

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. Introduction and Planning Context

This assessment is specifically designed to identify the views, needs, and voice of the public – the external stakeholders. Much internal staff planning has been completed. Now, identification of Key Issues and related potential strategies from this Needs Assessment enables the opportunity to provide the residents of Broward County with quality parks and recreation facilities and services, a connected system of community greenways, and wise stewardship of natural resources that the public has identified as important to them. This can then be integrated into Strategic Action Planning for staff to follow.

A project team comprised of staff from the Broward County Parks and Recreation Division, facilitated by GreenPlay, has guided this project. This team provided input throughout the Needs Assessment process and participated in a Visioning Retreat along with Key Stakeholders. This collaborative effort has created an Assessment that incorporates objective assessment, along with local knowledge and institutional history that only community members can provide.

The **Needs Assessment** has created strong analysis tools for future decision-making using the following compiled and analyzed information and findings:

- Current demographic information
- Local, regional, and national trends
- Community engagement summaries
- Statistically-valid mail/phone and an open web-based survey
- Economic Impact Analysis
- Compilation of Findings in context
- Prioritization of Key Issues for future strategic planning efforts

## B. Findings

### Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout the process, County staff assisted in strong public outreach. Outreach and engagement efforts included:

- 15 Focus Groups, with a total of 225 staff and stakeholder participants
- A statistically-valid survey with 400 respondents
- An open, web-based survey with 106 respondents
- Individual interviews with key staff
- Findings and Visioning Workshops attended by 66 stakeholders and over 40 staff

### Demographics/Trends/Past Planning Analysis

This analysis explored local, state, and national trends with regard to parks and recreation service delivery. Existing County and Regional plans were reviewed to determine commonalities and to provide guidance.

### **Assessment of Economic Impact**

As part of the overall assessment of the County's Park and Recreation System, the evaluation team has prepared an estimate of the system's economic value to the residents and government of the County. Although there are many methodologies of estimating economic value, this study focuses on two that are relatively clear to measure, are straightforward, and fit within the level of effort of the overall project. The first is the revenue to the Park and Recreation Division attributable to sources outside of the County. The second is the economic impact to the County of expenditures by visitors on goods and services within the County. The study focuses on revenues and expenditures from outside of the County, because only those types of revenues represent a net new economic impact to the County.

Based on visitor surveys prepared by the County and by consultants, we estimate that approximately 31 percent of visitors to County Parks, and other recreational facilities, are from outside the County, and that on average a visitor spends approximately \$569 per trip to the County on goods and services. Based on these numbers, we estimate that the County Parks and Recreation Division receives approximately \$2.5 million in revenue annually from outside of the County, and that the total annual economic impact on the County from these visitors totals \$110 million, generating 4,300 jobs.

### **Visioning Workshops**

On July 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, Findings Presentations and Visioning Workshops were held. With representation from 66 community stakeholders and over 40 staff, the Visioning Workshops helped further explore several of the Key Issues.

## **C. Identification of Key Issues and Needs for Future Strategic Analysis**

Identification of Key Issues and related potential strategies from this Needs Assessment enables the opportunity to provide the residents of Broward County with quality parks and recreation facilities and services, a connected system of community greenways, and wise stewardship of natural resources into the future.

Overall, the Needs Assessment indicates that the County is doing a very good job in providing coverage from programs, services, and facilities. The majority of residents indicated that their expectations are being met through current operational and capital strategies. From the summary of Findings and the Visioning Workshops, the following Key Issues have been identified as the primary priorities and opportunities for Broward County Parks and Recreation, based on this Needs Assessment.

#### **Key Issues**

- ❖ Optimize Marketing and Communications
- ❖ Identified role in continued development and expansion of the Greenways Program
- ❖ Maximize Partnerships for service in Broward County
- ❖ Address safety and perception of safety issues
- ❖ Complete a Pricing, Cost Recovery, and Revenue Policy
- ❖ Develop strategic plan including updated level of service and asset management plan

Key Issues and Potential Strategies are detailed in **Section D**.

## D. Summary of the Recommended Key Issues and Strategies

### **Key Issue 1 – Optimize Marketing and Communications**

Strategy 1.1 – Enhanced Web Presence

Strategy 1.2 – Fully Utilize Email and Online Social Dialogue Channels

Strategy 1.3 – Partner with Other Organizations to Cross Market

Strategy 1.4 – Utilize Celebration Tactics in Addition to Marketing Points

Strategy 1.5 – Measure and Evaluate Resources and Impact of Communication Efforts

Strategy 1.6 – Continue with Existing Marketing Channels per the Marketing Plan

### **Key Issue 2 – Identify Role in Continued Development of the Greenways Program**

Strategy 2.1 – Assign a Parks and Recreation Staff Liaison Specifically for Greenways and Trails

Strategy 2.2 – Include a focus on connectivity for Inventory and Level-of-Service Analysis

Strategy 2.3 – Work with Other Relevant County Divisions and Local Governments to Improve County-wide Connectivity and Access through Implementation of a Cohesive Action Plan

### **Key Issue 3 – Maximize Partnerships for Service in Broward County**

Strategy 3.1 – Continue and Enhance the County-wide Parks and Recreation Leadership Meetings

Strategy 3.2 – Support County-wide Studies that Include Alternative Providers

Strategy 3.3 – Promote integration of Broward County Schools (BCS) as a Key Partner

Strategy 3.4 – Create and Implement a Division-Wide Partnership Policy

### **Key Issue 4 – Address Safety and Perception of Safety Issues**

Strategy 4.1 – Adopt a Culture of Collaboration and Positive Action Regarding Public Safety

Strategy 4.2 – In Areas Where Crime May Be an Issue, Conduct a Safety Inventory

Strategy 4.3 – Utilize National and Locally-Suggested Mechanisms to Improve Safety and Perceptions

### **Key Issue 5 – Complete a Pricing, Cost Recovery, and Revenue Analysis and Policy**

Strategy 5.1 – Implement Ongoing Usage of the Services Assessment and Tools

Strategy 5.2 – Implement a Cost Recovery Methodology and Policy

### **Key Issue 6 – Develop an Integrated Comprehensive Master and Strategic Plan**

Strategy 6.1 – Integrate Needs Assessment Results with Level of Service Findings

Strategy 6.2 – Include the Assets and Programs of Alternative Providers as Possible

Strategy 6.3 – Include Recommendations, Goals, Strategies, and an Action Plan

Strategy 6.4 – Update the Needs Assessment and Strategic Master Plan Every Five Years

## E. Next Steps

This Needs Assessment has identified strengths to celebrate, along with a variety of Key Issues and Opportunities, and primary strategies for addressing those needs. It is important to recognize that identification of needs from the community is not the only important tool for the Divisional planning context.

Moving forward with the recommended strategies from this assessment and incorporating them into staff work plans will be important. However, from a County administrative standpoint, the most important strategy may be **Strategy 6** – to complete the Divisional Strategic Master Plan. **Appendix A** includes a Sample Strategic Master Plan Table of Contents, outlining the recommended sections for that plan.

This Needs Assessment should fulfill **Section III** for that plan, and inform many of the other sections. Once that plan is complete, the full priorities for action, responsibility, timeline, funding impacts, and performance measurements for the Division can be fully prioritized in full context of the agencies assets, programs, constraints, and operational and maintenance functions.

