

City of Boynton Beach

Recreation and Parks Department
Boynton Beach, Florida



Strategic Plan Recreation and Open Space Element 2008-2009



**We Make
Life Fun!!**

Boynton Beach
Recreation and Parks Department



Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks Strategic Master Plan

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

Throughout time, parks and open spaces have provided a unifying community structure and an aesthetic identity to our urban environments as well as providing recreational opportunities. While it is difficult to place a precise value on our parks and open space systems, it is clear to all that they provide a variety of benefits that contribute to the “liveability” of our cities, such as:

- Accommodate recreational activities,
- Attract recreation enthusiasts,
- Increase property values,
- Provide public access to natural recreation areas and significant sites,
- Provide and enhance animal and plant habitats,
- Conserve, preserve and protect historic character,
- Contribute to the city’s identity and marketability,
- Enhance aesthetic quality, and
- Contribute to clean air and water.

Parks and recreation opportunities contribute to the health of residents, provide a variety of recreational and educational activities for all ages, and preserve and enhance the quality and integrity of the natural environment. Parks and recreational opportunities are also significant in attracting visitors to the community and, thus, contribute to local tourism and economic development. When a community has a comprehensive and interrelated system of parks and recreation opportunities that responds to the needs and values of local residents, the residents support their local governments, become involved in their community activities, and reap the benefits of a “quality-of-life” community.

Over the past year, the importance of recreation and parks has been even more compelling with the “It Starts in Parks” (ISIP) program initiated by the Florida Recreation and Parks Association and incorporated into the National Recreation and Parks marketing plan. The ISIP campaign is intended to better position parks and recreation in the future to be recognized and supported for the benefits and services provided by the profession. The eight (8) messages of the ISIP campaign are:

- Personal Achievement
- Sense of Community
- Conservation of our natural resources
- Economic development
- Good health
- Ties to our heritage
- Respect for nature
- Florida’s future

This Master Plan identifies the recreational needs of the citizens of Boynton Beach as indicated in the System Map and the Comp Plan and recommends strategies and actions for meeting those needs. The Master Plan identifies the actions necessary to implement the plan in order to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that give guidance for improving programs and services, creating a financially responsible organization, making land

acquisitions and protecting open spaces, improving and establishing new facilities and instituting continuous improvement processes. This plan will enable the city to make the necessary changes that will help sustain an attractive and livable city.

The City of Boynton Beach Recreation and Park staff prepared this Master Plan to serve as the strategic planning tool for making parks, open space, facility and recreational program decisions over the next decade. The Master Plan includes recommendations that give guidance for improving programs and services, creating a financially responsible organization, making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, improving and establishing new facilities and instituting continuous improvement processes. Through these processes, the department will constantly and consistently review community input and proactively make the necessary changes that will help create an attractive and livable city.

The City of Boynton Beach is experiencing a slow down in growth and development. Expectations and demands for expansion and protection of park lands and open spaces are paramount to the protection of recreational lands for the future. The anticipation of these changes has led to the research and design of this Master Plan in the hopes that every one of the demands are met, and that the City of Boynton Beach will continue to find itself among the best communities in the country.

The City of Boynton Beach is growing and becoming more diverse in its redevelopment. In Boynton Beach, parks and recreation services continue to be an integral part of establishing and sustaining a higher quality of life while highlighting an image and character that is unique to Boynton Beach. To this end, parks and recreation services can affect the city by their ability to:

- Provide social benefits by connecting people within the community regardless of income, background and ability.
- Provide economic benefits by improving the quality of life in the community and helping to attract businesses and residents to the city.
- Provide protection of the environment by establishing greenways, natural areas and open spaces managed by the city.
- Provide benefits to individuals and the community by promoting physical fitness and self-improvement.

The process used to shape this Master Plan included the following tasks:

- Evaluating current services and operations of the Recreation and Parks Department.
- Evaluating current and future needs for parks, recreation services, recreation facilities, open space and trails.
- Creating equity access maps to visualize and determine gaps of services.
- Developing recommendations and an implementation plan for the future that will provide the greatest benefits to the residents.

B. Methodology

In 2001, the City of Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks Department commissioned a Needs Assessment, which was prepared by Management Learning Laboratories. The purpose of the assessment was to determine recreation interests, facility usage, and opinion of recreation as

related to the Boynton Beach system of parks and facilities. After review of the information that resulted from the study, it was determined that a master plan of the park system should be developed that would steer the direction of the acquisition and development of parks and facilities into the future of Boynton Beach. In July 2004, the firm of Glattig Jackson Kercher, Inc. was hired to solicit public input regarding the city's parks, recreation facilities and programs and to prepare the Conceptual Parks and Recreation System Map and make changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan that will allow the recommendations in the System Map to occur.

Through a series of meetings with city staff, board members from the Senior Advisory and the Recreation and Parks Boards, and the general public, a system-wide map was developed that indicated existing parks and proposed parks, recreation facilities, greenways, bikeways and open space.

Interviews were held with the City Commission, City Manager, Interim Director of Human Resources, the Planning Team and staff to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the department. Complete summaries of these interviews are included in the Appendix of this report. In summary, the participants were asked four (4) questions regarding the "ideal" park system, issues that need to be addressed, funding mechanisms and partnerships. In general, it was felt by most of the participants that the department has a motivated and dedicated staff, the parks inventory needed to be analyzed, departmental organization needed to be analyzed, funding sources need to be identified and partnerships with schools and private developers should be addressed.

Using this information, the Recreation and Parks staff analyzed the current and future needs for additional staff and operating resources. Park standards, or Levels of Service, for park land and facilities were determined. Potential funding sources were identified.

The Department received accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) in October 2006. As a result of the accreditation application process, the Department began moving toward a more analytical approach in determining what programs to offer. This led to the development of a Recreation Programming Plan which outlines a philosophical approach to programming. This plan helps the department determine who it is serving and why and helps set the direction for future planning.

Over the past few years, a change in clients has been recognized. There is a greater demand for more senior and child age programs and less for adults. Participation in athletic programs has decreased. This may be because adults are using private recreation opportunities rather than public; however, the City offers high quality, less expensive options. Analysis of trends and needs is an ongoing task so that the Department is assured of meeting the needs of its constituents.

In 2008, Recreation and Park staff updated the Strategic Plan to show projects that have been completed since the adoption of the 2007 plan and to match the 2008-2012 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) as adopted by the City Commission.

A telephone survey will be conducted in 2008 to determine the recreational and facility needs of the public. The study will allow the department to analyze its current offerings and determine if changes are warranted. It will also assist staff in prioritizing recreation programs and facility needs.

C. Purpose of Plan

The Master Plan has been prepared to address the following key goals:

- Assess current needs for recreation and park facilities for the citizens of Boynton Beach.
- Assess the future needs for recreation and park facilities for the citizens of Boynton Beach.
- Prepare a long range, phased plan for the provision of current and future park needs.
- Preservation of important natural and cultural facilities.
- Provide a system of connected greenways and trails for the city.
- Provide an effective Parks and Recreation services delivery system for the citizens.
- Effective management/administrative/departmental structure;
 - Effective maintenance system;
 - Land Development Regulations to provide for future park needs;
 - Appropriate funding program for future capital improvements;
 - Creation of appropriate multi-jurisdictional partnerships for the provision of parks and open space services.

II. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

A. Parks Classifications

The Recreation and Parks Department, through the Strategic Planning process, has developed different park classifications.

Urban Open/Civic Space

Urban parks will provide civic open space in the downtown area for the enjoyment of all the residents of the City as well as visitors to Boynton Beach. They serve as elegant public spaces that are designed to complement the urban patterns of downtown Boynton Beach. These parks will serve as urban oases amongst the bustle of downtown activity.

Urban parks should be located according to traditional town planning principles and good urban design. The parks will be of two types: (1.) downtown plazas, and (2.) waterfront parks. Additional urban pocket parks will be added to complement the historic urban framework. All of the urban parks should be tied together with a network of streetscaped pedestrian walkways and urban trails. The waterfront park system will build upon and enhance the waterfront park network in the downtown. The waterfront park system will create a connected system of urban park amenities along the waterfront and provide direct access to the activities of the downtown. The park facilities and programs of the park spaces should complement the objectives of the Community Redevelopment Agency. The urban park experience should embrace the spirit of Boynton Beach as a quality-of-life destination with a quaint traditional hometown feel.

Community Parks

Community parks are typically the largest active parks in the City and serve the largest population base. They are the most comprehensive in terms of recreation activities provided. These parks are the most expensive to build and maintain.

The optimum service area for a community park in Boynton Beach should be one (1) mile. Community parks should be serviced by arterial and collector streets and be easily accessible throughout the service area by way of interconnecting trails. While community parks should be strategically located through the community, their locations can be significantly impacted by other types of parks, most notably regional or county parks, which can contain some of the same recreational opportunities provided in community parks.

The optimal size of a community park should be based on the land area needed to accommodate the desired uses.

Special Use Parks

Special use parks are those parks with unique, specialized amenities that cater to a select group of users. In Boynton Beach, special use parks include the cemeteries, the Little League Park and Kids Kingdom. Efforts should be made to include future special uses in neighborhood and community parks rather than segregate them into separate areas.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks will be the basic unit of the Boynton Beach park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of each neighborhood. They should be developed for both active and passive activities geared specifically for those living within the neighborhood service area. These parks should accommodate a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, seniors, family groups, and special populations. Creating a sense of place in each park by bringing together the unique character of each site with the social character of the neighborhood will be vital to creating a successful design.

Neighborhood parks should be centrally located within each service area, which should encompass a ½ mile distance, and if possible, uninterrupted by non-residential streets or other physical barriers. Each site should be accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks or low-volume streets. Ease of access and walking distance are critical factors in locating a neighborhood park. A person's willingness to use a neighborhood park is greatly reduced if they perceive it to be difficult to access or not within a reasonable walking distance. Ease of access, central location and linkage to greenways are the key concerns when selecting a site. The site itself should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for both active and passive recreational uses. Since one of the primary reasons people go to a park is to experience a pleasant outdoor environment, the site should have some innate aesthetic qualities. "Left-over" parcels of land that are undesirable for development are generally undesirable for neighborhood parks as well and should be avoided. Additionally, it is more cost effective to select a site with inherent aesthetic qualities, rather than trying to create them through

extensive site development. Given the importance of location, neighborhood parks should be selected before a subdivision is platted and acquired as part of the development process.

It is recommended that 5 acres be the generally accepted minimum size necessary to provide space for a menu of activities. The site should have well-drainage and suitable soils and level topography. Ideally, it should be connected to other park system components such as natural areas, lakes, ponds, and greenways. Land within a flood plain should only be considered if the facilities are constructed above the appropriate flood elevation. Although a park size of 5 acres is recommended, the actual size should be based on the land area needed to accommodate the desired uses.

Since each neighborhood is unique, input from neighborhood residents should be used to determine the development program for the park. The guidelines presented here should be used as a framework to guide program development and ensure consistency with other park system components. They should not be used as an impediment to creative design possibilities.

Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. Neighborhood parks are not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems and congestion.

Neighborhood parks should be the basic unit of the Boynton Beach park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of each neighborhood.

Conservation Lands

The function of an Open Space Park or Greenbelt is to provide space where people can engage in passive and active recreation, provide preservation and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas and habitat for wildlife, and to serve as corridors to effectively link park system components together to form a continuous park environment.

These parks should be located in areas of significant natural resources, aesthetic landscapes, and open space. There are no specific standards for how much conservation land a community should have. Instead, it is dependent on the number and quality of natural and historical resources in the area, the public desire to preserve these valuable sites, and the willingness of the citizens to provide funds for their preservation.

Water and Beach Access Parks

These parks offer opportunities for access to and interaction with the Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic Ocean. Amenities can include kayaking and canoe launches, fishing areas, observation boardwalks, day docks, boat launching ramps, volleyball courts, picnic areas, restrooms and parking. Generally each park has its own unique features that are defined by the relationship with the water.

Neighborhood and community input through the public input process should be the primary determinant of development of any park. The guidelines posted in this document

should be used as a framework to guide program development and ensure consistency with the other park system components. They should not be used as an impediment to creative and unique design concepts.

Recreation Facilities

The City has seven (7) recreation centers and a community pool, each offering various and diverse programs and classes for people of all ages. Most centers are open Monday through Saturday from morning through the evening. Certain facilities can be rented for weddings, family reunions, etc.

B. Inventory

1. Park Land

a. Existing Park System

The current park system is made up of 32 parks, cemeteries and open spaces in the following categories:

Urban Open/Civic Space	Acres	Neighborhood Parks	Acres
Bicentennial Park	0.60	Boynton Lakes Park	8.6
Edward Harmening Arbor	0.46	Civic Center	0.8
Heritage Park	0.24	Forest Hills Park	4.8
Hibiscus Park	0.83	Galaxy Park	3.7
Kiwanis/Sierra Club Park	0.19	Laurel Hill Park	1.26
Veterans' Park	0.3	Meadows Park	7.2
TOTAL	2.60	Knollwood Park	3.3
		Pence Park	2.9
Community Parks	Acres	Pioneer Canal Park	3.2
Congress Avenue Park	24.3	Betty Thomas	2.3
Ezell Hester Park	23.7	TOTAL	38.06
Wilson Park	5.44		
TOTAL	53.44	Conservation Lands	Acres
		Seacrest Scrub *	53.7
Special Use Parks	Acres	Rolling Green Scrub **	8.0
Barton Mem. Park/Cemetery	6.4	Rosemary Scrub *	13.4
Boynton Beach Memorial Cemetery	12.41	TOTAL	67.10
Little League	12.8		
Kids Kingdom	0.44	Water/Beach Access	Acres
Sara Sims Park/Cemetery	6.95	Boat Club Park	7.9
TOTAL	39.00	Intracoastal Park	9.4
		Jaycee Park	5.5
Greenways/Bikeways	Acres	Mangrove Park	10.72
Palmetto Green	2.16	Oceanfront Park	10.7
TOTAL	2.16	TOTAL	44.22

* Owned by Palm Beach County.

** Rolling Green acreage including in total acreage for Ezell Hester Park

This is a citywide total acreage of 238.58 acres of park, cemetery and open space lands.

b. Future Park Sites

The following areas are potential future park sites:

Site	Acres
FP&L	7.14
Girl Scout	7.58
Nichols Road	14.74
Nautica Sound/Meadows I	9.8
Quantum	17.39
Winchester	5.0
Woolbright Place	3.62
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>64.55</i>

Thus, there is a potential for 310.32 acres of park, cemetery and open space lands in the City.

2. Facilities

a. Existing Recreation Facilities

- Art Center
 - Community Center with Class Rooms
- Boat Club Park
 - Meeting Room
 - Play Equipment
- Carolyn Sims Center
 - Event Room
 - Multipurpose Room
 - Game Room
 - Classroom
 - Kitchen
 - Playground
- Civic Center
 - Community Center with Class Rooms
 - Auditorium
- Congress Avenue Community Park
 - Har-Tru Tennis Courts (17)
 - 4 Composite Tennis Courts
 - Pro Shop
 - Locker Rooms/Showers
- Ezell Hester Park
 - Community Center with Activity and Meeting Rooms and Gymnasium
 - Baseball/Softball Field
 - Basketball Courts (3)

- New and Improved Play Equipment
- Pavilion
- Racquetball Court (4)
- Tennis Court (2)
- Nature Preserve
- Intracoastal Park Clubhouse
 - Classrooms
 - Event Room
 - Catering Kitchens
- John H. Denson Pool
 - Play Features
 - Water Slides
 - Dressing Rooms
 - Showers
- Madsen Center
 - Shuffleboard Courts (16)
- Senior Center
 - Community Center
 - Meeting Rooms
 - Exercise Room
 - Kitchen
 - Computer Room
 - Arts & Crafts Room
 - Game Room

C. Analysis

1. Park Land and Facilities

a. Existing Parks and Facilities

- **Urban Open/Civic Space**
 - ***Bicentennial Park*** is a passive park on Federal Highway. The park has little to attract visitors; however, it will be greatly impacted by the downtown redevelopment and will become a critical part of the urban open space of the town center. A memorial to the Veterans was installed in June 2008. Completion of the park was November 2008.
 - ***Edward F. Harmening Arbor Park*** is a small passive park located adjacent to the East Water Treatment Plant. It has several species of flowering trees. Its location and lack of parking create an isolated park area with very little visitation.
 - ***Heritage Park*** located on Seacrest Boulevard, is a popular gathering space for neighborhood residents. There is a monument dedicated to Boynton Beach African Americans. The monument is frequently vandalized. Beautification

efforts include the removal of the planters and installation of 35 palms.

- **Hibiscus Park** is a small park located in the Lake Boynton Estates neighborhood. The playground equipment was replaced in March 2008.
- **Kiwanis/Sierra Club Park** is located on Northeast 22nd Avenue and is simply a grassy area.
- **Veterans Park** is located in the downtown core of the City. At present, it is a passive park with large ficus trees. In the future, the park will become precious green space in the urban downtown center.

- **Neighborhood Parks**

- **Boynton Lakes Park** is located in the Boynton Lakes neighborhood and contains a playground, a walking trail and a large open grassy area. The play equipment and park furniture was replaced in 2005.
- **Betty Thomas Park** was completed in 2007 and includes a picnic pavilion, two tennis courts, picnic areas, walking trail, landscaping and a small parking lot. The park is named after Betty Thomas, long term Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Member, member of the Senior Center Board and school principal in Boynton Beach.
- **Civic Center Park** is located on Ocean Avenue and has play equipment and a maze made from shrubs.
- **Forest Hill Park** is located in the Forest Hill neighborhood and is bordered on the west side by a sound barrier wall on I-95. This park was built in 1972 and was showing signs of aging. The park furniture and play equipment was replaced in 2006, as was the fence in the front.
- ⊖ **Galaxy Park** is one of the oldest parks in the system and is well used. The restroom was renovated in 2005. The fencing around the baseball fields was replaced in 2006. The playground equipment was replaced in 2007.
- ⊖ **Laurel Hills Park**, located in the Laurel Hills neighborhood, contains play equipment, a basketball court and an open grassed area. The park was built in 1972 and is in need of renovation. Replacement of the play equipment and park furnishings was completed in 2006. A double rail fence was installed in 2007. New park entry signage was installed in 2008.
- **Meadows Park** is an extremely popular park used by city residents and school groups. While the park was built in 1994, the heavy use has created bare areas around the pavilions and courts. The playground equipment and park furniture were replaced in 2006. Because of the heavy use and enjoyment by park users, this park will require consistent maintenance and upgrades.

- ⊖ ***Pence Park*** is the oldest park in the system. Neighborhood residents heavily use the basketball courts. The fence around the baseball field was replaced in 2005. The restrooms were renovated in recent years. The playground equipment was installed in March 2008. Conversion of the softball field to a multipurpose field is scheduled for 2009.
 - ⊖ ***Pioneer Canal Park*** has the only freshwater boat ramp in the park system, which is widely used. The tennis courts are also heavily used. The park was not master planned and use of the property is not effective. The installation of a double rail fence, renovation of the restrooms and resurfacing of the basketball and tennis was completed in 2007 and 2008. Replacement of the play equipment was completed in 2008.

- **Special Use Parks**
 - ***Barton Memorial Park*** is a cemetery that contains early African American resident gravesites dating back to the early 1900's. It is currently closed for burials.
 - ***Boynton Beach Memorial Park*** is the primary public cemetery in Boynton Beach. There are several hundred gravesites remaining and the property was replatted to identify over 300 more sites. The trees were heavily damaged by the 2004 hurricanes and were replaced in 2005/06.
 - ***Kids Kingdom Playground*** is a "Leathers" designed wooden and concrete play structure that is an extremely popular destination for residents, schools, camps and visitors. The structure was built in 1996 and is beginning to show signs of wear. The structure must be inspected regularly for splinters and damage. Funds are included in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for annual maintenance.
 - ***Little League Park*** contains four (4) baseball fields that are used primarily by the Boynton Beach Little League organization. The maintenance of the ball fields and areas adjacent to the ball fields has been turned over the East Boynton Beach Little League.
 - ***Sara Sims Park and Cemetery*** is an older park that requires constant maintenance due to vandalism. This park is in the CRA district.

- **Water Beach Access**
 - ***Boat Club Park*** is located between Federal Highway and the Intracoastal Park and provides boat access to the Intracoastal Waterway and Atlantic Ocean. This park is heavily used by both boaters and park users. The fishing pier was replaced in 2004. The restrooms inside the

community center were renovated in 2004. Playground equipment is scheduled for replacement in 2008/09. The restrooms are scheduled for renovation in FY 2007/8. The canal was dredged in February 2008. Additionally, Palm Beach County is providing funding for a new or renovated restroom, new picnic pavilions and improvements to the boardwalk.

- ⊖ ***Intracoastal Park***, the newest park in the system, is located between Federal Highway and the Intracoastal Waterway. It is an extremely popular site that contains picnic shelters and a large, handicapped accessible play structure. A two story, 7,200 square foot clubhouse was completed in October 2007 and is available for rent for meetings, weddings, recreation programs and activities, etc.
- ⊖ ***Jaycee Park*** is a 5-acre park located between Federal Highway and the Intracoastal Waterway. The park construction was completed in February 2008 and includes a walking path, three pavilions, a restroom, two (2) bocce ball courts, play areas for ages 2 to 12, picnic areas, landscaping and a small parking lot.
- ***Knollwood Park*** is a 3.0 acre park located at Lawrence Road and Meadows Drive. Knollwood was built by D. R. Horton Developers as a public/private partnership. In exchange from fill removed from the park site and used for development, the developer paid for the construction of the park. Park amenities include a pond with well planted littoral zones, a walking path, a gazebo and a small parking area.
- ***Mangrove Park*** contains a 1/4 mile aluminum walkway through 10 acres of mangroves on the Intracoastal Waterway and includes educational kiosks and an observation deck. Trash accumulation in the mangroves is an unpreventable problem.
- ***Oceanfront Park*** is the City's only beach access. It is heavily used, primarily by residents of Boynton Beach and Ocean Ridge. The boardwalk was scheduled for replacement in 2004; however, the cost of the replacement exceeded the budget. It is now scheduled for replacement in 2008/09.
- **Greenway/Bikeways**
 - ***Palmetto Green Linear Park*** is located on the south side of the SFWMD C-16 canal. The pathway turns into several overlooks that could serve as fishing piers; however, a great amount of trash and refuse has been tossed off the platforms making fishing difficult.

- **Conservation Lands**
 - *Rolling Green Scrub* is actually 5 different scrub sites located in and around Ezell Hester Park.
 - *Rosemary Scrub* is owned by Palm Beach County and is maintained in conjunction with the Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks Department. The scrub is open to the public.
 - *Seacrest Scrub* is also owned by Palm Beach County, maintained in conjunction with the Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks Department and open to the public.

- **Community Parks**
 - ⊖ *Congress Avenue Community Park* is home to the city's tennis complex. The fencing and lights on several of the courts were replaced in summer of 2005. A Master Plan was done for future park development that includes a barrier-free park. The 2008/09 CIP includes \$2.5M for construction of Phase I which will include several play areas, trails, a picnic pavilion, restrooms, and seating areas that will be completely barrier free. Construction is expected to begin in early 2009.
 - *Ezell Hester Park* is one of the largest parks in the system and the athletic facilities are heavily used. The sand volleyball courts were replaced with a large play structure in 2005/06. The park also includes basketball courts, racquetball courts, tennis courts, a baseball field, walking trail and picnic pavilions.
 - *Wilson Park* was completed in February 2008. The park includes the Carolyn Sims Center, a two-story, 14,000 square foot recreation center that houses a game room, class rooms, multipurpose event room, catering kitchens and offices. Site amenities include two basketball courts, two play areas, picnic shelters, and multipurpose field. The John H. Denson Pool, a newly constructed pool includes a triple water slide, water features, lanes for swimming, and dressing rooms.

- **Recreation Facilities**
 - *Art Center* was built in 1992 and includes 3 classrooms, a pottery/kiln room and offices. Currently the building operates at capacity and offers classes in arts and crafts, teen and adult fine art, pottery, painting, afternoon recreation, summer camp, specialty camps, pre-school programs and classes.
 - *Boat Club Clubhouse* is a 2,500 square foot building that offers painting and bridge programs. It is used by community groups and neighborhood associations for meetings and is also used as a rental facility.

- ***Carolyn Sims Center***, a 14,000 square foot two-story building, was completed in February 2008. It includes a multipurpose room, catering kitchens, game room, classroom, meeting room and offices. Programming includes pre-school, afterschool, teen recreation, sports clinic, social groups, summer camp, specialty camps and the Youth Violence Prevention Program.
- ***Civic Center*** opened in 1962. It includes a 3,800 square foot auditorium with stage, classroom, dance studio, kitchen, lobby and offices. Programming opportunities include youth and adult dance, summer camp, pre-school programs, Jazzercise, language classes, piano and keyboard classes, bridge, music concerts and Outlook Club for the sight impaired. Recent improvements include refinishing of the stage floor, a new sound system, new stage drapes, painting and a chair rail.
- ***Ezell Hester, Jr. Center*** was constructed in 1992 and renovated in 1999. The center includes men's and women's locker rooms, lobby, tot room, meeting room, computer lab, game room, weight room, gymnasium, kitchen, and offices. Programs include sports teams, tournaments, cheerleading, gymnastics, after school recreation, summer camp, specialty camps, pre-school programs, fitness programs, sports clinics and special events.
- ***John H. Denson Pool*** was completed in February 2008 and includes a triple water slide, "tumble buckets" water play features, teaching area, deck chairs, large umbrellas and men's and women's dressing rooms. Programs include junior lifeguard training, water fitness, adult swim classes and youth swimming lessons.
- ***Senior Center*** was purchased in 1998 and has undergone a series of three renovations. It includes a cafeteria/activity room, lobby/coffee area, computer lab, multipurpose room, a stage, fitness room, classroom, conference room, arts room, game room, kitchen and offices. Programming includes computer classes, card games, dances, live music, association and group meetings, health screenings, music lessons, lunch program, driving classes, group outings, safety courses and various special events. Local groups that provide a variety of services that include AARP, R.S.V.P, Delray Medical Center, Aker Kasten Community Outreach Program, Shopper Hopper transportation service, Mental Health Association of PBC and Mae Volen. Recent improvements made possible by a grant from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs include hurricane shutters, air conditioning unit, entrance way awnings, automatic handicap door openers for the restrooms, automatic sensor

flushers for the restrooms, public address system and video surveillance cameras.

- ***Tennis Center*** was built in three phases and was completed in 1992. There is a pro shop, men's and women's locker rooms, 17 Har-tru courts and 4 composite courts. Programs include junior and adult instruction, men's and ladies' singles and doubles leagues, men's and ladies' team matches, tournaments and special events.

b. Future Parks

- **Urban Civic Open Space**

- ***Woolbright Place*** is approximately 3 acres located on SW 8th Place and SW 1st Court.

- **Neighborhood Parks**

- ***FP & L Park*** is located on old Southwest 23rd Avenue directly south of the FP & L Substation and is bordered on the west by the E-4 canal and on the east by the CSX Railroad. This park could be developed so that access to the canal is provided. This 7.68-acre site has not been master planned.
- ***Girl Scout Park*** is located on the east side of the E-4 canal and is heavily treed with mature canopy. This site also could be developed for access to the canal. A master plan has not been done at this time for this 9.73 acre site.
- ***Meadows I/Nautica Sound Park Site*** is a 9-acre site that could be developed as a community park since there is no community park in this quadrant of the city; however, it is expected that surrounding neighborhoods would prefer a more passive use. A master plan has not been done for this site.

- **Community Parks**

- ***Nickels Property*** is a 15.4 acre site located on the west side of the Boynton Beach Mall. This site is not within the city boundaries at this time.
- ***Quantum Park Site*** is a 15-acre site located in the Quantum Corporate Park east of the E-4 canal. A master plan was done for this site that included athletic facilities; however, it is anticipated that the use will change from active to passive, nature-oriented as gopher tortoises have been spotted on the site. The property is adjacent to a large conservation area, which could be incorporated into the nature-oriented aspects of the park with the addition of interpretive trails. Additionally, this park could be used for access to the canal for canoes and kayaks as part of the greenway/blueway.

- **Greenway/Blueways**
 - *Palmetto Green Linear Park* is planned for expansion from the existing path west to I-95, then south to Galaxy School. Funds are allocated in the CIP for land acquisition and construction.
 - *Barton Greenway* is planned to connect the west terminus of the Palmetto Green Linear Park Extension south through Barton Memorial Park through Barton Scrub to the north side of Galaxy Elementary School. The project is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation and is expected to be completed in 2009.

III. VISION

- *Ensure Boynton Beach's Recreation and Park Legacy for Future Generations*
 - Develop fully programmed, fully operational and well-maintained parks, facilities and programs that meet both current and future park and recreation needs.
 - Keep the public and local leaders informed about the value, benefits, conditions and needs of Boynton Beach's park system.
 - Coordinate the planning, management, development and funding of parks, natural resources, trails and recreation needs and concerns with other Boynton Beach departments and city, county and regional planning efforts.
 - Engage the residents to become stewards of Boynton Beach's recreation and park system to help preserve the legacy for future generations.
 - Continue to plan, organize, host and evaluate high quality program opportunities for a diverse population.
 - Continue to maintain and upgrade recreation facilities to meet the needs of the constituents.
- *Design, Build and Maintain Excellent Parks and Recreation Facilities*
 - Develop a park system that adequately serves the citizens' current and future needs in an efficient and affordable fashion.
 - Develop each park, natural area and open space to respect the unique attributes of each site and its neighbors and according to its role in the overall recreation and park system.
 - Develop parks and facilities that are accessible and available to all residents. Meet and, where possible, exceed the requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - Use environmentally friendly, sustainable methods to build and care for parks, natural resources and recreation facilities. Think green.

- *Create An Interconnected Regional and Local System of Paths, Walkways, Blueways and Trails for Make Boynton Beach a "Walkable Community"*
 - Provide a safe and convenient trails system between parks, natural areas and recreational facilities, and connect them with residential areas, civic institutions and businesses.
 - Coordinate the development of a regional trails system with surrounding municipalities and the county.
 - Integrate the parks, community centers, and trails into the neighborhoods.

- *Provide equal access to parks and recreation programs for all residents in the City*
 - Pursue all opportunities to provide parks and recreation services in new developments throughout the community and in natural areas.
 - Provide developed neighborhood parks and community facilities within a reasonable distance of every resident.
 - Provide a geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities that offer equal access and opportunity for all residents.
 - Provide a variety of programs that are free or low fee to assure equal access for all economic groups.

- *Develop Recreation and Parks Facilities that Promote "Community in the City"*
 - Build public plazas and "green connections" in neighborhoods and along main streets.
 - Provide unique public spaces that give Boynton Beach a special and attractive identity that reinforces the existing character of the City.
 - Partner with other public agencies, schools and private organizations to maximize parks and recreation opportunities, facilities and programs.
 - Provide a wide variety of arts, culture, historical and civic amenities in the system.

- *Provide an Appropriate Set of Land Management Regulations to Accomplish the Long Range Needs of the Park System.*
 - Develop a long-range strategic plan for the City that enables the City to plan and develop specific future parks sites within the context of a well-orchestrated land development scenario.
 - Review and update the Parks and Recreation Impact Fee structure every three (3) years.
 - Adopt new standards in the Comprehensive Plan that will assure an adequate and appropriate parks, recreation and open space system.
 - Establish regulations that require new developments to provide pedestrian and bicycle access into and through the new developments.

- *Provide Adequate Park and Recreation Maintenance and Management*
 - Establish appropriate maintenance standards to upgrade and enhance the level of maintenance for parks and recreation facilities.
 - Implement a parks and recreation improvement program, including redevelopment of existing areas, maintenance, improvement and renovation of all public areas and facilities.

- Maintain, secure and manage existing and future parks, facilities and open space in a manner that encourages appropriate use.

IV. PARK STANDARDS

A. Overview

Each community is unique. Every City has its own “personality” that differs because of its demographic makeup. Due to differing geographical, cultural, social, economic and environmental characteristics, each community must select a set of standards, which best serves them for the cost of delivering those services.

The parks and recreation system of a given City needs to reflect the needs of the residents of that City by setting standards for appropriate service. The standards are an expression of the essential facilities needed to provide the level of park and recreation services desired by the residents in each community. These standards are typically expressed as ratios such as acres of park per 1,000 residents or numbers of tennis courts per 1000 residents. The ratios are very useful in order to quickly assess the quantities and cost of the projected needs. Standards should be practical and achievable, and provide for equitable allocation of parks and recreation resources throughout the community.

B. Description of Standards

The City of Boynton Beach currently has a level of service for park acreage of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents. It has been determined that this is an appropriate and satisfactory level of services. Currently, the City owns 235.77 acres of developed park land which is more than sufficient to meet this level now and in the future.

C. Needs Assessment

A needs assessment was completed in September 2008. A summary of the findings is included as Appendix H. It is important that the Department understand the needs and wants of the residents. This can be made possible by completing a random survey every two years, holding public meetings and using focus groups to help determine if changes need to be made to facilities and programs.

D. Level of Standards

Based on current trends in some recreational activities and on the 2002 Needs Assessment, the following LOS are recommended.

RECOMMENDED LOS AND NEEDS**65,208 – 2004 POPULATION**

FACILITY	CURRENT LOS	EXISTING FACILITIES	NEED PER POPULATION	CURRENT NEED
Baseball/Softball, Youth	1/15,000	6	4	0
Baseball, Regulation	1/20,000	1	2	1
Basketball	1/ 4,000	13	16	3
Community Center	1/25,000	7	3	0
Fitness Trail	1/30,000	2	2	0
Football	1/40,000	1	2	1
Multipurpose Field/Soccer	1/10,000	3	7	4
Racquetball Court	1/10,000	8	7	0
Picnic Area	1 /3,000	20	26	6
Playground	1 / 4,000	17	22	5
Shuffleboard	1 /5,000	16	13	0
Pool	1/80,000	1	1	0
Tennis Court	1 /2,000	31	33	2
Bocce Court	1/25,000	2	3	1
Volleyball Court	1/15,000	3	4	1
Skate Park	1/65,000	0	1	1

V. MASTER PLAN**A. Conceptual Parks and Recreation System Map**

The following is the Conceptual Parks and Recreation System map developed through the strategic planning process by Glatting Jackson. It is a result of the numerous meetings and the input from City staff, elected officials, board members and the public.

B. Future Park Improvements

THE VISION: CITY OF BOYNTON BEACH'S RECREATION AND PARKS SYSTEM

The Vision for the City of Boynton Beach's Recreation and Parks System is to create a green infrastructure system of interconnected pleasing, functional, and well-maintained open spaces, parks, greenways, streets, and waterways that will provide the permanent physical qualities of a great city. Implementation of this Vision will enable the City's Recreation and Parks Department to accomplish its mission to "engage Boynton Beach citizens in diverse recreational experiences, and to cultivate parks and open spaces".

Working with City staff, members of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, and interested citizens, Glatting Jackson first developed nomenclature for the different components of the City's Park and Recreation System including:

- Urban Open / Civic Spaces
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Special Use Facilities
- Water / Beach Access
- Greenways / Bikeways / Trails
- Conservation Lands
- Regional Parks
- Schools / School Parks
- Private Recreational Facilities

A long range plan was developed for each component of the System, responding to existing and projected population and demographics, lifestyles and needs.

LIFESTYLES

Early in the planning process, it was determined that the parks and recreation needs of City residents vary depending upon where they live; therefore, the City conducted a "Lifestyles Workshop" on November 17, 2004 to discuss differences in both existing and proposed lifestyles and recreation needs in the various quadrants. The notes from the Workshop are attached (Meeting Minutes, November 17, 2004).

District I, the Southwest Quadrant, is characterized as an area of retirees living in planned communities, most of which have their own private recreational amenities; therefore, the public recreation needs in this quadrant are primarily for large passive parks. It is anticipated that this demographic will change much over the next 15 – 20 years.

District II, the Northeast Quadrant, is an older coastal community that is experiencing changes in its demographic mix, with more families and young professional couples moving into the area. This area of the City has more parks and recreation facilities than any other, but many need to be expanded or upgraded to accommodate increasing demands. The community stated that they also needs jogging trails, bike paths, and cultural/arts facilities within walking distance of residents as in other districts in the City.

District III, the Southeast Quadrant, is also an area of changing demographics, and is the most likely area to “gentrify” in the coming years. The community’s parks system needs to be expanded with more developed open space and recreation facilities to meet the increasing demand. This can be accomplished with the existing inventory.

District IV, the Northwest Quadrant, is the highest income area of the City, characterized as “typical suburbia”. There are not enough parks and recreation facilities to serve the youth and family-oriented lifestyle of this quadrant, and trails and bike paths are also needed to meet the needs of this growing suburban community.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

A Parks and Recreation System Conceptual Master Plan was developed to show the locations of both existing and proposed facilities to meet the needs outlined above. Following is a description of each of the proposed improvements.

Urban Open / Civic Spaces

Bicentennial Park

- Complete renovation as an urban civic space for the downtown redevelopment.

Veterans Park

- Complete renovation as an urban civic space for the downtown redevelopment.

Neighborhood Parks

The City of Boynton Beach has 10 Neighborhood Parks in its current Park System. As time and use have taken a toll on some of these facilities, eight (8) parks were identified through workshops and interviews as having a need for retrofitting and/or enhancement. In addition to these renovations, nine (9) parcels owned by the City were identified to be developed as parks in a phased fashion in order to meet the recreational needs of the City’s population as it continues to increase in the years to come. Priority of park development would be determined as funding becomes available.

Hibiscus Park

- Landscaping

Retrofit Galaxy Park

- Renovation of ball field
- Picnic shelter
- Arboretum

Retrofit Pioneer Canal Park

- Provide recreational access, i.e. canoe, kayak launch site, to adjacent Canal Waterway
- Surface parking lot
- Multipurpose field

New Neighborhood Park - FP&L/ Golf Road Park Site

- Develop park to provide recreational access, i.e. canoe, kayak launch site, to adjacent Canal Waterway.

New Neighborhood Park - Girl Scout Park

- Develop park to provide recreational access, i.e. canoe, kayak launch site, to adjacent Canal Waterway.

New Neighborhood Park – Nautica Sound Park Site

- Develop park to local residents’ needs

New Neighborhood Park – Meadows I Park Site

- Develop park to local residents’ needs

New Neighborhood Park – Woolbright/Leisureville Place Park Site

New Neighborhood Park - Quantum Community Eco Park Site

- Develop park to meet residents’ needs

New Neighborhood Park – Winchester Park Site

- Develop park to meet residents’ needs

Depending on future funding through the general fund, the Boynton Beach Community Foundation, grants and other funding mechanisms, these parks will be developed as the opportunity arises. The Strategic Plan currently does not identify when the sites will be developed. That will be determined based on identification of need in the Parks and Recreation System Needs Assessment, future trends, community needs and funding.

Community Parks/ Centers

Out of the four (4) existing Community Parks/ Centers, one (1) was identified as having a need for retrofitting and one (1) site was identified as a potential Community Park site to be developed as the need arises.

New Community Park - Nichels Road Site

- Develop a multi-purpose Community Park to meet residents’ needs

Retrofit Congress Avenue Community Park

- Upgrade the Tennis Center to meet residents’ needs (in progress)
- Playground
- Therapeutic Recreation Center
- Gardens
- Pavilions
- Walking trail
- Landscaping
- Park furniture

Special Use Facilities

Two Special Use Facilities are proposed to be retrofitted. Cemeteries were historically used as passive and contemplative parks. The City of Boynton Beach has the opportunity to revive this tradition and provide its residents with truly memorable and contemplative “Cemetery Parks.”

Retrofit Barton Memorial Park

- Consider developing Barton Memorial Park as a “Cemetery Park” that includes historical context.
- Bikeway/Greenway

Retrofit Sara Sims Park

- Complete park renovation to include
 - New restrooms
 - Picnic areas with pavilions
 - Play equipment
 - Single rail fence
 - Multipurpose field

Water/ Beach Access

Intracoastal Park

- *Replacement of Park Furniture*

Oceanfront Park

- Replacement of boardwalk
- Replace office, concession and changing rooms with 2-story building
- Enlarge maintenance building
- Single rail fence
- Install stairs from lower parking lot
- Handicap walking to beach

Retrofit Jaycee Park

- Boardwalk

Greenways/ Bikeways/ Trails

In August 2004 the City Commission approved, in concept, the City of Boynton Beach Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan, which establishes an interconnected system of Greenways, Blueways, Bikeways and Trails throughout the City. This System has been incorporated into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as follows:

Palmetto Greens Expansion

- Expand the greenway to I-95

Barton Greenway

- *Complete greenway/bikeway from west terminus of Palmetto Greenway Expansion to Galaxy School*

Develop FEC Corridor Greenway

- Develop corridor as a “Transit Greenway” that provides for a multi-purpose recreational path, and connects to adjacent cities and park systems.

Develop I-95 Corridor Greenway

- Work with FDOT and the County to establish this Greenway, including a paved multi-purpose path, shade trees, benches, bicycle stands, and signage.

Develop Intracoastal Waterway Boardwalk

- Develop a pedestrian, recreational promenade/boardwalk along Intracoastal Waterway connecting Woolbright Road and Jaycee Park.

Develop Shaded Bikeways Program

- Enhance roadways throughout the City to create a system of tree-lined boulevards, avenues and streets that link neighborhoods, parks, and commercial/employment areas, and safely accommodate motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Develop Recreational Greenways

- Develop recreational greenways along Canal R.O.W., Utility Easements, and any available vacant parcels as a means to create citywide “Green Infrastructure Network.”

Conservation Lands

The current Park System provides residents with three conservation sites: Rolling Green Scrub, Rosemary Scrub, and Seacrest Scrub. One (1) additional parcel was identified through the interviews and workshop as potential conservation sites that would provide residents with additional passive and educational recreation experiences:

New Conservation Land – Quantum Conservation Site (Private)

- Acquire site and develop along with Quantum Community Park to create larger and more influential environmental park.

Recreation Facilities

Art Center

- Replacement of the awning is scheduled in FY 2008/09
- Replacement of the roof is scheduled in FY 2012/13
- Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat completed in 2008

Ezell Hester, Jr. Center

- Replacement of the awning is scheduled for FY 2007/08
- The gym floor is refinished each year
- The tennis pavilion awning is scheduled for replacement in FY 2008/09
- Replacement of the dugouts is scheduled for FY 2010/11
- The area will be relandscaped in FY 2008/09

Intracoastal Clubhouse

- The clubhouse is scheduled for painting in FY 2012/13

Tennis Center

- Lights on some of the courts will be replaced in FY 2008/09
- Fence repair is scheduled for FY 2008/09
- Resurfacing of the composite courts will be completed in FY 2008-09

Recreation Programming

Demographic analysis indicates that there are more families in the Boynton Beach area than in prior years. In the past, about 40% of the department's participants were non-residents. As more recreation facilities are developed west of the city and more families move into the city, recreation programming needs are shifting to offer family-oriented opportunities.

There has also been a change in the level of programs that are subsidized by the general fund. More revenue based programs and programs that are self supporting are being offered.

Private Recreation Facilities

Similar to most counties and cities of South Florida, the City of Boynton Beach is comprised of many private and gated Planned Unit Developments (PUD), condominiums, and apartment complexes. Many of these developments provide their residents with recreational facilities and amenities in the form of community pools, playgrounds, sports courts, etc. These facilities, although private, help meet the recreational needs of City residents.

Additional Planning, Code Revisions

Each of the facilities outlined above require further planning and design in order to be implemented. Additionally, the City needs to adopt its Greenway Plan as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and revise the Land Development Codes to require the implementation of greenway segment and/or neighborhood and community parks as part of the development approval process.

COMPLETED IMPROVEMENTS

The following improvements have been made since Fiscal Year 2005-06.

Community Parks

Congress Avenue Community Park

- Landscaping around tennis courts
- Removal of exotic plant material
- Replacement of landscape buffer
- Fencing around courts

Ezell Hester Park

- Playground equipment
- Park furniture
- Entryway sign
- New roof

Carolyn Sims Center and John H. Denson Pool at Wilson Park

- New community center
- Replacement of pool
- Multipurpose field
- Play equipment
- Basketball courts
- Landscaping
- Park furniture
- Picnic pavilions

Intracoastal Park

- Completion of two story clubhouse
- Installation of retaining wall
- Landscaping

Neighborhood Parks

Boynton Lakes Park

- Replacement of play equipment
- Landscaping
- Park furniture

Laurel Hills Park

- Single rail fence
- Replacement of play equipment
- Park furniture
- Park signage
- Resurface basketball court
- Replace basketball standards

Meadows Park

- Replacement of play equipment
- Landscaping
- Park furniture
- Resurfacing of tennis courts
- Resurfacing of basketball courts

Forest Hill Park

- Replacement of fence
- Park furniture
- Entryway sign

- Landscaping
- Replacement of play equipment

Galaxy Park

- Park furniture
- Renovation of restroom
- Replacement of play equipment
- Landscaping
- Entryway signage

Knollwood Park

- Walking trail
- Gazebo
- Littoral plantings
- Parking lot
- Landscaping
- Irrigation

Betty Thomas Park

- Picnic shelter
- Play equipment
- Walking trail
- 2 Basketball courts
- Parking lot
- Landscaping
- Irrigation

Hibiscus Park

- Replacement of play equipment
- Resurfaced basketball court
- Park furniture
- Entryway signage

Pioneer Canal Park

- Replacement of play equipment
- Double rail fence
- Painting of restroom
- Resurface tennis courts
- Resurface basketball courts
- Park furniture
- Entryway signage

Special Use Facilities

Boynton Beach Memorial Park

- Re-landscaping
- Replacement of the wall with a decorative fence
- Entrance gates

Little League Park

- Renovated irrigation
- Replacement of lighting system
- Renovation of four (4) fields
- Renovation of concession building
- Painting of restrooms and dugouts
- Landscaping

Urban Open/Civic Space

Heritage Park

- Removal of planters
- Installation of 35 palms

Water/Beach Access Parks

Oceanfront Park

- Paint all buildings
- Replaced lifeguard towers
- Entryway signage
- Landscaping

Boat Club Park

- *Dredge the channel*
- *Seal parking lot*

Intracoastal Park

- 7,200 square foot Clubhouse

Retrofit Jaycee Park

- Provide recreational access to Intracoastal Waterway
- Picnic shelters
- Restrooms
- Parking area
- Play equipment
- Walking trail
- Interpretive exhibits
- Bocce courts
- Open play space
- Landscaping
- Park furniture
- Entryway signage

VI. THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan is the most important aspect of the strategic planning process. This phase of the plan proposes a set of strategies for the City of Boynton Beach to put in place in order to realize the various elements of the plan. The Implementation Plan is divided into four sections: A. Capital Improvements Plan, B. Funding Sources, C. Comprehensive Plan, and D. Management and Administrative Recommendations.

A. Capital Improvements Plan

The City of Boynton Beach uses a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that is updated on an annual basis.

The Strategic Plan is a ten-year plan and includes a 10-year CIP. Certain assumptions have to be made as to the timing and details of development of parks and facilities. This is a fluid plan that helps steer the department and can change as plans become reality.

The 5-year City CIP is included in Appendix E-G.

B. Funding Sources

A significant challenge for the City of Boynton Beach in meeting public recreation demands is funding. Significant financial investment is necessary for physical development, land acquisition, maintenance and programming. Implementing the recommendations of the Strategic Plan hinges on the ability to secure funding from multiple sources and responding with effective management of parks and recreation facilities and programs.

The major challenge of any implementation of the plan is the lack of adequate dedicated funding sources for both capital and land acquisitions, and for ongoing park management. The following funding sources are a comprehensive listing of funding options is available for consideration.

1. Park Impact Fees

The City of Boynton Beach currently assesses new development for park impact fees. The purpose of this is to implement the capital facilities element of the Comprehensive Plan by:

- a. Ensuring that adequate park, recreation, open space and trail facilities are available to serve new development.
- b. Maintaining the high quality of life in Boynton Beach by ensuring that adequate facilities are available to serve growth thereby providing for the needs of new growth and maintaining existing service levels for present businesses and residents.

- c. Establishing standards and procedures whereby new development pays its proportionate share of the costs of park, recreation, open space and trail facilities.

Existing fees are charged as follows:

- Single-Family, Detached Unit \$1,418.00 Per Unit
- Single-Family, Attached Unit \$1,045.00 Per Unit
- Multi-Family Unit \$924.00 Per Unit

Consideration is begin given to increasing the impact fees to assure that sufficient funds are collected to cover the costs of adequate park and recreation facilities.

2. CRA Funding

Potential collaboration and cost sharing initiatives with the CRA will be used to renovate existing and/or build new parks in the CRA district. The following parks are located in the CRA district.

Urban Open/Civic Space

Bicentennial Park
Heritage Park
7th Avenue Park
Veterans Park

Neighborhood Parks

Galaxy Park

Community Parks

Ezell Hester Park

Special Use Parks

Barton Memorial Park
Sara Sims Park

Greenways/Bikeways/Trails

Palmetto Green

Water/Beach Access

Mangrove Park

It is hoped that a stronger relationship between the CRA and the Recreation and Parks Department will be developed which will emphasize the importance that parks have in the success of redevelopment.

3. Grants

The following identifies a number of grant sources that are available for land acquisition, park improvements, recreation facilities, greenways and trails, conservation land and programming:

- Florida Forever – Florida Communities
- Florida Recreation Development and Assistance Program (FRDAP)
- Greenways and Trails
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Palm Beach County Discretionary Funds
- Palm Beach County Recreation Assistance Grant (RAP)

4. Debt Financing

This method essentially requires a community to sell bonds or otherwise borrow money to be repaid from an annual automatic lien on the general fund. Or a community can pay for its infrastructure in the same way a person borrows money to purchase a home. In both instances, the capital need is immediate and high, the equity appreciation reasonably assured, and the monthly or annual principal and interest payments generally fixed. Like all forms of infrastructure financing, there are some disadvantages and risks. One major risk is voter aversion to approving bond issues, which means an increase in their property taxes.

5. Reserves

Reserves are those surplus funds in a local government coffer that are either intentionally built up for a “rainy day” or accrue because the budget requirements were less than the revenues collected. By having sufficient reserves, a municipality does not have to try to sell bonds or borrow capital improvement funds. Reserves are difficult to project.

6. Advance Acquisition of Park and Open Space Land

In this approach, a municipality maps out its future parks, recreation and open space through the comprehensive planning process. It then negotiates with landowners to purchase the property at a fair price, ideally before the land boom prices begin to rise. This approach can work to the advantage of developers and new residents by assuring that the parks and greenways will be there to increase property values and make new subdivisions more attractive to homebuyers. The cost of the property can be repaid back to the city by the developers of the property.

7. Lease-Purchase Contracts

These contracts allow a community to begin use of a tract of land without acquiring all of the money needed to purchase the property. Sometimes, the lease fee is higher than the interest on bonds; however, it does provide a means to convince citizens that unless the community comes up with the money to purchase the land, the recreation opportunities enjoyed on the land will be foregone.

8. Sale of Park Land

The sale of underutilized land should be considered. Reduction of acreage would have a direct impact on the cost for maintenance.

9. Real Estate Transfer Fees

As cities expand, the need for infrastructure improvements grows. Since parks add value to neighborhoods and communities, some cities have turned to real estate transfer fees to fund parks and recreation needs. Usually transfer fees amount to ¼% to ½% on the total sale of the property.

10. Naming Rights

Many cities have turned to selling the naming rights for new buildings or the renovation of existing buildings and parks for the cost associated with the improvement.

11. Cell Towers

Cell towers in remote park areas or attached to existing light poles on athletic fields is another source of income.

12. Partnerships

Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two governmental entities, a non-profit and the City, or a private entity and the City. The partners develop park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities and asset management based on the strengths and weakness of each partner.

13. Special Taxing Districts

Taxing districts are established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, park furnishing, public art, supplemental services

14. Boynton Beach Community Foundation

The incorporation of the Boynton Beach Community will provide a mechanism through which funds can be raised for City projects. It is anticipated that funding for the Congress Avenue Barrier-Free Community Park will be raised through the Foundation.

15. Program Fees

With the economic challenges being faced by the city, it is anticipated that program fees will be evaluated and adjusted to help offset the amount of subsidy received from the general fund. The current fees are in the lower range of comparable cities. It is anticipated that increased fees could lead to a decrease in participation.

C. Comprehensive Plan

A critical part of the Strategic Plan is the rewriting of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comp Plan will include the development elements identified in the Strategic Plan and will allow the City to formalize the Strategic Plan to assure the adherence to the plan. A copy of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan is included in Appendix F.

D. Management and Administrative Considerations

1. Departmental Organization

Current Departmental Organization

At the current time, the parks, recreation and transportation divisions make up the Recreation and Parks Department. Traditional departmental organization dictates that these services are usually combined and managed by one director. The following depicts the current structure of the department:

The Department is organized in the following manner:

DIVISION	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME FTE'S
Recreation	28	21.21
Parks	30	5.22
Transportation	5	.70

Desired Department Staffing Levels

Changes need to be made to the existing organizational structure to achieve a balance in duties. A Recreation Superintendent position should be created to supervise the two (2) Senior Recreation Managers to complement the Parks Superintendent position.

Over the past few years, due to budget constraints and through attrition, several positions have been eliminated. While the department has been able to continue to provide programming and maintenance at an acceptable level, the addition of new parks and facilities may require the addition of recreation and parks staff. It is anticipated that the following staff or services will be needed as new facilities are developed.

The 2007-08 Strategic Plan included additional staff requirements because of the opening of the Intracoastal Clubhouse, the Sims Center and the Denson Pool. The department was able to hire a Pool Supervisor, a part time Lifeguard Senior, three (3) part time Lifeguards and a part time Recreation Leader to manage the pool operations. Due to budget constraints, the decision was made to close City Hall in the Mall and to move that staff to Intracoastal Park, eliminating the need to hire an additional full time supervisor and recreation specialist. The Sims Center will

be managed by existing staff. It was also decided to eliminate the Tennis Professional position and the Recreation Manager position. Madsen Center was closed for recreational purposes with the exception of keeping the external shuffleboard courts in operation and the Recreation Supervisor was relocated.

Additionally, due to attrition, a Parks Maintenance Worker position and a Parks Maintenance Worker Senior position were eliminated from the Parks Division personnel.

Future Staffing Recommendations and Associated Costs

2008/2009

Improvements: Congress Avenue Barrier-Free Community Park,-Greenways

Position (Location)	Hourly Salary	FTE's	Total Annual Cost
Maintenance Specialist	15.35	1	31,928
Maintenance Worker	12.54	1	26,083
TOTAL			58,011

2010/2011

Improvements: Replacement of Buildings at Oceanfront Park

Position (Location)	Hourly Salary	FTE's	Total Annual Cost
None			
TOTAL			-0-

NOTE: Salaries reflect a 5% increase in each out year. Salaries do not include benefits, equipment, etc.

2. Programs

The Department has developed a Recreation Programming Plan, which will be reviewed annually to assess and address current and future needs. This plan will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan and updated as required.

Additionally, the Needs Assessment will be completed every five (5) years.

3. Revenue Generation

Increase User Fees for Programs

The Revenue Policy guides the range of fees charged for recreation programs in the City. Since the downturn in the national economy, numerous parks and recreation systems have been forced to reevaluate raising user fees to continue to offer quality-programming opportunities. While this is not initially popular with

users, a proper marketing and information effort should help users understand the necessity of this strategy.

Historically, adult programming has been partially subsidized by the City. It is recommended that Boynton Beach audit the true costs of each program, including maintenance and facility costs, staff costs, advertising costs, etc,

Most municipalities believe that children's and teen's programs be partially subsidized, and that reduced cost for participation be given to the financially disadvantaged. The choice of how much the program is subsidized is a policy decision to be made by the City Commission. It is recommended that the Department track the true costs for each program and make adjustments so that one program is not subsidized more than another.

Facility and Athletic Rentals

As the new community centers and neighborhood parks are added to the system, a fee plan for rental facilities should be developed. Picnic shelters can be used on a first come-first served basis; however, guaranteed use can be made through a reservation program that includes a rental and clean-up fee. A fee plan for rental facilities is included in the Revenue Policy Manual.

Athletic facilities should also be rented. They are quite costly to maintain so the fees should cover the cost of maintenance and upkeep.

Equipment Rental

This revenue source is available through the rental of equipment such as tables, chairs, tents, stages, bicycles, roller blades, canoes, kayaks, sports equipment, etc.

Special Fundraisers

Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover the costs of specific programs and/or capital projects.

Utility Round-up Programs

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with the local utilities on a round-up program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill up to the even dollar amount and they then pay the parks and recreation department the difference.

Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of additional programs in the City. Sponsorships are also used for special events.

Foundations

These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, gifts, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

Advertising

This revenue source is for the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as the City's program guide, scoreboards, dasher boards, fences or other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent that exposes the product or service to many people.

Signage Fees

This revenue source charges citizens and businesses with signage fees at key locations with high visibility for short term events. Signage fees typically run from \$25.00 per sign up to \$200.00 per sign based on the size and location.

Scholarship Program

This program allows the City to set across-the-board subsidy rates but offer financial assistance to those residents who cannot afford to pay the full amount. In this way, the program subsidy level is maintained and equitable access to the programs is maintained. The scholarship program can be a formal program through which businesses and individuals can donate money specifically to the program. Or the program can be funded with monies from the City, either from the general fund or other designated source.

Adopt-A-Park Program

The development of a formal Adopt-A-Park program would establish rules and guidelines of responsibilities for the adoptee. It would be recommended that the adoptors be a formal organization such as a neighborhood organization, homeowners association, business, civic group, etc. There is strength in numbers making burn-out less likely.

Wish List

This method of raising funds or getting materials has proven to be a successful method of augmenting the budget. Each year, the department establishes a "wish list" of items that they need, such as landscaping materials that are wanted, play equipment, art supplies, even vehicles and equipment. The list is published to the public. The downside is that the results can vary greatly from year to year, depending on the economy's performance. It is suggested that the list not contain any items necessary for the day-to-day operation.

Volunteer Program

The use of volunteers to do clerical work and programming can be a useful tool in augmenting the staffing levels. The City has a volunteer program that is formalized and includes background checks, regular schedules, job descriptions and evaluations to assure the safety of the clientele and the quality of the volunteers.

Cost Avoidance

The City should take a position of not being everything for everyone. It must be driven by the market and stay with the Department's core business. By shifting its role as direct provider, the City will experience savings by deciding whether or not to provide that facility or program. This is cost avoidance.

4. Administrative and Operational Management Plans

As a result of the Accreditation Self Assessment process and strategic planning meetings, the following plans have been developed as focus areas for to guide the department's future planning. They have been included in the Strategic Plan.

- Programming Plan
- Marketing Plan
- Community Relations Plan
- Maintenance Management Plan
- Needs Assessment

The purpose of the Programming Plan is to guide and assist staff in systematically offering quality recreation programming to customers and residents who live, learn, work, play in and visit Boynton Beach.

The purpose of the Marketing and Communications Plan is to aid the Department and its personnel in identifying the issues facing our community and how to market the Department's natural resources and parks, programs and activities, facilities and services to our clientele. More than ever it is necessary to implement a simple and practical marketing plan that can be used to guide the Department in its quest to satisfy the needs and desires of our diverse community. The Marketing Plan will help the Department increase the value that Recreation and Parks programs and services bring to our citizens and will assist the Department in being effective for our customers.

The purpose of the Community Relations Plan is to promote the marketing vision and unique selling proposition of the Department while developing and strengthening relationships with individuals and communities in and around the City of Boynton Beach. The basic purpose of the plan is to promote the Department as a structured and integral part of the Boynton Beach community through the provision of activity programming, events, facilities and spaces.

The Park Maintenance Plan was developed for two reasons. The first reason was to meet the requirements of the Accreditation Process. The second was to assure that the maintenance of parks in Boynton Beach meets certain expectations. A comprehensive Park Maintenance Plan is the backbone of the City's park system. A Park Maintenance Plan addresses routine, regularly scheduled tasks, preventative tasks, scheduled improvements and emergency repairs. The Plan identifies areas of responsibility, types of maintenance and standards for the different types of maintenance. Additionally, it contains a task-based reporting system that will allow the City to identify real time efforts into the different areas of responsibility, types of maintenance tasks performed, and time allocated per employee for maintenance task.

It is necessary for the department to keep up with the changing trends in recreation and demographics to assure that the needs of the participants are being met. A needs assessment should be conducted on an annual basis using different methodologies including written surveys, telephone surveys and focus groups.

The Department shall utilize these focus areas in developing annual department and staff goals while continuing to respond to changing conditions, needs and trends, thus ensuring that there is a long range strategy to achieve the Department's mission.

VII. EVALUATION

The Strategic Plan will be evaluated and updated annually for presentation to City Commission in May of each year. The Leadership staff is responsible for determining if the plan is successful and what change need to be included in the updated plan. Additionally, the Programming Plan, Marketing Plan, the Community Relations Plan, and the Maintenance Management Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis. Changes will be as necessary.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Marketing Plan

Appendix B
Programming Plan

Appendix C
Community Relations Plan

Appendix D
Maintenance Management Plan

Appendix E
Recommendations from Staff Connections regarding Organizational Structure

Appendix F
Revised Comprehensive Plan

Appendix G
5-year Capital Improvement Plan

Appendix H
Summary of Needs Assessment