various maintenance activities for a large and diverse park system. The San Francisco manual of maintenance standards was developed in response to a voter mandate and in collaboration with representatives of the public. Somewhat less complex than the Denver standards, it includes photographs to illustrate desir-

¹ Steven W. Smidley, “Maintaining your maintenance staff: creating maintenance standards without the funds doesn’t have to be a chore,” *Parks & Recreation* (January 2004).

² Craig Bonzan and Stan Smalley, “Park Maintenance Standards—Put It in Writing and Pictures,” www.cprs.org/confhandouts2004/N&B-Park_Maint_Standards_Park_Maintenance_Standards_Final.ppt.

able and undesirable conditions. (A nonprofit park advocacy group encourages the public to assess maintenance standards in the San Francisco parks using these standards.) The additional examples provide other, simpler approaches to maintenance standards.

Operational Efficiency/Effectiveness

Operational standards help to define operational excellence through efficiency and effectiveness measures. The standards will provide consistent levels of service and expectations throughout the park system. Baseline measurements for recommended standards are as follows:

- Staff ratios per acre
- Cost per maintained acre
- Performance measures to hold staff accountable and reward performance (PEP's, Balanced Scorecard)
- Utilize Parks and People Partnerships (PPP), as a division, the average score will be at least 3 on a scale of 5 for 80% of parks evaluated.
- Life cycle asset maintenance levels are met at the time periods set for replacement and upgrading

Existing Conditions – Parks Division

The standards recommended are considered "norms" in the industry. At present, the Parks Division cannot fulfill the anticipated level of service for associated parks due to various reasons, the primary being lack of resources. The Division has developed maintenance standards for 2007 to help ensure that parks are maintained to a specified level of consistent service.

Maintenance Levels

By reviewing the service level classifications found in "Park Maintenance Standards," a publication of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and adopting reasonable standards for the Denver Parks and Recreation Department (DPR), a total of three appropriate service levels are proposed as follows:

Level Green. Maintenance applications associated with well-developed park areas with high visitation and use; primarily regional parks (ex: Civic Center, Ruby Hill, Sloan's Lake, City Park, etc.). The goal is to provide a clean, safe, well maintained appearance to these areas. SPECIAL NOTE: The following amenities/areas also will be classified as "Level Green" within ALL parks:

- Restrooms (plumbed)
- Gardens
- Tier "A" athletic fields (from Ballfield Master Plan)
- Playgrounds
- Outdoor pool and public building grounds
- Permitted picnic sites

Level Blue. Maintenance applications associated primarily with; neighborhood parks, parkways, tier B and C athletic fields (ex: Highland Park, Golden Key Park, Alameda Ave., etc.). These areas will generally be neat and orderly in their appearance with some tolerance for effects of wear and tear.

Level Yellow. Maintenance applications associated with undeveloped or remote natural areas or parks. These areas typically will be open parkland areas, natural vegetation areas, wildlife and preserve areas, or areas seldom publicly used except for specific leisure activities such as hiking.

Please see *Appendix-A* for an alphabetized list of all parks/parkways and their assigned service level. Each park and/or natural area should be designated with a specific maintenance level. Following are the specific elements that are to be maintained; definition of the overall qualitative standard; and definition of the quantitative standard for the performance specifications for each maintenance function including the inspection frequency and response priorities.

Maintenance Standards

Qualitative. Qualitative standards describe the activities and outcomes desired for each maintenance level by amenity.

Quantitative. Quantitative standards identify the number of staff hours necessary to complete a maintenance task or function to the level described in the qualitative standards for the same task. Quantitative standards are determined by multiplying the number of units to be maintained by the number of staff hours needed to complete the task one time, multiplied by the frequency with which the unit needs to be maintained. The 2005 and 2006 task tracking data will help determine hours per task for 2007.

Qualitative Maintenance Standards

The qualitative standards listed below describe achievable goals utilizing existing resources, or they describe a goal of the Department. We will identify which parks are maintained at the associated level and indicate what is needed to increase that maintenance level (where applicable). It should be noted that as new parks and lands are acquired for maintenance, it would directly impact the existing level of service within that district and the Department as a whole.

Level Green - Qualitative Maintenance Standards

GENERAL MAINTENANCE DUTIES:

Site inspection. Inspect all park areas and document any noticeable deficiencies (*Appendix B*).

Inspection of Park Lighting. Inspect and report any damage to lights within DPR parks or parkways (XCEL or Facility Services). Lights are to be checked during operating period to report any outages. Graffiti on light poles is to be removed by Parks staff.

Litter Removal (hand). Walk entire site and remove noticeable litter.

Empty Trash Receptacles. Remove and replace liners when receptacle is more than half full or has a strong odor, and replace with a new liner. Area around the trash receptacle is also clear of litter. Clean to remove odor from receptacle.

Empty Dumpsters. Empty dumpsters before they are 100% full. Area around dumpster is clear of litter.

Graffiti Removal/Vandalism Repair. Amenities are free of graffiti and vandalism should be repaired in a timely manner. Acts of vandalism causing a hazard shall be repaired or taken out of service immediately.

Hardscape Maintenance (roads, parking lots, pavilions, plazas, etc.). Surfaces are free of glass, litter, debris, and trip hazards. Painted lines and informational / directional signs are clear, distinct, and readable.

Walkway/Trail Sweeping/Cleaning. Walkways shall be clear of litter, debris, and trip hazards. Designated trails with natural vegetation will have a three-foot (where space is available) recovery zone on both sides of the trail mowed to 4".

Athletic Court Maintenance. Surface is smooth, free of cracks, holes, trip hazards, graffiti, sand/gravel, and debris. Worn painted surfaces do not exceed 20% of total court surface. Fencing materials are secure without holes, bending, or sagging fencing material. Gates and latches are functional. Lights function properly and timers set accordingly. Hand Ball walls and tennis practice walls are free of graffiti and meet painting requirements of court surfaces.

- **Basketball goals.** Backboards are secure, level, free of rust and graffiti. Nets are intact and properly hung. Frayed or worn out nets will be replaced when noticed.
- **Tennis Nets.** Nets are free of tears and holes. Support poles and net cable are properly installed and secure. Nets have center strap and nets are at proper height.

Snow Removal. Any snow accumulation on the park roads, trails, or parking lots one inch or more in depth will be plowed to the channel or down slope side. Any snow removal not accessible by machine will be removed manually including walkways, bridges, stairs, etc. Any ice accumulation will be treated with sand/gravel, or an environmentally safe chemical or both.

DPR PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

11/2006

Picnic Table and Bench Maintenance. Benches and tables are clean and free of debris and litter. Tabletops and benches are smooth and clear of any sharp edges. Grills are kept clean.

Restroom Maintenance. (Generally April 15 – October 31 non-heated) Restrooms are clean and free of any debris or hazards, and all amenities are functional. Paper products are stocked. Restrooms are free of graffiti. Paint is in good condition.

Portolet Maintenance. Portolets are clean and free of any debris or hazards, and all amenities are functional. Paper products are stocked. Free of graffiti.

Drinking Fountains. Fountains are to be kept operational and clean. Plumbing maintenance is to be performed by Facility Services.

Structure Maintenance. Fences and gates perform to design specifications, and are operational and attractive. Fabric, posts, and rails are securely fastened, free of holes, gaps, and rust.

Sign Maintenance. Park identification, traffic, and rules signs are properly secured. Signs are clean, legible, visible, and free of any protrusions.

General Construction (including plan review). District staff is to participate in development, review and/or implementation of construction projects that have an impact on their operation.

Waterway Management. Waterways, lakes, and lake amenities (including islands) are maintained to be safe, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing. Aquatic weed and algae growth will be managed to preserve the intended use of the amenity (i.e., recreation, fishing, wildlife viewing). Shorelines should be kept clean and free of debris. Inlets/outlets are kept free of debris to maintain proper flow and prevent flooding. Storm drains are clean and free of debris. Water inlet height is maintained at 100% of design standard.

Dog Park Maintenance/Dog Bag Dispensers. All dogs within the Off-Leash Dog Parks in the City & County of Denver must display a Denver Dog License regardless of whether the owner is a Denver resident. There shall be a zero tolerance policy for dogs off-leash in park areas other than the designated OLDPA areas. Dog Parks shall be kept free of items left behind including chairs, water dishes, and toys. Doggie bag dispensers installed in Denver Parks shall be self-service refills by park users. Dog Park users are required to refill holes their dogs dig in order to keep the area safe.

Equipment Maintenance. Equipment is maintained and operated according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Training. There will be an ongoing process so staff has the knowledge and resources to provide optimal completion of the maintenance program.

Event & Utility Task Coordination. All events requiring permits in parks will be coordinated through DPR Permit Office to meet the needs of the permittees and minimize the impact on permit sites. Any utility work or contractor's construction to commence in parks or parkways will be coordinated through DPR Inspectors.

PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE:

Rake Fall Zone Material. Move material so it is at a consistent level and has a consistent type of material within the fall zone areas. The area should maintain positive drainage.

Add Fall Zone Material. Add fall zone material to meet ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute Standards. Fill material to be 4-6 inches below top of containment edge per DPR design specifications.

Site Inspection. Visually inspect to identify and remove any hazards and clear off debris from playground walkways.

DPR PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

11/2006

Safety Inspection Documentation. Playground inspection (DPR triplicate) safety forms to be completed and turned in to DPR Safety Office, DPR Facility Services, and file copy for the park district. Any safety hazards noted will be repaired or immediately taken out of service.

Repairs. Equipment repaired to manufacturer's specifications. Remove any graffiti from play equipment.

Sanitize. Equipment to be power washed and sanitized.

Remove Debris. Leaves, sticks, and other debris are to be removed.

Rototill Fall Zone Material. Loose fall zone material inside play area is to be rototilled to reduce compaction within the fall zone area. Rubber surface is free of holes and tears, and secure to base material.

ADA Accessibility. ADA accessible playgrounds are to be maintained to meet ADA playground requirements.

HORTICULTURE MAINTENANCE:

General Overview of Flower Bed, Tree, and Shrub Maintenance. Trees and shrubs are healthy and thriving. Individual plants are free of dead limbs and materials, insect and disease infestations, and invasive species. Trees and shrub beds are mulched such that weed growth is minimized and a lawnmower cannot strike trunks or limbs. Trees with less than a 4-inch caliper will be mulched a minimum of 2-foot radius from the trunk. Trees with greater than a 4-inch caliper will be mulched 2 to 4-foot radius of trunk. Close groupings of trees may be mulched similar to shrub beds (with Superintendent approval). Mulch is not to be placed against the trunk of trees. Mulch should be applied 4 inches deep in other areas.

Planning for Flower Beds. Evaluate, monitor, design, and plan flower beds. Coordinate between district staff, Greenhouse staff, and DPR Planning for best display, plant selection, plant availability, bed selection, location, and maintenance impacts.

Prep Annual Bed Soil. Rototill annual flowerbeds to provide a quality planting area for bedding material. Soil should be rototilled to a depth of 8 to 12 inches.

Planting Annuals. Annuals to be planted according to plant requirements (spacing and depth) and to maximize floral displays. Beds will have a defined edge accomplished by keeping turf mowed and a consistent soil edge border with a 4 to 6-inch trough as the defining edge. Bed planting areas should be raised above surrounding areas to improve drainage and presentation.

Planting Perennials. Perennials to be planted according to plant requirements (spacing and depth) and to maximize floral displays. Beds will have a defined edge accomplished by keeping turf mowed and a consistent soil edge border with a 4 to 6-inch trough as the defining edge. Bed planting areas should be raised above surrounding areas to improve drainage and presentation.

Bed Maintenance. Flowers should be deadheaded or trimmed periodically (determined by variety) to encourage blooming. Plants to be fertilized by plant needs. Fertilizer could be foliar, granular, or liquid applied products. Products will be selected that minimize any harmful affects to the plants. Beds are to be maintained weed free. Perennial plants should be divided and thinned to maintain their vigor. Bed edge should be maintained as described in planting of annuals and perennials.

Add Organics. Supplemental organic material should be applied to the beds in the fall after removal of the flowers (as the ideal time) or early spring where needed before planting.

Remove Annual Flowers. Annual flowers are to be removed after first hard frost in the fall or October 15.

Spade Annual Beds. After all of the annual flowers have been removed, the soil will be spaded/turned over.

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Pre-Emergent Herbicide. Pre-emergent herbicides should be used prior to target weed emergence, and when their use will not impact plant health, and hand weeding can be minimized. Herbicides are to be applied according to label and department requirements.

Post-Emergent Herbicide. Post-emergent herbicides should be used after weed emergence while the weeds are still young, and when their use will not impact plant health and hand weeding can be minimized. Herbicides are to be applied according to label and department requirements.

Shrub Planting. Plant according to DPR design specifications.

Shrub Pruning. Pruning needs will be based on:

- Maintaining plant health by removing dead, damaged, or diseased plant tissue.
- Remove branches that crowd, rub, or droop on other branches.
- Stimulate flowering or fruiting.
- Improve plant appearance by training to a particular shape or size (naturalized growth/form will be the standard).
- Rejuvenate old, overgrown shrubs to restore their shape and vigor. Severe pruning is required for rejuvenation, according to approved DPR guidelines & BMP's.

Shrub Bed Mulching. Using consistent, clean, chipped mulch to a depth of four inches

Ornamental Grasses. Cut back in March to promote new growth.

Winter Watering. Water plant material when there has been less than .5-inch moisture within a four-week period when irrigation systems are inactive.

TURF MANAGEMENT:

General Overview for Turf Management. Turf is healthy and thriving, and covers a minimum of 90% of the surface area, with no more than 15% of the area containing broadleaf weeds. Turf height should be mowed to 3 inches each mowing. Turf area is free of insect and disease infestations. Walkways, driveways, and other hardscape areas are free of grass clippings after mowing.

Irrigation. Denver Parks will adhere to all guidelines set forth by Denver Water regarding the use of water resources, and utilize industry BMP's for irrigation. The current standard is to use 70% of total Denver Park's consumption from 2001. This equates to approximately 24 inches per acre/year. Irrigation is to occur within three days or less per irrigation zone, between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Adjust sprinklers and controllers to avoid runoff or ponding that would be detrimental to plant health, public health (mosquito abatement), conservation efforts, or the enjoyment of the public. No irrigation should occur 24 hours before mowing.

Mowing. Non-athletic turf (excluding natural areas) is mowed to a height of three inches. Walkways and hardscape are to be free of clippings after mowing. Mower blades are to be sharp to avoid tearing grass blades. One third or less of the grass blades should be removed each mowing. Clippings will be left in place with minimal noticeable clipping accumulation.

Trimming/Roundup. Areas not accessible to riding mowers shall be trimmed each mowing if necessary to match the mowing height. Trimming to be reduced as much as possible around objects by using Roundup and/or pre-emergent herbicides (i.e., posts, utility boxes), 6 to 12-inch radius kept clear, and base of shrubs and trees require 24-inch minimum radius clear of turf (bare soil/mulch).

Fertilization. Apply up to three pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. Applications will be based on turf needs for health and to minimize competition from turf weeds. Applications are normally one pound per 1000 square feet per application. Higher rates can be used when using high-grade slow release nitrogen products. Soil testing to be completed to determine soil and plant requirements for optimal growth.

Aeration. Aerate using hollow tine, slicing, deep tine, or shatter tine to promote increased porosity in the soil to increase oxygen, water, and nutrient uptake for plants in turf areas.

Herbicide Application. To be applied in accordance with FIFRA, Colorado Department of Agriculture, and CCD Mayor's Executive order #121. Utilize IPM/BMPs to encourage a strong turf management program and minimize the use of herbicides. General use classified pesticides will be used for turf and ornamental applications. Applications will be made to maximize the use of the herbicide while minimizing the exposure to the public.

Edging. Turf along concrete edges will be removed in cool season turf areas to the edge of the concrete curb or walkway using the appropriate edging equipment. The edge of the concrete surface should be visible after edging.

Overseeding. Areas with noticeable bare spots in a contiguous area (less than 90% cover) shall be overseeded with the appropriate seed mix for consistency and sustainability. Utilize design specifications for appropriate methods. Seeding will follow DPR seeding specifications.

Topdressing. Soil used as topdressing material is to be consistent with existing soil texture where it is to be applied. Organic materials used are to meet DPR's organic material specifications. Topdressing is to be used in non-athletic fields when soil tests or leveling needs determine the application.

Filling Low Spots. Fill low spots with matching existing soil when filling noticeable depressions or holes. Compact to meet surrounding soil compaction.

Mulching. Use riding mowers with mulch kits or decks to mulch leaves and debris in turf areas. Mulching is used to enhance the appearance of the area and return valuable nutrients to the soil. Mulching minimizes unnecessary hauling to the dump.

Sweeping. Utilize a litter lift (turf sweeper) to remove excess litter, grass clippings and other debris. Sweeping is to be limited to areas needing cleanup after a special event or when additional mowings haven't removed clippings adequately.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM MAINTENANCE:

General Overview for Irrigation Systems. Irrigation systems are regularly and continuously functional. Maintain efficient and effective irrigation systems and adhere to current water restrictions, BMP's, and guidelines by Denver Water Department (DWD). Frequency and amount of irrigation is determined by Evapotranspiration (ET) requirements. Irrigation repairs are initiated within 24 hours after a problem is identified.

Activate Irrigation Systems. Activate irrigation systems so systems are slowly charged to avoid water hammer damage.

Irrigation Repairs. Repair components to their original operating level at installation. Replace or repair worn out components when a problem is reported or noticed during inspection. Significant changes should be recorded on as-builts.

Program Controllers. Routinely check and program controllers to meet ET needs by plant type. Program the automatic irrigation systems to occur between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. not more than three nights per week per zone. Application rate should be less than infiltration rate.

Manage Consumption. Districts to monitor and evaluate actual consumption compared to ET and water budgets.

Perform Irrigation Audits. Utilize The Irrigation Association's Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor training to evaluate inefficient irrigation or areas using more than 35 inches per acre/year.

Winterize Systems. Shut down and drain irrigation systems after the first hard frost. Start with systems with backflow devices smaller than 2 inches. Systems are to be shut off at the point-of-connection, and drained from the lowest points in the system. Then, all mainlines and laterals to be cleared of water by using compressed air. Systems should be clear of water to the extent that zero components are damaged due to freeze damage.

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Maintain Irrigation Zone Info. All parks and parkways with irrigation systems shall have a laminated 8-1/2" x 11" irrigation system chart. Existing components identified and labeled shall include: Water meter, stop and waste valve, backflow device and size, mainlines, laterals, valve boxes, drains, quick couplers, and irrigation heads.

Winter Overhaul/Repair. Prioritize repairs/replacement with available resources for winter overhaul and repair.

Pump Station Maintenance. Coordinate pump maintenance start-up and shutdown with DPR's on-call pump contractor and Facility Services. Utilize pump-operating manual for routine operation during the irrigation season.

Read Water Meters. Read and record water meters prior to activation and at fall shut-off.

ATHLETIC FIELD MAINTENANCE: (TIER A FROM MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS)

Drag/Rake/Line Infields. Keep ballfields safe and playable by dragging/raking to insure a level-consistent surface. Routine dragging is completed using a small pickup with a steel mat drag, or a Sand Pro Infield Leveler. Care is taken to avoid lip buildup along infield/outfield transition line.

Relamp Ballfield Lighting. Replace any worn out ballfield lamps.

Fencing Inspections/Repairs. Inspect and repair fencing so that material has the majority of original material integrity and condition. Kick-boards to have appropriate sealant or paint applied so wood is free of paint chips or splintering.

Bleacher Repairs. Hardware is kept intact, seating surface is clean, smooth, and free of any sharp edges or protrusions. Bleachers are secured to concrete pads and firmly anchored to the ground. Pads are clean and clear of any debris.

Mound Repacks/Repairs. Size and slope of mound is to meet infield construction specifications.

Repair Batter Boxes. Boxes are properly installed and lined.

Aerate Infields. Infields are aerated to break up hardpan, improve drainage, incorporate new material, and level playing field.

Infield Lip Reduction. Provide consistent level of surface between skinned infield and outfield turf to provide safe, and the best playability for consistent play.

Scoreboard and Press Box Re-lamps. Replace scoreboard lamps according to the light manufacturer's replacement specifications.

Paint Turf Sports Fields. Paint turf athletic fields lines with a non-toxic paint that does not harm turf. Fields are to be painted according to specifications of permit requirements. Fields with cut lines will be replaced with painted lines.

Install Soccer Goals. Soccer goals to be regulation size according to age and competitive level permitting the soccer fields. Goals will be portable to shift fields each season to avoid undue wear.

Remove/Store Soccer Goals. Goals to be removed and stored on-site in a passive use area. Removal of goals is necessary to reduce un-permitted play and reduce wear to the fields in the off-season.

Layout Athletic Fields. After fields have been identified for play, a plan shall be developed to insure proper lining of fields for user groups.

Overseed Athletic Fields. Fields need to be seeded when less than 10% or more of the field is without turf cover. Football fields are to be overseeded with a blend of three improved turf-type bluegrass cultivars at a rate of 1.5 lbs per 1000 square feet. Soccer fields should also be overseeded with bluegrass at the same rates.

Aerate Athletic Fields. Aerate fields to reduce compaction and improve water and nutrient uptake by using a combination of hollow core aerating, slicing, shatter tine aeration, or deep tine aeration. A minimum of two passes (aggressive aeration) in perpendicular directions shall

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be performed each aeration event. When core aerating, a steel mat shall be dragged during core aeration to help break up cores, level low spots, and return loose soil into the aeration holes. Turf should be actively growing when aggressive aeration is practiced.

Clean Dugouts/Press Boxes. Surfaces are free of glass, litter, debris, and trip hazards.

Level Green - Quantitative Maintenance Standards

Overview. Level Green areas will receive a high level of intensive, frequent, regular routine maintenance. Regular monitoring and adjustments shall be utilized to keep the area highly appealing while minimizing hazards. Task assignments may include extensive work to upgrade conditions that would surpass other service level areas. Please see *Appendix C* for frequency of maintenance tasks for Level Green areas.

General Maintenance. Areas are visually inspected daily for normal maintenance needs. Litter is removed on a daily basis. Trash receptacles are emptied when they are half full or odor is noticeable. Graffiti and vandalism issues are handled promptly. Restrooms are checked and cleaned/stocked two times a day (once in the morning thoroughly, and inspected and cleaned/stocked as needed in the afternoon). Coals from grills are emptied.

Playground Maintenance. Staff will provide daily general inspections to determine obvious safety or maintenance issues. Fall zone material is routinely removed from adjacent hardscape areas and returned to play area.

Horticulture Maintenance. Plants are maintained frequently so plant material is kept healthy, safe, and well manicured. Many maintenance tasks require a horticulturist and/or a skilled assistant for proper execution. Seasonal bed areas are weeded one to two times per week to minimize noticeable weeds. Shrubs are pruned on a three-year cycle (crossing, rubbing, crowded branches); broken or diseased branches or stems are removed within a reasonable amount of time.

Turf Management.

- Mow turf to maximum recommended height for the specific turf variety at least once weekly during growing season.
- Aerate as required but not less than twice each year or 3 times per year in high traffic areas.
- Edge walkways, borders, fences and other appropriate areas once a month during the growing season.
- Install sod or seed to maintain uniform turf coverage of 90%.
- Broadleaf weeds should cover no more than 15% of the turf consistent with established IPM threshold.
- Inspect thatch layer regularly and modify when more than ½-inch in depth as needed.
- Remove grass clippings only if coverage is unsightly or impacts health of the turf. Re-mowing and distributing is preferable to removal of clippings.
- Test soil as needed, and apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements (2-3 times during growing season).
- Inspect regularly for insects, diseases and rodents and respond to outbreaks according to IPM threshold standards.

Irrigation System Maintenance. Irrigation systems are regularly and continuously functional to meet plant requirements for Level Green service. Maintain efficient and effective irrigation systems and adhere to current water restrictions, BMP's, and guidelines by DWD. Frequency and amount of irrigation is determined by ET requirements. Irrigation repairs are initiated within 24 hours after a problem is reported.

Athletic Field Maintenance. Tier A fields will be maintained to meet the safety and playability requirements required by field usage. 700 Hours is the recommended maximum number of permitted hours per year for baseball/softball fields. 500 Hours is the recommended maximum number of hours per year (20 hrs/week) for soccer/football/multi-purpose athletic fields.

Level Blue - Qualitative Maintenance Standards

Overview. Areas generally are neat and orderly in appearance with some tolerance for the effects of wear and tear. Maintenance is of moderate to lower intensity and frequency that Level Green areas. Emphasis is on controlling deterioration and adapting the site to routine activities. Vegetation is managed to accommodate the activities. Typically these sites will be parkways, neighborhood parks, and other lower use areas.

General Maintenance. Areas are generally clean and litter free, and maintained to minimize hazards.

Playground Maintenance. See Level Green service levels.

Horticulture Maintenance. These areas may or may not include seasonal plantings. Trees and shrubs are healthy and thriving. Dead limbs and branches, materials, insect and disease infestations, and invasive species are removed or addressed as appropriate. Trees and shrub beds are mulched so that weeds cannot grow and a mower cannot strike trunks or limbs. Weeds and debris acceptable within limits between routine service.

Turf Management. Turf is kept within acceptable turf height (3 to 4 inches) or as use indicates. Turf is fertilized to maintain acceptable level of color and density. Clippings may be noticeable (but not detrimental to turf health) between mowings. Turf is healthy and thriving and covers a minimum of 80% of the surface area, with no more than 20% of the area containing broadleaf weeds. Turf area has minor insect and disease infestations. Walkways, driveways, and other hardscape areas are free of grass clippings after mowing.

Irrigation System Maintenance. Systems are maintained and adjusted to meet moderate level of plant care.

Athletic Field Maintenance. Tier B & C fields are maintained to the Level Blue Turf Management standards. Skinned infields are dragged based on permitted hours of fields.

Level Blue - Quantitative Maintenance Standard

Please see *Appendix C* for frequencies.

Overview. Level Blue areas will receive a moderate level of regular routine maintenance with regular monitoring, and adjustments shall be utilized to keep the area generally appealing while minimizing hazards.

General Maintenance. Litter is removed two times per week. Trash receptacles are emptied two times per week or before receptacles are 80% full. Graffiti and vandalism issues are handled promptly after notification.

Playground Maintenance. See Level Green service levels.

Horticulture Maintenance. Plants are maintained less frequently than Level Green areas, but plant material is still kept healthy, and manicured. Many maintenance tasks require a horticulturist and/or a skilled assistant for proper execution but with less frequency. Shrubs are

pruned on a five-year cycle (crossing, rubbing, crowded branches); broken or diseased branches or stems are removed within a reasonable amount of time.

Turf Management.

- Mow turf to maximum recommended height for the specific turf variety at least three times per month during the growing season.
- Aerate as required but not less than once each year.
- Edge walkways, borders, fences and other appropriate areas at least two times during the growing season (March-October).
- Install sod or seed to maintain uniform turf coverage of 80%.
- Weeds should cover no more than 20% of the turf surface.
- Apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements, up to twice each year.
- Inspect regularly for insects, diseases and rodents and respond to outbreaks according to IPM threshold standards within 10 days.

Irrigation Management. Response to broken components is within 48 hours, and 24 hours for wasteful water use.

Athletic Field Maintenance. Tier B and Tier C fields are maintained to Level Blue turf management standards. Fields are dragged and lined based on permitted hours. Fields are maintained to provide safe play, but for non-competitive games.

Level Yellow - Qualitative Maintenance Standards

Grass and Open Field Maintenance. Grass and native plant material is healthy and thriving and left in a natural state.

Tree and Shrub Maintenance. Trees and shrubs are healthy and thriving and left in a natural state.

Litter Control. Ground is usually free of litter and debris after complaints.

Hardscape Maintenance. Surfaces are free of glass, litter, debris, and trip hazards after complaints.

Level Yellow - Quantitative Maintenance Standard

Overview. Areas should be left in a natural state. Unless legal requirements dictate, areas are not mowed, trimmed, fertilized, or irrigated except to provide optimal plant establishment and maintenance. Weed control limited to legal requirements for eradication of noxious plants or for establishment of desirable plants. Maintenance normally consists of restoring natural or native plantings and following recommended practices of maintenance after establishment. Vegetation retains a healthy and natural appearance. Weeds and debris are removed as required or requested. Litter removal is scheduled monthly, and receptacles are emptied per Level Blue service.

DENVER DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

APPENDIX - A

DPR PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS 2007
SERVICE LEVELS

DISTRICT	LOC. CODES	NAME	ADDRESS	LEVEL GREEN	LEVEL BLUE	LEVEL YELLOW
NORTHEAST						
LEVEL GREEN SERVICE AREAS						
NORTHEAST	L10	LOWRY SPORTS COMPLEX PARK	LOWRY BLVD PKWY & UINTA WAY	X		
LEVEL BLUE SERVICE AREAS						
NORTHEAST	509	ANDREWS DR. PARKWAY	ANDREWS DR PEORIA ST TO 46TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	624	BEZOFF (BEN) PARK	EXPOSITION AV & FULTON ST		X	
NORTHEAST	510	CHAMBERS RD. PARKWAY	CHAMBERS RD I-70 TO 56TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	539	CRESCENT PARK			X	
NORTHEAST	525	E. 38TH AVE. PARKWAY	38TH AV HIMALAYA PKWY TO PICCADILLY RD		X	
NORTHEAST	503	E. 45TH AVE. PARKWAY	45TH AV HAVANA ST TO LIMA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	515	E. 46TH AVE. -ARKWAY	46TH AV ANDREWS DR TO CHAMBERS RD		X	
NORTHEAST	504	E. 47TH AVE. PARKWAY	47TH AV HAVANA ST TO KINGSTON ST		X	
NORTHEAST	505	E. 49TH AVE. PARKWAY	49TH AV NOME ST TO PEORIA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	506	E. 51ST AVE. PARKWAY	51ST AV HAVANA ST TO NOME ST		X	
NORTHEAST	507	E. 51ST AVE. PARKWAY	51ST AV UVALDA ST TO DURHAM CT		X	
NORTHEAST	508	E. 53RD AVE. PARKWAY	53RD AV DURHAM CT TO CHAMBERS RD		X	
NORTHEAST	546	E. 56TH AVE. PARKWAY	56TH AV PEORIA ST TO CHAMBERS RD		X	
NORTHEAST	L01	E. 5TH AVE. PARKWAY	5TH AV QUEBEC ST TO LOWRY REC CTR GROUNDS		X	
NORTHEAST	L02	E. 6TH AVE. PARKWAY	6TH AV QUEBEC ST PKWY TO UINTA WAY		X	
NORTHEAST	L04	E. ALAMEDA AVE. BIKEWAY /TRAIL	ALAMEDA AV MONACO ST TO GALENA ST		X	
NORTHEAST		E. ALAMEDA AVE. PARKWAY	ALAMEDA AV MONACO ST TO GALENA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	L05	E. BAYAUD AVE. PARKWAY	BAYAUD AV QUEBEC ST PKWY TO FAIRMONT DR PKWY		X	
NORTHEAST	536	ELMENDORF PARK	ELMENDORF PL & SCRANTON ST		X	
NORTHEAST	L06	FAIRMONT DR. PARKWAY	FAIRMONT DR ALAMEDA AV TO LOWRY BLVD		X	
NORTHEAST	537	FALCON PARK	MAXWELL PL & XANADU ST		X	
NORTHEAST	538	FORD (BARNEY) PARK	MAXWELL ST & SABLE ST		X	
NORTHEAST	L16	FRED THOMAS PARK	26TH AV & QUEBEC ST		X	
NORTHEAST	549	GREEN VALLEY WEST RANCH PARK	45TH AV & ARGONNE		X	
NORTHEAST	545	HAVANA ST. PARKWAY	HAVANA ST I-70 TO 56TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	555	HEADQUARTERS FACILITY	10450 SMITH RD		X	
NORTHEAST	L99	HEADQUARTERS FACILITY	8540 E LOWRY BLVD		X	
NORTHEAST	626	HIGHLINE CANAL BIKEWAY /TRAIL	HIGHLINE CANAL COLORADO BLVD TO HAVANA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	501	HIGHLINE CANAL BIKEWAY/TRAIL	HIGHLINE CANAL TOWER RD TO N CITY LIMITS		X	
NORTHEAST	520	HIMALAYA PARKWAY	HIMALAYA PKWY HIGHLINE CANAL TO 42ND AV		X	
NORTHEAST	L09	LOWRY BLVD. PARKWAY	LOWRY BLVD QUEBEC ST TO DAYTON ST		X	
NORTHEAST	519	MARRAMA PARK	43RD AV & CEYLON CT		X	
NORTHEAST	511	MAXWELL PL. PARKWAY	MAXWELL PL UVALDA ST TO SABLE ST		X	
NORTHEAST	L11	MCNICHOLS PARK	17TH AV & SYRACUSE ST		X	
NORTHEAST	541	MONTBELLO CENTRAL PARK	ANDREWS DR & CROWN BLVD		X	
NORTHEAST	535	MONTBELLO CIVIC CENTER PARK	ALBROOK DR & TULSA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	L12	MONTCLAIR REC CENTER GROUNDS	729 ULSTER		X	
NORTHEAST	L13	MONTCLAIR WATER RESERVOIR PARK	QUEBEC ST 11TH AV TO 12TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	512	NOME ST. PARKWAY	NOME ST 49TH AV TO 51ST AV		X	
NORTHEAST	502	NURSERY FACILITY	10450 SMITH RD		X	
NORTHEAST	544	PEORIA ST. PARKWAY	PEORIA ST TO I-70 TO 56TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	L14	QUEBEC ST. PARKWAY	QUEBEC ST ALAMEDA AV TO 6TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	L15	RAMPART WAY ISLANDS	RAMPART WAY LOWRY BLVD TO ACADEMY BLVD		X	
NORTHEAST		RED CROSS FACILITY	4TH AV & RED CROSS WAY		X	
NORTHEAST	534	SILVERMAN (MELVIN F) PARK	ANDREWS DR & TITAN CT		X	
NORTHEAST	513	TULSA CT. PARKWAY	TULSA CT ALBROOK DR TO ANDREWS DR		X	
NORTHEAST	514	UVALDA ST. PARKWAY	UVALDA ST 51ST AV TO 56TH AV		X	
NORTHEAST	L18	VERBENA PARK	11TH AV & VERBENA ST		X	
NORTHEAST	540	VILLAGE PLACE PARK	ANAHEIM CT & ALBROOK DR		X	
NORTHEAST	L20	YOSEMITE ST. PARKWAY	YOSEMITE ST 11TH AV TO LOWRY BLVD		X	
LEVEL YELLOW SERVICE AREAS						
NORTHEAST	524	UNNAMED 41ST & ENSENADA OPEN SPACE	41ST AV & ENSENSADA ST			
NORTHEAST	522	UNNAMED 42ND & LISBON OPEN SPACE	42ND AV & LISBON ST			
NORTHEAST	523	UNNAMED 42ND & PERTH OPEN SPACE	42ND AV & PERTH CIRCLE			
NORTHEAST	L17	UNNAMED 6TH AVE. & SYRACUSE OPEN SPACE	6TH AV & SYRACUSE ST			
NORTHEAST	517	BLUFF LAKE OPEN SPACE	HAVANA AT 32ND AV			
NORTHEAST	521	FIRST CREEK OPEN SPACE	FIRST CREEK 48TH AV & PICCADILLY RD			
NORTHEAST		GREAT LAWN DRAINAGE	LOWRY BLVD PKWY & YOSEMITE ST PKWY	NOT DPR		
NORTHEAST	L07	GREAT LAWN PARK	LOWRY BLVD PKWY & YOSEMITE ST PKWY			
NORTHEAST	550	GREEN VALLEY EAST RANCH PARK	47TH AV & JEBEL			
NORTHEAST	L08	KELLY OPEN SPACE	11TH AV & UINTA WAY			
NORTHEAST	L19	WESTERLY CREEK PARK				
NORTHEAST		WESTERLY CREEK PATH	YOSEMITE ST 11TH AV TO LOWRY BLVD	NOT DPR		
NORTHEAST	516	PARKFIELD OPEN SPACE	DIA GATEWAY CHAMBERS N OF I-70			
NORTHEAST	518	SAND CREEK BIKEWAY/TRAIL	PEORIA ST TO CITY LIMITS			

APPENDIX - C

PARK MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES - 2007												
Each Square Represents One Week												
TASK DESCRIPTION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
	Refer to Level green frequency when level blue data is blank											
	Times Per Week		Times Per Month		Times Per Year		Times Per Week		Times Per Month		Times Per Year	
	As Needed	Times Per Week	As Needed	Times Per Month	As Needed	Times Per Year	As Needed	Times Per Week	As Needed	Times Per Month	As Needed	Times Per Year
	LEVEL GREEN	LEVEL BLUE	COMMENTS									
Turf Management:												
Irrigate												
Mowing												
Trimming/Roundup												
Fertilizer Application												
Aeration												
Post-emergent Herbicide Application												
Pre-emergent Herbicide Application												
Edging												
Overseeding												
Topdressing												
Filling Low Spots with Soil												
Mulching												
Sweeping												
Irrigation System Maintenance:												
Activate irrigation systems												
Irrigation system repairs												
Program controllers												
Manage consumption												
Perform irrigation system audits												
Winterize irrigation systems												
Irrigation zone information												
Winter overhaul/repair												
Pump station maintenance												
Read water meters												

**SAN FRANCISCO
PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS:
THE MANUAL
AND
*EVALUATION FORM***

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

In November 2003, San Francisco voters passed Proposition C that required the Recreation and Park Department (“Rec & Park” or “Department”) to develop maintenance standards for parks in the City and County of San Francisco (“City”). These standards define the desired conditions of park features and were developed by Rec & Park and the Controller’s Office with the assistance of park advocates and the general public. (See Appendix A – Acknowledgments.) These standards will be used to assess and evaluate conditions in San Francisco parks in all 11 supervisorial districts.

What are the objectives of having standards?

- Communicate condition of the park system to Rec & Park management and staff, elected officials, and the public
- Develop and communicate Rec & Park’s goals regarding maintenance standards
- Establish link between park conditions and Department’s resources through systematic park evaluations
- Assist Rec & Park staff in scheduling and prioritizing maintenance functions and resources
- Improve park conditions by efficient resource allocation and improved parks maintenance

What does this Manual do?

In an effort to deliver more efficient and effective City services, this manual sets forth standards to enable Rec & Park staff, the Controller’s Office, and City residents to assess park conditions and the Department’s ability to deliver results. The standards provide a framework for periodically inspecting and evaluating the condition of the tangible features of each park relative to the established standards. Over time, the data collected by Rec & Park staff will help the Department and City officials to make more informed resource allocation decisions.

In order to fairly and consistently evaluate the conditions of the City’s parks, the City needs to define what the expected conditions of the parks should be. Currently, the City lacks reliable, measurable, and objective information on park conditions. This parks standards manual represents the City’s first attempt to clearly delineate quality standards for all the City’s parks. Some other jurisdictions have already implemented standards and evaluations and the City is learning from their best practices in creating this standards manual. (See Appendix B – Methodology.)

The goal of a standards manual is to improve consistency and minimize subjectivity when assessing park conditions. This manual will allow communication and comparison of park conditions throughout the City based on a uniform model. This standards manual will also make possible reporting on individual, regional, and citywide park conditions, as well as on specific park features. In addition, this manual will allow the Department to develop new department-wide performance measures and objectives in the future.

How does this Manual work?

The Department has numerous properties that it maintains. Initially, the Department will evaluate four property types that the Department owns as listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Property Types to be Inspected with the San Francisco Park Maintenance Standards

Property Type	Definition
Mini Park	A park typically 0.5 acre or smaller, serving a neighborhood or part of a neighborhood; often a landscaped area with few facilities such as a community garden, a children’s play area, or outdoor performance space.
Civic Plaza or Square	An area that is typically designated to attract citywide and regional visitors; a tourist destination; often entrenched in local culture and history; a gathering place for civic action, processions, and cultural events; could have a landscaped area, a children’s play area, a decorative fountain, an underground garage, a concession, or public art.
Neighborhood Park or Playground	A park typically varying in size from 0.5 acre to 30 acres, serving a neighborhood or several neighborhoods; could be a developed park or playground with a range of facilities, such as a recreation center, clubhouse or swimming pool, or undeveloped open space.
Regional Park	A park typically greater than 30 acres in size with a variety of park landscapes, facilities and programs for city residents, regional visitors, and tourists, or any park serving as a tourist destination of historical, cultural or architectural significance.

Source: Recreation and Park Department Management Information System Division - data dictionary as of 6/21/04.

Park maintenance standards are classified among three categories: Landscaped and Hardscaped Areas, Recreational Areas, and Amenities and Structures.¹ Within each category, a series of park features is evaluated. For example, the Landscaped and Hardscaped Areas category includes five features: (1) lawns, (2) ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers, (3) trees, (4) hardscapes and trails, and (5) open space. Each park feature is evaluated using separate elements that apply to that specific feature. For example, lawns are evaluated on 7 elements: (1) cleanliness, (2) color, (3) density and spots, (4) drainage/flooded areas, (5) edged, (6) height/mowed, and (7) holes. The manual specifically describes and defines the quality standard(s) for each particular feature. (See Table 2 below.)

¹ With the exception of restrooms, interior of recreational facilities are excluded from the park evaluation process. Irrigation systems and natural areas are also excluded from the evaluations at this time.

Table 2. Park Features Covered in the Park Maintenance Standards Manual

Landscaped and Hardscaped Areas	Recreational Areas*	Amenities and Structures
1. Lawns	6. Turf Athletic Fields (E.g., Soccer pitches)	10. Restrooms
2. Ornamental Gardens, Shrubs, and Ground Covers	7. Outdoor Athletic Courts (E.g., Tennis & Basketball Courts)	11. Parking Lots & Roads
3. Trees	8. Children’s Play Areas	12. Waste and Recycling Receptacles
4. Hardscapes and Trails	9. Dog Play Areas	13. Benches, Tables, and Grills
5. Open Space		14. Amenities & Structures

(*Excludes recreational programs.)

The evaluation form contained in this manual should be filled out to evaluate each park. The evaluation form contains simple “yes” or “no” questions on whether each element meets the standards or not. For example, the “height/mowed” standard for lawns asks whether lawns are mowed and kept at a uniform height of less than ankle height – yes or no. Pictures are included to illustrate acceptable and unacceptable standards. Pictures may not cover all elements. See Table 3 below for a description of the elements under each feature.

Table 3 – Elements of Park Features (PF) Included in the Park Maintenance Standards Manual

Category	Park feature	Elements examined under each park feature
A. Landscaped and Hardscaped Areas		
1.	Lawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness • Edged • Color • Height/mowed • Density and spots • Holes • Drainage/ flooded area
2.	Ornamental Gardens, Shrubs, and Ground Covers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness • Pruned • Plant health • Weediness
3.	Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limbs • Plant health • Vines
4.	Hardscapes and Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness • Surface quality • Drainage/flooded area • Weediness • Graffiti
5.	Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness

Category	Park feature	Elements examined under each park feature
B. Recreational Areas		
6.	Turf Athletic Fields (E.g., ball fields, soccer pitches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Color Drainage/flooded area Fencing Height/mowed Holes Functionality of structures Graffiti
7.	Outdoor Athletic Courts (E.g., tennis and basketball courts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Drainage/ flooded area Fencing Functionality of structures Graffiti Painting/stripping Surface quality
8.	Children’s Play Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Fencing Functionality of equipment Graffiti Integrity of equipment Painting Signage Surface quality
9.	Dog Play Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bag dispenser Cleanliness Drainage/ flooded area Height/ mowed Signage Surface quality Waste Receptacles
C. Amenities and Structures		
10.	Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Graffiti Functionality of structures Lighting Odor Painting Signage Supply inventory Waste receptacles
11.	Parking Lots and Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA parking spaces Cleanliness Curbs Drainage/ flooded areas Graffiti Painting/ striping Signage Surface quality
12.	Waste and Recycling Receptacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness of receptacles Fullness Painting Structural integrity and functionality
13.	Benches, Tables, and Grills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Graffiti Painting Structural integrity and functionality
14.	Amenities & Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior of buildings Drinking fountains Fencing Gates / locks Retaining walls Signage Stairways

After a park has been evaluated, the park will have an aggregate score for the number of standards that it meets. For example, if one tallies all the elements applicable to a park and the park met the standard for 90% of the elements, the park would then receive a score of 90%. Additionally, results of different park features can be compared across park sites, for example, Union Square met the standard for lawns, but Franklin Square did not. The evaluation form includes a comments area to allow evaluators to explain why standards may not have been met, for example, “80% of the turf area was not fairly green” due to broken irrigation system. On a citywide level, evaluation results could tell us about specific park features and whether standards were met across the City. For example, the results could be aggregated to tell what percentage of children’s play areas met park standards across the City and/or by supervisorial districts. This information could be used for many different purposes such as identifying maintenance problems, allocating resources, and improving park conditions.

What are the limits and caveats of this Manual?

A few points should be noted about this standards manual and park evaluation form. First, the results of the park evaluations using this manual provide a general index of park conditions. The elements that are used to rate park features are important ones as identified by the Department and the public at large. This manual purposefully avoids technical or scientific standards that are difficult to gauge. For example, in ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers, several standards could have been developed regarding specific plant health and shape. Measuring for compliance with these standards would be extremely time-consuming and in the end are not necessarily visible to the untrained eye. As a result, the elements chosen relate to items that would be discernable by an average citizen and would affect their general park experience.

The park features in this manual are reflective of the basic infrastructure of a San Francisco park. Although not all features will be present at each park, each feature constitutes a large part of a park’s maintenance and labor costs. As a result, the periodic evaluation of these primary features provides an overall index of the park’s condition.

Second, the evaluation measures the condition of existing facilities compared to the developed standards. It does not define what should be provided or the lack of certain amenities. Aesthetic principles of landscape design and/or other park design issues are not addressed. While the Department may recognize whether the aesthetics are favorable or unfavorable, it is beyond the scope of these standards. For example, a park might meet all quality standards for its existing facilities and features even though one’s park experience would be enhanced through the addition of an ornamental garden or if the evaluator feels the ornamental garden may benefit from more diverse plant life. This standards manual therefore only defines the minimum expected conditions of the existing facilities.

Lastly, in an effort to make the scoring as reliable and objective as possible, the standards are designed in such a manner that the majority of people would come up with the same conclusions about whether a park meets certain quality standards. It is the responsibility of the Recreation and Park Department to regularly evaluate each park using the established standards and to train its staff on the standards.

Who is the intended audience of this Manual?

- Recreation and Park Department staff
- Controller's Office
- Elected Officials
- Park Advocates
- General Public

Conclusion

The intent of this standards manual and evaluation form is to collect information about park conditions and to increase users' satisfaction with their park experience. City officials and the Recreation and Park Department look forward to the results of these regular park assessments and seek to use these results to continue to improve the delivery of services to the residents of San Francisco. For further information, please visit the Recreation and Park website at http://www.sfgov.org/site/recpark_index.asp.

Thank you.

NB: THIS IS PAGE 6. PAGE 7 OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT IS BLANK.

A. LANDSCAPED AND HARDSCAPED AREAS

1. LAWNS

PASS



FAIL



2. ORNAMENTAL GARDENS, SHRUBS, AND GROUND COVERS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: All planted areas, including ornamental gardens, perennial and annual beds, shrubs, and ground covers. Ornamental gardens or planted areas located in children’s play areas or other areas of the park are covered here.

Note: Community gardens, planted areas primarily maintained by the public and devoted to the community’s cooperative agricultural or horticultural practices, are not evaluated.

PF 2: Ornamental Gardens, Shrubs, and Ground Covers (If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
2.1	Cleanliness	2.1.a Ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers are free of litter. 2.1.b Ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers are free of debris. Notes: The standard is met if no more than 10 pieces of litter or debris, lightly scattered, are visible in a 25’ by 25’ planted area or along a 100’ line. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs and rocks. Leaves are excluded. The standard 2.1.a is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present. Cleanliness under trees that are part of lawns area is covered in the lawns standard 1.1.a. Cleanliness under trees that are part of ornamental gardens or shrubby/planted areas is covered in standard 2.1.a.	2.1.a
2.2	Plant health	90% or more of each ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers shows no signs of death or damage (e.g., broken or uprooted shrubs and flowers).	2.1.b
2.3	Pruned	100% of ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers has appropriate size and shape for their location. Note: The size and shape should be common to species and should <u>not</u> impede pathway nor block sight lines and landmarks, unless they are deliberately designated barriers.	
2.4	Weediness	90% or more of each ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers is free of weeds and 100% free of vines overtaking ornamental plantings.	
Comments:			
Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.			

3. TREES

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Trees surrounding paved paths, play areas, sitting areas, athletic fields, and open spaces –excluding natural areas. (See definition of natural areas in the open space feature, page 10.)

Notes: Litter under trees is covered in standard 1.1.a (cleanliness-litter of lawns). Cleanliness of area under trees that are located in an ornamental garden or shrubbery area is covered in standard 2.1.

PF 3: Trees

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
3.1	Limbs	No broken or hanging limbs greater than four (4) inches in diameter are visible or impede passage to pedestrians. Notes: For mini parks, neighborhood parks and civic plazas or squares, the standard is met if no broken or hanging limbs greater than four (4) inches in diameter are visible.	
3.2	Plant health	For regional parks, the standard is met if no more than five (5) broken or hanging limbs are visible. All trees are alive and 90% of trees are free of damage (e.g., dead limbs, brown foliage, damaged bark).	
3.3	Vines	Note: With the exception of open spaces including natural areas, the standard is not met if any tree is dead. Vines in trees do not exceed five (5) feet in height from the base of the tree and are not in the canopy of the tree.	
Comments:			
<p>Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.</p>			

4. HARDSCAPES AND TRAILS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Hardscapes such as paths, sidewalks and surfaces of plazas as well as non-paved surfaces such as trails.

Note: These standards cover the hardscaped areas between two park destinations (e.g., play area and picnic area), sidewalks surrounding parks, and yellow (i.e., caution tape) or red marked areas.

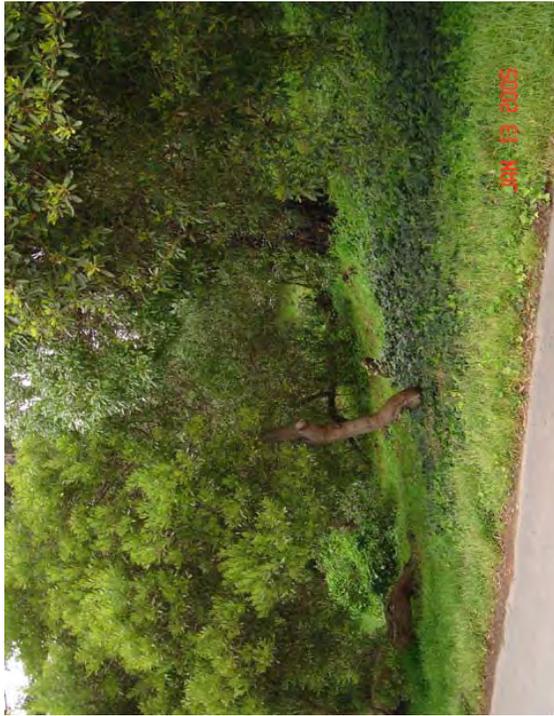
PF 4: Hardscapes and Trails

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

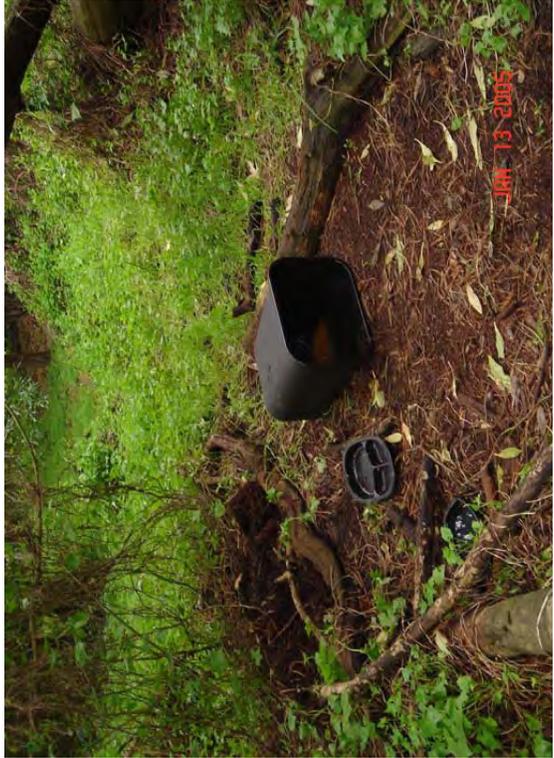
No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
4.1	Cleanliness	<p>4.1.a Hardscapes are free of litter and debris. The surface of circulation areas adjacent to play areas is free of playground sand, where applicable.</p> <p>4.1.b Trails are free of litter and debris.</p> <p>Notes: The standards are met only if all of the following three conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than five (5) pieces of litter are lightly scattered in any 25' by 25' area or along a 100' line; • No debris obstructs passage; and • No needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present. <p>Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs and rocks that impede passage. Leaves are excluded.</p>	<p>4.1.a</p> <p>4.1.b</p>
4.2	Drainage/flooded area	At least 95% of observed hardscape area is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation.	
4.3	Graffiti	<p>Note: Standard applies all year. Hardscape area is free of graffiti.</p>	
4.4	Surface quality	<p>Note: Recreation and Park Department's policy is no tolerance of graffiti. If graffiti is observed, it must be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours. Paved surface is free of irregularities in grade greater than half an inch (0.5") and is free of cracks and holes greater than two (2") inches in diameter and depth.</p>	
4.5	Weediness	At least 95% of paved surfaces are free of weeds.	
Comments:		This standard does <u>not</u> refer to edging or grass growth over adjoining hardscape. Edging is addressed under lawns (standard 1.5).	
<p>Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.</p>			

5. OPEN SPACE

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Any open space, which is an undeveloped park area that may have a planted area not actively maintained by the department. Open space is neither an actively used park land nor a designated natural area, such as right of way patches or unimproved lots.

Notes: This park feature excludes natural resource areas, which are areas deemed to contain remnants of San Francisco's historic landscape including a significant population of rare, endangered or native California flora and fauna. Open space-natural areas are not included in this standards manual, and therefore, are not inspected. Department management decided that natural areas are excluded from park evaluations at this time.

PF 5: Open Space

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
5.1	Cleanliness	From a 10 feet distance (i.e., from nearest path), open space is free of litter and debris. Notes: In open space, the standard is met if no more than 15 pieces of litter are visible in a 50' by 50' area or along a 200' line. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include large limbs. The standard is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present.	
Comments:			

Check if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.

B. RECREATIONAL AREAS

6. TURF ATHLETIC FIELDS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Natural or artificial turf areas used for sports, such as baseball diamonds and soccer pitches.

Note: Standards 6.2 (color) and 6.7 (height/mowed) do not apply to artificial turf fields.

PF 6: Turf Athletic Fields

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Please, indicate number of athletic field and type. (Use map if available.)			
			#	#	#	#
6.1	Cleanliness	Turf athletic fields are free of litter and debris. Notes: The standard is met if no more than 15 pieces of litter or debris, lightly scattered, are visible in a 100' by 100' area. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances that impede playing. Examples of debris include limbs, rocks, and any other item that impedes playing. The standard is not met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present.				
6.2	Color	Turf athletic fields are uniformly green.				
6.3	Drainage/flooded area	Turf athletic field is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation. Notes: Standard applies all year. Per department's Best Practice for Field Saturation, when field is saturated due to rain, field is to be closed.				
6.4	Fencing	Fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages along the base.				
6.5	Functionality of structures	90% of available sport-related and support structures are operational for playing or observing sports. Notes: Examples of sport-related and support structures include backstops, goal posts, dugouts, team benches, spectator stands, and lighting system. This standard focuses on functionality, not attractiveness of structures.				
6.6	Graffiti	Turf athletic fields and their sport-related and support structures are free of graffiti.				
6.7	Height/mowed	Note: Graffiti on benches are covered under benches, tables, and grills standards. Turf is mowed and kept at a uniform height of less than ankle height.				
6.8	Holes	Noticeable from a 10 feet distance, turf field is free of holes. Notes: Holes greater than six (6) inches (in diameter and/or depth) that are observed during the inspection process should be reported so they can be filled. The standard is not met if there are multiple holes or mounds caused by any animal (e.g., gophers, moles), even if holes are less than six (6) inches in diameter and/or depth.				

Comments:

Check if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.

7. OUTDOOR ATHLETIC COURTS (E.G., TENNIS/ BASKETBALL COURTS)

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Paved surfaces designed for playing sports including tennis, basketball, volleyball, and skateboarding.

PF 7: Outdoor Athletic Courts

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Please, indicate No. of court and type. (Use map if available.)					Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
			#	#	#	#	#	
7.1	Cleanliness	<p>Court surface is free of litter and debris.</p> <p>Notes: At all parks, the standard is met if less than five (5) pieces of litter or debris, lightly scattered, are visible across a 25' by 25' area or along a 100' line. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances that impede playing. Examples of debris include limbs, rocks, and any other item that impedes playing. The standard is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present.</p> <p>At least 95% of observed court surface is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation.</p> <p>Note: Standard applies all year.</p>						
7.2	Drainage/ Flooded area	<p>Fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages along the base.</p>						
7.3	Fencing	<p>90% of available sport-related and support structures are operational for playing or observing sports.</p> <p>Notes: Examples of sport-related and support structures include backstops, goal posts, nets, basketball rims, dugouts, team benches, spectator stands, and lighting system. Standard is not met if nets of basketball or tennis courts are missing. This standard focuses on functionality, not attractiveness of structures.</p> <p>Outdoor athletic courts and their sport-related and support structures are free of graffiti.</p>						
7.4	Functionality of structures	<p>Note: Graffiti on benches are covered under benches, tables, and grills standards.</p> <p>Play lines are clearly visible and worn painted surfaces do not exceed 20% of total court surface.</p>						
7.5	Graffiti	<p>Noticeable from a 10 feet distance, play court surface is smooth, and free of irregularities in grade greater than half an inch (0.5") and is free of cracks and holes greater than one inch (1") in diameter and depth.</p>						
7.6	Painting/ striping							
7.7	Surface quality							
Comments:								

Check if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.

8. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Children’s play areas with play equipment. Play equipment includes independent play equipment (such as swings) and composite structures that may include slides, decks, ladders, bridges, etc.

Notes: If any substandard conditions are observed, they should be reported to the department for abatement. This children’s play area evaluation is not a substitute for the safety inspection conducted by a certified playground safety inspector (CPSI). Facilities categorized as “playground” may contain children’s play areas. Ornamental gardens, shrubs, and ground covers located in children’s play areas and other areas of the park are covered under ornamental garden standards.

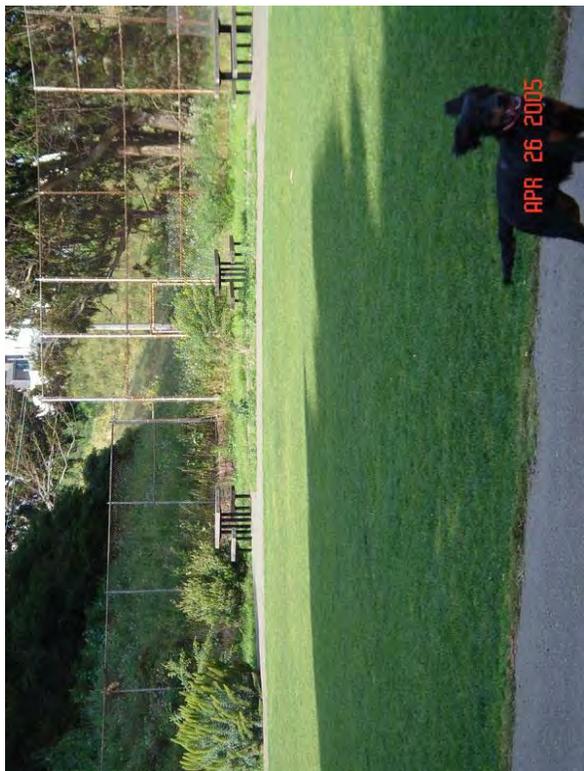
PF 8: Children’s Play Areas

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Please, indicate No. of children’s play area. (Use map if available.)		
			#	#	#
			Meet standard? Yes/No/NA		
8.1	Cleanliness	Children’s play area is free of litter, debris, and weeds. Sandbox is free of all foreign debris. The rubber surface in children’s play areas is free of playground sand, where applicable. Notes: At all parks, the standard is met if no more than 10 pieces of litter or debris, lightly scattered, are visible in a 25’ by 25’ area or along a 100’ line. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs, rocks, and any other item that impedes use of a play area. Leaves are excluded. The standard is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present. Smoking is prohibited in children’s play areas. Hardscaped areas adjacent to children’s play areas are evaluated under hardscapes and trails. Where applicable, fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages along the base.			
8.2	Fencing	At least 80% of intended play equipment is present and functional.			
8.3	Functionality of equipment	Note: Occasionally the City may find it necessary to permanently remove pieces of play equipment.			
8.4	Graffiti	Play area and its equipment are free of graffiti.			
8.5	Integrity of equipment	Note: If graffiti is observed, it has to be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours.			
8.6	Painting	80% of play equipment is free of deterioration, such as rust, rot, splinters, dents, and 100% is free of sharp edges and protrusions. 100% of attachments (e.g., bolts and screws) are secure.			
8.7	Signage	Painted structures are free of peeling or chipped paint. Signs are legible, free of graffiti, and properly installed in visible locations.			
8.8	Surface quality	Note: Existence, language, and purpose of signage are not assessed.			
		8.8.a If applicable, sand is loose (not compacted) and the level is at least 12 inches in depth. 8.8.b If applicable, 100% of rubber surface around playground equipment is present and adjacent rubber surfaces do not exceed ¼ inch (0.25”) of vertical elevation difference.	8.8.a		
Comments:					
Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.					

9. DOG PLAY AREAS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Any designated off-leash areas.

Note: Users of dog play areas are responsible for picking up and disposing of feces, supplying bags for dog waste bag dispensers, and filling holes dug by their dogs before leaving the dog play areas. (For more information, see the Recreation and Park Department's Dog Policy - Resolution No. 0205-001 of May 8, 2002.)

PF 9: Dog Play Areas

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/ NA
9.1	Bag dispenser	Bag dispensers are available, free of graffiti, and fully operational.	
9.2	Cleanliness	<p>9.2.a Dog play area is free of litter and debris.</p> <p>9.2.b Dog play area is free of feces.</p> <p>Notes: The standard 9.2.a is met if no more than 15 pieces of litter or debris, lightly scattered, are visible in a 100' by 100' area or along a 200' line. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs, rocks, and other items that impede the use of the dog play area. Leaves are excluded. The standard is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, and/or broken glass are present.</p>	<p>9.2.a</p> <p>9.2.b</p>
9.3	Drainage/ flooded area	80% of dog play area is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation.	
9.4	Height/ mowed	Note: Standard applies all year. Where applicable, turf in dog play area is mowed and kept at a uniform height of less than ankle height.	
9.5	Signage	Park signs for designated off-leash areas are legible, free of graffiti, and properly installed in noticeable locations.	
9.6	Surface quality	Surface is smooth and free of holes greater than six (6) inches in diameter and/or depth.	
9.7	Waste receptacle	Waste receptacles are available and not overflowing.	
Comments:			
<p>Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.</p>			

C. AMENITIES & STRUCTURES

10. RESTROOMS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Entryway and interior of all restrooms, including standalone or part of buildings restrooms, with entrances from inside or outside of a building.

PF 10: Restrooms (If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Was the restroom open? (Yes/No)				Unisex
			Male	Female	Male	Female	
10.1	Cleanliness	10.1.a Entryway and interior of restrooms are free of litter, debris, and feces. 10.1.b. Toilets, urinals, sinks, and diaper-changing stations are clean. Notes: The standard 10.1.a is met if no more than three (3) pieces of litter or debris are visible on the floor, wall or ceiling of restroom. The standard 10.1.a is not met if feces, needles, condoms, or broken glass are present in the interior or entryway of restrooms within a 25' perimeter. Restrooms are free of graffiti.	10.1.a				
10.2	Graffiti	Restrooms are free of graffiti.					
10.3	Functionality of structures	Note: If graffiti is observed, it has to be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours. All toilets, urinals, partitions, stall walls and doors, diaper-changing stations, water faucets, and sink drains are operational and free of leaks, where applicable.					
10.4	Lighting	90% of lights are operational, where applicable.					
10.5	Odor	Restroom is free of offensive odor.					
10.6	Painting	Painting has uniform coat and is not peeling.					
10.7	Signage	Restroom signs are legible, free of graffiti, and properly installed near entrances.					
10.8	Supply inventory	Restrooms are stocked with toilet paper, paper towel, and soap.					
10.9	Waste receptacles	Waste receptacles are clean and not overflowing.					
Comments:							
Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.							

11. PARKING LOTS AND ROADS

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Parking lots and roads maintained by the Recreation and Park Department, such as those in Richmond Recreational Center, McLaren Lodge, and Golden Gate Park.

Note: Parking garages are excluded from standards.

PF 11: Parking Lots and Roads

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/NA
11.1	ADA parking spaces	ADA parking spaces are available.	
11.2	Cleanliness	Parking lots and roads are free of litter and debris. Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs, rocks, and any other item that impedes the use of the parking lot or roads. The standard is <u>not</u> met if needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present. When present, 90% of curbs in parking lots and roads are intact.	
11.3	Curbs	Notes: This standard mostly applies to asphalt curbs (a.k.a. berms) in regional parks, but if it is present in other parks, this element should be assessed.	
11.4	Drainage/ flooded areas	Parking lots and roads are free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation. Note: Standard applies all year.	
11.5	Graffiti	Parking lots and roads are free of graffiti. Note: If graffiti is observed, it has to be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours.	
11.6	Painting/ stripping	75% of parking and road lines are visible.	
11.7	Signage	Signs are legible, free of graffiti, and properly installed in noticeable locations. Note: Examples of signs include directional signs.	
11.8	Surface quality	11.8.a Parking lots and roads are free of potholes greater than six (6) inches in diameter and/or depth.	11.8.a
		11.8.b Parking lots and roads are evenly surfaced.	11.8.b

Comments:

Check if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.

12. WASTE AND RECYCLING RECEPTACLES

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Waste and recycling receptacles, and their surrounding areas. Overall cleanliness of other park features, such as benches and tables should be evaluated in their respective areas.

PF 12: Waste and Recycling Receptacles

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/ N/A
12.1	Cleanliness of receptacles	<p>12.1.a 90% of all receptacles are clean and 100% are free of graffiti.</p> <p>12.1.b Immediate areas surrounding 90% of all waste receptacles are free of litter and debris.</p> <p>Notes: The standard 12.1.b is <u>not met</u> if (i) more than three (3) pieces of litter or debris are present in the immediate area surrounding any waste receptacle; and/or (ii) needles, condoms, broken glass, and/or feces are present.</p> <p>Examples of litter include cigarette butts, tissue paper, food wrappings, newspapers, and larger items like abandoned appliances. Examples of debris include limbs and rocks.</p>	12.1.a
12.2	Fullness	90% of all receptacles are not overflowing.	
12.3	Painting	Painting has uniform coat and is not peeling, where applicable, on 90% of all receptacles.	
12.4	Structural integrity and functionality	90% of all receptacles are free of large cracks or damage that affect their use.	
Comments:			
<p>Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check <input type="checkbox"/> if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.</p>			

13. BENCHES, TABLES, & GRILLS

PASS



FAIL



14. AMENITIES & STRUCTURES

PASS



FAIL



What is inspected: Exterior of buildings, amenities, and structures that were not covered in other park features.

Note: Park sector supervisors are responsible for checking interior and exterior of facilities. However, reporting of interior conditions –with the exception of restrooms in the interior of buildings (i.e., recreational centers, clubhouses)- is excluded from this inspection process.

PF 14: Amenities and Structures

(If this park feature is not applicable, mark here and go to the next one.)

No.	Measured element	Standard description with unit of measure (if applicable)	Meet standard? Yes/No/ NA
14.1	Exterior of buildings	14.1.a Exterior of buildings is free of vandalism and graffiti. 14.1.b 90% of painting of exterior of buildings is of uniform color and not peeling.	14.1.a 14.1.b
14.2	Drinking fountains	Note: If graffiti is observed, it has to be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours. Drinking fountains are accessible, operational, and free of standing water and debris.	
14.3	Fencing	Fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages along the base.	
14.4	Gates / locks	Existing gates, latches, and locks are operational.	
14.5	Retaining walls	14.5.a Retaining walls are structurally sound. 14.5.b Retaining walls are free of vandalism and graffiti.	14.5.a 14.5.b
14.6	Signage	Note: Structurally sound implies, among other things, that the walls are not leaning and that they are free of large cracks. If graffiti is observed, it has to be reported to the department to be abated within 48 hours. Signs are legible, free of graffiti, and properly installed in noticeable locations.	
14.7	Stairways	Note: Availability, language, and purpose of signage are not assessed. 14.7.a Stairways are free of litter and debris. 14.7.b Stairways are structurally sound. 14.7.c 95% of stairways are free of weeds.	14.7.a 14.7.b 14.7.c

Comments:

Check if a work order will be submitted as part of this inspection. Check if a work order has been submitted within the last 4 months, but work has not been done.

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APPENDIX B. METHODOLOGY

From October 2004 to April 2005, the Recreation and Park Department and the Controller’s Office drafted the San Francisco Park Maintenance Standards Manual with the assistance of:

- ◆ Output-based park standards from other jurisdictions and industry literature. (See Appendix A. Acknowledgments.)
- ◆ Focus group of San Francisco’s park section supervisors
- ◆ Monthly meetings of Recreation and Park’s park section supervisors
- ◆ Public discussion and outreach:
 - ✓ City Services Committee, San Francisco Board of Supervisors (January 6, 2005)
 - ✓ Recreation and Park Commission (January 20, 2005)
 - ✓ Mailing to 500+ groups and individuals (January 20, 2005)
 - ✓ Multiple meetings with SFSOS and Neighborhood Parks Council/ParkScan (NPC)
 - ✓ Park and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC) (February 1, 2005)
- ◆ Controller and Rec & Park Site Visits on February 11, 2005 for testing standards and tools
- ◆ Consultation with Rec & Park IT staff to ensure proper linkage and consistency with TMA (Total Management Asset system) and others responsible for citywide park maintenance functions

City of Boulder - Levels of Park Maintenance Standards

Service Category	Function	Level A	Level B	Level C
Horticulture				
<i>Flower plantings</i>	Fertilize:	1-3 x/season	N/A	N/A
	Irrigation:	1-5 x/ wk	N/A	N/A
	Inspection for insects/disease	Weekly	N/A	N/A
	Soil prep:	1-2 x/year	N/A	N/A
	Replace:	If needed	N/A	N/A
	Weed control:	100%	N/A	N/A
<i>Perennial plantings</i>				
	Fertilize:	1-3 x/seas	1x/ seas	N/A
	Irrigation:	1-5 x/ wk	1-5 x/ wk	N/A
	Inspection for insects/disease	Weekly	1x/ 2 wks	N/A
	Soil prep:	1-2 x/yr	1x/ yr	N/A
	Replace:	If needed	N/A	N/A
	Weed control:	100%	85%	N/A
<i>Shrub plantings</i>				
	Fertilize:	1-3 x/seas	N/A	N/A
	Irrigation:	1-5 x/ wk	1-5 x/ wk	N/A
	Inspection for insects/disease	Weekly	1x/ 2 wks	N/A
	Soil prep:	1-2 x/yr	N/A	N/A
	Replace:	If needed	N/A	N/A
	Weed control:	100%	85%	N/A
	Clearance Pruning:	1x/ yr	1x/ yr	N/A
	Mulching:	1x/ yr	As needed	N/A
<i>Horticultural Tree Care</i>				
	Inspection:	Weekly	1x/ 2 wks	N/A
	Component repair:	As needed	As needed	N/A
	Component replace:	As needed	As needed	N/A
	Main/lateral repairs:	24 hours	36 hours	N/A
	Winterization:	1x/ yr	1x/ yr	N/A
	Frequency:	1-5x/wk to 75% Evaporation/Transpiration	1-5x/wk to 75% ET	N/A
	Adjust:	Daily-weekly	Weekly	N/A
Irrigation				
<i>Operation</i>				
	Inspection:	Weekly	1x/ 2 wks	N/A
	Component repair:	As needed	As needed	N/A
	Component replace:	As needed	As needed	N/A
	Main/lateral repairs:	24 hours	36 hours	N/A
	Winterization:	1x/ yr	1x/ yr	N/A
	Frequency:	1-5x/wk to 75% Evaporation/Transpiration	1-5x/wk to 75% ET	N/A
	Adjust:	Daily-weekly	Weekly	N/A
<i>Scheduling</i>				

PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS SURVEY

Park Inspected: _____

Date Inspected: _____

Inspected By: _____

District: _____

Overall Percentage of Standards Met: _____

Quarter: _____

Place a “Y” in the space if the item meets standards. Place an “N” in the space if the item does not meet standards.

I. ATHLETIC FACILITIES: COMPETITIVE FIELDS % of standards met: _____

A. Turf

- ___ 1. Turf has a healthy dense stand of grass and coverage is no less than 95% of playable area.
- ___ 2. Appropriate grass for warm seasons is Common Bermuda or Hybrid Bermuda and for cool season is Perennial Rye Grass if required.
- ___ 3. Play area has a uniform surface and well drained.
- ___ 4. Turf is mowed at the appropriate height for the type of grass used, the time of the season, and the type of field use.
- ___ 5. Turf is free of any litter or debris.

B. Skinned Infields

- ___ 1. Infields have a uniform surface and are free of lips, holes and trip hazards.
- ___ 2. Infields are well drained with no standing water areas.
- ___ 3. Infields have proper soil consistency for intended usage.
- ___ 4. Infields are free of weeds and grass.
- ___ 5. Infields are free of rocks, dirt clods, and debris as per Little League and Amateur Softball Association rules and specifications.
- ___ 6. Bases and plates are properly installed, level, and are at the proper distances and anchored in accordance to manufacturer’s specifications and league requirements.

C. Soccer Goals

- ___ 1. Goals are made of lightweight aluminum.
- ___ 2. Goals are properly installed and anchored.
- ___ 3. Goal frames show no excessive bending.
- ___ 4. Nets are in good condition and free of holes, tears, and fraying which would allow a soccer ball to pass.

D. Bleachers

- ___ 1. Hardware is intact.
- ___ 2. Seating surface is clean, smooth, and free of protrusions and catch points.
- ___ 3. Bleachers are secured to concrete pads or firmly anchored to the ground.

- 4. Bleacher areas have trash receptacles present and are in good condition.

E. Lights

- 1. Electrical systems and components are operational and in compliance with appropriate building codes.
- 2. 90% of lamps for each field are operational.
- 3. No electrical conducting wires are exposed.
- 4. Ballast boxes and components are properly installed and secured.
- 5. Lights provide uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures are adjusted to eliminate dark or blind areas.

F. Fencing

- 1. Fencing material is galvanized chain link and is the appropriate gauge wire for specified use.
- 2. Fencing material is properly secured to support rails.
- 3. Support rails are properly connected and straight.
- 4. Fencing is free of holes and protrusions.
- 5. Fabric is straight and free of bending or sagging.
- 6. Gates and latches are operational.

G. Restrooms

- 1. Restrooms are clean, sanitary, and properly stocked with paper products.
- 2. Lights and ventilation systems are operational.
- 3. Toilets, water faucets, stall doors, and hand air dryers are operational.
- 4. Restrooms are free of graffiti.
- 5. Restroom doors are properly marked according to gender.
- 6. Restrooms have clean trash receptacles.
- 7. Restroom doors and locks are operational.
- 8. Restrooms are in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

II. PLAYGROUND

% of standards met: _____

A. Play Equipment

- 1. Play equipment and surrounding play areas meet ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards.
- 2. Play equipment and hardware is intact.
- 3. Play equipment is free of graffiti.
- 4. Age appropriateness for the play equipment is noted with proper signage.
- 5. Shade structure is secure and free from tears.

B. Surfacing

- 1. Fall surface is clean, level, and free of litter and debris.
- 2. Fall surface meets ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards.
- 3. Fall surface is well drained.
- 4. Rubber cushion surfaces are free of holes and tears.
- 5. Rubber cushion surfaces are secure to the base material and curbing.

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C. Borders

- 1. Playground borders are well defined and intact.
- 2. Playground borders meet ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards.

D. Decks

- 1. Planks are intact, smooth, structurally sound, free of splinters, and have no cracks greater than ¼ inch.
- 2. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
- 3. Planks are level with no excessive warping.

E. Benches

- 1. Slats are smooth and structurally sound.
- 2. Hardware is intact and structurally sound.
- 3. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
- 4. Seats and backing are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

III. PICNIC FACILITIES

% of standards met: _____

A. Pavilions

- 1. Pavilions comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 2. Pavilions are clean, sanitary, and free of graffiti.
- 3. Electrical plugs, lights, appliances, fans, and hot water heaters are operational and in good condition and comply with current building codes.
- 4. Pavilions are structurally sound, cleanly painted with no rotten lumber or rusted metal and no loose siding or loose shingles.
- 5. Pavilions are relatively pest and rodent free and regularly treated for ants, wasps, termites and mice.
- 6. Interior kitchens are equipped with an operational fire extinguisher.
- 7. Doors, windows, screens, and locks are operational.
- 8. Water fountains, water faucets, exhaust vent fans, and hose bib connections are operational.
- 9. Signage with reservation and rules information and emergency telephone numbers is in a noticeable location.
- 10. Pavilion grounds are mowed and trimmed and free of litter, debris and hazards.
- 11. Vegetation around pavilions is trimmed back to reduce hazards and does not impede entry and regress.

B. Shelters

- 1. Shelters comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 2. Shelters are clean, sanitary, and free of graffiti.
- 3. Lights and electrical plugs are operational and comply with current building codes.
- 4. Shelters are structurally sound, cleanly painted with no rotten lumber or rusted metal and no loose siding or loose shingles.
- 5. Water fountains and hose bibs are operational.
- 6. Signage with reservation and rules information and emergency telephone numbers is in a noticeable location.

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- 7. Grounds around shelters are mowed and trimmed and free of litter, debris, and hazards.
- 8. Vegetation around shelters is trimmed back to reduce hazards and does not impede entry and regress.

C. Tables

- 1. Tables are clean, free of rust, mildew, and graffiti.
- 2. Table hardware is intact.
- 3. Table frames are intact and slats are properly secured.
- 4. Table seats and tops are smooth and free of protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

D. Grills

- 1. Grills are operational and free of rust and metal deterioration.
- 2. Grills are clean and free of grease build-up.
- 3. Grill racks are operational and secure to main body.
- 4. Grills are properly anchored to reduce hazards and theft.
- 5. Underbrush, low limbs, and debris are cleared away from grill area to reduce possible fire hazard.

E. Trash Receptacles

- 1. Receptacles are clean.
- 2. Wood receptacles are painted and free of damaged or missing parts.
- 3. Hardware for wood receptacles is intact.
- 4. Concrete receptacles are intact and free of cracks or damage.
- 5. Area around trash receptacles is clean and free of trash and debris.

F. Restrooms

- 1. Restrooms are clean, sanitary, and properly stocked with paper products.
- 2. Lights and ventilation systems are operational.
- 3. Toilets, water faucets, stall doors, and hand air dryers are operational.
- 4. Restrooms are free of graffiti.
- 5. Restroom doors are properly marked according to gender.
- 6. Restrooms have clean trash receptacles.
- 7. Restroom doors and locks are operational.
- 8. Restrooms are in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

IV. TENNIS COURTS

% of standards met: _____

A. Surfacing

- 1. Surface is smooth, level, and well drained with no standing water.
- 2. Surface is free of large cracks, holes, and trip hazards.
- 3. Surface is painted and striped in accordance with the United States Tennis Association court specifications.
- 4. Worn painted surfaces do not exceed 20% of total court surface.
- 5. Surface is free of litter, debris, gravel and graffiti.

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B. Nets

- 1. Nets are free from tears and frays.
- 2. Nets are properly installed and secured to support poles.
- 3. Nets have center straps installed at the regulated height and are anchored to the court.
- 4. Support poles have hardware intact, properly anchored, and installed.

C. Lights

- 1. Electrical systems and components are operational and in compliance with appropriate building codes.
- 2. 90% of lamps for each court are operational.
- 3. Timers are properly set for specific hours of operation.
- 4. No electrical conducting wires are exposed.
- 5. Ballast boxes and components are properly installed and secured.
- 6. Lighting controls with operation instructions and information are conveniently located for easy access.
- 7. Lights to give uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures are adjusted to eliminate dark or blind spots.

D. Fencing

- 1. Fencing material is galvanized chain link and is the appropriate gauge wire for specified use.
- 2. Fencing material is properly secured to support rails.
- 3. Support rails are properly connected and straight.
- 4. Fencing is free of holes, protrusions, and catch points.
- 5. Fabric is straight and free of bending or sagging.
- 6. Gates and latches are operational.
- 7. Windscreens are tightly secured to the fencing and are free of tears and holes.

V. BASKETBALL COURTS

% of standards met: _____

A. Surfacing

- 1. Surface is smooth, level, and well drained with no standing water.
- 2. Surface is free of large cracks, holes, and trip hazards.
- 3. Surface is painted and striped as per court specifications.
- 4. Worn painted surfaces do not exceed 20% of total court surface.
- 5. Surface is free of litter, debris, gravel, and graffiti.

B. Goals and Backboards

- 1. Goals and backboards are level with hardware intact.
- 2. Goals and backboards are painted.
- 3. Nylon nets are properly hung and are not torn or tattered.
- 4. Support poles are secure in the ground and straight.

C. Lights

- 1. Electrical systems and components are operational and in compliance with appropriate building codes.
- 2. 90% of lamps for each court are operational.
- 3. Timers are properly set for specific hours of operation.

- 4. No electrical conducting wires are exposed.
- 5. Ballast boxes and components are properly installed and secured.
- 6. Lighting controls with operation instructions and information is conveniently located for easy access.
- 7. Lights to provide uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures are adjusted to eliminate dark or blind areas.

VI. SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS

% of standards met: _____

A. Nets

- 1. Nets are free from holes and are not torn or tattered.
- 2. Nets are hung tightly at the specified height.
- 3. Nets are securely attached to the support poles.
- 4. Support poles to have hardware intact, properly anchored and installed.

B. Surface

- 1. Court surface is loose sand.
- 2. Surface is smooth with good drainage and no standing water.
- 3. Surface is free of weeds, grass, litter, and debris.

C. Borders

- 1. Borders are well defined and intact.
- 2. Borders meet ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards.

VII. PONDS

% of standards met: _____

A. Water

- 1. Aerators are operational.
- 2. Pond surface is at least 90% clear of vegetation.
- 3. Water area is free of trash and debris.
- 4. Bank areas are smooth and free of wash outs and erosion.
- 5. Ponds are stocked with appropriate species of fish.
- 6. Ponds are dyed to enhance appearance and assist in reduction of unwanted vegetation when applicable.
- 7. Pond/Waterways Management plan is developed and filed with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as required.

B. Fishing Piers/Decks

- 1. Planks are intact, smooth, structurally sound, free of splinters, and have no cracks greater than 1/4 inch.
- 2. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
- 3. Planks are level with no excessive warping.
- 4. Handrails are present.
- 5. Piers and decks comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

C. Benches

- 1. Slats are smooth and structurally sound.
- 2. Hardware is intact and structurally sound.

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- 3. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
- 4. Seats and backing are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

VIII. PARKS: GENERAL STANDARDS

% of standards met: _____

A. Grounds

- 1. Grounds are mowed and trimmed.
- 2. Park is free of litter, debris, and hazards.
- 3. Parking lots are clean and striped. (if applicable)

B. Drinking Fountains

- 1. Fountains are accessible and operational.
- 2. Fountains are in appropriate locations.
- 3. Fountains are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 4. Fountains are installed on solid surfaces and free of standing water and debris.

C. Signage

- 1. Park identification signs are secure and properly installed in a noticeable location.
- 2. Handicap parking signs are secure, visible, and to code.
- 3. Park Rules signs are secure and in a noticeable location.
- 4. Restroom signs are secure and visible.
- 5. Signs are clean, painted, and free of protrusions.

D. Ornamental Plants

- 1. Plants are healthy.
- 2. Plant beds are free of litter, debris, and weeds.
- 3. Plant selection is appropriate for season and area usage.

E. Walkways

- 1. Walkways have a uniform surface and are level with the ground and free of trip hazards.
- 2. Walkways are free of litter and debris.
- 3. Walkways meet the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 4. Walkways have unobstructed accessibility, i.e. free from low and protruding limbs, guide wires, etc.
- 5. Walkways are neatly edged.
- 6. Walkways are clear of weeds and grass growth in cracks and expansion joints.

F. Trash Receptacles (random)

- 1. Receptacles are clean.
- 2. Wood receptacles are painted and free of damage or missing parts.
- 3. Hardware for wood receptacles is intact.
- 4. Concrete receptacles are intact and free of cracks or damage.
- 5. Roll-off containers and dumpsters are screened or hidden and placed in less intrusive areas.
- 6. Area around trash receptacles is clean and free of trash and debris.
- 7. Area around roll-off containers and dumpsters is clean and free of trash and debris.

G. Ornamental Steel Fencing

- 1. Hardware is intact.
- 2. Fences are properly installed and anchored.
- 3. Support rails are properly connected and straight.
- 4. Bolts or screws are flush with surface with no exposed sharp points.
- 5. Fence is straight with no excessive bends.
- 6. Gates and latches are operational.

H. Chain Link Fencing

- 1. Fencing material is galvanized chain link and is the appropriate gauge wire for the specified use.
- 2. Hardware is intact.
- 3. Fences are properly installed and anchored.
- 4. Support rails are properly installed and straight.
- 5. Bolts or screws are flush with the surface with no exposed sharp points.
- 6. Fencing is free of holes and protrusions.
- 7. Fabric is straight and free of bending or sagging.

I. Wood Fencing

- 1. Fences are intact, structurally sound, and free of deterioration.
- 2. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface with no exposed sharp points.
- 3. Fences have no excessive cracks or splintering.

J. Lights: Security and Exterior Facility Lights

- 1. 90% of security and facility lights are operational.
- 2. No electrical conducting wires are exposed.
- 3. Lights comply with current building codes.
- 4. Electrical components are operational, properly installed, and secured.

K. Bridges

- 1. Bridges have a uniform surface and are free of trip hazards.
- 2. Lumber is structurally sound, free of cracking, deterioration, and splintering.
- 3. Bridges comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 4. Bridges have handrails intact and are properly installed and anchored.
- 5. Bridges are free of litter and debris.

L. Athletic Practice Areas

- 1. Athletic practice areas are free of litter and debris.
- 2. Areas are mowed at the appropriate height and trimmed.
- 3. Area has a uniform surface and is well drained.
- 4. Areas have trash receptacles present that are in good condition.
- 5. Soccer goals are properly installed and anchored.
- 6. Soccer goals are made of lightweight aluminum.
- 7. Soccer goal frames show no excessive bending.
- 8. Soccer nets are in good condition and free of holes, tears, and fraying which would allow a soccer ball to pass.
- 9. Baseball backstops are properly installed, anchored, and in good sound condition.

COLLEGE STATION (TX) PARK MAINTENANCE SURVEY

Standards for Parks Facilities

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- ___10. Support poles and railings are straight and properly connected.
- ___11. Backstop fencing is galvanized chain link and is the appropriate gauge wire.
- ___12. Backstop fencing is properly installed to support rails and is free of bending and sagging.
- ___13. Backstop fencing is free of holes, protrusions, and catch points.
- ___14. Bleacher hardware is intact.
- ___15. Bleacher bracing is tightly connected.
- ___16. Bleacher seating surface is clean, smooth, and free of protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

M. Irrigation (turf)

- ___1. Irrigation system is fully operational with complete coverage.
- ___2. System is free of leaks.
- ___3. Heads are installed according to intended use.
- ___4. Heads are properly adjusted with rotations and arcs set to reduce water run off.
- ___5. Systems are set to run at specific times to minimize water evaporation and waste.

N. Irrigation (landscape)

- ___1. Irrigation system is fully operational with complete uniform coverage.
- ___2. System is free of leaks.
- ___3. Heads are installed according to intended use.
- ___4. Heads are properly adjusted with rotations and arcs set to reduce water run off.
- ___5. Systems are set to run at specific times to minimized water evaporation and waste.

O. Picnic Units

- ___1. Tables are clean, free of rust, mildew, and graffiti.
- ___2. Table hardware is intact.
- ___3. Table frames are intact and slats are properly secured.
- ___4. Table seats and top are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.
- ___5. Grills are operational and free of rust and metal deterioration.
- ___6. Grills are clean and free of grease build-up.
- ___7. Grill racks are operational and secure to main body.
- ___8. Grills are properly anchored to reduce hazards and theft.
- ___9. Underbrush, low limbs, and debris are cleaned away from grill area to reduce possible fire hazard.
- ___10. Trash receptacles are clean.
- ___11. Wood trash receptacles are painted and free of damaged or missing parts.
- ___12. Hardware for wood receptacles is intact.

P. Metal Benches

- ___1. Hardware is intact and structurally sound.
- ___2. Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
- ___3. Seats and backing are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners.

(Revised 6/17/03)

*1995 Service Level Standards Neighborhood Parks
1 FTE & seasonal crew / 17 acres in no more than 3 sites*

*2004 Status: 1 FTE / 26 acres in 4.5 sites/FTE
2006 status: 1 FTE /33.3 acres in 4.5 sites/FTE*

<i>Daily / Weekly Tasks</i>	<i>Seasonal Tasks</i>
Restrooms	Irrigation Winterization
Trash	Irrigation Start-up
Travel Time	Landscape projects
Administrative Activities	Division capital projects
Playground Safety Checks	Turf Aeration
Irrigation Management	Turf Fertilization
Vandalism Repair	Spraying/ Weed Control
Hand Mowing/Weed Whip	Pond/ditch Maintenance
Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance	Athletic Field Prep
Sport Court / Pathway Lighting Maintenance	Snow Removal, Tree Care, Tree Mulching, Flower Bed Prep.
Shrub/ Flower Beds	In House Construction Projects
Playground Safety Checks	

*1995 Service Level Standards Community Parks
1 FTE & seasonal crew / 25 -40 Acres*

*2004 status: 1FTE/41.2 Acres in 1.2 Sites/FTE
2006 status: 1 FTE/42.8 Acres in 1.4 Sites/FTE*

<i>Daily / Weekly Tasks</i>	<i>Seasonal Tasks</i>
Rest Rooms	Snow Removal
Trash	Irrigation Start-up/Winterization
Athletic Field Prep	Tree and Shrub Bed projects, planting, mulchings
Sport Court Maintenance	Turf Maintenance, fertilize, aerate, weed spraying, Overseeding
Irrigation Repair	Pathway

LONGMONT (CO) SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

*2002 Service Level Standards Greenway and District Park Maint.
1 FTE / seasonal crew per 100 acres of developed Greenways or District
Parks in 4 or more sites
2005 actual status 1 FTE/ 200 acres in 8 sites
2006 actual status 1FTE/ 300 acres in 22 sites
2007 projected 1 FTE/ 305.26 acres in 24 sites*

<i>Representative Daily / Weekly Tasks</i>	<i>Representative Seasonal Tasks</i>
Seasonal Supervision	Irrigation Winterization
Trash	Irrigation Start-up
Travel Time	Landscape projects
Equipment maint. (daily check, Lube and cleanup)	Edging
Safety Checks/inspection sheets	Turf Aeration
Restroom maint. and repair	Turf Fertilization
Irrigation Management	Shrub and tree pruning projects
Vandalism Repair	Bed/path/trail restoration
Mowing/Trimming	Snow Removal
Safety trims/trees and shrubs	Equipment Rebuild and Fabrications
Walk maint. Sweeping/Blowing/(safety)	
Event preparation/restoration	
Weed control (turf and beds)	
Equipment repair and Maint. (Blades, oil, etc.)	* Chemical applications are contracted out

LONGMONT (CO) SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

*2002 Service Level Standards Irrigated ROW Maint.
 1 FTE / seasonal crew per 25 acres of developed ROW in 10 sites
 2005 status: 1 FTE/ 56 acres 20+ sites
 2006 status: 1 FTE / 29.15 acres in 12 sites*

<i>Daily Tasks</i>	<i>Weekly Tasks</i>	<i>Seasonal Tasks</i>
Seasonal Supervision	Irrigation Management	Irrigation Winterization
Trash	Vandalism Repair	Irrigation Start-up
Travel Time	Mowing/Trimming	Landscape projects
Equipment maint. (daily check, Lube and cleanup)	Safety trims/trees and shrubs	Division capital projects
Safety Checks/inspection sheets	Walk maint. Blowing/(safety)	Turf Aeration
	Edging (by-weekly)	Turf Fertilization
	Weed control (turf and beds)	Extensive shrub and tree pruning projects
	Equipment repair and Maint. (Blades, oil, etc.)	Bed restoration
		Snow Removal
		Equipment rebuild and fabrications

LONGMONT (CO) SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

*2001 Service Level Standards for Urban Forest
1 FTE / 5,000 trees with \$125,000 supplemental contracted services
7 year Trim Cycle*

*2002 Status: 1 FTE / 7,250 with \$80,000 supplemental contracted services
15 year Trim Cycle*

*2003 Status: 1 FTE / 7,500 with \$46,000 supplemental contracted services
25 year Trim Cycle*

*2004 Status: 1 FTE / 7,750 with \$74,000 supplemental contracted services
15 year Trim Cycle*

*2005 Status: 1 FTE / 8,000 with \$129,000 supplemental contracted services
13 year Trim Cycle*

<i>Weekly Tasks</i>	<i>Seasonal Tasks</i>
Tree pruning	Tree planting
Tree removal	Tree maintenance - roundup, mulch, guy, etc
Tree watering	Contract tree maintenance bids
Public tree maintenance requests	Monitor contract work
Public tree info requests	License contractors
Departmental tree requests	Development tree inspections
Code enforcement	Bucket assistance requests
Grappler assistance requests	Stump grinding
Equipment maintenance	Merit injection
Record keeping	Storm damage
Staff meetings	Tree inventory - GPS/GIS
	Budget prep and monitoring
	Equipment purchasing
	City training
	Outside forestry training
	Arbor Day