

II. INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

A. Vision for the Project

The Broward County Parks and Recreation Division hired GreenPlay LLC, a national management consulting firm, in February of 2012 to help conduct an objective, County-wide assessment of the needs and desires for the County's Parks and Recreation assets, lands, programs, and services.

At the start of the Needs Assessment, GreenPlay Team members met with the Broward County Project Team to determine the Project Vision, Critical Success Factors, and Performance Measures for the Project.

| Project Vision |
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| <p>GreenPlay will assist the Broward County Parks and Recreation Division in developing a Needs Assessment for parks, recreation, conservation, and greenways/trails for the future. The project will include comprehensive stakeholder engagement through a series of focus groups, public meetings, stakeholder interviews, a statistically-valid survey, creation of an updated community profile, completion of a Services Assessment, and identification of the economic value of the system. Recommendations will be created related to analysis of key issues and potential strategies, performance measurements, improvements to ongoing customer satisfaction evaluation, and an outline of a strategic plan to meet the needs of the community.</p> |

| Critical Success Factors | Performance Measures |
|--|---|
| 1. Need to identify Key programs, facilities, and/or services and minimize duplications of service in Broward County. | 1. Stakeholder input (e.g., statistically-valid survey, focus groups, and public meetings) and the Services Assessment has been utilized to identify needs and gaps in service. |
| 2. Performance measures are needed to maximize and evaluate effectiveness and efficiency. | 2. Appropriate performance measures have been identified for key issue areas. |
| 3. Improvements are needed for existing customer satisfaction survey procedures. | 3. Recommendations for improvements for existing customer satisfaction survey procedures were developed. |
| 4. Need to identify the appropriate role for the County in continued development and expansion of the Greenways Program. | 4. The County's role in continued development and expansion of the Greenways Program was outlined. |
| 5. Need to identify the economic value of the parks and recreation system. | 5. Analysis and language was developed that identifies and articulates the value that the system brings to the County. |
| 6. Need an outline for a strategic plan to help meet the needs of the community. | 6. An outline was included for a strategic plan to help meet the needs of the community. |

B. Project Methodology

A project team comprised of key Divisional management staff has guided this project. This team provided input throughout the planning process and participated in the project team meetings throughout the course of the project. This collaborative effort has created a plan that incorporates local knowledge and institutional history that only community members can provide. The following methodologies were used to develop the **Needs Assessment**.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

A comprehensive “Information Gathering” trip included focus groups, public meetings, and staff interviews. A statistically-valid survey was mailed to 10,000 households in Broward County and made available on the web to gather feedback on citizen satisfaction levels, needs, and willingness to pay for parks and recreation services.

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.

Findings Compilation and Visioning Workshops

A draft “**Findings Presentation**” was presented, summarizing all information gathered to date. Visioning workshops were conducted to further identify suggestions and input on the recommendations and potential strategies coming from this project.

Key Issues, Goals, and Strategies

Based on the findings and analysis, key issues were identified and compiled with Project Team and stakeholder participation and review. Recommended goals and strategies were then developed.

Overall Project Schedule - 2012

- ❖ **Strategic Kick-Off Meetings – March 13th**
- ❖ **Information Gathering – Community Engagement Meetings - April 24-27 and beyond**
- ❖ **Findings and Visioning Meetings – July 18-19th**
- ❖ **Draft Report Presentations – September 19th**
- ❖ **Final Assessment Approvals – October 9th**

C. Review of Related Planning Efforts

Assessment of parks and recreation needs provide a “snapshot in time” of community desires, willingness to pay, and support for programs and services. However, the Needs Assessment is not done in a vacuum, and all identified needs must be put into context with other planning efforts, along with the reality of practical solutions.

This Needs Assessment also takes into consideration integration with various related Broward County plans.

The 2012-2016 Broward County Commission Strategic Plan

This County-wide Commission Strategic Plan includes several areas of Vision, Goals, and Objectives related to the Parks and Recreation Division.

Vision: A community with accessible, vibrant arts and culture, recreation, and learning opportunities.

- **Goal:** Provide diverse artistic, cultural, educational, and historical amenities and programs that contribute to a vibrant, multi-cultural, and economically-viable community.
- **Goal:** In coordination with our community partners, maintain and enhance a premier system of parks and libraries that provide a variety of recreational, cultural, and learning opportunities for our residents and visitors.

Objectives:

1. Achieve a 4.5 out of 5.0 customer satisfaction rating annually
2. Create three new Friends of Parks groups by 9/30/16
3. Increase number of volunteer hours by 10% by 9/30/16
4. Increase percent of operational budget supported by user fees by 4% by 9/30/16
5. Generate \$150,000 of budget from non-General Fund sources through 9/30/16

Along with other broader County vision areas that can be contributed to by the Parks and Recreation Division:

Vision: A Pristine, Healthy Environment

- **Goal:** Promote, protect, and enhance the environment with collaborative partners.
- **Goal:** Encourage and promote community stewardship and appreciation of the environment and the conservation and wise use of our natural resources.
- **Goal:** Become a market for “Signature Event” through public and private partnerships.

Vision: Unlimited economic opportunities

Goal: Increase the economic impact of tourism by selling, promoting, and marketing the Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County area as a premier destination for visitors and meetings.

Vision: Fiscally sustainable and transparent government

Goal: Raise awareness of County programs and services and their value to the community.

Goal: Improve operational effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency.

The 2006 Recreation and Open Space Element of the County Comprehensive Plan

This guiding section of the County-wide Comprehensive Plan lists a variety of goals, objectives, and policies that help govern the Parks and Recreation Division.

Goal 9.0. It is the goal of the Broward County Board of County Commissioners to provide safe and adequate recreation sites and facilities, including cultural art facilities, and open space to satisfy the current and future needs of residents and non-residents, including special populations such as pre-school age children, the elderly, and the disabled; to maintain or improve accessibility to recreation sites and facilities; and to encourage public and private involvement in developing a greenways system that supports state and other community greenway efforts.

- Objective 9.1.** Ensure public access to local and regional recreation sites and facilities, including greenways, water bodies, and Broward County's beachfront.
- Objective 9.2.** Coordinate public and private resources to meet recreation demands.
- Objective 9.3.** Ensure that local parks and recreation facilities are adequately provided to meet the local park service demand.
- Objective 9.4.** Ensure that regional parks and recreation facilities are sufficiently provided to meet the regional park service demand of 5,863 acres by 2010 and 6,342 acres by 2015.
- Objective 9.5.** Ensure the provision of open space by public agencies and private enterprise.

This County-wide Comprehensive Plan is due to be updated prior to 2017.

The 2010 Comprehensive Assessment for Parks and Recreation

An internal operational and organizational assessment.

Key Issues and Recommendations:

1. Develop Revenue to support financial sustainability
 - a. Create business and program plans for each park and major attraction
 - b. Review prices and cost recovery goals
 - c. Retain revenues within the Division to promote entrepreneurial practices
 - d. Develop endowment or trust funds through a Foundation
2. Consolidate the organization for efficiency
 - a. Reduce number of districts for effectiveness and to break down silos
3. Conduct a county-wide customer survey
4. Move towards an "outcome based" vs. "effort-based" culture
5. Increase marketing and communications funding and resources
 - a. Increase the budget for marketing to 5-6% of the total budget and track Return on Investment (ROI) for a desired outcome of \$6-7 for every dollar spent
 - b. Create a Marketing and Communications Plan
 - c. Improve marketing for the Hospitality Centers
6. Improve involvement of partnerships and volunteers
 - a. Update policies for partnership, sponsorship, and volunteer management
7. Keep parks open as much as possible to enhance revenues
8. Create consistency in written standards across the Division
9. Create an Assets Management Plan
10. Develop a Strategic Plan for the Division

The Division has moved forward on a number of these recommendations, including the creation of a Marketing and Communications Plan, consolidation of districts, addressing the Programming Plan (through the Services Assessment), the customer survey (through the statistically-valid survey), moving forward on the Business Plan for the Central Broward County Regional Park, and addressing the “outcome-based culture.”

The 2011 Parks and Recreation Operations Section Strategic Plan

- **Operations Goal 1:** Expand and enhance park revenue generating programs and services.
- **Operations Goal 2:** Provide quality park recreation activity programs.
- **Operations Goal 3:** Enhance stewardship efforts in providing a full range of quality, safe, and accessible park lands, natural areas, and facilities.
- **Operations Goal 4:** Enhance professionalism and productivity of human resources.
- **Operations Goal 5:** Provide outstanding SUNSATIONAL customer service.

Many other Division and related planning documents, budgets, policies, reports, and procedures were reviewed to be in context with the assessment of needs.

