



2021 Coral Gables Community Recreation Master Plan

Approved by City Commission on September 28th, 2021
City of Coral Gables Community Recreation Department
405 University Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33134

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1 INTRODUCTION



Gordon Park

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

The City of Coral Gables is a beautiful City. Designed under the auspice of George Merrick in the City Beautiful style, and is centrally located in Miami-Dade County. It is a premier place to live, conduct business and play. Parks and public open space are an integral part of what makes Coral Gables a great place to live and visit.

The City of Coral Gables Community Recreation Master Plan (CRMP) is a long-range planning document intended to build on the City's park legacy and help shape the direction, development and delivery of the City's parks and recreation facilities and services. Based on a comprehensive planning approach, this plan considers previous planning documents, department goals, existing conditions and assessment of needs to establish a community-defined set of priorities to advance the quality of life and maximize efficiencies of parks and recreation resources. This is accomplished by defining a direction for development and delivery of the City's parks and recreation services for the future, based on community expressed needs and priorities.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

1.2 Document Intent

Meeting the needs of a rapidly growing population will become a critical issue for the parks and recreation system. By building upon the existing planning efforts and initiatives, this CRMP seeks to leverage future projects and finite resources for the betterment of parks and recreation services and facilities. In addition to this goal, the primary purpose is the recognition of the role of parks as a central driver of what makes Coral Gables a great community.

The Changing Role of Parks

Parks play a vital role in creating healthy, vibrant, and livable cities and communities which are capable of successfully attracting capital, creative talent, and cultural assets within an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Over time, the functions of parks within the American cultural environment have changed, as summarized in the following section. Today, the recognition that integrated park systems can form the core of successful communities is well documented and understood within the planning profession. Solving more problems through parks systems means that departments are asked to provide an increasingly diverse breadth of recreational facilities, services, and programs in order to meet the needs of citizens.

Dr. Galen Cranz in his book “The Politics of Park Design” chronicled the evolution of park function and design as well as the benefits parks provided to American communities over the last 150 years. Over that period, parks in the United States forged a distinct path that separates function from European design roots. Beginning with the Pleasure Ground era of the mid-19th century, parks were



Pleasure Grounds park, Jackson Park, Chicago.

developed to reflect a natural, countryside landscape but without the perceived dangers of the wilderness. With many of the large urban parks such as Central Park in New York City and Forest Park in St. Louis, the vision was of civilized nature within a city. Most parks of this era had a purpose of providing a mental and physical reprieve from harsh and polluted city lifestyles. A downside was that few people, other than the wealthy, could travel to the parks, as many parks were large and required land on the edge of cities. Working-class residents had few opportunities to enjoy the benefits provided by these new parks. As a brief but impactful subset to the Pleasure Ground era, during the late-19th century, cities started bringing in the principles of the large parks and adapting them to small urban parcels. The purpose was to bring the benefits of open space to where people lived, in the



George Merrick House. Courtesy Coral Gables Historical Resources.

cities. This adaptation was concurrent with growing efforts to promote safe places for children to play, out of the busy streets of cities full of carriages and the newly invented automobile. With the purpose of parks expanding from providing a healthy reprieve from the ills of the urban environment to include social reform and assimilation of a growing immigrant population, a new movement in parks was born, the Reform Park.

During the Reform Park era, which lasted until the early years of the Great Depression, a sharp transformation of the design and function of parks occurred. New parks were no longer located on the edge of cities; instead most were bounded on all sides by streets and newly zoned residential parcels. Parks were smaller with most ranging from a few city blocks square to a single block. The gentle planned countryside character of parks changed into symmetrical blocks of recreational amenities that included athletic fields, courts, and field houses. For many of the working class, these parks were the first time a public space was provided close to them for a purpose other than working or transportation.

With the rise of city planner Robert Moses in New York City, a new park era began when he proclaimed, "We'll make no more absurd claims about what can be accomplished with parks, but rather, fulfill the mandate to provide recreation services." The era of Recreation Parks had arrived and lasted until the mid-1960s. In a striking opposition to the first two park eras, parks were now a recognized governmental service. In order to build a healthy, physically fit generation of servicemen, recreation became a top priority. A good outcome from this era was that park advocates no longer had to

document the social reform and assimilation benefits to justify expenditures on parks. The downside was a prevalence of boring parks with little to no artistic vision which still prevail in some cities.

A manifestation of the Recreation Park era and the mandated governmental funding of parks, cities began to experience difficulties in managing large portfolios of individual parks and miscellaneous properties. This era, called The Open Space System, promoted creative uses of parks with artistic and social programming and an expansion in purpose of parks to include revitalization, civic participation, recreation, and the arts.

As the post-industrial economy has continued to evolve and society has adapted, parks have become more than just recreation amenities that passively contribute to communities. Parks and open spaces are now economic drivers and place-defining cores of communities. Well-designed and resourceful parks have

become engines for attracting people and businesses seeking to benefit from a high quality-of-life.

Shifts in the priorities of the creative class, one of the key economic and social driving forces in post-industrial cities, as defined by noted urbanist Richard Florida of the University of Toronto, have placed a greater importance on parks and recreation-based opportunities as a necessity for a high quality-of-life. The changing trends in recreation demand, driven by these affluent, knowledge-based workers, coupled with the simultaneous impacts of aging populations, growing inequity among households, and the highest immigration level in 100 years, have resulted in the need for park systems that benefit a wide spectrum of users that value parks as a critical component of their lifestyle. For new residents of Coral Gables, parks and open space serve not only an enticement to move to the City but also serve as places to socialize, learn, and assimilate with the community.



Recreation Park at Jones Beach, New York City. Courtesy of Associated Press.



Open Space System Park at Paley Park, New York City, Courtesy of Clifford Goodwill.

The Benefits of Parks

With more research in the fields of parks, public health, urban planning, and landscape architecture, as well as increasing advocacy over the last decade, the positive contributions of parks are being recognized across a wide-range of disciplines. One such aggregator is The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) which has documented contributions that parks and recreation provide to healthy and vibrant communities.

Figure 1-1: Parks and Recreation Community Contributions National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)



Categories of Contribution NRPA:

- Physical Health**
 Simply put, communities with more parks are healthier. Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as academic and other public research have concluded that time spent outdoors completing physical activities leads to lower rates of chronic disease and obesity, and longer, richer life spans.
- Mental Health**
 For many people, a relaxing walk in a park is an unparalleled stress reliever. Studies have shown that having access to nature or open space can reduce stress, improve cognitive functions, and reduce depression and anxiety.

- **Social Function**

Parks are social destinations. By providing comfortable options to sit, relax, and socialize, parks frequently become meeting locations for neighbors. Research documents that communities with parks have more cohesion among neighbors leading to less isolation of at-risk populations and the elderly.
- **Youth Development**

Commonly an under-represented segment of the population when tackling the challenges of society, youth can respond positively to being introduced to life skills early through extracurricular activities, free play, and artistic expression in parks.
- **Environmental**

Parks are where the impacts of urban environments meet the sensitivities of nature. When developed to be sustainable and resilient, parks can provide net-positive impacts to water quality and quantity, and healthy habitat restoration.
- **Economic Impact**

Parks provide some of the best return on investment a community can make. Studies have documented the wide-reaching impacts parks have economically on communities. From sustaining or improving property values, to encouraging redevelopment or job creation, parks make for great public investments. Parks play a key role in attracting and retaining businesses and entrepreneurs. Cities like Bentonville, Arkansas, the home of Walmart Headquarters, have invested heavily in parks and other quality of life improvements in order to encourage talented workers to move there.
- **Resiliency**

In addition to the contributions recognized by the NRPA, many communities are seeking to leverage the environmental benefits of parks and open spaces to make neighborhoods more resilient to the impacts of climate change, natural disasters, or energy scarcity.
- **Social Equity**

Ensuring that all people have access to local parks and recreation provides a greater sense of community, social cohesion, and helps to break down potential barriers between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Figure 1-2: Three Pillars of the NRPA

Alignment with the three pillars of the NRPA provides benefits that are essential to a park system that serves people of all ages, promotes cultural diversity, environmental stewardship, and economic prosperity. Safe, equitable, thriving communities attract people with a wide variety of needs and encourage participation in community building.

Through the development of this CRMP, the City of Coral Gables has the opportunity to consciously prioritize the achievement of particular benefits through the careful crafting of its parks system, recreation programs and the services they provide.



War Memorial Youth Center

A Legacy Built on Great Parks

The City of Coral Gables was incorporated in 1925 and took shape as a planned city incorporating Mediterranean architecture. The adoption of these styles inspired the design of both residential and commercial areas that were reminiscent of European city walls, gateways, monuments, and open spaces - unique to the building legacy of the community.

Founder George Merrick's vision for the transformation of his 160-acre property into the thriving City it is today was aided by a team of designers and architects who utilized a Mediterranean style to craft a Beautiful City, featuring tree-lined avenues, fountains, monumental gateways, and timeless architecture. While these antiquity inspired features became a focal point of Coral Gables, Merrick's vision of a place where people could live in a "great garden set with houses," and a "park where all the people can live to their best capacities" ensured that parks and open spaces would become essential to framing the future of the City.

Through a combination of progressive zoning principles, a dedication to the arts, and a culture of conservation, the City was able to provide acres of parkland with a wealth of amenities for its residents. Prioritizing the creation of high-quality parks and recreation facilities throughout the years resulted in the development of numerous neighborhood and community parks, special use facilities, and the continued acquisition of new park land.

This park planning and development legacy was continued with the initiation of the first Parks and Open Space System Master Plan in 2000. Built on extensive public

involvement and consensus building, this plan sought to position Coral Gables to respond to changing community needs over the next 15 years, while continuing the diligent work that had come to define the City's parks. Priorities from the plan included acquiring additional park land, improving connectivity and waterway access, neighborhood parks, and senior centers and programming.

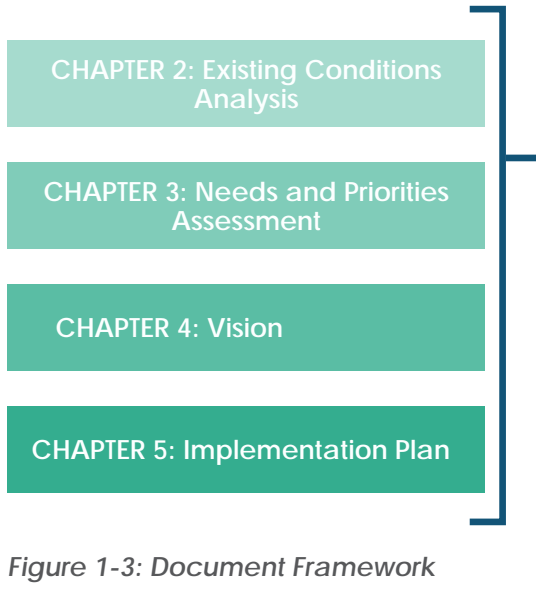
While this plan laid the foundation for the future delivery of parks and recreation services, changes in community needs and priorities, as well as economic trends, resulted in the need for a fresh update to the Master Plan in 2010. The 2010 plan continued the priorities established in the original document; however, it added a focus on downtown open spaces and expanding access to diverse community programs to accommodate changes in recreation needs and priorities.

These plans have successfully advanced the Community Recreation Priorities of Coral Gables for the last 20 years, continuing the culture of high-quality parks and open spaces that has been a staple of the City since its establishment. The efforts of everyone from Merrick to the City staff and community members today, have helped develop Coral Gables into a world-class city and a premier destination within South Florida. This CRMP seeks to continue that legacy, ensuring that Coral Gables remains a thriving city that provides high quality parks, open spaces, and recreation services for a vibrant community.



Granada Golf Course

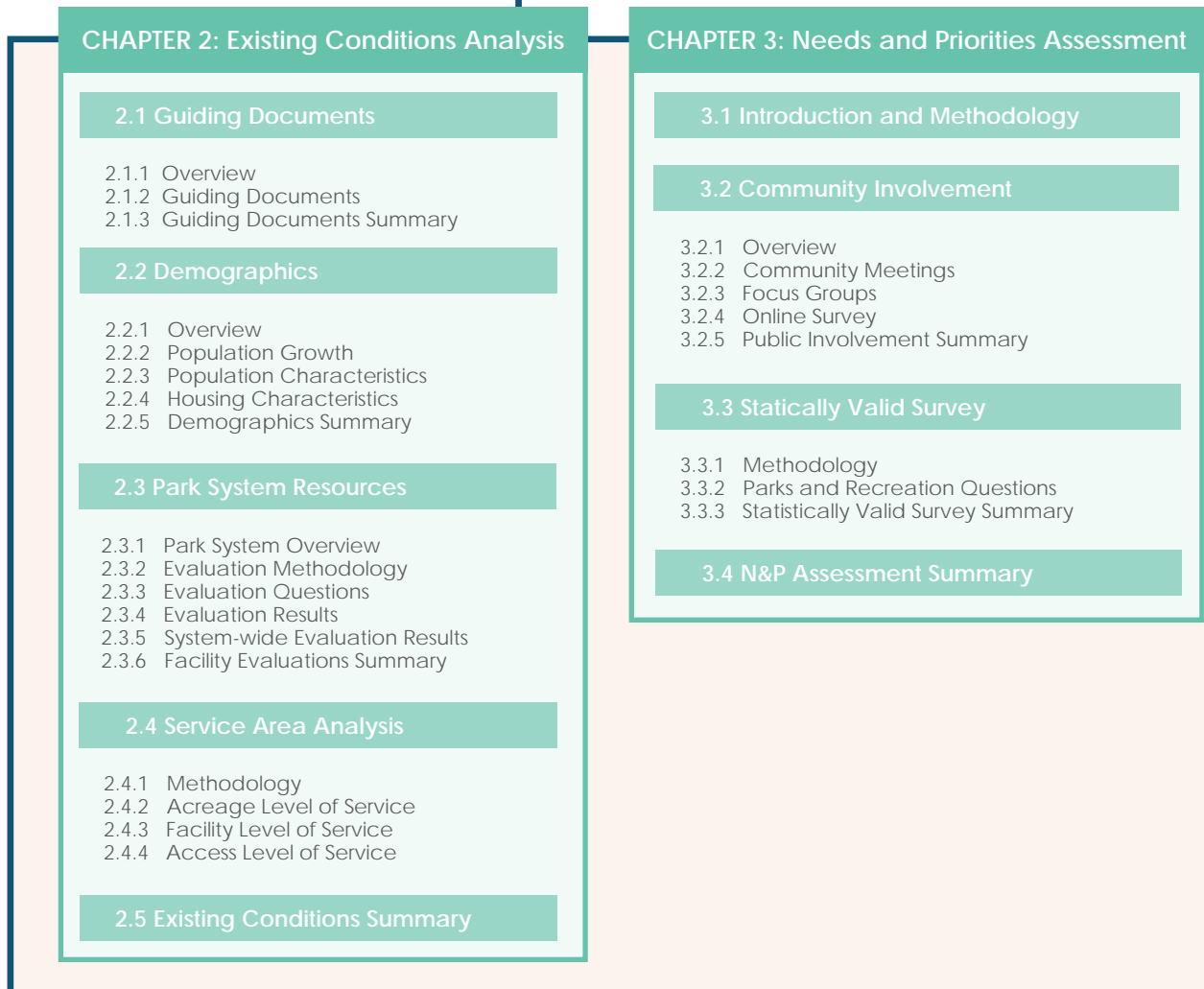
1.2 Document Intent



This document is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide for the planning, acquisition, development and operations of parks, trails, park facilities and recreation programs throughout the City. As such, this Master Plan will assist users in the formation of programming needs and priorities and long range visioning for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and programs.

This document has been developed in a linear process, building upon previous work; beginning with an overview of the existing parks system, analysis of public needs and priorities, formation of a long-range vision, and lastly a strategic plan for implementation.

Figure 1-3: Document Framework



Comprehensive Research and Analysis Methodology

To gain an accurate understanding of the City of Coral Gables parks and greenway network as well as residents' needs, the consultant team utilized a mixed methods, triangulated approach to data analysis.



Figure 1-4: Data Analysis

CHAPTER 4: Vision	CHAPTER 5: Implementation Plan
<p style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0;">4.1 Introduction</p> <p>4.1.1 Purpose</p> <p>4.1.2 Approach</p> <p style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;">4.2 Vision Sub-systems</p> <p>4.2.1 Components of the Vision</p> <p>4.2.2 Parks and Facilities</p> <p>4.2.3 Recreation Programming and Community Health</p> <p>4.2.4 Access and Linkages</p> <p>4.2.5 Cultural and Historic Resources</p> <p>4.2.6 Sustainability and Resilience</p> <p style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;">4.3 Vision Summary</p> <p>4.3.1 The Comprehensive Vision Plan</p>	<p style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0;">5.1 Funding and Phasing Plan</p> <p>5.1.1 Introduction</p> <p>5.1.2 Cost Estimate</p> <p>5.1.3 Funding Analysis</p> <p>5.1.4 Phasing Recommendations</p> <p>5.1.5 Operations and Maintenance Estimates</p> <p style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;">5.2 Action Items</p> <p>5.2.1 Introduction</p> <p>5.2.2 Action Items</p>

Figure 1-3 illustrates the four step process utilized in this Master Plan. The Existing Conditions Analysis provides the context in which needs and priorities are assessed. These needs and priorities are refined through the creation of a publicly developed vision, and detailed strategic plan. Together, these provide an achievable plan for the design, development, and delivery of parks and recreation facilities throughout the City of Coral Gables.



2 EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS



Coral Bay Park

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to gain a broad understanding of the current conditions of the City of Coral Gables' parks, facilities, programs, services, and environmental practices. At the time of development the City managed 81 named parks and facilities, classified into four categories: community facilities, neighborhood parks, urban open spaces, and non-city parks. This chapter takes an in-depth look at the conditions, appearance, and functionality of the existing parks and recreation system as a snapshot for analysis.

CHAPTER 2: Existing Conditions Analysis

2.1 Guiding Documents

- 2.1.1 Overview
- 2.1.2 Guiding Documents
- 2.1.3 Guiding Documents Summary

2.2 Demographics

- 2.2.1 Overview
- 2.2.2 Population Growth
- 2.2.3 Population Characteristics
- 2.2.4 Housing Characteristics
- 2.2.5 Demographics Summary

2.3 Park System Resources

- 2.3.1 Park System Overview
- 2.3.2 Evaluation Methodology
- 2.3.3 Evaluation Questions
- 2.3.4 Evaluation Results
- 2.3.5 System-wide Evaluation Results
- 2.3.6 Facility Evaluations Summary

2.4 Service Area Analysis

- 2.4.1 Methodology
- 2.4.2 Acreage Level of Service
- 2.4.3 Facility Level of Service
- 2.4.4 Access Level of Service

2.5 Existing Conditions Summary

2.1

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

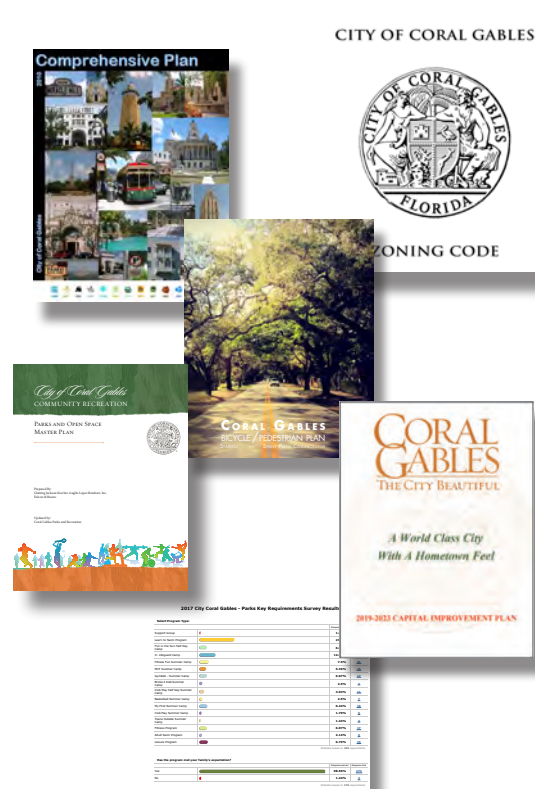
2.1.1 Overview

Since Merrick first laid out his vision for the development of his family estate into a high-quality park-based community, Coral Gables has maintained a comprehensive and relevant set of priorities, values, and specific projects. The goal is to move the community more in line with Merrick’s original vision. These priorities were defined and refined over the years through a regular process of writing and updating the City’s guiding documents. The success of this planning is evidenced by the fact that what was originally Merrick’s picturesque Mediterranean suburban community

has since established itself as a vibrant, growing city with a set of needs and a transitioning vision larger than he could have imagined. The CRMP is not an effort unto itself, but is instead a process to align the Community Recreation Department’s objectives with those of the city as a whole. The CRMP must work cohesively with the efforts of other departments to achieve the City’s expanded vision for the future. The essence of that vision is that Coral Gables makes a successful transition from “America’s Finest Suburb” to “America’s Finest City.”

Guiding Documents

- Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan (2010)
- Coral Gables Mobility Master Plan (2014)
- City of Coral Gables Zoning Code (Updated 2018 and 2021)
- Parks and Open Space Master Plan (2000-2015)
- Parks Key Requirements Survey (2017)
- Coral Gables Capital Improvement Plan (2019-2023)



In an effort to achieve integration with other city goals and ensure momentum toward a cohesive vision for Coral Gables, the parks and recreation planning process included a review of guiding documents for better continuity of recommendations. The following is a brief summary of the

most significant documents that address current parks and recreation initiatives. These documents communicate the vision, context, and mutually supportive efforts ongoing in Coral Gables that are critical to developing a seamless Master Plan.

2.1.2 Guiding Documents

Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan (2010)

The City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan establishes a visionary blueprint for the City's growth, development, and function by providing specific guidelines for 14 sectors of city operations. The plan preserves the City's historic and cultural character while promoting the City's

mission and vision. All 14 of the City sectors addressed in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan may be advanced by this CRMP; however, five are directly relevant: Community Facilities, Natural Resources, Recreation and Open Space, Historical Resources, and the Green sectors. Each sector includes a stated vision and goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, and noted below:

Primary Sectors Advanced by this Master Plan:

1. Community Facilities



Vision Statement: Provide high-quality public facilities and community services.

Goal: Meet the existing and future public facilities needs of the residents and businesses through the provision of safe and efficient public facilities and services.

2. Natural Resources



Vision Statement: Maintain and enhance the natural environment in the City of Coral Gables and surrounding areas through the promotion of environmental protection and sustainability.

Goal: Ensure that the City is an environmentally sustainable entity containing a healthy ecosystem in which natural resources are conserved, protected, maintained, enhanced, and restored.




3. Recreation and Open Space


Vision Statement: Provide and maintain a high-quality and environmentally sensitive system of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces, which meet the needs of the entire community.

Goal: The City of Coral Gables recreation system will serve residents with neighborhood parks and open spaces that offer both passive and active recreation activities and facilities. Those facilities should be linked together by a network of sidewalks, pathways, and bike lanes. They will provide public/open spaces and serve as gathering places in the downtown area. The City will provide high-quality recreation programs and facilities to meet the needs of residents.

Figure 2-1: Recreation Facilities Standards Per Resident (Comprehensive Plan, 2010)

- 

Playing Fields

 - 1 field per 5,600 residents
 - Passive parks
 - 0.30 acres per 1,000 residents
- 

Equipped Play Areas

 - 1 area per 5,000 residents

Table 2-1: Coral Gables Recreation Facilities Radius Standard (Comprehensive Plan, 2010)

Park Type	Acreage/Mileage	Service Radius
Urban Open Space	0 - 0.25	5 min walk or 1/4 mile
Neighborhood	0.25 - 3	10 min walk or 1/2 mile
Community Facilities	3 - 100	15 min drive or 5 miles
Beach/Waterway Access	N/A	20 min drive or 6 - 2/3 miles
District/Regional	>100	30 min drive or 10 miles
Trail Ways	≥ 100' in length	10 min walk or 1/2 miles
Private Park/ Recreation Facilities	varies	10 min drive or 3 - 1/3 miles



History

4. Historical Resources

Vision Statement: Provide the comprehensive plan foundation for the protection and enhancement of the City of Coral Gables' historic and cultural resources, including buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, archaeological sites, and other landmarks.

Goal: Preserve and promote the recognition of structures, sites, man-made or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City.



Conservation

5. Green

Vision Statement: Provide goals, objectives, and policies that preserve, improve, and promote responsible use and protect the City's natural and built environment.

Goal: The City of Coral Gables will take measurable steps towards becoming a "sustainable" community by providing a healthy setting for residents, workers, property owners, and visitors and increase awareness of green development practices and ways to have a significant impact on the City's environment including the following: protecting the quality of air, water, land, and other natural resources; conserving native vegetation, fish, wildlife, and worldwide ecosystems; minimize the carbon footprint; and reduce greenhouse emissions.

Relevance to Master Plan:

The Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan establishes a unified blueprint vision. Its goals specifically address the interconnected needs of the residents including the services, programs, and development of the parks and recreation system. The goals included: to create high-quality facilities and programs; to preserve and protect

natural resources and ecosystems through green development practices; to include sustainable and environmentally sensitive design and maintenance; and to protect the Mediterranean historic character of the City. The CRMP should align seamlessly with these City objectives, values, and priorities to continue the community's vision of establishing a high quality-of-life for Coral Gables residents.

Coral Gables Mobility Master Plan (2014)

The purpose of the Coral Gables Mobility Master plan **Figure 2.2** created in 2014 was to recommend projects that could be implemented with an initial investment in bicycle facilities in the short term, while also identifying bicycle and pedestrian investments for consideration in the years ahead.

By examining existing conditions and utilizing public input to form recommendations, the plan determined that Coral Gables had an incomplete sidewalk network that failed to connect surrounding neighborhoods and parks

to one another and to the downtown area. Existing sidewalks and bike lanes were disconnected from each other and traveled along busy routes with little protection for biking and pedestrian commuters. The existing infrastructure was characterized by segmented sections rather than a complete network. As a result, many important destinations such as parks and the University of Miami are not well served by the pedestrian and biking network. Additionally, many major city intersections lacked crosswalks and pedestrian refuge medians. The plan identified 23 project areas in the city where biking and pedestrian accommodation could be improved.

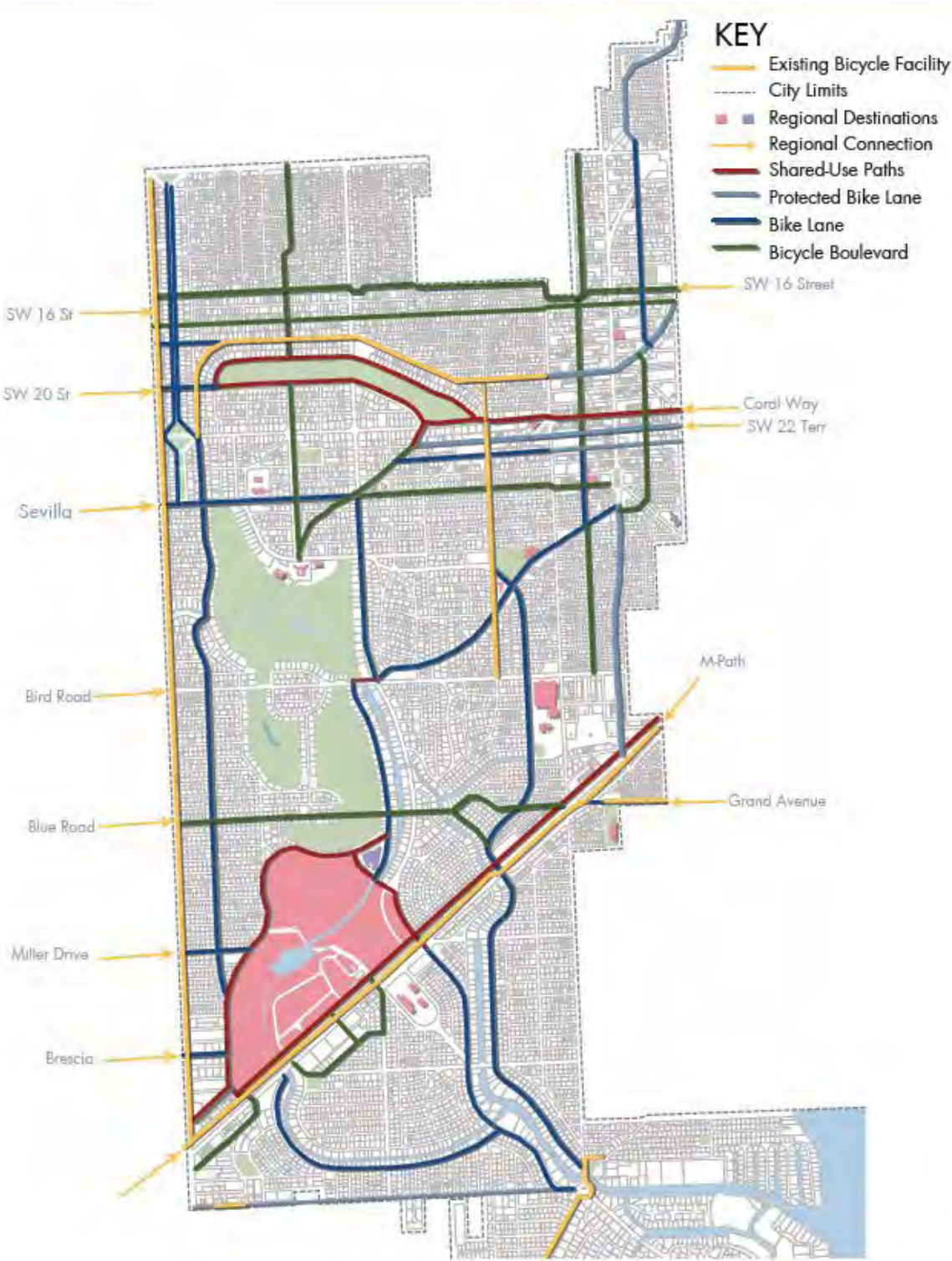
The Coral Gables Mobility Master Plan process identified the public's main goals as:



Public

- Create a safe east/west route near the University of Miami;
- Reconfigure the Bird/University/Granada intersection addressing safety for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Install more striped bike lanes in the city and connect them to those already existing.
- Connect the university with the city.
- Complete and connect downtown bike lanes with neighborhood and park bike lanes.
- Complete bike lanes from Old Cutler to the Central Business District (CBD) and from the University of Miami to the CBD and War Memorial Youth Center including projects on Riviera Dr. and Alhambra Circle.

Figure 2-2: 2014 Mobility Master Plan Recommendations





The Major Goals of the 2014 Mobility Master Plan:





- **Goal 1: Engineering** - Provide a city-wide network of safe, convenient, and accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities for all users.
- **Goal 2: Encouragement** - Promote and encourage bicycling and walking as viable forms of transportation, healthy forms of exercise, and as a positive benefit to the environment.
- **Goal 3: Implementation** - Promote long-term implementation and evaluation of bicycle and pedestrian planning and development.
- **Goal 4: Funding** - Strive to provide adequate funding resources for planning, developing, and maintaining bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Mobility Master Plan Numbers:

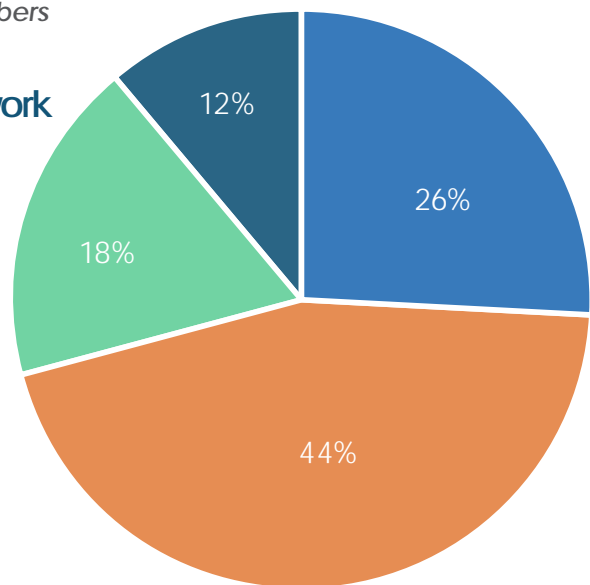
The plan documented 23 specific city bicycle and pedestrian projects that included recommendations ranging from installation of bike lanes and sidewalks, to crosswalks and shared-use paths. The following diagram **Figure 2-3** shows the percentage of the overall Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that each project type represents.

Figure 2-3: Coral Gables Mobility Master Plan Numbers

Project Type Miles and % of Planned Network

	New Bicycle Boulevards	9 miles
	New Bicycle Lanes	15 miles
	Shared Use Paths	6 miles
	Protected Bike Lane	4 miles

Total new Bikeways	34 miles
Total Bikeway Network	36.1 miles
Total Pedestrian Network	6.76 miles



Relevance to Master Plan

The Coral Gables Mobility Master plan establishes the City's goal to create a walkable, bikeable environment for its residents and visitors. It defines the vision for a city-wide network of connectivity through a series of upgrades and installations of bike and pedestrian infrastructure. It states the City's goal to encourage biking and walking as viable, safe transportation. The

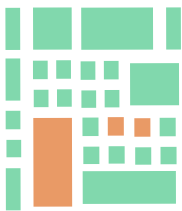
Master Plan places priority on ongoing planning and regular allocation of funds for upkeep and development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. These types of projects work as a glue between parks and open spaces in the City. The new CRMP should intentionally tie into the mobility network and vision already established in this plan so that the systems operate compatibly.

The City of Coral Gables Zoning Code (Updated 2018 & 2021)

The City of Coral Gables, Zoning Code was created to implement the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Code is designed to protect and promote the safety, health,

comfort, morals, convenience, peace, prosperity, appearance, and general welfare of the City and its inhabitants. The Code also protects the historic character of Coral Gables, fosters community pride, and develops and conserves natural resources of land, water, and air.

City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Permissions for Parks or Open Space:



Zoning

- **City Parks Zoning:** City parks are permitted in all Coral Gables zoning districts. The University Campus District conditionally permits parks that are principally designed to serve university educational needs.
- **Open Space Zoning:** Public open space is permitted in Mixed Use and Preservation districts, and is conditionally permitted in Special Use Districts. The University Campus District conditionally permits open space zoning principally for educational uses.
- **Outdoor Recreation and Entertainment Zoning:** Outdoor recreation and entertainment is permitted in Industrial Districts and is conditionally permitted in Commercial Limited, Commercial, and University Campus District.
- **Indoor Recreation and Entertainment Zoning:** Indoor recreation and entertainment is permitted in Commercial Limited, Commercial, and Industrial Districts. It is conditionally permitted in the University Campus District.

City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Key Highlights (2021 Update):

Major Changes:

- Apply the Downtown District Overlay (DO) to parcels of all sizes.
- Require a 60-foot parking setback in the DO.
- Allow no additional height above 6 stories/70 feet in the DO.
- Replace commercial limited, commercial, and industrial uses with mixed-use
- Allow small mixed-used parcel
- Decrease parking requirements and allow remote parking
- Increase multifamily housing
- Exempt parking for small-scale, low-rise buildings

Minor Changes:

- Create a street design section to apply to all districts.
- Increase seawall/bulkhead height to 6ft/7.5ft.
- Exempt parking for small-scale low-rise buildings in CBD.
- Allow townhouses to have upper story landscaped terraces and rear landscape.
- 20% front yard requirement for all residential properties
- Clarify the distinction between landscaped open space for residential properties and accessible/visible urban open space for mixed-use properties.

Relevance to Master Plan

The Zoning Code for Coral Gables gives clear usage and development guidance for the City. Districts that are located next to each other have provisions in the Code that help create complementary edges and intersections or purposeful

borders between areas with different land uses. This Code promotes high-quality, interconnected relationships between all the sectors that diversify Coral Gables and enable the City to thrive. These Zones will help define clear uses, purpose, and relationships of specific open space and parks sites in the CRMP.

2000 Parks and Open Space Master Plan

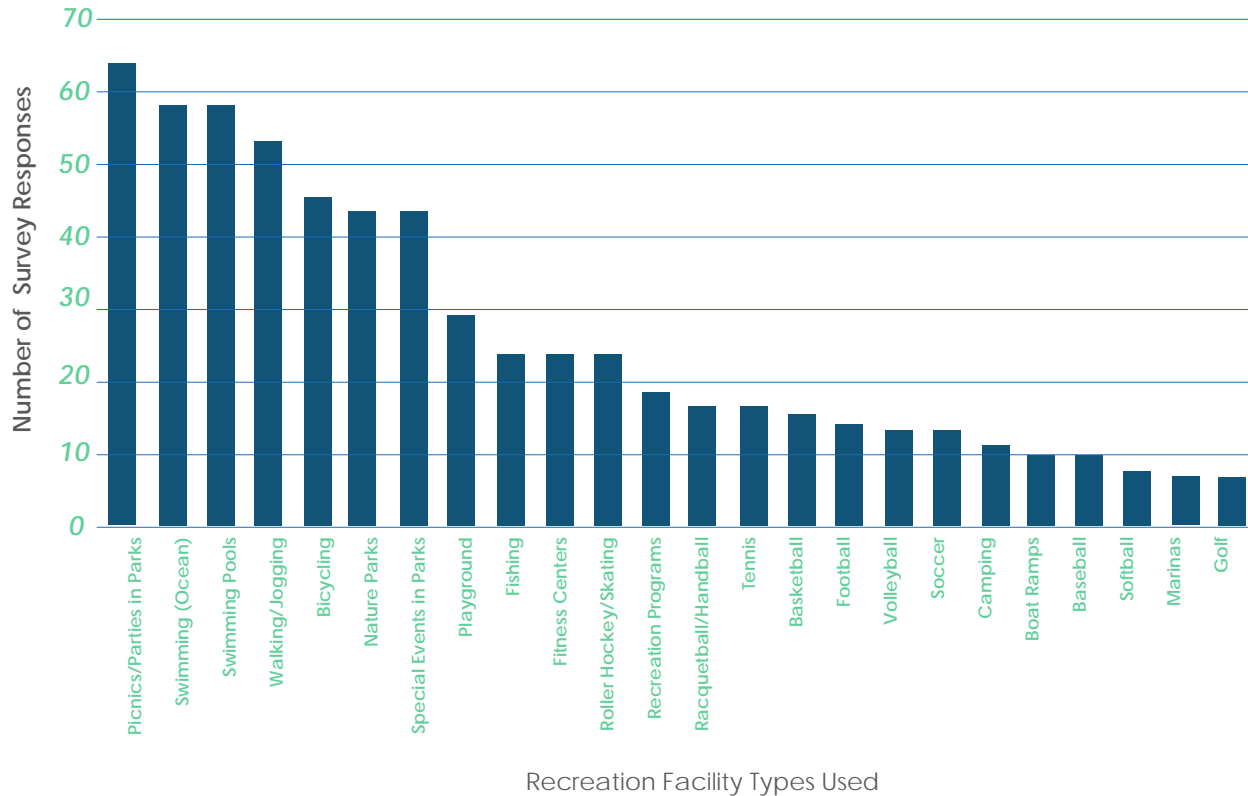
The Coral Gables Parks and Open Space Master Plan was first prepared in 2000 by Glattig Jackson and subsequently updated in 2010 by Coral Gables Community Recreation Department staff. Its purpose is to enhance the quality of life for the City's residents and guests of all ages through recreation and educational opportunities, facilities, and events that create memorable life experiences. In 1999,

Coral Gables encompassed almost 8,000 acres in land mass. Over 2,300 acres (27%) were reserved for recreation and open space by various providers. The 2000 Master Plan laid out a vision to improve a City system of urban open spaces including purchasing land for parks and open space and developing neighborhood parks throughout the city. It also emphasized development of public downtown gathering spaces; a safe completed sidewalk system; and senior community centers with more senior programs.

In 2000, when the plan was first developed, surveys indicated that picnicking, swimming, walking/jogging, and biking were among the most popular activities for Coral Gables residents and that those activities had

greatly increased over the previous 30 years. This data assisted in prioritizing additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the City in the 2000 Master Plan.

Figure 2-4: Coral Gables Use of City Recreation Facilities from the 2000 Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Source: Miami-Dade Leisure Interest Survey - City Trends for the City of Coral Gables 2000

Priorities in the 2000 Parks and Open Space Plan Included:

- Acquire land for parks.
- Create a central gathering place downtown for lunch (plaza/ amphitheater).
- Develop a complete, fully connected citywide sidewalk network.
- Establish areas of public access to the City's waterways and canals.
- Increase the number of neighborhood parks.
- Increase the number of Senior/Community Centers and add additional programming.

Key Projects from the 2000 Master Plan Included:

- Connect Merrick Park to City Hall through a system of plazas.
- Reclaim Pinewood Cemetery as a public space through new facilities and landscaping.
- The Columbus Esplanade – Restore the space between the Biltmore and the neighboring church to Merrick’s original vision for a grand gathering space complete with fountains and seating areas.
- Develop Sheehy Park and a parcel on Blue Road as public recreation facilities with access to the waterways and canal system.

Updated 2010 Park and Recreation Master Plan

In 2010, when the plan was updated by City of Coral Gables staff, the vision of residents and city leaders continued to focus on ensuring a high quality of life in the city. The major shift in the updated 2010 plan was an emphasis on proximity and convenience. The updated plan prioritizes filling specific gaps in the park and recreation system to ensure close, easy access to open space, parks, waterways, recreation facilities, and natural areas for all residents throughout the entire city.

This plan for convenience took the form of serving residents with neighborhood parks and open spaces that offer both passive and active recreation activities and facilities. The City determined that it was important to provide active recreation facilities such as ballfields and court sports within a convenient driving distance (3 miles) for residents. Another priority was linking park facilities with a network of shaded sidewalks and bike lanes into one large system to serve the entire city. Finally, a high priority was the provision of public/open spaces to serve as gathering places in the downtown area.

Updated Priorities in the 2010 Plan for Parks and Open Space:

- Complete a **Neighborhood Park System**: Expand the existing system of neighborhood parks by developing existing park sites and partnering with the School Board and Miami-Dade County to provide service for all communities.
- **Develop Downtown Open Spaces**: Identify opportunities to develop streetscapes, mini-parks, plazas, neighborhood parks, and public assembly spaces for existing and future residents of the growing downtown population.

- **Complete Linkages:** Complete the existing system of pedestrian/ bicycle facilities to create a continuous, interconnected system of safe “friendly streets,” sidewalks, bike lanes, bike paths, and crosswalks throughout the City.
- **Expand the System of Community Facilities:** Strengthen partnerships with other providers to accommodate changing recreational needs for indoor and outdoor recreation, and continue to explore new and innovative program delivery methods.
- **Restore the Connection to the Water:** Re-establish public access to the City’s waterways as intended in Merrick’s original vision, celebrating this unique public asset.
- **Polish the System of Public Spaces:** Honor the landscape and architectural heritage that defines Coral Gables and extend these features throughout the City’s parks, public spaces, streets, and gateways.

Key Projects from the 2010 Updated Master Plan:



1. Additional neighborhood parks

- Six new neighborhood parks are proposed.
- Three neighborhood parks are proposed as joint-use parks with Miami- Dade County.
- Coral Gables Elementary is proposed as a joint-use neighborhood park.



2. A system of downtown urban open spaces



3. Additional joint-use community facilities

- Joint-use facilities at Ponce de Leon Middle and Coral Gables High School.
- Restoration of the Columbus Esplanade.



4. A complete pedestrian/bicycle facility network connecting all sections of the City

- Proposed bike lanes on Granada Boulevard, Bird Road, and Riviera Drive.
- A complete sidewalk system.
- Extension of the Old Cutler Road bike path; and
- Creation of the Prado Walking Trail.



5. Public access to the waterway system

- Public access facilities at Sheehy Park and Blue Road Open Space creating a waterway trail through the City.



6. New gateways

- Six new gateways at prominent intersections around the perimeter of the City.

Relevance to Master Plan

The goals and projects defined in the previous Parks and Open Space Master Plan (and 2010 update) will operate as a baseline for the CRMP. The 2000-2015 priorities give a framework for determining successes and in-progress visions for Coral Gables parks and recreation. The major priorities of the plan were walkability, safe biking infrastructure, access to waterways and parks, picnicking, and open space.

It will be critical to determine which of these goals have been successful and how a new plan can continue to develop these systems in alignment to priorities by residents. Two key questions to update are: 1) Are current city priorities the same? 2) Do these goals still align with the needs and interests of residents? The new CRMP can build on the successes of the current system and will answer these questions to expand development in areas of the city that may have new needs.

2017 City of Coral Gables - Parks Key Requirements Survey

In 2017 Coral Gables created a survey to gain insight into the values and needs of its existing park program users. The goal was to learn what types of programs attracted people and what improvements users think are needed. The survey addressed topics such as existing user characteristics, what brought them to the facility, was service meeting their expectations, and how could service be improved. The resulting data helped to better align all City leadership's understanding of recreation programming successes and opportunities.

The survey indicated that the primary participants of recreation programming in Coral Gables are younger residents (18 and under) with older residents (65+) being the second highest. Survey responses indicate that 83 percent of participants were under the age of 18; 12 percent were 56 or older and only 4 percent were between ages 19 and 55. Many of the respondents were new participants of the City programs: 60 percent had used the services for one

year or less; 30 percent had used the services between one and four years and approximately 10 percent had used the facilities five or more years. The survey also indicated that 43 percent of participants were not Coral Gables residents.

The survey revealed that aquatics related programs are the most popular with classes for learning-to-swim and lifeguard camp combining for 40 percent of the 278 survey participant responses. Fitness related summer camps and classes were the second most popular programs representing 30 percent of the survey responses. Respondents recommended three main improvements for city parks and recreation programs including cleaner bathrooms, evening classes, and more frequent classes. Participants valued a safe, clean facility with ease of parking and access. Primary motivations for registering for programs were location, friendly staff, and the prices/fees. The least significant factors in registration were whether it could be done in person, the payment process, and mobile registration capabilities.

Relevance to Master Plan

The 2017 Parks Key Requirements Survey provides insight from actual users of Coral Gables recreation facilities and programs. While digitization and mobile technology is the focus of much of current business operations, planning, and development,

this survey indicates that word of mouth recommendations, a smile from staff members, quality but lower cost programs, and clean facilities are primary concerns of patrons. It is important to put equal priority in the CRMP on helping to create these types of experiences for guests and the Coral Gables community.

2019-2023 Coral Gables Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a city-wide five-year investment strategy for Fiscal Years 2019 through 2023. It ensures available funds to repair, replace, preserve, and enhance the infrastructure of Coral Gables. The plan is a compilation of capital projects/programs chosen based

upon critical needs to meet regulatory mandates, to remedy conditions and improve public health, safety and welfare for residents, visitors, and employees, and to provide essential maintenance of City facilities. The amount allotted in the plan for parks and recreation improvements spanning 13 specific projects or expenditures categories is \$24,664,608.

Table 2-2: Parks & Recreation Improvement Projects and Funding (2019-2023)

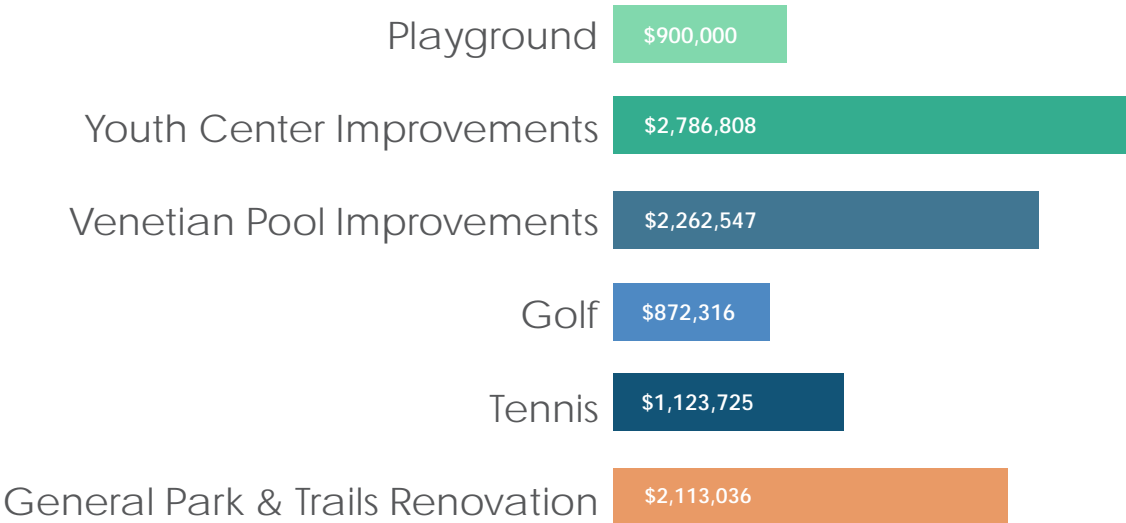
Project	Description	Five-year Cost
Downtown Civic Plaza & Garden	Develop a public gathering place for a small event, special use area along Biltmore Way.	\$2,000,000
Purchase Land	Purchase land for parks and recreational usage.	\$3,503,919
Fred B. Hartnett/Ponce Circle Park Improvements	Park improvements for ease of circulation, enlarged landscape spaces and parallel parking.	\$2,000,000
Development of Passive Parks	Acquire land for passive parks and open space.	\$2,327,921
W.H. Kerdyk/Bilt Tennis Ctr Improvements	Renovate existing pro shop building..	\$ 1,080,317
96 Parks & Recreation Major Repairs	Replace and renovate all capital assets within Parks & Recreation.	\$10,373,877
Parks System Improvements	New and expanded facilities, land purchase for additional parks, green and open spaces and development.	\$443,574
Vacant Lots Acquisition	Acquisition of large parcel in north part of the City.	\$2,000,000
Mar Street-Play Street	Develop Mar Street right-of-way as a neighborhood park.	\$200,000
102 Manatee Overlook	Develop area where people gather to watch the manatees in the adjacent waterway.	\$200,000
Old Cutler Bay Passive Park	Design and construction of a passive park at Old Cutler Bay.	\$200,000
Coral Gables High School Track Lighting	Installation of field and track lighting to allow community access in the evenings.	\$300,000
Granada Golf Course Groundwater Diversion	Engineering consulting fees for evaluating and developing scope of work and cost estimate for Granada storm water management and irrigation.	\$35,000



Significant Financial note from Coral Gables CIP plan:

- For 2019, \$4.5 million was budgeted out of a total \$10.3 million budget for the full five-year CIP for Parks and Recreation. This is a significant portion dedicated for the first year and represents almost 45% of the five-year budget.

Figure 2-5: 2019-2023 Coral Gables Capital Improvement Plan Funding by Type



Relevance to Master Plan

The CIP provides data related to current parks and recreation projects and funding. It details and allocates funds for acquisition of land parcels for parks, ongoing renovation, and expansion of parks and recreation facilities. The CIP includes right-of-way and stormwater management projects.

The CRMP can complement this work and assist with its ongoing planning while meeting parks needs that are currently not addressed. This plan will help to inform future CIP development to tailor funding and planning priorities in alignment with the community's defined needs and priorities.

2.1.3 Guiding Documents Summary

The guiding documents of the City of Coral Gables articulate a clear vision to maintain a high quality of life for its residents. Dedication to this vision from City leadership has remained steadfast even during periods of intense transition or economic downturn. Through a spectrum of large-scale plans that establish safe completed citywide mobility systems to smaller targeted goals like updating park furniture and pocket neighborhood parks, Coral Gables is addressing both comprehensive and personalized needs in its neighborhoods.

The City's guiding vision strongly adheres to principles of visual aesthetic consistency and tasteful updates and maintenance while also addressing critical concerns of sustainability, conservation of natural resources, and environmentally sensitive development and design. Previously completed plans and studies present a focus on recent developments and preferences in passive and active recreation such as picnicking, biking, and aquatic activities. A review of these documents provides a strong foundational understanding of Coral Gables' values and ongoing goals. That foundation of knowledge is critical to the development of the CRMP. It will help shape elements of continuity with existing community values and provide a blueprint to pinpoint park and recreation needs that are as yet unmet throughout the City.



Lisbon Park



Snapper Creek Parkway

2.2

DEMOGRAPHICS

2.2.1 Overview

Understanding the demographic and population characteristics and trends of Coral Gables will allow the CRMP to respond to community needs and help build a strong city, based on the existing culture and values. As an essential element to the quality of life in Coral Gables, parks and recreation facilities are not just places, but unique spaces that respond to experiences and activities. The first step in analyzing the community's demographics and population is to identify trends in historic data and future projections. This allows the City to identify changes that may impact delivery of parks and recreation services over the next 10+ years.

In the last two decades, Coral Gables experienced an average growth of approximately 1.2 percent annually. This is similar to state-wide trends of growth and urbanization experienced specifically by Miami-Dade County and also the greater Miami Metro area of Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade Counties. The population of both areas rose approximately 11 percent during the same period. This trend also spanned the State of Florida, which saw a population increase between 2000 and 2010 of 17.6 percent. Moving forward, the state is expecting an incremental slowdown in growth to approximately 3.0 percent or 3.5 percent by 2045. The only exception to this trend is a small uptick of



William H. Kerdyk, Jr., and Family Park

about 2.0 percent in population expected around 2025. Otherwise, Florida and Coral Gables expect a noticeable slowing of population growth in the next 25-years.

With growth increases in the last 20-years and a steadying of population growth expected over the next 20-years, it is an opportune time to reevaluate the City's parks and recreation needs. There have been substantial density changes resulting in an evolving labor force and housing conditions. Previously planned developments were restrained by limited resources due to the 2008 recession. Coral Gables can now gain a strong sense of just how much the City has changed and can begin to meet the new needs over the next decade. With the major growth over the last decade, population characteristics and needs for parks and recreation have changed as well. Three main categories were analyzed in this study; population growth; population characteristics; and housing characteristics. The following sections highlight significant findings.

2.2.2 Population Growth

The growth trends of the last 20-years increased the density and urbanization of Coral Gables and transitioned it from a small city to a flourishing one. This growth has resulted in needs for additional parkland and recreation facilities. Previous planning efforts and demographic analysis envision future growth will continue in areas that have historically experienced increases in population density and urbanization. This type of growth often serves a city well as dense planning and infill can provide highly walkable neighborhoods and efficient transportation options such as biking and pedestrian networks to access parks and recreation facilities

Data from by the Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources Transportation Analysis **Map 2-1** shows that many areas where growth has already occurred are also becoming denser. The projections show the expected growth to remain relatively stable between 2020 and 2040. The areas with strongest projected growth are in the northeastern area of the City with a strong trend of continuing urbanization in the Downtown area and adjacent neighborhoods. The highest growth is expected along US1, which is expected to see an increase in population of more than 3,000 in the next 20-years.

This type of growth creates a strain on existing parks causing capacity concerns with facilities due to overcrowding and programs unable to meet growing need. The data depicts a need for greater access to transit and walkable facilities throughout these dense areas, as well as an emphasis on providing parks and open spaces in the growing urban fabric. Three areas in Coral Gables also indicate an expected decline in population. Data from the Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources Transportation Analysis **Map 2-2** shows that the areas with an increase in population also expect employment to rise. Five areas in the northeastern area of the City expect an increase in labor force of between 500 and 1,000. While population growth requires additional recreation and parks facilities, workers have a different set of needs. An increase in the number of people in the urban fabric during the day leads to a need for more downtown urban spaces for lunch, socializing spaces, and additional spaces for indoor recreation where people can exercise on their lunch breaks.

Table 2-3: City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade, and State of Florida Population Projections

Year	City of Coral Gables		Miami-Dade County		Miami Metro Area		State of Florida	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2000	42,249	-	2,253,779	-	5,007,988	-	15,982,824	-
2010	46,780	+9.7%	2,496,457	10.8%	5,564,657	11.1%	18,801,310	17.6%
2019	49,700	+6.2%	2,743,095	9.9%	6,031,209	8.4%	20,484,142	9.0%
2020	-	-	2,872,760	4.7%	6,289,509	4.3%	21,526,547	5.1%
2025	-	-	3,062,631	6.6%	6,667,988	6.0%	23,061,892	7.1%
2030	-	-	3,215,054	5.0%	6,978,321	4.7%	24,357,003	5.6%
2035	-	-	3,350,365	4.2%	7,248,007	3.9%	25,485,553	4.6%
2040	-	-	3,477,569	3.8%	7,486,853	3.3%	26,492,005	3.9%
2045	-	-	3,592,198	3.3%	7,700,152	2.9%	27,423,577	3.5%

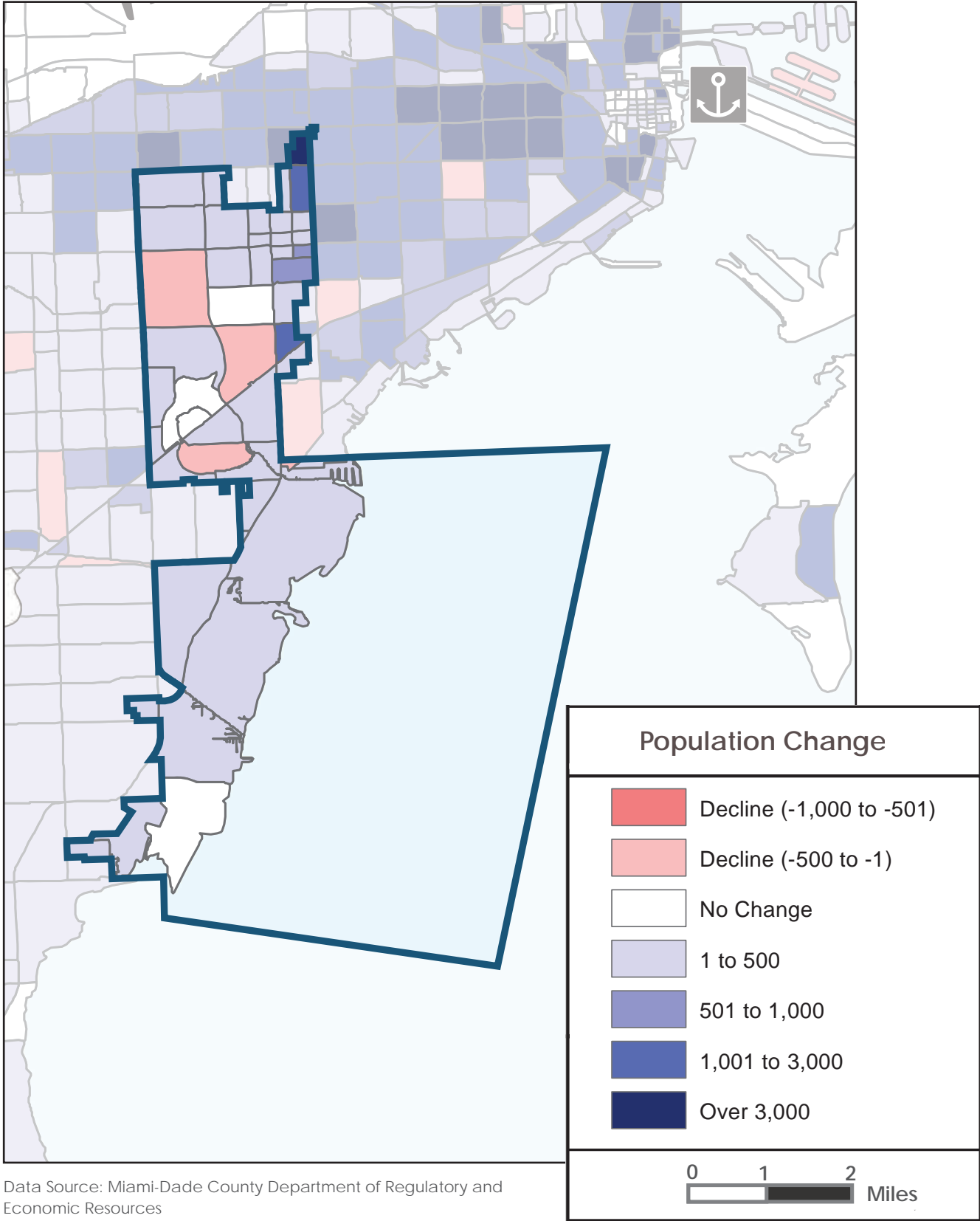
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000, 2010, 2017
 Florida Office of Economic & Demographic Research

Three areas in north and west portions of the City expect a similar increase in employment. These center around the University of Miami Campus. One additional area in the northern portion of Coral Gables is projected to experience moderate to high employment increases of up to 3,000 people. This growth is fueled due to continued development of the Shops at Sunset Place.

2.2.3 Population Characteristics

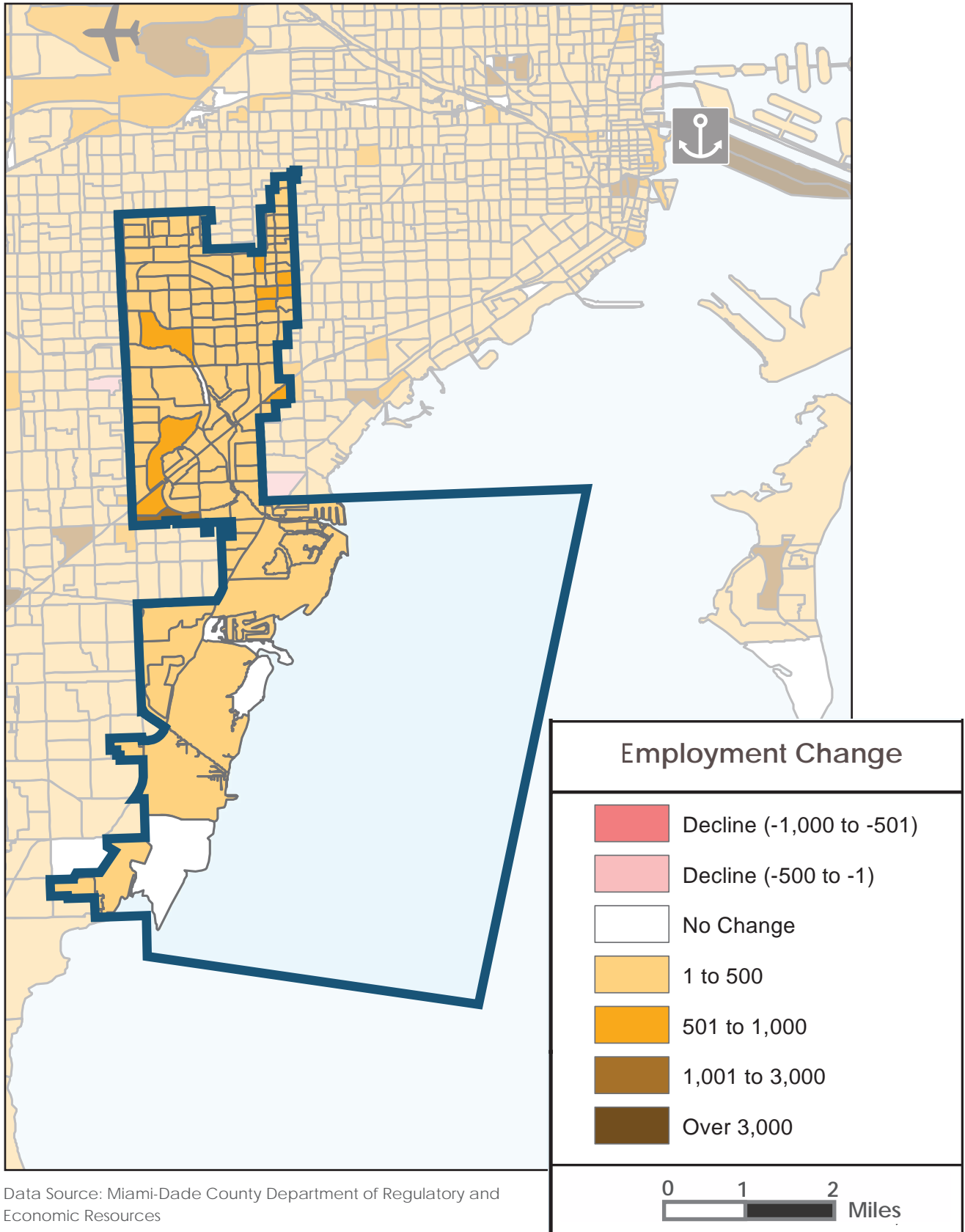
Total population and growth can help to determine level of service goals, while population characteristics can help to define what type of facilities will best serve the community **Table 2-3**. The U.S. Census 2017 and American Community Survey (ACS) data for the City of Coral Gables reveals population trends. When compared with data from 2000 and 2010, and that of Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida, this information is put into a temporal and geographic context. Data combined from the US Census Bureau allows for the most recent characteristics and historic growth trends to be identified. The following population characteristics analysis among other factors will help determine needs for parks and facilities.

Map 2-1: Coral Gables Population Change (2010-2040) TAZ (Transportation Analysis Zones)



Data Source: Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources

Map 2-2: Coral Gables Employment Change (2010-2040) MAZ (Micro Analysis Zone)



Data Source: Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources

A majority of Coral Gables' population is Non-Hispanic White and Latino/Hispanic communities **Table 2-4**. Combined these groups make up 93.3 percent of the population. Between 2000 and 2019, Coral Gables experienced a notable change in the overall percentage of Non-Hispanic White citizens, decreasing by 13.3 percent from 47.7 percent to 34.4 percent of the City's population. The Latino/Hispanic community saw the greatest increase of any ethnic group during the same period, rising 12.3 percent to represent 58.9 percent of the population. Other ethnic groups experienced much smaller changes. Asian population rose 0.8 percent. The African American population decreased 0.2 percent between 2000 and 2019, and residents who identify as having a background of two or more races decreased 0.5 percent to a total of 1.0 percent of the City's population.

The changes that Coral Gables is seeing are similar but less pronounced in Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida overall. The Non-Hispanic White population percentage fell 7.0 percent in Miami-Dade County and 11.0 percent in the state. The Latino/Hispanic population increased much less in the county with only 1.1 percent growth but was more similar to that of the state at large which increased by 8.4 percent. The trends seen in the Coral Gables Latino/Hispanic and Non-Hispanic White communities are more similar to the state at large than to Miami-Dade County which saw much smaller changes in both communities. Between 2000 and 2019, the African American population saw a 0.2 percent and 4.0 percent decrease in Coral Gables and the County, but saw 0.8 percent increase throughout the state of Florida.

Table 2-4: Race/ Ethnicity in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Race/Ethnicity	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
Non-Hispanic White	47.7%	43.0%	34.4%	-13.3%	20.7%	15.4%	13.7%	-7.0%	65.4%	59.1%	54.4%	-11.0%
Black/African American	3.3%	2.5%	3.1%	-0.2%	20.3%	19.2%	16.3%	-4.0%	14.6%	15.1%	15.4%	0.8%
Latino/Hispanic	46.6%	52.2%	58.9%	12.3%	57.3%	52.2%	58.4%	1.1%	16.8%	21.6%	25.2%	8.4%
Asian	1.7%	1.7%	2.5%	0.8%	1.4%	1.6%	1.5%	0.1%	1.7%	2.4%	2.7%	1.0%
American Indian	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.3%	0.7%	0.2%	-0.1%
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Other Race	1.5%	0.1%	0.1%	-1.4%	4.6%	3.4%	2.6%	-2.0%	3.0%	3.4%	0.3%	-2.7%
Two or More Races	1.5%	0.6%	1.0%	-0.5%	3.8%	1.4%	1.5%	-2.3%	2.4%	2.0%	1.8%	-0.6%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000, 2010; 2019

Age

While the population of Coral Gables is aging, it is doing so more slowly than the rest of the State of Florida. **Table 2-5**. Between 2000 and 2019 the median age in Coral Gables increased by 1.7 years to 39.8 years of age. The median age increased much faster by 4.1 years in Miami-Dade County to 39.7 years of age. The median overall population age in the State of Florida, increased by 3.2 years to 41.9 years of age. To better understand these changes, individual age groups were analyzed for comparison.

In Coral Gables, the 55 to 74 age group experienced an increase of 4.1 percent. This may reflect the aging Baby Boomer generation. This same trend carried over into the rest of the state where the 55 to 74 age group increased by 5.3 percent between 2000 and 2019. The younger resident population 5 to 19 decreased in the state by 2.4 percent and 4.0 percent in the county. This same younger age group of 5 to 19, however, increased 3.0 percent in Coral Gables. The increase in the younger population in Coral Gables along with a slower increase of older populations likely

Table 2-5: Population by Age in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Age (Years)	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
Under 5	4.9%	4.0%	4.9%	0.0%	6.5%	6.2%	5.8%	-0.7%	5.9%	5.8%	5.4%	-0.5%
5 to 9	4.9%	5.4%	5.2%	0.3%	7.0%	5.9%	5.5%	-1.5%	6.5%	5.8%	5.5%	-1.0%
10 to 14	4.8%	5.7%	5.6%	0.8%	7.1%	6.2%	5.7%	-1.4%	6.6%	6.1%	5.7%	-0.9%
15 to 19	8.2%	12.3%	10.1%	1.9%	6.9%	6.9%	5.8%	-1.1%	6.3%	6.7%	5.8%	-0.5%
20 to 24	8.4%	9.5%	7.8%	-0.6%	6.4%	7.1%	6.5%	0.1%	5.8%	6.5%	6.2%	0.4%
25 to 34	13.7%	8.6%	11.3%	-2.4%	15.0%	13.7%	14.3%	-0.7%	13.0%	12.2%	12.9%	-0.1%
35 to 44	15.3%	13.3%	11.7%	-3.6%	16.1%	15.3%	14.0%	-2.1%	15.5%	13.6%	12.1%	-3.4%
45 to 54	13.9%	14.6%	13.2%	-0.7%	12.5%	14.3%	14.9%	2.4%	12.9%	14.4%	13.3%	0.4%
55 to 64	10.0%	11.3%	12.0%	2.0%	9.1%	5.7%	12.0%	2.9%	9.7%	12.0%	13.2%	3.5%
65 to 74	7.5%	6.9%	9.6%	2.1%	7.2%	10.6%	8.3%	1.1%	9.1%	8.8%	10.9%	1.8%
75 to 84	6.0%	5.6%	5.5%	-0.5%	4.4%	4.7%	5.0%	0.6%	6.4%	5.9%	6.2%	-0.2%
85 +	2.2%	2.7%	3.0%	0.8%	1.7%	1.8%	2.3%	0.6%	2.1%	2.2%	2.6%	0.5%
Median Age	38.1	38.6	39.8	1.7	35.6	37.7	39.7	4.1	38.7	40.3	41.9	3.2
Under 18	17.4%	18.4%	19.1%	1.7%	24.8%	22.4%	20.4%	-4.4%	22.8%	21.7%	20.1%	-2.7%
Over 65	15.8%	15.2%	18.1%	2.3%	13.3%	13.9%	15.6%	2.3%	17.6%	16.9%	19.7%	2.1%
Male	46.7%	47.0%	48.9%	2.2%	48.3%	47.6%	48.6%	0.3%	48.8%	48.9%	48.9%	0.1%
Female	53.3%	53.0%	51.1%	-2.2%	51.7%	52.4%	51.4%	-0.3%	51.2%	51.1%	51.1%	-0.1%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000; 2010; 2019

accounts for the lower median age of 39.8 in Coral Gables compared to the State of Florida median age of 41.9. While the City's population has continued to age in the last nine years, the growth in the youngest age groups of 19 and below in Coral Gables means there is a new wave of young residents in the City.

A focus on meeting the needs of an older population is critical for the City of Coral Gables. With older generations, much of the parks and recreation focus may turn to health and wellness programs. However, continued emphasis will need to be placed on the improvement and programming of parks and schools in the City as well to meet the needs of the increasing younger age groups.

Gender

Populations do not typically experience extreme changes in gender distribution unless a major event occurs to impact it such as the closing or creation of a military base. The 2000 U.S. Census indicated that there was a higher population of women in Coral Gables **Table 2-5**. In 2000 women comprised 53.3 percent of the total population and

men equaled 46.7 percent. This ratio shifted however between 2000 and 2019 during which the percentage of men increased by 2.2 percent to comprise 48.9 percent of the Coral Gables population. In Miami-Dade County, the ratio also shifted slightly in favor of men with an increase of 0.3 percent to a total of 48.6 percent lower than that of Coral Gables. This growth trend extended throughout the State of Florida though more slightly where men saw an increase of 0.1 percent, but women comprised equal percentage of the population as in Coral Gables at 48.9 percent.

Income

Coral Gables residents experienced a substantial increase in median household income between 2000 and 2019, from \$66,839 to \$100,000 **Table 2-6**. The increase of \$33,161 is much higher than that of households in Miami-Dade County and in the State of Florida where median incomes are \$48,982 and \$53,267 respectively. The increase could be reflective of an aging, more professionally established population in Coral Gables. To better understand the trends, changes in individual income brackets were evaluated.



Jaycee Park

Table 2-6: Median Household Income in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Income in last 12 months	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
Less than \$10,000	6.50%	7.1%	4.6%	-1.9%	13.9%	10.1%	9.4%	-4.5%	9.6%	7.3%	6.8%	-2.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.30%	3.3%	2.9%	-0.4%	7.5%	6.9%	5.9%	-1.6%	6.7%	5.6%	4.7%	-2.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8.60%	6.8%	6.1%	-2.5%	14.4%	12.6%	11.6%	-2.8%	14.5%	11.8%	10.5%	-4.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8.70%	6.9%	6.0%	-2.7%	13.0%	11.5%	10.5%	-2.5%	14.2%	11.8%	10.7%	-3.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	10.90%	10.6%	6.7%	-4.2%	15.7%	14.4%	13.4%	-2.3%	17.4%	15.6%	14.3%	-3.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	16.00%	12.1%	13.1%	-2.9%	16.7%	17.2%	16.7%	0.0%	18.5%	18.9%	18.4%	-0.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.50%	8.2%	10.5%	0.0%	8.1%	10.1%	10.6%	2.5%	8.7%	11.5%	11.9%	3.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	13.30%	14.5%	14.3%	1.0%	6.2%	9.8%	11.3%	5.1%	6.3%	10.5%	12.5%	6.2%
\$150,000 or more	6.50%	30.5%	35.7%	29.2%	2.0%	7.4%	10.6%	8.6%	1.8%	7.0%	10.2%	8.4%
\$200,000 or more	15.60%	21.4%	23.9%	8.3%	2.7%	4.0%	5.9%	3.2%	2.3%	3.6%	5.4%	3.1%
Median Income	\$66,839	\$84,027	\$100,000	\$33,161	\$35,966	\$43,605	\$48,982	\$13,016	\$38,819	\$47,661	\$53,267	\$14,448

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000; 2010; 2019

Income increases have been a consistent trend across all of the State of Florida with the percentages of the population in income brackets making \$49,999 per year or less consistently decreasing. Most notably, middle income households in Coral Gables in income brackets of \$35,000 to \$74,999 annually, decreased by 7.1 percent, greater than the county’s decreases of 2.3 percent or the state’s decrease of 3.2 percent. Significant differences between Coral Gables and the rest of the state are also apparent in households making \$75,000 to \$150,000 annually. Between 2000 and 2018 the county and state saw a good portion of their income increases in this range. Miami-Dade County saw an

increase of 7.6 percent, and the State of Florida saw an increase of 9.4 percent, whereas Coral Gables increased only 1.0 percent in this same income range. Growth in higher income brackets spread across the whole state, but Coral Gables’ greatest percentage increase was in the \$150,000 and higher income bracket which experienced very strong growth of 29.2 percent between 2000 and 2019. This was substantially higher than the county or state growth which saw 8.6 percent and 8.4 percent increases respectively in this same income bracket. This stronger growth in highest income brackets sheds light on the notably higher median household income overall in Coral Gables compared to the rest of the state.

As incomes increase and budgets allow for more disposable income, residents often begin seeking out more specialized parks and recreation services such as rock climbing or sailing. With the rise in incomes in Coral Gables, the City should expect an increased interest in specialized recreation services.

Educational Attainment

Residents of Coral Gables in general have a very high level of educational attainment **Table 2-7**. 65.5 percent of the City's population has a Bachelor's degree or higher. The number of residents with a Master's degree or higher increased by 3.5 percent between 2000 and 2019 to represent a total of 34.4 percent of the City's population, a number markedly higher than Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida

where 10.6 percent of the population have a Master's degree or higher. During this same time period, the county saw a increase of 1.3 percent in it's population with a Masters degree, and the state saw an 2.5 percent increase.

Coral Gables saw its highest educational attainment increase in Bachelor's Degrees with a rise of 3.8 percent, which was lower than the increases in the County or State of Florida overall, which saw increases of 6.0 percent and 4.2 percent in Bachelor's degrees between 2000 and 2019. However, Coral Gables has a much higher percentage of its overall population with Bachelor's degrees at 31.1 percent compared to the county's 18.3 percent and the state's 18.2 percent. This trend of strong and increasing educational focus is likely due to the proximity and influence of the University of Miami's main campus.

Table 2-7: Educational Attainment in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Education (% of pop. 25 and older)	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
Less than 9th Grade	3.20%	2.9%	2.1%	-1.1%	14.7%	12.2%	9.9%	-4.8%	6.7%	5.7%	4.9%	-1.8%
9th – 12th grade, no diploma	5.10%	2.3%	1.7%	-3.4%	17.4%	10.8%	8.6%	-8.8%	13.4%	9.0%	7.1%	-6.3%
High School graduate	11.00%	12.3%	11.3%	0.3%	22.3%	27.4%	27.7%	5.4%	28.7%	30.3%	28.8%	0.1%
Some college, no degrees	15.90%	11.4%	12.3%	-3.6%	17.6%	14.9%	15.6%	-2.0%	21.8%	20.6%	20.2%	-1.6%
Associate's degree	6.50%	7.3%	7.0%	0.5%	6.3%	8.4%	9.4%	3.1%	7.0%	8.5%	9.8%	2.8%
Bachelor's degree	27.30%	31.5%	31.1%	3.8%	12.3%	16.7%	18.3%	6.0%	14.3%	16.8%	18.5%	4.2%
Master's degree or higher	30.90%	32.2%	34.4%	3.5%	9.3%	9.5%	10.6%	1.3%	8.1%	9.1%	10.6%	2.5%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, 2019
U.S. Census Bureau Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000

Table 2-8: Employment Characteristics in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Employment (Pop. 16 years and older)	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
% In Labor Force	62.2%	57.2%	60.1%	-2.1%	57.5%	62.8%	62.5%	5.0%	58.6%	61.3%	58.7%	0.1%
% Unemployed	3.70%	3.30%	2.3%	-1.4%	5.0%	5.3%	3.9%	-1.1%	3.2%	5.4%	3.7%	0.5%
Drove Alone	76.8%	76.0%	77.4%	0.6%	73.8%	76.9%	76.8%	3.0%	78.8%	79.4%	79.4%	0.6%
Carpooled	6.9%	5.3%	6.5%	-0.4%	14.6%	9.5%	8.8%	-5.8%	12.9%	10.4%	9.2%	-3.7%
Public Transit	2.9%	4.7%	3.6%	0.7%	5.2%	5.5%	5.0%	-0.2%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%	0.0%
Walked	6.7%	6.5%	4.4%	-2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.0%	-0.2%	1.7%	1.6%	1.4%	-0.3%
Mean Travel Time (min)	22.8	21.9	24.8	2.0	30.1	29.5	32.2	2.1	26.2	25.7	27.4	1.2

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2019
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Employment

In 2010 the percentage of the Coral Gables population that was in the labor force had decreased by 5.0 percent to equal 57.2 percent of residents **Table 2-8**. Now, in 2019 that percentage has gone back up by 2.9 percent with a total of 60.1 percent of the population in the labor force. This remains a lower percentage than in 2000, and is lower than the county which has 62.5 percent of its population participating in the labor force. However, it is higher than the state percentage with 58.7 percent of the population in the labor force. Unemployment has decreased by 1.4 percent in Coral Gables with an overall unemployment of 2.3 percent of the population. This remains lower than the county’s 3.9 percent and the state’s 3.7 percent. The decrease in labor force participation alongside low unemployment numbers is indicative of a population with order residents choosing to enter retirement. Overall, employment numbers show that Coral Gables has a trend of economic strength as a community able to support a strong business environment.

Mode of Commute

A high percentage of Coral Gables residents drive alone to work, and since 2000 that number has increased by 0.6 percent representing 77.4 percent of residents **Table 2-8**. Miami-Dade County and the state show similar percentages of people driving to work, but the county had a more rapid increase since 2000 of 3.0 percent. The number of citizens choosing to walk to work or to carpool has also decreased in the City, county, and the state. One result of greater vehicular traffic is increased commute times across the City. This trend and percentage will likely grow with future population increases and a greater density of development infill in Coral Gables. The number of workers choosing public transit as their mode of transportation, however, did increase by 0.7 percent in Coral Gables in 2019, unlike the county and state which saw no change or a decrease. Coral Gables could consider methods of supporting this trend by developing improvements that encourage and make alternative methods of public transit more accessible and appealing to residents.

2.2.4 Housing Characteristics

Demographics are often thought of in terms of people, but an overview of the City's housing characteristics can provide additional trends and details about the population. High levels of homeownership typically signify stable communities, whereas high levels of vacancy can indicate a struggling local economy. Additionally, the number of new residential

units not only mirrors population growth, but can provide clues as to how densely and rapidly a community is growing based on the residential building types. This information can provide input in the amount of additional future parkland or facilities needed or even the type of facilities based on an increase in urban densities, which represent an evolving lifestyle.

Table 2-9: Housing Characteristics in the City of Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida, 2000-2019

Housing	City of Coral Gables				Miami-Dade County				State of Florida			
	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change	2000	2010	2019	Change
Households with families	61.0%	63.1%	63.6%	2.6%	70.6%	69.1%	68.4%	-2.2%	66.4%	65.3%	64.5%	-1.9%
Family w/ own kids under 18	24.2%	26.1%	25.8%	1.6%	33.8%	30.9%	28.3%	-5.5%	28.1%	26.5%	23.9%	-4.2%
Family w/o own kids under 18	36.8%	37.0%	37.8%	1.0%	36.8%	38.2%	40.1%	3.3%	38.3%	38.8%	40.6%	2.3%
Non-Family	39.0%	36.9%	36.4%	-2.6%	29.4%	30.9%	31.6%	2.2%	33.6%	34.7%	35.5%	1.9%
HHs* w/ people under 18	25.4%	27.2%	26.7%	1.3%	31.3%	35.7%	32.8%	1.5%	31.3%	29.8%	27.2%	-4.1%
HHs* w/ people over 65	28.6%	28.9%	33.6%	5.0%	30.7%	28.1%	31.8%	1.1%	30.7%	30.3%	35.7%	5.0%
Avg. HH* size	2.30	2.46	2.59	0.29	2.50	2.88	3.07	0.57	2.50	2.53	2.65	0.15
Avg. family size	2.90	3.13	3.26	0.36	3.00	3.48	3.74	0.74	3.00	3.11	3.27	0.27
Total Housing Units	17,796	19,383	21,240	3,444	852,278	980,580	1,016,653	164,375	7,302,947	8,863,057	9,348,689	2,045,742
% Units Occupied	94.10%	84.9%	83.9%	-10.2%	91.1%	84.4%	85.6%	-5.5%	86.8%	80.7%	81.5%	-5.3%
% Vacant	5.90%	15.1%	16.1%	10.2%	8.9%	15.6%	14.4%	5.5%	13.2%	19.3%	18.5%	5.3%
% Owner-Occupied	66.20%	69.3%	64.0%	-2.2%	57.9%	58.1%	51.6%	-6.3%	70.1%	69.7%	65.0%	-5.1%
% Renter Occupied	33.80%	30.7%	36.0%	2.2%	42.1%	41.9%	48.4%	6.3%	29.9%	30.3%	35.0%	5.1%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census American Community Survey, 2019
HH=household

Households and Family

The most common household type in Coral Gables is family households without children under 18 **Table 2-9**. This type of household represents 37.8 percent of all city households and increased by 1.0 percent since the 2000 Census. Households without children typically represent couples without children or whose children have aged and moved out of the home or older couples who may be caregivers. The next most common household type is the non-family household representing 36.4 percent of total households. The percentage of this household in the City decreased 2.6 percent since the last Census in 2000 and represent households where tenants are not immediate family members. The third most common household are those with individuals over the age of 65. This household type increased the most of all household types since the 2000 Census rising 5.0 percent. This reflects the current age, educational, and economic status of the City. Households with children under 18 did increase 1.3 percent since the 2000 Census which also reflects the recent rise in the population of young children in Coral Gables.

The average Coral Gables household size increased by 0.29 to 2.59 people, which is a smaller increase than that of Miami-Dade County at 0.57 to 3.07 people, but higher than the average state-wide increase of 0.15 and statewide average of 2.65. Two factors that could be contributing to the increase in household size are the rise in Latino/Hispanic households with young children in the City as well as the number of residents who may have older family members living with them. The average family size is growing in Coral

Gables as well increasing 0.36 percent to 3.26 people, which is smaller than the county average of 3.74 and slightly smaller than the state average of 3.27 people.

Housing Units

In absolute numbers, the amount of housing units in Coral Gables grew by 3,444 units between 2000 and 2019 **Table 2-9** an increase of 19.4 percent. Miami-Dade County experienced a similar increase in housing units of 19.2 percent while Florida experienced a significantly higher increase of 28.0 percent. The rate of vacancy in the housing units in Coral Gables increased by 10.2 percent between 2000 and 2019 to 16.1 percent of the total units. This change is noticeably higher than the county's increase of 6.0 percent and the state increase of 5.5 percent and the state's increase of 5.3 percent. Coral Gables' total vacancy percentage of 16.1 percent is higher than the county's which is 14.4 percent, but lower than the state average which is 18.5 percent. Some unique factors that may account for recent rises in vacancies include properties being purchased as investment units and the increasing number of homes and apartments being acquired for recently popularized services such as Airbnb or short-rentals.

2.2.5 Demographics Summary

With a better understanding of Coral Gables' population, the next step is to apply these finding to parks and recreation needs in the City. What is the impact of recent population growth, characteristics, and housing trends for the next 10+ years of parks and recreation planning? The following section explores the implications of this demographics analysis.

Figure 2-6: Household and Family Size in Coral Gables (2000-2019)

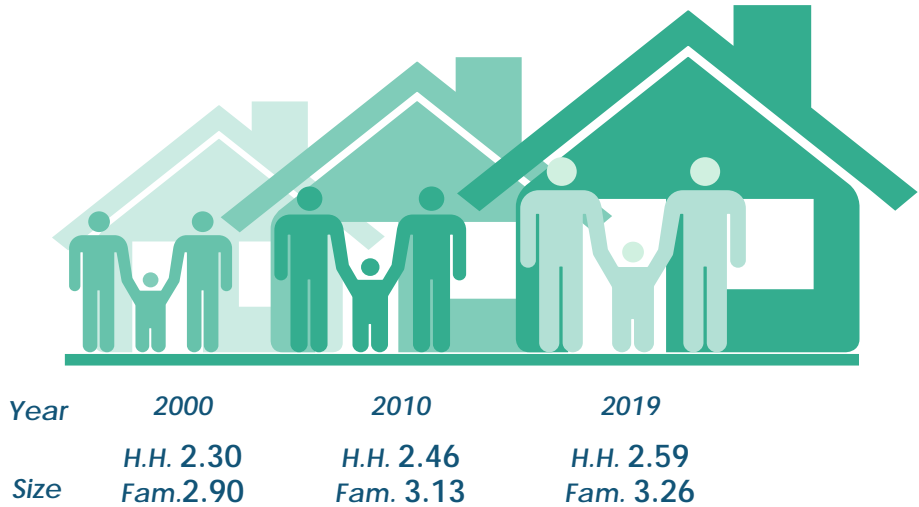


Figure 2-7: Notable Age Group Growth Rates in Coral Gables (2000-2019)

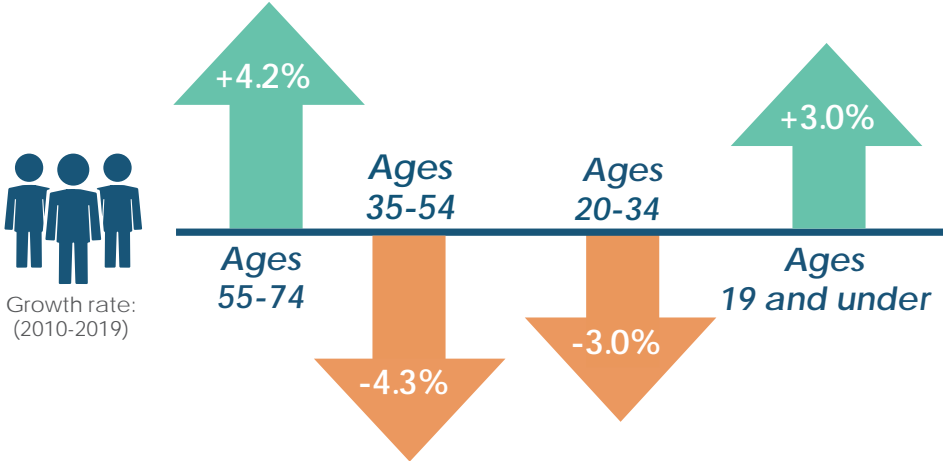
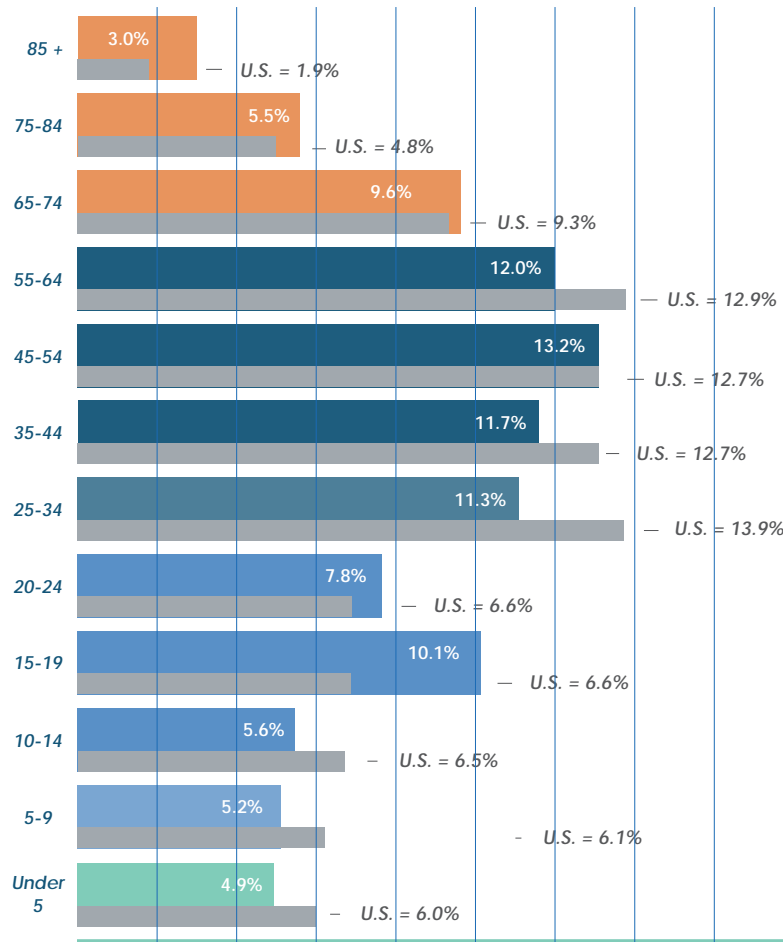


Figure 2-8: Population by Age in Coral Gables with Comparison to National Averages



Housing Summary

Coral Gables is defying both county and state trends with an increase of 1.6 percent in households with their own children under 18 even as the city’s general population is aging. This is evidence the city is maintaining a diverse residential community. These trends in younger and older population may increase the needs for both family and non-family programs and services. An area of housing in which the city is amplifying the trends across the state is in the percentage of occupied living units. While housing has increased in Coral Gables, a smaller percentage of units are occupied now than in 2000 which is a trend across Florida. However, vacant units in the city have increase by 10.2 percent compared to 5.5 percent and 5.3 percent in the county and state. Coral Gables rental occupancy has also increased by 2.2 percent, which is a trend across the state as well. These are characteristics of a population becoming increasingly transient and mobile. These trends impact the city’s parks and recreation system due to the desire of an increasingly active population for more diverse services, which influences the centralization of facilities and programs.

Figure 2-9: Median Age in Coral Gables, Florida, and the United States

Age Summary

The median age in Coral Gables increased to 39.8 years of age in 2019. A large percent of the Coral Gables population 43.3 percent is above the age of 45, so the aging trend will likely continue. However, 33.6 percent of the population is at or below the age of 24, and that percentage has been growing. Growth in older and younger populations requires recreation facilities that meet the diverse corresponding needs of these residents. These needs could include ease of access and safe access to parks systems, opportunities for active and passive recreation, and a focus on health and wellness-related services.

Coral Gables

39.8 yrs.

+1.7 yrs.
(2000-2019)

Florida

39.7 yrs.

+4.1 yrs.
(2000-2019)

United States

38.2 yrs.

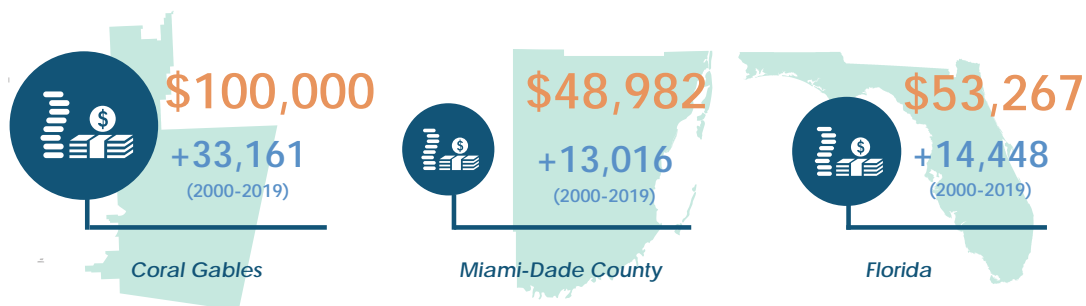
+2.9 yrs.
(2000-2019)

Age Takeaways

39.8+

- **Median age** rose by 1.7 years to 39.8, a higher median age than Florida's and the National Average
- **43.3 percent** of population is **above the age of 45**, greater than county-wide level
- Largest population **decrease: Ages 25 to 44 (-6.0%)**
- Largest population **increase: Ages 55 to 64 (+4.1%)**
- Population **19 and under increased by 3.0 percent**, compared to the county-wide decrease of 4.7 percent and state-wide decrease of 2.9 percent.

Figure 2-10: Median Income in Coral Gables, Miami-Dade County, and Florida (2000-2017)



Income Key Takeaways



- Median income increase of **49.6 percent** since 2000
- Incomes below **\$100,000** down by **14.6 percent** since 2000
- Incomes above **\$150,000** up **29.2 percent** since 2000
- **13.6 percent** of population make **under \$25,000** - the national poverty line for a family of four. Decreased **4.8 percent** from 2000

Income Summary

The income changes in Coral Gables since 2000 are noteworthy. While incomes increased across Florida, the median income in Coral Gables rose by 49.6 percent to \$100,000 per year. This is over double the amount in growth seen in the county and the state. One of the primary causes for this jump was a 20.9 percent hike in the percentage of residents earning between \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year plus an additional 8.3 percent increase in residents earning over \$200,000. The percentage of the population earning below \$100,000 dropped 14.6 percent since 2000. During this period the percentage of population living at or under the national poverty line dropped 4.8 percent to 13.6 percent. Rapid and substantial rise in median income typically signals an increasingly affluent population with additional resources and higher disposable incomes, This can result in a populace with changing recreation needs and expectations.



Cocoplum Park

2.3

PARK SYSTEM RESOURCES

Strong city parks systems are developed over years through the guidance and foresight of city and department leadership as well as engaged community input. When evaluating a park system, it is critical to understand not only the breadth of the existing system but also its functionality, its strengths, weakness, and current limitations. Strengths can be capitalized on and successful system features can be expanded. Fresh analysis also reveals opportunities for innovative services and programs.



Ingraham Park



William H. Kerdyk, Jr., and Family Park

2.3.1 Park System Overview

The Coral Gables Community Recreation Department oversees a diverse park system and a variety of recreation programs that have grown since the 2008 Long-Range Strategic Plan. The department now manages a large system including:

- **280+ acres of public park land**
- **10 Community Facilities (237 acres)**
- **69 Parks**
- **20 Neighborhood Parks (21 acres)**
- **31 Urban Open Spaces (30 acres)**
- **18 Non-City Parks (1,620 acres)**



Pierce Park

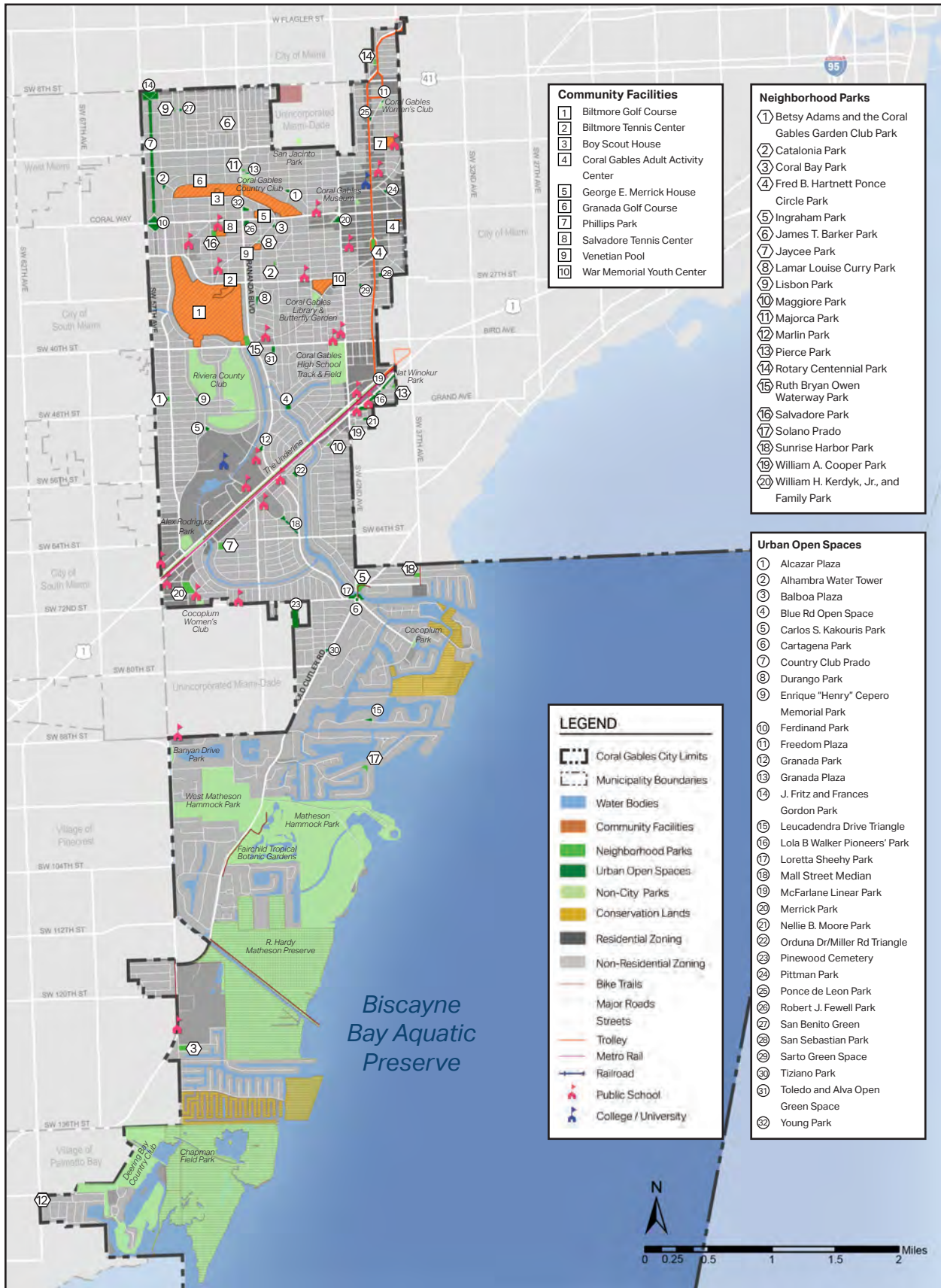
The following section provides data obtained through in-person observation of all the parks in the city using a comprehensive set of criteria developed by the project team to objectively evaluate the parks both individually and as a system. A map of the system of parks and their regional context can be found on the following page **Map 2-3**; highlighting all community facilities, neighborhood parks, urban open spaces, non-city parks, conservation lands, and systems of public transit.

This section seeks to document and analyze the Coral Gables Parks system to identify the current successes and opportunities of all city parks.

2.3.2 Evaluation Methodology

Many thoughtful methods and criteria have been proposed in attempts, to varying degrees of achievement, to capture the level of success a public space or park provides. Some methods are deep in academic rigor such as the System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) developed by Dr. Thomas McKenzie at San Diego State University, while other techniques can be as simple as asking a user or group of users how they like the space as part of an intercept survey.

Map 2-3: City of Coral Gables Parks and Recreation Facilities Location Map





Young Park

The most important component of the approach of a suitable evaluation process is to understand how the information gathered will be used. For this evaluation, the information collected will be used to gauge the performance of each park, community facility, urban open space,

and non-city park in Coral Gables, providing summaries of key successes and opportunities for enhancements, and to outline recommended capital and operational improvements tied to documented needs and community priorities.



Sunrise Harbor Park

The methodology utilized by the Project Team is one based on research and validation by the Project of Public Spaces (PPS). Their research has shown, through the evaluation of thousands of public spaces around the world, that there are common qualities shared universally among the spaces celebrated by users as successful. These qualities include: they are accessible; people are engaged in activities; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and the space is a social one where people gather and meet one another.

PPS's methodology for evaluating public spaces is derivative of the seminal works by William (Holly) Whyte who specialized in the study of human behavior in urban settings. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Whyte studied pedestrian behavior and city dynamics for the New York City Planning Commission. At the core of Whyte's research titled 'Street Life Project' was a notion of perseverance and sanctity of public spaces. Three perspectives developed by Whyte would later influence the PPS's approach to evaluating public spaces:

Whyte's Three Key Perspectives for Public Space

1

Social life in public spaces contribute fundamentally to the quality of life of individuals and society as a whole. Whyte felt there is a moral responsibility to create physical places that facilitate civic engagement and community interaction.

2

Bottom-up place design as a new way of designing public spaces. Whyte believed that design should begin with a thorough understanding of the way people use spaces and how they want to use space. This belief emphasizes the power of providing a comfortable space for users.

3

Clear observation of spaces without theoretical or aesthetic biases. Whyte felt that by looking hard at a space with a clear mind, sometimes more than once, an observer must believe what is seen and learn from the successes and failures.

Since the development of Whyte's perspectives, additional emphasis has been placed on how a public space benefits not only the user but the environment while also contributing to the economics of society which is burdened with the costs of developing and maintaining the space. For these considerations, the Project Team has expanded upon the criteria developed by PPS to include observations on how a space performs in sustainable development, including design and construction. Defined by the United Nation's World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, sustainable development consists of 'meeting the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,' by striking a balance between economic and social development and environmental protection.

Combining the research of Whyte that led to PPS's definitive approach to evaluating public spaces, with the principles of the UN's definition of sustainable development, creates a more comprehensive spectrum of observational fundamentals. Grouped into six categories or topics, specific questions have been developed that are evaluated through observation of each space. These six categories are:

Six Topical Categories of Park Evaluation

- **Design and Construction:** Includes observations of the quality of design, materials, use of standards and incorporation of current codes or requirements, and the durability of a space.
- **Effectiveness:** Includes the observation of users or evidence of users of a space, range of offerings, balance of activities and contextual consistency. (See PPS's 'The Power of 10+')
- **Condition:** Includes observations of the quality of upkeep of a space, evidence of pride of users and maintenance, and presence of deferred improvements.
- **Comfort and Image:** Includes observation of a space's first impression, comfort of users, visual attractiveness, and perception of safety. (See Crime Prevention Through Environment Design – CPTED)

- **Access and Linkages:** Includes observation of universal accessibility barriers, multi-modal connectivity, dominance of the space by a transportation use other than pedestrian and bicycles, and ease of access from surrounding areas. (See Parks and Inclusive Play)
- **Sustainability:** As a three-part category, observations focus on social interactions and connections to surrounding neighborhoods, environmental considerations and promotion that result in net positive contributions, and economic viability and contributions.



Loretta Sheehy Park

2.3.3 Evaluation Questions

To observe system wide successes and opportunities, representatives of the project team reviewed each of the parks and facilities operated by the city and completed an observational form for each site. The following criteria was used and is based in part on guidelines developed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities.

Criteria and Evaluation Questions for Creating and Sustaining Strong Public Spaces

Design and Construction:

- Is the design and construction of this site meeting the needs of users served?
- Is the site readily accessible to the users being served (walking, biking, vehicle, etc.)?
- Does the site utilize durable materials or products?
- Does the site include appropriate recreation amenities for intended users?
- Has the site been developed or recently renovated?
- Is there evidence that the site utilizes design standards for branding, materials, etc?

Effectiveness:

- Are people using the site, or is it empty?
- Is there evidence the site is used by people of different ages?
- How many different types of activities are available?
- Are there choices in intensity of activities?
- Is there a balance of active recreation (programmed spaces) and passive (at will) opportunities?
- Does the site promote or encourage good health and fitness?
- Is there evidence that the site serves users' current needs for recreation, relaxing, or other activities?

Condition:

- How would you rate the site's maintenance?
- What level of satisfaction is evident from users?
- Does the site need improvements (1= very much, 5= no/none)?

Comfort and Image:

- Does the site make a good first impression?
- Are there enough places to sit and are they conveniently located?
- Is the site clean and free of litter?
- Does the site feel safe? (CPTED standards, etc.)
- Do vehicles dominate the site through access roads, parking and/or maintenance? (1=Very Much; 5 = No/none)

Access and Linkages:

- Are there clear and open view lines into open spaces?
- Is there clear and useful wayfinding/signage within the site?
- Can people easily walk to the site from surrounding areas?
- Does the site function for people with special needs?
- Do paths and/or roads connect people to primary amenities?
- Are there transit stop(s) or parking near (within 1/4-mile) of primary entrance points?

Sustainability:**Social**

- Does the site provide places for people to gather?
- Does the site promote a healthy lifestyle and/or help to reduce daily stress?
- Is the site well connected with clear and safe access points?

Environmental

- Does the site use energy, water, and material resources efficiently?
- Does the site improve water quality?
- Does the site enhance, preserve, promote, or contribute to biological diversity?
- Is the site a node within a larger ecological corridor or habitat?
- Does the site enhance environmental awareness or knowledge?

Economic

- Does the site create public and/or private revenue-generating opportunities?
- Does the site sustain or increase property values?
- Does the site contribute to nearby property development or redevelopment potentials?
- Does the site promote permanent jobs (directly or indirectly)?



Country Club Prado

Evaluation Ratings

The following section details the scoring range of evaluations along with documentation of key successes and opportunities for each community facility, park, or urban open space observed. Additional contributing information is included for three tools or sets of standards that are part of the evaluation criteria through the use of individual questions or themes.

Every space observed was assigned a score for each categorical question based on the qualitative assessment of how the park met the aforementioned criteria at

the time of observation. Once all scores were assigned, a matrix was created **Table 2-10** and **Table 2-11** that allowed trends to become visible across the entire system. It is important to note that there is no “one size fits all” set of criteria that can accurately evaluate every type of park. However, seeing each individual park’s score and system-wide scores allows for the identification of unique trends, and a general comparison of parks within the system.

Specific needs identified for each park noted during observation are addressed in Chapter 3 - Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Exceeding Expectations

Parks with scores in this range are defined as parks with new or recently enhanced facilities or features, readily accessible through multiple modes of transportation, exhibiting multiple features that enhance the comfort and experience of park users, and that exhibit a maintenance quality that meets or exceeds the standards of the City:

- These parks are **functioning** as intended and are also exceptionally **well maintained, aesthetically pleasing, safe**, and often demonstrate **sustainable** techniques.
- The park accommodates a wide **variety** of uses and maintains a consistently **high-level of activity** while still remaining **flexible**.
- The park shows clear evidence of **good design standards** and embraces **heritage** resources (if applicable).
- There are many ways for users to **access** the park including **via mass transit, walking**, and **biking**.

- **Multi-purpose fields** or **lawn surfaces are well maintained** and could be considered **tournament/competition grade**.
- Sports fields may contain **premium amenities** such as score boards, enclosed dugouts, bleachers, and lighting.
- **These parks score in the 75-100 range.**

Meeting Expectations

Parks with scores in this range are defined as parks with serviceable facilities or features providing functional recreational access for the public, accessed primarily by vehicle with some connections to adjacent neighborhoods. These parks exhibit few features that enhance the comfort and experience of park users beyond a minimal recreational access capacity, and that exhibit a maintenance level sufficient for the uses in the park but would benefit from additional maintenance:

- From a programmatic level, these parks **function** as intended.
- They are **generally well maintained**, and may be **aesthetically pleasing**.
- The park can accommodate several **different activities** and has a **moderate level of activity**.
- This park **may or may not have a transit stop** nearby and has **reasonable sidewalk connectivity**.
- This park is generally **compatible with the surrounding land uses** and provides the user with a **feeling of safety**.
- **Field surfaces are well maintained** and **playable**, but typically **do not include the premium features** that may be present in parks that “exceed expectations.”
- **These types of parks score in the 50-74 range.**

Not Meeting Expectations

Parks within this score range are generally defined as parks with facilities or features that have exceeded their functional life span and/or need enhancement or replacement to provide functional recreational access for the public. They are accessed primarily by vehicle and are disconnected from adjacent neighborhoods. These parks exhibit few, if any, features that enhance the comfort and experience of park users, and that exhibit a maintenance level insufficient to continue to provide the desired uses and recreational access:

- These parks are **not currently performing** as intended.
- Although they **can still be well maintained** and/or aesthetically pleasing, many **typically are not**.
- These parks may have a consistently **low level of activity**; **few accommodated uses**, and **may not be compatible with the surrounding land uses**.
- These parks **may not be perceived as safe** by their users.
- It is common for these parks to be **difficult to access** either by public transit, bicycle, or on foot.
- **Field surfaces** are **not typically well maintained**, or the fields are so **over-programmed** that adequate maintenance is impossible.
- **These types of parks score in the 0-49 range.**



Nat Winokur Park

2.3.4 Evaluation Results

Of the 61 named City-owned facilities, in Coral Gables, 53 are located in the northern half of the city north of Sunset Drive. This area of the city contains the densely populated central business sector. All of the large community facilities, the majority of the small urban open spaces, as well as most neighborhood parks are in this portion of the city. The distribution of the majority of these smaller green spaces being in this zone is likely in part due to the presence of multiple large preserves and parks provided to residents and thereby more abundant outdoor space in the southern half of the City. The limited amount of open space in the more densely populated northern half of the Coral Gables makes quality urban open spaces and neighborhood parks vitally necessary, but the lack of larger community gathering space is notable. The southern portion relies heavily on its large green spaces, but with lacking emphasis on connectivity from neighborhoods to those parks as well as very few smaller parks in neighborhoods leads to questioning whether those larger sites are able to serve the outdoor recreation purposes they are relied on to fill.

The analysis done in this chapter gives a basis for evaluating the successes of the current park system and also identifying opportunities to bolster those successes and strengthen areas where the City could begin to focus on additional park services alongside its existing strengths.



Phillips Park



War Memorial Youth Center



Salvadore Park and Tennis Center

Table 2-10 Facility Evaluation Ratings

Legend:

- Exceeding Expectations
- Meeting Expectations
- Not Meeting Expectations

- Design & Construction (Max: 30)**
 - Is the design and construction of this site meeting the needs of users served?
 - Is the site readily accessible to the users being served? (walking, biking, vehicle, etc.)
 - Does the site utilize durable materials or products?
 - Does the site include appropriate recreation amenities for intended users?
 - Has the site been developed or recently renovated?
 - Is there evidence that the site utilizes design standards for branding, materials, etc.
- Effectiveness (Max: 35)**
 - Are people using the site, or is it empty?
 - Is there evidence the site is used by people of different ages?
 - How many different types of activities are available?
 - Are there choices in intensity of activities are (programmed spaces) and passive (at will)?
 - Does the site promote or encourage recreation health and fitness?
 - Is there evidence that the site serves users' current needs for recreation, relaxing, or other activities?
- Condition (Max: 20)**
 - How would you rate the site's maintenance? (grass cutting, working equipment, etc.)
 - What level of satisfaction is evident from users?
 - What level of pride is evident from City staff regarding maintenance or customer service? (Much, 5 = No/none)
- Comfort and Image (Max: 25)**
 - Does the site need improvements? (1 = Very)
 - Does the site make a good first impression?

Park Name	Design & Construction (Max: 30)								Effectiveness (Max: 35)								Condition (Max: 20)			Comfort and Image (Max: 25)		
Community Facilities																						
Boy Scout House - Troop 7	13	2	2	3	2	2	2	20	3	4	3	2	3	3	2	11	3	3	3	2	15	2
Coral Gables Adult Activity Center	28	5	5	5	3	5	5	27	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	20	5	5	5	5	19	5
Coral Gables Biltmore Golf Course	29	5	5	5	5	4	5	27	5	4	3	3	3	5	4	20	5	5	5	5	22	5
Coral Gables Merrick House	29	5	5	5	4	5	5	23	4	4	4	4	3	n/a	4	20	5	5	5	5	22	5
Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center	20	4	3	3	4	3	3	33	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	16	4	4	5	3	18	4
Granada Golf Course	28	5	5	5	4	5	4	26	5	4	3	3	2	5	4	19	5	5	5	4	22	5
Phillips Park	19	4	4	3	3	2	3	29	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	14	4	4	3	3	16	3
Salvadore Tennis Center	23	4	4	4	4	4	3	25	5	4	3	3	2	5	3	16	4	4	5	3	18	4
Venetian Pool	24	4	4	5	5	3	3	27	5	5	4	4	n/a	4	5	16	4	5	4	3	20	5
William H. Kerdyk Biltmore Tennis Center	30	5	5	5	5	5	5	25	5	4	2	3	2	5	4	20	5	5	5	5	21	5
Weighted Average	81	86	84	86	78	76	76	77	92	86	70	68	58	87	78	86	88	90	90	76	79	86
Neighborhood Parks																						
Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club Park	26	4	5	4	4	5	4	n/a	5	4	3	3	4	5	3	19	15	5	n/a	5	22	5
Catalonia Park	6	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	5	15	6	3	n/a	n/a	14	4
Coral Bay Park	21	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	n/a	6	16	4	4	4	22	4	
Fred B. Hartnett Ponce Circle Park	11	n/a	5	3	n/a	n/a	3	4	3	2	2	2	3	n/a	4	16	12	4	n/a	4	20	4
Ingraham Park	19	4	4	4	3	n/a	4	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	n/a	12	16	4	4	4	21	4
James T. Barker Park	14	n/a	4	3	2	2	3	n/a	n/a	2	2	2	2	n/a	4	16	11	4	n/a	4	17	3
Jaycee Park	23	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	16	16	4	5	4	20	5
Lamar Louise Curry Park	14	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	4	14	13	4	3	4	17	3
Lisbon Park	29	5	5	5	4	5	5	n/a	n/a	4	4	4	4	n/a	10	12	4	n/a	4	24	5	
Maggiore Park	18	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	16	14	4	3	4	19	5
Majorca Park	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	12	10	4	n/a	3	15	3	
Marlin Park	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	13	12	4	3	3	16	3
Pierce Park	17	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	12	12	4	3	3	17	3
Rotary Centennial Park	23	4	5	4	4	3	3	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	4	15	15	4	3	4	22	4
Ruth Bryan Owen Waterway Park	16	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	n/a	2	2	2	3	n/a	n/a	6	6	4	n/a	n/a	18	3
Salvadore Park	23	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	17	17	4	4	5	21	4
Solano Prado	11	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	3	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2	3	15	7	4	n/a	n/a	16	4
Sunrise Harbor Park	19	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	n/a	11	15	4	4	4	19	3	
William A. Cooper Park	16	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	14	14	4	3	4	19	4
William H. Kerdyk, Jr., and Family Park	23	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	16	16	5	3	4	21	4
Weighted Average	67	69	77	68	61	63	67	64	69	65	61	56	58	65	69	74	81	70	79	65	77	77

How to Read Table 2-10:

Scores are based on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score possible. In cases where a specific criteria is not applicable due to circumstances such as limited access or the absence of the facility or

- Are there enough places to sit and are they conveniently located?
- Is the site clean and free of litter?
- Does the site feel safe?
- Do vehicles dominate the site through access, roads, parking, and/or maintenance? (1 = Very Much, 5 = No/none)
- **Access and Linkages (Max: 30)**
- Are there clear and open view lines into open spaces?
- Is there clear and useful wayfinding/signage within the site?
- Can people easily walk to the site from surrounding areas?
- Does the site function for people with special needs?
- Do paths and/or roads connect people to primary amenities?
- Are there transit stop(s) or parking near (within 1/4 mile) of primary entrance points?
- **Sustainability (Max: 60)**
- **Sociability Sustainability**
- Does the site provide places for people to gather?
- Does the site promote a healthy lifestyle and/or help to reduce daily stress?
- Is the site well connected with clear and/or access points?
- **Environmental Sustainability**
- Does the site use energy, water, and material resources efficiently?
- Does the site improve water quality?
- Does the site enhance, preserve, promote, or contribute to biological diversity?
- Is the site a node within a larger ecological corridor or habitat?
- Does the site enhance environmental awareness or knowledge?
- **Economic Sustainability**
- Does the site create public and/or private revenue-generating opportunities?
- Does the site sustain or increase property values?
- Does the site contribute to nearby property development or redevelopment potentials?
- Does the site promote permanent jobs? (directly or indirectly)
- **Totals**

2	4	4	3	17	3	2	3	3	3	3	15	7	3	2	2	8	2	2	2	n/a	2	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	52
5	5	n/a	4	28	4	4	5	5	5	5	25	13	5	4	4	4	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	n/a	4	n/a	4	89
4	5	4	4	23	3	4	4	4	4	4	42	11	4	4	3	11	3	3	3	n/a	2	20	5	5	5	5	84
4	5	4	4	27	4	4	5	5	5	4	37	13	4	4	5	12	4	4	4	n/a	n/a	12	4	4	n/a	4	88
3	4	4	3	22	4	3	4	3	4	4	38	13	4	5	4	9	3	4	n/a	n/a	2	16	4	4	3	5	77
4	5	4	4	25	5	4	4	3	4	5	44	13	4	5	4	11	3	3	3	n/a	2	20	5	5	5	5	84
3	3	4	3	20	4	3	4	3	3	3	26	12	4	4	4	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	69
3	5	2	4	22	4	3	4	3	4	4	32	13	4	5	4	6	2	2	2	n/a	n/a	13	5	3	n/a	5	74
4	4	4	3	21	3	2	4	4	4	4	42	13	4	5	4	11	5	4	n/a	n/a	2	18	4	5	4	5	81
3	5	4	4	26	4	4	5	5	4	4	32	13	4	5	4	6	2	2	n/a	n/a	2	13	5	4	n/a	4	83
70	90	76	72	77	76	66	84	76	80	80	74	81	80	86	76	55	62	60	56	-	40	87	91	82	80	93	78
4	4	5	4	27	5	4	5	4	4	5	30	13	5	4	4	10	4	4	n/a	n/a	2	7	n/a	4	3	n/a	85
n/a	4	3	3	11	4	3	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	n/a	4	3	n/a	66
5	5	4	4	22	4	4	4	3	3	4	26	11	4	4	3	11	3	3	3	n/a	2	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	73
3	4	5	4	24	5	3	5	3	3	5	24	11	4	3	4	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	n/a	4	3	n/a	71
4	4	4	5	23	4	4	4	3	4	4	26	13	5	4	4	9	4	3	n/a	n/a	2	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	77
2	3	5	4	11	3	3	3	2	n/a	n/a	16	9	3	3	3	7	3	3	n/a	n/a	1	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	57
4	4	4	3	22	4	4	3	3	4	4	28	12	4	4	4	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	8	n/a	4	4	n/a	78
2	4	5	3	19	5	2	4	2	2	4	24	8	3	2	3	13	3	3	2	3	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	56
5	5	5	4	23	4	5	5	5	4	n/a	28	14	5	4	5	10	4	4	n/a	n/a	2	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	88
2	4	4	4	22	5	3	4	3	4	3	25	10	3	3	4	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	7	n/a	4	3	n/a	64
2	3	4	3	10	4	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	9	3	3	3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62
2	3	4	4	17	4	3	4	2	2	2	25	9	2	3	4	12	3	3	4	n/a	2	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	56
3	4	4	3	18	4	3	3	2	3	3	24	10	3	4	3	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	61
4	5	4	5	25	4	4	5	3	4	5	24	11	5	3	3	7	3	2	n/a	n/a	2	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	76
3	4	4	4	15	3	3	2	2	2	3	25	8	3	3	2	17	3	4	4	4	2	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	58
4	4	5	4	24	4	4	5	3	4	4	26	11	4	3	4	11	3	3	3	n/a	2	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	77
1	4	4	3	9	4	2	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	22	8	4	2	2	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	56
3	4	5	4	21	4	3	4	3	4	3	23	10	3	3	4	7	2	3	n/a	n/a	2	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	66
3	4	4	4	18	4	3	3	2	3	3	24	9	3	3	3	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	7	n/a	4	3	n/a	61
4	4	5	4	26	5	4	5	4	4	4	30	14	5	4	5	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	8	n/a	4	4	n/a	79
63	80	87	76	71	83	67	78	58	68	75	66	70	74	65	71	59	62	62	64	70	39	69	-	75	64	-	68

condition being evaluated, a score of 'n/a' is listed. Final park scores are weighted to a scale of 0-100, with 100 being the highest possible. Total scores shown adjacent to park or facility names correspond to locations shown on **Maps 2-4** through **2-6**.

Table 2-11: Facility Evaluation Ratings

Legend:

- Exceeding Expectations
- Meeting Expectations
- Not Meeting Expectations

- Design & Construction (Max: 30)**
 - Is the design and construction of this site meeting the needs of users served?
 - Is the site readily accessible to the users being served? (walking, biking, vehicle, etc.)
 - Does the site utilize durable materials or amenities for intended users?
 - Has the site been developed or recently renovated?
 - Is there evidence that the site utilizes design standards for branding, materials, etc.
- Effectiveness (Max: 35)**
 - Are people using the site, or is it empty?
 - Is there evidence the site is used by people of different ages?
 - How many different types of activities are available?
 - Are there choices in intensity of activities are (programmed spaces) and passive (at will)?
 - Does the site promote or encourage good health and fitness?
 - Is there evidence that the site serves users' current needs for recreation, relaxing, or other activities?
- Condition (Max: 20)**
 - How would you rate the site's maintenance (grass cutting, working equipment, etc.)
 - What level of satisfaction is evident from users?
 - What level of pride is evident from City staff regarding maintenance or customer service? (Much, 5= No/None)
- Comfort and Image (Max: 25)**
 - Does the site need improvements? (1 = Very)
 - Does the site make a good first impression?

Park Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Alcazar Plaza	6	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	9	n/a	n/a	2	2	2	3	n/a	10	4	n/a	3	3	17	3								
Alhambra Water Tower	8	n/a	2	3	n/a	n/a	3	8	2	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a	13	5	n/a	4	4	19	4									
Balboa Plaza	23	4	3	4	3	5	4	20	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	19	5	4	5	5	23	5								
Blue Rd Open Space	6	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	2	8	n/a	n/a	2	2	2	2	n/a	9	4	n/a	3	2	16	3								
Carlos S. Kakouris Park	14	n/a	3	3	3	2	3	8	n/a	n/a	2	2	2	2	n/a	12	4	3	3	2	17	3								
Cartagena Park	16	2	2	4	2	3	3	14	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	17	5	3	5	4	15	4								
Country Club Prado	14	3	3	3	2	n/a	3	17	3	n/a	2	3	3	3	3	10	4	n/a	3	3	17	4								
Durango Park	18	3	3	3	3	3	3	14	n/a	n/a	2	3	3	3	3	10	4	n/a	3	3	18	4								
Enrique "Henry" Cepero Memorial Park	18	3	3	4	3	2	3	15	3	n/a	2	2	2	3	3	13	4	3	3	3	17	3								
Ferdinand Park	17	3	3	4	2	3	2	16	3	n/a	2	2	3	3	3	12	5	n/a	4	3	17	5								
Freedom Plaza	9	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	15	3	n/a	2	2	2	3	3	10	4	n/a	3	3	16	3								
Granada Park	15	2	2	3	2	3	3	13	3	n/a	2	3	3	2	n/a	7	4	n/a	3	n/a	17	4								
Granada Plaza	9	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	6	n/a	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	4	n/a	3	3	18	4								
J. Fritz and Frances Gordon Park	11	2	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	8	2	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	10	4	n/a	3	3	17	4								
Leucadendra Drive Triangle	9	2	3	n/a	2	n/a	2	8	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2	7	4	n/a	n/a	3	15	3								
Lola B Walker Pioneers' Park	18	3	4	3	2	3	3	17	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	14	4	3	4	3	16	4								
Loretta Sheehy Park	16	4	4	4	n/a	n/a	4	26	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	16	4	4	4	4	20	4								
McFarlane Linear Park	17	3	4	4	3	n/a	3	16	n/a	n/a	3	3	3	4	3	4	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	9	n/a								
Mall Street Median	17	3	3	3	3	3	2	22	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	16	4	3	5	4	17	4								
Merrick Park	16	3	4	3	3	n/a	3	11	n/a	n/a	2	3	3	3	n/a	11	4	n/a	4	3	17	3								
Nellie B. Moore Park	17	3	4	3	3	2	2	18	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	12	3	3	3	3	17	3								
Orduna Dr/Miller Rd Triangle	14	2	3	2	3	2	2	12	n/a	n/a	2	2	3	3	2	9	3	n/a	3	3	15	3								
Pinewood Cemetery	16	3	3	3	n/a	4	3	10	3	3	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	4	4	4	3	21	4								
Pittman Park	13	3	4	3	n/a	n/a	3	20	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	12	3	3	3	3	18	3								
Ponce de Leon Park	17	3	3	3	3	2	3	16	3	n/a	2	2	3	3	3	13	4	3	3	3	18	4								
Robert J. Fewell Park	12	3	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	16	n/a	3	2	2	3	3	3	9	3	n/a	3	3	19	3								
San Benito Green	12	2	3	3	1	2	1	7	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	2	2	4	3	n/a	n/a	1	15	3								
San Sebastian Park	17	3	3	3	3	2	3	12	2	n/a	2	2	3	3	n/a	9	4	n/a	3	2	16	4								
Sarto Green Space	13	2	3	n/a	3	2	3	8	n/a	n/a	2	3	3	n/a	n/a	8	3	n/a	3	2	16	4								
Tiziano Park	11	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	3	12	2	3	2	n/a	n/a	3	2	7	4	n/a	n/a	3	16	4								
Toledo and Alva Open Space	13	2	2	3	2	3	1	12	n/a	n/a	2	2	3	3	2	5	3	n/a	n/a	2	15	3								
Young Park	16	3	4	3	3	n/a	3	16	n/a	3	2	2	3	3	3	10	4	n/a	3	3	18	4								
Weighted Average	57	55	61	64	51	54	55	53	57	57	45	48	53	56	53	68	78	65	69	59	69	73								
Overall Weighted Average	65	65	70	69	60	62	62	61	69	68	54	54	55	64	64	74	81	75	76	64	73	76								

- Are there enough places to sit and are they conveniently located?
- Is the site clean and free of litter?
- Does the site feel safe? (CPED standards, etc.)
- Do vehicles dominate the site through access roads, parking, and/or maintenance? (1= Very Much; 5= None)
- **Access and Linkages (Max: 30)**
- Are there clear and open view lines into open spaces?
- Is there clear and useful wayfinding/signage within the site?
- Can people easily walk to the site from surrounding areas?
- Does the site function for people from needs?
- Do paths and/or roads connect people to primary amenities?
- Are there transit stop(s) or parking near 1/4 mile of primary entrance points?
- **Sustainability (Max: 60)**
- **Sociability Sustainability**
- Does the site provide places for people to gather?
- Does the site promote a healthy lifestyle and/or help to reduce daily stress?
- Is the site well connected with clear and/or access points?
- **Environmental Sustainability**
- Does the site use energy, water, and material resources efficiently?
- Does the site improve water quality?
- Does the site enhance, preserve, promote, or contribute to biological diversity?
- Is the site a node within a larger ecological corridor or habitat?
- Does the site enhance environmental awareness or knowledge?
- **Economic Sustainability**
- Does the site create public and/or private revenue-generating opportunities?
- Does the site sustain or increase property values?
- Does the site contribute to nearby property development or redevelopment potentials?
- Does the site promote permanent jobs? (directly or indirectly)
- **Totals**

2	4	4	4	9	4	2	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	5	3	n/a	2	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	59
2	5	4	4	11	4	3	2	2	n/a	n/a	17	5	3	n/a	2	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	63
5	5	5	3	20	4	4	2	2	3	5	24	9	4	3	2	11	2	3	3	n/a	3	4	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	72
2	4	4	3	11	2	1	2	2	n/a	4	12	6	2	2	2	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50
3	4	4	3	12	4	3	3	2	n/a	n/a	9	8	3	3	2	1	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	53
1	4	4	2	15	4	2	1	1	2	5	18	7	2	3	2	8	2	2	2	n/a	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	53
2	4	4	3	19	4	3	3	2	3	4	21	9	3	3	3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	61
3	4	4	3	14	4	2	3	2	n/a	3	19	8	3	3	2	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	60
3	4	4	3	13	4	2	3	2	2	n/a	20	8	3	3	2	9	4	3	n/a	n/a	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	58
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2	4	4	3	19	4	3	3	3	3	3	12	6	n/a	3	3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	60
2	4	4	3	15	4	2	2	2	2	3	14	8	3	3	2	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	56
2	4	4	4	19	4	3	2	3	2	5	14	5	3	n/a	2	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	63
2	4	4	3	17	3	3	3	2	3	3	17	8	3	2	3	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	59
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3	n/a	4	2	24	4	3	4	4	4	5	23	10	3	3	4	10	3	3	2	n/a	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	66
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3	4	4	3	20	4	3	3	3	3	4	21	9	3	3	3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	n/a	3	3	n/a	62
4	4	4	4	16	3	4	3	3	3	n/a	24	9	3	3	3	12	3	3	4	n/a	2	3	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	62
1	4	3	4	13	3	1	3	3	n/a	3	14	6	2	2	2	8	3	3	n/a	n/a	2		n/a	3	n/a	n/a	43
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1	4	4	3	13	4	1	2	2	n/a	4	8	8	3	3	2		3	3	4	n/a	2		n/a	3	3	n/a	41
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44	83	80	64	59	75	48	59	47	53	73	60	57	59	58	54	59	59	60	65	70	42	63	-	64	62	-	59
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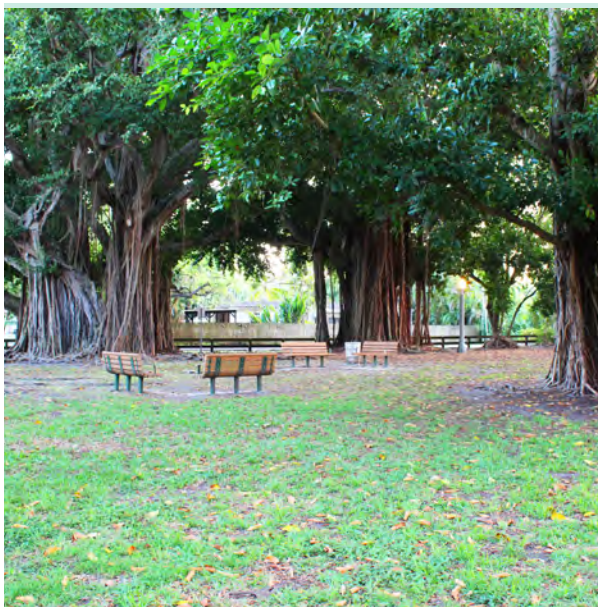
Fewell Park



Nellie B. Moore Park



Rotary Centennial Park



San Jacinto Park

2.3.5 System-wide Evaluation Results

This summary will convey a system-wide evaluation of the City parks based on technical analysis and park quality industry standards of service. The Long Range Vision Chapter, Chapter 4, will then identify individual park improvements that are based on public input and identified need. A review of the scores shown in the park evaluation matrix helps to identify system-wide successes and opportunities. Though individual parks have their own successes and opportunities, a system-wide analysis helps to identify weaknesses and strengths in the park system as a whole. The City will then be able to use this data to develop a strategy to improve or promote its mission broadly. The following are key findings for each of the evaluation park categories: design and construction, effectiveness, condition, and comfort and image.



Ponce de Leon Park



Coral Gables Merrick House

System-wide Successes

Condition

One of the biggest strengths of the Coral Gables park system that was revealed through the evaluations of the parks is their condition. The community facilities and many of the neighborhood parks demonstrated a high-level of comfort, safety, and general appearance. Most offer a good first impression of both the overall site and the facilities and amenities present in the park. Maintenance at the parks and facilities was found to be above average as indicated by the clean appearance of most gathering areas and walkways, as well as the presence of well-maintained lawns and planting areas. The larger community facilities in particular appeared to be in above average condition and exhibited a high-level of maintenance, pride of staff, and user satisfaction. The Coral Gables urban open spaces are less successful in condition and appearance but still generally reflect a high-quality of maintenance and condition.

Access and Linkages

Many of the parks and open spaces exhibited a relatively high-level of access for users. A majority of the parks had clear open site lines, were walkable, and within close proximity to transit stops. The large number of open spaces throughout the City is critical to supplementing park access, helping to provide multi-modal access to open spaces for a large number of residents throughout Coral Gables.

Economic Sustainability

In general, the park system scored well in the economic sustainability categories particularly for the Community Facilities. These parks provide a high-level of opportunity for revenue generation and permanent jobs for staff. At the neighborhood park and open space level, the parks seem to have a positive impact on property values and development in the surrounding context.



Durango Park

System-wide Opportunities

ADA Accessibility

While the community facilities were found to have infrastructure that supported access for people with special needs, the neighborhood parks and open spaces often lacked ADA accessibility to the sites and their primary amenities. This is typically due to lack of safe crosswalks, sidewalks connecting the site to the surrounding area, or a lack of accessible paths within the site. As improvements are determined for each park, ADA accessibility and safe access to the parks should be a priority throughout the system.

Condition, Comfort, and Image

The park evaluations reveal that the assessed parks lack a promotion of biodiversity and the enhancement of environmental awareness and education. In the City's guiding documents, the Comprehensive Plan indicates that this is one of its high priorities with the goal being to maintain environmentally sensitive system of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. This goal to meet the needs of the community through environmentally sound design, is an opportunity for the City to shift more focus to one of its stated system goals. It is important in order to improve the quality and sustainability of the parks. The expansion of ecological connections between park and preserves, and use of native plants, should be incorporated into any future improvement or development of parks and facilities. The integration of green infrastructure such as storm water management and flooding mitigation strategies is a further example of this type of opportunity for Coral Gables parks to improve environmental impact.

Design and Construction

While the larger community facilities display a high-level of design and construction, the neighborhood parks and urban open spaces provide opportunities to increase more wide-spread access to quality open space and green space. Integration of even small scale design improvements like seating, planting, shade, and pedestrian connectivity within these space could allow these areas to advance the vision of the park system providing linear parks, and pocket parks throughout the City. Since these spaces are already part of the parks system, these types of opportunities could be addressed prior to the acquisition of additional property for park and open spaces throughout Coral Gables.

Overall improvements to Design, Effectiveness and Amenities

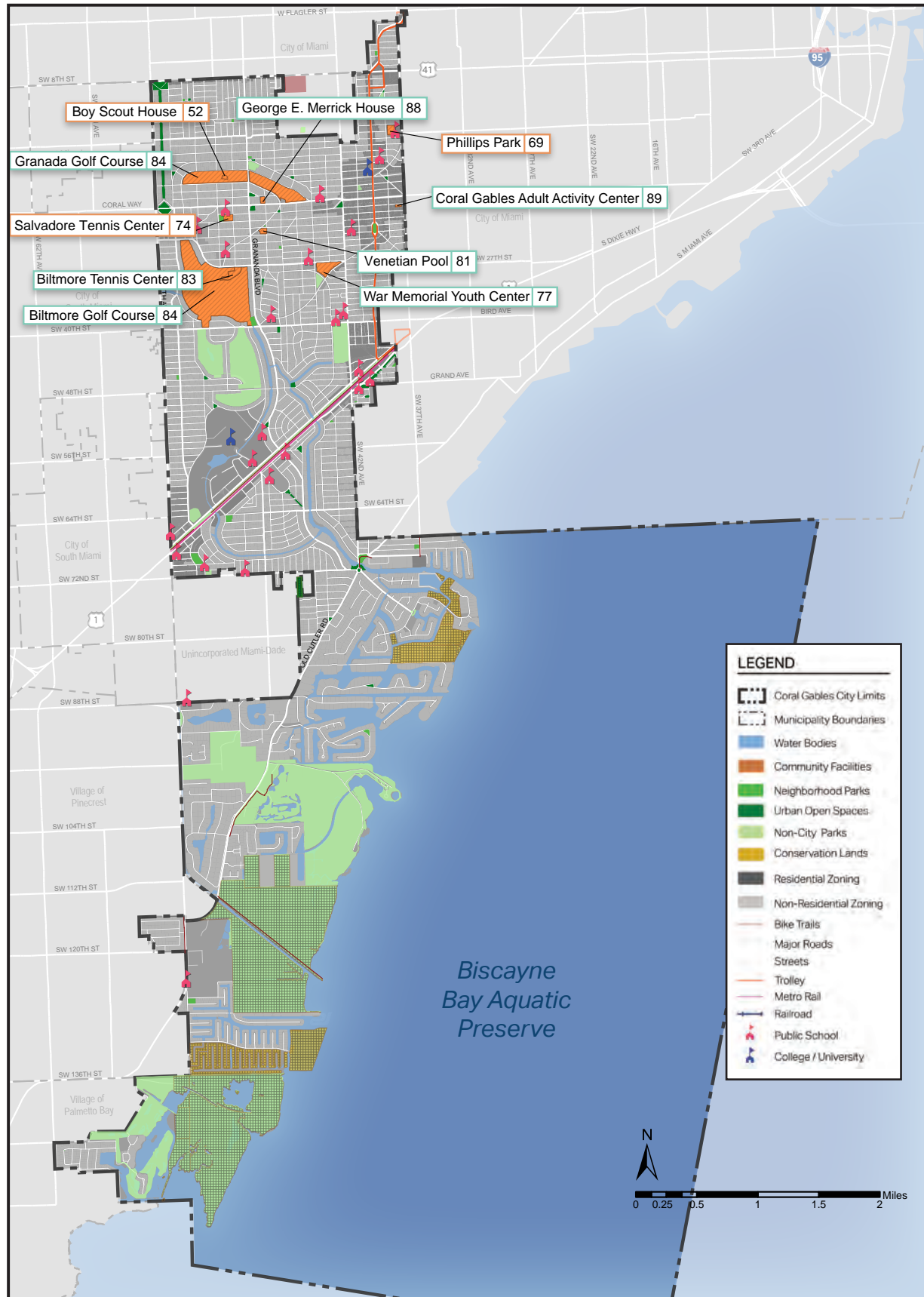
While overall design and comfort scored well, utilization of design standards and providing updated amenities for a wider variety of users could be areas to be improved upon in the future. There also appeared to be a lack of places for people to sit in the parks and open spaces, which aligns with feedback from stakeholders and the general public.

Amenities and equipment in some parks may also be nearing the end of their lifespan, or may no longer appropriate for intended users. The design improvements and amenity additions to parks and open spaces should take effectiveness into consideration - especially where public feedback indicates an increased need or lack of desired facilities.

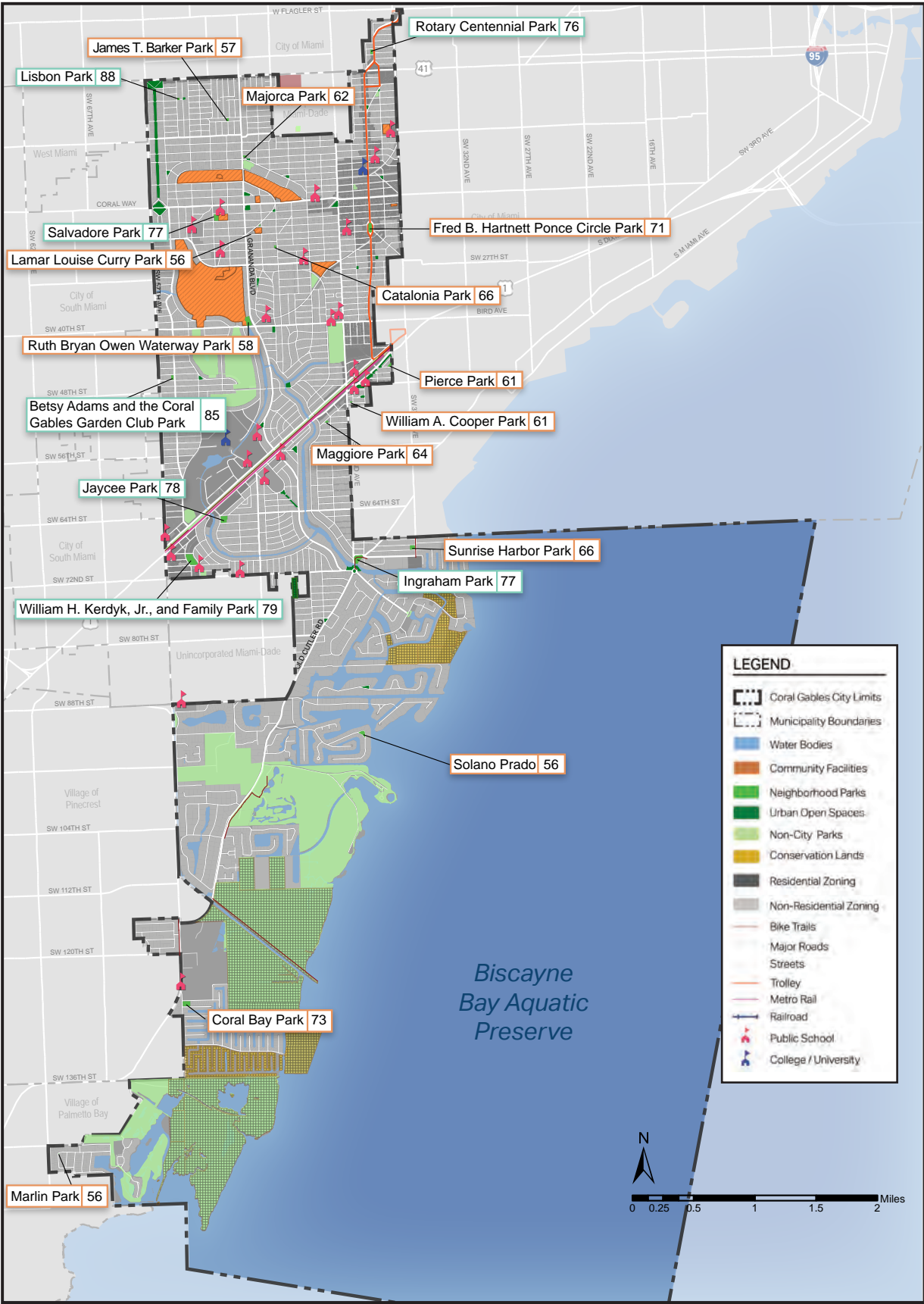


Merrick Park

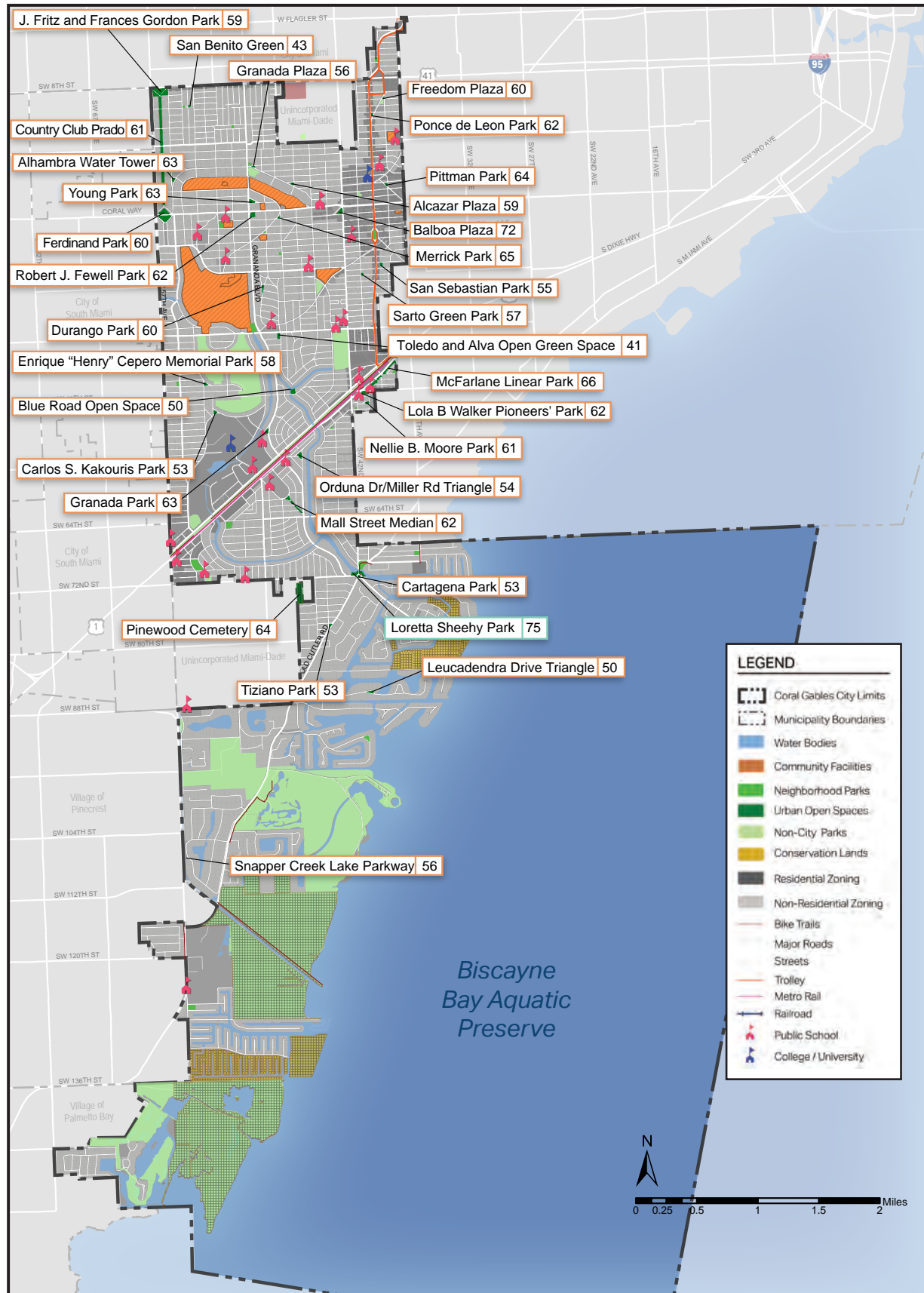
Map 2-4 – Community Facilities Evaluation Ratings



Map 2-5 – Neighborhood Parks Evaluation Ratings



Map 2-6 – Urban Open Spaces Evaluation Ratings



Key Takeaways



- **Prioritize improvements to neighborhood parks:** The overall scores for neighborhood parks were 10 points lower than for the community facilities. While the community facilities are larger and generally contain more amenities, neighborhood parks are typically more accessible from a user's residence. Ensuring that neighborhood parks are easily walkable and contain the appropriate amenities should be a priority moving forward.
- **Connect neighborhoods to parks:** Access to the park system can be improved in ways that prepare for the future. Alternative transportation is becoming increasingly prevalent. For it to be safe and utilized, the necessary infrastructure like drop-offs, parking, and protected paths and shelters, should be in place to create walkable/bikable neighborhoods with seamless connections to parks and open spaces. The amenities that support these alternative transportation methods should be accessible as well. That will require intentional importance centered on ADA access improvements system wide.
- **Design standards for branding, wayfinding, and signage:** In multiple cases, the urban open spaces are nearly unidentifiable as park settings. Signage is sparse, seating limited or not present, and few or no sidewalks or paths of access help identify them as more than large medians. A comprehensive wayfinding and signage program should be developed to increase awareness of and use of these small open spaces in the city. The program could also address historical sites and narratives of Coral Gables and convey positive messaging and an identifiable, unique brand for the Community Recreation Department.
- **Improve the quality of small open spaces:** Along with increased access to the urban open spaces should come quality design and place-making improvements as well. Places to sit or rest should be increased. Crosswalks and sidewalks should be added to safely connect the parks to existing pedestrian paths. Increased bold, splashes of color in plantings could consistently identify sites as welcoming park settings across the city.
- **Environmental sustainability and education:** Opportunities abound in the parks system for environmental mitigation, sustainable design, and education. As improvements are made to the park system and new parks are designed, environmental design strategies and standards could bolster both the quality of the parks and surrounding urban landscape while also positioning the park system in the future as a valuable resource for critical mitigation infrastructure and environmental education.

2.3.6 Facility Evaluations Summary

The existing Coral Gables Community Recreation System is highlighted by a diverse range of conditions and opportunities. By combining the results of each of the City’s three categorical park types, an overall summary of the ratings in each category can be calculated to represent the system as a whole. **Figure 2-11** on the following pages highlights system-wide results for each evaluation category, indicating the categories’ overall score as well as the scores for each question. This allows for the identification of successes and opportunities that are present throughout the Coral Gables Community Recreation System.

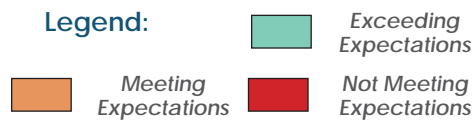
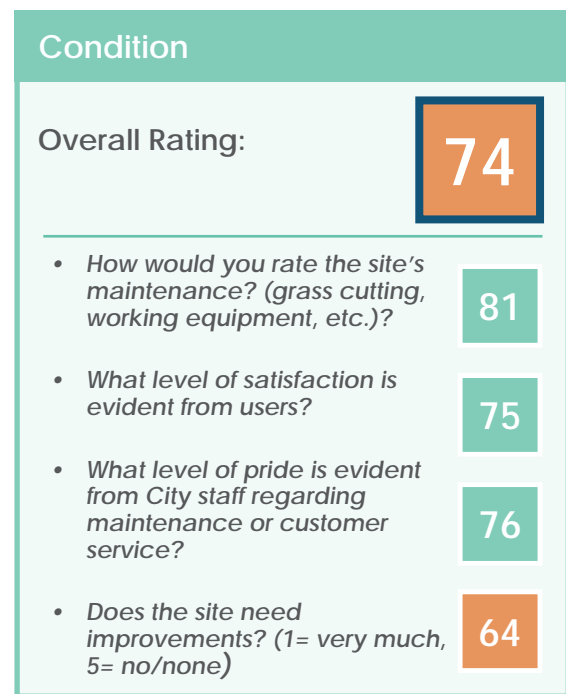
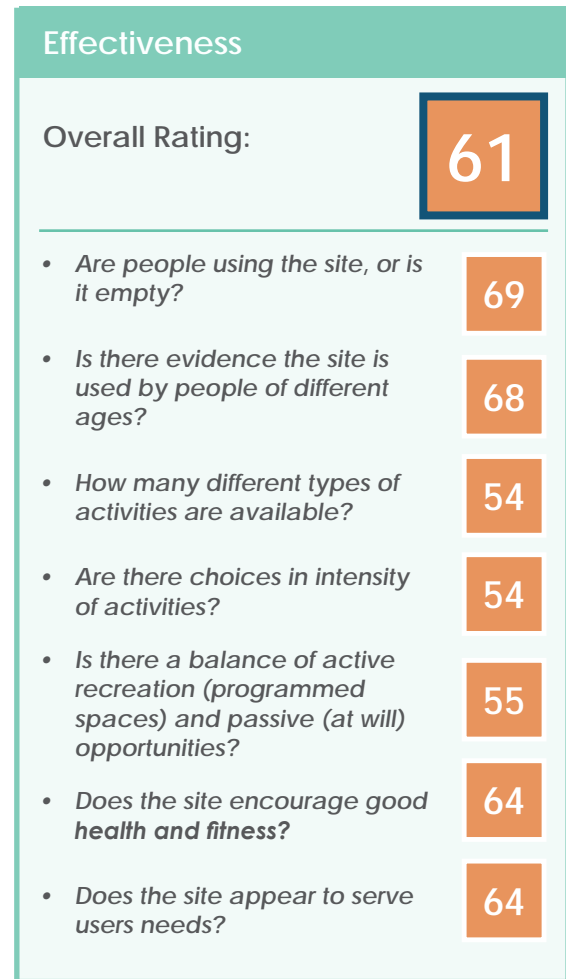


Figure 2-11: City of Coral Gables System-wide Facility Evaluation Ratings



Comfort and Image

Overall Rating:

73

- Does the site make a good first impression? 76
- Are there enough places to sit and are they conveniently located? 54
- Is the site clean and free of litter? 83
- Does the site feel safe? (CPTED standards, etc.) 82
- Do vehicles dominate the site through access roads, parking and/or maintenance? 69

Access and Linkages

Overall Rating:

66

- Are there clear and open view lines into open spaces? 78
- Is there clear and useful wayfinding/signage within the site? 57
- Can people easily walk to the site from surrounding areas? 69
- Does the site function for people with special needs? 55
- Do paths and/or roads connect people to primary amenities? 63
- Are there transit stop(s) or parking near (within 1/4 mile) of primary entrance points? 75

Sustainability

Overall Rating:

68

Social

65

- Does the site provide places for people to gather? 68
- Does the site promote healthy lifestyle and/or reduce daily stress? 65
- Is the site well connected with clear and safe access points? 63

Environmental

59

- Does the site use energy, water, and material resources efficiently? 60
- Does the site improve water quality? 61
- Does the site enhance, preserve, promote or contribute to biological diversity? 62
- Is the site a node within a larger ecological corridor or habitat? 70
- Does the site enhance environmental awareness and knowledge? 40

Economic

80

- Does the site create public or private revenue-generating opportunities? 91
- Does the site sustain or increase property values? 71
- Does the site contribute to nearby property development or redevelopment potentials? 66
- Does the site promote permanent jobs? (directly or indirectly) 93

2.4

SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

2.4.1 Methodology

The purpose of an Existing Level of Service (LOS) analysis is to quantify how well the existing parks system is meeting the needs of residents. The National Recreation and Park Association's definition of LOS is "an allocation mechanism for the delivery of park land and basic recreation facilities throughout a community. By adoption of such a standard, a community in essence says that all citizens, [...], will have an equal opportunity to share in the basic menu of services implicit in the standard and accompanying spatial distribution and allocation of policies."

For the City of Coral Gables parks and open spaces, the LOS analysis was measured based on three basic principles that will be continually refined based on public input in subsequent phases of this planning process.

- **Acreage** (Amount of Park Land)
- **Facilities** (Amount of Facilities)
- **Access** (Distance or Travel Time)

2.4.2 Acreage LOS

The most common way to measure LOS for existing acreage is the number of public park acres per 1,000 residents in a community. Currently, there are 260 acres of public park lands operated by the City of Coral Gables, with an additional 1,620 acres of parkland operated by other agencies within the City limits. The 2019 population of Coral Gables is estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau to be 49,700 residents, which translates into an Acreage LOS of 5.24 acres per 1,000 residents when considering the City's parks. Based on estimates for the planning area that includes Coral Gables from the 2045 Miami-Dade Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the population is projected to increase by 32.7% over the next 25 years, providing the 2040 population estimate of 63,327. If no additional park land is acquired, the acreage LOS will drop to 3.97 acres per 1,000 residents in 2040. **Table 2-8** shows the LOS analysis for each park type and calculates the projected LOS for 2040, as well the acreage needed to maintain current acreage LOS figures as the population grows.

Also included in this analysis are other parks and conservation areas within the city limits that are managed by Miami-Dade County or other agencies. Most of these lands are resource-based, with the largest being Matheson Hammock Park, R. Hardy Matheson Preserve, and Chapman Field Park – all located along the Biscayne

Bay Aquatic Preserve. While these parks certainly add additional park acreage to supplement the City of Coral Gables system, the resource-based nature of these parks may not be meeting the needs and priorities of the community when it comes to facilities or access.

While Acreage LOS helps ensure a commitment to park land as the city develops, it has shortcomings. Comparison to other cities may be difficult as some cities, including Coral Gables, operate golf courses, conservation areas, and other non-recreational facilities which are high in acreage but low in available capacity. Acreage LOS also does not consider amenities that are accessible to residents but owned and operated by entities other than the city or consolidated city/county park systems; examples include school ball fields and playgrounds, parks operated by other agencies located adjacent or near to the City border, and privately-operated programs such as YMCAs, church after-school programs, community meeting facilities, and non-profit senior programs.

For these reasons, this Master Plan explores additional techniques such as Existing Facility LOS and Access LOS to better determine the extent to which parks, recreation and cultural resource facilities and programs are able to meet the needs of City of Coral Gables residents. This methodology assumes the following principles:

Facilities (Amount of Facilities)

- Every resident should have similar opportunities to use recreation facilities.

Access (Distance or Travel Time)

- Every resident should be able to access specific park facilities within similar walking, bicycling, public transit and/or driving distances.

Table 2-12: Coral Gables Acreage LOS Analysis per 1,000 Population

Park Type	# of Parks	Acreage	Coral Gables LOS (2020) acreage/1000 pop*.	Coral Gables LOS (2030) acreage/1000 pop**.	2030 Acreage Needed to Meet Current LOS	Coral Gables LOS (2040) acreage/1000 pop**.	2040 Acreage Needed to Meet Current LOS
Urban Open Spaces	32	28.73	0.58	0.49	4	0.45	8
Neighborhood Parks	20	17.36	0.35	0.30	2	0.27	5
Community Facilities	10	214.33	4.31	3.69	27	3.39	58
Total City Parks	62	260.42	5.24	4.48	33	4.12	71
Non-City Parks	18	1619.7	32.59	27.87	207	25.61	441
Total Parks within City Limits	80	1880.12	37.83	32.35	241	29.73	512

* 2019 Population of 49,700 (US Census Bureau)

** 2030 and 2040 based on a 1.3% projected growth annually from 2020-2045 (Miami-Dade LRTP)

Acreage LOS Findings

The 2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) does not provide a standard for acreage LOS, as agency recommendations are shifting more towards an access-based model. However, the 2019 NRPA Performance review found that average agency oversees 10.1 park acres per resident. Coral Gables LOS is similar to other municipalities in the Southeast Florida Region where larger population densities within municipal limits are typical. Acreage LOS is useful in establishing a baseline for understanding how population growth may place a strain on the available parkland for future resident access. As the city's population experiences growth in the next 20 years, the overall park system will need to add over 71 acres of new park land in order to maintain current LOS levels.

It should also be noted that over 80 percent of the system's park acreage is contained within the community facilities classification and nearly 90 percent of the acreage is found within the two golf courses operated by the City. With the large amount of acreage found within a total of 10 parks, the remaining 18 percent of the park acreage is contained within 51 parks throughout the city, with the average park size being 3.2 acres.

From an acreage distribution perspective, it may appear the park system is unbalanced. However, this evaluation does not take into consideration the context of the smaller parks throughout the system or the access level of service that the system provides. The facilities and amenities found in each site will also provide a better understanding of how well each park site is meeting the needs of the users



Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

it serves. While **Table 2-12** provides deficit figures for each park type, this acreage may be better allocated to certain park types or areas of the city and should be evaluated based on a combination of acreage distribution, facility priorities, and access needs.

2.4.3 Facility LOS

Another technique used to measure existing parks and recreation LOS is by the number of facilities per population. Like acreage, there are no strict standards for the number of facilities that a community needs. This section documents the evaluation and comparison of the number of facilities per population to averages in the Southeast Region of Florida found in the 2019 Florida SCORP.

Demand for Outdoor Recreation

The 2019 SCORP document contains a survey conducted in 2016 that included responses from 4,000 residents regarding their participation in outdoor recreation activities during the previous 12 months, as well as their primary reasons for participating in these activities. Highlighted in **Table 2-13** and **Table 2-14**, the top activities for households in the southeast include fitness walking/jogging, cycling, and wildlife viewing, and the top reasons for participation in outdoor recreation activities include relaxation, scenery, and general health. The survey also identified the most desired facilities, shown in **Table 2-15**, with the top facilities including hiking/walking trails, bike paths, community parks, and beach access. These facilities align with the activities and participation rates and indicate the types of facilities

Table 2-13: Top Outdoor Recreation Activities Household Participation Percentage Rates for Southeast Region Residents and Statewide (Top 10)

Activity	Southeast	Statewide
Freshwater fishing	28%	34%
Saltwater fishing	35%	36%
Swimming (outdoor pools)	43%	38%
Hiking	34%	42%
Pinicking	49%	44%
Visiting historical sites	42%	46%
Bicycling	55%	49%
Saltwater beach activities	52%	54%
Wildlife viewing	54%	61%
Fitness walking/jogging	67%	68%

Table 2-14: Primary Reasons for Participation in Outdoor Activities for Southeast Region Residents and Statewide Based on Percentage of the State Resident Participation

Activity	Southeast	Statewide
For the challenge	10%	12%
Variety of available opportunities	21%	26%
I live/stay close by park/rec area	26%	26%
Spend time by myself	29%	27%
It's affordable	38%	45%
Be close to nature	43%	46%
Mental well-being	46%	50%
Be with friends and family	51%	51%
General health	52%	54%
Physical fitness	52%	54%
Enjoy the scenery	55%	60%
Relaxation	62%	66%

that receive the most use from current and future populations.

In addition to providing the results from the survey, the SCORP document also provides 2017 recreation expenditures for outdoor activities in Miami-Dade County. Analyzing recreation expenditures provides a better understanding of the demand for facilities/activities, as this provides an indication of what people are willing to spend their disposable income on **Table 2-16**. When considering total spending from both residents and tourists, total spending for the county was over \$15 billion. The activities receiving the most spending included saltwater beach activities, fitness walking/jogging, freshwater beach activities, picnicking and hiking. The results from the survey are

Table 2-15: Top 10 Most Desired Recreation Facilities for Southeast Region Residents and Statewide

Rank	Southeast	Statewide
1	Hiking/walking trails	Hiking/walking trails
2	Biking paths/trails	Biking paths/trails
3	Community parks	Nature/interpretive trails
4	Beach access/parking	Community parks
5	Wildlife viewing areas/overlooks	Wildlife viewing areas/overlooks
6	Nature/interpretive trails	Paved walkways
7	Playgrounds for children	Playgrounds for children
8	Paved walkways	Beach access/parking
9	Off-leash dog areas	Off-leash dog areas
10	Outdoor public swimming pools	Campgrounds

Table 2-16: Top 10 Expenditures for Recreation Activities in Miami-Dade County

Rank	Activity	Total Spending	Resident Spending	Visitor Spending
1	Saltwater Beach Activities (not including fishing)	\$1,988,014,698	\$661,070,840	\$1,326,943,858
2	Fitness Walking/Jogging	\$1,283,323,851	\$682,658,095	\$600,665,756
3	Freshwater Beach Activities (not including fishing)	\$918,629,948	\$349,466,028	\$569,163,920
4	Picnicking	\$799,168,195	\$80,598,321	\$718,569,874
5	Hiking	\$775,873,320	\$131,137,354	\$644,735,967
6	Saltwater Boat Fishing	\$653,074,200	\$61,862,461	\$591,211,739
7	Saltwater Non-Boat Fishing - Pier, Jetty or Catwalk	\$574,428,232	\$56,040,582	\$518,387,650
8	Saltwater Shoreline Fishing	\$554,848,288	\$212,289,193	\$342,559,095
9	Nature Study	\$533,075,999	\$63,805,877	\$469,270,122
10	Outdoor Swimming Pool Use	\$530,365,328	\$72,467,824	\$457,897,504

generally in line with the level of recreation expenditures associated with the top activities. This is helpful in determining the kind of recreational activities that citizens wish to engage in and spend money on, and identifying the types of facilities that can best serve these demands.

Supply of Recreational Opportunities

The Florida SCORP uses the supply of recreation services and compares them to the resident demand figures to establish a LOS for the supply of resources. In order to more accurately relate the supply metrics to the demand, SCORP considers the percentage of participation in its LOS calculations for recreation supply of facilities. This means that LOS is measured in the amount of resources and facilities

that are available to support an activity, expressed in terms of units of supply per 1,000 participants.

Each region's level of service was estimated for 26 activities to provide a geographically relevant standard to which counties and municipalities can compare. The Southeast Region serves as the benchmark by which Coral Gables can be compared. In addition to supplying participation data for these 26 activities, the SCORP divides the results into two categories: resource-based facilities, and user-oriented facilities. Resource-based facilities are those that are dependent upon some element or combination of elements in the natural or cultural environments that cannot be easily duplicated. Activities supported by these facilities include beach access,



Ingraham Park

fishing, hiking, biking, and nature study. User-oriented facilities are those that can be provided almost anywhere for the convenience of the user. These facilities support more specific activities that include soccer, tennis, baseball, basketball, golf and pool swimming.

Facility LOS Findings

Table 2-17 shows the current facility LOS for Coral Gables and the Southeast Region of Florida. This data is evaluated based on the percentage of resident participants each unit is serving. The LOS for these facilities is compared to the Southeast Region LOS, and facility deficits in Coral Gables have been identified for the current population, and the population estimate for 2040. Facilities that are not quantified in the LOS calculations by SCORP are evaluated based on growth, with units needed to maintain current LOS figures provided.

When compared to the SCORP LOS figures for the Southeast Region, Coral Gables has an adequate number of basketball courts, swimming pools, soccer fields, and golf holes, with a significant surplus of tennis courts. The city currently has a deficit in baseball/softball fields, football fields, and boat launch lanes. These conditions are projected to continue as the population increases in the next 15 years.

Four additional baseball/softball fields, two additional football fields, and one additional boat launch lane are needed to meet the current Southeast Region LOS figures. However, as population growth occurs between now and 2040, the addition of one more baseball field, one more football field, and another swimming pool will be necessary to meet the Southeast Region LOS. The number of basketball courts, tennis courts, and soccer fields may be sufficient to meet demand from now until the population reaches the 2040 estimates.

The facilities that are not quantified in the SCORP LOS calculations are evaluated based on the units that will be needed to maintain the current Coral Gables LOS figures. Like the facilities discussed in the previous paragraph, almost all of the facilities necessary to maintain current levels are needed in the next 20 years. As these estimates are not based on SCORP participation levels, further input from the community will be necessary to identify the facilities that have the greatest unmet needs and highest demand. It should also be noted that this facility LOS evaluation only includes facilities that are in the Parks and Recreation System inventory, and excludes all school sites, private recreation areas, and parks run by other agencies that are not in the park system inventory. Many of these sites contain additional facilities that could potentially supplement the deficits experienced in the user-oriented categories. However, public access to these facilities may be limited.

Table 2-17: Coral Gables Facility LOS Analysis per 1,000 Population

Facility Type	Southeast Region LOS units/1000 pop. (2016)	Number of Facilities in Coral Gables	Coral Gables LOS (2019) Units/1000 pop.	2020 Units Needed to Meet Southeast LOS	Coral Gables LOS (2030) Units/1000 pop.	2030 Units Needed to Meet Southeast LOS	Coral Gables LOS (2040) Units/1000 pop.	2040 Units Needed to Meet Southeast LOS
Baseball/Softball Fields	0.65	4	0.37	3	0.33	4	0.29	5
Basketball Courts	0.83	9	1.25	(3)	1.11	(2)	0.98	(1)
Swimming Pools	0.06	1	0.05	0	0.04	0	0.04	1
Tennis Courts	1.03	34	2.87	(22)	2.54	(20)	2.25	(18)
Soccer Fields	0.09	2	0.17	(1)	0.15	(1)	0.13	(1)
Football Fields	0.27	1	0.09	2	0.08	2	0.07	3
Boat Launch Lanes	0.19	0	0.00	1	0.00	1	0.00	1
Golf (Holes)	1.63	27	0.53	(9)	2.11	(6)	1.87	(3)
						2030 Units Needed to Meet Current Coral Gables LOS		2030 Units Needed to Meet Current Coral Gables LOS
Water Access	-	2	0.04	-	0.03	0	0.03	1
Gymnasium	-	1	0.02	-	0.02	0	0.02	0
Fitness Gym	-	4	0.08	-	0.07	1	0.06	1
Racquetball Courts	-	3	0.06	-	0.05	0	0.05	1
Volleyball Courts	-	2	0.04	-	0.03	0	0.03	1
Benches	-	311	6.04	-	5.35	40	4.74	85
Picnic Tables	-	48	0.93	-	0.83	6	0.73	13
Covered Pavilions	-	10	0.19	-	0.17	1	0.15	3
Playgrounds	-	22	0.43	-	0.38	3	0.34	6

* 2019 Population of 49,700 (US Census Bureau)

** 2030 and 2040 based on a 1.3% projected growth annually from 2020-2045 (Miami-Dade LRTP)

2.4.4 Access LOS

A third approach explored to better determine existing LOS is analyzing the level of access that residents have to park facilities. This is typically measured as a distance, either in miles or travel time. The NRPA uses access as a key component in the concept of Park Equity, which is defined as “ensuring that all people have access to the benefits of local parks and recreation.” The 2019 SCORP discusses the emergence of park access as the recommended metric by which agencies set their LOS standards. Aligning with this methodology, the City of Coral Gables has established access standards for park types in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, and these standards will be considered during LOS analysis in this section. In addition to the predetermined park types, access LOS will also be evaluated for select facilities, consistent with the park classification or park type each facility is typically found in. The types of facilities are also consistent with those identified in the Facility LOS section of the chapter. Elements analyzed include:

Existing Park Classifications Types:

- Urban Open Space: 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile
- Neighborhood Parks: 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile
- Community Facilities: 2 miles and 4 miles
- Water Access - 4 miles

Synthesis Analysis:

- All Parks with Open Space - 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile

Neighborhood Serving Facilities - 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile:

- Basketball Courts
- Playgrounds
- Park Shelters

Community Serving Facilities - 2 miles:

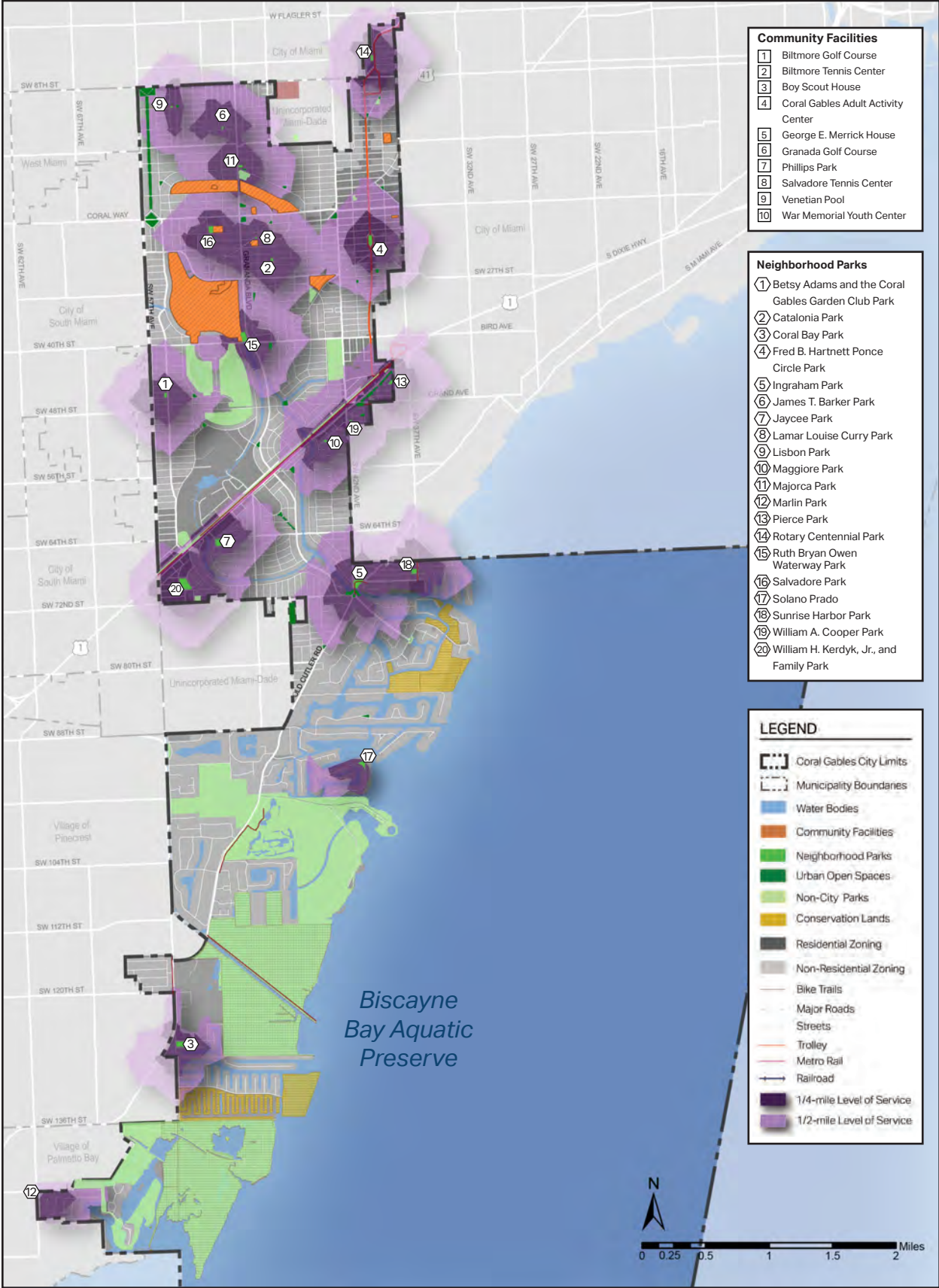
- Baseball/Softball
- Tennis Courts
- Soccer/Multi-purpose Fields

District/Regional Serving Facilities - 4 miles:

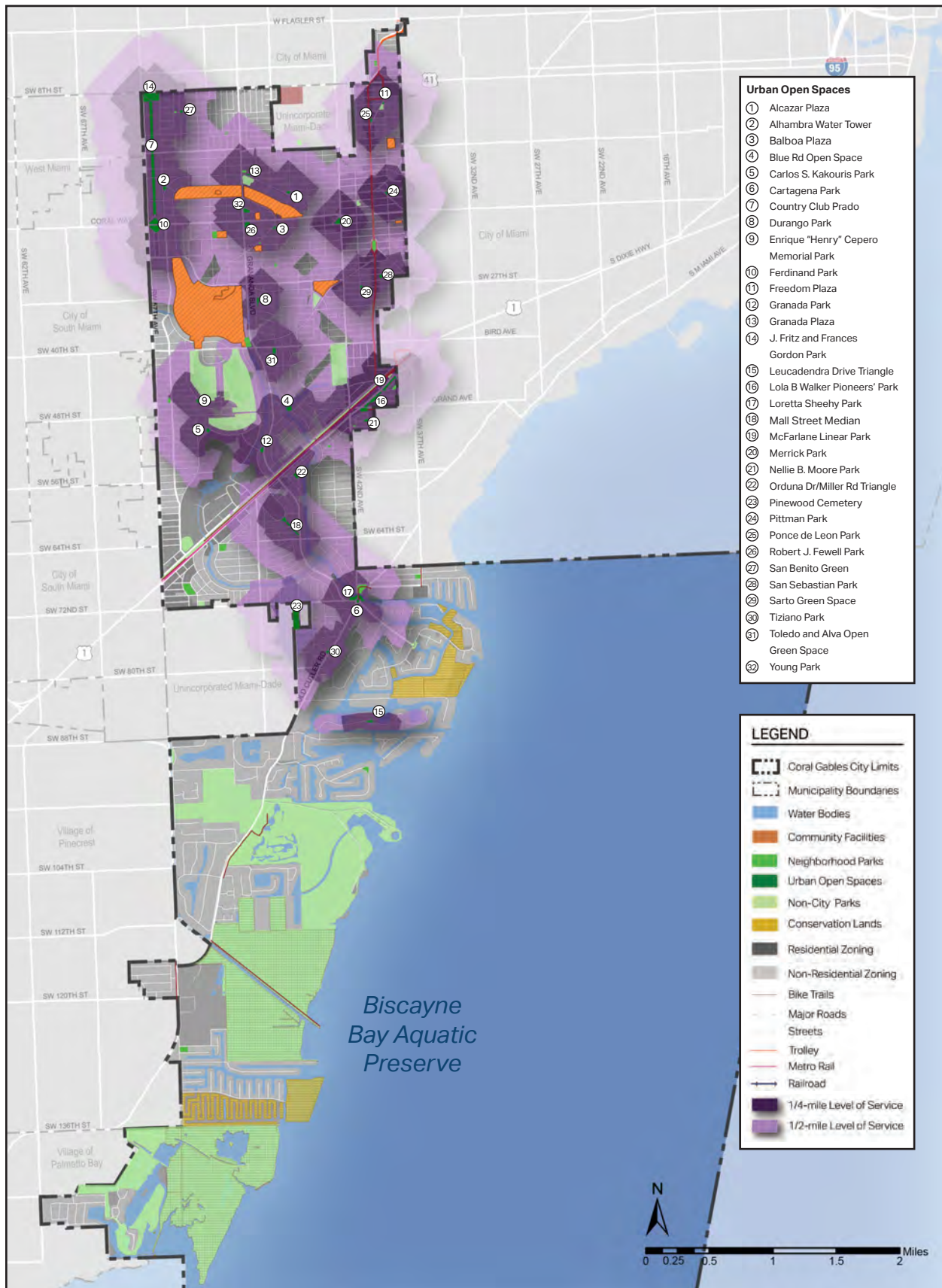
- Golf
- Community Centers
- Gymnasium
- Outdoor Pool

Maps 2-7 to 2-21 identify gaps in accessibility for each park classification and facility type.

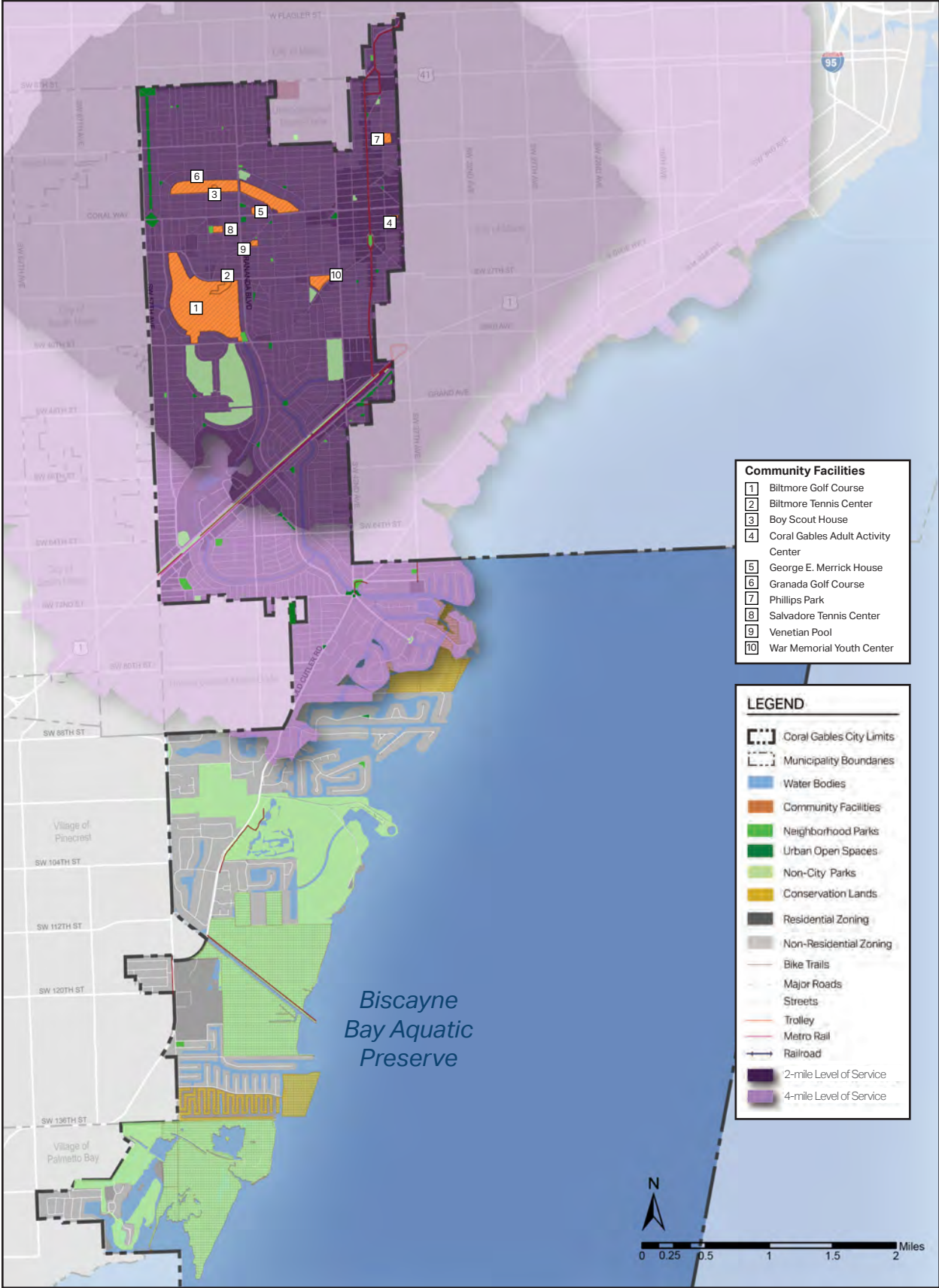
Map 2-7 – Neighborhood Parks Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



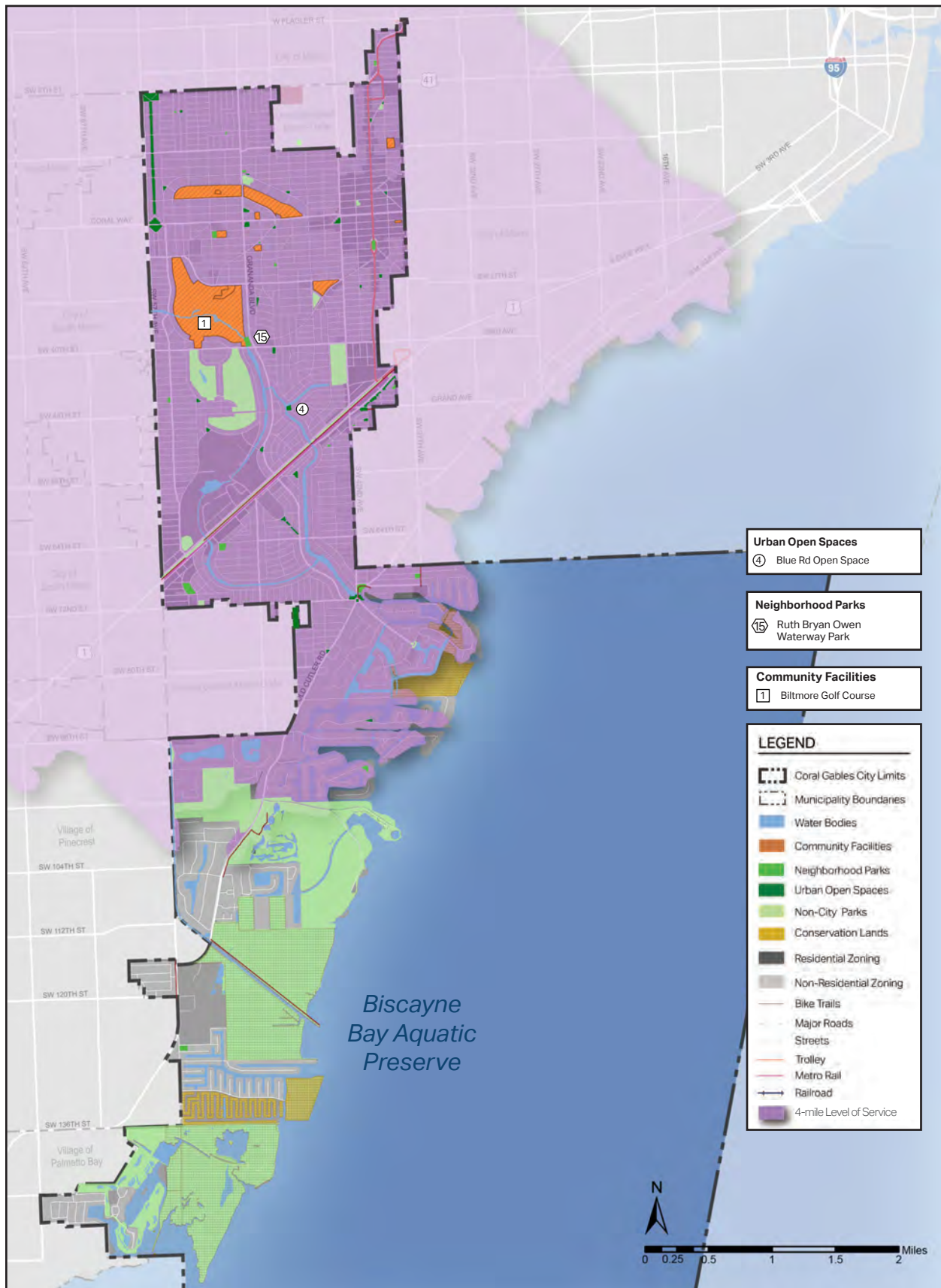
Map 2-8 – Urban Open Spaces Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



Map 2-9 – Community Facilities Level Of Service : 2-mile and 4-mile



Map 2-10 – Water Access Points Level Of Service : 4-mile



Access LOS Findings

Park Classifications

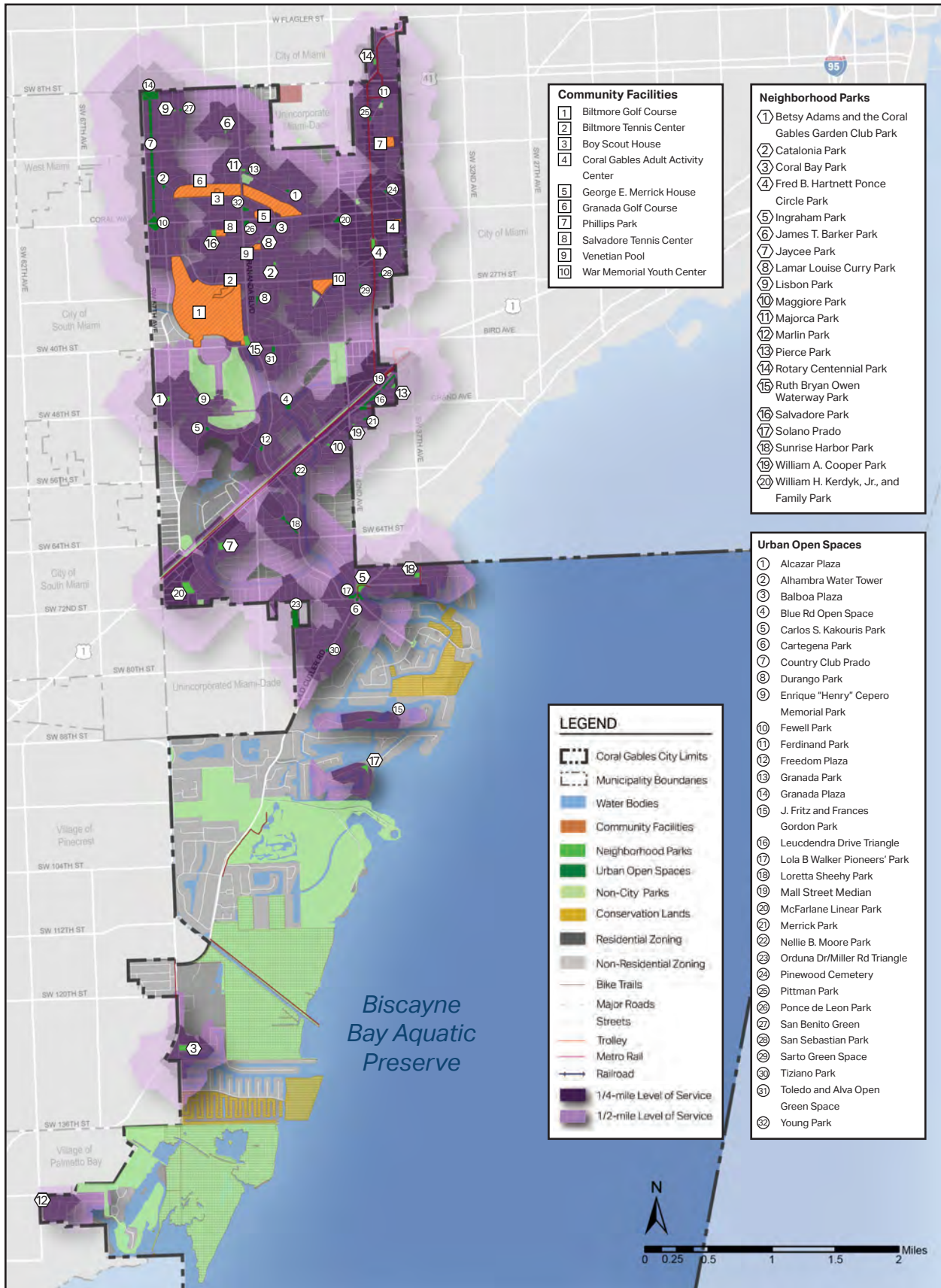
In general, the majority of the neighborhood parks and open spaces are located in the northern and central parts of the city and provide adequate level of service to these areas when analyzed at 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile services areas. While there are very few of these park types in the southern part of the city, the residents in the southern part of Coral Gables may have access to larger community parks and preserves, as well as private recreation facilities.

Analyzed at a 2-mile and 4-mile service area, community parks and facilities, and water access points provide extensive level of service to the northern and central parts of the city. There is a large gap in the level of service of community facilities in the southern half of the city. Almost the entire southern portion of the city lies outside the 4-mile level of service radius of these facilities.



Sunrise Harbor Park

Map 2-11 – All Parks and Open Spaces Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



Park Synthesis Analysis

Map 2-11 combines the different park types and analyzes access at a walking and biking range to provide a better understanding of the access LOS for the entire Park System. All parks in the City of Coral Gables are included in this analysis, in an effort to provide a graphic representation of how easy it is for residents to access a park in their neighborhood.

Analyzing the 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile access Level of Service for all of Coral Gables parks and recreation facilities, reveals major gaps in LOS mostly in the southern sections of the city with some smaller pockets of gaps in the central part of the city. The northern and central parts of the city are well served by parks and recreational facilities. The southern areas with the largest gaps are primarily low density residential properties, so the demand for walkable access might not be as high as the areas in the northern portion of Coral Gables. The results of this analysis may indicate that some neighborhoods in the city may not have walkable access to open spaces, however the need for walkable facilities will need to be analyzed alongside the community input as well as future growth patterns.

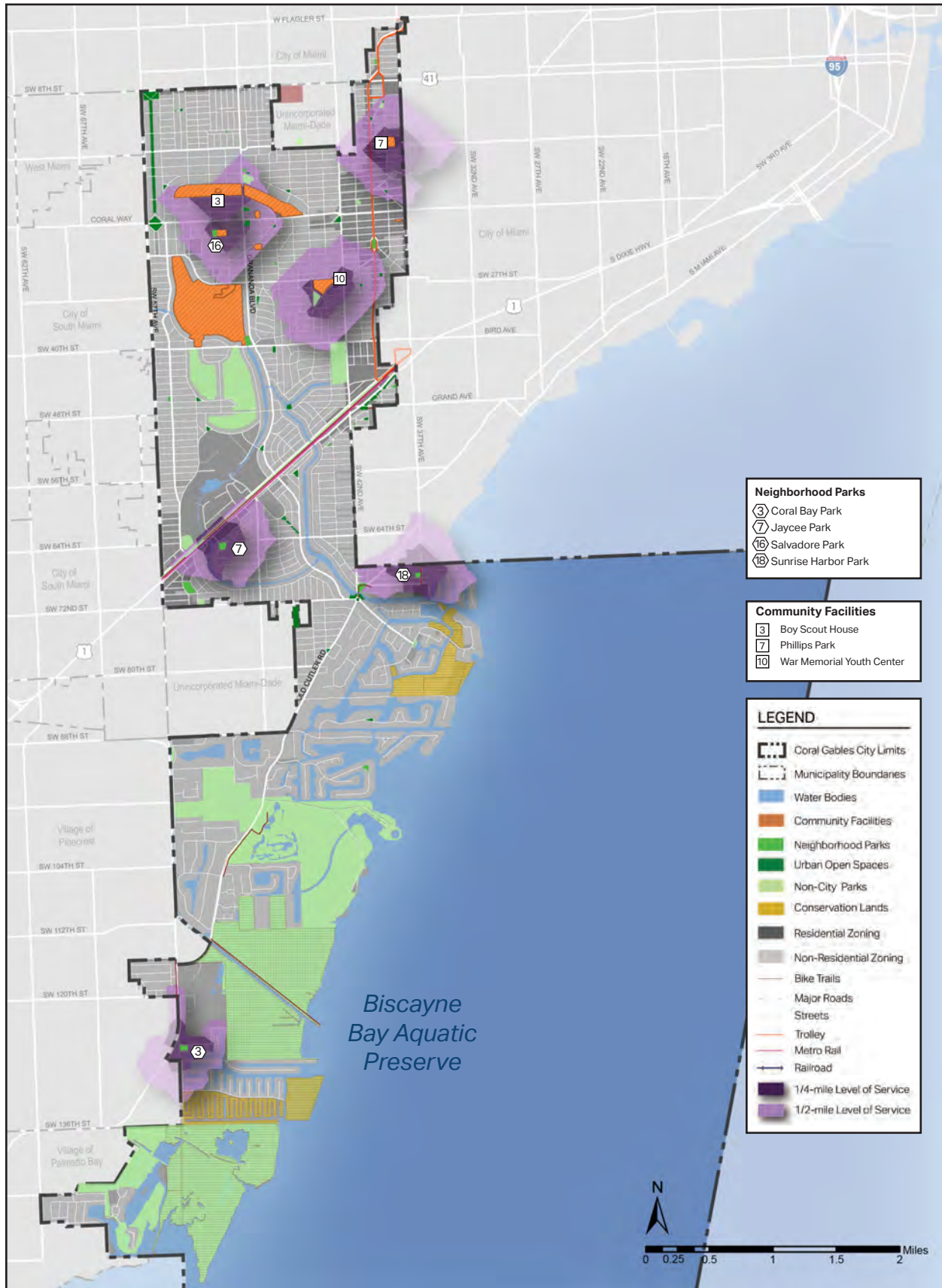
Facility Access LOS

The facility access LOS analyzes neighborhood-serving, walk-to facilities such as playgrounds, basketball courts, and park shelters, analyzed at 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile service area, while community facilities, like tennis courts, multipurpose fields/ soccer fields, and baseball/softball fields, that may serve a slightly larger population are analyzed at a 2-mile service area. Generally, playgrounds and basketball courts have adequate coverage throughout the northern portion of the city with some smaller gaps in the central portion of the city. The southern part of the city is serviced by only one park which have these neighborhood-serving facilities thus leaving large gaps in service in the southern part of the city.

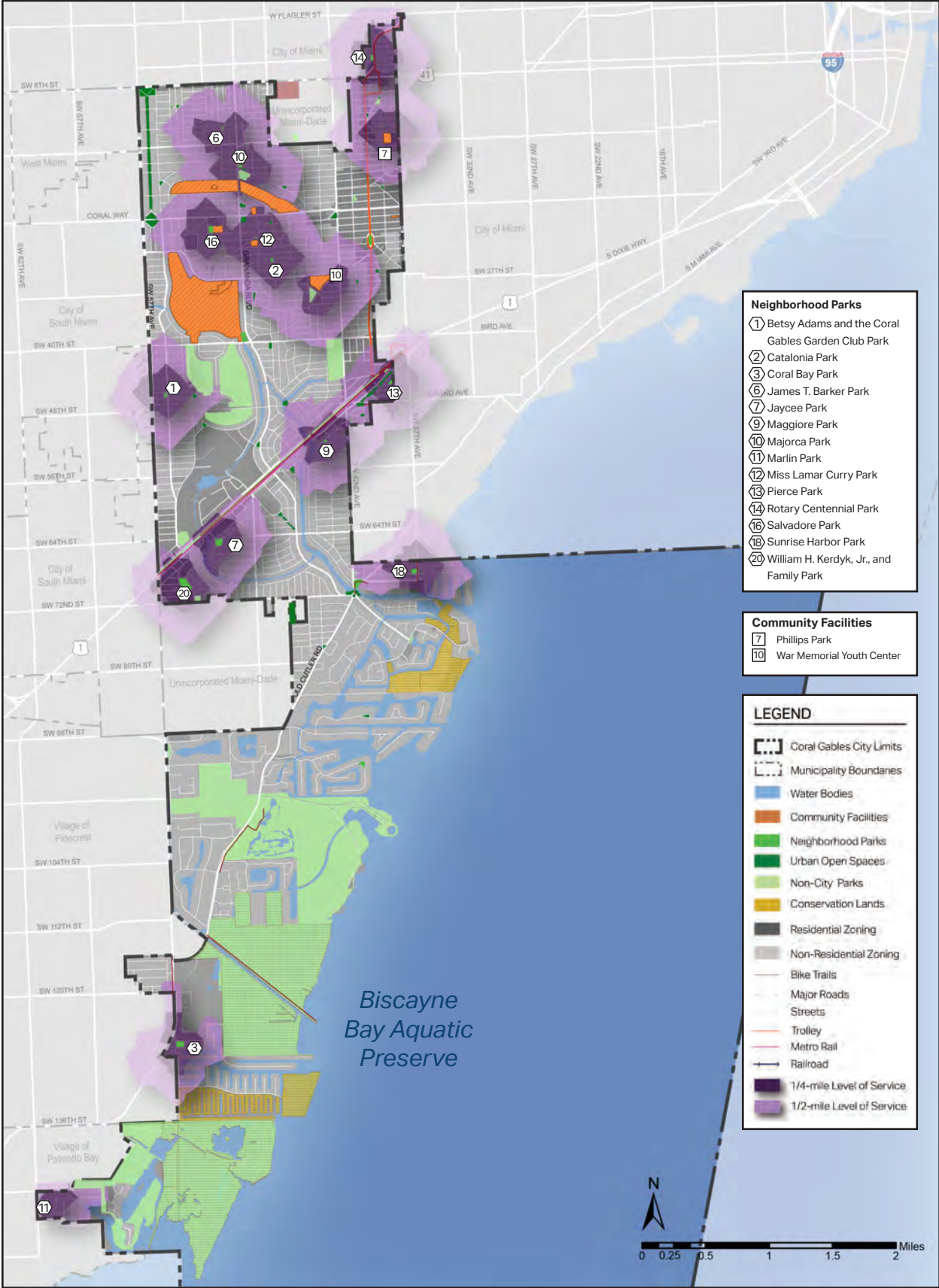
District/ Regional facilities have service areas that are generally accessible within two miles of the facility location. In Coral Gables, tennis courts, baseball/softball fields, soccer/multi-purpose fields, provide substantial coverage in the northern and central portions of the city.

Regional-serving facilities such as golf courses, gyms, community centers and aquatic facilities are analyzed at a four-mile service area. This is due to specialized nature of these facilities and the tendency for them to serve as more of a destination for residents from throughout the city and surrounding communities. All of these regional serving facilities are concentrated in the northern and central part of the city providing extensive coverage to these parts of the city as well as surrounding communities outside the city limits.

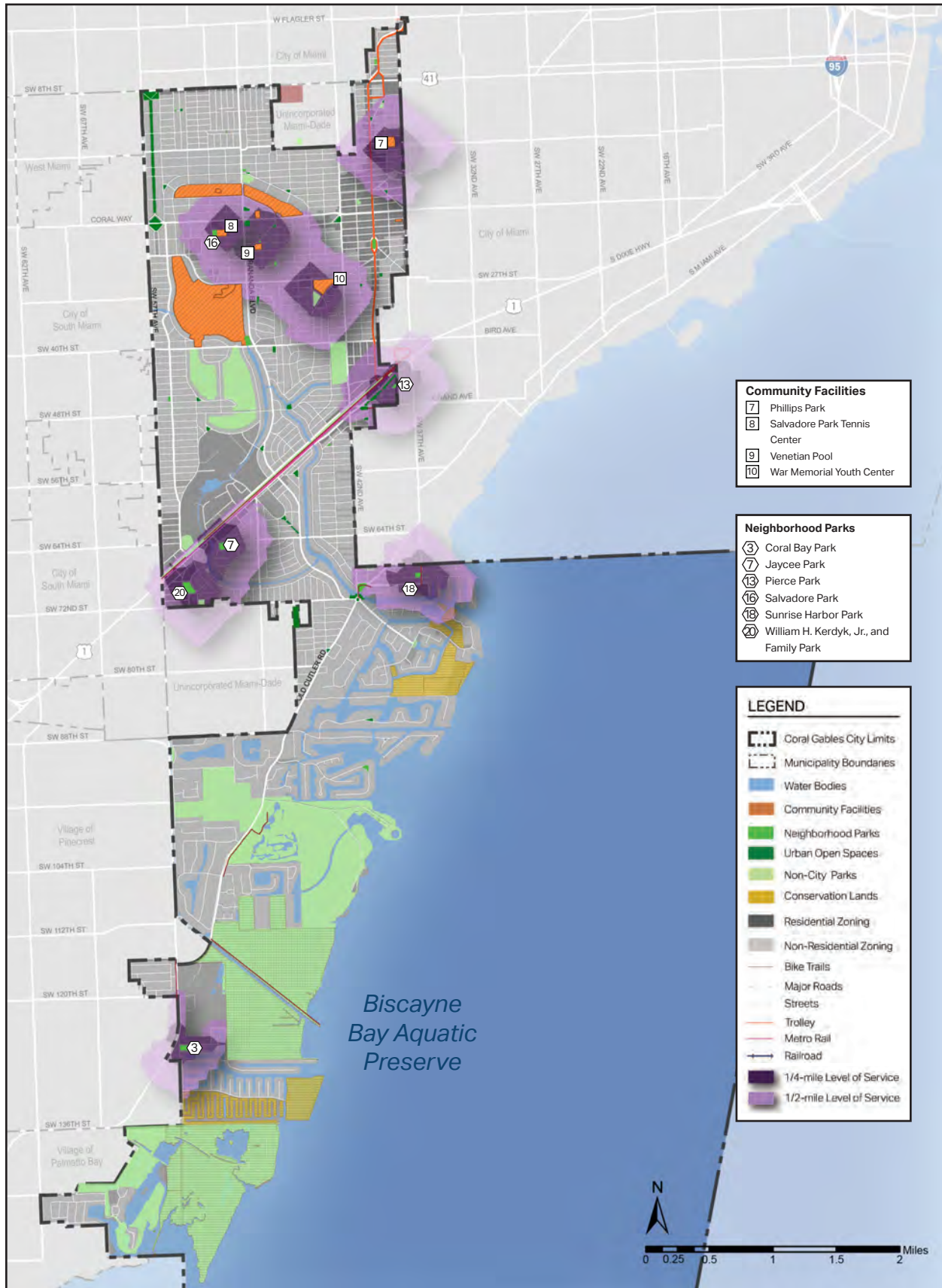
Map 2-12 – Basketball Courts Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



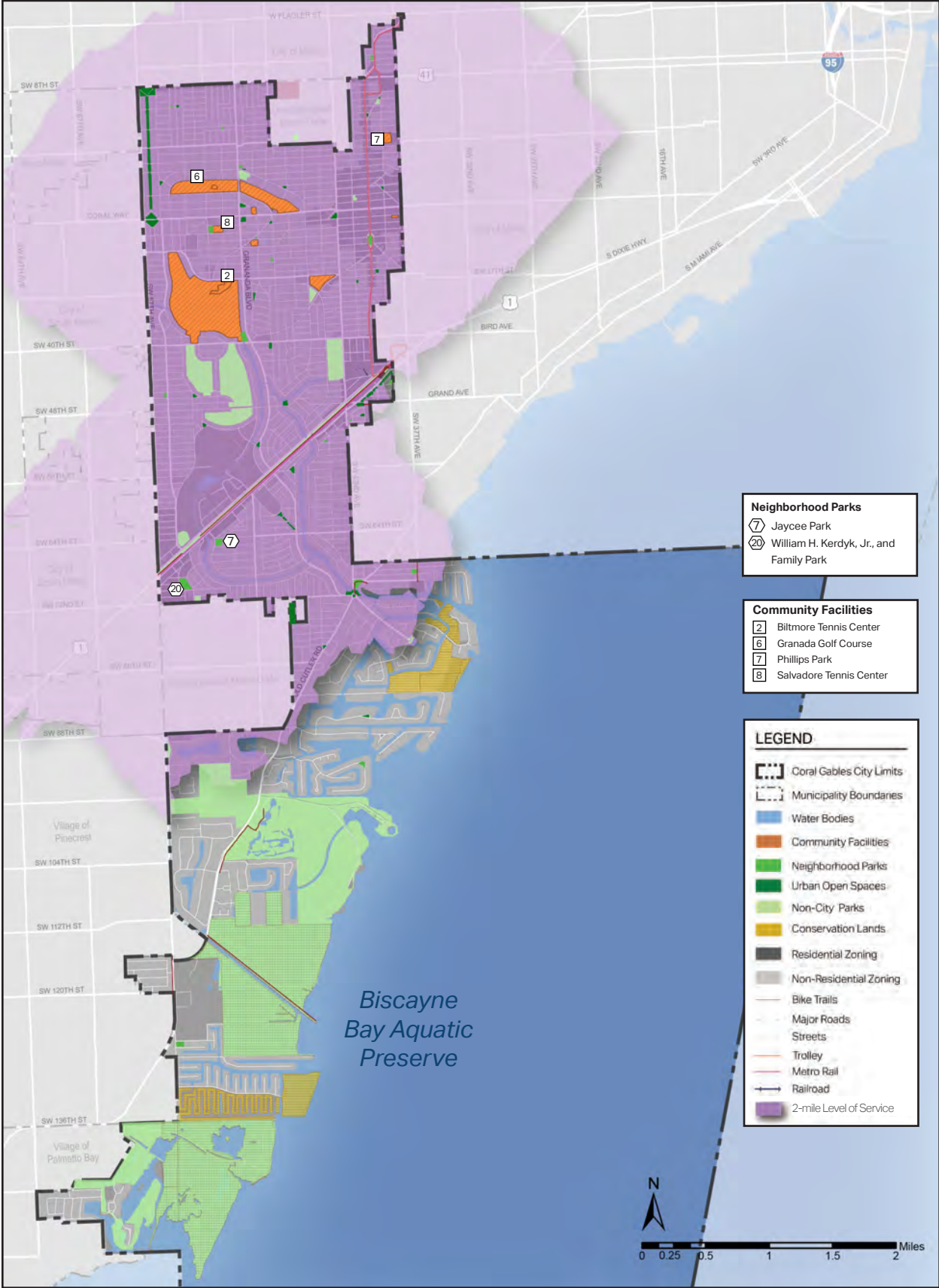
Map 2-13 – Playgrounds Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



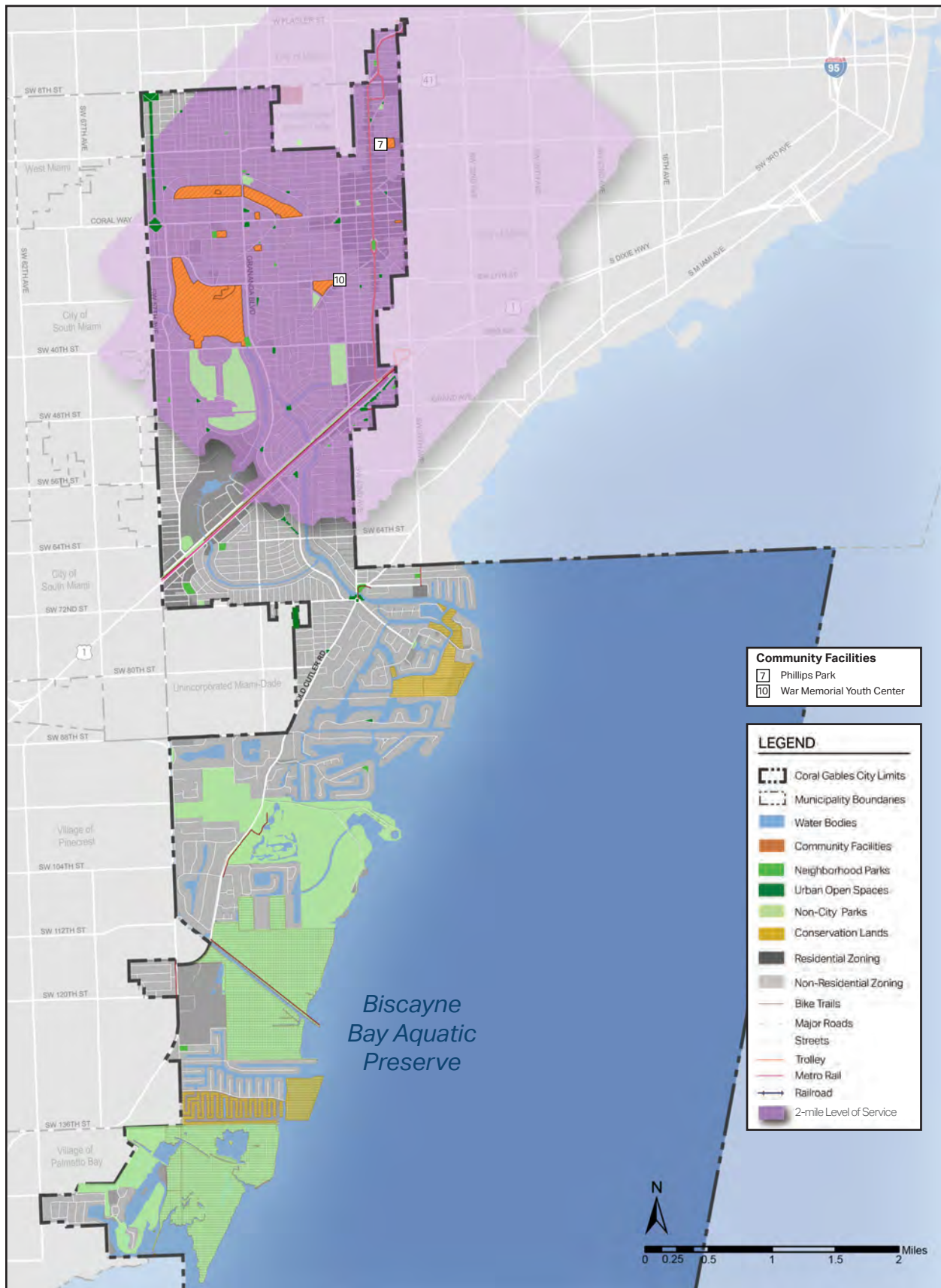
Map 2-14 – Covered Pavilions Level Of Service : 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile



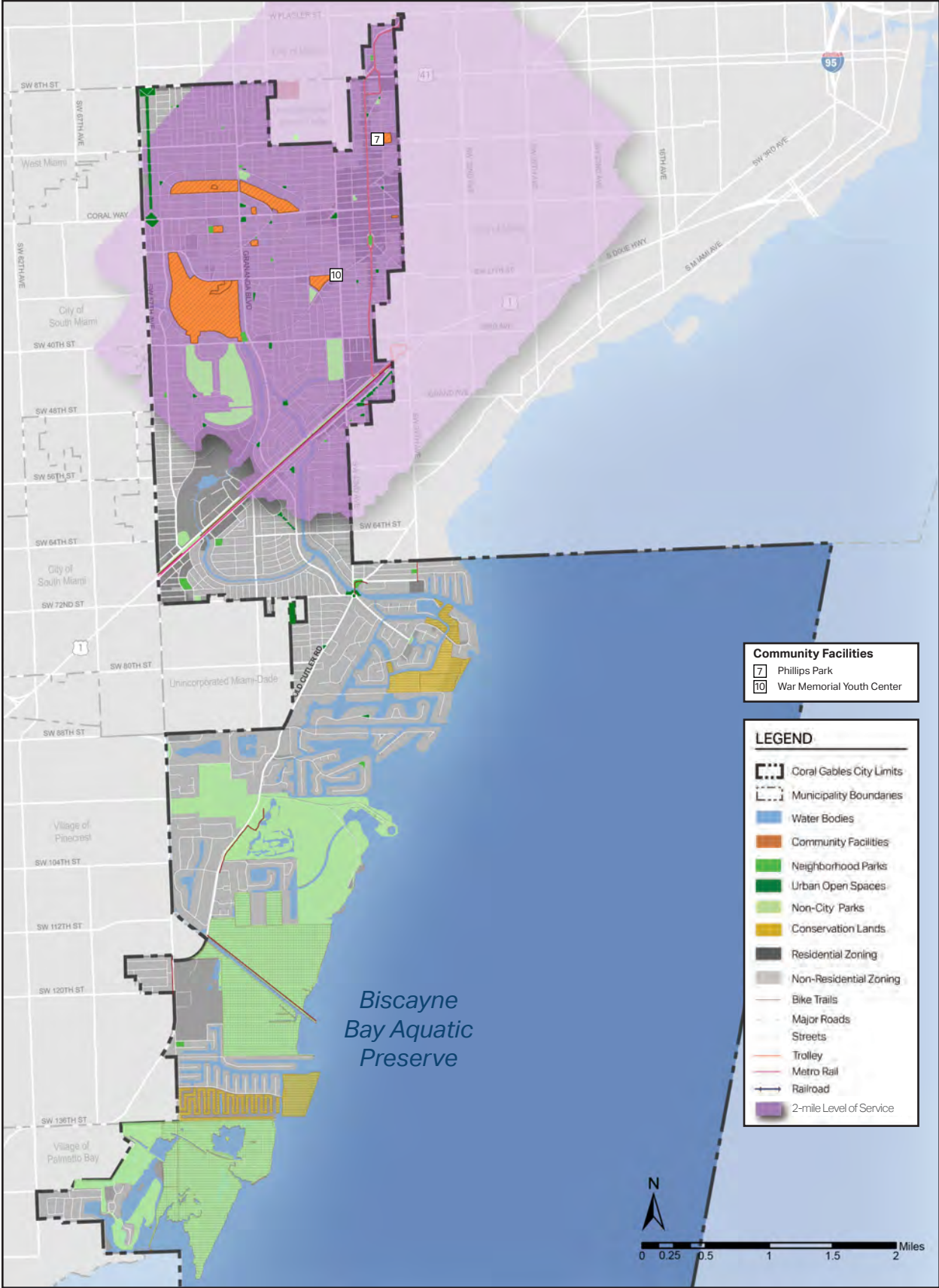
Map 2-15 – Tennis Courts Level Of Service : 2-mile



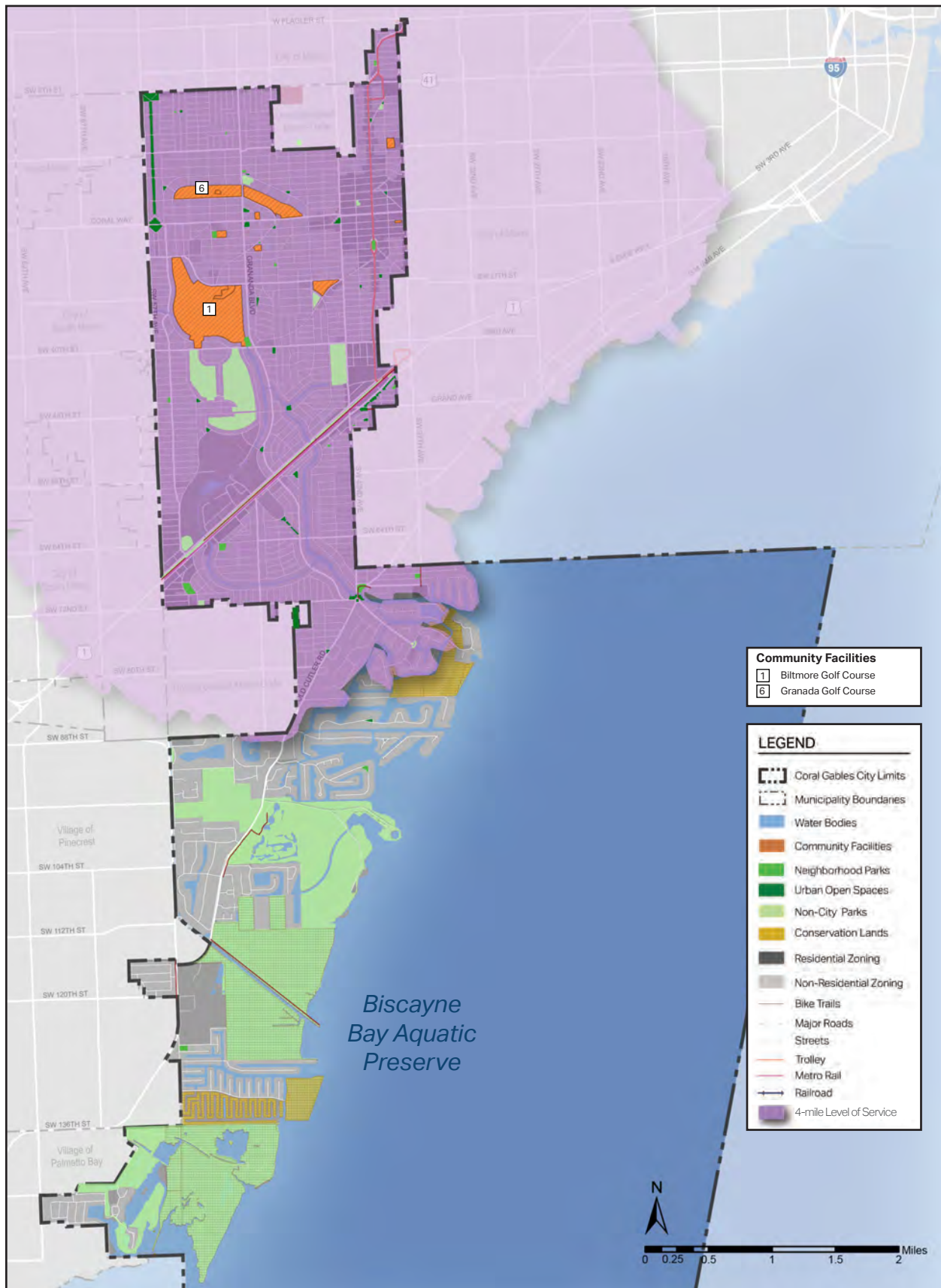
Map 2-16 – Baseball/Softball Fields Level Of Service : 2-mile



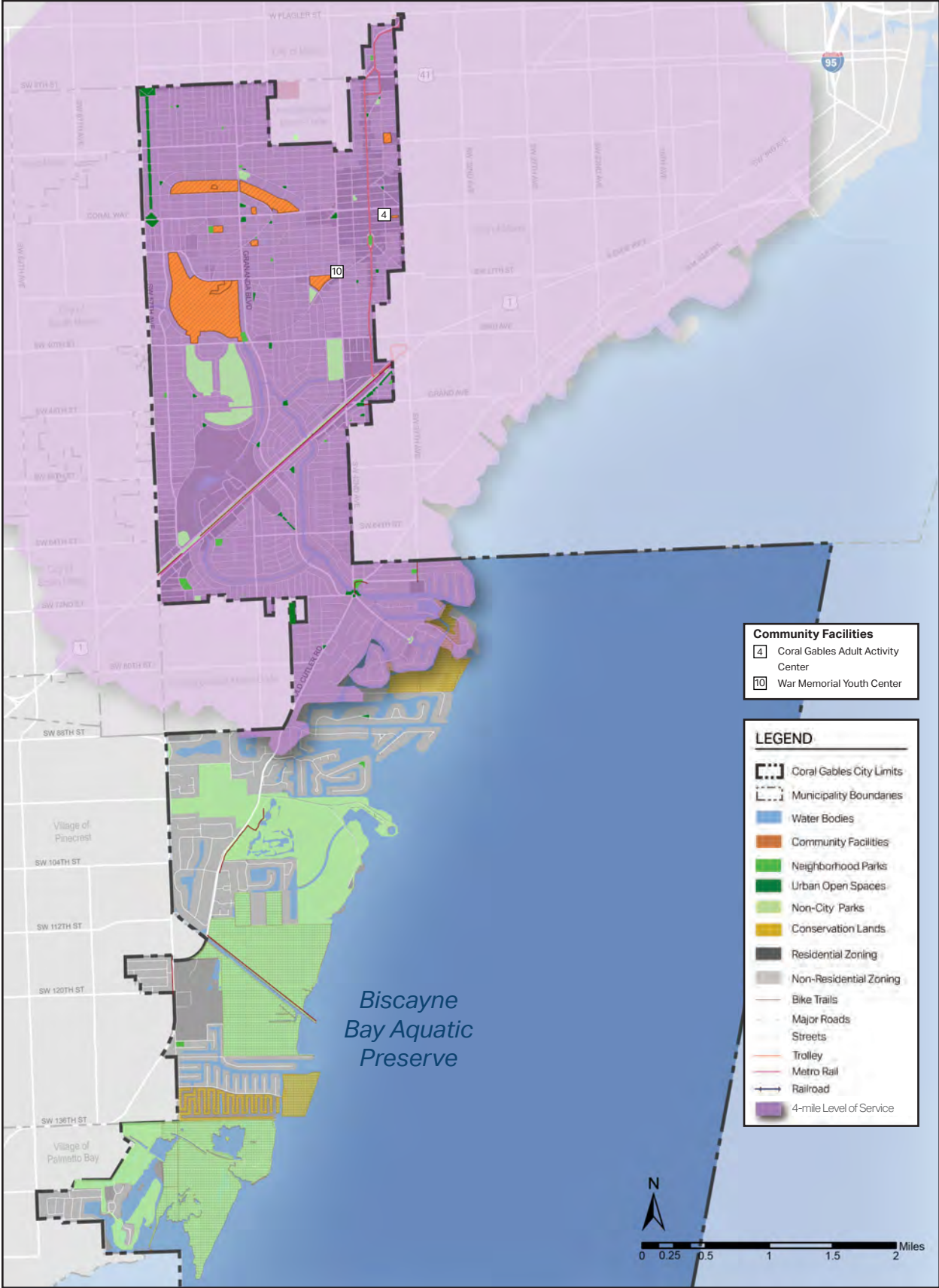
Map 2-17 – Soccer/Multipurpose Fields Level Of Service : 2-mile



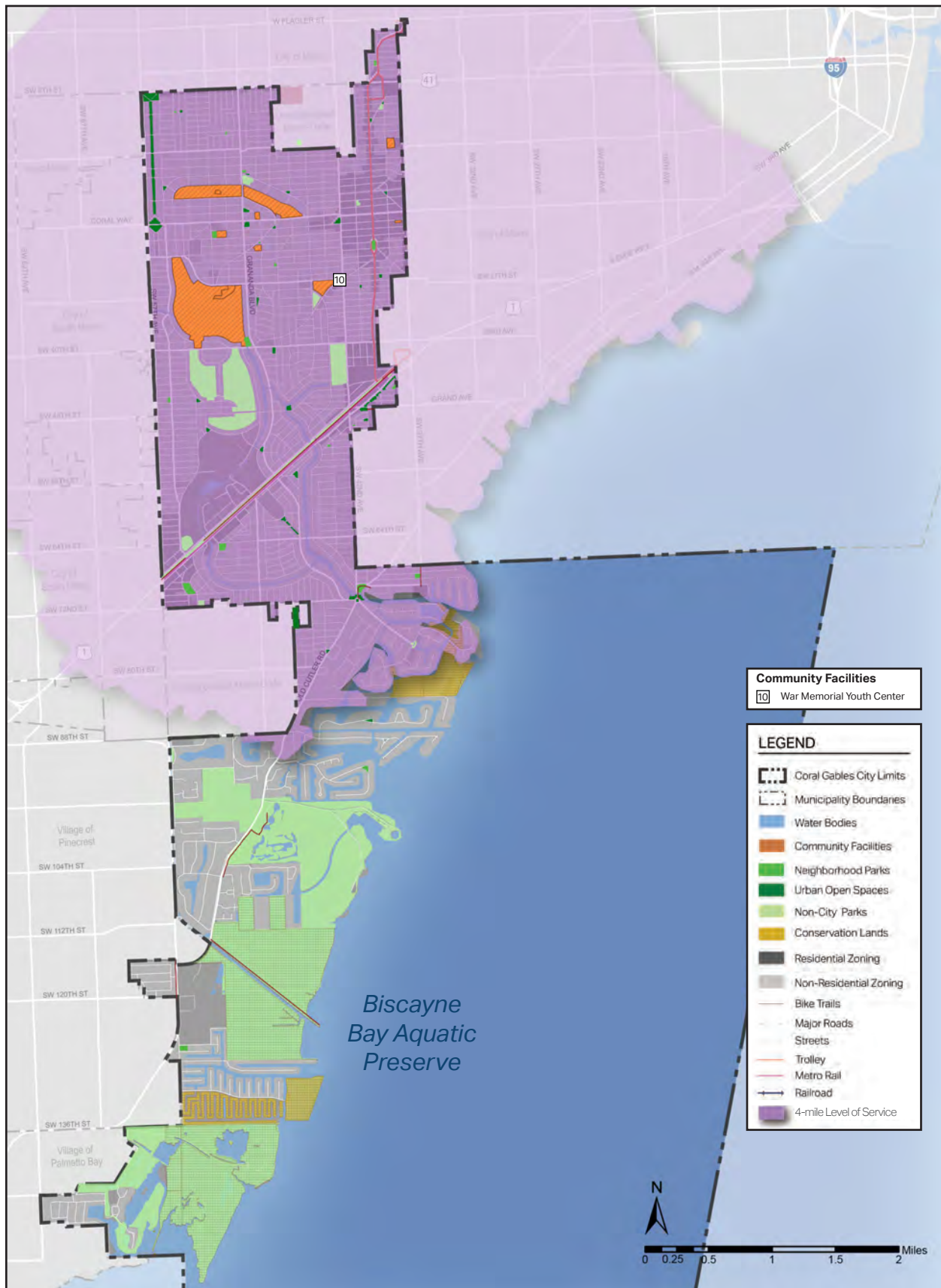
Map 2-18 – Golf Course Level Of Service : 4-mile



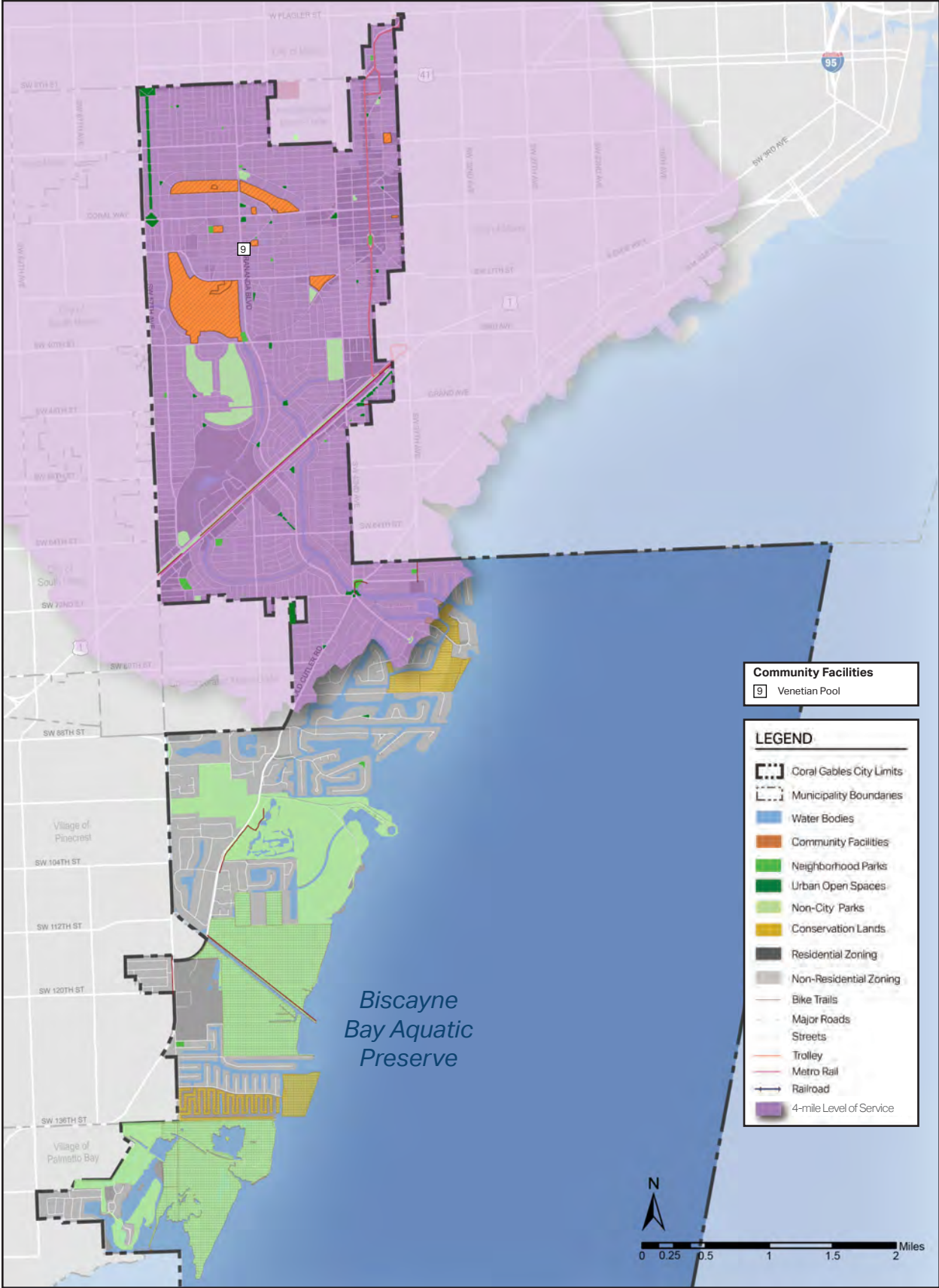
Map 2-19 – Community Centers Level Of Service : 4-mile



Map 2-20 – Gymnasiums Level Of Service : 4-mile



Map 2-21 – Swimming Pools Level Of Service : 4-mile



Level of Service Summary

By utilizing a three-level approach to analyze the level of service for park and recreation facilities a number of trends can be identified that, in conjunction with the Needs Assessment, can help inform the vision for the park system and future facility development.

Acreage LOS

When compared to National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) agency averages, the 2019 NRPA Performance review found that the average agency oversees 10.1 park acres per resident. Coral Gables LOS is similar to other municipalities in the Southeast Florida Region where larger population densities within municipal limits are typical. As the city's population experiences growth in the next 20 years, the overall park system will need to add over 71 acres of new park land in order to maintain current LOS levels.

Facility LOS

When compared to the SCORP LOS figures for the Southeast Region, Coral Gables has an adequate number of basketball courts, swimming pool, soccer fields, and golf holes, and a significant surplus of tennis courts. The city currently has a deficit in baseball/softball fields, football fields, and boat launch lanes. These conditions are projected to continue as the population increases in the next 15 years thus requiring the city to consistently add to its inventory of facilities.

Access LOS

In general, the parks and recreation system in Coral Gables is providing a high level of access to parks and recreation facilities for its residents. When considering all parks, open spaces and community facilities, the neighborhoods in the northern and central portions of the city typically enjoy walkable or bikable access to a nearby park. The southern portion of the city has a relatively lower accessibility levels to parks and facilities. In terms of facilities, the larger community and regional-serving facilities generally provide adequate coverage, while the neighborhood-serving facilities are typically aligned with the same trend present in the park synthesis analysis.



Solano Prado

2.5

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

The condition of the current park system reflects the department's success in providing high-quality service through the care of its facilities. Additional goals laid out in the City documents seek to meet the needs of the future, and the Community Recreation department has opportunities to help meet these goals.

These opportunities include establishing a comprehensive, identifiable brand for the entire Community Recreation system to communicate a unified vision of the City. This can be aided by signage, which can emphasize the location and importance of each park and open space to its immediate community. George Merrick envisioned a neighborly, park-like environment for Coral Gables, and larger open spaces downtown would support community gatherings, and increased public access to the waterways would place renewed emphasis on this vision.

Connectivity throughout the City requires infrastructure for pedestrian, bike, and community transit options that are growing in popularity. The City is investing to make these services staples of its transit system, and it is critical that these amenities partner with recreation planning to provide comfortable, safe, and integrated access to parks and outdoor spaces. This type of planning supports both active and passive recreation and as such will meet the needs of the City's two fastest growing populations, the older and youngest generations. Sustainable development practices that protect air, water, and land should be integrated with these changes to prepare the City to meet critical environmental needs of a growing coastal City. The high standards which the Community Recreation department is meeting set the tone for why the pursuit of these goals is worth the investment. The department has positioned itself to be a critical leader tackling these design challenges for a continued, quality future for Coral Gables.

Level of Service

Coral Gables is currently providing a level of service that is comparable to other communities in the South Florida Area, and it is only experiencing significant facility deficits in athletic fields. In general, access LOS is relatively good throughout the city when considering park open space, however gaps exist for certain facilities. Deficits and gaps will only be exacerbated as the population continues to grow, however Coral Gables is well positioned to provide additional amenities and improve access to neighborhood parks. Deficits in facilities will also need to be compared to the needs and priorities of the communities, in order to ensure the necessary facilities are provided to Coral Gables residents.

System-wide Ratings

100 - 75 *Exceeding Expectations*
74 - 50 *Meeting Expectations*
49 - 0 *Not Meeting Expectations*

Design and Construction

65

Effectiveness

61

Condition

74

Comfort and Image

73

Access and Linkages

66

Sustainability

68

Guiding Documents

The Coral Gables guiding documents provide insight about the values and priorities of residents over the last 20 years. A strong master planning process identifies ongoing City efforts to meet community needs and initiates faster implementation of its defined goals through leveraging and partnership of departments across the City. The intent is to advance a consistent and common vision for the community of Coral Gables. Once the CRMP is complete, it will then be a valuable resource to other departments to help guide their future efforts. A review of these guiding documents revealed several goals that remain consistent with residents today:

- Connectivity using complete streets, sidewalks, and bike routes.
- Environmentally sustainable design that can be utilized for education.
- Maintenance and improvement of existing parks and recreation facilities.
- Outdoor spaces for people to gather and socialize downtown.
- Classes for aquatics and learning to swim.
- Promotion of Coral Gables heritage.
- Increasing public access to waterways.



3

NEEDS AND PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT



Pittman Park

Chapter 3: Needs and Priorities Assessment

Building on the information gathered as part of the Community Inventory and Assessment, the System Master Plan team utilized innovative techniques to conduct a comprehensive needs and priorities assessment for the War Memorial Youth Center. Techniques used are a combination of qualitative and quantitative industry best practices that provide a system of cross-checks to determine the top needs and priorities for parks, recreation and cultural resources in the City of Coral Gables. The following details summarize the findings from each technique:

CHAPTER 3: Needs and Priorities Assessment

3.1 Introduction and Methodology

3.2 Community Involvement

- 3.2.1 Overview
- 3.2.2 Community Meetings
- 3.2.3 Focus Groups
- 3.2.4 Online Survey
- 3.2.5 Public Involvement Summary

3.3 Statically Valid Survey

- 3.3.1 Methodology
- 3.3.2 Parks and Recreation Questions
- 3.3.3 Statistically Valid Survey Summary

3.4 Needs and Priorities Assessment Summary

3.1

INTRODUCTION and METHODOLOGY

Building on the information gathered as part of the Community Inventory and Assessment, the planning team utilized innovative techniques to conduct a comprehensive citywide needs and priorities assessment. Techniques used are a combination of qualitative and quantitative industry best practices that provide a system of cross-checks to determine the top needs and priorities for the City's Community Recreation System. The following details summarize findings from each technique.

The previous chapter, Chapter 2: Community Inventory and Assessment, documents a process of observational techniques that the planning team utilized to better understand the current condition of Coral Gables parks, recreation facilities, programs, and policies. These techniques are a critical component of the master planning process but are also limited in providing data conveying how residents use, value, and envision their parks, recreation facilities, programs, services, and community. This chapter documents two additional research types, qualitative and quantitative, which allow the team to gather community member input through public participation, community surveys, and inventory analysis. The following content conveys what Coral Gables residents collectively shared as their vision for community recreation in their city.

Each method of data collection: public participation, community surveys, and inventory analysis, provides a snapshot of information that when combined, contribute to a mixed methods, triangulated approach that can demonstrate community trends in needs and priorities. Eight comprehensive methods of input or data collection were utilized as part of this triangulated approach **Figure 3-1**. Though some techniques are more statistically valid than others, by utilizing a comprehensive group of eight select techniques, the planning team can cross-check results to better determine an accurate understanding of community needs and priorities.

Figure 3-1: Mixed Methods, Triangulated Approach



3.2

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

3.2.1 Overview

Direct and engaging community involvement forms the cornerstone of the qualitative research method for the City of Coral Gables Community Recreation Master Plan. A primary goal of the community involvement was to provide opportunities for geographical, topic specific, and policy related input. The first component of public participation included conducting five community meetings in three geographical regions of the city: northern, central, and southern.

Two of the five community meetings were offered downtown on a weekend day making them additionally accessible to residents. The second component of community involvement was conducting nine topic-based focus groups addressing a selection of community recreation elements. The third component included stakeholder interviews with elected officials, Community Recreation staff, community officials and community leaders in Coral Gables. The following are summaries of findings for each method.



Ponce de Leon Middle School Community Meeting

3.2.2 Community Meetings

Five community meetings were held in geographically distinct areas across the city: Ponce De Leon Middle School (central); Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (south); Adult Activity Center (north and central business district); War Memorial Youth Center (citywide), and a second meeting was held at the Adult Activity Center (citywide). Each meeting was publicly advertised via social media, flyers posted throughout the community, email blasts by the City, and City website postings.

Each meeting consisted of a presentation of the overall planning process, findings from the Community Inventory Assessment, and a preliminary overview of additional public participation opportunities. Records of these meetings can be found in Appendix A, along with comments recorded from each meeting. The following report summarizes themes that emerged from the five community meetings.



Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden Community Meeting

Community Meeting #1: Ponce de Leon Middle School

The first community meeting was held in the area sector of the City at Ponce De Leon Middle School in the evening on May 7, 2019. Residents provided comments through a series of interactive activities such as written responses to prompts and questions on flip charts, completing individual master plan surveys, and through dialogue and the recording of comments with Project Team members. Primary comments summarizing these methods included:

- Incorporate safe access routes to parks from surrounding neighborhoods.
- Add shade and benches along paths to city destinations and at transit stops.
- Add running and walking amenities such as trails, gardens, and running tracks across the city.
- Make park equipment and amenities accessible to everyone.
- Build additional city dog parks.
- Increase water activities such as splash pads, kayaking, and fishing.



Ponce de Leon Middle School Community Meeting



Adult Activity Center Community Meeting

Community Meeting #2: Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

The second community meeting was held in the southern area of the City at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden on the evening of May 8, 2019. Comments provided by participants included:

- Add additional dog parks in the city and include water spigots, benches, and separate areas for large and small dogs.
- Create a community center in South Gables – explore possible joint venture opportunities.
- Increase lighting on Coral Gables sidewalks.
- Incorporate shade cover in parks for children.

Community Meeting #3: Adult Activity Center

The third community meeting was held at the Adult Activity Center in the northern, downtown area of the City Coral Gables in the evening on Thursday, May 9, 2019. Comments from participants included:

- Offer additional community fitness programs such as zumba, yoga, and Pilates.
- Increase the number of dog parks in the city.
- Add benches with outlets and chargers to parks.
- Increase access to city canals for activities such as canoe trips.
- Provide more educational programs and classes addressing personal safety, technology, and arts.
- Add more protection for city crosswalks such as hawks and pedestrian activated flashers.
- Explore expanding senior outreach, exercise, and social programs.

Community Meeting #4: War Memorial Youth Center

The fourth community meeting was held at the War Memorial Youth Center for citywide access in the morning on Saturday, May 11, 2019. Comments provided by participants included:

- Increase the number of safe bike routes to parks and community facilities to create a bike-friendly community.
- Provide more pedestrian-friendly infrastructure throughout the city.
- Increase the number of walking and running trails.
- Provide for more water-based activities such as swimming, fishing, kayaking, and boating.
- Add fitness classes and additional gym facilities.
- Explore offering limited Sunday hours at the War Memorial Youth Center.
- Promote a holistic approach to community sports by building a sense of team and belonging between different age groups.
- Emphasize meeting resident needs at community facilities.
- Ensure that City parks, facilities, and amenities are accessible for users of all abilities.

Community Meeting #5: Adult Activity Center

The fifth community meeting was held at the Adult Activity Center for citywide access in the afternoon on Saturday, May 11, 2019. Comments provided by participants included:

- Complete safer biking and walking access routes to neighborhood parks.
- Extend incomplete sidewalks to important destinations throughout the city.
- Add higher visibility crosswalks across major city thoroughfares.
- Increase rubberized tracks, running trails, and running facilities in the city.
- Add more neighborhood parks and pocket parks in multi-family neighborhood communities.
- Offer additional yoga facilities and classes.
- Increase pool activities provided in the city such as warm therapy pools and lap pools.
- Explore adding a labyrinth walk and meditation gardens in the city.
- Create a more accessible communication system (an email list) for City activities calendar and facility openings and closings.
- Offer cardio and aerobics classes and equipment.

Community Meeting Themes

Information gathered from each community meeting was recorded in meeting notes and coded by the planning team to identify consistent themes of community-wide needs and priorities. The primary themes from the community meetings included:

- Provide safe and enhanced opportunities pedestrian and bike travel to parks and community facilities.
- Develop additional off-leash dog parks with high-quality amenities that are accessible throughout the city.
- Provide improved facilities for walking such as rubberized tracks, walking paths, and/or shaded trails.
- Add additional outdoor and indoor aquatics and water-based access and facilities.
- Create meditative exercise spaces and gardens in the city.
- Prioritize inclusive accessibility to parks and recreation facilities for children and special populations.
- Explore expanding athletics programming, facility hours, and educational opportunities.
- Elevate transit experiences in the city through accessibility, protected transit stops, resting benches, and high-quality bike amenities, especially for citywide park and recreation destinations.

In addition to the input received from community meeting participant comments, attendees were encouraged to complete an online survey intended to identify needs and priorities for facilities and activities. Participants were invited to contribute written comments through a series of participation display boards. The following tables provide a summary of the display board comments for the five community meetings:

What types of activities will you be doing in 5, 10, and 20 years?

5 Years

- Biking
- Walking/running/track
- Meditative activities such as yoga, pilates, tai chi, nature walks, and meditative gardens
- Indoor and outdoor swimming
- Gym
- Attending summer camps
- After school activities
- Soccer
- Family activities
- Playgrounds
- Art classes and programming
- Fishing/boating
- Safety and self-defense classes
- Basketball
- Kayaking
- Educational classes
- Tennis

10 Years

- Walking/running/jogging
- Yoga/zumba/Pilates
- Biking
- Fitness/health and wellness classes
- Hiking
- Family activities
- Sports and athletics academies
- Art classes and programming
- Educational classes
- Senior wellness and social programming
- Safety education
- Technology classes

20 Years

- Yoga/Pilates
- Fitness centers and classes
- Walking
- Biking
- Zumba
- Swimming
- Kayaking/boating
- Art classes
- Fishing
- Safety courses
- Nature walks and meditative gardens

If you could change or add items to your park or the recreation programs you participate in, what would it be?

CHANGE

- Safe bike and pedestrian accessibility routes to parks and community facilities.
- Update and increase track and walking facilities.
- Increase the number of pools and aquatics programs.
- Accessible facilities and programs.
- Increase shade for city athletic facilities and sidewalks.
- Incorporate shade for transit stops.
- Update playground facilities.

ADD

- Safe bike lanes and sidewalk routes to parks for people of all ages.
- Add better protection at crosswalks such as pedestrian activated lights.
- Increase the number of city dog parks and include shade.
- Add benches with solar outlets and charging stations.
- Increased numbers of neighborhood parks and downtown parks.
- Increase protected areas for children to play.
- Canal access and programmed waterways activities.
- Increase the number of pools (a pool at the War Memorial Youth Center).
- Meditation gardens and labyrinth walks.
- Educational classes and mentor/mentee match programs.
- Offer safety and self-defense classes.

3.2.3 Focus Groups

Nine focus groups were held at the War Memorial Youth Center covering various topics ranging from athletics to special populations. The meetings occurred between May 8th, 2019 and May 11th, 2019. Combined, the focus group meetings were attended by over 85 participants. Each meeting was approximately one hour in length and started with a brief introduction of the planning process, followed by an in-depth discussion of needs and priorities, then capped by a discussion of preliminary vision ideas for each topic and potential implementation strategies. The focus group topics were as follows (in order of completion):

- **City Departments**
- **War Memorial Youth Center**
- **Special Events**
- **Aquatics**
- **Golf**

- **Youth Sports**
- **Parks**
- **Special Populations**
- **Tennis**

Comments and ideas from participants were recorded in meeting notes and coded to identify consistent themes in primary findings. Items coded include topics or ideas which had more than one comment or included a detailed discussion during the focus group meeting. Themes are as follows for each focus group:

City Departments (5/8/19):

- Emphasize acquisition and development of quality parkland in downtown and throughout the City.
- Prioritize need for acquisition of land for ground-level parks and green space in the downtown area, and design these spaces to be flexible for recreation, entertainment, shopping, and dining.

- Incorporate new safety features and technology such as chargers, outlets, cameras, and free WiFi into parks at the initial design phase with city aesthetics standards.
- Increase pools, water play, and splash pads for toddlers, which are a priority for parents with small children who have no place to take their kids for water play in the city currently.
- Prioritize and promote diverse methods of access to parks and city facilities including the Freebee, the Trolley, scooters, bike lanes, bike sharing, car sharing, public transit, sidewalks, linear parks, and greenways.
- Establish downtown gathering spaces along Miracle Mile for green space, plazas, concerts, outdoor movies, and an amphitheater.
- Lack of parking is a concern for parks and community facilities.
- Consider building a skateboard park to eliminate damage caused by skateboarders in public spaces.
- Additional public safety may be needed for an increase in visitors attracted to city by new, updated amenities and facilities.

War Memorial Youth Center (5/8/19):

- Utilize undeveloped property across the street from the Youth Center for parking or additional facility programming.
- Improve or expand existing facilities and add more locations dedicated to programmed activities, healthy lifestyle athletics, and exercise options such as track and field, jogging, and yoga.



Coral Gables City Leaders Stakeholder Focus Group

- Additional athletics that should be considered at the Youth Center include tennis, aquatics, a lap pool, warm water aerobics and exercise, volleyball, additional gymnasium space, dance rooms, and dance aerobics programs. Consider potential annex location for programming and need for redesign of existing facility.
 - Evaluate adding a running track around the Youth Center or the baseball field.
 - The Youth Center outdoor courtyard could become a lap pool; the fields could expand into the existing parking lot; the gym could be redesigned to cover the road as a connection to the property across the street in front of the War Memorial Youth Center entrance.
 - A complete redesign for the Youth Center could be implemented in phases by building on the fields and then redeveloping outdoor facilities where the buildings currently is located.
 - The gym at the Youth Center does not provide youth access for exercise even accompanied by their parents.
 - Explore providing academic support and tutoring programs at the Youth Center.
 - The City or a private partnership could provide bussing from schools to the Youth Center for after-school programs. The public bus system could have a pickup at schools and a drop off at the Youth Center.
 - Expand youth athletics and offerings and improve quality programming at the Youth Center by better utilizing the existing property, rooms, and facilities.
 - Open the gym and wellness center for several hours on Sundays. A separate secondary entrance for the Youth Center could be designed specifically for that.
 - The Youth Center restrooms need an overhaul. The heavy doors cause injuries, the women's bathroom is outside the Center's security area, and dispensers, dryers, and faucets are old and failing.
 - Consider rebuilding the Youth Center outdoor bathrooms and concessions building with a new, combined facility near the fields.
 - Create a second floor over the Youth Center courtyard to add additional facilities.
 - Offer an outdoor dance studio with shade in the courtyard.
 - Reconsider hurricane preparedness for the Youth Center so that it is a faster process to prepare and reopen.
 - Build a low parking garage along the townhomes near the War Memorial Youth Center to free up land for additional center athletics programming.
- Special Events (5/8/19):**
- Prioritize special event opportunities for residents through implementation of early entry times, discounts, or advanced communication.
 - Evaluate increasing nonresident fees to support improved maintenance and quality at community facilities, parks, and events.
 - Planners want to tailor events to residents' preferences so they will attend and the City supports their events.

- Increase communication regarding city events and programs through online notifications and mailers to residents.
- Event planners would benefit from earlier communication about changes in fees and policies and strong communication from and with Community Recreation Department about what residents want from local events.
- Consider increasing locally themed events inspired by things specifically unique to Coral Gables.
- Provide toddler water safety and swimming instructor training for City staff in a partnership with the Red Cross.
- Prioritize making safe bike and pedestrian routes from the surrounding neighborhoods to the pool.
- Incorporate a diving board pool in a new City pool facility.
- Install covered and lighted bike parking at the Venetian Pool to encourage children to bike to the pool from their neighborhoods.
- Provide multiple healthy snack options in the Venetian Pool snack machines to encourage healthy lifestyles and choices.
- Develop updated play environments at playgrounds that encourage exploration, learning, exercise, and water play.

Aquatics (5/9/19):

- Develop additional aquatic activities such as splash pads, pools, as well as access to waterways.
- Open a pool space dedicated to toddlers for learning to swim classes, with shallow pools, a splash pad, and teachers who are trained to help children learn.



Golf Focus Group

- Explore adding pool facilities at the War Memorial Youth Center on the property across the street from the main building.
- Consider adding pools and water play to existing, underused open spaces and green spaces throughout the city.
- Explore the option of releasing the Department's magazine prior to sports registration opening.

Golf (5/9/19):

- Signage and low hedge protection at the golf course could encourage people to not be on the course unless they are golfing.
- Joggers, dogs, baby strollers, and children running onto the golf course cause stress and concern for golfers that they will injure someone.
- Consider hiring a full-time ranger to patrol the golf courses.
- Increase variability in golf course play by designing the courses that can be played forwards and backwards, which are about the same maintenance and could increase play and enjoyment.
- Add flashers and on-demand crosswalks at the golf course crosswalks.
- Consider sending out regular fliers to inform new neighborhood residents about course expectations.
- Offer additional clothes options at the golf shop.

- Some residents are concerned that the metal flower and shape installations around the city were added without much public input and do not match the character of Coral Gables. They consider it a long timeframe before any conversation can be had about moving the installations.

Youth Sports (5/9/19):

- Improve or expand existing athletics facilities and add more locations throughout the city dedicated to at-will athletics and exercise options such as track and field, jogging.
- Consider converting existing fields at the War Memorial Youth Center to synthetic turf to extend playable time.
- Increase access to paths along the city waterways for biking.
- Add rubberized running tracks along the waterways and sidewalks throughout the city.
- Complete safe sidewalks in neighborhoods to the neighborhood parks.
- Incorporate dedicated bike lanes and encourage education for community support of safe biking through neighborhoods.
- Locate all the War Memorial Youth Center parking across the street and expand the facilities on the current site into the existing parking lot.
- Add a place to walk and a track for runners on the other side of US 1.

- Strengthen relationships with local schools to allow increased use of track facilities by the public during non-school hours.
- Evaluate increasing nonresident fees for youth athletics and classes to help support additional capacity and quality.
- Lack of parking at city parks is a concern.
- Evaluate the Public Works motor pool lot off of Coral Way for potential use for parks and recreation.

Parks (5/10/19):

- Increase the quantity of colorful flowering plants and trees throughout the city to increase the beauty.
- Implement an adopt-a-park system where clubs, groups, and companies can adopt a park and maintain it while having the opportunity to advertise their business.
- Prioritize long-term sustainability by updating existing facilities and implementation of sustainable design standards over trends.
- Create a Coral Gables Parks Foundation.
- Existing bike lanes and sidewalks remain segmented and unprotected from vehicular traffic and fail to connect many neighborhoods to City parks, community facilities, and downtown.
- Airbnb and rental homes are making single-family neighborhoods increasingly transient and no longer a community because the homes are functioning as hotels.

- Ideas suggested for safer streets: better timed stoplights at crosswalks, all lights turn red together allowing pedestrians to move from all corners at the same time with no cars in the intersection, on-demand activators, and flashing lights at crosswalks.
- Create standardized labels for plants and trees with braille for an inclusive outdoor learning environment in parks and gardens.
- Establish downtown gathering spaces including green space, plazas, and an amphitheater.
- Identify spots in the easements near bridges over the waterways where people can fish.
- Combine all the art installations in the city in a single themed park or open space.

Special Populations (5/10/19):

- Clearly advertise that the War Memorial Youth Center programs and facilities are inclusive to people of all ages with special needs.
- Provide support for staff to do a formal special populations training for summer counselors.
- Include general training as part of City Employee Orientation specifically related to interacting with special populations and addressing their needs.
- Have a clear public statement that goes out on all program literature and the website that the War Memorial Youth Center welcomes people with disabilities.

- Create training specifically to address comments and behavior. Even adults do not know how to respond to an inappropriate comment professionally.
- Offer additional programming for adults with disabilities beyond age 22.
- Develop a class to teach swimming for special population community members.
- Evaluate adding a protected walking path/running track around the War Memorial Youth Center that could be used by residents with special needs and children.
- Establish a service dog period in some city parks; - 30 mins per week where well-behaved, trained service dogs do not have to fight and compete with lesser behaved dogs, and owners do not have to worry.
- At monthly outdoor City events, have a speaker who addresses the special populations needs, programming, and city classes. Perhaps have someone with a disability speak, or someone who is a champion for the community.
- Encourage special populations community members to work in publicly visible positions in the community.
- Find ways to get special populations members involved in the community after work, and provide program options.
- Evaluate the option of designing a free-running park, an obstacle park indoor/outdoor gym for energetic young people.
- Start a communication network for people in special populations communities to let each other know about City opportunities and programs.



Coral Gables Special Populations Focus Group

- Consider scheduling programs for special populations with methods that provide consistency, which is critical for many during school and holiday breaks.

Tennis (5/10/19):

- Provide improved tennis amenities and buildings at Salvadore Tennis Center.
 - Add a second level with a shaded gathering space to eliminate having umbrellas blow away.
 - Maintenance is considered by users to be the primary concern because they believe the courts are good quality.
 - Players struggle to get access to a court because the facilities are very busy. Some believe this is compounded by the quantity of non-residents who play.
 - There is willingness to pay higher fees for higher quality and value at Salvadore Tennis Center.
 - Add more maintenance staff to sweep courts more often at city tennis facilities.
 - Consider updating and revitalizing the six clay courts at Granada to make them a world-class asset for the city and relieve pressure on Salvadore Tennis Center.
 - Explore making the Granada building two-story.
- The Granada courts could be brought back under City management and maintenance and have staff there more regularly.
 - Enforce a policy that players must stop 5 mins. before their time is over to sweep the courts. Provide signs at the courts to make people aware.
 - For \$500,000 the contract allowing both residents and non-residents to play at the same price at city tennis facilities could be bought out.
 - Consider possible options for shaded seating at Salvadore Tennis Center.
 - Enhance locker room amenities at Salvadore Tennis Center, including showers in both.

3.2.4 Online Survey

Coral Gables residents and anyone with interest in responding had an opportunity to participate in an online public opinion survey via Survey Monkey. Beginning on September 23, 2019, the survey was open to the public for voluntary response until it concluded. The Master Plan team developed a questionnaire addressing the current parks and recreation system and programs as well as desire for future planning, amenities, and programs. The Online Public Opinion Survey was accessible on the Coral Gables City website and was dispersed through the public engagement meetings, email blasts, and social media.

Survey Respondents

The intention of the online survey was to reach as many residents of Coral Gables and other interested parties as possible who would take interest in the future of the community recreation in the City. Several basic demographic questions were asked to gain an understanding of the respondents before completing questions regarding the parks and recreation facilities and activities.

Parks and Recreation Questions

A series of questions specific to park and recreation issues was asked of each respondent. The number of responses vary for each question. The questions were organized into five categories:

- **Park and Facilities**
- **Recreation Program**
- **Satisfaction**
- **Priorities**
- **Communication**

1. Which of the three recreation facilities are most important to your household? (Top 5)

Responses indicated that by far neighborhood parks are the most important facilities to residents (42.2%). Other facilities that received high responses were: playgrounds (23.5%); walking paths (16.7%); natural parks and preserves (14.6%); and dog parks (13.9%).

2. Which recreation programs are most important to your household? (Top 5)

The programs most important to the households of those taking the survey were those promoting enjoyment of nature (29.6%). Following that, the most important were aquatics (17.7%), those for fitness and wellness (15.6%), senior adult activities (13.2%), and mommy and me/daddy and me programs (12.5%).

Table 3-1: Top 5 most important facilities

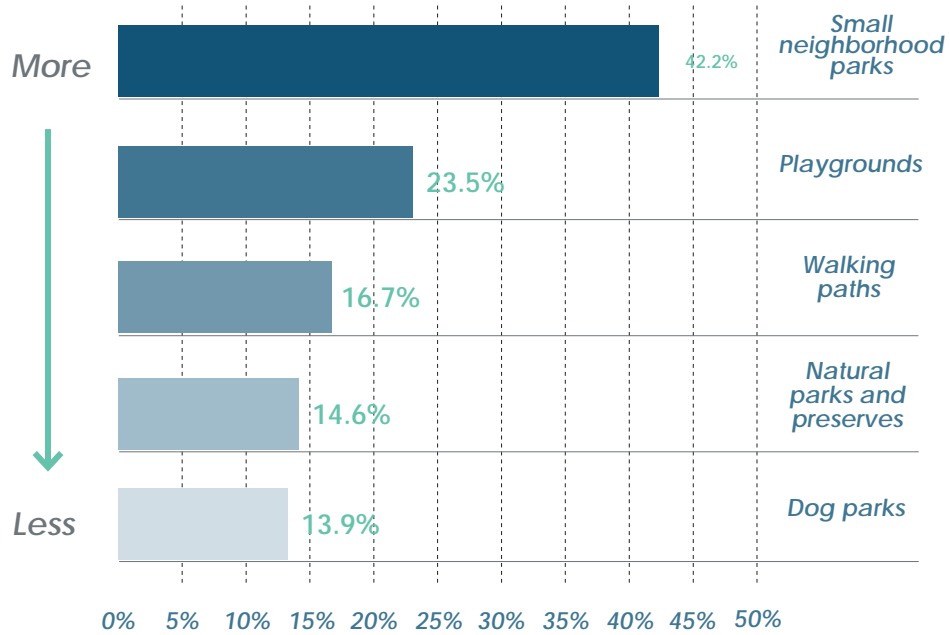
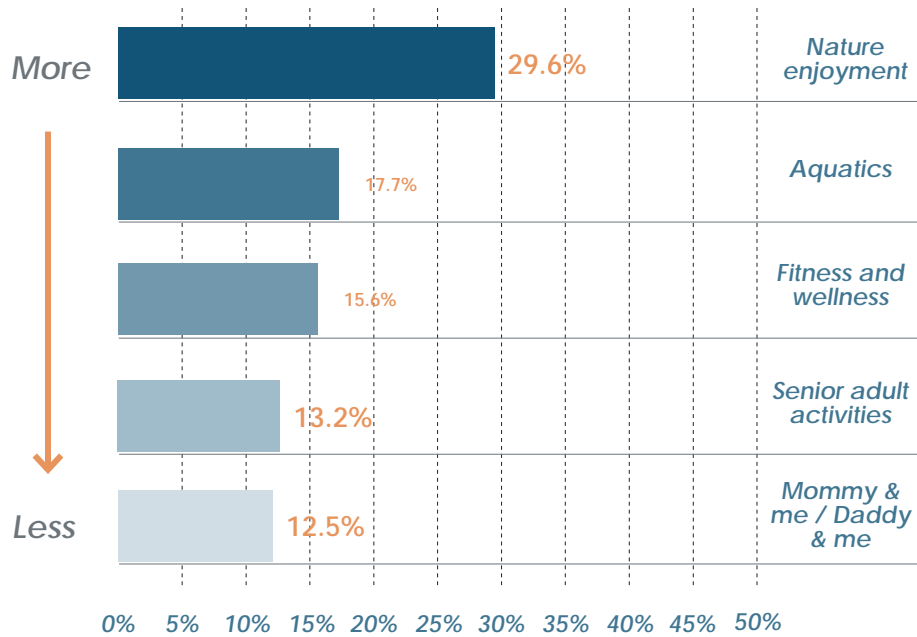


Table 3-2: Top 5 most important programs



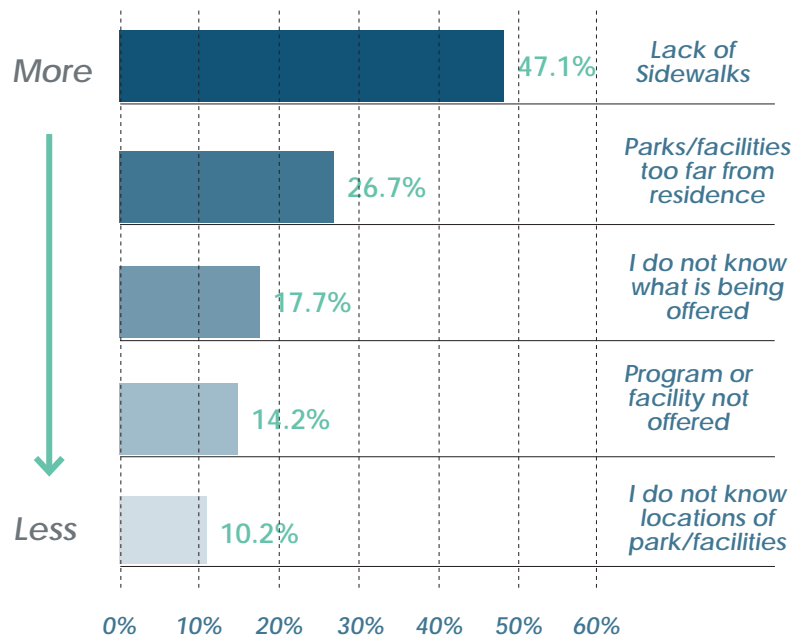
3. What are the three most significant reasons that prevent you or members of your household from using parks, trails, waterways, recreation facilities, or programs in the City of Coral Gables more often? (Top 5)

Survey responses showed that lack of sidewalk access is the main obstacle to use of the parks and recreation system (47.1%). The next greatest reason for lack of usage was the distance from parks and facilities (26.7%), followed by lack of knowing the programs offered (17.7%), a program or facility not being offered (14.2%), and lack of knowledge of park and facility locations (10.2%).

4. Which actions should Coral Gables take to improve the parks and recreation system? (Top 5)

Respondents indicated that the first action they would like to see the City take to improve parks and recreation is to purchase land for new neighborhood parks (41.0%). The next priority is maintenance of existing facilities and fields (38.1%), followed by development of new neighborhood parks (30.1%), next development of new trails and connecting existing trails (26.9%), and expansion of existing trails (20.5%).

Table 3-3: Top 5 reasons that prevent your use of parks and recreation system

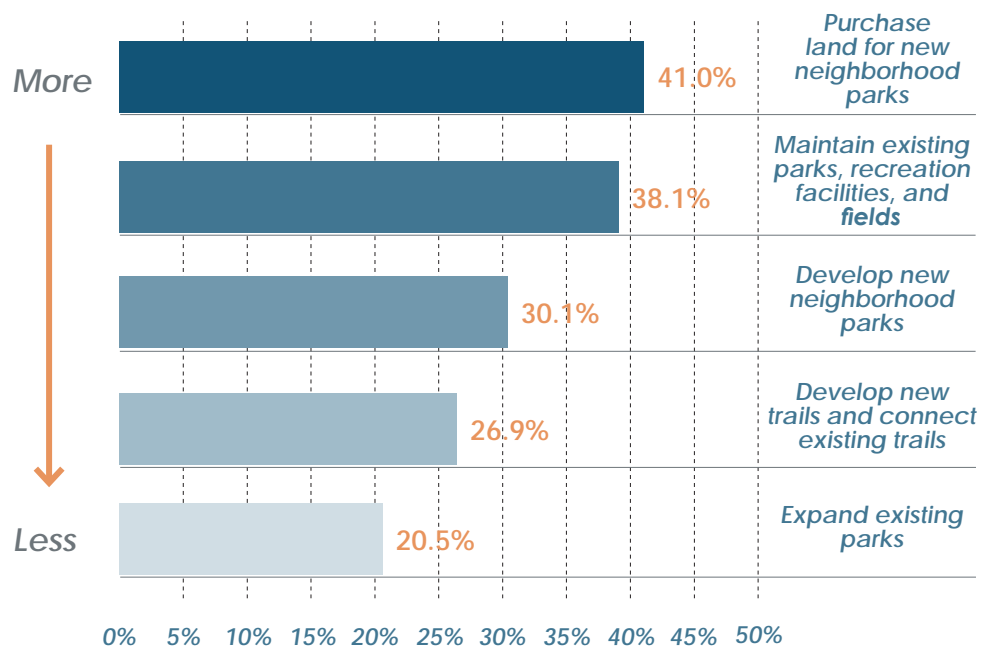


Online Survey Themes

The following parks and recreation needs and priorities themes were taken from the online survey:

- Neighborhood parks and walking paths are the amenities most used.
- At-will outdoor recreation spaces like small neighborhood parks, large community parks, and natural parks and preserves are most important to households.
- Aquatics and water-related activities are the greatest unmet need.
- Support for expanded facilities and programs for outdoor fitness, health, and wellness.
- More visual and performing arts are desired for the system.

Table 3-4: Which actions should Coral Gables take



3.2.5 Community Involvement Summary

Forming the foundation of the qualitative research, public engagement provides a snap shot of the views of residents, stakeholders and elected officials for the vision and needs and priorities of the

Coral Gables Parks and Recreation System. With the interaction of over 11,000 citizens through in-person meetings and online conversations, the project team gained an understanding of the community's needs. Below is a list that summarizes common themes based on input provided during the public engagement process.

Public Engagement Themes (Top 20):

1. Improve or expand existing facilities while enhancing locations dedicated to at-will, healthy lifestyle athletics and exercise options such as track and field, jogging, and yoga.
2. Prioritize special event opportunities for residents through implementation of early entry times, discounts, and advanced communication.
3. Plan for and integrate multimodal access to parks and open spaces that is safety-oriented, accessible, efficient, and convenient throughout the city.
4. Prioritize the acquisition of land for ground-level parks and green space in the downtown area, and design these spaces to be flexible for recreation, entertainment, shopping, and dining.
5. Complete safe biking and walking routes from neighborhoods to significant community facilities and parks.
6. Develop additional aquatic activities such as splash pads, pools, as well as access to waterways.
7. Expand athletics and offerings and improve quality programming at the War Memorial Youth Center by better utilizing the existing property and facilities.
8. Prioritize sustainability through updating existing facilities and implementation of sustainable design standards over trends.
9. Create an inclusive city mantra for special populations that pervades park design, facilities, program literature, and experiences to encourage diversity of users.
10. Develop additional off-leash dog parks throughout city.
11. Provide improved tennis facilities at Salvadore Tennis Center.
12. Explore additional partnerships and volunteer opportunities such as 'Adopt-a-Park' programs or establishment of a 'Friends of Coral Gables Parks' foundation.
13. Incorporate new safety features and technology such as chargers, outlets, cameras, and wifi into parks at the initial design phase with city aesthetics standards.
14. Explore enhancements at the War Memorial Youth Center for youth-oriented services such as after-school transportation, academic support, and tutoring, and access to fitness area (with supervision).
15. Incorporate bike facilities at destination locations including the Venetian Pool, Public Library, and the War Memorial Youth Center.
16. Evaluate increasing non-resident fees to support improved maintenance and quality at community facilities, parks, and events.
17. Redesign the hurricane preparedness system for the War Memorial Youth Center in order to increase efficiency of preparing and reopening of the facility.
18. Broaden the types of general recreation facilities and offerings throughout the City such as diving boards and heated pools, indoor courts, pool access for young children, outdoor shaded dance studios, and a reading garden.
19. Develop updated play environments at playgrounds that encourage exploration, education, exercise, natural play, diverse users, and learning.
20. Integrate public art into parks.



Young Park

3.3

Statistically Valid Survey

3.3.1 Methodology

The System Plan team conducted a Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey on behalf of the City of Coral Gables during the summer of 2019. The purpose of the survey was to establish needs and priorities for the future development of parks, recreation facilities/ programs and services within the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout Coral Gables and was administered through a combination of mail, telephone, and website.

The survey was developed in cooperation with department staff, first through a workshop in June 2019 and then through a series of draft survey instruments. A final survey was approved by the City in June 2019. The final survey was six printed pages in length and contained 23 questions. A target sample size of 600 was set for mail, telephone and website responses and that goal was exceeded with 601 completed surveys. Questions focused on parks, park and recreation facilities, needs and priorities, satisfaction, communications, funding, and sample demographics, which were used to validate the survey to the demographics of Coral Gables.

Approximately 3,000 printed surveys were mailed to randomly selected households throughout the City. Respondents were provided three means

to complete the survey; by mail, by phone (in either English or Spanish); and through a website. An automatic voice message was sent to each house that had been mailed a printed survey. Three weeks after the mailing of surveys, follow-up phone calls were made to households. Households that indicated they had not returned a completed survey were provided an option to complete one by phone. The survey was completed by 601 respondents and has a level of confidence of 95%, which means results could be replicated 95 times out of 100. In addition, the survey has a margin of error of +/-4.0%. A detailed copy of the questionnaire and full survey results can be found in the appendices.



Jaycee Park

3.3.2 Parks and Recreation Questions

A series of questions specific to park and recreation facilities and activities issues was asked to each respondent. The following information provides a summary of key findings for a selection of survey questions at the city-wide level. Detailed results can be found in the appendix. Questions are organized into two primary categories of facilities and activities:

Citywide Facility Needs and Priorities Summary

Citywide facility needs responses indicate that a desire for dog parks is both high and also generally unmet. At will walking paths and trails is the

most requested facility for the city. A small drop off follows these two facility types, with the second most important facility, and then a sharp drop off after that.

Table 3-5: Estimated number of households whose needs for facilities are being met 50% or less (Top 9)

The facilities that received the most responses were: walking paths/sidewalks (7,032), natural parks and preserves (6,657), trails (6,268), walking/running tracks (6,102). Following an initial drop off in responses, two other categories of smaller neighborhood parks (5,271) and community gardens (5,083) received the most responses for greatest need. A dramatic drop in the quantity of responses followed these first groups.

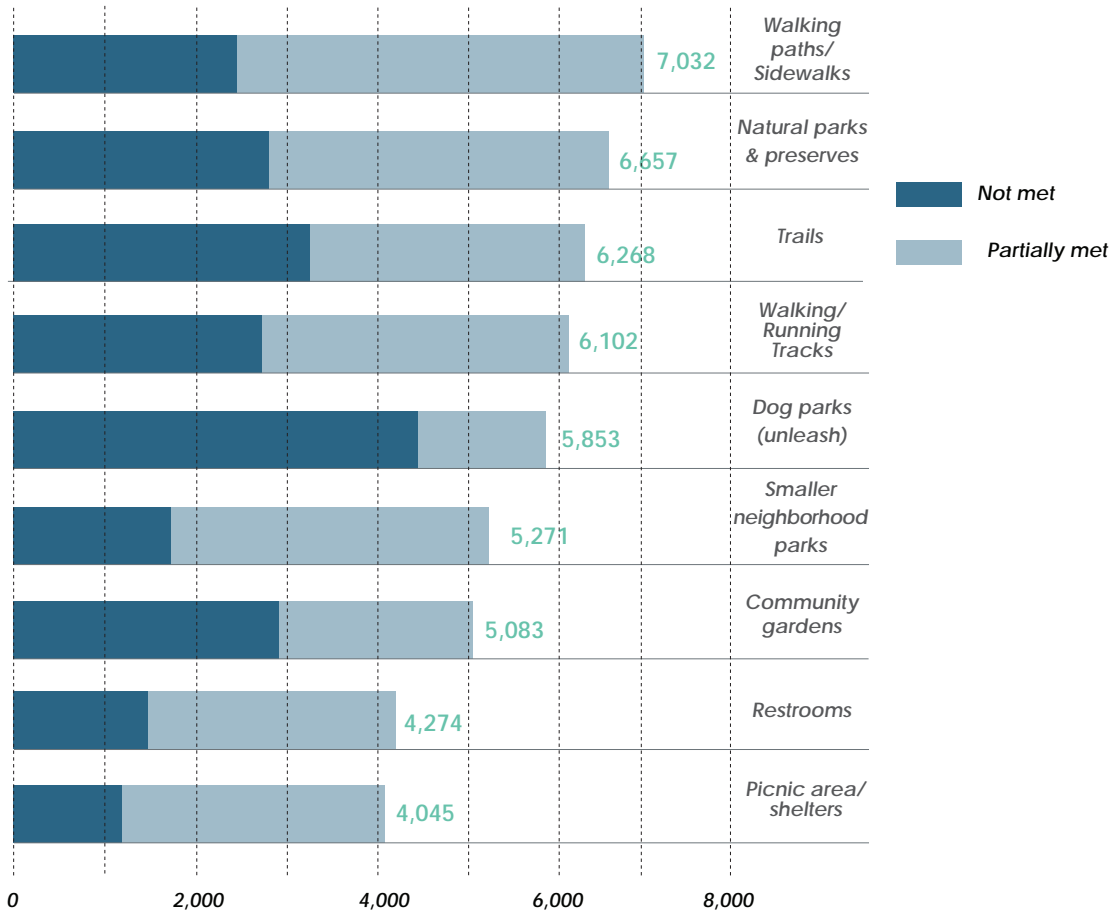
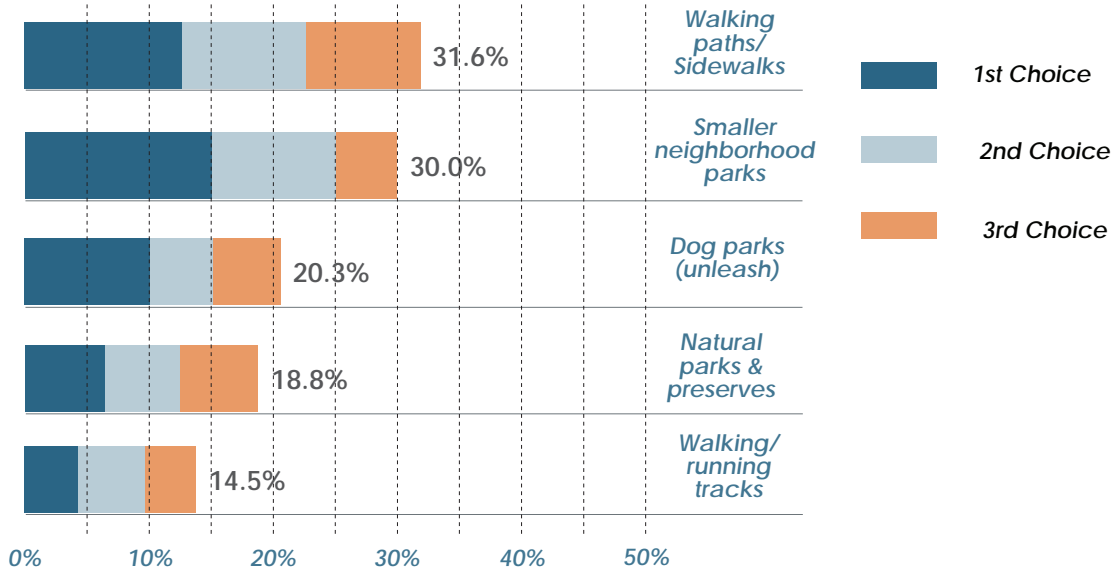


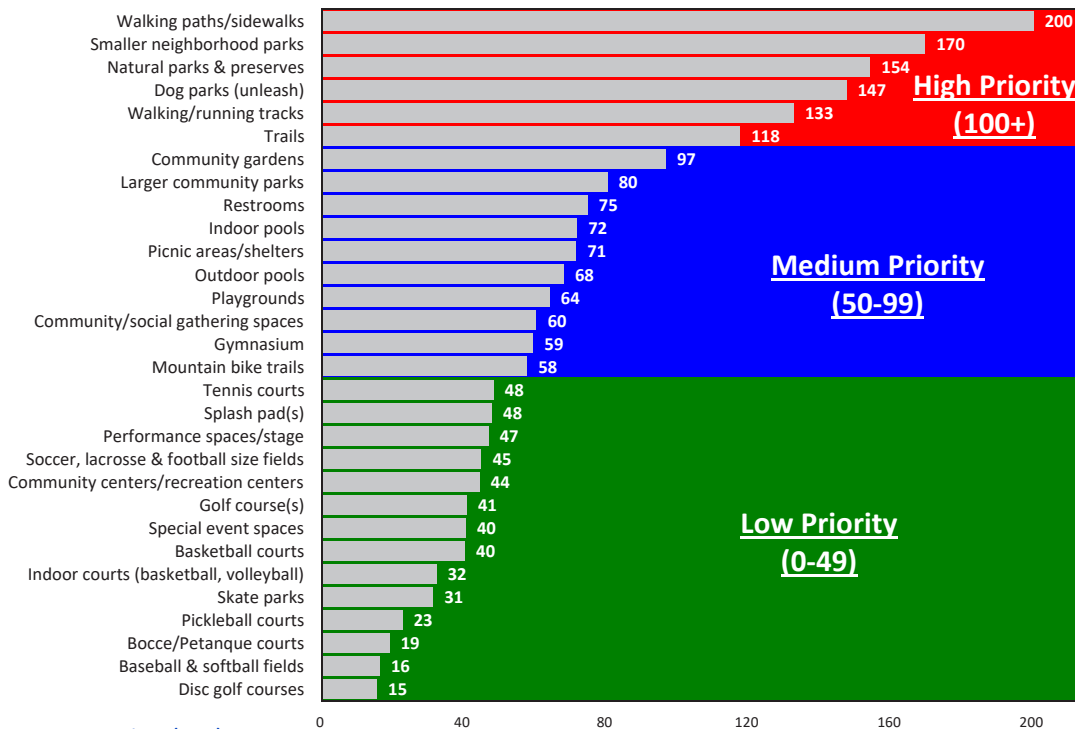
Table 3-6: Facilities most important to households (Top 5)

The facilities regarded by residents as most important were: walking paths/sidewalks (31.6%), smaller neighborhood parks (30.0%), dog parks (20.3%), natural parks & preserves (18.8%), and walking/running tracks (14.5%).

parks (30.0%), Dog parks (20.3%), natural parks & preserves (18.8%), and walking/running tracks (14.5%). A drop in the quantity of responses followed these prioritized categories.



**Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities
Based on the Priority Investment Rating - OVERALL**



Source: ETC Institute (2019)

Citywide Activity Needs and Priorities Summary

Citywide activity needs responses indicate that wellness activities including yoga, pilates, and zumba are both strongly desired by the community and need to increase in availability. Aquatics is the next greatest need indicated by community members. The most desirable activities according to survey responses relate to nature enjoyment. While the City is doing a good job partially meeting this need, the strong public interest demonstrates that increased opportunities and programming would be likely be welcomed and well utilized.

Table 3-7: Estimated number of households whose needs for (Top 9) activities are being met 50% or less

The two activities that received the most responses were: nature enjoyment (6,359), and fitness & wellness (6,005). A second group of seven activities received the second most emphasis: outdoor/adventure recreation (4,736), yoga/pilates/zumba (4,686), water-related activities (4,105) performing arts (4,089) aquatics (4,014) history & museums (4,007) and adult sports (3,985). A drop in the quantity of responses followed these categories.

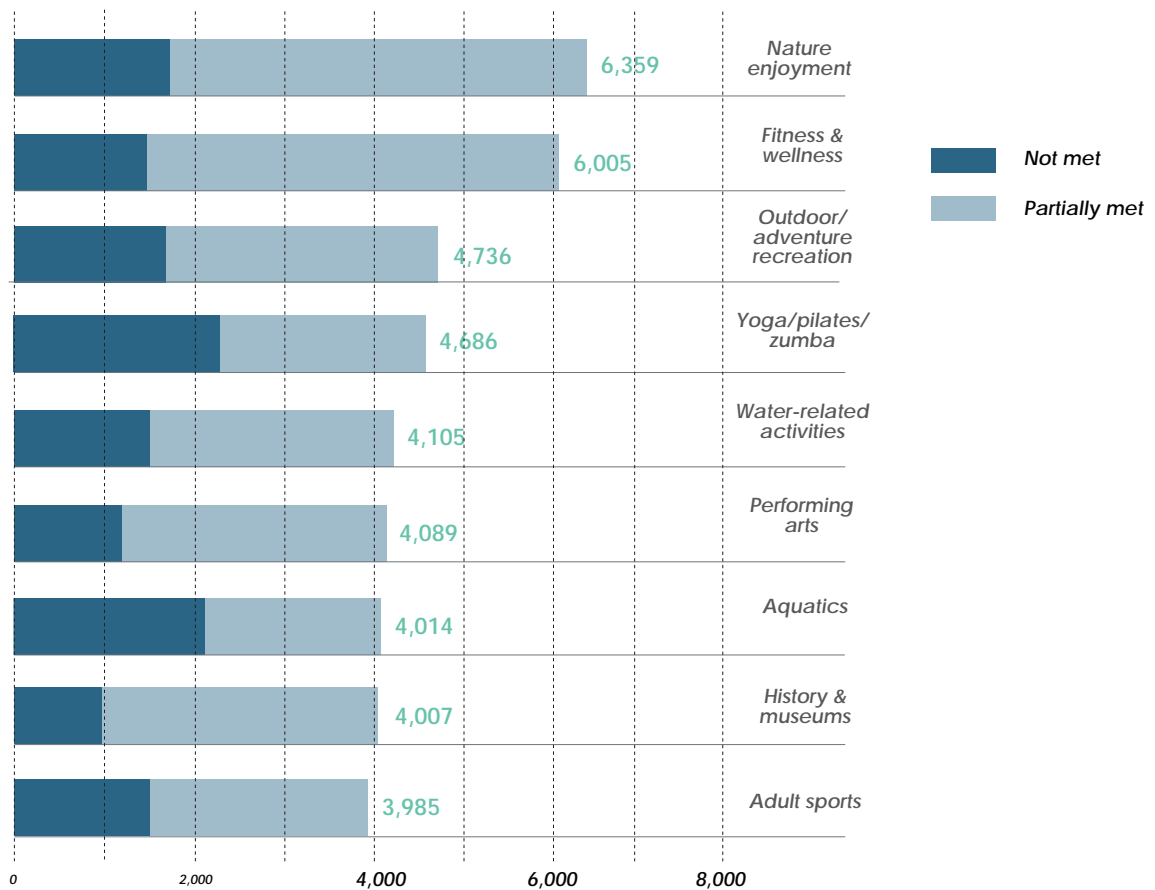
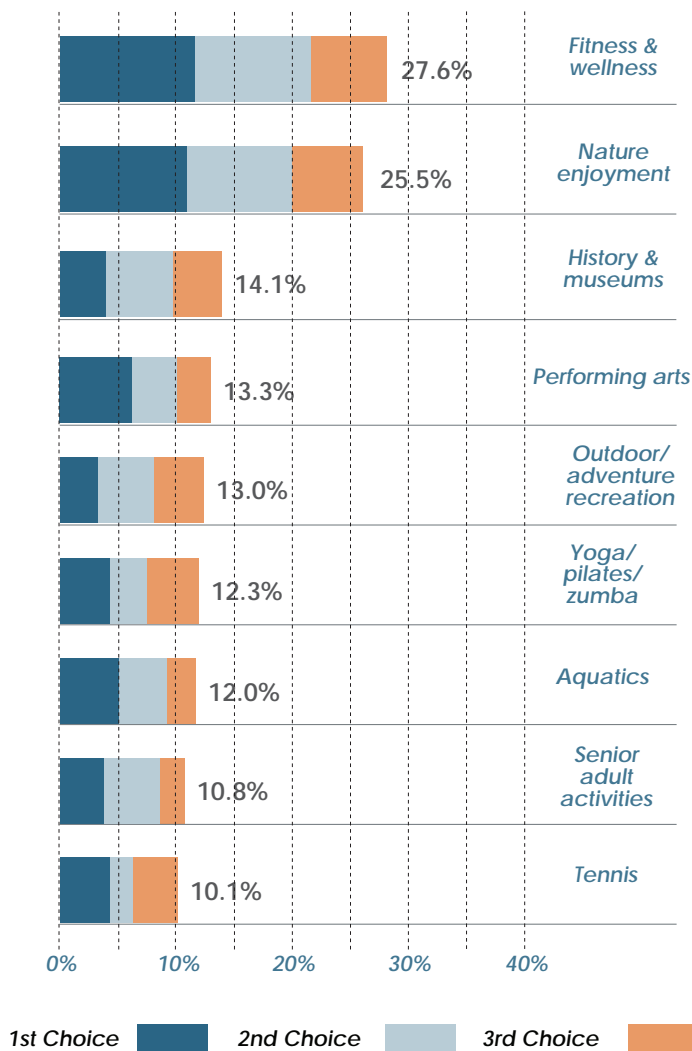
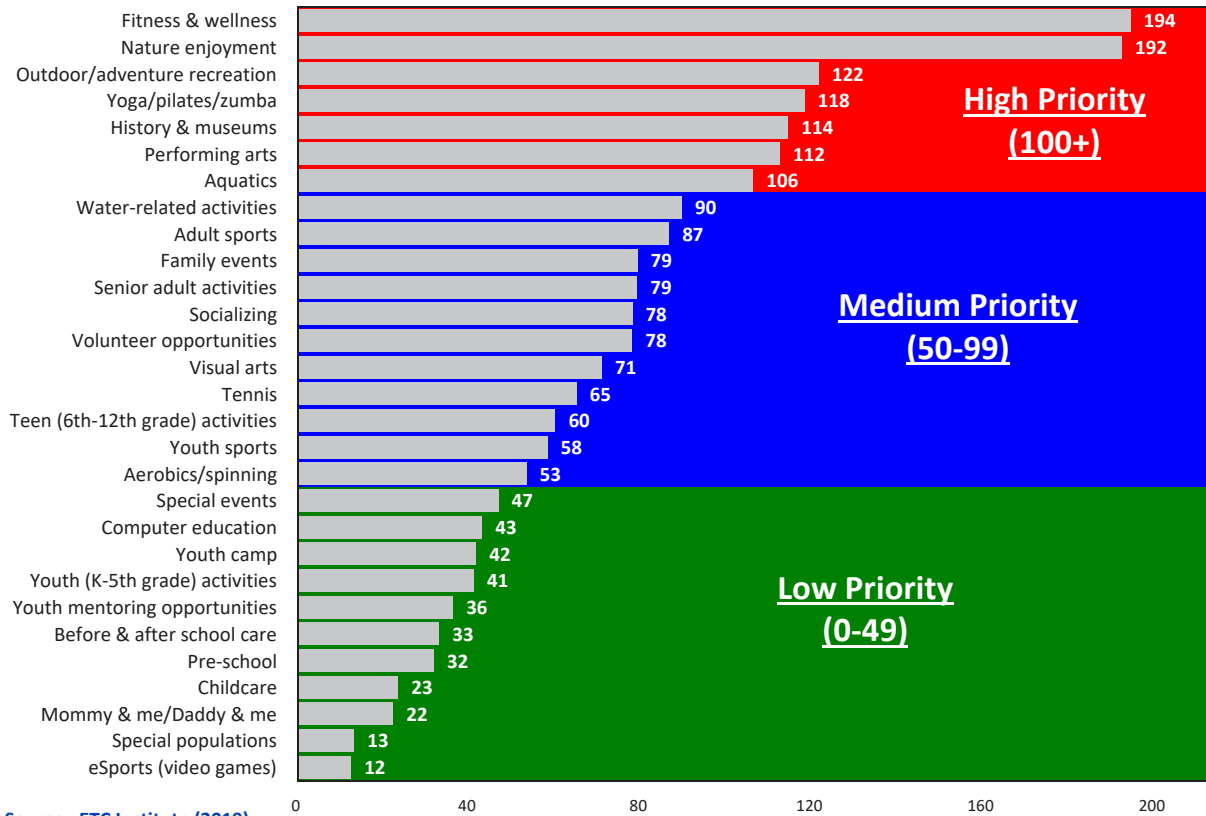


Table 3-8: Activities most Important to households (Top 9)

The two activities that received the widest support for their importance to resident households were fitness and wellness receiving (27.6%) and nature enjoyment (25.5%). A substantial drop in support followed these with all other activities receiving less than (15.0%).



Top Priorities for Investment for Activites Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *OVERALL*



Source: ETC Institute (2019)

1. Have you used the following types of major recreation amenities/facilities provided by the City of Coral Gables? (Top 8):

Two parks and recreation facilities are used most by Coral Gables residents. Small neighborhood parks are the most utilized with (65.1%) of respondents saying they used them more than any other facilities. Walking paths are the second most popular with (64.4%) of people saying they use them the most. Nearly all other facilities are used by a lesser percentage between (50%) and (45%).

2. Which park and recreation amenities do you think should receive the most attention from the City of Coral Gables over the next two years? (Top 5):

Residents indicated that smaller neighborhood parks should receive the most attention (45.8%) of all facilities and that walking paths should receive the second most attention (41.3%). Though a large drop in priority followed these top two, the other three facilities that users indicated should receive attention are large community parks (29.8%), playgrounds (24.3%), and the War Memorial Youth Center (22.8%).

Table 3-9: Most used parks and recreation facilities (Top 8)

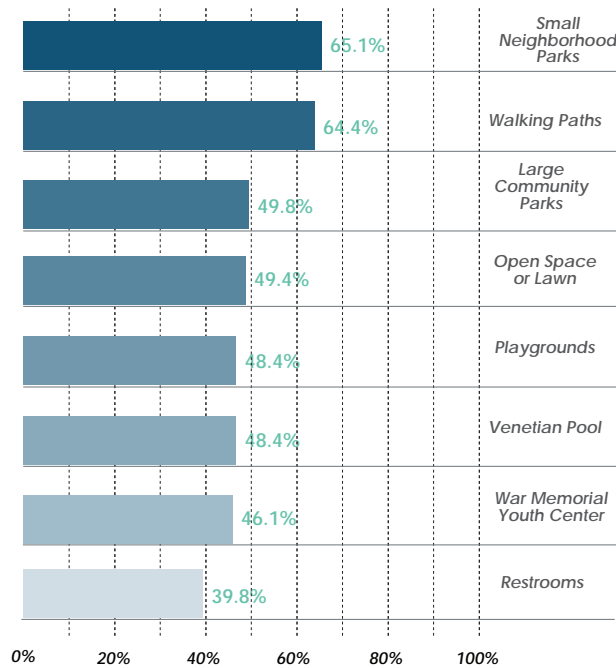
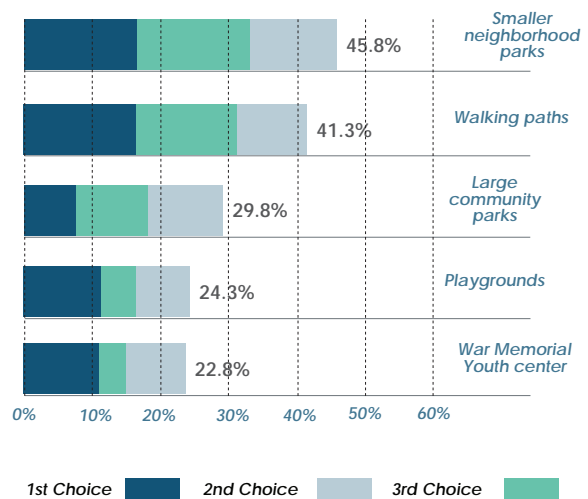


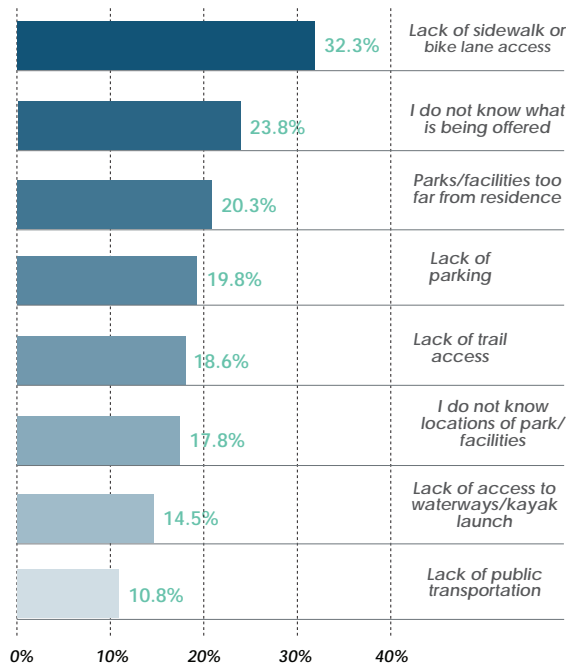
Table 3-10: Facilities that should receive the most attention (Top 5)



3. What reasons prevent you or other members of your household from using parks, trails, waterways, recreation facilities, or programs in the City of Coral Gables more often?:

The primary reason residents do not use parks and recreation facilities and programs is lack of ease of access with (32.3%) of respondents saying that lack of sidewalk or bike lane access is what hinders them. Following this, lack of knowledge of what is being offered (23.8%) and parks/facilities too far from residence (20.3%) hindered participation the most.

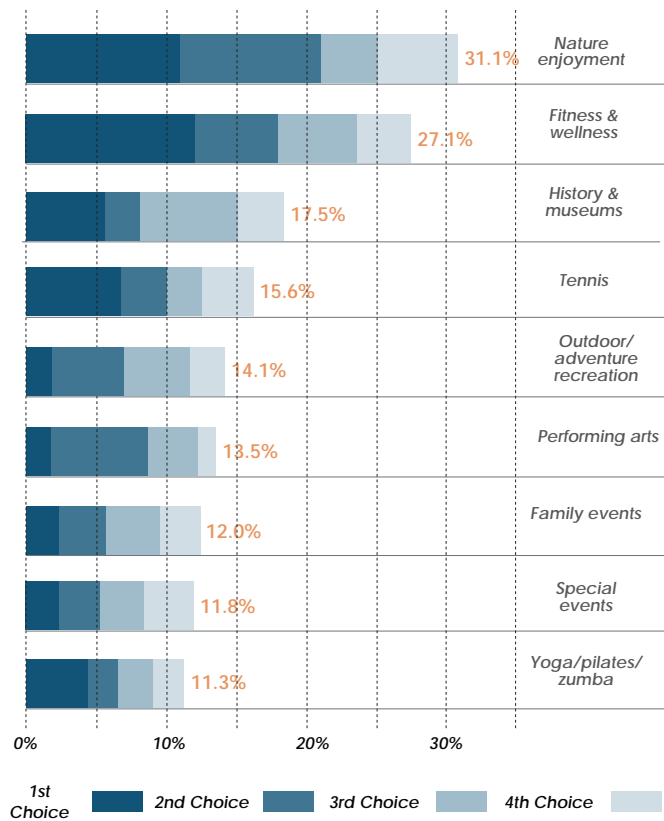
Table 3-11: Reasons that prevent use of facilities and programs (Top 8)



4. What activities does your household enjoy most often? (Top 9):

Coral Gables households indicated their most common activity is nature enjoyment (31.1%). The second most common activities relate to fitness and wellness (27.1%). A substantial drop in participation followed these main two types of activities with history and museums (17.5%), tennis (15.6%) and outdoor/adventure recreation (14.1%) being the next most common.

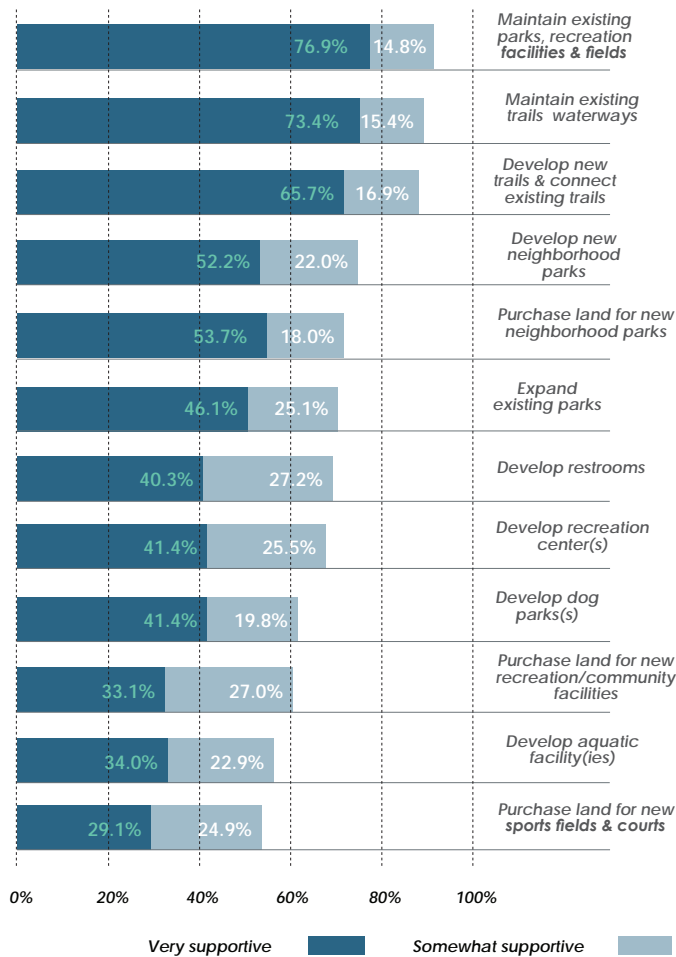
Table 3-12: Activities that households participate in most often (Top 9)



5. How supportive would you be of the following actions that the City of Coral Gables could take to improve?:

Coral Gables residents who responded overwhelmingly indicated they would support the City taking the steps to increase regular maintenance for existing parks and recreation facilities and fields (91.7%). Maintenance of existing trails/waterways was also widely supported (88.8%). Following these, the next most supported action of improvement is developing new trails and connecting the ones that already exist (82.6%).

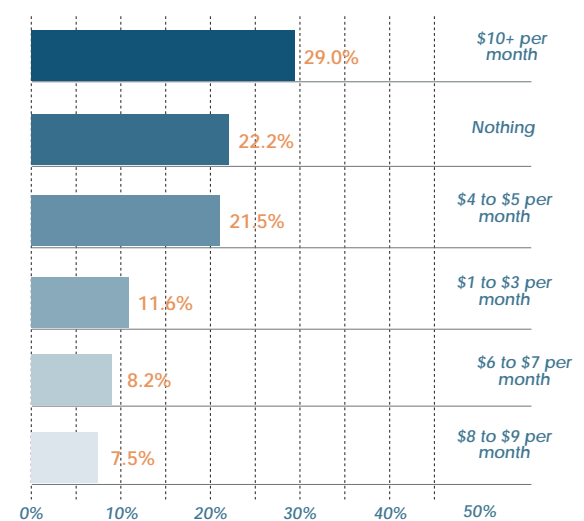
Table 3-13: Support for actions the City could take to improve



6. What additional amount would you be willing to pay per month to fund the improvements to existing parks and facilities and the development of new parks and facilities?

Residents (44.7%) indicated a willingness to pay an additional \$6-\$7 per month to see improvements made to City parks and recreation facilities and programs. A total of (77.8%) of residents indicated they would be willing to pay \$4-\$5 per month to see improvements made. This is a positive sign for voting on a potential bond in future to meet the needs.

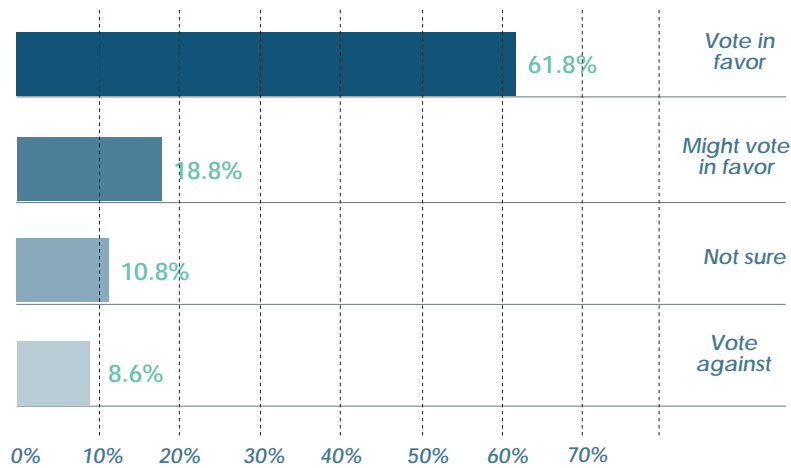
Table 3-14: Support for actions the City could take to improve



7. If a voter referendum was held to improve and develop the items that are most important to your household for the amount of additional tax funding you would pay, how would you vote?

A substantial number of Coral Gables residents (61.8%) indicated a willingness to vote in favor of a referendum to improve and develop items most important to their households. A total of (80.6%) expressed some willingness to vote in favor of a referendum.

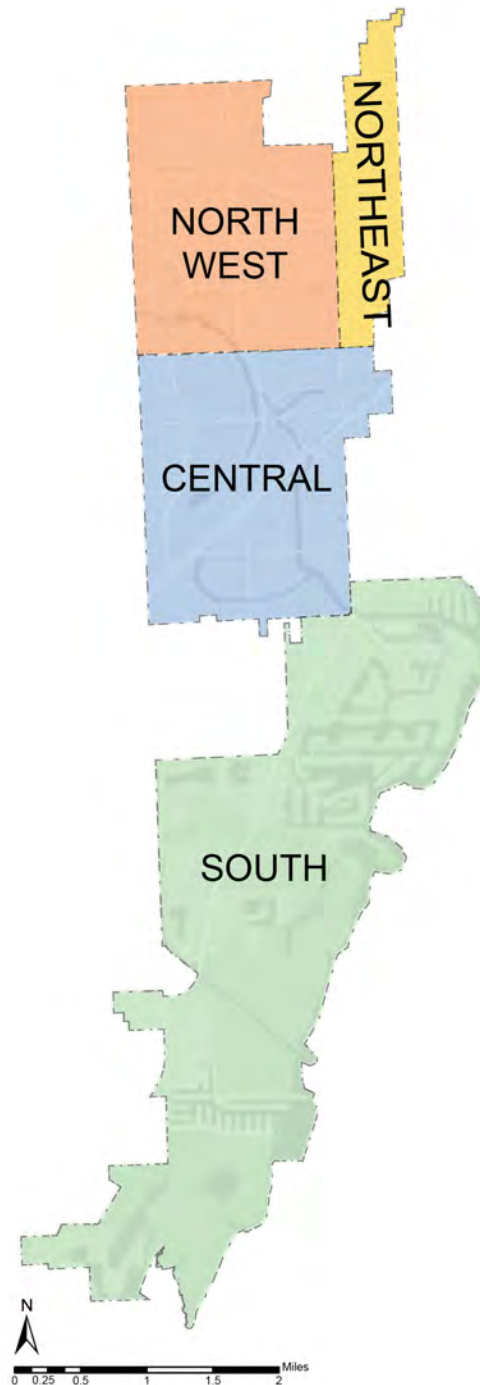
Table 3-15: Willingness to vote in favor of a referendum to improve and develop items most important to your household.



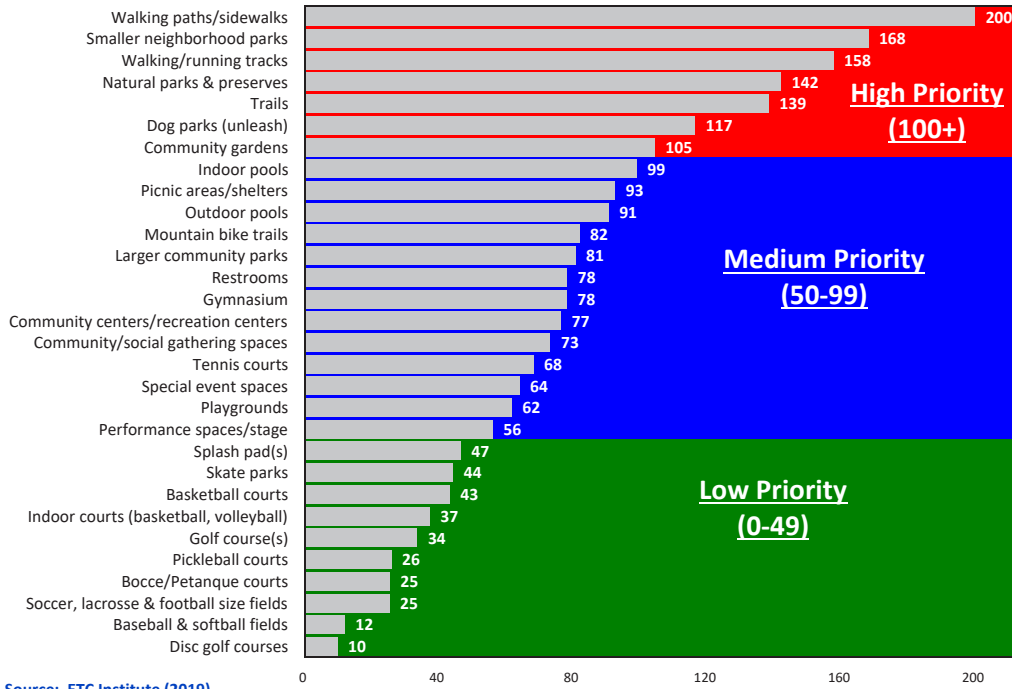
City Zones Results

The following map shows the sectors defined for the Statistically Valid Survey. While citywide survey results provide an overview of the needs and priorities for Coral Gables as a whole, examining the results by the districts shown can provide a more precise snapshot of the communities within the city. The following charts provided a summary of key findings for a selection of survey questions with responses broken down by each of the four districts **Map 3-1**. Detailed results can be found in the appendix.

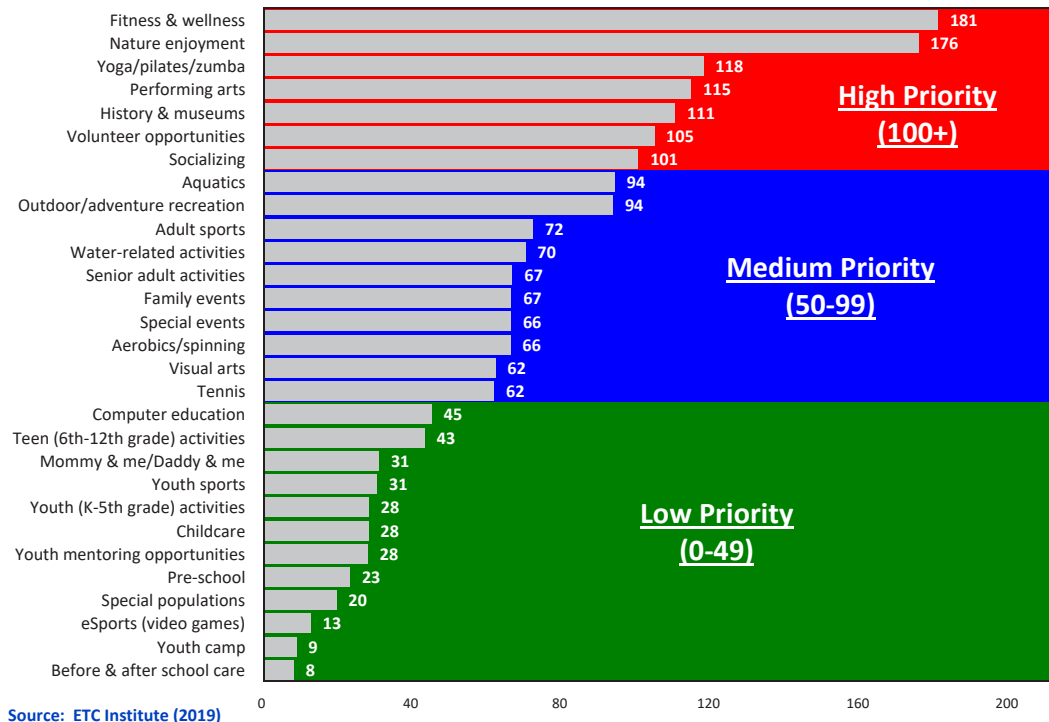
Map 3-1: Coral Gables Survey Zones



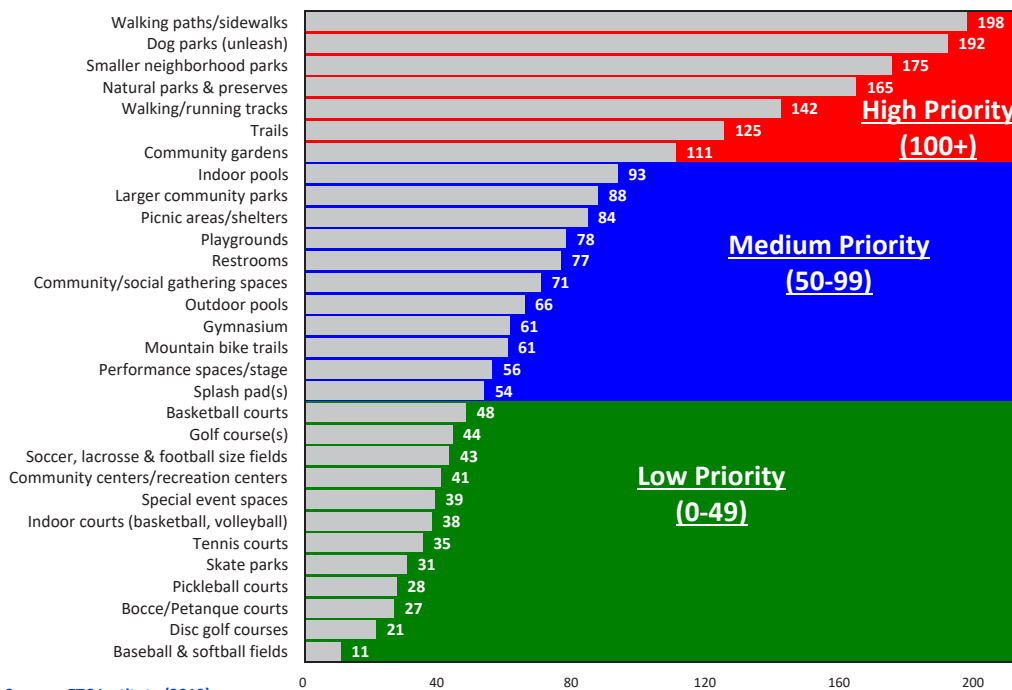
Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *NORTHEAST*



Top Priorities for Investment for Activities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *NORTHEAST*

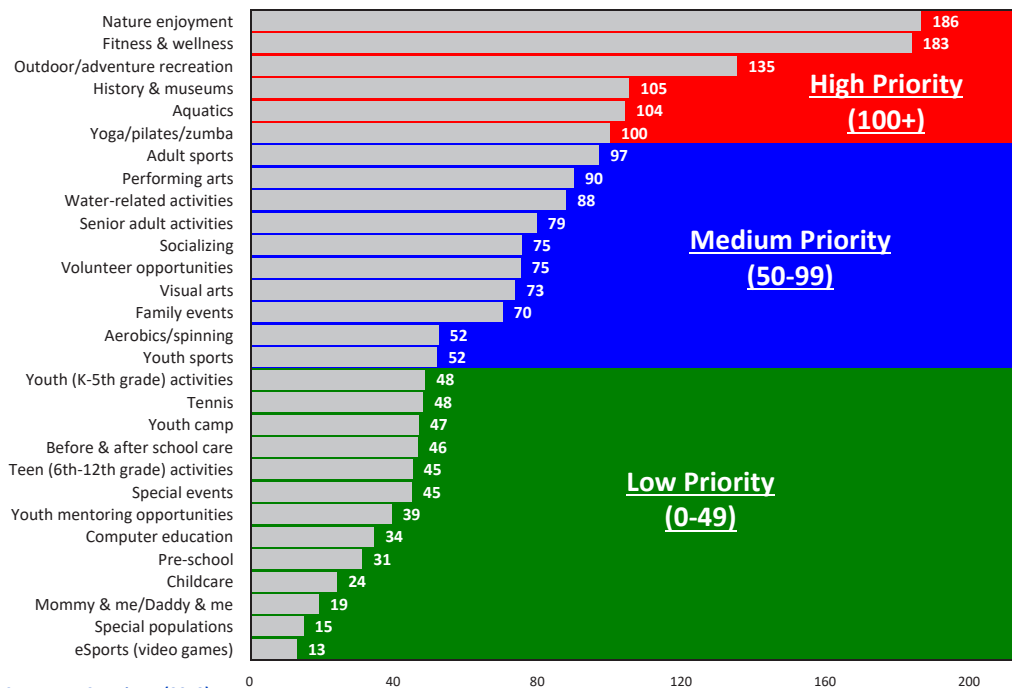


Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *NORTHWEST*



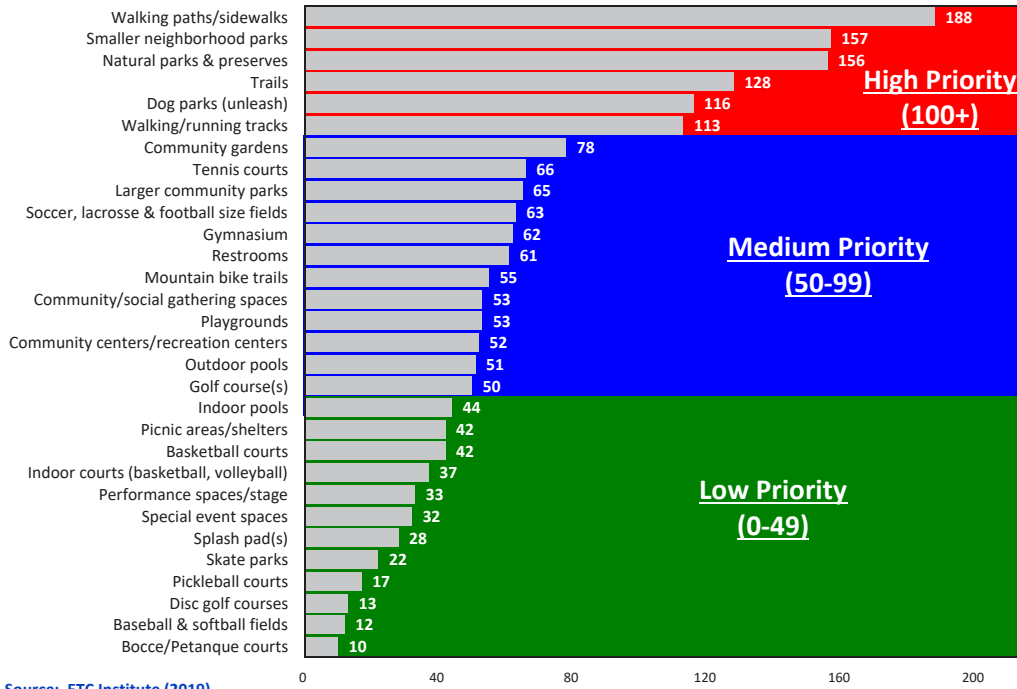
Source: ETC Institute (2019)

Top Priorities for Investment for Activities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *NORTHWEST*



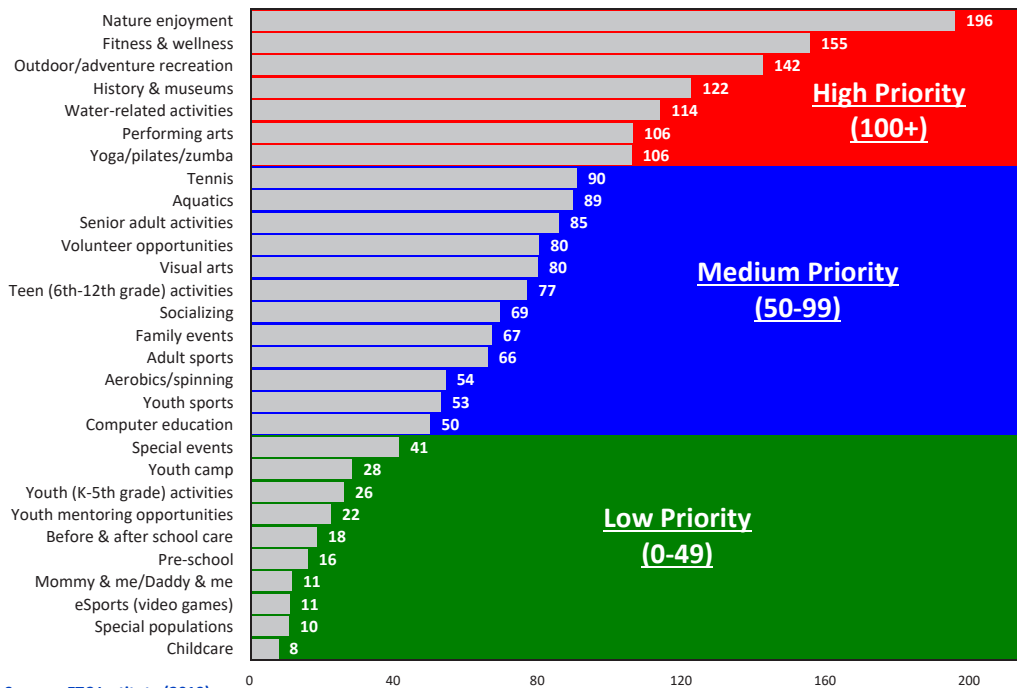
Source: ETC Institute (2019)

Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *SOUTH*



Source: ETC Institute (2019)

Top Priorities for Investment for Activities Based on the Priority Investment Rating - *SOUTH*



Source: ETC Institute (2019)

3.3.3 Statistically Valid Survey Summary

The mail/telephone survey is the strongest, most accurate tool available to determine needs of the general population and serves to cross-check results of the Online Public Opinion Survey. Significant findings from the survey include:

Survey Priority Takeaways



- *The activities that survey responders participated in most often are **nature enjoyment** (31.1%), **fitness & wellness** (27.1%), **history & museums** (17.5%), **tennis** (15.6%), **outdoor adventure** (14.1%).*
- *The activities most important to the households of responders often were **nature enjoyment** (31.1%), **fitness & wellness** (27.1%), **history & museums** (17.5%), **tennis** (15.6%), **outdoor adventure** (14.1%).*
- *The facilities that survey responders used most often were **small neighborhood park** (65.1%), **walking paths** (64.4%), **large community parks** (49.8%), **open space and lawn** (49.4%), **playgrounds** (48.4%) **Venetian Pool** (48.4%), **War Memorial Youth Center** (46.1%), and **public restroom** (39.8%).*
- *The facilities most important to the households of responders often were **walking paths/sidewalks** (31.6%), **smaller neighborhood parks** (30.0%), **unleashed dog parks** (20.5%), **natural parks and preserves** (18.8%), and **walking and running tracks** (14.5%).*
- ***Nature enjoyment, fitness & wellness, outdoor adventure recreation, yoga, pilates, zumba, water-related activities, performing arts, aquatics, history & museums, and adult sports are the top priority activities with the highest level of unmet need.***
- ***Walking paths and sidewalks, natural parks, preserves, trails, and walking and running tracks, unleashed dog parks, small neighborhood parks, community gardens, restrooms, and picnic areas and shelters, are the top facility types with the greatest unmet need.***
- *The facilities that responders believed should receive the most attention are **small neighborhood parks, walking paths, large community facilities, playgrounds, and the War Memorial Youth Center.***

- *The greatest inhibitors that prevented respondents from using the City's facilities and programs were lack of sidewalk or bike lane access (32.3%), lack of knowledge of what is being offered, (23.8%) too great a distance from residence (20.3%), and lack of parking (19.8%).*
- *The actions that the City could take to improve the community recreation system that responders said they would support the most were maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities, maintenance of existing trails and waterways, developing new trails and connecting existing trails, developing new neighborhood parks, purchasing land for new neighborhood parks, expanding existing parks, and developing public restrooms.*



Merrick Park

3.4

NEEDS AND PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Through the compilation of findings from various research techniques, a number of parks and recreation needs and priorities emerged. The table below is an overview of the findings from each analysis technique, which were further refined based on additional public input and analysis.

Three types of research were utilized in a mixed methods, triangulated approach as part of the needs assessment process:

observational; qualitative; and quantitative. Together these three types of research provided nine techniques to cross-check results and better determine an accurate understanding of the needs and priorities of the residents of Coral Gables. Table 3-16 summarized the synthesized findings of these methods, which included observational evaluations, two community surveys, community and stakeholder meetings, and a level of service analysis.

Table 3-16: Needs Assessment Summary

		Needs Assessment Techniques								
		Park System Resource Evaluation	Community Meetings	Focus Groups	Stakeholder Interviews	On-line Public Opinion Survey	Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey	Acreage Level of Service Analysis	Facility Level of Service Analysis	Access Level of Service Analysis
Facilities	Smaller Neighborhood Parks	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
	Walking Paths and Biking Trails	●	●	●	●	●		●		
	Nature Parks & Preserves	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
	Dog Parks	●	●	●		●	●			
	Walking/Running Tracks & Trails	●	●	●	●	●			●	
	Community Gardens	●	●			●	●			
	Larger Community Parks	●		●		●	●	●	●	
	Restrooms	●		●		●	●			
	Indoor/Outdoor Pools & Splash Pads	●	●	●		●	●			
	Playgrounds	●	●	●		●	●		●	
Programs and Activities	Fitness & Wellness	●	●	●	●	●				
	Nature Enjoyments	●		●	●	●				
	Outdoor/Adventure Recreation			●	●		●			
	Yoga/Pilates/Zumba	●	●	●			●			
	History & Museums		●			●	●			
	Performing Arts	●	●	●		●	●			
	Aquatics	●	●	●		●	●			
	Water-related Activities	●	●	●		●				
	Adult Sports		●		●		●			
	Family Events	●	●	●	●	●				

- = Indicates Highest Need
- = Indicates Need

The top ten facilities and program needs are highlighted in Table 3-16. These facilities and activities are identified through these nine techniques to have the highest level of importance and largest unmet need by the community.

In addition to the identification of the top community-wide needs, from the public participation and survey techniques, overall priorities have emerged. The charts to the right are a summary of the top priority themes as identified by the following methods:

- **Community Meetings**
- **Focus Groups**
- **Stakeholder/ Elected Officials Interviews**
- **Online Public Opinion Survey**
- **Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey**
- **Existing Level of Service Analysis**



Top 5 Priority Actions

- Maintain and **enhance existing parks and facilities**
- Improve **safety and security** in parks and nearby areas
- Provide new **walking and biking trails**
- Improve **communication** between the parks and recreation department and the community
- **Equitable access** to parks through **enhanced connectivity and walkability**

Additional Priority Facilities / Programs

- Provide **more diverse programs**, including: fitness and wellness; art, dance and performing arts; senior adult programs; citywide special events; nature programs and adult sports programs
- Provide more **events** throughout the City especially in the **Downtown area**
- Develop additional **off-leash dog parks**
- **Wayfinding** to highlight **destinations, health-related information and educational/interpretative elements** and amenities such as benches
- Continue to provide **affordable and easily accessible** recreation programs
- More and **better specialized recreation classes** (i.e. art classes, fitness, dancing, safety, volunteering, practical living and health and fitness) to meet the **needs of a diverse population**
- Create more opportunities for **art in the community**
- More **programs** and locations for **special populations through partnerships**
- Provide opportunities for **indoor fitness and exercise**
- Focus on programs and activities that can **grow participation for key age groups** and meet their needs



4 VISION



Ingraham Park

Chapter 4: Vision

Highlighted by extensive public input, the Community Recreation Department launched a three-day workshop of visioning sessions to better understand the community's aspirations for its parks and recreation system. Combining the results from the workshop with previous steps allows the community to provide a comprehensive vision for the future. The following chapter describes these results.

CHAPTER 4: Vision

4.1 Vision Plan Approach

- 4.1.1 Purpose
- 4.1.2 Approach

4.2 Vision Sub-systems

- 4.2.1 Methodology
- 4.2.2 Parks and Facilities
- 4.2.3 Recreation Programming and Community Health
- 4.2.4 Connectivity and Access
- 4.2.5 Cultural and Historic Resources
- 4.2.6 Sustainability and Resilience

4.3 Vision Plan Summary

- 4.3.1 The Comprehensive Vision Plan

4.1

VISION PLAN APPROACH

4.1.1 Purpose

The vision for the City of Coral Gables' parks and recreation facilities and programs is intended to build on the original vision of the City, and the continuous efforts to honor that legacy. The City's system of parks, open spaces, recreation facilities, arts, and natural areas, all elements of a world-class public realm, are woven into the fabric of what makes Coral Gables a truly beautiful and livable City. The vision laid out in this chapter integrates components of previous and ongoing city-wide efforts, as well the extensive community input, in an effort to continue to ensure that the parks system contributes to a high quality of life for generations to come.

4.1.2 Approach

The approach for developing the parks, recreation and recreation system vision is a three-part effort:

- City staff and the consultant team completed a technical review of the existing parks system that identified continued improvements needed in order to maintain a high level of service for residents.
- Supplementing this technical review was a multi-faceted community involvement process (Chapter 3). During two-days of Needs and Assessment workshops, residents and stakeholders indicated their needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- The next step involved a two-day open-door Visioning Workshop with City staff, general public, special interest groups, stakeholders, school representative(s), and community officials to develop a long-range vision for the City's parks system. Combining the results from the workshop with previous steps allows the community to provide a comprehensive vision for the future of Coral Gables Community Recreation System Plan. Topics during the workshops included a presentation of the Needs and Priorities Analysis findings, park and facility improvement recommendations, and identification of key "sub-systems" for further planning and development.



Gordon Park

4.2

VISION SUB-SYSTEMS

4.2.1 Components of the Vision

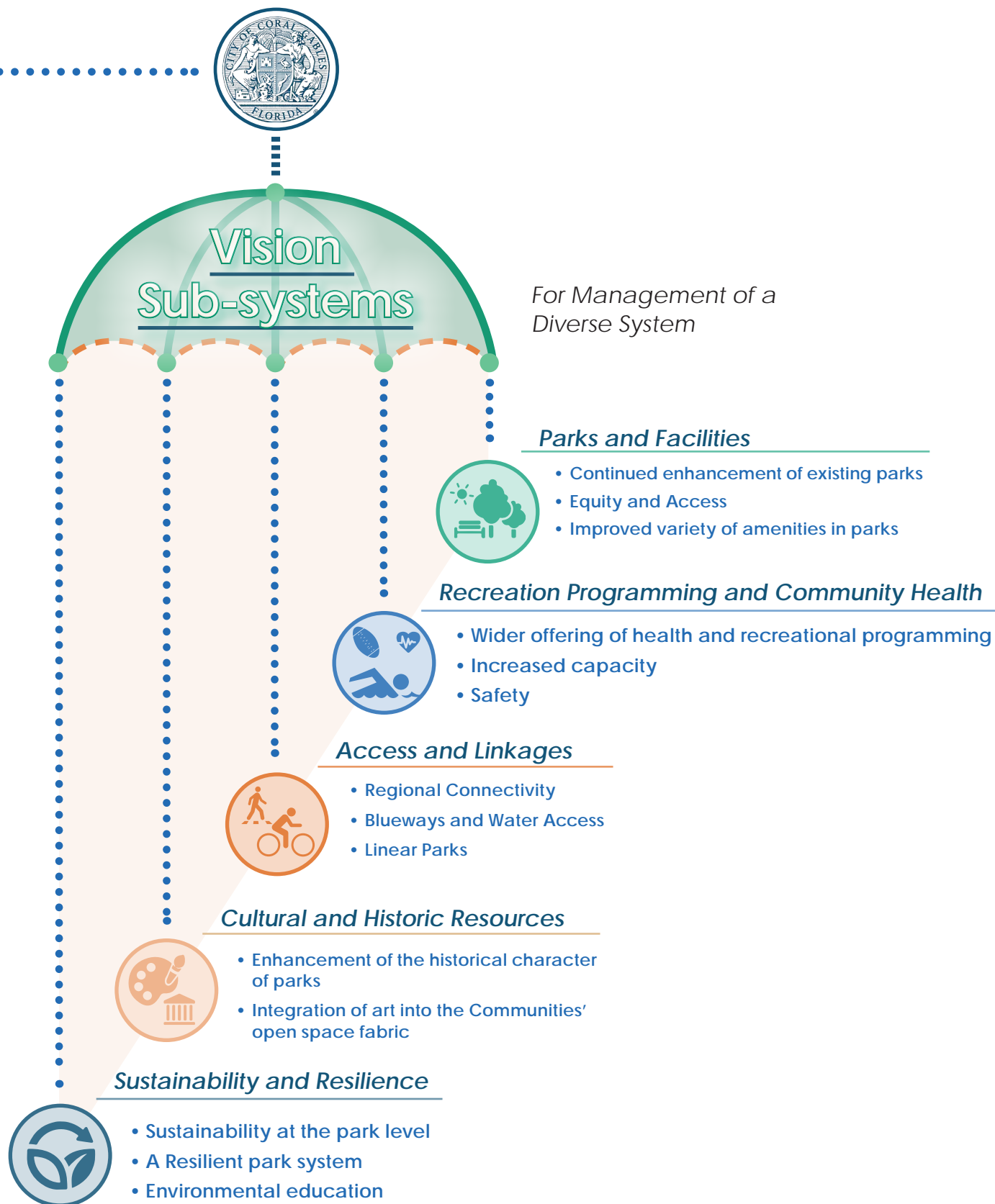
As a result of the above efforts, the Vision is built upon a framework distilled from broad public input and comprehensive analysis. A unique approach was taken for the City of Coral Gables, which established a set of subsystems that help guide the development of the parks and facilities across the system.

These subsystems, shown in **Figure 4-1** are:



The guiding principles and vision recommendations for each of these subsystems are intended to guide the parks and recreation system over the next 10 years. Guiding principles have been developed to reflect the combined results of input and analysis completed in Chapter 2 (Existing Conditions Analysis) and Chapter 3 (Needs and Priorities Assessment) of this planning document. These principles and the associated vision concepts are intended to be modified as needed to ensure achievement of the subsystem vision, and ensure its contribution to the overall vision of the City of Coral Gables. In the next chapter, a comprehensive implementation strategy for achieving this vision is presented within the focus on community priorities, funding strategies and defined roles. This implementation plan is intended to be updated on a regular basis by staff to reflect the changing trends, priorities and roles within the community.

Figure 4-1: Subsystem Components of Vision





4.2.2 Parks and Facilities

Guiding Principles

The City of Coral Gables' parks and open spaces serve as a major contributor to the sense of community and quality of life. They provide neighbors and visitors an opportunity to refresh, explore and play. Parks also contribute significant economic and environmental benefits. Using community input from the Needs Assessment and Visioning Workshops, the following guiding principles were developed for parks and facilities:

Goal 1: Continued Enhancement of Existing Parks and Facilities

- Overall park improvements for enhanced user experience
- Provide a greater variety of amenities and activities in existing parks

Goal 2: Develop Additional Parks, Facilities and Open Spaces

- Improved level of access with the addition of new parks and facilities
- Incorporate new facilities / amenities to address unmet community needs and priorities

Continued Enhancement of Existing Parks and Facilities

Coral Gables has a distinctive variety of parks and open spaces ranging in sizes from small pocket park-sized open spaces to larger community parks with multiple recreational amenities. Several of these parks have been recently renovated or are in the process of being renovated, as outlined in the CIP lists. The newly renovated parks help to address the community's needs for recreational spaces with the addition of either new play equipment or wider pathways and sidewalk connectivity into neighborhoods. However, the park system has multiple parks and facilities that are in the need of an update. The Needs Assessment and Visioning workshops helped identify such facilities with recommendations for the type of improvements desired. Several of these recommendations correspond to the park facilities in need for improvements detailed in the Existing Conditions Analysis results in Chapter 2 of this report.

Overall Park Improvement For Enhanced User Experience

The park system has multiple parks and facilities that are in the need of renovations and/or additions. Some of the recommended improvement priorities included improved pedestrian access to parks, addition of sidewalks and pathways, addition of restrooms, enhanced security measures, lighting improvements, updating existing park amenities, shaded seating areas, shaded walkways, outdoor fitness stations, and technological additions like wi-fi in parks. Parks recommended for potential improvement are mapped on **Map 4-2** on the following page.



Newly renovated Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club Park

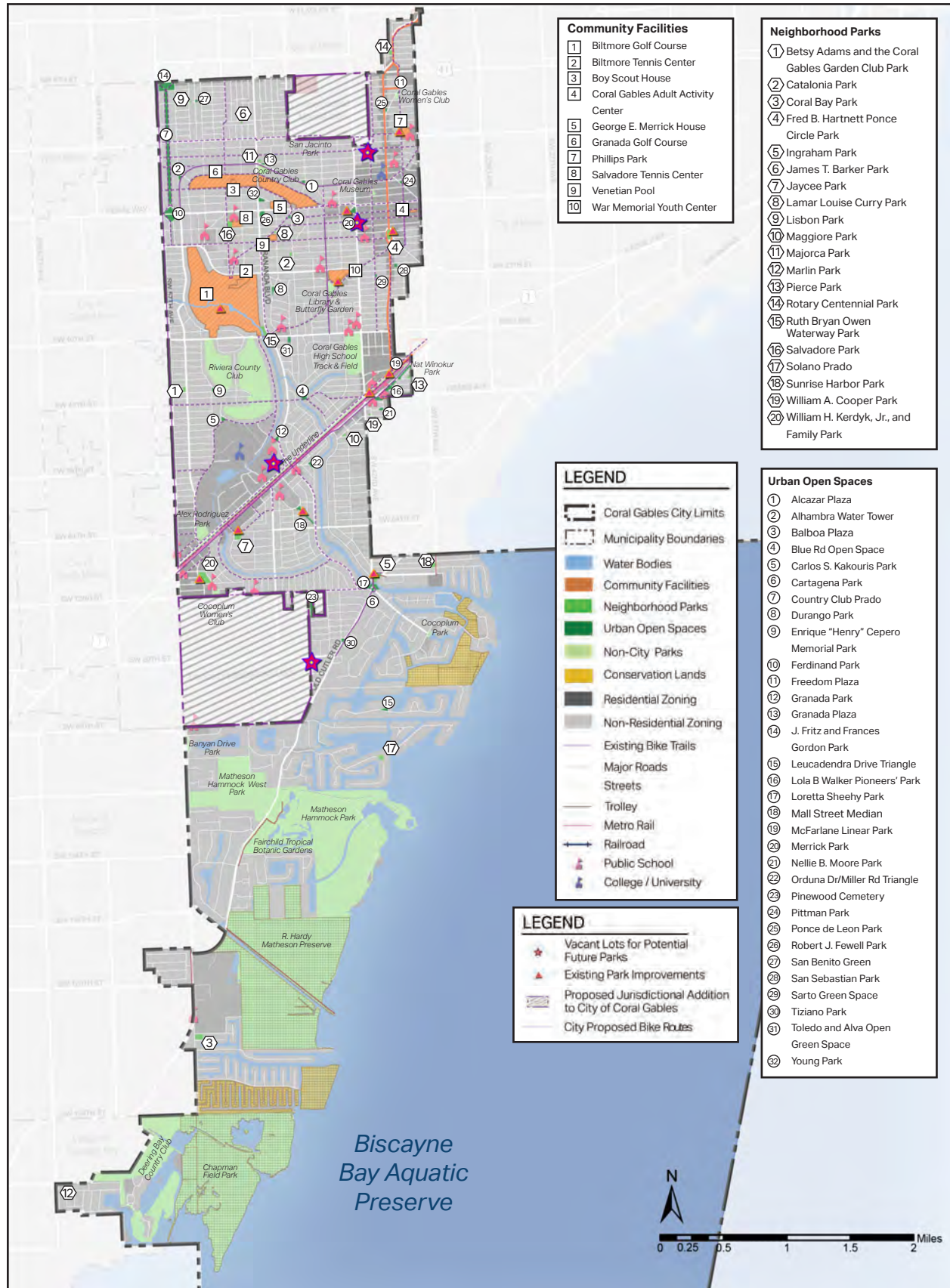


Well-maintained outdoor fitness station at Ingraham Park is popular with park users



Need for playground surface improvements at Sunrise Harbor Park

Map 4-2: Vision Plan- Parks and Facilities Goals



Provide A Greater Variety of Activities In Existing Parks

One of the most commonly repeated recommendations from the public to enhance the utilization of park spaces with the addition of more activities and amenities. Several of the parks in the current system are under utilized comprising mostly of an open green space with some rudimentary seating and may or many not have a sidewalk along the periphery. Such spaces have been classified as urban open spaces under the City's park classification system. However, many of these urban open spaces are substantially sized to be developed into neighborhood parks by incorporating park amenities like playgrounds, improved shaded seating, enhanced shaded pedestrian circulation within the park space, and improved park accessibility from surrounding neighborhood. **Map 4-3** identifies a few of these urban open spaces that can potentially be developed into neighborhood parks. Four of the parks in the map - Catalonia Park, Majorca Park, Marggiore Park, and Miss Lamar Curry Park are currently classified as neighborhood parks in the City's park system. These parks are underutilized and can optimize their spaces further with the addition of park amenities.

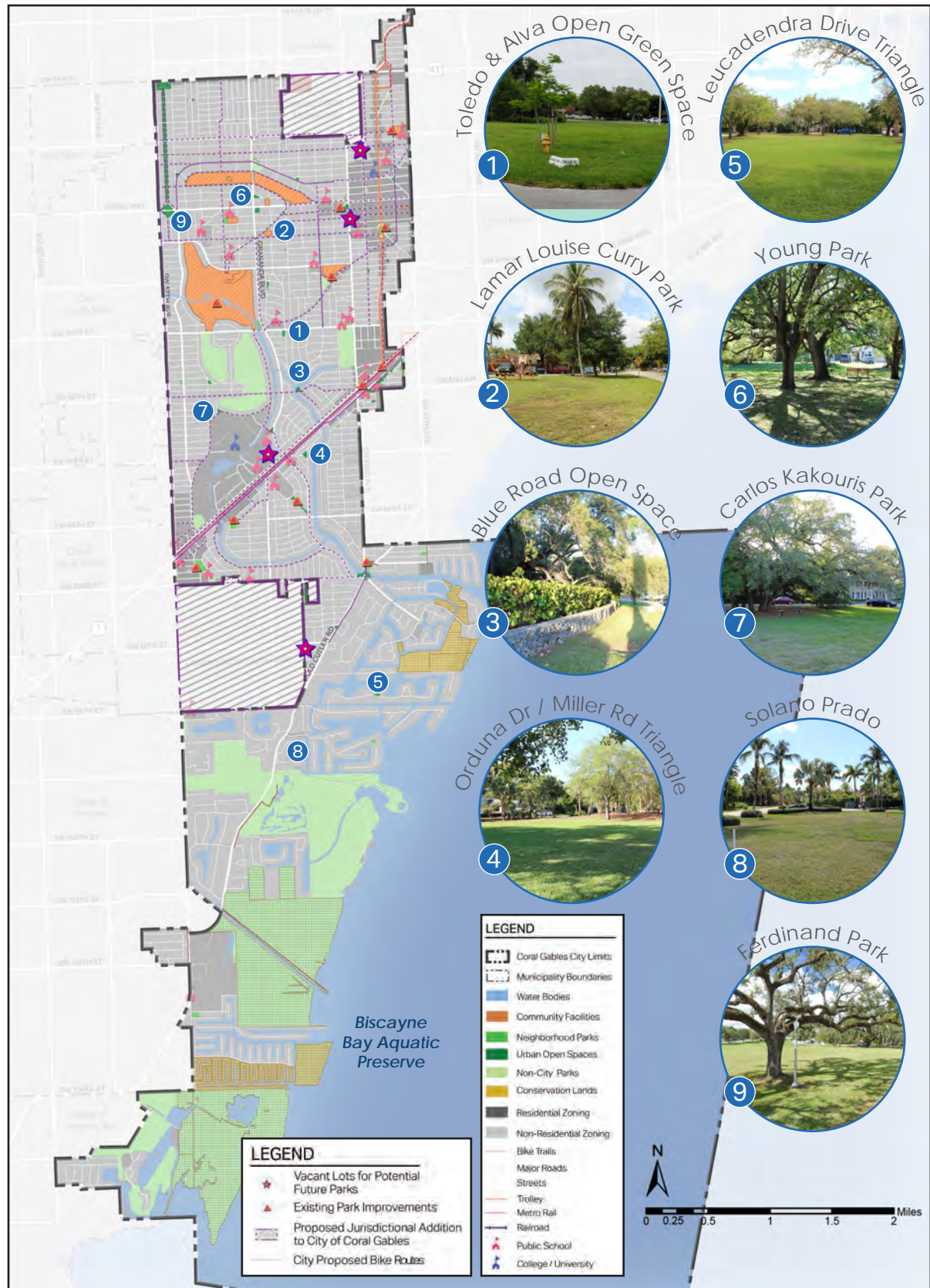


Jaycee Park - Optimally utilized neighborhood park space



Toledo & Alva Open Space - Potential neighborhood park site for improved variety of amenities and activities

Map 4-3: Potential existing park sites for neighborhood park level enhancements

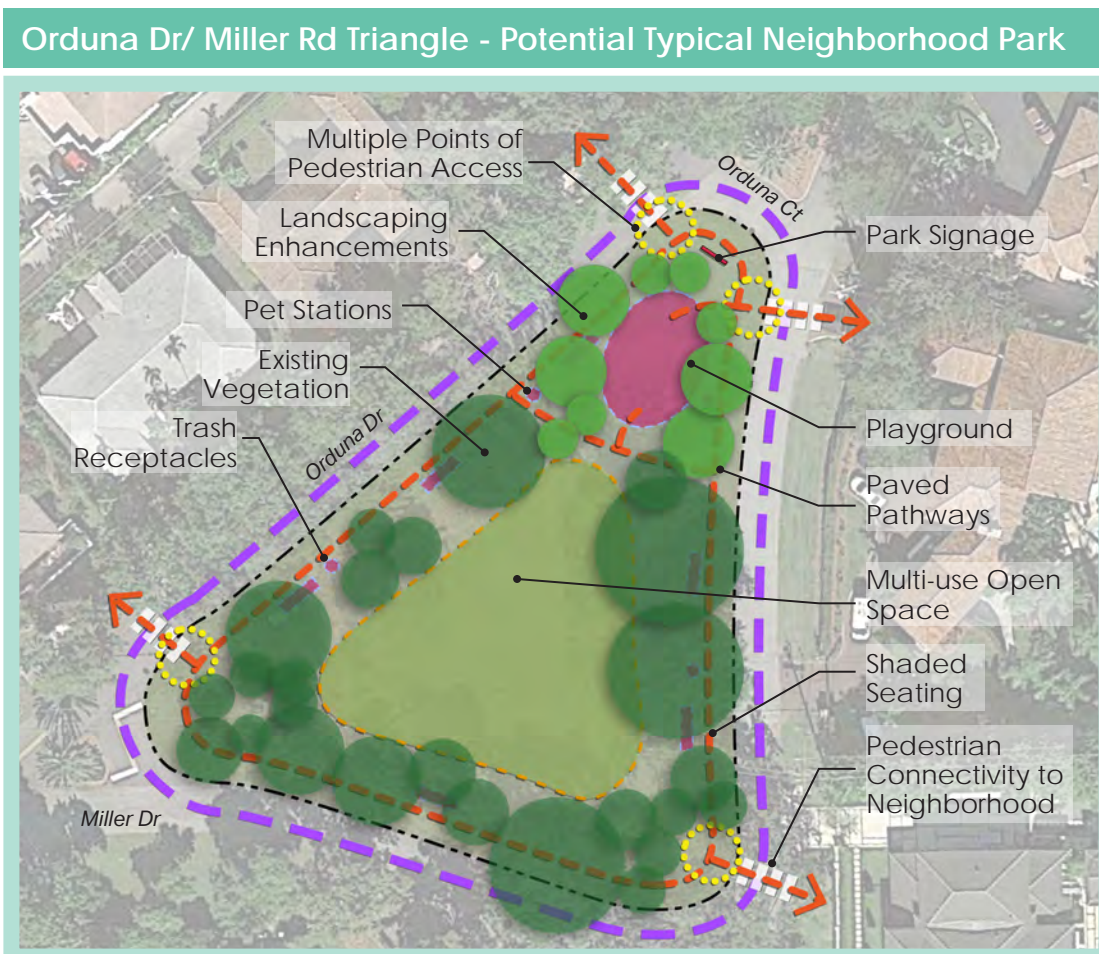


Potential Typical Neighborhood Park

Orduna Dr / Miller Rd Triangle

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) classifies a typical neighborhood park as a green space, one to 15 acre in size and serving a population with half-mile walking distance. Neighborhood parks serve a variety of age groups within a limited area or neighborhood. The neighborhood park may include areas for active recreation activities such as field games, court games, playgrounds, etc. Passive recreation activities may include walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking.

Orduna Miller Park has been identified, in the section above, as a potential urban space that could benefit from the addition of park elements to become an enhanced neighborhood park. The image below is a conceptual ideation for improvement to Orduna Miller Park. Similar improvements could be incorporated into several other City park spaces to create a robust system of neighborhood parks.



A Flagship Park For the City

The Coral Gables park system is a mix of multiple park spaces with varying degrees of size. Some parks are moderately sized, but most of them are smaller pocket parks or urban plazas. During the Vision Workshops the public expressed the need for a premier park space that could be a reflection of the City's heritage and serve as a destination for both residents and visitors. Among the suggested sites, the most talked about was the idea of transitioning Granada golf course into a flagship park for the City. The golf course, at the heart of the City, is already a premium destination by itself. It is used heavily for recreational walking and biking along the edges despite the lack of any pedestrian amenities. Adding a multi-use trail along the perimeter of the park could provide users with a safer option for recreation while creating minimal interruption to the functioning of the golf course. As recreation trends evolve and change over time, more comprehensive improvements could be explored based on the needs and priorities of the community.

Centralized Event Space

Parks and recreation trends show an increasing demand for spaces that allow for at-will activities and larger special events. Coral Gables is no exception. The community has expressed a need for flexible parks that could accommodate public events and gatherings. City parks like the Ponce Circle Park, with its Downtown location, could potentially be redeveloped to serve as a centralized event space. Underutilized portions of the park could be reactivated with the creation of urban gathering spaces. The centralized location of the park and the



Granada Golf Course - A premier City facility



Creating safer options for recreational park users along the perimeter of Granada Golf Course

ability for residents to access this location from different parts of the City would make it an ideal venue for hosting public events and festivals.

Satellite Park Facility

The centrally located War Memorial Youth Center, and the Adult Activity Center collectively meet a majority of the active adult sports programming and recreational needs within the core of the

City, however some of the neighborhoods on the perimeter of Coral Gables may be experiencing service gaps for these activities. During the Visioning Workshop, recommendations were made to create a satellite park facility, with enhanced adult sports programming at Philips Park. This facility would be able to cater to the needs of the northern part of the City and help meet increased demand. A dog park was also on the list of recommended facilities at the park. While the park is currently heavily used for sports and recreation, the evolving needs and priorities of the residents in this area may provide the context for extensive improvements at this location. An efficient redesign of the park could carve out spaces for additional desired activities such as a dog park, and provide recreation opportunities a more diverse range of residents.

Develop Additional Parks, Facilities, and Open Spaces

The City currently has some wonderful examples of well-designed and highly used urban open spaces, neighborhood parks, and community facilities that have been developed since the City's inception. These parks and open spaces have helped establish Coral Gables as a premier destination and an attractive place for people to live and work. Because of this, the population growth the City has experienced is projected to continue, and will require additional parks and open spaces to maintain the high quality of life residents currently enjoy.

The Needs and Priorities Assessment identified small neighborhood parks and pocket parks as a top priority for neighbors in Coral Gables. While the community



Reactivating Ponce Circle Park into an urban event space



Philips Park is a popular and heavily used neighborhood park

input indicated a desire to improve existing facilities, there are many City residents that live in areas that lack small neighborhood facilities within walking distance. As the City grows, the need for parks and open spaces will grow proportionately, and existing gaps will be exacerbated. To increase the accessibility to parks, it may become necessary for the City to explore additional properties to develop new parks.

Population growth and increased density, coupled with a decrease in available land and increasing property values, will create the need for creative solutions to provide parks and open spaces. New facilities may be regular street level parks or could be alternative options like roof-top facilities. The Vision workshops helped identify such parcels that could be potential sites for future parks. The Vision and Level of Service Overlay Map shown in **Map 4-4** outlines these parcels as well as highlights larger areas, where no particular site has been identified, but the community expressed a need for a park space in those areas. These identified areas with a need for parks, overlap with the gaps in service analyzed in the Level of Service maps.

Improved Level of Access With the Addition of New Parks and Facilities

Map 4-4 identifies potential locations of future park sites. The site locations were vaguely identified during the Vision Workshops as areas with vacant sites that could potentially be acquired by the City for future park projects. The map also highlights the current level of service for all Coral Gables parks that provide open space access at a 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile service area, a walkable distance supported by community neighbors through quantitative research. This translates to the open spaces that are within walking distance for the neighborhoods served. The level of service layer has been overlaid with the potential sites for future parks and areas with parks required as identified during the Vision Workshops.



Urban Open Space - Lisbon Park

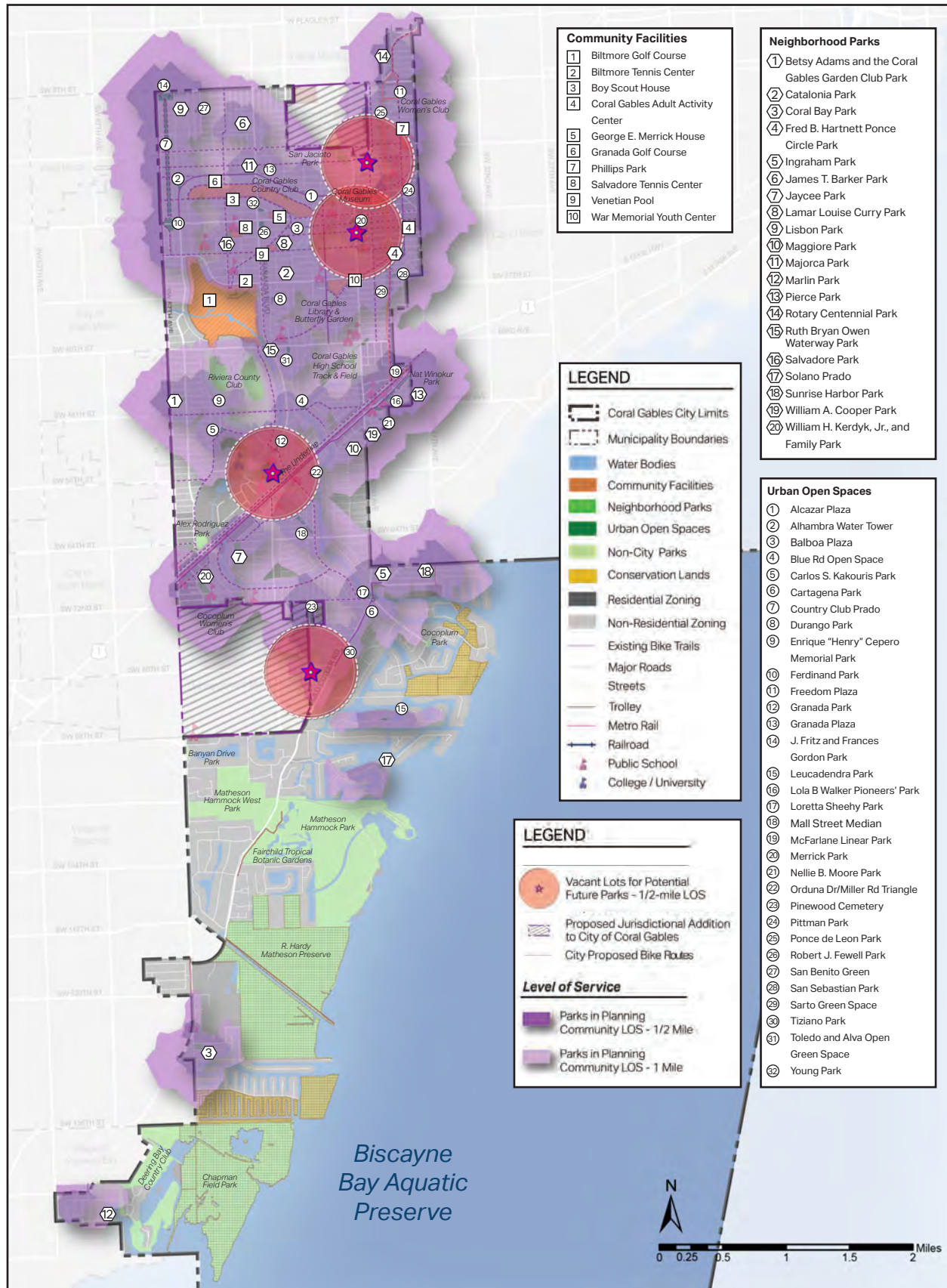


Neighborhood Park - Ingraham Park



Community Facility - Venetian Pool

Map 4-4: Vision Map and Level of Service (City Parks 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile LOS)



Also shown on this map are residential zoning areas of Coral Gables to further identify areas where residents are without access to open space. The analysis identifies gaps in the some of the western parts of the City and major gaps in the southern section of the City. A majority of the areas in the southern part of the City are low density residential areas, where current park and recreational needs may be met by the existing city-owned and non-city parks. The central parts of the City have a higher population density and a greater demand for parks. The gaps in the level of service, especially in the 1/4-mile radius, analyzed for the central part of the City overlaps with the areas with park needs identified by the community during the Vision Workshops.

Develop More Neighborhood and Pocket Parks

The results from online and Statistically Valid Survey, as well as recommendations from the Vision Workshops, expressed a public desire for more neighborhood and pocket parks in the park system. The City can identify optimal locations for such pocket parks from within its collection of surplus properties.

A pocket park could be a small open green space with shaded seating, and pathway connections. Lisbon Park is excellent example of an existing Coral Gables city park that highlights several elements of a well designed pocket park. The park is well connected to the surrounding neighborhood, utilizes sustainable building materials, and has a balanced mix of park amenities like benches and dog stations- all situated under a shaded canopy of trees. All future pocket parks can take cues from Lisbon Park and could be designed with similar elements, thus creating a series of pocket parks that increases the accessibility of parks to the citizens of the City.



Pocket Park - Lisbon Park

Rooftop Park

An additional solution that is being utilized by urban cities is to develop rooftops for open space. This is particularly useful in dense, urban areas, where property values make the acquisition of ground-level open space difficult. While rooftops can be used for a variety of purposes, the most common application of this strategy is for athletic facilities such as tennis or basketball courts. Rooftops can also incorporate sustainable strategies such as bio-filtration systems or community gardens. Parking garages are often suitable structures to implement

rooftop parks. Potential Location #2 on **Map 4-4** highlights a location in Coral Gables where these opportunities may exist. The City is currently in the process of acquiring the property to develop into a rooftop park with amenities. In addition to this property, the City also has several parking decks in and around its Downtown that could be potential future rooftop parks, as need for park spaces increases in the future.

Case Study

Rooftop Park

The optimally utilized rooftop deck provides ample recreational options for the residents in an Uptown location where availability of open space is at a premium. The rooftop of the parking deck has been developed as a rooftop park with multiple amenities. Park amenities include basketball and tennis courts, dog run, pathways, outdoor seating and dining spaces, and landscaped planters.

Skyhouse Uptown Parking Deck, Charlotte NC



SkyHouse Uptown Parking Deck, Charlotte, NC (photo credit: Charlotte Observer)



4.2.3 Recreational Programming and Community Health

Guiding Principles

Community health is a critical concern for residents of Coral Gables. Top priority facilities such as walking and biking trails, nature trails and indoor fitness facilities, and programs such as adult fitness and wellness and senior programs indicate residents' desire for a recreation system that encourages a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages. With regards to programs, the Statistically Valid Survey noted a need for fitness and wellness programs for 55 percent of respondents, yoga/Pilates and Zumba at 38 percent, and aquatics at 31 percent. Using this information, as well as additional input from the vision workshops, the following guiding principles will help guide the vision for Recreational Programming and Community Health:

Goal 1: Additional Health and Wellness Program Offerings

- Increase availability of senior health and fitness programming
- Explore the benefits of a healthy community, and methods which could enable the parks system to achieve health and wellness goals

Goal 2: Develop Facilities to Meet Health and Wellness Needs

- Develop a new aquatic facility
- Implement strategies for expanding the capacity of existing facilities

Additional Health and Wellness Program Offerings

Increase Program Availability

Section 4.2.1 highlighted opportunities for the improvement of access to open space, and further sections will expand on sustainable strategies that will insure continued integration of natural areas, as well as connectivity improvements that encourage alternative transportation for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition to access to facilities, the community also expressed a strong desire for increased access to programming, and health and wellness opportunities.

Input from the community involvement phase of the system plan has indicated that there is a desire for more indoor fitness and exercise facilities throughout Coral Gables, as well as programs that promote senior and adult fitness. During the Vision Workshops, a need for increased offering of senior recreational programming was also expressed. This input, coupled with rise in the percentage of residents aged 55-64, may indicate a rising demand for senior programs and services.

In addition to a general increase in the number of programs, the location of these programs was also a factor for residents. The City of Coral Gables currently offers senior health programming at the War Memorial Youth Center and the Coral Gables Adult Activity Center, however both of these centers are located in the northeastern portion of the City. During the engagement process, the public expressed a need for senior programming in areas of the City outside of the Downtown core. Suggested sites include Biltmore Golf Course, and Coral Gables Country Club, as well as



Athletic fields at War Memorial Youth Center



Tennis Courts at Salvadore Tennis Center

centers set up at non-city properties such as Cocoplum Women's Club, and Shops of Merrick Park. Utilizing these locations as programmable sites could help meet the demand for active adult programming in the western and southern parts of the city.

Benefits of a Healthy Community

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has performed extensive research on the benefits of parks and how parks contribute to the health of communities. Physical activity is necessary to maintain good health and increases strength, flexibility, and endurance; relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety; improves mood; and enhances psychological well-being.

Despite the importance of parks and other recreational open spaces to health, many residents do not have adequate access to parks and open space. This is particularly true in cities, where park access is often inequitably distributed, putting certain populations at risk for health problems associated with inactivity.

Incorporating natural areas into a parks system can help improve psychological and social health. Exposure to nature can aid in surgical recovery, improve therapeutic treatment for mental health, and provide a setting for children who suffer from Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) to improve concentration and focus. Parks provide children with opportunities for outdoor play, which is a critical component in the development of muscle strength and coordination, language, and cognitive abilities.

Parks also build healthy communities by creating stable neighborhoods and strengthening community development. Parks achieve this by providing opportunities for people to work together, build trust, and foster companionship.

Health Benefits of Parks

- Parks, greenways, and trails enable and encourage people to exercise
- Exposure to nature improves psychological and social health
- Play is critical for child development
- Parks help build healthy, stable communities



William H. Kerdyk, Jr. and Family Park



Alcazar Plaza

Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness

Public park and recreation agencies create healthy communities and play a fundamental role in enhancing the physical environments in which we live. Through facilities, outdoor settings, and services provided, they support good health for people of all abilities, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and ethnicities. They foster change through collaborative programs and policies that reach a vast population to:

- Help reduce obesity and incidence of chronic disease by providing opportunities to increase rigorous physical activity in a variety of forms;
- Provide a connection to nature which studies demonstrate relieves stress levels, tightens interpersonal relationships, and improves mental health;
- Aid in reducing hunger in America and increasing access to nutritious food options; and
- Foster overall wellness and healthful habits, such as becoming tobacco-free and engaging in enrichment opportunities that add balance to life.

National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)



Outdoor fitness area at Ingraham Park

Develop Facilities to Meet Health and Wellness Needs

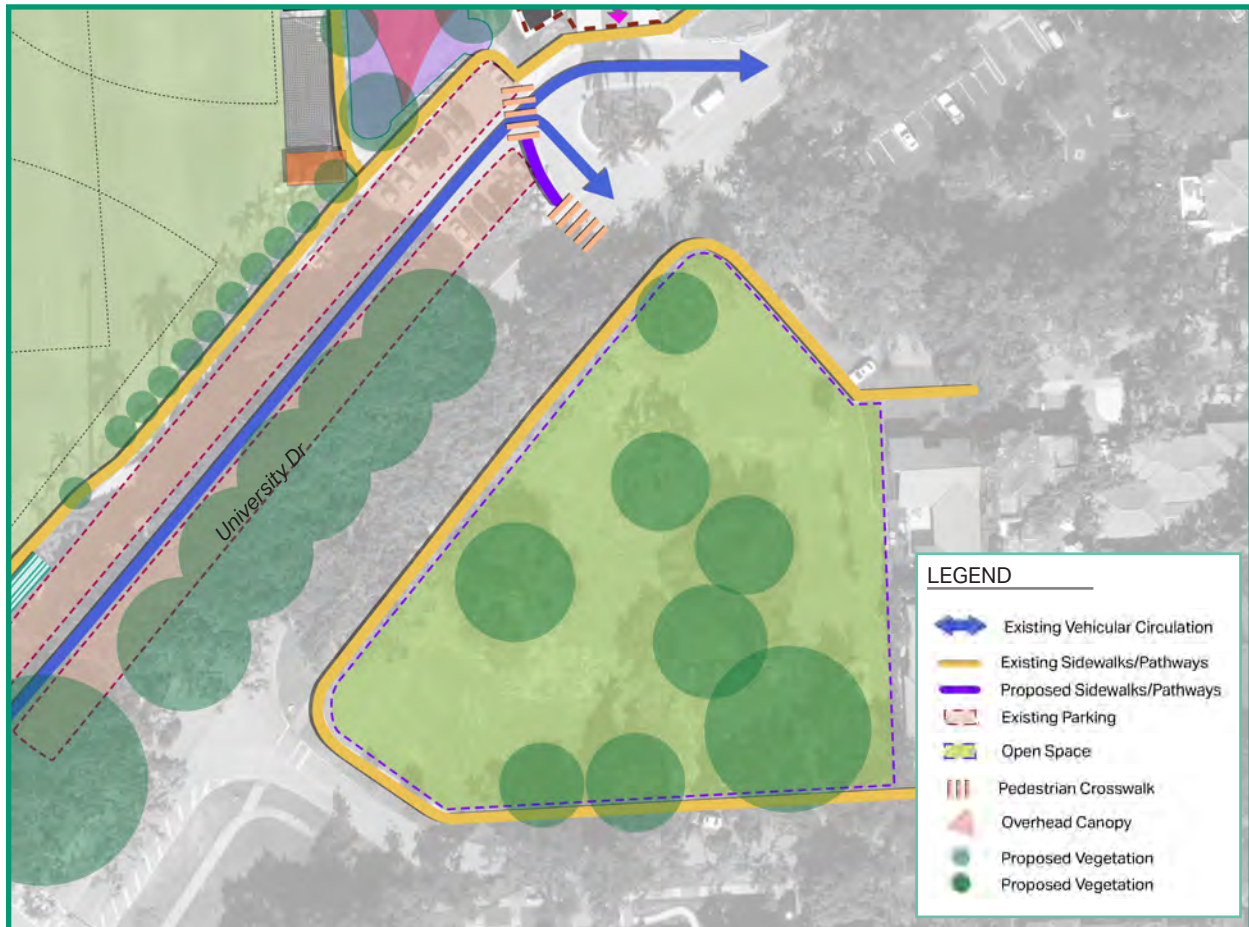
The City of Coral Gables is experiencing a steady demographic growth. This has increased the need for new facilities in addition to improving the capacity of existing facilities. Results from the online public opinion survey and the statistically valid surveys and Vision Workshops highlighted a need for an aquatic facility, expanded indoor fitness facilities, and walking/fitness trails. Strategies for the improvement to walking/fitness trails are described in the previous sections (Section 4.2.1).

Aquatic Facility

Throughout the engagement process the public highlighted a need for an aquatics facility, especially for youth programs, as a high priority need for the City. Currently, the Venetian Pool is the only City owned swimming pool. The pool caters to the recreational needs of the community, however there are very few opportunities for youth, like Learn to Swim programs.

One of the potential sites identified for an aquatic facility is a vacant lot adjacent to the War Memorial Youth Center. Shown below, this site could be incorporated into the Youth Center to include a variety

Potential Location for Aquatic Complex Adjacent to War Memorial Youth Center

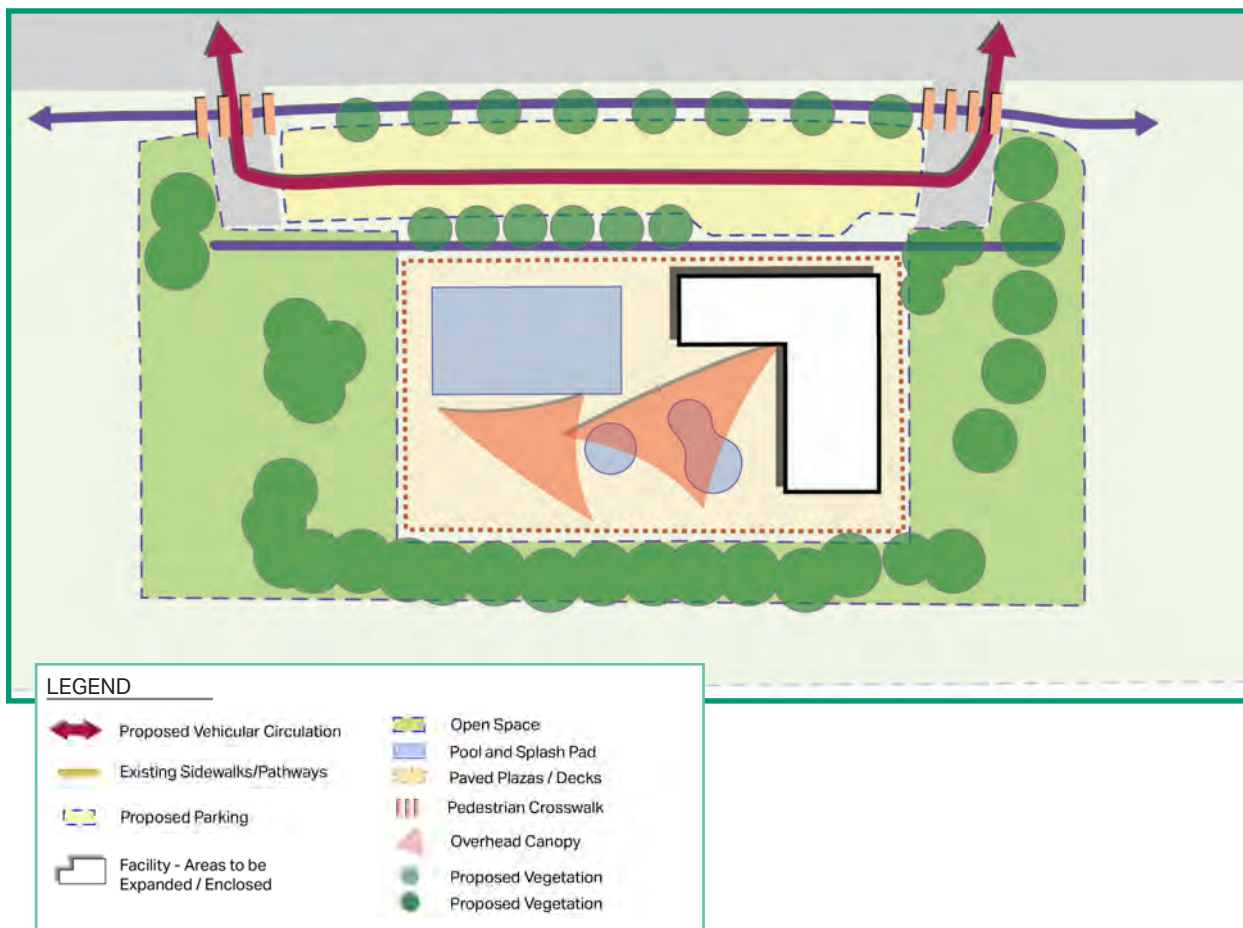


of uses, including but not limited to, a fitness center, additional parking, or the aquatic facility. A further feasibility analysis of this site should be conducted in order to determine the most appropriate use, as well as an exploration of additional locations that could house an aquatic complex.

Once a location is determined, the diagram below shows a potential layout and the facilities included in the aquatic complex. Amenities include a fitness/activity center, children’s wade pool, splash pad, 25-yard lap pool, pool-house, and additional parking.

While outdoor aquatic facilities remain beneficial to the communities they serve, there is a regional trend that focuses on developing indoor aquatic facilities. Due to the weather conditions experienced in South Florida, many communities have moved towards developing new indoor aquatic facilities. Besides the elimination of the need to shut down the pools during storms, the ability to operate the facility for longer hours and in consistent conditions makes these facilities more attractive for league and resident use. Furthermore, co-locating aquatic facilities with senior programs, and after-school programs, at community centers allows for better access and more efficient use of a costly facility.

Potential Layout of Aquatic Complex





Example of an indoor aquatics facility - Pullen Park, Raleigh, NC

Strategies for Capacity Improvement

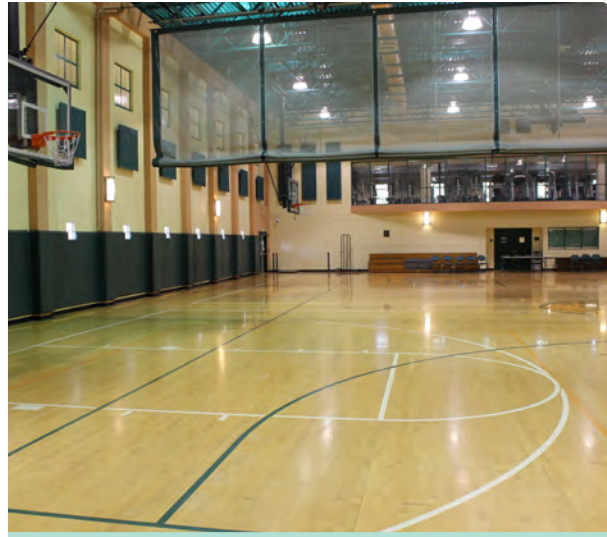
The increased demand as well as availability and access to programs throughout the City of Coral Gables not only will place a strain on the staff that offer these services, but also the capacity of the system to host additional programming. Due to the diverse nature of current and future programming demands, flexible spaces and maximizing availability of facilities should be a priority. This principle applies to both indoor and outdoor facilities. While the engagement process revealed a need for additional indoor spaces, the need for additional athletic fields may not be as urgent, however, additional fields should be planned for future growth. Some of the strategies that could be implemented to increase the capacity of existing and future facilities are outlined below:

Indoor Facilities

- Provide indoor facilities that are flexible and have the ability to support a variety of programs and activities.
- Design multi-purpose rooms with the ability to utilize multiple configurations and subdivide the spaces.
- Support facilities and amenities that increase access and comfort for seniors and users with special needs.
- Develop operations and staffing plans that are both efficient and allow for maximum availability for a wide-range of users.

Athletic Fields

- Utilize artificial turf to reduce the amount of maintenance needed and but also allow fields to be available more frequently. This allows users more opportunities to use fields for both organized league play and informal “pick-up” activities, reducing the potential for conflict between user groups.
- Incorporate or improve lighting to increase the availability of athletic facilities and utilize new LED technology to decrease energy consumption.
- Design fields to satisfy multiple configurations, such as a full-size soccer field that can also be lined for multiple youth soccer fields within the confines of the field boundaries.



War Memorial Youth Center Basketball Court



Phillips Park



War Memorial Youth Center Athletic Field



4.2.4 Access and Linkages

Guiding Principles

The demand for access between parks and communities was one of the most prevalent topics during the community involvement process. Access as a concept can be applied to the entire park system's overall vision. The guiding principles for access through the parks and recreation system are supported by other City and County initiatives that seek to improve access and quality of life for neighbors and stimulate economic growth throughout the City. The goals for access established through the Visioning workshop are:

Goal 1: Regional Access and Linkages

- Develop major north to south and east to west multi-use trails
- Complete fragmented sidewalks and widen existing sidewalks

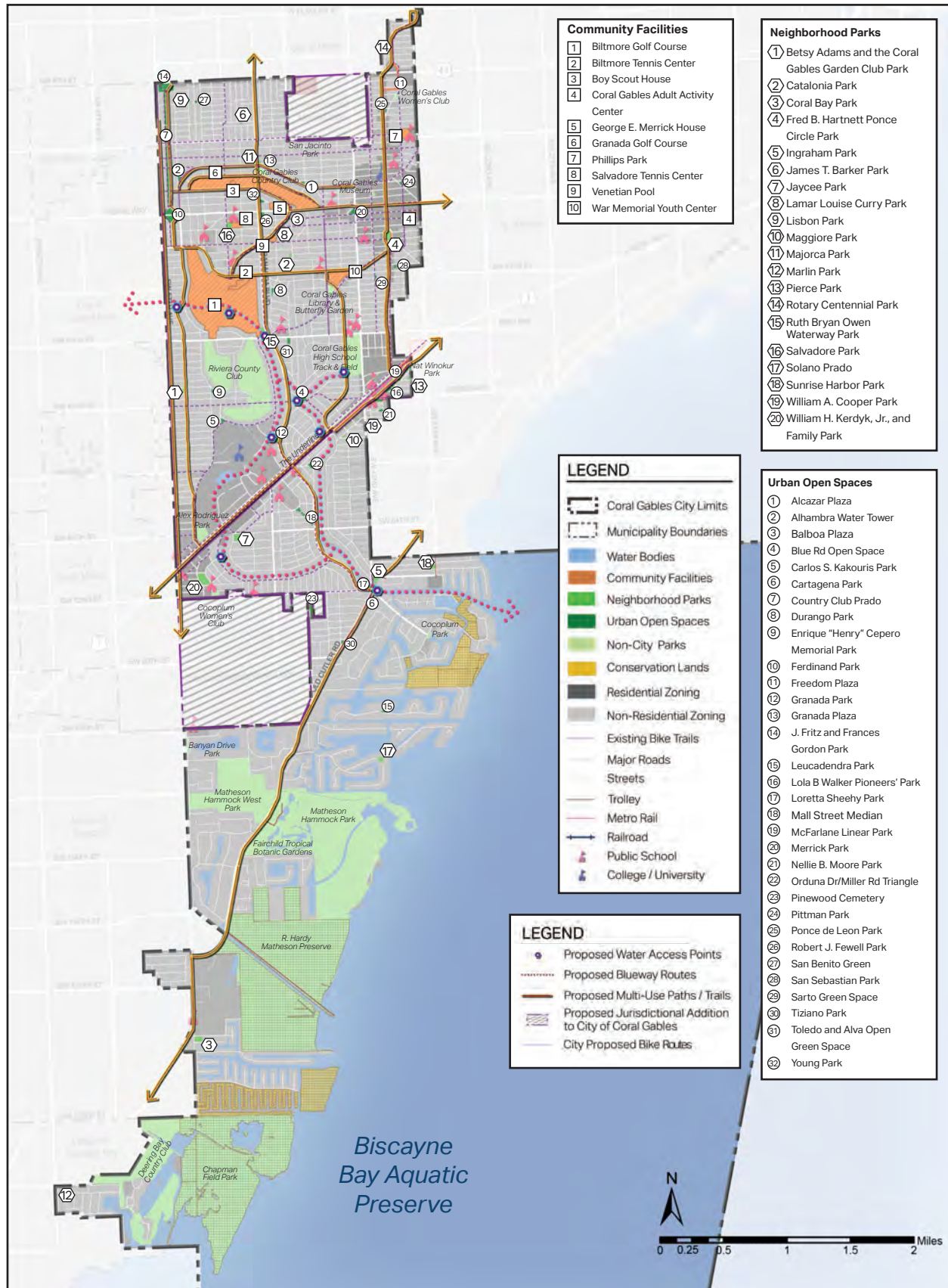
Goal 2: Blueways and Water Access

- Incorporate water into park system through blueways
- Create points of public water access to waterways

Goal 3: Linear Park System

- Develop linear parks
- Develop complete streets / green streets

Map 4-1: Vision Plan: Connectivity and Access Goals



Regional Access and Linkages

The Vision workshop recommendations for access focused on creating regional access and linkages through the development of multi-use paths and trails that connected the City's parks and recreation facilities. These linkages are intended to be along the city's primary axes, and include north-to-south trails along Granada Boulevard, Country Club Prado, South Red Road, SW 42nd Drive and Ponce De Leon Boulevard; west to east trails along Coral Way, Alhambra Circle, Anastasia Avenue, and South Dixie Highway. This goal carries forward and builds upon recommendations for proposed bike routes outlined in the Coral Gables Mobility Master Plan that recommended bike routes, bike boulevards, and bike lanes along different sections of the major thoroughfares of the City.

Several of the existing City parks are in need of sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks to link to the adjoining neighborhoods. While newly renovated parks like Betsy Adams Park have wide paved sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks that address this issue, there are several other parks where access could be significantly improved with the addition of sidewalks. These sidewalks could play a critical role in linking pieces in the overall regional access vision of the City.

While existing plans provide a foundation for regional access and linkages and increased bicycle and pedestrian safety, this vision seeks to build upon approved plans and provide recommendations for further access improvements, in an effort to encourage recreational use of the greenway and blueway network.



Existing bike lane along Alcazar Plaza



Wide sidewalks along Catalonia Park



Lack of sidewalks along Enrique Cepero Memorial Park

Blueways and Water Access

Canals and waterways add 40 miles of waterfront to the City of Coral Gables from Biscayne Bay, meandering through residential neighborhoods, and through the Granada Golf Course. Despite the canals dominant presence throughout the City, there are very few points of public access to the waterways. The public recommendations displayed an increased interest in incorporating these waterways into the City’s park system. Creating multiple points of public water access could enhance people’s experience of the City’s park system, creating new avenues for exploring and experiencing the parks.

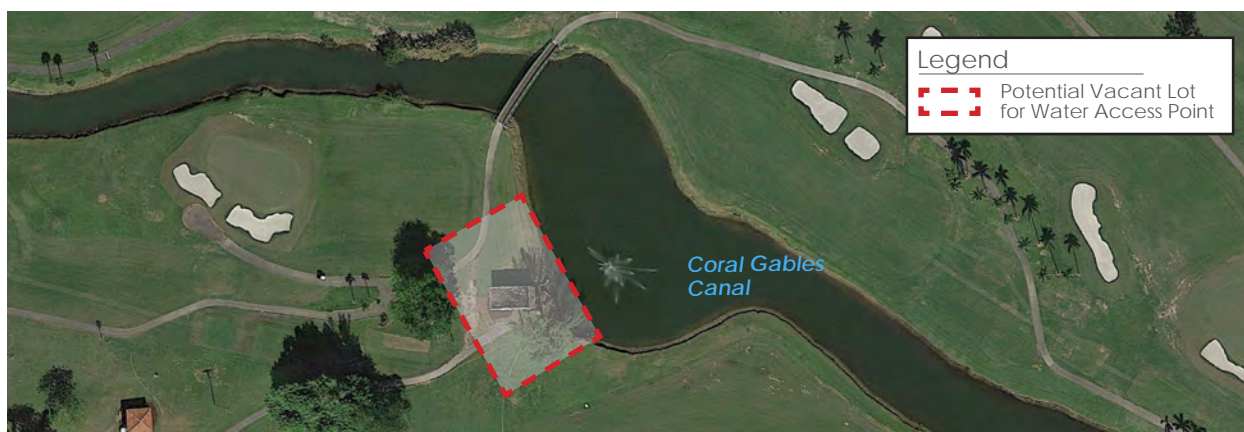
Map 4-1 highlights some of the suggested locations for public water access points. Some of these access points could be located within the boundaries of existing City parks such as Ruth Bryan Owen Waterway Park, Blue Road Open Space, Granada Boulevard Triangle, and Cartagena Park. The remaining access points could be created on vacant lots along the waterways. These identified points are highlighted on **Map 4-1**. Aerial basemaps of potential vacant lots for the water access points identified below and on the following page.



Potential water access point at Blue Road Open Space



Potential water access point at Ruth Bryan Owen Waterway Park



Coral Gables Waterway - Gondola House at Biltmore Golf Course



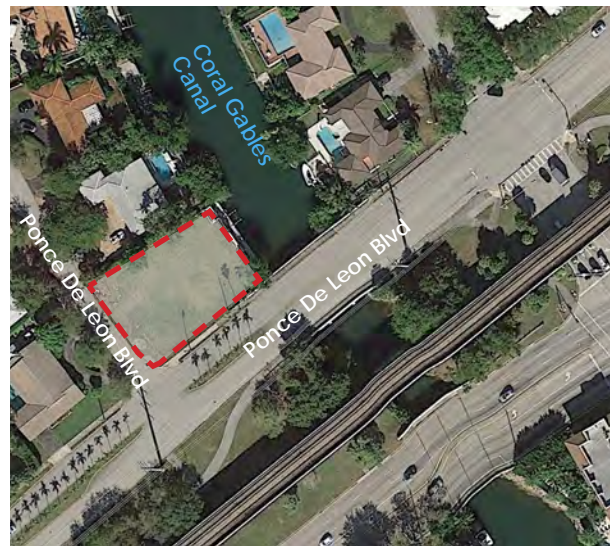
Coral Gables Waterway - Adjacent to Riviera Drive and Coral Gables High School




Coral Gables Waterway - Intersection of South Alhambra Circle and Nervia St



Coral Gables Waterway - Intersection of South Alhambra Circle and Nervia St



Coral Gables Waterway - Intersection of South Alhambra Circle and Orduna Dr

Legend	
	Potential Vacant Lot for Water Access Point

Linear Park System

While a significant expansion of the citywide trail system will increase access to parks and recreation facilities, there are opportunities for further connectivity and placemaking through the integration of linear parks and complete streets in key corridors. At a minimum, complete streets typically feature two-way vehicle traffic, bike lanes, wide pedestrian sidewalks, transit connectivity, parking, and landscape buffer or small open spaces for shade and refuge. Streets with these characteristics generally promote a pedestrian and bike friendly environment that can help promote economic development along the corridor.

Existing parks and urban open spaces like the Country Club Prado, Mall Street Median, Lola B Walker's Pioneer Park, and McFarlane Linear Park could be connecting blocks, serving as destinations, in the linear park system. The linear parks could incorporate park amenities such as shaded seating areas, walking trails, bike stations, outdoor fitness stations, and drinking water fountains. Couple of these locations could also include a dog-run. Need for another dog park was expressed in the north-east part of the City.



Existing Linear Park - McFarlane Linear Park



Potential Linear Park - Mall Street Median



4.2.5 Cultural and Historic Resources

Guiding Principles

The City of Coral Gables is home to multiple national and local historic landmarks, including 11 resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), one of which is also designated as a National Historic Landmark. In addition to these, there are also dozens of locally recognized historic landmarks and districts. Several of these local landmarks are situated within City park properties. The City boasts multiple monuments and historic markers, and existing walking, biking and waterway tours enable people to explore and navigate to these historic sites. By building on this rich heritage, the parks system can further enhance and celebrate these historic landmarks while providing opportunities for additional arts and cultural resources throughout the City.

Goal 1: Continue to Promote the City's Cultural and Historic Character

- Highlight the historic landmarks situated within City parks, urban open spaces and gateways that make Coral Gables beautiful
- Create a cultural and historic trail of historic landmarks situated within the City's park system

Goal 2: Continue to Integrate Art Into the Community's Open Space Fabric

- Implement a diverse collection of public art installations
- Explore opportunities to integrate art into signage and wayfinding

Continue to Promote the City's Cultural and Historic Character

The abundance of rich history and culture in the City of Coral Gables presents ample opportunity for integration of these resources into the park system. **Map 4-5** on the following page shows the location of the public historical and cultural sites in the City, 12 of which are located within the City's park properties. Connecting these sites creates an opportunity for an additional network of accessible historic destinations.

There are multiple existing walking, bike and waterway tours that navigate people to various the historic sites. A majority of these sites lie along the corridors of current and existing bike routes as well as proposed multi-use paths. The abundance of resources along these trails can be emphasized by integrating cultural and historic routes into these segments of the trail system. Signage and way finding can be used to indicate significant places along a trail and provide educational information about its importance. By utilizing the trail system to tell the story of historic and cultural sites, residents will have the opportunity to access recreation amenities and resources that strengthen the fabric of their community, further increasing the quality of life in Coral Gables and promoting the historic beauty if the City.

Integration of Art Into the Community's Open Space Fabric

Art in public places is an important part of the culture of a diverse community such as Coral Gables. While not only aesthetically pleasing, public art provides opportunities for local artists to contribute

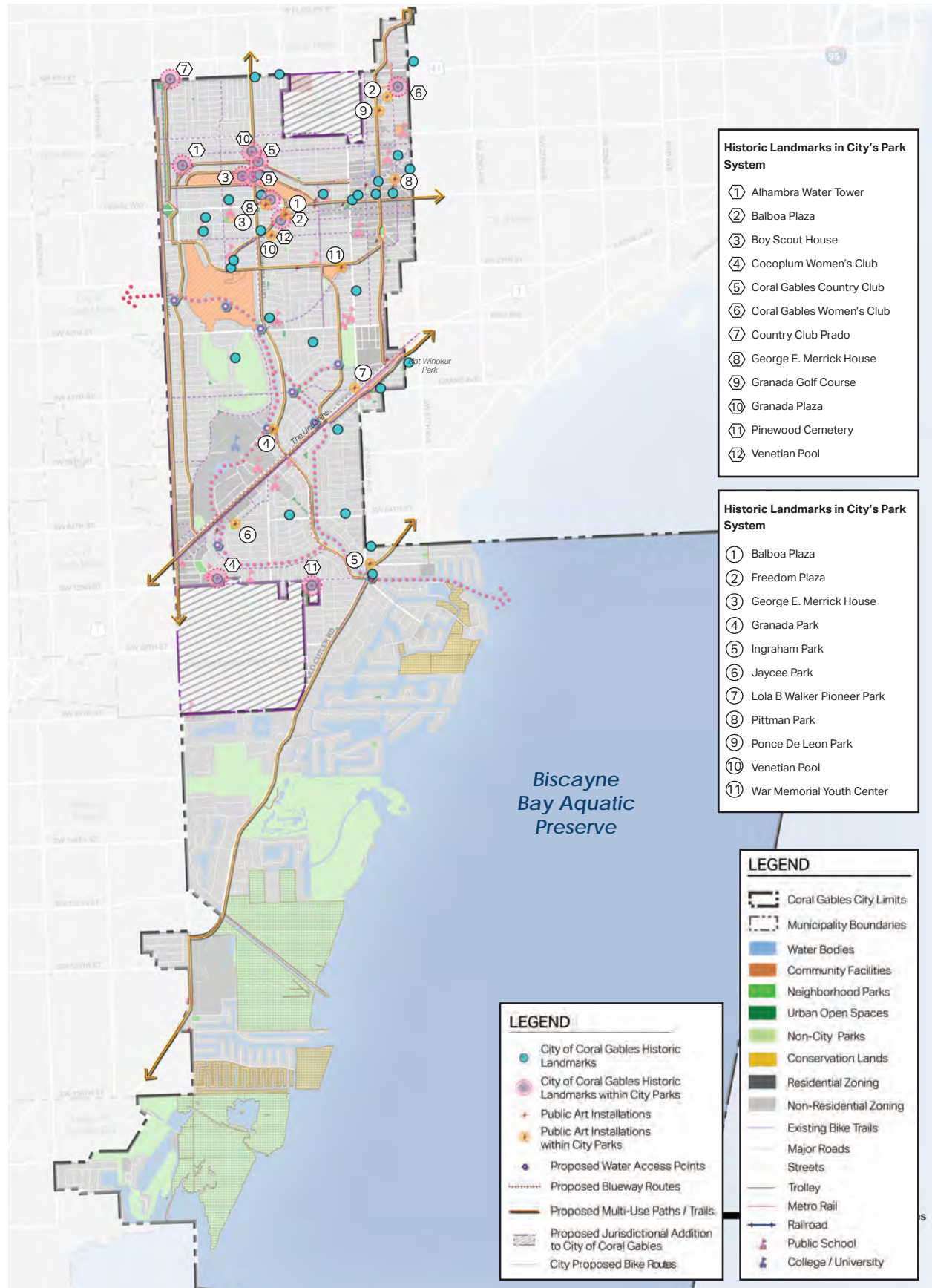


Alhambra Water Tower - Built in 1924 to conceal a steel water tank



Coral Gables Merrick House

Map 4-5: Historic Public Landmarks and Public Art in the City of Coral Gables Parks



to the image and economics of the City, and exposes residents and visitors to the diversity and culture that makes Coral Gables a unique, beautiful city.

Public Art can take many forms and exists in a wide variety of public spaces in a City. Common types of public art generally fall within one of the following categories:

- Sculpture
- Architecture
- Murals / Paintings
- Earthworks
- Memorials
- Signage
- Installation Art
- Interactive Art

Coral Gables currently features several different types of public art throughout the City, both modern as well as of historic character. Several of these art pieces are located with City parks and urban open spaces **Map 4-5**. Examples of modern pieces include comic-book inspired speech bubble artwork as part of the City's Art in Public Places Program. Other art installations from the City's Public Art collection can be found at several of the City's parks and open spaces.

While these programs and installations have a dramatic impact on the aesthetic of the City, there is opportunity to continue this great legacy. Similar art installations could potentially be incorporated into several other parks, urban open spaces, and gateways of the City that could reinforce the brand and identity of the City's park system.



Fountain at Ponce De Leon Park



Modern art installation at Jaycee Park



Sculptural bike racks at Venetian Pool

Case Study

The Mockingbird Trail, Flagler Village, Fort Lauderdale, FL

The Mockingbird Trail is an initiative underway in Flagler Village, a historic neighborhood of Fort Lauderdale, that seeks to combine outdoor recreation with urban public art. This Urban Art Trail will feature over two miles of verdant walkways, various outdoor seating elements, exercise routes, contemporary urban design street furniture and over a dozen public art installations. The concept encourages neighborhoods to connect with natural flora and fauna through the use of public art. The trail has garnered significant public support and has received financial contributions from private and non-profit donors, as well as the Community Foundation of Broward's 2014 Art of Community: The Engagement Challenge Fund Grant. Features of the trail include:

- Sculpture Art
- Murals
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Greenway Paths
- Native Plants
- Stormwater Planters
- Decorative Lighting
- Custom-design Seating
- Connections to Future Trails

Phase One of the Trail includes a two-mile route and six trail stops with art installations in the neighborhood of Flagler Village. The project serves as a catalyst for additional streetscape, planting improvements and public art throughout the City.

Mockingbird Trail



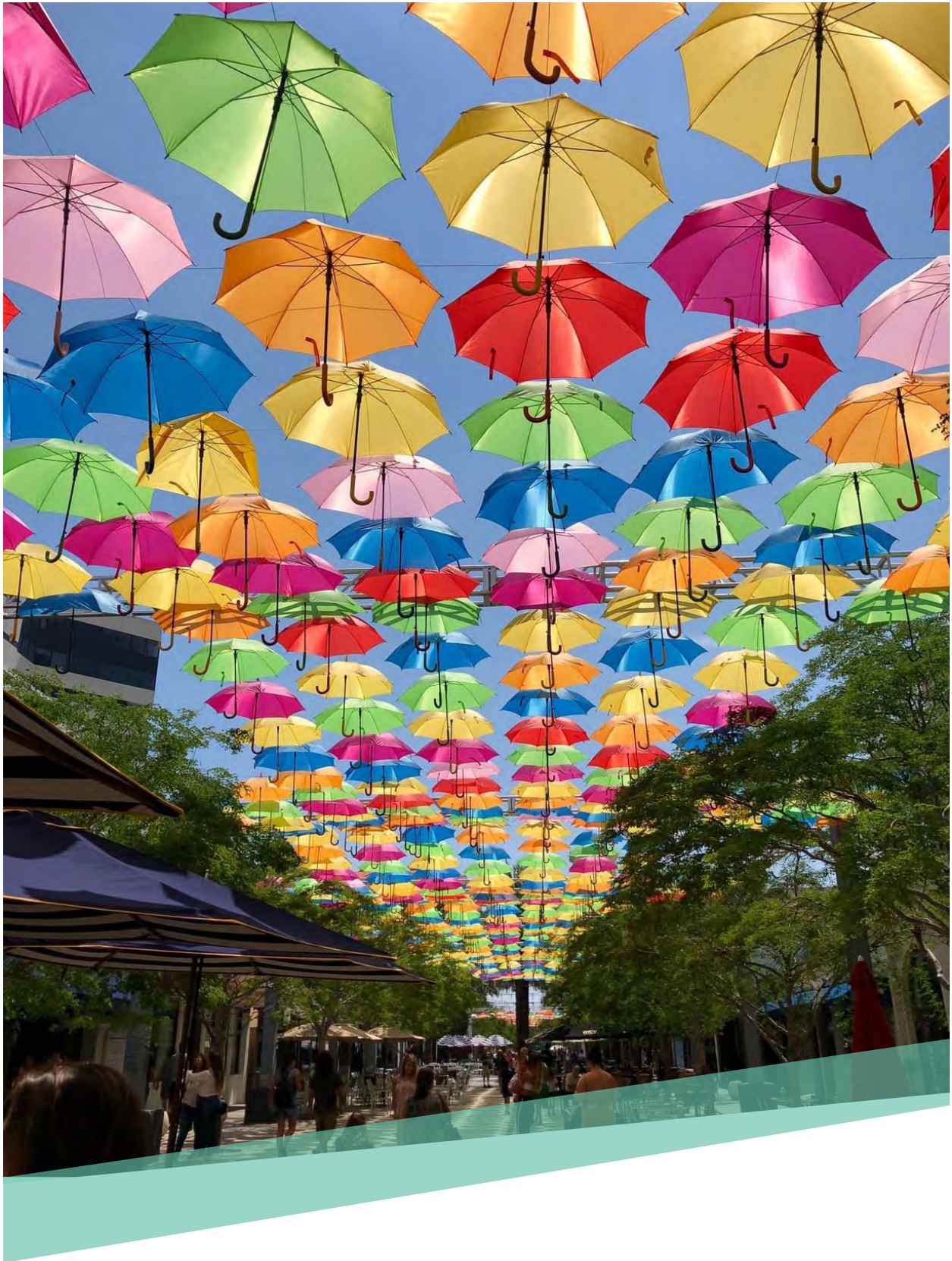
Mockingbird Trail Map



Trail Along the FEC Rail Corridor



Art Installation on NE 3rd Street



Giralda Plaza



4.2.6 Sustainability and Resilience

Guiding Principles

The City's parks system offers a diverse range of user experiences and opportunities to engage the natural environment in various ways. A key part of the experience is due to the promotion of natural system function, biodiversity and conservation of resources. While the City and the greater region have been successful in developing initiatives that address sustainability and resilience, there are opportunities within the park system to incorporate city-wide initiatives. The following guiding principles provide a framework for strategies that should be utilized in future park development and improvement:

Goal 1: Sustainability at the Park Level

- Promote system-wide sustainability efforts with small-scale interventions at each park

Goal 2: A Resilient Park System

- Opportunities for the implementation of resilient environmental practices within the park system

Sustainability at the Park Level

A sustainable park system begins with best practices and strategies for each individual park. Incorporation of these strategies establishes a culture in which every park contributes to the success of the system and the natural environment throughout the City. The following diagram **Figure 4-2** shows a prototypical community park with sustainable strategies. While typical facilities and amenities associated with such a park are shown, sustainable features that contribute to the overall environmental quality of the park are also highlighted. These scalable features can be incorporated to parks throughout the City in situations where they are applicable, and will provide ecological benefits.

In addition to the amenities and physical attributes of the park that contribute to sustainability, the following maintenance strategies can also be implemented in order to achieve long-term sustainability over the life of a park.

- **Energy Management Plan** - controls energy costs at facilities and promotes conservation and alternative energy
- **Native Plants** - reduces water consumption through irrigation, as well as the amount of resources to maintain landscapes
- **Life Cycle Analysis** - promotes efficient use of resources throughout the life of a park or facility
- **Variable Maintenance Standard Levels** - enables the efficient use of maintenance resources for a diverse system and promotes natural areas and habitats

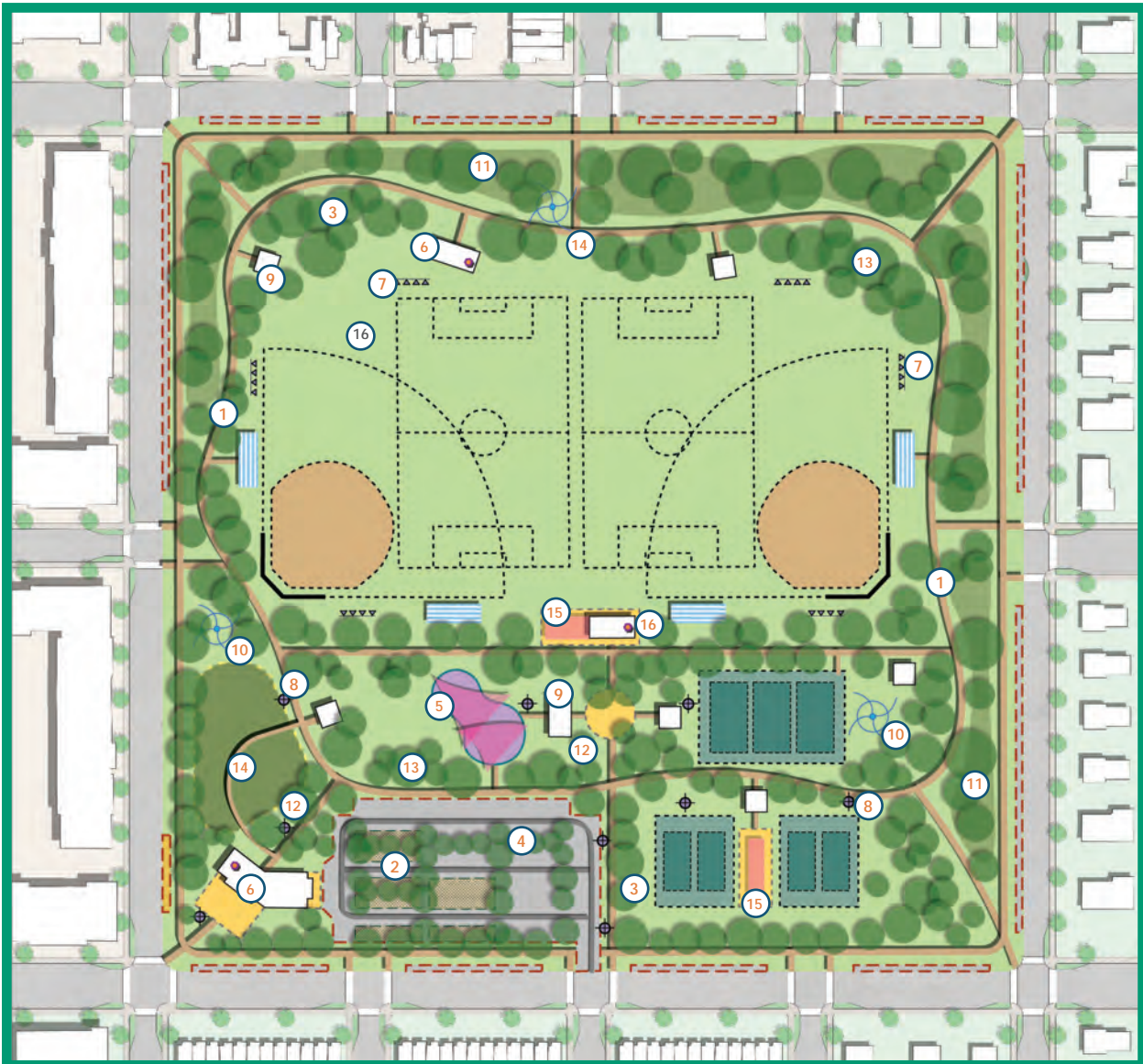


Fewell Park is an oasis of native plants



Effective use of sustainable materials and landscape elements in Ingraham Park

Figure 4-2: Prototypical community park with Sustainable Strategies



LID Parking

- 1 Permeable Pavement - reduces surface runoff and allows for water filtration.
- 2 Grass Parking - serves as flexible green space and overflow parking when needed, reduces surrounding temperatures.
- 3 Shade Trees - provide aesthetic benefits and reduces heat in parking area.
- 4 Heat Islands/ Rain Gardens - provide shade for temperature reduction, increased tree canopy and water filtration.



Sustainable Amenities

- 5 **Reusable Materials** - use of recyclable materials reduces landfill needs.
- 6 **Green Roofs**- incorporates water filtration into vertical structures with large surface areas.



Lighting and Energy

- 7 **LED Light Fixtures** - reduce energy consumption and maintenance and replacement costs.
- 8 **Dark Sky Compliant** - minimizes light pollution and unnecessary energy consumption.
- 9 **Solar Panels on Pavilions and Light Fixtures** - provides alternative energy source for amenities at the point of need.
- 10 **Large Wind Turbines** - provides additional energy to the park site, as well as education value for alternative energy demonstration.



Drainage and Water Filtration

- 11 **Swales** - grading the site to drain into swales allows for efficient drainage and storage, and can be designed to benefit drainage from surrounding areas.
- 12 **Rain Gardens** - provides drainage and water filtration for surface runoff from adjacent areas.
- 13 **Native Plants** - use of native plants allows for naturally stabilized areas and decreased maintenance and irrigation needs.
- 14 **Educational Signage** - increases awareness of the importance of natural systems, stormwater management, water quality, and sustainable energy.



Community Gardens

- 15 **Edible Plants** - helps increase education and awareness of health and wellness, urban agriculture and food access.
- 16 **Sustainable Irrigation** - utilize cisterns, water barrels, and drip irrigation for irrigation with on-site water sources.



A Resilient Park System

Coral Gables, like many other cities, will be presented with many climatic challenges and opportunities in the future. The proximity to the ocean contributes to the high quality of life in Coral Gables, but also presents a unique set of circumstances that many coastal communities will be forced to address in the future. Miami-Dade County has done a great job of beginning the conversation and starting initiatives, and Coral Gables has been a primary contributor in these efforts. As these initiatives move forward, it is essential that the parks system plays a key role in the resilience and long-term stability of the City. Applying resilience principles in park planning can help maintain balance of natural resources and recreation needs while adapting to environmental and climate-related changes.

While the scope climate impacts are global, the impacts are felt at a local level. It is at the local level where residents are at the highest risk for damage to the social, economic and environmental stability of the community. Local governments are best equipped to take action, prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change, by focusing on the following strategies:

- Use past experience to inform future decisions
- Recognize ways to use resources
- Prioritize shared ownership in decision making
- Bring together a range of distinct systems and institutions
- Form well-conceived, constructed, and managed systems
- Plan for spare capacity purposively created to accommodate disruption
- Be willing and able to adopt alternative strategies in response to changing circumstances



The City has multiple waterfront park sites like the Ruth Bryan Waterway Park



Streets lined with giant Banyan trees is unique to the City

Resilient Strategy Opportunities at the Park System Level

As Coral Gables continues to grow in population and in density, the sustainability and resilience of its natural systems will become more critical. Coral Gables coastal location, and the abundance of water habitats and natural corridors will provide the setting for environmental challenges that require both system-wide planning strategies and interventions at the park level. The parks and recreation system's deep integration into the natural and urban environments presents a unique opportunity to implement strategies that can help communities respond to these challenges and continue to have access to a quality recreation system.

The following section highlights how one element of resilience- stormwater management, can be applied across the park system to varying degrees and context sensitivity.

Stormwater Storage

Due to the coastal environment and numerous canals that are found within Coral Gables, large storm events coupled with tidal events can often result in severe flooding throughout the City.

One unique strategy that can be implemented in larger parks is to use recreation fields and open spaces as detention basins for severe storm events. Parks in close proximity to canals are especially applicable for this strategy, as they can be early receptors of the flood water before it reaches surrounding neighborhoods. A large multi-use field can serve in this capacity. Diverting drainage towards this field by sinking it by three feet can result in nearly two million gallons of water being detained by each field.



Hortt Park, Fort Lauderdale- Sunken multi-purpose field used as detention basin during severe storm events

Neighborhood Stormwater Control

Severe storm events can impact areas that are not immediately adjacent to water bodies, especially if the stormwater system is overwhelmed by unexpected volumes of water. Parks within neighborhoods can serve as drainage areas for neighborhood stormwater and can be designed to manage large amounts of surface runoff.

An example of a park that fits this scenario is Ingraham Park, which already incorporates low impact strategies such as permeable walkways and rain gardens. While the stormwater management features contribute to on-site drainage and water filtration, enhancement of the facility and the surrounding streets can provide benefits to the neighborhood. **Figure 4-3** shows Ingraham Park and the surrounding areas, highlighting potential improvements that can be made to enhance the ecological functions of the park. The following is a list of improvements/enhancements:

Environmental Education

Creating public awareness about sustainability and resilience is an important step towards creating a sustainable park system. When people have the opportunity to see parks as more than just spaces for recreation and fitness, but assets that protect the viability of their community, it creates a positive impact on the brand of parks.

A robust signage and wayfinding plan, with emphasis on environmental signage can help create a cohesive environmental education system for the parks of the City. This can include information on the natural systems in the parks, the stormwater management process, and how the park system fits into the overall resilience of the City as a whole.



Ingraham Park

Figure 4-3: Potential Neighborhood Drainage at Ingraham Park



- ① Swales and Bioretention Basins with native plantings can provide stormwater management on site. These elements can also be added along the perimeter of the park to collect some of the stormwater run-off from surrounding streets.
- ② Sunken Multi-use Field can serve as a large detention area for excessive runoff during large storm events.
- ③ Permeable Pavement in existing walkways help reduce surface runoff.
- ④ Grass Parking Lots/ Permeable Pavement in parking lots capture additional runoff.

4.3

VISION PLAN SUMMARY

4.3.1 The Comprehensive Vision

The comprehensive vision was created as a cumulative representation of the ideas and thoughts shared by the public and stakeholders during the two-day Vision Workshop. Combining the results from the workshop with previous steps allows the community to provide a comprehensive vision for the future of Coral Gables Community Recreation System Plan.

Section 4.2 details the Vision Plan by individual sub-system element and the goals derived from each of these sub-systems helped develop the Comprehensive Vision Plan, **Map 4-6**, that would enable the City to draw the future of its parks and recreation system. As noted in previous sections, the parks and recreation system will play a key role in the continued development of Coral Gables and its communities. This vision outlines a continuation of investment in these contributing community assets and is consistent with the needs and priorities expressed through public involvement.

Figure 4-4 summarizes the key take-aways from each subsystem. Implementation of these goals would

enable the City of Coral Gables to develop a robust park and recreation system that would not only enrich the lives of the people in its communities but would also form a prime attraction for people visiting the City. With ongoing improvements to existing parks; reinforcing underused parks with the addition of more park amenities; creating additional water access points; incorporating sustainable and resilient strategies into park development and improvement; promoting history, art and culture as an integral part of the park system fabric; and developing facilities that meet the health and wellness needs of the community, the Coral Gables Park system could be developed as a robust system. The Vision Plan envisions the parks and recreation facilities to be more than just outdoor spaces for recreation but also as a contributor to the health and economic development of the City.

The following implementation chapter provides a strategic plan that identifies phasing strategies, defines priority projects, and explores funding options for achieving the Vision outlined in this chapter.

Map 4-6: Comprehensive Vision Plan

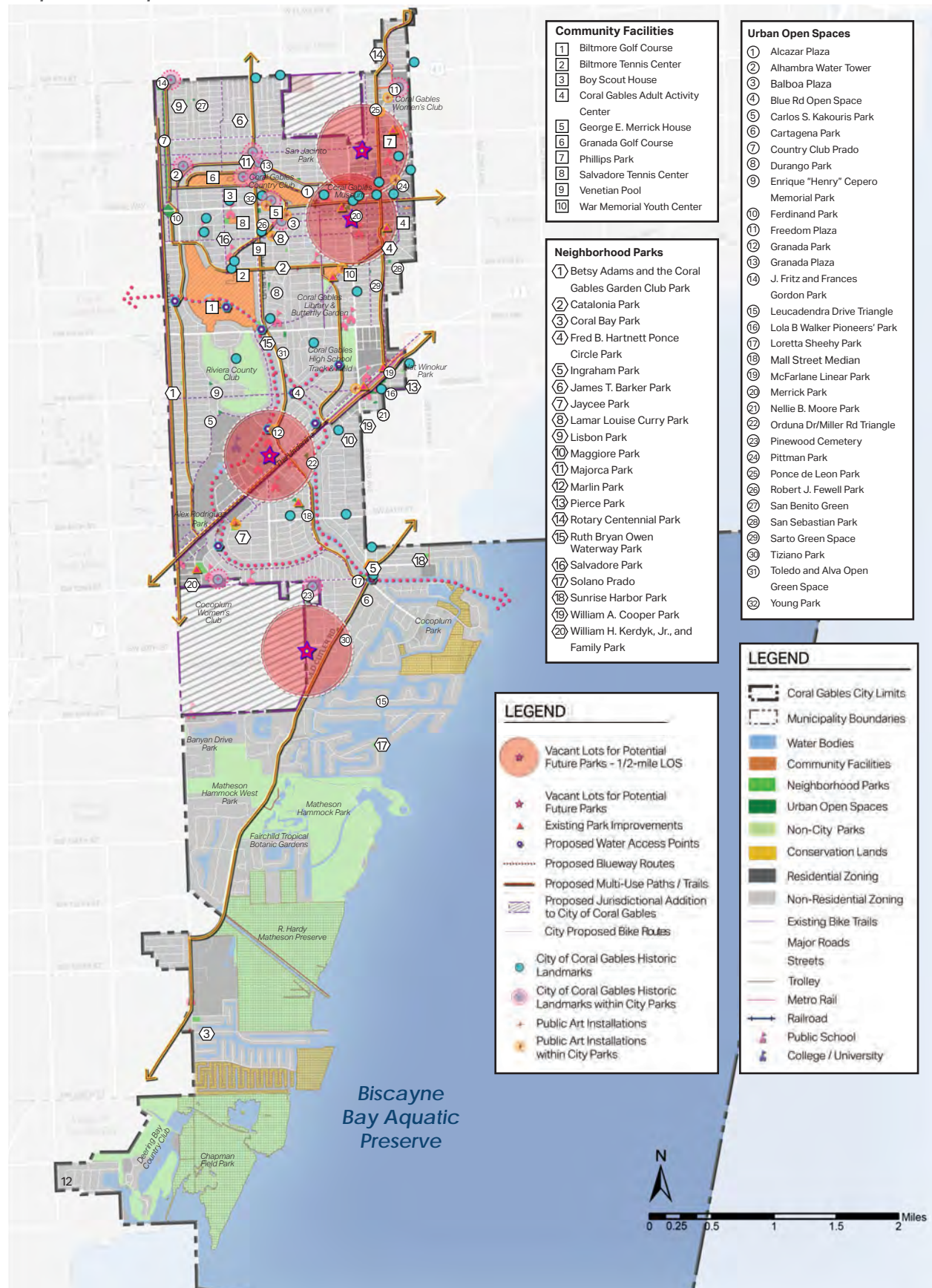


Figure 4-4: Key goals of the Vision Plan



Parks and Facilities

- Continued enhancement of existing parks and facilities by providing greater variety of activities and amenities
- Develop additional parks, facilities and open spaces with the addition of new park sites to address unmet community needs especially in areas of the City with gaps in level of service



Recreational Programming and Community Health

- Wider offering of health and recreational programming particularly senior health and fitness programs
- Explore the benefits of a healthy community, and the methods by which the parks system can help achieve health and wellness goals
- Develop new facilities such as a aquatic center, and walking/fitness trails to meet the health and wellness needs of the community



Access and Linkages

- Increase regional connectivity by developing multiple major north to south and east to west multi-use trails, complete sidewalks and widen existing sidewalks
- Incorporate blueways as a part of the park system and create points of public water access to waterways
- Increase access to parks through the development of linear parks, and complete/ green streets



Cultural and Historic Resources

- Enhance the cultural and historic character of the City by highlighting existing historic landmarks situated within City parks
- Create a cultural and historic trail connecting historic landmarks situated within the City's park system
- Integrate art into the community's open space fabric by creating a diversity of public art installations and develop opportunities to integrate art into signage and wayfinding



Sustainability and Resilience

- Promote system-wide sustainable efforts with small-scale interventions at each park
- Explore opportunities for the implementation of resilient environmental practices within the park system



Tiziano Park



5 IMPLEMENTATION



Ingraham Park

Chapter 5: Implementation Plan

In order to advance the parks and recreation vision established by the Coral Gables community, implementation strategies must be defined and priorities for the future of the parks and recreation system must be established. As the final chapter of this Master Plan, the Implementation Plan includes: estimation of probable cost of the vision established in Chapter 4; evaluation of funding sources; phasing recommendations; long-term planning strategies; and an action plan.

CHAPTER 5: Implementation Plan

5.1 Funding and Phasing Plan

- 5.1.1 Introduction
- 5.1.2 Cost Estimate
- 5.1.3 Funding Analysis
- 5.1.4 Phasing Recommendations
- 5.1.5 Operations and Maintenance Estimates

5.2 Action Items

- 5.2.1 Introduction
- 5.2.2 Action Items

5.1

FUNDING & PHASING PLAN

5.1.1 Introduction

The implementation plan for the Coral Gables Community Recreation Master Plan focuses on the implementation of the vision and guiding principles through three critical components: funding and phasing; planning strategies; and action items. Priority of individual action items are tied to public input gathered and documented throughout the needs and priorities assessment (Chapter 3). Together, these three components will allow the Community Recreation Department to review and as needed, efficiently revise the strategic plan in the future to reflect changing conditions, demographics or priorities. Figure 5-1 identifies how these components reflect the overall progress of the Master Plan.

The Vision (Chapter 4) of the Master Plan formed six subsystems each defined through a series of guiding principles. Defining these principles and their associated goals allowed the project team to better understand how to address the needs and priorities that were identified throughout the planning process, as well as the individual park needs that resulted from the Existing Conditions Analysis. Utilizing the park evaluations completed for each park and facility in the system, recommendations intended to satisfy system-wide vision objectives were developed at an individual park level. These recommendations formed a portion of the probable cost estimate that will be discussed in this section.

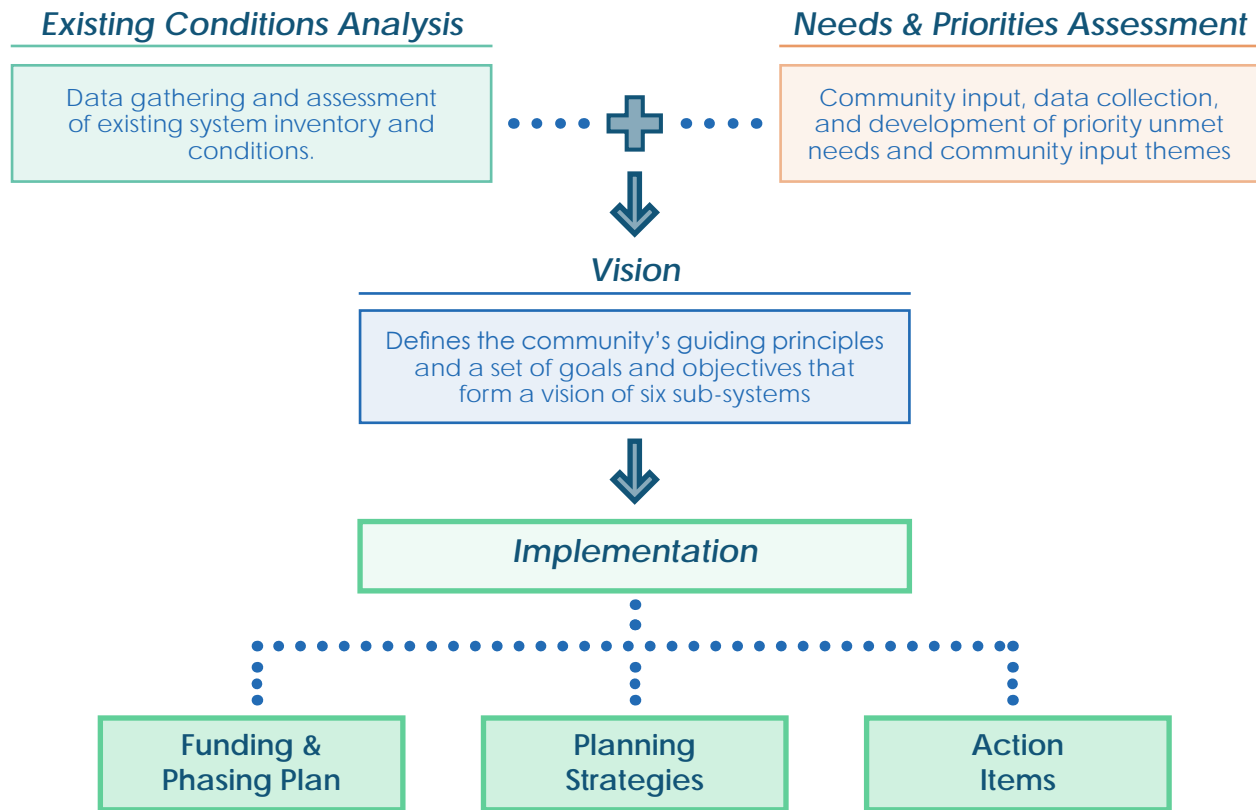
In addition to costs associated with the vision recommendations, the cost estimate also incorporates projects that have been previously identified by the City and the Department, projects identified in the Community Investment Plan (CIP), and projects identified during the facility evaluation process.

The Funding and Phasing Plan focuses on the implementation of the vision and objectives by identifying existing funding available for priority projects, as well as alternative funding the City may consider. These may include leveraging or 'stacking' potential grants, partnerships with public, private or non-profit agencies, and bond sales for parks and recreation improvements. Analyzing available existing and potential funding sources lays the foundation for the phasing recommendations for funding the probable cost estimates. For the phasing recommendations, two categories of time have been identified; short-term represents CIP recommendations to be completed in the next five years; and medium-term, which represents CIP recommendations to be completed in a six to ten year time-frame.

5.1.2 Cost Estimate

Based on cost estimates derived from Coral Gables parks and recreation facility assessments, projects identified in the CIP, and recommendations associated with the Master Plan Vision, the estimated probable cost is approximately **\$160,659,557 million** in 2021 dollars for complete implementation

Figure 5-1: System Master Plan Flow Chart



of all aspects of the Vision (Table 5-1). The Vision includes system improvements anticipated to occur to establish and maintain parks delivery within the next ten years consistent with the growth anticipated in the City. The following provides a more detailed description of the Vision probable cost estimate:

- **Parks and Facilities:** Projects include the addition of new facilities in existing parks, and development of new parks.
- **Recreation Programming and Community Health:** Changes or additions to program offerings, services and initiatives.
- **Access and Linkages:** Improvements and/or enhancements to pedestrian or bicycle facilities to provide better and safer connections in parks and on routes to and from park facilities.
- **Cultural and Historic Resources:** Enhancement of existing historic cultural resources and opportunities for new installations in public places.
- **Sustainability and Resilience:** Projects in existing and new facilities that contribute to system-wide sustainability and resilience.

Table 5-1: Cost Estimate by Vision Sub-system

Vision Elements	
Parks and Facilities	\$37,330,772
Recreation Programming and Community Health	\$43,810,862
Access and Linkages	\$3,303,000
Sustainability and Resilience	\$3,265,000
Cultural and Historic Resources	\$11,571,991
Greenway Projects**	\$39,668,840
Planning, Design & Permitting + Contingency for Existing Improvements	\$21,640,304
Total*	\$160,659,557

* 2020 Costs

** Greenway are separate from the Access and Linkages subsystem and are on-going projects

The figures provided in this chapter are order-of-magnitude costs that are intended for planning purposes only. Acquisition costs for new facilities on land that is not currently owned by the City shall be evaluated on a project-specific basis once individual parcels have been identified.

The proposed vision may be modified over time in response to actual population growth, future resident desires, and available funding sources. Additionally, it is recommended that each proposed project should undergo a detailed feasibility and cost analysis prior to physical implementation. Final actual costs could vary significantly depending on many factors including but not limited to:

- Time-frame of implementation
- Individual project scale
- Changing land acquisition costs
- Property market values rise/decline
- Raw products and materials costs

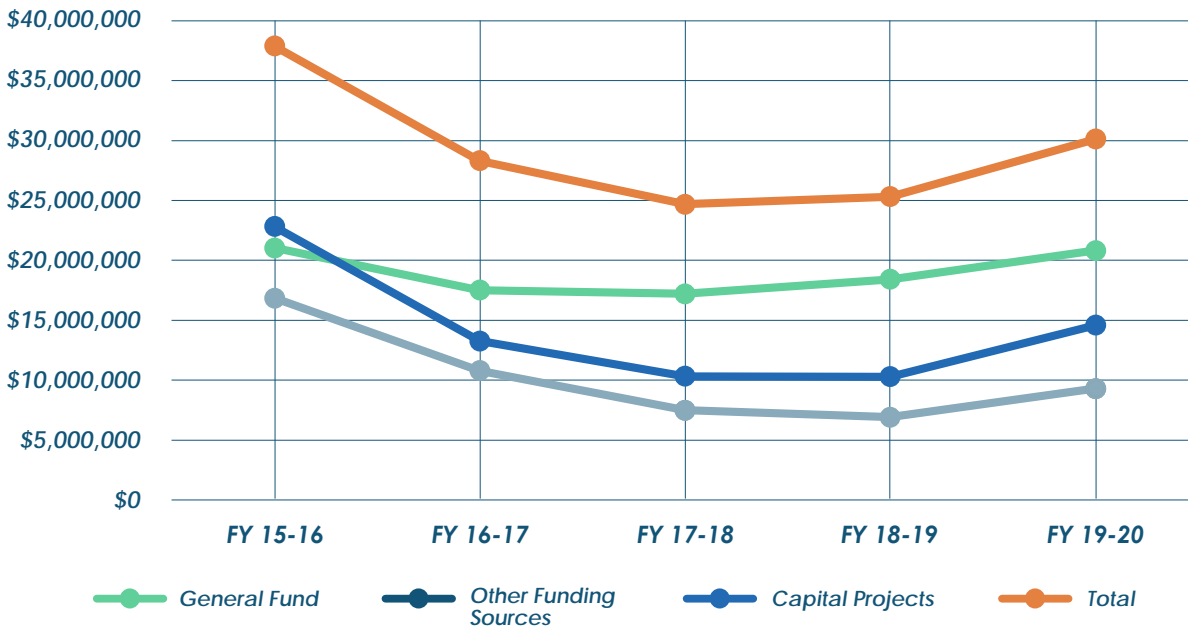
5.1.3 Funding Analysis

Historical and Projected Funding

Over the last five years, the Community Recreation Department budget has seen General Fund appropriations remain relatively consistent, with an average general fund appropriation of \$19 million. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts to recreation participation, the general fund appropriations for FY 2021 are slightly reduced to \$17,940,770. General Funding includes Historic Resources and Cultural Arts Preservation, Cultural Arts Facilities and Programs, Administration, Pool and Recreation Facility operation, Adult Services, Special Events, Maintenance and Capital Projects.

In addition to the General Funds, the department has historically received an average of \$10.3 million in additional funding. This includes grants, impact fees, rentals and fees, and other funding sources. Over the last five years, 95 percent of this additional funding has been utilized for capital projects. Figure 5-1 illustrates historical trends of increases and decreases in total department funding, general fund appropriations, additional funding, and capital projects.

Figure 5 1: Community Recreation Department Historic Funding - 2015-2020



Potential Grants

Over two dozen grants have been identified for projects proposed in the vision, with a potential total (not including any leveraging) of approximately \$21.7 million, with many providing options to apply annually.

Individual grants may apply to multiple projects, therefore, the projected funding totals for each project may include the use of overlapping grants for a different project. The following tables (Table 5-4) include summarized descriptions of project-based potential funding sources, organized into the Vision sub-section to which they may be applicable.

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

Community Parks

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	1,000,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	January
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
SFWMD Cooperative Water Program	\$100,000*	50%	Irrigation, Plumbing Fixtures	February
Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	\$50,000	0%	Irrigation, Plumbing Fixtures	March
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	\$400,000	20%	Construction of Trails and Support Facilities	March
AARP Community Challenge	\$50,000*	100%	Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health	April
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	500,000	200%	Educational, Amphitheater, Nature, Art Elements	June
Our Town Grant	\$150,000	100%	Innovative Public Art Projects	August
Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	October
Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF)	\$20,000	100%	Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting	November
MLB Tomorrow Fund	\$40,000*	100%	Renovation and Development of Ballfield Related Elements	Rolling
U.S. Soccer Foundation Grant	\$50,000*	100%	Field Turf, Lighting, Irrigation, Program Equipment	TBD

Small - Medium Parks

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	\$1,000,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	January
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
SFWMD Cooperative Water Program	\$100,000*	50%	Irrigation, Plumbing Fixtures	February
Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	\$50,000	0%	Landscaping, Stormwater, LID Elements	March
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	\$400,000	20%	Construction of Trails and Support Facilities	March
AARP Community Challenge	\$50,000*	100%	Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health	April
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Educational, Amphitheater, Nature, Art Elements	June
Our Town Grant	\$150,000	100%	Innovative Public Art Projects	August
Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	October
Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF)	\$20,000	100%	Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting	November
MLB Tomorrow Fund	\$40,000*	100%	Renovation and Development of Ballfield Related Elements	Rolling
U.S. Soccer Foundation Grant	\$50,000*	100%	Field Turf, Lighting, Irrigation, Program Equipment	TBD

Park Land Acquisition

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	\$1,000,000	100%	Land Acquisition of Passive and Active Recreational Facilities	January
Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program	\$750,000	100%	Land Acquisition for Outdoor Recreation Facilities	July
Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Land Acquisition of Passive and Active Recreational Facilities	October
OGT Land Acquisition Program	\$1,000,000*	0%	Acquisition of Trails/Greenways that Enhance the State System	October
Florida Communities Trust	\$5,000,000	25%	Land Acquisition of passive and active recreational facilities including those for unique and disabled persons	December

Trails/Linear Parks

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	\$1,000,000	100%	Trails, Parking, Landscaping and Other Support Facilities	January
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	\$1,000,000	0%	Pedestrian & Bicycle Trails and Greenways	February
Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	\$50,000	0%	Landscaping, Stormwater, LID Elements	March
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	\$400,000	20%	Construction of Trails and Support Facilities	March
AARP Community Challenge	\$50,000*	100%	Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health	April
Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant	\$400,000*	40%	Stormwater/Water Quality Projects	April/October
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$300,000*	100%	Kayak/Canoe Facilities Blueway Facilities	April
Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	October
OGT Land Acquisition Program	\$1,000,000*	0%	Acquisition of Trails/Greenways that Enhance the State System	October
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	\$1,000,000*	25%	Stormwater including integrations with open space and trails	November
Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF)	\$20,000	100%	Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting	November

Cultural Facilities/Community Centers/Education Facilities

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	\$1,000,000	100%	Outdoor Classroom, Amphitheater, Performance Areas, Restrooms, Trails, Support Facilities	January
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
SFWMD Cooperative Water Program	\$100,000*	50%	Irrigation, Plumbing Fixtures	February
Environmental Education Grants	\$91,000*	25%	Educational Elements, Signage, Nature Trails, Internet Applications	April
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$300,000*	100%	Waterfront Educational Facilities	April
Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant	\$400,000*	40%	Stormwater/Water Quality Projects	April/ October
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Educational, Amphitheater, Nature, Art Elements	June
Our Town Grant	\$150,000	100%	Innovative Public Art Projects	August
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	\$1,000,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	November
National Leadership Grants for Museums	\$500,000	100%	Nature Centers, Museums, Botanical Gardens, Children's Museums	December
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	\$1,500,000	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	TBD

Waterfront Facilities

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	\$1,000,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Courts, Fields, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, and Landscaping	January
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	\$400,000	20%	Waterway Trails, Kayak/Canoe, Trailhead Facilities	March
AARP Community Challenge	\$50,000*	100%	Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health	April
Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP)	\$200,000*	5%	Boating Ramps, Day Docks, Other Boat Facilities	April
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$300,000*	100%	Boating Facilities, Waterfront Recreation Elements, Navigation Facilities	April
Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program	\$5,000,000*	0%	Waterfront Infrastructure, Resiliency Improvements (Seawalls, LID, Flood Prevention)	July
Boating Infrastructure Program (BIGP)	\$1,500,000*	25%	Boat Facilities for Vessels Larger than 26'	August
Coastal Resiliency Implementation Grant	\$500,000	0%	Nature Based Stormwater Management, Elevation of Public Facilities	October
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	\$1,000,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	November
Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF)	\$20,000	100%	Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting	November

Stormwater/Emergency Management

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Urban Waters Restoration	\$35,000	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	January
Water Quality Restoration Grant (SWAG)	\$500,000*	50%	Stormwater, Water Quality Projects	April
Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant	\$400,000*	40%	Stormwater, Water Quality, LID Projects	April/October
Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program	\$5,000,000*	0%	Waterfront Infrastructure, Resiliency Improvements (Seawalls, LID, Flood Prevention)	July
Coastal Resiliency Implementation Grant	\$500,000	0%	Nature Based Stormwater Management, Elevation of Public Facilities	October
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	\$1,000,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	November
Water Project Funding	\$500,000*	100%	Stormwater, Water Quality, Alternative Water	November
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)	\$1,500,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	TBD

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



Ingraham Park

Funding Opportunities

Table 5-2: Funding opportunities by facility type

● = Indicates Funding Potential

		Funding Opportunities																
		Land and Water Conservation Fund Program	Urban Waters Restoration	Doppel Family Trail Grant	SFWMD Alternative Water Supply	Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	Recreational Trails Program	AARP Community Challenge	Environmental Education Grant	Florida Boating Improvement Program	Green Stormwater Infrastructure Case Study	NRPA/Disney Play Space Grant	Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant	Water Quality Restoration Grant (SWAG)	Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	Cultural Facilities Grant	Historic Preservation Small Matching Grant
Trails		●		●		●		●	●				●	●	●	●		
Land Acquisition		●															●	
Environmental Ed./ Interpretive Facilities			●						●	●		●		●	●	●	●	
Structure Hardening/Elevation		●							●				●					
Stormwater			●			●	●					●		●	●		●	
Picnic Facilities		●							●								●	
Cultural Facilities		●							●								●	
Support Facilities		●				●		●	●		●					●	●	
Landscaping		●	●		●		●	●	●			●		●	●	●	●	
Water Access (piers, observation decks)		●						●			●					●		
Streetscape/Sidewalks						●												
Historic/Heritage																	●	●
Structure Hardening/Elevation																		

Funding Opportunities

Table 5-2: Funding opportunities by facility type

● = Indicates Funding Potential

	Funding Opportunities															
	Special Category Grant	BUILD Transportation Grant	Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program	Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program	Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)	Our Town Grant	Coastal Resiliency Implementation Grant	Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program	Greenways and Trails Land Acquisition Program	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	Urban & Community Forestry Grants	Water Project Funding	Florida Communities Trust	National Leadership Grants for Museums	MLB Tomorrow Fund	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
Trails		●	●					●								
Land Acquisition			●					●	●				●			
Environmental Ed./ Interpretive Facilities						●	●	●			●			●		
Structure Hardening/Elevation			●					●							●	
Stormwater		●	●	●			●	●		●		●				●
Picnic Facilities			●					●								
Cultural Facilities			●			●		●						●		
Support Facilities			●		●			●								
Landscaping		●	●	●			●	●		●	●					●
Water Access (piers, observation decks)			●		●		●	●								
Streetscape/Sidewalks		●														
Historic/Heritage	●		●			●								●		
Structure Hardening/Elevation				●						●						●

Grant Stacking

Utilizing multiple funding sources has become the most effective way of maximizing the amount of funding a community can obtain. “Grant Stacking” allows a project to draw funding from several sources. The idea of “Grant Stacking” refers to grouping grants of varying levels (federal, state and local) to support one project. Careful selection of grants can result in one grant providing the matching funds requirement for another grant and the reciprocal as well. This process can address acquisition and development in phases to best meet a project’s intent and time schedule. The example on the following page demonstrates how this process can be successfully completed.

General Notes:

- Funding is based on City’s eligibility to apply for the listed grant opportunities. Prior awards or current projects may affect the ability of the City to obtain listed grants.
- Grant amounts are based on maximum award possible. The cost of elements will ultimately determine the maximum amount to be obtained.
- Other funding opportunities may be available; however, those listed are stable grant programs that normally occur every year. This list does not include line item appropriations from any local, state or federal government.

Figure 5-2: Grant Stacking Case Study

City of Clermont - Victory Point Park



Land Acquisition

- 2017 Florida Communities Trust - \$165,000

Development

- 2016 SJWMD Cooperative Funding - \$940,608
- 2016 Land and Water Conservation Fund - \$200,000
- 2016 Section 319 Non-Point Solution Grant - \$412,060
- 2017 Florida Cultural Facilities Grant - \$500,000
- 2017 Land and Water Conservation Fund - \$200,000
- 2017 Recreation Trails Program Grant - \$200,000
- 2017 Urban Community Forestry Grant - \$8,500

Summary

The Funding Analysis highlights historical and projected funding that may be utilized to advance capital projects. Though the overall shared-community Vision created during the master plan process is estimated at \$160 million in 20221 dollars, the City has several funding sources available that can be utilized for implementation, many of which can be phased or even enhanced for additional funding opportunities to help address economic fluctuations and changing City priorities over time. Through the analysis of existing sources, projections of future funding options and recommendations are as follows:

- Grants** – Through the identification of over \$40 million in grant opportunities annually, the department has the potential to increase capital improvement based grants to \$1.5 million annually, resulting in approximately \$15+ million over the next ten years.
- Park System Improvements with Impact Fees** – The City has averaged over \$380,000 per year over the last four years in park system improvements utilizing impact fees. However, the total has fluctuated significantly. Use of impact fees has increased since the Impact Fee Study Current in 2017. Growth trends are expected to continue for the next ten years, and impact fees should continued to be utilized for park system improvements. If current CIP utilization continues, along with projected population grown, the department could have approximately \$5 million available over the next ten years.

- General Obligation Bonds** – As a funding source, general obligation bonds have historically received support from many municipalities in the South Florida region. A potential option for consideration is to hold two bond referendums; one focused on park and facility reinvestment at \$47 million; and a second one focused on park land acquisition and development at \$30 million. These bonds would assist in the development of both existing and proposed facilities. This source has the potential to provide \$80+ million in funding over the next ten years.
- Though there are additional funding sources available to the City, the four listed are traditionally the most utilized and supported. As a result, the City has the potential to secure funding ample enough to implement a significant portion of the Vision. With further evaluation of park impact fees, a higher success rate of securing grants or an increase in bonding capacity, the City could realistically achieve \$137 million or more in funding over the next ten years.

Table 5-3: Potential Funding Over Next Ten Years

Funding Sources for 10-Year Improvements	
General Fund CIP	\$40MM
Grants (Capital)	\$15MM
Park Impact Fees	\$5MM
Park and Recreation Reinvestment	\$47MM
Parkland Acquisition and Development	\$30MM
Total	\$137MM

5.1.4 Phasing Plan

The Phasing Plan for Capital Improvement Projects is comprised of three different phases based on community needs and priorities. These phases, summarized to the right and in **Table 5-4** below, provide a framework for the implementation of \$139 million in capital improvement projects over the next 10 years.

Table 5-4: Phasing Plan Totals

Capital Improvement Projects: 1-3 Year Total	
Year 1	\$10,596,221
Year 2	\$13,870,037
Year 3	\$26,551,277
Total	\$51,017,535

Capital Improvement Projects: 4-6 Year Total	
Year 4	\$24,735,997
Year 5	\$19,908,577
Year 6	\$19,076,555
Total	\$63,721,129

Capital Improvement Projects: 7-10 Year Total	
Year 7	\$5,385,509
Year 8	\$4,772,429
Year 9	\$4,939,037
Year 10	\$6,637,097
Total	\$21,734,072
1-10 Year Total	\$136,472,736

Note: All yearly totals include estimates for design, planning, permitting and contingency.

Phase 1: Short-term Capital Projects (1-3 Years) - \$51,017,535

Phase 1 is focused on immediate needs and the highest priorities of the community; reinvestment in existing facilities and parks; additions/ improvements to neighborhood and community parks, and ongoing improvements. These immediate actions will help to reduce long-term operations and maintenance costs by expeditiously completing deferred maintenance. In addition, the immediate reinvestment into existing parks will provide residents in all areas of the City with refreshed amenities, landscape, new tree canopies, and attractive spaces.



Phase 2: Medium-term Capital Projects (4-6 Years) - \$63,721,129

Phase 2 is further advancement of reinvestment and enhancements. Recreation facility improvements, particularly to the War Memorial Youth Center, will provide additional needed capacity to programming opportunities throughout the City, while additional sustainable and resilient projects will help advance one of the City's core goals of being a more sustainable community.



Phase 3: Long-term Capital Projects (7-10 Years) - \$21,734,072

The last phase of recommended capital project is focused on projects that develop City owned park land into new, beautiful park spaces and facilities. With the expected growth of Coral Gables to generally continue as a trend over the next decade, newly acquired parkland will need to be developed to provide walkable and bikeable public spaces in areas of the City that are growing or currently lack access to parks.

Included in the three capital project phases are on-going efforts that should be conducted concurrently across the ten-year period. These projects, shown in **Table 5-5** help advance longer term projects including trails and greenway development, new park development, land acquisition, water access and public art installations.

Considering Phases 1-3 in the ten-year time-frame, including ongoing projects, the 11-year+ projects total approximately \$14.3 million (**Table 5-6**). This figure includes the remaining phases of ongoing projects.

In order to determine recommendations for phasing of projects. The projects team assigned a category to each project in the cost estimate. These categories are:

- Reinvestment and Deferred Maintenance for Small Parks
- Additions/Improvements to Small-Medium Size Parks
- Additions/Improvements to Neighborhood Parks and Community Facilities
- Proposed Parks and Open Spaces
- Ongoing Projects
 - Trails and Greenways
 - New Park Development
 - Land Acquisition
 - Water Access
 - Public Art

, These categories help provide a clear picture of where parks and recreation funding should be allocated over the next 10+ years.

Table 5-5: Ongoing Project Totals

Ongoing Projects	
Year 1	\$2,357,237
Year 2	\$2,591,237
Year 3	\$2,622,437
Year 4	\$2,981,237
Year 5	\$3,012,437
Year 6	\$2,747,237
Year 7	\$3,371,237
Year 8	\$3,402,437
Year 9	\$3,371,237
Year 10	\$3,402,437
Total	\$29,859,169

Note: All yearly totals include estimates for design, planning, permitting and contingency.

Table 5-6: 11-Year+ Projects

11-Year + Projects	
Total	\$24,186,821

Note: All yearly totals include estimates for design, planning, permitting and contingency.

In addition to these overall categorizes, the cost estimate is also broken up into improvement type, to provide a better understanding of the specific improvements as they relate to the Vision Cost Estimate. These improvement types are shown in shown in **Table 5-7**, along with the percentage of the total improvements each category represents.

Table 5-7: Cost Estimate by Improvement Type

Improvement or Development Type		
Department Identified Projects	\$14,990,000	11.2%
Sidewalks and Pathways	\$1,443,000	1.1%
Crosswalks & Park Access	\$780,000	0.6%
Park Amenities	\$3,372,400	2.5%
Landscape and Green Spaces	\$1,305,000	1.0%
Stormwater	\$1,190,000	0.9%
Signage	\$973,000	0.7%
Community Facilities	\$47,610,862	34.2%
Public Art (including 1.5% allowance)	\$2,880,491	2.1%
Play Equipment	\$3,900,000	2.9%
Fitness Equipment	\$1,200,000	0.9%
Lighting	\$1,400,000	1.0%
Water Access	\$680,000	0.5%
Shoreline Improvements	\$100,000	0.1%
Park Structures	\$490,000	0.4%
Athletic Facilities	\$2,000,000	1.5%
New Park Development	\$5,966,872	4.4%
Land Acquisition	\$9,000,000	6.7%
Trails and Greenways	\$39,668,840	29.5%
Planning, Design & Permitting + Contingency for Existing Improvements	\$21,640,304	-
Total	\$160,659,557	

Over the next ten years, over 80 percent of the Capital improvement Projects are targeted towards Reinvestment in existing community facilities, land acquisition, greenways and trails, and the development of new parks.

Each phase of the implementation is shown in detail on the following pages, with **Tables 5-8 through 5-10** providing categories and Capital Improvement Project figures for each year.

Table 5-8: Phase 1 - Short-Term Capital Improvement Projects (1-3 Year)

Capital Improvement Projects: 1-3 Year							
Improvement Category	Year 1	Parks Included	Year 2	Parks Included	Year 3	Parks Included	1-3 Year Total
Reinvestment and Deferred Maintenance for Small Parks	\$1,345,800	Maggorie, Salvador, Nellie B Moore	\$480,000	Jaycee	\$1,081,600	Rotary Centennial, William A Cooper	\$2,907,400
Additional/Improvements for Small/Medium Parks	-	-	\$1,075,000	Granada Golf Course Phase 1, Lamar Louise Curry, Merrick	\$770,000	Pierce	\$1,845,000
Additional/Improvements for Neighborhood Parks and Community Facilities	\$2,935,600	Fred B. Harnett/ Ponce Circle, Solano Prado, Toledo and Alva Open Green Space	\$5,175,000	Fred B. Harnett/ Ponce Circle, Blue Rd Open Space, Salvadore Tennis	\$12,987,400	Fred B. Harnett/ Ponce Circle, Carlos S. Kakouris, Phillips, Venetian Pool	\$21,098,000
Proposed Parks and Open Spaces	\$1,000,000	Downtown Civic Plaza	\$500,000	Downtown Civic Plaza	\$500,000	Downtown Civic Plaza	\$2,000,000
Sub Total	\$5,281,400	-	\$7,230,000	-	\$15,339,000	-	\$27,850,400
Design Planning and Contingency	\$2,957,584	-	\$4,048,800	-	\$8,589,840	-	\$15,596,224
Short-Term Total	\$8,238,984		\$11,278,800		\$23,928,840		\$43,446,624
Ongoing Projects							
Trails and Greenways	\$500,000	-	\$500,000	-	\$500,000	-	\$1,500,000
New Park Development	-	-	\$150,000	-	-	-	\$150,000
Land Acquisition	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-	\$2,400,000
Water Access	-	-	-	-	\$170,000	-	\$170,000
Public Art	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	\$633,148
Sub Total	\$1,511,049	-	\$1,661,049	-	\$1,681,049	-	\$4,853,148
Design Planning and Contingency	\$846,188	-	\$930,188	-	\$941,388	-	\$2,717,763
Total	\$10,596,221	-	\$13,870,037	-	\$26,551,277	-	\$51,017,535

Table 5-9: Phase 2 - Medium-Term Capital Improvement Projects (4-6 Year)

Capital Improvement Projects: 4-6 Year							
Improvement Category	Year 4	Parks Included	Year 5	Parks Included	Year 6	Parks Included	4-6 Year Total
Reinvestment and Deferred Maintenance for Small Parks	\$278,500	Boy Scout, Fewell House, Loretta Sheehy	\$185,000	Cartegena, Ingraham	\$211,000	Pittman, Ponce De Leon	\$674,500
Additional/Improvements for Small/Medium Parks	\$3,196,300	Country Club Prado, Lola B Walker, Sunrise Harbor	\$1,006,900	Coral Bay Park	\$906,600	McFarlane, Ruth Bryan Owen, Young	\$5,109,800
Additional/Improvements for Neighborhood Parks and Community Facilities	\$15,496,200	Enrique Cepero Memorial, Orduna Dr / Miller Rd Triangle, J. Fritz and Frances Gordon, War Memorial Youth Center	\$14,664,600	Ferdinand, War Memorial Youth Center	\$14,585,862	War Memorial Youth Center	\$44,746,662
Proposed Parks and Open Spaces	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$0
Sub Total	\$18,971,000	-	\$15,856,500	-	\$15,703,462	-	\$50,530,962
Design Planning and Contingency*	\$2,783,760	-	\$1,039,640	-	\$625,856	-	\$4,449,256
Medium-Term Total	\$21,754,760	-	\$16,896,140	-	\$16,329,318	-	\$54,980,218
Ongoing Projects							
Trails and Greenways	\$750,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$2,250,000
New Park Development	\$150,000	-	-	-	-	-	\$150,000
Land Acquisition	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-	\$2,400,000
Water Access	-	-	\$170,000	-	-	-	-
Public Art	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	\$633,148
Sub Total	\$1,911,049	-	\$1,931,049	-	\$1,761,049	-	\$5,603,148
Design Planning and Contingency	\$1,070,188	-	\$1,081,388	-	\$986,188	-	\$3,137,763
Total	\$24,735,997	-	\$19,908,577	-	\$19,076,555	-	\$63,721,129

* Design, Planning and Contingency for War Memorial Youth Center is excluded from these figures.

Table 5-10: Phase 3 - Short-Term Capital Improvement Projects (7-10 Year)

Capital Improvement Projects: 7-10 Year						
Improvement Category	Year 7	Parks Included	Year 8	Parks Included	Year 9	Parks Included
Reinvestment and Deferred Maintenance for Small Parks	\$300,000	Balboa Plaza, Coral Gables Adult Activity Center, George E Merrick House, Pinewood Cemetery	\$130,000	Alhambra Water Tower, Freedom Plaza	\$683,400	Granada Plaza, Lisbon Park, Majorca Park, Solano Prado
Additional/Improvements for Small/Medium Parks	\$610,400	Alcazar Plaza, Sarto Green Space, Tiziano	\$548,200	Catalonia Park, San Sebastian Park	\$321,600	Durango Park, Granada Blvd Triangle
Additional/Improvements for Neighborhood Parks and Community Facilities	\$180,800	Lucadendra Triangle	-	-	-	-
Proposed Parks and Open Spaces	\$200,000	Mar Street-Play Street	\$200,000	Manatee Overlook	-	-
Sub Total	\$1,291,200	-	\$878,200	-	\$1,005,000	-
Design Planning and Contingency	\$723,072	-	\$491,792	-	\$562,800	-
Long-Term Total	\$2,014,272	-	\$1,369,992	-	\$1,567,800	-
Ongoing Projects						
Trails and Greenways	\$1,000,000	-	\$1,000,000	-	\$1,000,000	-
New Park Development	\$150,000	-	-	-	\$150,000	-
Land Acquisition	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-	\$800,000	-
Water Access	-	-	\$170,000	-	-	-
Public Art	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-
Sub Total	\$2,161,049	-	\$2,181,049	-	\$2,161,049	-
Design Planning and Contingency	\$1,210,188	-	\$1,221,388	-	\$1,210,188	-
Total	\$5,385,509	-	\$4,772,429	-	\$4,939,037	-

Capital Improvement Projects: 7-10 Year		
Year 10	Parks Included	7-10 Year Total
\$370,300	James T Barker Park	\$1,483,700
\$1,703,200	Granada Golf Course Phase 2, Mall Street Median	\$3,183,400
-	-	\$180,800
-	-	\$400,000
\$2,073,500	-	\$5,247,900
\$1,161,160	-	\$2,938,824
\$3,234,660	-	\$8,186,724
Continuation of Ongoing Projects		
\$1,000,000	-	\$4,000,000
-	-	\$300,000
\$800,000	-	\$3,200,000
\$170,000	-	\$340,000
\$211,049	-	\$844,197
\$2,181,049	-	\$8,684,197
\$1,221,388	-	\$4,863,150
\$6,637,097	-	\$21,734,072

Capital Improvement Projects: 11+ Years
Continuation of Ongoing Projects
These project includes the continuation of trail and greenway development, new park development, land acquisition, water access and public art
\$24,186,821

Capital Improvement & Ongoing Projects: Totals	
1-3 Year	\$51,017,535
4-6 Year	\$63,721,129
7-10 Year	\$21,734,072
11+ Years	\$24,186,821
Total	\$160,659,557

5.1.5 Operations and Maintenance Estimates

With the addition of park acreage and new facilities, operation and maintenance (O&M) costs can be expected to increase. These increases, however, can be off-set by the fact that a significant portion of recommended capital improvements are for the replacement or enhancement of existing facilities or parks. In many cases, replacement of worn park amenities or facilities in poor conditions can result in cost savings due to lower needs in maintenance and staffing to repair, inspect facilities, or in equipment and material costs. This plan is conservative in the assumption that replacement of existing park amenities or facilities will result in a net zero cost adjustment for operations and maintenance.

Adding parkland or new facilities, however, will commonly result in additional O&M costs. With full implementation of the Vision, approximately 8-10 acres of new parkland will be added to the system, along with 20 miles of greenway trails. With this comes the need to secure sites, mow grass, pick up litter, and other basic needs. Upon development of each new park site, additional O&M costs are provided to staff new centers and programs and maintain new park amenities. Table and associated charts identify the estimated phased annual O&M costs for new or expanded facilities.

Table 5-11: O&M Estimates within 1-10 Year Timeframe

O&M Costs within 1-3 Year	
Proposed Park Facilities	\$66,667
Trails and Greenways	\$50,000.00
Land Acquisition + New Park Development	\$85,000.00
Water Access	\$5,666.67
Public Art	\$21,104.93
Total	\$228,438 annually
O&M Costs within 4-6 Year	
Proposed Park Facilities	\$0
Trails and Greenways	\$75,000.00
Land Acquisition + New Park Development	\$85,000.00
Water Access	\$5,666.67
Public Art	\$21,104.93
Total	\$186,772 annually
O&M Costs within 7-10 Year	
Proposed Park Facilities	\$10,000
Trails and Greenways	\$100,000.00
Land Acquisition + New Park Development	\$87,500.00
Water Access	\$8,500.00
Public Art	\$21,104.93
Total	\$227,105 annually

In addition to identifying increased operations and maintenance costs, maintenance planning is a key component of a successful implementation plan. This includes the development of an amenity replacement matrix to help track existing park inventory. This can ensure that the life-cycle of park facilities, equipment, and amenities is tracked by the department, and a forecast cost and time of replacement made available.

This matrix can be developed using the park evaluations conducted as part of this Master Plan, and continuously updated to ensure accuracy and to reflect community priorities

Table 5-12: Example of Park Improvement Matrix

Park Amenity Replacement Matrix - Jaycee Park					
Amenity/ Equipment	Condition	Estimated Improvement Cost	Timeframe for Replacement	Replacement Priority	Notes
Basketball Court	Good	\$25,000	10 years	low	resurfacing, goal repair/ replacement
Tennis Court	Good	\$30,000	5- years	low	resurfacing, net replacement
Playground	Average	\$350,000	2-3 years	high	new equipment, shade, surfacing
Parking lot	Good	\$75,000	15-years	low	resurfacing, striping
Picnic Pavilion	Average	\$50,000	5-years	medium	prefabricated structure
Bike Racks	Good	\$5,000	10-years	low	multi-bike

Park Additions	Estimated Improvement Cost	Timeframe for Replacement	Replacement Priority	Potential lifespan	Notes
Sidewalks	\$10,000	2 years	high	20 years +	8'-wide min., concrete
Internal Pathways	\$30,000	2 years	high	20 years +	8'-wide min., concrete
Crosswalks	\$15,000	2 years	high	20 years +	ADA accessible, high-visibility markings
Water Access	-	-	\$170,000	-	
Public Art	\$211,049	-	\$211,049	-	

5.2

ACTION ITEMS

5.2.1 Introduction

The funding analysis, phasing plan, and operations and maintenance sections outline an approach to implementing various park facility improvements needed to address the shared-community Vision for the City of Coral Gables Parks and Community Recreation services. In addition to the components found in the Long-range Vision, the strategic plan incorporates elements from the Existing Conditions Analysis and the findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment.

The following pages and tables (**Table 5-13**) identify action items for the Vision that can help implement priority projects identified in the previous section. Each action item advances the objectives of the vision, as well as the priorities identified by parks and recreation staff. Three categories of time have been identified: “priority” represents priority action items to be completed in the next five years; “continued emphasis” represents action items that may take up to 10 years to complete; and “aspirational,” represents action items that may take more than 10 years to fully complete.



Jaycee Park

5.2.2 Action Items

Table 5-13: Action Items

Priority Action Items (Completion in 3 years)	
Item	Capital
A	Implement a focused approach for capital improvements and reinvestments in existing parks to promote safety, user experience, and community aesthetics.
B	Secure additional grants by leveraging dedicated funding sources for targeted capital improvements or need-based grants from State, Federal, or non-profit sources.
C	Expand on dedicated, capital funding sources to address deferred maintenance in existing small parks, and the addition of new facilities in neighborhood parks and community parks.
D	Evaluate the current use of impact fees, and explore the opportunity to utilize additional fees for parks and recreation improvements.
E	Work with strategic partners to expand access and linkages to parks through the development of sidewalks and crosswalks to parks - prioritizing safety and accessible routes to primary amenities.
F	Conduct a feasibility study for the development of the WMYC, including the potential for aquatics.
Item	Acquisitions
F	Develop a strategic land acquisition program to target and secure land acquisition opportunities - particularly vacant lots, opportunities for water access, and locations that enhance access level of service.
Item	Policy
G	Integrate Park System Master Plan recommendations into the City Comprehensive Plan.
H	Implement recommendations for the Way Memorial Youth Center Master Plan for improved programming and recreation services.
I	Update Level-of-Service (LOS) standards to reflect findings from the LOS assessment to inform strategic land acquisition.
J	Work in conjunction with other City departments to develop a parks-oriented approach to access and linkages, sustainability, and resilience.
Item	Initiatives
K	Increase marketing and communication efforts through a variety of outlets to enhance community-wide knowledge of parks, facilities, programs, natural areas and special events.
L	Develop a system-wide branding and wayfinding strategy that is cohesive throughout the City, yet unique to individual neighborhoods and communities, integrating historic landmarks and public art.
M	Develop park and facility design guidelines and standards for use internally and by consultants to maintain a consistent design pattern and language that visually brands the City's parks, and also enhances individual neighborhoods.
N	Update the department's policies and procedures to emphasize safety in design practices such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), as well as procedures to respond to public health issues.
O	Continue to engage the community through focus groups and community outreach to address safety and public health concerns.
P	Develop the park amenity replacement matrix based on park evaluations and associated cost estimates.
Q	Expand program and recreation services offerings for users of all ages and abilities.

Table 5-13: Action Items

Continued Emphasis Action Items (Completion in 6 years)	
Item	Capital
A	Evaluate recommended plant species, design and material standards, and educational signage when implementing landscaping and planting improvements throughout parks.
B	Continue to coordinate with other departments to improve access and linkages, and safe routes to parks and recreation facilities.
C	Develop and update a department-wide resilience plan to county the impacts of climate change and sea level rise to park and recreation facilities.
D	Work in collaboration with Miami-Dade County Department of Health to create a system for conducting community safety and public health audits in parks to document changes or trends, and plan for integrating parks into emergency management.
E	Continue to implement and expand on the dedicated funding sources for public art and cultural/historic resources in parks.
H	Explore opportunities for greenway development, focusing on primary north-south and east-west connections for multi-use trails.
I	Continue to develop a blueway system through water access development and blueway trail planning.
J	Promote the maintenance and improvement of the urban tree canopy through a complete streets / green streets program.
K	Continue to promote system-wide sustainable efforts with small-scale interventions at each park.
L	Continue to partner with local magazines, blogs and other media outlets to promote parks, recreation program opportunities, special events, and cultural resources.
M	Develop education programs in coordination with local school and other partners to promote nature-based activities, health and wellness, sustainability, and resilience.

Table 5-13: Action Items

Aspirational Action Items (Completion in 10+ years)	
Item	Capital
A	Work in collaboration with Public Works to establish educational materials and programs for residents and visitors on the impacts of climate change, and the City's techniques to address these through resilient practices.
B	Continue to develop additional parks and urban green spaces to address growth and increased density.
C	Enhance all urban parks, green spaces and streetscapes with native, drought tolerant plants and sustainable materials.
D	Complete the blueway trail route, with access points in key areas.
E	Develop a linear park system to complement complete streets and multi-use trail development, providing a seamless green connection on central north-south and east-west axes.
H	Develop cohesive standards of maintenance for public facilities such as cemeteries, golf courses, and historic sites in order to enhance access and neighborhood aesthetics through green spaces.
I	Enhance staff and volunteer training to include safety, community health, and emergency management courses and perceived safety assessment techniques.
J	Continue to promote the economic value of parks, programs and events throughout the City.
K	Develop a multi-use aquatic center to provide water-based programming opportunities to residents of Coral Gables.

