

**The
Recreation
and
Open Space
Plan**

INTENT AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the Recreation and Open Space Chapter is to provide and maintain a high quality and environmentally sensitive system of open spaces and recreation facilities which meet the needs of the community through the year 2010. The foundation for this Chapter is **Sarasota's Strategic Plan** and Florida statutory requirements.

Sarasota's Strategic Plan Goals

In 2004, the City Commission adopted "Sarasota's Approach to Strategic Planning", which provides the foundation for the Strategic Plan and six Strategic Goals that have particular relevance to the Recreation and Open Space Chapter:

"Viable, safe and diverse neighborhoods and businesses that work together."

Neighborhood recreation and open spaces play a key role in providing viable neighborhoods. They facilitate recreation and they foster neighborhood communication - often serving as the central gathering place. They are a source of neighborhood pride and identity.

"An attractive, environmentally-friendly community that is safe and livable and provides an array of cultural and aesthetic enjoyments."

The City's recreation and open spaces are critical to the City's attractive, clean and aesthetically pleasing image.

"Well maintained and future-oriented infrastructure."

Maintaining existing parks and open spaces and recognizing changing demographics are important to providing recreation and open spaces that meeting the needs of the community.

It is the intent of the Recreation and Open Space Plan to pursue actions that further **Sarasota's Strategic Plan**.

Florida Statutory Requirements

Section 9J-5.014, that addressed the subject matter of this chapter, was repealed February 20, 1996.

Organization of the Recreation and Open Space Plan

The Recreation and Open Space Plan consists of a goal followed by objectives and action strategies pursuant to the goal.

The Recreation and Open Space Plan is organized around objectives addressing the following topics:

- Objective 1. A System Consistent with the Needs of the Population;
- Objective 2. Accessibility and Safety;
- Objective 3. Efficient and Environmentally Sensitive Facilities;
- Objective 4. Coordination with Public Agencies and the Private Sector; ~~and~~;
- Objective 5. Festivals and Cultural Celebrations; and
- Objective 6. Parks + Connectivity Master Plan.

The Recreation and Open Space Plan is one of the eleven plans which collectively represent the Sarasota City Plan. This Plan can neither stand alone nor be interpreted independent of the others.

Implementation of the Sarasota City Plan

Implementation of the Sarasota City Plan will require actions by both the public and private sectors. In this regard many of the plan components speak to “the City” pursuing certain actions to:

promote, provide, consider, identify, enhance, create, maintain, conserve, support, reduce discourage, coordinate, and employ.

While these actions may be initiated by City government itself, City government will also be expecting applicants seeking development approvals to pursue these same type of actions as part of their applications.

GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STRATEGIES

Goal

It shall be the goal of the City of Sarasota to provide and maintain a high quality and environmentally sensitive system of open spaces, and recreation facilities which meet the needs of the community.

Objective 1 - A System Consistent with the Needs of the Population

The City shall continue to plan, acquire, develop and maintain a system of open spaces and recreation facilities, consistent with the needs of the population as determined by the level-of-service standards.

Action Strategies

- 1.1 **Level-of-Service Standards:** The level-of-service standards for open space and recreation facilities will be a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 resident population.
- 1.2 **Bayfront Park and Island Park:** The City will develop a Master Plan for Bayfront Park and Island Park. The Master Plan will seek to maintain and improve open vistas to the water, provide for the highest level of maintenance, and reestablish a pedestrian connection with the Downtown Proper. The Master Plan will exclude the development of structure parking at the parks.
- 1.3 **Gulf Coast Heritage Trail System:** The City, in conjunction with the Sarasota Bay National Estuary Program (SBNEP) and other agencies, shall continue to support and promote the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail System for Sarasota and Manatee Counties.
- 1.4 **Bay and Gulf Access in Residential Development:** Access to Sarasota Bay and the Gulf of Mexico shall be considered in the review of proposed residential developments in coastal areas.
- 1.5 **Pedestrian Access to Shoreline:** Public pedestrian access to Sarasota Bay and the Gulf of Mexico shall be required incident to the development of properties in coastal areas for non-residential uses, unless waived at the time of site plan approval.

- 1.6 **Compatibility:** Open spaces and recreation facilities will be compatible with adjacent land uses. Buffering of active recreation facilities shall be provided when necessary to mitigate any potential incompatibility with adjacent land uses.
- 1.7 **Bayfront Mooring Field:** A bayfront mooring field shall be developed and maintained adjacent to Bayfront Park to address the needs of the community.

Objective 2 - Accessibility and Safety

The City shall continue to ensure public accessibility and public safety of open spaces, recreation facilities, beaches and shores.

Action Strategies

- 2.1 **Handicapped Accessibility:** Park, recreation, and open space facilities will be designed to provide for accessibility by handicapped persons in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- 2.2 **Public Accessibility:** Where a developer provides park, recreation, or open space facilities for the general public, such facilities shall be planned and located so as to maximize public accessibility.
- 2.3 **Mass Transit Accessibility:** The City will support expansions of the Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) system operated by Sarasota County, to link major residential developments with open spaces and recreation facilities.
- 2.4 **Public Safety:** Park and Recreation facilities shall employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles whenever possible.

Objective 3 - Efficient and Environmentally Sensitive Facilities

The City shall continue to provide for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of open spaces and recreation facilities, consistent with the adopted level-of-service and the Sarasota City Plan, in an economically efficient and environmentally sensitive manner.

Action Strategies

- 3.1 **Resource Preservation:** The City will continue to preserve and protect naturally occurring habitats, such as beaches, dunes, and coastal vegetation.
- 3.2 **Impact Minimization:** Open spaces and recreation facilities shall be designed so as to minimize the impact of human activities on natural systems, consistent with the relevant action strategies of the Environmental Protection and Coastal Islands Plan.
- 3.3 **Development Incentives:** The City will explore providing certain development incentives, in the Land Development Regulations, in exchange for the provision and maintenance of open space and recreation facilities.
- 3.4 **Federal and State Funds:** The City shall pursue funds from various sources, including, Federal, ~~and~~ State, and County agencies and private providers, for the acquisition, preservation, and maintenance of open space and recreational facilities.
- 3.5 **Developer Funded Public Art:** The City recognizes that public art has broad public benefits and will require developer funded public art or the deposit of a monetary contribution into a public art fund for development located in select zoning districts.
- 3.6 **Public Funded Art:** The City recognizes that public art has broad public benefits and will analyze the feasibility of cosponsoring public art acquisitions and events with other public and private entities.
- 3.7 **Public Art in Neighborhoods:** The City shall consider locating public art in neighborhoods.

Objective 4 - Coordination with Public Agencies and the Private Sector

The City shall continue to coordinate with other public agencies and the private sector in the acquisition and development of open spaces and recreation facilities with the Future Land Use Chapter.

Action Strategies

- 4.1 **Coordination:** The City shall coordinate development and maintenance of open spaces and recreation facilities with the private sector, including neighborhood associations, and with Sarasota County, Manatee County, the School Board of Sarasota County, and the Town of Longboat Key.
- 4.2 **Consolidation of Service Provision:** Programs for the provision and maintenance of open space and recreation facilities shall be consolidated, where feasible, with similar programs of other public agencies, to increase efficiency.
- 4.3 **Adopt a Park Program:** The City, in conjunction with “Sarasota County Keep Sarasota Beautiful”, will continue to encourage such programs as: “Adopt-a-Street”, “Adopt-a-Park” or “Adopt-a-Beach” to maintain and beautify the City’s parks and beaches.

Objective 5 - Festivals and Cultural Celebrations

The City shall continue to encourage festivals and other cultural celebrations as part of the City’s annual budget process.

Action Strategies

- 5.1 **Coordinating Festivals and Special Events with Neighborhoods:** The City will coordinate the programming of festivals and special events with neighborhoods that are impacted by these events.

Objective 6 - Parks + Connectivity Master Plan

The City shall continue to develop, maintain, and improve upon its recreational system of parks, trails, and open spaces by implementing the Parks + Connectivity Master Plan when cost feasible.

Action Strategies

- 6.1 **Eastside Park:** The City will evaluate the development of a new park in the eastern area of the municipality. If an Eastside park is developed, it should be located proximate to residential uses and existing recreation facilities or schools, and may include amenities such as basketball courts, a playground, family aquatic center, and open space.
- 6.2 **New Recreational Facilities:** The City shall consider developing the following recreational facilities as identified in the Parks + Connectivity Master Plan:

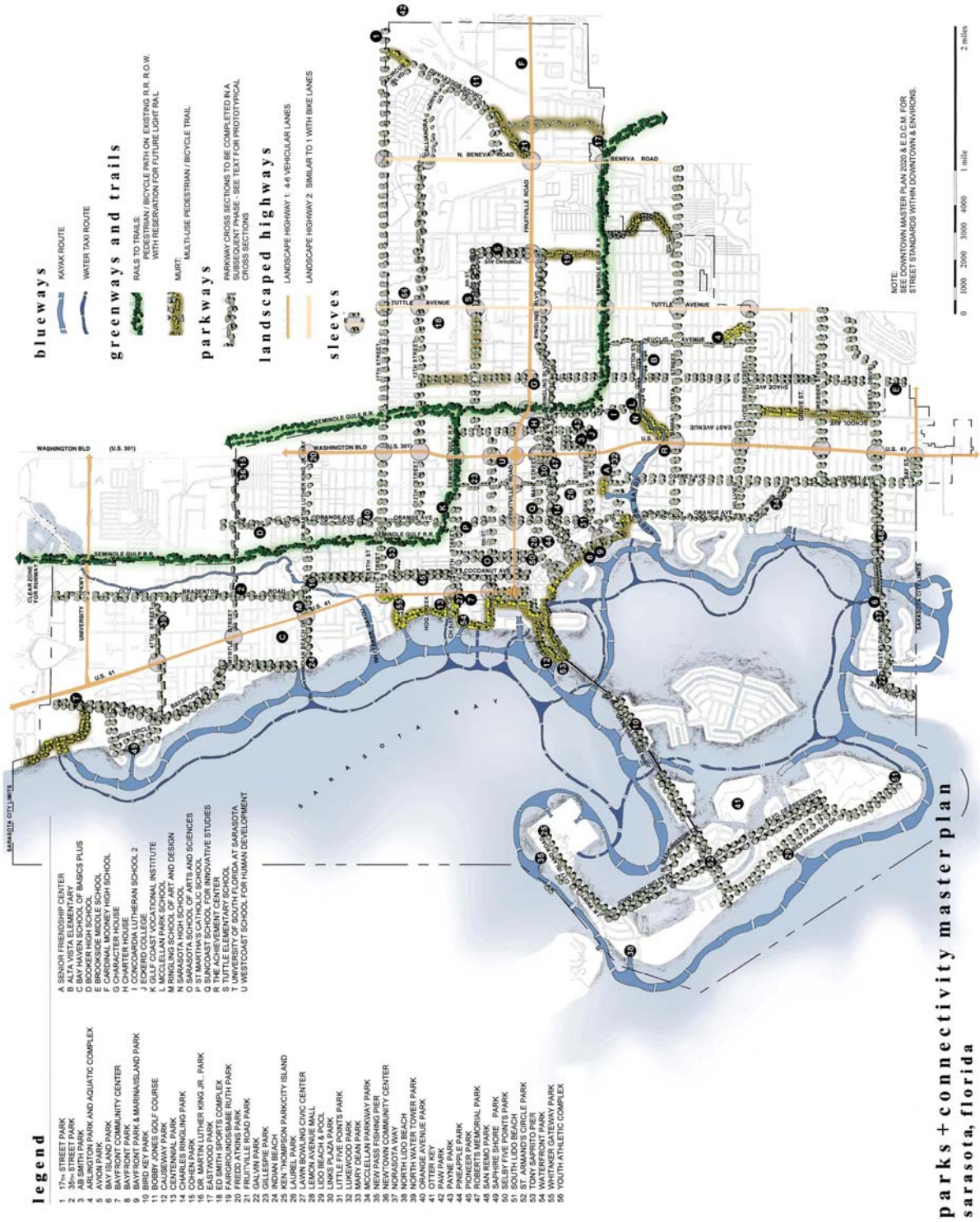
Facility Type	Recommendation
Soccer/football	2 new fields
Tennis courts	3 new courts at Payne Park
Basketball courts	4 new courts
Playgrounds	1 new playground with sections for (a) tots and (b) older children
Community pools	1 new family aquatic center
Boat ramps	Work on parking availability to include consideration of remote parking served by shuttle or valet system
Community centers	Renovate Newtown Community Center and consider adding an outdoor sprayground
Shuffleboard courts	Add courts to Payne Park Shuffleboard Center to allow for tournament play

- 6.3 **Connectivity Plan:** The City shall consider making improvements to its transportation facilities in order to create a system of interconnected pathways consisting of blueways, greenways and trails, parkways, landscaped highways, and sleeves as displayed on Illustration R-1, Parks + Connectivity Plan.
- 6.4 **Blueways:** The City shall consider developing kayak and canoe launching areas and allow for the private development of water taxi service at various locations along the coast.
- 6.5 **Greenways and Trails:** The City shall consider creating interconnected greenways and trails consisting of off-road multi-use paths suitable for cycling,

running, and walking. Greenways and trails encompass (1) multi-use recreation trails (MURTs) and (2) rails-to-trails facilities

- 6.6 **Parkways:** The City shall consider transforming selected streets, as depicted on Illustration R-1, Parks + Connectivity Plan, into parkways. Parkways are streets that provide safe, pleasant pedestrian experiences, and where feasible, also include dedicated bicycle lanes. Parkways will have appropriate landscaping, lighting, and signage.
- 6.7 **Landscaped Highways:** The City shall consider providing for landscaping of major thoroughfares, as depicted on Illustration R-1, Parks + Connectivity Plan, to enhance the driving experience for residents and visitors.
- 6.8 **Sleeves:** The City shall develop “sleeves” at the intersections of trails and parkways with landscaped highways in order to make it safe for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the high-volume, highways.
- 6.9 **Identification and Wayfinding:** The City shall consider standardizing identification signs for its park facilities and improve the wayfinding system by including entrance signs into the City and developing a standard system for directing drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians to parks and other points of interest.
- 6.10 **Landscaping for Parks and Streetscapes:** In developing landscaping for parks and streetscapes, the City shall use the plant lists as recommended in the Parks + Connectivity Master Plan as a guide.

Illustration R-1 Parks + Connectivity Master Plan



Legend

- 1 17th STREET PARK
- 2 35th STREET PARK
- 3 AB SMITH PARK
- 4 AVON PARK AND AQUATIC COMPLEX
- 5 AVON PARK
- 6 BAY ISLAND PARK
- 7 BAYVIEW COMMUNITY CENTER
- 8 BAYVIEW PARK
- 9 BAYVIEW PARK & MARINA/ISLAND PARK
- 10 BIRD KEY PARK
- 11 BIRDAIR PARK
- 12 CAUSEWAY PARK
- 13 CENTENNIAL PARK
- 14 COHEN PARK
- 15 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PARK
- 16 ED MARY SPORTS COMPLEX
- 17 FAIRBOURNS/BAE RUTH PARK
- 18 FREDD ATKINS PARK
- 19 GALVIN PARK
- 20 GILLESPIE PARK
- 21 KEN THOMPSON PARK/CITY ISLAND
- 22 LAUREL PARK
- 23 LAWN BOWLING CIVIC CENTER
- 24 LIDO BEACH & POOL
- 25 LIMEWOOD PARK
- 26 LINKS PLAZA PARK
- 27 LIVERWOOD PARK
- 28 MARY DEAN PARK
- 29 NEW PASS FISHING PIER
- 30 NEW TOWN COMMUNITY CENTER
- 31 NORASOTA WAY
- 32 NORTH WATER TOWER PARK
- 33 ORANGE AVENUE PARK
- 34 PAYNE PARK
- 35 PIONEER PARK
- 36 ROBERTS MEMORIAL PARK
- 37 SAMPSON PARK
- 38 SELBY FIVE POINTS PARK
- 39 SOUTH LIDO BEACH
- 40 TONY SARRITO PIER
- 41 WATERFRONT PARK
- 42 WATERFRONT PARK
- 43 WATERFRONT PARK
- 44 YOUTH ATHLETIC COMPLEX

- blueways**
- KAYAK ROUTE
- WATER TAXI ROUTE
- greenways and trails**
- RAILS TO TRAILS
- PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE PATH ON EXISTING R.R. R.O.W. WITH RESERVATION FOR FUTURE LIGHT RAIL
- MURT
- MULTI-USE PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE TRAIL
- parkways**
- PARKWAY CROSS SECTIONS TO BE COMPLETED IN A SUBSEQUENT PHASE - SEE TEXT FOR PROTOTYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS
- landscaped highways**
- LANDSCAPE HIGHWAY 1: 4-6 VEHICULAR LANES
- LANDSCAPE HIGHWAY 2: SIMILAR TO 1 WITH BIKE LANES
- sleeves**

NOTE: SEE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN 2020 & D.C.M. FOR STREET STANDARDS WITH DOWNTOWN & ENVIRONS

