



North Port FLORIDA

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

City Commission

December 9, 2025



Agenda

- Master Plan Overview
- Parks Today
- Opportunities
- The Vision and Toolkit

Master Plan Purpose



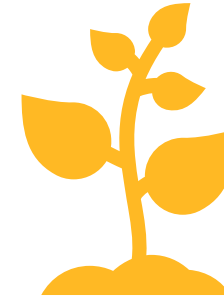
Understand Needs + Opportunities

Create a responsive parks and recreation system that meets the needs of the community



Blueprint for the Future

Plan for the future parks and recreation system



Improve, Sustain, and Enhance

Improve, sustain, and enhance the quality of life in North Port

Parks and Recreation Department Evolution

- Started as the Recreation Division within the General Services Department
- In 2018, the Division assumed responsibility for parks and grounds maintenance from Neighborhood Development Services
- Later in 2018, became the Parks & Recreation Department
- In 2019, the Department expanded with the addition of the North Port Aquatic Center
- In 2021, following the termination of an interlocal agreement with the County, the Department assumed full responsibility for the maintenance, operations and scheduling of nineteen athletic sports fields, Marina Park and The Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park
- In 2023, in the wake of a major hurricane, the Department assumed operations of the Warm Mineral Springs Park facility
- Year-round staff of 76 employees (doubled over the summer).



City Strategy

The Master Plan aligns with the City's broader Strategic Vision, which emphasizes:

- Quality of Life
- Environmental Resilience & Sustainability
- Growth Management
- Infrastructure & Facilities

The Master Plan sets forth a blueprint for delivering outstanding parks, recreation, open space and facilities that match the needs of a growing, diverse and youthful community—and preserve the “city within a park” character that makes North Port unique.



Master Plan Process



1

Parks Today

Document Review
Park and Facility Inventory
Existing Programming
Level of Service

2

Opportunities

Public Engagement
Programming Needs and Opportunities
Youth Sports Future Demand Analysis
Eco-Tourism Opportunities

3

The Vision & Toolkit

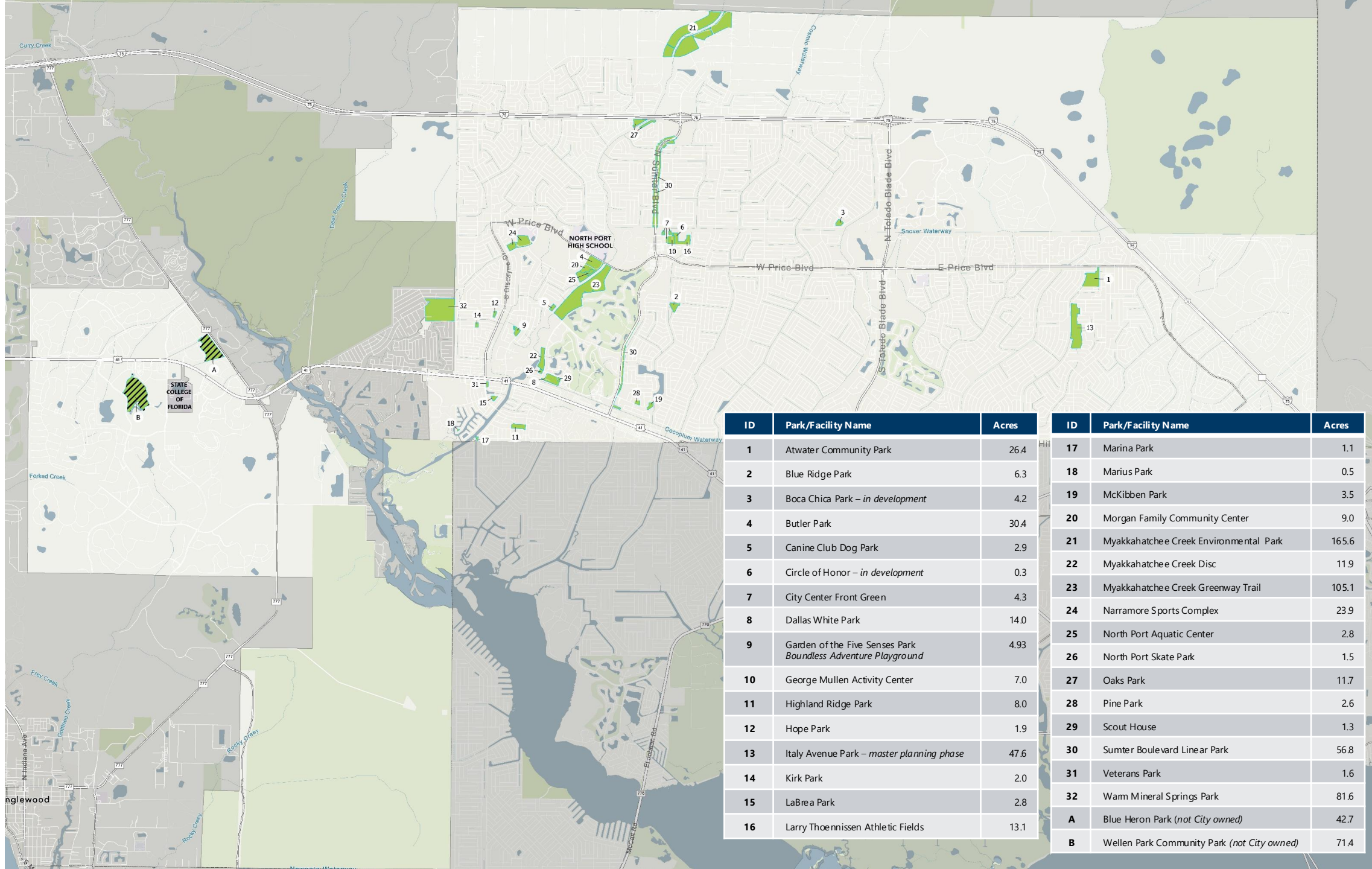
Guiding Principles
Land Acquisition Strategy
Park Type Standards
Capital Improvement Plan



Parks Today

Analysis of Parks and Facilities
Existing Programming
Level of Service

The Park System



ID	Park/Facility Name	Acres
1	Atwater Community Park	26.4
2	Blue Ridge Park	6.3
3	Boca Chica Park – <i>in development</i>	4.2
4	Butler Park	30.4
5	Canine Club Dog Park	2.9
6	Circle of Honor – <i>in development</i>	0.3
7	City Center Front Green	4.3
8	Dallas White Park	14.0
9	Garden of the Five Senses Park <i>Boundless Adventure Playground</i>	4.93
10	George Mullen Activity Center	7.0
11	Highland Ridge Park	8.0
12	Hope Park	1.9
13	Italy Avenue Park – <i>master planning phase</i>	47.6
14	Kirk Park	2.0
15	LaBrea Park	2.8
16	Larry Thoenissen Athletic Fields	13.1

ID	Park/Facility Name	Acres
17	Marina Park	1.1
18	Marius Park	0.5
19	McKibben Park	3.5
20	Morgan Family Community Center	9.0
21	Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park	165.6
22	Myakkahatchee Creek Disc	11.9
23	Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Trail	105.1
24	Narramore Sports Complex	23.9
25	North Port Aquatic Center	2.8
26	North Port Skate Park	1.5
27	Oaks Park	11.7
28	Pine Park	2.6
29	Scout House	1.3
30	Sumter Boulevard Linear Park	56.8
31	Veterans Park	1.6
32	Warm Mineral Springs Park	81.6
A	Blue Heron Park (<i>not City owned</i>)	42.7
B	Wellen Park Community Park (<i>not City owned</i>)	71.4

Measuring the Parks

North Port Park System

29 Completed Sites

2 Under development (Boca Chica and Circle of Honor)

1 Master Plan Phase (Italy Ave. Park)

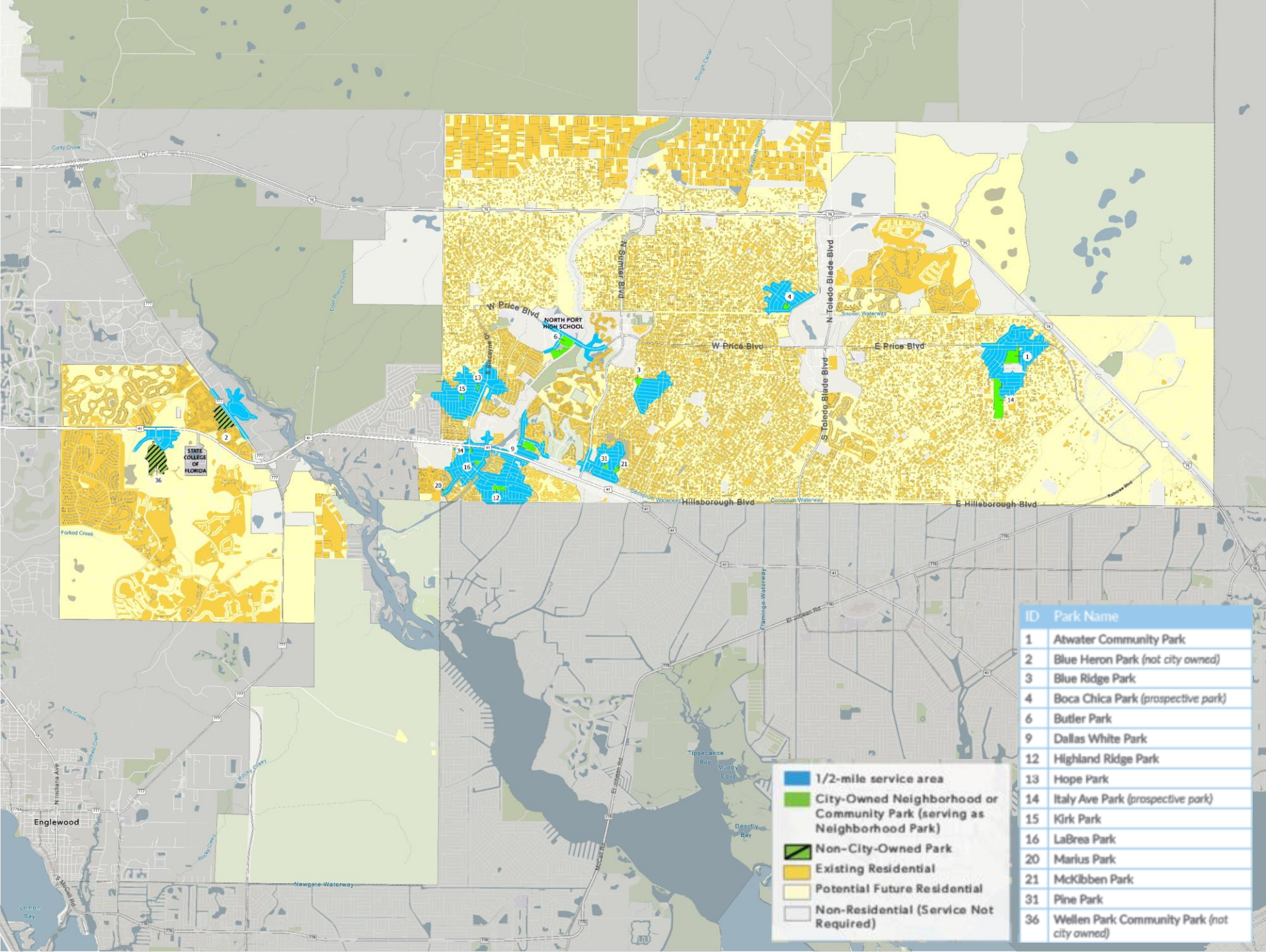
Park Types:

- 3 Community Parks and 1 in the master planning phase
- 8 Neighborhood Parks and 1 in development
- 13 Special Use Facilities and 1 in development
- 2 Greenways
- 1 Open Space
- 2 Conservation



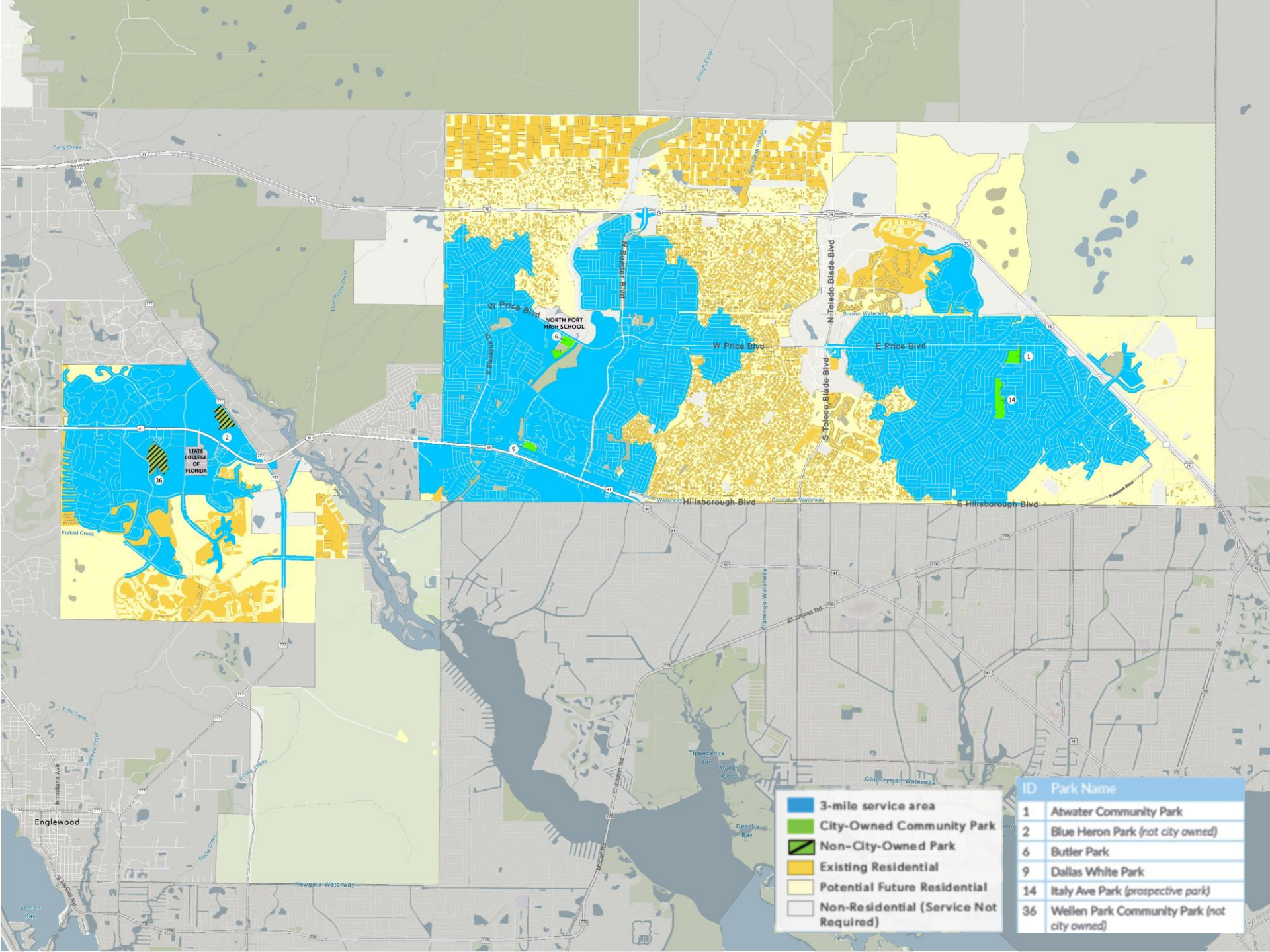
Neighborhood Park Level of Service

- The service area analysis for neighborhood parks includes both designated neighborhood parks and community parks, as community parks typically offer similar amenities and functions as a neighborhood park. Service area is 1/2-mile.
- Gaps in service -northern and central areas



Community Park Level of Service

- The service area analysis for community parks uses a 3-mile radius per park, based on the assumption that users are generally willing to drive to access the broader range of amenities offered
- Gaps in service - southwestern and northernmost, where residential development is still underway.





Visioning

Public Engagement
Programming Needs and Opportunities
Youth Sports Future Demand Analysis
Eco-Tourism Opportunities

Public Engagement



Statistically Valid Survey

June 15, 2025-July 31, 2025
Mailed & Online

Open Link Survey

July 4, 2025 - July 31, 2025
Online

Public Workshop #1

July 9, 2025, from 5:30pm - 7:00pm
George Mullen Activity Center
1602 Kramer Way, North Port, FL

Public Workshop #2

July 10, 2025, from 5:30pm - 7:00pm
Morgan Family Community Center
6207 West Price Boulevard, North Port, FL

Focus Group #1

July 15, 2025, 5:30pm – 7:00pm
North Port City Hall
4970 City Hall Boulevard, North Port, FL

Public Workshop #3

July 16, 2025, from 5:30pm - 7:00pm
George Mullen Activity Center
1602 Kramer Way, North Port, FL

Focus Group #2

July 17, 2025, from 12:00pm – 1:30pm
North Port City Hall
4970 City Hall Boulevard, North Port, FL

Focus Group #3

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

July 17, 2025, from 6:30pm – 8:00pm
North Port City Hall
4970 City Hall Boulevard, North Port, FL

Focus Group #4

July 21, 2025, from 5:30pm – 7:00pm
Virtual

What We Heard

Connectivity and Trails

Additional trails and connection to neighborhoods and between parks

Accessibility and Equity

Park distribution

Sun Relief

Additional shade and longer park hours

Programming and Recreation Amenities

Additional unique and active recreation amenities
Additional senior-focused and nature-based programming

Eco-Tourism

Additional nature-based recreation opportunities
Additional marketing of offerings



Programming Needs and Opportunities

Programming Needs

- Senior focused
- Teen focused
- STEM focused
- Additional nature-based
- Additional Space
 - Community Center at Italy Ave.



Youth Sports Demand Analysis



Youth Sports Future Demand Analysis

- Population Growth
 - 19% of family households currently engaged
 - In 2044: +3,292 new family households with children will engage in organized sports (2025: 4,935 households)
- Facility Expansion Needs
 - 34 new sports related facilities required by 2044, including:
 - 19 Sports Courts (highest unmet need: outdoor volleyball)
 - 8 Diamond Fields (softball preferred over baseball)
 - 7 Rectangular Fields (multi-use fields)



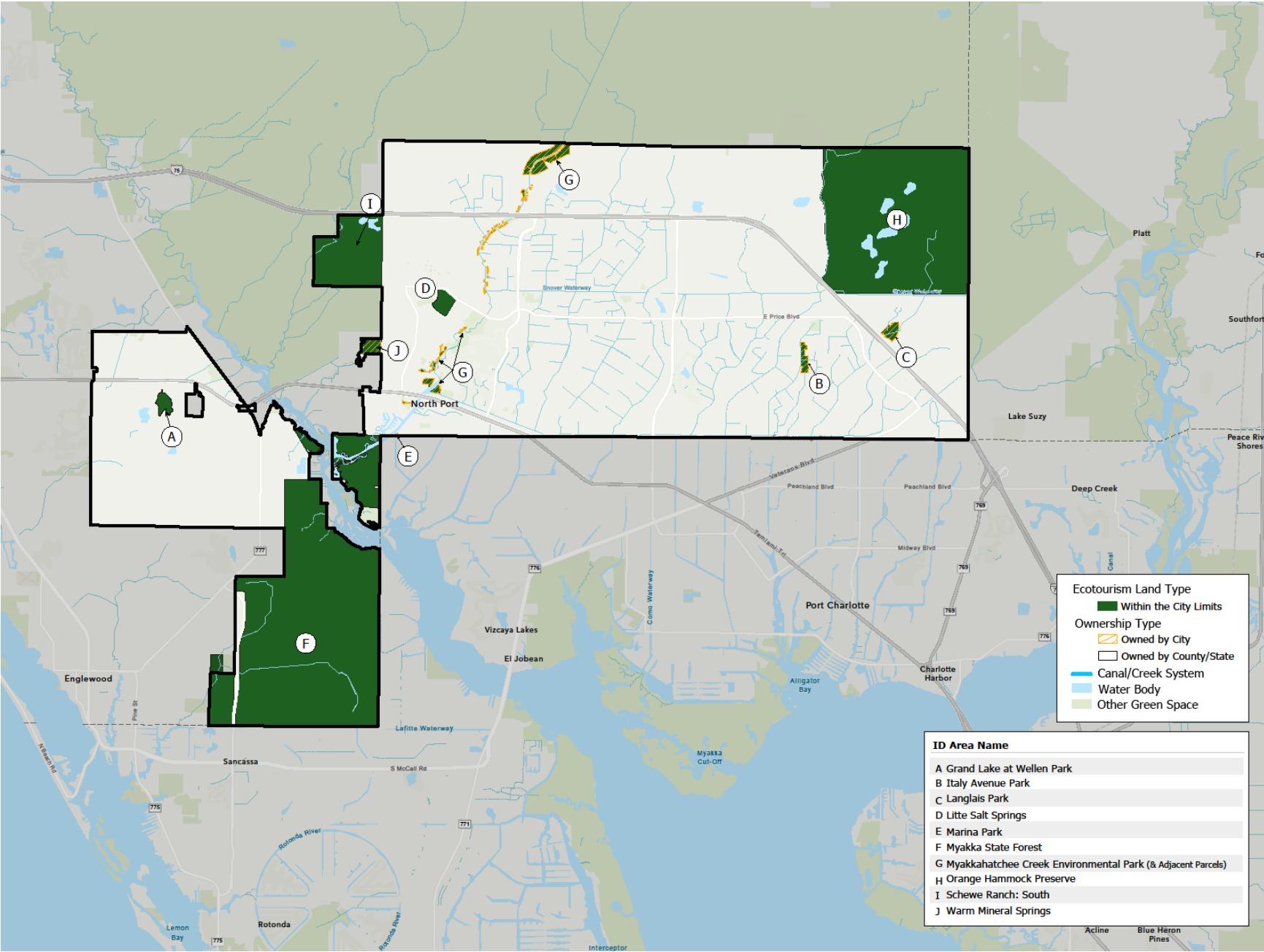
Eco-Tourism Opportunities



Consider Eco-Tourism Opportunities Across Three Scales

A) Within City Limits

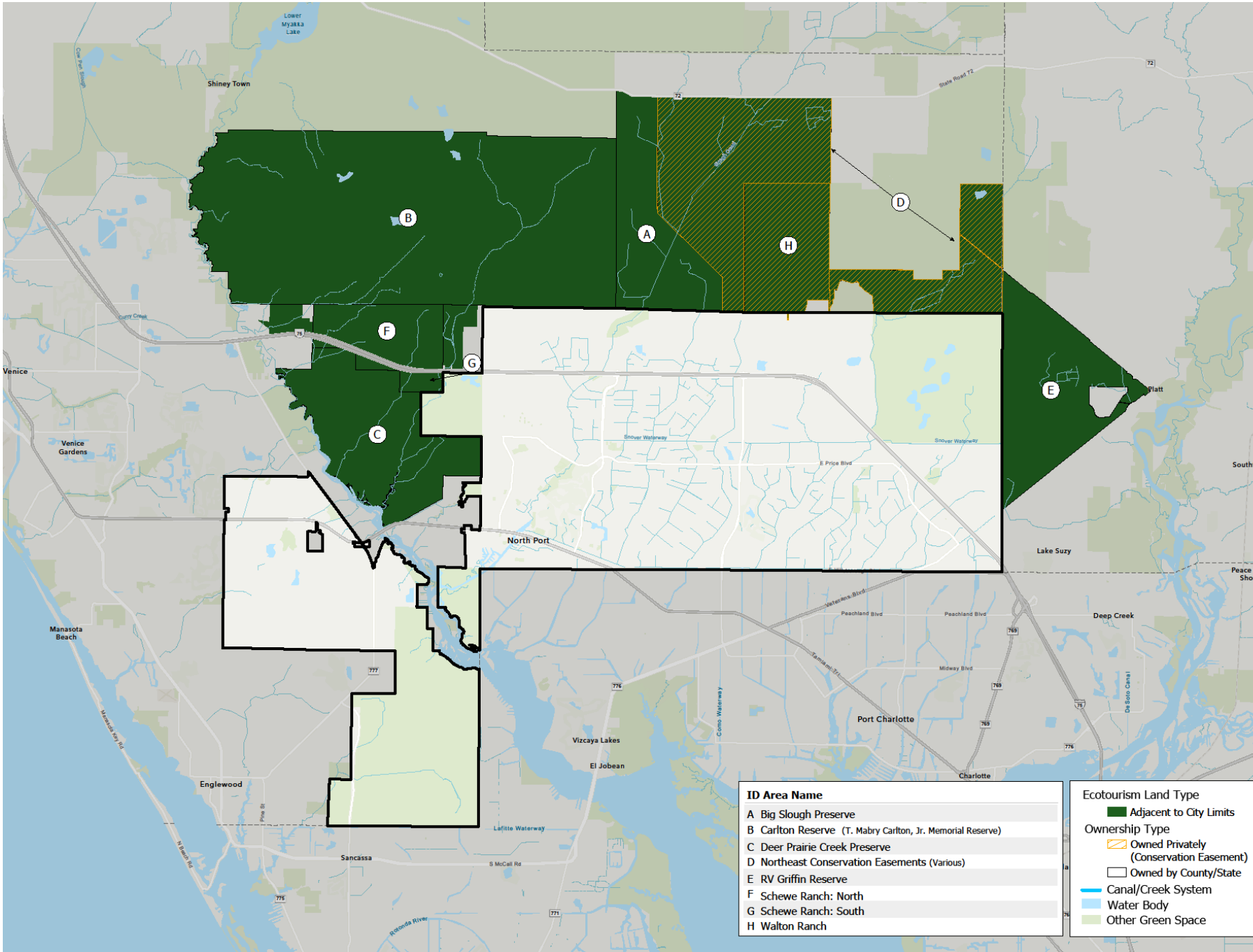
- Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park
- Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Trail
- Garden of the Five Senses
- Oaks Park
- Warm Mineral Springs Park
- Creeks and canals
- Marina Park with access to the Myakka River
- A vision for vacant lands
- Myakka State Forest
- Myakka River
- Grand Lake at Wellen Park
- Schewe Ranchlands
- Orange Hammock Wildlife Management Area



Consider Eco-Tourism Opportunities Across Three Scales

B) Adjacent to the City's Boundary

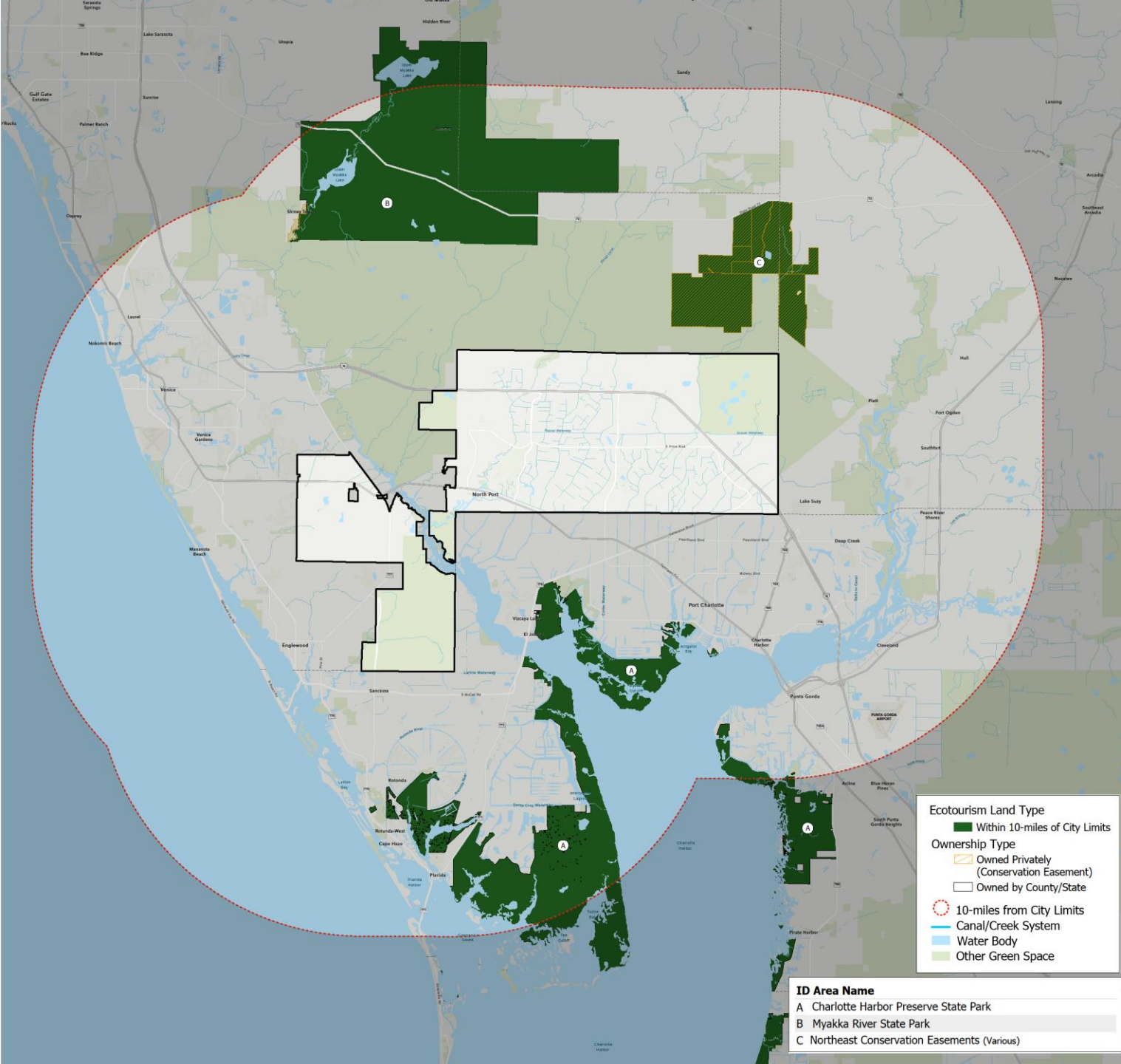
- Deer Prairie Creek Preserve
- T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve
- Big Slough Preserve
- RV Griffin Reserve
- Walton Ranch and other private ranches under Conservation Easement



Consider Eco-Tourism Opportunities Across Three Scales

C) Within 10 miles of the City's Boundary

- Myakka River State Park
- Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park



Other Recommendations

- Use Warm Mineral Springs as a hub for environmental information for the City.
- Work with local, private, and public partners to expand nature programming.
- Make strategic acquisitions of conservation lands to protect or enhance wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and support recreational uses
- Expand recreational opportunities on the agricultural lands in the northeastern portion of the city.
- Expand on the “Go Green with Parks” initiative.
- Assess infrastructure enhancements needed to accommodate ecotourism opportunities.
- Seek opportunities to partner with local concessionaires for activities.
- New Park Sustainability Manager position



**What is the vision for North
Port Parks & Recreation?**



Master Planning

Guiding Principles

Land Acquisition Strategy

Park Type Standards

Capital Improvement Plan

Guiding Principles



Provide
for
Today



Plan for
the
Future



Enhance
User
Experience



Connect
People
to Parks



Expand
Access to
Nature

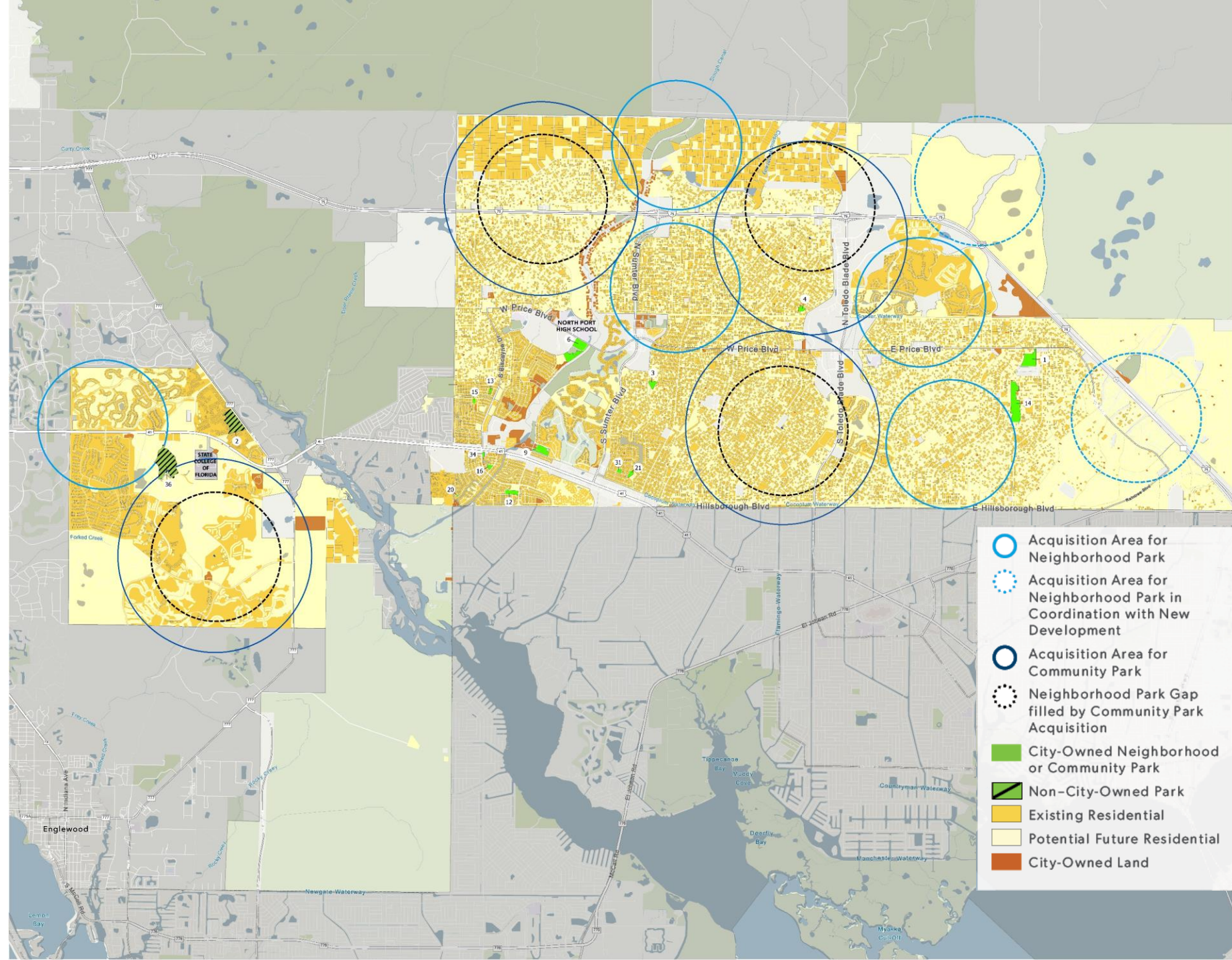
Land Acquisition Strategy

Community Parks

- 4 areas identified with a 3-mile radius, including one in the Wellen Park area
- These parks also serve nearby residents as neighborhood parks, helping to address gaps in both categories

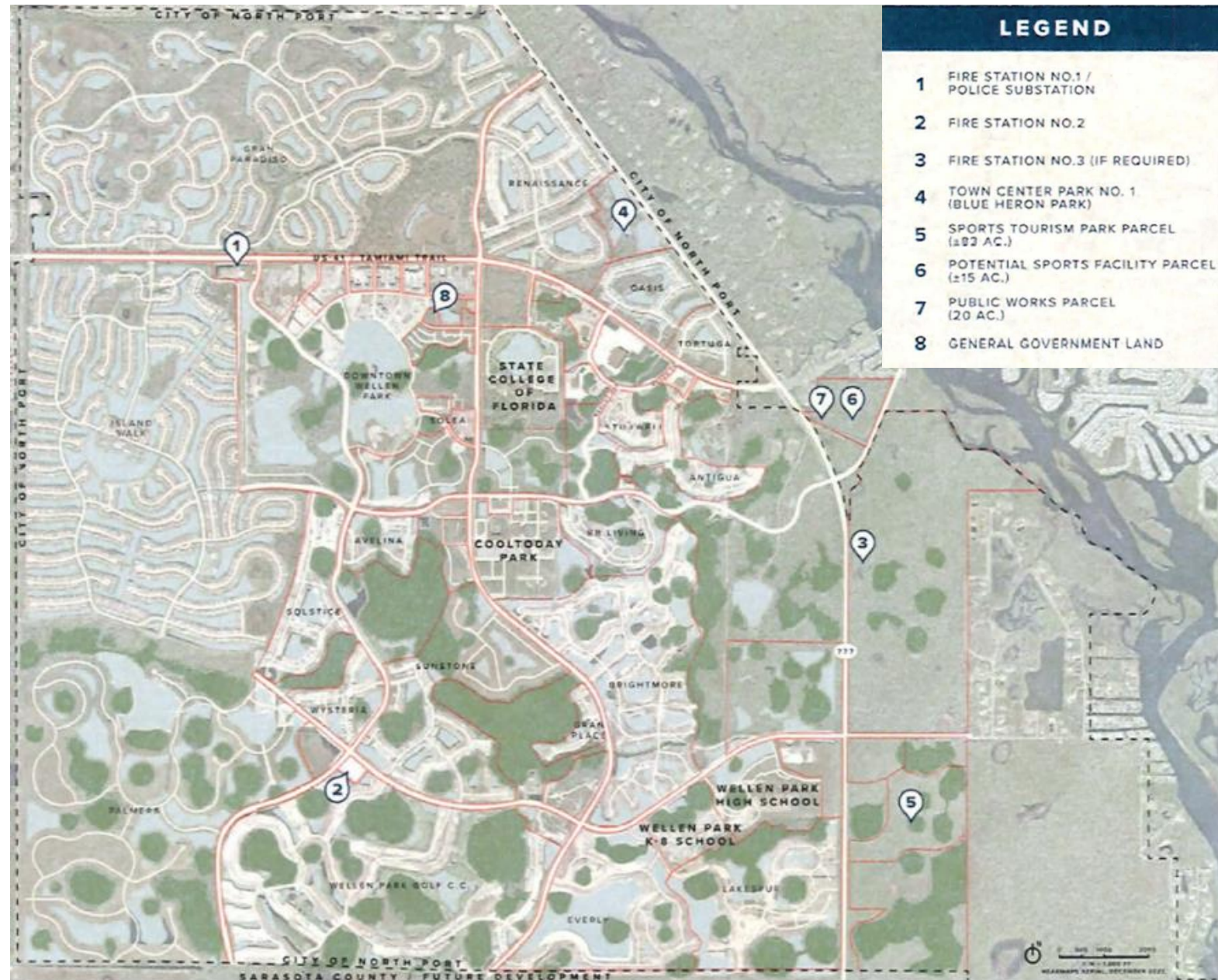
Neighborhood Parks

- Prioritizes filling 1-mile gaps first, 1/2-mile in next phases
- 8 areas with a 1-mile radius have been highlighted, including one in Wellen Park
- 2 of these areas are designated for future residential development and can be planned in coordination with new growth



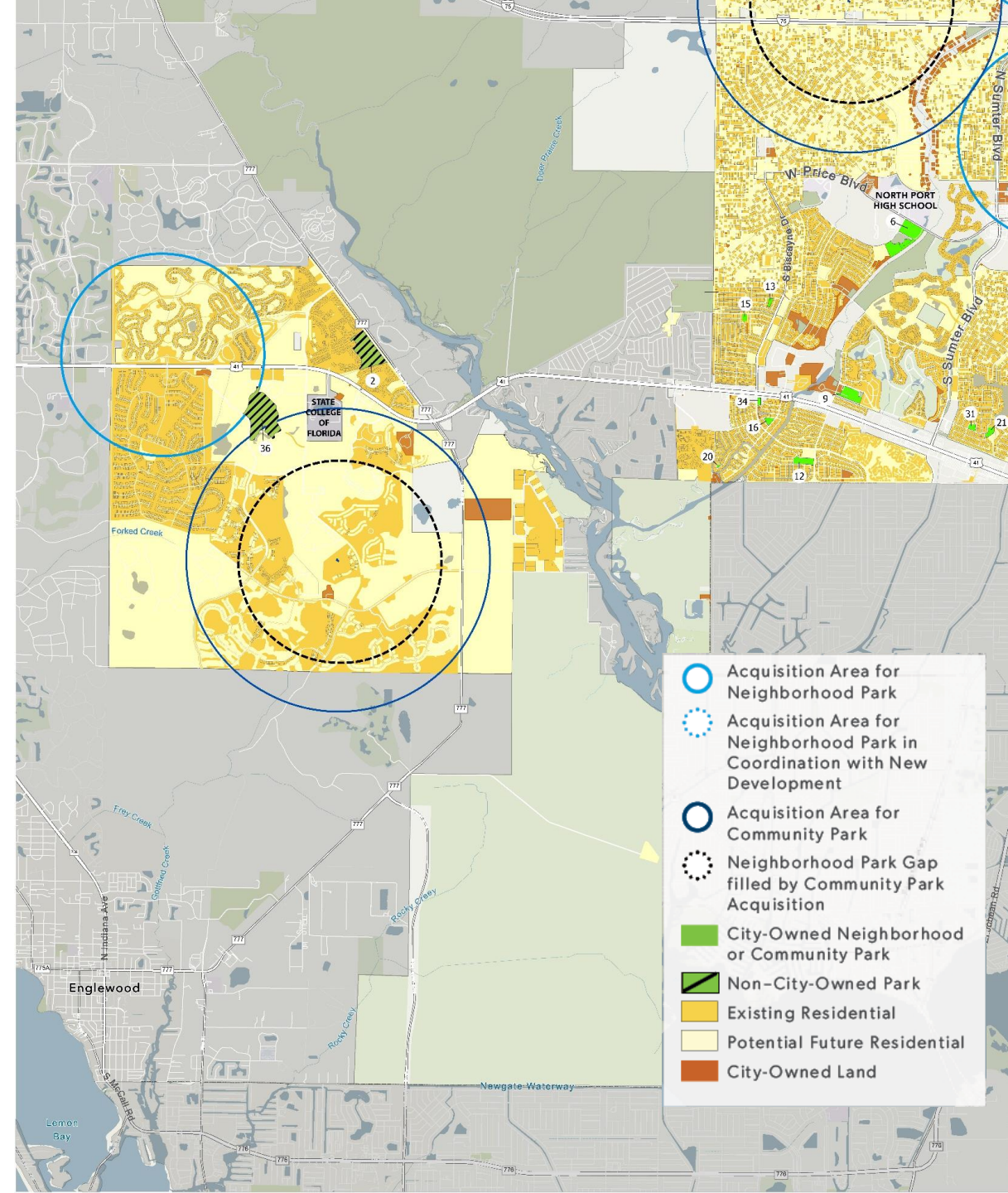
Wellen Park

- Wellen Park: a master-planned community envisioned as a mixed-use
- Planned to accommodate more than 22,000 homes and approximately 60,000 residents.
- Growth patterns differ significantly from individual lot development in East North Port



Wellen Park

- Post-Annexation Agreement
 - 15 acres for Sports Facility
- Recommendation
 - Reallocate as follows:
 - 10-acre Community Park
 - 5-acre Neighborhood Park
 - Multi-use Tournament Complex to meet needs from Youth Sports Analysis



Park Type Standards

Neighborhood Park

Size: 2 - 10 acres*

Elements:

- Standard City of North Port park signage
- Safe crossings into the park from surrounding residential uses
- Unprogrammed open space
- Lighted walking loop with shade and seating
- Shaded play area
- Lighted (when appropriate) unique user experience i.e. sports court, fitness stations, other unique park draws
- Small pavilions and picnic tables
- Off-street parking – sufficient for daily use patterns and ADA requirements

*Recommended for future acquisitions of parks



Community Park

Size: 10 - 50 acres

Elements:

- Standard City of North Port park signage
- Safe crossings into the park from surrounding residential uses
- Lighted sports court and/or sports field – type determined based on parcel size, site-specific public engagement, and citywide sports field needs
- Walking loop with shade and seating
- Shaded play area
- Mix of group pavilions and small pavilions
- Restroom building
- Off-street parking
- Lighted (when appropriate) unique user experience i.e. event space, public art, splash pad



Italy Avenue Park

Italy Avenue Park

Program Statement

- Nature Trails
- Community Center
- Rectangular youth fields – potentially synthetic turf, sized to accommodate soccer, football, and lacrosse
- Playground
- Dog Park
- Support amenities: parking & pavilions and picnic areas

Journey to the future
Master Plan Development for Parks & Recreation

Embark on a "Journey to the Future" with the City of North Port! We're updating our Parks & Recreation Master Plan and your voice is essential. This long-term planning effort will guide the next decade of improvements, including the development of our first neighborhood park east of Toledo Blade, at the Italy Avenue site. Now's your chance to help shape what it becomes!

Join us for a special open house-style public workshop on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 from 5:30-7 p.m. at the George Mullen Activity Center—1602 Kramer Way.

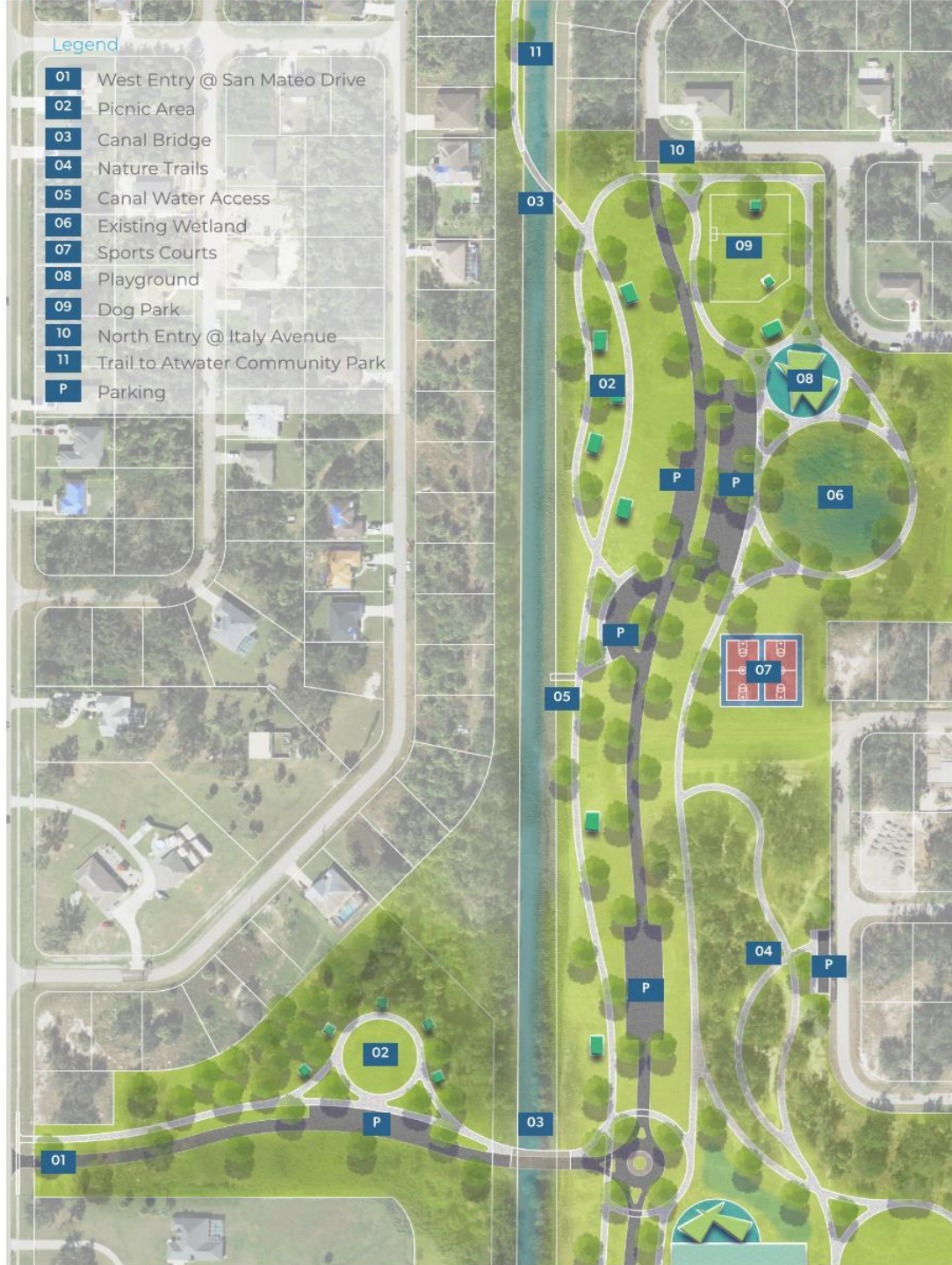
Stop by at any time during the event to share your ideas, ask questions, and help us dream big for the future of recreation in your neighborhood and across the city.

Can't make the meeting? No problem, just take a few minutes to complete our Master Plan Community Survey and share your ideas. Scan the QR Code or visit NorthPortSurvey.org/Open



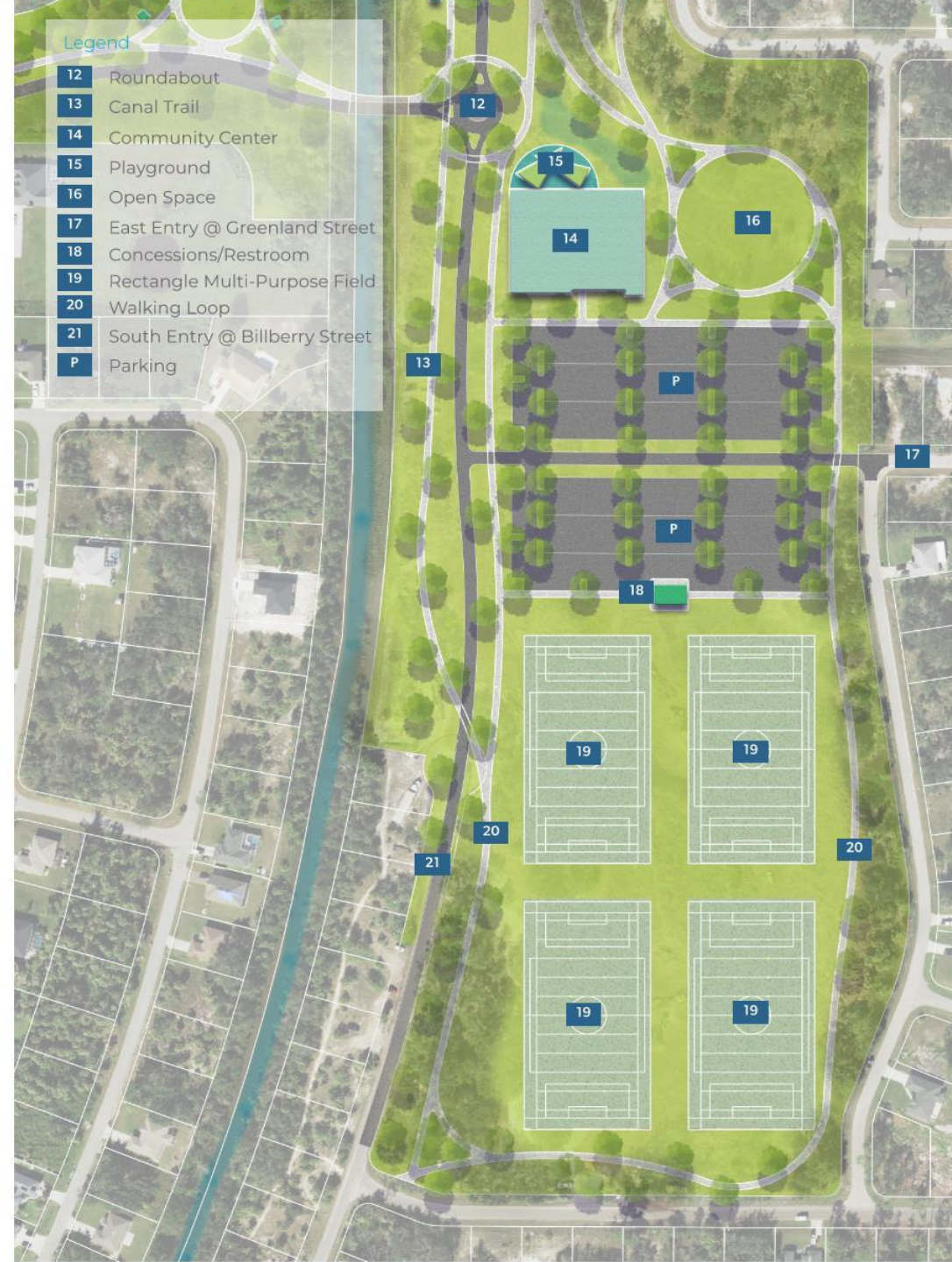
Legend

- 01 West Entry @ San Mateo Drive
- 02 Picnic Area
- 03 Canal Bridge
- 04 Nature Trails
- 05 Canal Water Access
- 06 Existing Wetland
- 07 Sports Courts
- 08 Playground
- 09 Dog Park
- 10 North Entry @ Italy Avenue
- 11 Trail to Atwater Community Park
- P Parking



Legend

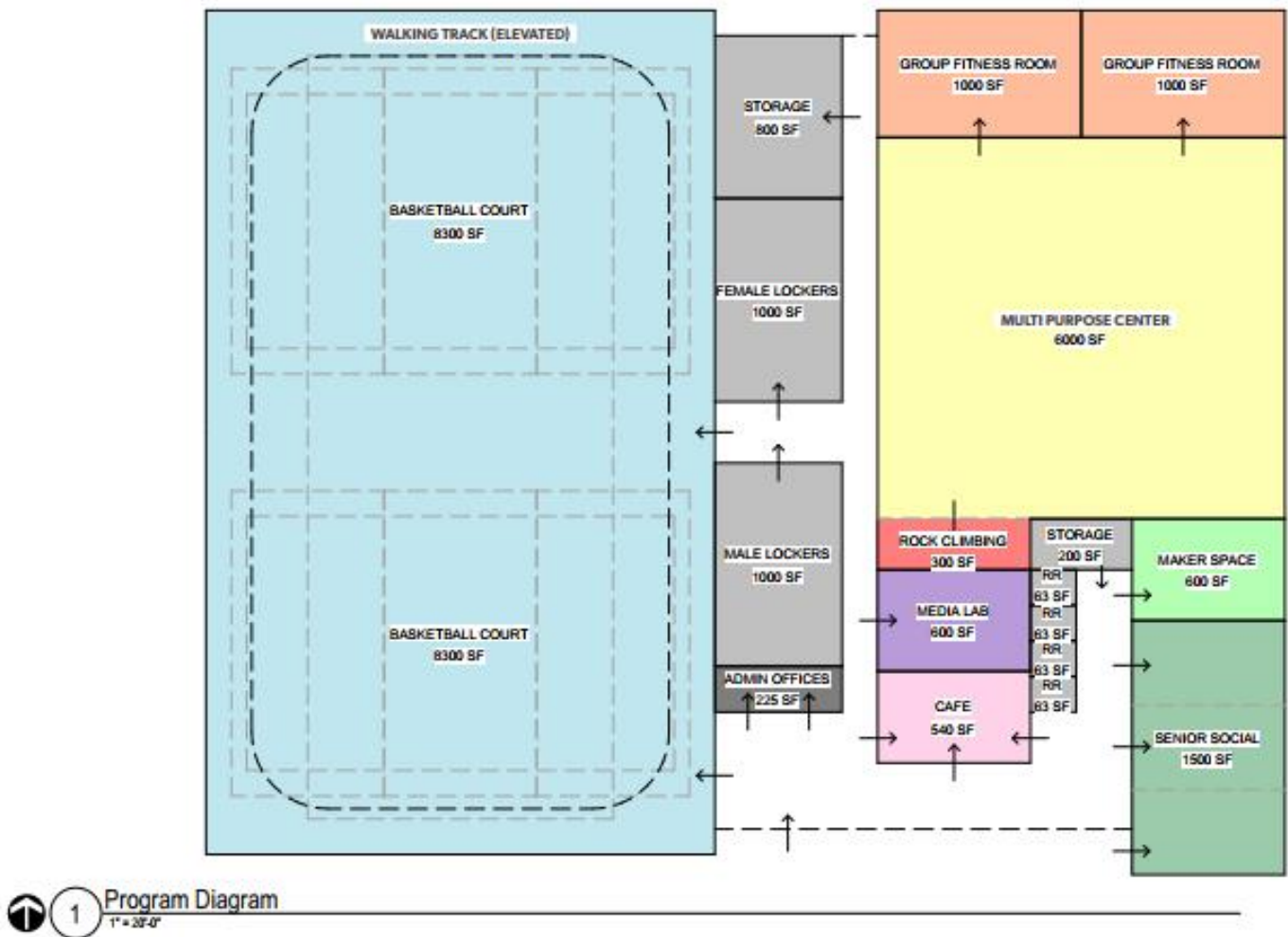
- 12 Roundabout
- 13 Canal Trail
- 14 Community Center
- 15 Playground
- 16 Open Space
- 17 East Entry @ Greenland Street
- 18 Concessions/Restroom
- 19 Rectangle Multi-Purpose Field
- 20 Walking Loop
- 21 South Entry @ Billberry Street
- P Parking



Community Center Program Statement

Space	Indoor Programming Product/Service	Count	Approx. SF each	Total SF
Courts	Basketball Courts (84' x50')	2	8,320	16,640
	Pickleball Courts	6	Over basketball courts	
	Indoor Soccer	1	Over basketball courts	
	Rock Climbing	1	300	300
	Indoor Track	1	Suspended above all courts	
	Total Court Square Footage	16,940		
Multi -Purpose	Maker Space Studio	1	600	600
	Senior-Focused Social Activities	1	1,500	1,500
	Senior-Focused Lifelong Learning Workshops	1	Within multi-purpose space	
	Total Multi-Purpose Square Footage	2,100		
Multi- Purpose Center	Multi-Purpose Center	1	6,000	6,000
	Group Exercise/Dance/Wellness Room	2	1,050	2,100
	Total Fitness Square Footage	8,100		
Cafe	Cafe	1	540	540
	Reading / Social Nook	1	Within Cafe	
	Total Cafe Square Footage	540		
Media	Media Lab	1		600
	Game Room	1	Within Lab	
	Total Media Square Footage	600		
	Total Programmatic Square Footage	28,280		
	Mechanical, Electrical, Storage, etc. 10% of programmatic sf	2,828		
	Common Area, Stairs, Circulation, etc. 15% of programmatic sf	4,242		
	Total Building Square Footage	35,350		

Community Center Conceptual Footprint



W3 Architects
(717) 821-0000
www.w3architects.com
ARCHITECTS



NORTH PORT PARKS & REC MASTER
PLAN - ITALY AVE - PROGRAMMING

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Project # 24097 11 X 17 HORIZONTAL
Ref. Sheet
Date 09/12/2025 SK-1.0

Capital Improvement Plan

Capital Improvement Plan

- Includes costs for recommended improvements
- Organized into timeframes
 - Short (1-2 years)
 - Mid (3-5 years)
 - Long (5+ years)

Park Name	Short (1-2 Years)	Mid-Term (3-5 Years)	Long (5+ Years)	Upgrade Enhancement Total
Atwater Community Park	\$1,335,500.00	\$555,000.00	\$325,000.00	\$2,215,500.00
Blue Ridge Park	\$255,000.00	\$375,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$680,000.00
Boca Chica Park	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
Butler Park	\$225,805.00	\$830,000.00	\$685,000.00	\$1,740,805.00
Canine Club Dog Park	\$116,000.00	\$285,000.00	\$470,000.00	\$871,000.00
Circle of Honor	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
City Center Front Green	\$-	\$234,500.00	\$2,345,000.00	\$2,579,500.00
Dallas White Park	\$58,800.00	\$-	\$385,000.00	\$443,800.00
Garden of the Five Senses Park	\$260,000.00	\$1,010,000.00	\$1,435,000.00	\$2,705,000.00
George Mullen Activity Center	\$2,383,223.00	\$764,563.00	\$2,196,000.00	\$5,343,786.00
Highland Ridge Park	\$470,500.00	\$126,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$661,500.00
Hope Park	\$52,550.00	\$-	\$-	\$52,550.00
Italy Avenue Park	\$-	\$1,060,000.00	\$21,200,000.00	\$22,260,000.00
Kirk Park	\$13,700.00	\$-	\$400,000.00	\$413,700.00
LaBrea Park	\$353,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$-	\$383,000.00
Larry Thoenissen Athletic Fields	\$30,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$-	\$100,000.00
Marina Park	\$4,800.00	\$18,000.00	\$-	\$22,800.00
Marius Park	\$2,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
McKibben Park	\$102,800.00	\$200,000.00	\$415,000.00	\$717,800.00
Morgan Family Community Center	\$356,848.00	\$96,342.00	\$2,097,421.00	\$2,550,611.00
Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park	\$20,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$-	\$70,000.00
Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Disc Golf	\$5,000.00	\$-	\$-	\$5,000.00
Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Trail	\$2,000.00	\$-	\$3,700,000.00	\$3,702,000.00
Narramore Sports Complex	\$1,412,200.00	\$595,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$2,257,200.00
North Port Aquatic Center	\$-	\$205,000.00	\$165,000.00	\$370,000.00
North Port Skate Park	\$18,970.00	\$414,800.00	\$-	\$433,770.00
Oaks Park	\$26,815.00	\$-	\$-	\$26,815.00
Pine Park	\$-	\$-	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00
Scout House	\$28,605.00	\$-	\$-	\$28,605.00
Sumter Blvd Linear Park	\$-	\$66,000.00	\$36,000.00	\$102,000.00
Veterans Park	\$-	\$4,800.00	\$-	\$4,800.00
Warm Mineral Springs Park	\$-	\$-	\$14,000,000.00	\$14,000,000.00
Other Projects	\$2,480,000.00	\$19,065,000.00	\$22,025,000.00	\$43,570,000.00
Grand Total	\$10,014,116.00	\$26,068,005.00	\$72,709,421.00	\$108,791,542.00

Short Term (1-2 years)

Park & Facility Enhancements

- Atwater Community Park
- Blue Ridge Park
- Butler Park
- Canine Club Dog Park
- Dallas White Park
- Garden of the Five Senses Park
- George Mullen Activity Center
- Highlands Ridge Park
- Hope Park
- Kirk Park
- LaBrea Park
- Larry Thoennissen Athletic Fields
- Marina Park
- Marius Park
- McKibben Park
- Morgan Family Community Center
- Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park
- Myakkahatchee Creek Disc Golf
- Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Trail
- Narramore Sports Complex
- Oaks Park
- Scout House

Other Projects

- Pavilion Replacement Plan
- Sports Court Resurfacing & Fencing Replacement Schedule
- Land Acquisition
 - 2 – Community Parks
 - 3 – Neighborhood Parks
- Systemwide Trail Map and Signage
- Safe Routes to Parks Plan

Short Term Total: \$10M

Mid Term (3-5 years)

Park & Facility Enhancements

- Atwater Community Park
- Blue Ridge Park
- Butler Park
- Canine Club Dog Park
- Garden of the Five Senses Park
- George Mullen Activity Center
- Highlands Ridge Park
- LaBrea Park
- Larry Thoennissen Athletic Fields
- Marina Park
- Marius Park
- McKibben Park
- Morgan Family Community Center

- Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park
- Narramore Sports Complex
- North Port Aquatic Center
- Sumter Blvd Linear Park (public works)
- Veterans Park

Park Design & Engineering

- City Center Front Green
- Italy Avenue Park

Other Projects

- Pavilion Replacement Plan
- Sports Court Resurfacing & Fencing Replacement Schedule
- Land Acquisition
 - 2 – Community Parks
- New Park Development
 - 2 – Community Parks
 - 3 – Neighborhood Parks
- Trail Master Plan

Mid Term Total: \$26M

Long Term (5+ years)

Park & Facility Enhancements

- Atwater Community Park
- Blue Ridge Park
- Butler Park
- Canine Club Dog Park
- Garden of the Five Senses Park
- George Mullen Activity Center
- Highlands Ridge Park
- Kirk Park
- Marius Park
- McKibben Park
- Morgan Family Community Center
- Myakkahatchee Creek Greenway Trail
- Narramore Sports Complex

- Pine Park
- Sumter Blvd Linear Park (public works)

Park Construction

- City Center Front Green
- Italy Avenue Park
- Warm Mineral Springs Park

Other Projects

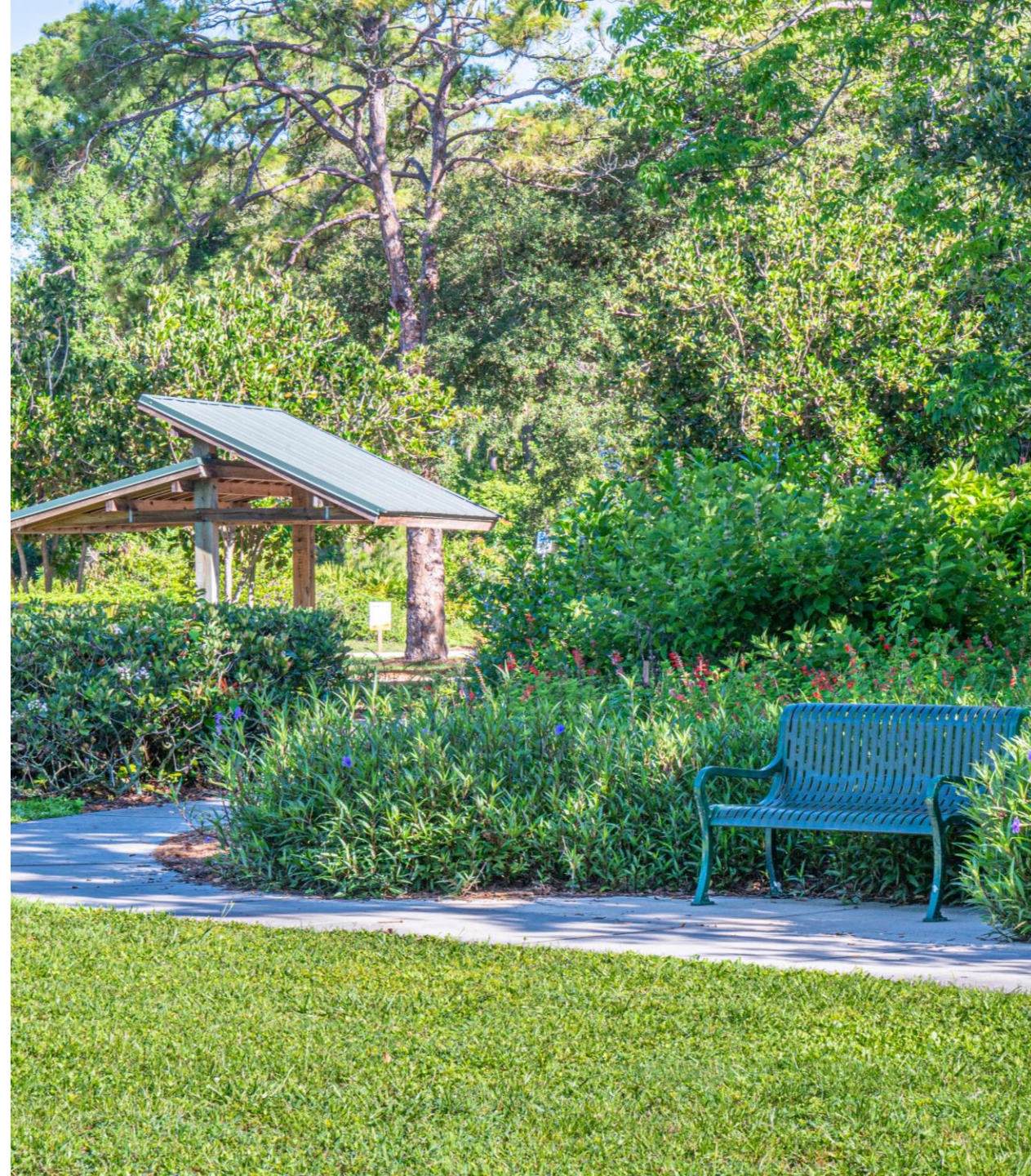
- Pavilion Replacement Plan
- Sports Court Resurfacing & Fencing Replacement Schedule
- Land Acquisition
 - 4 – Neighborhood Parks
- New Park Development
 - 2 – Community Parks
 - 4 – Neighborhood Parks

Long Term Total: \$72.7M

Funding Sources & Opportunities

Funding Sources and Opportunities Recommendations

- Alternative Financing Mechanisms
 - Bonds
 - Dedicated Millage Rates
- Enhanced Agreements
 - Strengthen Development/Developer Agreements - Require Land Dedication
- Tiered Impact Fee Structures
 - Based on Geographic Service Areas or Amenity Levels
- Refined and Expanded User Fees
 - Bundled Memberships
 - Dynamic Pricing For Rentals
 - Expanded Programming
- Expansion of Interlocal Agreements
 - Interlocal Agreements with Government Entities



Grant Stacking

- Utilizing multiple funding sources is the most effective way to maximize grant funding.
- Careful selection of grants can result in one grant providing the matching funds requirement for another grant.
- This process can address acquisition and development in phases



Project Examples

City of Clermont
Victory Pointe Park

Land Acquisition

Florida Communities Trust	\$165,000
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Development

SJWMD Cooperative Funding	\$940,608
Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$200,000
Section 319 Non-Point Solution Grant	\$412,060
Florida Cultural Facilities Grant	\$500,000
Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$200,000
Recreational Trails Program Grant	\$200,000
Urban and Community Forestry Grant	\$8,500

Total Grant Funding	\$2,626,168
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