

Findings Report



April 2024

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment



Publish Date :
April, 2024

**Palm Beach County
Parks and Recreation Department
2700 6th Avenue South
Lake Worth, FL 33461**

www.pbcparcs.com

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Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment



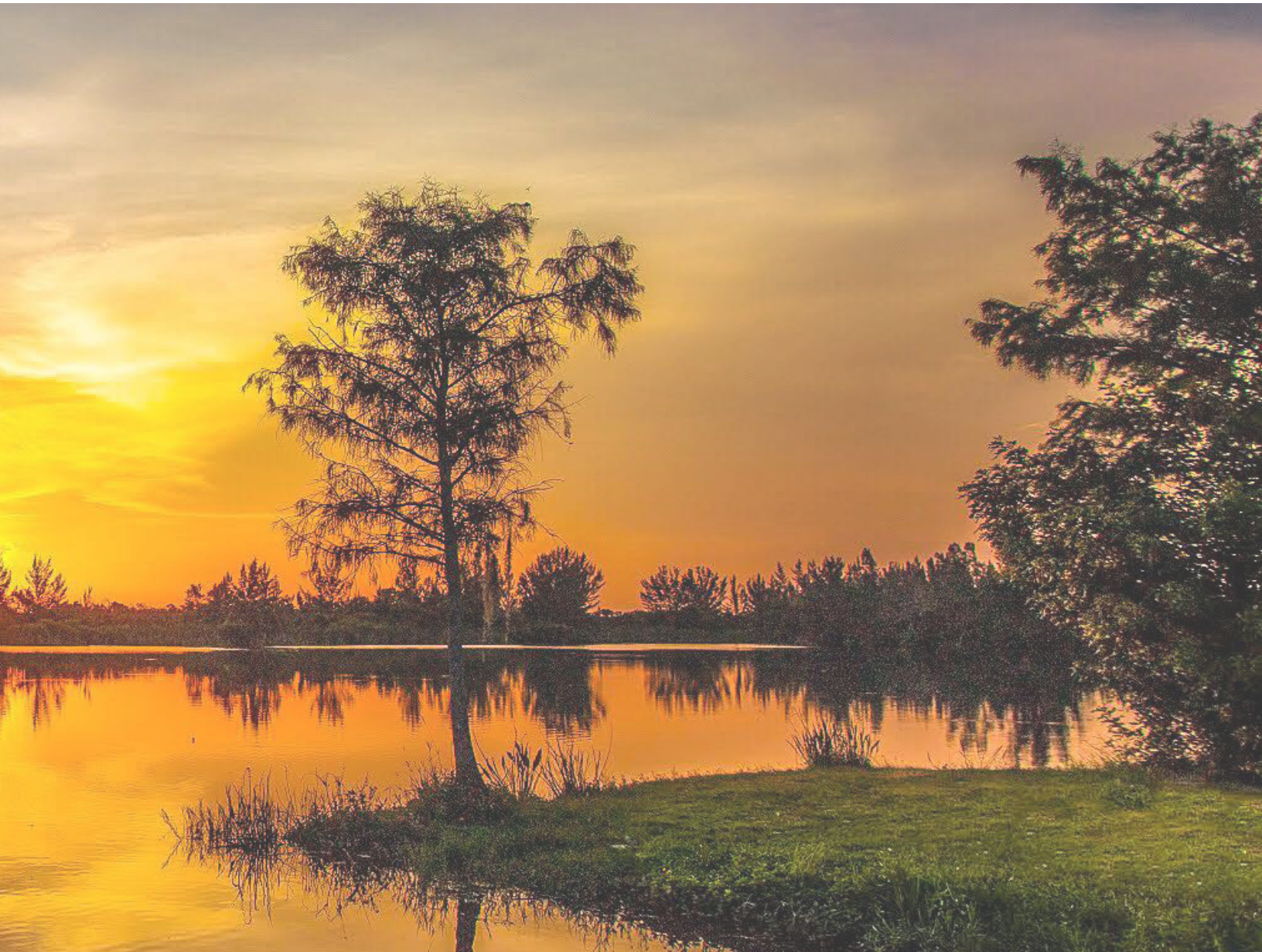
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CHAPTER

1





PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

1.1 - THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

A Plan for The Future

The Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (PRCCNA) is intended to serve as a guide for obtaining and interpreting valuable feedback on the recreation needs and priorities of Palm Beach County residents. The study will assist the Parks and Recreation Department in the formation of its goals, policies, and strategic plans, as well as the future development of program areas and facilities to meet the needs of the community. It will also help demonstrate if programming or facility deficiencies exist throughout or within the County.

The purpose of the PRCCNA is to lay the foundation for a new vision and goals for the Parks and Recreation Department and establish a shared set of community needs and priorities. Input obtained during this needs assessment will ultimately provide a focused direction for the development and delivery of parks, recreation, cultural and community services. This assessment will help ensure that Palm Beach County is meeting the needs of residents today, while continuing to provide a high-quality, sustainable and equitable park system for the future.



Project Objectives

- Build on previous planning efforts in order to integrate needs and priorities with other County plans and initiatives
- Communicate complex issues associated with this planning process that are understandable to residents and stakeholders
- Connect with the community through outreach and effectively communicate the benefits of parks and recreation facilities
- Provide a range of opportunities for residents and stakeholders to provide input and have their needs and priorities heard
- Implement a process that is inclusive, transparent, and empowering for all members of the community
- Recognise the varying needs of a diverse County with unique communities.



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

1.2 - METHODOLOGY & APPROACH

Project Process

The PRCCNA was intended to provide valuable community input that will be utilized for the planning, acquisition, development and operations of parks, trails, park facilities, and recreation and cultural

programs throughout the County. The assessment was conducted in a linear process, building upon previous work; beginning with an overview of the existing parks, analysis of public needs and priorities, formation of a long-range vision, and lastly, a strategic plan for implementation.

1 Connecting with the Community Outreach

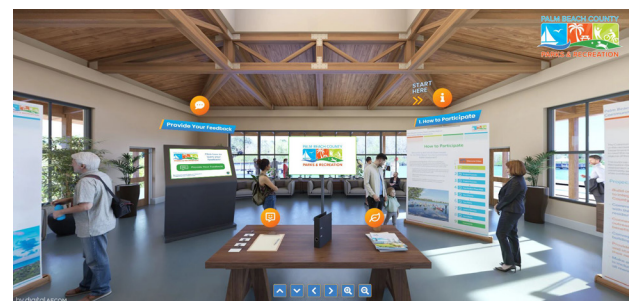
August 2023 - October 2023

- Department Coordination
- Background Research, Inventory and Mapping
- Material Development
- Meeting Advertisements
- Social Media
- Project Website

2 Gathering Community Input Engagement

October 2023 -

- Stakeholder Interviews (12)
- Focus Groups (9)
- Community Meetings (4)
- Virtual Room
- Online Survey
- Statistically Valid Survey



The process for the PRCCNA is summarized in the diagram below, including all engagement methods utilized during the assessment as well as the timeframes during which they were conducted.

3 Establishing Community Needs and Priorities Summary

December 2023



January 2024 - March 2024

- Synthesis and Analysis of Findings
- Preparation of Draft Summary Report
- Presentation to the Commission
- Final Report

Virtual Room

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department invites you to participate in a live engagement event to provide your feedback on your parks, programs and recreation activities.

PALM BEACH COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION

Step 1: **Change** | **Add** | **Remove** | **Cancel** | **Save**

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

What would you change?

What would you add?

Change **Add**

Continue

2023 Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Survey

Let your voice be heard today!

Palm Beach County would like your input to help determine park and recreation priorities for our community. This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete. When you are finished, please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-only envelope. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online at palmbeachcounty.gov/survey. We appreciate your time.

1. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...
Under Age 3 _____ Ages 3-10 _____ Ages 11-14 _____ Ages 15+ _____

2. Please indicate if you use the following parks or recreation facilities/amenities provided by Palm Beach County by circling the YES or NO next to each. If you do use the amenity/facility, please rate your overall satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Very Satisfied" and 5 means "Very Dissatisfied."

Facility/Amenity	How often you use the facility/amenity?	How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the facility/amenity?	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
21 Public trails	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
22 Beachfront courts	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
23 Beaches	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
24 Boat launches	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
25 Canoe/kayak launch	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
26 Community centers and rental facilities	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
27 Dog parks	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
28 Golf courses	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
29 Large regional parks	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
30 Multi-use trails	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
31 Nature centers	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
32 Open green space	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
33 Park restrooms	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
34 Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
35 Playgrounds	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
36 Recreation centers	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
37 Rent volleyball	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
38 Small neighborhood parks	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
39 Swimming pools/beach facilities	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					
40 Tennis courts	Yes No	1 2 3 4 5					

3. WHICH THREE of the facilities/amenities listed above in Question 2 do you think should receive the MOST ATTENTION from the County over the next TWO years? (Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 2.)

1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

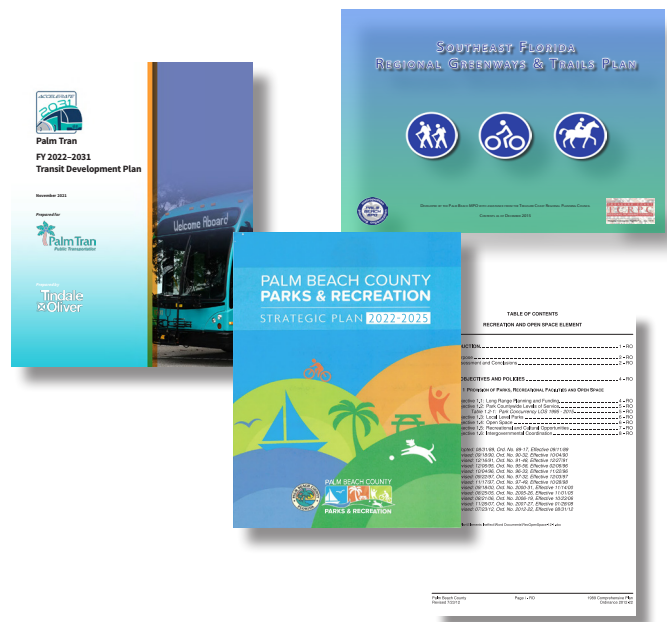
Department Coordination, Background Research & Material Development

While the PRCCNA's primary focus was on obtaining community input on parks and recreation needs and priorities, a significant portion of the project involved background research, inventory development, mapping and engagement tool development. The Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department was instrumental in providing the project team with critical resources and background information that allowed for the effective communication of the park system's context, facility and program offerings, and resource mapping. The Department also assisted the project team in the distribution of all outreach materials, as well as the scheduling of stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and community meetings. The following is a summary of the collaborative efforts conducted by the Department and the project team prior to initiation of the community engagement phase of the PRCCNA.

Guiding Documents

The PRCCNA is part of an interconnected network of planning initiatives conducted at local and regional scales. Results from this assessment were analyzed within the context of other plans and initiatives to identify areas of alignment, key trends, and potential collaboration opportunities. The list of referenced guiding documents included the following:

- Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025
- Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space Element
- Palm Beach County Greenways and Trails Plan
- Palm Tran - FY 2021 - 2031 Transit Development Plan
- Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Surtax Project List



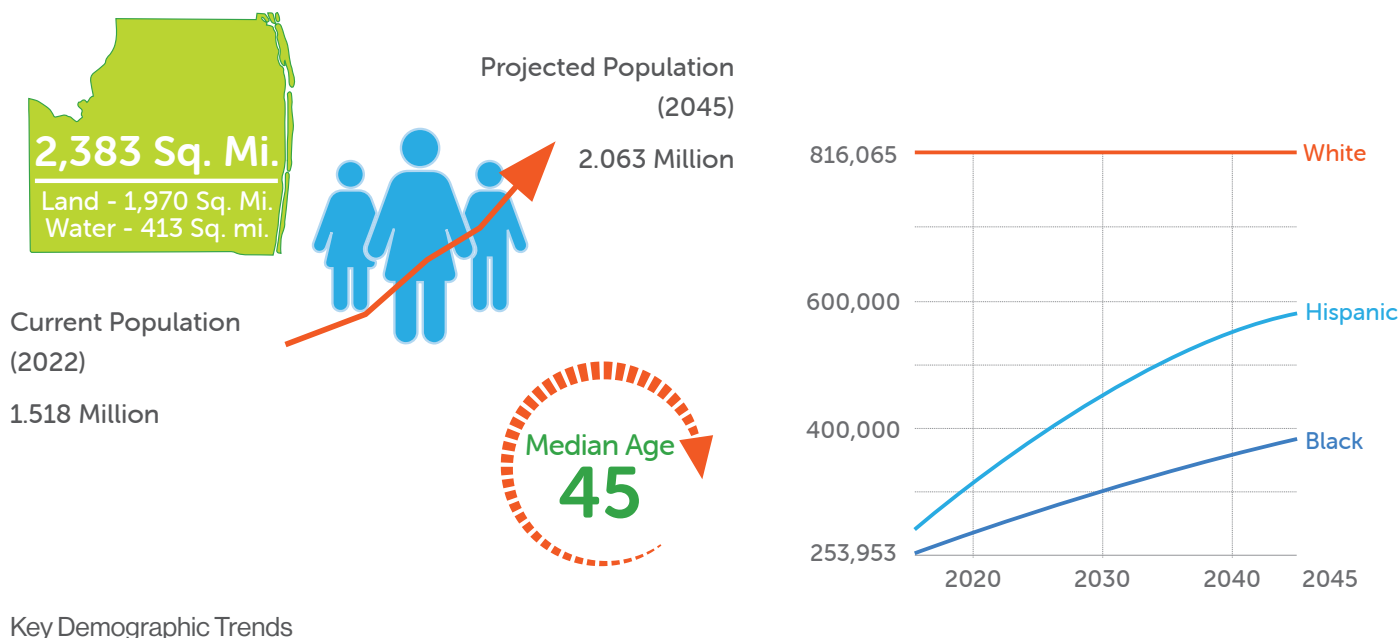
Select Guiding Documents

Demographics

In addition to researching guiding documents, the project team also reviewed the demographics of Palm Beach County to identify any applicable trends to parks and recreation needs and priorities. Located in the southeastern part of Florida, Palm Beach County (PBC) stretches from Florida's Atlantic Coast into the state's rural center and includes the northern edge of the Everglades National Park. The eastern third of Palm Beach County is highly urbanized, while the central and western portions of the county are suburban or rural.

PBC has seen substantial growth over the last couple of decades, and is currently the third most populous county in the state. This trend is expected to continue over the next 15 years as the County is expected to grow to over two million people by 2045.

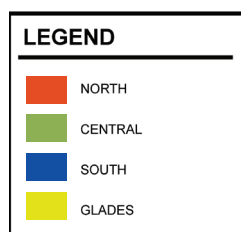
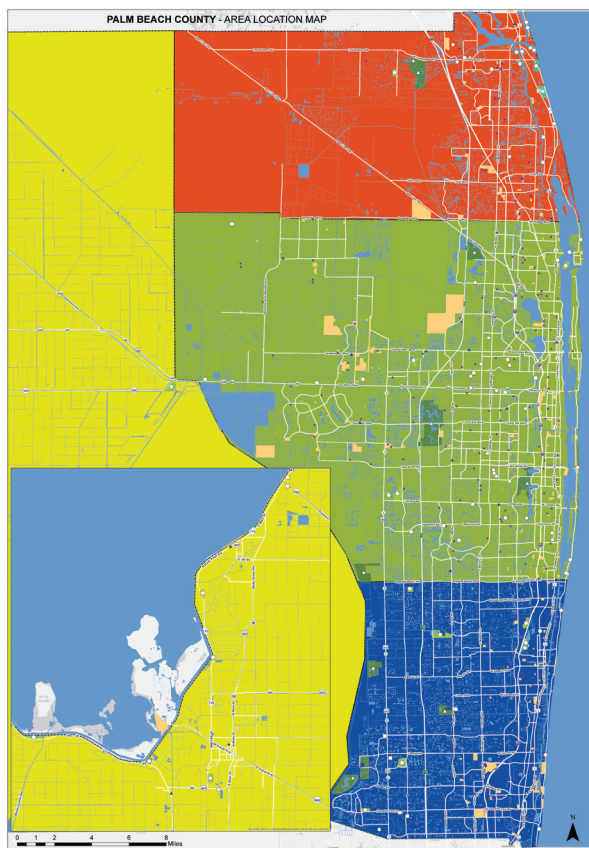
As the County grows, the population is expected to continue to diversify in both race, ethnicity and age. The County's current median age is 45 years, which is higher than the surrounding region and the State of Florida. However, the number of families and families with children are also increasing, which may result in increased diversity of recreation facility and program needs across the age spectrum. The figure below highlights some of the key demographic trends identified in the overview:



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Parks System Inventory

In addition to obtaining valuable community input, the PRCCNA was also an opportunity to educate the general public on the park system. Provided by the department, the diagram to the right is a summary of the parks and amenities available throughout Palm Beach County. The Department also provided location maps showing the park types available in each geographically distinct area of the County. Shown in the map legend below, these areas include the North, Central, South, and Glades areas of the County.



Level of Service

In addition to location maps, the Department also provided Level of Service (LOS) maps for residents to visualize how the parks are serving their community. LOS is a measure of a park system's ability to provide parkland, facilities, and access to its residents. There are three types of LOS: Acreage LOS, Facilities LOS, and Access LOS. Acreage and Facility LOS are calculated based on acreage or units serving the population. Access LOS is assessed as an equitable travel time from residences to a park. For the purpose of this assessment, the LOS analysis prioritizes Access LOS as its primary metric.

The maps on the following pages include:

- Palm Beach County (North) - Parks and Community Facilities Location Map
- Palm Beach County (Central) - Parks and Community Facilities Location Map
- Palm Beach County (South) - Parks and Community Facilities Location Map
- Palm Beach County (Glades) - Parks and Community Facilities Location Map
- Palm Beach County (North) - 10 Minute Walk and 10 Minute Drive Level of Service
- Palm Beach County (Central) - 10 Minute Walk and 10 Minute Drive Level of Service
- Palm Beach County (South) - 10 Minute Walk and 10 Minute Drive Level of Service
- Palm Beach County (Glades) - 10 Minute Walk and 10 Minute Drive Level of Service

Total County Parks Acreage - 8190.72 Ac.

Parks by Commission District

- District 1 - 24 parks
- District 2 - 10 parks
- District 3 - 15 parks
- District 4 - 8 parks
- District 5 - 16 parks
- District 6 - 16 parks
- District 7 - 9 parks

Developed Acreage - 6036.43 Ac.
Undeveloped Acreage - 2154.32 Ac.



Total Number of Parks - 98

- Beach Park - 16
- Community Park - 17
- District Park - 33
- Neighborhood Park - 22
- Regional Park - 10

Park Amenities

- Tennis - 50
- Basketball - 64
- Pickleball - 38
- Volleyball - 21
- Racquetball - 36
- Other - 15

- Baseball/ Softball - 82
- Multipurpose Field - 54
- Open Play Field - 17

- Picnic Area - 48
- Picnic Shelter/ Pavilion - 278
- Picnic Table - 168

Play Courts



Play Fields



Playground - 103



Golf Course / Driving Range - 5



Picnic Areas



Community / Recreation Center - 20



Nature Center - 5



Walking, Biking, Equestrian Paths - 121 mi



Special Event Area - 13



Water Access



- Boat Launch - 32
- Canoe/ Kayak Launch - 16
- Boat Slip - 87

Pools, Water Parks



- Pool - 8
- Water Park - 6

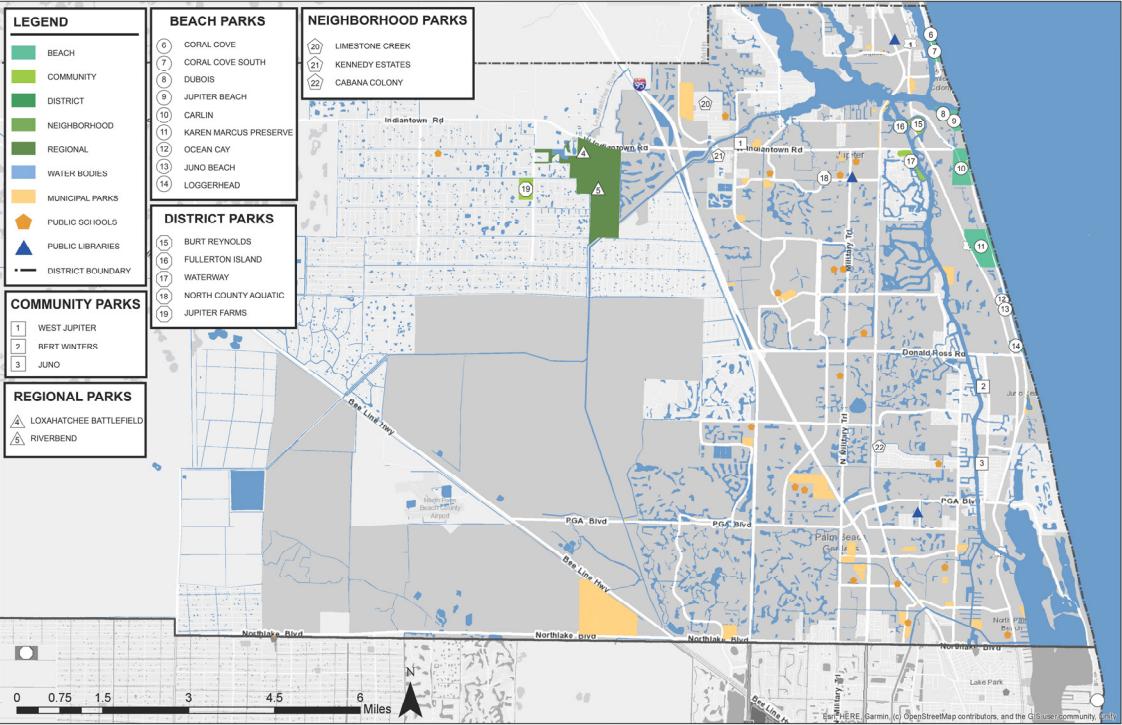
Other Amenities



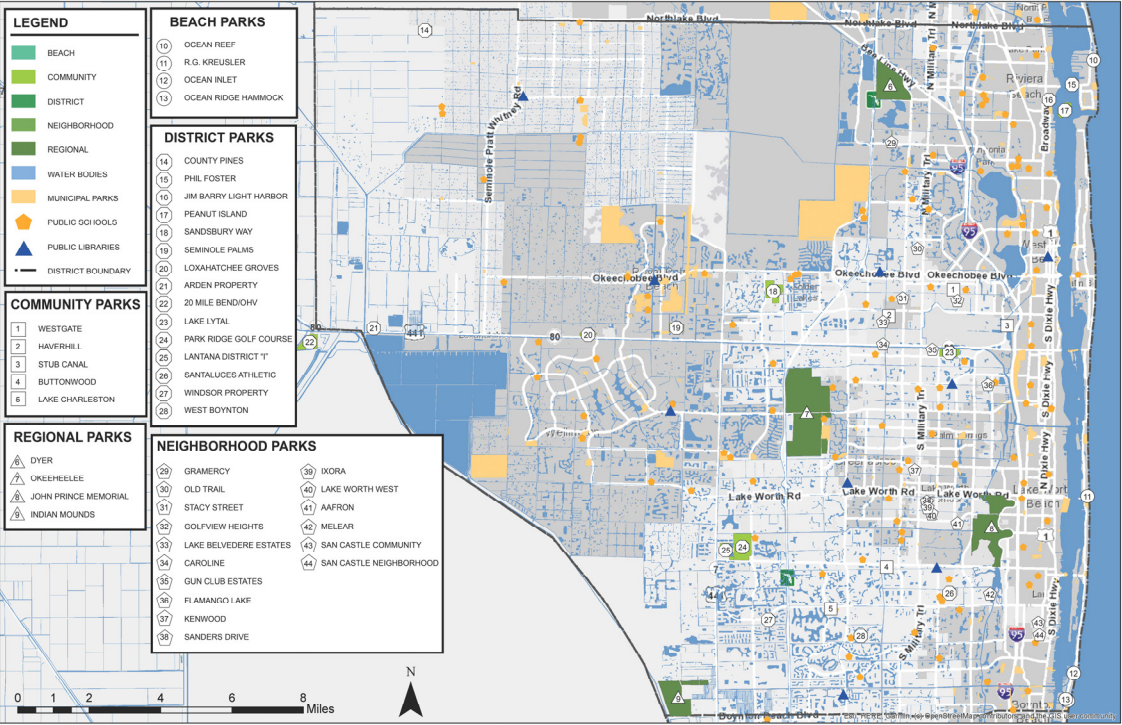
- Archery Range - 1
- Skate Park - 2
- Dog Park - 4
- BMX, RC Car Track - 3
- Pier Fishing - 15
- Equestrian Facility - 5

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

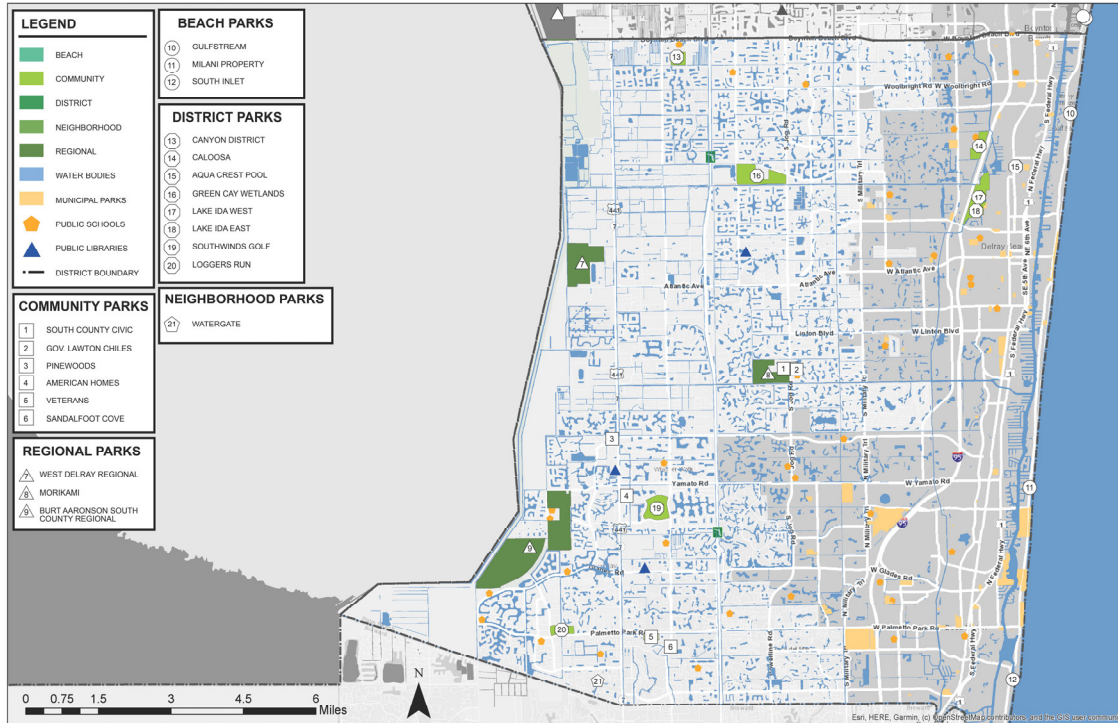
PALM BEACH COUNTY (NORTH) - PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES LOCATION MAP



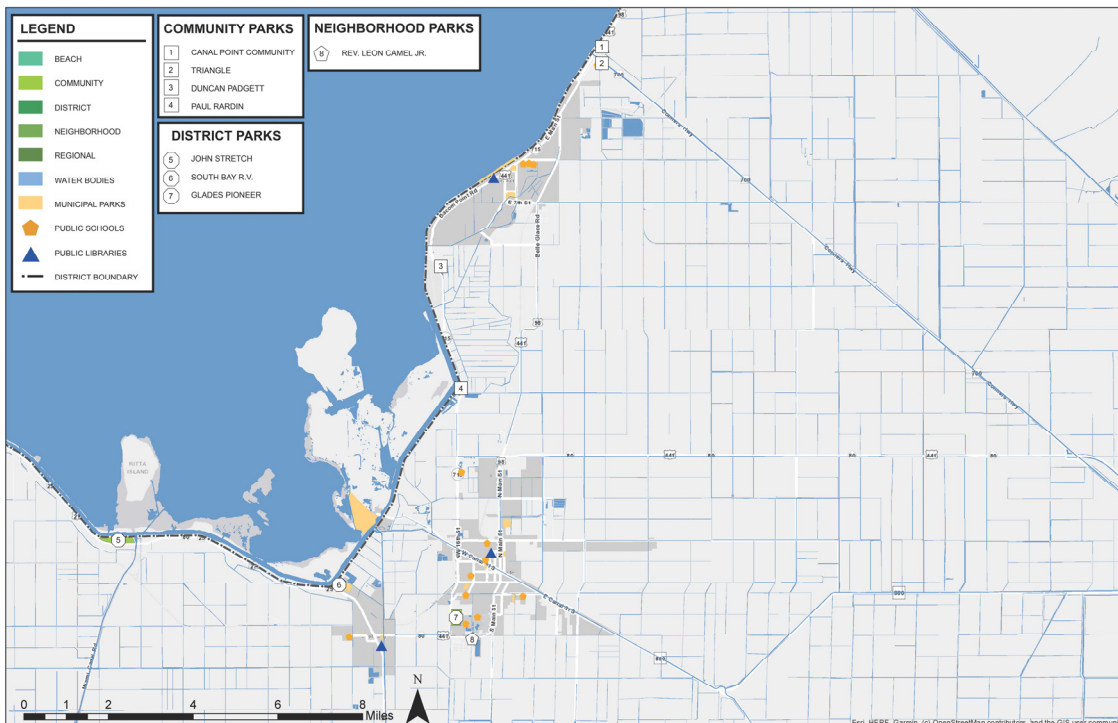
PALM BEACH COUNTY (CENTRAL) - PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES LOCATION MAP



PALM BEACH COUNTY (SOUTH) - PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES LOCATION MAP

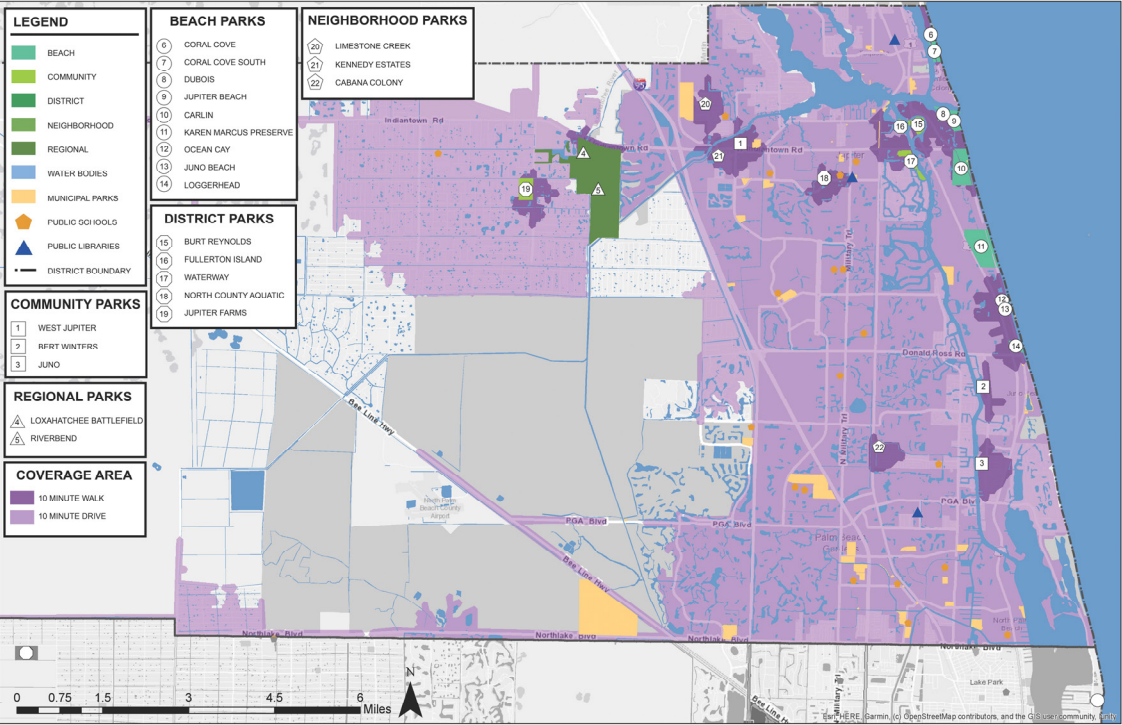


PALM BEACH COUNTY (GLADES) - PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES LOCATION MAP

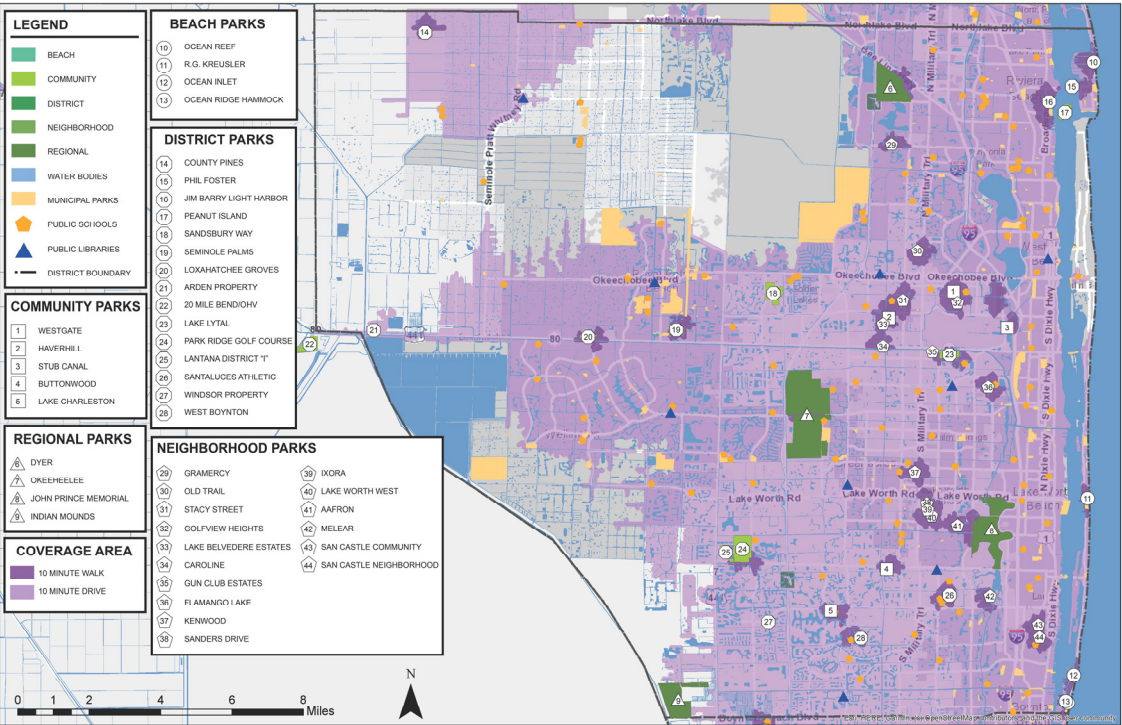


Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

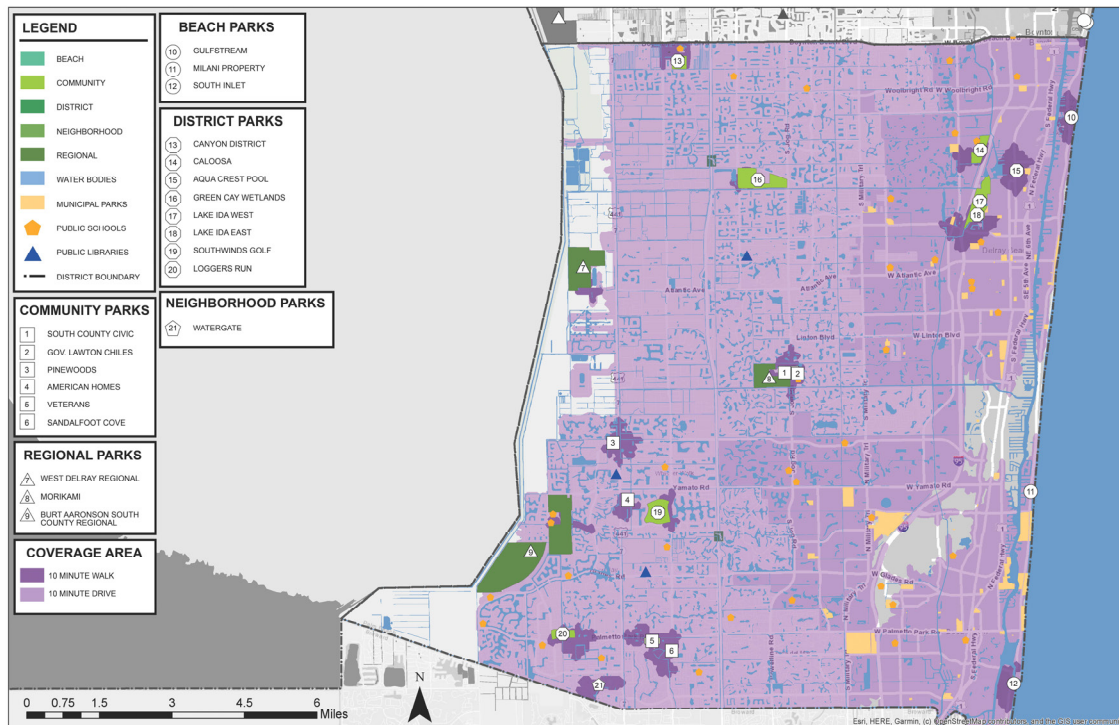
PALM BEACH COUNTY (NORTH) - 10 MINUTE WALK AND 10 MINUTE DRIVE LEVEL OF SERVICE



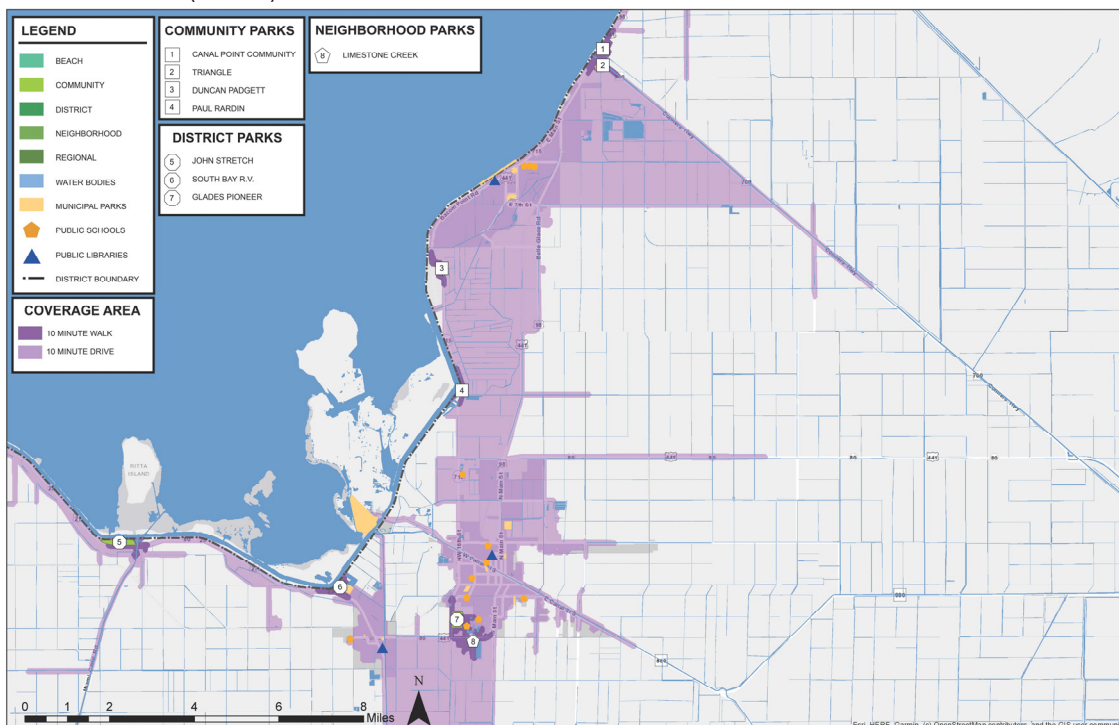
PALM BEACH COUNTY (CENTRAL) - 10 MINUTE WALK AND 10 MINUTE DRIVE LEVEL OF SERVICE



PALM BEACH COUNTY (SOUTH) - 10 MINUTE WALK AND 10 MINUTE DRIVE LEVEL OF SERVICE



PALM BEACH COUNTY (GLADES) - 10 MINUTE WALK AND 10 MINUTE DRIVE LEVEL OF SERVICE



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Engagement Tool Development

The information developed through the collaborative efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department and the project team were ultimately included in the materials presented to the public through the various methods of public engagement. These materials were utilized to provide background information and prompt feedback in stakeholder interviews, focus groups, community meetings, the project website, the virtual open house, and both surveys. Materials included:

- Project Informational Handout
- County Map Booklet
- Community Meeting and Virtual Open House Boards:
 - Project Information Boards
 - Open-ended Comment Boards
 - Recreation Activity Preference Boards

In order to encourage participation from traditionally underrepresented groups, all materials were provided in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole. Copies of all engagement materials can be found in the Appendix.

Outreach

Outreach for PRCCNA included a multi-faceted approach with a mix of traditional and modern methods. The County distributed flyers, posters and business cards at community locations throughout the County, as well as with local organizations. The County also embarked on a robust social media campaign through a variety of outlets in the weeks leading up to the engagement launch. Specific efforts were made to engage with traditionally underrepresented and overlooked groups in order to ensure everyone had an opportunity to participate. All outreach materials directed residents to the project website using a QR code, and also provided information on the four in-person community meetings across the County. Examples of outreach materials can be found on the following page.

Understanding the geographic and demographic differences across the County, the project team made a concentrated effort to ensure that outreach was targeted throughout the different communities of Palm Beach County. Outreach was conducted in conjunction with efforts to host meetings in four distinct geographic areas of the County, as well as twelve planning areas considered in cross-tabulations of the Statistically Valid Survey.

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation
Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment



Attend a Community Meeting!

Four opportunities to participate!

Community Meetings are from
6:00 - 8:00 PM

Your feedback is an integral part of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process. We invite you to attend a community meeting and provide your feedback on the needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities and services in your community.

November 8, 2023 Green Cay Nature Center	November 9, 2023 Okeetchee Nature Center	November 14, 2023 Belle Glade Public Library	November 15, 2023 West Jupiter Community Center
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Virtual Open House and Online
Survey Available at:

www.PBCparksplan.com

All queries and comments related to this project
can be submitted to:

Email: pbcparks@pbco.gov

Phone: 561-966-6664

In addition to the community meetings, we are providing other opportunities to participate in the public engagement process. A Virtual Open House and online survey are available on the project website, and the website will continue to be updated with project information and upcoming engagement opportunities.

Parques y Recreación del Condado de Palm Beach
Evaluación Integral de Necesidades Comunitarias



¡Asista a una Reunión Comunitaria!

¡Cuatro oportunidades para
participar!

Las Reuniones Comunitarias
son desde las 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Sus comentarios son una parte vital del proceso de la Evaluación Integral de las Necesidades. Lo invitamos a asistir a una reunión comunitaria y brindar su opinión sobre las necesidades y prioridades de parques, instalaciones y servicios recreativos en su comunidad.

Noviembre 8, 2023 Green Cay Nature Center	Noviembre 9, 2023 Okeetchee Nature Center	Noviembre 14, 2023 Belle Glade Public Library	Noviembre 15, 2023 West Jupiter Community Center
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La Casa Abierta Virtual y Encuesta
en Línea están disponibles en:

www.PBCparksplan.com

Además de las reuniones comunitarias, ofrecemos otras oportunidades para participar en el proceso de participación pública. Una Casa Abierta Virtual y una encuesta en línea están disponibles en el sitio web del proyecto. El sitio web seguirá siendo actualizado con información del proyecto y próximas oportunidades de participación.

Todas las consultas y comentarios relacionados
con este proyecto pueden enviarse a:

Email: pbcparks@pbco.gov

Teléfono: 561-966-6664

Tell us your ideas for Palm Beach County's
Parks, Recreation Facilities and Programs!

Join the conversation today!

Follow us!



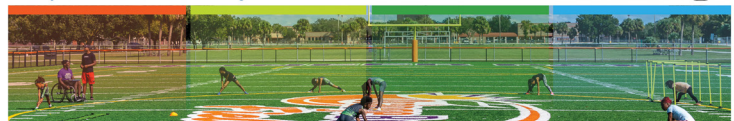
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Get Involved!

www.PBCparksplan.com

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation
Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment



We Want Your Feedback!

Visit the Virtual Open House!

Open October 16 - December 16, 2023

ONLINE SURVEY
AVAILABLE NOW!

Scan the QR code to visit our
project website at
www.PBCparksplan.com
and access the virtual open house
and take our online survey.



CHAPTER

2





ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

2.1 - STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Methodology

In addition to the focus group meetings, interviews were conducted with stakeholders and elected officials, County management, community leaders and others identified and invited by the County to ensure a high level of review and information gathering from a variety of perceptions and opinions. These interviews were conducted one-on-one with a member of the project team and were done in-person or in a virtual setting.

Stakeholder Interview Findings

Below are the common themes that were identified through stakeholder interviews. Common themes are organized by the questions asked during the interviews.

Benefits of Parks

There was an emphasis on outdoor activities for health, community, and inclusivity.

- Diverse park facilities
- Family-friendly spaces
- Post-covid considerations
- Accessible playgrounds
- Lighting
- Various activities like pickleball

There was a need to adapt community centers with affordable, demographic-responsive programs, visionary leadership, and a focus on recreation and nature elements. Emphasis points were:

- Adapt community centers for changing needs
- Balance services for seniors and families
- Prioritize affordable, demographic-responsive programs
- Emphasize visionary leadership
- Address housing affordability and proximity to workplaces
- Expand parks tailored to community needs
- Focus on recreation spaces and natural elements

Parks and Recreation Department Role

Stakeholders indicated their vision for the role of the Parks and Recreation Department as collaborative, accessible, and community-minded. Specific comments included the following:

- Gold Medal standards drive park enhancement
- Prioritize safety, avoid duplication, and maintain high standards
- Serve all through accessible branches, regional parks, and tailored services
- Collaborate with municipalities for diverse open spaces and recommendations
- Ensure accessibility for everyone

Vision



Changes or Additions to the Park System

Changes or additions needed for the community were indicated as:

- More land for innovative park programs
- Avoid traditional methods
- Prioritize data collection
- Introduce camping options
- Additional indoor facilities
- Collaborate with YMCA
- Address park size and shade concerns

Comparables

Some features and programs of parks that stakeholders want available in Palm Beach County were:

- Cultural and historical amenities
- More comprehensive wayfinding and signage
- Better decision making with resources
- Gardens
- Splash pads
- Accessible recreation opportunities for people of all abilities
- California and Utah provide many examples of park systems with natural areas and open green spaces
- Miami-Dade county provides examples of innovative strategies in a dense environment
- Non-motorized connections between and within parks
- Increased trees and shaded areas

Needs and Priorities

Additional needs and priorities indicated by the stakeholders included the following:

- Enhance infrastructure for growing population
- Maintain tennis facilities and beach access
- Prioritize diverse outdoor spaces
- Ensure maintenance through partnerships
- Address South County's needs with more trees and diverse activities

Additional Questions or Comments

There were several additional questions and comments from the stakeholders.

- Request for improved roads to natural parks and a pool facility
- Concerns about equitable facility use, emphasizing shade, nature, and climate awareness
- Interest in pickleball, soccer, basketball, and multi-purpose fields
- Emphasis on transportation connectivity

2.2 - FOCUS GROUPS

Methodology

In addition to the Stakeholder Interviews, nine topic-based focus groups were held virtually to address a selection of specific community recreation topics. The focus groups included people from different fields of expertise associated with the County's Parks and Recreation facilities. These community members shared their thoughts about the current status of the system and offered ideas for future improvements.

Each meeting was approximately one hour in length, and started with a brief introduction of the project process, followed by an in-depth discussion of benefits of parks and recreation facilities, the vision for the future of the system, comparable communities, and top needs and priorities for parks and recreation.

- Natural Resources and Sustainability Focus Group - Tuesday, November 7, 2023 - 10:00 am
- Arts, History and Culture Focus Group - Tuesday, November 7, 2023 - 11:00 am
- County Departments Focus Group - Tuesday, November 7, 2023 - 3:00 pm
- Seniors and Active Adults Focus Group - Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - 9:00 am
- Youth Sports Organizations Focus Group - Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - 10:00 am
- Specials Needs Programs Focus Group - Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - 11:00 am
- Municipal Partners Focus Group - Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 9:00 am
- Community Organizations Focus Group - Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 11:00 am
- Economic Development Focus Group - Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 2:00 pm

Records of these meetings and associated comments can be found in the Appendix. The following page summarizes questions, comments, and directions that emerged during the focus group meetings. Focus Group questions intended to prompt discussions included the following:

- Benefits of Parks: How do you or the communities you represent benefit from parks, recreation facilities, or recreation programs? Visitors?
- Vision: What is your vision for the future of parks and recreation in Palm Beach County? What do you see as the role of the Parks and Recreation Department in providing benefits to the community? What can be changed or added to improve the park system to achieve this vision?
- Comparables: Are there aspects of parks, park facilities or recreation programs that you have seen elsewhere that you think should be available in Palm Beach County?
- Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see, and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the County for both facilities and programs?

Focus Group Findings

The focus groups provided a wealth of information on the existing parks and recreation system as well as the future of parks, facilities and programs throughout the County. Common themes from the focus groups included:

- Emphasis on access to natural areas and outdoor recreation
- Equitable access to parks throughout the County
- Affordable opportunities for recreation
- Maintaining the current high quality of parks and recreation facilities
- General sense that Palm Beach County is on the leading edge of parks and recreation facilities and programs
- Providing additional parks and recreation facilities to meet population growth
- Sustainability and resilience through parks and natural areas
- Additional public art in parks and cultural programming opportunities
- Safety throughout the park system
- Facilities and programs for teens
- Increasing staff at facilities, as well as providing educational and training opportunities for staff
- Alternative transportation and connectivity

Natural Areas and Sustainability Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Nature Centers
- Central locations to meet and conduct events
- Opportunities for diverse choices in programming and services

Vision:

- More of what the Parks are already doing, particularly with conservation
- Role of Parks Department
 - Maintain current parks / expand parkland / upgrade parks
 - Digitally enabled parks, facilities and amenities
 - Continue to hire and train qualified staff to operate parks and facilities
- More robust capital budget
- Increase incentives for employees to work here and advance
- Keep up with current trends, like pickleball

Comparables:

- Miami-Dade and Broward Counties

Needs and Priorities:

- Upgrade existing facilities
- Increase staffing to accommodate demand
- Advertisement and marketing of available programs and facilities
- Replicate existing amenities that prove to be successful
- Increase parking for visitors and staff

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Arts, Culture and History Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Sustainable community connections
- Health and wellbeing
- Community green spaces
- “Arts as Prescription”
 - Programs and offerings
 - Mental health
- Tourism
 - Eco-tourism
 - Cultural council
 - Recreation facilities and programs for visitors
- Opportunities for people with disabilities
- Arts, Culture and History
 - Generating interest in topics the community may not know about
- Addressing the inequality divide
 - Parks provide a venue for affordability
 - Opportunities for all members of the community
- County parks are natural areas that provide nature-based benefits

Vision:

- Continue to fund the level we are at now and beyond
- Level of programming needs to be maintained
- Focus on accessibility
 - Accessible for as many people as possible
 - Visitors feeling a sense of place
- Historic/cultural assets - sense of history and cultural importance
- More trees and shade for programmable areas

- Public art expansion
 - More temporary/participatory public art
- Event-based experiences
- Cultivating community connection and cohesion
- Partnerships with artists

Comparables:

- Communities with opportunities to swim
- Palm Beach County is the standard bearer
- Temporary public art experiences
 - Urban city parks in NYC and MA
- Participatory, site-specific experiences
- Arts in parks

Needs and Priorities:

- Maintain existing facilities
- New parks – reserved land for open green spaces
- Continue with programming opportunities
- Expand facilities and programs for underserved communities
- Focus messaging strategy
 - Retro-messaging back to nature
- Community partners
- Signage/wayfinding
 - Natural areas
 - Wayfinding in parks and to parks
 - Digital wayfinding/information
- Promotion of programs and available facilities
- Passive experiences
 - Walking trails
 - Open spaces

County Departments Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Community health
- Physical health
- Social interaction
- Cultural engagement
- Wildlife
- Horticulture
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Botany
 - Bird watching
 - Environmental benefits
- Crime prevention
- County natural areas
 - Educational opportunities
 - Passive/adventure opportunities
 - Complement other uses
- Water utilities
 - Public parks through wetlands
- Lessons from the COVID era
- Groundwater recharge and stormwater benefits
- Introduce public works projects through parks
- Interpretive/educational signage
- Provide affordable benefits to the community
- Economic development
- Wetlands
- Affordability

Vision:

- Maintain the status quo in terms of quality and level of service
- Identifying community interests
- Maintain quality while expecting an increase in population of 200,000-300,000 people
- More staff, more budget
- Address challenges with different user groups
- Land acquisition strategies for future parks
- Parks as a leader in sustainability and resilience
 - Develop resilient design guidelines
- Free Wi-Fi in parks
- Continue sewer infrastructure projects
- Parks as self-sufficient with sustainable energy
 - Solar utility pond
 - Park system off the grid
- Parks and recreation playing a role in a fragmented ecosystem

Comparables:

- Security of parks – learn a lot from Broward

Needs and Priorities:

- Asset preservation, keep up what we have
- New sources of revenue to address challenges with water and utility stresses
- Drought tolerant plants
- Stay in tune with residents' needs
- Recreation programs
- County staff/volunteer education is a priority – doing a great job, keep expanding
- Moving forward in a sustainable and responsible way
- Maintain land base – constant development pressure – need strong conservation advocacy

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Seniors and Active Adults Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Senior perspective
 - Recreation facilities for seniors
 - Trips to parks – beaches and natural preserves
 - PalmTran/transportation opportunities
 - Socializing/community spaces
 - Physical activity/accessibility
 - Integration/connectivity
 - Physical/emotional benefits
 - Intergenerational
 - Parks/libraries
 - Interaction with children/grandchildren

Vision:

- Senior center for 55+, some older
- Accessible senior facilities for all abilities
- Audio/visual accessibility
- Safety and security features

Comparables:

- Parks with exercise equipment
 - Senior-friendly
 - Outdoor fitness equipment for seniors
- Gardening/community gardens

Needs and Priorities:

- Security on-site and/or cameras
- Fixed park hours
- Continue health and wellness
- Fitness facilities
- Mental health
- Maintenance (preventative)

- Partnerships with resources in the community
 - County resources
 - Community resources
 - Parks as one-stop-shop for the day

Youth Sports Organizations Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Youth services
 - Summer camp sites with gathering spaces
 - Food
 - Classes
 - Get your green on and go
- Young children
 - Affordability
 - Structured activities for new skills
- Off-road multi-use trails
- Cycling opportunities
- Safe spaces away from traffic

Vision:

- Opportunities for improvement
 - Certain communities have more opportunities for facilities and programs, more equitable
 - More balanced system across the County
- Must have the outdoor space for opportunities
- Address high-risk areas
- Entry-level positions and training opportunities for teens
- Mindful stations for mental health
- Parkland acquisition
- Addressing increased growth and development
- Conservation of open space and natural areas
- More public recreation space in non-private areas



- Pocket parks in dense areas
- Increased tree canopy
- Address potential user conflicts
- Dedicated space for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians
- Improved streetscape

Comparables:

- Areas with dedicated cycle space
- Need more investment in public amenities for cycling
 - Park City, Utah
 - Philadelphia, PA
 - Frisco, CO
- Broward County
 - Covered basketball courts
 - More shaded spaces
- Older teen programs
 - Programs for those that don't play on travel teams

Needs and Priorities:

- Activate under-utilized spaces
 - Responding to trends
 - Utilize County-owned spaces for places that are used by the public
- Places for older kids/teens that meet their interests
- Outdoor/adventure
- Bike trails, pump tracks and wheeled sports
- Recreation responding to heat
 - Shade/tree canopy
 - Water access
 - Flexibility
- Skate park with new YMCA

- Lake Lydle
- Affordable activities for teens

Special Needs Programs Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Opportunities for health and wellness
- Ability to spend time in nature
- Affordable programs
- Variety of programs
- New skills for those with disabilities

Vision:

- Parks – need to maintain what we have
- Resources to grow and expand
- More opportunities for people with disabilities to participate
- Additional locations for therapeutic recreation, e.g. complex in Lake Worth
- County is so large, not serving all areas equally
- Facilities of individuals with spinal injuries
- Accessibility for all age groups
- Transportation to recreation areas

Comparables:

- We offer a lot, we have a lot of resources available

Needs and Priorities:

- Staffing
- New and innovative facilities like Okechee wake park
- Lots of space, but limited parking (accessible)
- Adaptive sports – gyms that can host these activities
- Expand wheelchair lending program and recreation facilities

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- Storage spaces
- On-site access to equipment for people that are traveling to our facilities
- Specialized wheelchairs for nature trails
- Website information on available equipment
- Trail access
- Nature-based recreation
 - Providing open space as County develops
- Other individuals with disabilities across the spectrum
- Internal promotion of opportunities and advertisement of services
- Special needs swim lessons and drowning prevention
- Parks that have everything – something for everyone throughout the County
- Programming is currently centrally located- need to branch out
- Senior programming as the population ages
- Providing opportunities for everyone
- Inclusive playgrounds with sensory opportunities
- Transportation
- Safe spaces for children and families
- Affordability

Municipal Partners Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- County offers facilities we do not offer
 - At-will, nature-based recreation
 - Large picnic pavilion areas
- Municipalities tend to offer more active recreation
- Large athletic complexes

- Dog parks
- County facilities and fee structures
- Benefit from large regional parks
- Partnerships to build up our parks
- All parks are for everyone
- Help with the economy

Vision:

- Pickleball courts
- Canals connecting throughout the County
- Regional trail system - ways to connect all of our spaces together
- Blueways
- Ownership of the connectivity initiative
- Maintain visionary ideas
- County add facilities and programming that the municipalities don't do, like adventure recreation
- Local level
 - What exists between each municipality and the county
- Ways to reevaluate where connectivity will benefit

Comparables:

- Broward as an example of connectivity
- Sunrise, FL
 - Covered pickleball/basketball
- Park systems abroad
 - Playgrounds
 - Less structured/more creative
 - Overcoming legal issues to creative play
 - Destination – unique, nature-based

Needs and Priorities:

- West Delray/West Palm/ Boynton are going to need help
 - Young families with high expectations
 - Level of service
- Field deficient
- Potential land acquisition
- Priority to serve families and young children
- Staffing issues
- Partnerships with other agencies and career paths for agencies
- Operations and maintenance
- High-density, affordable housing is stressing infrastructure
- Using hardscape areas as parks (underpasses)
- How to get people to natural areas
- Addressing the homeless/unsheltered

Community Organizations Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Passive parks and active parks
- Gathering spaces for parks
- Nature-based recreation
- Glades
 - City parks and County parks serving four cities
- Family activities and special events
- Marinas
- Lake access

Vision:

- Build up County parks that serve cities
- If every park had a classroom for around 20-40 people
 - Meetings/clubs/community groups
 - People are currently meeting at fire stations, sheriffs offices, and libraries
- Track clubs
 - Practice area for track clubs
 - Currently utilizing schools
- Water park
 - Functional year-round
 - Learn to swim programs and therapeutic programs
- Continue to get feedback from the community
- Water activities in the Glades area

Comparables:

- Switzerland/Italy
 - Vending and franchises in a park – snacks/ refreshments
- Public/private partnerships
- Bike rentals/bike shares/bike connectivity
- Would like to see a lot of the things that are on the coast out in the western portion of the County

Needs and Priorities:

- Trails
- Fitness and exercise opportunities
- Tennis/pickleball courts and programs
- Upgrades to existing facilities
- Changing baseball fields to soccer/multipurpose fields
- Closest County Park to the glades is too far for some

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

- Meeting rooms
- Zumba/Yoga – need instructors
- Beaches – keep them clean
- Dog parks – places to take dogs in dense communities
- Restrooms
- Splash pads
- Water-related activities
- Nature centers

Economic Development Focus Group

Benefits of Parks:

- Infrastructure
- Different organizations that we bring in to use the parks
- Parks and recreation is the largest provider for sports venues
 - Sports tourism
- Young people
 - Different experiences across the parks

Vision:

- ATV or UTV parks - safe opportunities
- Diversity of product that lives within the parks
- Anchor for economic development and tourism
- Creative and forward thinking, open-minded
- Willing to have conversations regarding development
- Fishing/water-based activities
- Take advantage of Lake Okeechobee
- Expand on how we communicate what is available

Comparables:

- Places with an ATV/UTV park
- Tampa
 - Events/sporting events that bring outside interest
 - Balance of organization and public use of facilities/local programming
 - Large venue with 15+ fields
- Wellington

Needs and Priorities:

- Our parks are underutilized
- Awareness of what is available
- Facilities
 - Indoor sporting venues
 - Multipurpose indoor facilities
 - Convention center/fairgrounds are only current large options
 - Missing intermediate size facility
 - Large footprint of rectangular fields
 - Synthetic turf – rectangular fields can't handle demand
 - Open-minded for opportunities like pickleball
 - Post-COVID recreation trends
 - Synthetic turf baseball diamonds
 - Golf range (Top Golf)

2.3 - COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Methodology

One of the primary engagement methods of the PRCCNA was a series of community meetings that were open to the public. Hosted by the County and members of the project team, the meetings were held at key public centers in geographically distinct areas of the County to capture an accurate cross-section of residents. All meetings were from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Meetings Locations and Date:

- Green Cay Nature Center - Nov. 8, 2023
- Okeetchee Nature Center - Nov. 9, 2023
- Belle Glade Public Library - Nov. 14, 2023
- West Jupiter Community Center - Nov. 15, 2023



Community Meeting Findings

Common Themes

Participants generally enjoyed outdoor activities such as walking and biking, and expressed strong interests in cultural experiences. There was a strong preference for family-oriented and inclusive recreation, including programs for individuals with disabilities and active seniors. The enthusiasm extended to aquatic programs, with interest in increased opportunities for track and field, soccer, kayaking and boating.

- Outdoor activities, including walking, biking and kayaking
- Cultural activities and programs
- Family-oriented and inclusive recreation
- Programs for seniors
- Increased access and availability
- Maintain park cleanliness, enhance user-friendliness
- Upgrade playgrounds
- Resolve conflicts in natural areas
- Extend Pioneer Park Pool's operation, coordinate opening times
- Increase staff for diverse programs
- Replace single-use fields with multi-use space
- Utilize social media for local event awareness

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Meeting #1 Green Cay Nature Center

Participants indicated a desire to participate in natural and outdoor activities such as walking, visiting the beach, kayaking, and biking.

Changes to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- Keep the park clean from litter
- More user- friendly, adapt to specialized needs users
- Update playground
- Add more sunshades
- Use sustainable products to as cleaning products and construction materials

Additions to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- More parks in western communities including more walking area, biking and wildlife space
- Photography exhibits: celebrate local and international photography

What types of facilities and activities would you like to have access to?

- 5 Years:
 - Off-road bike tours and walking area
 - Guided natural tours
 - Learning opportunities on botanical and horticultural topics
- 10 Years:
 - More senior and adult programs
- 20 Years:
 - More park space



Meeting #2 Okeehetee Nature Center

Participants showed support for natural and outdoor activities like walking, visiting wildlife/natural areas, exercising, fishing, boating, kayaking, and going to the beach.

Additionally, there was a need for art and cultural pursuits, such as visiting museums, historical places and attending visual and performing arts events. Participants also expressed a desire for family-oriented and inclusive recreation activities, showing interest in activities like picnicking, programs for individuals with disabilities, attending special events and festivals, and activities for more active seniors.

Changes to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- Conflicts between PBC parks (at natural and combined areas)
- Coordinate park opening and closing times

Additions to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- Add employees to natural centers
- Increase funding
- Add visible signage in parks
- Add additional waste receptacles in parks
- Increase staff levels/retention
- Improve efficiency of hiring process
- Modernized facilities with digital access
- Add benches in wildlife/natural area
- Closer access to restrooms from ski dock area
- Add boardwalk/birdwatching platforms

What types of facilities and activities would you like to have access to?

- 5 Years:
 - Water skiing
 - Add boardwalks



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Meeting #3 Belle Glade Public Library

Participants expressed an interest in family recreation activities, particularly catering to active seniors and individuals with disabilities. There was a notable interest in aquatic programs, including water fitness, therapeutic/warm water programs, splash pads, and swimming lessons.

Additionally, participants expressed a desire for increased availability of track and field, soccer, kayaking, boating, and biking activities.

Changes to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- Extend the operating time of Pioneer Park Pool throughout the entire year
- Upgrade the playground to include obstacle courses

Additions to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- Meeting Space
- Activities for children with disabilities
- Add running track to support track clubs

- Add bike racks and create bike trails with berms, ramps, wooden features
- Soccer fields
- Tennis courts
- Splash pad
- Amphitheater stage

What types of facilities and activities would you like to have access to?

- 5 Years:
 - Mountain bike park
 - Track field
 - Meeting space
- 10 Years:
 - Pool / Splash pad in Pahokee / South Bay
 - Skate park
 - Amphitheater



Meeting # 4 West Jupiter Community Center

People were mostly interested in family recreation programs for people with disabilities and activities for special events and festivals.

Participants also enjoy natural and outdoor activities and would like to have more of walking, biking routes and wildlife and natural areas.

Changes to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- More staff for more programs
- Replace single use fields with multi-purpose fields
- More physical activities for middle aged people, people with disabilities; evening activities schedule
- Social media to bring awareness of local events, meetings

Additions to Parks or Recreation Programs:

- More day programs for adults with disabilities in north county
- Extend open-gym hours
- Therapeutic recreation
- Multi-use trails for walking, running and biking

What types of facilities and activities would you like to have access to?

- 5 Years:
 - Recreation building for the North County.
 - Therapeutic recreation center in North County
 - More programs and activities for people with disabilities
- 20 Years:
 - Housing development for adults with disabilities



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

2.4 - VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE


Project Website

A project website was created at the beginning of the project to keep the community updated on the progress of the plan. This project website also served as a platform for virtual public engagement purposes through the utilization of virtual meeting rooms that hosted all PRCCNA related information along with options for online community feedback. The online survey was also accessed from this site.

Virtual Open House

As part of the online engagement, community members were invited to visit a Virtual Open House and provide feedback on the needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities and services for their specific community. Once in the Virtual Open House, participants could watch a welcome video, view information boards, and participate in a series of engagement exercises to provide input. The Virtual Open House remained accessible for three months for the community to learn and provide input on parks and recreation needs and priorities.

www.PBCParksPlan.com

[Home](#) [Project Overview](#) [Process & Schedule](#) [Document Downloads](#) [Contact Us](#)



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

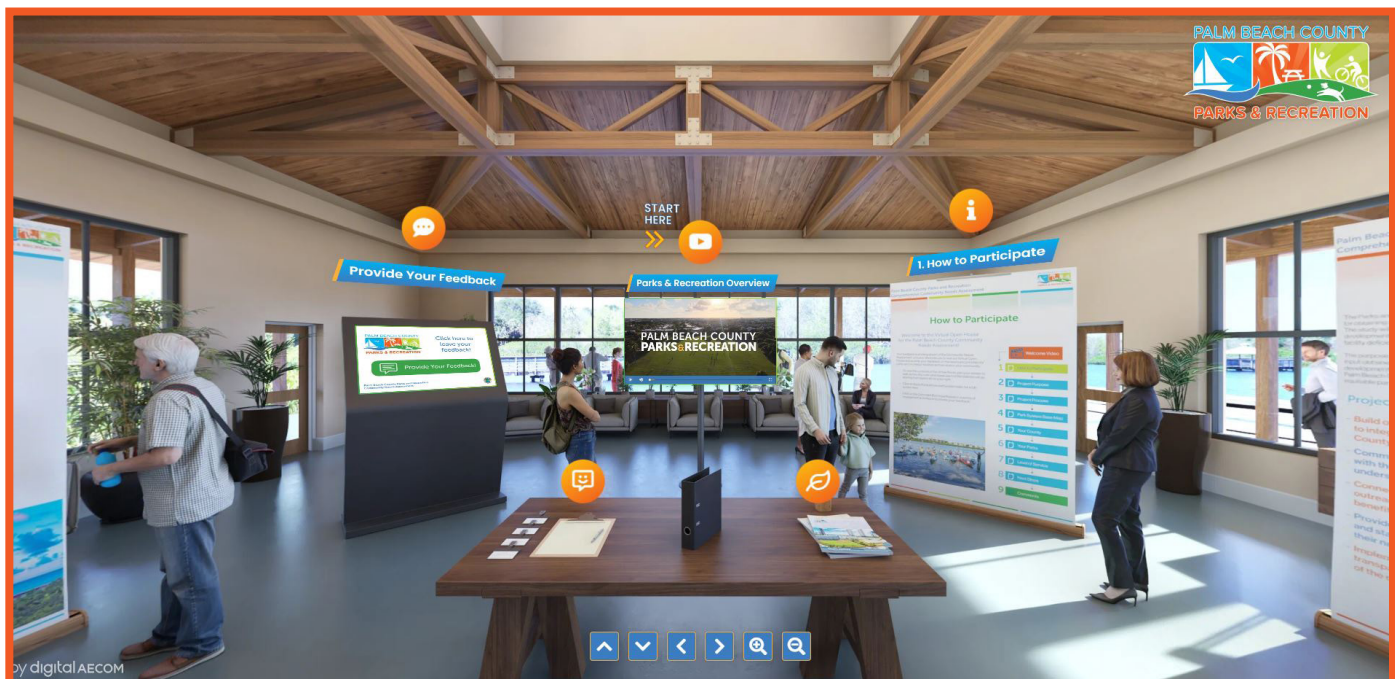
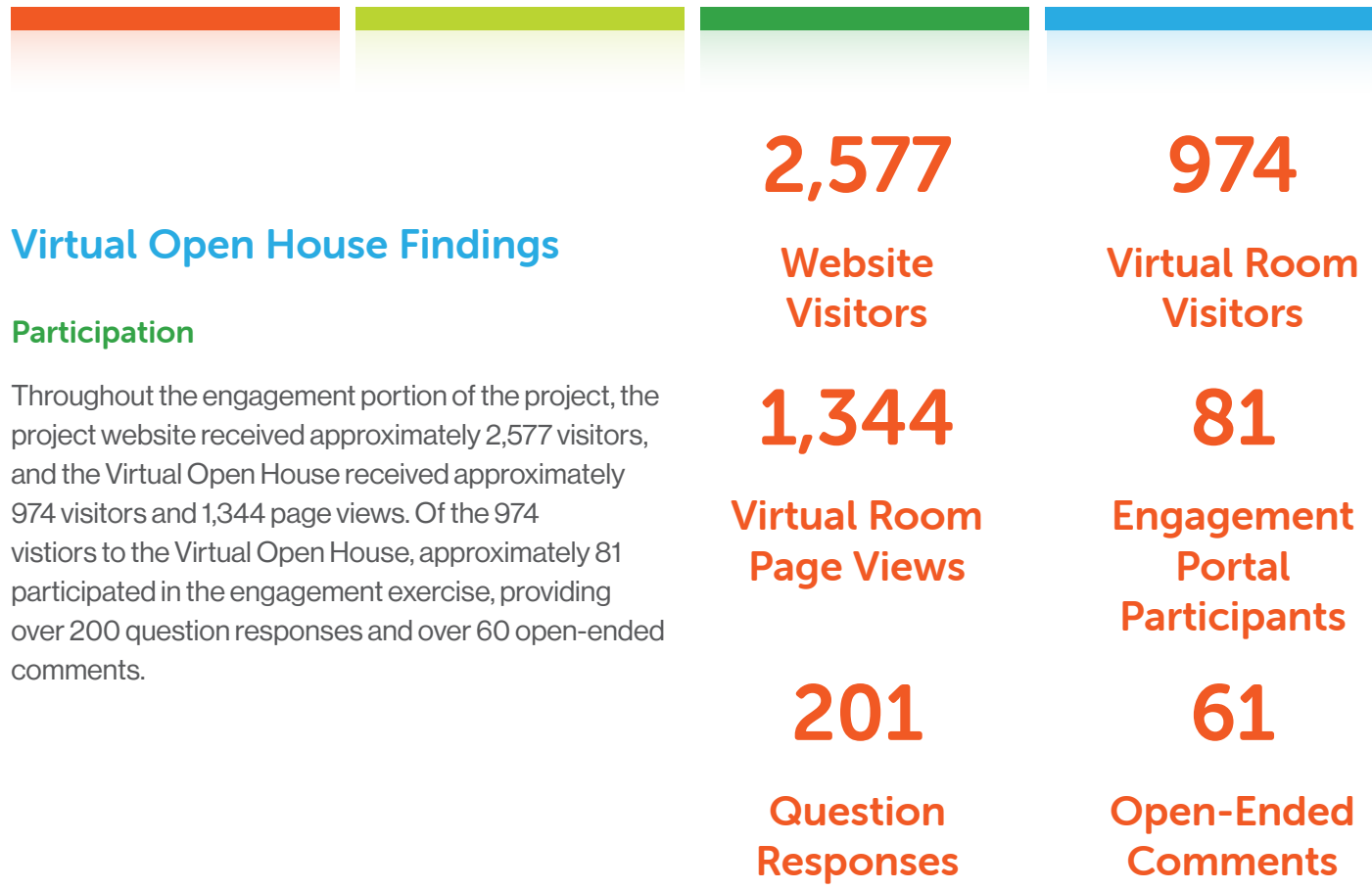
Community Meetings

Palm Beach County is working to gather public input on your parks and recreation system through a Community Needs Assessment. As part of this effort, the County will be hosting a series of Community Meetings to help establish the needs and priorities for parks, programs, and recreation services.

All meetings are open to the public and will be held at four distinct geographic locations throughout the County.

- **Community Meeting #1**
Green Cay Nature Center; November 08th, 2023; 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- **Community Meeting #2**
Okeetchee Nature Center; November 09th, 2023; 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- **Community Meeting #3**
Belle Glade Public Library; November 14th, 2023; 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- **Community Meeting #4**
West Jupiter Community Center; November 15th, 2023; 6:00 – 8:00 pm

[Explore Your Virtual Open House](#)



Virtual Open House Public Engagement Room

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation

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Engagement Exercises

While attending the virtual open house, the participants were asked to answer several questions. These questions were intended to gauge the participant's sentiments towards the current park infrastructure and their vision for the future. They were asked the following questions:

- What would you change?
- What would you add?
- What type of facilities or activities would you like to have access to in five, ten, twenty years?

In addition, the participants were asked to select which activities they currently participate in or have a need for from different sets of program/activity categories.

Common Themes

The common themes identified through the engagement exercises are as follows:

- Extend hours and timeframe of services
 - Participants requested that the park system extended their hours of service to allow for increased access, as well as introduce early morning, evening, and weekend classes. They also mentioned expanding the season for certain recreational activities like the water parks.
- Increase services and recreational activities
 - Participants wanted to see an increase in many existing services and activities that the park system already provides. For example, they mentioned increasing the number of archery classes and bike rentals available, building additional indoor and outdoor pickleball courts, and adding more playground equipment, splash pads, and pools.

- There was also interest in expanding the County's recreational sports teams options to include volleyball, kickball, and swimming, among other sports.
- Improve existing infrastructure
 - Many comments included improving existing infrastructure, specifically adding shade structures to the walking and biking paths and playgrounds. Upgrading restrooms and installing more water bottle refill stations was also mentioned.
- Increase equitable access
 - Ensuring equitable access to the park system was a high priority for the respondents. This included access for individuals with disabilities, residents from unincorporated areas, and visitors with irregular work schedules. There was a particular interest in ensuring sports fields are available for the Special Olympics.
- Maintaining green space
 - Many comments requested the green space throughout the park system remains protected and maintained.

Below are the results for the question regarding which activities the participant or a member of the participant's household currently participates in or have a need for. Top five results from each category are shown.

Natural/Outdoor Activities

13 Participants

1. Go to the Beach (92%)
2. Walking (85%)
3. Exercising (77%)
4. Visit Wildlife/Natural Areas (77%)
5. Biking (62%)

Sports/Fitness

11 Participants

1. Fitness Classes (73%)
2. Gymnastics/ Dance (45%)
3. Pickleball (36%)
4. Track and Field (27%)
5. Tennis (27%)

Family Recreation

12 Participants

1. Special Events/ Festivals (83%)
2. Picnicking (67%)
3. Life Skill Classes (50%)
4. Active Senior (42%)
5. Visit Playground (42%)

Art/Cultural

12 Participants

1. Visit Museums (83%)
2. Historical Places/ Events (73%)
3. Performing Arts (67%)
4. Visual Arts (58%)

Youth Programs

11 Participants

1. Youth Aquatics (27%)
2. Sports Development (27%)
3. Pre-School (18%)
4. Camps (18%)
5. After School (18%)

Aquatic Programs

11 Participants

1. Water Fitness (8%)
2. Swimming for Fun (64%)
3. Therapeutic/ Warm Water (55%)
4. Learn to Swim (27%)
5. Use Splash Pad (9%)

2.5 - ONLINE SURVEY

Methodology

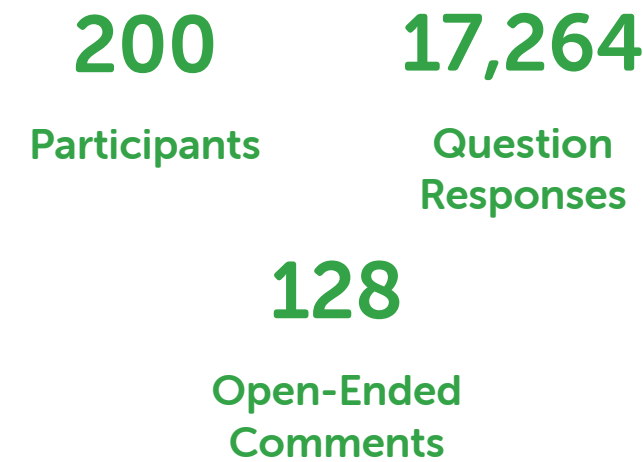
The PRCCNA online survey was conducted using the PublicInput.com engagement platform over the course of approximately four months. The survey was designed to seek input from the public for this planning project on various topics such as demographics, usage patterns, barriers to usage, priorities, and communication. The following collection of charts and data highlights results from the online survey.

Detailed results of all the survey questions can be found in the Appendices.

Online Survey Findings

Participation

The online survey received over 400 visitors and 200 participants who completed the survey. A summary of participation is below.



Overall satisfaction for program services offered by Palm Beach County

Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the program services offered by the County, with all aspects of program services receiving higher than 80% satisfaction. The respondents were satisfied with the quality of instructors, fees charged for value received, times programs are offered, quality of customer service for registration, quality of facilities where programs are offered, and ease of registration. It is important to note, however, that availability of information about parks and recreation programs and services on the website was also the top aspect of program services that respondents were dissatisfied with (16%). With online medium becoming the preferred mode of accessing information about programs, having a streamlined website is essential. The County should continue improving online platforms and ensure websites are updated and easy to navigate.

Top 5
Aspects of
Program
Services
with Highest
Satisfaction

1. Quality of Instructors (92%)
2. Fees Charged for Value Received (88%)
3. Times Programs are Offered (87%)
4. Quality of Customer Service for Registration (87%)
5. Quality of Facility where Program is Offered / Ease of Registration (85%)

Facilities Needing the Most Attention

When asked to rate their satisfaction for parks and recreation facilities, respondents also expressed a high level of satisfaction for facilities that they used. In addition to asking participants to rate their satisfaction with current facilities, respondents were also asked to rate the facilities they felt needed the most attention over the next two years. Responses indicated that attention was needed at beaches, multi-use trails, large regional parks, pickleball courts, nature centers, and small neighborhood parks. This aligns with input received through other questions in the survey, as well as other methods of engagement conducted across the process.

Top 5 Facilities Needing the Most Attention Over the Next Two Years

1. Beaches (40%)
2. Multi-use Trails (26%)
3. Large Regional Parks (18%)
4. Pickleball Courts (18%)
5. Small Neighborhood Parks (17%)

Barriers to Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks or facilities being too far from residences was listed as the topmost reason preventing household members from using parks and recreation facilities. Another top barrier was “program or facility not offered”, which can partially be attributed to a lack of awareness of what is being offered. Improvement to the marketing of programs and services could potentially help mitigate the perception that programs or facilities are not offered. Using other community or municipal facilities was also a top reason preventing use of County facilities, highlighting the need for coordination to reduce potential duplication of services.

Top 5 Reasons Preventing Residents from Using Parks, Greenways, Recreation Facilities, or Programs

1. Parks/Facilities Too Far From Residence (35%)
2. Program or Facility Not Offered (24%)
3. I Do Not Know What is Being Offered (24%)
4. Other (21%)
5. Parks/Facilities are Too Crowded / I Use Private or Other Community's Facilities (19%)

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Facilities Most Needed by Respondents

The results of the type of facilities most needed by respondents is consistent with the results of other public engagement efforts. The results express a need for beaches (48%), restrooms (47%), large regional parks (45%), shaded areas (43%), small neighborhood parks (41%), nature centers (41%), open green space (41%), multi-use trails (40%), picnic pavilions and shelters (35%), and recreation centers (34%).

Facilities Most Important to Respondents

The facilities that are most important to the residents of Palm Beach County largely align with the facilities that residents had the most need for. Top facilities include beaches (48%), multi-use trails (32%), large regional parks (28%), nature centers (22%), open green space (19%), pickleball courts (18%), playgrounds (17%), restrooms (16%), small neighborhood parks (15%), and shaded areas (15%).

Top 10 Facilities Most Needed by Respondents

1. Beaches
2. Restrooms
3. Large Regional Parks
4. Shaded Areas
5. Small Neighborhood Parks
6. Nature Center
7. Open Green Space
8. Multi-use Trails
9. Picnic Pavilions and Shelters
10. Recreation Centers

Top 10 Facilities Most Important to Respondents

1. Beaches
2. Multi-use Trails
3. Large Regional Parks
4. Nature Centers
5. Open Green Space
6. Pickleball Courts
7. Playgrounds
8. Restrooms
9. Small Neighborhood Parks
10. Shaded Areas

Programs Most Needed by Respondents

Respondents listed several at-will recreational activities and programs as some of their top needs. Activities and programs ranking highly included nature/environmental enjoyment (47%), outdoor/adventure recreation (47%), concerts (44%), history and museums (43%), performing arts (39%), special events (38%), health and wellness (37%), water-related activities (37%), active adult activities (36%), and socializing (35%). These needs coincide with the current recreational trends of people wanting to participate in more at-will activities versus planned programs such as sports activities.

Programs Most Important to Respondents

The programs and activities that are most important to the residents of Palm Beach County largely align with the facilities that residents had the most need for. Top activities and programs include nature/environmental enjoyment (50%), outdoor/adventure recreation (38%), active adult activities (30%), concerts (28%), health and wellness (25%), boating/sailing (18%), family-focused programs and special events (18%), tennis/pickleball programs and leagues (16%), adult athletic leagues (14%), and history and museums (13%).

Top 10 Activities or Programs Most Needed by Respondents

1. Nature/Environmental Enjoyment
2. Outdoor/Adventure Recreation
3. Concerts
4. History and Museums
5. Performing Arts
6. Special Events
7. Health and Wellness
8. Water-related Activities
9. Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities
10. Socializing

Top 10 Activities or Programs Most Important to Respondents

1. Nature/Environmental Enjoyment
2. Outdoor/Adventure Recreation
3. Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities
4. Concerts
5. Health and Wellness
6. Boating/Sailing
7. Family-Focused Programs and Special Events
8. Tennis/Pickleball Programs and Leagues
9. Adult Athletic Leagues
10. History and Museums

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Sources of Information about County's Recreational Programs and Activities

A majority of the survey respondents indicated learning about the County's programs and activities through email blasts, County/department website, social media posts, other websites, and printed publications. This is a reflection of the County's consistent efforts to ensure the community stays informed. However, in the barriers to parks and facilities use online survey question, around 24% of respondents cited not knowing what is being offered as one of the top barriers to using the County's programs and facilities.

Actions to Improve the Parks and Recreation System

In an effort to identify how resources should be allocated to improve the park system, respondents were asked which actions they would support with their tax dollars. Top actions selected by respondents included maintain/improve existing beach parks, develop new nature trails and greenways, maintain/improve existing parks, maintain/improve existing nature centers/natural areas, and maintain/improve existing trails and greenways .

Top 5 Methods Most Preferred Methods of Communication

1. E-mail Newsletters (69%)
2. County/Department Website (53%)
3. Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) (45%)
4. Search Engine/Other Website (28%)
5. Printed Publications/ Leisure Time Magazine (19%)

Top 5 Actions to Improve the Parks and Recreation System

1. Maintain/Improve Existing Beach Parks (50%)
2. Develop New Nature Trails and Greenways (47%)
3. Maintain/Improve Existing Parks (33%)
4. Maintain/Improve Existing Nature Centers/Natural Areas (30%)
5. Maintain/Improve Trails and Greenways

2.6 - STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

Methodology

In conjunction with the other engagement techniques, the project team also administered a statistically valid parks and recreation survey for Palm Beach County during the winter months of 2023. The survey results helped determine park and recreation priorities for the county at large, as well as specific communities throughout Palm Beach County.

Survey packets were mailed to a random sample of households in Palm Beach County. 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 online at PalmBeachCountySurvey.org.

After the surveys were mailed, the project team followed up with residents to encourage participation. To prevent people who were not residents of Palm Beach County from participating,

everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. The project team then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were 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 collect a minimum of 1,200 completed surveys from residents. The goal was met with 1,212 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 1,212 households has a precision of at least +/- 2.8 at the 95% level of confidence. Major findings from the survey can be found on the following pages. Results were also cross-tabulated for twelve distinct planning areas across the County to capture the unique needs of the communities in each area.

Palm Beach County Facilities/ Amenities Use

Use of Facilities/Amenities

Respondents were asked to select all the facilities/ amenities their household uses. Beaches (79%), restrooms (65%), and small neighborhood parks (57%) were selected most often by respondents. If respondents did use the facility/amenity, they were asked to rate their satisfaction. Respondents were most satisfied (rating "satisfied" or "very satisfied") with nature centers (91%), large regional parks (90%), and golf courses (89%). Respondents said the most important facilities/amenities to their households are beaches (45%), restrooms (27%), and multi-use trails (22%).

2023 Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Survey
Let your voice be heard today!

Palm Beach County would like your input to help determine priorities for our community. This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete. When you return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-only envelope. If you prefer, you can survey online at PalmBeachCountySurvey.org. We appreciate your time.

1. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

Under age 5	Ages 5-14	Ages 15-24	Ages 25-34	Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55-64	Ages 65+
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Please indicate if you use the following parks or recreation facilities/amenities in Palm Beach County by circling the YES or NO next to each. If you do use this amenity, rate your overall satisfaction on a scale of 4 to 1, where 4 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

Facility/Amenity	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
1. Beaches	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
2. Large regional parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
3. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
4. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
5. Golf courses	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
6. Large regional parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
7. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
8. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
9. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
10. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
11. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
12. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
13. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
14. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
15. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
16. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
17. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
18. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
19. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
20. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
21. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
22. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
23. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
24. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
25. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
26. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
27. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
28. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
29. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
30. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
31. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
32. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
33. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
34. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
35. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
36. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
37. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
38. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
39. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
40. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
41. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
42. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
43. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
44. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
45. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
46. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
47. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
48. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
49. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
50. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
51. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
52. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
53. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
54. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
55. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
56. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
57. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
58. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
59. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
60. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
61. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
62. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
63. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
64. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
65. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
66. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
67. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
68. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
69. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
70. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
71. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
72. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
73. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
74. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
75. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
76. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
77. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
78. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
79. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
80. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
81. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
82. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
83. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
84. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
85. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
86. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
87. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
88. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
89. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
90. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
91. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
92. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
93. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
94. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
95. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
96. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
97. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
98. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
99. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
100. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
101. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
102. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
103. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
104. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
105. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
106. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
107. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
108. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
109. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
110. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
111. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
112. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
113. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
114. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
115. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
116. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
117. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
118. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
119. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
120. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
121. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
122. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
123. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
124. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
125. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
126. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
127. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
128. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
129. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
130. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
131. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
132. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
133. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
134. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
135. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
136. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
137. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
138. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
139. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
140. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
141. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
142. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
143. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
144. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
145. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
146. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
147. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
148. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
149. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
150. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
151. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
152. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
153. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
154. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
155. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
156. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
157. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
158. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
159. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
160. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
161. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
162. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
163. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
164. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
165. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
166. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
167. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
168. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
169. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
170. Restrooms	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
171. Picnic pavilions and shelters	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
172. Dog parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
173. Recreation centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
174. Beach volleyball	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
175. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
176. Community centers and social facilities	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
177. Multi-use trails	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
178. Nature centers	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
179. Open green spaces	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
180. Restrooms	Yes	No				

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Transportation Methods

Respondents most often travel to parks and recreation facilities via driving (92%) followed by walking (42%).

Parks and Green Space

Almost an equal percentage of respondents feel there is sufficient parks and green space areas within walking distance of their residence (46%) and that there is not (47%).

Barriers to Recreation Use

Respondents most often noted parks/facilities being too far from residence (28%), not knowing what is offered (23%), and insufficient security/loitering (19%).

Benefits of Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with 10 potential benefits provided by parks, trails, and recreation facilities. Respondents most often agreed (rating “agree” or “strongly agree”) with the benefit of preserving open space and the environment (94%), improving physical health and fitness (93%), and improving mental health and reducing stress (92%).

Palm Beach County Programs Participation

Recreation Program Use

Twenty-five percent (25%) of respondents report participating in recreation programs offered by Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation during the past two years. Of those who have participated, over half (56%) participated in two to three programs. Respondents most often use parks, facilities, and programs during weekday evenings (31%).

Satisfaction with Programs

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with 10 aspects of recreation programs. Respondents were most satisfied (rating “satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with the overall quality of programs (86%), the times programs were offered (85%), and the location of programs (82%).

Communication Methods

Respondents most often learn about Palm Beach County recreational programs/activities via word of mouth (56%), social media (54%), and the county/department website (45%). Respondents would most prefer to use social media (58%), email newsletters (45%), and the county/department website (42%).

Development and Funding

Respondents most often support (rating “somewhat supportive” or “very supportive”) maintaining/improving existing parks (87%), maintaining/improving existing beach parks (87%), and maintaining/improving existing nature centers/natural areas (85%). The three actions respondents would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars are maintaining/improving existing beach parks (45%), developing new nature trails and greenways (35%), and maintaining/improving existing nature centers/natural areas (32%).

Willingness to Pay for Improvements

Respondents were asked to indicate what the maximum amount of additional funding they would be willing to pay per month to fund improvements to parks and facilities. Respondents most often selected \$4-5 (24%), \$1-3 (21%), and nothing (21%).

Parks and Recreation Facilities Needs and Priorities

Facility Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 30 different parks and 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

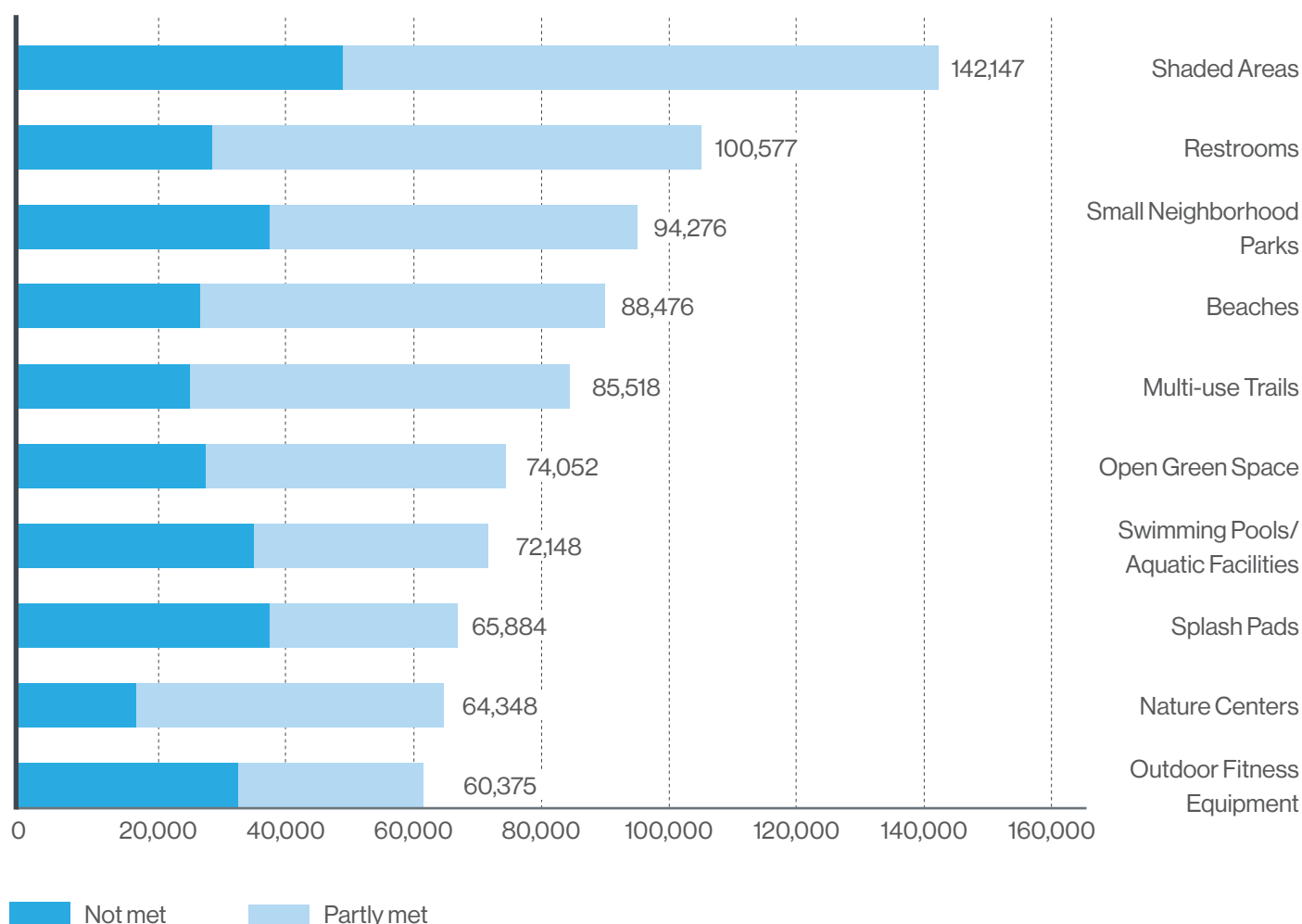
“unmet” need for various facilities.

The three parks and recreation facilities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Shaded areas – 142,147 households
2. Restrooms – 100,577 households
3. Small neighborhood parks – 94,276 households

The top ten percentages of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in **Figure 2-1** below.

Figure 2-1: Estimated Number of Households Whose Facility/Amenity Needs Are Only “Partly Met” or “Not Met”



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

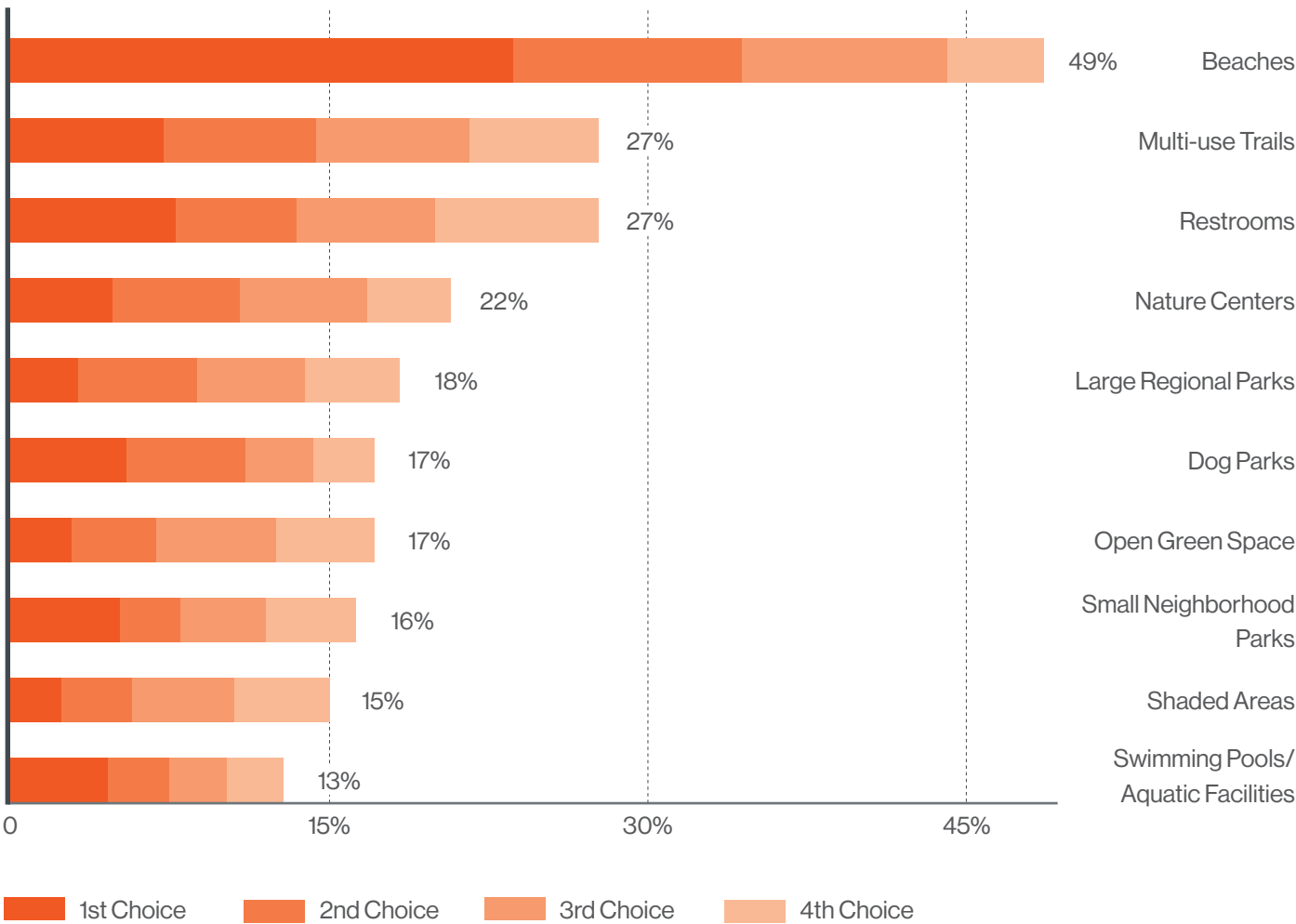
Facilities Importance

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 ranked most important to residents:

- 1. Beaches (49%)
- 2. Multi-use trails (27%)
- 3. Restrooms (27%)
- 4. Nature centers (22%)

The top ten percentages of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in **Figure 2-2** below.

Figure 2-2: Facilities/Amenities Most Important to Households



Recreation Program Needs and Priorities

Recreation Program Needs

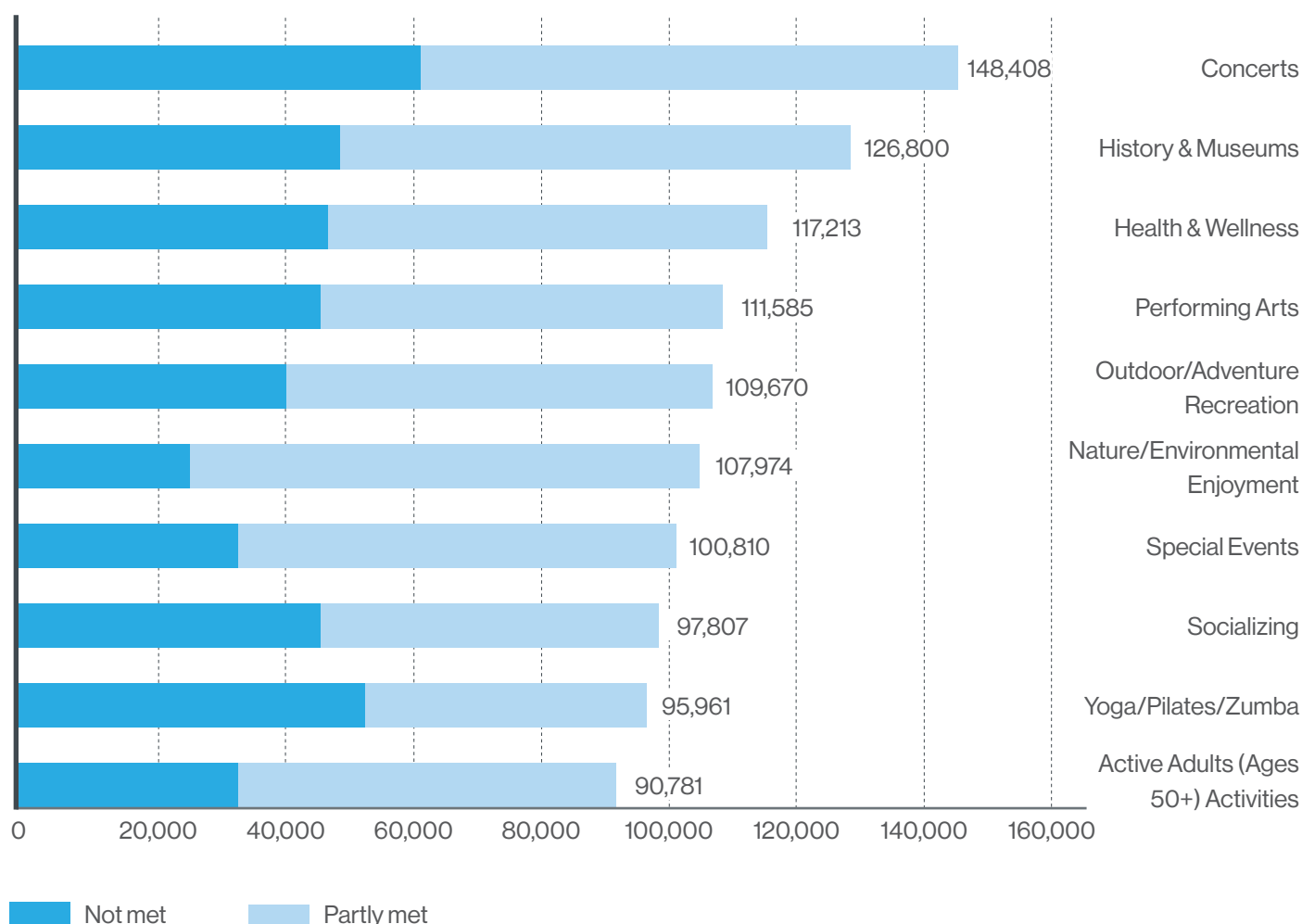
Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 29 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various recreation programs.

The three programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Concerts (148,408 households)
2. History and museums (126,800 households)
3. Health and wellness (117,213 households)

The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 29 programs assessed is shown in **Figure 2-3** below.

Figure 2-3: Estimated Number of Households Whose Program Needs Are Only “Partly Met” or “Not Met”



Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Programs Importance

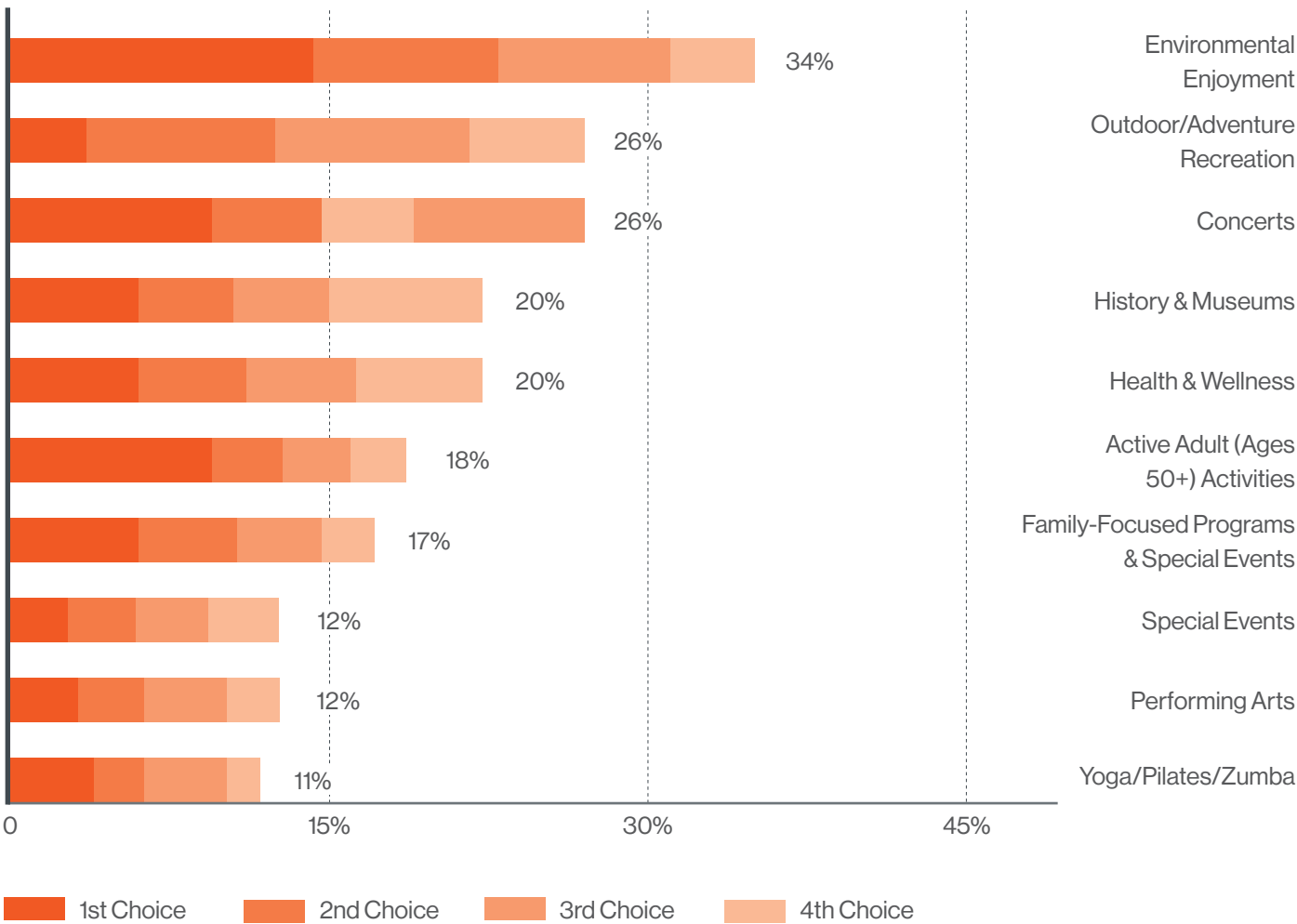
In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, these were the four programs ranked most important to residents:

- 1. Nature/environmental enjoyment (34%)
- 2. Outdoor/adventure recreation (26%) and Concerts (26%)
- 3. History and museums (20%) and Health & Wellness (20%)

4. Active adult (ages 50+) activities (18%)

The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in **Figure 2-4** below.

Figure 2-4: Programs Most Important to Households



Priority Investment Rating

Facilities/Amenities

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The PIR equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility. Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in the Appendix.

Based on the PIR, the following **parks/facilities** were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Beaches (PIR=163)
- Shaded areas (PIR=131)
- Restrooms (PIR=126)
- Multi-use trails (PIR=116)

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following **programs** were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Concerts (PIR=175)
- Nature/environmental enjoyment (PIR=173)
- Outdoor/adventure recreation (PIR=150)
- History and museums (PIR=145)
- Health and wellness (PIR=138)
- Active adult (ages 50+) activities (PIR=114)
- Performing arts (PIR=109)
- Special events (PIR=103)

The lists below shows the top ten Priority Investment Rating for both facilities and programs assessed on the survey.

Top 10 Priorities for Investment for Facilities/ Amenities Based on Priority Investment Rating

1. Beaches (163)
2. Shaded Areas (131)
3. Restrooms (126)
4. Multi-use Trails (116)
5. Small Neighborhood Parks (99)
6. Nature Centers (90)
7. Open Green Space (86)
8. Swimming Pools/Aquatic Facilities (78)
9. Dog Parks (69)
10. Large Regional Parks (66)

Top 10 Activities or Programs Most Needed by Respondents

1. Concerts (175)
2. Nature/Environmental Enjoyment (173)
3. Outdoor/Adventure Recreation (150)
4. History & Museums (145)
5. Health & Wellness (138)
6. Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities (114)
7. Performing Arts (109)
8. Special Events (103)
9. Yoga/Pilates/Zumba (96)
10. Family-Focused Special Events (96)

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Planning Areas

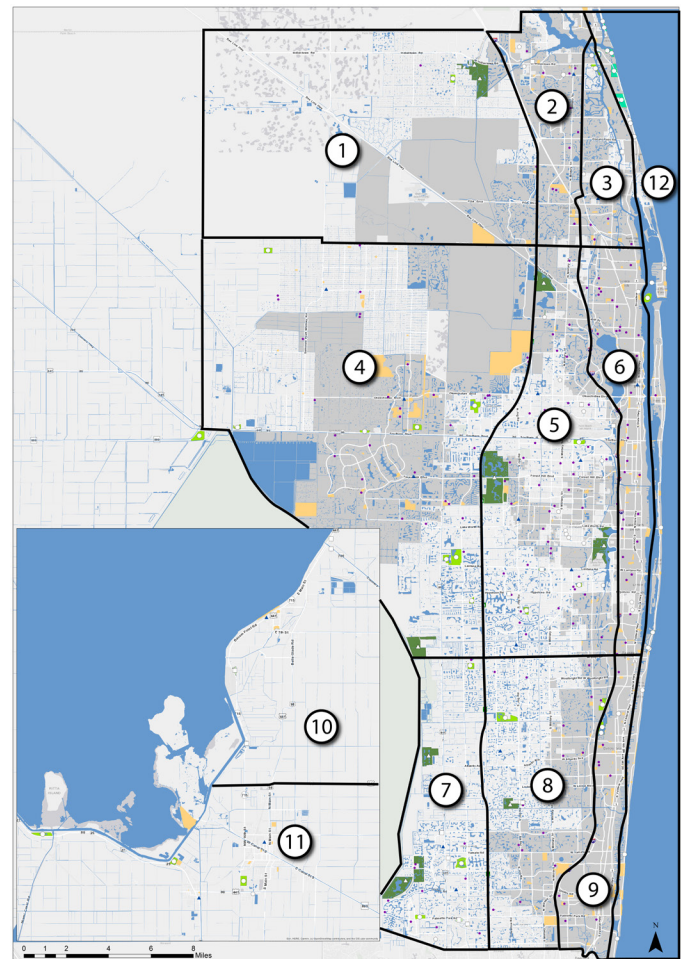
In addition to County-wide results, the survey findings were cross-tabulated across twelve distinct planning areas in order to capture the needs and priorities of the diverse communities throughout Palm Beach County. Shown in the map on the right, the areas are:

1. North West
2. North Central
3. North East
4. Central West
5. Central Central
6. Central East
7. South West
8. South Central
9. South East
10. Pahokee
11. Belle Glade
12. Barrier Islands

Planning Area Findings

In general, planning area findings were consistent with findings at the County-wide level. However, there were some areas where distinct differences in needs and priorities could be found across the planning areas. Below is a list of common themes identified through the cross-tabulation exercise:

- Satisfaction with recreation facilities is relatively high across the County, however satisfaction with athletic facilities tended to be lower in the Pahokee, Belle Glade, and South Central planning areas
- Most respondents were satisfied with water-related facilities with the exception of the Central planning areas where dissatisfaction increased



Palm Beach County Planning Area Location Map

- Satisfaction levels for multi-use trails were high for all areas except for the Belle Glade and Pahokee planning areas
- Most planning areas expressed a strong level of satisfaction for large regional parks with the exception of the Belle Glade, Pahokee, and the North West Planning areas, while satisfaction with small neighborhood parks tended to be lower across several planning areas
- Dissatisfaction with overall quality of recreation programs was highest in the Pahokee, Belle Glade, and North Central, and South East Planning areas

- While most respondents indicated that driving was the primary mode of transportation for accessing parks and recreation facilities, alternative transportation was more prevalent in the Pahokee, North Central, North East, Central East, Belle Glade, South East, and Barrier Islands planning areas
- Respondents in the Central East, Central Central, Belle Glade, South Central, and South West planning areas indicated they do not feel there are sufficient parks and green space areas within walking distance to the their residence
- The most common reason for not using recreation facilities was that facilities are too far from residence, with the exception of North West (too crowded), North East (do not know locations), Barrier Islands and South Central (do not know what is offered), and South East (security)
- Respondents in all planning areas indicated that their needs for parks and recreation facilities were met or partly met, with the exception of pickleball in the North West and Belle Glade planning areas, soccer fields in the Central East planning area, and splash pads in the North West and Barrier Islands planning areas
- Pahokee, South, and Central planning areas typically indicated the highest level of unmet needs across a range of parks and facilities
- Beaches were the most important facility to households with the exception of the Pahokee planning area (community centers and rental facilities)
- Programs and activities that respondents indicated an unmet need for across all planning areas included adult athletic leagues, active

adult (ages 50+) , adaptive sports/therapeutic recreation, adult and youth learn to swim, aerobics, aquatic related activities , esports, performing arts, and toddler/pre-k activities

- Pahokee, Belle Glade, South, and Central planning areas typically indicated the highest level of unmet needs across a range of programs and activities
- The most common ways respondents across all planning areas learn about Palm Beach County recreational programs and activities are County/ department website, social media, and word of mouth, with the most preferred methods of communication being County/department website, social media, and email newsletters
- Respondents across all planning areas were generally supportive of maintaining/improving existing beach parks, maintaining/improving existing parks and recreation facilities, and developing new nature trails and greenways
- Respondents in Belle Glade largely favored developing new larger community parks, while respondents in all planning areas aside from Pahokee, North East, Barrier Islands, and South West expressed support for developing small neighborhood parks
- A majority of respondents across all planning areas were in agreement with the benefits provided by parks listed in the survey

Table 2-1 on the following pages shows the top five most important selections for both facilities and programs/activities across all planning areas. Detailed results of the cross-tabulation exercise can be found in the Appendix.

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Table 2-1: Top 5 Most Important Facilities and Programs/Activities by Planning Area

North West	North Central	North East	Central West	Central Central	Central East
Facilities					
Beaches	Beaches	Beaches	Beaches	Beaches	Beaches
Multi-use Trails	Multi-use Trails	Multi-use Trails	Large Regional Parks	Multi-use Trails	Multi-use Trails
Restrooms	Open Green Space	Open Green Space	Dog Parks	Restrooms	Restrooms
Nature Centers	Nature Centers	Restrooms	Multi-use Trails	Large Regional Parks	Small Neighborhood Parks
Dog Parks	Shaded Areas	Boat Launches	Small Neighborhood Parks	Nature Centers	Swimming Pools/ Aquatic Facilities
Programs/Activities					
Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment
Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities	Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	Outdoor/Adventure Recreation
Health & Wellness	Family-Focused Programs & Special Events	Concerts	Health & Wellness	Concerts	Concerts
History & Museums	History & Museums	Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities	Concerts	History & Museums	History & Museums
Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities	Concerts	Water-Related Activities	Outdoor/Adventure Recreation	Family-Focused Programs & Special	Water-Related Activities



South West	South Central	South East	Pahokee	Belle Glade	Barrier Islands
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Facilities

Beaches	Beaches	Beaches	Community Centers & Rental Facilities	Beaches	Beaches
Multi-use Trails	Nature Centers	Multi-use Trails	Shaded Areas	Playgrounds	Golf Courses
Nature Centers	Large Regional Parks	Nature Centers	Nature Centers	Restrooms	Dog Parks
Golf Courses	Shaded Areas	Open Green Space	Restrooms	Swimming Pools/ Aquatic Facilities	Restrooms
Dog Parks	Open Green Space	Small Neighborhood Parks	Athletic Facilities	Picnic Pavilions & Shelters	Community Centers & Rental Facilities

Programs/Activities

Concerts	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Concerts	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Using Wi-Fi	Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities
Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	Concerts	Health & Wellness	History & Museums	Health & Wellness	Concerts
Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities	Nature/ Environmental Enjoyment	Concerts	Adult Learn to Swim	Special Events
Active Adult (Ages 50+) Activities	History & Museums	Special Events	Family-Focused Programs & Special	Boating/Sailing	History & Museums
Performing Arts	Health & Wellness	Outdoor/Adventure Recreation	Visual Arts	Family-Focused Programs & Special	Outdoor/Adventure Recreation



CHAPTER

3





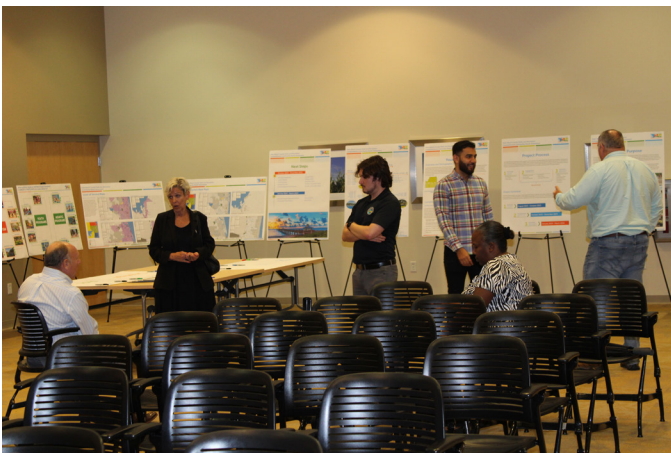
SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

3.1 - METHODOLOGY

Building on the information gathered through previous planning efforts and an inventory of the park system, the project team utilized a wide-range of techniques to conduct a comprehensive, county-wide needs and priorities assessment. The techniques utilized are a combination of industry best practices that provide a system of cross checks to determine the community's top parks and recreation needs and priorities.

The extensive engagement conducted during the PRCNA process resulted in the participation of over 1,600 residents and a wealth of input on the future of their parks and recreation system. When analyzing the results from the all engagement efforts, common themes and shared community needs and priorities can be derived for parks, recreation facilities and programs in Palm Beach County



3.2 - COMMON THEMES

- High level of satisfaction with the parks, facilities and programs provided by the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department
- Acknowledgment of the benefit that parks, natural areas, and recreation facilities provide to the residents of Palm Beach County
- Strong emphasis on access to natural areas, conservation lands, beaches, and at-will recreation opportunities
- Connections to greenways and trails at both the neighborhood and regional level
- Residents expressed a strong desire for concerts, special events and family-oriented programs and events
- Participants indicated a strong desire for additional restrooms in parks and recreation areas
- Provide a balanced system across the County that works in conjunction with municipalities to ensure resident needs and priorities are met in each unique community
- Increase safety, security, and accessibility for parks and recreation facilities
- Sustainability and resilience throughout the park system and the County as a whole are important factors in the development of park facilities
- Continue to address population growth by providing additional neighborhood parks, as well as large community-based facilities that offer new opportunities
- Continue to improve marketing and promotion of available facilities and programming opportunities to ensure the community knows what is available
- Ensure that programs and recreation opportunities are easily accessible and affordable for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities
- Continue to provide opportunities for programs and facilities that promote arts, culture and history
- Maintain and improve existing parks to ensure the high level of quality that residents value is carried into the future
- Provide flexible, multi-purpose, multi-use and multi-generational parks and recreation facilities
- Increase staff at parks and recreation facilities and provide additional training to ensure service delivery remains at a high level

3.3 - SHARED COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Through the compilation of findings from a mixed-method engagement approach, a number of parks and recreation needs and priorities emerged. The table to the right is an overview of the findings from each analysis technique, which were further refined based on common needs and priorities from each method.

Six techniques were used during this process in order to offer a variety of opportunities to the public and also to cross-check results and better determine an accurate understanding of common needs and priorities. **Figure 3-1** summarizes the synthesized findings of these methods, which included online engagement, community and stakeholder meetings, and a statistically valid survey.

The top facilities and program needs are highlighted in **Table 3-1**. These facilities and activities are identified through these six techniques to have the highest level of importance and largest unmet need by the community.

Figure 3-1: Facility and Activity Needs and Priorities Summary

Top Facility Needs and Priorities
<div>1. Beaches</div> <div>2. Multi-use Trails</div> <div>3. Shaded Areas</div> <div>4. Small Neighborhood Parks</div> <div>5. Nature Centers/Natural Areas</div> <div>6. Large Regional Parks</div> <div>7. Restrooms</div> <div>8. Swimming Pools/Aquatic Facilities</div> <div>9. Water Access Facilities</div> <div>10. Open Green Space</div>
Top Activity or Program Needs and Priorities
<div>1. Nature/Environmental Enjoyment</div> <div>2. Outdoor Adventure Recreation</div> <div>3. Health and Wellness</div> <div>4. Concerts and Special Events</div> <div>5. Family-Focused Programs and Events</div> <div>6. Water-Related Activities</div> <div>7. History and Museums</div> <div>8. Active Adult Activities</div> <div>9. Performing Arts</div> <div>10. Fitness Classes</div>



Table 3-1: Needs Assessment Summary

- = Indicates Highest Need
- = Indicates Need

		Virtual Open House	Community Meetings	Stakeholder Interviews	Focus Groups	Online Survey	Statistically Valid Survey
Facilities	1 Beaches	●	●	●	●	●	●
	2 Multi-use Trails	●	●	●	●	●	●
	3 Shaded Areas	●	●	●	●	●	●
	4 Small Neighborhood Parks	●	●	●	●	●	●
	5 Nature Centers/Natural Areas	●	●	●	●	●	●
	6 Large Regional Parks	●	●	●	●	●	●
	7 Restrooms	●	●		●	●	●
	8 Swimming Pools/Aquatic Facilities	●	●	●	●	●	●
	9 Water Access Facilities	●	●	●	●	●	●
	10 Open Green Space	●		●	●	●	●
Activities and Programs	1 Nature/Environmental Enjoyment	●	●	●	●	●	●
	2 Outdoor/Adventure Recreation	●	●	●	●	●	●
	3 Health and Wellness	●	●	●	●	●	●
	4 Concerts and Special Events	●	●	●	●	●	●
	5 Family-Focused Programs and Events	●	●	●	●	●	●
	6 Water-Related Activities	●	●	●	●	●	●
	7 History and Museums	●		●	●	●	●
	8 Active Adult Activities		●	●	●	●	●
	9 Performing Arts	●		●	●	●	●
	10 Fitness Classes	●	●		●	●	●

Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

3.4 - CONCLUSION

The PRCCNA establishes a clear set of shared community parks and recreation needs and priorities that were synthesized from the mixed method approach utilized during this needs assessment process. These results provide valuable insight into where the County should allocate future resources as well as additional planning efforts that can help ensure the shared community needs and priorities are met. The following list outlines recommendations that should be considered by the County following the PRCCNA:

- Continue to develop the Parks and Recreation Department's ongoing Master Plan with visionary and implementation-focused components to accompany the PRCCNA
- Include the findings from the PRCCNA into all planning, design and development decision making for facilities or programs and make results from the PRCCNA available to all complementary providers within the County
- Develop a set of park design guidelines that help guide the design and development of future park and recreation facilities and ensure they align with the findings from the PRCCNA, particularly with regard to conservation, sustainability and resilience
- Identify partners/providers in the County and the South Florida region to help the department achieve goals and meet define delivery roles
- Enhance department marketing efforts with an emphasis on increasing awareness of available park facilities, recreation programs and special events
- Evaluate maintenance practices and future needs along with benchmark data to effectively utilize available resources and increase overall quality of the parks system
- Coordinate with municipalities for joint-development of multi-use trails, greenways, blueways, and access points
- Ensure a land acquisition program is in place to maintain levels of service and conservation efforts as the County continues to grow
- Continue to engage the public on all planning, design and development projects to address changing community needs and priorities over time



