Executive Summary

City of Fort Lauderdale

Parks and Recreation Long Range Strategic Plan

September 2008

Introduction

The City of Fort Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Long Range Strategic Plan is the culmination of a yearlong effort by the City to develop a long range vision for the park facilities and programs and strategically plan for the future needs of residents. By strategically planning parks, greenway, trails, streets and public open spaces, as well as providing recreational opportunities that are relevant to the lifestyles and demographics of the community, the City can greatly influence the quality of life for present and future generations of residents and visitors.

The planning process includes an inventory and analysis of existing facilities, an assessment of the community's future needs and recommendations for changes to the parks system to meet those needs. The assessment of facilities and future needs has been derived through quantitative evaluations as well as qualitative expressions of community desires through public involvement.

The Long Range Strategic Plan has taken into account the entire City of Fort Lauderdale neighborhood residential areas, the Downtown, North-West and South Regional Activity Centers and the Barrier Island /Beach areas and reflects the City's historical context. Ultimately the plan seeks to integrate with other City efforts to advance a common vision of a more livable and sustainable community. To this end the planning process incorporated and built upon the results of previous planning studies.

Previous studies that were reviewed include:

- 2007 Evaluation and Appraisal Report
- Building a Livable Downtown Plan
- South Andrews Avenue Master Plan and Development Guide
- Davie Boulevard Master Plan
- Flagler Village Precinct Plan
- Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Redevelopment Plan Update
- Tarpon River Civic Association Future Plan
- New River Master Plan
- Central Beach Master Plan

Action Plan

1. Increase Health and Wellness Facilities
- Renovations at Carter and Holiday Parks
- Cooperative facility development in the Hospital District
- Cooperative facility development in the Downtown
- New facility development at Riverland and Croissant Parks

2. Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

3. Partner with the Transit Authority to provide a Recreation Bus Loop

4. Expand Water Access and Nature-based Programs
- Formalize neighborhood access at street end and canal end areas
- Develop more nature programs at Snyder park

5. Expand "At Will" Recreation Opportunities
- Provide more drop in style programs
- Create facilities that can be used at peoples discretion
- Apply the Pyramid Methodology for cost recovery

6. Increased Programming in Downtown and Riverwalk Areas

7. Increase Public Awareness and Promote Joint Marketing Opportunities

8. Enhance Partnerships and Cooperation

9. Integrate Plan into Codes and Ordinances

10. Develop a Life-Cycle Replacement Budget to Maintain Existing Facilities

11. Integrate Sustainability Practices in Park Planning and Design
- Reduce water consumption and maintenance through the use of artificial turf on high use fields
- Use native plants in non-active park areas
- Minimize the use of pesticides through Integrated Pest Management practices
- Minimize runoff with bioswales and porous pavement

12. Expand Neighborhood and Community Park Special Events
- Promote neighborhood interaction and identity
- Strengthen community ties
- Celebrate Diversity
- Encourage assimilation
- Provide information about City facilities and programs

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ETC

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment process used objective, evaluations as well as both quantitative and qualitative means to develop a list of the priority needs for the City.

Methods included:

Inventory and Assessment of Parks System/Facilities Resources

- Inventory of Existing Parks Resources
- Landscape and Maintenance Assessment
- Park Maintenance Policies and Procedures Evaluation
- Inventory and Assessment of Recreation Program Resources
- Gap Analysis of Recreation Programs and Services
- Current Recreation Opportunities Adequacy
- Access and Opportunity to Participate Analysis

Financial Analysis

- Property Tax
- Culture and Recreation Fund
- Parks and Recreation Budget - FY 2006/2007 Adopted
- Revenue Plan 2006/2007

Comparative Analysis (Quantitative)

- Level of Service Analysis
- Comparison to SCORP and NRPA Guidelines
- Comparison to Comparable Communities
- Access Analysis

Community Involvement (Qualitative)

- Commissioner Interviews
- Focus Group Workshops
- Stakeholder Workshops
- Public Meetings
- Public Opinion Survey

This Process resulted in the definition of the following priority / most important needs:

- Neighborhood access to local recreation amenities
- Trails and connectivity
- Health, fitness and wellness programs
- Natural resources and provide nature programming
- Better beach parking and access information
- Funding for maintenance and infrastructure improvements
- Safety and security

Top priority needs identified by Fort Lauderdale youth:

- Field Trips
- Dance / Cheerleading
- Health / Fitness
- Socialize / Meet Friends
- Pools/Water Parks
- Computers
- Baseball
- Swings / Slides / See Saw

Additionally, several issues and opportunities emerged, including:

- Enhance partnerships and cooperative planning efforts with other public agencies and private recreation providers
- Evaluate redevelopment impacts and amend codes and ordinances to create effective open space in densifying areas
- Enhance pedestrian friendly streets and increase non-vehicular mobility
- Integrate sustainable practices into future planning and design

Capital Improvements Program Recommendations

The department currently conducts a capital improvements planning process that is based on individual requests and departmental identified priorities. This process is internal to the City and does not include the capital improvement planning of other critical partner agencies. As the Fort Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Department moves forward there will be an ever increasing need to develop facilities in partnership with other agencies and organizations. The Capital Improvement recommendations begin with premise that the City needs to first maintain what investment it has prior to committing to any new facilities. The Parks Department currently receives approximately 2.6 million dollars a year in capital improvement funding. Of that, amount approximately half is for the recurring replacement of built facilities with predictable life cycle. The first recommendation is to develop a recurring life cycle replacement budget to provide for the predictable replacement of existing park facilities. Further recommendations are intended to meet the expressed needs of the overall vision.

Budget Considerations

In addition to the capital improvements needed to effectuate the plan there is also a need to fund several of the initiatives on an ongoing basis. Exact budget costs are difficult to determine and will need to be determined as a part of the budgeting process.

Recommended initiatives that will require budgeting include:

- Increased marketing and printing costs to effectively mail seasonal brochures to all City residents
- Explore partnerships for providing a park loop bus program
- Funding for the development of a Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Expand nature based programming in the City

PRIORITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS DERIVED FROM THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS ARE:

1. **Life Cycle Replacement Budget for all Property in the Open:**
   a. Sewer and Water Infrastructure
   b. Roofing repair and Replacement
   c. Paving and Resurfacing
   d. Fencing
   e. Shelters
   f. Playgrounds / Splash Playgrounds
2. **Renovation of the community centers at Carter and Holiday Parks to accommodate more health and fitness activities**
3. **Improvements to streets-end and canal-end parks for better public access and recognition**
4. **Conversion of two high use athletic fields throughout the city**
5. **Land Acquisition and Development of a new neighborhood park in the Melrose Park neighborhood area**
6. **Development of a downtown community / health and fitness center in cooperation with the downtown property owners and businesses**
7. **Development of preserves and water access properties**
8. **Renovations at Snyder Park for better public access and nature based program facilities**
9. **Development of a Health, Wellness and Therapeutic Recreation Center in cooperation with healthcare providers in the hospital district**
10. **Land Acquisition and Development of a new neighborhood park in the Edgewood Neighborhood area**
11. **Addition to and development of new health and fitness centers at Riverland and Croissant Parks**

Implementation Plan

To achieve the vision for parks and recreation in the City there are multiple steps that need to be taken. Some of these steps are broad and sweeping and others are smaller. The intent of the strategic plan is to guide the progress of City Parks and Recreation Department in that every incremental step, no matter how small, advances the overall vision for the future. In order to accomplish this goal there are both program and policy initiatives that must be initiated as well as budgeting and capital improvement planning that must be done. All of the following recommendations below are based on the best information available today; however a periodic review of these efforts needs to be done to insure their effectiveness and relevance to the ever changing political and economic climate. Following is a description of the recommended steps needed to achieve the Long Range Plan.

PROGRAM AND POLICY INITIATIVES:

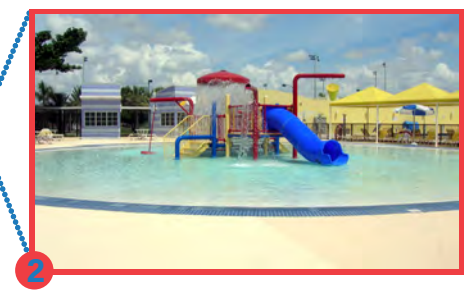
- **Integrate the Master Plan Tenets into the City Comprehensive Plan**
- **Revise the City Land Development Regulations to be Consistent with the Plan Objectives**
- **Develop a Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan**
- **Evaluate and Develop a "Safe Routes to Parks" Program to Insure Safe Access to Local Parks**
- **Increase Coordination and Promotion of Programs**
- **Increase Awareness and Programming of Natural Areas**
- **Increase Programming in the Riverwalk and Downtown Areas**
- **Develop Park Facility Planning and Design Guidelines**
- **Adopt CPTED Standards for Safety and Security in Park and Open Space Areas**
- **Expand the Adopt-A-Park Program**
- **Adopt Green Design and Sustainability Practices**
- **Expand field trip programming and provide greater opportunities for youth to participate in activities throughout the area.**

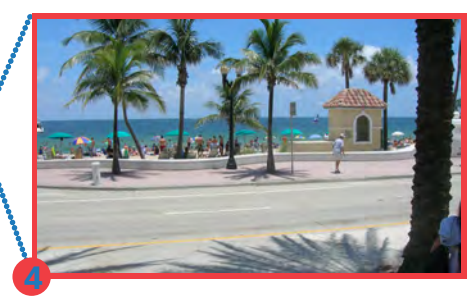
Long Range Plan

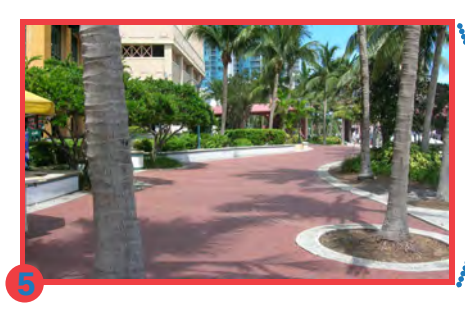
The future plan for parks and recreation in the City of Fort Lauderdale is inextricably linked to the future vision of the City as a whole. Parks, recreation facilities, open spaces and natural areas, the sum total of the public realm, are woven into the community fabric and are integral to what makes the City a great place to live. To this end, this plan strives to integrate the relevant components of all previous planning efforts and build upon them to enhance the overall vision for the City as a whole. Ultimately, this plan will provide a clear layout for not only the strictly defined parks and recreation facilities of the department, but also provide a clear framework for all open space within the City. The hope is that by doing so mutual interests can be identified and multiple public benefits can be achieved.

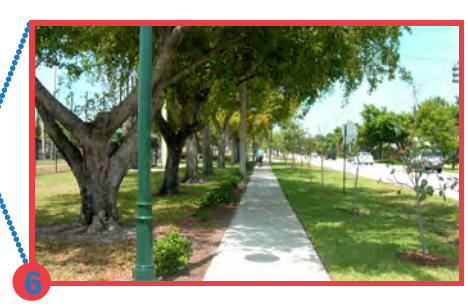
Elements of the plan include:

1. **Improve Neighborhood Access to Local Recreation Amenities**
2. **Improve Existing Community-Wide Parks**
3. **Expand Access to Greenways and Trails**
4. **Improve Water Access**
5. **Expand Indoor Health and Fitness Oriented Community Recreation Centers**
6. **Improve "Complete Streets" to Create a Network of Sidewalks and Bike Lanes/Paths to Serve Schools, Parks, and Neighborhoods**
7. **Explore Partnerships for Providing Transit Service to Parks and Beaches**









Fort Lauderdale Parks & Recreation

Long Range Strategic Plan

LEGEND
- # Existing
- # Proposed

MINI PARKS
- 1 Earl Lifshey Park
- 2 Sweeting Park
- 3 Tarpon Cove
- 4 Bayview Dr. Canals
- 5 Hector Park
- 6 Himmarshee Canals
- 7 Little George English Park
- 8 Tarpon River Park
- 9 Townsend Park
- 10 Westwood Heights Triangle Park
- 11 Willingham Park

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
- 1 Ann Herman Park
- 2 Annie Beck Park
- 3 Bayview Park
- 4 Benenson Park
- 5 Bill Keith Preserve
- 6 Bryant Peney Park
- 7 Civic Peoples Park
- 8 Cliff Lake Park
- 9 Colee Hammock Park
- 10 Dolphin Isles Park
- 11 Flagler Heights Park
- 12 Flamingo Park
- 13 Francis L. Abreau Place
- 14 Greenfield Park
- 15 Guthrie Blake Park
- 16 Harbordale Park
- 17 Imperial Point Park
- 18 Lincoln Park
- 19 Maj. WM. Lauderdale Park
- 20 Melrose Park
- 21 Merle Fogg Park
- 22 Middle River Terrace Park
- 23 Palm Aire Park
- 24 Palm Aire Village Park
- 25 Poinciana Park
- 26 Provident Park
- 27 Riverland Woods Park
- 28 Riverside Park
- 29 Sailboat Bend Park
- 30 Sistrunk Park
- 31 Stranahan Park
- 32 Victoria Park
- 33 Virginia Young Park
- 34 Vista Park
- 35 Warfield Park
- 36 Coontie Hatchie Landings
- 37 DC Alexander Park
- 38 Estere Davis Wright Park

COMMUNITY PARKS
- 1 Bass Park
- 2 Beach Community Center
- 3 Croissant | Davis Park
- 4 Florence Hardy Park and Southside Cultural Center
- 5 Floyd Hull Stadium
- 6 George English Park
- 7 J.C. Carter Park
- 8 Osswald Park
- 9 Riverland Park

SCHOOL PARKS
- 1 Bennett Elementary School
- 2 Floranda Elementary School
- 3 Harbordale Elementary School
- 4 Hortt Elementary School
- 5 Lauderdale Manors Elementary School
- 6 North Fork Park Elementary School
- 7 Riverland Elementary School
- 8 Virginia S. Young Elementary School
- 9 Walker Park Elementary School
- 10 Westwood Heights Park Elementary School
- 11 New River Middle School
- 12 Rogers Middle School
- 13 Sunrise Middle School
- 14 Dillard High School
- 15 Fort Lauderdale High School
- 16 Stranahan High School
- 17 Sunset School

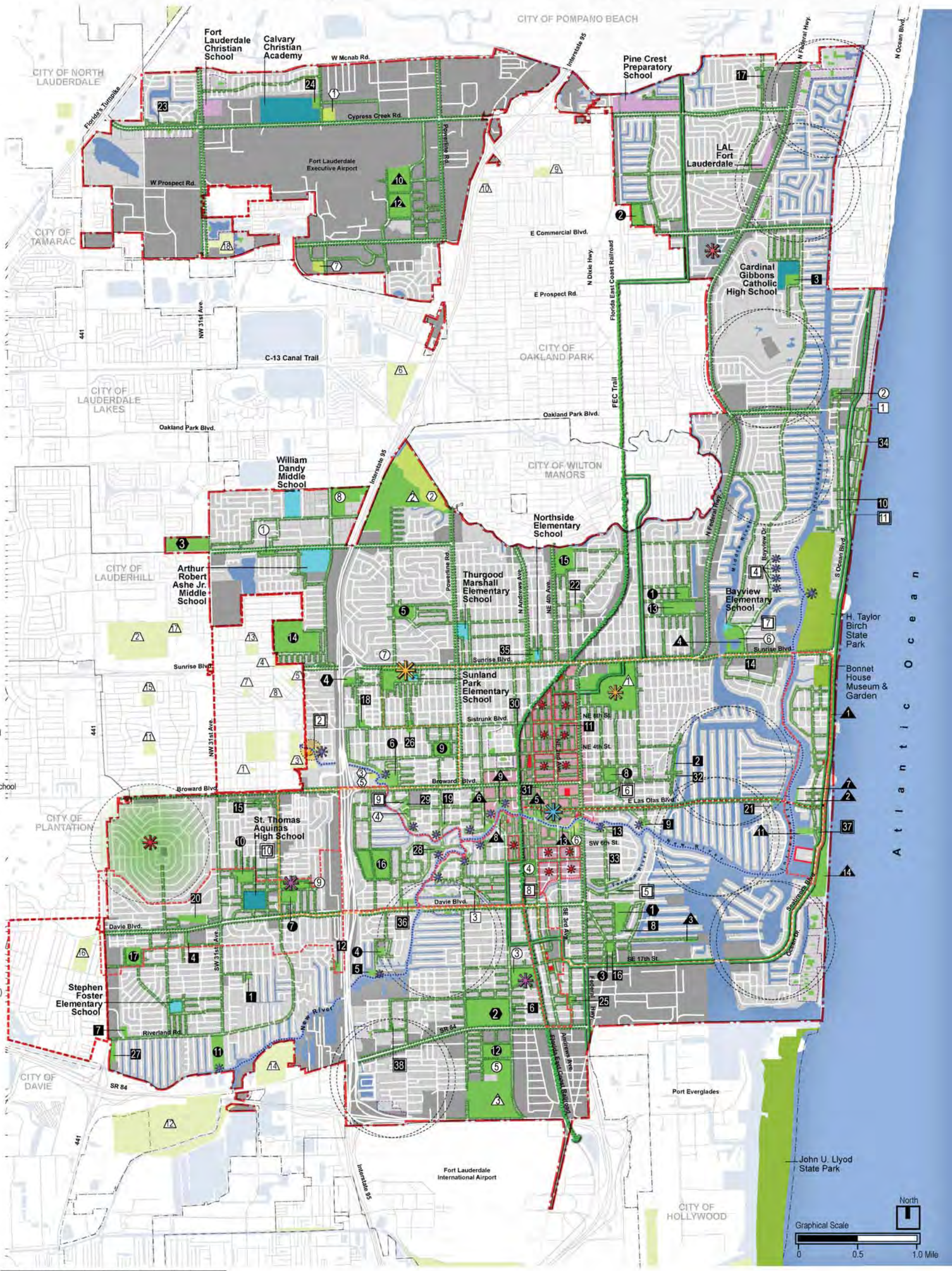
LARGE URBAN PARKS
- 1 Holiday Park
- 2 Mills Pond Park
- 3 Snyder Park

SPECIAL USE FACILITIES
- Public Beach
- Birch Las Olas Anchorage
- Boat Basin
- Boat Ramps (George English)
- Bubier Park
- Cooley's Landing (7th Ave. Boat Basin)
- Birch Las Olas Dockage
- New River Dockage
- Esplanade Park
- Fort Lauderdale Stadium
- Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex
- Lockhart Stadium
- Riverwalk Linear Park
- South Beach Park

CONSERVATION AREAS
- 1 Cypress Creek Sand Pine Preserve
- 2 Mills Pond Conservation Area
- 3 North Fork Riverfront Park
- 4 Sailboat Bend Preserve
- 5 Site 141A
- 6 Smoker Park
- 7 Warbler Wetlands

CEMETERIES | PASSIVE PARKS
- 1 Evergreen Cemetery
- 2 Lauderdale Memorial Park
- 3 Sunset Memorial Park
- 4 North Woodlawn Cemetery

COUNTY PARKS
- 1 Boulevard Gardens Park
- 2 Central Broward Regional Park
- 3 Deleveo Park
- 4 Dillard Park Green Space
- 5 Franklin Park
- 6 John D. Easterlin Park
- 7 Lafayette Hart Park
- 8 Lewis Chislom Park
- 9 North Andrews Gardens Park
- 10 North Andrews Park
- 11 Parkway/ Broward Estate School
- 12 Pond Apple Slough
- 13 Roosevelt Gardens
- 14 Secret Woods Nature Center
- 15 St. George Park
- 16 Sunview Park
- 17 West Ken Lake Park
- 18 William J. Kelley Park



Parks and Recreation System Master Plan Legend:

Existing Conditions:
- Fort Lauderdale City Limit
- Unincorporated Area
- Surrounding City Limit
- Non-Residential Area
- Downtown Fort Lauderdale
- City Park Land
- City Conservation Land
- County Park Land
- State Park Land
- Private School
- Private Recreational Facility and Service Area

Proposed Park Enhancements :
- Proposed New Neighborhood Park
- Areas for Future Neighborhood Park Consideration
- Proposed Partnership with Public School for Neighborhood Park
- Potential Partnership with Private School for Neighborhood Park
- Potential Recreational Indoor Facility in Partnership with North Broward Hospital District
- Proposed Downtown Indoor Recreational Facility
- Proposed Renovated Indoor Recreational Facility
- Proposed New Indoor Recreational Facility
- Proposed Water Access Points
- Proposed Pocket Park Per Downtown Master Plan
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- Park Proposed in Previous Planning Study

Proposed Connectivity Enhancements :
- Proposed Greenway Per Broward County Greenways and Trails Master Plan
- Proposed Rails with Trails Greenway
- Complete Streets| Opportunities for Enhanced Pedestrian Connectivity
- Park Streets| Opportunities for Enhanced Pedestrian Neighborhood Connectivity
- Transit Connections | Park Loop
- Transit Connections | Downtown - Beach Connector Via Las Olas Blvd.
- Proposed Water Trail.

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