

# Port St. Lucie
# **Parks & Recreation Master Plan 5-year Update**

2025 | Final Report

PORT ST. LUCIE
PARKS & RECREATION

PEREZ PLANNING + DESIGN, LLC

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# 0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# 0.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Port St. Lucie's recent 10-Year Parks and Recreation System Master Plan (Barth, 2019) established a comprehensive, long-range vision for the City's recreational facilities and programming. This 5-year Update is intended both as a progress report on the 2019 plan, and to re-establish a vision of priorities and recommendations, given the city's continued growth and transformation. This plan reflects the City leadership's ongoing efforts to make Port St. Lucie (PSL) more livable and sustainable, and in the words of the City's Comprehensive Plan:

> *"to strive to go beyond meeting the basic needs for St. Lucie residents to meeting their needs for cultural enrichment and community identity."*

## PURPOSE

The City's purpose for a Master Plan for Parks & Recreation Update is to:

- Ensure that the parks and recreation system is addressing community needs, considering a rapidly changing community and focused resources.
- Identify what is still relevant and what should change from 2019 PRMP.
- Develop phase 2 recommendations for the parks and recreation system strategically considering that staff has implemented phase 1 recommendations from 2019 PRMP.
- Identify funding sources, including exploring Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and other resources – ex. repurposing or re-activating existing City assets and properties.
- Complete a Program Assessment.
- Continue implementation of High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS)
- Prepare the City for the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Re-Accreditation.

## SCOPE OF WORK

Initiated in July 2024, the year-long parks and recreation planning process includes five phases:

1. Context Analysis
2. Needs and Priorities Assessment
3. Vision
4. Implementation
5. Final Plan Adoption
6. Phase 1 Implementation (By City)




The following pages summarize the key findings from five of these phases.

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## 0.2 CONTEXT ANALYSIS SUMMARY FINDINGS

The Context Analysis is comprised of three elements. Following are the summary findings of each of these context elements.

**Planned Context** reviews existing plans, initiatives, and projects in place and in progress in the City.

**Demographic Context** reviews characteristics of the existing and projected population of the City.

**Park System Context** reviews the conditions of the City's existing parks and recreation system.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan can help address resident priorities and assist in the implementation of the Mission, Vision, and Goals from the City's Strategic Plan.

**Mission:** Provide exceptional services that enhance our community's safety, beauty, and quality of life through innovation, engagement, and fiscal responsibility.

**Vision:** To be a leader in finding innovative solutions that put residents first and support opportunities for all people to thrive.

**Resident Priorities:**

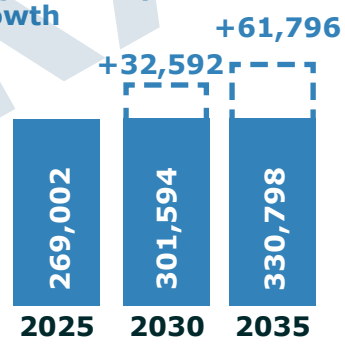
1. Traffic
2. Control Growth
3. Economic Development/ Business Support/ Development

**Strategic Goals:**

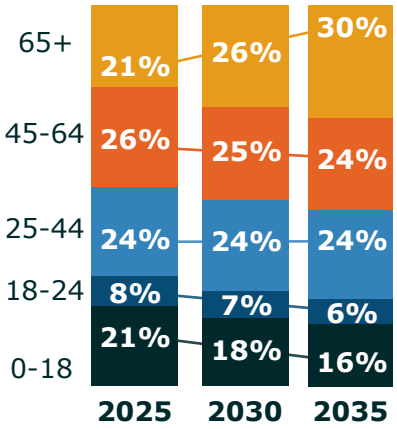
1. Safe, Clean, and Beautiful
2. Vibrant Neighborhoods
3. Smart & Connected City
4. Diverse Economy & Employment Opportunities
5. High-Quality Infrastructure & Facilities
6. Culture, Nature & Fun Activities
7. High Performing Government Organization

The City is projected to add over 32,000 residents by the year 2030 and over 61,000 residents by 2035 when 1 in every 3 city residents may be over the age of 65, 1 in every 2 between the adult ages of 25-64, and 1 in almost every 5 under 18. This suggest the importance of multi-purpose and multi-generational park investments.

**Projected Population Growth**

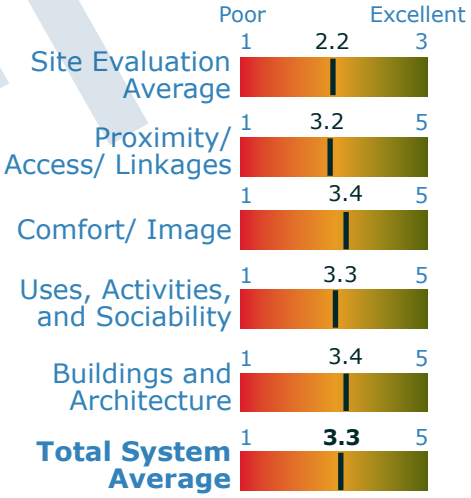



**Projected Age Distribution**




The City's parks and recreation facilities were evaluated based on 5 categories and 32 sub-categories.

**Park Evaluation Findings**




The evaluations suggest that the system is in Fair condition, with a Total System Average score of 3.3 with the following strengths and opportunities:

**Strengths**

- Cleanliness/ overall quality of maintenance
- Evidence of management and stewardship
- Sense of place and ownership

**Opportunities**

- Lighting
- Protection from bad weather
- Mix of uses/ things to do

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## 0.3 NEEDS AND PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

A mixed-methods, "triangulated" approach including primary quantitative, primary qualitative, and secondary data analyses techniques were used to determine top priority needs from different perspectives. These different techniques led to residents providing over 30,000 question responses. Following are key summary findings.

### Top Priority Facilities/ Amenities

#### High Priority

1. Walking & hiking trails
2. Natural areas/nature parks
3. Paved bike/multi-purpose trails

#### Medium Priority

1. Fitness center/spa
2. Outdoor stage/ amphitheater
3. Community garden(s)
4. Outdoor pool/aquatics
5. Splash pad/spray ground
6. Picnic shelters/picnic areas
7. Indoor pool
8. Dog parks
9. Senior center
10. Children's indoor play area
11. Community recreation center

### Top Priority Programs/ Activities

#### High Priority

1. Adult fitness/wellness
2. Nature programs
3. Senior programs

#### Medium Priority

1. Adult sports programs
2. Youth sports programs
3. Circuit exercise programs
4. Teens programs
5. Youth art/dance/ performing arts classes
6. Youth fitness & wellness programs
7. Youth summer camps

### Benefits of Parks and Recreation System

PSL Parks enhance the quality of life for residents in the community — **95%** Strongly Agree/ Agree

It is important to connect parks & public green spaces through a system of trails & pathways — **94%** Strongly Agree/ Agree

PSL Parks increase property values in the community — **92%** Strongly Agree/ Agree

### Funding Allocation for $100 for Capital Improvements

- $20.70 - Development of new walking & biking facilities
- $16.78 - Improvements/maintenance of existing parks & recreation
- $13.40 - Development of new/additional parks facilities in existing parks
- $13.07 - Acquiring new park land
- $11.22 - Improvements/maintenance of existing walking & biking facilities
- $10.50 - Development of new indoor recreation centers recreation centers
- $7.42 - Improvements/maintenance of existing indoor recreation centers

### Funding Allocation for $100 for Programs/ Operations

- $19.62 - Increase staff to improve maintenance of parks & facilities
- $15.81 - Additional adult recreation programs and/or classes
- $14.69 - Additional senior recreation programs and/or classes
- $14.69 - Additional youth recreation programs and/or classes
- $12.27 - Additional youth recreation programs and/or classes
- $10.62 - Additional youth athletic program/leagues
- $6.98- Additional adult athletic program/leagues

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## Park Visitation Level of Service

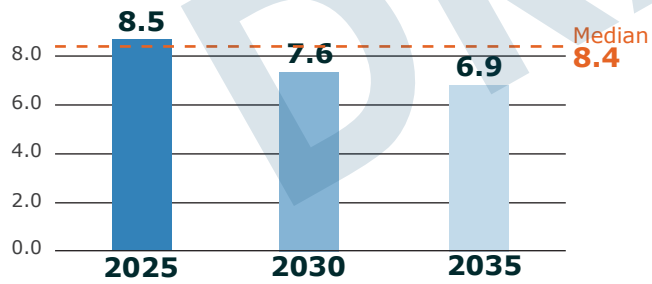
Cell phone data provided by Placer Labs was used to identify park visitation trends. In 2024, the parks and recreation system received 5,161,803 million visits. Parks with the highest visitation were parks associated with athletic facilities:

1. Whispering Pines Park - 684,317
2. William Mcchesney Park - 601,992
3. Sportsman's Park - 379,046
4. Jessica Clinton Park - 323,500
5. Pioneer Park - 244,202

## Acreage Level of Service

Acreage LOS Analysis measures the number of City park acreage divided by 1,000 population. The City's 2025 Acreage LOS is 8.5 acres per 1,000 residents and the 2035 Acreage LOS is 6.9 acres per 1,000 residents. While this is above the City's Comprehensive Plan Acreage LOS target of 5.0 acres per 1,000 population, it is below the National Median of 8.4 acres per 1,000 population.

### Acreage LOS Analysis



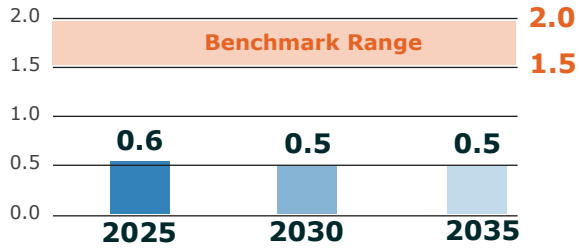

## Indoor Square Footage Level of Service

Indoor Square Footage (SF) LOS measures the amount of square feet of indoor recreation/ community center per capita. The City's 2025 Indoor SF LOS is 0.6 acres per capita and the 2035 Indoor SF LOS is 0.5 acres per capita. This is well below the industry benchmark of 1.5 to 2.0 SF per capita.

## Access Level of Service

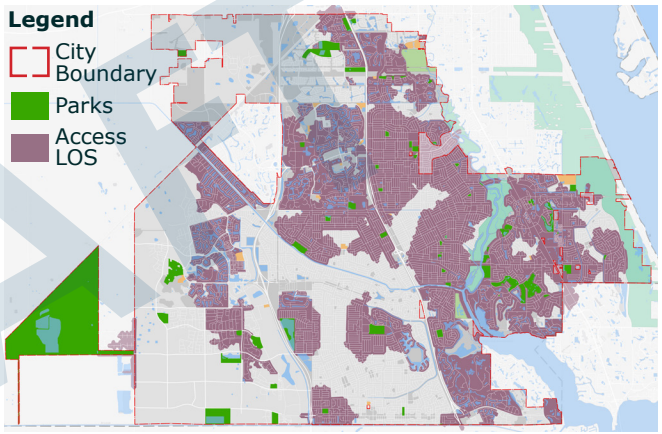
Access LOS Analyses identifies areas in the City that have access to parks and recreation facilities.

### Indoor SF LOS Analysis

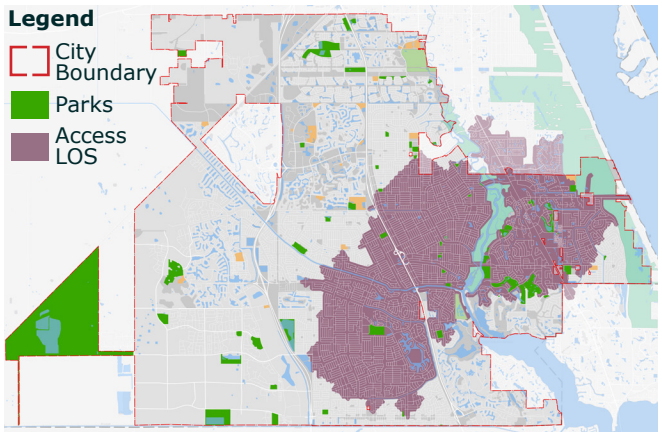



The images below identify areas in the City that have access to parks within 1 mile and indoor centers within 3 miles.

### Neighborhood Park Access LOS | 1 Miles




### Community Center Access LOS | 3 Miles




These and other LOS analyses techniques completed suggest a need for additional parks, indoor centers, and recreation facilities such as playgrounds, community gardens, dog parks, splash pads, pickleball courts, and athletic fields.

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## 0.4 VISION UPDATE

Based on the findings from Context Analysis, Needs and Priorities Assessment, Staff Visioning Workshop, and industry best practices, the Vision for the City of Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is organized around four goals identified below. The Vision Goals provide focused, overarching targets for implementing the Department's Vision Update over the next 5 to 10-years while also describing the aspirations the Department will seek to achieve.

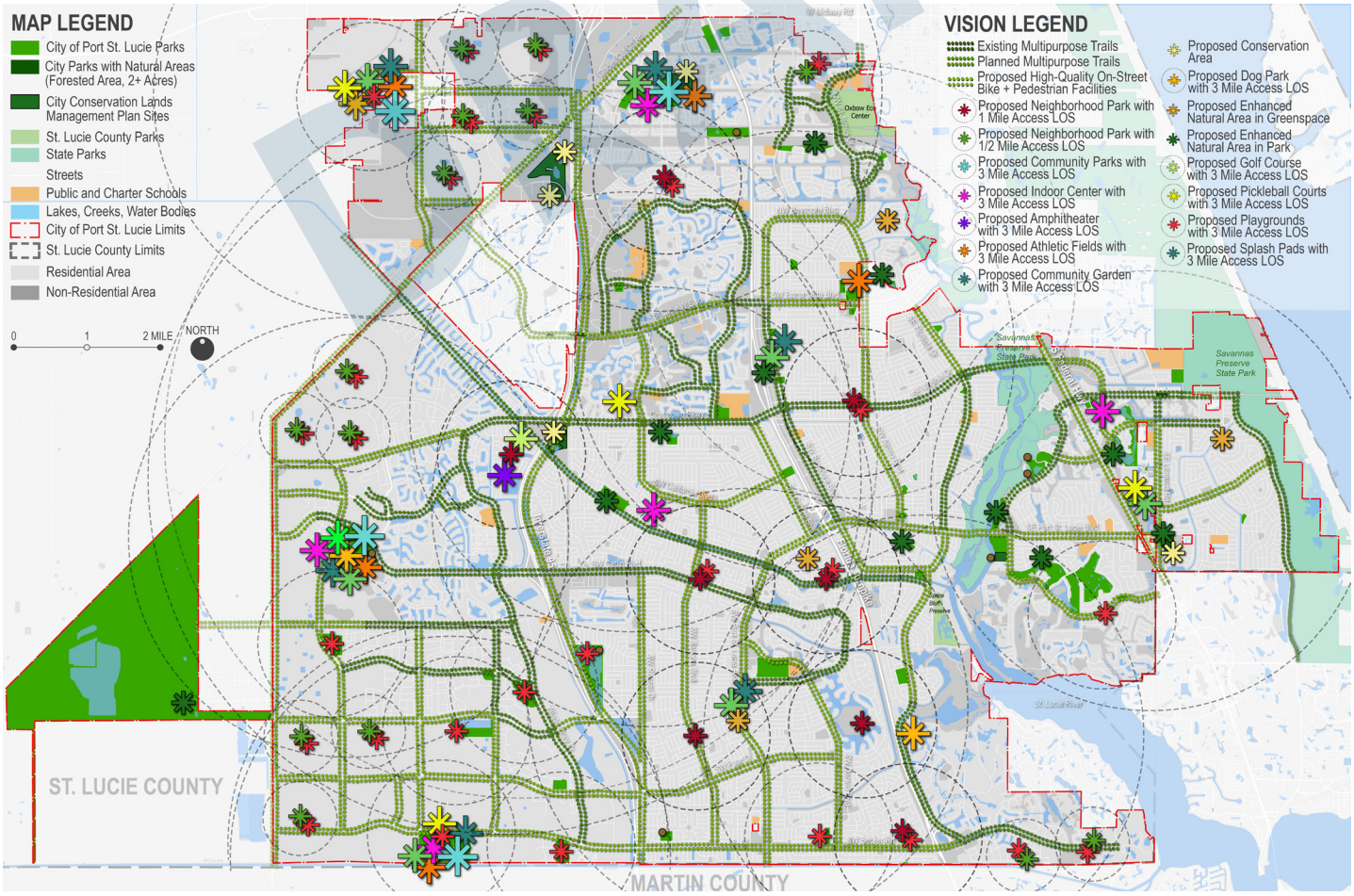
**1** **REALIZE previously identified high priority parks and recreation projects.**

**2** **REINVIGORATE aging parks, recreation facilities, and programs.**

**3** **CONNECT the community to parks, recreation facilities, and programs.**

**4** **GROW the parks and recreation system.**

### City of Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation Physical System Vision

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## 0.5 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation strategy for the Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update is comprised of two interrelated parts:

- Funding to pay for capital projects and staffing needs
- Capital Improvement Projects

### Funding Strategy

Conversations with the City's Finance Department suggested that the City may have $63,500,000 in funding for parks and recreation capital projects over the next 10-years from the following sources:

| Capital Funding Sources | 10 Year Projection |
|---|---|
| General Fund CIP | $30,000,000 |
| Impact Fees | $32,500,000 |
| Parks and Recreation Grants | $1,000,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **$63,500,000** |

Other sources such as a Sales Tax, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Hotel Motel Tax, Sponsorships, Partnerships, General Obligation (GO) Bonds, and Revenue Bonds may provide more funding to implement projects. Additionally, the parks & Recreation Master Plan Update identifies over $50 million in grant opportunities that the City may pursue to increase funding for parks.

Given the focused amount of funding that will be available to implement projects, prioritization criteria based on the Vision Goals and Objectives, along with industry best practices were used to score projects and identify the projects that rise to the top, for Mayor and Council's consideration. These projects are identified in the chart to the right. It is important to note that this list should not be considered as final and should be reviewed and revised annually based on new City priorities, developments, and new projects.

### Capital Projects Prioritization Criteria

| Goal | Criteria |
|---|---|
| **REALIZE** | Project History |
| | Priority Facility Need |
| **REINVIGORATE** | Park Condition |
| | Availability of Space/ Land |
| | Park Program Delivery |
| | Access to Athletic Facilities |
| **CONNECT** | Park Visits |
| | Universal Accessibility |
| | Multi-generational/ Multi-purpose Gathering |
| **GROW** | Level of Service Gap |
| | Partnership |
| | Staffing and Financial Resources |

### Prioritized Project List

| Project | Planning Level Capital Costs | Planning Level O&M Costs |
|---|---|---|
| 1. FY 26 Project + FY 27-35 Repair, Replacement Improvement Project | $22.7 Million | - |
| 2. Activation and Improvements to Public Access for 198 Acres of Natural Areas | $10 Million | $675,000 |
| 3. Park land acquisition | $11.5 Million | - |
| 4. Light 14 School Athletic Fields | $7 Million | $210,000 |
| 5. Sportsman's Park - Phase 1 | $30 Million | $300,000 |
| 6. Community Center Hub - Torino Regional Park | $30 Million | $1.225 Million |
| 7. Community Center Hub - Tradition Regional Park | $30 Million | $1.225 Million |

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PLANNING FOR THE PORT ST. LUCIE PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM

The City of Port St. Lucie's recent 10-Year Parks and Recreation System Master Plan (Barth, 2019) established a comprehensive, long-range vision for the city's recreational facilities and programming.

This 5-year Update is intended both as a progress report on the 2019 plan, and to re-establish a vision of priorities and recommendations, given the city's continued growth and transformation. This plan reflects the City leadership's ongoing efforts to make Port St. Lucie more livable and sustainable, and in the words of the City's Comprehensive Plan:

> *"to strive to go beyond meeting the basic needs for St. Lucie residents to meeting their needs for cultural enrichment and community identity."*



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## BACKGROUND

Port St. Lucie is often referred to as a "platted community" because at its founding in 1961, the City's original 66 square miles were all subdivided by one developer into tracts, primarily single family lots. The original developer had little concern for the future needs of the community related to public amenities and water and sewer infrastructure, and environmental regulations at the time were minimal[1].

> *As time passed GDC [the developer] succeeded in selling most of the 80,000 residential lots they had platted. Low cost of living, sub-tropical climate and a centralized location influenced population growth. The population grew rapidly during the late 1970's and 1980's to more than 55,000 people in 1990 and exceeded 76,000 at the beginning of 1997. However, the percentage of persons in the available labor force grew at a disproportionately higher rate than the number of available local jobs. This trend continues today and has created two situations; a higher than average unemployment rate and a higher than average rate of people working outside the community.*



From an initial population of less than 300 to a 2023 Census estimage of 245,021, over the past 60 years Port St. Lucie has seen significant population growth, and expansion of the city through annexations. However, this rapid growth has not come without challenges.

> *The lack of planned areas for economic development was not a major problem in the early days of the City's growth as there were adequate areas appointed for commercial, office, and industrial use to support the early population. As time progressed and the City population grew at a rapid pace the lack of areas for economic development became apparent. The City created land use conversion zones that allow conversion from residential land use to commercial, office, institutional, and multi-family uses along designated major corridors. This has helped relieve some of the shortage of land available for economic development.*

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## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The City's purpose for a 5-year Master Plan for Parks & Recreation Update is to:

- Ensure that the parks and recreation system is addressing community needs, considering a rapidly changing community and focused resources.
- Identify what is still relevant and what should change from 2019 PRMP.
- Develop phase 2 recommendations for the parks and recreation system strategically considering that staff has implemented phase 1 recommendations from 2019 PRMP.
- Identify funding sources, including exploring Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and other resources – ex. repurposing or re-activating existing City assets and properties.
- Complete a Program Assessment.
- Prepare the City for the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Re-Accreditation.

A broader purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to help implement the goals of the City's Strategic Plan. Communities are increasingly aware of the potential for parks and the public realm (streets, trails, stormwater facilities, civic spaces, natural areas, and other publicly-owned lands) to generate multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits.  The City's parks and recreation system can help meet all of the City's strategic goals listed in the chart below.

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## 1.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As explained in the 2019 Master Plan, there are no state or national standards that define the "most appropriate" vision for the public realm or response to residents' needs and priorities; each community must decide what facilities and programs to provide based on community values, ideology, preferences, and finances. In the absence of standards, best practices and guiding principles can form the foundation for the City's parks and recreation system.

One model that has guided the City's public realm planning work over the last five years is Dr. Barth's concept of High Performance Public Spaces.

Re-assessing the role of this model and considering new guidelines to inform this plan was an early focus of stakeholder and community engagement.

The 25 criteria for a High Performing Public Space (Barth, 2015) include:

**ECONOMIC CRITERIA**

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA**

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

**SOCIAL CRITERIA**

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

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## 1.4 SCOPE OF WORK

Initiated in July 2024, the year-long parks and recreation planning process includes six phases:

1. Context Analysis
2. Needs and Priorities Assessment
3. Vision
4. Implementation
5. Final Plan Adoption
6. Phase 1 Implementation




### Phase 1 - Context Analysis

The purpose of the first phase of the project, the Context Analysis, is to review previously-prepared documents with implications for the Master Plan; analysis of existing and projected demographics and trends; park site evaluations; an assessment of current parks and recreation levels-of-service including the amount of park acreage, and equitable access to parks and recreation facilities; and "benchmarking" the City's parks and recreation system against other communities.

### Phase 2 - Needs + Priorities Assessment

The purpose of the Needs and Priorities Assessment, the second phase of the planning process, is to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions. Also initiated in November 2024, the needs assessment used a "triangulated" approach to identify needs from different perspectives. Qualitative and quantitative needs assessment techniques included a steering committee kick-off meeting; two public workshops; interviews and focus group meetings; a statistically-representative mail survey; and an on-line survey. Findings from the various techniques were compiled and compared to determine residents' top priorities for parks and recreation improvements.

### Phase 3 - Vision

The purpose of the Vision phase of the project is to update the long-range for the City's parks and recreation system. This 5-year Vision update will be based on available resources, existing conditions, residents' priorities, and current "best practices" in parks and recreation planning. The Vision includes general recommendations for improvements to the existing parks system, as well as recommendations for additional parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

### Phase 4 - Implementation

The purpose of the Implementation phase is to develop a realistic implementation strategy for the plan. The planning team will estimate the costs to build and maintain the proposed improvements identified in the Vision, and – based on the available and projected resources identified in the first phase of the project – developed a recommended phasing, funding, and implementation strategy.

### Phase 5 - Final Plan Adoption

The purpose of the last phase is to organize all the information in a summary document to present to City staff and City Council for final approval.

### Phase 6 - Phase 1 Implementation

The purpose of the last phase is initiate the Phase 1 recommendations identified in the Master Plan Update.

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# 2 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## 2.1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Recreation and park systems occupy a unique space at the intersection between the physical environment of a place, its people, and their culture. For many people, parks are the public spaces they interact with most directly and are a government institution with the rare power to provide environmental, social, and cultural benefits, both on an individual level, and for the community as a whole.



Parks provide a critical opportunity to strengthen the fabric of a community by weaving social and cultural experiences into the landscape. And because every community is different, understanding the nuances of Port St. Lucie's context is extremely valuable to contributing to the overall success of this plan and its impact within the community.

The Perez Planning + Design (PPD) Team reviewed existing documents; analyzed demographics and trends; inventoried the existing parks system; and visited and evaluated parks and park structures, in order to assess Port St. Lucie's existing conditions through the following three contexts:



### PLANNING CONTEXT

The layout of the built and natural environment, plus recent plans, initiatives, and development shaping Port St. Lucie.



### DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The characteristics of the existing and projected residents of Port St. Lucie.



### PARK SYSTEM CONTEXT

The organizational, programmatic, and physical condition of Port St. Lucie's existing parks and recreation system.

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# 2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

## 2.1.1 Planning Context Maps

Modern community planning involves a complex layering of regulatory, infrastructure, and environmental systems, including zoning, political representation, transportation and education, just to name a few.

And community planning typically functions best when it ensures that there is coordination across this broad spectrum of activities, embodying the idea of "breaking down silos" between the structure of government agencies and departments. The complexities of engineering complex physical infrastructure in the built environment, while ensuring the health and vitality of the natural environment; uplifting culture, educating all citizens, and providing a strong economic outlook for every household… these are the challenges of modern community planning, closely intertwined with the role of political decision makers who lead our communities. On top of it all, cities are almost always in constant flux, with "change as the only constant" certainly a reality for Port St. Lucie over the last 50 years.

Given this context, it is critical to understand the ongoing planning and development in the City of Port St. Lucie to ensure that Parks and Recreation planning is designed to support and integrate with other efforts and initiatives. This section maps the existing and planned conditions of Port St. Lucie with relevance to this Parks and Recreation update.

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**Figure 2.1 - *Political/Regulatory Context***

The primary political boundaries within the City of Port St. Lucie are the Council Districts. Councilmembers have direct influence on the parks and recreation projects and services in their districts. Community organizing, including efforts to build or improve parks and recreation, often occurs at the neighborhood level, with the city divided into 36 recognized neighborhoods.

Additionally, residents of Port St. Lucie are represented by the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners. Commission Districts 2 and 3 are almost entirely within city limits, while districts 1, 4, and 5 each cover remaining portions of the city.

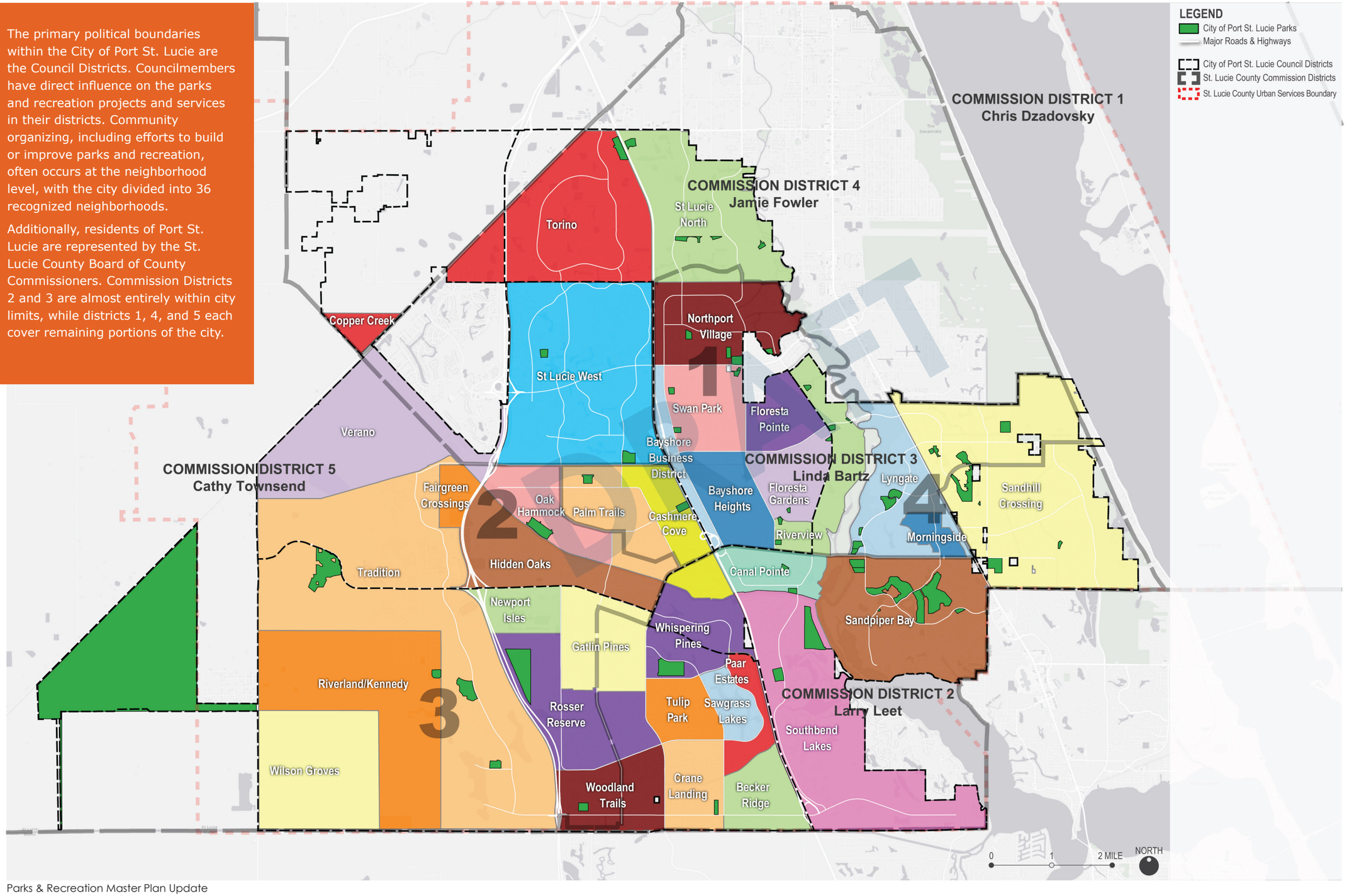


**Figure 2.2 - *Future Land Use***

The Future Land Use element of the Comprehensive Plan identifies 24 land use categories, which impact zoning and development decisions.

Importantly, three separate categories define types of Open Space, which may include parks, preserves, and other lands where development is limited. Ensuring that any new park sites can and will be designated under these categories will be an important component of the vision.

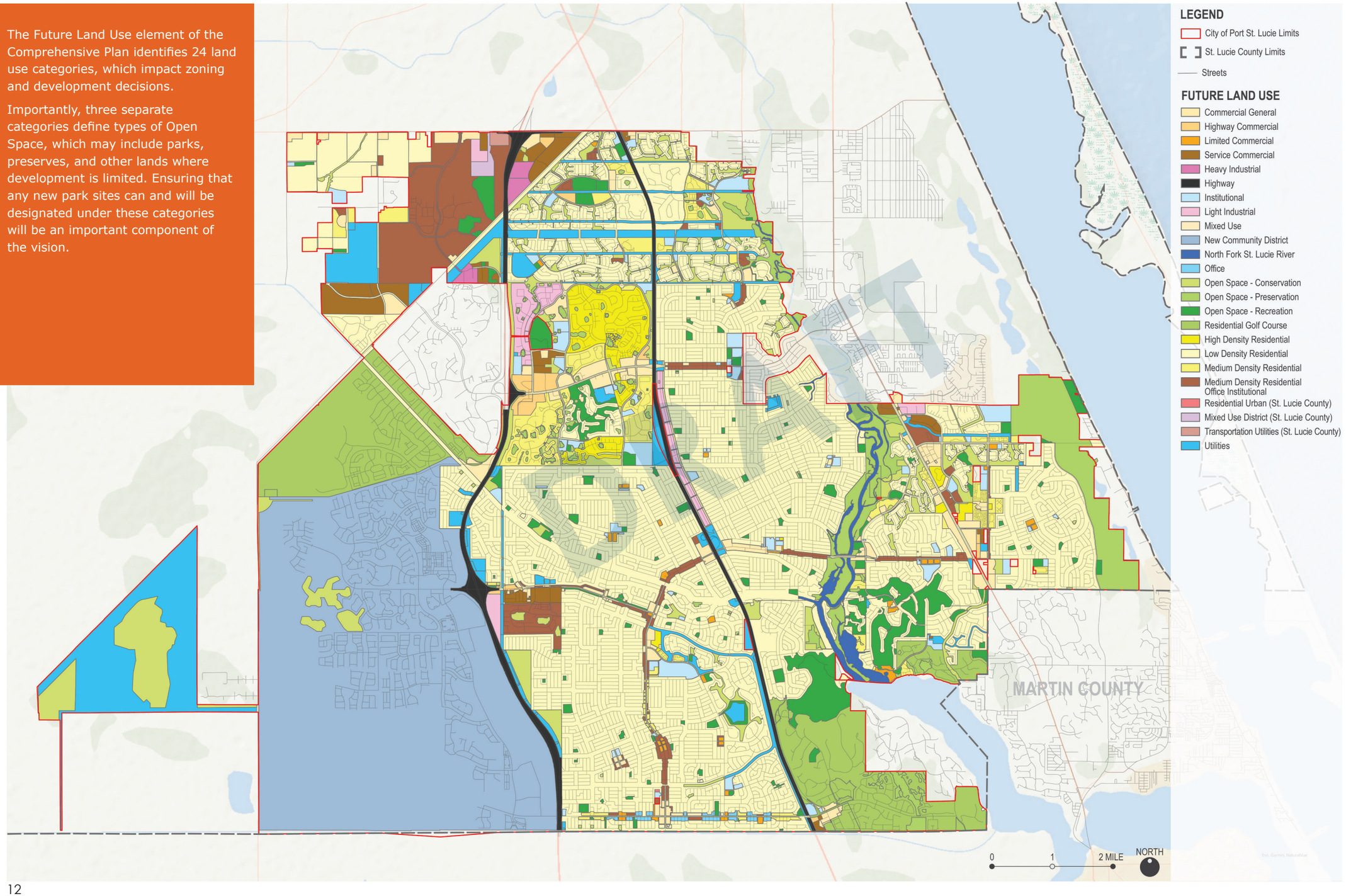


**Figure 2.3 - *Transportation***

Transportation infrastructure, in particular road right-of-way, constitutes a large segment of the public realm and offers numerous opportunities for integration with parks and recreation, from sidepath trails to linear parks.

The public transit network provides an alternative to personal vehicle travel and is a valuable component in the equity of access to parks for all residents. Additionally, transit facilities and sites can provide significant opportunities for recreation, as the planning for the Deacon Street Transit hub has demonstrated.

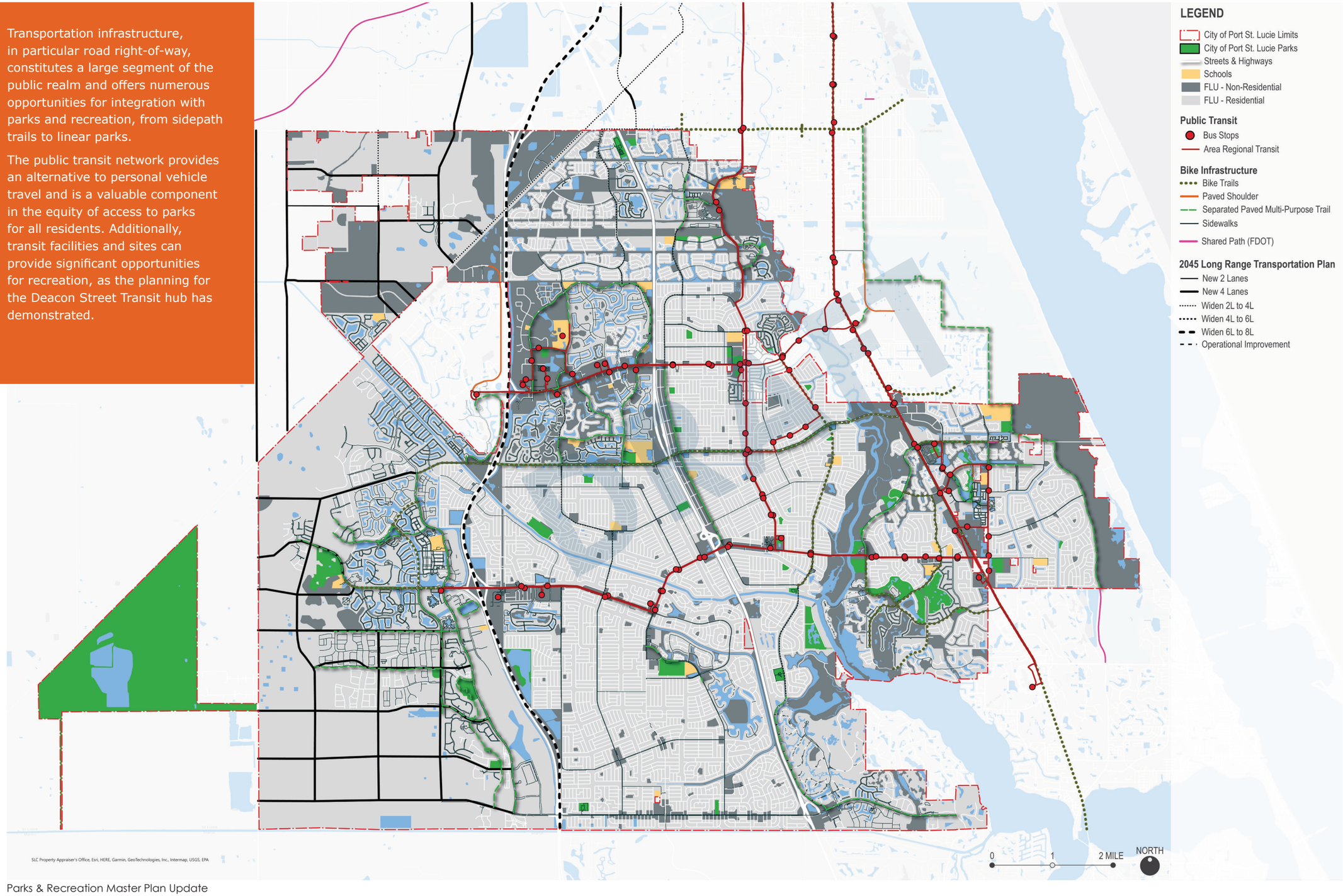
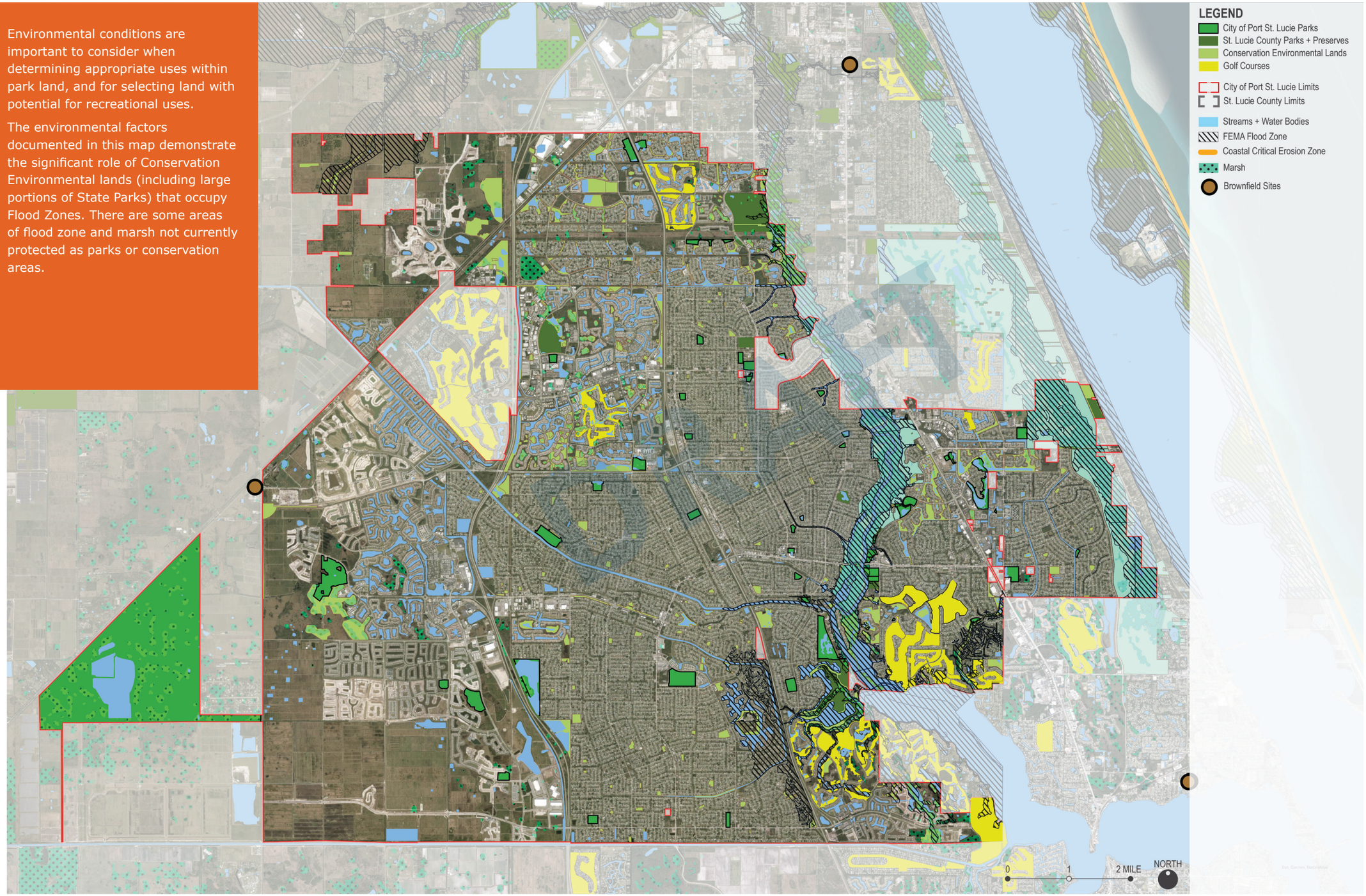


**Figure 2.4 - *Environmental***

Environmental conditions are important to consider when determining appropriate uses within park land, and for selecting land with potential for recreational uses.

The environmental factors documented in this map demonstrate the significant role of Conservation Environmental lands (including large portions of State Parks) that occupy Flood Zones. There are some areas of flood zone and marsh not currently protected as parks or conservation areas.



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## 2.1.2 Review of Relevant Planning Documents

The Project Team reviewed the following planning documents, studies, and surveys provided by the City that may influence the development of the parks master plan:

1. City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan
2. City of Port St. Lucie Strategic Plan
3. Mobility and Impact Fee – Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023
4. Art in Public Places Plan
5. Port St. Lucie, FL – The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024
6. City of Port St. Lucie Planning & Infrastructure Study
7. Parkland Acquisition & Environmental Lands Preservation Program
8. Conservation Lands Management Plan
9. St. Lucie County Parks and Recreation Master Plan
10. City of Port St. Lucie 10-Year Parks and Recreation System Master Plan

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### City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan (2020)



RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Per Chapter 163, F.S. the recreation and open space element provides for a comprehensive system of public and private sites for recreation, including, but not limit to, natural reservations, parks and playgrounds, parkways, beaches and public access to beaches, open spaces, waterways, and other recreational facilities. The City of Port St. Lucie Recreation and Open Space Element also includes a Level of Service (LOS) standard for parks to ensure there is sufficient park space for existing and future development and to ensure a high quality of life.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

City of Port St. Lucie 10-Year Parks and Recreation System Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Department administers the development and maintenance of parks. The Department is responsible for planning and developing public parks and recreation facilities within the City and managing a variety of recreation and leisure programs throughout the City. The department's mission is to enhance the quality of life in Port St. Lucie by providing the programs and facilities that will facilitate the residents' pursuit of culture and recreation in a safe and enjoyable setting. This is pursued with the understanding of contributing to the attractiveness of the community, conservation of the environment, and the social and economic health of the City.

In July 2019, the City contracted with Barth Associates to develop a 10-Year Parks and Recreation System Master Plan. In addition to identifying existing conditions and planning for future endeavors, the plan includes community health/wellness activities and community education opportunities.

The Plan conducted an inventory of 1,514.68 acres of developed City recreation facilities and 1,472 acres of County and State-owned public recreation land. Strategies for acquiring new parkland included the dedication of park and recreation land as part of the annexation agreements for the western annexed lands, utilization of the City's Conservation Trust Fund, which is funded by County Ad Valorem taxes, and the acquisition of parkland through annexation agreements with property owners to set aside land for parks and open space.

The current LOS for developed parkland is 7.5 acres per 1,000 residents based on the estimated 2020 population. If no additional parkland is acquired, the existing parkland will meet the established LOS of 5 acres per 1,000 through the long-term planning period. The population in 2040 is estimated to be 302,261 resulting in a LOS of 5.01 acres per 1,000 residents.

Classification System for Parks and Open Space

The following six areas comprise the City's classification system for parks and open space. Park acquisition and development requirements are not based on this system, but it is provided as a system to inventory and monitor existing or future facilities and sites.

1. Small Neighborhood Parks (SNP): These are sites less than 5 acres in size and designed to provide small tracts of green open space within residential areas. They are generally passive recreational areas but may include limited active recreational opportunities. Each site serves residents in a 1/2 to 3/4 mile radius. These areas typically are not developed and have a land use designation of OSR (Open Space Recreation) and were originally set aside as passive or active recreation when the City was first designed by General

City of Port St. Lucie | 3-1 | Adopted
Comprehensive Plan 2010-2040 | October 26, 2020

**Overview**

Under Florida Law, local governments are required to prepare a comprehensive plan as a definitive guide for their growth management.

In addition to growth management, local governments are encouraged to use their comprehensive plans to provide mechanisms for developing and implementing the future vision for their jurisdiction.

The City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan serves to :

1. Guide future development through the regulation of land use;
2. Maintain quality of life; and,
3. Provide for economic development

**Themes / Analysis**

The Comprehensive Plan includes 10 Elements. Within each Element are Goals, Objectives, and Policies—these three components are adopted by ordinance, and provide the basis for zoning regulations.

**Recommendations / Vision**

Four of the 10 elements have direct impact on the objectives and requirements of parks and recreation facilities and operation:

***Element 1 – Capital Improvements Element***

The Capital Improvements Element considers the need for public facilities and their location, in order to encourage efficient use.

The following items from the Goals, Objectives,

and Policies are relevant to parks and recreation planning:

*Policy 9.1.1.1: The City shall include in its 5-Year Capital Improvement Program all projects identified in other Comprehensive Plan elements determined to be of relatively large scale and high cost ($100,000 or greater); all capital improvements with costs $35,000 or greater shall be included in the City's 5-Year capital improvement program and budget.*

***LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD***

***F. PARKS AND RECREATION***

***Developed Public Park or Recreation Facilities: 5.0 acres/1000 population***

***Element 2 – Conservation and Coastal Management Element***

**Water Access Facilities**

Public access to water is provided at River Place Park, Veteran's Park at Rivergate, and Tom Hooper Park.

The following items from the Goals, Objectives, and Policies are relevant to parks and recreation planning:

*Policy 5.1.6.2: The City, with the County, should prioritize new park purchases and park development, with emphasis on parks that would provide public access to coastal area waters and include parking facilities and access to a state or county road where possible.*

| Zoning Code | Zoning Description | Total Acres | % of Total City Area |
|---|---|---|---|
| OSC | Open Space-Conservation | 3162.88 | 4.11% |
| OSC/I | Open Space-Conservation/ Institutional | 8.61 | 0.01% |
| OSC/OSR | Open Space-Conservation/ Open Space- Recreation | 515.66 | 0.67% |
| OSP | Open Space- Preservation | 2919.25 | 3.79% |
| OSR | Open Space- Recreation | 2340.27 | 3.04% |
| OSR/I | Open Space- Recreation/ Institutional | 168.00 | 0.22% |
| OSR/LI | Open Space- Recreation/ Light Industrial | 15.53 | 0.02% |

***Element 3 – Future Land Use***

The Future Land Use element prescribes a land use designation for every parcel in the City. There are seven designations that are primarily associated with parks and recreation through the Open Space category:

| Zoning Code | Zoning Description | Total Acres | % of Total City Area |
|---|---|---|---|
| CG/OSR/I | Commercial General/ Open Space- Recreation/ Institutional | 51.13 | 0.07% |
| CG/RH/ OSR/I | Commercial General/ High Density Residential/ Open Space- Recreation/ Institutional | 17.29 | 0.02% |
| LI/OSR/I | Light Industrial/ Open Space-Recreation/ Institutional | 283.46 | 0.37% |
| RH/OSR/I | High Density Residential/ Open Space- Recreation/ Institutional | 1050.88 | 1.36% |
| RM/CG/ OSC | Medium Density Residential/ Commercial General/ Open Space-Conservation | 64.04 | 0.08% |
| RM/OSR/I | Medium Density Residential/ Open Space- Recreation/ Institutional | 800.80 | 1.04% |
| SLC OSP | Open Space- Preservation (St. Lucie County) | 51.42 | 0.07% |

Approximately 7,000 acres in the City have received multiple future land use designations, a practice which was originally intended to allow flexibility and to encourage a mix of uses. The following categories include one of the Open Space designations noted previously as a potential land use.

The following items from the Goals, Objectives, and Policies are relevant to parks and recreation planning:

*Policy 1.1.1.1: No development activities shall occur within areas designated on the Future Land Use Map as Open Space Preservation.*

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*Policy 1.1.1.10: The City may encourage the preservation of recreational and commercial waterfronts for water dependent uses.*

*Policy 1.1.4.6: The Future Land Use Map allocates an open space designation to: a) recreation areas; b) conservation areas; c) preservation areas.*

*a. Open Space Recreation (OSR). These areas are designated for existing or future parks.*

*b. Open Space Conservation (OSC). Conservation areas are comprised of lands that* should, to the maximum reasonable extent, maintain the natural character of the land.

*c. Open Space Preservation (OSP). Preservation areas are those areas having unique ecological, hydrological, physiographic, historical or socioeconomic importance.*

*Policy 1.1.4.10: The following densities and intensities shall apply to the future land use designations:*

| Zoning Code | Zoning Description | Coverage | Height | Impervious Area Allowed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| OSR | Open Space- Recreation | 30% | 35 feet | 80% |
| OSC | Open Space-Conservation | 10% | 35 feet | 20% |
| OSP | Open Space-Preservation | 10% | 35 feet | 20% |

***Element 6 – Infrastructure***

*Policy 4.C.2.2.2: The City shall promote stormwater management facility design guidelines that support joint use of retention and detention basins for passive recreation, habitat, and open space.*

***Element 7 – Intergovernmental Coordination***

**Parks and Recreation**

Needs within this element include the ongoing work with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and its oversight of Savannas Preserve State Park located within the City.

*Policy 6.1.1.10: The City should continue to coordinate the impacts of development and management of the St. Lucie River, Indian River Lagoon, Savannas Preserve State Park, and other natural resources with the South Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and other relevant agencies.*

***Element 8 – Public School Facilities***

*Policy PSFE 4.8.1: Collocation and Shared Use of Facilities [ILA Section 10.1]. Collocation and shared use of facilities are important to both the ST. LUCIE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD and the City. The ST. LUCIE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD will look for opportunities to collocate and share use of school facilities and civic facilities when preparing the District Educational Facilities Plan. Likewise, collocation and shared use opportunities will be considered by the City when preparing the annual update to the Comprehensive Plan's schedule of capital improvements and when planning and designing new, or renovating existing, community facilities. For example, opportunities for collocation and shared use with public schools will be considered for libraries,* ***parks, recreation facilities, community centers, [bold added]*** *auditoriums, learning centers, museums, performing arts centers, and stadiums. In addition, collocation and shared use of school and governmental facilities for health care and social services will be considered.*

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*As part of the annual update of the Annual Facilities Work Plan, the City will provide the School Board with **planned parks, libraries and community centers [bold added]** anticipated to be planned or constructed within the next five years. The School Board will review potential for collocation with schools.*

***Element 9 – Recreation and Open Space***

Developed primarily from the analysis and recommendations of the 2019 System Plan, all aspects of the Recreation and Open Space element are relevant to the current operations and strategies of the Parks and Recreation Department and will inform recommendations in this Update.

***Element 10 – Transportation***

*Policy 2.3.2.3: Work with local recreation departments, the South Florida Water Management District, and the State Department of Environmental Protection to develop bicycle facilities and trails within community and regional parks, off road trails such as drainage canals and utility right-of-way property, and other major recreational facilities.*

## Strategic Plan (originally 2013, annual update ongoing 2024-2025)




Overview

The City of Port St. Lucie has taken an innovative approach to Strategic Planning, annually updating the plan and intentionally using it to serve as the "driving force" of the entire City organization. Through a regular process of resident feedback, the plan aligns the goals, strategic initiatives and projects most important to the public, the Mayor, and City Council. The image below depicts the ongoing timeline to develop the latest Strategic Plan, described as a "people-first" approach.

Themes / Analysis

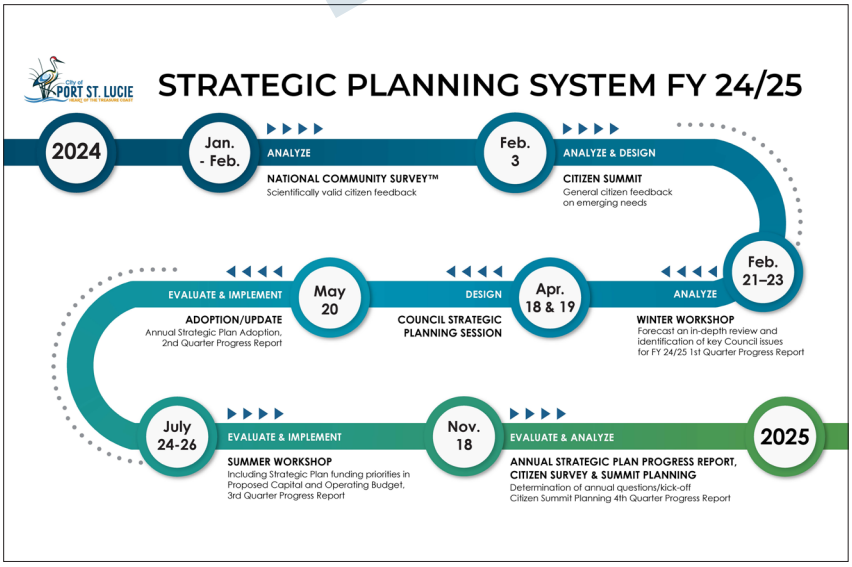
The Strategic Plan includes both Mission and Vision statements:

OUR MISSION

To provide exceptional services that enhance our community's safety, beauty and quality of life through innovation, engagement and fiscal responsibility.

OUR VISION

To be a leader in finding innovative solutions that put residents first and support opportunities for all people to thrive.




The results of the most recent National Community Survey conducted in Port St. Lucie found that the top 3 priorities residents would like the City to focus on are:

1. Traffic
2. Control Growth
3. Economic Development/ Business Support/Development

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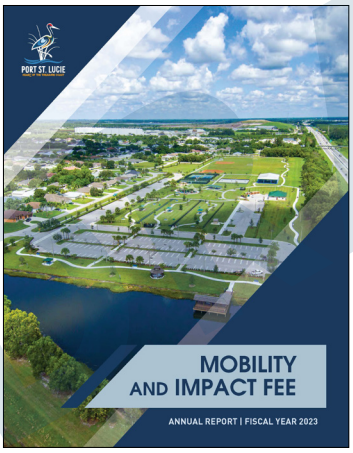
Recommendations / Vision

The City maintains a dashboard of progress on the Strategic Plan, which includes performance trackers on each of the following Strategic Goal sections:

- Safe, Clean and Beautiful
- Vibrant Neighborhoods
- Smart & Connected City
- Diverse Economy & Employment Opportunities
- High-Quality Infrastructure & Facilities
- Culture, Nature & Fun Activities
- High Performing Government Organization

## Mobility and Impact Fee Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2023)




Overview

This report discusses the impact fee collected and used in the preceding fiscal year. As defined in the report:

*Mobility and Impact Fees are a one-time fee assessed to new construction to help cover the costs associated with the increased demand for public services and infrastructure resulting from new development or construction.*

Themes / Analysis

On May 8, 2023 the City Council adopted revised impact fee schedules for Parks, Law Enforcement and Public Buildings utilizing the Extraordinary Circumstances provision in the Florida State statute. Parks and Law Enforcement impact fees were increased, and the Public Buildings fee was decreased. (Ordinances 23-27 Parks, 23-26 Law Enforcement, and 23-23 Public Building.)

In 2023, the City collected a total of $3,690,208.17 for Parks, and over the preceding five years, averaged nearly $3.3 million per year.

Recommendations / Vision

Over FY 2023, the City expended Impact Fee funding on four park projects:

- Tradition Regional Park - $150,522 for BMX park design
- Torino Regional Park - $164,443 for softball field; project is in preliminary planning
- Winterlakes Neighborhood Park – Phase II – $1,542,369 for buildout, including installation of a walking trail, volleyball courts, pavilion, gazebo, and fishing pier.
- O.L. Peacock, Sr. Park Design – Phase 1 - $46,885 for construction design, including an upland trail, small playground, landscaping, new entryway, signage, pavilions, and additional on-street parking.

**City Roads/Mobility and Impact Fee Data Report for the Years Ending Sept. 30**

| ACTUAL VALUES COLLECTION | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fiscal Year | Roads/Mobility | | Parks | | Law Enforcement | | Public Buildings | |
| | Residential | Commercial | Residential | Commercial | Residential | Commercial | Residential | Commercial |
| 2019 | $ 2,267,291.00 | $ 382,475.14 | $ 2,028,205.00 | $ 207,430.00 | $ 531,270.00 | $ 58,309.04 | $ 5,450,344.00 | $ 707,466.73 |
| 2020 | $ 2,956,405.00 | $ 337,705.92 | $ 2,276,588.00 | $ 24,898.00 | $ 685,780.00 | $ 15,073.55 | $ 6,104,659.76 | $ 98,834.06 |
| 2021 | $ 4,709,482.00 | $ 1,649,664.64 | $ 3,548,346.00 | $ 731,098.00 | $ 1,041,292.00 | $ 208,316.26 | $ 9,267,619.44 | $ 1,353,705.74 |
| 2022 | $ 12,550,937.70 | $ 671,757.47 | $ 2,965,802.00 | $ 1,000,376.00 | $ 909,982.86 | $ 275,004.91 | $ 8,534,776.65 | $ 978,675.47 |
| 2023* | $ 8,808,817.02 | $ 1,547,660.21 | $ 3,631,623.17 | $ 58,585.00 | $ 877,615.50 | $ 62,572.20 | $ 1,330,609.00 | $ 61,027.17 |

*Unaudited

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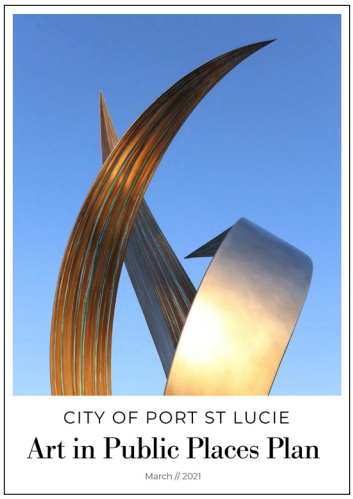
## City of Port St Lucie Art in Public Places Plan (2021)




Overview

In 2018, the City passed an ordinance to develop an Art in Public Places program. This plan was created to build on the City's early efforts and "further operationalize" the program . The plan focuses on how to use art to create remarkable places that connect residents with their community, create an identity for the City, and further advance the City's overall strategic goals.

Themes / Analysis

The plan provides thorough background on the elements of the art program, including:

- a specific definition of public art,
- the roles, responsibilities, and desired background of Advisory Board members,
- the criteria for evaluation of public art,
- funding requirements for new private development projects,
- an inventory of existing public art,
- a description of staffing and partnerships.

The plan also provides a collection of words, phrases, and images to inspire artists:

- Home
- A slice of Florida Paradise
- A city for all
- Past, present, future
- Nature Nearby

Recommendations / Vision

Public feedback informed the Vision statement and Guiding Principles:

Vision - In Port St. Lucie public art serves the community by creating remarkable, beautiful, engaging public spaces.

Guiding Principles - The people of Port St. Lucie desire a future where public art:

- Creates a strong sense of place that allows for community interaction
- Ensures diversity and accessibility in A City for All Ages
- Compliments and draws attention to the natural environment
- Engages people with a sense of playfulness and whimsy
- Beautify the physical landscape of the community

The plan includes six strategies to guide the program:

1. Placemaking with public art
2. WOW! Public art (large-scale, highly impactful pieces)
3. Empower local artists
4. Enhanced procurement guidelines
5. Coordination with citywide efforts
6. Right-sized staffing

The plan identifies preferred location types and priority locations, as well as a set of policies to guide operations. The plan also explores connections between the seven Strategic Goals—and accompanying Initiatives—of the City's 2021 Strategic Plan and the Art program's potential to advance them.

Lastly, the plan offers 10 Big Ideas for Implementation.

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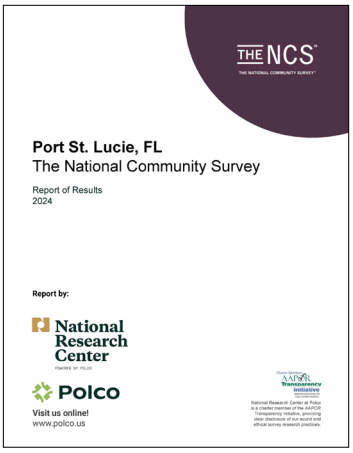
## Port St. Lucie, FL – The National Community Survey Report of Results (2024)




Overview

The 2024 National Community Survey (NCS) report for Port St. Lucie, FL, evaluates residents' opinions on community livability, encompassing ten key facets such as safety, economy, mobility, and natural environment. The survey was conducted from January 23 to February 27, 2024, with a representative sample of 334 residents. It highlights community strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement, comparing results to national benchmarks and previous years.

Themes/Analysis

Quality of Life: High ratings for Port St. Lucie as a place to live and raise children, with strong resident loyalty.

Safety: Most residents feel safe, with positive evaluations of police and fire services.

Mobility: Challenges persist in traffic flow and transportation infrastructure, though public transit ratings have improved.

Community Design: Concerns about growth management and affordable housing; mixed reviews on neighborhood planning.

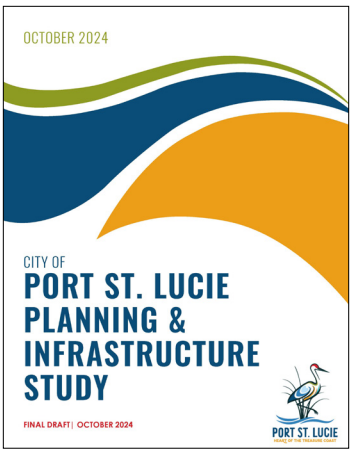
Environment: High appreciation for natural environment, cleanliness, and air quality, but reluctance to pay extra for enhanced trash collection.

Governance: Trust in local government shows areas of strength, though transparency and engagement could improve.

Recommendations/Vision

1. Address Mobility Issues: Prioritize traffic flow improvements, road repairs, and public transit development.
2. Focus on Housing: Develop strategies for affordable housing and balanced growth.
3. Enhance Community Design: Improve planning and coordination for residential and commercial areas.
4. Maintain Environmental Standards: Continue preserving natural areas while improving recycling and waste services.
5. Increase Government Transparency: Enhance communication and engagement with residents to build trust.
6. Resource Allocation: Utilize the Quality-Importance Matrix to prioritize services with high importance but lower perceived quality.

## Planning Infrastructure Study (2024)




Overview

The study examines the growth and development challenges facing the City of Port St. Lucie in the context of increasing population, land-use changes, and regional infrastructure demands. It highlights the strain on municipal resources due to development at the city's periphery and explores strategies to manage these impacts, including annexation policies, fiscal considerations, and infrastructure planning. The report emphasizes the importance of balancing growth with sustainability and service quality, considering the city's role as a regional hub for residential, commercial, and industrial activities.

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Themes/Analysis

**Growth Pressures:**

Rapid population increases and urbanization are driving the conversion of agricultural land to residential and mixed-use developments.

Unchecked growth at municipal boundaries creates fiscal and infrastructural burdens for the city.

**Infrastructure Challenges:**

Limited road and utility capacity, coupled with increasing traffic congestion, are significant concerns.

The city's infrastructure serves non-residents, leading to subsidy-related tensions.

**Annexation Dynamics:**

Annexation is identified as a key tool for managing growth and securing financial contributions from developers.

Legal frameworks for voluntary and involuntary annexations are outlined as mechanisms for expanding municipal oversight.

**Fiscal Implications:**

Growth outside municipal boundaries benefits the county while imposing costs on the city for services and infrastructure.

The study benchmarks financial data to assess the city's capacity to manage growth sustainably.

**Environmental and Sustainability Concerns:**

Development near sensitive areas raises questions about long-term environmental impacts and sustainable resource use.

Recommendations / Vision

1. Targeted Annexation Policies:

- Adopt a proactive annexation strategy focusing on areas with high development potential.
- Ensure annexation agreements are in place before extending municipal services to developments.

2. Infrastructure Investments:

- Prioritize road network enhancements and utility expansions to manage increased demands.
- Collaborate with the county to share the financial burden of regional infrastructure projects.

3. Policy and Planning Tools:

- Implement fiscal impact analysis tools to evaluate the long-term costs and benefits of new developments.
- Strengthen coordination with county planning bodies to align goals and resources.

4. Developer Contributions:

- Require developers to fund or contribute to infrastructure projects directly associated with their developments.
- Negotiate agreements that ensure adherence to city standards and policies.

5. Sustainability Focus:

- Promote land-use patterns that minimize environmental degradation.
- Encourage mixed-use developments to reduce urban sprawl and improve efficiency.

---

## Parkland Acquisition & Environmental Lands Preservation Program - Utilizing Strategic Land Conservation and High-Performance Public Spaces (2021)




Overview

The document outlines the strategic approach of Port St. Lucie's Parkland Acquisition and Environmental Lands Preservation Program. It highlights the city's commitment to conserving critical lands and enhancing public spaces through a combination of land acquisition, conservation, and development of High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS). The program aims to align with the city's 10-Year

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Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Strategic Plan to address community needs for open spaces and environmental preservation.

Themes/Analysis

*Community Prioritization:*
Recent public input indicates strong public support for preserving natural areas, open spaces, and developing park facilities.
Land acquisition for environmental and recreational purposes is rated as a high priority by residents.

*Environmental and Recreational Goals:*
Conserving critical lands to enhance water quality and protect natural habitats.
Promoting multifunctional spaces to serve stormwater management, recreation, and conservation.

*Strategic Land Management:*
Incorporating interdepartmental collaboration for land assessment, prioritization, and acquisition.
Utilizing structured decision-making tools to identify and evaluate potential sites.

*Funding and Implementation:*
Establishing dedicated funding for land acquisition in the Capital Improvement Plan.
Seeking grants and optimizing use of city-owned properties for efficient implementation.

Recommendations / Vision

1. Pilot Projects:
   Authorize prioritization of city-owned properties for HPPS pilot projects.
   Develop pilot sites for multifunctional purposes such as recreation, stormwater management, and conservation.
2. Land Acquisition:
   Identify and acquire properties to address deficits in stormwater management and recreational areas.
   Focus on conservation lands suitable for inclusion in the Florida Forever List for environmental protection.
3. Initiatives and Branding:
   Create an open space initiative targeting smaller lots to enhance green space availability.
   Develop a branding strategy for HPPS to promote public awareness and education
4. Policy and Planning:
   Finalize a Conservation Lands Management and Acquisition Plan and associated funding strategy.
   Update the Capital Improvement Plan and relevant ordinances to support program objectives.

## Conservation Lands Management Plan (2023)




Overview

This report outlines a strategic plan for the management and utilization of conservation lands owned by the city. The plan focuses on eight parcels of land, totaling 198 acres, acquired through grants and donations. Currently, these lands are underutilized and unmanaged. The report provides updated analyses of these properties, highlights current challenges, and presents a detailed five-year action plan for restoration, maintenance, and improvement. The proposed measures aim to enhance public access, protect natural habitats, and align with community priorities for recreation, water quality, and green space.

Themes / Analysis

*Conservation and Restoration:*
Prioritizing habitat restoration and maintenance.
Eradication of invasive species and replanting native vegetation.
Establishment of wildfire mitigation strategies

*Public Access and Education:*

Development of walking trails, boardwalks, and observation decks.

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Installation of educational kiosks and signage to inform visitors about conservation efforts.

*Sustainability and Management:*

A structured five-year action plan with detailed budgeting and activities.
Recommendations for ongoing maintenance funding and monitoring.

*Community Engagement:*

Encouraging resident participation and feedback through improved public amenities.
Soliciting land donations for further conservation opportunities.

<u>Recommendations</u>

Secure Council Support of the plan

1. Immediate Implementation (1-2 years):
    - Secure properties with wildlife-friendly barriers to prevent unauthorized vehicle access.
    - Launch an exotic species eradication program.
    - Begin planning and designing physical improvements like trails and educational centers.
2. Budgeting and Funding:
    - Establish a dedicated budget line for the management of conservation lands.
    - Initiate with a $925,000 deposit and program an annual allocation of $100,000 for maintenance.
3. Continue to pursue greenspaces
    - Explore opportunities for additional land acquisition for green spaces.
    - Actively solicit donations for conservation and preservation purposes.

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## 2.3 DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The purpose of the demographic context analysis is to gain a better understanding of both existing and future populations within the City of Port St. Lucie and identify potential recreation trends and needs. The analysis includes the city's population, population density, age distribution, ethnicity, race, income, and housing characteristics. The city's demographics are also compared to St. Lucie County and the state of Florida's demographics.

### Population and Population Growth

Figure 2.5 below compares the past, existing, and projected population and population growth of the City of Port St. Lucie to St. Lucie County and the State of Florida.

**Figure 2.5 - *Population and Growth***

| | 2010* | 2020* | 2010-2020 % Change | 2024^ | 2025 | 2030 | 2024-2030 % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Port St. Lucie | 164,603 | 204,851 | 24% | 253,959 | 266,236 | 327,621 | 28% |
| St. Lucie County | 277,789 | 329,226 | 19% | 385,746 | 408,600^ | 466,300^ | 20% |
| Florida | 18,801,310 | 21,538,187 | 15% | 23,014,551 | 23,758,000^ | 25,686,500^ | 11% |

** Source: US Decennial Census*
*^Source: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR)*

As represented in the chart, the City of Port St. Lucie added approximately 40,000 new residents and experienced a population growth of 24 percent between the years 2010 and 2010. This growth rate was higher than the both the county and state.

*Population Growth Implications*

In just the last 4 years, it is estimated that the city added nearly 50,000 residents, accounting for nearly all the growth in the county.

Between 2024 and 2030, the City of Port St. Lucie is projected to increase by an additional 78,000 residents, a growth of 28% and a continued rate more than double the state of Florida's.

Given this substantial growth, there is expected to be a need for more park acreage, facilities, amenities, programs, and resources to maintain the quality of life that residents currently enjoy.

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**Figure 2.6 - *Population Growth***

Between 2010 and 2010, every Census Tract in the city experienced growth on an annual basis, ranging from 0.1% to 9.1%.

The highest growth occurred in the Tradition/Riverland area, where new housing developments were delivered on previously agricultural land. High growth also occurred west of the Turnpike, where additional housing was added in communities that existed prior to 2010, such as in Torino around Winterlakes Park and in Southbend Lakes.

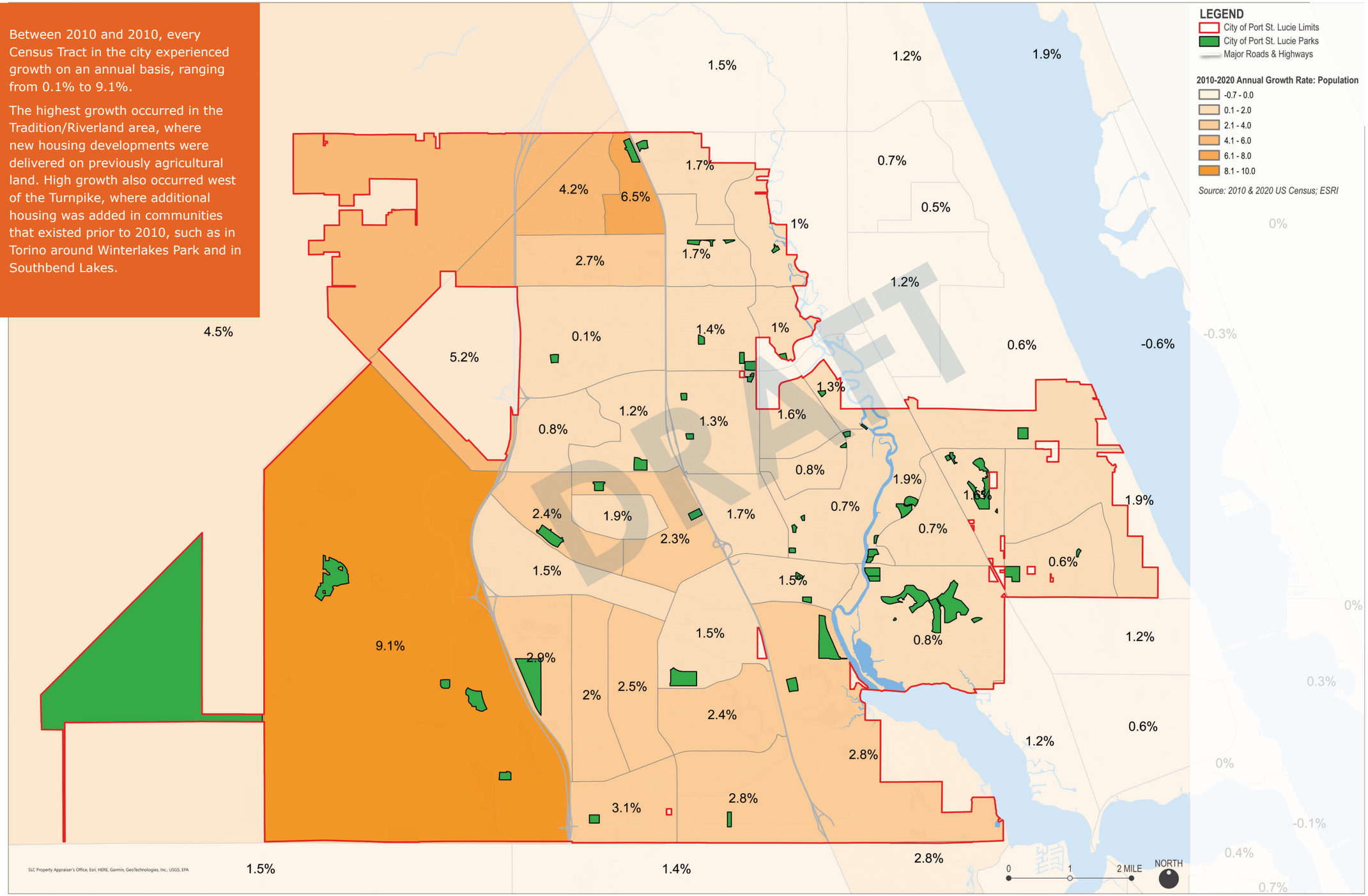
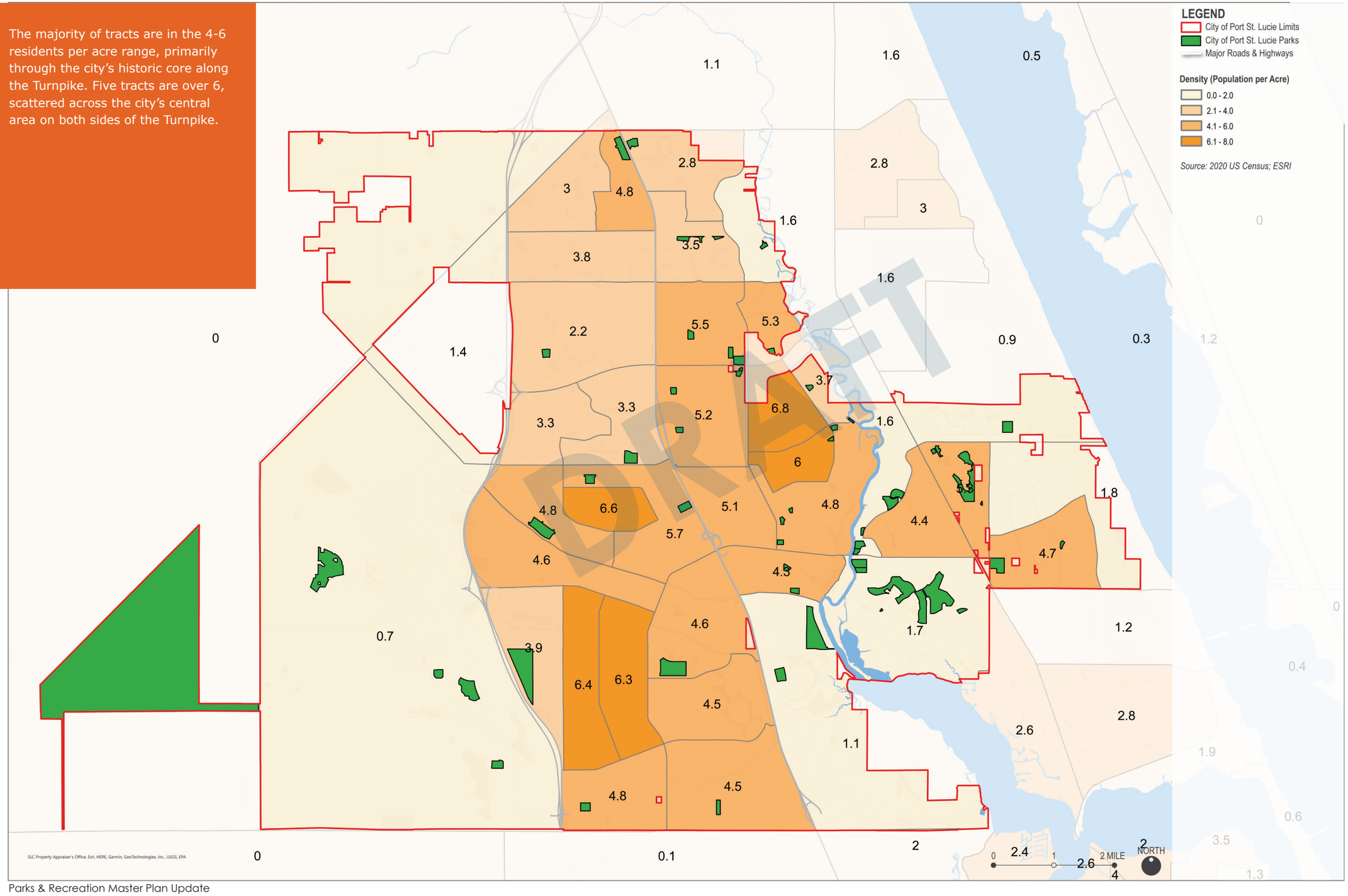


**Figure 2.8 - *Population Density***

The majority of tracts are in the 4-6 residents per acre range, primarily through the city's historic core along the Turnpike. Five tracts are over 6, scattered across the city's central area on both sides of the Turnpike.

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## Population Density

Population density is an important factor to consider in parks system planning because it impacts lifestyles and the manner by which residents enjoy parks and recreation services. Higher density populations create a larger demand for parks, recreation facilities, and programs within a given area.

Figure 2.7 below shows the major differences in population density between the City, County, and State. Throughout the years, the City of Port St. Lucie has maintained a higher population density than the County and the State and is projected to continue that trend through 2030.

**Figure 2.7 - *Population Density (Residents per Acre)***

| | 2010* | 2020* | 2024^ | 2025^ | 2030^ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Port St. Lucie | 2.2 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 4.3 |
| St. Lucie County | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Florida | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |

** Source: US Decennial Census*
*^Source: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR)*

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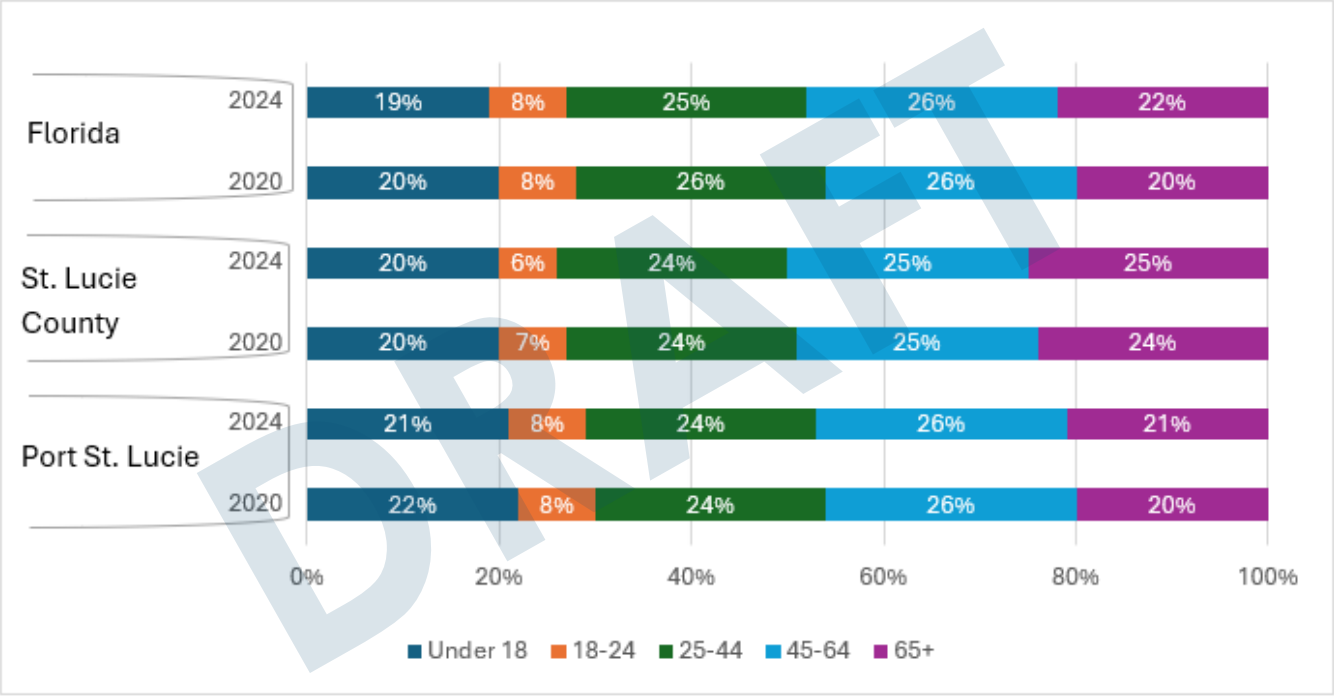
*Population Density Implications*

While the City has a higher population density than the County or State, the population density is relatively low compared to major urban areas. Despite pockets of new multi-family housing, the majority of the City is still comprised of single-family homes with relatively large lots. These lots may address the everyday, close-to-home recreational needs of typical families such as access to a playground in the backyard, a lawn to play catch, a community garden, or a confined space for a dog to run around without a leash. However, low population densities may also suggest a need for neighborhood and community gathering spaces with facilities and amenities that encourage social and physical interaction.

## Age Distribution

Figure 2.9 illustrates the age distribution between 2020 and 2024 for the City, County, and State. The data suggests that the City is relatively balanced between children and young adults under 20, and the middle aged population of 45-64. The City has a slightly higher percentage of youth and young adults than the County or State. However, similar to the County and the State, the age distribution appears to be getting older with fewer children under the age of 17 and more adults over the age of 65 in 2024 versus 2020.

**Figure 2.9 - *Age Distribution***




*Source: US Census - ACS 5-year Estimates*

### *Age Distribution Implications*

The City's relatively equal distribution across 20-year generations suggests a need for a diverse array of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. However, the gradually increasing population over-65, and its high degree of concentration in certain areas (including a tract with greater than 60% of all residents over 65) suggests a need to consider specific facilities and programs that serve this growing segment.

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**Figure 2.10- *Population Under 10***

The majority of tracts include 10-20% of the population under 10-years old, with only one tract containing 0% children. The tracts with the highest proportion are in the Torino area, with a quarter of residents under 10.

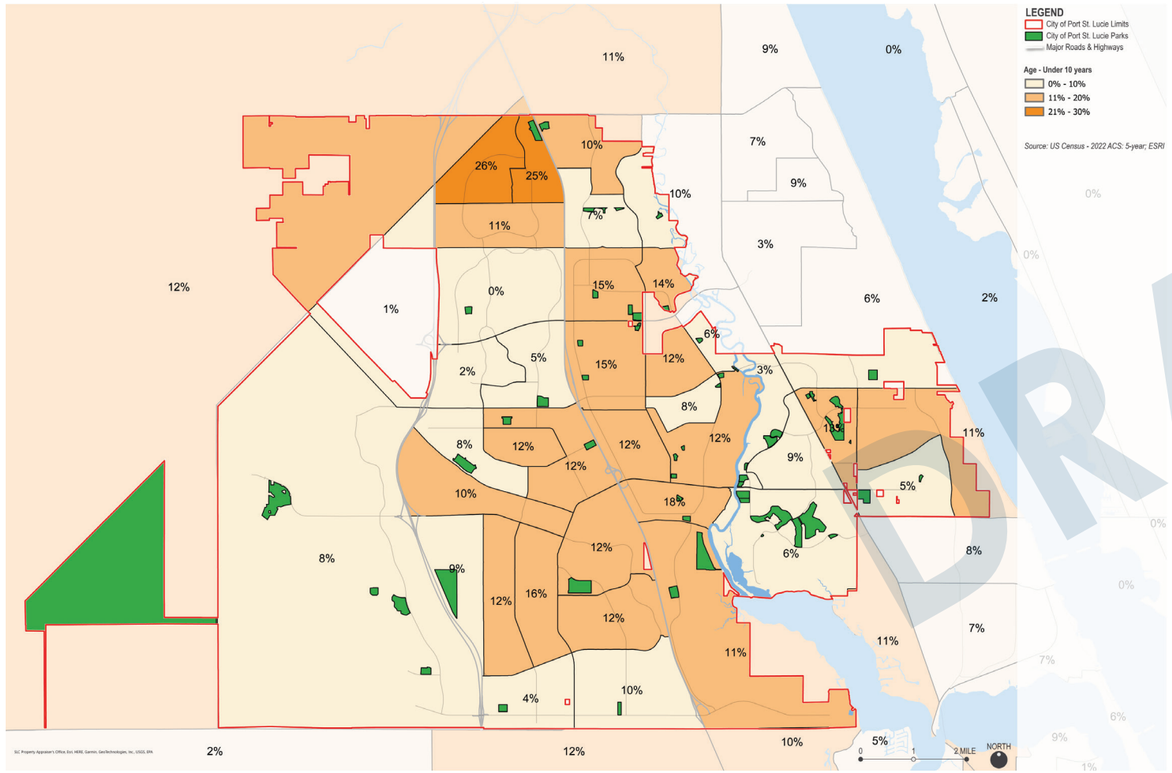


**Figure 2.11 - *Population Over 65***

The majority of tracts include 10-20% of the population over 65-years old, with the lowest tract at 7%. Two tracts are over 50%, one in Sandhill Crossing at 52% and the highest in St. Lucie West at 65%.

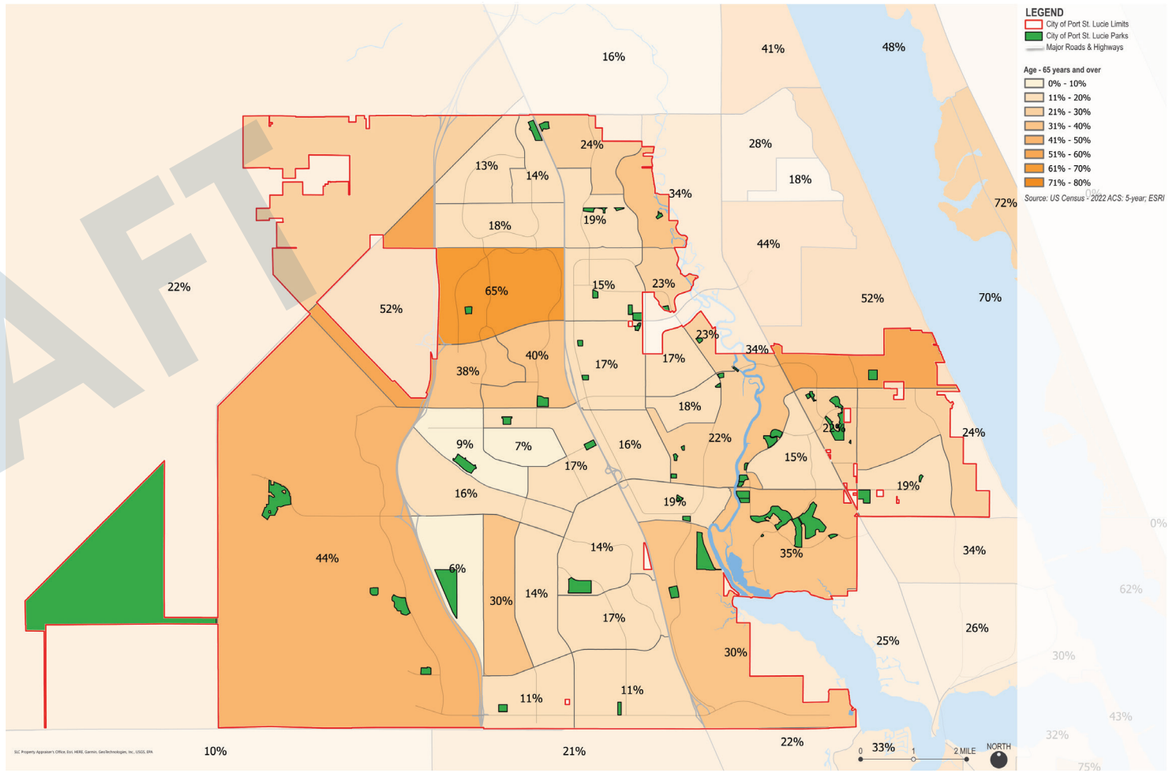


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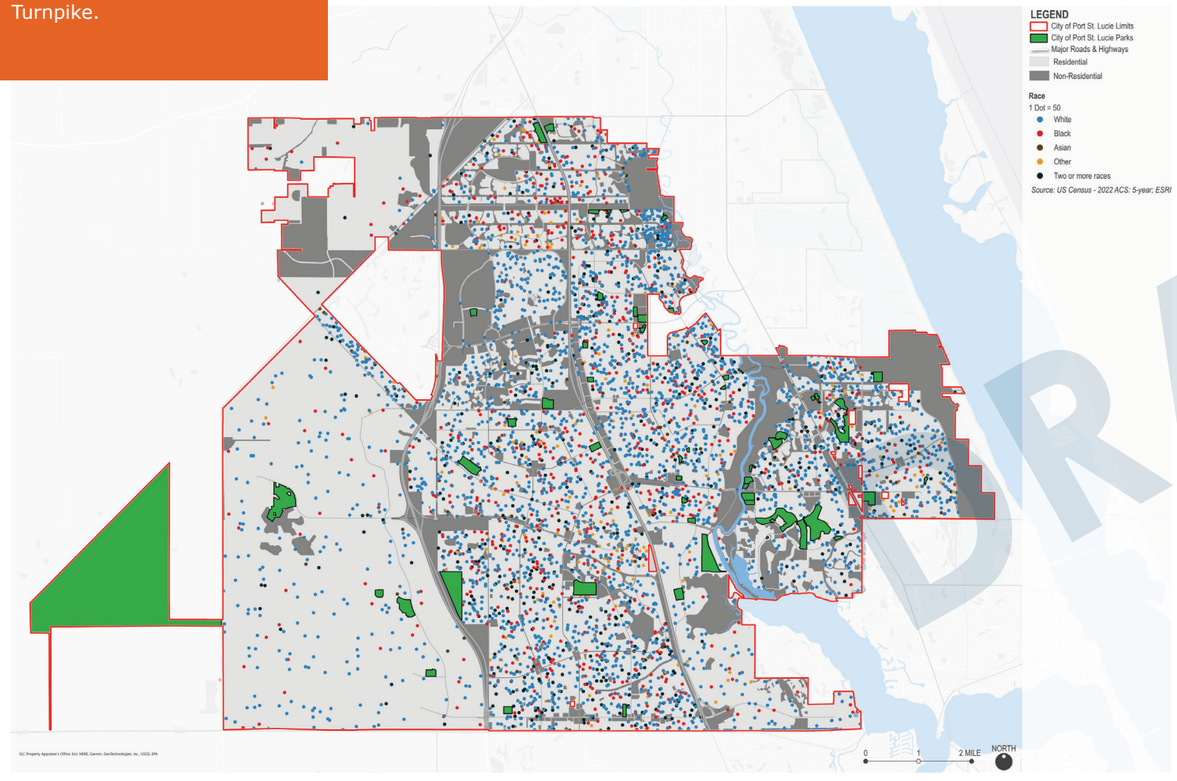
**Figure 2.14 - *Race***

The majority White population has a relatively even distribution across the city. There appears to be a slight concentration of Black residents in the Torino area, with residents identifying as Other or Two or more races also primarily west of the Turnpike.

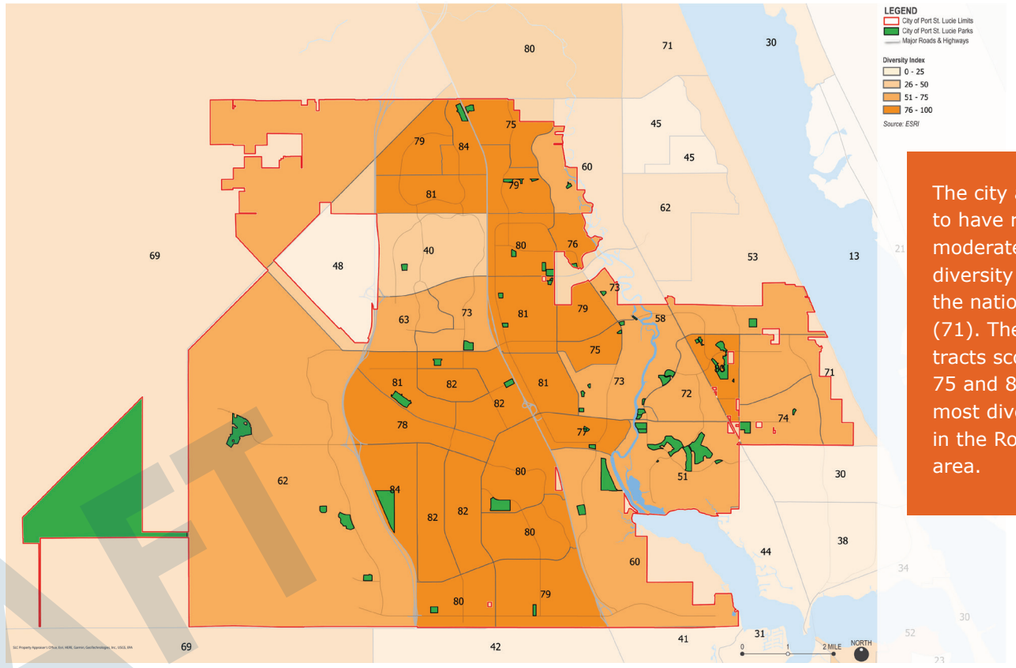



*Race and Ethnicity Implications*

The City's moderate diversity suggests a need to continue seeking opportunities to provide a wide variety of programs and experiences that will appeal to residents of all backgrounds. Multi-lingual signage, multi-cultural events, and outreach to all communities can ensure a system that reflects the city.

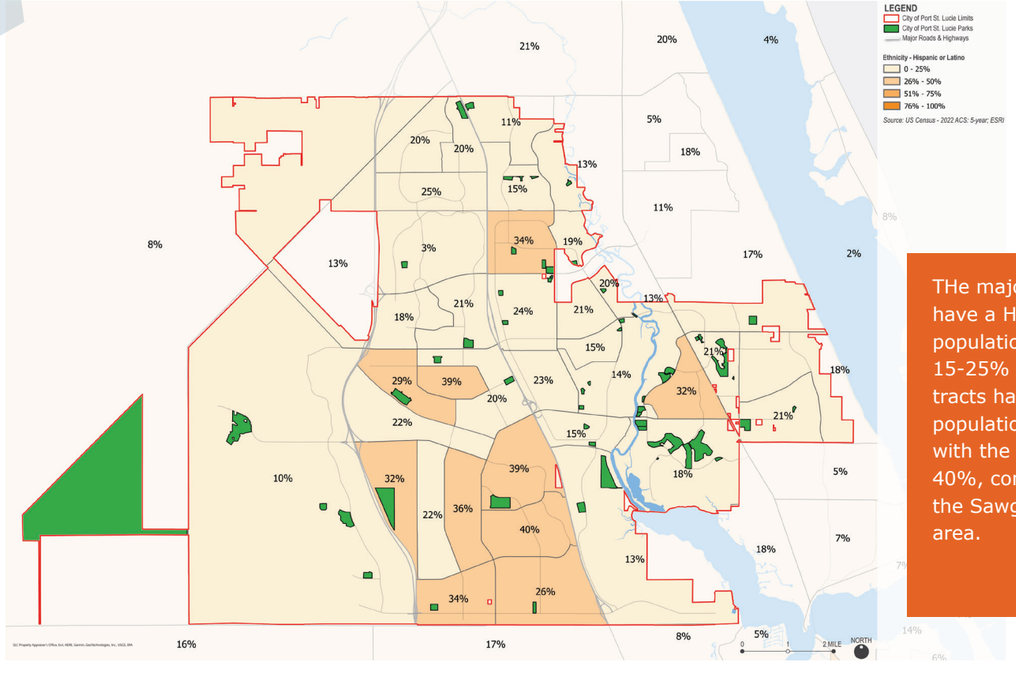
*[1]Esri's Diversity Index summarizes racial and ethnic diversity, indicating the likelihood that two individuals, chosen at random from the same area, belong to the same race or ethnic group. The index ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (highest diversity). An area's Diversity Index increases when the population includes more race/ethnic groups.*

**Figure 2.15 - *Diversity Index[1]***




The city appears to have relatively moderately high diversity compared to the national average (71). The majority of tracts scored between 75 and 85 with the most diverse scoring 84 in the Rosser Reserve area.

**Figure 2.16 - *Ethnicity***




THe majority of tracts have a Hispanic population in the 15-25% range. Ten tracts have a Hispanic population over 25%, with the highest at 40%, concentrated in the Sawgrass Lakes area.

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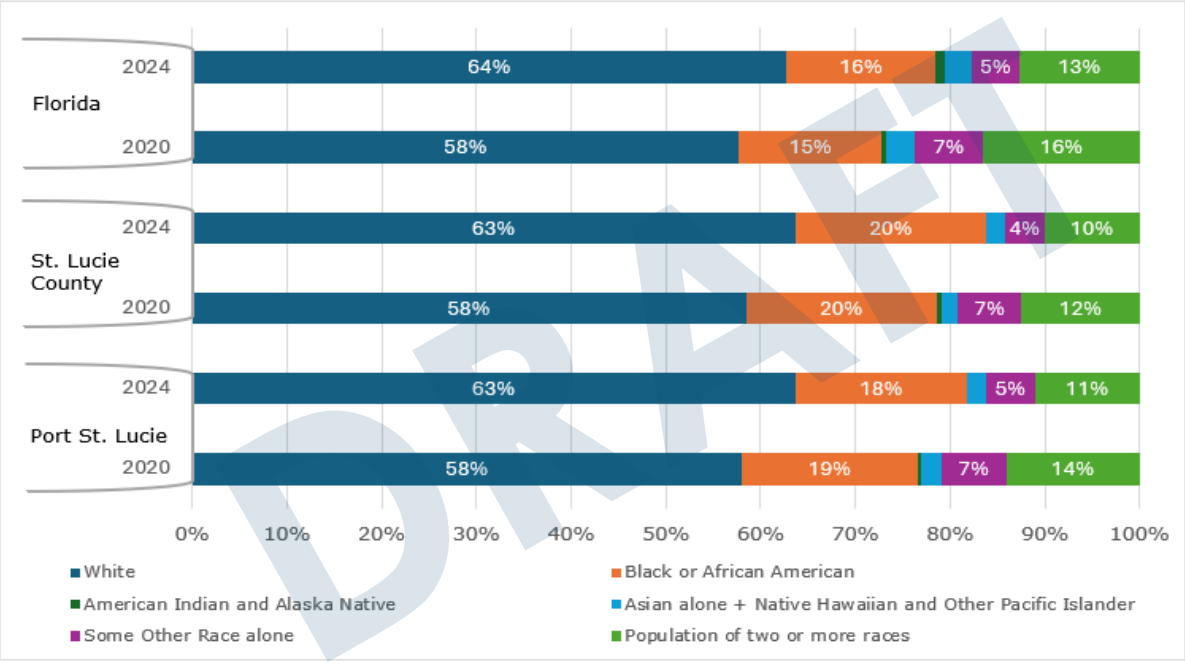
## Race and Ethnicity Distribution

Race and ethnicity may be relevant indicators of recreation program and facility needs and desires, particularly worth considering if the racial makeup of a community is changing. Various academic studies have shown that individuals' preferences towards specific park settings, activities, or amenities can vary by racial category.

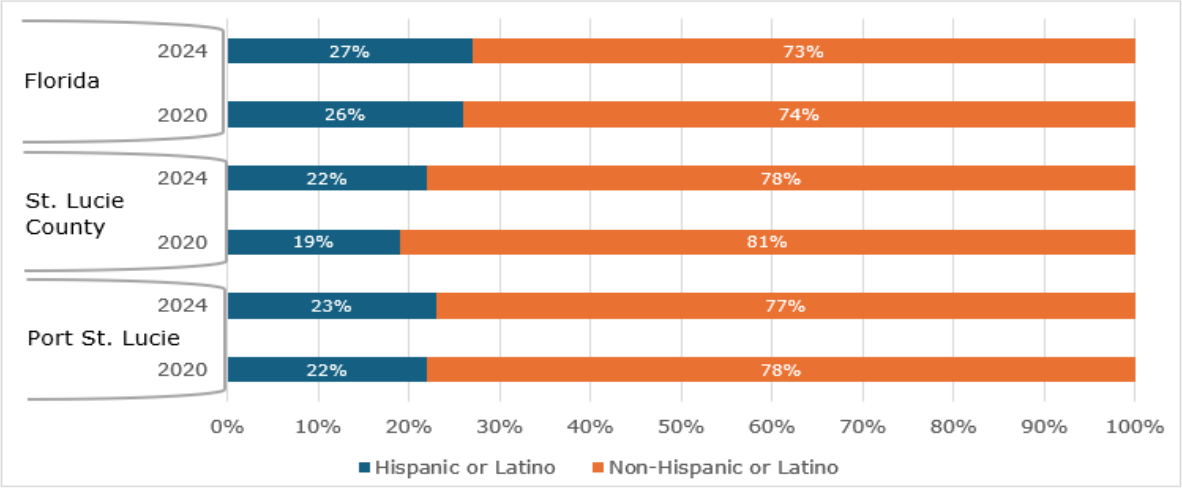
Additionally, Port St. Lucies's diverse population presents opportunities to celebrate and memorialize past and present figures and cultural keystones that make the city and its communities unique, with the potential for enriching community identity and character.

**Figure 2.12 - *Race Distribution***




*Source: US Census - ACS 5-year Estimates*

**Figure 2.13- *Ethnic Distribution***




*Source: US Census - ACS 5-year Estimates*

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## Income and Poverty

Income levels provide a glimpse of the purchasing power of city residents. Simply stated, the higher the household income, the greater the potential that residents have disposable income to spend on fee-based leisure programs and activities. The lower the household income, the more residents may rely on local government to provide affordable and/or free parks, recreation, and social programs and services. This is particularly true for families living under the poverty threshold.

Figure 2.17 illustrates the median income and poverty rate in the City, County, and State as of 2020 and 2024.

**Figure 2.17 - *Income and Poverty***

| | Median Household Income | | Poverty Status | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2020* | 2024^ | 2020* | 2024^ |
| Port St. Lucie | $62,380 | $74,928 | 9.3% | 7.9% |
| St. Lucie County | $55,237 | $66,530 | 13.1% | 9.5% |
| Florida | $57,703 | $73,311 | 13.3% | 12.3% |

** Source: US Census - ACS 5-year estimates*
*^Source: US Census - ACS 1-year estimates*

The data reveals that the City of Port St. Lucie's median household income increased between 2020 and 2024, to reach a new record high of $74,928. This is higher than both the county and state.

The city's poverty rate declined from 2020 to 2024, reaching 7.9%, which is also lower than the county and state.

*Income and Poverty Implications*

The positive trends in household income and poverty level at all geographies are notable, and in particular given that the city is outperforming the county and state. It will be critical to identify and populations that are not experiencing the positive trends and consider ways for the parks system to support them, whether that's reduced fees based on income level or educational programs that support workforce development.

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**Figure 2.18 - *Median Household Income***

The majority of tracts have a median household income of $75,000-$100,000--however, the higher density tracts are typically $50,000-$74,999, coinciding with the overall city median of $74,928.

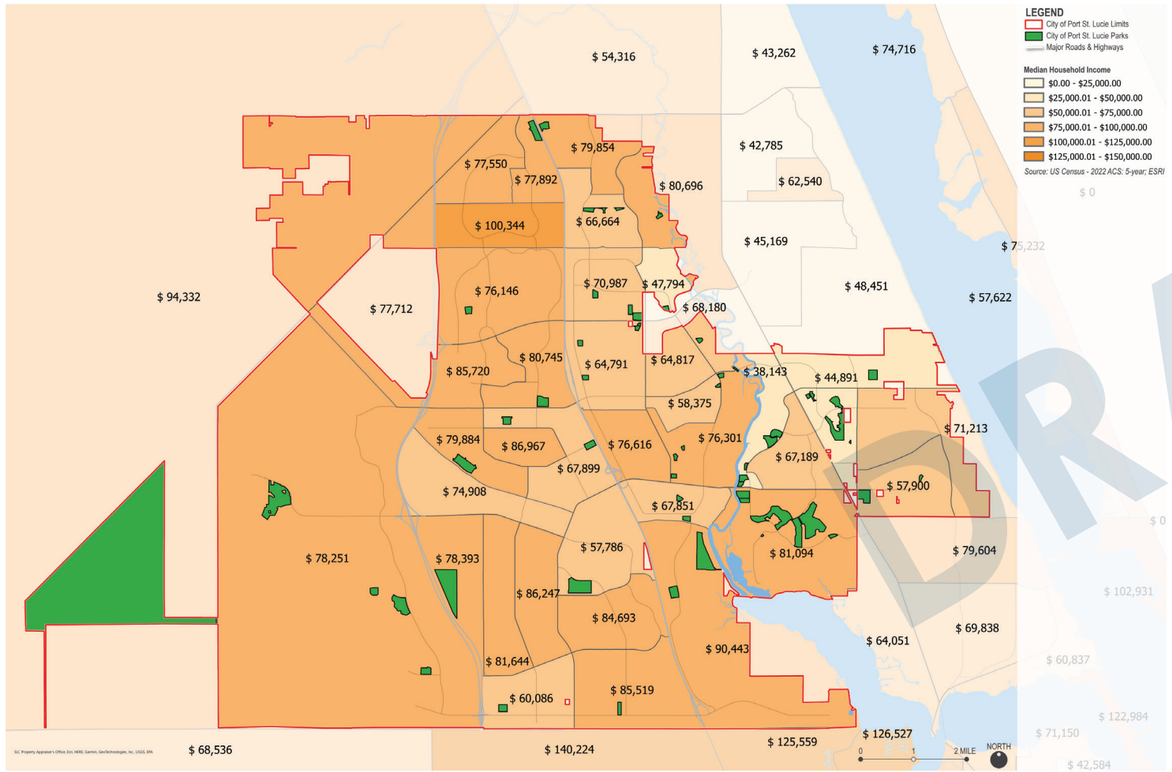


**Figure 2.19 - *Poverty***

The majority of tracts include 5-10% of the population in poverty. Two tracts are notable for having over 20% poverty, with the highest at 28% in the Canal Pointe area.

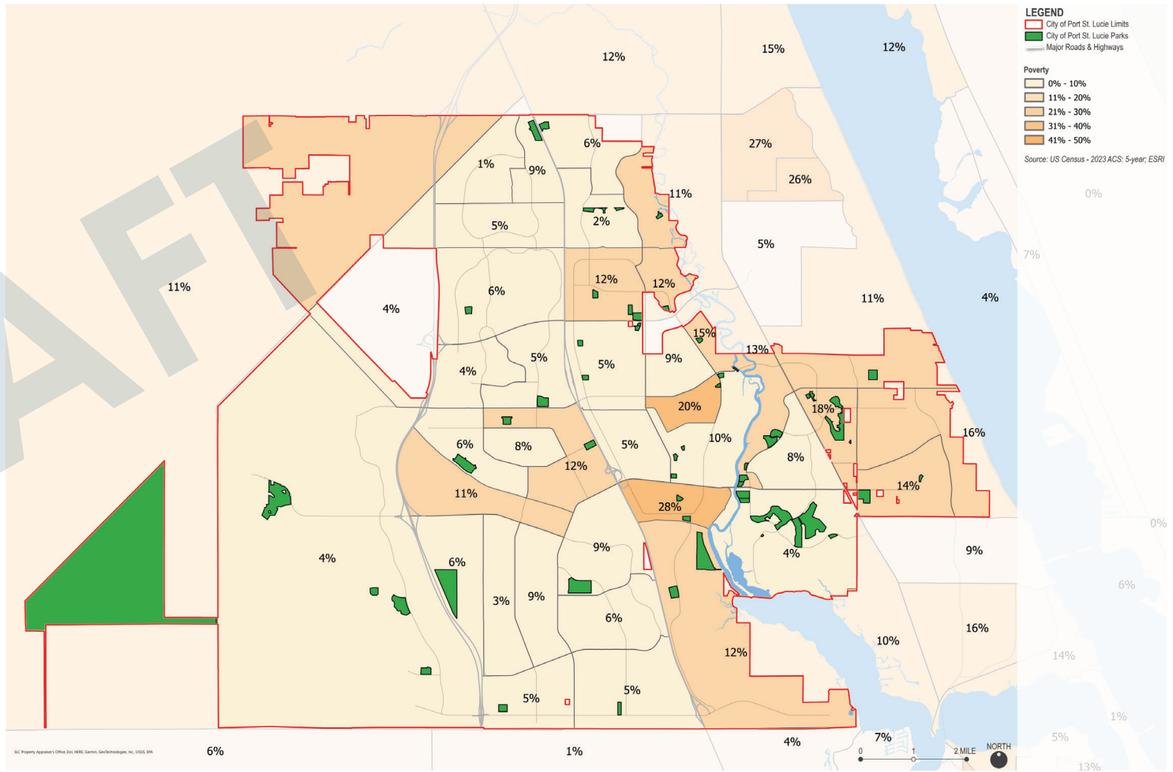


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**Figure 2.21 - *Owner Occupied***

The vast majority of tracts have an owner-occupancy over 75%, with only five tracts below. Only one tract is majority renter-occupied (54%) in the Sandhill Crossing area.

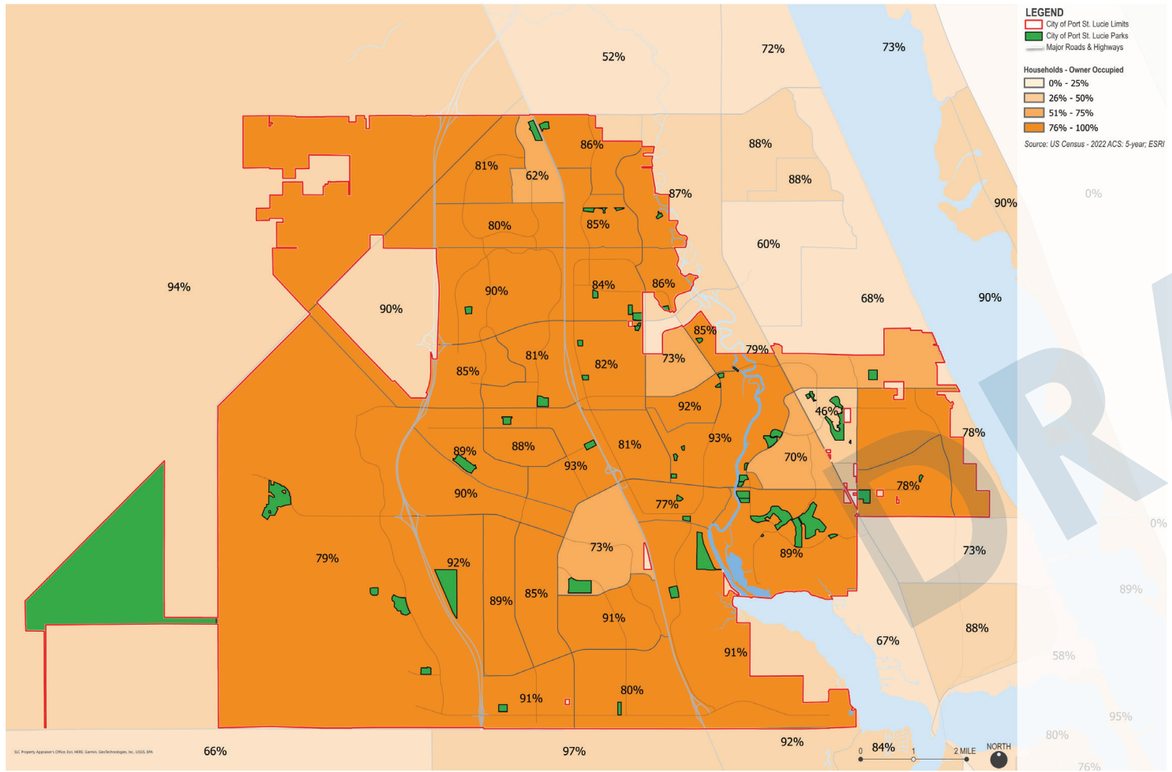
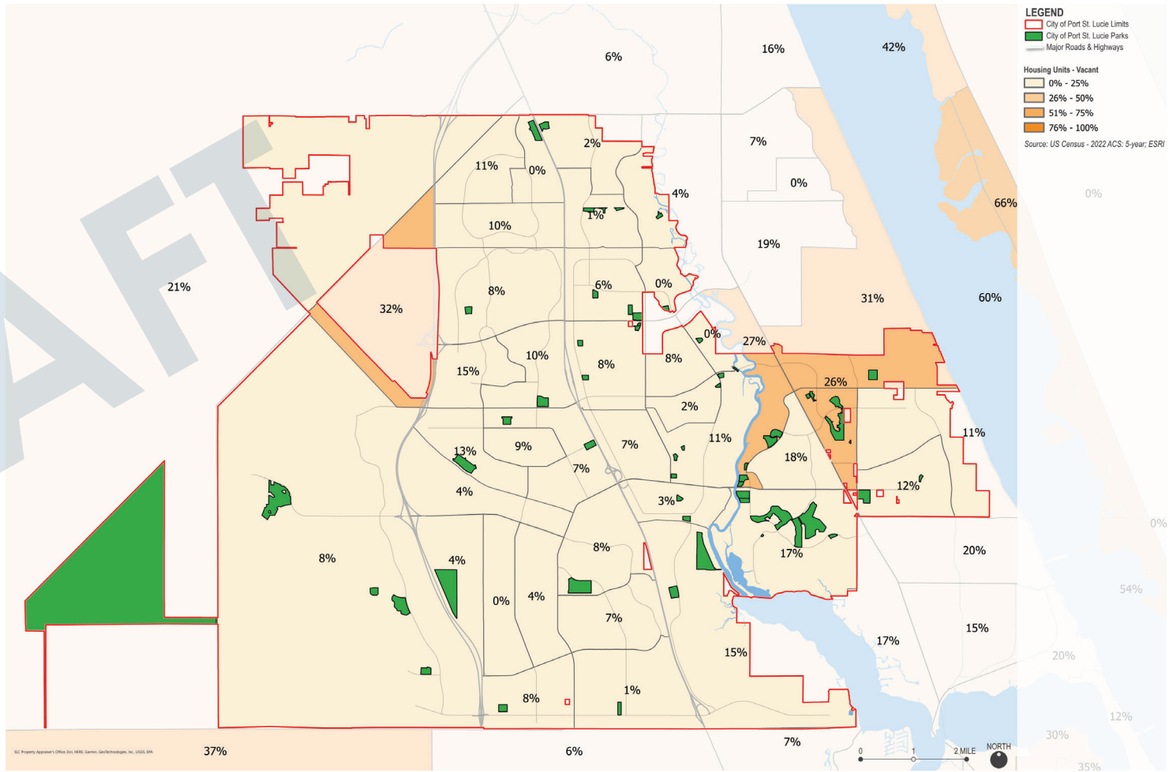



**Figure 2.22 - *Vacant***

The vast majority of tracts have a vacancy below 25%, with many below 10%. However, there are a couple of tracts over 25, including in the Sandhill Crossing area, and west of St. Lucie West, both of which have high seasonal populations.

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## Housing Characteristics

Housing characteristics can provide valuable insights into the conditions in communities. Owner occupied housing typically suggests single family homes, where residents may have access to a yard which provides the opportunity for some basic recreation activities, such as a place to toss a ball or let a dog run. The opposite is rental housing, where residents may not have the same access to spaces for recreation. However, it's important to analyze conditions in context, as some rental housing may be highly amenitized, with a pool, gym, dog run, and other recreational features.

Similarly, the proportion of vacant housing can be an indicator of neighborhood stability. Areas with high vacancy may be suffering from a number of negative conditions and may require closer analysis for adjusting land uses to reduce the vacancy rate.

In Florida specifically, vacancy may suggest properties that are not the primary residence but are a vacation or part-time property. Understanding this condition may inform parks and recreation programming and facilities needs.

As of 2024, Port St. Lucie has an estimated 8% vacancy rate, almost half that of the county and state, which has declined since 2020. The city has a owner-occupancy rate of 85%, well above the county and state, which has also risen over the last four years.

**Figure 2.20 - *Owner-Occupied Housing and Vacancy***

| | Owner Occupied | | Vacant Units | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2020 | 2024 | 2020 | 2024 |
| Port St. Lucie | 79% | 85% | 10% | 8% |
| St. Lucie County | 75% | 79% | 18% | 15% |
| Florida | 66% | 68% | 17% | 15% |

**Source: US Census - ACS 5-year estimates*

### *Housing Implications*

Overall, the city's high percentage of home-owner occupied housing suggests a degree of community stability. Additionally, the trends of falling vacancy and increasing owner-occupancy suggest further stability over the next few years.

However, the conditions of housing around parks can have a direct impact on the park experience and the park's overall success. A more localized analysis of the conditions around parks may be worthwile to understand how part-time vacancy or other factors impact park use and needs.

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## 2.4 PARK SYSTEM CONTEXT

### 2.3.1 Parks & Facilities Inventory

The City of Port St. Lucie's existing parks and recreation system is currently comprised of 49 developed parks, three indoor centers, and 12 undeveloped park sites. The system totals 2,287 acres and is organized into the following park types, a slightly revised framework from the previous master plan:

- Open Space Parks (primarily passive spaces with few amenities, typically a walking trail and benches, meant to serve local populations);
- Neighborhood Parks (designed for more active uses such as ball fields but still relatively small at 6-14 acres and expected to serve the surrounding neighborhood);
- Community Parks (larger spaces comprising more than 15 acres with more substantial facilities and lit ball field or court areas);
- Nature Preserves (spaces to be retained largely in their natural state and which are restricted from development by zoning);
- Special Purpose Parks (facilities which vary in size that serve a particular function such as a swimming pool or golf course); and
- Undeveloped Parks (sites that have been selected for future parks and are in a state of planning, design, or construction, but not open to the public as of December 2024. The City owns approximately 250 acres of undeveloped parkland, and approximately 470 acres of additional parkland will be provided through future development, for a total of 720 acres planned for future parks).

An additional type expected to be added with the development of Torino and Tradition Parks is the Regional Park (very large multi-function spaces catering to a wide variety of users and serving areas within a half-hour drive).

Other public and private recreational resources are located in the City of Port St. Lucie. These include facilities provided by the State of Florida, Martin County, Martin County School Board, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, private apartment complexes, and homeowner associations. Figure 2.10 maps the City's parks and recreation system.

Various apartment complexes and homeowner associations within the City of Port St. Lucie provide their residents with access to private recreational facilities. Typical facilities include swimming pools, tennis courts, and playgrounds. While these facilities may address some specialized recreation needs, they typically do not address the community's larger recreational needs such as multipurpose trails, natural areas, dog parks, and sports fields.

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**Figure 2.23 - *Inventory Map***

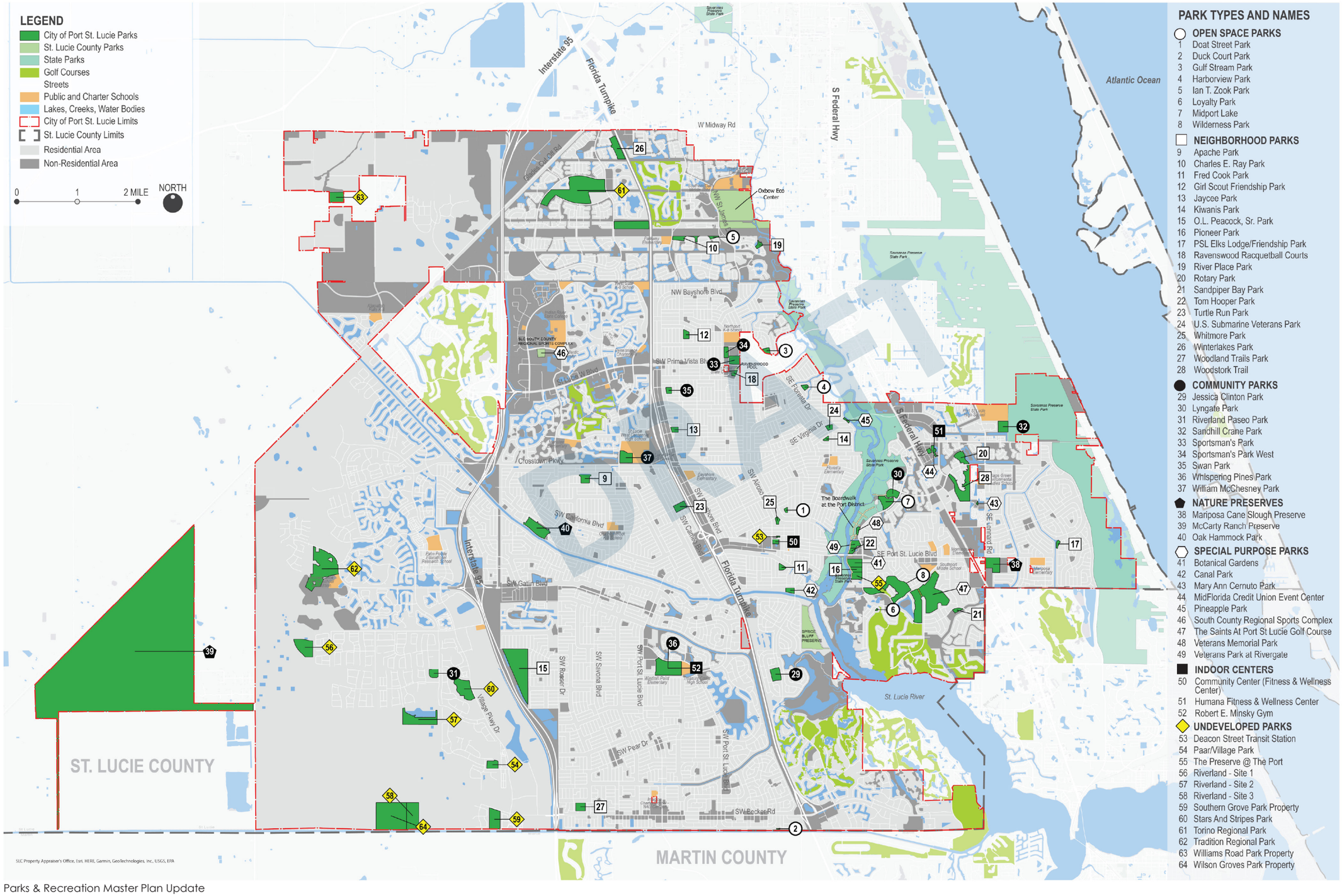

**Figure 2.24 - *Inventory Table***

| Parks and Recreation Master Plan Facilities Inventory | | | | | | Number of Indoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Outdoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID (PRMP24) | Park Name | Acres | Year Established | Recreation Center/Community Center Square Footage | Park Type (2024) | Aerobics/Fitness/Wellness Room | Arts + Craft Room | Computer Lab | Conference Room | Game Room | Gymnasium | Indoor Basketball/Soccer/ Volleyball | Kitchen | Locker Room | Meeting Room | Multi-Purpose/Banquet Room | Education Center | Teen Room | Senior Center | Restrooms | Camping sites | Vending/Concession Stand | Amphitheater/Plaza/Open Space | Tables | Grills | Pavilion/Gazebo/ Shelter | Fountains/Splashpads | Playground | Dog Park | Fitness Stations | Walking Trails (LF or Miles) | Basketball Court | Tennis Court | Racquetball Court | Volleyball Court | Disc Golf course | Shuffleboard Court | Boat Ramp | Fishing Pier | Baseball Fields | Soccer Fields | Football Fields | Pickleball Court | Mulit-purpose Playing Fields | Canoe & Kayak Launch | Softball Fields | Swimming area | Batting Cages |
| 1 | Apache Park | 13.9 | 2009 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Botanical Gardens | 22.8 | 2010 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Canal Park | 9.0 | 2015 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Charles E Ray Park | 8.7 | 2004 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 6 | 2 | 3 | | 1 | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 5 | Community Center | 4.9 | 1999 | 35,000 | Indoor Center | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Deacon Street Transit Station | 1.9 | 2004 | | Undeveloped[1] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Doat Street Park | 2.4 | 1984 | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Duck Court Park | 0.6 | 2021 | ` | Open Space[2] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Fred Cook Park | 5.5 | 1997 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | Girl Scout Friendship Park | 8.4 | 1992 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 11 | Gulf Stream Park | 8.5 | 1988 | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | Harborview Park | 4.8 | 1983 | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | Humana Fitness & Wellness Center | - | | | Indoor Center | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | Ian T Zook Park | 3.5 | 2000 | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | Jaycee Park | 6.2 | 1983 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 8 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 16 | Jessica Clinton Park | 20.0 | 2005 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 8 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| 17 | Kiwanis Park | 3.8 | 1984 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | Loyalty Park | 0.7 | 1984 | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | Lyngate Park | 16.0 | 1976 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 12 | 3 | 2 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |
| 20 | Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve | 19.8 | 2011 | | Preserve | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Mary Ann Cernuto Park | 0.9 | 2007 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 19 | | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | McCarty Ranch Preserve | 600.0 | 2014 | | Preserve | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | Midflorida Credit Union Event Center | 8.7 | | | Special Purpose | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | | 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | Midport Lake | 12.0 | | | Open Space | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | O.L. Peacock Sr Park | 110.0 | 2008 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Oak Hammock Park | 48.7 | 2000 | | Preserve | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 4 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 3 | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | |
| 27 | Paar/Village Park | 14.8 | | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28 | Pineapple Park | 2.0 | | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | Pioneer Park | 22.6 | 2024 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 30 | PSL Elks Lodge Friendship Park | 3.5 | 2005 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 31 | Ravenswood Racquetball Courts | 1.0 | 1982 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 32 | River Place Park | 7.8 | 2000 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 4 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |

[1] *Deacon Street Transit Station Park is currently in design, with an intended type of Special Purpose.*
[2] *Duck Court Park Phase 1 opened in 2024 and Phase 2 is currently in design plan review.*

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| Parks and Recreation Master Plan Facilities Inventory | | | | | | Number of Indoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Outdoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID (PRMP24) | Park Name | Acres | Year Established | Recreation Center/Community Center Square Footage | Park Type (2024) | Aerobics/Fitness/Wellness Room | Arts + Craft Room | Computer Lab | Conference Room | Game Room | Gymnasium | Indoor Basketball/Soccer/ Volleyball | Kitchen | Locker Room | Meeting Room | Multi-Purpose/Banquet Room | Education Center | Teen Room | Senior Center | Restrooms | Camping sites | Vending/Concession Stand | Amphitheater/Plaza/Open Space | Tables | Grills | Pavilion/Gazebo/ Shelter | Fountains/Splashpads | Playground | Dog Park | Fitness Stations | Walking Trails (LF or Miles) | Basketball Court | Tennis Court | Racquetball Court | Volleyball Court | Disc Golf course | Shuffleboard Court | Boat Ramp | Fishing Pier | Baseball Fields | Soccer Fields | Football Fields | Pickleball Court | Mulit-purpose Playing Fields | Canoe & Kayak Launch | Softball Fields | Swimming area | Batting Cages |
| 33 | Riverland - SITE 1 | 14 | | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Riverland - SITE 2 | 55.9 | | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | Riverland - SITE 3 | 57.4 | | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | Riverland Paseo Park | 12.0 | 2024 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | 1 | | |
| 37 | Robert E. Minsky Gym (@ Whispering Pines) | - | 1999 | 11,000 | Indoor Center | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Rotary Park | 8.5 | 1983 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 7 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 39 | Sandhill Crane Park | 19.0 | 1992 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 15 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | 4 | 3 | | | | | | | | 1 | | 3 | | |
| 40 | Sandpiper Bay Park | 11.5 | 1999 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41 | SLC South County Regional Sports Complex | 10.3 | | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | Southern Grove Park Property | 36.7 | TBD | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | Sportsman's Park | 16.0 | 1975 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 5 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | 2 | | |
| 44 | Sportsman's Park West | 13.0 | 1985 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 8 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| 45 | Stars and Stripes Park | 26.5 | 2025 | | Undeveloped[3] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | Swan Park | 6.5 | 1982 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | | |
| 47 | The Preserve at The Port | 12.6 | | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | The Saints at Port St Lucie Golf Course | 185.0 | 2001 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | Tom Hooper Family Park | 2.6 | 2003 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | Torino Regional Park | 224.01 | 2024 | | Undeveloped[4] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 51 | Tradition Regional Park | 124.7 | 2025 | | Undeveloped[5] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 52 | Turtle Run Park | 10.0 | 1993 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 6 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | | |
| 53 | U.S. Submarine Veterans Park | 5.3 | 2020 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 54 | Veterans Memorial Park | 2.5 | 1995 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | Veterans Park at Rivergate | 21.5 | 1983 | | Special Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 14 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 56 | Whispering Pines Park | 37.0 | 1992 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 10 | 2 | 3 | | 1 | | | | | 14 | | 1 | | | | 2 | | 2 | 8 | 1 | | 2 | | |
| 57 | Whitmore Park | 4.4 | 2003 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 58 | Wilderness Park | 85.0 | 2000 | | Nature Preserve | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 59 | William McChesney Park | 24.5 | 1995 | | Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 4 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | | | | | |
| 60 | Williams Road Park Property | 36.1 | TBD | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 61 | Wilson Groves Park Property | 143.9 | TBD | | Undeveloped | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 62 | Winterlakes Park | 28.0 | 2013 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 63 | Woodland Trails Park | 13.0 | 2018 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 64 | Woodstork Trail | 75.0 | 2007 | | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1.3 | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| | | 2,316.81 | | 0 | | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 19 | 5 | 7 | 133 | 27 | 38 | 3 | 17 | 3 | 3 | 4.8 | 9 | 22 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 0 |

*[3] Stars and Stripes Park is currently Under Construction, with an intended type of Special Purpose*
*[4] Torino Park is currently in design, with an intended type of Regional Park*
*[5] Tradition Regional Park is currently in design, with an intended type of Regional Park*

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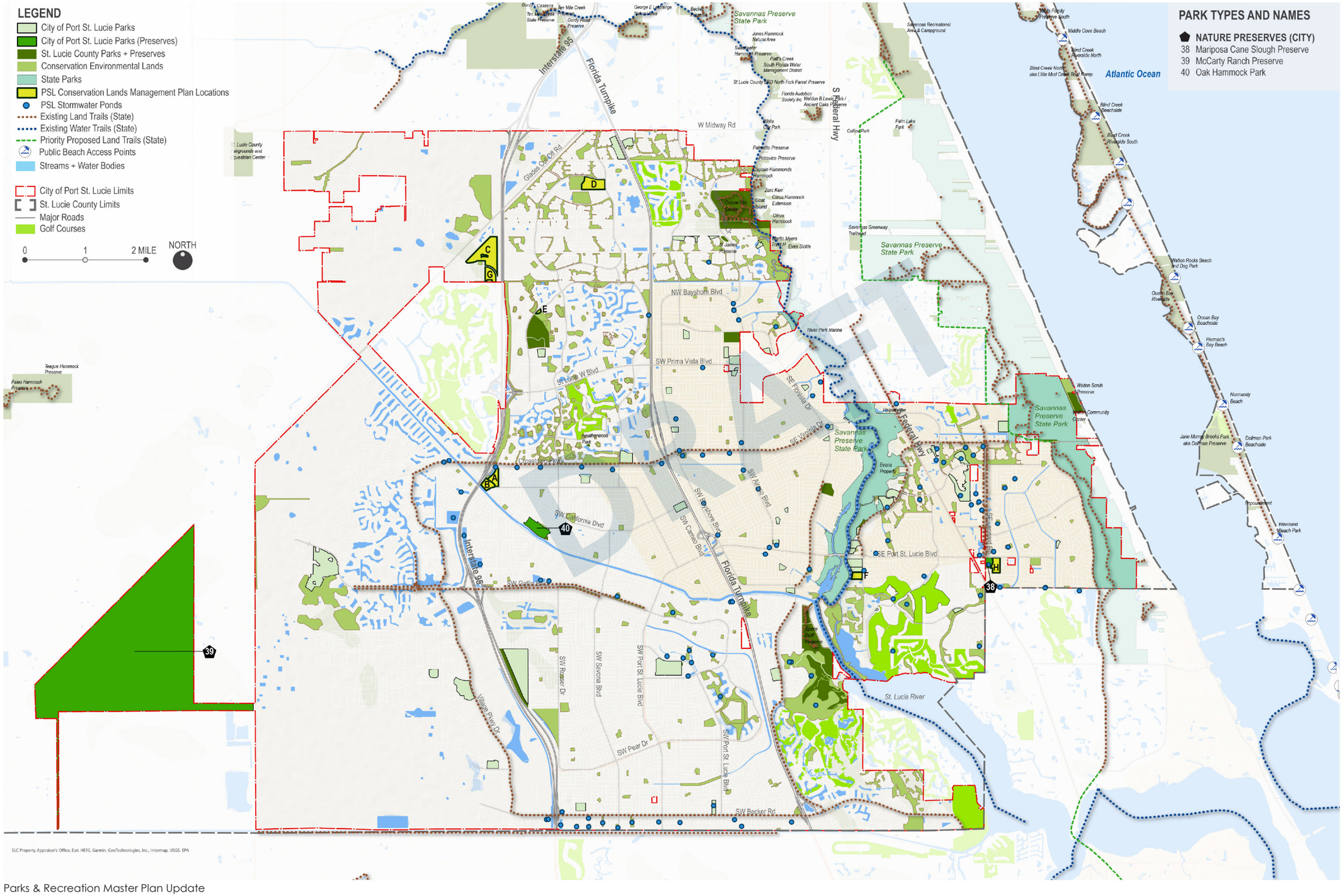
**Figure 2.25 - *Natural Resource Recreation***



**Natural Resource Recreation**

Natural Resource Recreation is a general description for parks and conservation areas primarily designated for passive uses, such as hiking, kayaking, and birdwatching, as well as habitat restoration and protection. This type of recreation has been a leading desire in public input since the 2019 Master Plan.

The Department currently has three parks designated as Nature Preserves:

- Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve: 19.75 acres with a walking trail.
- McCarty Ranch Preserve: 600 acres is available for public outdoor recreation, including opportunities for hiking, biking, fishing, canoing, disc golf, horseback riding, and camping. The preserve totals 3,107 acres and includes +/- 370 acres of water impoundments areas.
- Oak Hammock Park: 48.7 acres, featuring a C-24 canal boat ramp, with floating dock, playground area, parking area with space for 12 trailers, two fishing piers, and three miles of walking trails through oak and palm hammocks.

The County provides the following natural areas:

- Oxbow Eco-Center & Preserve: 225-acre nature preserve with environmental learning center, hosting the Environmental Education and Community Outreach Division of St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department. Includes over 4 miles of trails, with extensive boardwalks and an observation tower.
- Sprice Bluff Preserve: 97-acre site with two trail loops and canoe access. Trails provide an introduction to history of early pioneer settlement and indigenous history in the area.

Additionally, the State manages nearly 7,000 acres in and around the city as part of the Savannas Preserve State Park.

There are also several thousand acres designated as Conservation Environmental Lands, most of which are currently unmanaged. Recent planning efforts (described in Plan Review and labeled here as PSL Conservation Lands Management Plan Locations) have begun looking at prioritizing sites for improvement and public access.

Considering how to better integrate these major existing natural area parks and preserves, including the Oxbow Eco Center and the Savannas Preserve State Park, into the network of trails and other city greenspaces is a key component of this plan.

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## 2.3.2 Park Evaluations

As discussed in the Guiding Principles, research by park experts has shown that all successful parks and public spaces share common qualities:

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

Considering these qualities, the parks were evaluated based on 5 categories and 32 sub-categories using Woodland Trails Neighborhood Park, Jessica Clinton Community Park, and Pioneer Park as a measuring stick for the rest of the parks system.

Parks were evaluated collaboratively by City Staff and the Consultant Team using a three-point scale for the site condition category and five-point scale for the other system categories:

| LEGEND | System | Site |
|---|---|---|
| Performance | Score | |
| Excellent | 5.0 | 3.0 |
| | 4.0 | |
| Fair | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 2.0 | |
| Poor | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| - | n/a | |

Figure 2.26 lists the scores while Figure 2.27 maps them. Detailed results can be found in the Appendix.



### ACCESS
Proximity, Access, and Linkages

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



### COMFORT
Comfort and Image

- **First impression/overall attractiveness**
  *Is the park attractive at first glance?*
- **Feeling of safety**
  *Does the park feel safe at the time of the visit?*
- **Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance**
- **(Exterior /Interior)**
  *Is the park clean and free of litter?*
- **Comfort of places to sit**
  *Are there comfortable places to sit?*
- **Protection from bad weather**
  *Is there shelter in case of bad weather?*
- **Evidence of management/stewardship (Exterior/ Interior)**
  *Is there visual evidence of site management?*
- **Ability to easily supervise and manage the park or facility (Interior)**
  *How difficult it is to supervise the park and its facilities?*
- **Condition and effectiveness of any equipment or operation systems**
  *Is the equipment and/or operating system in good condition?*
- **Branding**
  *Does the park exhibit appropriate branding?*

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## USE
### Uses, Activities, and Sociability

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

## BUILDINGS
### Buildings and Architecture

- **Image and aesthetics**
  *Is the building attractive?*
- **Clarity of entry and connection to the park**
  *Is the building integrated into its surroundings?*
- **Interior layout**
  *Is the layout functional?*
- **Interior finishes, furniture, and equipment**
  *Are the furnishings and equipment inside the building of good condition and quality?*
- **Functioning dimensions of spaces**
  *Does the organization of space support the building's intended function?*
- **Structural integrity**
  *Is there any obvious need for structural repairs?*
- **Building enclosure**
  *Is there any obvious need for repairs to the building shell?*
- **Building systems**
  *Are all the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in working order?*
- **Energy and sustainability**
  *Is there evidence that the building is energy efficient?*

## CONDITION
### Site

- **Site Structures/ Amenities**
  *What are the condition of the park's amenities?*
- **Site Furnishings**
  *What are the condition of the park's furnishings?*
- **Landscape/ Hardscape**
  *What are the conditions of the park's landscapes and hardscapes?*

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**Figure 2.26 - *Park System Evaluations***

| LEGEND Performance | System Score | Site |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 5.0 | 3.0 |
| | 4.0 | |
| Fair | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| | 2.0 | |
| Poor | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| - | n/a | |

| PARK NAME | TYPE | SITE AMENITIES AVERAGE | SITE FURNISHINGS AVERAGE | SITE GENERAL HARDSCAPE LANDSCAPE AVERAGE | SITE EVALUATION AVERAGE | TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES | PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES: | Visibility from a distance | Ease in walking to the park | Clarity of information/ signage | ADA Compliance | Lighting | COMFORT & IMAGE: | First Impression / overall attractiveness | Feeling of safety | Cleanliness/ overall quality of maintenance (Exterior Site) | Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Facilities Interior) | Comfort of places to sit |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL AVERAGES | | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 3.1 |
| Apache Park | Neighborhood | - | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Botanical Gardens | Special | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| C-24 Canal Park | Special | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Elks Friendship Park | Neighborhood | 1.8 | 1.3 | 2.2 | 1.8 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.6 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Charles E. Ray Park | Neighborhood | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Event Center Recreation & Fitness | Facility | 2.7 | - | - | 2.7 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 2.0 |
| Community Center | Facility | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Doat Street Park | Open Space/ Neighborhood | - | 1.0 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Fred Cook Park | Neighborhood | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Girl Scout Friendship Park | Neighborhood | 1.5 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Gulf Stream Park | Open Space | - | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Harbor View | Open Space | - | 1.7 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Ian T Zook Park | Special | - | - | - | - | 3.0 | 3.3 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | - | 2.8 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Jaycee Park & YMCA Branch | Neighborhood | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Jessica Clinton Park | Community | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Kiwanis Park | Neighborhood | 1.0 | 1.6 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Loyalty Park | Open Space | - | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 3.5 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | - | 2.9 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Lyngate Park & Dog Park | Community | 2.1 | 1.9 | 2.0 | - | 3.6 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve | Preserve | - | 2.6 | - | 2.6 | 2.3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Mary Ann Cernuto Park/Plaza | Special | 3.0 | - | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| McCarty Ranch Preserve | Preserve | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| McChesney Park | Community | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Midport Lake | Open Space | 3.0 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Minsky Gym | Facility | 1.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 1.8 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 |
| O.L. Peacock Sr. Park/ Lake | Neighborhood | - | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Oak Hammock Park | Preserve/Special | 1.3 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Parks Yard | Facility | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Pioneer Park/Historic Homes | Special | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.4 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | 3.0 |

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| Protection from bad weather | Evidence of management / stewardship (Exterior Site) | Evidence of management / stewardship (Facility(ies) Interior) | Ability to Easily Supervise and Manage the Park or Facility (Interior) | Condition and Effectiveness of any Equipment or Operating Systems | Branding | USES AND ACTIVITIES & SOCIABILITY: | Mix of uses/things to do | Level of activity | Sense of pride/ownership | Programming Flexibility | Ability of Facility to Effectively Support Current Organized Programming | Marketing or Promotional Efforts for the Facility or Activities | BUILDINGS AND ARCHITECTURE: | Image and Aesthetics | Clarity of Entry and Connections to Park | Interior Layout | Interior Finishes and Furniture and Equipment | Functioning Dimensions of spaces | Structural Integrity | Building Enclosure | Building Systems | Energy and Sustainability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.8 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | - | - | 5.0 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | 2.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 5.0 | - | - | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | 2.3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.3 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 5.0 | - | - | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

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| PARK NAME | TYPE | SITE AMENITIES AVERAGE | SITE FURNISHINGS AVERAGE | SITE GENERAL HARDSCAPE LANDSCAPE AVERAGE | SITE EVALUATION AVERAGE | TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES | PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES: | Visibility from a distance | Ease in walking to the park | Clarity of information/ signage | ADA Compliance | Lighting | COMFORT & IMAGE: | First Impression / overall attractiveness | Feeling of safety | Cleanliness/ overall quality of maintenance (Exterior Site) | Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Facilities Interior) | Comfort of places to sit |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pineapple Snook Park | Neighborhood | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Ravenswood/ Racquetball Courts | Neighborhood | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | - | 2.0 |
| River Place Park | Neighborhood | 1.8 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Riverland Paseo Park | Community | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Rotary Park & PAL | Neighorhood | 1.7 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Sandhill Crane Park | Community | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Sandpiper Bay Park | Neighborhod | - | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Sportsman's Park | Community | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Sportsman's Park West | Community | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Swan Park | Community | 2.0 | 1.3 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| The Saints at PSL Golf Course | Special | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.0 | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Tom Hooper Family Park | Neighborhood | 1.0 | 3.0 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Turtle Run Park | Neighborhood | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| U.S. Submarine Veterans Park | Neighborhood | - | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Veterans Memorial Park | Special | 2.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Veterans Park @ Rivergate | Special | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Whispering Pines Park | Community | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Whitmore Park | Neighborhood | 1.0 | 1.1 | 2.3 | 1.5 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Wilderness Park | Open Space | - | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | - | 3.1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 3.0 |
| Winterlakes Park | Neighborhood | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Woodland Trails Park | Neighborhood | 2.8 | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | - | 5.0 |
| Woodstork Trail | Neighborhood | 1.8 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | 4.0 |

| Protection from bad weather | Evidence of management / stewardship (Exterior Site) | Evidence of management / stewardship (Facility(ies) Interior) | Ability to Easily Supervise and Manage the Park or Facility (Interior) | Condition and Effectiveness of any Equipment or Operating Systems | Branding | USES AND ACTIVITIES & SOCIABILITY: | Mix of uses/things to do | Level of activity | Sense of pride/ownership | Programming Flexibility | Ability of Facility to Effectively Support Current Organized Programming | Marketing or Promotional Efforts for the Facility or Activities | BUILDINGS AND ARCHITECTURE: | Image and Aesthetics | Clarity of Entry and Connections to Park | Interior Layout | Interior Finishes and Furniture and Equipment | Functioning Dimensions of spaces | Structural Integrity | Building Enclosure | Building Systems | Energy and Sustainability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 4.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 5.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| 1.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 4.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.0 | 4.0 | - | - | - | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5.0 | 5.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | - | - | 5.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

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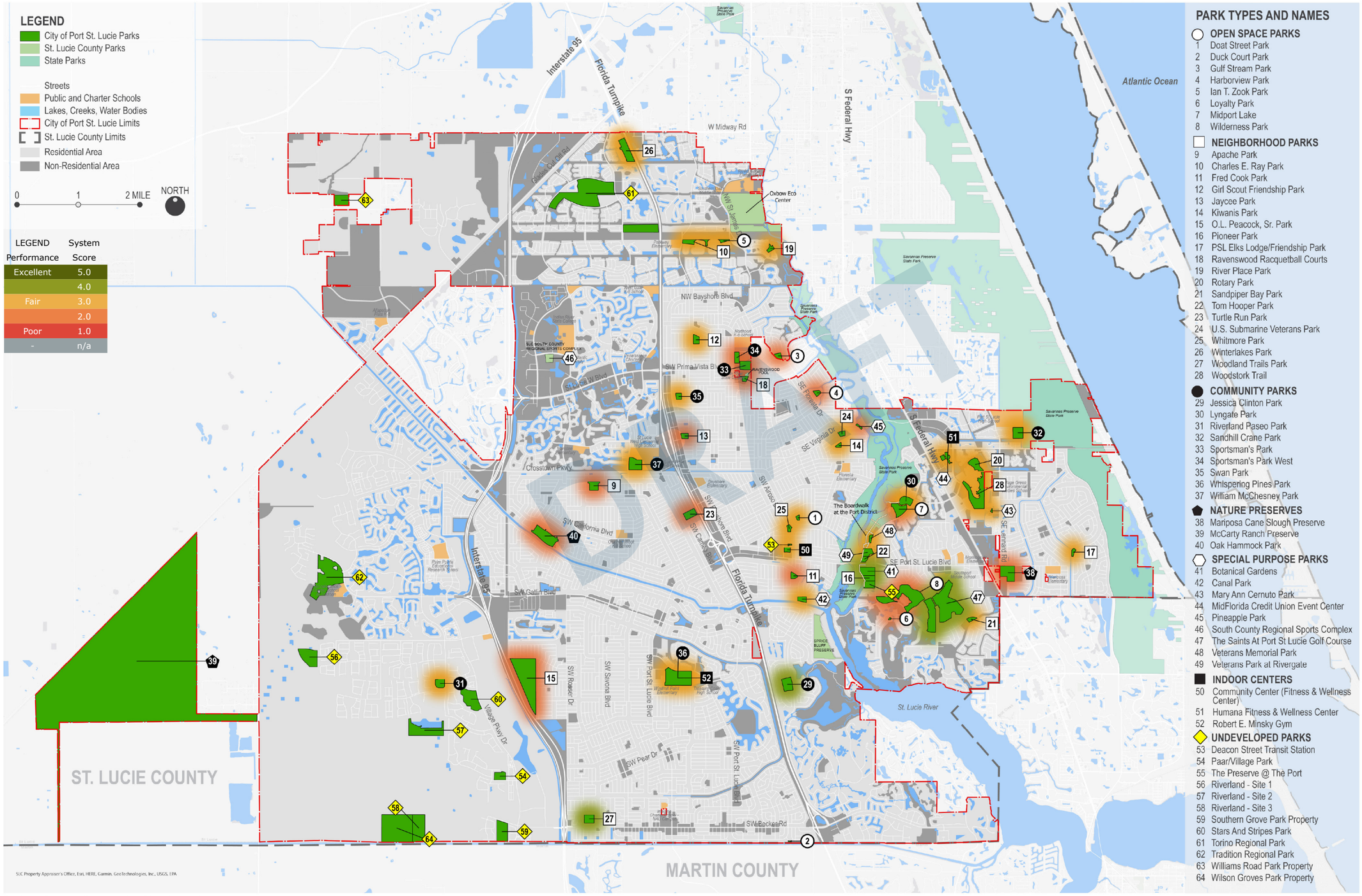
**Figure 2.27 - *Park Evaluations Summary Map***



**General Park and Facility Evaluation Summary Findings**

Based on the evaluation of Port St. Lucie's parks and recreation system using the criteria previously described and Woodland Trails Neighborhood Park, Jessica Clinton Community Park, and Pioneer Park as the measuring stick, it appears that the City's parks and recreation system is in fair condition, with an overall score of 3.3. The system displayed a variety of strengths that the Department should build on, as well as some opportunities to improve particular elements and locations. These will be further explored during the Vision Phase of the project. Following is an overview of these strengths and opportunities.

## Proximity, Access, and Linkages

### (+) STRENGTHS



- Many of the City's parks provide adequate visibility into the park from at least one or two sides with clear sight lines into the park. Jessica Clinton Park, Loyalty Park, Mary Ann Cenuto Park/ Plaza, Sandpiper Bay Park, Doat Street Park, Whitemore Park, Wilderness Park, and Woodland Trails Park are great examples of parks that have clear visibility into the park.



- Some of the City's parks offer users the opportunity to walk to the park along sidewalks or low traffic streets that connect the park to the surrounding neighborhood. A great example are the sidewalks along SW Calmar Avenue and the low traffic and low stress streets that surround Woodland Trails Park and allow users to get to the park.

- Many of the City's parks provide adequate ADA access for users. The City's ADA Transition Plan ensures that the City continue to enhance ADA access to parks as funding becomes available.




- Some of the City's parks provide an exemplary hierarchy of signage including gateway signage, location map, identification, directional, and educational signage. Notable examples include Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, Sandpiper Bay Park, Veterans Memorial Park, and Woodland Trails Park.

### (-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While many of the City's parks are connected to the surrounding neighborhoods by sidewalks or low volume, low traffic streets, many do not. Additionally, many of the sidewalks and streets do not include shade trees, which makes walking to the park during hot Florida days unpleasant. Additionally, some of the sidewalks are located directly adjacent to fast moving traffic without a buffer to separate pedestrians from the traffic. For

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example, sidewalks along SE Becker Road don't provide residents with a very comfortable walking experience. The City should continue to build sidewalks and plant trees along sidewalks and streets that connect to parks wherever possible.




- While some of the City's parks contain gateway and regulatory signs, many lack a hierarchy of signage options to inform and educate users. Additional signage opportunities include a park system location map, park amenity location map and amenity directional signage (depending on the size and complexity of the park), amenity signs, and educational interpretive signs.



- There is an opportunity to improve lighting in many of the City's parks. This includes installing pedestrian, vehicular, amenity, and signage lighting that facilitate the use of parks before dawn and after dusk. Additionally, the City should continue to update park lighting to include LED, dark-sky, down-lighting.

## Comfort and Image

### (+) STRENGTHS



- Most of the City's parks offer an exemplary first impression and overall attractiveness with some parks exhibiting higher degrees of design, maintenance standards, and branding than others. Pioneer Park stands out from the rest of the park system with a "Wow" effect. The Botanical Gardens and Woodland Trails Park also offer a strong first impression and overall attractiveness.



- Most of the City's parks exhibit adequate cleanliness and overall quality of maintenance, management, and stewardship in the exterior and interior of the park buildings. These qualities have also helped foster a sense of safety and pride in the City's parks. The Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, and Woodland Trails Park are notable examples that stand out from the rest.

- Most of the City's parks include inviting, neat, clean, and sensorially pleasant places to sit that are located in pleasant areas. Notable examples are Botanical Gardens and Woodland Trails Park.



- Most of the City's parks with indoor centers contain buildings that facilitate the ability to easily supervise and manage the park allowing for clear views of major amenities, entrances, and exist from a central location.

- Most of the City's parks contain equipment and operating systems that are in good condition, effective, and well

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maintained. The Botanical Gardens, Pioneer Park, and The Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course are notable examples that stand out from the rest of the parks system.



### (-) OPPORTUNITIES

- While many of the City's parks are well maintained, clean, provide a great overall first impression, and strong branding, others don't exhibit the same type of quality standards. The City should continue to improve the quality of parks to ensure that parks across the system exhibit similar quality standards.



- While most of the City's parks include inviting, neat, and clean places to sit, much of the seating is fixed, which does not allow users to move chairs or benches. There are also many parks that don't provide shade or shelters for refuge during inclement weather. This is particularly true for many playgrounds that don't have shade.

## Uses, Activities, and Sociability

### (+) STRENGTHS




- Many of the City's parks provide a mix of things to do for a variety of users including children, adults, and seniors. This is particularly important for parks in Port St. Lucie given the City's multi-generational nature. Parks that provide an adequate mix of things to do for users of all ages include the Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, and Woodland Trails Park.



- Many of the City's parks contain high levels of activity. The Botanical Gardens, Community Center, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, McChesney Park, Sportsman's Park, and Whispering Pines Park are parks that have high levels of activity.

- Many of the City's parks exhibit a high level of pride and ownership and display limited to no signs of litter, vandalism, misuse of facilities, lack of maintenance, and upkeep. The Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course, and Woodland Trails Park are great examples of parks that exhibit high levels of pride and ownership.



- Many of the City's parks are adequately planned and spatially programmed to facilitate organized programming due to the proper size and location of facilities and amenities. The Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, and Pioneer Park are notable examples.

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- Many of the City's parks provide opportunities for multi-use and flexible use due to adequate facilities, spaces, support systems such as parking, shelters, water, and other elements. Notable examples are The Botanical Gardens and Pioneer Park.

- Some of the City's parks have strong marketing and promotional efforts to make the community aware of available programs, activities, and facilities. Notable examples are The Botanical Gardens, Jessica Clinton Park, Pioneer Park, the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course, and Woodland Trails Park.





## (-) OPPORTUNITIES

- While many of the City's parks include a mix of things to do for users of various age groups, others do not. This is particularly important for parks in Port St. Lucie as the community continues to grow and diversify. The City should continue to look for opportunities to diversify parks and recreation facilities and program offerings to cater to a park users of all ages; particularly in Neighborhood Parks. This would also enhance the level of activity in parks as well as sense of pride and ownership.



- While many of the City's parks are adequately planned and spatially programmed to facilitate organized programming, others are not. Parking continues to be a challenge in key parks; particularly Community Parks such as Sportman's Park, Swan Park, and Lyngate Park.



- While many of the City's parks provide opportunities for multi-use and flexible use due to adequate facilities, spaces, others do not. As the City continues to improve parks, there is an opportunity to ensure that park improvements are completed in away that facilitates multi-purpose and multi-use.

- While some of the City's parks have effective marketing and promotional efforts, others do not. The City should continue to explore strategies to promote the City's parks through-low tech and high-tech strategies including signage, wayfinding, partner cross-marketing, and social media.



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## Buildings and Architecture

### (+) STRENGTHS



- Most of the City's park buildings provide an attractive first impression. They have attractive proportions, materials, and contribute positively to the context of the park and neighborhood setting. Notable examples are buildings at the Botanical Gardens, Event Center Recreation & Fitness, the Community Center, and the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course.



- Many of the City's park buildings contained systems that were in good operating conditions and elements that conserved energy and promoted sustainability such as LED light fixtures, solar powered emergency light fixtures, water conserving faucets, auto-flush toilets and urinals, etc. Notable examples are buildings at the Botanical Gardens, Event Center Recreation & Fitness, the Community Center, and the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course.



- Many of the City's park buildings have well-organized, efficient, and functioning interior layouts, finishes, furnishings, and equipment. Additionally, entries and building orientations are clearly defined and facilitate intuitive access and circulation. Notable examples are buildings at the Botanical Gardens and Event Center Recreation & Fitness.

### (-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While most of the City's park buildings scored well, two buildings in particular are in need of improvements - Jaycee Park building and Minsky Gym. These buildings are reaching the end of their functional life and should be considered for improvements, potentially complete renovations.

- There is an opportunity to add a maintenance building in the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course. The existing building has also reached the end of its functional life and needs to be replaced.



- There is also an opportunity to improve the interior finishes, furniture, and equipment in the Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course.

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## Site Conditions

### (+) STRENGTHS



- Collectively, most of the amenities in the City's parks such as the fields, courts, pavilions, outdoor gyms, restrooms, etc. are in good to fair condition with some parks showing a higher degree of quality and standards than others. Park amenities that appear to be in excellent conditions are those located in The Botanical Gardens, C-24 Canal Park, Community Center, Mary Ann Cernuto Park/ Plaza, Midport Lake, and Pioneer Park.



- Some of the furnishings in the City's parks such as benches, bike racks, picnic tables, drinking fountains, trash/ recycling receptacles, etc. are also in excellent to fair conditions. Over time, the City has continued to replace furnishings to be consistent with the City's standards. Park furnishings that stand out from the rest of the parks are those located in The Botanical Gardens and Pioneer Park.

- The landscape and hardscape in some of City's parks are also in excellent to fair conditions. Landsacpe and hardscape that stand out from the rest of the parks are those located in The Botanical Gardens and Pioneer Park.

### (-) OPPORTUNITIES



- Some parks have amenities that are approaching the end of their use life and need to be replaced in the next 1 to 3 years. These are amenities in Elks Friendship Park, Girl Scout Friendship Park, Jaycee Park, Kiwanis Park, McChesney Park, Minsky Gym, Oak Hammock Park, Ravenswood/ Racquetball Courts, Rivers Place Park, Rotary Park & PAL, Sportman's Park, Tom Hooper Family Park, Turtle Run Park, Veterans Park @ Rivergate, Whispering Pines Park, Whitemore Park, and Woodstork Park.

- Some parks have furnishings that are also approaching the end of their use life and need to be replaced in the next 1 to 3 years. These are furnishings in Apche Park, Elks Friendship Park, Doat Street Park, Girl Scout Friendship Park, Harbor View, Jaycee Park, Kiwanis Park, Lyngate Park, McChesney Park, Midport Park, O.L. Peacock Park, Oak Hammock Park, River Place Park, Rotary Park & PAL, Sandhill Crane Park, Sportman's Park, Swan Park, Turtle Run Park, Veterans Park @ Rivergate, Whispering Pines Park, Whitemore Park, and Woodstork Park.

- Some parks have landscapes and hardscapes that have to be refreshed and improved in the next 1 to 3 years. These are landscapes and hardscapes in Gulf Stream Park, Jaycee Park, McChesney Park, Minsky Gym, Ravenswood/ Racquetball Courts, Sandhill Crane Park, Sportman's Park, Swan Park, Turtle Run Park, Veterans Park @ Rivergate, Whispering Pines Park, Whitemore Park, and Woodstork Park.

The strengths and opportunities discussed in the previous pages will be considered during the Vision phase to provide park specific recommendations in collaboration with staff.

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### 2.3.3 Placer.ai Data[1]

The City has contracted with Placer Labs to receive data on how individuals move throughout the city, including where they spend time. The data is collected based on the location of cell phones and provides valuable insights for parks and recreation, transportation, and economic development planning. The following datasets all offer relevant data that could inform parks and recreation decision-making.

**Number of Visits**

Visits is the sum of times that individuals entered a park site and spent at least 15 minutes. The number of visits in this context represents the total foot traffic or attendance at each park. It indicates park popularity and usage, measured in thousands. Higher numbers suggest greater community engagement and appeal, while lower numbers may indicate underutilization or limited accessibility. In total, the City of Port St. Lucie parks and recreation system received 3,300,205 visits.

High-Visitation Locations:
Whispering Pines Park tops the list with 433,102 visits, significantly outpacing the other parks. Other high-traffic locations include McChesney Park (323,600 visits) and Sportsman's Park (281,804 visits), showing a strong visitor presence at these sites. Jessica Clinton Park and Swan Park also exhibit notable visitation with 192,487 and 184,693 visits, respectively, indicating their popularity.

Moderate-Visitation Parks:
Winterlakes Park (158,974 visits) and Pioneer Park (140,832 visits, covering June 15 - Dec 31) show moderate visitor traffic, ranking well among the middle tier. Lyngate Park and Sportsman's West Visit follow with 133,417 and 124,232 visits, respectively, suggesting a consistent, but less intense, visitation rate.

Low-Visitation Locations:
A group of parks falls under the 100,000 visits mark, including locations such as Minsky Gym (106,104 visits), PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center (102,356 visits), and Sandhill Crane (100,177 visits). Botanical Gardens and Turtle Run each receive visits in the 90,000 range, marking them as relatively low-traffic spots compared to the top parks.

Minimal Visitation:
A number of parks show lower visitation figures, such as Ravenswood Racquetball Courts (13,733 visits), Whitmore Park (10,762 visits), and Fred Cook Park (10,015 visits). Mary Ann Cernuto Park (2,871 visits) and Apache Park (1,546 visits) stand at the very bottom of the list, highlighting their minimal attraction or seasonal appeal.

The data shows a marked drop-off in visitation as the parks decrease in rank. The highest-visited parks are significantly more popular, suggesting that these parks are central recreational hubs or are strategically located to attract a larger crowd. The parks with the lowest visitation could indicate either less accessibility, seasonal closures, or less awareness of these locations.

[1] "Placer Labs Inc. has provided certain input data to the City of Port St. Lucie, Florida, but was not involved in any of the analysis, conclusions or recommendations contained in this report and is not responsible for any entity's decisions made based on this report."

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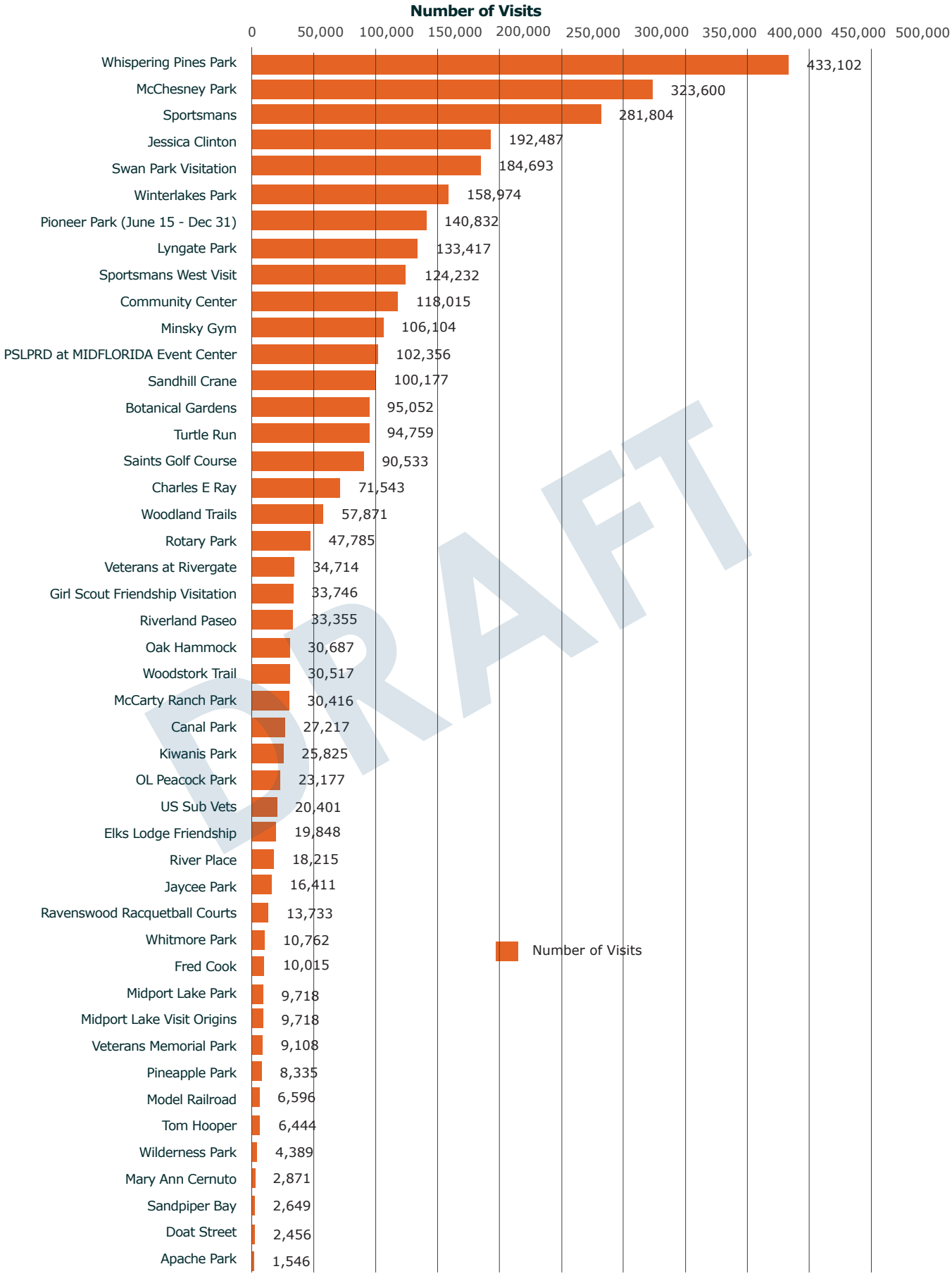
Number of Visits
0
50,000
100,000
150,000
200,000
250,000
300,000
350,000
400,000
450,000
500,000
Whispering Pines Park 433,102
McChesney Park 323,600
Sportsmans 281,804
Jessica Clinton 192,487
Swan Park Visitation 184,693
Winterlakes Park 158,974
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 140,832
Lyngate Park 133,417
Sportsmans West Visit 124,232
Community Center 118,015
Minsky Gym 106,104
PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 102,356
Sandhill Crane 100,177
Botanical Gardens 95,052
Turtle Run 94,759
Saints Golf Course 90,533
Charles E Ray 71,543
Woodland Trails 57,871
Rotary Park 47,785
Veterans at Rivergate 34,714
Girl Scout Friendship Visitation 33,746
Riverland Paseo 33,355
Oak Hammock 30,687
Woodstork Trail 30,517
McCarty Ranch Park 30,416
Canal Park 27,217
Kiwanis Park 25,825
OL Peacock Park 23,177
US Sub Vets 20,401
Elks Lodge Friendship 19,848
River Place 18,215
Jaycee Park 16,411
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 13,733
Whitmore Park 10,762
Fred Cook 10,015
Midport Lake Park 9,718
Midport Lake Visit Origins 9,718
Veterans Memorial Park 9,108
Pineapple Park 8,335
Model Railroad 6,596
Tom Hooper 6,444
Wilderness Park 4,389
Mary Ann Cernuto 2,871
Sandpiper Bay 2,649
Doat Street 2,456
Apache Park 1,546
Number of Visits

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**Number of Visits with Enhanced Placer Labs Methodology**

During the planning process, Placer Labs modified their counting methodology. Visits in the modified methodology are the sum of times that individuals entered or walked through a site. The number of visits in this context represents the total foot traffic or attendance at each park, which total 5,161,803 for the entire park and recreation system. That is 1,861,598 more visits than calculated with Placer Lab's previous methodology.

High-Visitation Locations:
Whispering Pines Park leads with 684,317 visits. McChesney Park (601,992 visits) and Sportsman's Park (379,046 visits) continue to attract significant local attention. Jessica Clinton Park and Pioneer Park also show considerable traffic, with 323,500 and 244,202 (June 15 - Dec 31) visits, respectively. A full year of visitation data for Pioneer Park between June 15, 2024 - June 15, 2025 shows 387,300 visits, which would make Pioneer Park the third visited park in the City.

Moderate-Visitation Parks:
Robert E. Minskey Gym (110,502 visits), Woodland Trails Park (104,961 visits) and PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center (102,356 visits) are in the moderate range of visits, followed closely by Saints Golf Course (90,751 visits) and Charles E Ray Park and Woodstork Trail/ Hillmoor Lake park (89,260 visits and 89,237 visits, respectively).

Low-Visitation Locations:
Parks like Riverland Paseo Park (55,973 visits), Girlscout Friendship Park (55,529 visits), and US Submarine Veterans Park (48,995 visits) exhibit lower, but still notable, levels of visitation. Jaycee Park and O.L. Peacock Senior Park follow with 47,851 and 47,760 visits, respectively, showing a consistent, though lesser, pull.

Minimal Visitation:
Parks such as Tom Hooper Park (19,910 visits), Pineapple Park (19,426 visits), and Whitmore Trail (17,190 visits) are attracting fewer visitors, reflecting possible niche appeal or limited local interest. Loyalty Park (2,608 visits), Harborview Park (962 visits), Ian T. Zook Park (642 visits), and Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve (618 visits) have the smallest local engagement, with very few visitors recorded.

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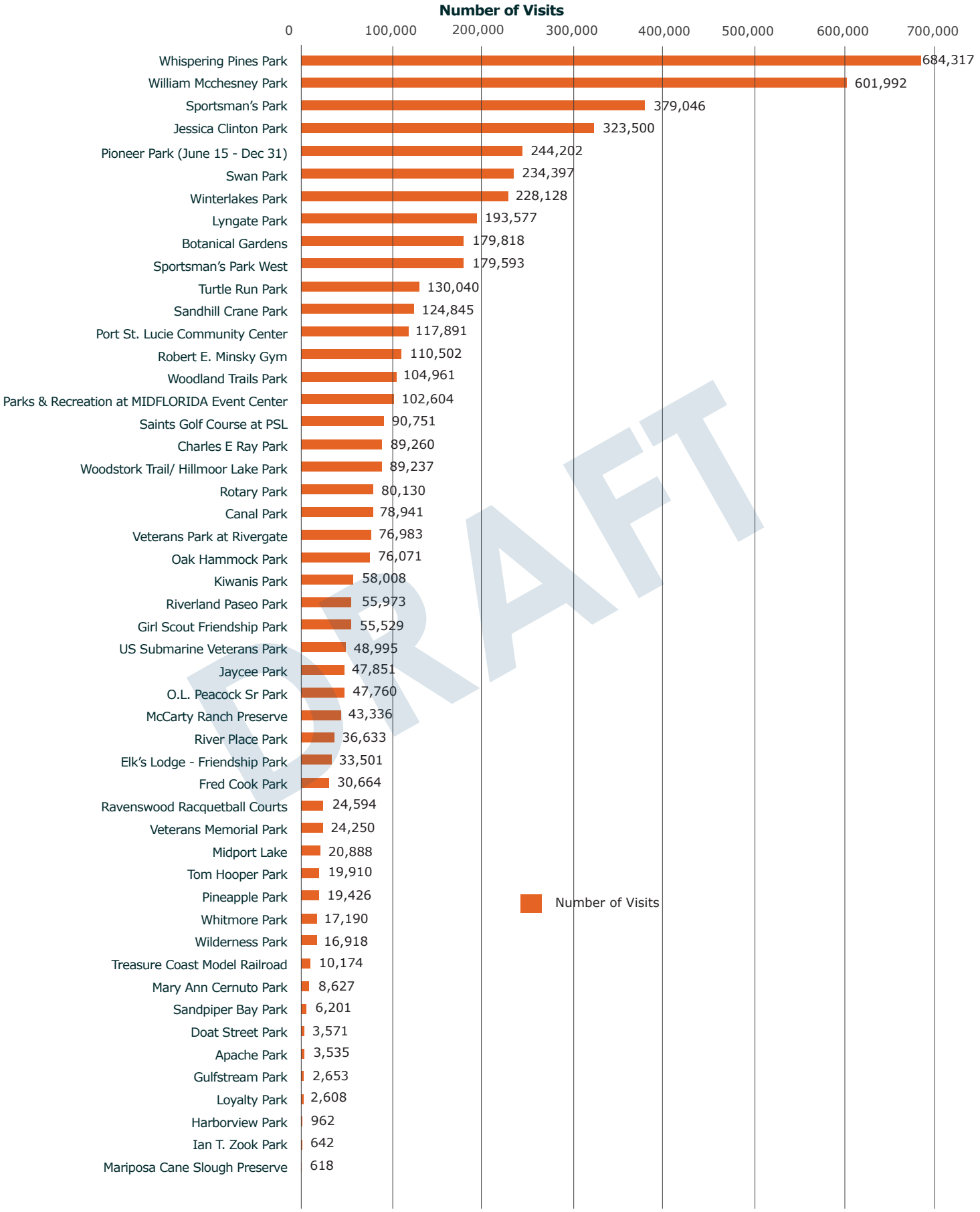
Number of Visits
0
100,000
200,000
300,000
400,000
500,000
600,000
700,000
Whispering Pines Park 684,317
William Mcchesney Park 601,992
Sportsman's Park 379,046
Jessica Clinton Park 323,500
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 244,202
Swan Park 234,397
Winterlakes Park 228,128
Lyngate Park 193,577
Botanical Gardens 179,818
Sportsman's Park West 179,593
Turtle Run Park 130,040
Sandhill Crane Park 124,845
Port St. Lucie Community Center 117,891
Robert E. Minsky Gym 110,502
Woodland Trails Park 104,961
Parks & Recreation at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 102,604
Saints Golf Course at PSL 90,751
Charles E Ray Park 89,260
Woodstork Trail/ Hillmoor Lake Park 89,237
Rotary Park 80,130
Canal Park 78,941
Veterans Park at Rivergate 76,983
Oak Hammock Park 76,071
Kiwanis Park 58,008
Riverland Paseo Park 55,973
Girl Scout Friendship Park 55,529
US Submarine Veterans Park 48,995
Jaycee Park 47,851
O.L. Peacock Sr Park 47,760
McCarty Ranch Preserve 43,336
River Place Park 36,633
Elk's Lodge - Friendship Park 33,501
Fred Cook Park 30,664
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 24,594
Veterans Memorial Park 24,250
Midport Lake 20,888
Tom Hooper Park 19,910
Pineapple Park 19,426
Whitmore Park 17,190
Wilderness Park 16,918
Treasure Coast Model Railroad 10,174
Mary Ann Cernuto Park 8,627
Sandpiper Bay Park 6,201
Doat Street Park 3,571
Apache Park 3,535
Gulfstream Park 2,653
Loyalty Park 2,608
Harborview Park 962
Ian T. Zook Park 642
Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve 618
Number of Visits

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**Number of Visits, Ranked by PSL Resident or Non-Residents Visit**

Park visits were also analyzed based on PSL residents versus non-residents. Of the total 3,296,545 park visits, 72% (2,367,525 visits) were made by PSL residents while 28% (929,020 visits) were made by non-residents. Here's a comparison summary of the PSL Resident vs. Non-Residents Visits data:

High-Visitation Locations:
Whispering Pines Park leads with 336,659 PSL resident visits, similar to its total visitation figure, indicating high local popularity. McChesney Park (220,927 visits) and Sportsman's Park (199,492 visits) continue to attract significant local attention. Jessica Clinton Park and Swan Park also show considerable local traffic, with 144,387 and 138,986 visits, respectively.

Moderate-Visitation Parks:
Winterlakes Park (104,185 visits) and Lyngate Park (99,512 visits) are in the moderate range for PSL residents, followed closely by Sportsman's West Visit (96,554 visits) and Pioneer Park (94,798 visits, June 15 - Dec 31). Minsky Gym and Community Center each draw roughly 90,000 visits, demonstrating their role as active community hubs.

Low-Visitation Locations:
Parks like PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center (79,452 visits), Turtle Run (71,305 visits), and Sandhill Crane (59,383 visits) exhibit lower, but still notable, levels of visitation. Saints Golf Course and Botanical Gardens follow with 51,961 and 51,174 visits, respectively, showing a consistent, though lesser, pull.

Minimal Visitation:
Parks such as Woodland Trails (45,494 visits), Rotary Park (35,223 visits), and Woodstork Trail (22,179 visits) are clearly attracting fewer visitors, reflecting possible niche appeal or limited local interest. Parks with particularly low PSL resident visits include Pineapple Park (6,295 visits), Veterans Memorial Park (5,490 visits), and Tom Hooper (5,012 visits), among others. Doat Street (1,648 visits), Mary Ann Cernuto (1,626 visits), Sandpiper Bay (1,468 visits), and Apache Park (925 visits) have the smallest local engagement, with very few visitors recorded.

A strong correlation exists between overall and PSL resident visits, suggesting that the most popular parks in terms of total visitation are also the primary spots for local residents. The higher-traffic parks, such as Whispering Pines Park, maintain a steady draw for PSL residents, likely due to better amenities or strategic location. Parks with the lowest visitation seem to cater to more specialized or smaller groups, or possibly face challenges in attracting local residents.

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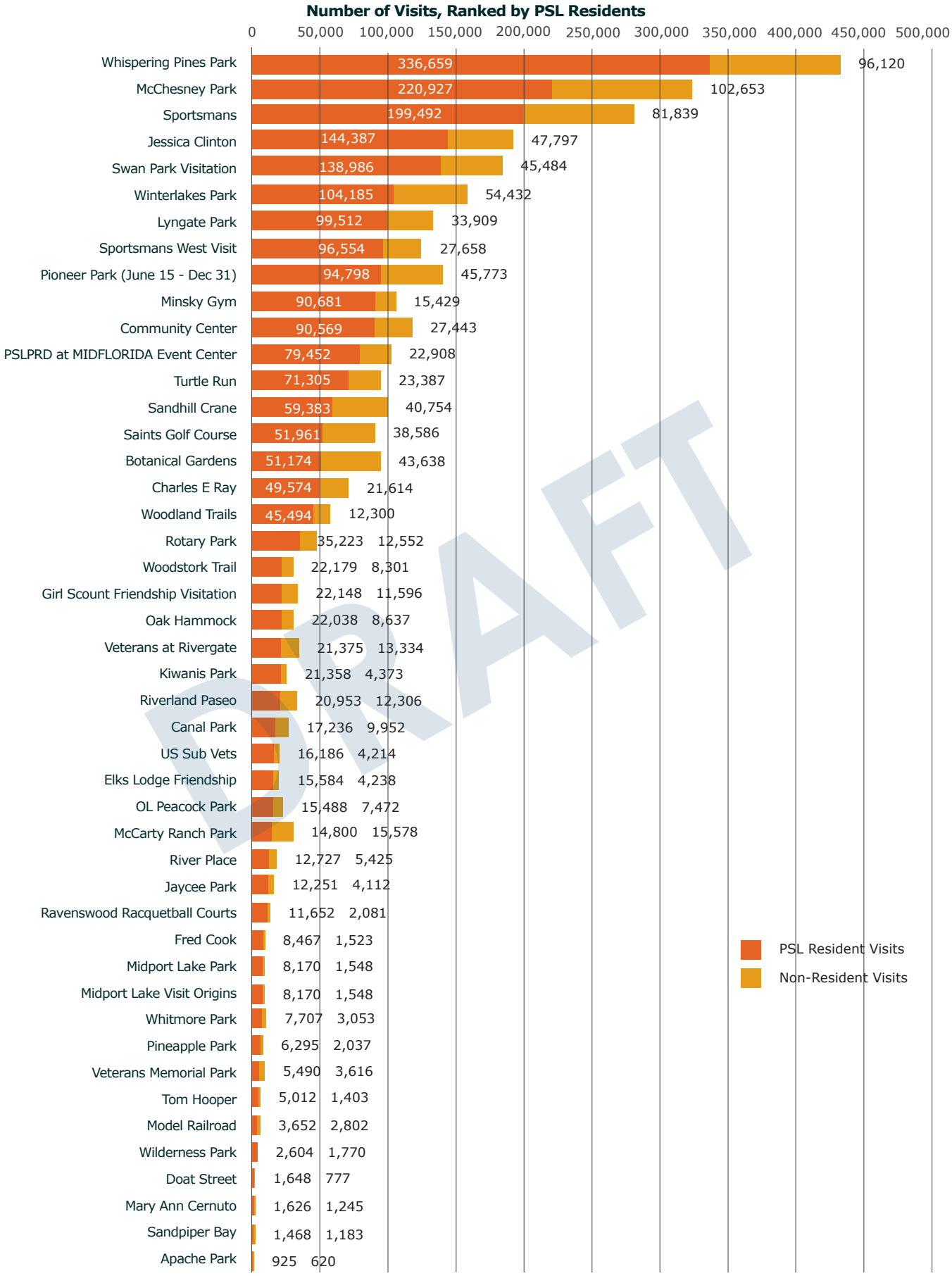
Number of Visits, Ranked by PSL Residents
0
50,000
100,000
150,000
200,000
250,000
300,000
350,000
400,000
450,000
500,000
Whispering Pines Park 336,659 96,120
McChesney Park 220,927 102,653
Sportsmans 199,492 81,839
Jessica Clinton 144,387 47,797
Swan Park Visitation 138,986 45,484
Winterlakes Park 104,185 54,432
Lyngate Park 99,512 33,909
Sportsmans West Visit 96,554 27,658
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 94,798 45,773
Minsky Gym 90,681 15,429
Community Center 90,569 27,443
PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 79,452 22,908
Turtle Run 71,305 23,387
Sandhill Crane 59,383 40,754
Saints Golf Course 51,961 38,586
Botanical Gardens 51,174 43,638
Charles E Ray 49,574 21,614
Woodland Trails 45,494 12,300
Rotary Park 35,223 12,552
Woodstork Trail 22,179 8,301
Girl Scount Friendship Visitation 22,148 11,596
Oak Hammock 22,038 8,637
Veterans at Rivergate 21,375 13,334
Kiwanis Park 21,358 4,373
Riverland Paseo 20,953 12,306
Canal Park 17,236 9,952
US Sub Vets 16,186 4,214
Elks Lodge Friendship 15,584 4,238
OL Peacock Park 15,488 7,472
McCarty Ranch Park 14,800 15,578
River Place 12,727 5,425
Jaycee Park 12,251 4,112
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 11,652 2,081
Fred Cook 8,467 1,523
Midport Lake Park 8,170 1,548
Midport Lake Visit Origins 8,170 1,548
Whitmore Park 7,707 3,053
Pineapple Park 6,295 2,037
Veterans Memorial Park 5,490 3,616
Tom Hooper 5,012 1,403
Model Railroad 3,652 2,802
Wilderness Park 2,604 1,770
Doat Street 1,648 777
Mary Ann Cernuto 1,626 1,245
Sandpiper Bay 1,468 1,183
Apache Park 925 620
PSL Resident Visits
Non-Resident Visits

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**Number of Visitors**

Visitors represents the total unique individuals that visit the site, regardless of the number of times an individual may have visited a site. Like visits, it also indicates park popularity and usage. Higher numbers suggest greater community engagement and appeal, while lower numbers may indicate underutilization or limited accessibility.

The analysis of park visitation data reveals key insights into usage patterns across various public spaces. Whispering Pines Park emerges as the most popular destination, attracting 84,552 visitors, followed closely by Pioneer Park (77,234 visitors) and Botanical Gardens (62,402 visitors). These parks demonstrate a strong appeal, due to their range of amenities, unique features, or prominence within the community.

Mid-tier parks such as McChesney Park (57,185 visitors), Sportsman's (55,899 visitors), and Jessica Clinton Park (52,457 visitors) also show significant engagement, suggesting they serve as important recreational hubs. In contrast, smaller facilities such as Mary Ann Cernuto Park (731 visitors), Apache Park (841 visitors), and Doat Street (886 visitors) receive substantially fewer visitors, indicating localized or specialized use.

Some parks, such as Swan Park (24,608 visitors) and Sandhill Crane (20,461 visitors), appear underutilized relative to their potential, especially given their central locations or unique features. Meanwhile, niche facilities like the PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center (18,322 visitors) and Rotary Park (15,318 visitors) see moderate engagement, reflecting their specialized programming or limited target audience.

Overall, the disparity in visitation highlights opportunities for targeted interventions. Popular parks may benefit from enhanced infrastructure to manage high usage, while underutilized parks could focus on promotional campaigns, improved accessibility, or the development of new amenities to attract a broader audience. These findings provide actionable insights for strategic resource allocation and park development planning to maximize community engagement and optimize park usage.

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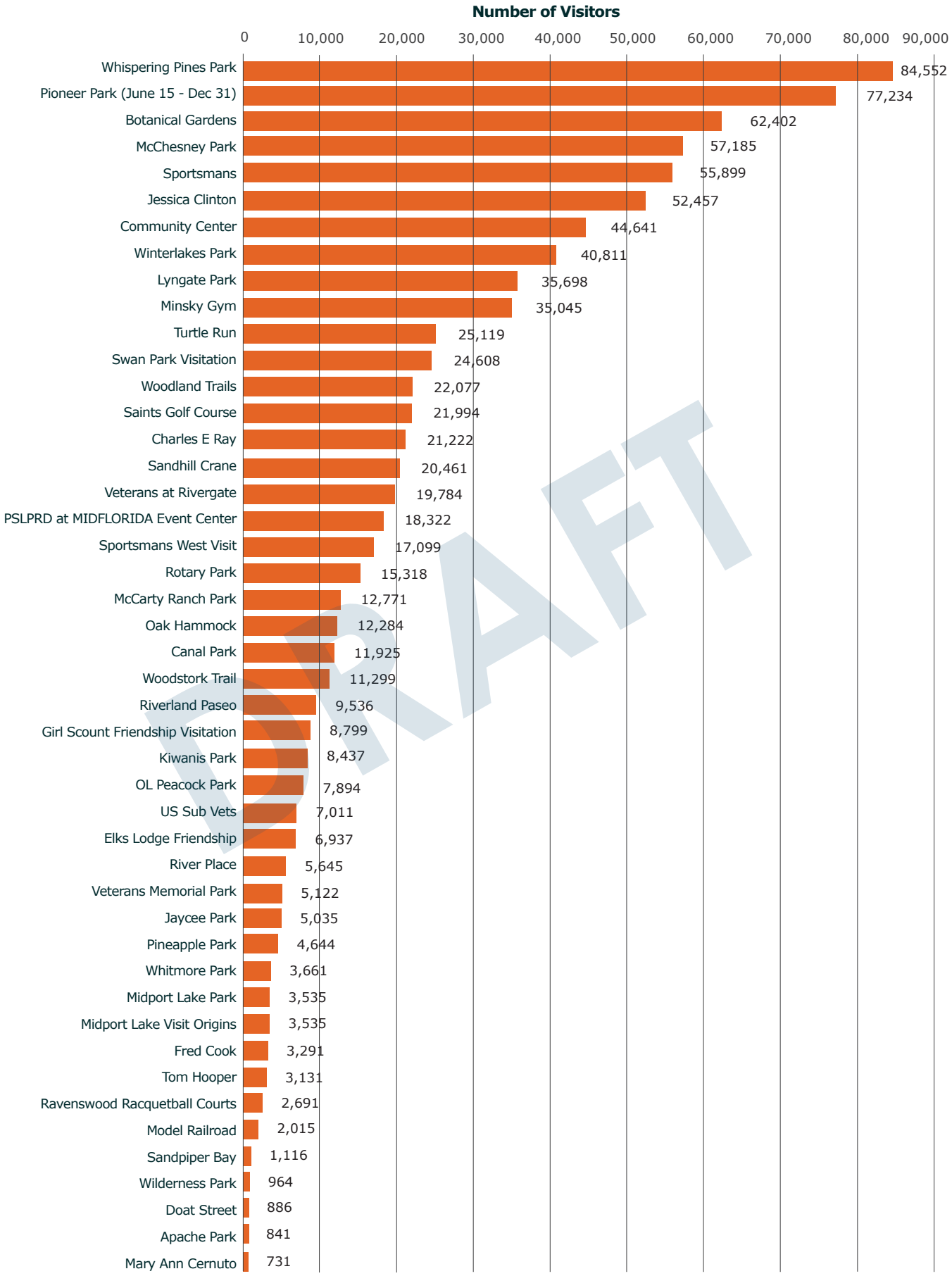
Number of Visitors
0
10,000
20,000
30,000
40,000
50,000
60,000
70,000
80,000
90,000
Whispering Pines Park 84,552
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 77,234
Botanical Gardens 62,402
McChesney Park 57,185
Sportsmans 55,899
Jessica Clinton 52,457
Community Center 44,641
Winterlakes Park 40,811
Lyngate Park 35,698
Minsky Gym 35,045
Turtle Run 25,119
Swan Park Visitation 24,608
Woodland Trails 22,077
Saints Golf Course 21,994
Charles E Ray 21,222
Sandhill Crane 20,461
Veterans at Rivergate 19,784
PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 18,322
Sportsmans West Visit 17,099
Rotary Park 15,318
McCarty Ranch Park 12,771
Oak Hammock 12,284
Canal Park 11,925
Woodstork Trail 11,299
Riverland Paseo 9,536
Girl Scount Friendship Visitation 8,799
Kiwanis Park 8,437
OL Peacock Park 7,894
US Sub Vets 7,011
Elks Lodge Friendship 6,937
River Place 5,645
Veterans Memorial Park 5,122
Jaycee Park 5,035
Pineapple Park 4,644
Whitmore Park 3,661
Midport Lake Park 3,535
Midport Lake Visit Origins 3,535
Fred Cook 3,291
Tom Hooper 3,131
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 2,691
Model Railroad 2,015
Sandpiper Bay 1,116
Wilderness Park 964
Doat Street 886
Apache Park 841
Mary Ann Cernuto 731

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### Visit Frequency

The analysis of visit frequency data highlights notable patterns in park utilization across the region. Swan Park Visitation and Sportsman's West Visit lead with the highest visit frequencies of 7.51, reflecting their strong appeal and regular usage by visitors. McChesney Park (6.22) and the PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center (5.59) also show high engagement levels, suggesting they serve as key recreational and event hubs. Parks such as Ravenswood Racquetball Courts (5.24), Whispering Pines Park (5.12), and Sportsman's (5.04) exhibit moderately high visit frequencies, indicating consistent visitor interest.

In contrast, parks like Botanical Gardens (1.64), Veterans at Rivergate (1.75), and Pioneer Park (1.82) have the lowest visit frequencies, potentially signifying a focus on occasional or specialized use. Facilities like Apache Park (1.84) and Pineapple Park (1.79) similarly cater to a narrower audience or limited repeat visits. Mid-range parks, including Winterlakes Park (4.16), Saints Golf Course (4.19), and Wilderness Park (4.55), demonstrate balanced usage, suggesting steady but not peak engagement.

The wide range of visit frequencies underscores the diverse roles of parks in serving community needs, from heavily frequented destinations to niche or occasional-use spaces. These findings provide valuable insights for resource allocation, maintenance prioritization, and programming efforts to optimize visitor experiences and enhance overall park utilization.

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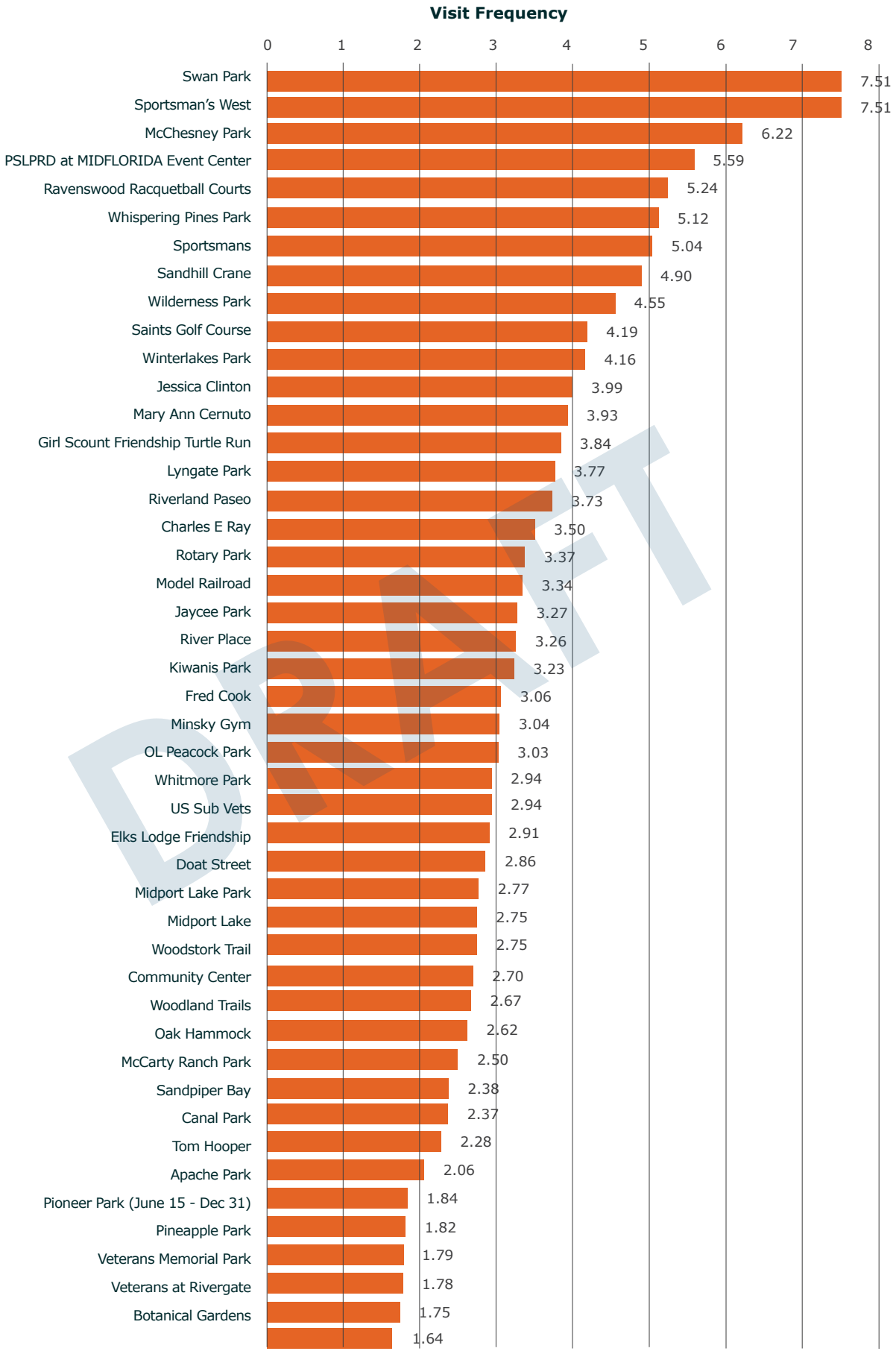
Visit Frequency
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
Swan Park 7.51
Sportsman's West 7.51
McChesney Park 6.22
PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 5.59
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 5.24
Whispering Pines Park 5.12
Sportsmans 5.04
Sandhill Crane 4.90
Wilderness Park 4.55
Saints Golf Course 4.19
Winterlakes Park 4.16
Jessica Clinton 3.99
Mary Ann Cernuto 3.93
Girl Scount Friendship Turtle Run 3.84
Lyngate Park 3.77
Riverland Paseo 3.73
Charles E Ray 3.50
Rotary Park 3.37
Model Railroad 3.34
Jaycee Park 3.27
River Place 3.26
Kiwanis Park 3.23
Fred Cook 3.06
Minsky Gym 3.04
OL Peacock Park 3.03
Whitmore Park 2.94
US Sub Vets 2.94
Elks Lodge Friendship 2.91
Doat Street 2.86
Midport Lake Park 2.77
Midport Lake 2.75
Woodstork Trail 2.75
Community Center 2.70
Woodland Trails 2.67
Oak Hammock 2.62
McCarty Ranch Park 2.50
Sandpiper Bay 2.38
Canal Park 2.37
Tom Hooper 2.28
Apache Park 2.06
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 1.84
Pineapple Park 1.82
Veterans Memorial Park 1.79
Veterans at Rivergate 1.78
Botanical Gardens 1.75
1.64

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**Average Dwell Time**

This dataset contains average dwell times (in minutes) for various locations. The locations span a range of public spaces, parks, recreation areas, and event centers. The dwell times range from a high of 155 minutes at McCarty Ranch Park to a low of 37 minutes at Canal Park.

Here's a summary of key insights:

Highest Dwell Times:
The highest average dwell times are observed at McCarty Ranch Park (155 minutes), Sandhill Crane (121 minutes), and Saints Golf Course (116 minutes), indicating these locations might attract visitors who spend significant time engaging with the environment or activities there.

Mid-Range Dwell Times:
Many locations fall within a range of about 80 to 100 minutes, such as Ravenswood Racquetball Courts (105 minutes), Sportsman's (102 minutes), and Model Railroad (99 minutes). These spots likely offer recreational or social activities that encourage moderate-length visits.

Shorter Dwell Times:
Locations like Canal Park (37 minutes), US Sub Vets (38 minutes), and Woodstork Trail (39 minutes) have much shorter dwell times, which could be indicative of brief visits, such as quick stops or less engaging activities.

General Trend:
Most of the locations have dwell times that are clustered between 40 and 120 minutes, suggesting a broad range of activities and attractions that either encourage short visits or longer stays, depending on the specific nature of the location (e.g., parks, event centers, recreational areas).

Variety of Locations:
The dataset includes a diverse range of locations, from parks like Swan Park Visitation (96 minutes) to more specialized spaces such as Model Railroad (99 minutes) and Veterans Memorial Park (55 minutes), suggesting that visitor engagement may vary depending on the type of activity offered.

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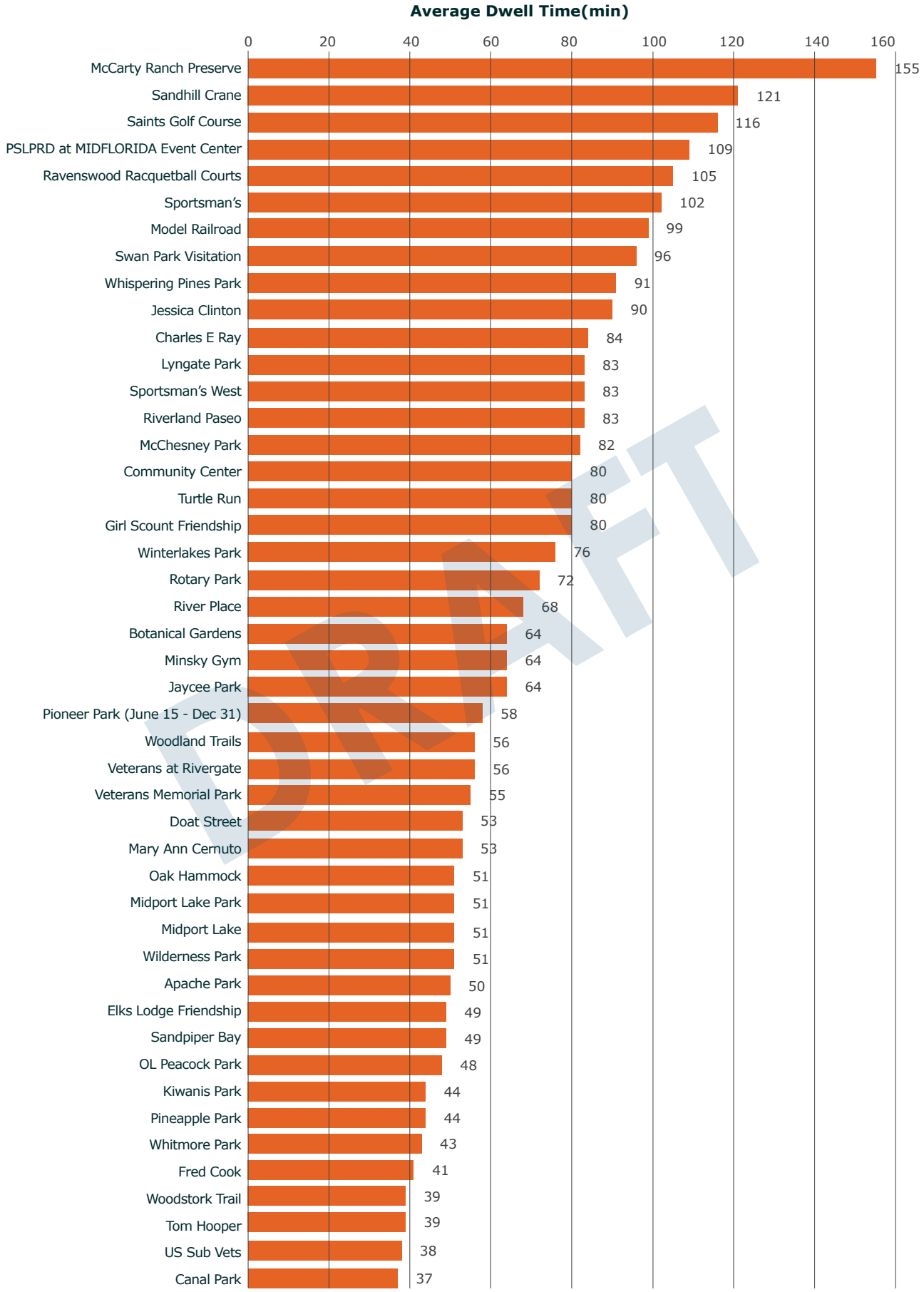
Average Dwell Time(min)
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
McCarty Ranch Preserve 155
Sandhill Crane 121
Saints Golf Course 116
PSLPRD at MIDFLORIDA Event Center 109
Ravenswood Racquetball Courts 105
Sportsman's 102
Model Railroad 99
Swan Park Visitation 96
Whispering Pines Park 91
Jessica Clinton 90
Charles E Ray 84
Lyngate Park 83
Sportsman's West 83
Riverland Paseo 83
McChesney Park 82
Community Center 80
Turtle Run 80
Girl Scount Friendship 80
Winterlakes Park 76
Rotary Park 72
River Place 68
Botanical Gardens 64
Minsky Gym 64
Jaycee Park 64
Pioneer Park (June 15 - Dec 31) 58
Woodland Trails 56
Veterans at Rivergate 56
Veterans Memorial Park 55
Doat Street 53
Mary Ann Cernuto 53
Oak Hammock 51
Midport Lake Park 51
Midport Lake 51
Wilderness Park 51
Apache Park 50
Elks Lodge Friendship 49
Sandpiper Bay 49
OL Peacock Park 48
Kiwanis Park 44
Pineapple Park 44
Whitmore Park 43
Fred Cook 41
Woodstork Trail 39
Tom Hooper 39
US Sub Vets 38
Canal Park 37

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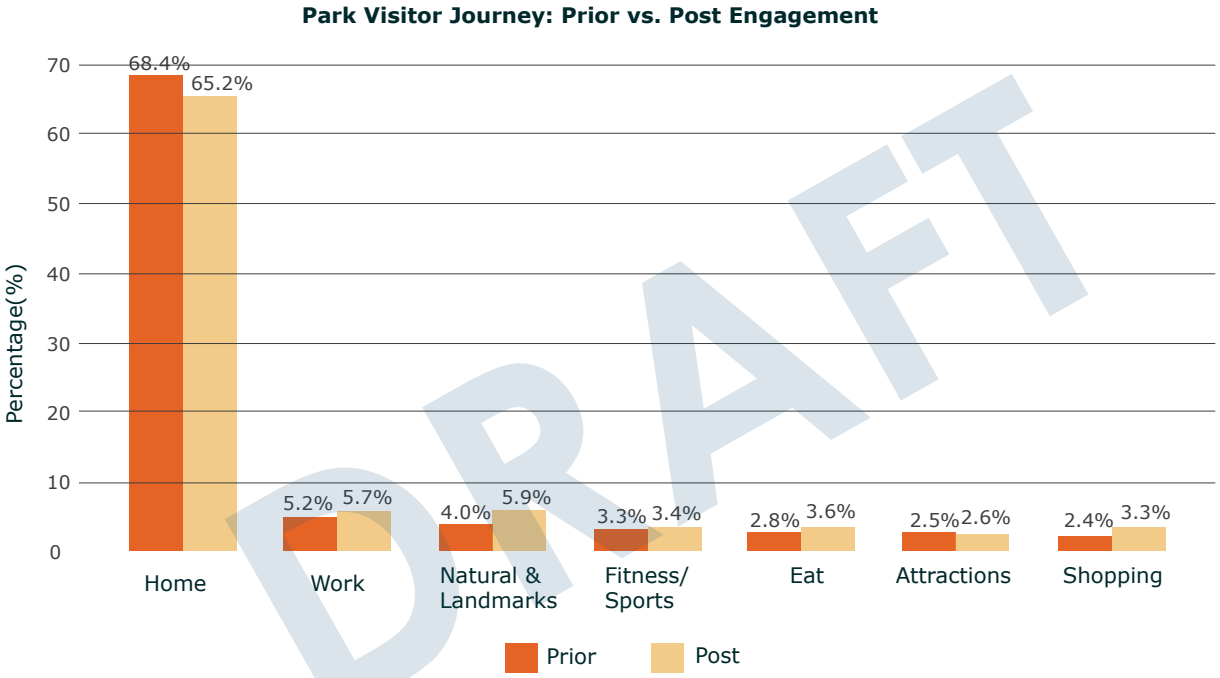
## Park Visitor Journey

Visitor journey data for parks is a valuable resource for understanding how visitors engage with park amenities, attractions, and activities during their visit. By tracking interactions, such as time spent in various areas, transitions between locations, and engagement with specific features, this data helps identify visitor preferences and patterns. It provides actionable insights to improve park layout, enhance visitor satisfaction, and prioritize resource allocation. Additionally, analyzing visitor journey data can guide future planning, marketing efforts, and the creation of tailored experiences that align with the diverse needs and expectations of park users.

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The visitor journey data underscores significant behavioral shifts, showcasing a decline in time spent at home (from 68.4% to 65.2%) alongside increased engagement with natural landmarks (4% to 5.9%), shopping (2.4% to 3.3%), and dining (2.8% to 3.6%). Work-related visits experienced a slight uptick (5.2% to 5.7%), while participation in fitness and sports activities remained consistent. These trends indicate a growing connection between the community and outdoor spaces, highlighting increased utilization of local parks and amenities. This shift suggests the effectiveness of interventions or park improvements in fostering diverse, engaging, and enriching visitor experiences.



# 3 NEEDS + PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT

# 3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The purpose of a Needs and Priorities Assessment is to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions. As noted in the 2019 Master Plan, unlike other elements of public infrastructure (such as roadways and water utilities), there are no nationally accepted standards for identifying residents' needs and determining ideal levels of service for parks, indoor recreation centers, athletic fields, trails, and other recreation facilities. Planning for parks and other elements of the public realm has historically been more art than science.

**Methodology**

Following the practices established in the previous plan, this update uses a mixed-methods, triangulated approach to the City of Port St. Lucie's needs assessment. Mixed-methods research combines the use of primary data collected through the planning process, and secondary data from other sources such as census data and previous reports; the primary data is collected through both quantitative and qualitative research techniques and data.

The term triangulation refers to the comparison of findings from the various techniques to identify consistent themes and top priorities. For example, the findings from the statistically-valid survey are compared to the findings from the other techniques – such as public workshops, interviews, focus group meetings, and level-of-service analysis – to identify consistent priorities.

The chart (right) outlines the specific techniques used for the City of Port St. Lucie needs assessment, and the types of data collected from each source (quantitative vs. qualitative).

Findings from secondary sources (and the Site Evaluations) were discussed in Section 2; following is a summary of the findings from each of the primary needs assessment sources.

● = Predominant
● = Minor

| | Quantitative Data | Qualitative Data |
|---|---|---|
| **PRIMARY SOURCES** | | |
| Statistically-Valid Survey | ● | ● |
| Online Survey | ● | ● |
| Site Evaluations* | ● | ● |
| Interviews | ● | ● |
| Focus Groups | ● | ● |
| Public Meetings | ● | ● |
| Level of Service Analysis | ● | ● |
| **SECONDARY SOURCES** | | |
| Census Data | ● | |
| Comprehensive Plan | ● | ● |
| Previous Studies | ● | ● |

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## 3.2 STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY

### Overview

PP+D's sub-consultant, ETC Institute, administered a community interest and opinion survey for the City of Port St. Lucie to help establish priorities for parks, trails, and sports facilities as well as recreational, social and cultural programs and services within the community. The survey is the most statistically-representative needs assessment technique, based on a random sample of City residents. The full 100-page report is available under separate cover; following is an executive summary of the survey findings.

### Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Port St. Lucie. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it on-line at www.PortStLucieSurvey.org.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up with residents to encourage participation. To prevent people who were not residents of Port St. Lucie from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting their survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses entered online with the addresses originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

The goal was to receive 400 completed surveys from households within the City of Port St. Lucie, Florida. The goal was exceeded within 406 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 406 residents have a precision of at least +/-4.9% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Executive Summary with major findings (Section 1)
- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 2)
- Priority Investment Ratings (PIR) (Section 3)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey

Following is a summary of the major findings.

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## Parks and Facilities Use and Satisfaction

Respondents selected all the parks that they have visited in the past year. The top 5 visited parks were:

**Fig. 3.1 Parks Visitation**

*by percentage of respondents*

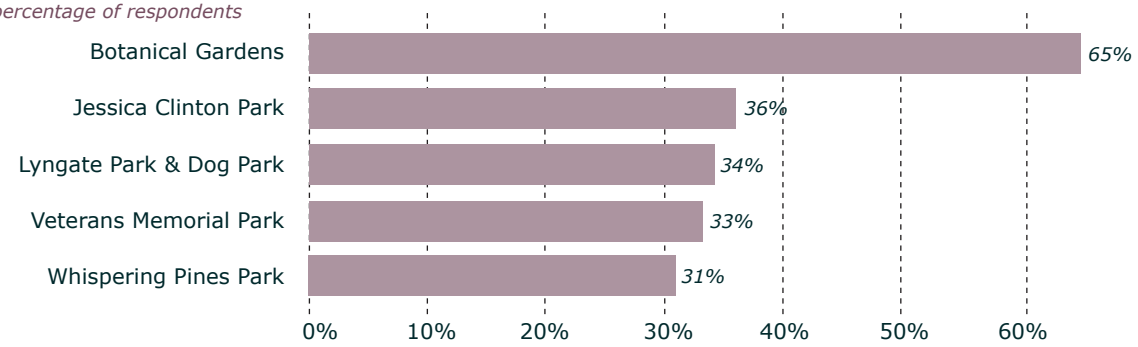
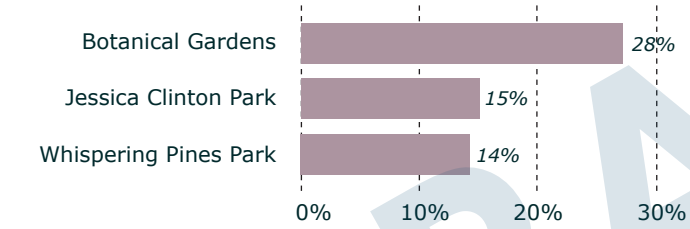



**Fig. 3.2 Parks Usage**

*by percentage of respondents*

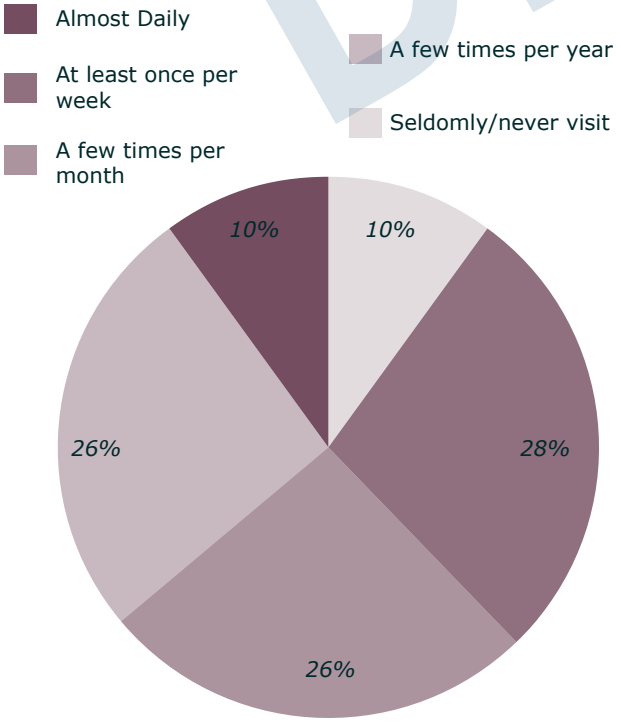
Respondents selected the two parks their household uses most often. Based on the sum of top 2 choices, the parks used most were:




Respondents selected how often they visited Port St. Lucie parks.

**Fig. 3.3 Parks Visitation**

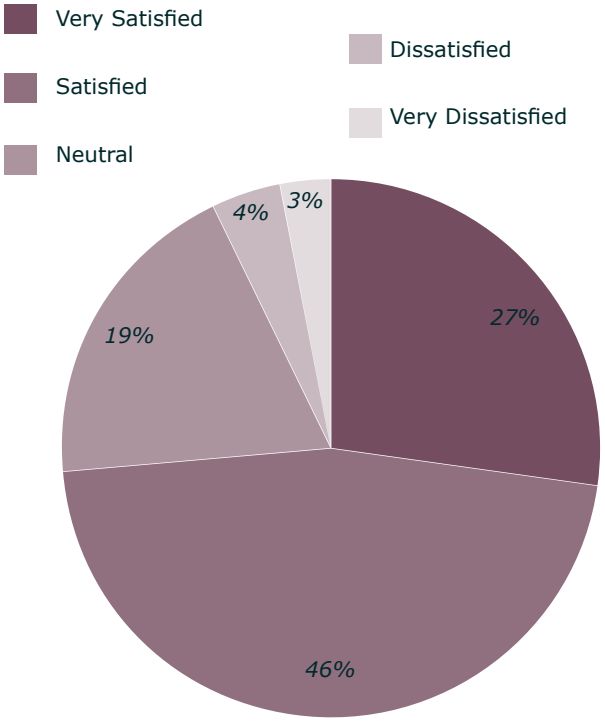
*by percentage of respondents*




And they selected how satisfied they are with the City's parks.

**Fig. 3.4 Parks Satisfaction**

*by percentage of respondents*

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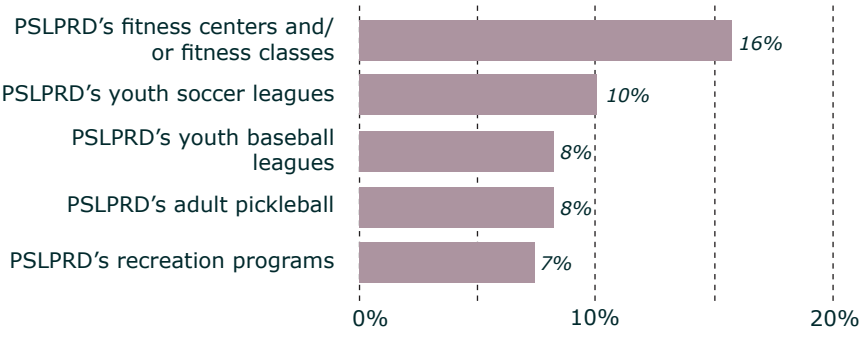
## Programs Use and Satisfaction

Respondents selected all the programs that they have participated in in the past 5 years. The top 5 most participated programs were:

**Fig. 3.5 Programs Usage**

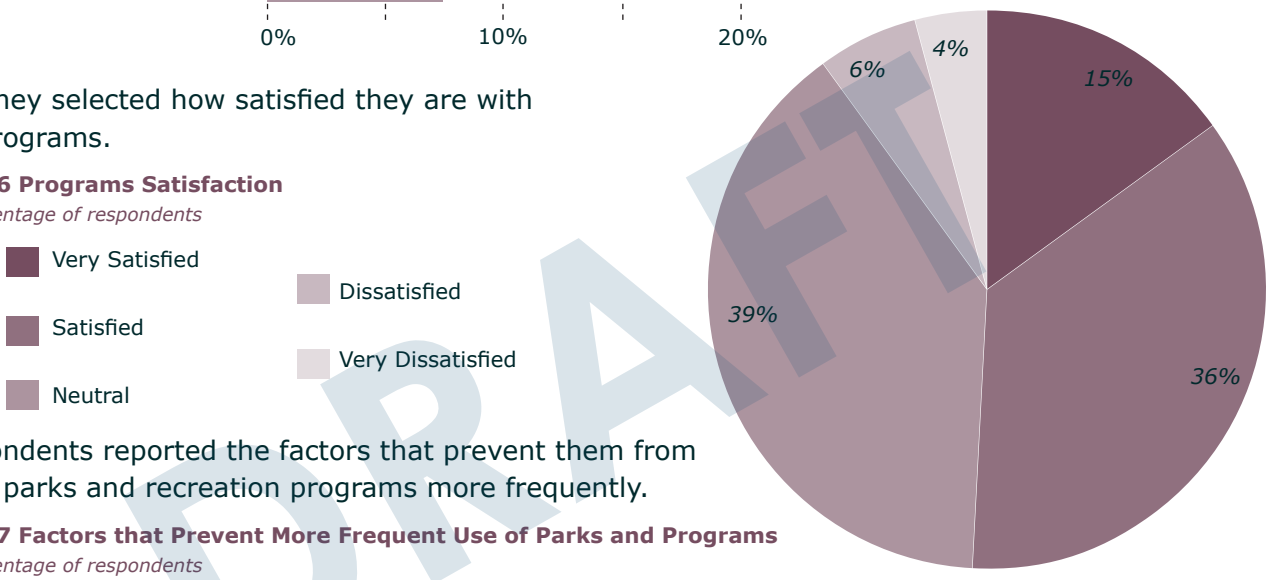
*by percentage of respondents*




And they selected how satisfied they are with the programs.

**Fig. 3.6 Programs Satisfaction**

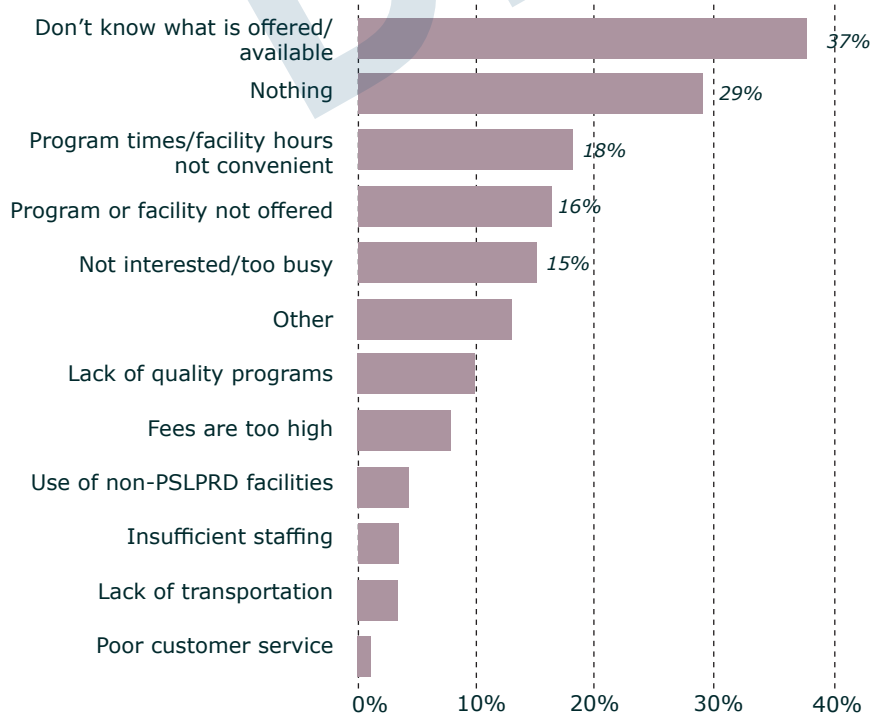
*by percentage of respondents*




Respondents reported the factors that prevent them from using parks and recreation programs more frequently.

**Fig. 3.7 Factors that Prevent More Frequent Use of Parks and Programs**

*by percentage of respondents*

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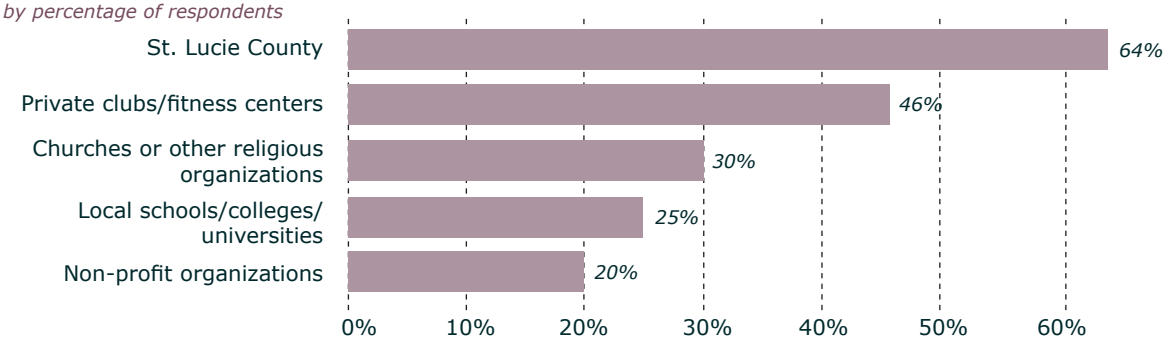
## Other Recreation Providers

Respondents selected all the other recreation programs and facilities providers they have used.

**Fig. 3.8 Recreation Programs and Facilities Organizations**

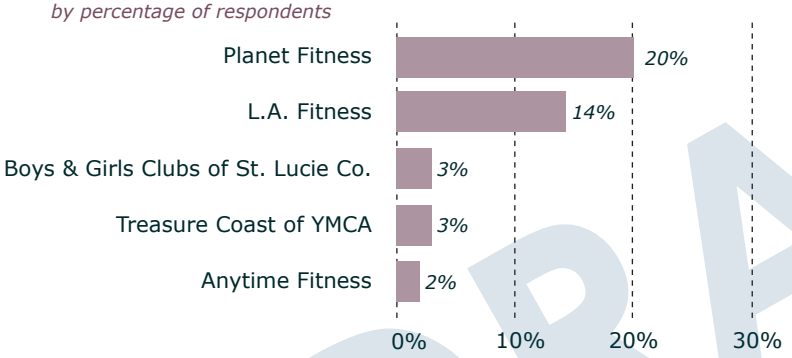
*by percentage of respondents*




And they selected from the following recreation providers that they **currently** utlize.

**Fig. 3.9 Recreation Facilities Use**

*by percentage of respondents*

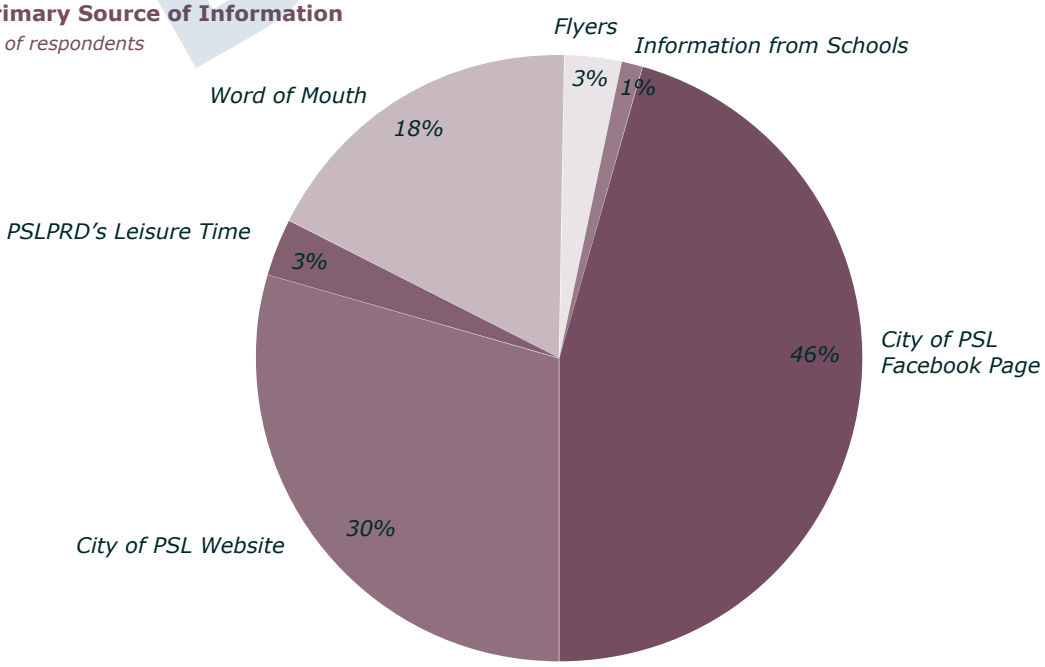



## Communication

Respondents selected the primary source of information they use to learn about PSLPRD-related events and programs.

**Fig. 3.10 Primary Source of Information**

*by percentage of respondents*

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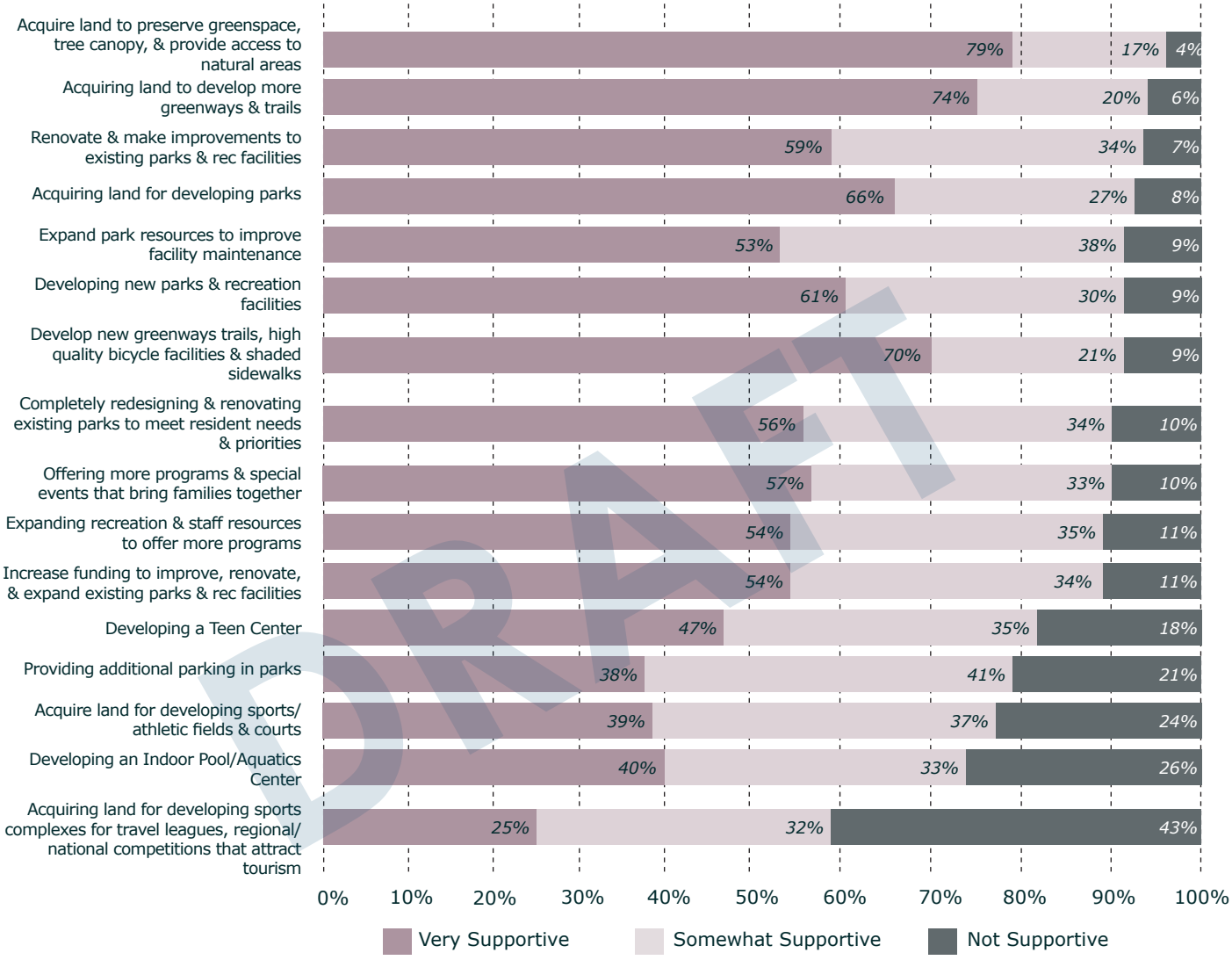
## Benefits, Importance, and Improvements to Parks and Recreation

Respondents rated how supportive they were of each of the following actions the City could take to improve the parks and recreation system.

**Fig. 3.11 Support for City Actions**

*by percentage of respondents*

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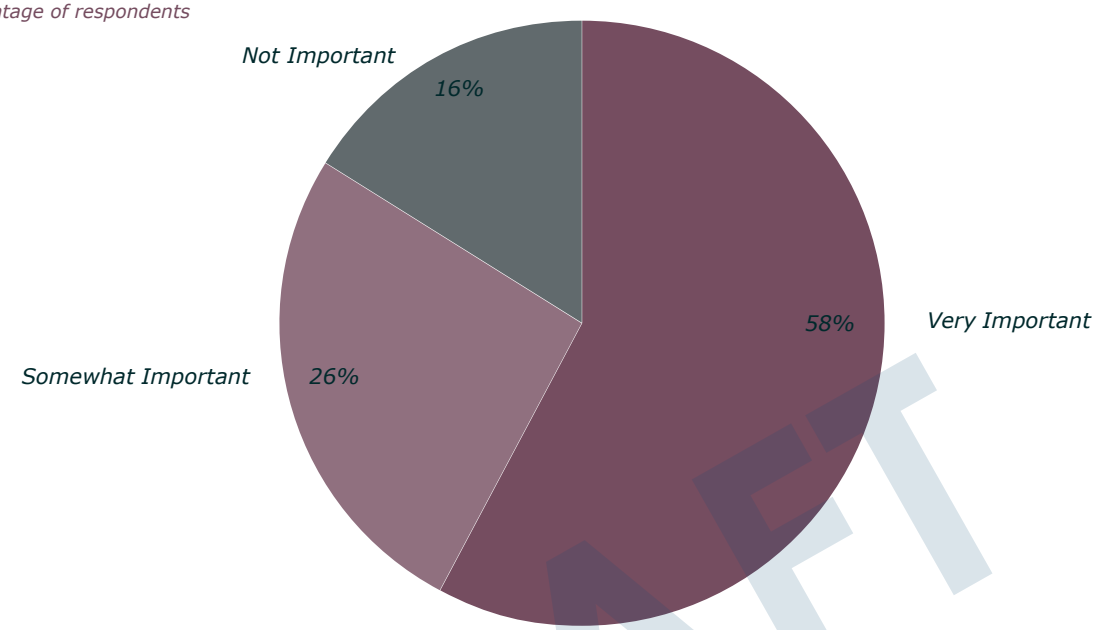
## Role of Parks and Recreation in the city

Respondents selected their level of importance of having a small park within walking distance of their home.

**Fig. 3.12 Importance of Small Park in Walking Distance of Home**

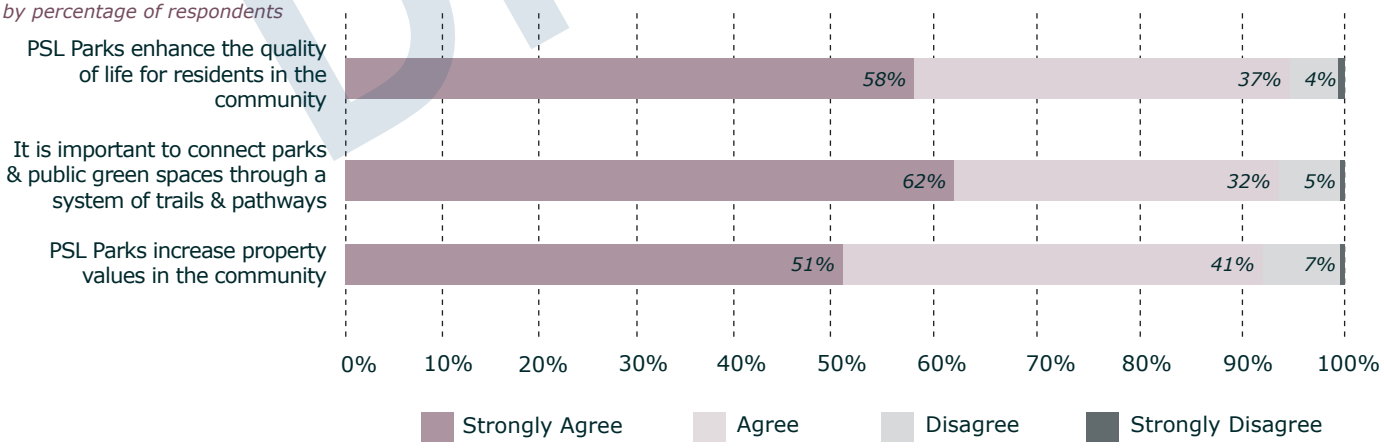
*by percentage of respondents*




And they rated their agreement with the following statements about the values of parks and greenspaces to residents of Port St. Lucie.

**Fig. 3.13 Agreement with Statements**

*by percentage of respondents*

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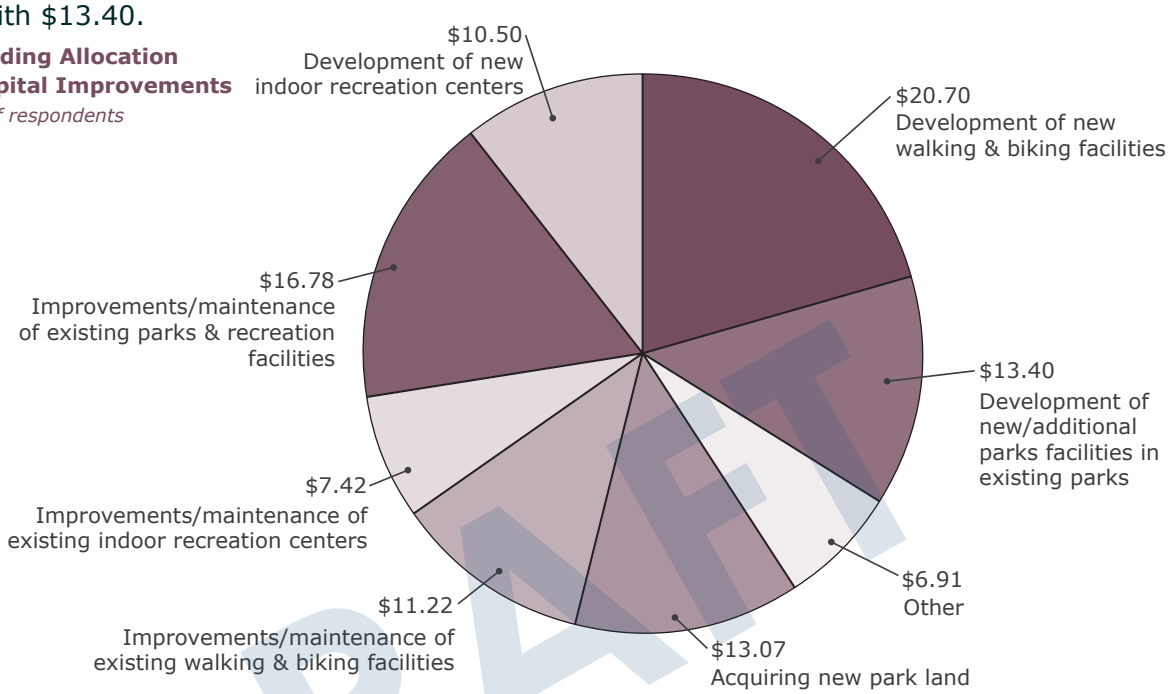
## Funding Allocation - Capital Improvements

Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical $100 budget for capital improvements. Respondents on average allocated the highest amount of funding ($20.70) towards Development of new walking and biking facilities, Improvements/ maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities followed with $16.78 and Development of new/additional parks facilities in existing parks was third with $13.40.

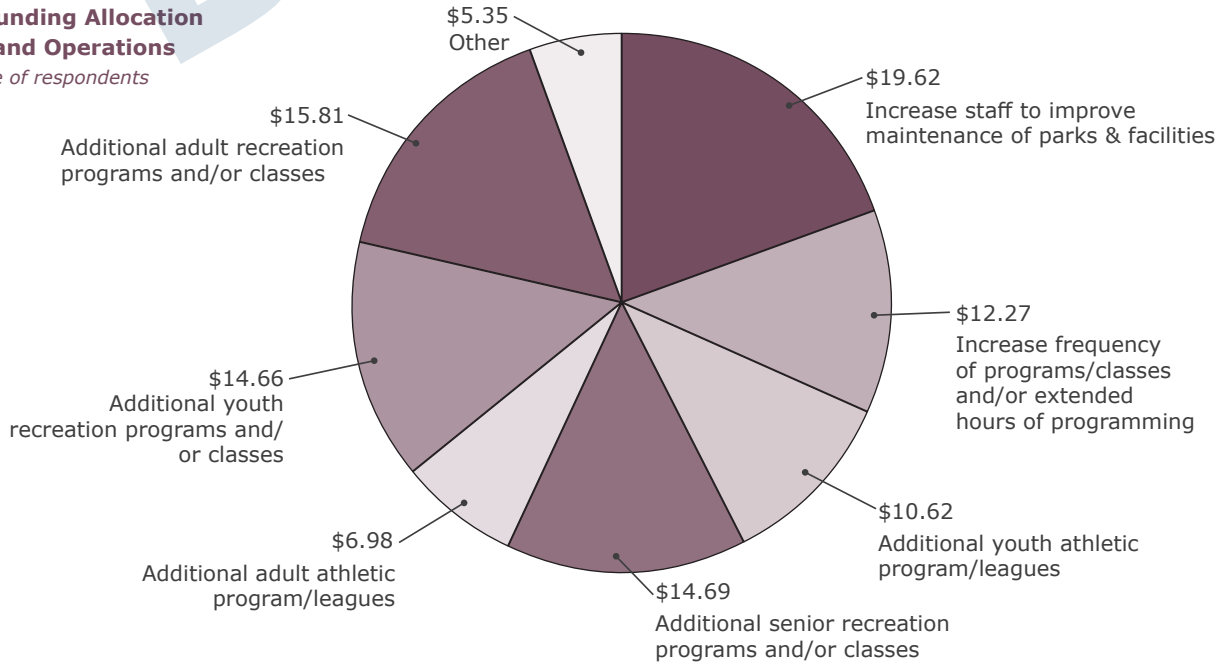
**Fig. 3.14 Funding Allocation Facilities/Capital Improvements**
*by percentage of respondents*




## Funding Allocation - Programs/Operations

Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical $100 budget for programs/operations. Respondents on average allocated the highest amount of funding ($19.62) towards increasing staff to improve maintenance of parks and facilities followed by $15.81 for additional adult recreation programs and $14.69 for additional senior recreation programs.

**Fig. 3.15 Funding Allocation Programs and Operations**
*by percentage of respondents*

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## Priorities for Programs Investments

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on programs (and separately amenities/facilities) and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the programs/amenity/facility.

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 13 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest "unmet" need for various facilities. Facilities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

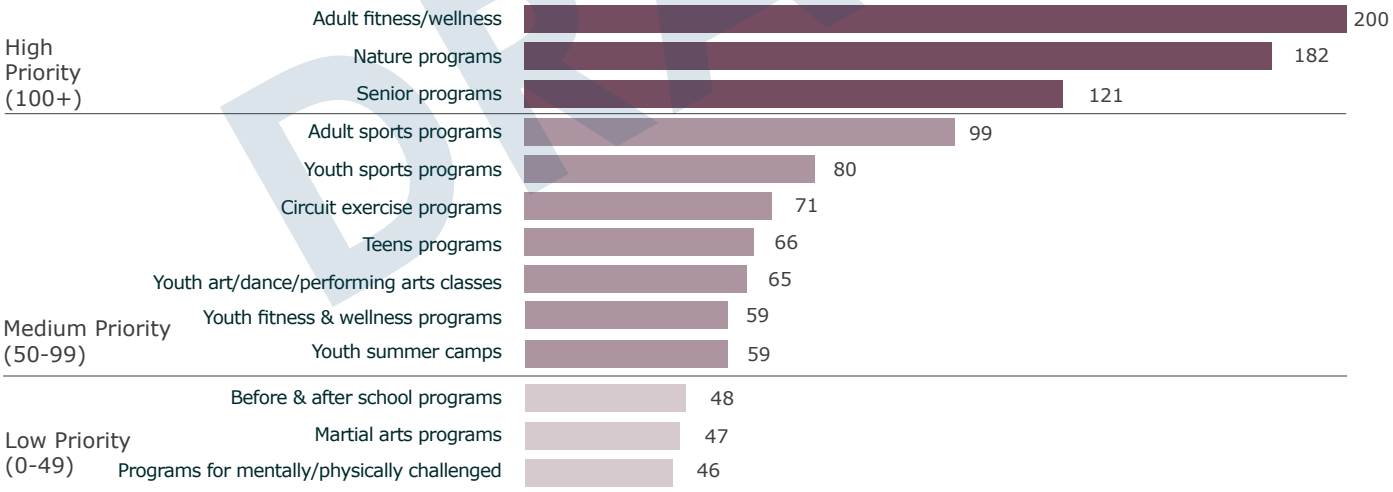
1. Adult fitness/wellness
2. Nature programs
3. Senior programs

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

1. Adult fitness/wellness
2. Nature programs
3. Senior programs
4. Adult sports programs

**Fig. 3.16 Priority Investment Rating for Programs**

*by percentage of respondents*

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## Priorities for Facility Investments

As with the PIR for Programs, respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 29 recreation facilities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met.

Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest "unmet" need for various facilities. Facilities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

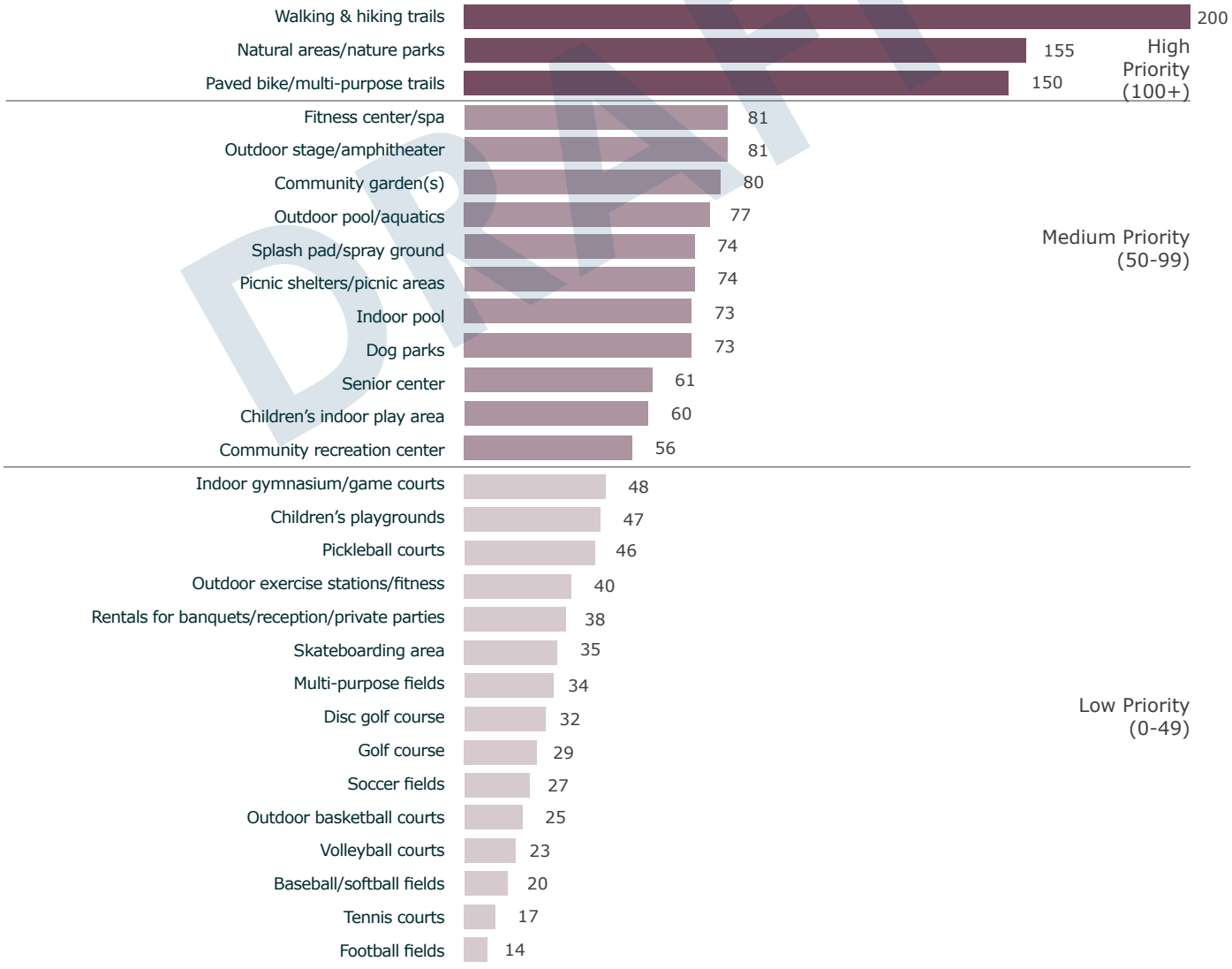
1. Walking & hiking trails
2. Natural areas/nature parks
3. Paved bike trails

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

1. Walking & hiking trails
2. Natural areas/nature parks
3. Paved bike trails
4. Dog parks

**Fig. 3.17 Priority Investment Rating for Facilities**

*by percentage of respondents*

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## 3.3 ONLINE SURVEY

### Overview

The City conducted an on-line survey using the Survey Monkey platform from October 2024 through January 2025. The questions were based closely on the Statistically Valid Survey, with some slight modifications as needed for formatting. Responses were received from 1,200+ participants. Unlike the Statistically Valid Survey, the on-line survey is not based on a random sample of residents, and therefore cannot be considered statistically-representative. Also, some respondents may be non-City residents.

A copy of the complete findings from the on-line survey are included in the Appendix. Following are highlights of the survey findings directly related to the parks and recreation needs assessment.

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## Parks and Facilities Use and Satisfaction

Respondents selected all the parks that they have visited in the past year. The top 5 visited parks were:

**Fig. 3.18 Parks Visitation**

*by percentage of respondents*

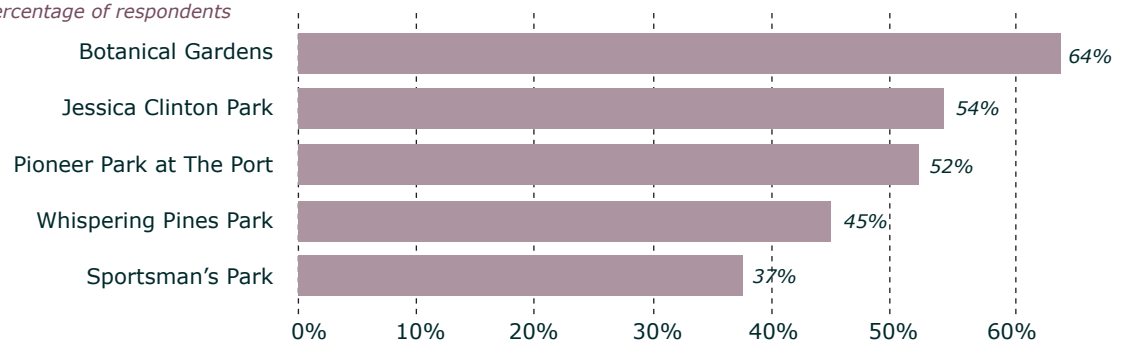
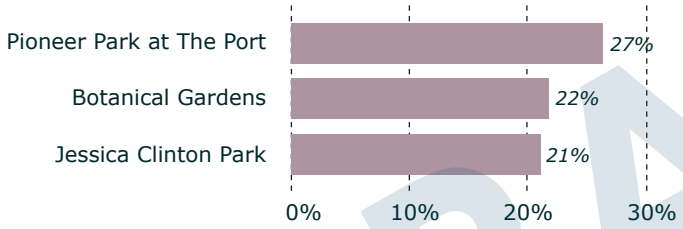



**Fig. 3.19 Parks Usage**

*by percentage of respondents*

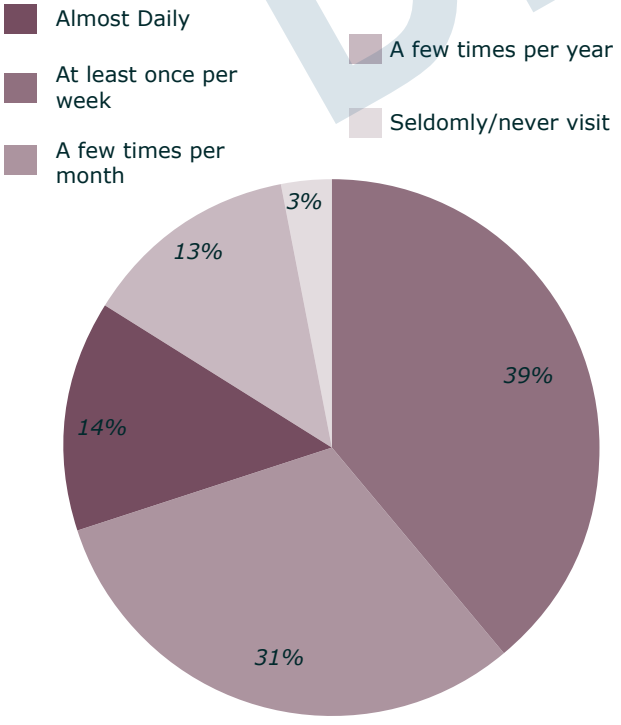
Respondents selected the two parks their household uses most often. Based on the sum of top 2 choices, the parks used most were:




Respondents selected how often they visited Port St. Lucie parks.

**Fig. 3.20 Parks Visitation**

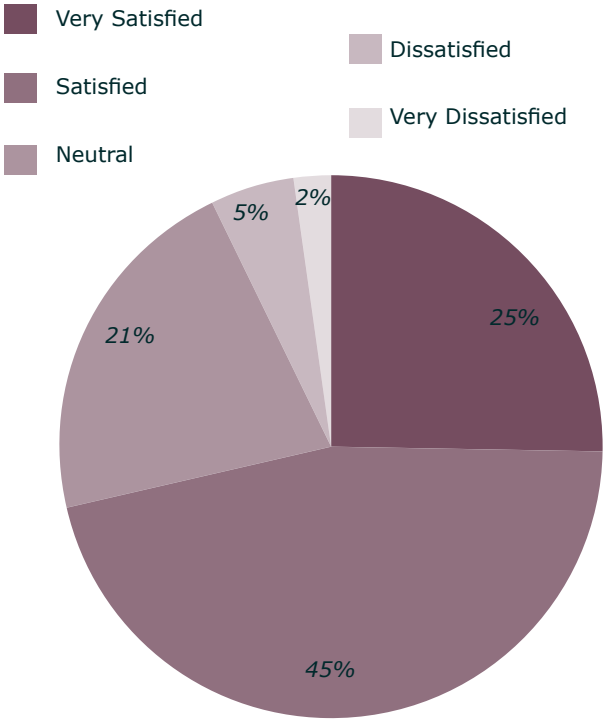
*by percentage of respondents*




And they selected how satisfied they are with the City's parks.

**Fig. 3.21 Parks Satisfaction**

*by percentage of respondents*

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## Programs Use and Satisfaction

Respondents selected all the programs that they have participated in in the past 5 years. The top 5 most participated programs were:

**Fig. 3.22 Programs Usage**

*by percentage of respondents*




And they selected how satisfied they are with the programs.

**Fig. 3.23 Programs Satisfaction**

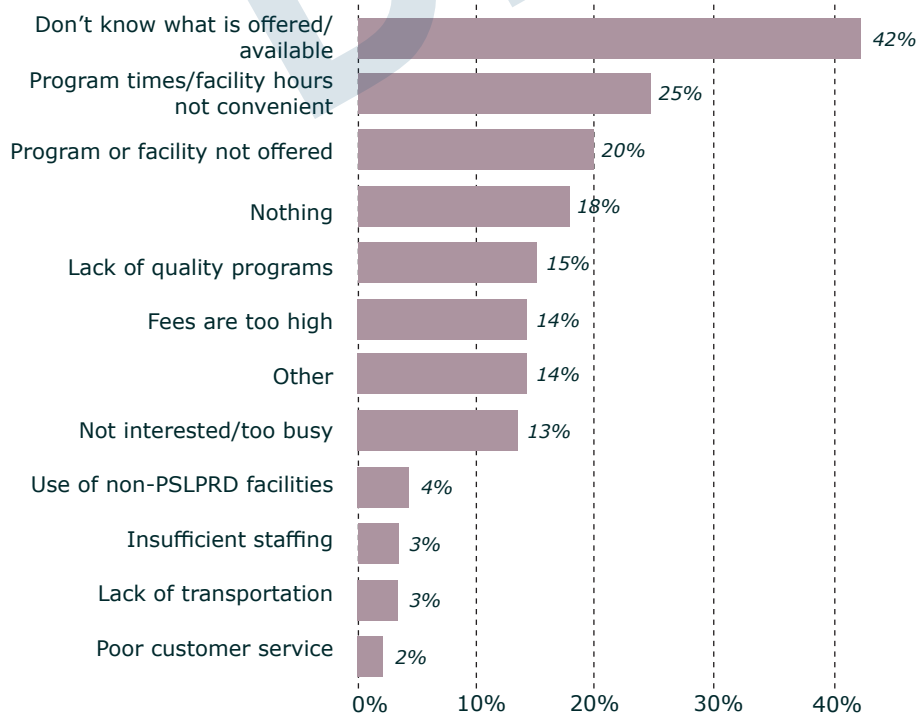
*by percentage of respondents*




Respondents reported the factors that prevent them from using parks and recreation programs more frequently.

**Fig. 3.24 Factors that Prevent More Frequent Use of Parks and Programs**

*by percentage of respondents*

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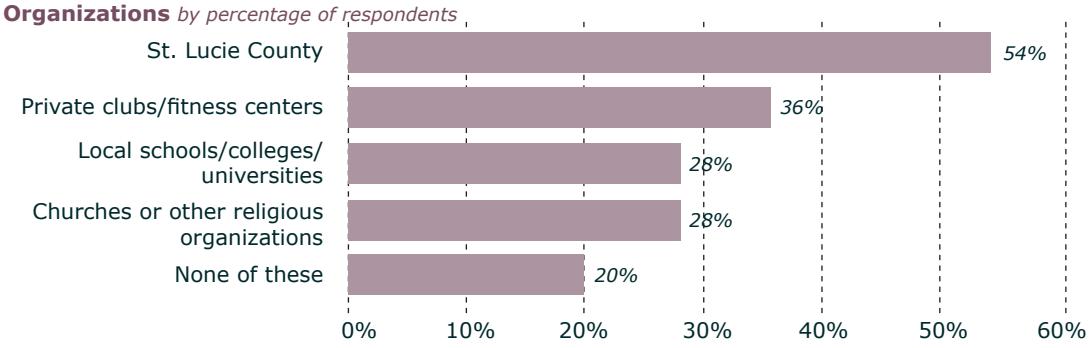
## Other Recreation Providers

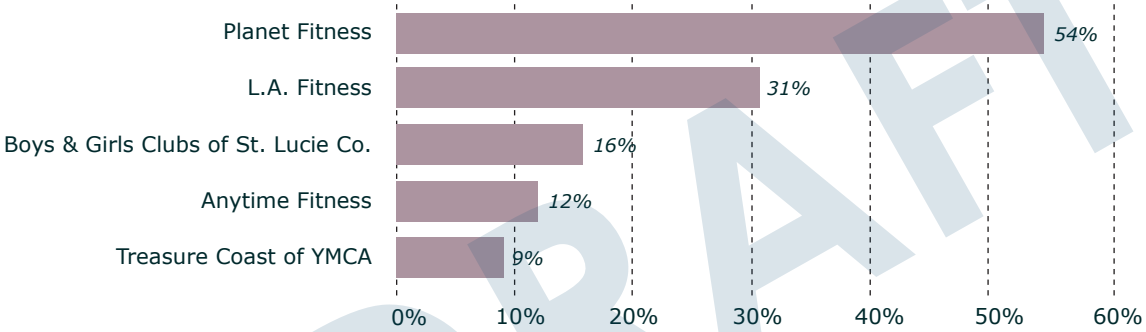
Respondents selected all the other recreation programs and facilities providers they have used.

**Fig. 3.25 Recreation Programs and Facilities Organizations** *by percentage of respondents*




And they selected from the following recreation providers that they **currently** utlize.

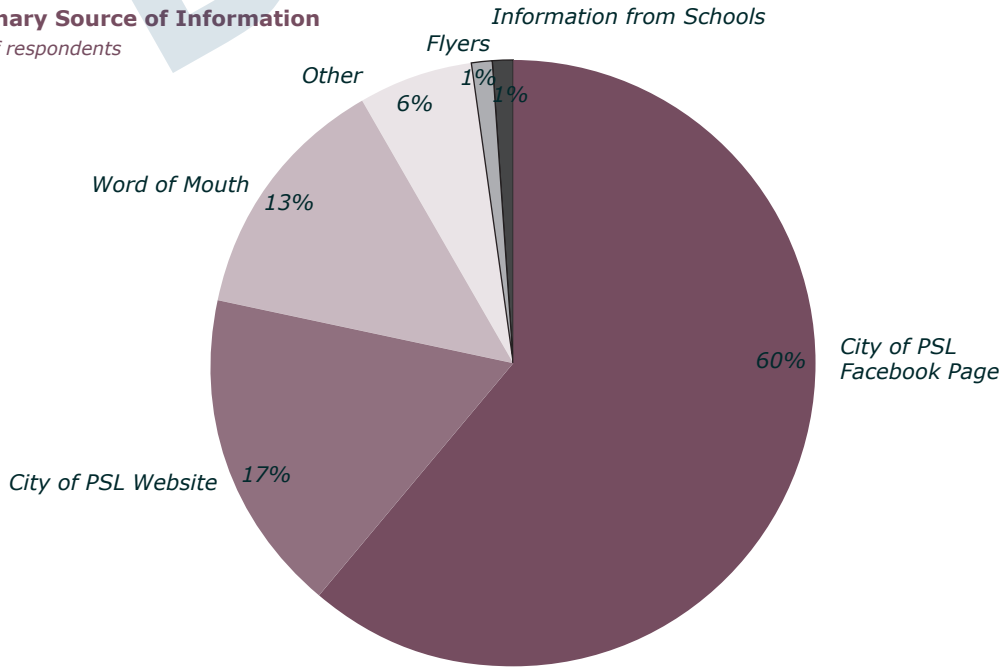
**Fig. 3.26 Recreation Facilities Use**
*by percentage of respondents*




## Communication

Respondents selected the primary source of information they use to learn about PSLPRD-related events and programs.

**Fig. 3.27 Primary Source of Information**
*by percentage of respondents*

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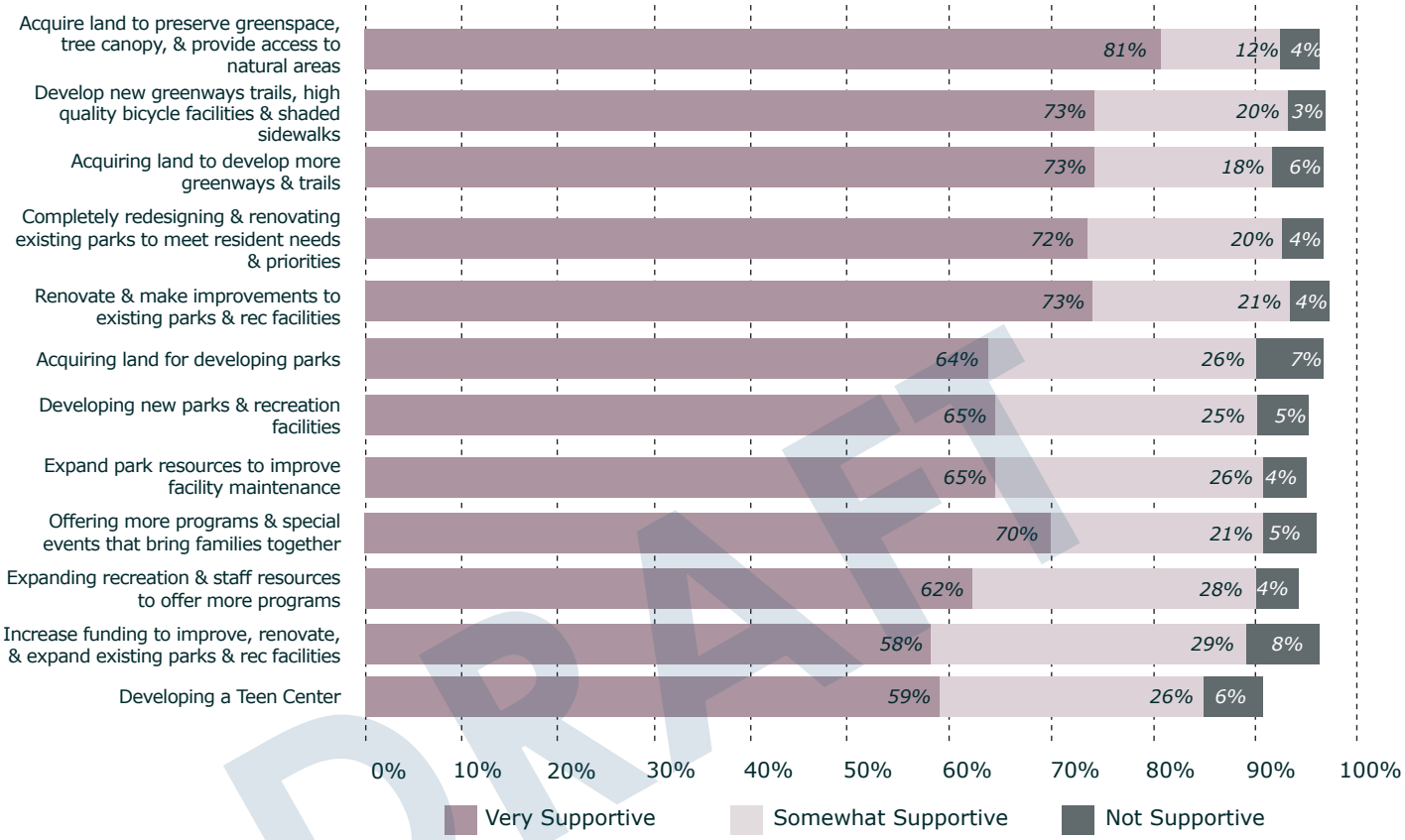
## Benefits, Importance, and Improvements to Parks and Recreation

Respondents rated how supportive they were of each of the following actions the City could take to improve the parks and recreation system.

**Fig. 3.28 Support for City Actions**

*by percentage of respondents (remaining percentages represent the response "Don't Know").*

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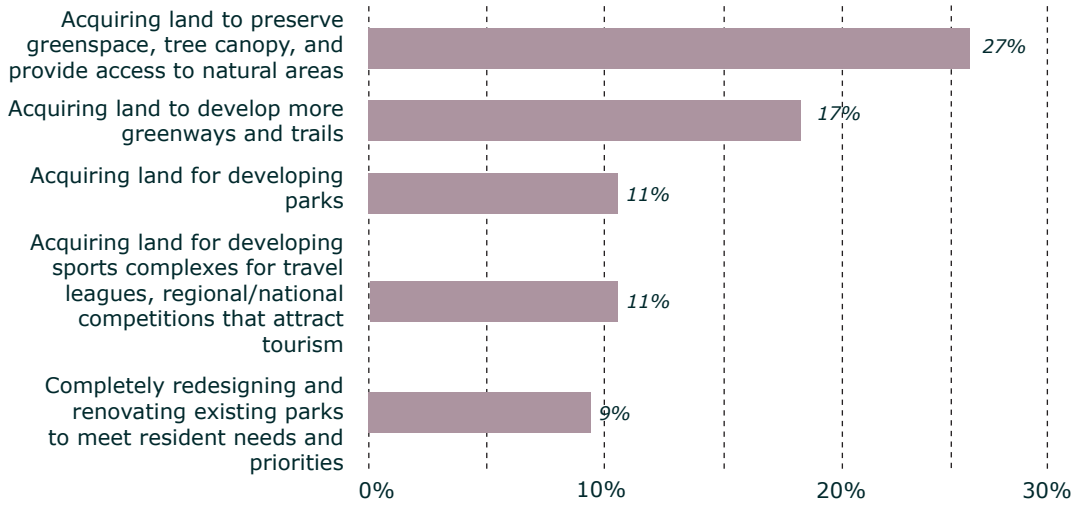
Respondents then ranked each of the actions the City could take to improve the parks and recreation system, based on the options that are MOST IMPORTANT to their household.

**Fig. 3.29 Ranking of City Actions**

*by percentage of respondents*

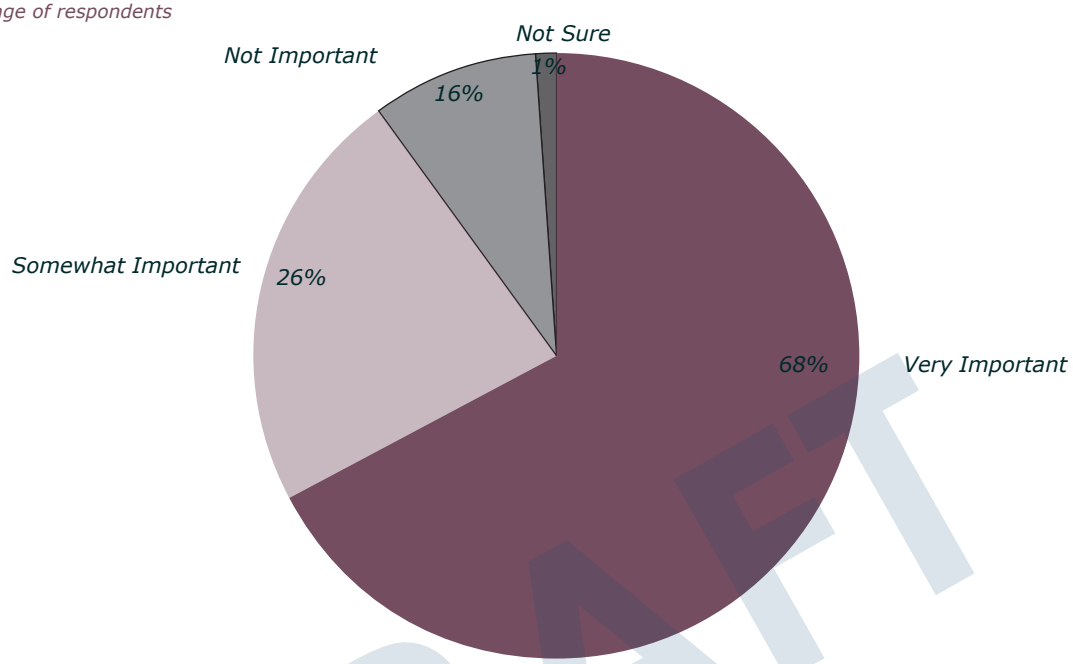


## Role of Parks and Recreation in the city

Respondents selected their level of importance of having a small park within walking distance of their home.

**Fig. 3.30 Importance of Small Park in Walking Distance of Home**

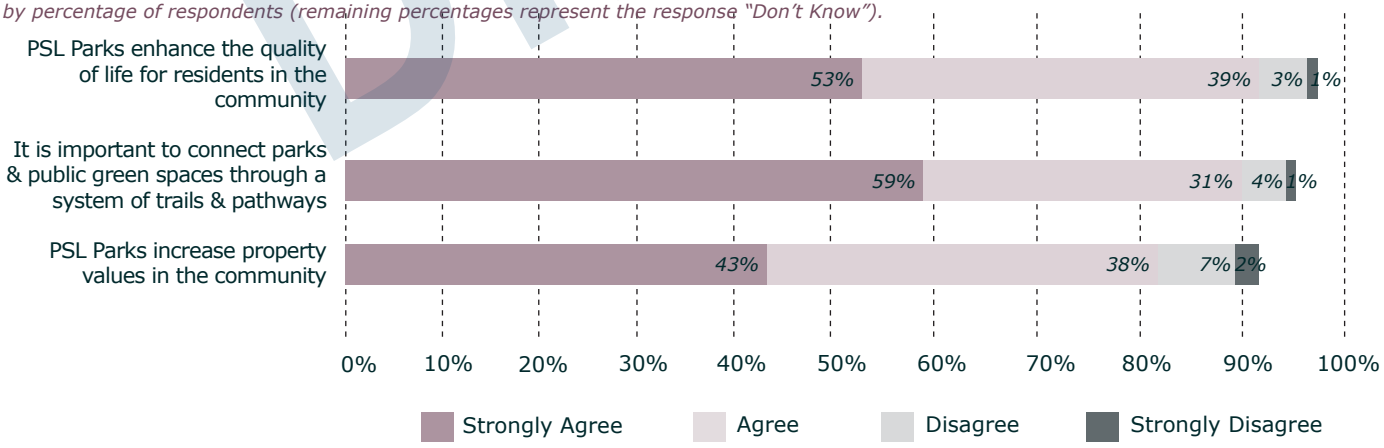
*by percentage of respondents*




And they rated their agreement with the following statements about the values of parks and greenspaces to residents of Port St. Lucie.

**Fig. 3.31 Agreement with Statements**

*by percentage of respondents (remaining percentages represent the response "Don't Know").*

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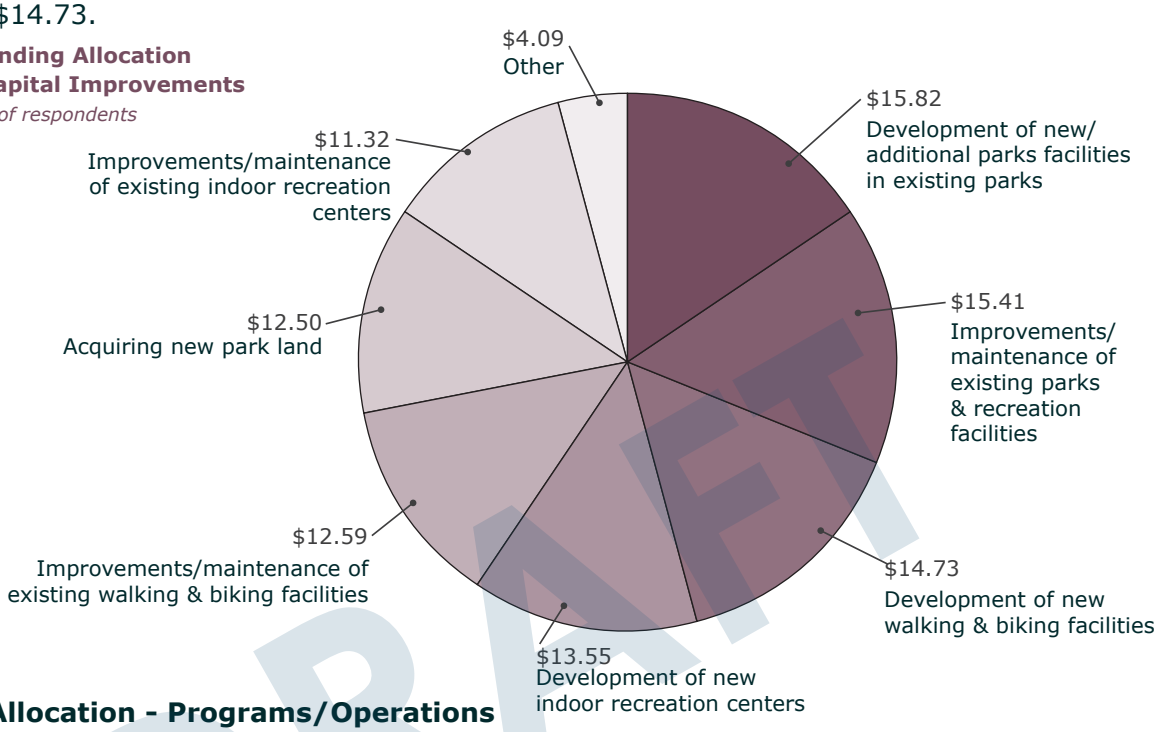
## Funding Allocation - Capital Improvements

Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical $100 budget for capital improvements. Respondents on average allocated the highest amount of funding ($15.82) towards Development of new/additional parks facilities in existing parks. Improvements/ maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities followed with $15.41 and Development of new walking and biking facilities was third with $14.73.

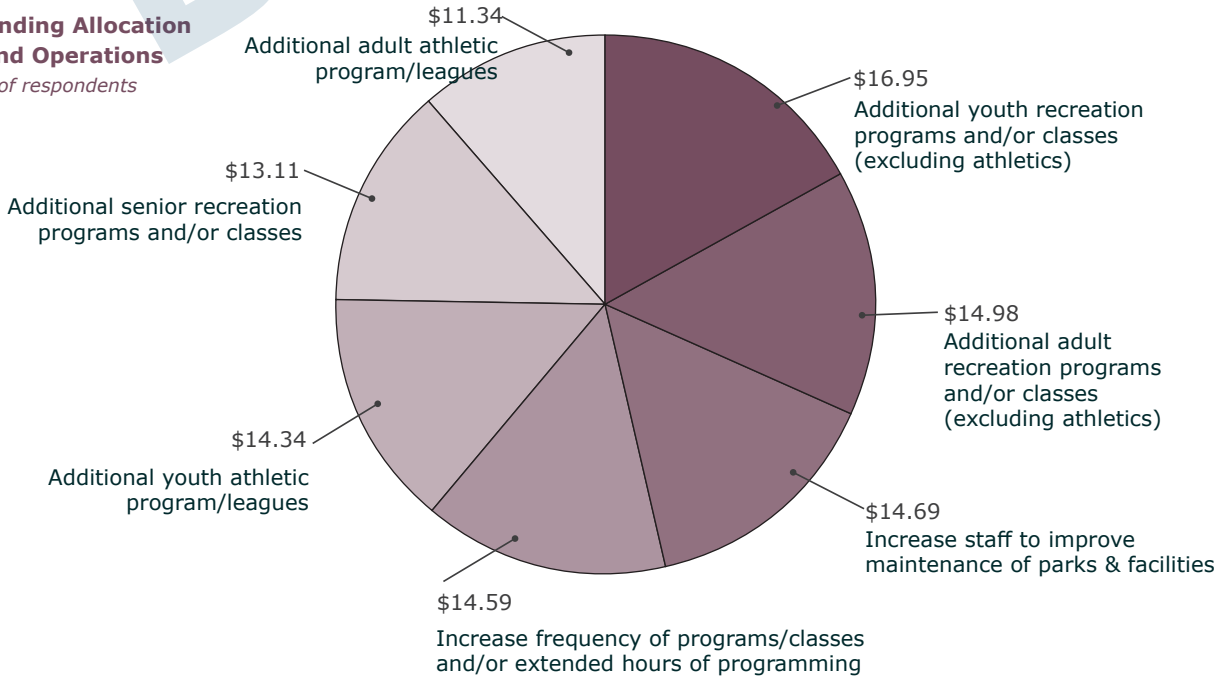
**Fig. 3.32 Funding Allocation Facilities/Capital Improvements**
*by percentage of respondents*




## Funding Allocation - Programs/Operations

Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical $100 budget for programs/operations. Respondents on average allocated the highest amount of funding ($16.95) towards Additional youth recreation programs and/or classes (excluding athletics) followed by $14.98 for additional adult recreation programs and $14.69 to Increase staff to improve maintenance of parks & facilities.

**Fig. 3.33 Funding Allocation Programs and Operations**
*by percentage of respondents*

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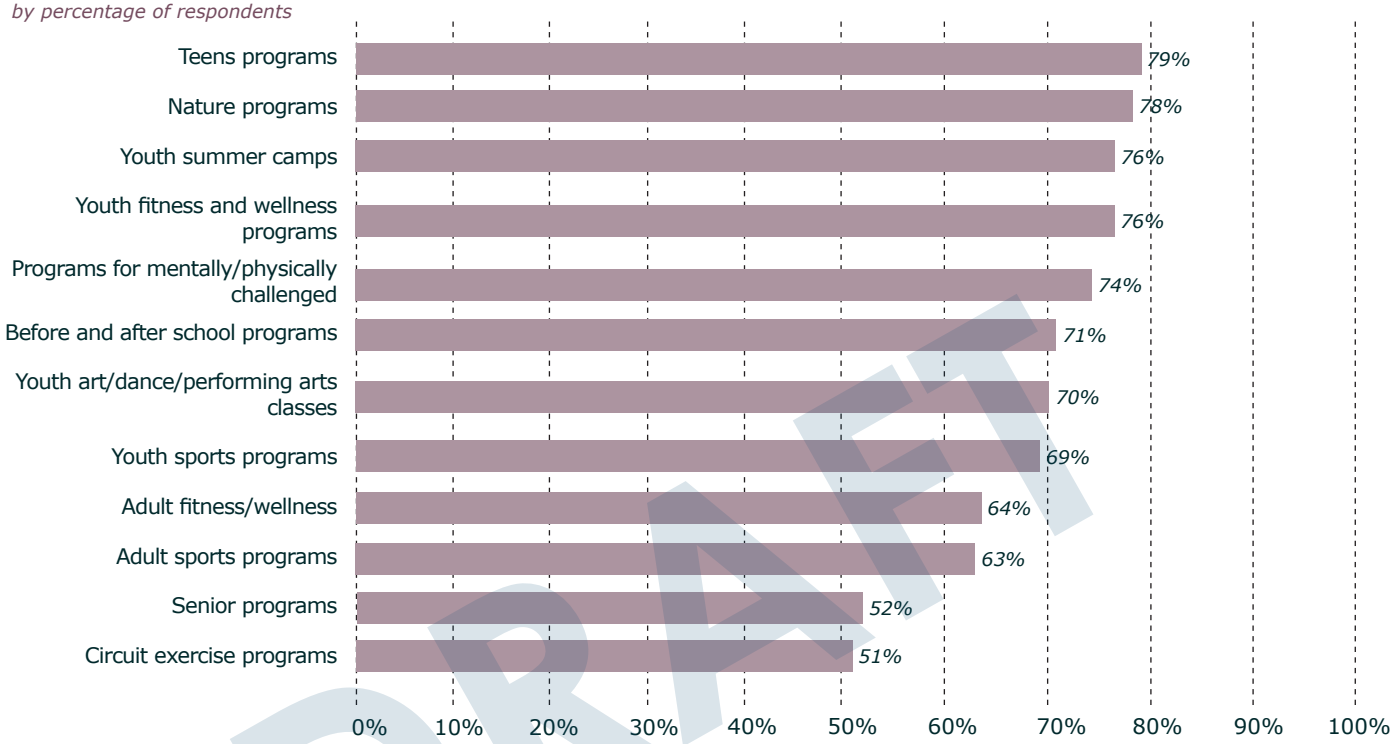
## Recreation Program Needs and Priorities

Respondents were asked to indicate how well their needs are being met for 13 recreation programs by selecting from the options of "Need MORE", Already ENOUGH, or "Too MANY". Following are the programs that over 50% of respondents identified as "Need MORE".

**Fig. 3.34 Programs Identified as High Need**

*by percentage of respondents*

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Respondents were then asked to identify the top four facilities that were most important to their household. Following are the identified facilities.

**Fig. 3.35 Ranking of Programs**

*Top Four Responses*

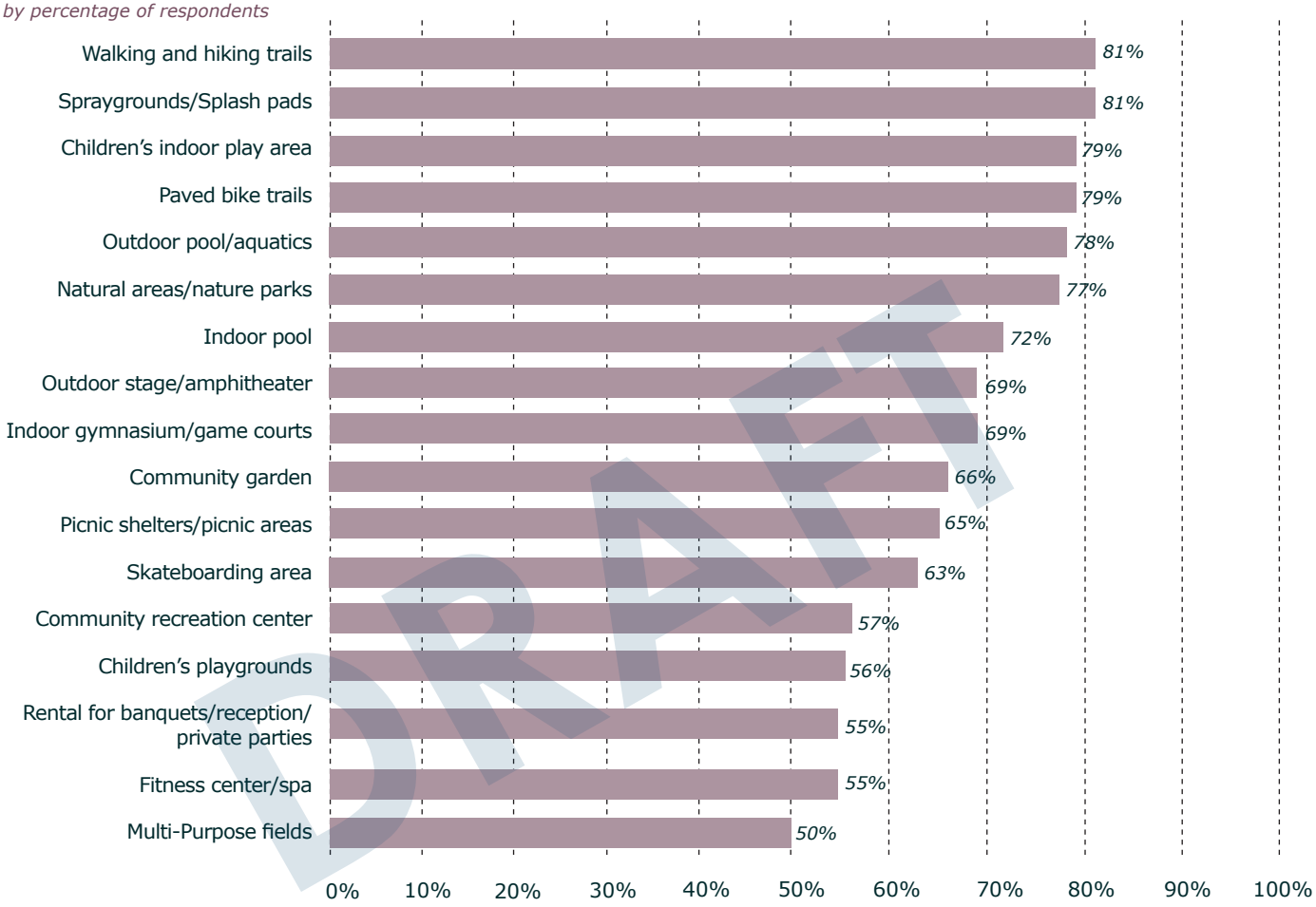
1. Before and after school programs
2. Youth summer camps
3. Youth sports programs
4. Youth fitness and wellness programs

## Recreation Facilities/Amenities Needs and Priorities

Respondents were asked to indicate how well their needs are being met for 29 recreation facilities by selecting from the options of "Need MORE", Already ENOUGH, or "Too MANY". Following are the facilities that over 50% of respondents identified as "Need MORE".

**Fig. 3.36 Facilities/Amenities Identified as High Need**

*by percentage of respondents*

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Respondents were then asked to identify the top four facilities that were MOST IMPORTANT to their household. Following are the identified facilities.

**Fig. 3.37 Ranking of Facilities/Amenities**

*Top Four Responses*

1. Walking and hiking trails
2. Spraygrounds/Splash pads
3. Natural areas/nature parks
4. Paved bike trails

## 3.4 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with four different focus groups of active parks and recreation users to ascertain needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system:

- Development Focus Group | Tuesday, November 12, 2024
- Recognized User/Youth Sports Focus Group | Tuesday, November 12, 2024
- Programming Focus Group | Thursday, November 14, 2024
- Local Government Group | Thursday, November 14, 2024

The complete meeting summaries are included in the appendix. The following summarizes key points across all meetings.

**Parks and Recreation Needs**

1. **Affordability & Access**
   - Many families cannot afford multiple children's participation in programs.
   - Need for more summer camps citywide, particularly in growing areas like the west
2. **Facility Expansion & Utilization**
   - More partnerships needed with non-profits for afterschool and summer programs.
   - Existing facilities, such as Minsky Gym, could be better utilized.
   - City has land but lacks buildings and staff to support programs.
3. **Athletic Fields & Organized Sports**
   - Demand for lighted fields is high; the last field was built in 2006.
   - Sports tourism and youth programs could benefit from additional fields
   - Drainage issues impact field usability
   - Need for a standalone sports facility has been discussed but not prioritized.
   - Growth in sports like lacrosse and pickleball requires additional spaces.
4. **Parks, Playgrounds, & Public Spaces**
   - Overuse of existing parks (e.g., Pioneer Park, Tradition Square).
   - Need for large-scale open event spaces.
   - Additional playgrounds, picnic tables, and ADA-accessible areas needed.
   - Growing demand for walking trails, biking paths, and golf cart infrastructure.
   - Connectivity between parks and neighborhoods is a priority.
5. **Maintenance & Upgrades**
   - Older parks and league facilities (e.g., Sportsman's Park, Swan Park) require upgrades.
   - Issues include drainage, rotting netting, outdated restrooms, and lack of shade.
   - Lack of long-term maintenance funding has led to deteriorating conditions.
6. **Traffic & Accessibility**
   - Increased demand for parking at parks and recreational facilities.
   - Golf cart parking, charging stations, and separated pedestrian/bike paths needed.
   - Traffic congestion at park sites, especially on the west side, needs to be addressed.

**Priorities**

1. **Expanding Lighted Fields & Organized Sports Facilities**
   - Address field shortages by accelerating plans for new fields.
   - Improve field drainage and invest in synthetic turf where appropriate.
   - Increase lighting to extend field usability.
2. **Enhancing Youth & Multi-Generational Spaces**
   - Expand programming and facilities for youth not in organized sports.
   - Develop multi-generational recreational

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spaces, including shaded areas and walking trails.

- Ensure parks meet the needs of high-density family neighborhoods.

3. **Improving Park Connectivity & Accessibility**
   - Develop better trail systems that connect parks and neighborhoods.
   - Work with the school district to encourage on-site recreational facilities.
   - Improve micro-transit options like Uber, Lyft, and dedicated public transportation routes to parks
4. **Strengthening Partnerships for Speed & Efficiency**
   - Formalize partnerships with non-profits to streamline programming.
   - Improve communication and approval processes for external partnerships
   - Expedite funding and approval processes for community projects
5. **Investing in Existing Parks & Facilities**
   - Ensure older parks and league facilities receive maintenance and upgrades.
   - Address safety concerns, including field hazards and outdated infrastructure.
   - Improve parking availability and overall park management.

**Funding & Implementation**

1. **Public-Private Partnerships & Sponsorships**
   - Explore naming rights and corporate sponsorships to offset costs.
   - Engage builders and developers in funding recreational amenities.
   - Leverage developer impact fees for park expansion.
2. **Alternative Funding Sources**
   - Seek state hazard mitigation grants for emergency shelters and multi-use community centers.
   - Explore sustainability grants for energy-efficient community buildings.
   - Consider reinstating countywide park taxes or similar funding measures.
3. **Leveraging Existing Budget & Resources**
   - Maintain a balance between new development and ongoing maintenance.
   - Ensure new facilities come with funding for staffing and operations.
   - Streamline approval processes to accelerate project implementation.

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## 3.5 CITY LEADERSHIP INTERVIEWS

Six interviews were conducted with City leadership and elected officials during the month of November 2024. Interviewees were asked four question. Following is a summary of the responses to the questions. The number in parenthesis after the comments represents the number of times a comment was heard from the interviewees.

1. **Review of Scope/ Schedule:** Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology?
    - The goal of City leadership is for Parks and Recreation to focus on their core values and focus on providing parks and recreation services.
2. **Parks and Recreation Needs:** Based on what you know, see, and hear about your community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs including physical improvements and programming?
    - It will be important for parks and recreation projects to have a "Wow" factor.
        - ☐ Explore the potential to have these types of parks throughout the City including in Traditions, Torino, and potentially Boxey Park.
        - ☐ Consider including Destination Parks/ "Wow" Parks in each District. However, budget is going to be an important consideration because the City has limited funds.
    - Parks and recreation needs include:
        - ☐ Fields for sports groups (4)
            - They need fields to practice and for the games, which also cause parking issues.
            - Need more lighted field for baseball, softball, soccer, etc.
        - ☐ Need to address recognized user groups for fields (2).
        - ☐ Land acquisition for new parks (2)
            - Explore the acquisition of the Old Elementary School next to Sportsman's Park – 15.4 Acres
            - Need to expand Veteran's Memorial Park because the City has outgrown the park. There isn't enough parking. The Veteran's that go there are aging and having to walk ½ to 1 mile to go to the Park. The City has to pay for a tent for the events. The City needs a pavilion for a couple of hundred people and a bigger parking area to get them off the road. It is dated and needs some attention. One suggestion it to clear the land next door to it that the City owns and add a Pavilion.
            - The City will attract 500 to 600 people to attend these ceremonies. But they only have space for 20 to 30 people in the seating area so everyone that sits behind them can't see anything. The City needs to add a stadium style sitting. Could potentially use the field for ceremonies, events, and accessible parking. Veteran's Day and Memorial Day, which attracts large crowds. But apart from those two events, Veteran's Groups will also host events and ceremonies. Also a popular space for remembrance.
            - Consider land banking for future parks.
        - ☐ Moving Veteran's Ceremony to another venue to accommodate more people, perhaps at Mid-Florida. There is more space and it is safer.

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- Explore two strategies in the Master Plan:
    - One strategy that shows a path to developing more parks, ballfields, community centers, etc.
    - Another one that can use existing parks with minor improvements to address parks and recreation needs in accordance with strategic plan and provide multiple benefits.
- Conservation areas/ Natural areas (2)
    - There are Conservation Lands that are available in the City. While they are currently under Planning and Zoning, there could be an opportunity to move them to Parks and Recreation. There are many lands that could benefit from very simple improvements to address the parks and recreation needs associated with access to nature. This may require changing policies in the City to enable funding these sites.
- Need to focus on maintenance of facilities and ensuring that we are not overstretching our resources.
    - It will be important for Parks and Recreation to have their own trades and maintenance staff.
- Need Community Centers in the west and northern parts of the City and around the Torino area.
    - Need Centers that are modern and flexible spacing and utilized efficiently, need more meeting rooms.
- We need to look at the park site on Commerce and the utilization of the site and explore can be done with that site, including working with Planning and Zoning to explore funding opportunities to beautify the site.
- Need to address programming.
- Start a Friend's of Port St. Lucie Parks.
- Leverage Port St. Lucie University Graduates.
- Develop a Multi-purpose Sports Complex.
- Consider SW annexation area in Southern Grove to assemble acreage.
- Increase standing in TPL.
- Add a basketball league.
- Add pickleball courts.

3. **Priorities:** Of the needs discussed, what are your top 3 parks and recreation and priorities?
    - Need to finish parks that the City has initiated (6)
        - Torino Park – it has been over 20-years since it was proposed and it is finally being implemented. We need to finish the park.
        - Implement Phase 2 and 3 of other parks get implemented with a Recreation Center with Parks element.
        - Port District project.
    - The City needs to leverage available land and improve it. The lands don't have to be a full-blown park to be considered a park or greenspace. It can be a stormwater pond that is amenitized with benches, parking, walking, fountains, etc., which there are many throughout the City, like Submarine Park, Woodstorck Trail. (4)
    - Need to make sure that we have sufficient staff to maintain the facilities (3).
    - Recreation components that have gap issues such as Senior Center and improvements to Recreation Centers (3)

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- Need to plan for Centers throughout the City that are programmable indoor spaces. Need to be sensitive that the West side gets everything, but the East and North side do not. Would have to implement two simultaneously. Consider thinking how we go vertical for Community Centers.

- Need to identify and develop a strategy around recognized user groups (2).
- Need to identify an event location for large scale events (2)
- Recreational facilities that have the entertainment component.
- More multi-purpose spaces that are flexible and can be used for multiple things (2)
- Performing Arts Center
- Winterlakes Park – Existing facility that comparatively speaking with a minor investment it could be improved with lighting.
  - Lighted Fields should be a priority because we can expand use of fields, where appropriate.
- Swan Park needs to be addressed.
- Outfit/ re-outfit current older parks with amenities that the City doesn't have but could have – currently doing that in Torino's and Traditions as well as the older parks. Re-branding may also be necessary to create an experience similar to the Port District and experiences that are comparable to the Private Sector, which would help reposition the asset.
- Need to acquire more greenspace for parks.

4. **Funding/ Implementation:** Considering that this plan may identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
   - Need to identify long-term funding source, anything that we can leverage.
     - A County Sales Tax may be on the Ballot for 2026 and could be explored to help with parks and recreation improvements (5).
     - Need to identify development fees that may be remaining and make sure that the City is getting its fair share from Park Impact Fees (4).
     - Need to explore how the City can Team up with the County for Park Site (4).
     - Need to identify Corporate Sponsorships (3)
     - Referendum (2)
     - Grant funding (2).
     - MSTU's with the County.
     - Need to identify different sources that we can get funding for and identify how much we can collect over the next 15-20 years.
       - Is there an opportunity for Cell Tower fees to go to parks versus going to the general fund.
     - Need to identify what the City can fund with available funding sources.
     - Special Assessment for Parks/ Parks District.
     - State and Federal Funding
   - Private Partnerships
   - Start a Friend's of Port St. Lucie Parks. Leverage Port St. Lucie University Graduates.
   - The City should look at ways to be efficient with expenditures.

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## 3.6 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

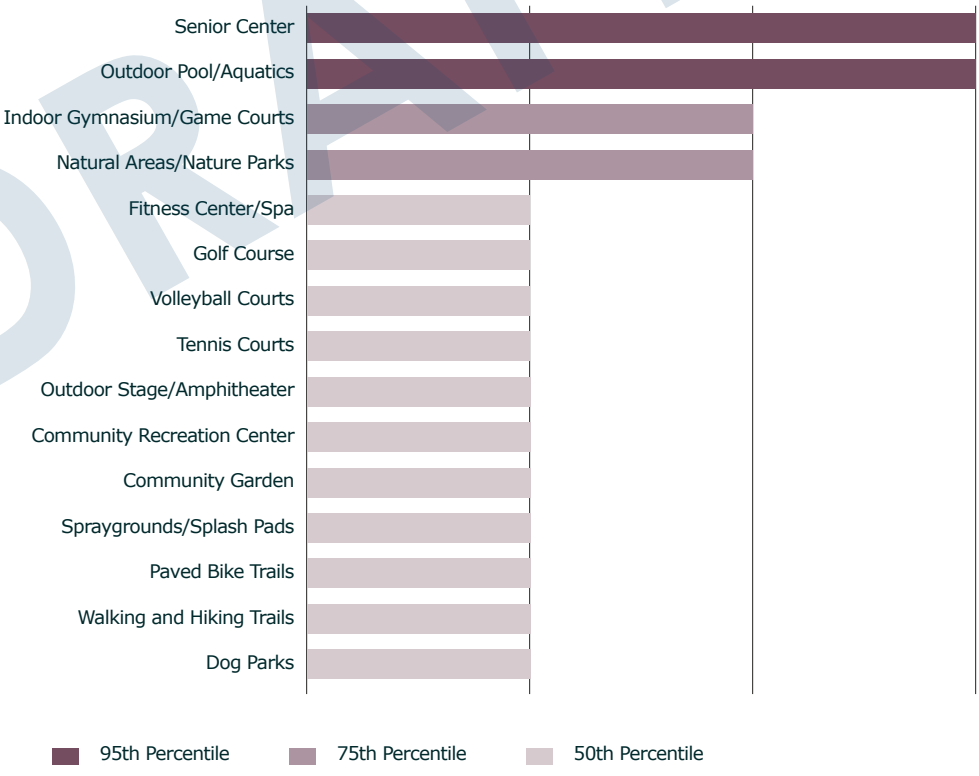
A project steering committee--composed of City Department representatives--was developed for the master plan update with a number of critical goals:

- to provide strategic direction, advice, and expertise;
- to serve as influential advocates that challenge conventional thinking;
- and to help implement the plan.

The first of four meetings was scheduled on January 24, 2025 for the Committee to provide input on the desired outcomes and priority needs. Attendees participated in six interactive exercises. Following is a description of the exercises and the selections that were in the 95th, 75th, and 50th percentile.

### Facilities Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings.

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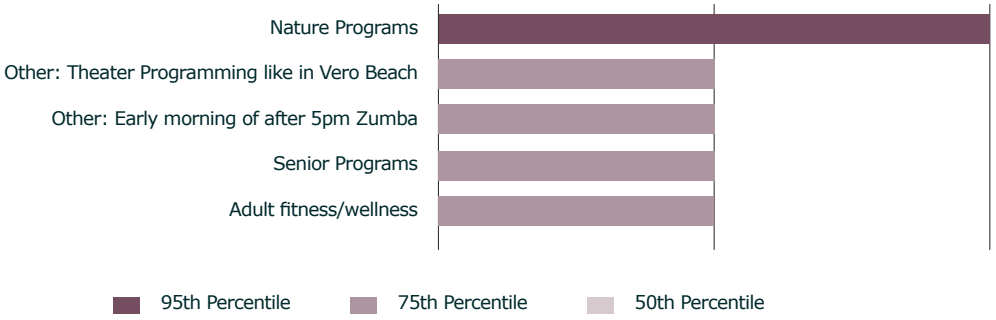
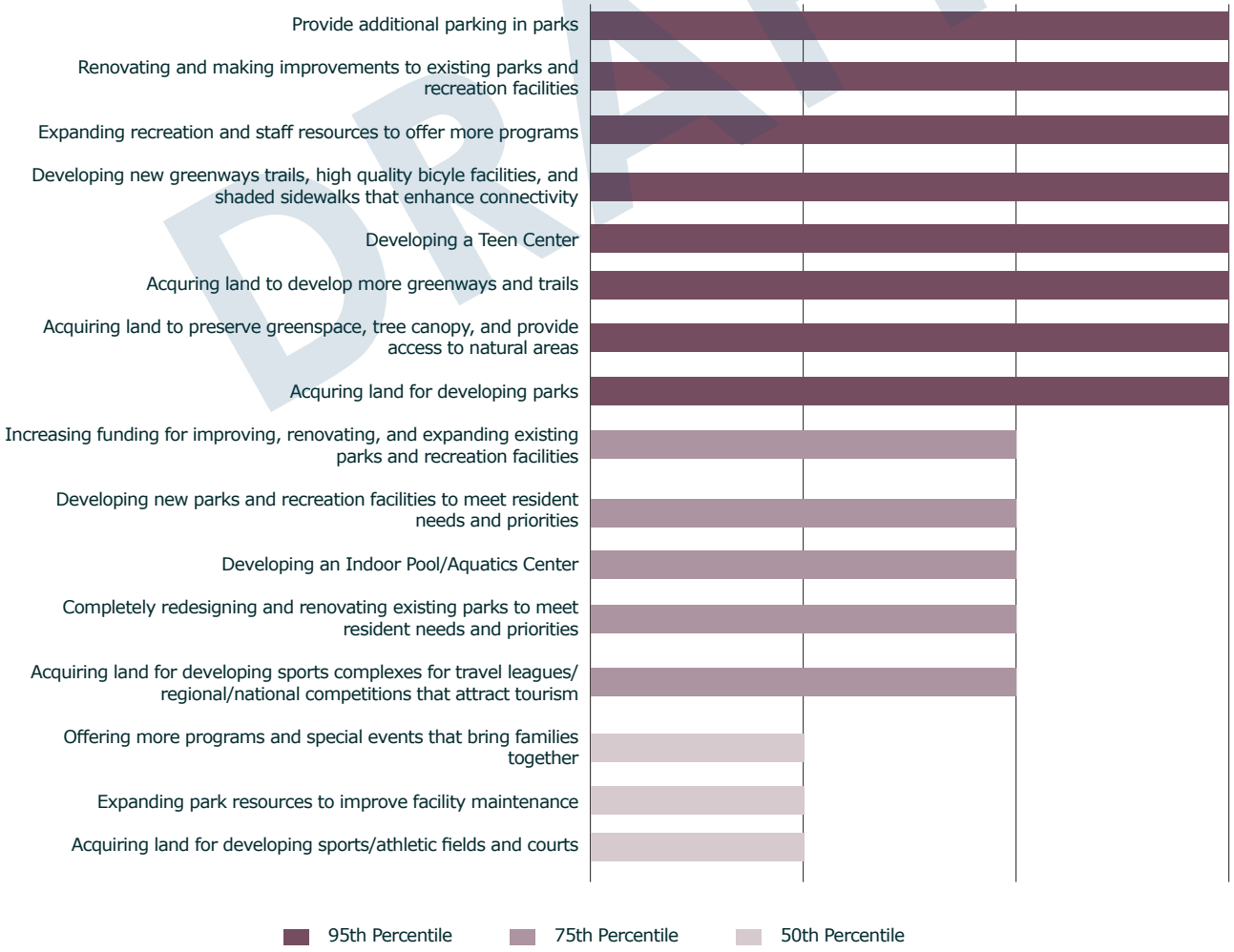
## Program Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 35 programs and activities, participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings.




## Actions

Based on a matrix with 16 actions that the City of Port St. Lucie could take to improve the parks and recreation system, participants were asked to place a dot on the actions for which they would be most supportive. Following are the findings.

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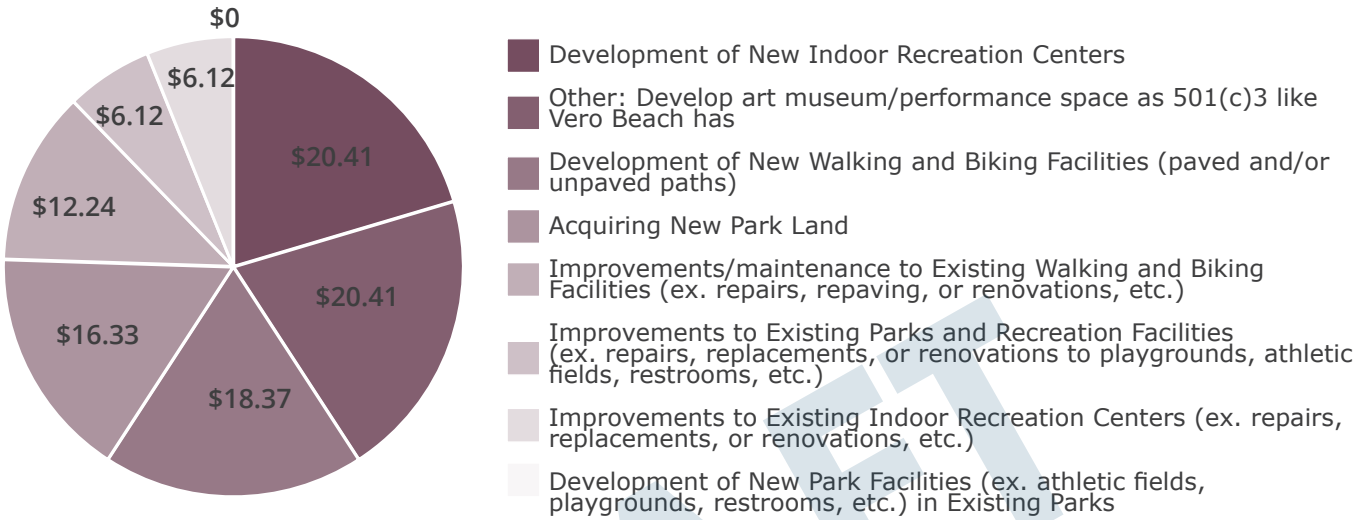
## Funding Facility Priorities

Participants were given $100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories. Following are the findings.

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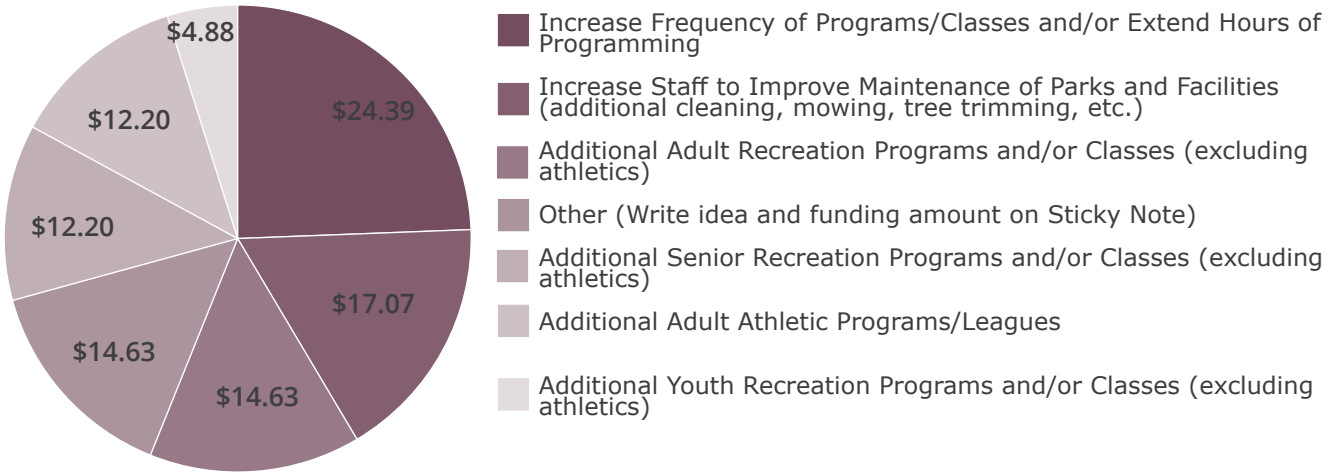
## Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given $100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories.



**What Else is on Your Mind?**

Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered.

- There is an opportunity to explore various perspectives of Pioneer Park:
  - The public's perspective
  - Staff's perspective of what staff was able to collaboratively create
  - Elected official's perspective and expectations of future parks
- There is also an opportunity to tap into the park to identify the "secret sauce" that has made the park such a success.
- Moving forward, the City will need to consider funding for parks, especially considering that Pioneer Park is the bar for park quality; at least for "Wow" Parks. It's important to note that after the park was built, no one has commented on it being too expensive given its overwhelming success.
- It will be important to review the City's Comprehensive Plan:
  - There is a need to acquire land and bank it; especially as it relates to park land acquisition.
  - It will be important to develop a policy for park land acquisition.
  - It will be important to align recommendations with the Comprehensive Plan:
    - Benchmark park land ratios
    - Show justification for the need to increase impact fees.
- Given the limited availability of undeveloped land, there may be a need to pursue the acquisition of already developed property, explore re-purposing it, and consider developing multi-story buildings.
- The City is updating the Mobility Plan, which will inform potential surplus Rights-of-Ways that may be explored for use as park land.
  - It may be important to consider developing a Classification of Linear Parks.
- Need strategic funding strategies to help understand how projects may score better for grants.
- Neighborhood Services Department – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update may help the Department meet the needs of senior citizens, especially the mental health element.
- Planning and Zoning Department – It will be important for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update to align with the City's Comprehensive Master Plan – Use Medium-High Population Projections,
- Think about the role of developers in molding the future parks infrastructure.
  - Refine expectations and agreements with developers
- How can the City get additional resources from the County considering the amount of taxes that the County collects from County residents.
- Make streets more walkable with buffers and trees to encourage residents to walk to parks.

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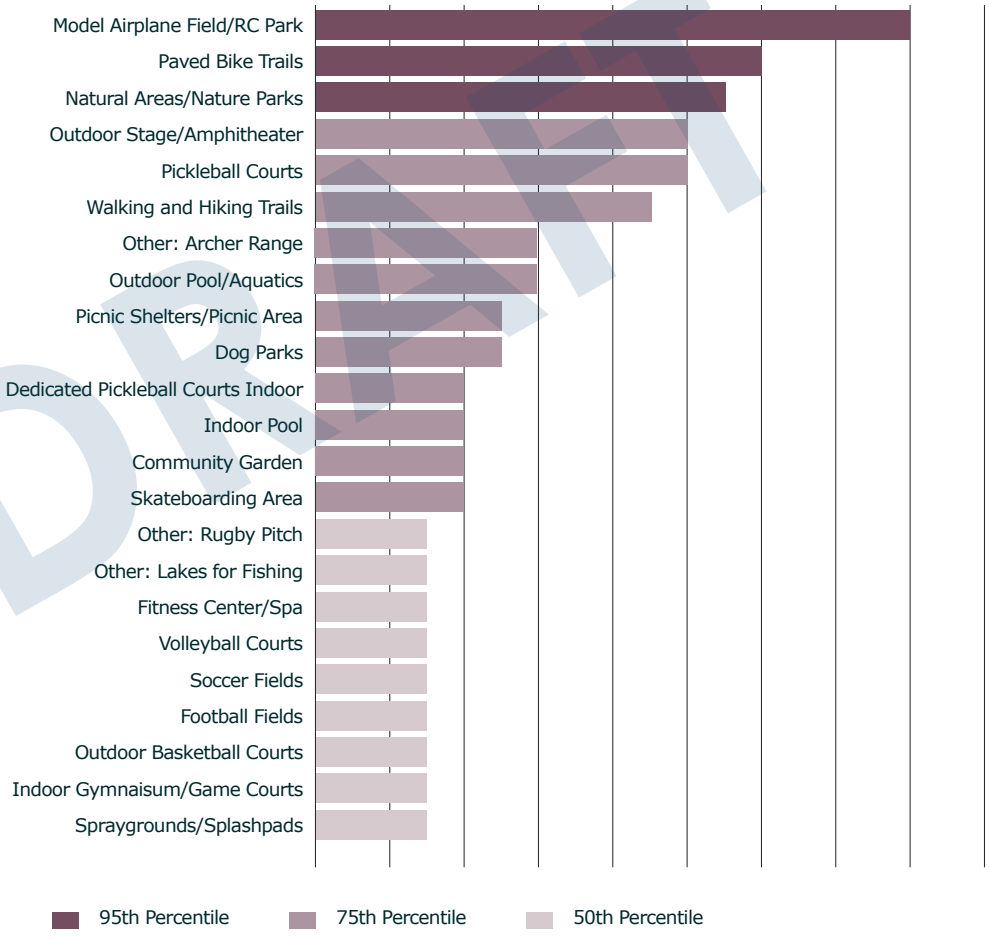
## 3.7 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Approximately over 70 residents attended two public workshops on November 6 and 7, 2024 to provide their input regarding parks and recreation needs and priorities.

Attendees participated in the same six exercises as the Steering Committee workshop, and they were also asked to provide any other comments related to parks and recreation needs or specific park improvements. Following are the findings form the workshops.

### Facilities Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings.

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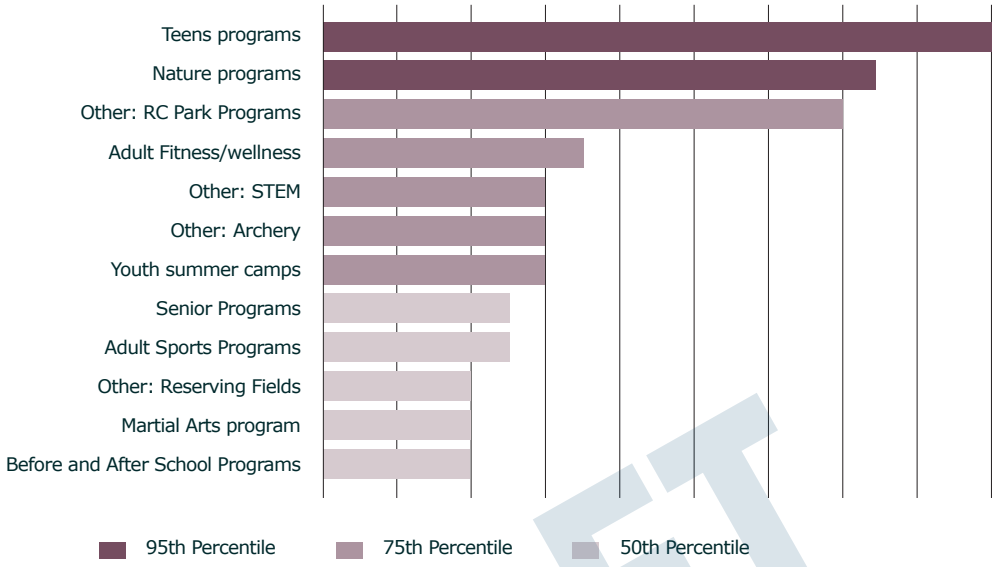
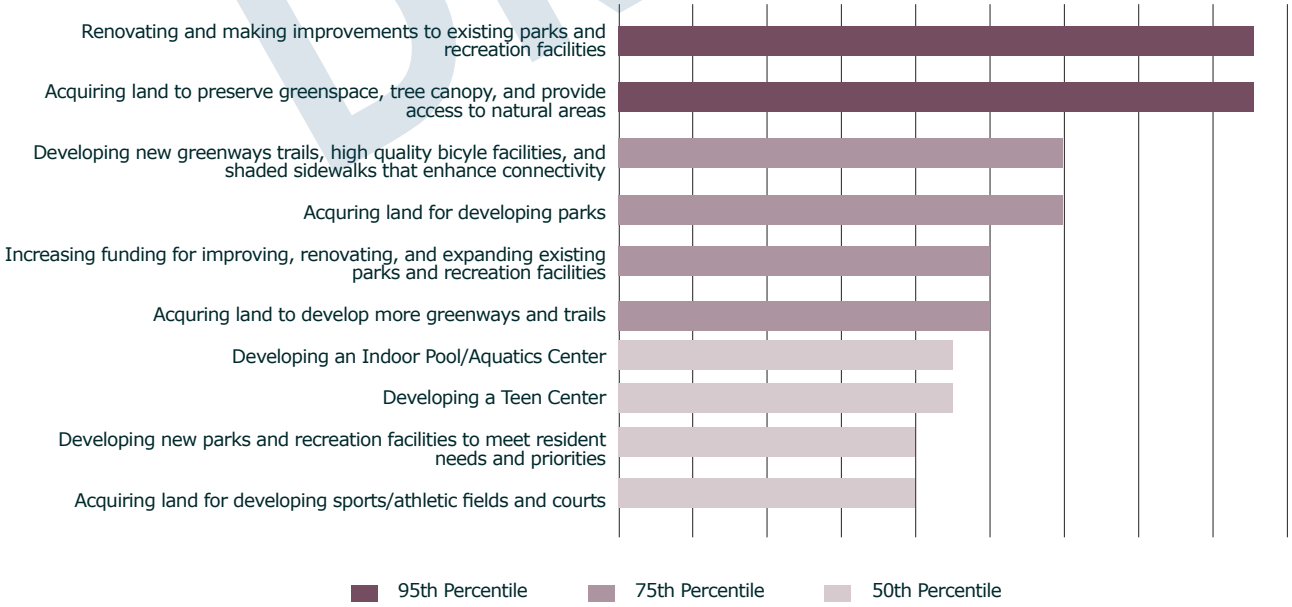



## Actions

Based on a matrix with 16 actions that the City of Port St. Lucie could take to improve the parks and recreation system, participants were asked to place a dot on the actions for which they would be most supportive. Following are the findings.

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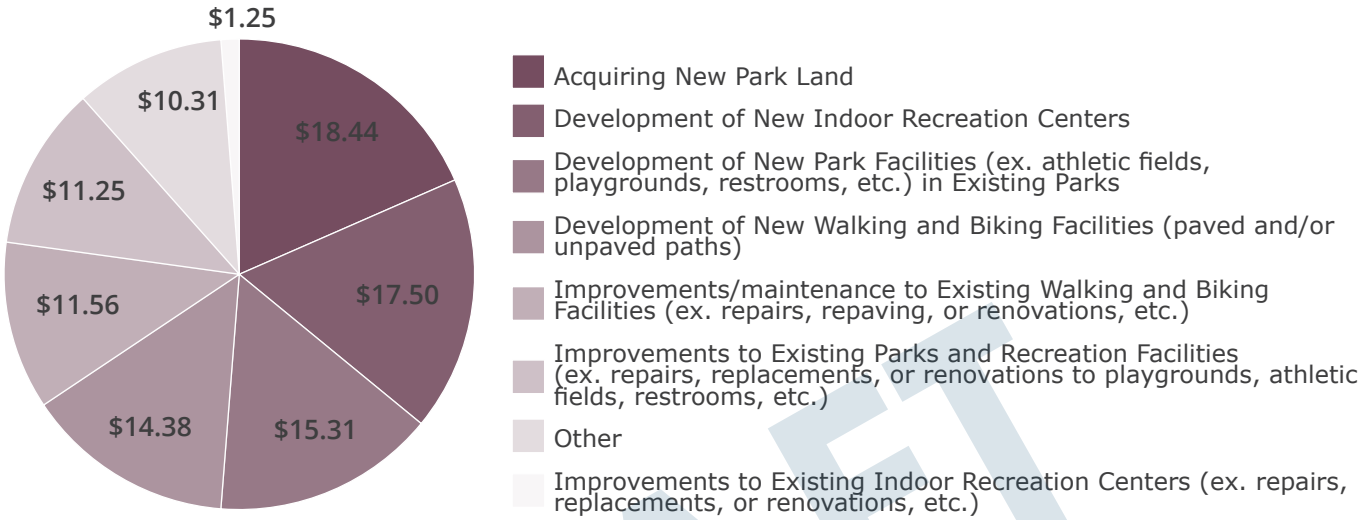
## Funding Facility Priorities

Participants were given $100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories. Following are the findings.

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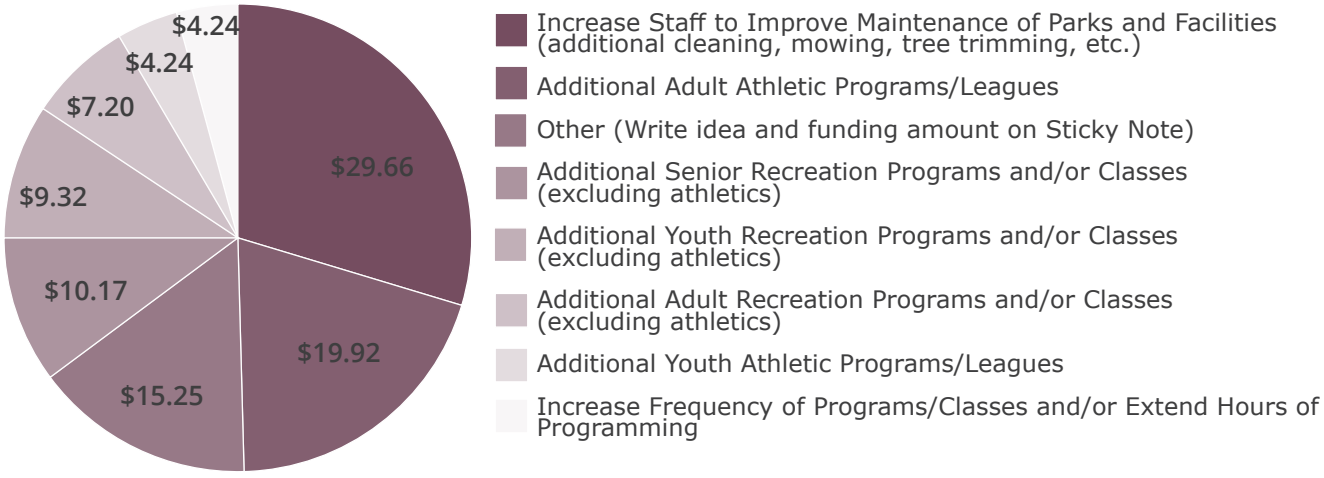
## Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given $100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories.



**What Else is on Your Mind?**

Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered.

- Improvements to RC Park.
  - AED Unit at Port St. Lucie RC Hobby Group.
    - Average age of the group is 60-65. What can they do to have a unit at the park?
  - Shade pavilions for when it rains, to protect equipment. 3 pavilions to get out of the sun:
    - 1 that is 20'x30'
    - 2 that are 15'x20'
  - The car track floods and users go weeks without using it. Would like the City to improve the park to reduce flooding.
  - Expand RC Park and improve storm drainage.
  - Improve pond for RC Boats.
- Would like to see an Okeeheelee Park in the Port St. Lucie in the area off Becker Road/I-95, which is an area that is being neglected.
- Would like the City to build more pocket parks with picnic shelters and swing sets. Acquire more lots for parks and greenspaces. Don't want to see more houses built in the County.
- Splash Pad off Becker Road.
- There is a park at Duck Court without benches. Would like a bench to sit.
- The reservation system for fields is antiquated. The City needs an online system.
- The City needs a fair policy for reserving fields. Would like to have access to all fields regardless of being a recognized sports group or not.
- Have more parks within walking and biking distance to parks without the need to drive.
- Provide more connectivity to parks.
- Strong/ sturdy bicycle racks to park expensive e-bikes.
- Walking paths and Yoga programs at Traditions Park.
- More shade Tree Tops Parks as an example.
- Food and beverage pods at parks to create outdoor food halls that can also function as business incubators.
- Need a walkability/ transit corridor to connect to activity centers, similar to Port St. Lucie Downtown and Pioneer Park.
- Would like to see an archery program for kids year-round.
- Programs for Home School kids.
- Develop a Miracle/ Universal Accessible Park.
- More sidewalks/ trails that are accessible.
- Pave trails separated from vehicles, especially considering recumbent bicycles.
- Pickleball Courts off of US-1.
- More nature trails, dirt gravel and paved trails with natural areas for walking, jogging, bicycling, similar to Halpatiokee Park.
- Pool, indoor or outdoor.
- Kickball Fields for adults.

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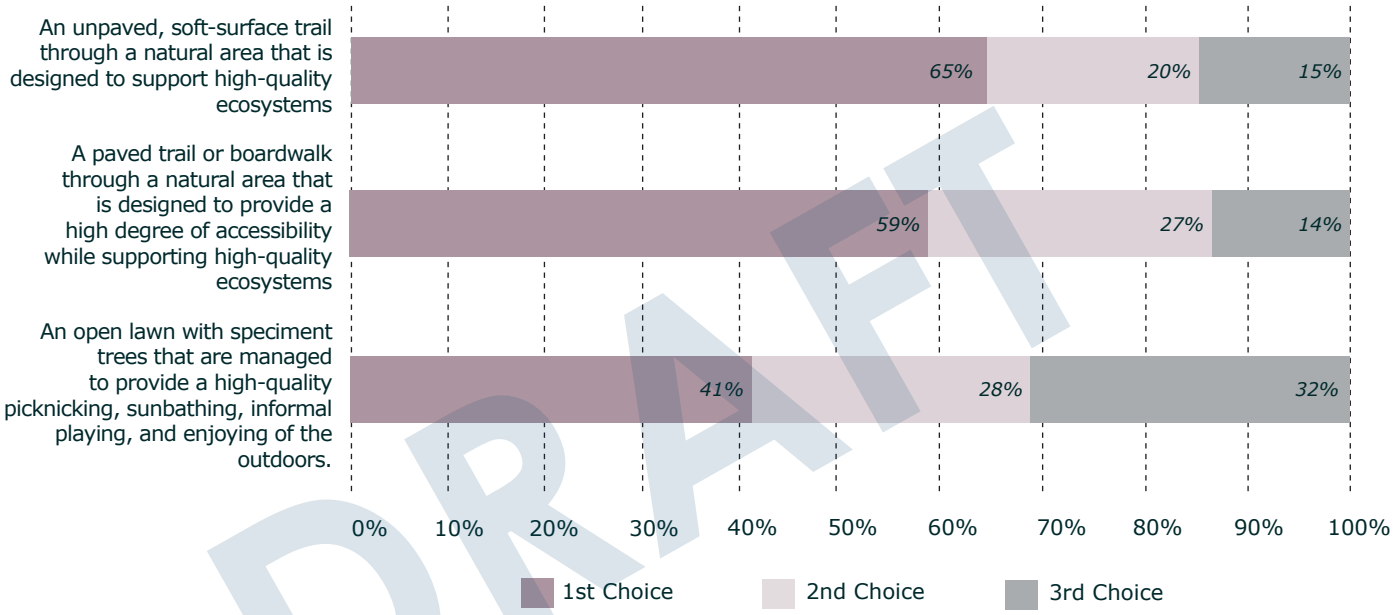
## 3.8 CITIZEN SUMMIT

On February 1, 2025, the Project Team attended Port St. Lucie's Citizen Summit, to share information on the Master Plan and collect additional input from the public. The following exercises were prepared to capture more specific feedback on certain program needs that were previously identified as high priorities.

### "What does 'Nature' mean to you?" - Defining Nature-based Recreation

Based on three options with images and descriptions of nature experiences, participants were asked to rank their definition their preferred definition of "nature."

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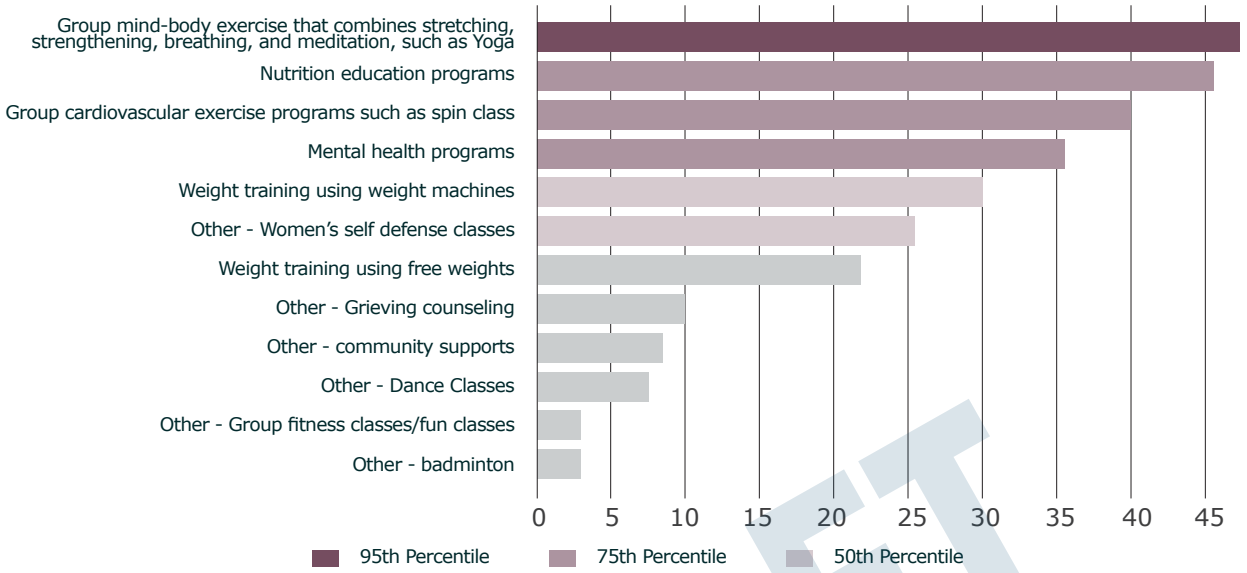
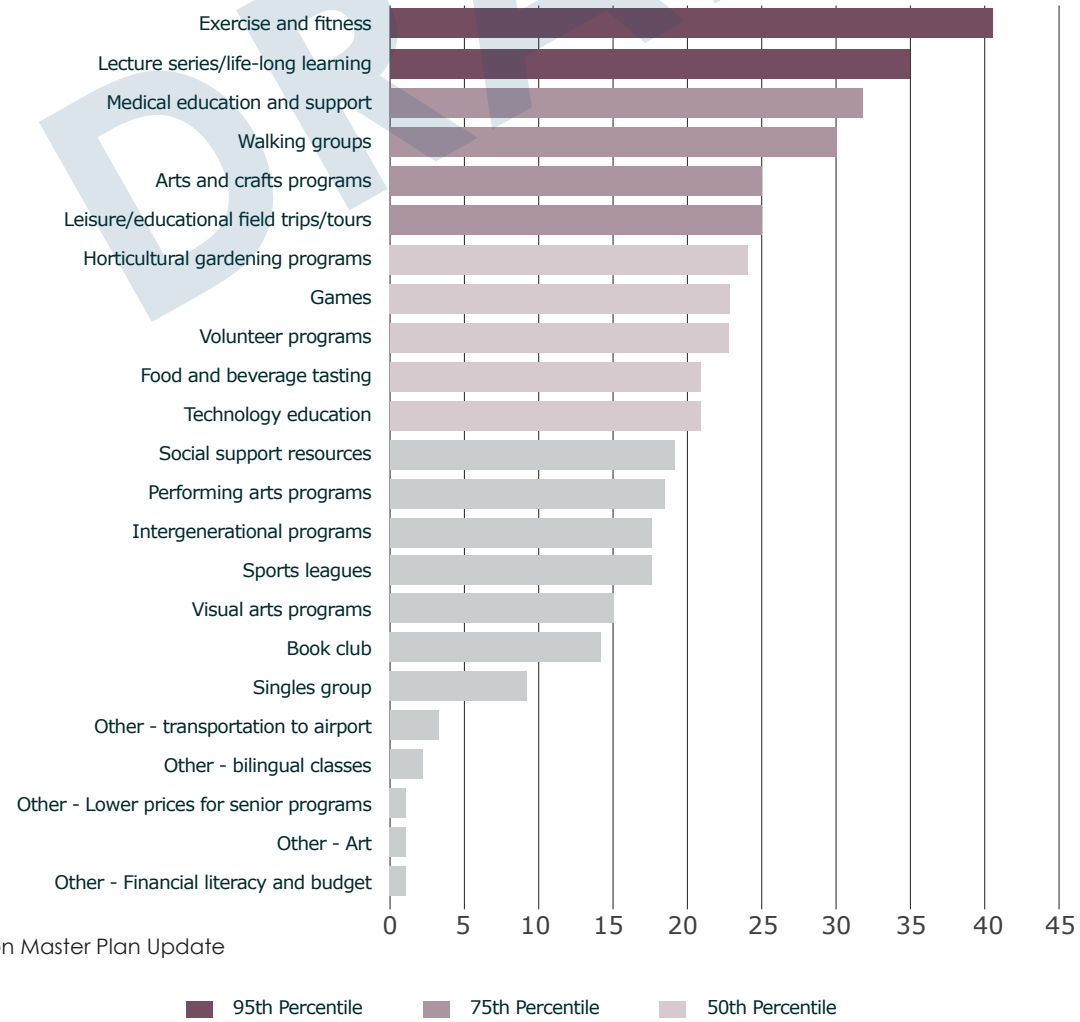
## Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs

Based on a matrix with images and names of 6 programs and activities (plus Other), participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they would like to see more of in Port St. Lucie.




## Program Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of 18 programs and activities (plus Other), participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they would like to see more of in Port St. Lucie.

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## 3.9 LEVELS OF SERVICE ANALYSES

There are no industry standards or regulations regarding how communities should establish Levels of Service (LOS) for parks and recreation services. Neither the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) nor the Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) publish traditional population-based LOS standards such as park acres and facilities per 1,000 residents.

Instead, cities are encouraged to conduct community-wide needs assessments and benchmark themselves against other similar communities in order to establish their own LOS standards.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed its benchmarking website Park Metrics, "the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies" to help cities develop LOS metrics. City of Port St. Lucie LOS findings were benchmarked against communities that have a similar population and population density as the City of Port St. Lucie.

Five different LOS methods were used to determine how well the City's parks and recreation system is meeting residents' needs:

1. **Access LOS:** Measures travel distances to parks and individual facilities such as playgrounds, athletic fields, recreation centers, etc. by calculating a service area.
2. **Acreage LOS:** Measures parkland acreage in a ratio to community's population (acres per 1,000 residents).
3. **Facilities LOS:** Measures the number of recreation facilities available per capita.
4. **Funding LOS:** Measures operations and maintenance spending per capita, capital spending per capita, and total parks and recreation spending per capita.
5. **Indoor Center Space LOS:** Measures indoor recreation space available per resident (square feet per resident).

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It is important to note that these LOS Analyses are just one tool for determining the community's needs. The findings alone may not be indicative of residents' needs and priorities. LOS analyses are based on the gross population of a community, not preferences or priorities based on unique community demographics, lifestyles, or values. The findings from the LOS analyses must be compared to the findings from the other needs assessment techniques in order to verify parks and recreation needs and priorities.

**Access LOS**

Access LOS measures the distance residents have to travel to access parks and recreation facilities. It is used to understand how park access varies between different neighborhoods in a city. The distance used in the calculation of LOS is important; for example, should a City aim for all residents to have a park within 1 mile of their homes, within ½ mile, or even less?

Informed by industry best practices and continuing the example established in the 2019 Master Plan, the following distances were used to analyze Access LOS for the City's park system and key recreational facilities identified in the Statistically-Valid Survey as being a high priority need.

- All City Parks - 1/2 mile, 1 mile
- City Open Space Parks - 1/2 mile
- City Neighborhood Parks - 1 mile
- City Community Parks - 3 miles, 5 miles
- Indoor Centers – 3 miles, 5 miles
- Nature Preserves – 3 miles, 5 miles
- Dog Parks – 1 mile, 3 miles

Figures 3.38 - 3.44 provide the results from this mapping analysis while chart below provides a summary of these findings.

| Park Type Analyzed | ½ Mile | 1 Mile | 2 Miles | 3 Miles | 4 Miles | 5 Miles |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All City Parks | ● | ● | | | | |
| City Open Space Parks | ● | | | | | |
| City Neighborhood Parks | ● | ● | | | | |
| City Community Parks | | | | ● | | ● |
| Indoor Centers | | | | ● | | ● |
| Nature Preserves | | | ● | | ● | |
| Dog Parks | | ● | | ● | | |

● Partial-Coverage ✚ Full-Coverage

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**Figure 3.38 - *Access LOS | All City Parks - 1/2 Mile + 1 Mile***

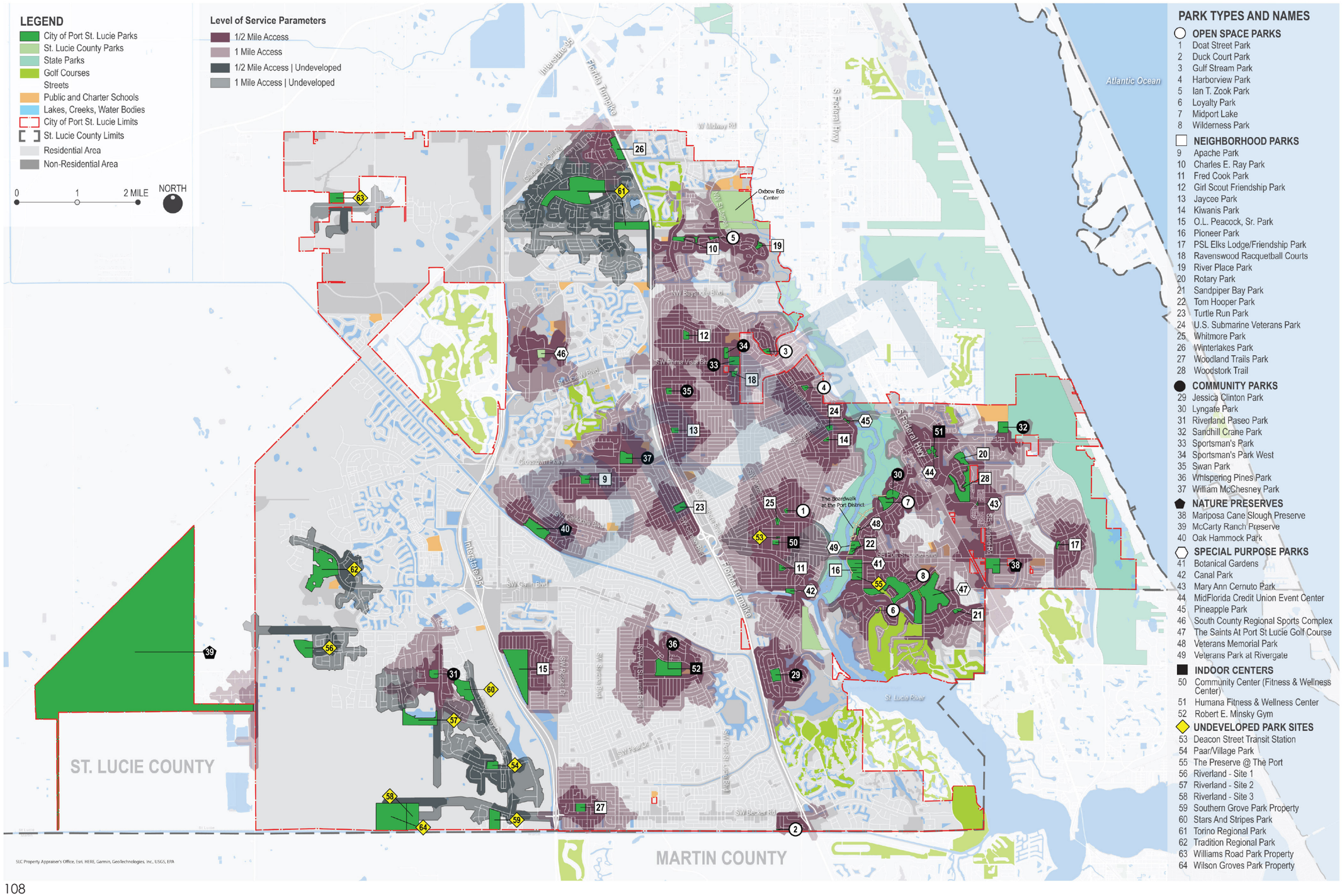


**Figure 3.39 - *Access LOS | All Parks (Sidewalk + Bike Path Network) - 1/2 Mile***

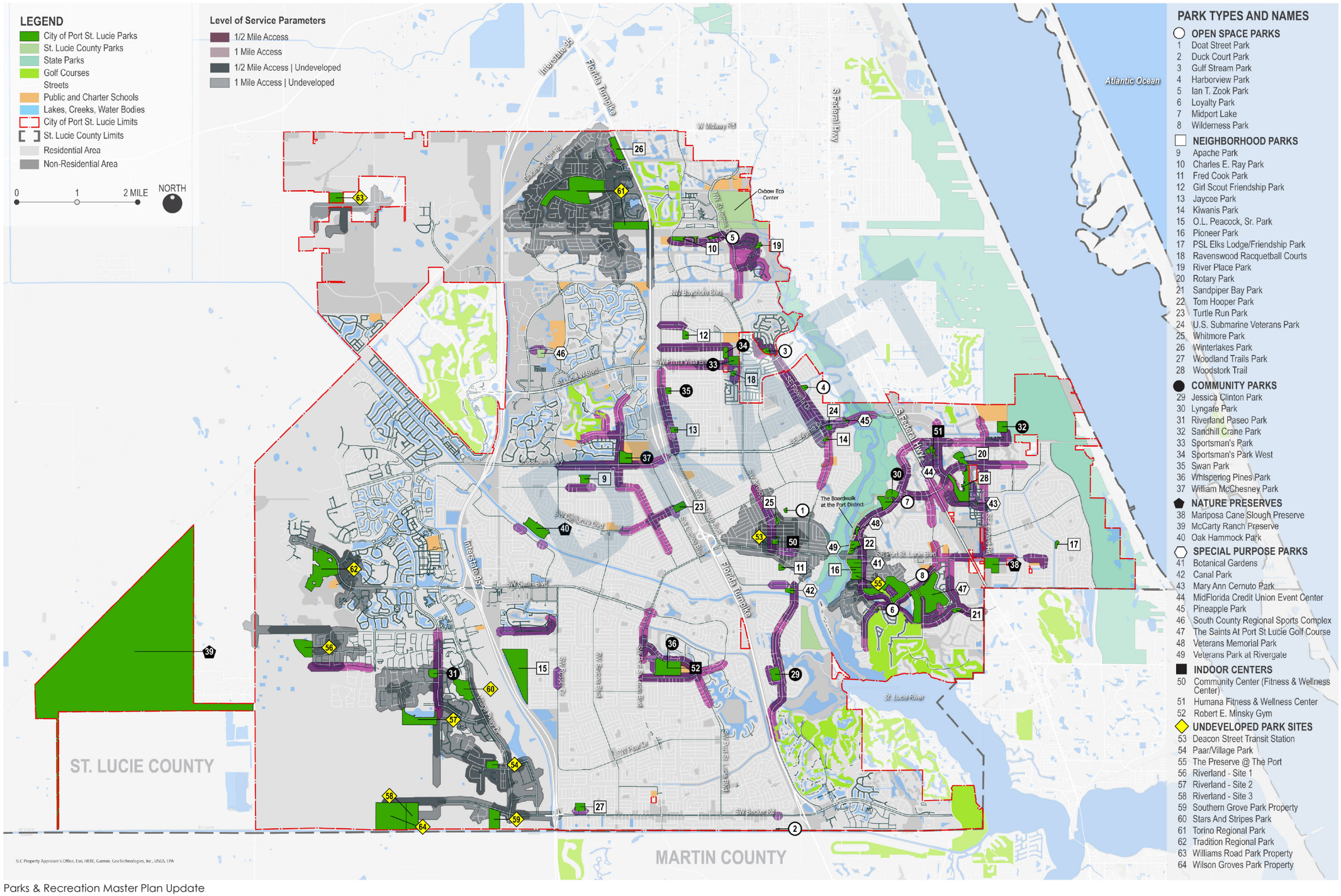


**Figure 3.40 - *Access LOS | City Open Space Parks - 1/2 Mile***

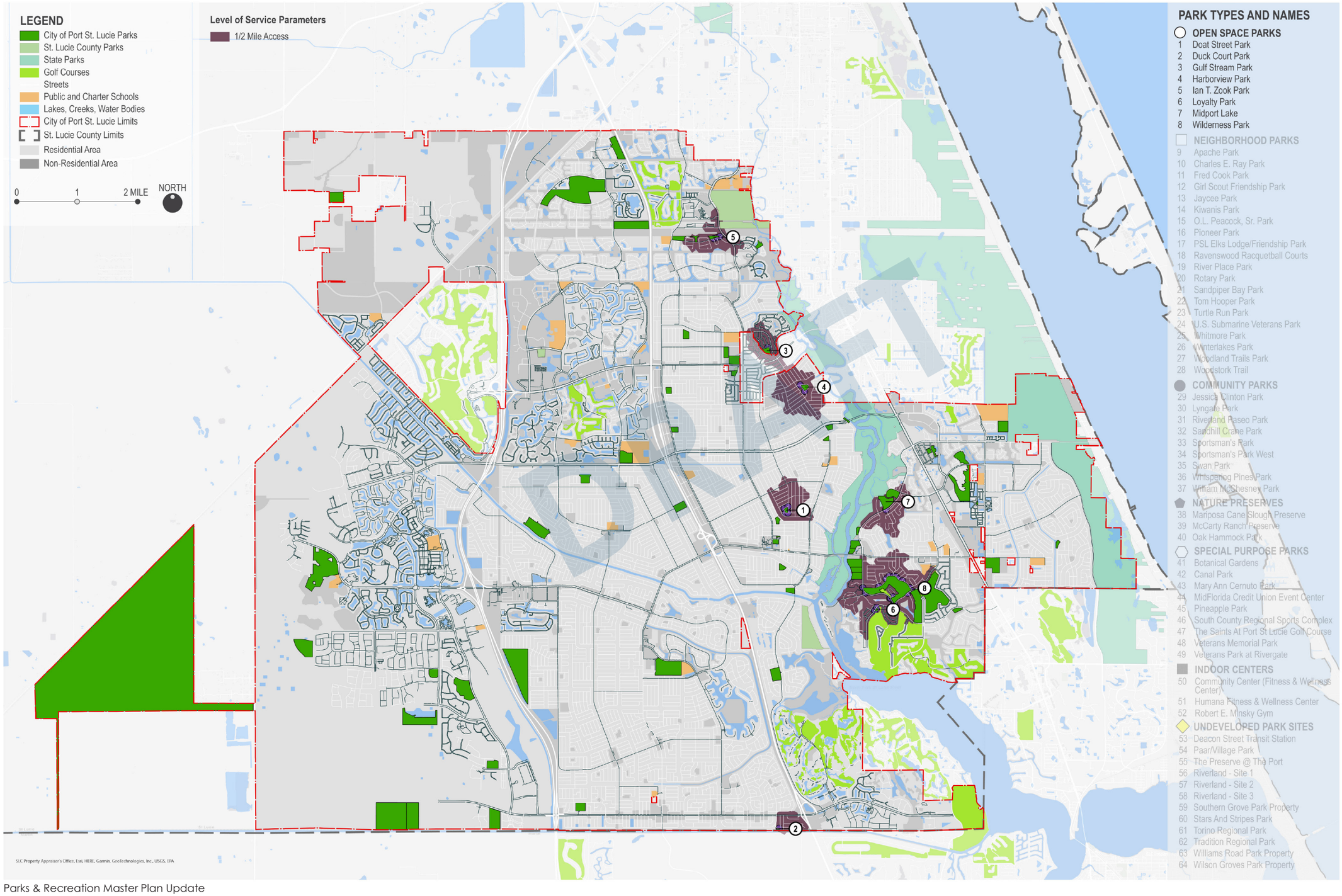


**Figure 3.41 - *Access LOS | City Neighborhood Parks - 1/2 Mile + 1 Mile***

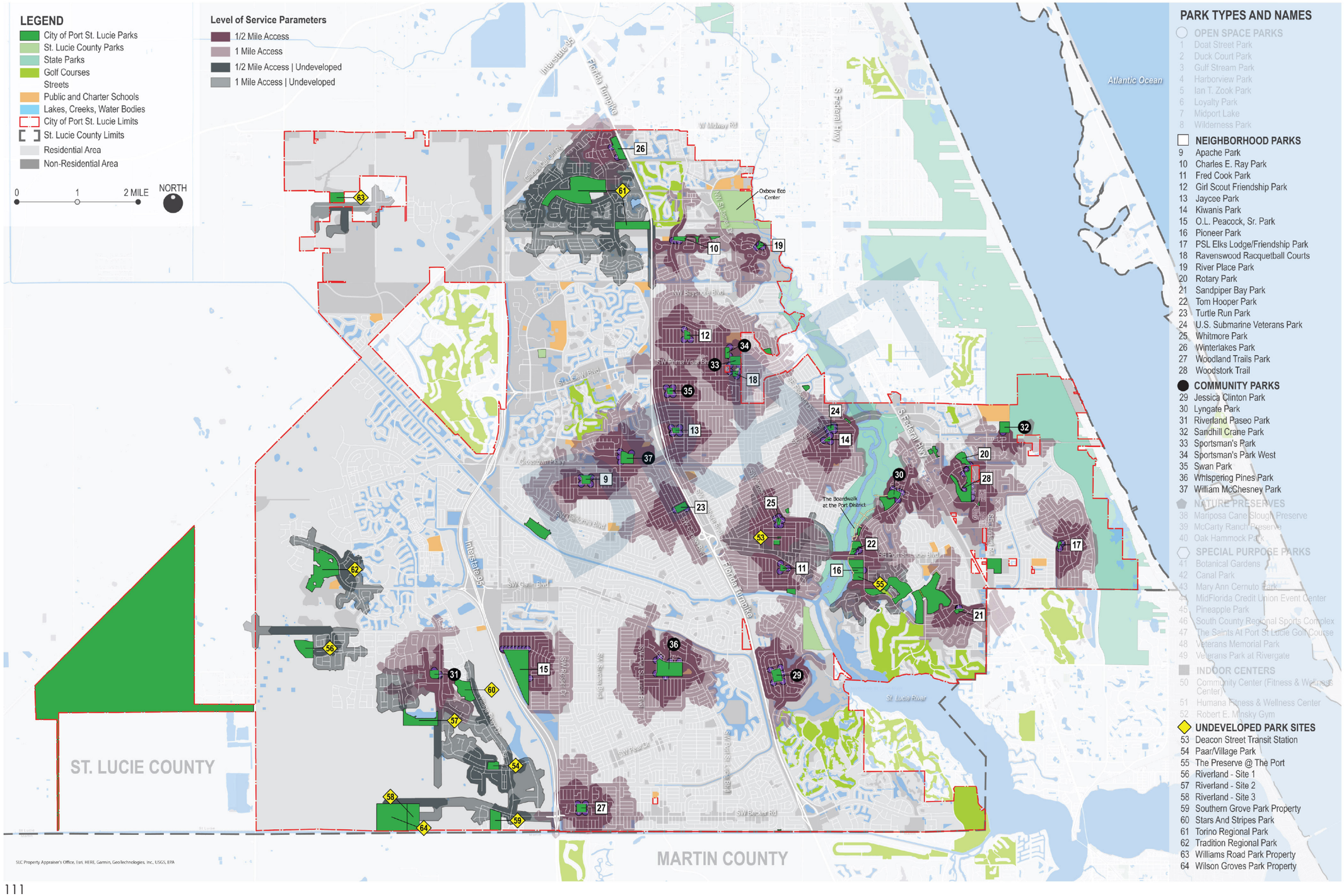


**Figure 3.42 - *Access LOS | City Community Parks - 3 Miles + 5 Miles***

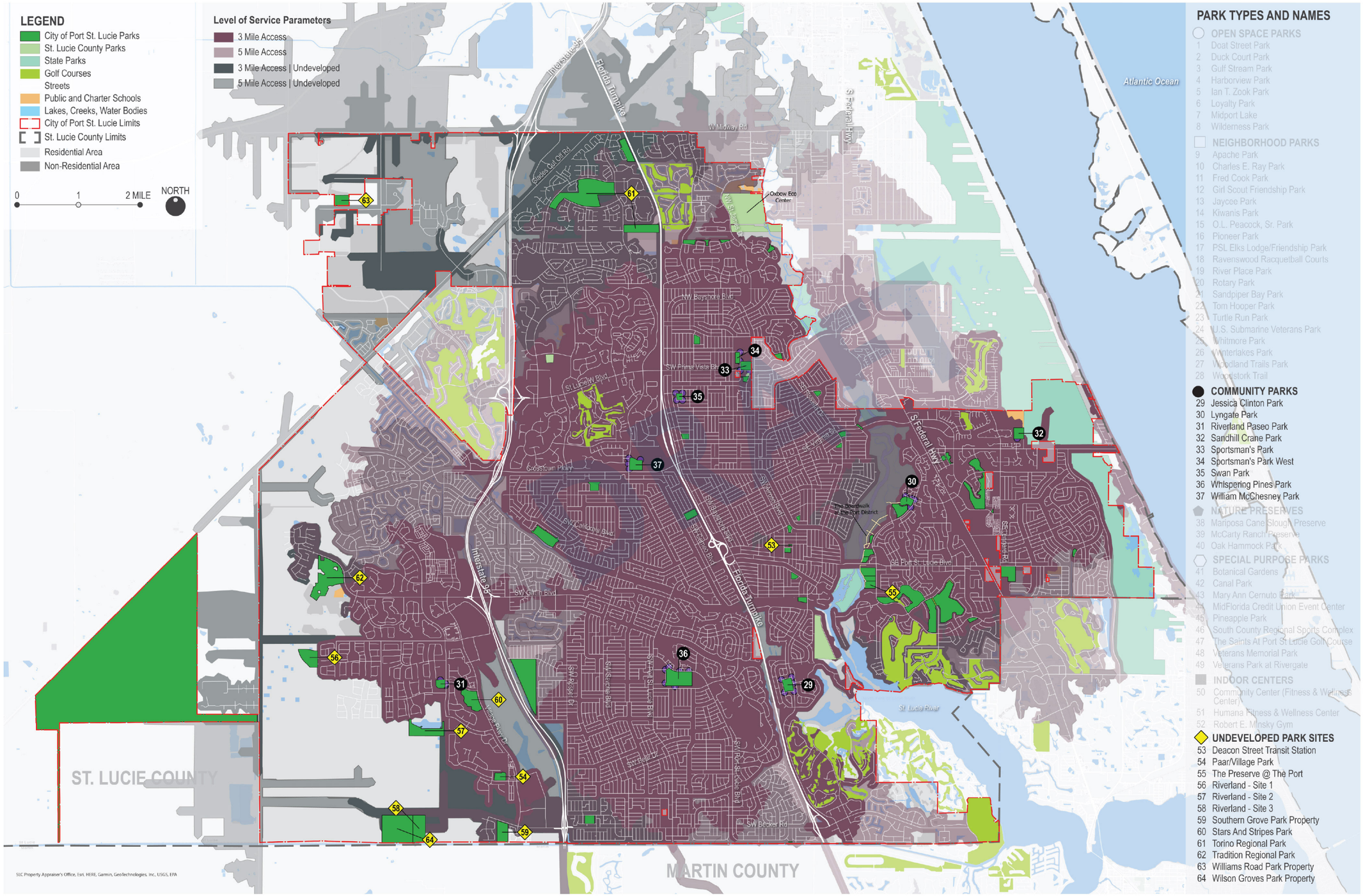


**Figure 3.43 - *Access LOS | Indoor Centers - 3 Miles + 5 Miles***

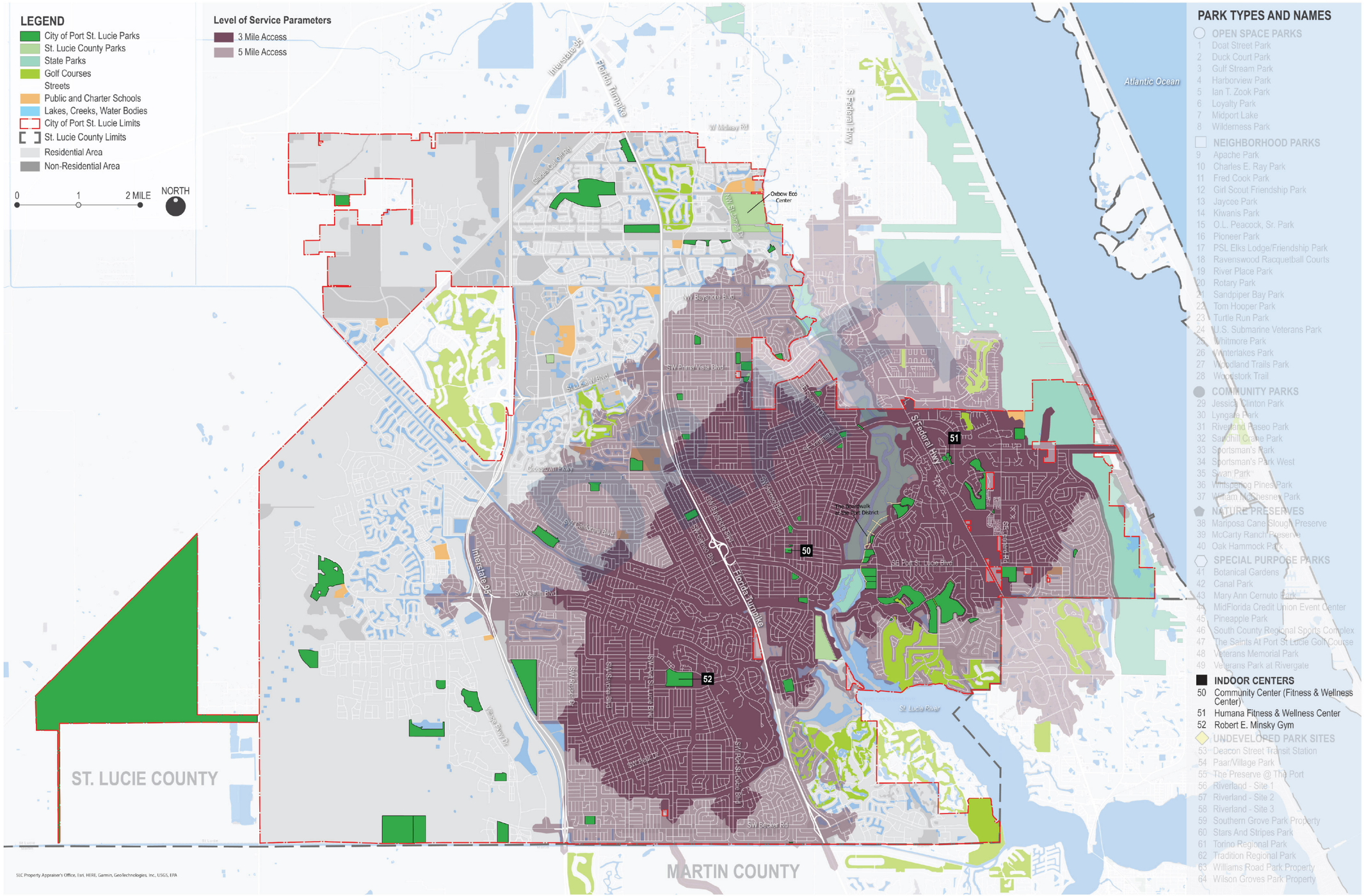
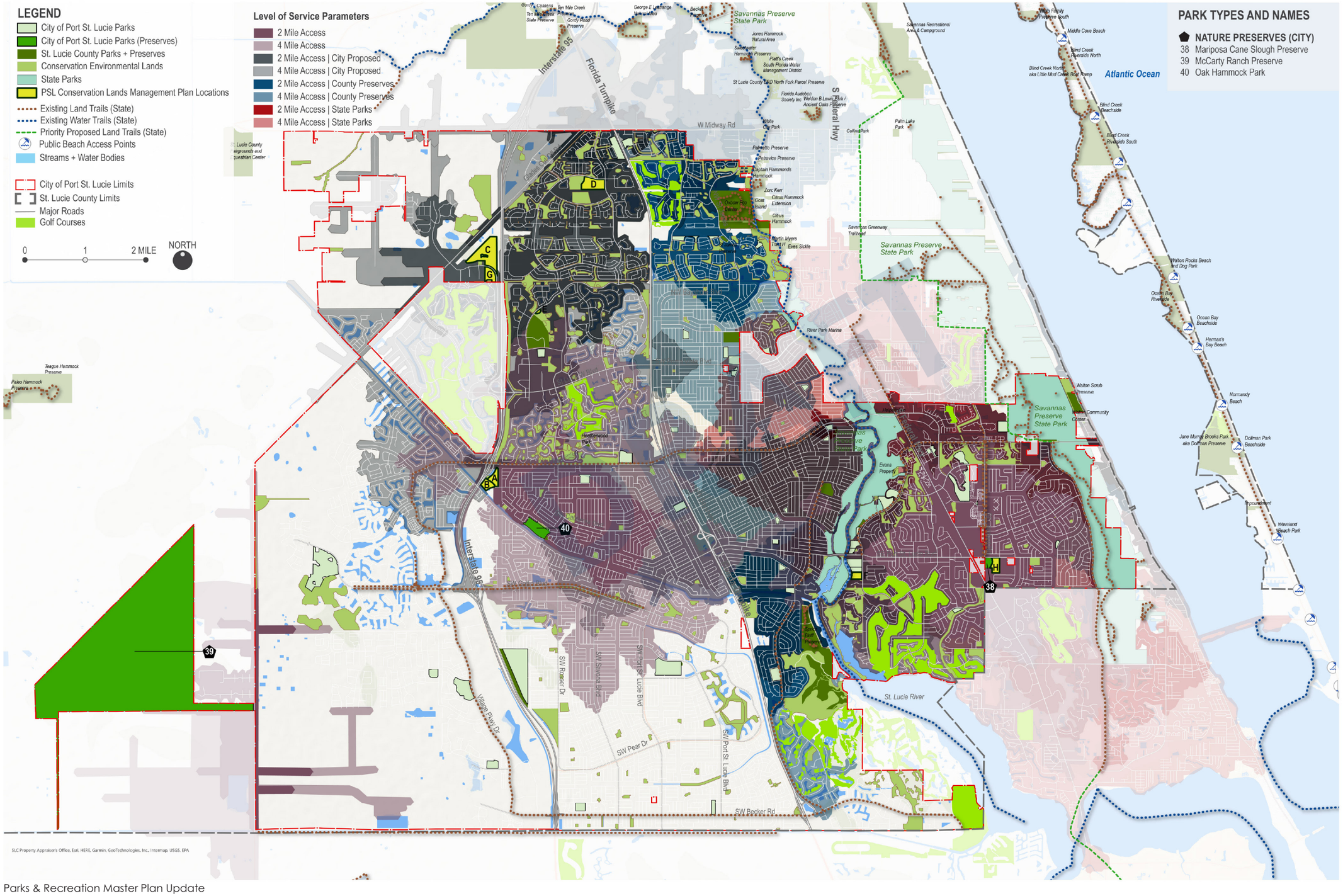


**Figure 3.44 - *Access LOS | Nature Preserves - 2 Miles + 4 Miles***



### Acreage LOS

Acreage LOS is expressed as Acres/1,000 population, measured by dividing the City's park acreage by its population. The City of Port St. Lucie's 2012-2035 Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan established an Acreage LOS target of 5 acres per 1,000 population for the City.

There is no agreed-upon methodology regarding what should be "counted" to calculate the LOS. The LOS calculations in the Comprehensive Plan include non-City-owned lands such as the County's Oxbow Nature Center and the State's Savannas State Preserve. A useful strategy is to break parkland down by various categories, including All Parkland, City-owned land, and distinguishing between "developable" and "undevelopable" park lands to clarify the actual amount of land available to meet residents' needs for athletic fields, dog parks, recreation centers, aquatics centers, and/or other recreation facilities desired by residents.

For the purposes of this report, Developable Parkland is defined as land without specialized constraints on its ability to have all types of park facilities constructed. Specialized constraints include conservation easements and other natural resource protections that preclude land development that would allow the creation of sports fields, parking lots, recreation centers, or other permanent structure.

Park Acreage LOS was analyzed using the population estimates for the years 2025, 2030, and 2035 with acreage estimates provided by the City for both developed and undeveloped parkland.

The following categories of acreage LOS were analyzed, ranging from most expansive to most limited:

- All City of Port St. Lucie Parks (Existing and Undeveloped) + County Parks + State Parks
- All City of Port St. Lucie Parks (Existing and Undeveloped)
- All City of Port St. Lucie Parks (Existing [as of January 2025])
- City of Port St. Lucie Parks (Existing, Developable Parkland)

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As mentioned previously, the City currently owns and manages just over 2,300 acres of parkland including the golf course, preserves, and other open space and future park sites. Combined with County and State parks, the grand total is approximately 4,950 acres. This equates to a total Acreage LOS of approximately 18.4 acres per 1,000 residents, based on an estimated 2025 population of 269,002.

Considering only City parkland, the Acreage LOS drops to 8.5 acres. And considering only existing parks (open as of January 2025), the Acreage LOS is 5.8.

However, the LOS for developable parkland is only approximately 2.3 acres per 1,000 residents based on the estimated 2025 population, which is below the City's Level of Service Standard of 5.0 acres (developed parkland) per 1,000 population as stipulated in the Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space Element. If no additional parkland is acquired, this will decrease to only about 1.9 acres per 1,000 residents in 2035, based on the City's latest population projections.

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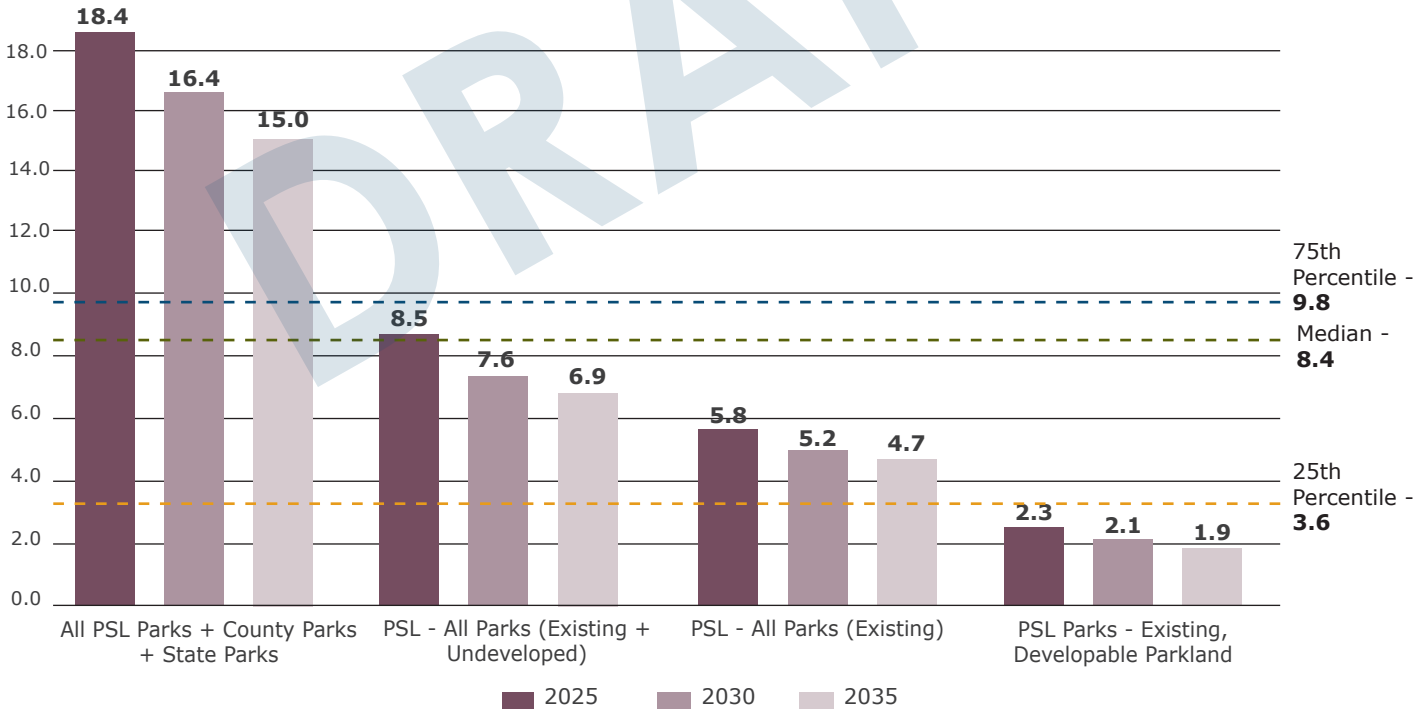
**Figure 3.45 - *Acreage LOS***



**Facilities LOS**

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

The City's Charting Port St. Lucie 2045 Comprehensive Plan, Recreation and Open Space Element does not establish any Facilities LOS targets for the City of Port St. Lucie. Therefore, the City's inventory of facilities was also benchmarked against NRPA comparable agencies. Park Facilities LOS were analyzed using the population estimate for the year 2025 and 2030 with facility counts provided by the City.

Figure 3.46 shows the findings from this analysis. City of Port St. Lucie recreation facilities that had a higher Facilities LOS number than the comparable Facilities LOS numbers, suggest that there may be a need for those recreation facilities in the City. Additionally, this comparison will inform discussion during the Visioning Phase of the project related to the need for establishing the City's Facilities LOS targets.

This analysis suggests that compared to the benchmarks, the City of Port St. Lucie may have a need for more of the following facilities based on the 2030 population:

INDOOR FACILITIES

- Recreation Centers
- Community Centers
- Senior Centers
- Teen Centers
- Performance Amphitheaters

OUTDOOR FACILITIES

- Playgrounds (designed for age 5-12)
- Totlots (playground for ages 0-5)
- Community Gardens
- Skate Parks
- Dog Parks
- Basketball Courts
- Multi-purpose Fields
- Soccer Fields
- Diamond Fields (Baseball/ softball)
- Restrooms
- Golf Courses (9 and 18-hole)
- Aquatic Centers
- Outdoor Pools
- Tennis Courts
- Volleyball Courts
- Walking Trails
- Disc Golf

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**Figure 3.46 - *Facilities LOS***

| | Facilities | City of Port St. Lucie | | | NRPA Park Metrics | | | Need/Surplus |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Aggregated Benchmarks (Pop. 200k-350k; Dens. 1,000-2,000/sq mi.) | | | Based on NRPA Median Benchmark |
| | | Inventory | 2025 | 2030 | 25th | Median | 75th | 2030 |
| Indoor Facilities | Recreation Centers | 1 | 269,002 | 301,594 | 166,981 | 201,001 | 220,500 | -1 |
| | Community Centers | 1 | 269,002 | 301,594 | 51,980 | 64,580 | 83,125 | -4 |
| | Senior Centers | 0 | - | - | 68,230 | 68,230 | 68,230 | -5 |
| | Teen Centers | 0 | - | - | 208,642 | 212,595 | 216,547 | -2 |
| | Stadiums[1] | 2 | - | - | 175,486 | 183,991 | 192,496 | 1 |
| | Arenas | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Performance Amphitheaters | 1 | 269,002 | 301,594 | 144,365 | 220,500 | 277,231 | -1 |
| | Nature Centers[2] | 1 | 269,002 | 301,594 | 334,472 | 334,982 | 335,491 | 1 |
| | Gyms | 2 | 134,501 | 150,797 | - | - | - | - |
| Outdoor Facilities | Playgrounds | 22 | 12,227 | 13,709 | 5,248 | 5,290 | 6,548 | -36 |
| | Totlots | 0 | - | - | 4,735 | 6,346 | 7,450 | -48 |
| | Community gardens | 0 | - | - | 111,321 | 112,000 | 201,001 | -3 |
| | Skate park | 0 | - | - | 100,501 | 166,981 | 168,001 | -2 |
| | Dog park | 5 | 53,800 | 60,319 | 40,938 | 44,100 | 83,491 | -2 |
| | Basketball courts | 9 | 29,889 | 33,510 | 10,500 | 10,773 | 11,586 | -19 |
| | Multiuse courts - basketball, volleyball | 0 | - | - | 20,397 | 22,126 | 23,856 | -14 |
| | Diamond fields: Total | 24 | 11,208 | 12,566 | 4,902 | 5,475 | 5,895 | -32 |
| | Rectangular fields: Total | 27 | 9,963 | 11,170 | 4,786 | 8,563 | 9,304 | -9 |
| | Restrooms (Permanent & Semi-permanent) | 31 | 8,677 | 9,729 | 5,154 | 5,859 | 7,310 | -21 |
| | Multipurpose synthetic field | 0 | - | - | 44,841 | 53,149 | 62,216 | -6 |
| | Trail Miles Maintained | 5 | 6 | 6 | - | - | - | - |
| Golf | Regulation 18-hole courses | 1 | 269,002 | 301,594 | 237,517 | 270,345 | 303,173 | -1 |
| | Regulation 9-hole courses | 0 | | | 220,500 | 220,500 | 220,500 | -2 |
| Swimming/ Aquatics | Aquatics centers | 0 | - | - | 73,500 | 73,500 | 73,500 | -5 |
| | Swimming pools (outdoor only) | 0 | - | - | 36,219 | 40,938 | 53,969 | -8 |
| | Indoor competitive swimming pools | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Splash Pad/Sprayground | 2 | 134,501 | 150,797 | 29,241 | 50,250 | 66,792 | -5 |
| Racquet Sports | Tennis courts (outdoor only) | 15 | 17,933 | 20,106 | 5,600 | 5,803 | 9,136 | -37 |
| | Pickleball (outdoor) | 29 | 9,276 | 10,400 | 11,824 | 13,915 | 33,600 | 8 |
| | Pickleball (indoor) | 0 | - | - | 166,981 | 166,981 | 166,981 | -2 |
| | Multiuse courts - Tennis, Pickleball (outdoor) | 0 | - | - | 19,928 | 31,660 | 43,393 | -10 |
| | Multiuse courts - Tennis, Pickleball (indoor) | 0 | - | - | 12,000 | 12,000 | 12,000 | -26 |
| | Racquetball/handball/squash courts (outdoor) | 11 | 24,455 | 27,418 | 33,600 | 33,600 | 33,600 | 3 |
| | Racquetball/handball/squash courts (indoor) | 4 | - | - | 100,501 | 100,501 | 100,501 | 1 |

*[1] The South County Regional Sports Complex includes both a baseball stadium and football/soccer stadium managed by St. Lucie County.*
*[2] Oxbow Eco Center is a Nature Center provided by St. Lucie County.*

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## SCORP

Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides an extensive analysis of recreation needs and trends across the state. This data is another valuable source of benchmarking to compare Port St. Lucie to nearby municipalities, providing a more localized comparison of Facilities needs which includes some amenities not covered by the NRPA data.

Figure 3.47 below benchmarks the City's outdoor facilities to available Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Facilities LOS for agencies in Florida's Central East Region.

**Figure 3.47 - *SCORP***

| Facility Type | Central East Region Resident Participation | Central East Region LOS x/ 1,000 residents (2025) | # City Facilities | # County Facilities | City (Need) / Surplus to Meet Central East Region LOS by 2025 | City (Need) / Surplus to Meet Central East Region LOS by 2035 | City+County (Need) / Surplus to Meet Central East Region LOS by 2025 | City+County (Need) / Surplus to Meet Central East Region LOS by 2035 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freshwater Non-Boat Fishing (Linear Feet of Pier) | 12% | 36 | 1,374 | 0 | 220 | -45 | 220 | -45 |
| Freshwater Boat Ramps | 15% | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | -1 | 0 | -1 |
| Paved Trails (Biking) | 40% | 0 | 5 | 25 | -5 | -7 | 20 | 18 |
| Baseball/Softball fields | 12% | 1 | 24 | 4 | -19 | -29 | -15 | -25 |
| Football fields | 13% | 0 | 6 | 1 | -13 | -17 | -12 | -16 |
| Golf (holes) | 18% | 2 | 18 | 0 | -59 | -76 | -59 | -76 |
| Soccer fields | 14% | 0 | 11 | 1 | 2 | -1 | 3 | 0 |
| Basketball courts | 17% | 1 | 9 | 0 | -47 | -60 | -47 | -60 |
| Tennis courts | 12% | 1 | 22 | 0 | -16 | -25 | -16 | -25 |
| Outdoor swimming pools | 36% | 0 | 0 | 1 | -4 | -5 | -3 | -4 |

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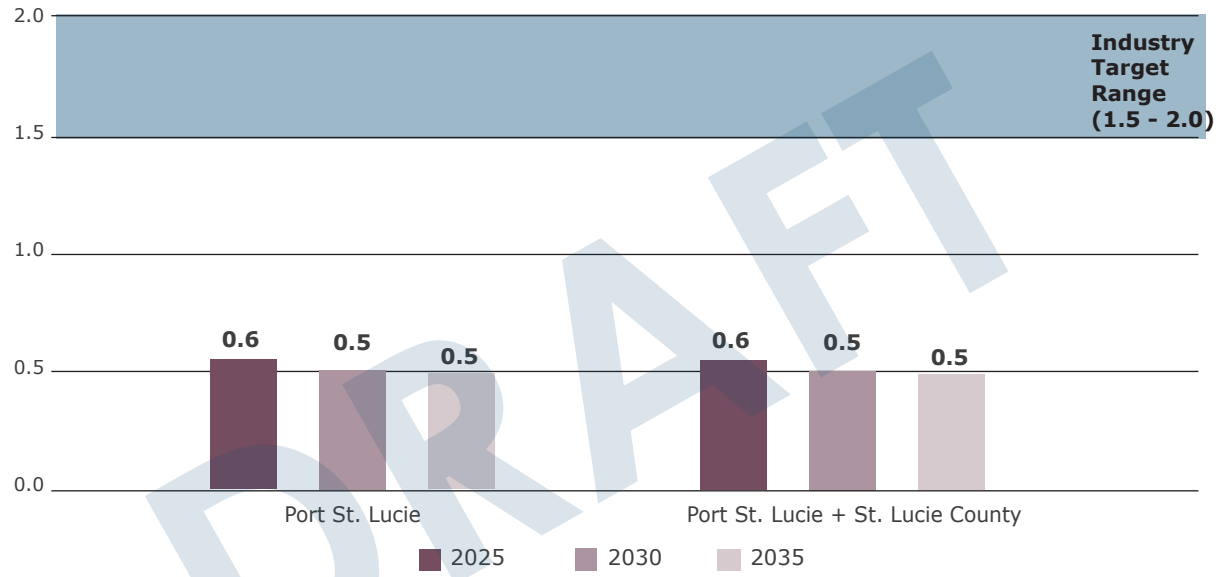
### Indoor Square Footage LOS

Indoor Recreation Center Space LOS is measured by dividing the amount of indoor and community recreation center space available to residents by the number of residents in the municipality.

Industry guidelines suggest that communities with high quality indoor recreation services should have 2.0 square feet of interior recreation and community center space per resident, with a minimum of 1.5 square feet per resident. Figure 3.48 illustrates the findings from this analysis considering Port St. Lucie's 2025, 2030 and 2035 population estimates.

**Figure 3.48 - *Indoor Square Footage LOS***

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Port St. Lucie currently has approximately 151,000 square feet of indoor recreation and community center space. This equates to approximately 0.6 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2025, 0.5 in 2030, and 0.46 in 2035.

If the square footage of other public indoor space is considered (including the Oxbow Eco Center), the total indoor recreation center square footage increases by about 6,500 to approximately 157,500 square feet. This equates to approximately 0.6 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2025, 0.52 in 2030, and 0.48 in 2035.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the City may have a deficit of indoor recreation center space. The table below identifies the gap to reach the targets of 1.5 or 2 square feet per resident by 2030.

| City Need | 2030 |
|---|---|
| To reach 1.5 sq ft per resident | ***252,503*** |
| To reach 2 sq ft per resident | ***387,004*** |

### Funding LOS

Funding LOS metrics used to gauge whether a community is adequately funded to manage their parks and recreation system include:

- **Operations and Maintenance Spending Per Capita** - the amount of operations and maintenance dollars spent on parks and recreation services per resident
- **Capital Spending Per Capita** - the amount of capital dollars spent on parks and recreation services per resident
- **Total Parks and Recreation Spending per Capita** - the amount of operations, maintenance, and capital dollars spent on parks and recreation services per resident

Funding LOS analyses were completed for FY 2023 and compared to NRPA Benchmarks.

Figure 3.49 illustrates per capita operations and maintenance spending. Based on this analysis, Port St. Lucie's per capita spending of $74 is below the 25th percentile of NRPA Benchmarks for cities with a similar population and density as the City of Port St. Lucie.

Figure 3.50 illustrates annual per capita spending for parks and recreation improvements compared to NRPA benchmarks.

**Figure 3.49 - *Operations and Maintenance Spending Per Resident***

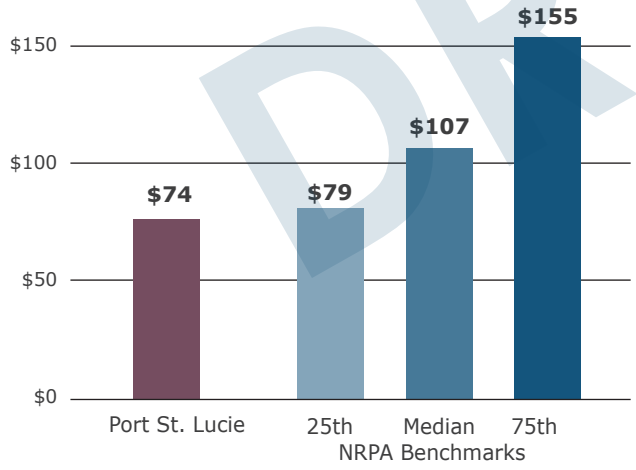


**Figure 3.50 - *Capital Spending Per Resident***

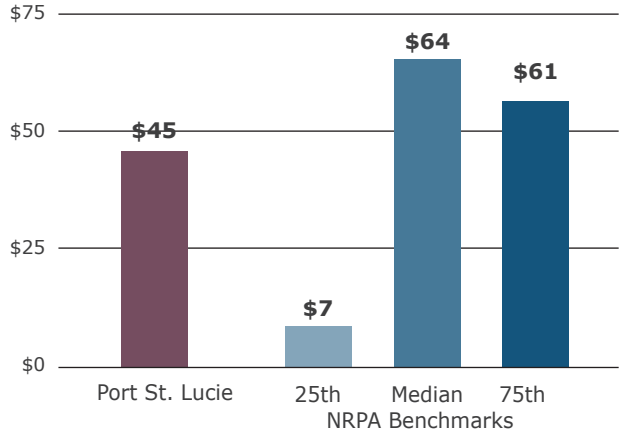


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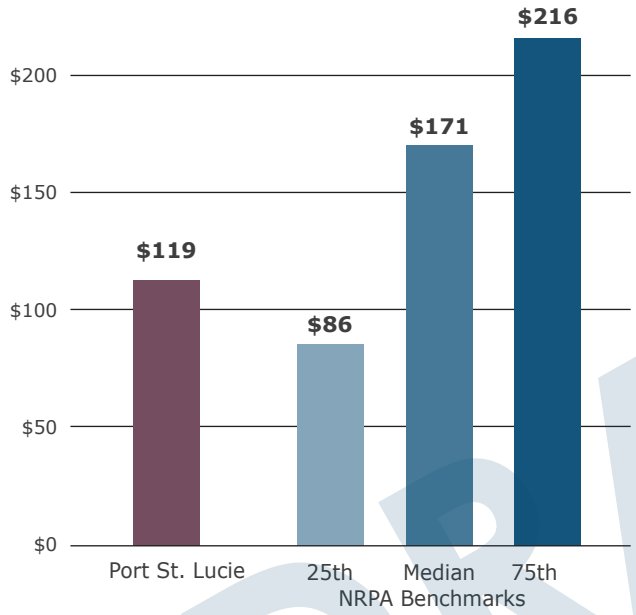
Figure 3.51 illustrates total spending per resident for parks and recreation operations, management, and capital improvements compared to NRPA benchmarks. At $119 per resident, Port St. Lucie is above the 25th percentile but well below the median.

**Figure 3.51 - *Total Parks and Recreation Spending Per Resident***

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## 3.10 SUMMARY FINDINGS

The Needs Assessment Summary Chart (Figure 3.52) on the following page compares the findings from the Statistically-Valid Survey conducted by ETC Institute (Column 1) to the findings from the other needs assessment techniques described in this section. The dots in each column indicate the priority needs identified from each technique. This table (and the tables on following pages) illustrates how the findings from the statistically-valid survey - the most reliable and credible of the needs assessment techniques, with the largest sample size - are validated by many of the other techniques related to facilities/amenities, programs/activities, Department actions, and funding allocation for facilities/capital improvements and programs/operations.

Based on a review of the findings from all of the needs assessment techniques, residents' top priorities appear to include:

| Facility Priorities | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Walking & hiking trails | 6. | Outdoor stage/amphitheater |
| 2. | Natural areas/nature parks | 7. | Community garden(s) |
| 3. | Paved bike/multi-purpose trails | 8. | Community recreation center |
| 4. | Splash pad/spray ground | 9. | Pickleball Courts |
| 5. | Fitness center/spa | 10. | Multipurpose Rectangle Fields |

| Program Priorities | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Adult fitness/wellness | 6. | Teens programs |
| 2. | Nature programs | 7. | Youth art/dance/performing arts classes |
| 3. | Senior programs | 8. | Circuit exercise programs |
| 4. | Youth sports programs | 9. | Youth summer camps |
| 5. | Adult sports programs | 10. | Before & after school programs |

Other priority needs include:

- Fields for sports groups:
  - Fields to practice and for the games.
  - More lighted field for baseball, softball, soccer, etc.
- Finish park projects that the City has initiated.
- The City needs to leverage available land and improve it.
- Provide sufficient staff to maintain the facilities.
- Recreation components that have gap issues such as Senior Center and improvements to Recreation Centers.

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**Figure 3.52 - *Findings Summary and Comparison - Facilities/Amenities & Programs/Activities***

| | NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE: | 1. Statistically Valid Survey | 2. Online Survey | 3. City Leadership Interviews | 4. Steering Committee | 5. Public Meetings | 6. Focus Groups | 7. Level-of-Service Analysis + Benchmarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FACILITIES/AMENITIES PRIORITIES: | | | | | | | |
| SVS High Priority | Walking & hiking trails | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Natural areas/nature parks | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Paved bike/multi-purpose trails | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| SVS Medium Priority | Fitness center/spa | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - | ● |
| | Outdoor stage/amphitheater | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - |
| | Community garden(s) | ● | ● | - | - | ● | - | ● |
| | Outdoor pool/aquatics | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - | ● |
| | Splash pad/spray ground | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Picnic shelters/picnic areas | ● | ● | - | - | ● | ● | - |
| | Indoor pool | ● | ● | - | - | ● | - | ● |
| | Dog parks | ● | ● | - | - | ● | - | ● |
| | Senior center | ● | - | ● | ● | - | - | ● |
| | Children's indoor play area | ● | ● | - | - | - | ● | - |
| | Community recreation center | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| SVS Low Priority | Multipurpose Rectangle Fields | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | ● |
| | Diamond Fields | ● | - | ● | - | - | ● | ● |
| | Playgrounds | ● | ● | - | - | - | ● | ● |
| | Pickleball Courts | ● | - | - | - | ● | ● | ● |
| | PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES: | | | | | | | |
| SVS High Priority | Adult fitness/wellness | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Nature programs | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Senior programs | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| SVS Medium Priority | Adult sports programs | ● | ● | - | - | ● | - | - |
| | Youth sports programs | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - |
| | Circuit exercise programs | ● | ● | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Teens programs | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | - | - |
| | Youth art/dance/performing arts classes | ● | ● | - | ● | - | - | - |
| | Youth fitness & wellness programs | ● | ● | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Youth summer camps | ● | ● | - | - | - | ● | - |
| SVS Low Priority | Before & after school programs | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - |
| | Martial arts programs | ● | - | - | - | ● | - | - |
| | Programs for mentally/physically challenged | ● | ● | - | - | - | - | - |

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**Figure 3.53 - *Findings Summary and Comparison - City Actions***

| NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE: | | 1. Statistically Valid Survey | 2. Online Survey | 3. City Leadership Interviews | 4. Steering Committee | 5. Public Meetings | 6. Focus Groups | 7. Level-of-Service Analysis + Benchmarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FACILITIES/AMENITIES PRIORITIES: | | | | | | | | |
| SVS - 50%+ "Very Supportive" | Acquire land to preserve greenspace, tree canopy, & provide access to natural areas | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Acquiring land to develop more greenways & trails | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Renovate & make improvements to existing parks & rec facilities | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Acquiring land for developing parks | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Expand park resources to improve facility maintenance | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - | - |
| | Developing new parks & recreation facilities | ● | ● | ● | - | ● | - | - |
| | Develop new greenways trails, high-quality bicycle facilities & shaded sidewalks | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Completely redesigning & renovating existing parks to meet resident needs & priorities | ● | ● | ● | ● | - | - | - |
| | Offering more programs & special events that bring families together | ● | ● | - | ● | - | - | - |
| | Expanding recreation & staff resources to offer more programs | ● | ● | - | ● | - | - | - |
| | Increase funding to improve, renovate, & expand existing parks and rec facilities | ● | ● | - | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Developing a Teen Center | - | ● | - | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Provide additional parking in parks | - | - | ● | ● | | - | - |
| | Developing an Indoor Pool/Aquatics Center | - | - | - | ● | ● | - | - |
| | Acquiring land for developing sports/ athletic fields and courts | - | - | ● | - | ● | - | - |

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**Figure 3.54 - *Findings Summary and Comparison - City Actions***

| NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE: | 1. Statistically Valid Survey | 2. Online Survey | 3. Steering Committee | 4. Public Meetings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR FACILITY/ CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS: | | | | |
| Development of new walking & biking facilities | $20.70 | $14.73 | $18.37 | $14.38 |
| Improvements/maintenance of existing parks & recreation | $16.78 | $15.41 | $6.12 | $11.25 |
| Development of new/additional parks facilities in existing parks | $13.40 | $15.82 | $0 | $15.31 |
| Acquiring new park land | $13.07 | $12.50 | $16.33 | $18.44 |
| Improvements/maintenance of existing walking & biking facilities | $11.22 | $12.59 | $12.24 | $11.56 |
| Development of new indoor recreation centers recreation centers | $10.50 | $13.55 | $20.41 | $17.50 |
| Improvements/maintenance of existing indoor recreation centers | $7.42 | $11.32 | $6.12 | $1.25 |
| Other | $6.91 | $4.09 | $20.41 | $10.31 |
| FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR PROGRAMS/OPERATIONS: | | | | |
| Increase staff to improve maintenance of parks & facilities | $19.62 | $14.69 | $17.07 | $29.66 |
| Additional adult recreation programs and/or classes | $15.81 | $14.98 | $14.63 | $7.20 |
| Additional senior recreation programs and/or classes | $14.69 | $13.11 | $12.20 | $10.17 |
| Additional youth recreation programs and/or classes | $14.66 | $16.95 | $4.88 | $9.32 |
| Increase frequency of programs/classes and/or extended hours of programming | $12.27 | $14.59 | $24.39 | $4.24 |
| Additional youth athletic program/leagues | $10.62 | $14.34 | $9.92 | $4.24 |
| Additional adult athletic program/leagues | $6.98 | $11.34 | $12.20 | $19.92 |
| Other | $5.35 | $4.21 | $14.63 | $15.25 |

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# 4 VISION

## 4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE VISION

This Vision provides an update to the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Long-Range Vision, carrying over projects as needed and pursuing new opportunities based on the City's evolving context and needs.

The purpose of the Vision is to present recommendations and potential solutions to the Needs and Priorities established through the previous phases. As there are no state or national standards to guide the development of a long-range parks and recreation vision, the recommendations presented here are developed primarily in response to residents' needs and the community's values, priorities, and resources. Best practices from the fields of parks planning and landscape architecture are also included to support the local desires.

**Vision Framework**

The findings of the first two phases produced a broad range of ideas, needs, challenges, and opportunities. These elements generally align under four overarching themes:

- **Realize**
- **Reinvigorate**
- **Connect**
- **Grow**

Based on these themes, and informed by specific results from the Context Analysis and Needs and Priorities Assessments, a Visioning Workshop was scheduled with City of Port St. Lucie Parks & Recreation Department (Department) Staff and stakeholders in March 2025 to explore the following topics under each of these themes:

- **Realize**
  - Pending Park Development and Improvement Projects
- **Reinvigorate**
  - Programming
  - Athletic Fields
  - Indoor Centers
  - Parks
- **Connect**
  - On-Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
  - Off-Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
- **Grow**
  - Natural Areas
  - Parkland
  - High-Performance Public Spaces

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The Visioning Workshop began the process of developing a Vision Update for the 2019 Plan. This Vision is organized around a framework that includes the first elements of the Vision Framework illustrated in Figure 4.1 – Mission, Vision & Values, Goals, and Objectives. The Steps will be discussed in the Implementation Plan. This framework will guide the Department over the next 10-years and beyond.

As discussed in the 2019 Plan, the Vision Update has potential to contribute to the City's resilience, sustainability, and quality of life - and to help achieve the City's strategic goals:

1. Safe, Clean, & Beautiful
2. Planning for a Thriving Future
3. Smart & Connected City
4. Diverse Economy & Employment Opportunities
5. High-Quality Infrastructure & Facilities
6. Culture, Nature & Fun Activities
7. High Performing City Government Organization

The parks and recreation system can also contribute to quality education for all residents through its programs and facilities, and diverse economy and employment opportunities by increasing property values, creating jobs, and attracting retirees and new businesses. Following is an overview of each of the proposed goals along with related objectives, projects, and actions.

The following sections explore the elements of the Vision Framework in more detail.

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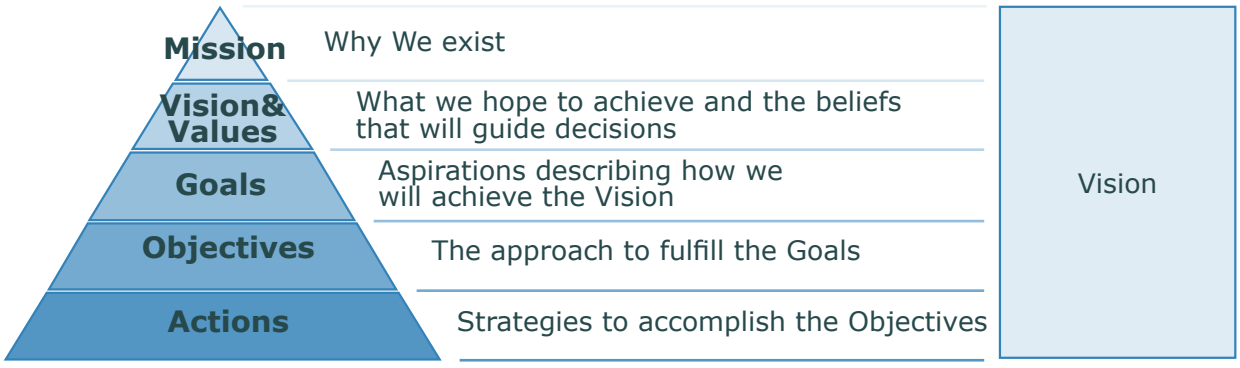
**Figure 4.1 - *Vision Framework***



## 4.2 DEPARTMENT MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Organizational statements are used to establish the foundation for the Department's operations.

The purpose of the Mission Statement is to express why the City of Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation Department exists.

The purpose of the Vision Statement is to identify the future state and aspirations of the Department.

The Values identify the core principles and beliefs that guide the Department's actions and decisions.

Following are the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Department that will guide this Vision Update, providing the baseline intentions behind all the recommendations.

**Mission**

To strengthen our community by offering exceptional leisure, cultural and innovative recreational opportunities.

**Vision & Values**

The Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation facilities are dynamic destinations. Numerous special events consistently meet the diverse community needs and shape the character of our City. Citizens encounter natural areas and waters that endure and captivate, as well as recreational programs which inspire personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community. All guests are assured that our facilities and parks are a safe place to play, celebrate, contemplate and recreate.

The values that the guide the Department's actions and decisions are:

- **Service:** We are committed to providing exceptional customer service to our community and organization. We value ethics, accountability, stewardship, and teamwork to accomplish our mission.
- **Innovation:** We encourage and empower innovation in service delivery through our visionary team.
- **Diversity:** We embrace diversity, promote inclusion, and respect the unique qualities of our City team and our community.
- **Engagement:** We are engaged and committed to prioritizing the highest level of service to our community.

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## 4.3 VISION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

The Vision Goals provide focused, overarching targets for implementing the Department's Vision Update over the next 5 to 10-years while also describing the aspirations the Department will seek to achieve.

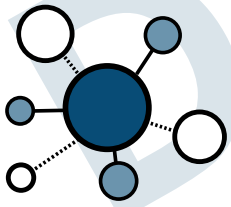
The four overarching themes previously outlined, which were informed by the findings of the first two phases of the project, provided a structure for organizing the Vision Workshop. These themes will continue to guide the Vision Update as the four primary Goals for improving the parks and recreation system over the next 5 to 10-years:

1 

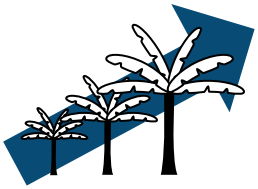
**REALIZE previously identified high priority parks and recreation projects.**

2 

**REINVIGORATE aging parks, recreation facilities, and programs.**

3 

**CONNECT the community to parks, recreation facilities, and programs.**

4 

**GROW the parks and recreation system.**

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**Objectives and Actions**

Within each of the Vision Goals are Objectives and Actions. The Objectives establish the means to achieve the overarching Goals. The Action describe regular internal functions of the Department Staff as well as methods to expand the Department's reach and impact through initiatives. This section describes these Objectives and Actions organized around the four Vision Goals.

# 1 REALIZE previously identified high priority parks and recreation projects.

- ***Objective 1.1: Continue design and implementation strategies for on-going high priority parks and recreation projects.***

  During the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase, City of Port St. Lucie leaders and staff repeatedly discussed the importance of completing previously identified high-priority parks and recreation projects such as Torino Regional Park Phase 1, Tradition Regional Park Phase 1, and Stars and Stripes Park. The Department will continue to prioritize the implementation of these projects and promoting them through Naturally PSL (See page 132).

  - ***Action1:*** Complete the design and implementation of on-going projects ensuring appropriate resources are allocated or adjusted to complete the projects on schedule. These projects include:
    - Torino Regional Park Phase 1
    - Tradition Regional Park Phase 1
    - O.L. Peacock, Sr. Preserve Construction
    - Wilderness Trails Park
    - The Port Conservation Trails
    - The Port District Master Plan

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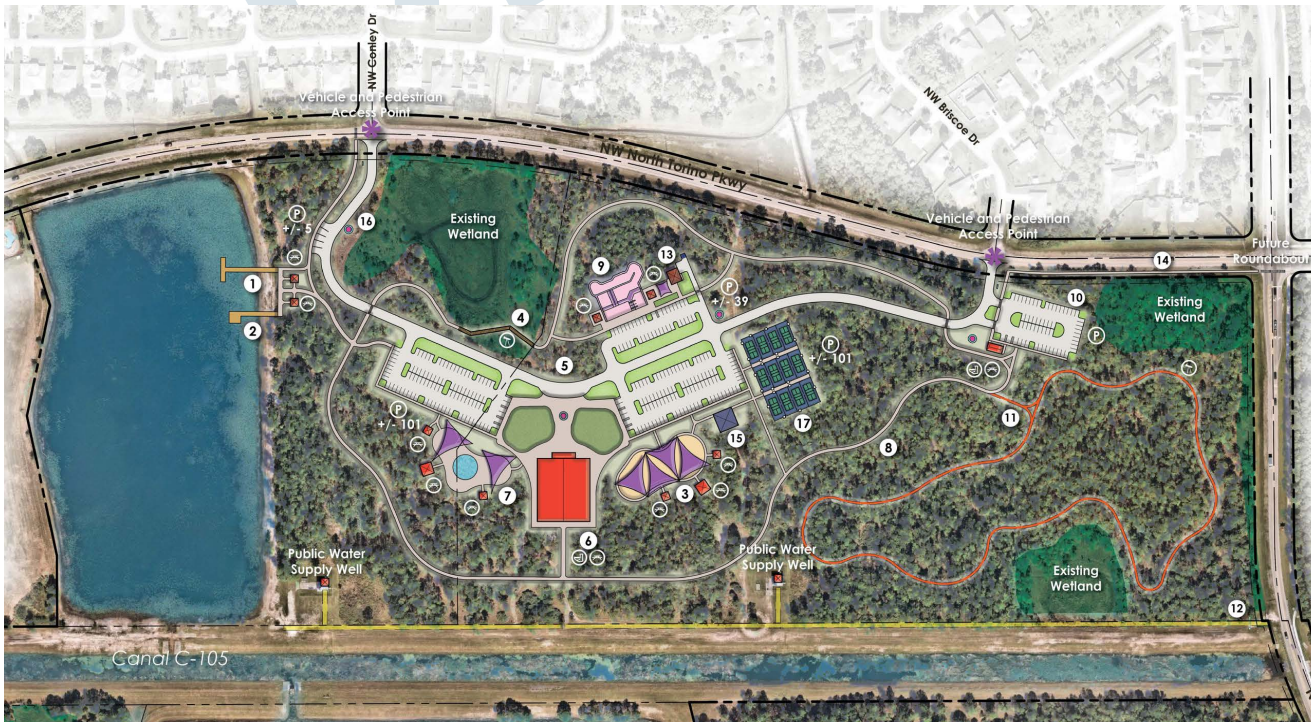
**Figure 4.2 - *Torino Regional Park - Phase 1***



- ***Objective 1.2: Establish design and construction strategies for projects identified by Mayor and Council in years 1-5 of the CIP.***

  Informed by the City's Strategic Plan, the findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase, and other City projects and initiatives, Mayor and Council have identified parks and recreation projects that should be implemented in the next 5 years. The Department will move forward with the implementation of these projects.

  - ***Action 1:*** Discuss projects during High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS) Committee to maximize internal departmental implementation strategies.
  - ***Action 2:*** Procure public engagement-based design and construction services for the implementation of the projects.
  - ***Action 3:*** Develop design and construction schedules ensuring appropriate resources are allocated or adjusted to complete the projects on schedule.

- ***Objective 1.3: Explore strategies to implement projects identified by Mayor and Council beyond year 5 of the CIP and in other studies and initiatives.***

  In order to remain responsive to changing community needs and priorities, projects may have to be shifted to later years in the City's CIP. This is an opportunity for the Department to explore implementation strategies of future projects to inform potential future prioritization.

  - ***Action 1:*** Discuss projects during High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS) Committee to maximize internal departmental implementation strategies.
  - ***Action 2:*** Complete feasibility studies or conceptual design for relevant projects to explore project implementation and phasing strategies.

- ***Objective 1.4: Review CIP yearly to update project procurement, design, and implementation strategies.***

  - ***Action 1*:** Present project implementation and phasing strategies to Mayor and City Council to update CIP and project timing.



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# Naturally PSL

During the last year, the City has successfully initiated Naturally PSL, a community-driven initiative that has brought awareness of the City's green spaces, places, and trails available for the community to enjoy.

The Naturally PSL initiative aims to provide increased access to natural areas through the development of new public preserves and trails, including the following projects in progress:

- **744.4 acres** of land to be developed as **Green Spaces and Places**
- **3,097-acre McCarty Ranch Preserve**, Recreation and Water Quality Project
- **2 New Parks** opened in 2024, and
- **6 More Existing Parks** to be opened and improved

Naturally PSL has the potential to be an integral part of the implementation of the Parks and Recreation System vision for the next 10-years. Other important opportunities of Naturally PSL will be discussed in subsequent pages.

## *Naturally PSL Green Spaces (Natural Areas) & Places (Parks) in progress*

Upcoming Projects to enhance residents' access to nature

**1. Stars and Stripes Park**
(Planned Opening 2025)
**2. Torino Regional Park and Nature Trails**
(Design FY2024-2025, Construction estimate to start 2026)
**3. Tradition Regional Park**
(Groundbreaking in 2024, planned completion 2026)
**4. O.L Peacock Sr. Park Improvements**
(Phase 1 estimated completion in 2025-2026)
**5. Peacock Trail** (construction in FY2026-2027)
**6. Wilderness Trail** (Groundbreaking in 2025)
**7. The Port District Master Plan Phase 1**
(restaurant to begin construction 2025)
**8. Port Preserve Trail** (Design Completed)
**9. Village Green Drive Complete Street**
(Ongoing Design phase)
**10. Hog Pen Slough Boardwalk**
(Ongoing Design phase, 90% plan in 2025)
**11. Florida SUN Trail – East Coast Greenway Extension**
**12. Paseo Greenway** (completed and open in 2024)
**13. Southwest Park** (conceptual, prioritized in Strategic Plan)
**14. McCarty Ranch Camping Enhancements**
(conceptual plan approved, Phase 1A construction in 2030)



# 2 REINVIGORATE aging parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

**Overview**

Feedback from residents and stakeholders was clear that the new park facilities developed in recent years have been much needed infrastructure investments that have helped fill significant gaps in the system; however, there was also a strong support for ensuring that older parks and existing programs receive the appropriate maintenance, support, and upgrades to ensure high quality experiences across the system.

This is reflected in the increase among respondents who indicated support for "Renovating and making improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities," which rose from 88% to 93% in the statistically valid surveys between 2019 and 2024.

- ***Objective 2.1: Renew programming.***

  The Program Lifecycle Analysis found that 32% of all programs fall within the beginning stage of growth. There is an opportunity to refresh program pipeline with innovative programming and next practices that activate spaces, re-energize the parks, and increase the positive impact of recreation facilities the Department operates.

  - ***Action 1:*** Regularly conduct research to identify current trends in recreation and leisure activities both nationally and globally using data from NRPA, FRPA, Sports and Facilities Industry Association (SFIA, Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) etc. Adapt and introduce these trends locally to keep the programs fresh and engaging.
  - ***Action 2:*** Provide programming that caters to different interests for seniors, adults, teens, and youth around the Department's Core Programs. Programs to explore include:
    - **Athletics**
      - Indoor Rock Climbing
      - Expanding Adult Programs
      - Basketball
      - Racquetball
      - Volleyball
      - Pickleball
      - Softball
      - Sports clinics
      - Adoptive sports challenge field
      - Rugby/ Lacrosse
      - Cricket
      - Kickball
    - **Camps**
      - Expand existing camps
      - Diversify camps
        - Musical camps
        - Drama/theater camps
        - Ecological/ Nature camps
    - **Community Programs**
      - Cooking
      - Photography
      - Age Group Based Programming
      - Arts/ Crafts
      - Special Population Programming
      - Nature Programs
      - Language Classes
      - Technology Classes
      - Adult Hip-hop/ high-energy programming classes

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  - **Fitness**
    - Expanded hours for fitness hours
    - Outdoor fitness classes
    - Mobile programs (In-partnership with the Police Athletic League (PAL))
    - Glow in the dark fitness classes
    - 5k runs/ marathons
  - **Golf**
    - Golf leagues (Golf course and virtual golf leagues)
    - Golf camps
    - Night golf

- **Action 3:** Before full-scale implementation, pilot new programs with target groups to gather preliminary feedback and make necessary adjustments. This approach helps in managing resources effectively and increases the chances of program success.
- ***Action 4*:** Conduct a cost-of-service study to determine program cost for developing a budget and cost recovery goals.
- ***Action 5:*** Conduct annual Program Evaluations using the evaluation matrix with Lifecycle Analysis.
- ***Action 6:*** Develop training to provide staff with the tools to renew the participant's experience.

- ***Objective 2.2: Renovate aging parks and recreation facilities based on identified needs.***

  Ninety-three percent of respondents in the statistically valid survey indicated that they were supportive of the City renovating and making improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities. Furthermore, improvements/ maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities was the second highest budget allocation by respondents of the statistically valid survey.

  - ***Action 1:*** Address deferred maintenance and proactively complete capital improvements based on the identified needs and prototypical park diagrams identified in the following pages.

    These prototypical park diagrams could be used as a starting point for discussions with residents and stakeholders for future park improvements, including addressing parks and recreation needs.

    Park improvements will continue to include a collaborative public engagement-based design process to ensure high-quality designs that are responsive and transparent.

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# NEIGHBORHOOD PARK




**Size:**
Generally 4 to 10 acres

**Location and Context:**
Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
Walking distance, approximately 1/2 mile to 1 mile

**Function:**
Neighborhood Parks are the primary green spaces of the parks system and serve the basic needs of nearby, neighborhood residents for passive and active, at-will and programmed social, cultural, and recreational uses. Programmed events should be limited to neighborhood serving events focused on the surrounding neighborhood.

Neighborhood Parks can also provide opportunities to address environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, urban heat island effect, biological diversity, ecological habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards. Ideally, half of the park space should be used for passive park uses with at least 50% of the passive space having canopy cover.

**Illustrated Amenities/ Elements**

1. Pavilion
2. On-street parking
3. Water overlooks
4. Picnic area with grills
5. Multi-purpose open space
6. Soft surface trails
7. Playground with shades
8. Pavilion with restroom
9. Picnic lawn
10. Living shoreline plantings
11. Walking paths
12. Sidewalk connection
13. Park zone(e.g., raised/ marked/ controlled pedestrian crossings were appropriate)
14. Seating
15. Utility location

**Other Typical Amenities/ Elements**

- Water fountains/ features, ponds
- Bicycle racks
- Dockless micro-mobility stations
- Sustainability strategies (e.g., renewable energy, water storage/ reuse, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Electrical outlets
- Green/ Low-Impact Development Infrastructure
- Lights on timers
- Litter/ recycling receptacles
- Movable tables and chairs
- Multi-purpose court with basketball court, pickleball court, and tennis court
- On-leash dog area
- Pickleball court
- Public art
- Sand volleyball court
- Splash pad
- Tennis court
- Wi-fi
- Shade trees and native landscaping

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# STORMWATER POND PARK




**Size:**
Generally 4 to 10 acres

**Location and Context:**
Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
Walking distance, approximately 1/2 mile to 1 mile

**Function:**
Stormwater Pond Parks can serve as an alternative for Neighborhood Parks in areas in the City where there may not be land available to build a traditional Neighborhood Park but there is a stormwater pond site owned by the City. They can be designed to serve the basic needs of nearby, neighborhood residents for passive, at-will and programmed social, cultural, and recreational uses. Active recreation uses may also be address should the space allow for it.

Stormwater Pond Parks already address environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, urban heat island effect, biological diversity, ecological habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards.

**Illustrated Amenities/ Elements**

1. Pavilion
2. Pavilion with restroom
3. On-street parking
4. Picnic lawn
5. Water overlooks
6. Observation platform
7. Living shoreline plantings
8. Walking path
9. Sidewalk connection
10. Park zone (e.g., raised/ marked/ controlled pedestrian crossings were appropriate)
11. Seating
12. Fitness station

**Other Typical Amenities/ Elements**

- Water fountains/ features, ponds
- Bicycle racks
- Dockless micro-mobility stations
- Sustainability strategies (e.g., renewable energy, water storage/ reuse, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Electrical outlets
- Green/ Low-Impact Development Infrastructure
- Lights on timers
- Litter/ recycling receptacles
- Movable tables and chairs
- Multi-purpose court with basketball court, pickleball court, and tennis court
- On-leash dog area
- Pickleball court
- Public art
- Sand volleyball court
- Splash pad
- Tennis court
- Wi-fi
- Shade trees and native landscaping
- Basketball court
- Covered multi-generational/ universally accessible playground
- Exercise equipment
- Multi-purpose trail
- Outdoor table games (e.g. ping pong, fooseball, etc.)

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# COMMUNITY/REGIONAL PARK




**Size:**
Generally 20 to 40+ acres

**Location and Context:**
Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
Generally 2 to 3 miles

**Function:**
Community Parks are where residents go to socialize and recreate with the larger community, whether it's to play ball, have a picnic, take a class, swim in the pool or enjoy a concert or art show. Ideally, they should be located on a major street and on neighborhood boundaries to maximize access and to minimize disruption from lights, noise and traffic.

Community Parks should also play a larger role in addressing environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, urban heat island effect, biological diversity, ecological and habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards. Ideally, half of the park space should be used for passive park uses.

**Illustrated Amenities/Elements**

1. Basketball court(s)
2. Community garden
3. Covered multi-generational/ universally accessible playground
4. Dog park
5. Exercise equipment
6. Multi-purpose open space
7. Multi-purpose trail
8. On-street parking
9. Outdoor table games (e.g. ping pong, fooseball, etc.)
10. Park Zone traffic markings to calm traffic around the park (e.g., raised/marked/ controlled pedestrian crossings were appropriate)
11. Picnic area
12. Restroom/ shelter
13. Splash pad
14. Tennis court

**Other Typical Amenities/ Elements**

- Baseball field
- Bike playground
- Bicycle racks
- Dockless micro-mobility stations
- Sustainability strategies (e.g., renewable energy, water storage/ reuse, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Electrical outlets
- Green/ Low-Impact Development Infrastructure
- Lights on timers
- Litter/ recycling receptacles
- Football field
- Movable tables and chairs
- Mountain bike trail
- On-leash dog area
- Pickleball court
- Police Pads
- Public art
- Running track
- Sand volleyball court
- Skate park
- Soccer field
- Softball field
- Swimming pool
- Tee ball field
- Water fountains/ features, ponds
- Wi-fi
- Shade trees and native landscaping

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# SCHOOL PARK



**Size:**
Dependent on the intended use as Mini, Neighborhood, or Community Park - 4 acres to 40+

**Location and Context:**
Adjacent to schools within Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
Dependent on the intended use as Mini, Neighborhood, or Community Park - 1/4 to 1,2 or 3-miles

**Function:**
School Parks combine the resources of multiple agencies and allow for expanded parks, recreation, cultural, and educational opportunities for the community in an efficient and effective manner. Ensuring close coordination between the School Principal and School District will maximize the benefits of the joint-use space.

Programmed events should coincide with the type of park facility that the School Park is intended to serve.

School Parks can also provide opportunities to address environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, urban heat island effect, biological diversity, ecological and habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards.

**Typical Amenities**

- Baseball field
- Basketball court
- Bike playground
- Bicycle racks
- Community garden
- Covered multi-generational/ universally accessible playground
- Dockless micro-mobility stations
- Dog park
- Sustainability strategies (e.g., renewable energy, water storage/ reuse, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Electrical outlets
- Green/ Low-Impact Development Infrastructure
- Exercise equipment
- Lights on timers
- Litter/ recycling receptacles
- Football field
- Movable tables and chairs
- Multi-purpose open space
- Multi-purpose trail
- Mountain bike trail
- On-leash dog area
- On-street parking
- Outdoor table games (e.g. ping pong, fooseball, etc.)
- Park Zone traffic markings to calm traffic around the park (e.g., raised/marked/ controlled pedestrian crossings were appropriate)
- Pickleball court
- Picnic area
- Police Pads
- Public art
- Playground
- Restroom
- Running track
- Sand volleyball court
- Secure park/ school fencing
- Skate park
- Soccer field
- Softball field
- Splash pad
- Swimming pool
- Tee ball field
- Tennis court
- Water fountain, features, ponds
- Wi-fi
- Shade trees and native landscaping

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# LINEAR PARK




**Size:**
Generally 25’- 50’+ wide

**Location and Context:**
Parks, Residential and Mixed-Use Areas, Natural Corridors, Vehicular Corridors, Utility Corridors

**Access Level of Service:**
City-wide

**Function:**
Linear Parks help tie the parks and recreation system together. They facilitate safe, more seamless pedestrian and bicycle movement between parks and recreation facilities, and other city facilities, like schools and libraries. Where space is available, they also provide opportunities for parks and recreation facilities and amenities.

Linear Parks can also provide opportunities to address environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, urban heat island effect, biological diversity, ecological and habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards.

**Illustrated Amenities/Elements**

1. Covered multi-generational/ universally accessible playground
2. Exercise equipment
3. Green/ Low-Impact Development Infrastructure
4. Multi-purpose trail
5. Neighborhood Access
6. On-street parking
7. Park Zone traffic markings to calm traffic around the park (e.g., raised/marked/ controlled pedestrian crossings were appropriate)
8. Pavilion/ shelter
9. Vegetative screening for residential backyard privacy

**Other Typical Amenities/ Elements**

- Water fountains/ features, ponds
- Basketball court
- Bicycle racks
- Dockless micro-mobility stations
- Sustainability strategies (e.g., renewable energy, water storage/ reuse, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Electrical outlets
- Lights on timers
- Litter/ recycling receptacles
- Movable tables and chairs
- Multi-purpose court with basketball court, pickleball court, and tennis court
- Multi-purpose open space
- On-leash dog area
- Outdoor table games (e.g. ping pong, fooseball, etc.)
- Pickleball court
- Picnic area
- Public art
- Restroom
- Sand volleyball court
- Splash pad
- Tennis court
- Wi-fi
- Shade trees and native landscaping

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# SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

**Size:**
Varies

**Location and Context:**
Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
City-wide

**Function:**
Special Use Facilities cover a broad range of parks and recreation facilities and are typically comprised of stand-alone recreation facilities not located within larger parks. Special use areas support single-purpose facilities, such as sports courts or fields dedicated to one sport, aquatics facilities, boat ramps, natural areas, or a building dedicated to special needs populations. Ideally, they should be located on a major street and in between neighborhoods to maximize access and to minimize disruption from lights, noise and traffic.

Where possible, Special Use Facilities should also play a larger role in addressing environmental challenges such as local stormwater management issues, biological diversity, ecological and habitat restoration, and the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards.

## Existing Park Site Needs + Improvements

In addition to the parks and recreation facility considerations included in the prototypical park diagrams, potential park improvements were identified through the site evaluations discussed in Phase 1 Context Analysis, following are potential recommended park site improvements. Additional findings can be found in the Appendix. It will be important for these suggested park improvements to go through a public engagement based park site improvement processes.

**Fig. 4.3 Potential Park Improvements**

| Park | Park Type | General Improvements |
|---|---|---|
| System wide | Open Space/ Neighborhood Parks | Install/repair/ update baseline amenities and furnishings:<br>- Drinking fountains,<br>- Picnic tables,<br>- Canopies/shade,<br>- Trash cans,<br>- Dog waste stations. |
| System wide | All Parks (prioritize based on use data) | Install multimodal access infrastructure:<br>- Bike/scooter racks<br>- Golf cart parking (with charging) |
| Doat Street Park | Open Space | - Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Add baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Add outdoor fitness equipment. |
| Gulfstream Park | Open Space | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |

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| Park | Park Type | General Improvements |
|---|---|---|
| Harborview | Open Space | - Currently being developed as a Stormwater Pond. Exploring adding a perimeter trail walking loop, and baseline amenities and furnishings. |
| Loyalty Park | Open Space | - Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Add baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Add outdoor fitness equipment. |
| Midport Lake | Open Space | - Implement Port District Master Plan. |
| Wilderness Park | Open Space | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| Apache Park | Neighborhood | - Develop into Neighborhood Park considering the Natural Area Improvements identified on page 156. |
| Elks Friendship Park | Neighborhood | - Renovate park as Neighborhood Park. |
| Charles E. Ray Park | Neighborhood | - Add perimeter walking trail loop.<br>- Improve walkways and parking.<br>- Consider adding lighting. |
| Fred Cook Park | Neighborhood | - Replace playground and add playground shade structure.<br>- Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Consider the Natural Area Improvements identified on page 156. |
| Jaycee Park & YMCA | Neighborhood | - Renovate park as Neighborhood Park, including renovating existing building and considering the Natural Area Improvements identified on page 156. |
| Kiwanis Park | Neighborhood | - Renovate park as a Neighborhood Park.<br>- Replace restroom, pavilions, playground, and add playground shade structure. |
| O.L. Peacock Sr. Park | Neighborhood | - Implement Master Plan. |
| Pinapple Snook Park | Neighborhood | - Add activities, mix-of uses and things to do such as movable tables and chairs and multi-generational amenities. |
| Ravenswood/ Racquetball Courts | Neighborhood | - Add parking.<br>- Improve racquetball courts.<br>- Improve landscaping, walkways, and parking. |
| River Place Park | Neighborhood | - Replace restroom, playground, and add playground shade structure.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Add additional multi-generational amenities. |

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| Park | Park Type | General Improvements |
|---|---|---|
| Rotary Park | Neighborhood | - Improve softball field, batting cages, and sand volleyball courts.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Add parking spaces in northern entrance to the park.<br>- Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Add additional multi-generational amenities. |
| Sandpiper Bay Park | Neighborhood | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| Tom Hooper Family Park | Neighborhood | - Implement Port District Master Plan. |
| Turtle Run Park | Neighborhood | - Replace pavilion and playground, and add playground shade structure.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Improve landscaping, walkways, and parking.<br>- Add perimeter trail walking loop.<br>- Add activities, mix-of uses and things to do such as movable tables and chairs and multi-generational amenities. |
| US Submarine Veterans Park | Neighborhood | - Add activities, mix-of uses and things to do such as movable tables and chairs and multi-generational amenities. |
| Jessica Clinton Park | Community | - Improve concession building.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Add perimeter on-street parking. |
| Lyngate Park & Dog Park | Community | - Implement Port District Master Plan.<br>- Improve racquetball courts and sand volleyball court.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Replace site lighting.<br>- Pave and formalize southern drive isle and parking area. |
| McChesney Park | Community | - Improved turf management.<br>- Install shade for bleachers. |
| Sandhill Crane Park | Community | - Improve dugouts, playground, and add playground shade structure.<br>- Improve sports lighting, site lighting, and fencing.<br>- Improving parking. |
| Sportsman's Park | Community | - Redesign, renovate, and expand the park. |
| Swan Park | Community | - Provide netting to separate fields for safety.<br>- Install restrooms for field 3.<br>- Improve drainage.<br>- Install shade for bleachers.<br>- Better turf management. |

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| Park | Park Type | General Improvements |
|---|---|---|
| Whispering Pines Park | Community | - Improve baseball field, batting cages, pavilion, volleyball court, concession building, maintenance building, storage building, storage shed, and dugouts.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Improve sports lighting, site lighting, and fencing.<br>- Improve landscape, walkways, and parking. |
| Ian T Zook Park | Special | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| Mary Ann Cernuto Park | Special | - Improve landscape. |
| Pioneer Park | Special | - Implement Port District Master Plan. |
| The Saints at PSL Golf Course | Special | - Replace dilapidated maintenance shed with new maintenance shed and golf cart barn.<br>- Replace entrance signage.<br>- Improve building interior finishes, furnishings, and equipment. |
| Veterans Memorial Park | Special | - Implement Port District Master Plan.<br>- Expand park, add a large pavilion and stadium style seating for large events. |
| Veterans Park @ Rivergate | Special | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve | Preserve | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| McCarty Ranch Preserve | Preserve | - See proposed Natural Area improvements identified on page 156. |
| Oak Hammock Park | Preserve | - Replace pavilion, restroom, playground, and add playground shade structure.<br>- Replace and expand maintenance building and storage shed.<br>- Replace baseline amenities and furnishings.<br>- Improve fencing and parking. |
| Community Center | Facility | - Expand community center to 50 - 55,000 square feet.<br>- Improve site lighting.<br>- Expand parking. |
| Minsky Gym | Facility | - Renovate and expand gymnasium to 30 - 40,000 square feet to include multiple rooms for programming and activities. |

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- **Action 2:** Proactively plan for the improvement of parks and recreation facilities and amenities by developing an asset management/ repair/ replacement plan.

- ***Objectives 2.3: Enhance access to athletic fields.***

  Placer.ai data identified parks with athletic fields as the most visited parks in the entire parks and recreation system including Whispering Pines Park, McChesney Park, Sportsman's Park, Jessica Clinton Park, and Swan Park. Additionally, findings from the Facilities Level of Service Analysis along with interviews with staff and stakeholders during the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase identified a need to enhance access to athletic fields***.***

  - ***Action 1:*** Complete field improvements and where appropriate, add field lighting to maximize field use. Parks to consider include:
    - — Winterlakes Park
    - — Turtle Run Park
  - ***Action 2:*** Work with St. Lucie Public Schools to establish mutually beneficial join use agreement to complete field improvements and add field lighting on appropriate school fields to maximize field use. Following is a list of schools for consideration.

**Fig. 4.4 Potential Schools to Complete Field Improvements and Add Lighting Where Appropriate**

| School Name | School Type | Rectangle Field Quantity | Rectangle Field Dimensions | Lighted | Dia-mond Field | Diamond Field Outfield Dimensions | Diamond Field Baseline Dimensions | Lighted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manatee Elementary School | Elementary | 1 | 280' x 190' | No | Multi-Purpose | 200' | 60' | No |
| Bayshore Elementary School | Elementary | 1 | 300' x 150' | No | - | - | - | - |
| Mariposa Elementary | Elementary | 1 | 300' x 200' | No | Multi-Purpose | 200' | 60' | No |
| West Gate K-8 School | Elementary/ Middle | - | 300' x 170' | No | - | - | - | - |
| North Port K-8 School | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 350' x 240' | No | Multi-Purpose | 300' | 90' | Yes |
| Oak Hammock K-8 School | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 350' x 200' | No | Multi-Purpose | 200' | 60' | No |
| Palm Pointe Educational Research School | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 340' x 200' | No | Multi-Purpose | 350' | 90' | No |
| Palm Pointe Educational Research School | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 340' x 200' | No | - | - | - | - |
| Palm Pointe Educational Research School | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 280' x 190' | No | - | - | - | - |

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**Fig. 4.4 Potential Schools to Complete Field Improvements and Add Lighting Where Appropriate (Continued)**

| School Name | School Type | Rectangle Field Quantity | Rectangle Field Dimensions | Lighted | Dia-mond Field | Diamond Field Outfield Dimensions | Diamond Field Baseline Dimensions | Lighted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Renaissance Charter School at Tradition* | Elementary/ Middle | 1 | 220' x 150' | No | - | - | - | - |
| Southern Oaks Middle School | Middle | 1 | 300' x 170' | No | Multi-Purpose | 200' | 60' | No |
| Southport Middle School | Middle | 1 | 200' x 150' | No | - | - | - | - |
| St. Lucie West Centennial High School | High | 1 | 340' x 200' | No | 1 Softball | 200' | 60' | No |
| St. Lucie West Centennial High School | High | 1 | 350' x 180' | No | 1 Baseball | 350' | 90' | No |
| Treasure Coast High School | High | 1 | 340' x 200' | No | 1 Softball | 230' | 60' | No |
| Treasure Coast High School | High | 1 | 340' x 200' | No | 1 Baseball | 380' | 90' | No |
| Tradition Preparatory High School* | High | 1 | 280' x 180' | No | | | | |
| Port St. Lucie High School | High | 3 | 350' x 180' | No | 1 Baseball | 350' | 90' | No |
| Port St. Lucie High School | High | 1 | 360' x 160' (Football with Track) | No | - | - | - | - |
| **Total** | | **20** | | | **6 Multi-Purpose 3 Baseball 2 Softball** | | | |

As discussed later in this chapter on page 160 in Goal 4 - Grow the parks and recreation system; Objective 4.2: Provide parks and recreation facilities throughout the City; Action 1: Provide equitable access to parks and recreation facilities, the proposed Facilities Level of Services (LOS) suggest a need of 7 additional rectangle fields and 7 diamond fields over the next 10-years. The City may be able to address that need by working with St. Lucie Schools to complete fields improve in schools. Otherwise, the City may need to build additional athletic fields.

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# 3 CONNECT the community to parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

**Overview**

Following the trend established in the 2019 Master Plan, walking and biking facilities continue to be the top facility need according to residents' input, with more sidewalks, hiking trails, and bike infrastructure all considered to be highly desired. The City has made progress in implementing a variety of pedestrian and bicycle projects over the last few years, and work continues through multiple initiatives highlighted here.

- City Sidewalk Master Plan - 2021 Update (On-street facilities) - Figure 4.5
- St. Lucie TPO - Walk-Bike Network 2025 (On-street facilities) - Figure 4.6
- Naturally PSL (Off-street facilities)- Figure 4.7
- Florida Greenways and Trails Plan (Off-street facilities)

The City continues to develop new sidewalks as part of this ongoing Master Plan, with eight new segments expected to be constructed over the next 3 years.

The City also has an ADA Transition Plan, which is guiding sidewalk improvements and maintenance. There is an opportunity to continue to build on these strategies to better connect residents to parks, recreation facilities, program, and services.

- ***Objective 3.1: Expand Naturally PSL: Green Spaces & Places to include parks, recreation facilities, blueways, programs, and services.***

  As discussed previously, during the last year, the City has successfully initiated Naturally PSL, a community-driven initiative that has brought awareness of the City's green spaces, places, and trails available for the community to enjoy. The City should to expand this initiative to include parks, recreation facilities, blueways, programs, and services.

  - ***Action 1:*** Add parks, recreation facilities, blueways, programs, and services to Naturally PSL: Green Spaces and Places website, story, and campaign.
  - ***Action 2:*** Continue to promote Naturally PSL.






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**Fig. 4.5 Sidewalk Master Plan 2021 Update - Project Schedule**

| Project | Council District | Construction Funding Source | Construction Schedule (FY) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Paar Dr - PSL Blvd to Savona Blvd | 3 | City | Complete |
| Paar Dr - Darwin Blvd to PSL Blvd | 3 | LAP | Complete |
| Tiffany Ave - School Site to Walton Rd | 4 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Hillmoor Dr - Hospital to Woodstork Trail | 4 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Hillmoor Dr - Lennard Rd to Playground | 4 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Morningside Blvd – Treasure Island to Cambridge St | 4 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Floresta Dr – Prima Vista Blvd to Airoso Blvd | 4 | CDBG | Complete |
| Southbend Blvd - Oakridge Dr to Eagle Dr | 4 | CDBG | Complete |
| Macedo Blvd - Selvitz Rd to St James Blvd | 1 | LAP | Complete |
| East Torino Pkwy - Vizcaya Falls to N. Delwood Dr | 2 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| West Torino Pkwy – California Blvd to Topaz Way | 2 | City/Sales Tax | Complete |
| Selvitz Rd - Milner Dr to Peachtree Blvd | 1 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Import Dr - Gatlin Blvd to Inca Ter (PH 1) | 2 | City/Sales Tax | Complete |
| Import Dr – Inca Ter to Savage Blvd (PH 2) | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2022/23 |
| Paar Dr - Savona Blvd to Daemon St | 3 | City/Sales Tax | Complete |
| Torino Pkwy - Cashmere Blvd to California Blvd | 2 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Curtis St - Prima Vista Blvd to Floresta Dr | 1 | LAP | Complete |
| Alcantarra Blvd - PSL Blvd to Savona Blvd | 3 | LAP | 2021/22 |
| Rosser Blvd - Open View Dr to Daemon St | 3 | City/Sales Tax | Complete |
| Brescia St - Savage Blvd to Gatlin Blvd | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2023/24 |
| North Tornio Pkwy – East Torino Pkwy to Blanton Rd. | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2024/25 |
| Savage Blvd - Import Dr to Gatlin Blvd | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2023/24 |
| Selvitz Rd - Floresta Dr to Bayshore Blvd | 1 | LAP | 2022/23 |
| Lakehurst Dr - Bayshore Blvd to Sandia Dr | 1 | City/Sales Tax | 2023/24 |
| Volucia Dr - Blanton Blvd to East Torino Pkwy | 2 | LAP | 2025/26 |
| Sandia Dr - Thornhill Dr to Crosspoint Dr | 1 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Sandia Dr - Crosspoint Dr to Lakehurst Dr | 1 | Sales Tax | 2023/24 |
| Blanton Blvd – East to West Torino Pkwy | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2026/27 |
| Abingdon Ave - Import Dr to Savona Blvd | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2022/23 |
| West Torino Pkwy – Topaz Way to Blanton Blvd | 2 | City/Sales Tax | 2025/26 |
| Kestor Dr - Darwin Blvd to Becker Rd | 3 | LAP | 2024/25 |
| Fairgreen Rd – Cadima St to Salvatierra Blvd | 2 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Cadima St - Fairgreen Rd to Galiano Rd | 2 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Galiano Rd - Cadima St to Import Dr | 2 | Sales Tax | Complete |
| Charleston Dr – Green River Pkwy to Berkshire Blvd | 4 | City/Sales Tax | 2027/28 |
| Eyerly Ave - Bayshore Blvd to Airoso Blvd | 1 | City/Sales Tax | 2024/25 |
| Paar Dr – Darwin Blvd to Vista Lake Ct | 3 | City/Sales Tax | 2026/27 |
| Paar Dr – Vista Lake Ct to Tulip Blvd | 3 | City/Sales Tax | 2027/28 |
| Carter Ave – Bayshore Blvd to Airoso Blvd | 1 | City/Sales Tax | 2025/26 |
| Berkshire Blvd – Green River Pkwy to Earl Blvd | 4 | City/Sales Tax | 2023/24 |
| Berkshire Blvd – Earl Blvd to Melaleuca Blvd | 4 | City/Sales Tax | 2024/25 |
| Berkshire Blvd – Melaleuca Blvd to South Blackwell Dr | 4 | City/Sales Tax | 2026/27 |
| Milner Dr – Midway Rd to Selvitz Rd | 1 | City/Sales Tax | 2022/23 |
| Grand Dr - Lennard Rd to Tiffany Ave | 4 | CDBG | Complete |
| Cambridge Dr. – Westmoreland Blvd. to Morningside Blvd | 4 | City/Sales Tax | Removed |
| Peacock Trail – Gatlin Park & Ride to Peacock Park | 3 | LAP | 2026/27 |

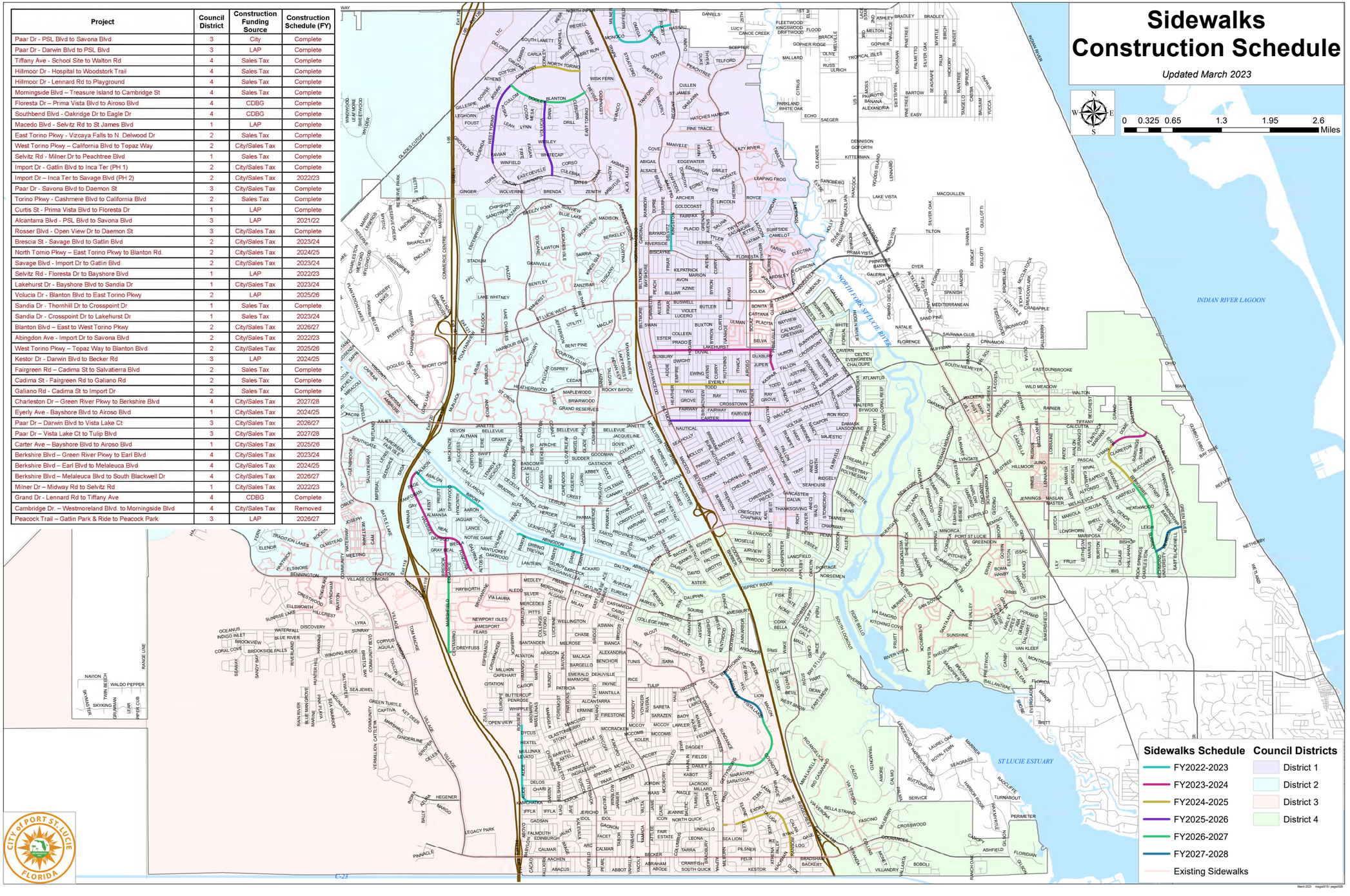
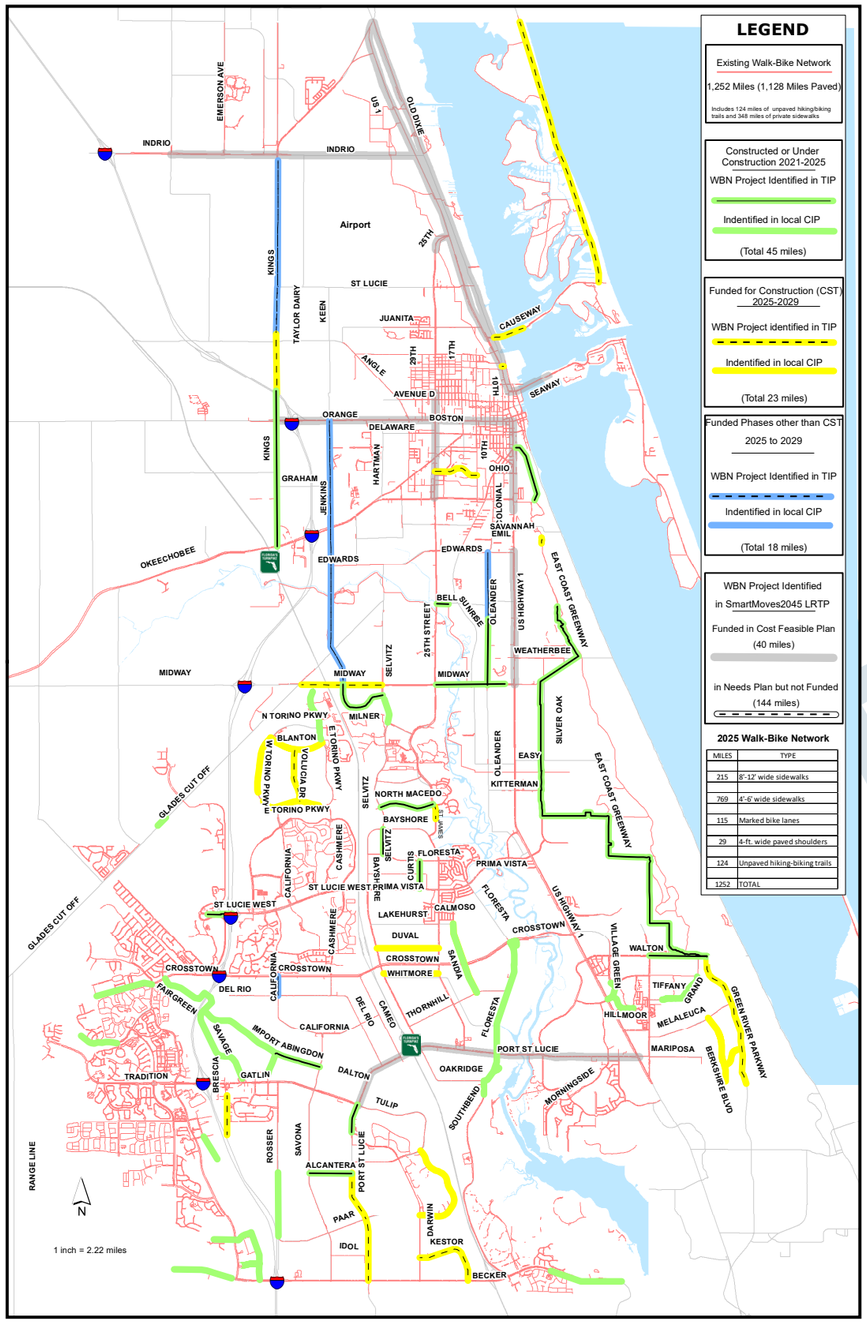


Fig. 4.6 St. Lucie Walk-Bike Network - 2025 Draft




## Walk-Bike Network

The St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is a Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for the planning and programming of State and Federal funding for transportation improvements for the City of Fort Pierce, City of Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie Village, and the unincorporated areas of St. Lucie County. The 2025 draft Walk-Bike Network (left) includes a variety of projects originating both at the city and county level, many with funding allocated to be implemented over the next five years.

Fig. 4.7 Naturally PSL

## Naturally PSL

The ongoing Naturally PSL initiative is focused on increasing awareness of existing trails and developing new trails, primarily in existing natural areas. The latest project report (below) identifies:

- **41.4 miles** of **trails available** within city limit, with an additional
- **20.3 miles** of **trails in planning**




1. Stars and Stripes Park
(Planned Opening 2025)
2. Torino Regional Park and Nature Trails
(Design FY2024-2025, Construction estimate to start 2026)
3. Tradition Regional Park
(Groundbreaking in 2024, planned completion 2026)
4. O.L Peacock Sr. Park Improvements
(Phase 1 estimated completion in 2025-2026)
5. **Peacock Trail** (construction in FY2026-2027)
6. **Wilderness Trail** (Groundbreaking in 2025)
7. The Port District Master Plan Phase 1
(restaurant to begin construction 2025)
8. **Port Preserve Trail** (Design Completed)
9. **Village Green Drive Complete Street**
(Ongoing Design phase)
10. **Hog Pen Slough Boardwalk**
(Ongoing Design phase, 90% plan in 2025)
11. **Florida SUN Trail – East Coast Greenway Extension**
12. **Paseo Greenway** (completed and open in 2024)
13. Southwest Park (conceptual, prioritized in Strategic Plan)
14. McCarty Ranch Camping Enhancements
(conceptual plan approved, Phase 1A construction in 2030)

# Trails as Linear Parks

**Fig. 4.8 Linear Park with Experiences**



Trail corridors provide an opportunity for multifunctional uses, combining active transportation with recreation, to create nodal "linear parks." Many cities explore the use of these corridors to serve residents through the creative implementation of park amenities as space and conditions allow.

The images here depict how a trail corridor can be activated through the integration of park amenities and experiences to create an active linear park based on the preferences of surrounding residents.



- ***Objective 3.2: Market existing and proposed signature trail projects identified in Naturally PSL that connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and activity centers.***

  As discussed previously, once again, paved multi-purpose trails were identified as a high-priority need in the statistically valid survey. Additionally, development of new walking and biking facilities was the highest budget allocation by respondents of the statistically valid survey. Naturally PSL has identified existing signature trails throughout the City. The City should continue to expand awareness of this existing trail system.

  - ***Action 1:*** Develop branding and marketing strategy, including signage and wayfinding design standards for existing and proposed trails.
  - ***Action 2:*** Promote signature trail projects**.**

- ***Objective 3.3: Continue to implement trail projects that connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and activity centers.***

  Figure 4.9 illustrates a conceptual trails and greenways vision that would connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and activity centers, including existing signature trails. The City should collaborate with partners to incrementally implement these projects.

  - ***Action 1:*** Coordinate with partners to pursue the implementation of high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities, prioritizing segments that connect schools to park.
  - ***Action 2:*** Discuss trail projects during High-Performance Public Spaces (HPPS) Committee to maximize internal departmental implementation strategies, including developing park experiences (Figure 4.8) along the corridor to create Linear Parks based on the on the parks and recreation needs of the surrounding community.
  - ***Action 3:*** Complete feasibility studies or conceptual design for proposed trail projects to explore project implementation and phasing strategies.

- ***Objective 3.4: Where possible and appropriate, implement Trail Walking Loops within City parks that integrate into the City's Walk-Bike Network.***

  A National Study of Neighborhood Parks completed by the City Parks Alliance and the RAND Corporation found that trail walking loops generated the most physical activity in parks.

  Many of the City of Port St. Lucie's parks already have walking loops that are well used by residents. Notable examples are Woodland Trails Park and Woodstork Trail Park. Many other parks however, do not have Walking Trail Loops.

  The City should develop Trail Walking Loops in parks to ensure that all residents have access to Trail Walking Loops within a 10-minute walk of their home.

  Additionally, the City should connect those Trail Walking Loops to the City's bicycle and pedestrian network.

  - ***Action 1:*** Develop Trail Walking Loops in parks.
  - ***Action 2:*** Implement infrastructure that facilitates  connect to existing and proposed sidewalks and the City's Walk-Bike Network.



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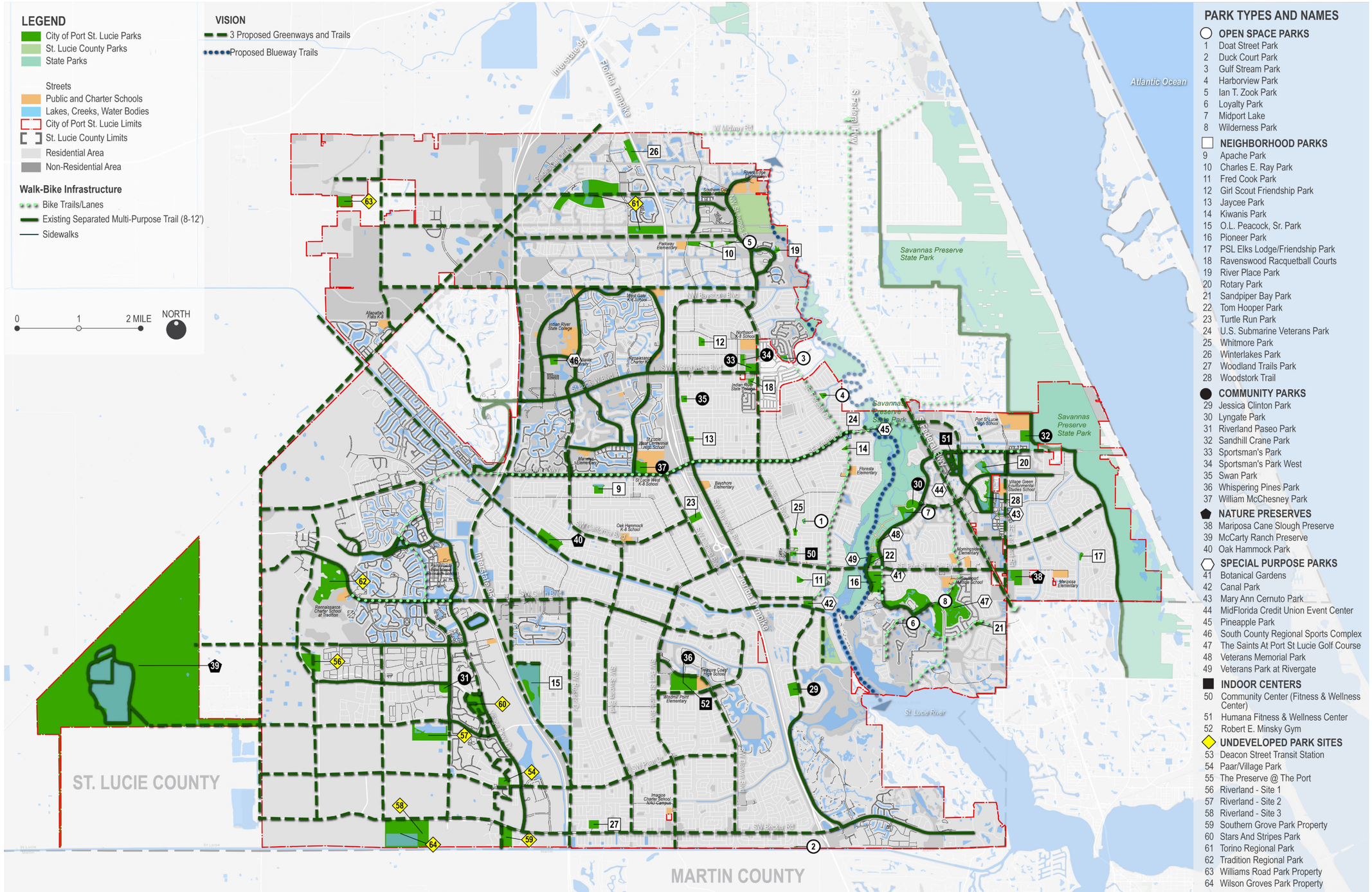
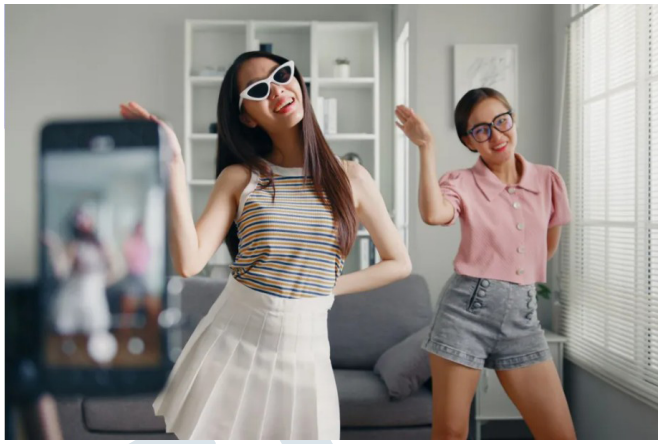
**Fig. 4.9 Conceptual Vision for Walk Bike Network**



***Objective 3.5: Use a wide array of online tools to reach diverse demographics to bring awareness to programs and services.***

Thirty-seven percent of statistically valid survey respondents acknowledged that the primary factor that prevents them from using parks and recreation programs more frequently is not knowing what is offered or available. There is an opportunity for the Department to continue to broaden marketing strategies to bring awareness to programs and services.

- ***Action 1:*** Employ teenagers and young adults as brand ambassadors to create Video content for social media, including on TikTok, that appeals to younger demographics.
- ***Action 2:*** Create engaging, short-form videos for platforms like Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok. These could showcase park highlights, event teasers, quick tutorials on outdoor activities, and user-generated content.
- ***Action 3:*** Utilize tools such as CivicRec or similar programs for targeted email marketing campaigns. Send regular newsletters with information on upcoming programs, events, and exclusive offers for subscribers.
- ***Action 4:*** Launch a podcast series featuring interviews with park staff, local environmentalists, and community members. Highlight the unique aspects of each park, upcoming events, and the benefits of outdoor activities.
- ***Action 5:*** Use tools like PosterMyWall, CivicPlus, and templates generated by AI (e.g., ChatGPT / MidJourney) to create visually appealing marketing materials like posters, flyers, and digital graphics for social media.
- ***Action 6:*** Utilize Placer.ai data park visitation data to better target marketing efforts and improve facility offerings based on visitor preferences.









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# 4 GROW the parks and recreation system.

**Overview**

Based on Port St. Lucie's continued growth, developing new parks and facilities is an important long-term goal of this Vision.

Following are Objectives and Actions to ensure the City's parks and recreation system vision addresses the future parks and recreation needs of the City.

***Objective 4.1: Grow the City's park land***

The City of Port St. Lucie is projected to grow by roughly 32,000 residents by the year 2030 and by 61,000 residents by the year 2035.

Counting the City's existing park land, the City's 2025 Park Acreage LOS is 8.5 acres per 1,000 population. This Acreage LOS is above the National Median Acreage LOS of 8.4 acres per 1,000 population for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Port St. Lucie. It is also above the City's existing target Acreage LOS of 5 acres per 1,000 population.

However, if the City does not add anymore park land, the Acreage LOS would drop to 6.9 acres per 1,000 population by the year 2035. While this is above the City's existing Acreage LOS Target, it is below the National Median Acreage LOS for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Port St. Lucie.

This Vision recommends that the City of Port St. Lucie increase its overall Acreage LOS target from 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 resident, which is more in line with the City's current Acreage LOS as well as the National Median Acreage LOS.

Achieving this would require the City to acquire an additional 359 acres of park land over the next 10 years. The City is already working towards this goals through on-going negotiations with developers and partners to obtain over 100 acres of park land.

- ***Action 1***: Increase the City's total parkland through a collaborative and multi-pronged strategy.

  Following are visions and recommendations for various park types to ensure equitable access to parks based on the top priority needs:

  — **Natural Areas**

  — **Neighborhood Parks**

  — **Community Parks**




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### Natural Areas Vision

The City of Port St. Lucie residents identified natural areas as a high-priority need. Additionally, they identified the preservation of natural areas as one of the most important community health needs.

Through Naturally PSL, the City is bringing awareness to existing and proposed natural areas. These are identified in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.11 provides an expanded vision of Natural Areas that includes a variety of potential natural area improvements. Following are a description of these potential natural area improvement projects.

*It is important to note that these potential improvements would need to go through a public-engagement based design process before being implemented.*

- **Existing City Parks with Planned Natural Area Improvements**
  - **Midport Lake -** Implement Port District Vision, expand nature trails, invasive plant removal, selective clearing, and connect to Lyngate Park.
  - **O.L. Peacock, Sr. Park -** Implement elements from proposed Master Plan related to nature access including water access, water overlooks, and trails.
  - **Tom Hooper Park** - Implement Port District Vision.
  - **Lyngate Park -** Implement Port District Vision, expand nature trails, invasive plant removal, selective clearing, and connect to Midport Lake.
  - **The Preserve @ The Port** - Implement Port District Vision.
  - **Torino Regional Park Phase 1** - Under Design
  - **Tradition Regional Park Phase 1**- Under Design
- **Four Publicly Owned Parcels identified in Naturally PSL with Potential Natural Area Improvements**
  - Develop Master Plans that consider adding formal off-street parking area, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.

**Fig. 4.10 Naturally PSL Green Spaces (Natural Areas)**

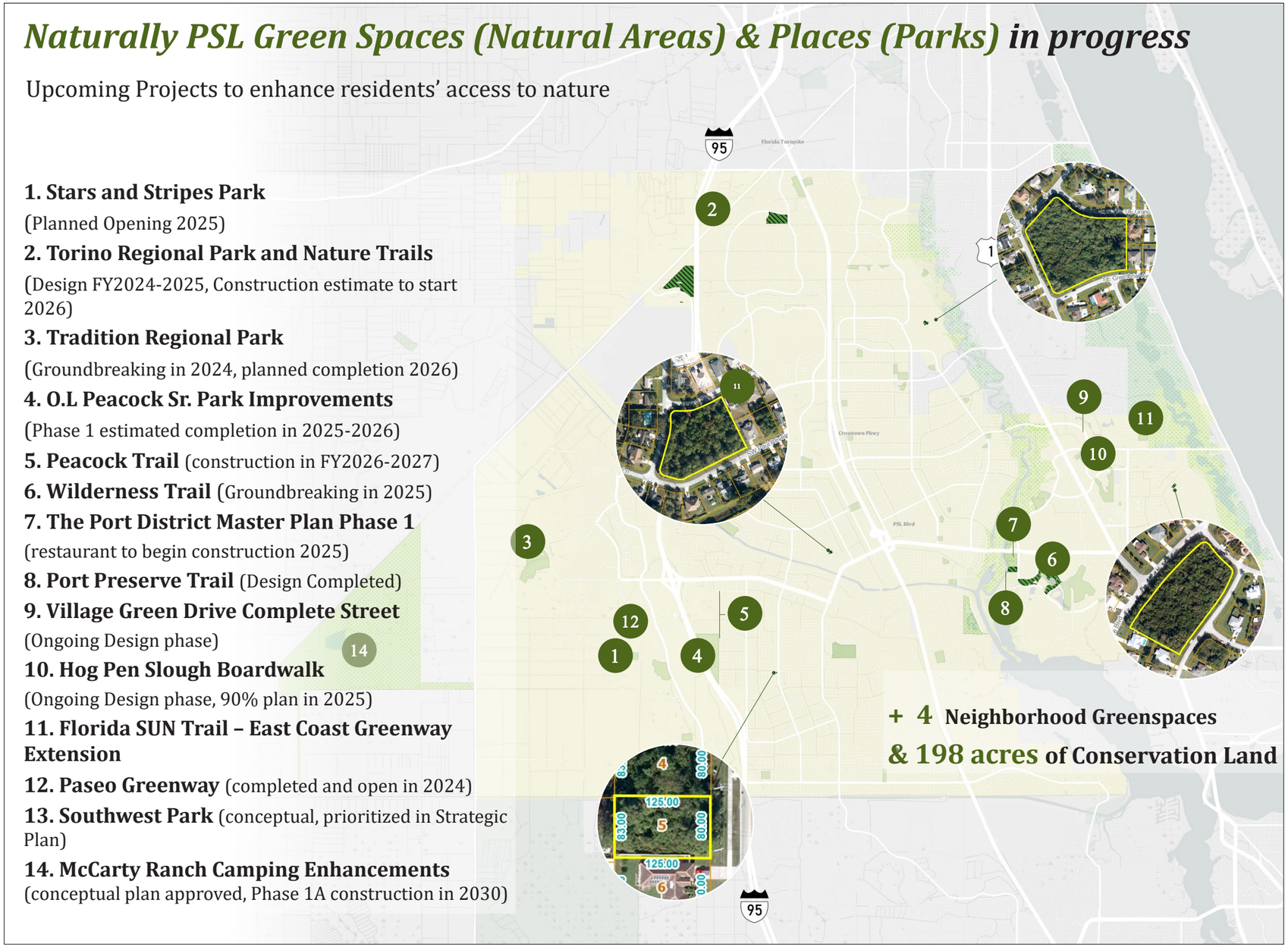
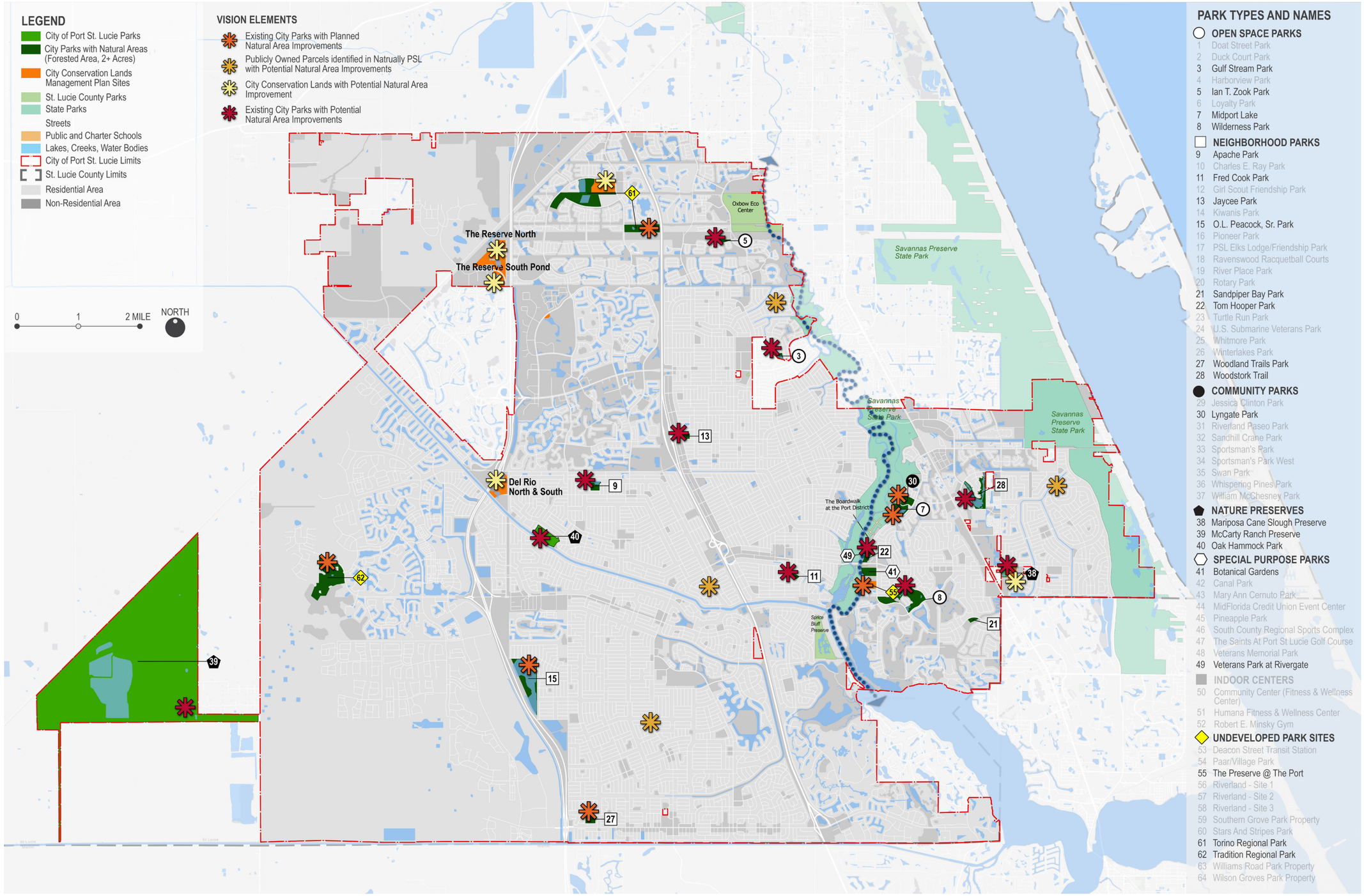


**Figure 4.11 - Natural Areas Vision**



- **Four City Conservation Lands with Potential Natural Area Improvements**
  - Work with City of Port St. Lucie Planning & Zoning to develop Master Plans for the four sites that consider adding formal on-street parking, off-street parking area, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, water overlooks, restrooms, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
- **Existing City Parks with Potential Natural Area Improvements**
  - **Gulf Stream Park** - Add formal entrance with on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Ian T. Zook Park** - Add formal entrance with on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Wilderness Park** - Add formal off-street parking area, on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, selective clearing. and extend existing paved multi-purpose trails
  - **Apache Park** - Develop Master Plan that considers adding formal off-street parking area, on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, water overlook, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Fred Cook Park** - Add nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Jaycee Park** - Add nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Sandpiper Bay Park** - Add formal entrance with on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Woodstork Park** - Replace boardwalk and site furnishings in poor condition, improve parking, and add interpretive signage.
  - **Mariposa Cane Slough Preserve** - Develop Master Plan and explore adding formal entrance with on-street parking, nature kiosk, interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **McCarty Ranch Preserve** - Develop Master Plan and explore improving formal entrance, off-street parking, camping, and adding nature kiosk, signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, restrooms, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.
  - **Oak Hammock Park** - Add formal entrance with on-street parking, nature kiosk, signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing
  - **Veterans Park at Rivergate** - Improve boat ramp, furnishings, add interpretive signage/ wayfinding, nature trails, furnishings, invasive plant removal, and selective clearing.

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## Neighborhood Parks Vision

Since the completion of the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City has continued working towards achieving the 10-Minute Walk initiative led by The Trust for Public Land, in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Urban Land Institute, encouraging cities to ensure "there's a great park within a 10-minute walk of every person, in every neighborhood, in every city across America."

This is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan Goal 2 - Vibrant Neighborhoods through the development of Neighborhood Gathering Spaces.

Figure 4.12 on the following page shows the potential locations of new Neighborhood Parks.

The larger circles with red asterisks are within the existing, low-density platted areas of the City and indicate a potential neighborhood park that would provide access to residents within a mile of the park (approximately a 20-minute walk).

The smaller circles with green asterisks are within the proposed, higher-density areas of the City and indicate a potential park that would provide access to residents within ½ mile (approximately a 10-minute walk).

New park sites could potentially include existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites (shown as blue dots on Figure 4.12 - see legend); existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.12 - see legend); and/or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.

The prototypical Neighborhood Park, Stormwater Pond Park, Linear Park, and School Park found in pages 135-139 illustrate what these parks could look like and can be used as a starting point for community-based design processes.

To provide a Neighborhood Park within one mile of all residents, the City would need to develop 20 new parks, in addition to the previously identified Undeveloped Parks.



Fortunately, the City has many vacant parcels available, most of which are already zoned for Open Space, and therefore would likely not need to acquire much additional land. Further study of these Proposed Park Sites would be necessary to determine the feasibility of various amenities.

## Community/Regional Parks Vision

Since the completion of the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City has begun the implementation of the first phases of two of the previously recommended Community/Regional Parks - Torino Regional Park and Tradition Regional Park.

Consistent with the City's Strategic Plan Goal 5 - High Quality Infrastructure and Facilities - Plan Roadways, Facilities and Fiber for Future Needs, Figure 4.13 shows the potential locations of 2 additional new Community Parks. One of those parks is located in SW Port St. Lucie, which is consistent with City's Strategic Plan Goal 6 - Culture, Nature, and Fun Activities - Develop Port St. Lucie's SW Park.

New community/regional park sites could also potentially include existing, undeveloped, City-owned park land; existing stormwater or utility sites; existing school sites; and/or sites within proposed redevelopment areas.

The prototypical Community Park and School Park found in pages 137-138 illustrate what these parks could look like and can be used as a starting point for community-based design processes.

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**Figure 4.12 - Neighborhood Parks Vision**

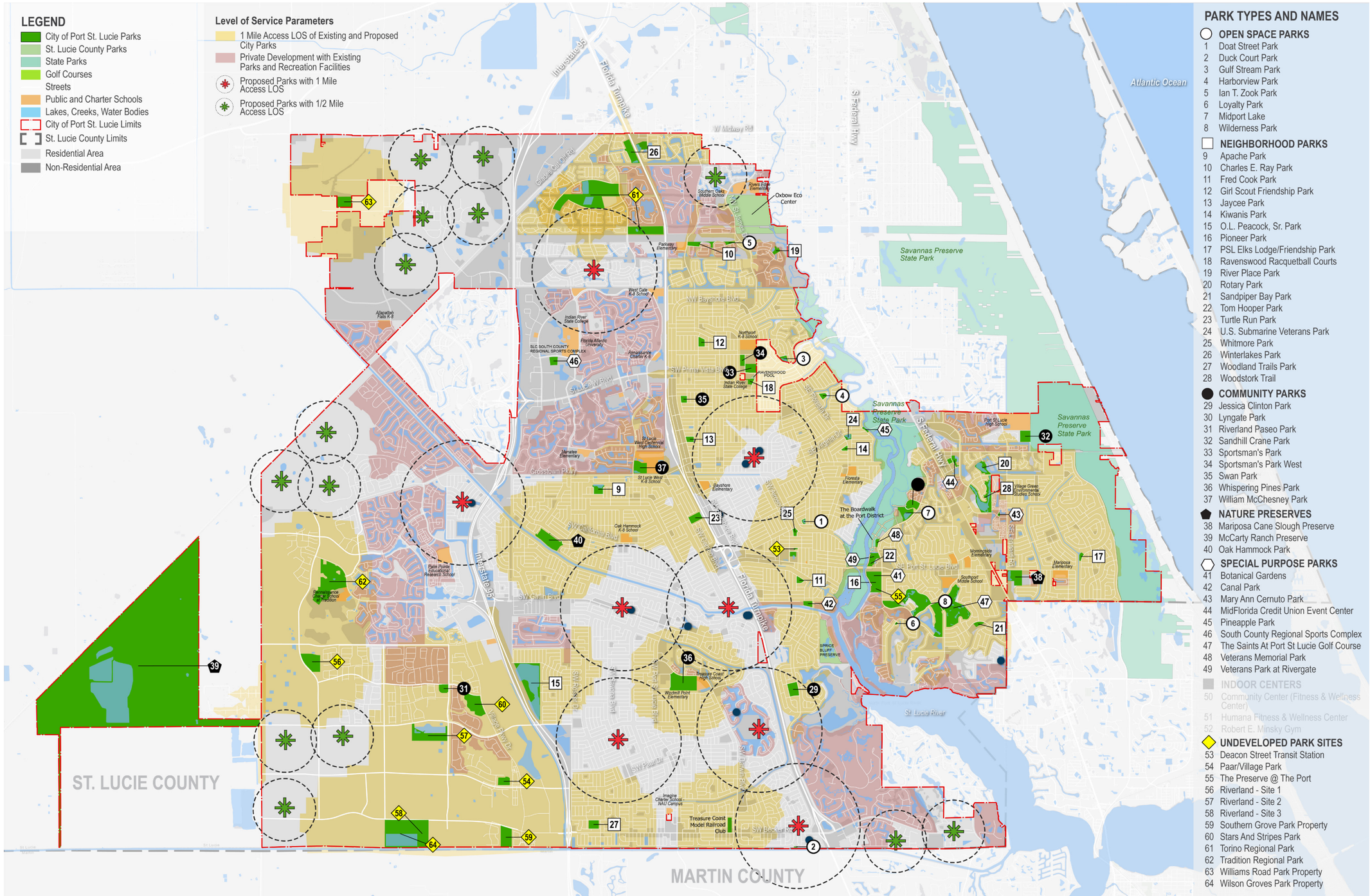
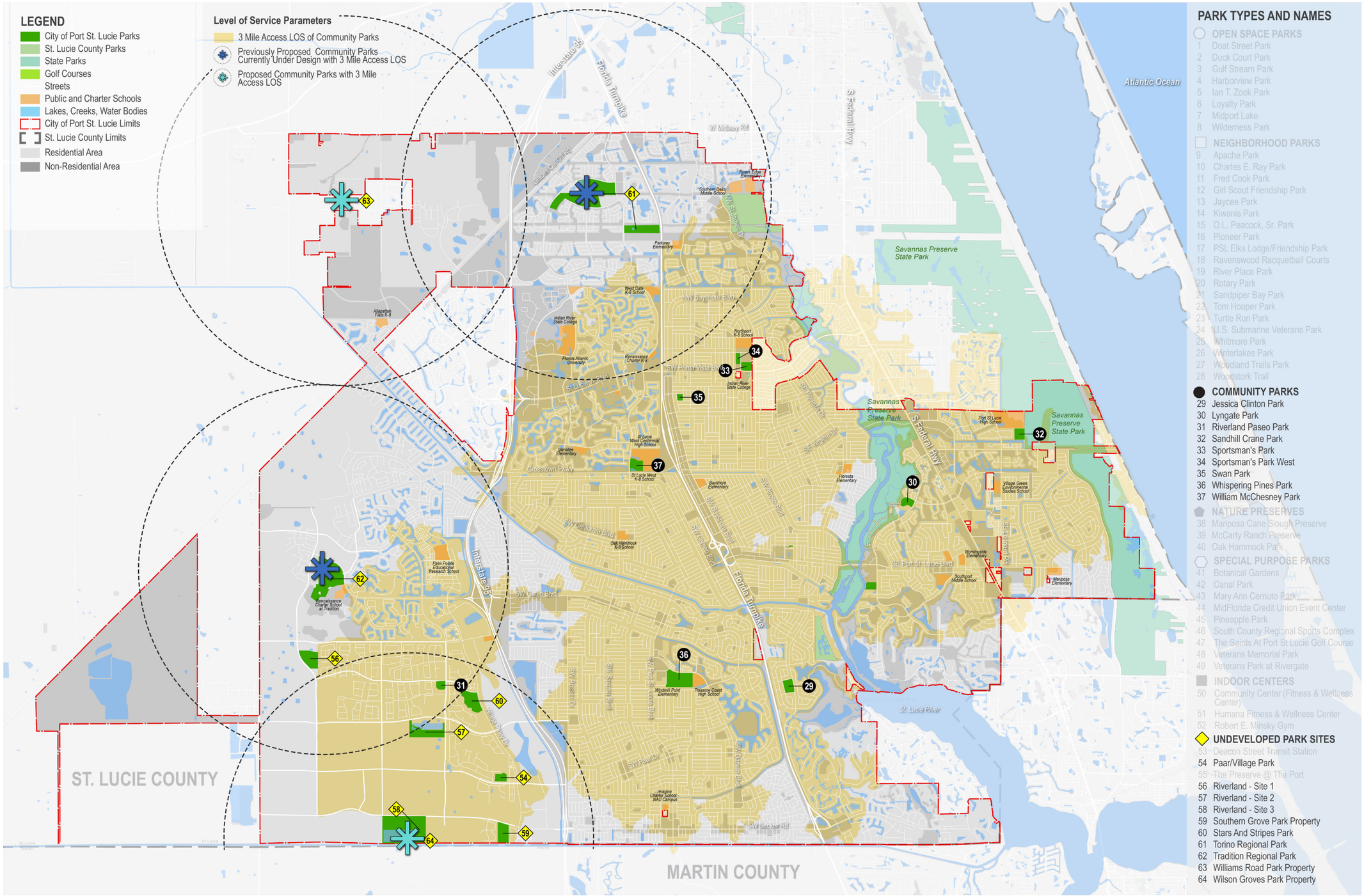


**Figure 4.13 - Community/Regional Parks Vision**



***Objective 4.2:*** Provide parks and recreation facilities throughout the City.

This Vision establishes a systematic approach to providing a balance of outdoor recreation facilities that respond to the recreation facility needs of residents.

- ***Action 1:*** Provide equitable access to parks and recreation facilities.

**Facilities Visions**

Based on the high-priority needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Vision recommends establishing Facilities and Access Level of Service (LOS) Guidelines that will guide the number and general future location of parks and recreation facilities.

Figure 4.14 identifies the recommended Facility and Access LOS Guidelines while Figures 4.15 - 4.25 in subsequent pages depict the areas in need of proposed facilities. Other facilities would be implemented in parks based on input from surrounding park residents and park planning and design best practices. The Facilities and Access LOS Guidelines are informed by the City's existing number of facilities, findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment, and local and national benchmarks, all with the goal of providing equitable access to parks and recreation facilities across the City.

**Figure 4.14 - Recommended Facilities and Access Level of Service Guidelines**

| | Facilities | City of Port St. Lucie | | Proposed Level of Service (2030) | | Need/ Surplus |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Inventory* | 2025 LOS | Acreage/ Facilities LOS | Access LOS | Based on Proposed LOS 2035 |
| Parks | City Park Acreage | 2,286 Acres | 5 Acres per 1,000 population | 8 acres per 1,000 population | 1/2 mile-1 mile Neighborhood Parks; 3 miles Community Parks | -359 |
| Indoor Facilities | Indoor Centers | 5 | 53,800 | 47,200 | 3 miles | -2 |
| | Gymnasium | 2 | 134,000 | 47,200 | 3 miles | -5 |
| Outdoor Facilities | Playgrounds | 17 | 15,800 | 6,300 | 1/2 Mile; 1 mile; 3 miles | -35 |
| | Splash Pads | 5 | 53,800 | 40,000 | 3 miles | -3 |
| | Community Gardens | 0 | - | 82,600 | 3 miles | -4 |
| | Amphitheaters | 1 | 26,000 | 165,000 | 5 miles | -1 |
| | Dog Parks | 5 | 53,800 | 47,200 | 3 miles | -2 |
| | Diamond Fields: Total | 30 | 8,967 | 8,900 | 3 miles | -7 |
| | Rectangular Fields: Total | 31 | 8,677 | 8,500 | 3 miles | -7 |
| | Golf Course (Public) | 1 | 269,000 | 165,000 | 5 miles | -1 |
| Racquet Sports | Pickleball Courts (Outdoor) | 29 | 9,276 | 8,900 | 3 miles | -8 |

**Includes planned facilities at Torino and Tradition Regional Parks.*
*[1] Oxbow Eco Center is a Nature Center provided by St. Lucie County.*

## Indoor Centers Vision

Indoor centers emerged as one of the high-priority needs through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

The 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan vision for Indoor Centers was to meet or exceed the industry "rule-of-thumb" of 1.5-2 square feet per capita. Meeting this goal would require the construction of over 300,000 of additional space over the next 20 – 30 years. Figure 4.15 on the following page shows that the existing centers primarily serve residents within the southeast quadrant of the City.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the proposed Indoor Centers Vision is to provide an Indoor Center within 3 miles of every resident. Based on the proposed Facilities and Access LOS, the City would need to develop 4 new Indoor Centers.

Figure 4.15 illustrates the proposed Indoor Centers Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Indoor Centers**
  - The City currently has 3 Indoor Centers - Community Center, Minsky Gym, and MIDFLORIDA Event Center.
    - **Community Center** - As discussed, previously and proposed in the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the existing Community Center needs to be updated to accommodate demand. The addition of a gymnasium to the Community Center would increase the total square footage to approximately 50,000 – 55,000 square feet.
    - **Minsky Gym** - As discussed in the previously and proposed in the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Minsky Gym will eventually also need to be replaced or expanded to create another +/- 30 to 40,000 square foot center.
- **Proposed Walton & One Indoor Center**
  - The Department's recreation presence at the MIDFLORIDA Event Center will move to a proposed new Indoor Center at Walton & One, which should include a Gymnasium.
- **Planned Indoor Centers**
  - Indoor Centers with Gymnasiums are proposed for future phases of Torino Regional Park and Tradition Regional Park.
- **Proposed Indoor Centers**
  - Two Indoor Centers with Gymnasiums are proposed to fill in the gaps of underserved areas in the City - one in central-western part of the City and one in the southwestern part of the City.

Figure 4.16 illustrates a prototypical Indoor Center Space Plan that could be used as a starting point for planing and design purposes.

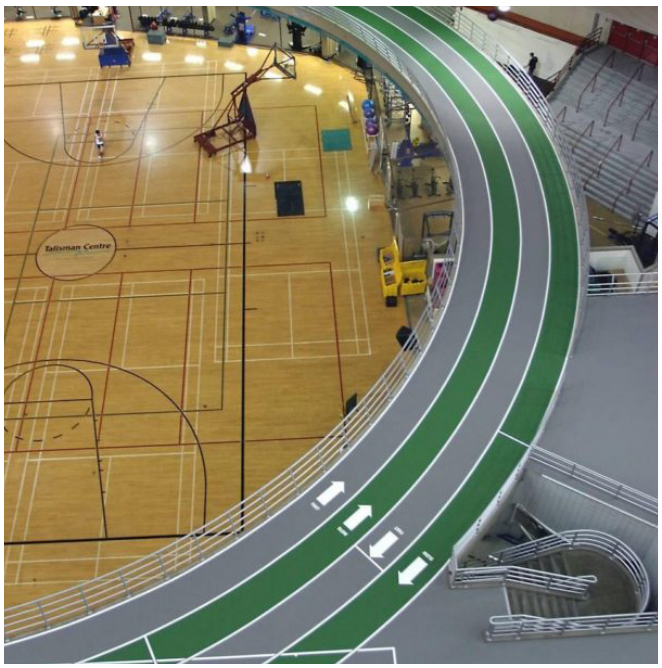



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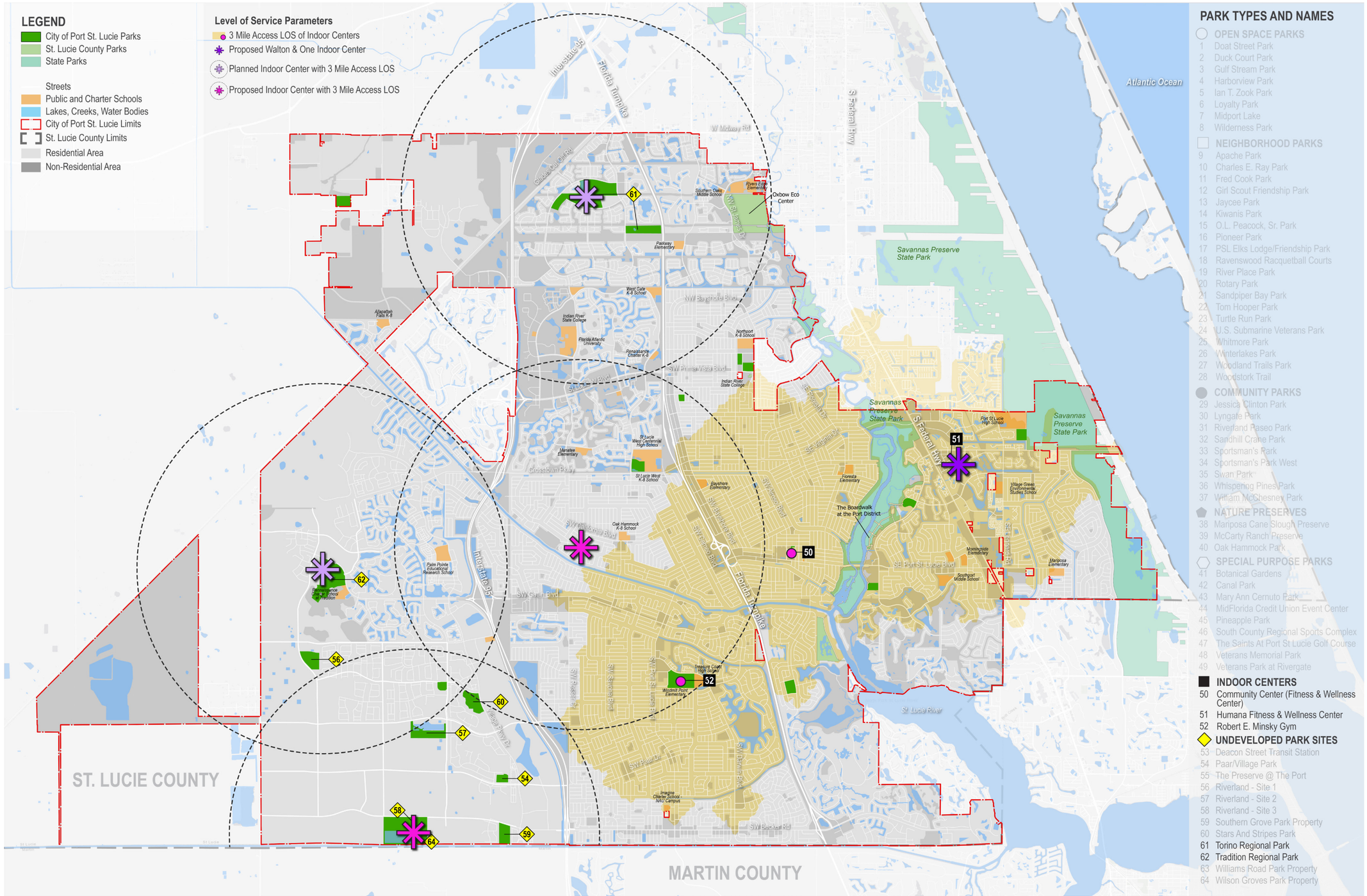
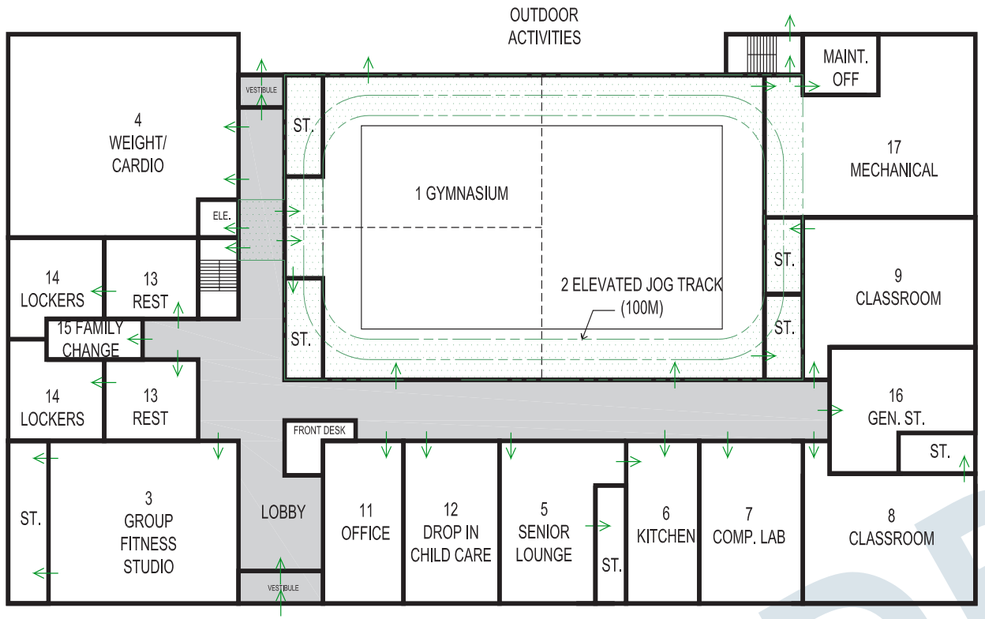
**Figure 4.15 - Indoor Centers and Gymnasium Vision**



# INDOOR CENTER




The included image illustrates a prototypical Indoor Center Space Plan that could be used as a starting point for planing and design purposes.

**Size:**
Generally 30,000 to 40,000 square feet

**Location + Context:**
Residential and Mixed-Use Areas

**Access Level of Service:**
3 Miles-Suburban

**Function:**
Indoor Centers are multi-purpose buildings that serve a broad range of ages, needs, and uses and provide critical social services to the community. Indoor Centers often play a significant role in youth development providing childcare and after-school opportunities and spaces such as computer labs, maker spaces, Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) programs. They also may serve senior populations with specific programming and spaces senior lounges, card rooms, billiards, and meeting rooms. The buildings should also include sustainability best practices, including the incorporation of bird-friendly design standards to minimize operational costs as well as bird fatalities.

**Playground Vision**

In 2024, the City opened the themed Playground at Pioneer Park in the Port District. Identified as having a "Wow" factor, this playground has attracted more than 90,000 visits in just six months. Moving forward, City leaders would like to see similar "Wow" playgrounds in key areas of the City.

Recognizing this desire, and based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Playground Vision proposes to include a "Wow" Playground within 3 miles of every resident and traditional smaller playgrounds within 1/2 or 1 mile of every resident, depending on the development context of the City.

Figure 4.16 illustrates the proposed Playground Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing/ Planned "Wow" Playgrounds**
  - Pioneer Park - Existing "Wow" Playground
  - Whispering Pines - Existing "Wow" Playground
  - Torino Regional Park - Planned "Wow" Playground
  - Tradition Regional Park - Planned "Wow" Playground
- **Proposed Playgrounds with 1 Mile Access LOS**
  - Playgrounds proposed in existing, low-density platted areas of the City that would provide access to residents within a mile of the playground (approximately a 20-minute walk).
- **Proposed Playgrounds with 1/2 Mile Access LOS**
  - Playgrounds proposed in proposed, higher-density areas of the City that would provide access to residents within ½ mile of the playground (approximately a 10-minute walk).

Similar to Neighborhood Parks, new playgrounds could potentially be included in existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites; existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.16 - see legend); and/ or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.






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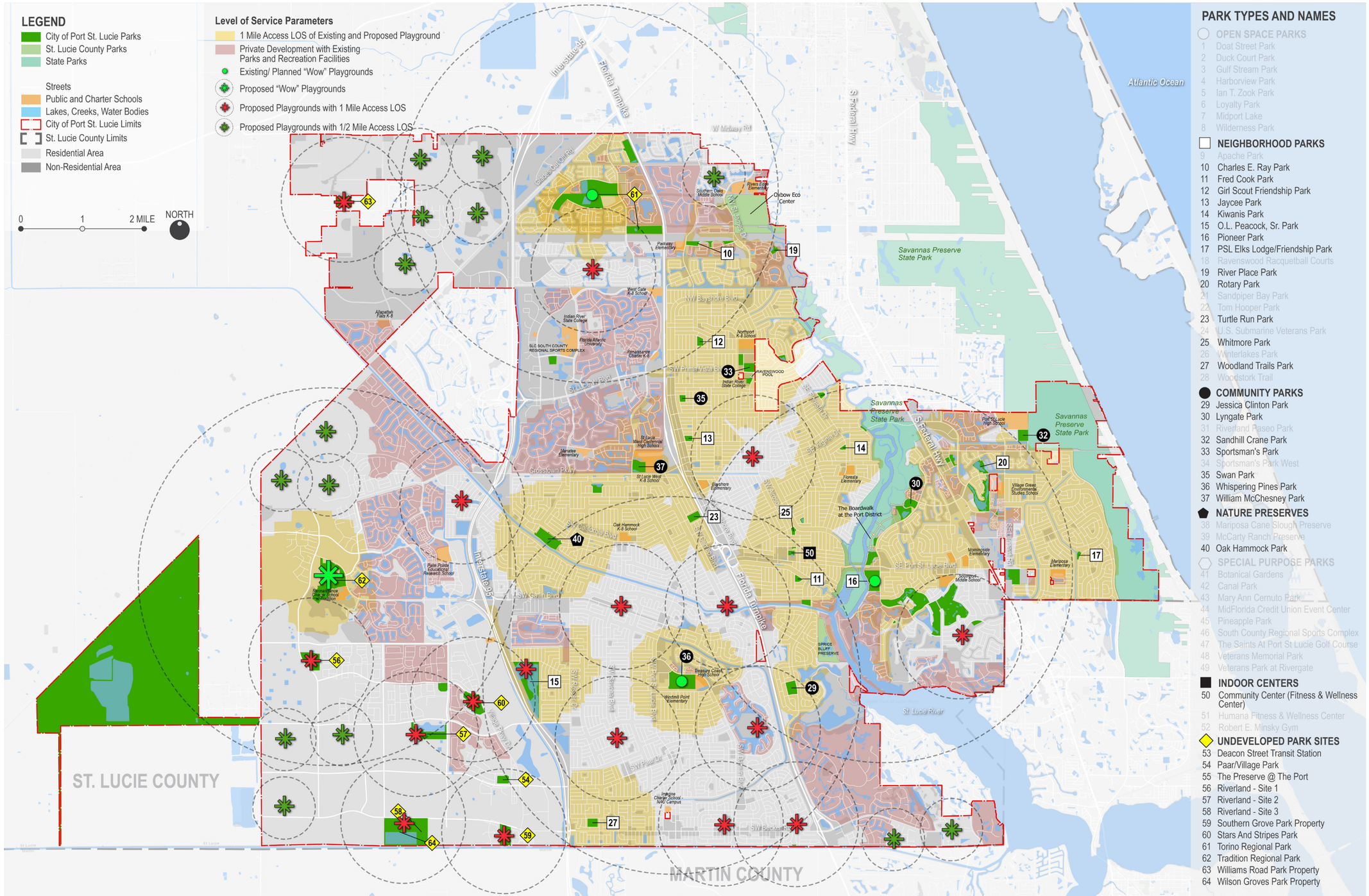
**Figure 4.16 - Playground Vision**



## Splash Pads Vision

Splash Pads emerged as a need through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Splash Pads Vision proposes to include a Splash Pads within 3 miles of every resident.

Figure 4.17 illustrates the proposed Splash Pads Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing/ Planned Splash Pads**
  - MIDFLORIDA Event Center
  - Pioneer Park - Existing Splash Pad
  - Torino Regional Park - Planned Splash Pad
- **Proposed Splash Pads**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for 5 Splash Pads throughout the central and western parts of the City.

New Splash Pads could potentially be included in existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites; existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.17 - see legend); and/or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.





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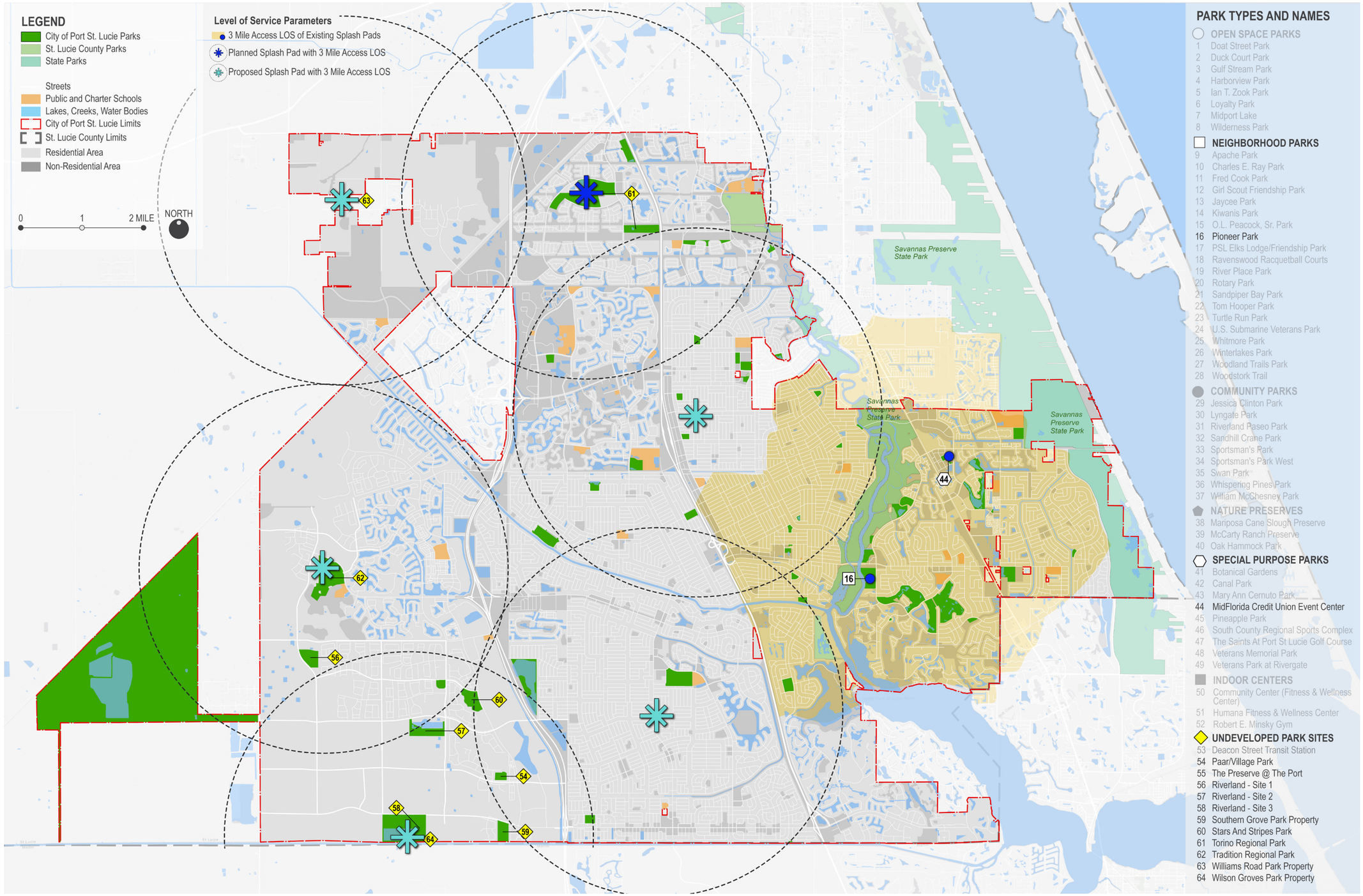
**Figure 4.17 - Splash Pads Vision**



### Community Gardens Vision

Community Gardens emerged as a need through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Community Gardens Vision proposes to include a Community Garden within 3 miles of every resident.

Figure 4.18 illustrates the proposed Community Gardens Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Proposed Splash Pads**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for 7 Community Gardens throughout the City.

New Community Gardens could potentially be included in existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites; existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.18 - see legend); and/or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.




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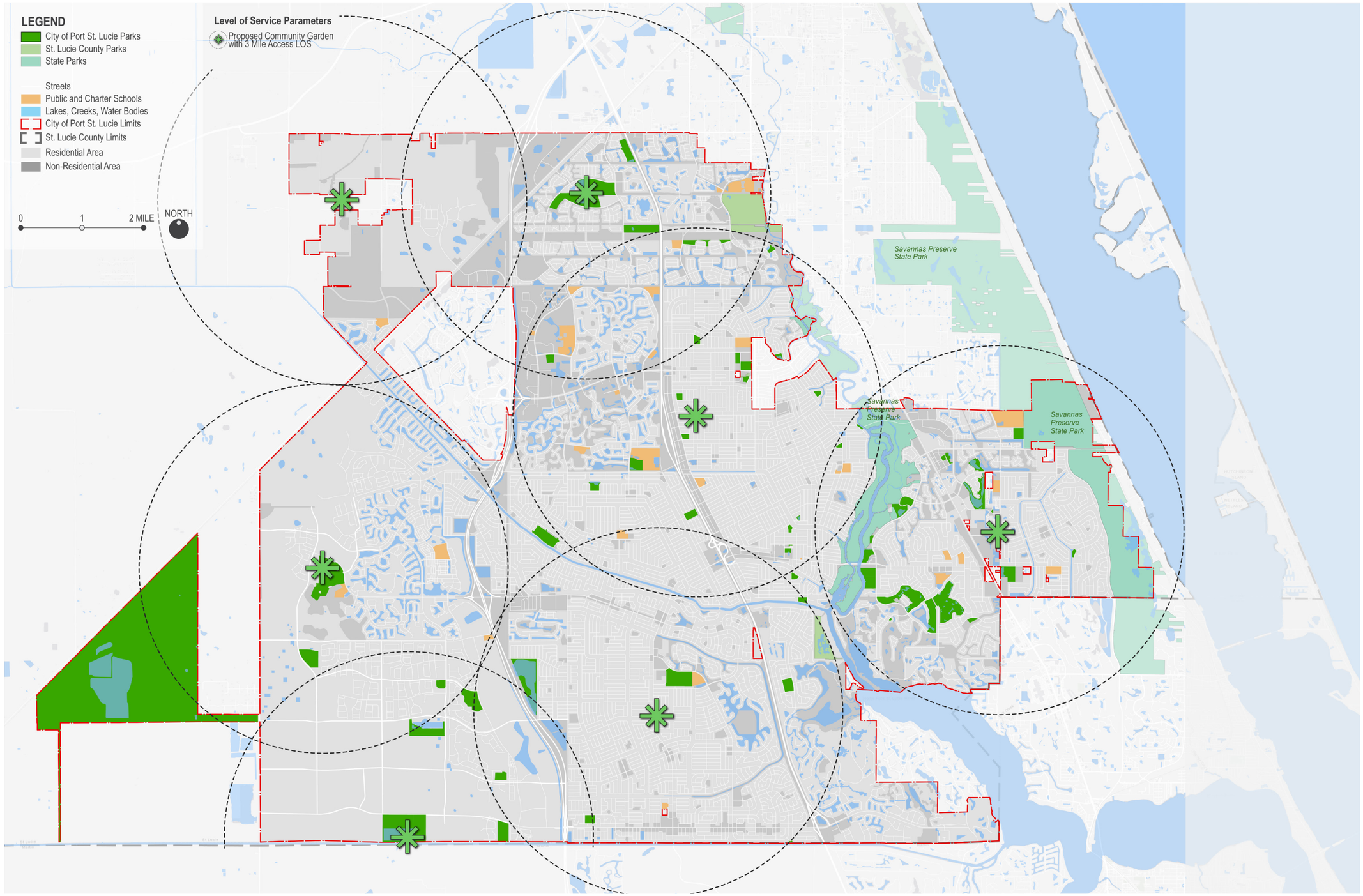
**Figure 4.18 - Community Gardens Vision**



### Amphitheater Vision

Amphitheaters emerged as a need through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

The 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan vision for Amphitheater was to potentially meet this need through public and private partnerships. For example, a developer may provide the public amphitheater within a proposed new residential development.

Figure 4.19 on the following page shows that the existing amphitheater primarily serve residents within the east part of the City.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the proposed Amphitheater Vision is to provide an Amphitheater within 5 miles of every resident. Based on the proposed Facilities and Access LOS, the City would need 1 additional Amphitheater in the western part of the City.

Figure 4.19 illustrates the proposed Amphitheater Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Amphitheater**
  - MIDFLORIDA Event Center - Existing Amphitheater
- **Proposed Amphitheater**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for an Amphitheater around the western part of the City.

As recommended in the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the amphitheater could potentially be met through a public and private partnerships within a proposed new residential development or through development of a Community Park in the western part of the City.



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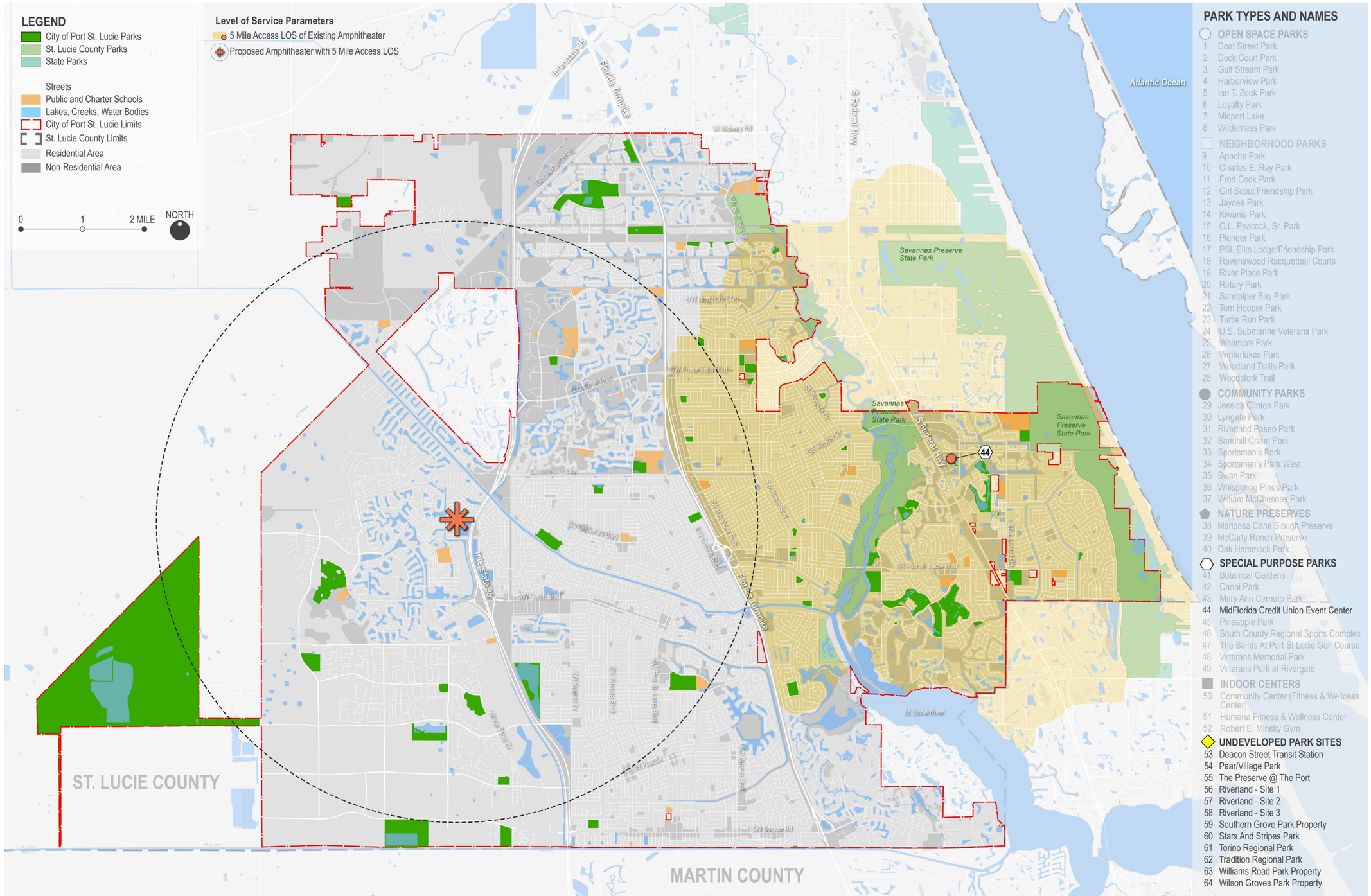
**Figure 4.19 - Amphitheater Vision**



### Dog Park Vision

Dog Parks emerged as a need through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Dog Parks Vision proposes to include a Dog Park within 3 miles of every resident.

Figure 4.20 illustrates the proposed Dog Parks Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Dog Parks**
  - Winterlakes Park
  - Woodland Trails Park
  - Lyngate Park
  - Riverland Paseo Park
  - William McChesney Park
- **Proposed Dog Parks**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for 3 Dog Parks throughout the City.

New Dog Parks could potentially be included in existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites; existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.20 - see legend); and/or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.




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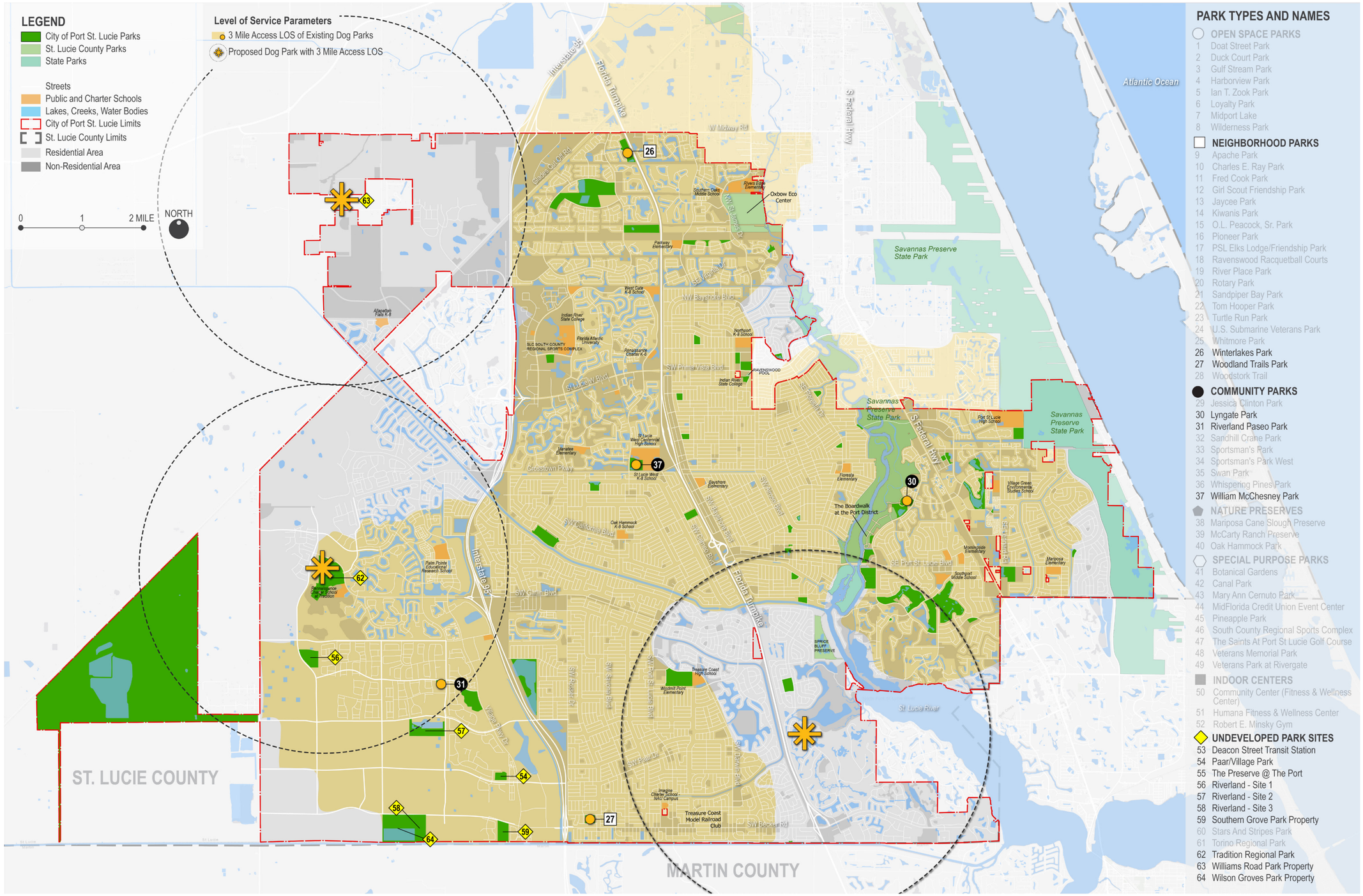
**Figure 4.20 - Dog Parks Vision**



### Athletic Fields Vision

As discussed previously, Placer.ai data identified parks with athletic fields as the most visited parks in the entire parks and recreation system. These parks included Whispering Pines Park, McChesney Park, Sportsman's Park, Jessica Clinton Park, and Swan Park.

Depending on the success of completing field improvements in appropriate existing City athletic fields and working with St. Lucie Public Schools to complete field improvements including adding lighting on appropriate schools fields, there may be a need to add additional athletic fields as the City continues to grow.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Athletic Fields Vision proposes to include athletic fields within 3 miles of every resident. Based on the proposed Facilities LOS, the City may have a need for 7 additional Diamond Fields and 7 additional Rectangle Fields in the next 10-years (in addition to those already proposed in Tradition Regional Park). As field are implemented, the City should evaluate the proposed Facilities LOS and update it per identified needs.

Figure 4.21 illustrates the proposed Athletic Fields Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Athletic Fields**
  - Charles E. Ray Park
  - Girl Scout Friendship Park
  - Jaycee Park
  - River Place Park
  - Rotary Park
  - Turtle Run Park
  - Winterlakes Park
  - Woodland Trails Park
  - Jessica Clinton Park
  - Lyngate Park
  - Riverland Paseo Park
  - Sandhill Crane Park
  - Sportsman's Park
  - Sportman's Park West
  - Swan Park
  - Whispering Pines Park
  - William McChesney Park
- **Proposed Athletic Fields**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for athletic fields in 4 geographic parts of the City - northwest, western-central, and southwest. Tradition Regional Park will address the need for the western-central part of the City while undeveloped park lands have the potential to address the need for the remaining areas.

    There may also be an opportunity to add more athletic fields near Sportman's Park should the City be able to obtain the school site north of the park.

    It may be important to light these fields upon implementation to maximize the use of the fields.



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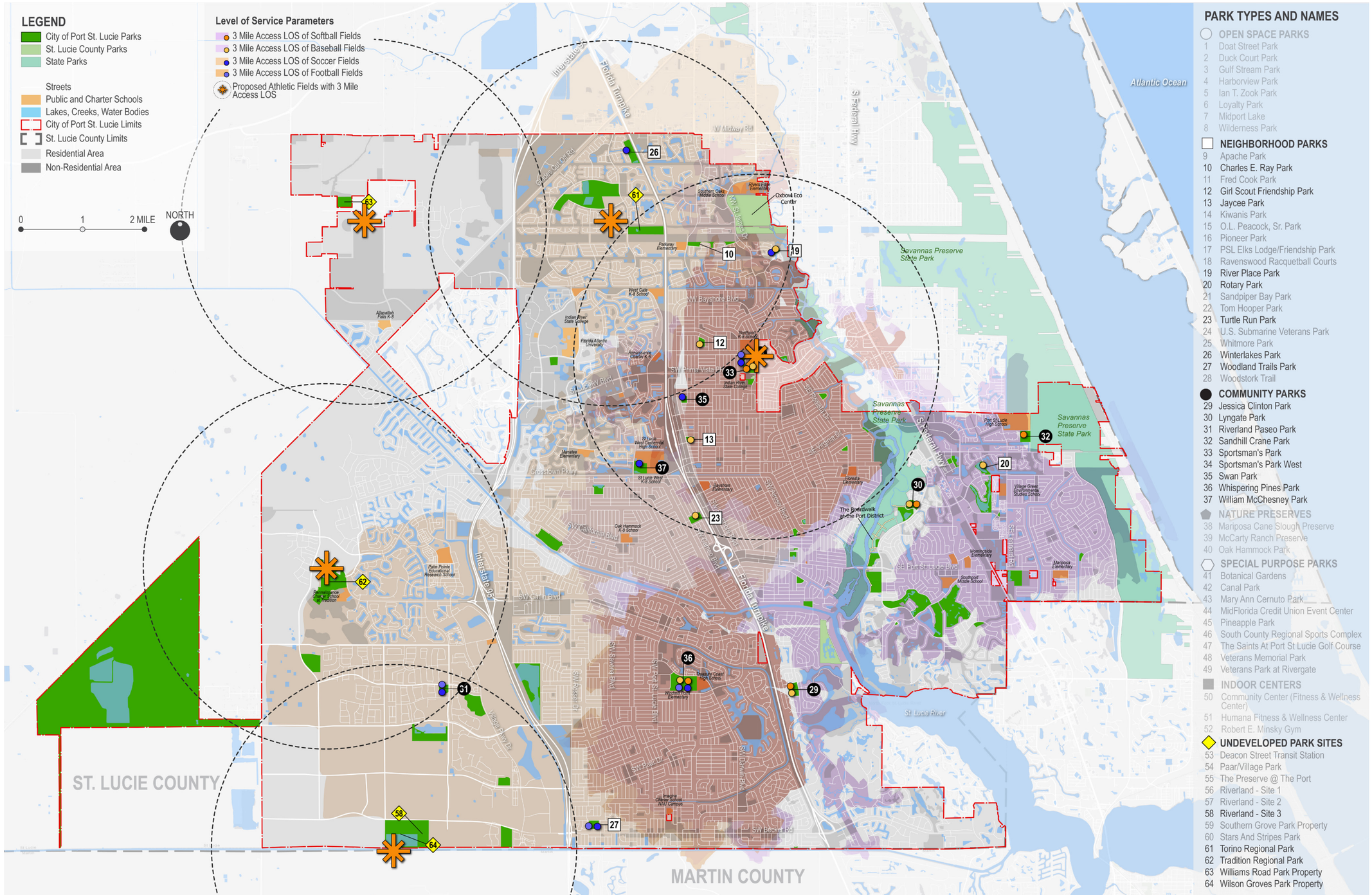
**Figure 4.21 - Athletic Fields Vision**



### Golf Course Vision

The Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course is one of the most played public golf courses in the region. The golf course typically averages around 50,000 rounds per year, 26,000 more rounds than the average public golf course. During peak season, it can have 270 players on a busy day. However, the golf course primarily serves residents living in the eastern part of the City and beyond.

During the Visioning Workshop, staff discussed the need of adding one additional public golf course on the western part of the City to serve residents in that part of the City.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the proposed Golf Course Vision is to provide a 2 public, 18-hole golf courses with driving ranges in the City of Port St. Lucie - 1 in the eastern part of the City and 1 in the western part of the City.

Based on the proposed Facilities and Access LOS, the City would need 1 additional public, 18-hole golf course with a driving range in the western part of the City.

Figure 4.22 illustrates the proposed Golf Course Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Golf Course**
  - The Saints at Port St. Lucie Golf Course
- **Proposed Golf Course**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for a public, 18-hole golf course and driving range in the western part of the City.



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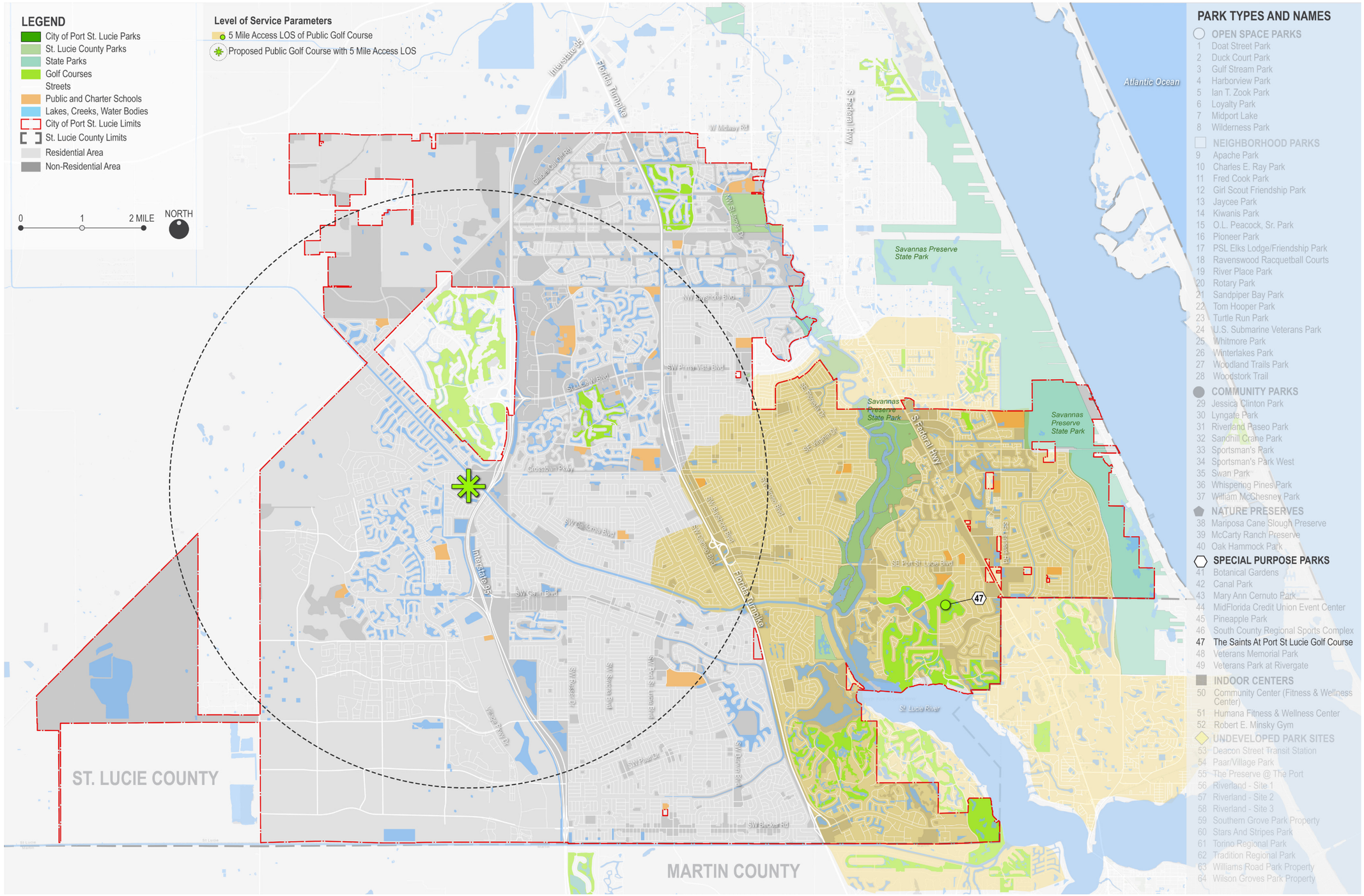
**Figure 4.22 - Golf Course Vision**



### Pickleball Court Vision

Pickleball Courts emerged as a need through the Needs and Priorities Assessment Phase.

Based on the needs identified through the needs assessment and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Pickleball Courts Vision proposes to provide Pickleball Courts within 3 miles of every resident.

Figure 4.23 illustrates the proposed Pickleball Court Vision, which includes the following elements.

- **Existing Pickleball Courts**
  - Winterlakes Park
  - Sportsman's Park
  - Whispering Pines Park
- **Planned Pickleball Courts**
  - Tradition Regional Park
- **Proposed Pickleball Courts**
  - Based on the Access LOS, there appears to be a need for Pickleball Courts in 3 geographic areas in the City - northwest, western-central, and southwest part of the City. Undeveloped park lands have the potential to address the need for Pickleball Courts in these areas.

New Pickleball Courts could potentially be included in existing undeveloped, publicly-owned stormwater, utility, or other sites; existing school sites (shown in orange on Figure 4.23 - see legend); and/or other sites within proposed redevelopment areas.

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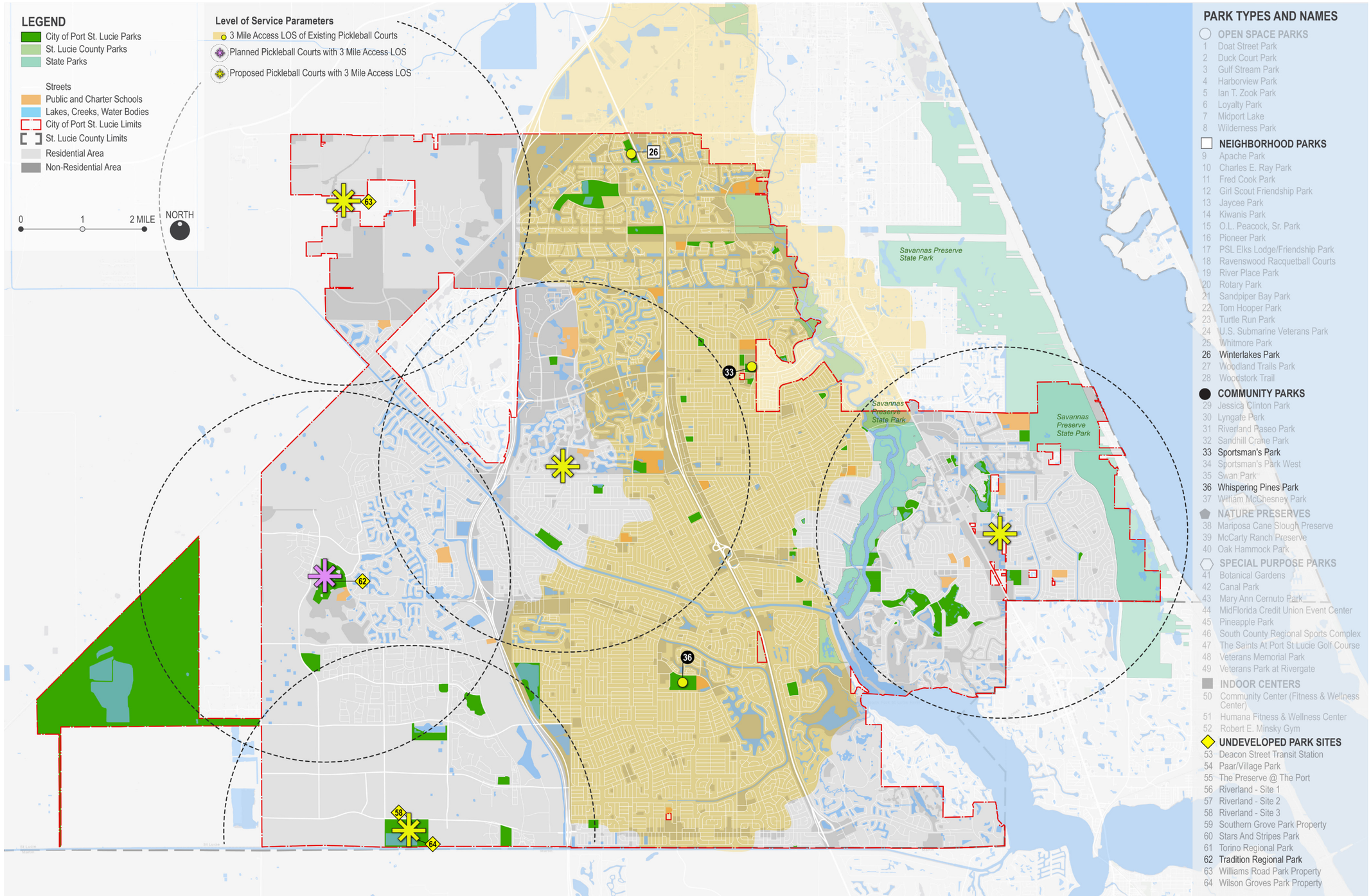
**Figure 4.23 - Pickleball Courts Vision**



- ***Objective 4.3: Expand Public Art in Parks***

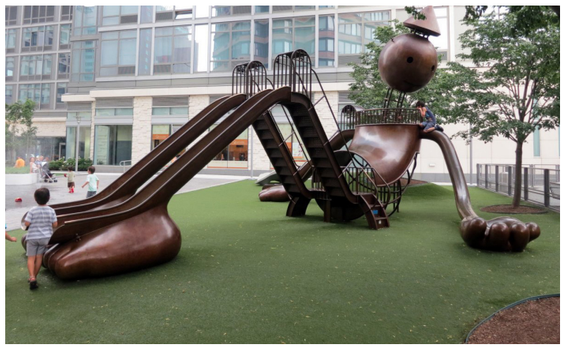
  The parks and recreation system should play an integral role in expanding public art in the City through the integration of public art in parks and recreation facilities such as playgrounds, sports courts, fields, buildings, trails, signage/ wayfinding, natural areas, etc.

  - ***Action 1:*** Embed and grow public art opportunities throughout the park system in collaboration with the Art in Public Places Master Plan Implementation.
  - ***Action 2:*** Collaborate with the Art in Public Places Master Plan Implementation to expand public art programming to include public art experiences and events.

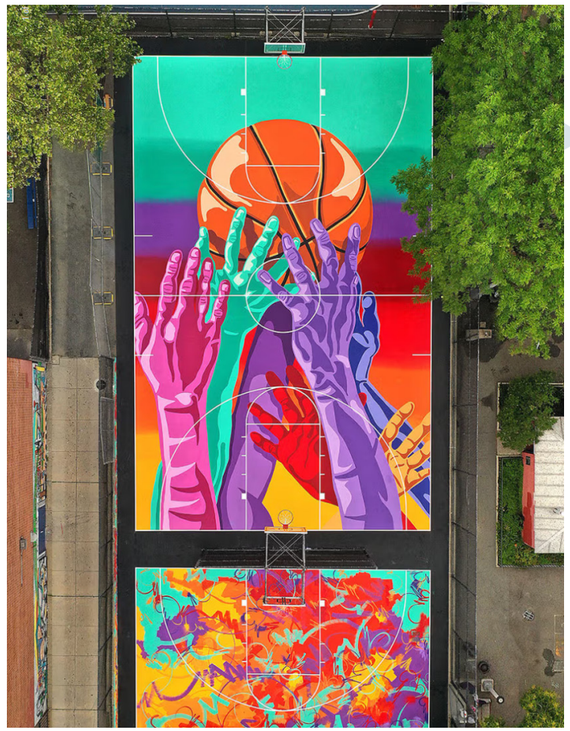










- ***Objective 4.4: Strategically increase programming capacity.***

  The City should grow new program areas based on community needs, broader trends, and next practices for future program and events offerings.

  Based on trends, community demographics and staff input, following are some strategies to grow and expand new program areas to serve the community members in the City or Port St. Lucie.

  - ***Action 1:*** Expand programs based on new facilities.
  - ***Action 2:*** Explore the opportunity to use a mobile parks and recreation van to expand program service delivery throughout the City.
  - ***Action 3:*** Collaborate with partners to expand non-core programming.

- ***Objective 4.5: Explore all possible strategies to fund parks and recreation capital projects.***

  Implementing the parks and recreation system vision will require increasing funding strategically. The City of Port St. Lucie's capital expenditures for parks and recreation during 2024 was $45 per capita. This amount is lower than the annual national median of $65 per capita for agencies with a similar population and population density as the City of Port St. Lucie.

  Considering the City's expenditure on parks and recreation services, the City should consider increasing funding for parks and recreation capital projects through a variety of funding sources to implement the Vision.

  - ***Action 1:*** Explore alternative funding sources including Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), sponsorships, grants, increase in park impact fees, and others.
  - ***Action 2:*** Explore including parks and recreation in future sales tax.





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- ***Objective 4.6: Stay on the cutting edge***

  As technology continues to evolve, it will be important for the Department to stay up to date to ensure that programs and services delivered are relevant and responsive to customer desires, needs, and priorities.

  - ***Action 1:*** Upgrade technology within parks and recreation facilities, across all systems (HVAC, media, etc.)
  - ***Action 2:*** Develop a strategy to provide Wi-Fi in parks.
  - ***Action 3:*** Research and incorporate Smart City/ Park elements in the park system.

- ***Objective 4.7: Ensure there is appropriate allocation of parks and recreation staff and resources to meet the growth of parks and recreation system.***

  As the City's population and the parks and recreation needs of the community continue to grow, increasing Department resources may be required to improve the system and continue to serve the system as it grows and adapts. The City of Port St. Lucie's annual operating expenditures per capita were $74 in 2024. This amount is lower than the annual national median of $107 per capita for agencies with a similar population and population density as the City of Port St. Lucie.

  Considering the City's current operating expenditures and resident desires, the City should explore additional parks and recreation operation fundings.

  - ***Action 1:*** Continue to coordinate with the City Manager's Office, Finance Department, and elected officials to increase funding allocation for staffing to match the median national benchmark for agencies similar to the City of Port St. Lucie.
  - ***Action 2:*** Expand community volunteer opportunities and add volunteer recruitment and recognition through volunteer days and park programs.

- ***Objective 4.8: Foster strategic partnerships.***

  Strategic partnerships are critical to the successful delivery of programs, services, and stewardship of parks. The Department will continue to collaborate with existing partners and will pursue new partners to address the varied needs of the City of Port St. Lucie.

  - ***Action 1:*** Review existing agreements and contracts with partner organizations to ensure that programs and service delivery is effective.
  - ***Action 2:*** Explore the development of a 501c3 Parks Foundation to leverage public funding with philanthropic contributions.
  - ***Action 3:*** Explore the development of Park Friend's of Groups and Park Conservancies to further the stewardship of parks and recreation facilities.




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## 4.4 AN INTEGRATED VISION

At its core, this Parks and Recreation Vision is about providing meaningful and equitable benefits for all residents of the City of Port St. Lucie. Its implementation will lead to beautiful parks within a short walk from everyone's home. It will mean a variety of recreation and parks facilities across the City; natural areas for residents and visitors to immerse themselves in nature; and indoor centers designed to support the Department's programs. Most importantly, it is a commitment to a high quality of life for everyone in the City of Port St. Lucie.

With this Vision, the Department is poised to establish itself as an active, healthy, happy, and thriving community by harnessing the "power of parks."



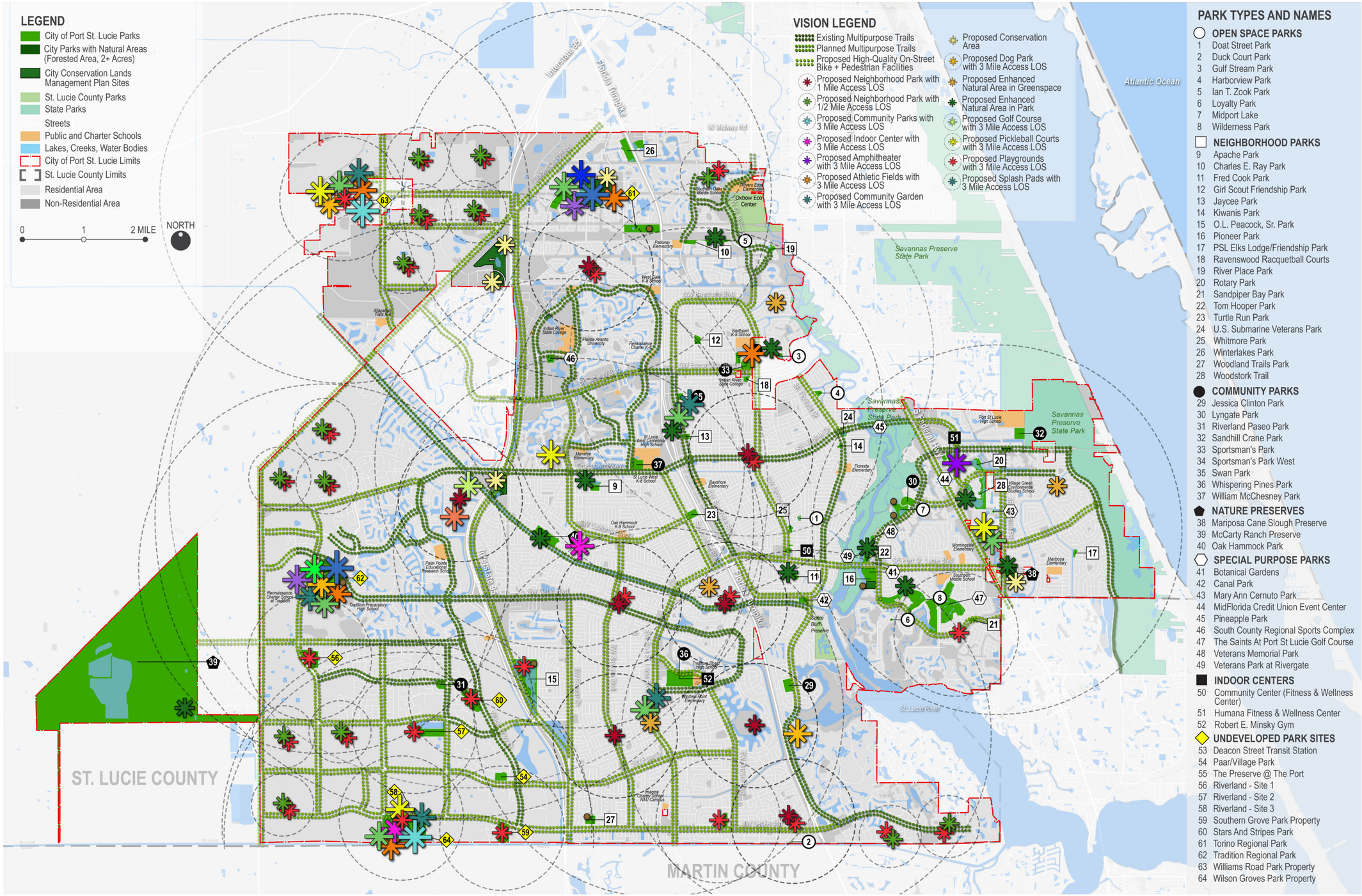









**Figure 4.24 - An Integrated Vision**





# 5 IMPLEMENTATION

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation strategy for City of Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is comprised of two interrelated parts:

- Funding to pay for capital projects and staffing needs; and
- Capital Improvement Projects, such as the construction of new parks and recreation facilities and the improvement of existing parks and recreation facilities.

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## 5.2 - FUNDING STRATEGY

The ability to implement the Parks and Recreation System Vision Update is directly linked to the amount of funding that will be available over the next 10 years and beyond. The complete Vision would likely cost hundreds of millions of dollars. The wide range of projects included would typically be implemented over time using a variety of strategies and funding sources, which may include:

- Dedicated Funding Sources
- Partnerships
- Grants
- Extra-ordinary Funding Sources

### Dedicated Funding Sources

Dedicated funding sources, such as taxes and development fees, remain the most sustainable funding sources for parks and recreation projects. The Consultant Team met with Staff to discuss realistic dedicated funding sources for the implementation of parks and recreation projects. Based on conversations with the City's Finance Department, Figure 5.1 illustrates a conservative estimate of the realistic funding dollars available over the next 10 years.

**Figure 5.1 - *10 Year Parks and Recreation Capital Funding Projections***

| Capital Funding Source | 10 Year Projection |
|---|---|
| General Fund CIP | $30,000,000 |
| Impact Fees | $32,500,000 |
| Parks and Recreation Grants | $1,000,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **$63,500,000** |

This estimate suggests that the City may have $63,500,000 in funding for parks and recreation capital projects over the next 10 years.

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Other dedicated funding sources that the City may consider in the future to pay for parks and recreation capital projects include the following:

- **Sales Tax (Surtax)** - consumption tax imposed by the government on the sale of goods and services. A sales tax is levied at the point of sale, collected by the retailer, and passed on to the county government.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** - a geographically targeted economic development tool that captures the increase in property taxes, and sometimes other taxes, resulting from new development, and diverts that revenue to subsidize that development.
- **Hotel Motel Tax** - paid on lodging at hotels, motels, inns, hostels, and similar places. Users pay these taxes when they rent a room, bed, or other space. A portion of this revenue could be dedicate to overall parks, recreation, and connectivity projects or even a specific parks, recreation, or trail projects that are associated with increasing tourism to a community.
- **Excise Tax** - a legislated tax on specific goods or services at the time they are purchased. Goods subject to excise taxes could be fuel, tobacco, and alcohol, among others.
- **General Obligation Bonds -** a municipal bond that is backed solely by the credit and taxing power of the issuing jurisdiction. General obligation bonds are issued with the confirmation that a municipality will be able to repay its debt obligation through taxation or revenue from projects. No assets are used as collateral.
- **Revenue Bonds** - a category of municipal bond supported by the revenue from a specific project, such as a parking deck, toll bridge, highway, or local stadium. Revenue bonds that finance income-producing projects are thus secured by a specified revenue source. Typically, revenue bonds can be issued by any government agency or fund that is managed in the manner of a business, such as entities having both operating revenues and expenses.

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**Partnerships**

Partnerships can be a powerful strategy to implement projects. They can spread capital costs for park projects or operations and maintenance costs for programs and special event among multiple stakeholders. Typical partnerships include schools, hospitals, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and public-private partnerships.

**Grants**

Grants allow municipalities to leverage public municipal funding dollars. The challenge with grants is that they tend to be competitive, meaning other municipalities are also competing for those some grant dollars. This requires the City to complete thoughtful and comprehensive applications in order to be competitive. Additionally, most large grants require a match, meaning the City would have to include funds from their capital budget to obtain the grant.

In certain instances, grants can be "stacked" or combined 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 vice versa. This process can address acquisition and development in phases to best meet a project's purpose and schedule.

Figure 5.2 includes a list of grants totally over $50 Million that are available for park and trail projects in Florida along with amounts and the types of projects that grants will fund. Figure 4.3 provides additional information on the available grants including grant amounts, match requirements, eligible items, and deadlines.

It is important to note that the availability of some of these federal grants are currently uncertain due to the current Administration's policy changes. The City should check these grant sources periodically to obtain the latest available information.

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**Figure 5.2 - *List of Available Grants and the Types of Projects the Grants will Fund***

| | Available Grants | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Types of Projects that Grants will Fund** | Land and Water Conservation Fund Program | Urban Waters Restoration | 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 Grant | Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant | Water Quality Restoration Grant (SWAG) | Cultural Facilities Grant | Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program | Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program | Our Town Grant |
| Trails | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | | ● | | |
| Land Acquisition | ● | | | | | | | | | | | ● | ● | | |
| Environmental Ed. / Interpretive Facilities | | ● | | | | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | | ● |
| Active Recreational Elements (racquetball, soccer, volleyball, playgrounds, dog park, etc.) | ● | | | | | | ● | | | | | | ● | | |
| Stormwater | | ● | | ● | ● | | | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Picnic Facilities | ● | | | | | | ● | | | | | | ● | | |
| Cultural Facilities (amphitheater, art & gathering space, museums) | ● | | | | | | ● | | | | | ● | ● | | ● |
| Support Facilities (restrooms, parking, benches, lighting, showers) | ● | | | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | ● | | |
| Landscaping | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Water Access (piers, observation decks | ● | | | | | ● | | | ● | | | | ● | | |
| Streetscape/Sidewalks | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Historic/Heritage | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | ● | | ● |
| Structure Hardening/ Elevation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | |

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**Figure 5.2 (Continued) - *List of Available Grants and the Types of Projects the Grants will Fund***

| | Available Grants | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Types of Projects that Grants will Fund** | Coastal Resiliency Implementation Grant | Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program | Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) | Urban & Community Forestry Grants | Water Project Funding | Florida Communities Trust | National Leadership Grants for Museums | Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) | FIND WAP Program | OGT Land Acquisition Program | RAISE Grant Funding | Resilient Florida Grant | RTC Trail Grants | SUN Trail |
| Trails | | ● | | | | | | | | | ● | | ● | ● |
| Land Acquisition | | ● | | | | ● | | | | ● | | ● | | |
| Environmental Ed. / Interpretive Facilities | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | | ● | | | | | |
| Active Recreational Elements (racquetball, soccer, volleyball, playgrounds, dog park, etc.) | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stormwater | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | | | ● | ● | | |
| Picnic Facilities | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cultural Facilities (amphitheater, art & gathering space, museums) | | ● | | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| Support Facilities (restrooms, parking, benches, lighting, showers) | | ● | | | | | | | ● | | ● | | | |
| Landscaping | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | | | ● | | ● | ● | | |
| Water Access (piers, observation decks | ● | ● | | | | | | | ● | | | | | |
| Streetscape/Sidewalks | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | |
| Historic/Heritage | | | | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| Structure Hardening/Elevation | | | ● | | | | | | ● | | ● | ● | | |

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**Figure 5.3 - *Grant List***

| Grant Opportunities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Funding Program** | **Grant Amount** | **Match Requirement** | **Types of Eligible Elements** | **Anticipated Deadline** |
| Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF) | $1,500,000 | 100% | Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Courts, Fields, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, and Landscaping | January |
| Urban Waters Restoration Program | $35,000 | 100% | Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater | January |
| Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program | $5,000,000 | 100% | Land Acquisition and development for Outdoor Recreation Facilities | February |
| SWFMD Cooperative Water Program | $100,000* | 50% | Irrigation, Plumbing fixtures | February |
| 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 Grant | $50,000 | 100% | Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health | April |
| Environmental Education Grants | $91,000* | 25% | Educational Elements, Signage, Nature Trails, Internet Applications | April |
| Florida Boating Improvement Grant (FBIP) | $200,000* | 5% | Boating Ramps, Day Docks, Other Boat Facilities | April |
| FIND WAP Program | $200,000* | 100% | Planning, construction of water access and waterfront facilities | April |
| Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant | $400,000* | 40% | Stormwater/Water Quality Projects | April/October |

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

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**Figure 5.3 - *Grant List (Continued)***

| Grant Opportunities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Funding Program** | **Grant Amount** | **Match Requirement** | **Types of Eligible Elements** | **Anticipated Deadline** |
| Water Quality Restoration Grant (SWAG) | $500,000* | 50% | Stormwater, Water Quality Projects | April |
| Cultural Facilities Grant Program | $500,000 | 200% | Educational, Amphitheater, Nature, Art Elements | June |
| Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Grant | $5,000,000* | 0% | Waterfront Infrastructure, Resiliency Improvements (Seawalls, LID, Flood Prevention) | July |
| Safe Streets for All (SSFA) | $1,000,000 | 20% | Planning and construction of traffic safety elements including multi-modal elements | July |
| Our Town Grant | $150,000 | 100% | Innovative public art projects including heritage trails | August |
| Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) | $200,000 | 100% | Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping | August |
| Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI) | $60,000 | 100% | Water access, Beach access, Kayak/Canoe, Native planting, Exotic removal, Education | October |
| Community Change Grant (EPA) | $20,000,000 | 0% | Parks, non-motorized facilities, stormwater, energy efficiency, resilience projects | November |
| Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) | $1,000,000* | 25% | Structure Hardening, Flood Protection | November |
| Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF) | $75,000 | 0% | Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting | November |
| Water Project Funding | $500,000* | 100% | Stormwater, Water Quality, Alternative Water | November |

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

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**Figure 5.3 - *Grant List (Continued)***

| Grant Opportunities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Funding Program** | **Grant Amount** | **Match Requirement** | **Types of Eligible Elements** | **Anticipated Deadline** |
| Florida Communities Trust | $5,000,000 | 25% | Land Acquisition of passive and active recreational facilities including trails, water access and active parks. | January |
| National Leadership Grants for Museums | $500,000 | 100% | Nature Centers, Museums, Botanical Gardens, Children's Museums | December |
| Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) | $1,500,000* | 25% | Stormwater Facilities/ Flood Prevention, Infrastructure Hardening | TBD |
| OGT Land Acquisition Program | $1,000,000* | 0% | Acquisition of Trails/ Greenways that Enhance the State System | October |
| Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grants | $5,000,000 | 20% | Transportation related projects with large scale impact. Includes nonmotorized safe streets and trails projects. | March |
| Resilient Florida Grant | $500,000* | 0% | Nature Based Stormwater Management, Elevation of Public Facilities, Hardening | September |
| RTC Trails Grant Program | $25,000 | 0% | Multi-Use Trails | July |
| SUN Trail | $1,000,000* | 0% | Development of Trails/ Greenways that Enhance the designated State System | December |

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.

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

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## 5.3 - PHASED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS STRATEGY

Given the focused amount of funding that may be available to implement the Vision, prioritizing projects will be important.

City staff and the Consultant Team collaboratively developed a prioritization strategy to inform how parks and recreation capital projects could be implemented over the next 10 years. Prioritization criteria were developed for the four main types of parks and recreation system projects:

- **Improvements to Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities** - Capital projects related to enhancing and replacing aging and deteriorating parks and recreation facilities, amenities, and spaces such as replacing an air conditioning unit, or a playground, or improving the natural turf in a field.
- **Development of New Parks and Recreation Facilities** - Capital projects related to installing and implementing new facilities that were not previously available in parks such as installing synthetic turf in an existing natural turf field, adding a new restroom building, or installing a splash pad in a vacant site.
- **Development of Walking and Biking Facilities** - Capital projects related to implementing walking and biking facilities such as paved trails, cycle tracks, and sidewalks.
- **Acquiring Park Land** - The acquisition of land that would be used for parks and recreation facilities.

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While criteria were developed for the third and fourth type of projects - Development of Walking and Biking Facilities and Acquiring Park Land, these projects were not prioritized in this plan. Walking and biking facilities are included in the City's trails plan, which was prioritized and in partnership with Public Works Department. However,  the Parks and Recreation Department is implementing trails as part of the original 10 Year Master Plan initiatives and breaking ground on The Port Preserve Trail and Wilderness Trail this year. Projects related to park land acquisition are reviewed as land becomes available.

The prioritization criteria that were developed were based on the Project Goals discussed in Chapter 3 - Vision and further informed by the findings from the Chapter 1 - Context Analysis, Chapter 2 - Needs and Priorities Assessment, industry best practices, and staff input. Figures 5.4 - 5.7 identify these prioritization criteria.

**Figure 5.4 -** ***Prioritization Criteria for Improvements to Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities***

| PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Goals** | **Criteria** | **Criteria Description** | **Points** | **Metric** |
| **Realize** | Project History | Was the project previously proposed or discussed? | 0,5 | No, Yes |
| | Priority Facility Need | Does the land address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| **Reinvigorate** | Park Condition | Does the project address a facility with significant disrepair? | 1,3,5 | Good, Fair, Poor Conditions |
| | Park Program Delivery | Does the project enhance the delivery of a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access to Athletic Facilities | Does the project enhance access to Athletic Facilities? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Connect** | Park Visits | How many people visit the park? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Universal Accessibility | Does the project enhance universal accessibility? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| | Multi-generational/ Multi-purpose Gathering | Does the project present an opportunity to improve multi-generational, multi-purpose gathering? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Grow** | Facilities LOS Gap | Does the project address a Facilities LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Partnerships | Does the land present an opportunity for funding partnerships? | 0,3,5 | No, Partial, Significant Funding |
| | Staffing and Financial Resources | What is the land's potential impact to staffing and funding resources? | 1,3,5 | High, Medium, Minimal Impact |

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**Figure 5.5 - *Prioritization Criteria for Development of New Parks and Recreation Facilities***

| PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Goals** | **Criteria** | **Criteria Description** | **Points** | **Metric** |
| **Realize** | Project History | Was the project previously proposed or discussed? | 0,5 | No, Yes |
| | Priority Facility Need | Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| **Reinvigorate** | Availability of Space/ Land | Is there land/ space to implement the project? | 0,5 | No, Yes |
| | Park Program Delivery | Does the project enhance the delivery of a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access to Athletic Facilities | Does the project enhance access to Athletic Facilities? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Connect** | Park Visits | How many people visit the park? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Universal Accessibility | Does the project enhance universal accessibility? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| | Multi-generational/ Multi-purpose Gathering | Does the project present an opportunity to improve multi-generational, multi-purpose gathering? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Grow** | Facilities LOS Gap | Does the project address a Facilities LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access LOS Gap | Does the project address an Access LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Partnerships | Does the land present an opportunity for funding partnerships? | 0,3,5 | No, Partial, Significant Funding |
| | Staffing and Financial Resources | What is the land's potential impact to staffing and funding resources? | 1,3,5 | High, Medium, Minimal Impact |

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**Figure 5.6 - *Prioritization Criteria for Development of New Walking and Biking Facilities***

| PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Goals** | **Criteria** | **Criteria Description** | **Points** | **Metric** |
| **Realize** | Project History | Was the project previously proposed or discussed? | 0,5 | No, Yes |
| | Priority Facility Need | Does the land address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| **Reinvigorate** | Park Program Delivery | Does the project enhance the delivery of a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access to Athletic Facilities | Does the project enhance access to Athletic Facilities? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Connect** | Community Connections | Does the project connect to schools, parks, neighborhoods, and activity areas? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| | Park Visits | How many people visit the park that the trail is connecting to? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Universal Accessibility | Does the project enhance universal accessibility? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| | Multi-generational/ Multi-purpose Gathering | Does the project present an opportunity to improve multi-generational, multi-purpose gathering? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Grow** | Trail Access LOS Gap | Does the project address a Trail Access LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Partnerships | Does the land present an opportunity for funding partnerships? | 0,3,5 | No, Partial, Significant Funding |
| | Staffing and Financial Resources | What is the land's potential impact to staffing and funding resources? | 1,3,5 | High, Medium, Minimal Impact |

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**Figure 5.7 - *Prioritization Criteria for Acquiring Park Land***

| PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR ACQUIRING PARK LAND | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Goals** | **Criteria** | **Criteria Description** | **Points** | **Metric** |
| **Realize** | Project History | Was the land acquisition previously proposed or discussed? | 0,5 | No, Yes |
| | Priority Facility Need | Does the land address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| **Reinvigorate** | Park Program Delivery | Does the land enhance the delivery of a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access to Athletic Facilities | Does the land enhance access to Athletic Facilities? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Connect** | Universal Accessibility | Does the land enhance universal accessibility? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| | Multi-generational/ Multi-purpose Gathering | Does the land present an opportunity to improve multi-generational, multi-purpose gathering? | 0,1,3,5 | No, Low, Medium, High |
| **Grow** | Facilities LOS Gap | Does the land address a Facilities LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Access LOS Gap | Does the land address an Access LOS Gap need? | 1,3,5 | Low, Medium, High |
| | Partnerships | Does the land present an opportunity for funding partnerships? | 0,3,5 | No, Partial, Significant Funding |
| | Staffing and Financial Resources | What is the land's potential impact to staffing and funding resources? | 1,3,5 | High, Medium, Minimal Impact |

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**Phased Capital Improvement Projects**

As discussed previously, the City may have $63.5 million in funding for parks and recreation capital projects over the next 10 years.

Based on previously discussed prioritization criteria and metrics, the Consultant Team scored potential projects. Figures 5.8 identifies a preliminary summary list of the top prioritized projects for Staff, Mayor, and Council's consideration.

It is important to note that this list should not be considered as final and should be reviewed and revised annually based on new City priorities, developments, and new projects.

Figure 5.8 contains the Project Rank, Project Name, Project Description, Total Opinion of Probable Order of Magnitude Planning Level Costs for the project, and Total Opinion of Probable Operations and Maintenance Costs for the project (in 2025 dollars). These amounts are based on the Consultant Team's experience with similar projects in Florida. However, the City should complete feasibility studies to confirm Order of Magnitude Planning Level Opinion of Probable Costs and Order of Magnitude Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs.

**Figure 5.8 - *Summary of Prioritized Projects***

| PHASE 1 PRIORITIZED PROJECTS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Project Rank** | **Project Name** | **Project Description** | **Order of Magnitude Planning Level Probable Costs** | **Order of Magnitude Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs** |
| 1 | FY 2026 CIP Projects and select FY 2027-2035 CIP Projects | Projects identified in FY 2026 CIP - $6,178,502 not including Walton & One Community Center and FY 2027-2035 park repair, replacement, and improvement projects such playground replacement, security upgrades, maintenance buildings, roof, etc. | $20,400,000 | - |
| 2 | Access to natural areas | Activation and improvements to public access for 198 acres of natural areas. | $10,000,000 | $675,000 |
| 3 | Park land acquisition | Allowance for park land acquisition citywide. | $11,500,000 | - |
| 4 | Lighting school athletic facilities | Lighting 14 school athletic facilities (7 rectangle fields and 7 diamond fields in coordination with St. Lucie Public Schools). | $7,000,000 | $210,000 |
| 5 | Sportsman's Park Renovation Phase 1 | Renovate approximately 20 acres of Sportsman's Park. | $30,000,000 | $300,000 |
| 6 | New Community Center | New Community Center in Torino Regional Park. | $30,000,000 | $1,225,000 |
| 7 | New Community Center | New Community Center in Tradition Regional Park. | $30,000,000 | $1,225,000 |

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