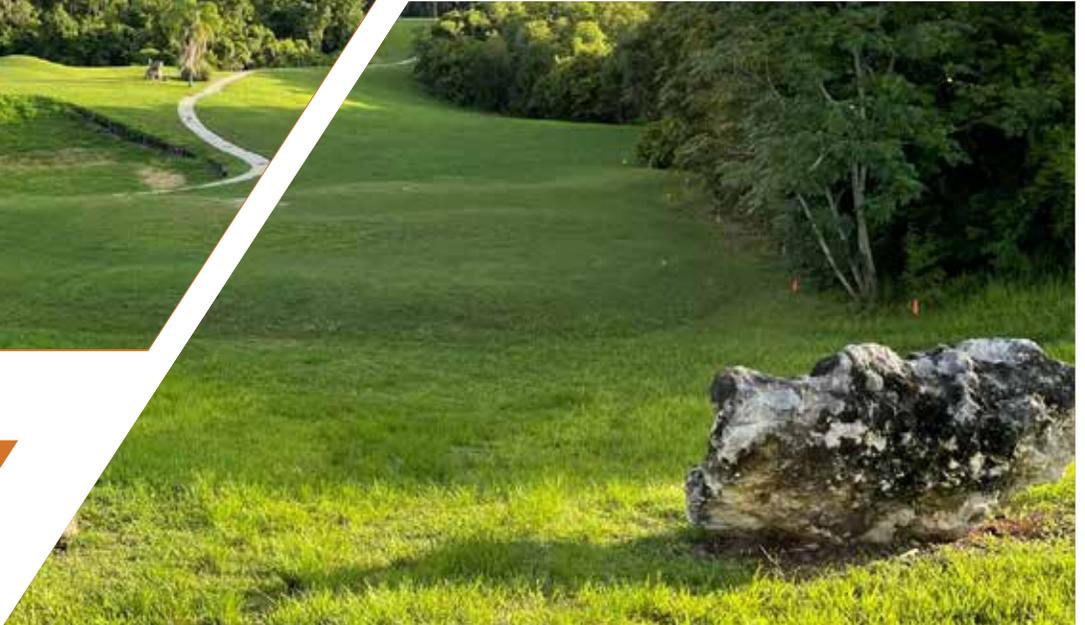
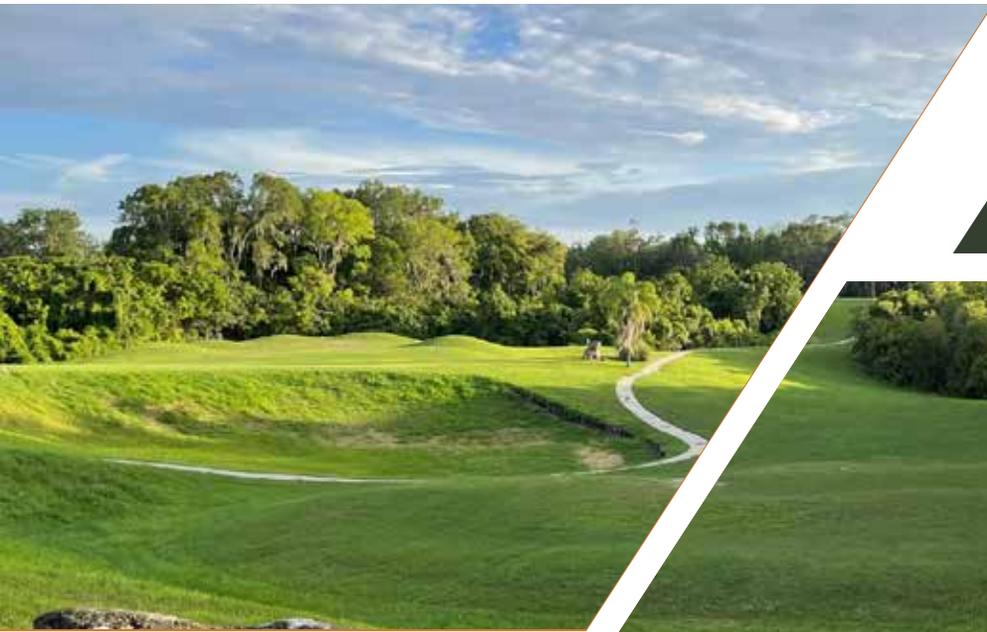




# BROOKSVILLE

## PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

**DRAFT November 2023**



December 2023

Project Phase 2 & 3 Volume 1: Final Report





Tom Varn Park Sportsfield Field



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# BROOKSVILLE

## PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the City Council, residents, and officials for their valuable input and feedback on the Brooksville Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Brooksville Parks and Recreation Master Plan signifies a significant step in the City's ongoing commitment to enhance the parks and recreation offerings in the city. This master plan offers a roadmap for existing park improvements, locations and programs for new neighborhood and community parks and implementation recommendations. The plan ideas were prepared and informed by a robust public engagement process with the community, stakeholders, city leaders, and staff.

This report is to be read in conjunction with the Volume 2 Parks Inventory, Existing Conditions Analysis, and Needs Assessment report, which serves as the foundation for this plan and recommendations in this report. Following the Phase 1 studies and assessments, the project team engaged with the community and decision-makers to present initial findings and gather insights regarding potential improvements to the City's parks and recreation facilities. A preliminary vision and set of guiding principles to steer the planning and design of Brooksville's park system was established. The parks master plan aligns with the City's overall vision, comprehensive plan policies and aspires to provide vibrant, secure, and accessible recreational facilities that cater to the diverse needs of their residents while fostering economic development. Proposals for existing park improvements reflect the current needs of the community and are based on sound park planning and design principles and provision standards.

The master plan recommends improvements to all the existing parks by adding family-oriented amenities like playgrounds, small gathering spaces, pavilions, and splash pads to the serve the neighborhoods and families they are adjacent to. The big ideas for improvements include the creation of an enhanced event space with an amphitheater at Quarry Park, the improvement and upgrade of the Jerome Brown recreation center and upgraded ball fields in Kennedy Park. The plan also recommends the integration of additional passive and sensory recreation options including community gardens, spaces for yoga, events, and racket sports to offer recreation opportunities for all demographics. The promotion of bike tourism, and the establishment of a comprehensive citywide bike-pedestrian network, leveraging Brooksville's "Trail Town" designation is another major aspect of this plan.

As the city's population is anticipated to grow significantly over the next 20 years, the master plan recommends new park sites and programs for 12 additional parks – 3 community parks and 9 neighborhood parks. This will expand the park lands in the city by some 150 acres. The plan also recommends the extension of the city's trail network predominantly in the north-south direction by some 8 miles through a combination of shared lanes and dedicated bike paths.

A phased implementation strategy is proposed. Initial planning level estimates the existing and new park improvements to cost around \$100 million. These improvements are proposed to be undertaken in collaboration with the City's partners and other public grants and funding sources. The implementation of this plan over the next 20 years is expected to significantly improve the quality of life, health and well-being of the city residents and position the city as a desirable place.



The Quarry Park

# 36 Weeks



# 7 Site Visits



# 3

## City Council Workshop



# 2

## Community Led Events



# Public Engagement Meetings



## Stakeholder Meetings



## Reports



## County Meeting



## Online Surveys



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**Parks and Recreation Department at the Back to School Bash**



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION



The Hernando County Courthouse Plaza

# Foster stewardship of Brooksville’s natural and cultural legacy.

The City of Brooksville is about 45 miles north of Tampa and 15 miles east of the Gulf of Mexico in east-central Hernando County, Florida. Over 9,000 people call it home, and it has a thriving downtown with a designated Main Street. Extending over 11 sq. miles, Brooksville is a full-service City with a Council-Manager system of government. The City of Brooksville is driven by future goals and is recognized for its warm southern hospitality. With its historic homes along brick avenues tucked among picturesque rolling hills, the City offers an environment that no other jurisdiction in the Greater Tampa Bay region can match. The City’s landscape comprises a network of hubs for activity serving different residents and visitors.

Historically, Brooksville has been the seat and main focal point for Hernando County. The City fosters an environment that allows residents opportunities for a better quality of life. In addition, the City’s population makes it possible to offer highly specialized public and private services that are not easily obtainable elsewhere in Hernando County.



Downtown Main Street





**Brooksville Adventure Coast Map**

# Project Overview



**Tom Varn Park baseball Stadium**

The City of Brooksville is a charming, small town with great culture and heritage that could only be improved by further organizing the parks, recreation, and open spaces through the proposed systemwide Brooksville Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Improving existing facilities, adding new ones in suitable locations with the right programs, and, most importantly, maximizing access to these facilities will significantly benefit and improve the health and well-being of the community, visitors, and business owners.

Innovative strategies for improvements to parks facilities, safety, operations, staffing, and organization; participatory process for citizen involvement; land acquisition criteria and strategies for parks and trails; and funding and grants are the main topics in the plan.

This is based on a realistic projection of the future greenspace and recreational needs based on a demographic trends analysis and conditions on the ground. The Master Plan provides a practical guide with regard to parks, buildings, and facilities usage; policy operations; short- and long-term maintenance costs; and future capital improvement expenses.

# Plan Purpose

This project aims to establish a strategic plan for the City of Brooksville’s recreation and parks system that will guide decision-making regarding operations, maintenance, and capital improvements over the next 20 years. The objectives are to:

- Address the City’s role in meeting the recreational needs of the residents of the City of Brooksville.
- Promote best practices and innovative strategies for improving parks, operations, and organization.
- Provide a practical guide for decision-making with regard to park, building, and facility usage; policy; operations; short- and long-term maintenance costs; and future capital improvement expenses.
- Facilitate a participatory process for citizen involvement in developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to ensure the City’s future efforts align with citizen’s needs and priorities regarding programs and facilities.
- Address the City’s future greenspace and recreational needs and provide recommendations for prioritizing park locations and any staffing augmentation to meet future needs.



**Tom Varn Park Baseball Field**



**Tom Varn Park Playground**

# Planning Process and Timeline

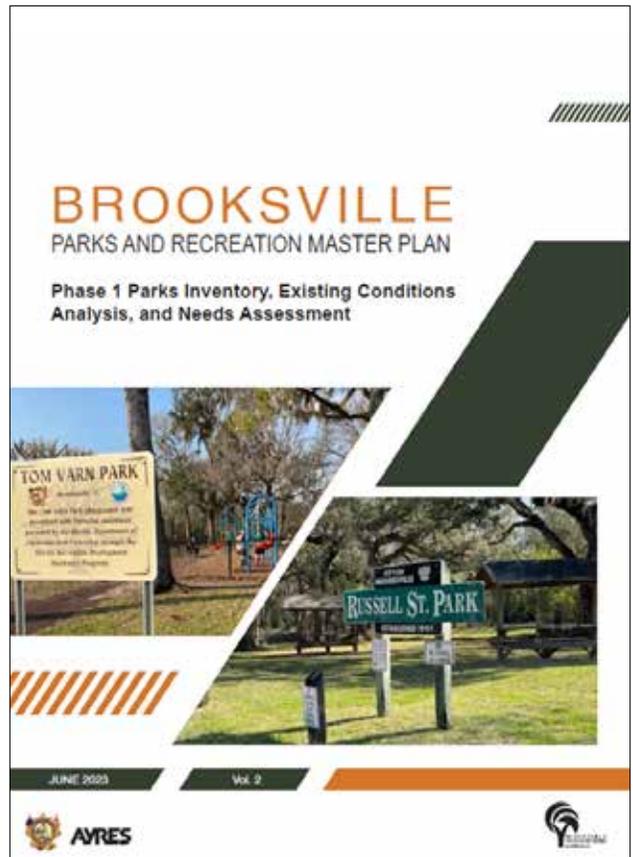
The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is split into three phases spanning 36 weeks. Phase 1 was completed in June, and Phase 2 was completed in September.

Three online surveys were released. The first online survey was distributed in June, the second was distributed in September, and the third was distributed in November. The surveys aided the decision-making process and informed the park's master planning and design ideation.

In addition to several meetings with staff, project stakeholders, and decision-makers, several public engagement meetings were held, the first in June, the Back to School Bash in August, public meeting number 2 was held in October, and the South Brooksville.

Community Resource Block Party was held in November. The public meetings were held to gather ideas about priority areas needing improvements and opportunity areas for new public spaces. Community and stakeholder engagement will continue to be vital to the process as the master plan is implemented.

The Master Plan work is compiled in two reports: Vol 1: Final Report with long-term recommendations and Vol 2: Parks Inventory, Existing Conditions Analysis and Needs Assessment.



# Existing City Parks and Facilities

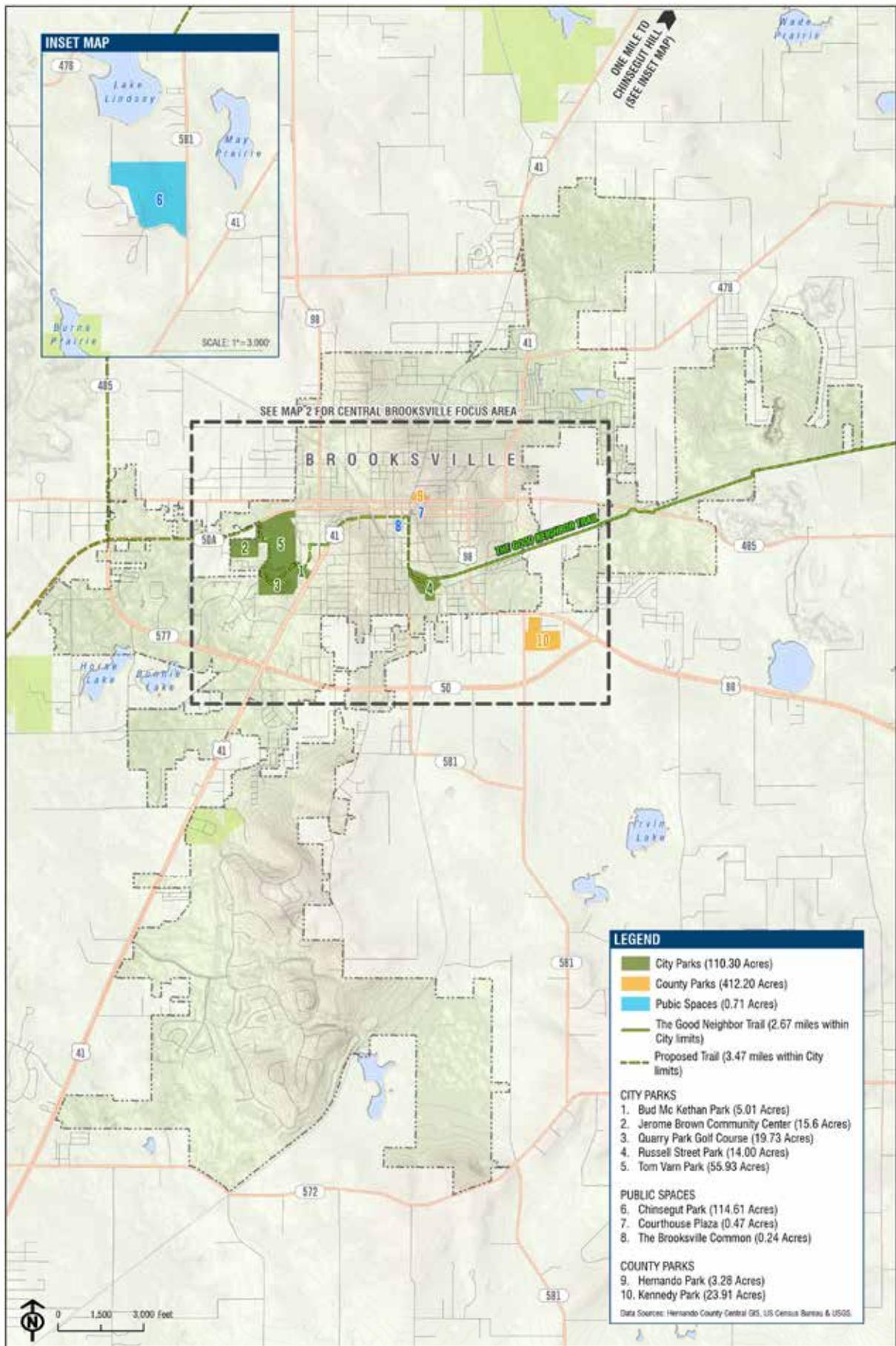
Within the City, several City and County facilities cater to parks and recreational needs. By fostering collaboration and integration among these entities and agencies, we can expand the range of opportunities and maximize the use of these facilities. This would benefit the residents and create advantages for everyone involved.

The City's parks and recreation facilities are mainly centered in and around the central area, close to downtown. Tom Varn Park is the largest and most popular facility and serves the City and neighboring communities as a regional/community park. The softball fields, Jerome Brown Community Center, and trails around the lake for City events and gatherings are widely used and popular. Other lesser-used facilities are the Quarry Park and Russell Street Park. These parks have great potential, subject to funding for improvements. Hernando Park within downtown is well-maintained and popular and could be programmed and retrofitted for broader urban activities. Kennedy Park, a county facility, also needs repair and upgrade. A significant shortcoming is the lack of neighborhood parks and playgrounds at a citywide level. These are valuable facilities located within walking or short biking distances of residential neighborhoods that could significantly improve the quality of life within the City.

Refer to the Volume 2 Report for a comprehensive facilities inventory, citywide assessments, and GIS mapping. The existing Parks and Recreation Facilities map on the following page shows the location of these facilities in the City and their areas.



Tom Varn Park Community Playground



Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities



**TOM VARN PARK** is the largest and most active recreational center within the City. Programs here include baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, and picnic areas. Tom Varn Park is the pride of the community with organized sports, indoor recreation at the Jerome Brown Center and key City events such as Art Walk and festivals being held here.



**BUD MCKETHAN PARK** is part of the same large parcel and is located on the southern side of the Tom Varn Park. Improvements to the courts at Bud McKethan Park are opportunities to be explored. These facilities have good access to the southern residential neighborhoods in the City and are adjacent to the assisted living and nursing home facilities.



Associated public spaces such as **THE BROOKSVILLE COMMON** are key public open spaces within the core City area. These spaces could provide passive recreation for residents and visitors. They can function more effectively with the right treatment and connectivity to other destinations and amenities.



**THE GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL** is built in collaboration with the FDEP and is an important dedicated trail within the City linking the Historic Museum and Train Depot to the wider County and wildlife areas to the east. There are opportunities for spurs from this main trail to serve other City neighborhoods and destinations.



**HERNANDO PARK** is a key open space in the heart of the City, in an urban setting. This is a County park but located within the City. The park features active tennis courts, adjacent to the Chamber of Commerce building. Walking paths and a restroom are additional features within this park.



**CHINSEGUT HILL** sits five miles historic museum on a 114-acre nature preserve. Atop one of the highest points in Hernando County, Chinsegut Hill has breathtaking views of the rolling hills. The grounds are used as a retreat and conference center with various mini cabins for overnight stays.



**KENNEDY PARK** is another County park that is just outside the eastern City limits. This park provides programs and multiple facilities that could be consolidated. The ballfields, basketball court, and recreation center are well-used, but could be optimized further.



**THE HERNANDO COUNTY COURTHOUSE PLAZA** is a key public open space within the core City area. The spaces could provide passive recreation for residents and visitors. They can function more effectively with the right treatment and connectivity to other destinations and amenities. The current mermaid public art installation program is a positive experience.



**JEROME BROWN COMMUNITY CENTER** houses indoor basketball, a conference Recreation Department offices. The park is a significant asset for the community, and the current road improvements are functioning. Opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian circulation within the park and connections underway.



**QUARRY DISC GOLF COURSE** is part of the same large parcel and on the southern side of Tom Varn Park. The future use of the Quarry Park considering the lease agreement conditions are opportunities to be explored. These facilities have access to the southern residential neighborhoods in the City and are adjacent to the assisted living and nursing home facilities.



**RUSSELL STREET PARK** is a well-shaded open space, associated with the Historic Museum and Brooksville Train Depot, a heritage site. Accessed by the Good Neighbor Trail, the park features small structures, including the School House building, toilets, and a gazebo, that could be updated. The stormwater retention swale/pond is a prominent park feature in this park along with the mature oak trees.

# Activities, Events, and Culture

The City of Brooksville, the Parks & Recreation Department, the Arts Council, Brooksville Main Street, and the community hosts various events dispersed between the downtown area and the parks. These events celebrate the culture, history, and diversity within the community of Brooksville while attracting tourists and public-private partnerships with businesses for potential sponsorship opportunities.



Back to School Bash



South Brooksville Community Resource Block Party



# Parks Program and Special Events

A Special Events Calendar was created assessing events held in Brooksville for the public, dispersed among the parks and other open spaces. The event calendar works as a guide in aiding and deciding the types of activities and programs that would be best suited for the existing park system and potential park improvements.

BROOKSVILLE SPECIAL EVENTS												
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
MO					1							
TU					2							
WE		1	1		3						1	
TH		2	2		4	1					2	
FR		3	3		5	2					3	1
SA		4	4	1	6	3	1				4	2
SU	1	5	5	2	7	4	2			1	5	3
MO	2	6	6	3	8	5	3			2	6	4
TU	3	7	7	4	9	6	4	1		3	7	5
WE	4	8	8	5	10	7	5	2		4	8	6
TH	5	9	9	6	11	8	6	3		5	9	7
FR	6	10	10	7	12	9	7	4	1	6	10	8
SA	7	11	11	8	13	10	8	5	2	7	11	9
SU	8	12	12	9	14	11	9	6	3	8	12	10
MO	9	13	13	10	15	12	10	7	4	9	13	11
TU	10	14	14	11	16	13	11	8	5	10	14	12
WE	11	15	15	12	17	14	12	9	6	11	15	13
TH	12	16	16	13	18	15	13	10	7	12	16	14
FR	13	17	17	14	19	16	14	11	8	13	17	15
SA	14	18	18	15	20	17	15	12	9	14	18	16
SU	15	19	19	16	21	18	16	13	10	15	19	17
MO	16	20	20	17	22	19	17	14	11	16	20	18
TU	17	21	21	18	23	20	18	15	12	17	21	19
WE	18	22	22	19	24	21	19	16	13	18	22	20
TH	19	23	23	20	25	22	20	17	14	19	23	21
FR	20	24	24	21	26	23	21	18	15	20	24	22
SA	21	25	25	22	27	24	22	19	16	21	25	23
SU	22	26	26	23	28	25	23	20	17	22	26	24
MO	23	27	27	24	29	26	24	21	18	23	27	25
TU	24	28	28	25	30	27	25	22	19	24	28	26
WE	25		29	26	31	28	26	23	20	25	29	27
TH	26		30	27		29	27	24	21	26	30	28
FR	27		31	28		30	28	25	22	27		29
SA	28			29		29	26	23	20	28		30
SU	29					30	27	24	21	29		31
MO	30					31	28	25	22	30		
TU	31						29	26	23	31		
TH							30	27				
FR							31	28				
SA								29				
SU								30				

**LEGEND**

- Tom Varn Park
- Quarry Disc Golf Course
- Jerome Brown Community Center
- Russell Street Park
- Hernando Park
- Chinsegut Hill
- Overlapped Events

## EVENTS

A list of some popular events that are held in Brooksville was compiled. These events are organized by the City, community members, and local organizations that utilize various public spaces within the City. It is to be noted that a strong community spirit exists, and aligning partnerships with local businesses and organizations will enable the number and success of these events.

- Art in the Park
- Treasure Hunting at the Quarry
- Indoor Fitness Games
- Orienteering Course
- Exploring the Tom Varn Park Trail
- Scavenger Hunt at Tom Varn Park
- Playground Fun
- Cardboard Sledding at the Quarry
- Bird Watching & Painting
- Sip & Paint
- Craft Vision Boards
- Tye-Dye Everything
- The Amazing Slime Run
- Water Balloon Games with Parks & Rec Crew
- Glow Dance Party
- Egg Hunt 4 Education
- Hernando Chapter of the FNSP Plant Sale
- Awareness Walk Dash for Dawn Center
- Teen Night
- Teen Night
- Memorial Day Bash
- Ice Cream Party
- Summer Blessings 2023
- Splish Splash Kiwanis Community Event
- D's Jeep Jam
- Family Movie Night
- Teen Night
- Ice Cream Party
- Family Picnic at the Playground
- Reptiles and Amphibians of Chinsegut
- Super Soaker Battle
- Moth Mania Night Hike
- Teen Night
- Family Movie Night
- Back to School Bash
- Group Tour on Orphan Trains
- Wildlife Signs
- Summer Blessings 2023
- Beginner Archery
- International Bat Night
- Gun & Knife Show
- Guided Hike at Chassahowitzka WMA
- Beginner Archery
- Hernando Chapter of the FNSP Plant Sale
- Science Explorers
- HCSO Benefits Fair
- 8th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Walk
- Multicultural Parade & Festival
- NAMI Hernando Walk
- Safety & Fun Fest
- Public Meetings
- Trunk-or-Treat in the Park
- Superintendent's Run 4 Education
- A walk in the park- Adult Fellowship
- City Special Event
- Tunnel to Towers 5k Run/ Walk

# Community Events



Images sourced from the City of Brooksville Parks & Recreation Department, Brooksville Main Street, the Blueberry Festival, and the Arts Council

# Parks and Recreation Master Planning Basis

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is developed in relation to the regulatory, cultural, historical, and developmental context of the City and the larger ideals that will benefit the City's residents and visitors. The diagram below illustrates the considerations, center focus, and aspirations that form the basis of this master plan.



# CHAPTER 2

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

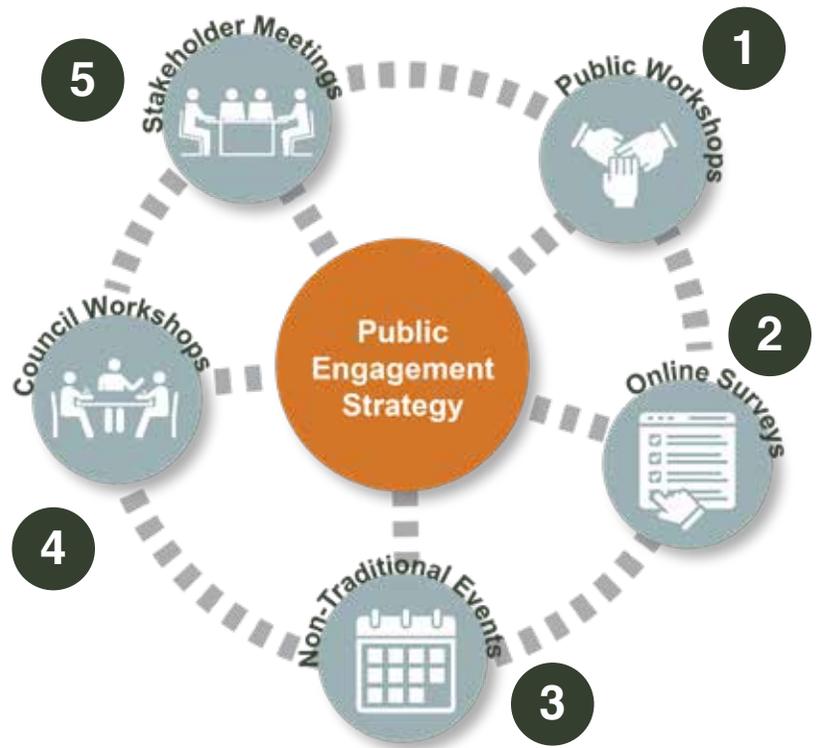


Stakeholder Meeting

# Public Engagement Plan

A robust public engagement strategy was deployed for the project. The methods included Stakeholder Meetings, Public Workshops, Online Surveys, Non-Traditional Public Events, and City Council Workshops. Refer to the Phase 1 Report for more details on the public engagement process and methods.

Clear communication, inclusion, public outreach, and stakeholder collaboration throughout the planning process.



Back to School bash



Public Meeting #1

# Stakeholder Meetings

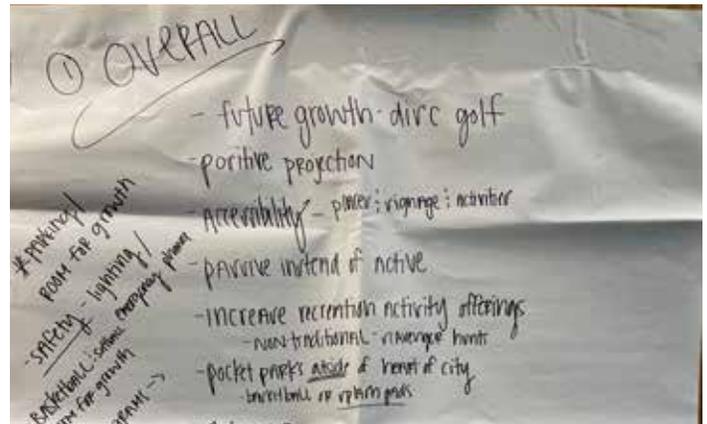
Stakeholder meetings were held on May 9, 10, and 12, 2023. Over 25 people represented various parks and recreation interests. Key themes from these meetings are:

- With parks and trails, many of Brooksville's passive, active, cultural, and historical activities could be easily accessible if they were connected to the greater community by the Good Neighbor Trail.
- There is a significant need for adult and youth-designated spaces that are inclusive and accessible for individuals with physical and mental limitations, including yoga areas, sensory stations/gardens, butterfly gardens, aquatic centers, and trails with exercise equipment.
- Amenities should be distributed throughout the park system, and recreational amenities for older community members should be considered.
- Partnerships with nonprofit and private service providers can offer a range of activities such as basketball, flag football, music, robotics, and e-sports. These can provide opportunities for continued educational programs such as GED classes, STEM, and STEAM, which should be prioritized in the planning and design.
- Collaborating with local organizations will intertwine active and passive recreation and bring activities to the parks that support non-traditional recreational activities that serve a broad age group.

The overall goal of the Parks Master Plan should incorporate inclusivity accessibility and leverage partnerships with local organizations as this facilitates the necessary improvements and improves the quality of life. Refer to the Volume 1 report for detailed notes on the meeting.



Stakeholder Meeting May 9, 2023



Stakeholder Meeting May 9, 2023



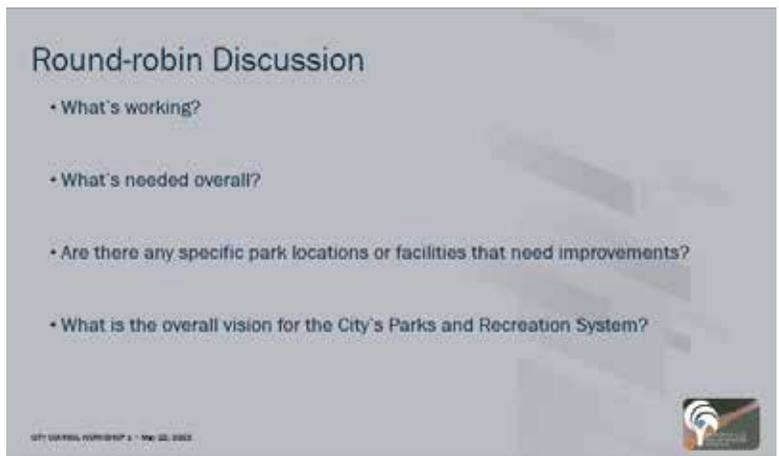
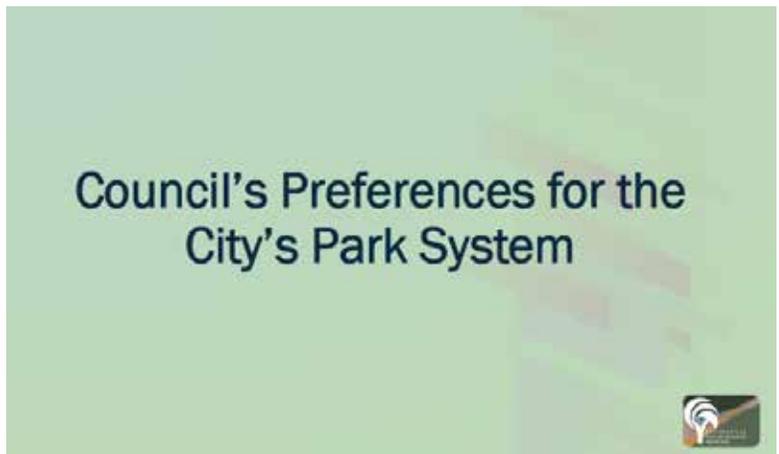
Stakeholder Meeting May 9, 2023

# City Council Workshops

## MAY 22 WORKSHOP

The first City Council Workshop was held on May 22, 2023, with City officials discussing opportunities, challenges, and progress regarding the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. City officials had the chance to voice their concerns and thoughts on the future of their parks system. Below is a summarized consensus of the main priorities.

- Past contributions from citizens, including respecting the efforts of volunteers and donors.
- HYL is integral to the community’s identity and should further embrace the future while avoiding trendy sports. Explore the potential for multiple sports in one facility.
- Capitalize on sports tourism opportunities, particularly with Hernando High School students—plan for pickleball and its economic potential.
- Investigate the relationship between sports tourism and travel ball by prioritizing youth sports over travel leagues.
- Recognize trails as an essential resource and highlight the link between trails and local businesses.
- Collaborate with the YMCA for potential opportunities.
- Address safety concerns, vandalism, and parking issues.
- Consider alternative accommodations for dogs if their presence in the park changes.
- Foster public/private partnerships.



## AUGUST 21 WORKSHOP

The second City Council Workshop was held on August 21, 2023, with City officials where updates on the status of the parks master plan were discussed, feedback and results of the first online survey were presented, opportunities and challenges that were faced during data collection and public engagement were shared, and initial park recommendations were presented. Below is a summarized consensus of the main priorities.

The goal is to push bigger events from the downtown main corridor and distribute the events to Tom Varn Park, the Quarry, and Bud McKethan for capacity issues and safety measures.

- Currently, no formal designated outdoor spaces meet the City’s needs for community gatherings.
- The City wants to increase the scale and how often events are held between special and private events. Discussions were had about the occupancy load of the existing parks system.
- Open space with a community building and outdoor event space is of priority to occupy future growth.
- Discussed areas within the Quarry where a designated stage/amphitheater could go; discussed partnering with local businesses for sponsorship and naming rights.
- The possible expansion of the Jerome Brown Community Center would alleviate capacity issues with other sports facilities/courts.
- Discussed the idea of designating a portion of the Quarry for golf as this would bring in revenue for the City and designate another portion for a mixed-use field.
- Council members could help distribute the surveys to help capture feedback from participants.
- Incorporate a designated outdoor exercise hub for people on the trail rather than spaced out.

### Agenda

1. Project Update
  - Phase 1 Report
  - Public Meeting 1: Ideas Gathering Feedback
  - Online Survey Results
  - Meeting with the County
  - Back-to-School Bash
2. Park and Recreation Master Plan Vision
3. Initial Park Recommendations



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 2 - August 21, 2023

### Online Survey Results

An online survey was created to garner community support and gather comments and feedback about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that will aid in the decision-making process. The feedback will inform the Phase 2 plan development.

**Dates:** May 12<sup>th</sup> to July 17<sup>th</sup>

**Highlights:**

1. The two favorite and most frequented parks are Tom Varn and Hermands Park.
2. Tom Varn, Russell Street, The Quarry, Kennedy, Bud Mc Keithan, Hermands Park, and the Good Neighbor Trail were all identified as needing improvements.
3. Residents feel that their needs are not currently being met for families, toddlers, children, adolescents, adults, seniors.
4. Residents identified that the existing facilities need to be maintained with added improvements and develop new facilities with additional programming and increase staffing.
5. Currently Facebook and word of mouth are the 2 ways residents are informed about events/news/activities. There is potential to explore other means of advertisement.
6. A skatepark, pickle ball court, splash pad, community pool, inclusive ADA playground equipment, and more seating/ pavilions to accommodate growth were the features/ amenities identified as priority needs.

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 2 - August 21, 2023

## City of Brooksville – Parks and Recreation Vision Statement

Brooksville desires a parks system that:

- Has vibrant, safe, accessible facilities
- Meets the community’s parks and recreation needs
- Promotes health and well-being
- Compliments the trail network
- Is reflective of the City’s heritage, culture, and environment

City Resident Needs + Economic Development

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 2 - August 21, 2023

## New Facilities

To meet the community’s needs as the City grows

<p><b>REGIONAL SPORTS FACILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatics center</li> <li>• Multi-use fields – softball, baseball, athletics and soccer field</li> <li>• Floor fields</li> <li>• Track/stadium seating or bleachers</li> <li>• Stage / open event space – commercial sized – food trucks or food stands</li> <li>• Passive outdoor recreation space and trails</li> <li>• Rest rooms</li> <li>• Recreation Center – public or private partnership                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use sports – basketball, handball, volleyball, pickle ball</li> <li>• Trail space</li> <li>• Meeting space</li> <li>• Exercise equipment</li> <li>• Gym</li> <li>• Swimming pool</li> <li>• Locker rooms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>COMMUNITY PARK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use sports fields – softball, baseball, athletics and soccer field</li> <li>• Active recreation courts – pickle ball, basketball, volleyball, handball</li> <li>• Water facilities including pool and splash pad</li> <li>• Performance stage/ bandshell, pavilion and picnic areas</li> <li>• Inclusive playground</li> <li>• Sensory garden with arts programming</li> <li>• Dog park</li> <li>• Community garden</li> <li>• Passive outdoor recreation space and trails with multi-generational exercise equipment</li> <li>• Recreation Center – public or private partnership with facilities such as: Multi-use courts – basketball, handball, pickle ball, flex space, meeting space, exercise equipment, gym, swimming pool, locker rooms</li> </ul>	<p><b>NEIGHBORHOOD PARK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picnic pavilions and benches</li> <li>• Multi-generational exercise stations</li> <li>• Multi-use outdoor courts</li> <li>• Inclusive playground</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Walking paths</li> <li>• Shaded areas</li> <li>• Rest rooms</li> <li>• Character and theme reflective of the surrounding neighborhood</li> </ul>
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CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 2 - August 21, 2023

### NOVEMBER 6 WORKSHOP

The third City Council Workshop was held on November 6, 2023, with City officials where updates on the status of the parks master plan were discussed, feedback and results of the second online survey were presented, opportunities and challenges that were faced during public engagements were shared, conceptual plan improvements to existing facilities, proposed neighborhood, community, regional parks/sports facility, and the Good Neighbor Trail expansion were presented. Comments from City Council members include:

- The City Council liked and appreciated the improvements made to Kennedy Park. However, because Kennedy Park is still County-owned, all improvements made will realistically happen when the City has acquired the park.
- Tom Varn Park will remain an athletic sports park; art-related programming and initiatives should be designated to Russell Street Park.
- Bike/pedestrian expansion on Howell Avenue is not conducive as there are existing issues with traffic at the nearby school and major traffic congestion.
- Council members discussed how to make the most out of their funding for the park's master plan, and it was decided they would focus on improvements to the existing facilities and revisit the proposed parks.
- The proposed parking garage at the entrance of Bud McKethan is an eyesore and is not an inviting, attractive feature for the park. In the conceptual plans, Bud McKethan will act as an entryway to the Quarry. This involves having parking that accommodates potential capacity issues.



Park Improvements and Jerome Brown Community Center  
Illustrative example



Trail Activation and Economic Development  
Illustrative example



**Systemwide Parks and Trails Network Map**

137.46 acres of existing parks

152.98 acres of proposed parks

24.14 miles of existing trails

8.72 miles of proposed trails

Disclosed population by 20 year is 25,000



# Online Survey

Surveys were updated three times during the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process.

## SURVEY 1 - IDEAS GATHERING

An online survey was created to garner community support and gather comments and feedback about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which aided the decision-making process—online Survey 1 ended in June. The feedback from the survey informed the Phase 2 plan development and ideation.

**Phase 1 Data Collection Online Survey**

\* 1. What are your **top** favorite or most frequented parks in Brooksville?

- Tom Land Park
- Jerome Street Community Center
- Quary Park Golf Course
- Paul Mitchell Park
- Russell St. Park
- Hemlock Park
- Kennedy Park
- The Golf Neighbor Trail
- The Brodieville Common
- Courthouse Plaza
- Oldstage Hill
- Other

2. Please indicate the specific park locations or facilities that need improvement.

3. Are there park features/amenities you and your family would use that are not currently provided?

4. Thinking about the various age groups if applicable, please indicate whether the existing facilities adequately meet their needs.

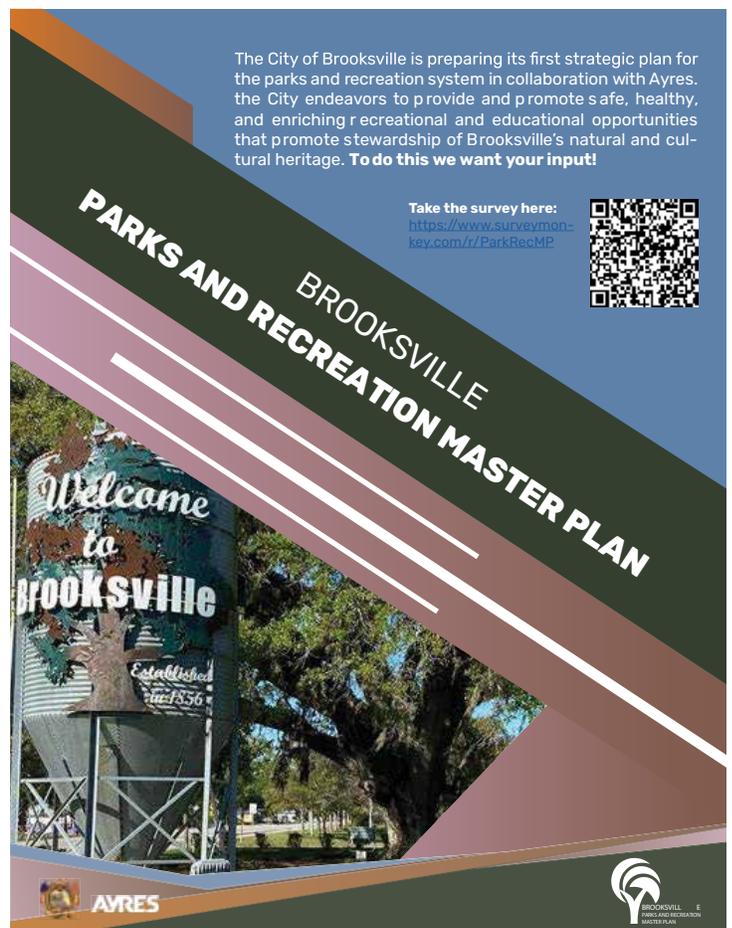
	adequately met	needs improvement	not met
Families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toddlers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adolescents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adults	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seniors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If needs are not currently met, please specify what is lacking.

5. Rank the following needs in order of least to most urgent:

- Enhancement of existing facilities
- Increased staffing
- Investments related to existing facilities
- Development of new facilities
- Additional programming

\* 6. What are the **top** **two** things you find out about parks and recreation services, activities, and needs?



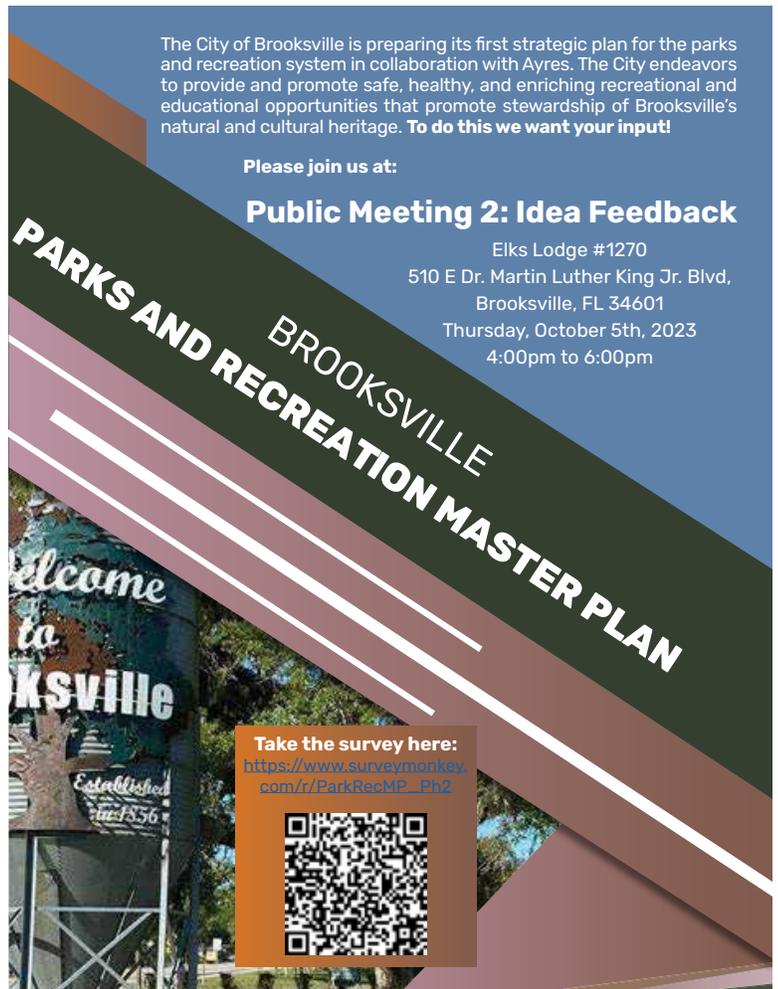
Online Survey 1 Flyer

### Idea Gathering

### SURVEY 2 - IDEA FEEDBACK

An online survey was created to garner community feedback about the improvements' conceptual plans for the existing parks and the new proposed community, neighborhood, and regional parks/sports facility. Online Survey 2 ended in October. The feedback informed the Phase 3 Parks and Recreation draft plan. Highlights of the survey results are:

- Community members favor the aquatic center at the regional park/sports facility.
- Community members favor the expanded trail and the community lawn and sports fields incorporated in the conceptual plan for community parks.
- Community members are in favor of the sensory park designated areas.
- The regional park/sports facility conceptual plan should incorporate a play area.
- Community members favor having passive activities and programming such as health-related programs, cooking classes, and art classes.
- Community members expressed their desire to integrate the trail within the parks with picnic shelters.
- The mountain bike/BMX course proposed at the Quarry should be paired with the skate park and designated at one location.
- The consensus is that the proposed parking may not be enough to withstand capacity issues.



Online Survey 2 Flyer

## **SURVEY 3 - FINAL CONCEPTS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Survey 3 will be added after public input of the draft master plan

# Non-Traditional Public Engagement

## BACK TO SCHOOL BASH - AUGUST

This event held on August 12, 2023, and was organized by the City's Parks and Recreation Department to facilitate a community gathering and provide resources to children ahead of the new school year. The gathering was an ideal venue to reach a wider audience to get feedback and gather ideas for improvements to the parks system as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan project. Over 100 people of various backgrounds visited the Parks and Recreation Master Plan table and provided valuable feedback. Community members were asked to mark their preferences on two boards - an Activities board and an Amenities board. They were guided into discussions on the scope and intent of the project and encouraged to express preferences and what they would like to see within the City's parks.

- Partnerships with local businesses should be leveraged to sponsor events like movies in the park and art festivals. This would earn publicity and advertising for the businesses in addition to generating a community atmosphere.
- Parents avoid using the playground sets in the parks and instead travel to Spring Hill or Inverness because the City's playgrounds lack the appropriate accommodation for children, especially those with physical and mental limitations. Multi-sensory playgrounds would be welcome.
- The community would be more encouraged to use the recreation center if the facilities and programs were geared toward expanding knowledge/ continued education and improving health. The community is in support of expanding Jerome Brown to include more programmatic spaces.



Back to School Bash August 12, 2023



Back to School Bash August 12, 2023

## SOUTH BROOKSVILLE COMMUNITY RESOURCE BLOCK PARTY - NOVEMBER

The Hernando County YMCA organized this event in partnership with the City of Brooksville to facilitate a community outreach event to reach and educate residents about community and City-led initiatives and the variety of available resources accessible to residents. The gathering was an ideal venue to reach a broader audience in the South Brooksville area to get feedback on the parks system as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan project.

Over 30 people passed by and engaged with the team at various levels. Overall, folks were pleased that the City is embarking on this project and the initiative to improve the City's parks. A timeline and action plan for implementation would be helpful.

The plan's emphasis on proposing neighborhood parks throughout the wider City was much appreciated. Proposed improvements to the trails with new north-south connections were also well-liked, which would provide more residents better access to a broader range of facilities and destinations.

Specific suggestions:

- Around the old squash courts, a community park could be incorporated into Tom Varn Park.
- The Y should engage in recreational activities in the City, especially in South Brooksville.
- Include and plan for activity centers along the trail to include vendors, sitting areas, and amenities such as bike repairs.
- The Hernando County Croom area is a dirt bike destination. On the east side of the County, there is a famous dirt bike area. Some people winter here to take advantage of the climate and dirt bike terrain.
- Include secure/fenced dog parks in neighborhood parks.
- The CRA in South Brooksville has been advocating for the renaming of Kennedy Park to Lorenzo Hamilton, a beloved teacher, principal, and important community figure.



Block Party November 4, 2023



Block Party November 4, 2023

# Public Meetings

## PUBLIC MEETING I - JULY 11

The first public meeting was conducted on July 11, 2023. This meeting facilitated discussions and gathered ideas with the community on what facilities, activities, and amenities they would like to see in their parks system. Possible opportunity areas for new open spaces and improvements to the existing facilities were examined.

- Align improvements at Russell Street Park with the improvements proposed by Public Works.
- More shade is needed on the Good Neighbor Trail, and more facilities like water fountains and ADA-compliant restrooms.
- The community would benefit from a splash pad and/or pool. A splash pad would provide entertainment for the kids, and a pool would allow the older residents to have aqua aerobics.
- Consider bike tourism aligned with the new "Trail Town" designation.
- Introduce new amenities to the park to spark interest with the youth, such as a skate park (potentially accompanied by a program that allows kids to loan a skateboard), and improve the playground to be functional, non-hazardous, and ADA accessible.
- Update the existing bandshell at the park, as it is underused and only used for City-sponsored events.
- Integrating art in the park would be an interesting feature that would contribute to the City's identity, spark interest from visitors, and contribute to the local economy.
- Build a community pool within Tom Varn Park, as this would help community members who must travel long distances to the nearest YMCA in Spring Hill.
- Increase publicity surrounding The Good Neighbor Trail, especially after Brooksville was subsequently designated a "Trail Town."



Public Meeting 1 July 11, 2023



Public Meeting 1 July 11, 2023

### PUBLIC MEETING 2 - OCTOBER

The second public meeting was held on October 5, 2023. The purpose of the second public meeting was to receive feedback from the community on the improvement conceptual plans for the existing parks and programs for new community, neighborhood, and regional parks/sports facility. This was done by showing the community a series of visual representations of ideas collected from previous public meetings and feedback from the first online survey of what potential programs and amenities could be incorporated within the parks system.

- Collaboration with CRA and YMCA. The Parks Department should work with the CRA and YMCA to bring health and wellness programming to Kennedy Park.
- Kennedy Park Community Center. The current center is small and not functional for desired events. Community members want to tear it down and build a new one with ample parking.
- Stage/Amphitheater for Community Gatherings. Local churches often use the park and would benefit from a stage.
- Passive Programming and Art Education. Passive programming, such as outdoor art education, is desired. The natural features of Brooksville should inspire creative activities.
- Golf Carts and The Good Neighbor Trail. Community members want Brooksville to be a golf cart community. They wish to utilize golf carts on The Good Neighbor Trail.
- Summer Program and Food Assistance. Reintroducing a summer program via a partnership with the YMCA is suggested. Food assistance programs for kids and families during the summer are desired.



Public Meeting 2 October 5, 2023



Public Meeting 2 October 5, 2023

# Project Website and Social Media

A dedicated project website was developed within the City's website in collaboration with City staff to publish project summaries, maps, and information on the project. The website is designed to encourage public input and discussion. The content for the website was organized into three brief sections.

- What's been done so far?
- How can I be involved?
- What's next?

The website can be accessed at <https://www.cityofbrooksville.us/386/Parks-and-Recreation-Master-Plan>. The website content is updated regularly to feature the latest on the project.

The Parks and Recreation Department has also been regularly updating their department's Facebook page with relevant information related to the status of the Parks Master Plan project.

The Facebook page can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/COBParksandRecreation/>



**Parks And Recreation Master Plan Project Website**



**Parks And Recreation Facebook Page**



# CHAPTER 3

# VOLUME I PARKS INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENTS OVERVIEW



Hernando Park

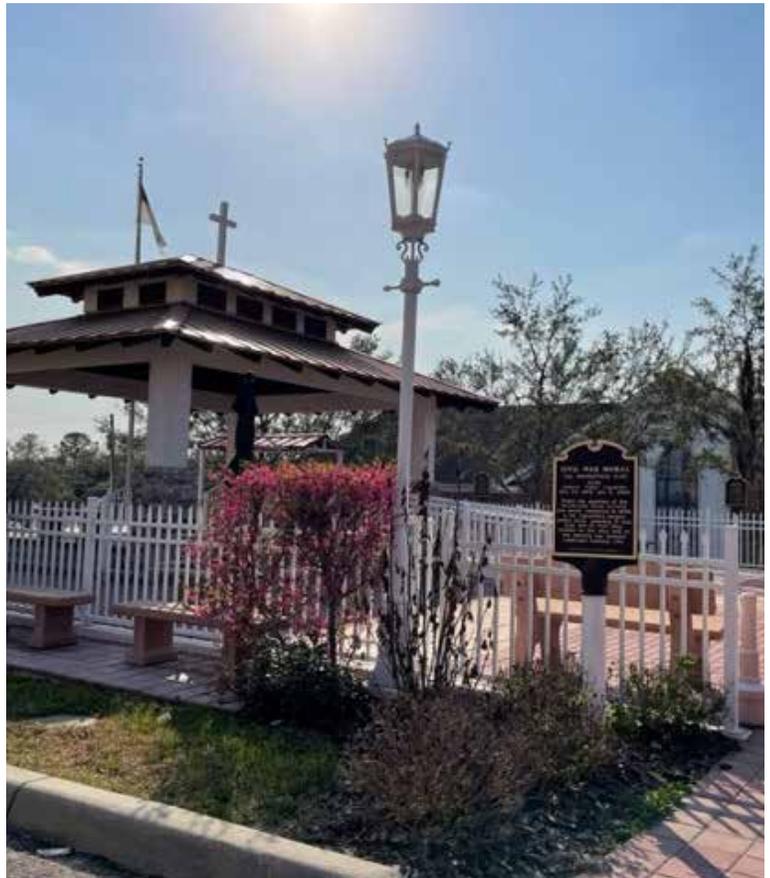
# Summary of Findings

The City of Brooksville aims to develop a strategic plan for its recreation and parks system over the next 20 years. The objectives include addressing residents' recreational needs, promoting best practices, providing a realistic guide for decision-making, involving citizens in the planning process, and addressing future green space and recreational needs. The Parks and Recreation Department is vital in providing resources and services for leisure and recreational activities. Collaboration among different entities can expand opportunities and maximize facility usage. The plan will prioritize inclusivity, accessibility, and partnerships with local organizations.

The City is looking to invest in sports tourism. Sports tourism in Florida revolves heavily around the state's favorable year-round climate. Florida is a popular sports destination for football, basketball, water sports, golf, tennis, cycling, and baseball. Baseball, football, basketball, and golf involve spectator events and participation, while water sports and tennis are primarily participation.

Many communities in Florida capitalize on sports tourism as a fundamental component of their local economy. Brooksville has a high potential to become a sports tourism destination. The community can market itself based on its proximity to Pasco County by expanding the capacity of sports camps, facilities, and events. The opportunity for sports tourism in the community is abundant. It will significantly impact the local economy through the creation of jobs, construction of accommodations, facility improvements, and increased revenue.

Brooksville's current park system and open space facilities are fragmented throughout the City. To strengthen the community, connections to the Good Neighbor Trail must be created by addressing and resolving the missing links in the open space network. Doing so will reconnect communities in North and South Brooksville through multi-use trails and recreational assets. The existing comprehensive plan is a foundation for the Parks Master Plan, as its Guiding Principles shape the community's development. With a population of 8,735, the plan will account for recreational facilities for children and senior citizens and ensure accessibility in areas with lower-income populations. The plan will also consider trail networks for active transportation and connect residents to desired destinations.

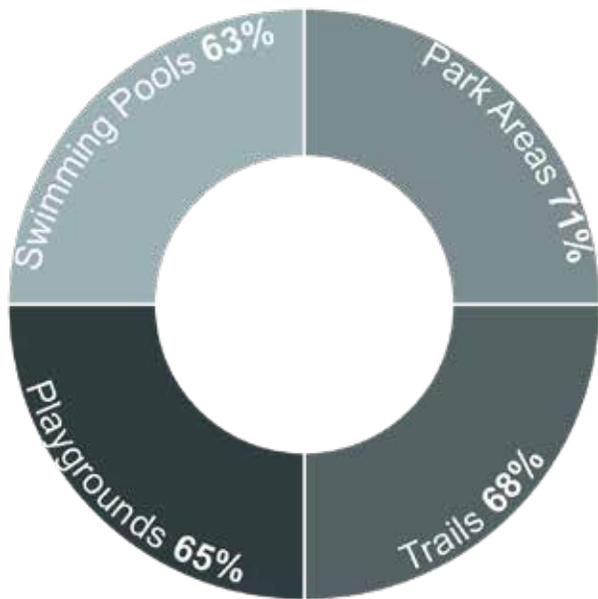


**The Brooksville Common**

## DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

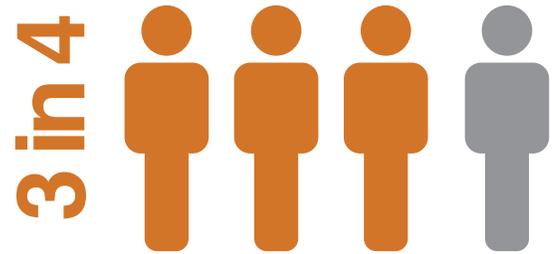
The Urban Land Institute reports that “84% of U.S. residents identify proximity to parks, playgrounds, open space, or recreation centers as an important factor in deciding where to live.” This is paramount in the context of Brooksville, as quality parks and recreation are among the primary factors businesses consider when deciding where to relocate. Parks offer programs and facilities geared toward health and well-being initiatives that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities and assist in crime prevention strategies. The National Association of Home Builders Economics and Housing Policy released a report citing that people between the ages 25 to 40 prefer open spaces such as parks as their top community feature.

### Community Features preferred by ages 25 to 40

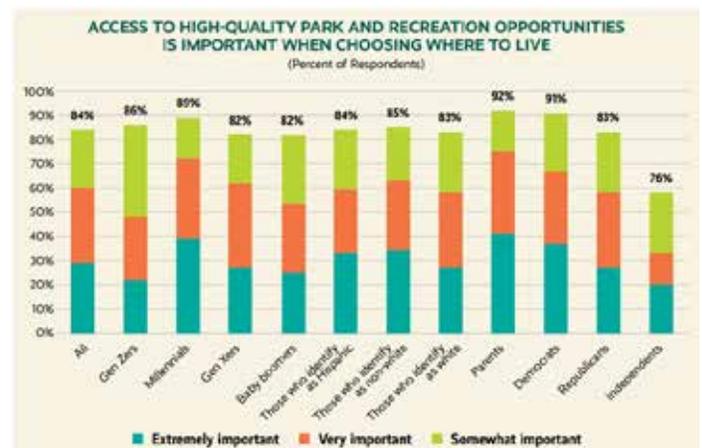
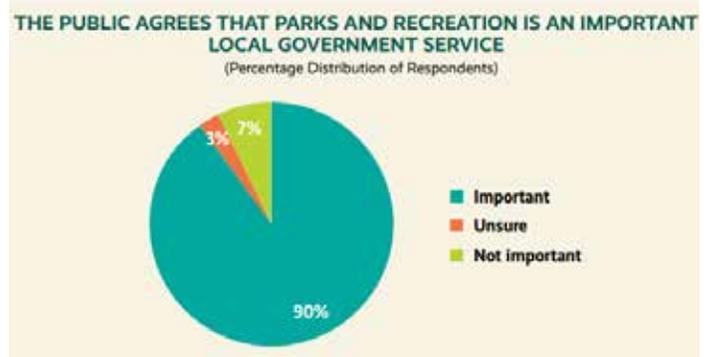


Sourced from the Urban Land Institute

The National Recreation and Park Association reports that 3 in 4 adults regard equity as a key objective for their local park and recreation department in their 2022 Engagement with Parks Report.

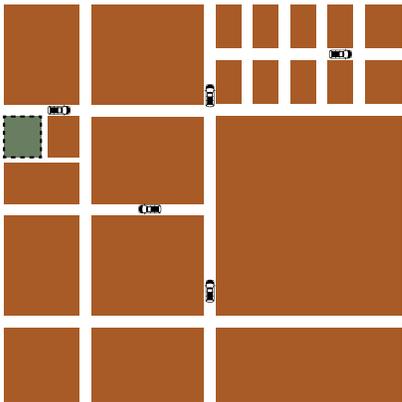


Adults regard equity as a key objective for their parks.



The Urban Land Institute reports that 38% of Americans say there is a disparity between convenient outdoor spaces in their community that allow for exercise, such as running and walking.

**38%** of people say there is a lack of outdoor spaces for recreational activities.



Sourced from the Urban Land Institute

The Trust for Public Land’s LandVote database is a repository that serves as a comprehensive resource for conservation ballot issues. Based on data from the LandVote database, it was found that voters expressed their support for land conservation through municipal and state ballot measures, amounting to an estimated \$2 billion in 2018. This finding illustrates that, even during a period when voters harbor concerns over the allocation of their tax funds, ballot initiatives pertaining to parks, recreation, and land conservation garner substantial backing from voters, with an average voter approval percentage of 75%.

**75%** voter approval in support of land conservation initiatives



Sourced from the Trust for Public LandVote Database

The 10-minute walk program, launched by the Trust for Public Land, surveyed that 1 in 3 U.S. residents do not have a park or green space within a 10-minute walk of their homes. This disparity accounts for 100 million people, including 28 million children who lack access to parks.

**1 in 3** U.S. residents do not have access to a park or greenspace within a 10 minute walk.



Sourced from the Trust for Public LandVote Database

The existing comprehensive plan is a foundation for the Parks Master Plan, as its Guiding Principles shape the community’s development. The plan will account for recreational facilities for children and senior citizens and ensure accessibility in areas with lower-income populations. The plan will also consider trail networks for active transportation and connect residents to desired destinations.

With a population of 8,735 in 2021, the City of Brooksville has experienced constant growth for the previous 13 decades, with a growth rate of 23%. This can be linked to various reasons, including commute and migration patterns, economic vitality, and the cost of living.

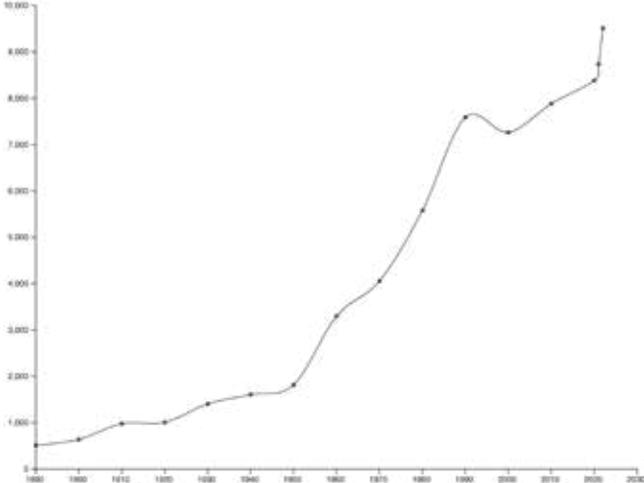
20.9% of the population in Brooksville is living below the federal poverty threshold.

The annual median income within the community stands at \$35,191, equivalent to an hourly wage of \$16.92. Consequently, a substantial portion of residents face limited accessibility to amenities like leisure and recreational activities, attributable primarily to their location from such opportunities

Inequity in participation rates in recreation and sporting activities among low-income households is exacerbated by multiple factors, including expensive program fees, equipment requirements, the distribution of program locations, and constrained transportation options. To promote equity, it is crucial to ensure that facilities provide several free and low-cost recreation programming to meet the needs of the communities, including low-income communities, and access to parks and programming are equally distributed.

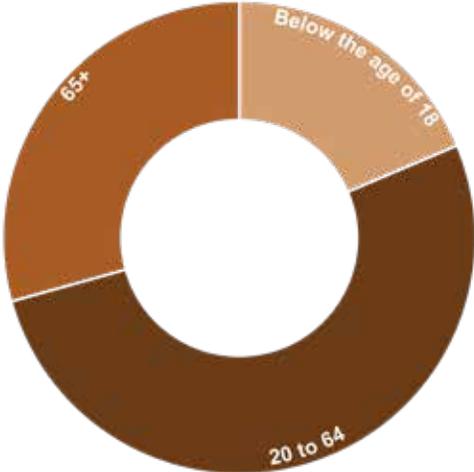
decade, the demographic composition of Brooksville has exhibited a consistent distribution among its child, adult, and senior populations. The presence of a broad age group indicates that park facilities are not exclusively used by children but also by adults and seniors. As such, the forthcoming park master plan will incorporate multi-generational programming, activities, and amenities to accommodate this diverse demographic composition.

Historic Population Growth, Brooksville, FL



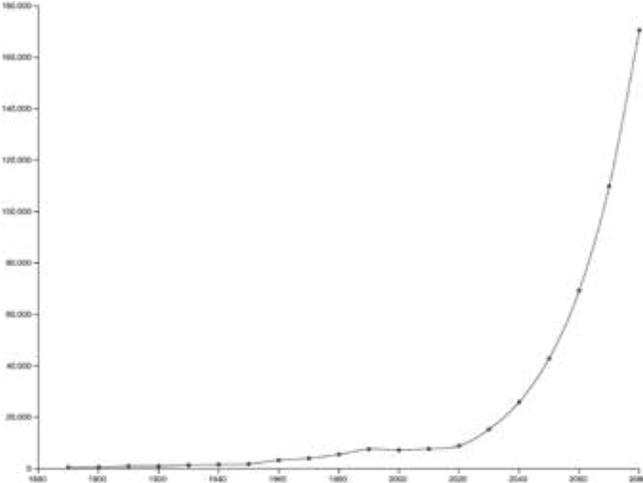
Sourced from the U.S. Census

Population by Age Range



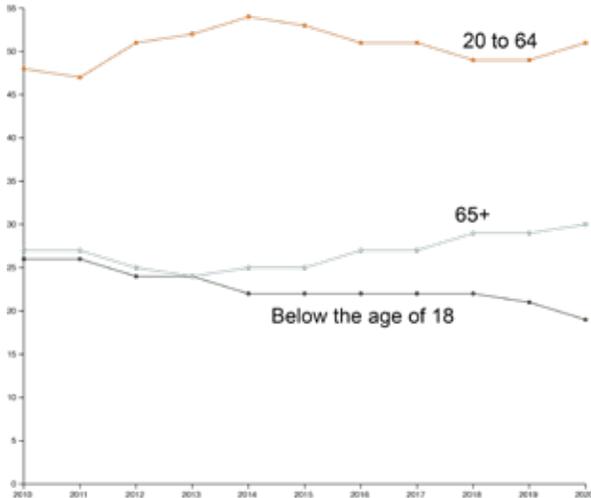
Sourced from the U.S. Census

Projected Population Estimate, Brooksville, FL



Sourced from the U.S. Census

Age Trends in Brooksville, 2010 to 2020



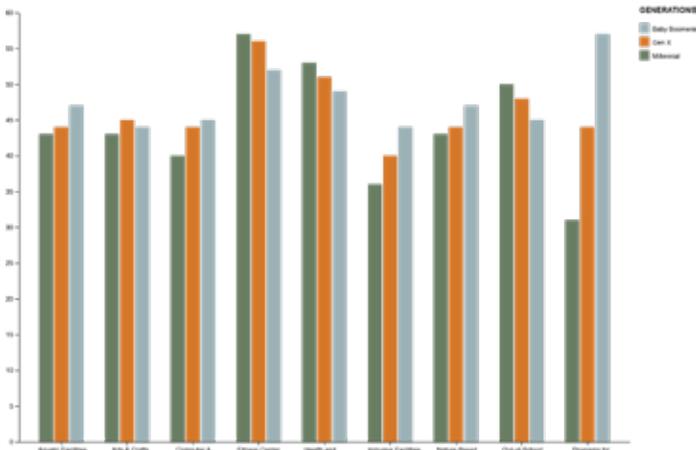
Sourced from the U.S. Census

In Brooksville, approximately 29.3% of the population comprises individuals aged 65 and above, while about 52% falls within the age range of 20 to 64. The remaining 18.6% of the population consists of individuals who are under the age of 18. Over the last

This demographic heterogeneity underscores the notion that park facilities are utilized by children, adults, and seniors. As such, the forthcoming parks master plan will incorporate multi-generational programming, activities, and amenities to accommodate this diverse demographic composition.

Examples of programming for people with mental and physical disabilities could include activities that focus on physical fitness, health and wellness, volunteer opportunities within the parks department, and enhanced social interactions.

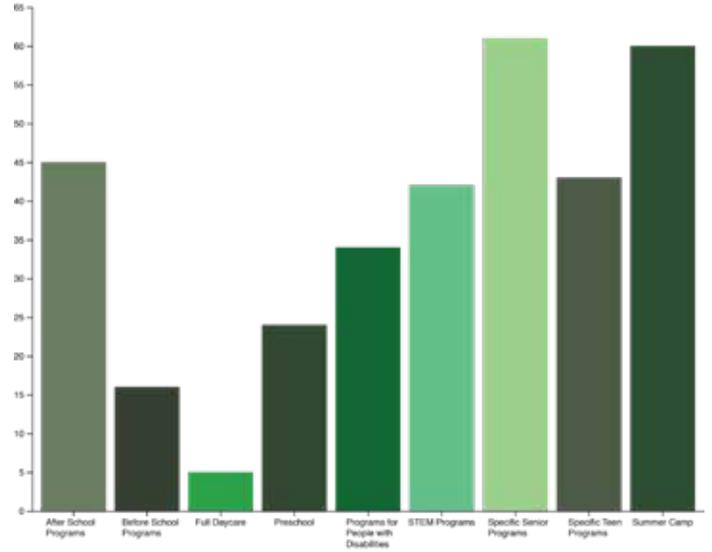
**Traditional and Non-traditional Recreation Programs and Services are Important to Local Communities**



Sourced from the NRPA

23.2% of the population in Brooksville have some physical or mental disability. 12.10% of the population below the age of 18 has a disability, 38.5% of the population 18+ has a disability, and 77.5% of the population 65+ has a disability. This highlights the need to implement inclusive amenities and activities that eliminate obstacles for otherwise impeded and marginalized individuals from routine engagements. The provision of support from parks and recreation holds particular significance for individuals with physical and mental disabilities. Designing for equity and inclusive programming ensures accessibility to parks, recreation centers, trails, aquatic features, and other facilities.

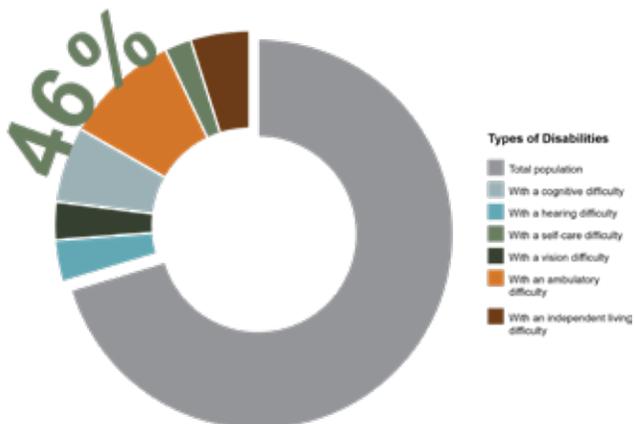
**Persons with Disabilities in Brooksville**



Sourced from the U.S. Census

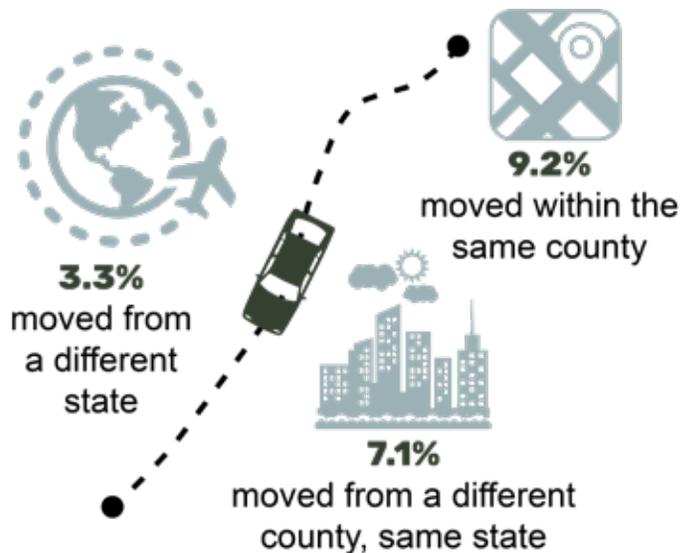
9.2% of the residents in Brooksville moved to the City from within Hernando County, 7.1% of the residents moved to the City from a different county within the state, and 3.3% of the residents moved to the City from another state.

**Persons with Disabilities in Brooksville**



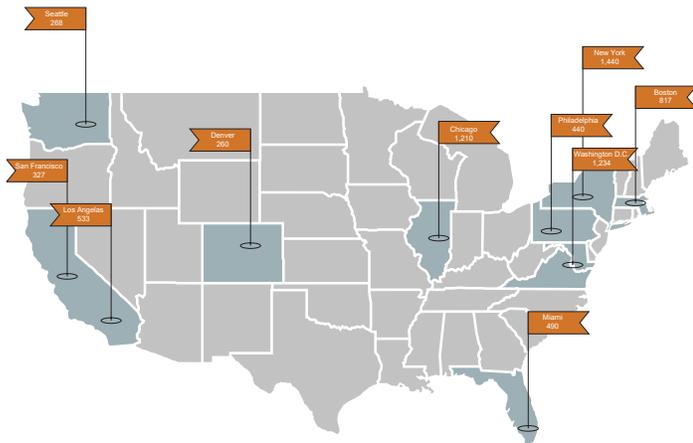
Sourced from the U.S. Census

**Residential Mobility**



Sourced from the U.S. Census

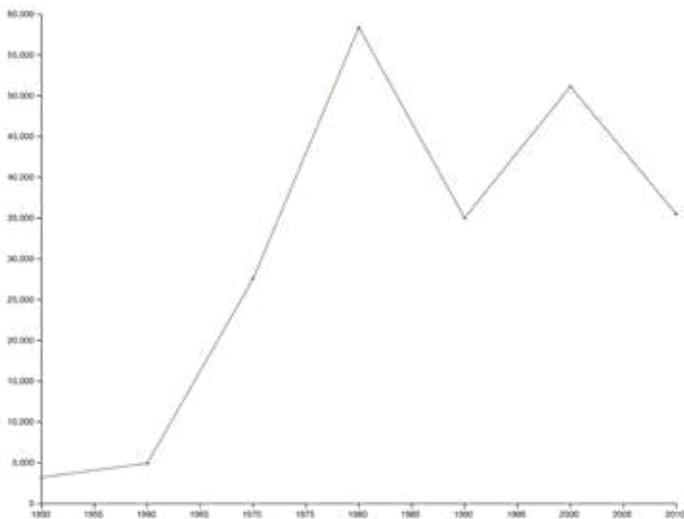
A substantial number of people have migrated from the eastern region of the United States, primarily from large metropolitan areas such as:



Sourced from Redfin Market Trends

The number of people migrating to Hernando County has fluctuated year after year. Though consistently over the years, there has been an influx of people 10-14, 35-39, and 60+ who call Hernando County their home. This indicates that more people are moving to Hernando County than leaving. This could be due to factors such as a greater demand for resources, income variability, affordable housing, and employment opportunities. Notably, Brooksville is a multi-generational community that stands to gain from implementing activities and programming tailored to cater to a wide range of age groups.

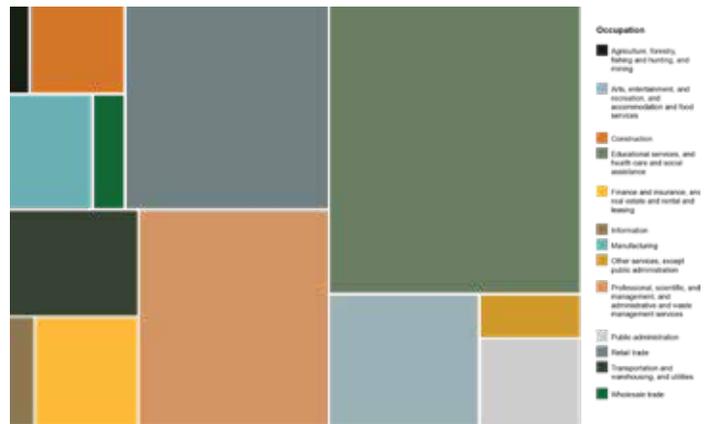
**Net Migration per 100 people, Hernando County**



Sourced from Net Migration, University of Wisconsin

There was a total of 9,443 jobs in Brooksville in 2020. Expanding Brooksville’s parks and recreation master plan could potentially be a way to generate employment. Integrating workforce development as a fundamental element, wherein new job possibilities in park management contribute to the local economy and enhance the maintenance of public spaces, holds considerable potential for yielding substantial benefits to lower-income populations.

**Net Migration per 100 people, Hernando County**



Sourced from Net Migration, University of Wisconsin

**People Moving to Brooksville**



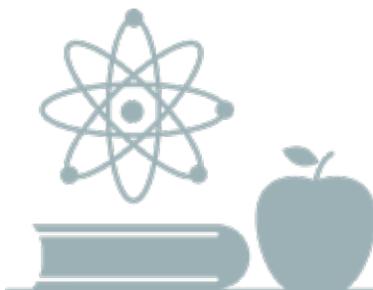
Sourced from Redfin Market Trends

**90%** of U.S. adults want their local parks department to provide job and volunteer opportunities available for youth and young adults.



Sourced from the NRPA

**3 in 4** park departments provide STEM programs to the community.



Sourced from the NRPA

Investments in improving a community's quality of life can create a virtuous cycle: high-quality places attract workers and employers, which in turn attract more investments and jobs.



Sourced from the NRPA

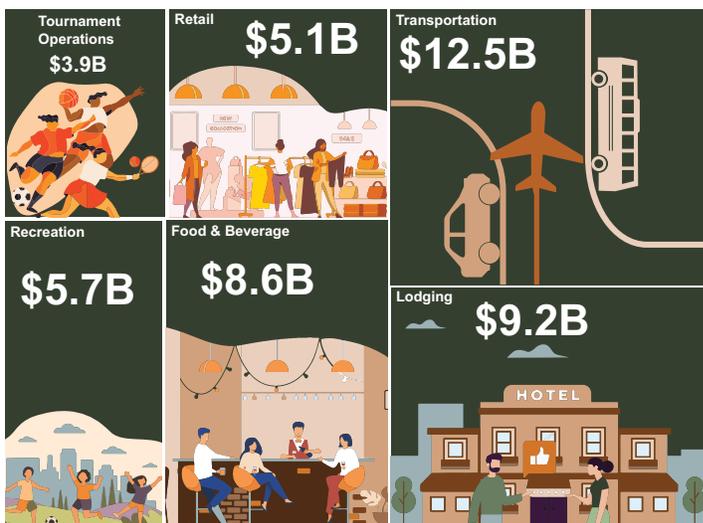
The City is looking to invest in sports tourism. Sports tourism in Florida revolves heavily around the State's favorable year-round climate. Florida is a popular sports destination for football, basketball, water sports, golf, tennis, cycling, and baseball. Baseball, football, basketball, and golf involve spectator events and participation, while water sports and tennis are primarily participation. Many communities in Florida capitalize on sports tourism as a fundamental component of their local economy. Brooksville has a high potential to become a sports tourism destination. The community can market itself based on its proximity to Pasco County by expanding the capacity of sports camps, facilities, and events. The opportunity for sports tourism in the community is abundant. It will have a significant impact on the local economy through the creation of jobs, construction of accommodations, facility improvements, and increased revenue.

The Sports Events and Tourism Association (SETA) estimates that sports tourism generated over \$90 billion in economic impact in the United States in 2021. The economic impact of Sports Tourism can result in the following benefits:

**Economic Impacts of the Sports Tourism Sector**



**Sports Traveler Spending by Industry**



Sourced from Sports ETA

# Park Needs Assessment

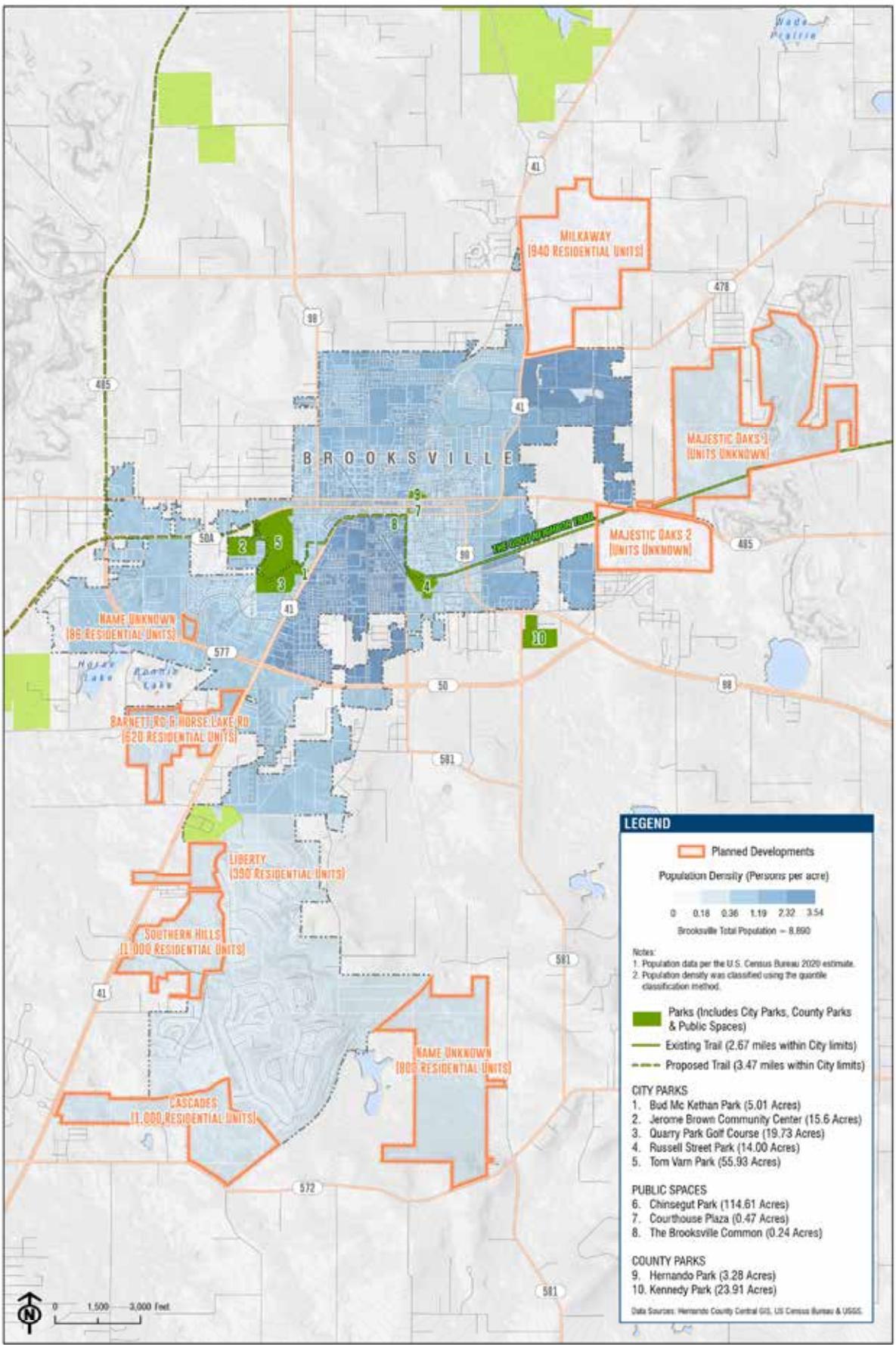
An assessment of existing parks and facilities within the City, demographics, population density throughout the City in relationship to the existing parks, identified opportunities with vacant and public lands, existing zoning, and future land use is included in the Volume 2 report. These maps help determine the best locations for parks and trails. Public facilities highlight support from the City's Park system, and anticipated developments identify the developments currently being discussed with the City.

In 2021, 8,735 people were living in Brooksville. Based on the development solicitations from the City's Planning Department, new developments could bring over 4,000 dwelling units with an associated population of around 25,000 in the next 20 years.

Furthermore, Brooksville is on the precipice of anticipated new development and population growth at a rate of 30% based on developer interests and projects discussed with the Planning Department. This highlights the need for updated athletic and sports facilities in a designated regional park located on the City's southeastern edge. The City's Planning Department is considering annexation. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, a park system, at a minimum, should be composed of a total of 6.25 to 10.50 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. The Plan overviews that the need for outdoor recreation in the state is growing and that the state will need to deal with environmental challenges, such as climate change, to ensure recreation remains viable.

The Vacant and Public Land Map and Public Facilities Map on the following page show potential future park sites considering the number and location of City-owned land in Brooksville.

Future Housing Developments			
Project	Location	Type of Housing	# of units
-	South Brooksville	Residential	800
Cascades	South Brooksville	Residential	1,000
Southern Hills	Southern Hills	Residential	1,000
Liberty	Southern Hills	Residential	390
-	Barnett RD & Horse Lake RD	Residential	620
-	Cortez Blvd.	Residential	86
Milkaway	North Brooksville	Residential	940
Majestic Oaks 1	North Brooksville	Residential	-
Majestic Oaks 2	North Brooksville	Residential	-
<b>Total Projected</b>			<b>4,836+</b>



**LEGEND**

- Planned Developments
- Population Density (Persons per acre)
- 0 0.16 0.36 1.19 2.22 3.54
- Brooksville Total Population = 8,890

Notes:

1. Population data per the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 estimate.
2. Population density was classified using the quantile classification method.

- Parks (Includes City Parks, County Parks & Public Spaces)
- Existing Trail (2.67 miles within City limits)
- Proposed Trail (3.47 miles within City limits)

**CITY PARKS**

1. Bud Mc Kethan Park (5.01 Acres)
2. Jerome Brown Community Center (15.6 Acres)
3. Quarry Park Golf Course (19.73 Acres)
4. Russell Street Park (14.00 Acres)
5. Tom Varn Park (55.93 Acres)

**PUBLIC SPACES**

6. Chinsegut Park (114.61 Acres)
7. Courthouse Plaza (0.47 Acres)
8. The Brooksville Common (0.24 Acres)

**COUNTY PARKS**

9. Hernando Park (3.28 Acres)
10. Kennedy Park (23.91 Acres)

Data Sources: Hernando County Central GIS, US Census Bureau & USGS.

Anticipated Developments Map

# Opportunities and Challenges

The following is a summary of the main opportunities and challenges from the planning process.

	Opportunities	Challenges
Overall Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and design for inclusiveness to accommodate users with physical and mental limitations.</li> <li>Highlight the Good Neighbor Trail with active recreational activities and designate it as the main connection to other open space amenities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Branch out and embrace the future while keeping the small-town charm of Brooksville.</li> </ul>
Active Recreation/ Organized Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brooksville has the capacity to explore sports tourism. Providing new facilities will allow the City to host major events.</li> <li>Provide designated spaces for youth sports (HYL) as they make up a large demographic.</li> <li>New sports facilities should accommodate expected growth in sports.</li> <li>Provide designated spaces for other sport-related recreational activities like swimming and skating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost and funding associated with new facilities.</li> <li>Public and private partnerships facilitation.</li> </ul>
Passive Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide non-traditional activities and programs for all age groups and physical and mental abilities through education, arts, and the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aid users who are outside the parks radius to utilize the parks amenities by providing means of transportation.</li> </ul>
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage public-private partnerships through sponsorship and bring improvements to the park facilities.</li> <li>Work with developers to secure and designate new land toward parks.</li> <li>Look to the YMCA for potential opportunities.</li> <li>Explore other avenues for generating funds such as community led funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore partnerships that align with the City and community's overall vision and aspirations.</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage public-private partnerships through sponsorship and bring improvements to the park facilities.</li> <li>Work with developers to secure and designate new land towards parks.</li> <li>Look to the YMCA for potential opportunities.</li> <li>Explore other avenues for generating funds.</li> <li>Close the gap by distributing amenities throughout the parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide aid to those who are economically disenfranchised and un-housed who utilize the parks as a means for shelter.</li> <li>Make the parks accessible and safe by providing appropriate safety measures.</li> </ul>

# CHAPTER 4

## CITY PARKS AND RECREATION VISION AND STRUCTURE



Downtown Main Street

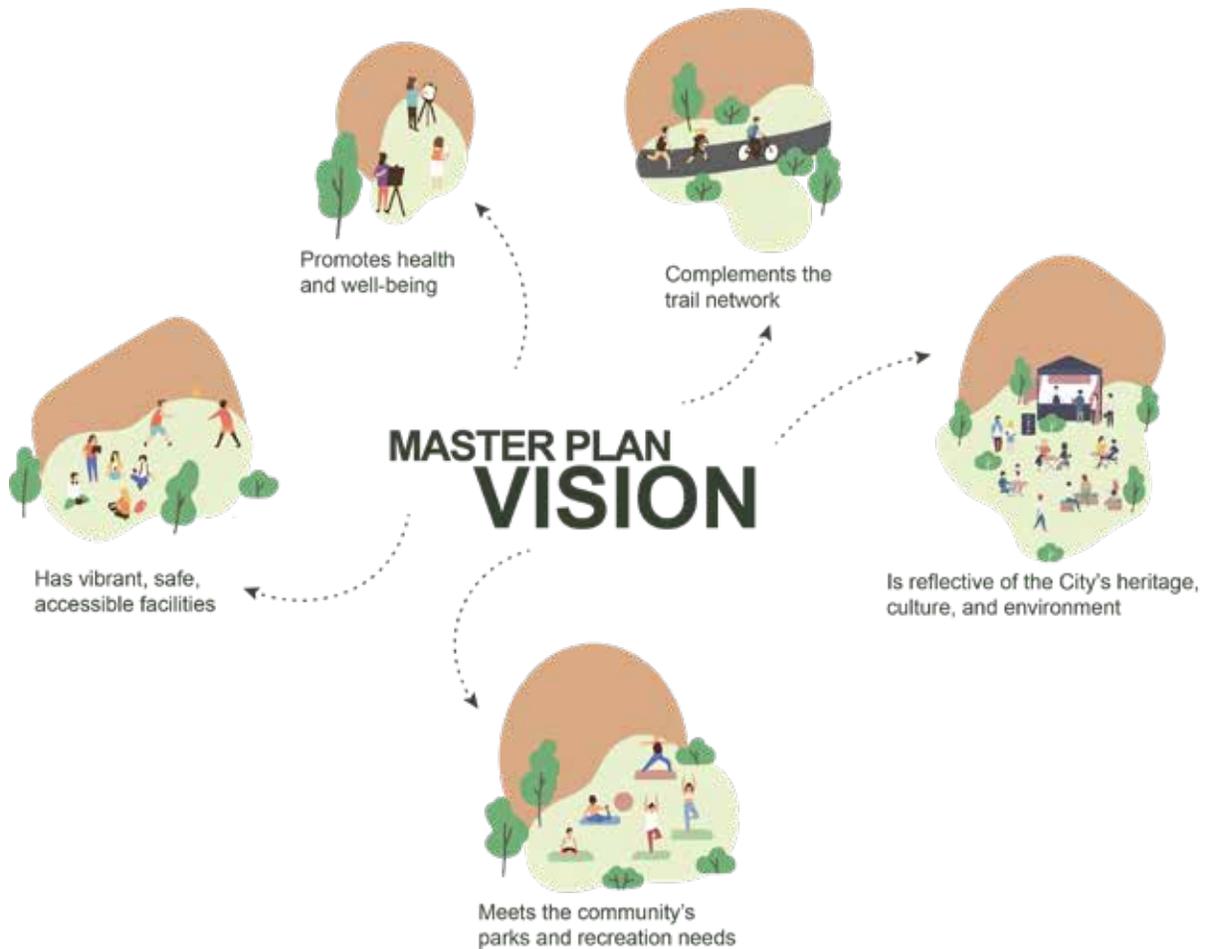
# Park & Recreation Vision Statement

Brooksville’s vision is to create a vibrant and inclusive community by highlighting the Good Neighbor Trail as a foundation for active recreational activities. The City is committed to providing designated facilities for all ages, ensuring that parks cater to all individuals’ diverse needs and abilities, including those with physical and mental limitations. With a strong emphasis on mental health programs and other well-being initiatives, Brooksville aims to promote and improve the quality of life of all residents.

Through public-private partnerships, the City will be able to transform parks and recreation into a thriving enterprise, generating economic growth and enhancing the community’s quality of life. To achieve this, the City will strategically distribute passive and active amenities throughout the park system, creating a safe and inviting environment for all to enjoy.

Recognizing the importance of public spaces, a hierarchy of parks, including neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks, will be identified and incorporated into the current park system. A network of bikeways and trails provides access to green spaces and parks that cater to the needs of residents. Moreover, Brooksville will address the City’s growing population and current needs by developing new parks with state-of-the-art athletics and sports facilities. A prominent feature of the parks will be its integration with the programs and activities around the City.

**Brooksville intends to create a City where parks are accessible, inclusive, and thriving, fostering community, health, well-being, and connection among residents.**



# Principles

**1. Vibrant.** Safe, accessible, and vibrant parks and recreation facilities, programs, and events that meet the community's growing needs.

**2. Equitable Access and Connectivity.** Make existing and new parks accessible to all cross-sections and age groups with a wide range of active and passive recreational programs.

**3. Context-Sensitive Design.** Best park plans, designs and programs are reflective of the City's history, culture and heritage.

**4. Resilient.** Flexibly planned parks to adapt to the changing nature of sports and community interests and balance current and future demands.

**5. Efficient.** Integrated parks and recreation programming and maintenance to ensure parks and recreation services are provided in an efficient manner.

**6. Health and Environment Focus.** Focus on health and wellness amenities integrated with the City's natural environment and promoting environmentally sensitive practices.

**7. Partnerships.** Leverage public-private partnerships to ensure good stewardship of the City's parks and promote economic development.



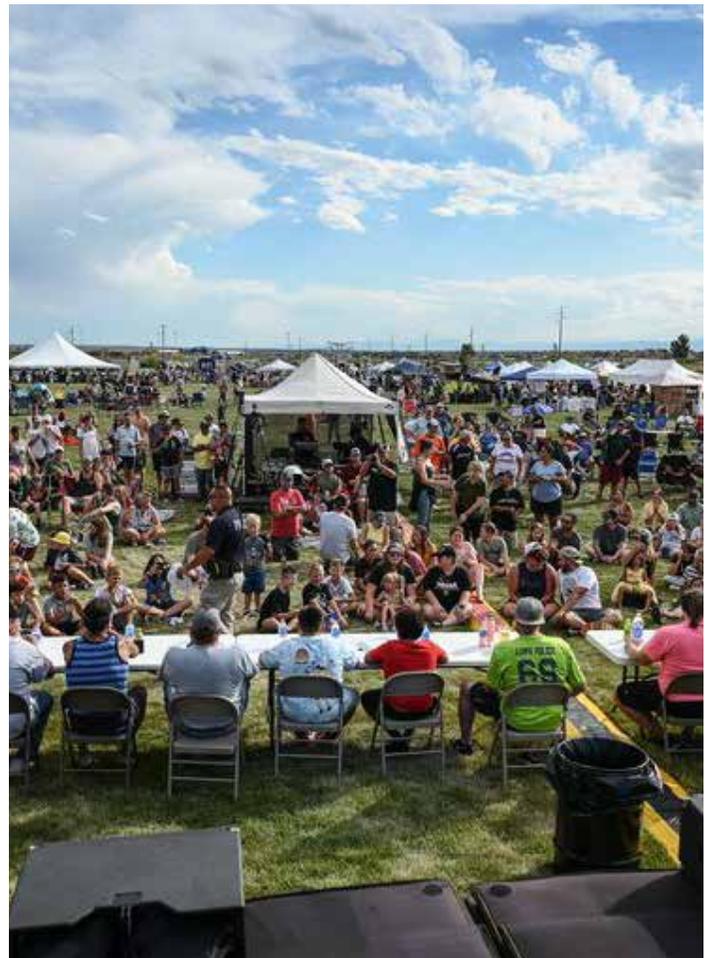
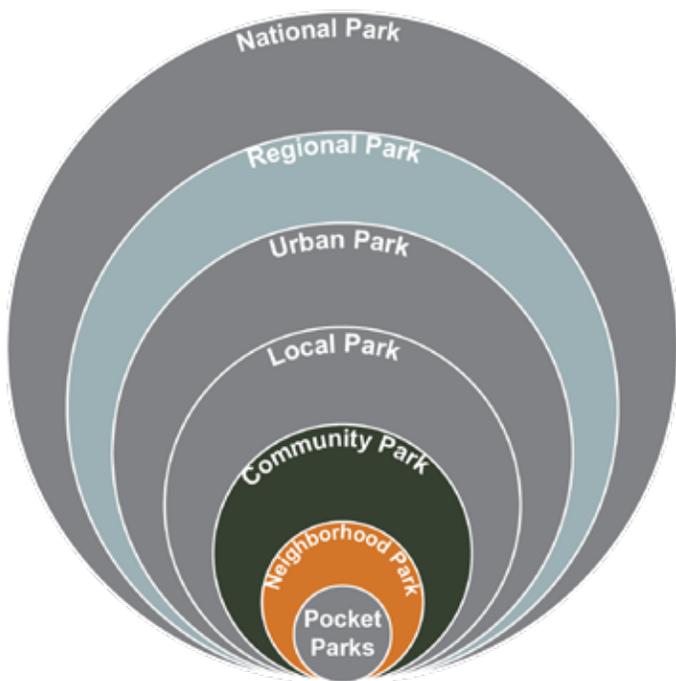
# Hierarchy

Based on the current structure and the community's preferences, Brooksville would benefit most from three distinct categories of parks - regional parks, community parks, and neighborhood parks.

**Regional Park:** Regional parks are the largest park category within the park classification and are intended to attract users from the surrounding area. These parks exhibit significant variations in terms of their dimensions, configuration, and activity level. They can be primarily based on natural resources, cater to specific user needs, or incorporate elements from both aspects.

**Community Parks:** Community parks are the neighborhood's social and recreational hub for several neighborhoods within the designated service area. The primary objective is to provide for the community's active and passive recreational requirements, preserve distinctive localized environmental features, and accommodate community-based social and civic events.

**Neighborhood Parks:** Neighborhood parks are vital for fostering a healthy and interactive community. They act as the traditional hub for recreational and social activities within a neighborhood. These parks provide a space for informal recreation, promote social interaction among residents, preserve open areas, contribute to the neighborhood's unique identity, and enhance the overall quality of life for those living within the vicinity. Neighborhood parks serve as an extension of residential activities that cannot be accommodated within individual yards.

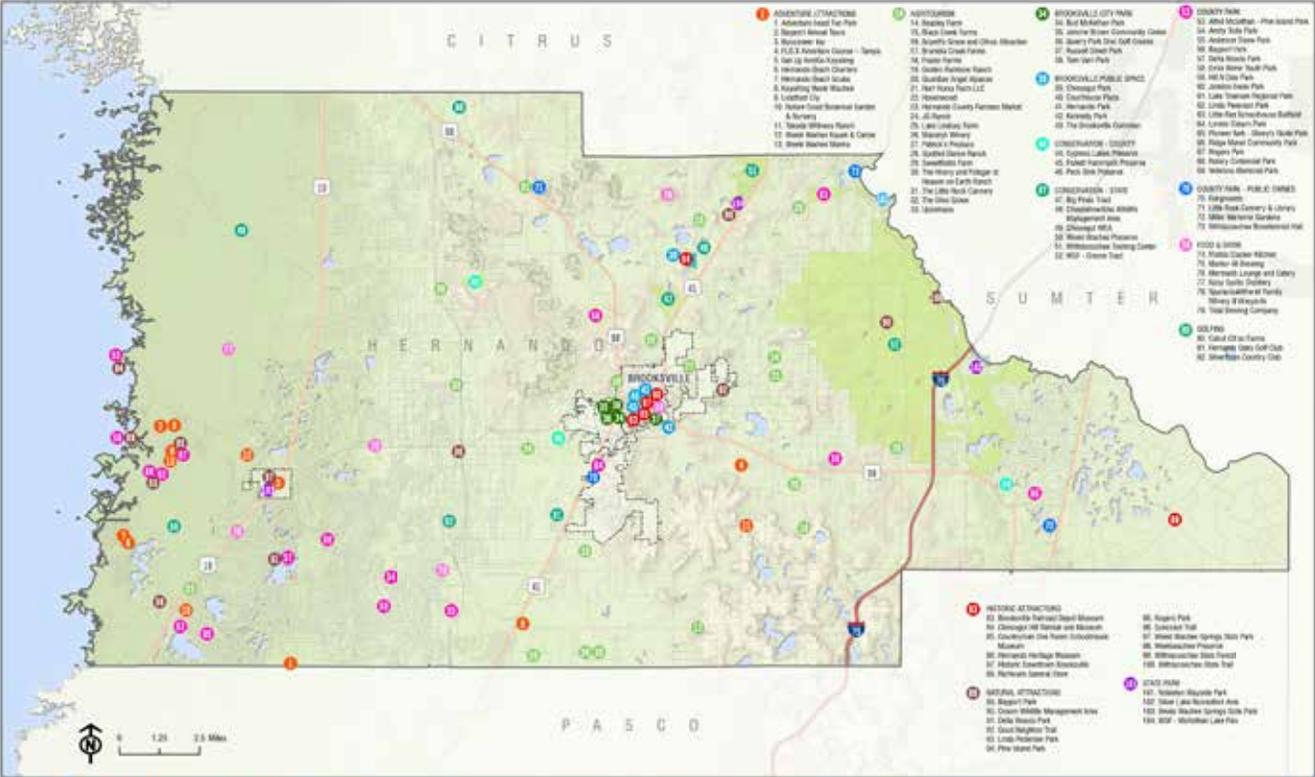


Activities and Events in Brooksville

# Park Demands

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

Hernando County offers a wide variety of activities in which residents can participate. Though fragmented throughout the County, many of the activities and attractions offered are centralized within or near Brooksville. It is important to note that the recreational activities and programming identified as being priority will work in tandem as an extension of existing features and complement the parks provision within the City. This, in turn, will offer diverse entertainment within Brooksville.

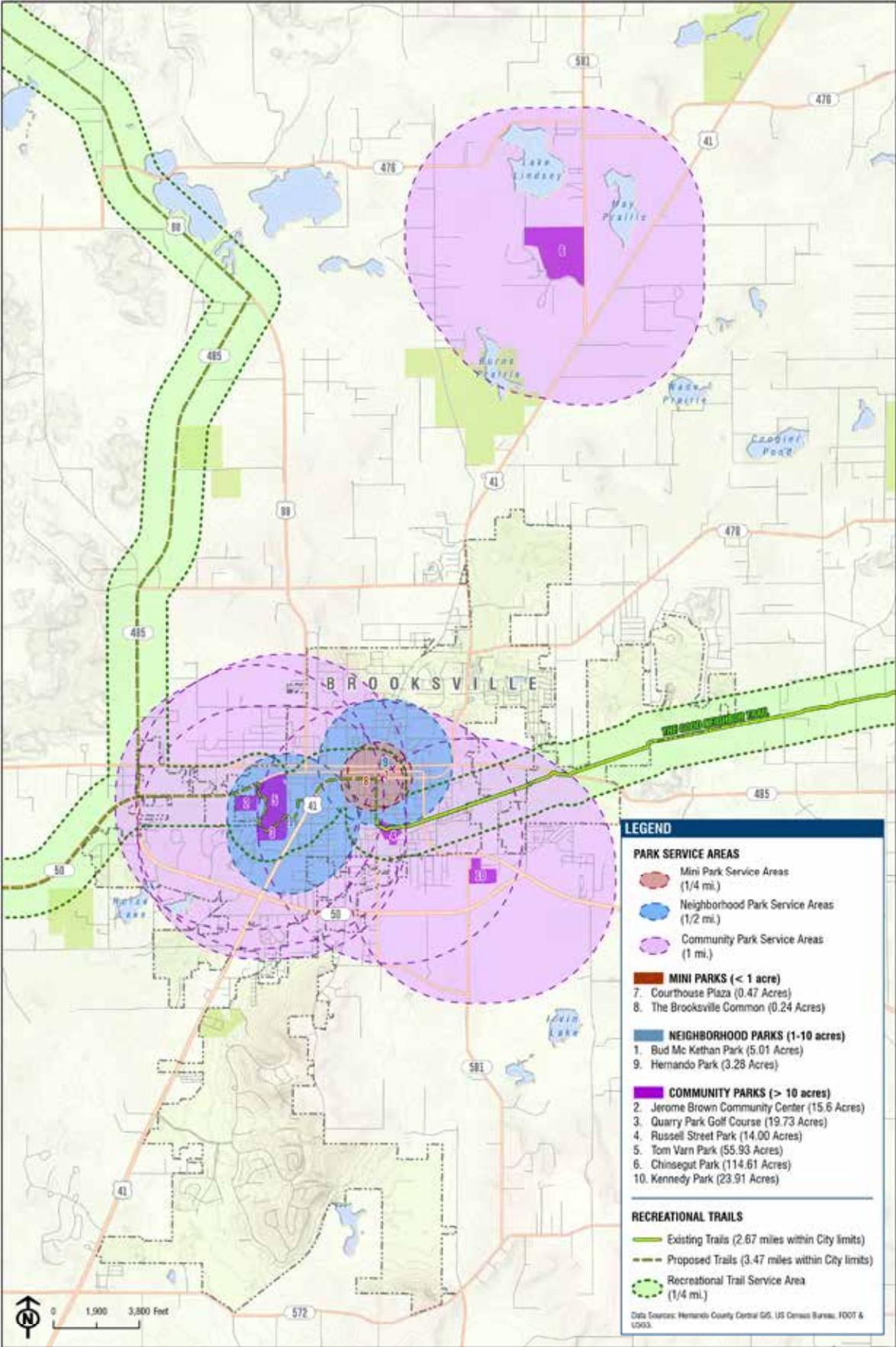


**Parks and Recreation Context Map**

In 2021, **8,735 people were living in Brooksville**. Based on the development solicitations from the City's Planning Department, new developments could bring over **4,000 dwelling units** with an associated population of around **25,000 in the next 20 years**.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, **a robust park system requires between 6.25 and 10.50 acres of open space for every 1,000 people**. This puts the **future demand** at around **250 acres of dedicated parks**. The **City has around 140 acres of park space**, including the County parks. An additional **110 to 120 acres of park space requirement is anticipated to meet future demand**. The Park Service ream Map on the following page shows the concentration of parks in the central area, leaving several communities largely underserved.

It is anticipated that the City will require a designated regional park and/or community park with updated athletic and sports facilities and several neighborhood parks.



Park Service Areas

# Potential Park Locations

The team evaluated regional sports, community parks, and neighborhood parks and discussed several location options for the new parks.

The rationale for these sites' location is primarily to provide parks and recreation opportunities to underserved areas by park type and catchment. All the sites assessed are publicly owned and vacant to some extent. The development context and access have also been considered in proposing these initial sites.

Windshield surveys of these sites were conducted for suitability. The considerations for each location are noted in the following pages. A more detailed technical site suitability should be undertaken to test the most suitable sites for a park.

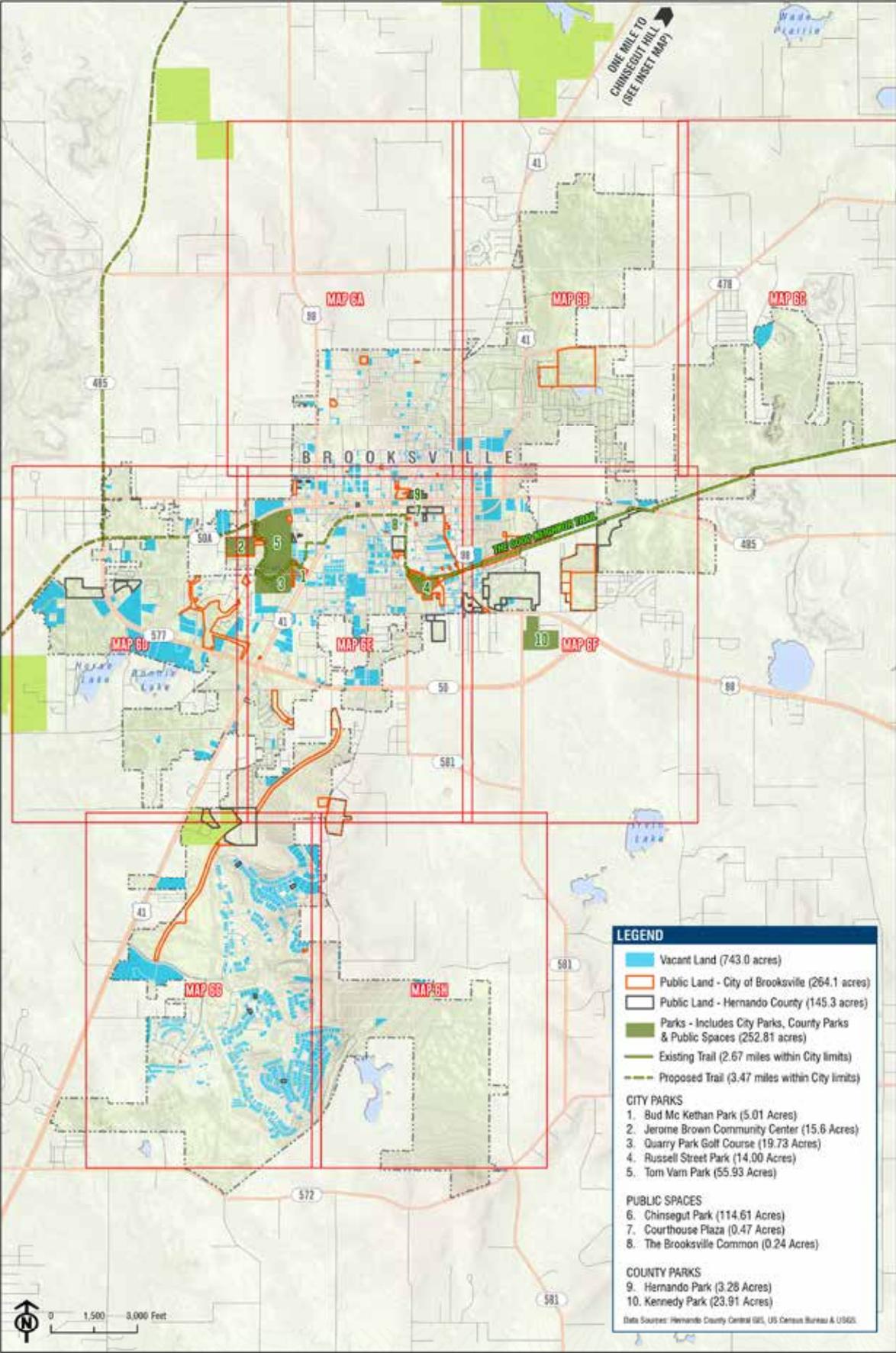
The following pages present a summary assessment of each location considered.

The Potential Future Park Locations Map suggests locations for new parks based on existing park service areas, demographic and residential distributions across the City, publicly owned land availability, and anticipated new developments.

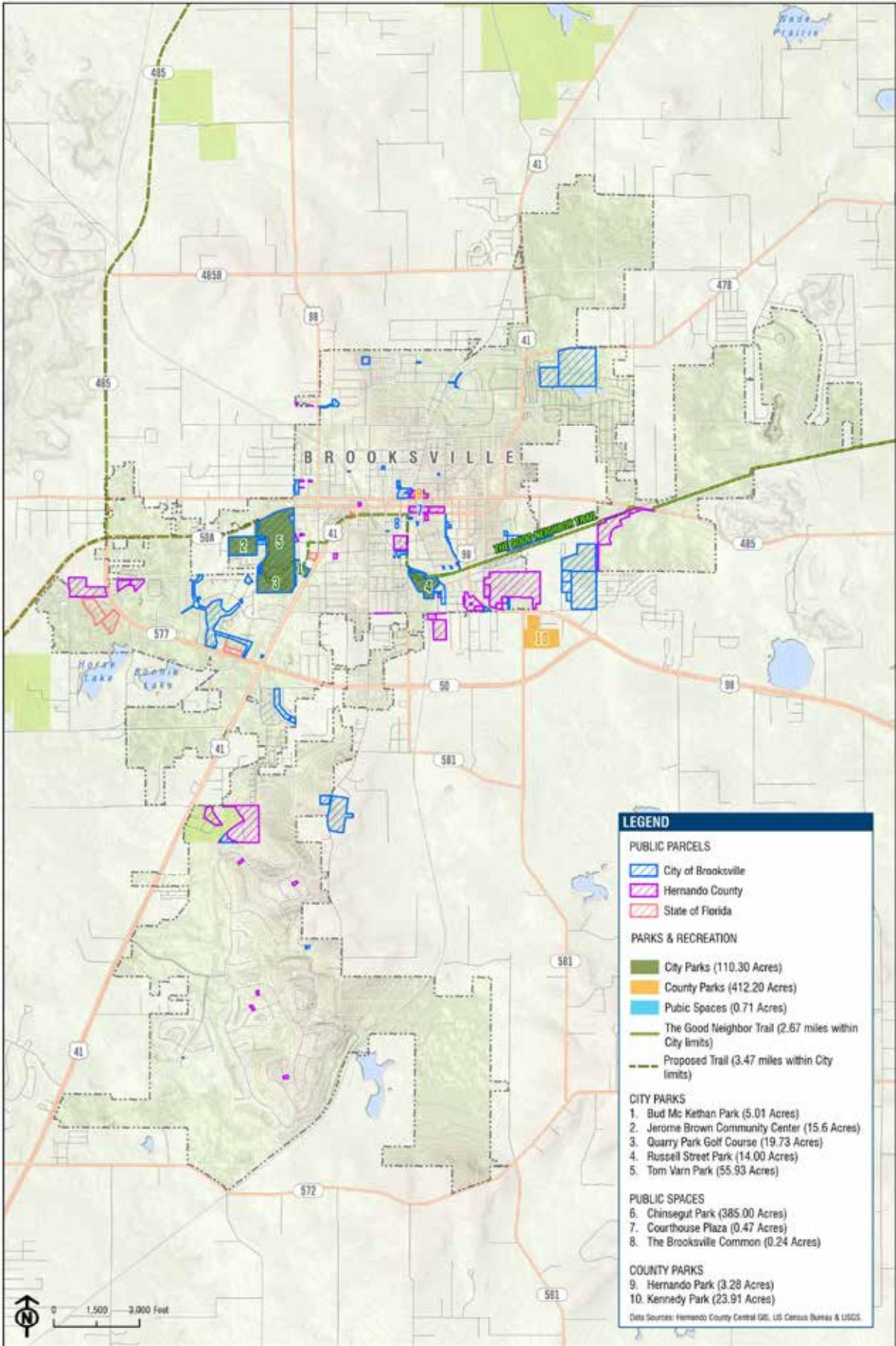
Refer to Volume 1 for details on land assessments.



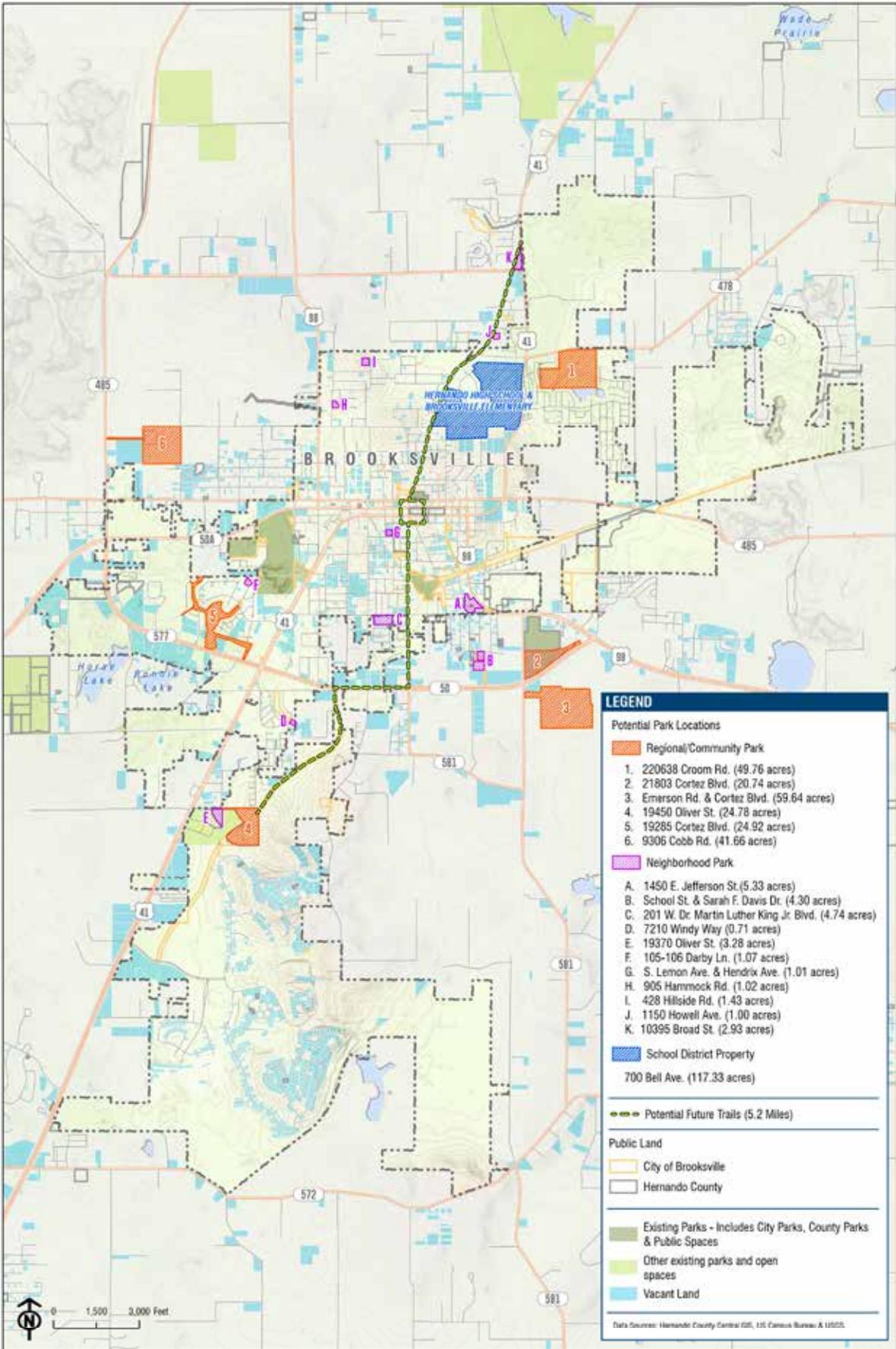
**Potential Park Location**



Vacant and Public Land Map



Public Facilities Map



Potential Future Park Location Map

# Potential Park Location 1

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

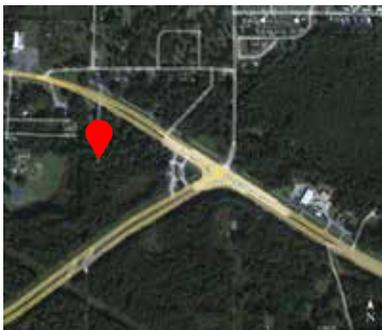
- Ideal site
- Property on opposite side
- Adjacent to trailer homes
- Needs clearing
- Near old trailer homes

**Address:** 220638 Croom Rd.  
**Size:** 49.76 acres  
**General Location:** Near North side, near school district property  
**Existing Use:** Wooded Area/ Wetland - Public Facility/ Conservation Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Mobile Home/Multi-Family Residential  
**Access:** Fenced and gated. "No Trespassing" sign.  
**Development Constraints:** Wooded/Utility easement



# Potential Park Location 2

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

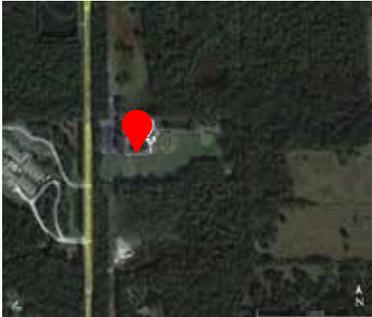
- Heavily wooded
- Two houses
- Marathon gas station
- Small ravine
- Utility easement

**Address:** 21803 Cortez Blvd.  
**Size:** 20.74 acres  
**General Location:** South of Kennedy Park  
**Existing Use:** Overhead Utility Easements/Wooded Area  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Planned Development/ Commercial/Conservation  
**Access:**  
**Development Constraints:** Wooded/Utility easement



# Potential Park Location 3

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

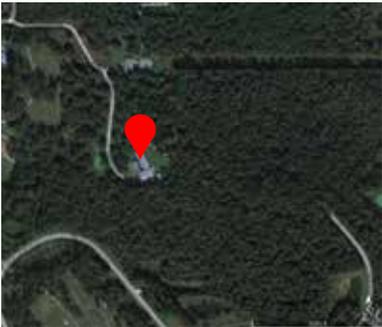
- Flat
- Wooded
- Good approach road
- Undeveloped lot behind school
- Utility corridor
- Possible trail access

**Address:** Emerson Rd. & Cortez Blvd.  
**Size:** 59.64 acres  
**General Location:** Southeast of the Emerson Rd. & Cortez Blvd. intersection  
**Existing Use:** Wooded Area - Conservation Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Conservation/Commercial/Educational/Residential  
**Access:** Gate with "No Trespassing" sign on Emerson Rd.  
**Development Constraints:** Wooded



# Potential Park Location 4

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

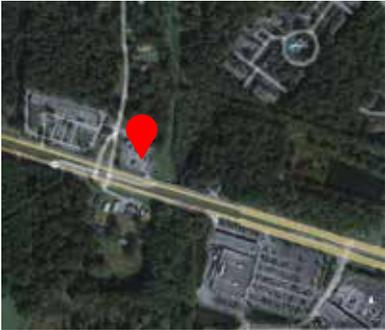
- Wooded site with terrain
  - Next to animal service
  - Mature trees
  - Possible swamp
  - Behind fairgrounds
- \*County fairgrounds can be upgraded to regional park\*

**Address:** 19450 Oliver St.  
**Size:** 24.78 acres  
**General Location:** Southside  
**Existing Use:** Public Facility - Hernando County Animal Services & Hernando County Master Gardener Nursery  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Mixed Use  
**Access:** Accessible via Oliver St. or Corliss Rd.  
**Development Constraints:** Existing public facilities



# Potential Park Location 5

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

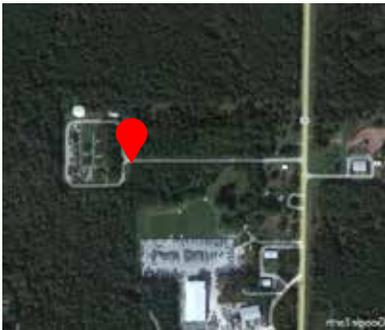
**Address:** 19285 Cortez Blvd.  
**Size:** 24.92 acres  
**General Location:** Southside  
**Existing Use:** Detention Pond/ Drainage Swale/Wooded Area - Single Family/Public Facility  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Commercial/Public Facility  
**Development Constraints:** Drainage area/wooded

- Observations:**
- US 41 has a bike trail
  - Stormwater stream
  - Stable neighborhoods
  - Tot-lot in neighborhood
  - New apartments (senior living) at Candlelight Blvd.



# Potential Park Location 6

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** 9306 Cobb Rd.  
**Size:** 41.66 acres  
**General Location:** North of City limits adjacent to Highway 485  
**Existing Use:** City Reclaimed Water Facility/Wooded Area - Industrial/Residential Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Industrial  
**Access:** Gated entrance drive on Cobb Rd.  
**Development Constraints:** Existing reclaimed water facility

- Observations:**
- Not an ideal site
  - Wooded site
  - Behind reclaimed water facility
  - Industrial traffic



# Potential Park Location A

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

- Near community center
- Prime location
- Electric tower
- Gateway site
- Clear site
- Small

**Address:** 509 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

**Size:** 5.33 acres

**General Location:** Near the intersection of US 98 & E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

**Existing Use:** Radio/Cell tower

**Context & Surrounding Use:** Single Family Residential/Multi Family/Commercial

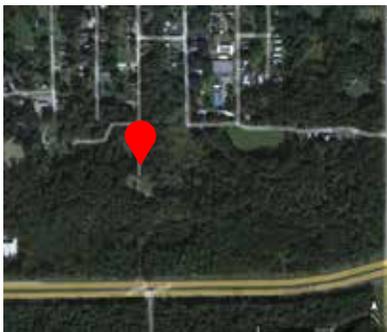
**Access:** Driveway on MLK Jr. Blvd.

**Development Constraints:** Radio/Cell Tower, Detention ponds



# Potential Park Location B

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Observations:**

- Wooded site
- Behind reclaimed water facility
- Industrial traffic

**Address:** School St. & Sarah F. Davis Dr.

**Size:** 4.3 acres

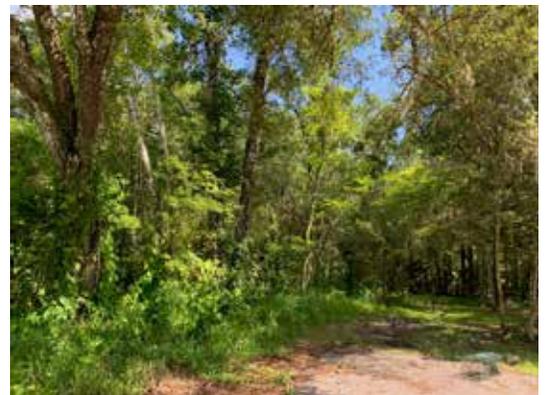
**General Location:** South of City limits near Kennedy Park

**Existing Use:** Wooded Area - South Brooksville Planned Development District

**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Planned Development

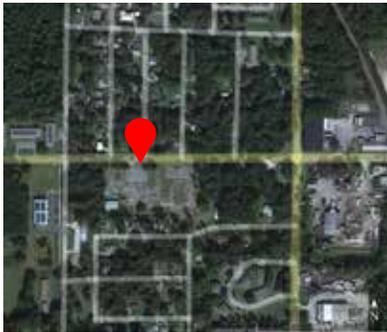
**Access:** Fenced. Gated entrance on School St.

**Development Constraints:** Wooded



# Potential Park Location C

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

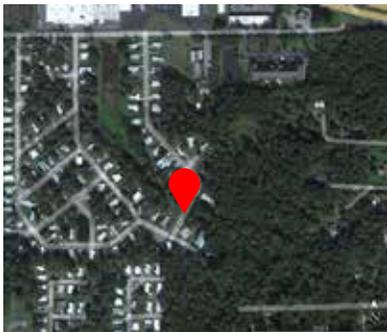
**Address:** 201 W. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
**Size:** 4.74 acres  
**General Location:** South central Brooksville  
**Existing Use:** Asphalt lots - County property - Residential Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Commercial  
**Access:** Fenced and gated with "No Trespassing" sign. Gate on MLK Jr. Blvd.  
**Development Constraints:** Asphalt/concrete slabs

- Observations:**
- Redevelopment site
  - Scraped building pads
  - Doesn't seem ideal



# Potential Park Location D

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

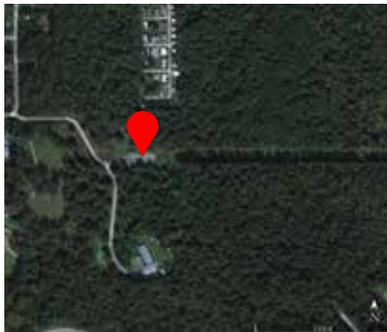
**Address:** 7210 Windy Way  
**Size:** 0.71 acres  
**General Location:** Southeast of the US 41 & Highway 50 intersection  
**Existing Use:** Drainage Swale/ Wooded Area - Mobile Home/Multi-Family Residential Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Mobile Home  
**Access:** Windy Way  
**Development Constraints:** Drainage area/wooded

- Observations:**
- Windy Way Trailer Homes
  - Adult community
  - Large trees
  - Stream
  - OK for play lot



# Potential Park Location E

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

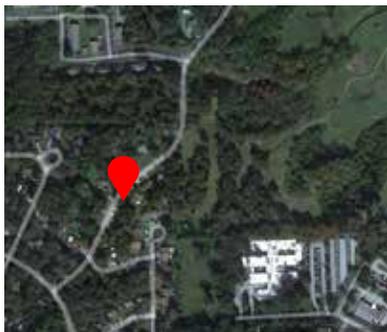
**Address:** 19370 Oliver St.  
**Size:** 3.28 acres  
**General Location:** South side  
**Existing Use:** Delamere Industries (Fence contractor) - Land use = Public Facility  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Public Facility/Mobile Home/Commercial  
**Access:** Oliver St.  
**Development Constraints:** Commercial business

- Observations:**
- County Fairgrounds possible southern gateway to City
  - Corner property for sale
  - Power line easement
  - Not near residential area



# Potential Park Location F

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

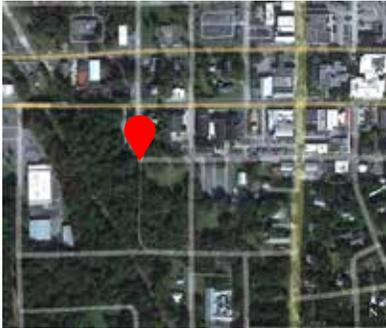
**Address:** 105-106 Darby Lane  
**Size:** 1.07 acres  
**General Location:** Northwest of the US 41 & Highway 577 intersection  
**Existing Use:** Pond/Wooded Area - Single Family Residential  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential/Recreational/Commercial  
**Access:** Darby Lane  
**Development Constraints:** Wooded/pond

- Observations:**
- Not ideal marshland
  - Depressed
  - Neighborhood can be connected to Tom Varn Park by trail
  - Reconfigure Tom Varn Park entrance



# Potential Park Location G

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** S. Lemon Ave. & Hendrix Ave.  
**Size:** 1.01 acres  
**General Location:** Central Brooksville  
**Existing Use:** Wooded, Vacant Lot - Mobile Home/Multi-Family Residential Land Use  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Mobile Home/Multi-Family/Commercial/Public Facility  
**Access:** S. Lemon Ave.  
**Development Constraints:** Wooded

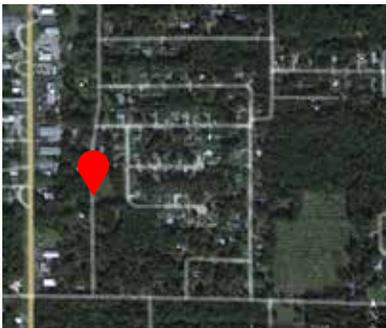
**Observations:**

- Construction in the area



# Potential Park Location H

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** 905 Hammock Rd.  
**Size:** 1.02 acres  
**General Location:** Northwest Brooksville  
**Existing Use:** Open Space - Single Family Residential  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Single Family/Commercial  
**Access:** Fenced. Gate on Laurel Ridge Ct.

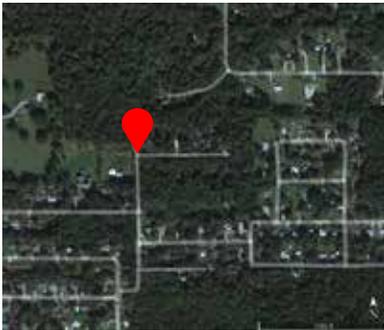
**Observations:**

- Near performing arts center
- Fenced flat site
- Elevated
- Within stable neighborhood
- 1 block from Highway 98
- No sidewalks



# Potential Park Location I

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** 428 Hillside Rd.  
**Size:** 1.43 acres  
**General Location:** Northwest Brooksville  
**Existing Use:** County owned with existing buildings and structures - Zoned as Public Facility  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Single Family  
**Access:** Fenced. Gate on Shadow Dr.  
**Development Constraints:** Existing public facility

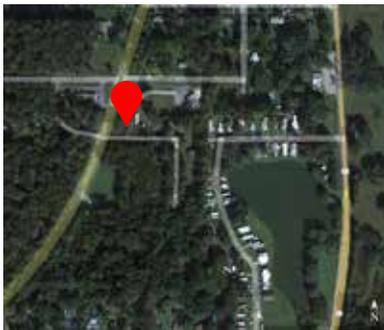
**Observations:**

- On dead end
- Resident street
- Adjacent to City facility



# Potential Park Location J

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** 1150 Howell Ave.  
**Size:** 1 acre  
**General Location:** North of City limits and school district property  
**Existing Use:** Utility facility  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Residential  
**Access:** Fenced. Gate on Howell Ave.  
**Development Constraints:** Existing facility

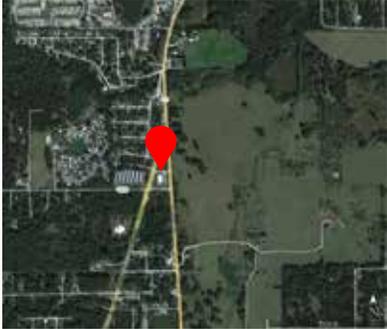
**Observations:**

- Depressed
- Lower than road level
- City utility



# Potential Park Location K

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

**Address:** 1150 Howell Ave.  
**Size:** 2.93 acres  
**General Location:** North and west of City limits adjacent to US 41  
**Existing Use:** Dollar General store and large median between Howell Ave. and US 41  
**Context & Surrounding Use:** Commercial/Residential  
**Access:** Dollar General parking lot entrances on Howell Ave. and N. Broad St.  
**Development Constraints:** Commercial business

- Observations:**
- Good access
  - Depressed site
  - Not connected to neighborhood
  - Not ideal for a park



Potential Trail Location

# CHAPTER 5

## SYSTEMWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS



**Illustrative Example of Improvements**

# Citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The rationale for these sites' location is primarily to provide parks and recreation opportunities to underserved areas by park type and catchment. All the sites assessed are publicly owned and vacant to some extent. The development context and access have also been considered in proposing these initial sites.

With the anticipated **4,000 new dwelling units** from future anticipated development, **Brooksville's population will be around 25,000 in the next 20 years**. The Park and Recreation Master Plan meets the City's and residents' needs and growing demand by alleviating capacity issues and equitable distribution of passive and active programming and amenities. This aspect also contributes to economic development by enhancing property values, attracting tourism, creating jobs, supporting local businesses, improving public health, attracting talent, increasing tax revenue, and fostering community engagement.

During the planning process, we have identified several potential park locations for the proposed neighborhood, community, and regional park/ sports facility and the expansion of the City's bike-ped network.

Currently, there are **137.46 acres of existing parkland** in Brooksville; with the addition of some 153 acres of new parks proposed in this plan, there will be **290 acres of parkland** in the City. This area does not include 160 acres of "other" facilities, namely the Brooksville Commons, the Courthouse Plaza, and Chinsegut Hill.

There are currently **24.14 miles of existing trails** in Brooksville; with the expansion of the trail network by **8.72 miles of proposed bike-ped connectivity**, there will be some **32 miles of trail within the City**.

This Systemwide Parks and Trail Network Map shows the City's parks and recreation facilities plan.



Illustrative Example of Park Improvements



Systemwide Parks and Trails Network

The Park and Recreational Master Plan will help shape Brooksville's physical and social fabric by providing a sustainable and inclusive development roadmap, fostering community well-being, economic vitality, and a sense of place.

The table below provides the location, size and intended use of the existing parks and other facilities.

EXISTING PARKS	Number	Name	Address	Size (Acres)
Existing Parks with Improvements	1	Tom Varn Park	301 Darby Ln	55.93
	2	Jerome Brown Community Center	99 Jerome Brown Pl	15.6
	3	Quarry Park Disc Golf Course	800 John Gary Grubbs Blvd	19.73
	4	Bud McKethan Park	800 John Gary Grubbs Blvd	5.01
	5	Russell Street Park	28 Russell St	14
	6	Hernando Park	205 E Fort Dade Ave	3.28
	7	Kennedy Park	899 Kennedy Blvd	23.91
Other Facilities	8	The Brooksville Common	15 S Broad St	0.24
	9	Courthouse Plaza	20 N Main St	0.47
	10	Chinsegut Park	22495 Chinsegut Hill Rd	114.61
	11	Hernando County Fairgrounds	6436 Broad St	43.88

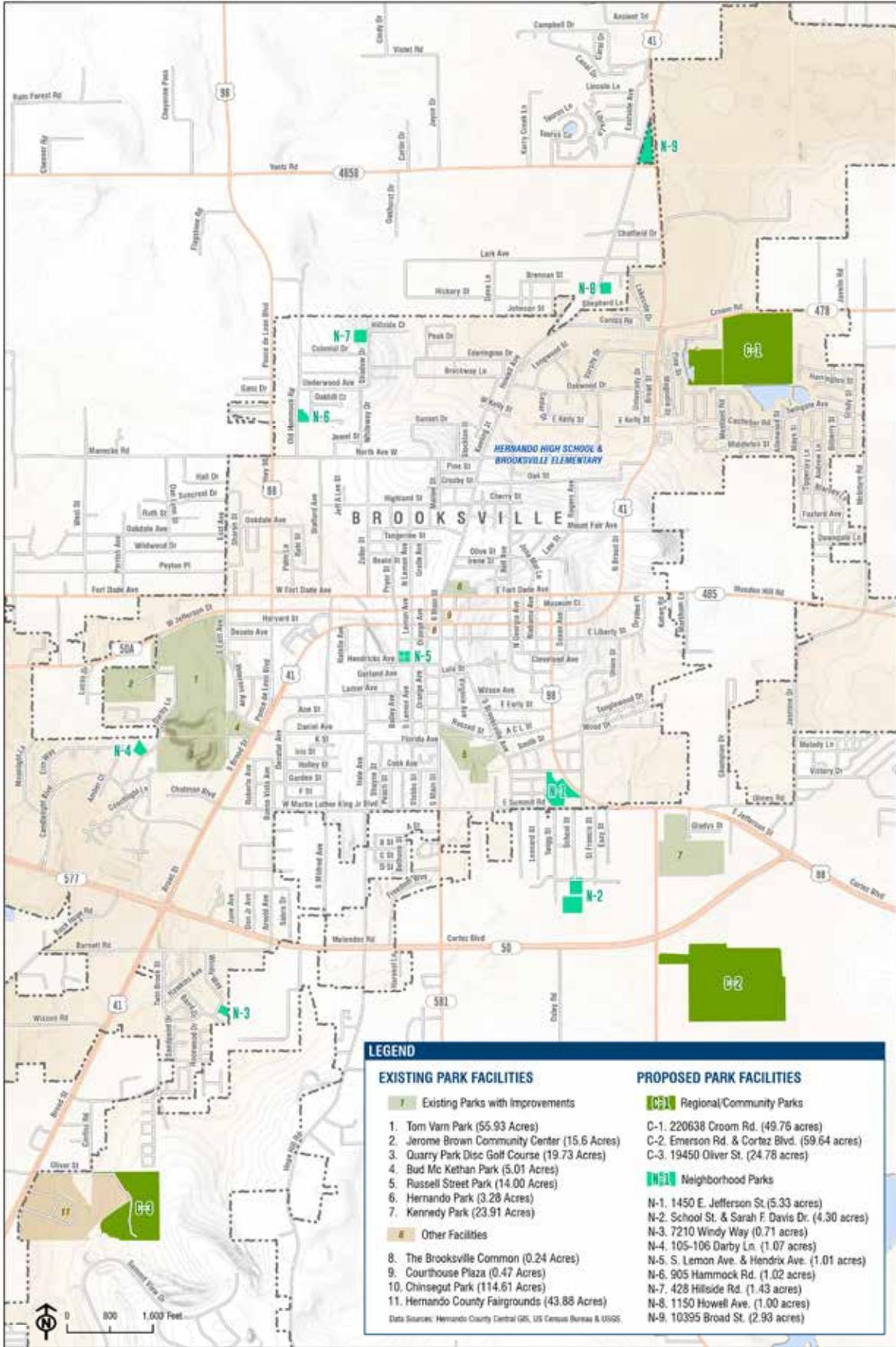
**TOTAL: 296.66**

The table below provides the location, size and use of the proposed facilities.

PROPOSED PARKS	Number	Address	General Location	Size (Acres)
Regional/Community Parks	C-1	220638 Croom Rd.	North side, near school district property	49.76
	C-2	Emerson Rd. & Cortez Blvd.	Southeast of the Emerson Rd. & Cortez Blvd. intersection	59.64
	C-3	19450 Oliver St.	South side	24.78
Neighborhood Parks	N-1	1450 E. Jefferson St.	Near the intersection of US 98 & E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.	5.33
	N-2	School St. & Sarah F. Davis Dr.	South of City limits near Kennedy Park	4.3
	N-3	7210 Windy Way	Southeast of the US-41 & HWY 50 intersection	0.71
	N-4	105-106 Darby Ln.	Northwest of the US-41 & HWY 577 intersection	1.07
	N-5	S. Lemon Ave. & Hendrix Ave	Central Brooksville	1.01
	N-6	905 Hammock Rd.	Northwest Brooksville	1.02
	N-7	428 Hillside Rd.	Northwest Brooksville	1.43
	N-8	1150 Howell Ave.	North of City limits and school district property	1
	N-9	10395 Broad St.	North and west of City limits adjacent to HWY 41	2.93

**TOTAL: 152.98**

The Park and Recreation Facilities Map in the next page shows the existing and proposed parks.



Park and Recreation Facilities

There is an extensive trail network in the City centered around the Good Neighbor Trail, which links to the Suncoast Trail, a regional trail network. Expansion of the trail network is recommended to connect destinations and parks in other areas, especially the northern part of the City.

- Build upon the new “Trail Town” designation.
- Leverage trail expansion currently underway.
- North-south trail within existing ROW that connects the Good Neighbor Trail to downtown and neighborhoods in the north and south for wider citywide bike connectivity.
- New trail segments to integrate neighborhoods and make connections to pocket parks along:
  - Dedicated easements.
  - Roads that have ROW space and are conducive to shared use.

The table below lists the types and lengths of the existing bike-ped paths and parks in the City.

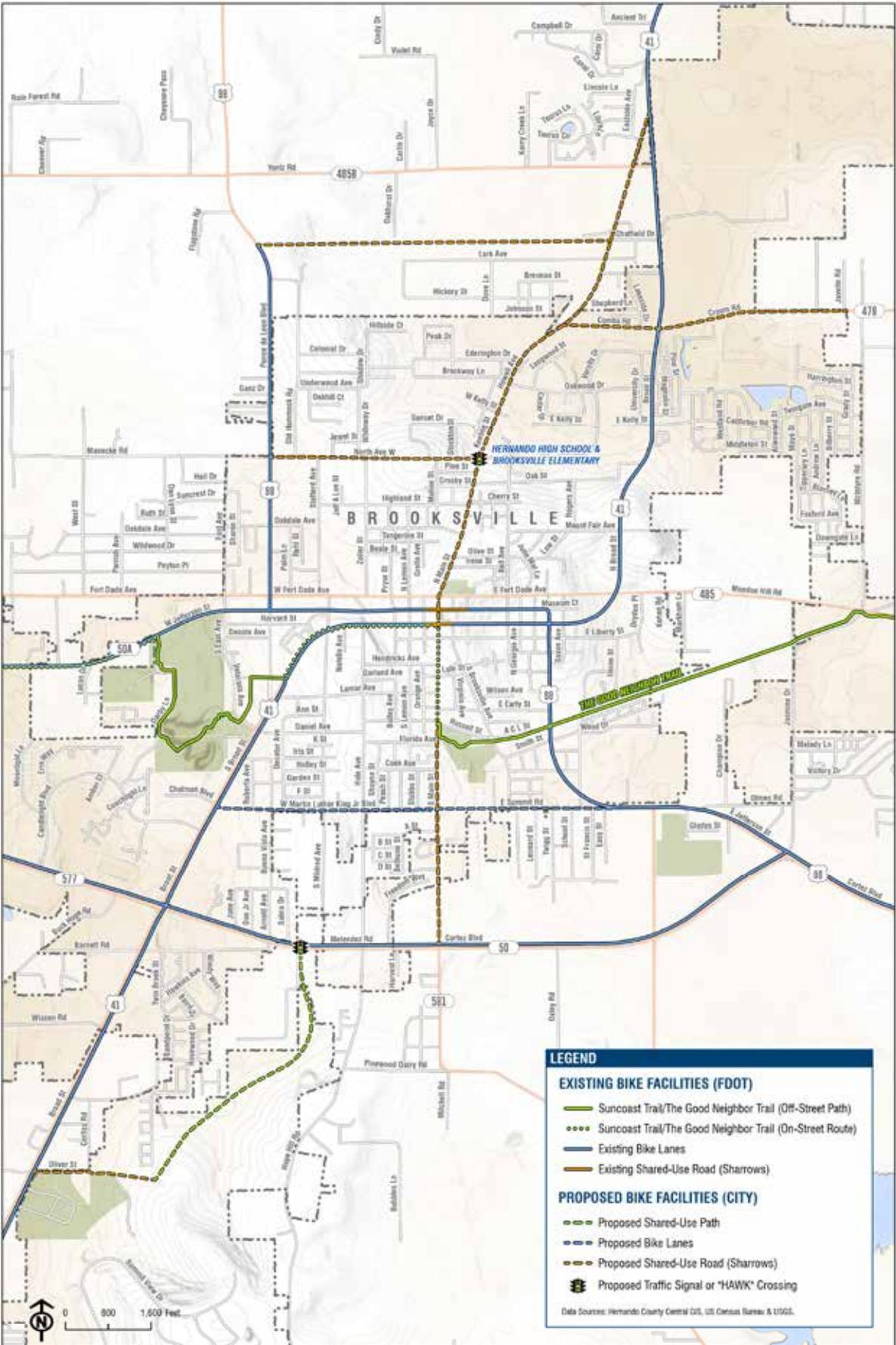
EXISTING TRAILS	Name/Location	From	To	Length (Miles)
Shared-Use Path	Suncoast Trail/The Good Neighbor Trail	S Main St	East City Limits	3.25
	Suncoast Trail/The Good Neighbor Trail	W Jefferson St	US Highway 41	1.08
On-Street Route	Suncoast Trail/The Good Neighbor Trail (W Jefferson St)	West City Limits	Darby Ln	1.68
	Suncoast Trail/The Good Neighbor Trail (Broad St)	Benton Ave	S Main St	0.64
	Suncoast Trail/The Good Neighbor Trail (S Main St)	Russell St	Broad St	0.34
Bike Lanes	US Highway 41	South City Limits	Orange Ave	4.81
	US Highway 41	S Brooksville Ave	Campbell Dr	2.54
	Cortez Blvd	W Jefferson St	US Highway 98	3.83
	W Jefferson St	East City Limits	N Orange Ave	2.65
	E Jefferson St	N Magnolia Ave	Museum Ct	0.28
	E Jefferson St	Museum Ct	Cortez Blvd	1.46
	Ponce de Leon Blvd	W Jefferson St	North City Limits	1.04
Shared-Use Road	Cobb Rd	W Jefferson St	North City Limits	0.39
	Jefferson St	N Orange Ave	N Magnolia Ave	0.15

TOTAL: 24.14

The table below outlines the types and lengths of the proposed bike paths.

PROPOSED TRAILS	Name/Location	From	To	Length (Miles)
Proposed Shared-Use Path	City of Brooksville Owned Parcel	1,200' east of Oliver St & Corliss Rd intersection	Cortez Blvd	1.09
Proposed Bike Lanes	Martin Luther King Jr Blvd	US Highway 41	US Highway 98	1.42
Proposed Shared-Use Roads	Oliver St	US Highway 41	Proposed Shared-Use Path	0.43
	S Main St	Cortez Blvd	Daniel Ave	0.76
	N Main St/Howell Ave	Broad St	Broad St	2.02
	Croom Rd	Howell Ave	East City Limits	1.01
	North Ave W	US Highway 98	Howell Ave	0.74
	Lark Ave	US Highway 98	Howell Ave	1.25

TOTAL: 8.72



Bike-Pedestrian Facilities Network

# GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL



ADJACENT LAND COVER VARIES

FURNISHING ZONE

TRAIL CORRIDOR

TRAIL KIOSK AND BIKE REPAIR

ADJACENT LAND COVER VARIES

## Trail Activation and Economic Development



**Bike Network Improvements-Howell Ave.  
40 ft Right of Way – Shared lanes (sharrow)**



**Bike Network Improvements-Howell Ave.  
50 ft Right of Way – Dedicated bike lane**

# Existing Parks Improvements

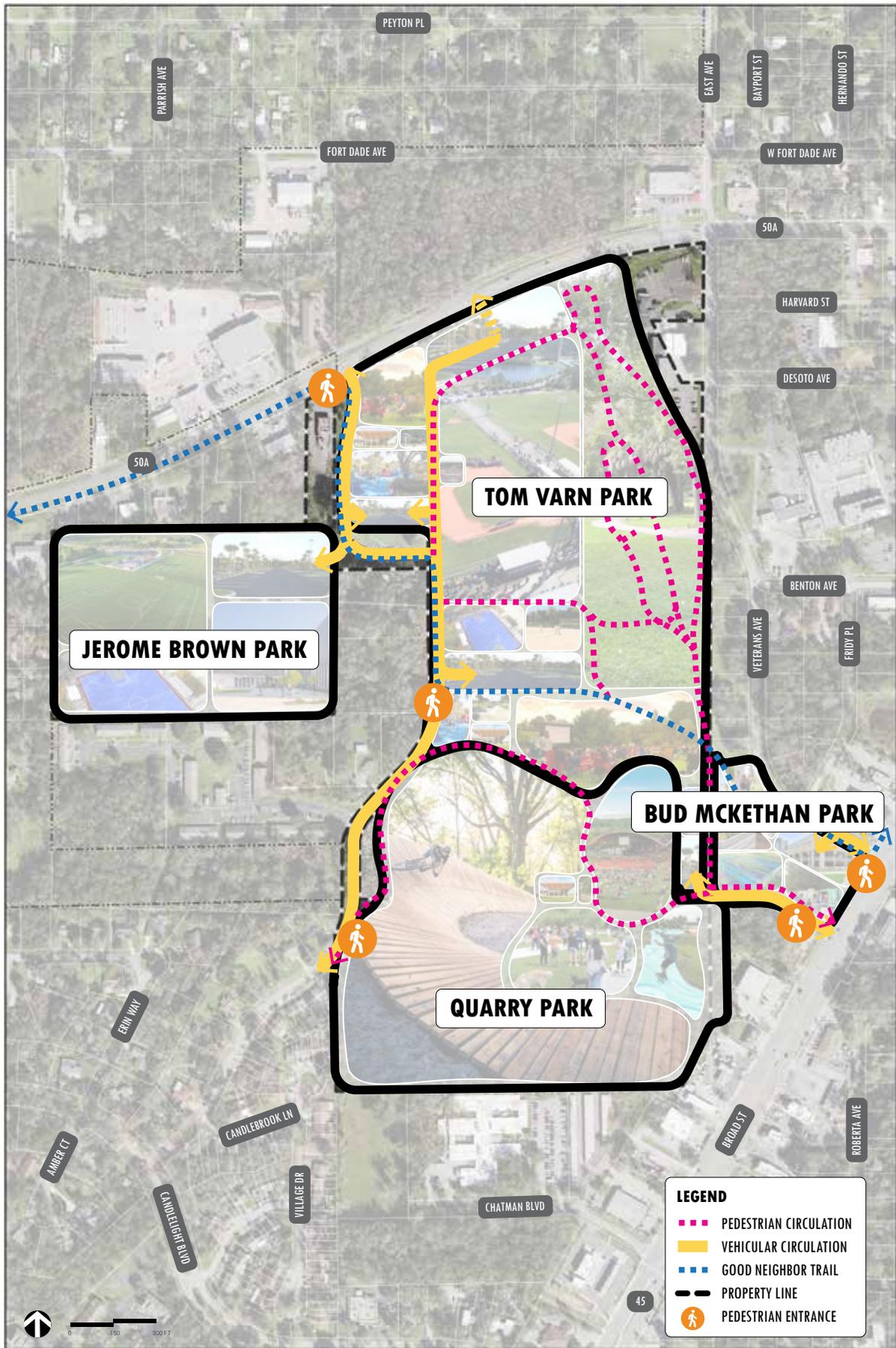
## “WEST SIDE PARKS”

The grouping of the “West Side Parks” consist of Tom Varn Park, Jerome Brown Community Center, the Quarry Disc Golf Course, and Bud Mc Kethan Park. This site is designated as four different types of open spaces.

- A sports complex that will house traditional recreational activities, meet the demand of the sports community, and aid in economic development of Brooksville.
- The neighborhood park houses events and activities and facilities serving a smaller population.
- The community park will house passive and active amenities, activities, and facilities that serve the larger population.
- The multi-use trail is the center of the parks system, acting as a conduit to reach other destination spots in the City. The trail offers a variety of multi-generational activities and amenities for residents.



West Side Parks Relationship Diagram



West Side Parks Conceptual Plan

## TOM VARN PARK CONCEPT

The layout of Tom Varn Park is improved in the concept diagram to increase the efficiency and legibility of the space by visitors. The northwest part of the park is the “neighborhood park that is served by the existing play area, parking, and pavilion with restrooms, with added community lawn. The sports and recreation area to the east supports many softball fields, basketball courts, and volleyball courts, with a new stadium facility. The existing trail area will be maintained with additional features such as public art. In the southern part, the amphitheater and community lawn can support many visitors for large events and create a destination point within Brooksville.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

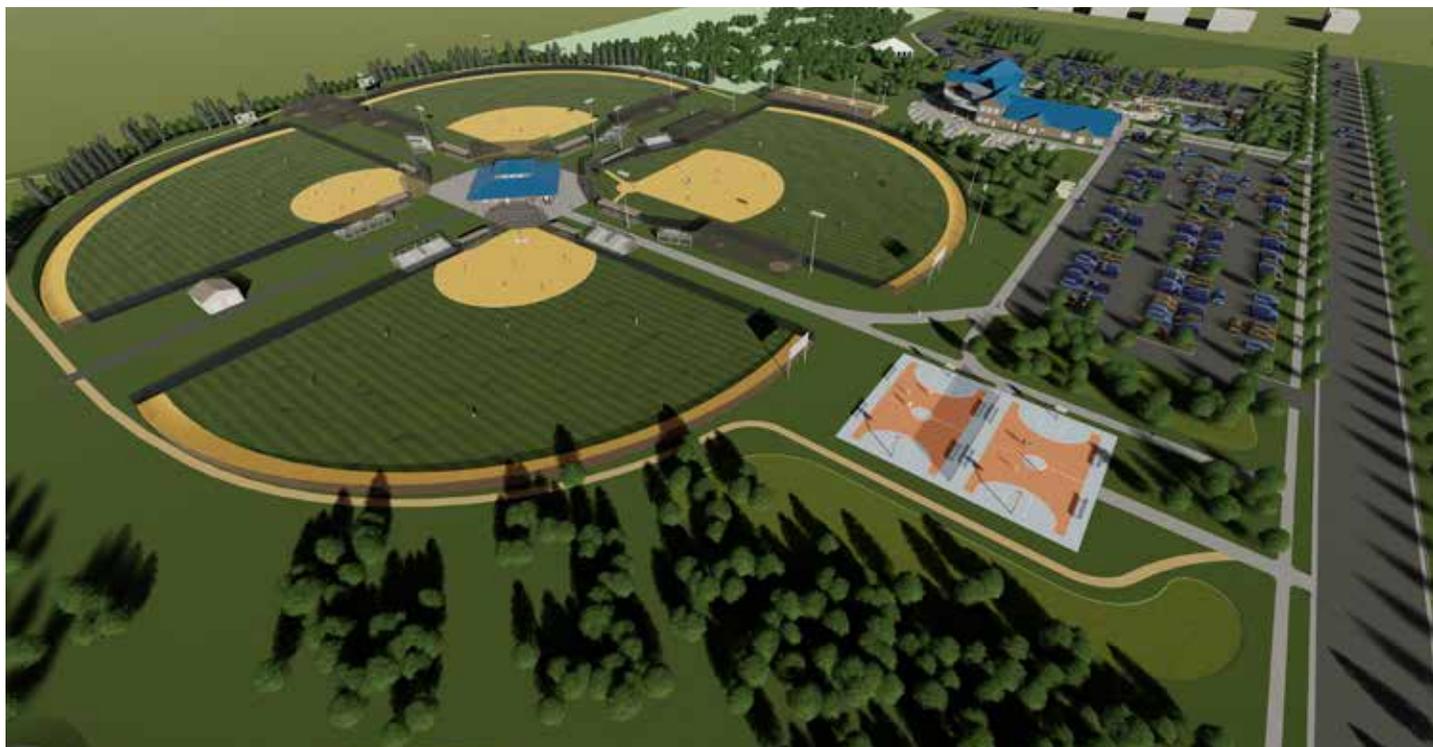
- Enhance the existing facilities.
  - Enhanced event area for Arts in the Park and other community events
  - Bleachers at the stadium
  - Update the existing outdoor exercise equipment and add more
  - Facilities for volleyball
  - Picnic areas
  - Restrooms
  - Integrate the proposed splash pad
  - Integrate the trail extension through the park and connection to SR 50A

- Incorporate neighborhood park facilities within the larger park.
- Add wellness areas – yoga, tai-chi, meditation.
- Incorporate a butterfly garden.
- Incorporate a community garden.
- Diversify to sports field to include athletic and soccer fields.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: basketball, softball, horseshoe pits, playground, pavilion, volleyball, enrichment center
- Proposed: concessions press and restrooms, community lawn, splash pad, improved playground, walking loop, basketball courts, volleyball courts, additional parking, sensory playground, skate park, pavilion and restrooms, community lawn, amphitheater
- Phasing:
  - Concessions, press, and restrooms, walking loop.
  - Community lawn, improved playground, splash pad.
  - Additional parking, basketball courts, volleyball courts.
  - Sensory playground, skate park, pavilion and restrooms.

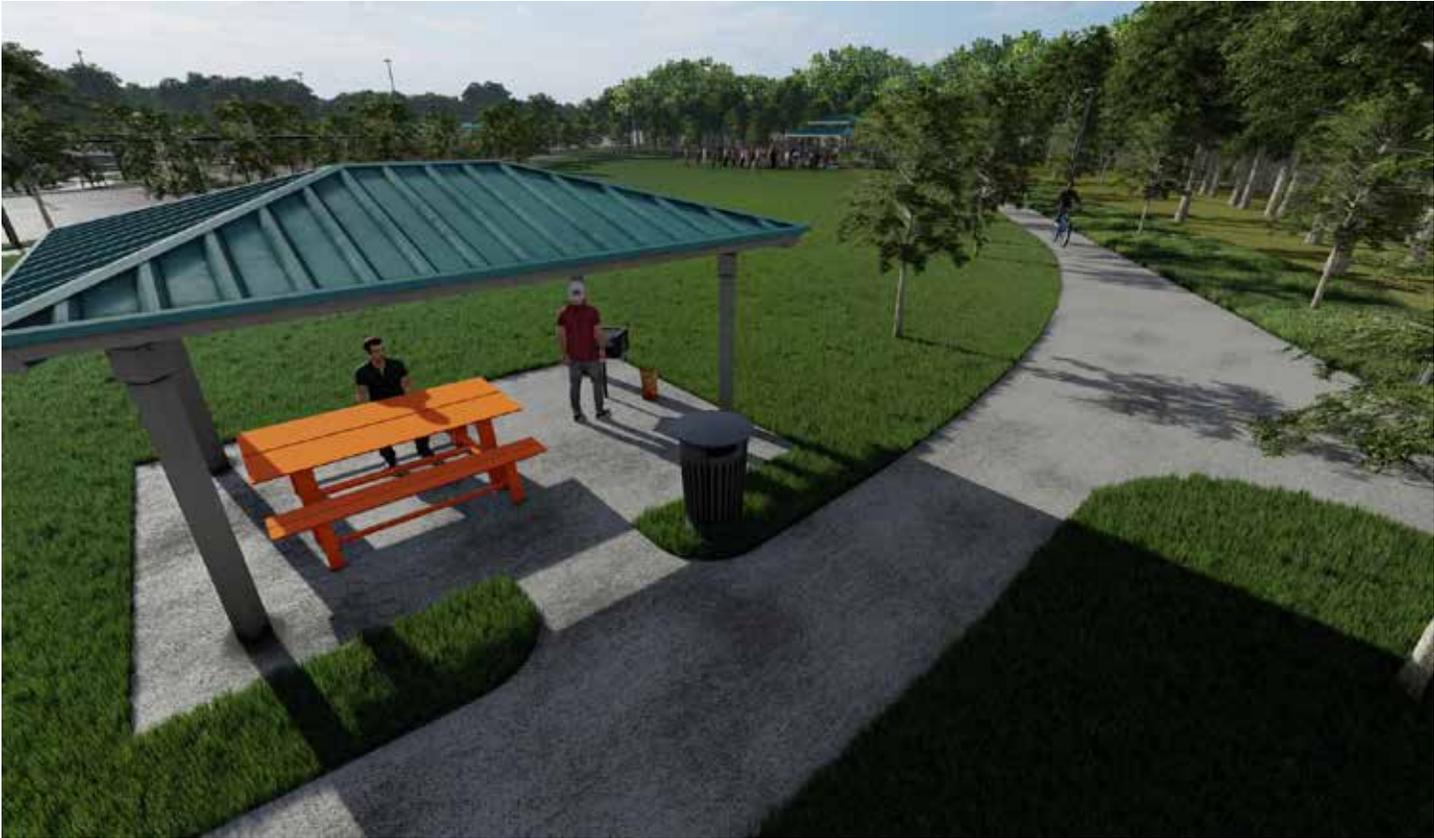


Illustrative example of park improvements at Tom Varn Park-Ball Fields

# TOM VARN PARK



Tom Varn Park



**Illustrative example of park improvements at Tom Varn Park- Art Walk and Passive Recreation**



**Illustrative example of park improvements at Tom Varn Park- Community Gardens**

# JEROME BROWN COMMUNITY CENTER CONCEPT

This area is transformed into a sports and recreation hub, with an expanded and renovated community center that accommodates indoor sports courts, STEM classrooms, and gathering spaces. Adjacent to the new community center are mixed-use fields that can host football, flag football, and soccer games. Parking is consolidated and improved for better wayfinding.

## PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Expand the recreation center (gymnasium/ courts) as a state-of-the-art facility to include:
  - Classrooms
  - Offices
  - Fitness center
  - Basketball courts
  - Volleyball courts
  - Yoga and meditation space

- Expand offerings in the center to include:
  - Flex space for innovation
  - STEM and STEAM programs
  - E-sports
  - After-school programs
  - Art classes and educational programs

## SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: indoor basketball and conference room, parks and rec department offices.
- Proposed: updated rec center, updated mixed use fields, updated parking.
- Phasing:
  - Updates to rec center, parking, mixed-use fields.



Illustrative example of park improvements at Jerome Brown Community Center

# JEROME BROWN PARK



Jerome Brown Community Center

## BUD MCKETHAN PARK CONCEPT

In Bud McKethan Park, the integrity of the “community park” is maintained with new and existing programs that will be incorporated to benefit the community. In the concept diagram, the existing tennis courts are improved and expanded to include pickleball, and the existing parking lot grows into a multi-story parking structure to accommodate more visitors to the parks nearby.

A community events area along Highway 41 can appeal to more visitors with farmer’s markets and food trucks, and people of the Enrichment Center can tend a community garden. Lastly, bicycle facilities and outdoor fitness amenities are placed along the entrance of the Good Neighbor Trail extension into the West Side Parks.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Playground with sensory garden.
- Look into the viability of adding a skate park near the tennis courts (existing concrete pad).
- Pickleball.

- Tennis (improved and more).
- Area to support events in the Quarry – food truck park. Upgrade Enrichment Center (County facility) – wine bar, gift shop, restrooms, etc., light show projection on this façade.
- Integrate art in the quarry and with the Enrichment Center.
- Make the restrooms more accommodating and ADA compliant.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

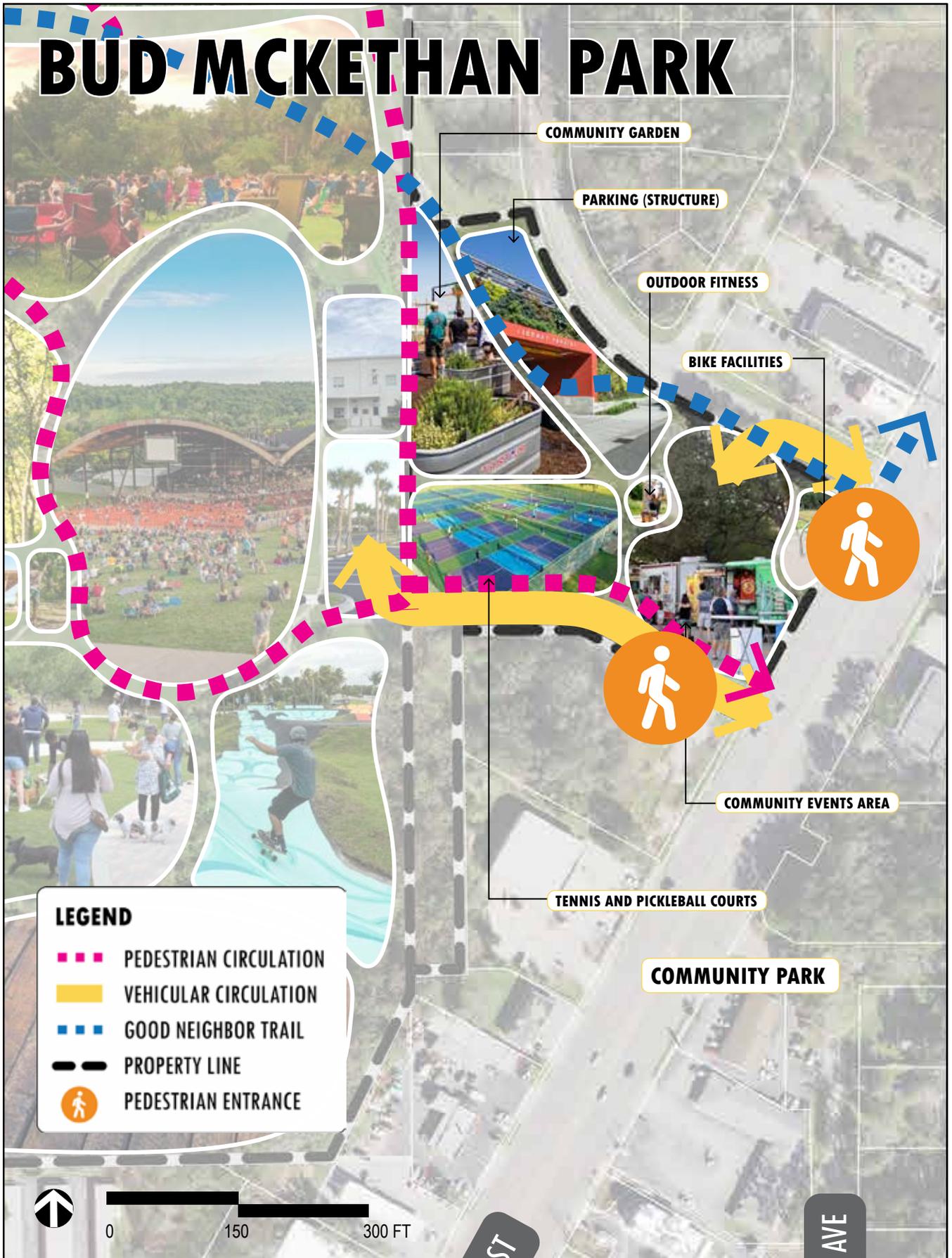
The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: tennis courts, playground, pavilion, parking.
- Proposed: community garden, outdoor fitness, bicycle facilities, parking structure, community events area, pickleball.
- Phasing:
  - Pickleball, bicycle facilities, outdoor fitness.
  - Community garden, community events area.
  - Parking structure.



Illustrative example of park improvements at Bud McKethan Park

# BUD MCKETHAN PARK



## LEGEND

-  PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
-  VEHICULAR CIRCULATION
-  GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL
-  PROPERTY LINE
-  PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE



0 150 300 FT

15 ST

AVE

Bud McKethan Park

## THE QUARRY PARK CONCEPT

The quarry is dedicated to a multi-use trail, which includes a mountain bike course, BMX course, pump track, and the existing disc golf course. A pavilion with restrooms and a dog park is also incorporated in this area.

Another key feature of the Quarry Park improvements is the new event space and outdoor amphitheater proposed in the “quarry.” This is recommended in a suitable location, leveraging the site’s terrain and vegetative background. This facility will provide much-needed event space to conduct larger events and festivals. Enhanced parking and event-related dining spaces are proposed to support this function.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Incorporate an amphitheater/stage capitalizing on the grade for large events.
- Integrate bike and BMX riding circuit (sports tourism) in association with the trail extension.
- Space for more family programs.

- Spooky Halloween
- Walk-in-the-park
- BBQ events
- Block parties
- Relocate or restrict disc golf to specific times or repurpose a portion of the driving range to accommodate more events.
- Restrict dog park activities to specific areas for safety.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

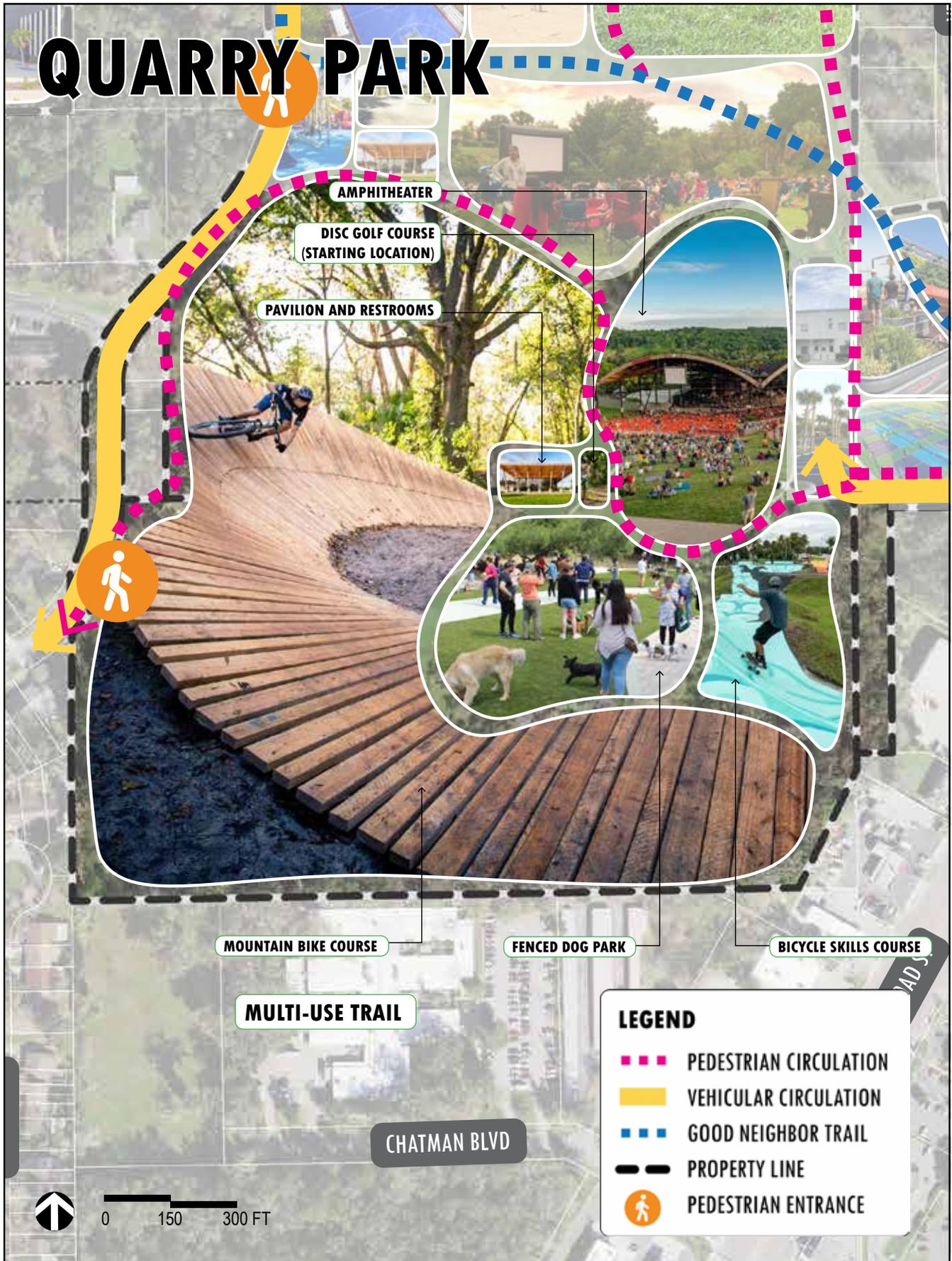
The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: disc golf course.
- Proposed: pump track, pavilion and restrooms, mountain bike course, dog park, BMX course.
- Phasing:
  - Amphitheater.
  - Pavilion and restrooms, dog park.
  - Mountain bike course, bicycle skills course.



Illustrative example of park improvements at Quarry Park-Amphitheatre

# QUARRY PARK



The Quarry Park

## RUSSELL STREET PARK CONCEPT

Russell Street Park is emphasized as a nature park in the concept diagram by expanding the Good Neighbor Trail and providing necessary amenities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The existing museums and gazebo are preserved with an adjacent community lawn and an improved parking lot.

A large event space focused on the heritage of Brooksville is situated on the corner of Russell Street and Main Street for easy access and visibility. An inclusive playground, splash pad, and outdoor classroom are also included in the park.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- This park is envisioned as the second small family and event space in the proximity of downtown. Upgrade park and incorporate activities for families.
  - Children’s play area with splash pad
  - Farmers market
  - Scavenger hunt
  - Integrate art in the park

- Improve lighting
- Have better parking
- Security measures such as security cameras
- Make the park a nature park – birdwatching
- Have environmental programs – nature classroom
- Incorporate boardwalk nature trail
- Heritage themed event space – leverage rail museum and historic theme. Align improvements with Public Works improvement project currently underway.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: trail depot, trailhead, gazebo, stormwater retention pond.
- Proposed: bicycle facilities, event space, inclusive playground, pavilion and restrooms, picnic shelters, splash pad, outdoor classroom, community/event lawn, nature trails.
- Phasing:
  - Nature trails, picnic shelters, pavilion and restrooms, bike facilities.
  - Community/event lawn, inclusive playground, splash pad, outdoor classroom.
  - Event space.



**Illustrative example of park improvements at Russell Street Park- Community Gathering Space**



Russell Street Park

## HERNANDO PARK CONCEPT

The integrity and history of Hernando Park are maintained by preserving the existing library, bandshell, and tennis courts, with added pickleball opportunities.

An inclusive playground, outdoor lounge, outdoor classroom, reading nooks, and relocated restroom building are centrally located and adjacent to the library.

A large community/activity lawn provides more space for the bandshell and library programming.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Programs geared toward kids and urban visitors.
- Update playground.
- Art classes and educational programs associated with the Arts Council.
- Events and programming geared toward older community.
- Facility upgrades:

- More restrooms
- More lighting
- Security measures such as security cameras
- Existing bandshell – open performance area as an attraction for downtown, karaoke, etc.
- Consider other urban activities – mini golf, etc.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: tennis courts, bandshell, fitness walking loop.
- proposed: outdoor classroom, reading/ gathering nooks, bicycle facilities.
- Phasing:
  - Bicycle facilities, outdoor classroom, reading/gathering nooks.



Illustrative example of park improvements at Hernando Park- Community Activity Lawn



Hernando Park

## KENNEDY PARK CONCEPT

Kennedy Park is updated to host more activities and increase efficiency among them. The baseball field and concessions will remain, with batting cages and a mixed-use sports field added adjacent to them.

The community recreation center will be expanded and renovated to include indoor sports courts, STEM classrooms, and gathering spaces. A central community lawn ties together all amenities.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Rehab existing recreation center to have classrooms for education programs (County is proposing a new roof).
  - STEM
  - Cooking classes
  - Health programs
  - Dance hall
  - Basketball
- Expand and build on existing programs to make use of underutilized spaces in the park to provide facilities for more organized sports (current baseball).

- Introduce a skate park.
- Improve the playground and make it ADA compliant and add turf area for children.

### SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

The following is the proposed sequencing of improvements

- Existing: parking, playground, activity center, baseball, softball/youth baseball, basketball, volleyball
- Proposed: activity lawn, bicycle facilities, batting cages, atv trails, mixed use field, new basketball courts, skate park, splash pad, new volleyball courts, inclusive playground.
- Phasing:
  - Bicycle facilities, mixed-use field, activity lawn, rec center, parking lot improvements.
  - Batting cages, new basketball courts, new volleyball courts, upgrades to baseball field, concessions, restrooms.
  - Inclusive playground, splash pad, skate park, atv trails.



**Illustrative example of park improvements at Kennedy Park-Mixed Ball Fields and Splash Pad**



Kennedy Park

# New Parks Facilities

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PROTOTYPE CONCEPT

A small neighborhood park can provide a space for residents close to where they live. In this park, a playground, community lawn, mixed-use sports courts, and a walking loop with outdoor fitness amenities provide both passive and active recreation opportunities. Restrooms and small picnic shelters are also available in the park.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Picnic pavilions and benches
- Multi-generational exercise stations
- Multi-use outdoor courts
- Inclusive playground
- Lighting
- Walking path
- Shaded areas
- Restrooms
- Character and theme reflective of the surrounding neighborhood



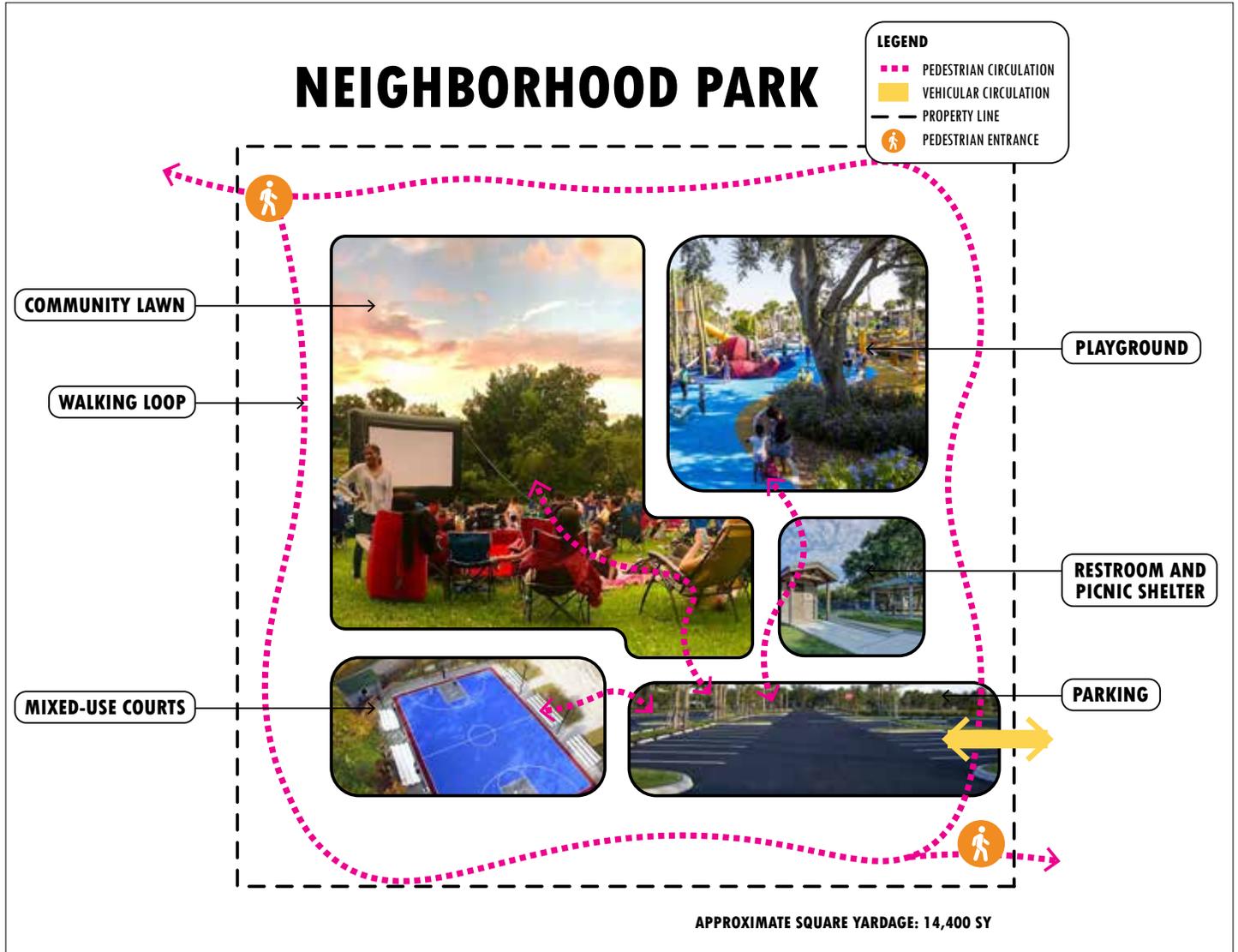
New Neighborhood Park Prototype-Childrens Playground



New Neighborhood Park Prototype-Splash Pad

### New Neighborhood Park Prototype

The prototype presented is a schematic plan illustrating new neighborhood park programming and amenities.



## COMMUNITY PARK PROTOTYPE CONCEPT

A new community park in Brooksville has the potential to host a wide variety of active and passive recreation. A large community pavilion and recreation center will accommodate indoor events and activities, while mixed-use courts and fields can be used outdoors. A splash pad and playground will provide play for children of all ages. Other programs in the park include a flexible performance area, community lawn, community garden, sensory garden with art features, dog park, and walking loop with outdoor fitness amenities.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Multi-use sports fields – softball, baseball, athletics, and soccer focused
- Active recreation courts – pickleball, basketball, volleyball, handball
- Water facilities including pool and splash pad
- Performance stage/bandshell, pavilions, and picnic areas
- Inclusive playground
- Sensory garden with arts programming
- Dog park
- Community garden
- Passive outdoor recreation space and trails with multi-generational exercise equipment
- Recreation Center – public or private partnership with facilities such as: Multi-use courts – basketball, handball, pickleball, flex space, meeting spaces, exercise equipment, gym, swimming pool, locker rooms



**New Community Park Prototype-Mixed Ball Fields and Rec Center**

### New Community Park Prototype

The prototype presented is a schematic plan illustrating a new community park, programming, and amenities.



## REGIONAL PARK/ SPORTS FACILITY CONCEPT

A new regional park has the potential to host a wide variety of active and passive recreation. A large community pavilion and sports complex accommodate indoor events and activities specialized in aquatics, athletics, and ball games. Mixed-use courts and fields can be used outdoors.

A splash pad and playground will provide play for children of all ages. Other programs in the park include a flexible performance area, community lawn, community garden, sensory garden with art features, dog park, and walking loop with outdoor fitness amenities.

### PROGRAM/ DETAIL BRIEF

- Aquatics center
- Multi-use fields – softball, baseball, athletics and soccer focused
- Sport fields
- Stadium seating or bleachers
- Stage/open event space – commercial aspect – food trucks or food courts
- Passive outdoor recreation space and trails

- Restrooms
- Recreation Center – public or private partnership with flex space, meeting spaces, exercise equipment, gym, pool, locker rooms Multi-use courts – basketball, handball, volleyball, pickleball
- Approximate cost – \$50 million

Square Footages for Sports Tourism Park

Program Element	Approx. Sq Ft	Amount desired	Totals
Recreation Center Building	240,560	1	240560
Concessions/Press/Restrooms Building	2,000	1	2000
Little League Baseball Field	40,000	2	80000
Softball/Youth Baseball Field	30,000	2	60000
Football Field	57,600	1	57600
Mixed-use Soccer and Flag Football Field	81,000	2	162000
Pickleball Court	1,800	6	10800
Aquatics Center	42,000	1	42000
Parking Lot (200-car lot)	65,000	1	65000
Restrooms Building	500	1	500
Flexible hardscape/plaza	8,200	1	8200
Flexible performance area/stage	12,000	1	12000
Activity lawn	16,000	1	16000
<b>Grand Total:</b>			<b>756660 sq. ft.</b>

### Space Allocation Example



New Regional Sports Facility Park Prototype

### Regional Park/ Sports Facility Prototype

The prototype presented is a schematic plan illustrating a new regional park/ sports facility, programming, and amenities.



## OTHER FACILITIES

Chinsegut Hill sits five miles outside Brooksville's City limits and is home to a historic museum on a 114-acre nature preserve. Atop one of the highest points in Hernando County, Chinsegut Hill has breathtaking views of the rolling hills. The grounds are utilized as a retreat and conference center with various mini cabins for overnight stays.

- Further promote as events and entertainment venue.
- Cabins/pods to promote nature tourism (like Airbnb).
- Expand destination-oriented activities in addition to current offerings
  - Additional event space.
  - Natural trails.
  - Nature center with classrooms.
  - Zip line.
  - Alpine slide.
  - Adventure course.

### PARK FACILITIES

- Conference center
- Overnight cottages



### CHINSEGUT HILL RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

(ADVENTURE PARK)



**CITY OWNED**



**VARIOUS ACTIVITIES**



**114.61 ACRES**



**KEY MAP**



Chinsegut Hill Retreat and Conference Center Aerial View

The Courthouse Plaza is a key public open space within the core City area. The spaces provide passive recreation for residents and visitors. They could function more effectively with the right treatment and connectivity to other destinations and amenities. The current mermaid public art installation program is a positive move to enhance the user experience.

**PARK FACILITIES**

- Seating
- Trash cans



**COURTHOUSE PLAZA**  
(URBAN PLAZA)

 COUNTY OWNED

 REST AREA

 0.47 ACRES

 KEY MAP



Courthouse Plaza Aerial View

The downtown Main Street and associated public spaces like The Brooksville Common are key public open spaces within the core City area. These spaces provide passive recreation for residents and visitors. They could function more effectively with the right treatment and connectivity to other destinations and amenities. The current mermaid public art installation program is a positive move to enhance the user experience.

**PARK FACILITIES**

- Seating
- Memorial plaques
- Prayer corner
- Little reading library
- Trash can



**COURTHOUSE PLAZA**  
(DOWNTOWN OUTDOOR LOUNGE)



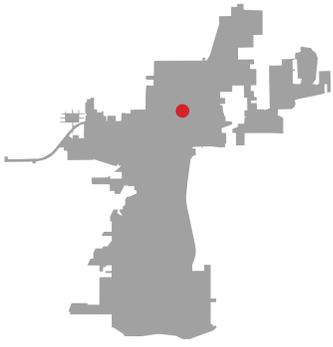
**CITY OWNED**



**REST AREA**



**0.24 ACRES**



**KEY MAP**



The Brooksville Common Aerial View

## SCENARIO PLANNING/ PHASING

A long-range vision for park expansion has been presented. While the cost and implementation steps may seem overwhelming, a phased approach can help Brooksville realize the vision. We recommend a phased approach, outlined below, to implement the master plan. First, the priorities for each park are presented, and then a breakdown of the order in which tasks could be approached in 0 to 3, 4 to 8, and 9 to 20-year timeframes is presented.

Existing Parks: Moderate Investments		Existing Parks: Major Investments
0-3 years	4-8 years	9-20 years
Community Garden	Rec Center Upgrades	Amphitheater
Splash Pad	Ballfield/ Court Improvements	Skate Park
In Park Paths	New Playgrounds	Bike Track
Programming	New Restrooms	Parking
	More Splash Pads	More Ballfields/ Court Improvements
New Parks: Acquisition and Development		
Opportunity Purchases/ Dictations	Three new Neighborhood Parks One new Community Park	Six new Neighborhood Parks Two new Community Parks
Trails		
Trail Lighting and other Amenities	New Trails on Road	New Trails Dedicated Lanes and Off Street Paths



Hernando Park Tennis Court

# Branding, Signage, and Wayfinding Strategies

Wayfinding serves as our guide when we travel, allowing us to interpret and understand the physical environment. It plays a crucial role in helping us navigate unfamiliar locations, reducing stress, and improving efficiency. Additionally, it contributes to our comfort in large public settings, providing a sense of arrival and assisting us in orienting ourselves and finding our way. This is particularly significant since branding methods can favor a city’s capacity to achieve its targeted economic, social, and cultural goals.

The signage across Brooksville’s park system exhibits inconsistencies on a park-to-park basis, encompassing variations in type font, color palette, and signage placement. The current park system and the two public spaces within the city limits present a fragmented arrangement, primarily concentrated in the downtown area. This situation exacerbates the discrepancy with the existing signage in downtown Brooksville, as Brooksville Main Street has diligently cultivated a distinct brand identity for the historic district.

Unfortunately, there is a deficiency of signage effectively guiding both residents and visitors towards Chinsegut Hill.

Moreover, upon arrival, the signage at Chinsegut Hill is inconsistent with the other public spaces and is partially obstructed due to the myriad of vegetation in the area.

## WAYFINDING PRINCIPLES

In collaboration with City staff, we aided in developing wayfinding solutions by providing a comprehensive range of services, such as brand development, conceptual design, placement strategy planning, and design intent sketches.

The primary objectives of wayfinding systems are:

- Enhancing community cohesion through a collective understanding of place.
- Creating a user-friendly multi-modal transportation network for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- Improving access to important community destinations and commonly utilized areas.
- Consistent design language
- Inclusive orientation and navigation for people with disabilities
- Reinforce city structure
- Use of public art to create unique landmarks



Existing Signage at Kennedy Park



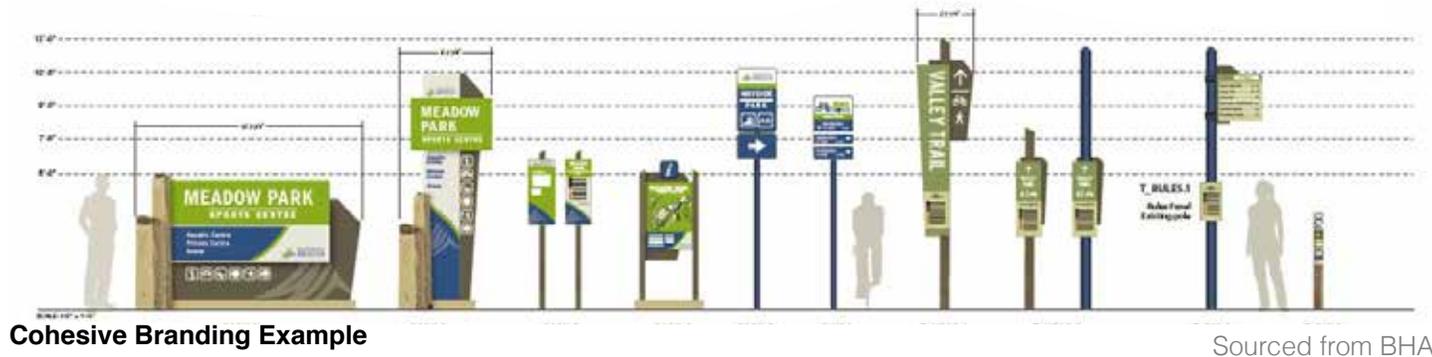
Existing Signage on Main Street

There are various goals that branding can pursue, including bolstering an infrastructure system, promoting economic development initiatives, and distinguishing a location as a preferred tourist destination. To preserve the historical and cultural heritage of Brooksville, three branded signage types are recommended that would facilitate a cohesive look:

- City and Downtown (Existing Signage)
- Parks (Proposed)
- Trails (Proposed)

An all-encompassing, thematic wayfinding system will unite segments of a community, bolster the brand, and establish a connection between marketing communications and the physical environment. Branded wayfinding facilitates the transition of Brooksville from a designation to a destination spot, as it connects people to experiences.

**SIGN TYPES & EXAMPLES**

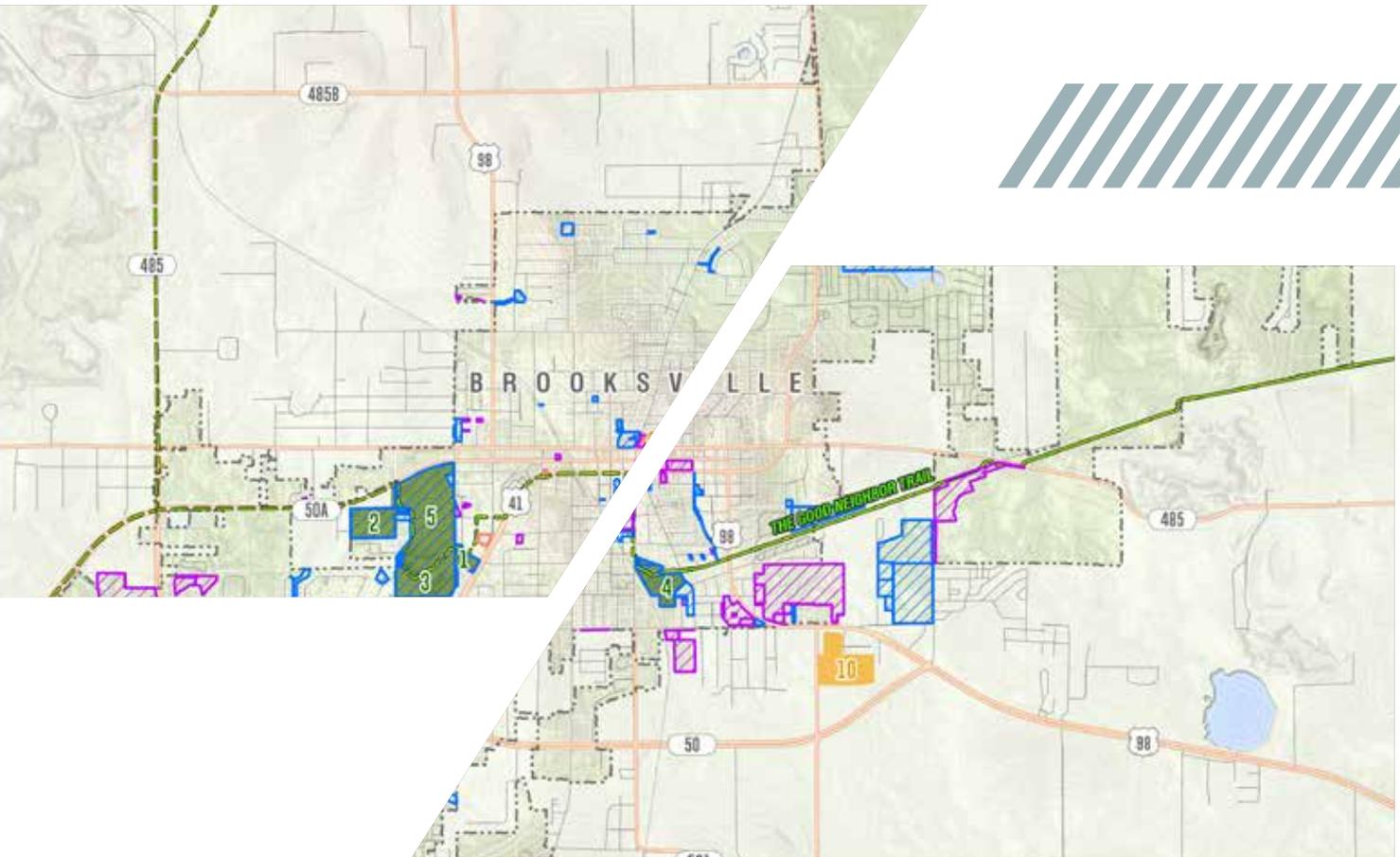


Cohesive Branding Example

Sourced from BHA

# CHAPTER 6

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



Public Facilities Map

# Implementation Strategies

The plan presented here is a twenty-year vision and, thus, will need to be implemented over time. Below, we have outlined manageable implantation steps. Each year, the staff and City Council should revisit the plan as part of the capital improvement planning process and update projects and timelines.

We propose focusing on existing neighborhood parks and upgrades first and moving on to larger investments and new parks in the future.

## ACTION PLAN

### HIGH-LEVEL PLANNING COSTS

Based on the growth projected, we believe that Brooksville will need nine neighborhood parks, three community parks, and a regional park/sports facility, in addition to more trails. Park costs will depend on the final locations, site features, and elements in the park when it is being built. For long-range planning purposes, the following estimates can be used: A neighborhood park could cost \$3 to \$4 million,

- A community park could cost \$12 to \$15 million,
- A regional park/sport facility could cost \$50 million,
- A new off street trail with amenities could cost \$500,000 per mile, and
- On street bike lanes can cost \$150,000 a mile.

The total cost of all the improvements in this plan could be approximately \$100 million. However, it is important to remember that these improvements would be made as the City grows to an expected 25,000 people.

The high-level cost estimates are based on previous projects undertaken by the team and are to be used for high-level planning purposes only. The project cost will depend on several factors when specific requirements and site conditions are ascertained in the detailed design and engineering process.

It is not expected that the City would solely fund these improvements. Instead, we suggest that improvement costs will be covered:

- By developers as new neighborhoods are created,
- With grants,
- Through community and corporate donations, and
- Through increased tax revenue realized as the city grows.

### ACQUISITION STRATEGIES

There are four primary strategies for acquiring or funding the acquisition of parks. They are:

- Parks Dedication Requirements
- Fees-in-Lieu
- Future Land Use Planning and Corridor Planning
- Special Districts and Specific Purpose Taxes

Moreover, in this plan, we have identified existing city-owned parcels that could become future parks. With the expected growth in Brooksville, park dedication requirements and fees in lieu of dedication will play a significant role in filling the demand for future parkland. In addition, overall planning, parks planning, and infrastructure planning will need to be coordinated to seize opportunities for new parks. Grants can sometimes be used for parkland acquisition; thus, several grant options are outlined in the following pages.

**OTHER PROJECT CROSS-REFERENCES**

Several projects and efforts are already ongoing and will overlap with the implementation of this plan. These include:

- The Suncoast Trail Extension,
- Splash Pad construction plans that are underway for Tom Varn Park,
- Ongoing discussions with the YMCA to utilize a new or renovated community center,
- The County Tourism Study,
- And the Chinsegut Hill property transaction.

**GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES**

The City should pursue a robust funding strategy to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Grants will be a key element of this strategy, and the following are important steps to take to be competitive for funding:

**Be Ready.** The State and Federal government provide funding for various projects. Having a set of designs or even concepts at the ready opens the door to immediate project implementation when funding is available. These opportunities usually occur outside the normal process when other projects are completed, leaving funds available. At that point, the agency is often looking for an opportunity to move funds and complete another, usually smaller project. Communication is also a key part of creating these opportunities. This relationship building effort can put the City in a position of being called on to use available funding on short notice.

**Focus on Language & Stretch.** When identifying potential grants, the grant title and agency advertising the grant may not clearly relate to parks or multi-use trails. Many grants come from agencies or programs not normally associated with parks and recreation funding. Many parks and recreation projects have been funded from economic development or tourism grants. Energy and sustainability grants may also present opportunities to provide a “green” transportation alternative for Brooksville.

**Continuing Community Involvement.** Build a community effort around the parks, recreation and bike-ped mobility system. Many communities have created a parks and recreation advisory or advocacy group, either through public sector efforts or through grass-roots involvement. These groups take on several roles. First, through focus and enthusiasm, they create a shared vision for the community. Second, a not-for-profit community organization can be a hub for community involvement and funding. Third, community-oriented groups often take on minor maintenance and security efforts for a parks and recreation system. This community involvement and enthusiasm tells grant providers that the funds will be appreciated, and the project will be popular.

**Expand Project Knowledge and Education.** Grant programs, including state and federal funding programs, focus on funding clear objectives and outcomes. Promoting the city parks and recreation master plan in terms of economic benefits, transportation opportunities, public health, and access to parks and nature all play a role in securing funding.

The table below lists common grants that City should monitor for funding opportunities.

Grant Program	Agency	Summary	Maximum Request	Program/Cost Share
<b>FEDERAL PROGRAMS</b>				
Federal Recreational Trails Program	FWHA (through FDEP)	The federally funded Recreational Trails Program of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides competitive, matching-grant funds to renovate, develop, or maintain recreational motorized, nonmotorized, and mixed-use trails and trailside facilities. Trail planning is NOT an eligible expense for this Program (62S- 2.072(4)(e) F.A.C.)	\$1,000,000	The more match provided, the more points awarded
Land and Water Conservation Fund	FDEP	LWCF is a competitive program that provides grants for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation use. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) administers the program on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Enclosed buildings and structures (except restrooms, restroom/concession buildings and bathhouses) are ineligible.	Announced prior to the application period	50/50
<b>STATE PROGRAMS</b>				
Florida Recreation Development Assistance	FDEP	FRDAP is a competitive program that provides grants for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation use or to construct or renovate recreational trails.	\$200,000	0%-50%, depending on award request
Florida Local Agency Program	FDOT	The Local Agency Program or "LAP" provides sub-recipient towns, cities and counties funds to develop, design, and construct transportation facilities with federal funds. Eligible projects include safety projects; Re-surfacing projects; Bicycle and pedestrian facilities; Traffic calming projects; Bridges and tunnels; Infrastructure-based Intelligent Transportation System projects	TBD	TBD
Coastal Partnership Initiative	FDEP	The Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI) grant program was developed to protect and effectively manage, at the local level, Florida's coastal resources. The program funds community projects such as habitat restoration, park planning and improvements, waterfront revitalization and improving communities' resiliency to coastal hazards.	\$74,000	50/50
Transportation Alternatives Program	FDOT	The TA Set-Aside program provides funding for programs and projects consistent with details described under 23 U.S.C. 133(h)(3), including 1) Transportation Alternatives, 2) Recreational Trails Program, 3) Safe Routes to School Program, and 4) planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.	Determined by FDOT District and MPO	80/20
Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail Network	FDOT	The Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail program provides funding for the development of a statewide system of interconnected paved multi-use trails (SUN Trail network) for bicyclists and pedestrians, physically separated from the road. The SUN Trail network is a refined version of the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) Plan's Land Trail Priority network. SUN Trail funded projects will improve the intermodal connectors by closing gaps in the statewide paved trail system to increase the reliability of Florida's transportation system.	Generally, \$500,000	TBD

Parks and Open Space, Florida Forever (Florida Communities Trust)	FDEP	Florida Forever is the state's conservation and recreation lands acquisition program. This program provides funding to acquire land for parks, open space, and greenways. The grant program assists FDEP in helping communities meet the challenges of growth, supporting viable community development and protecting natural resources and open space.	TBD	TBD
Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program	FDEP	According to Florida Statutes 259.105, The Florida Forever Act, OGT receives 1.5 percent of Florida Forever money to acquire greenways and trails or greenways and trail systems including, but not limited to, abandoned railroad rights-of-way and the Florida National Scenic Trail and for capital project expenditures.	TBD	TBD
Safe Routes to School	FDOT	Florida's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program can help communities address their school transportation needs and encourage more students to walk or cycle to school. It strives to enable and encourage children in grades Kindergarten through High School, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike to school; to make walking and biking to school safer and more appealing, and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and improve air quality in the vicinity of schools. In addition to encouraging more children to walk or cycle to school, the program also seeks to address the safety needs of children already walking or biking in less-than-ideal conditions.	TBD	TBD
Small Cities/CV CDBG	FL DEO	The primary statutory objective of the program is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income. The Program awards subgrants in four categories: Economic Development; Neighborhood Revitalization; Housing Rehabilitation; and Commercial Revitalization. Parks that revitalize an area are fundable.	\$5,000,000	100/0

PRIVATE PROGRAMS				
Kodak American Greenways Grant	The Conservation Fund	A partnership between The Conservation Fund and photo giant Eastman-Kodak has launched the American Greenways Eastman Kodak Awards (formerly the American Greenways DuPont Awards). Grants can be used to cover planning, technical assistance, legal or other costs associated with greenway projects. Grants may not be used for academic research, general institutional support, lobbying, or political activities.	\$2,500	100/0
National Trails Fund	American Hiking Society	A national grants program dedicated to building and protecting hiking trails. Created in response to the growing backlog of trail maintenance projects, the National Trails Fund has helped hundreds of grassroots organizations acquire the resources needed to protect America's cherished hiking trails. The National Trails Fund awards grants to organizations in order to improve hiking access or hiker safety on a particular trail.	\$3,000	100/0
Trail Accelerator Grants	IMBA	Trail Accelerator grants provide a jump-start to communities that have the interest and political support to develop trail systems but need assistance to get projects up and running. A Trail Accelerator grant offers awardees professional trail planning and consultation services to launch their trail development efforts, which can often leverage additional investment from local, regional, and national partners.	\$30,000	50/50
Community Grants	PeopleForBikes	The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride.	TBD	TBD

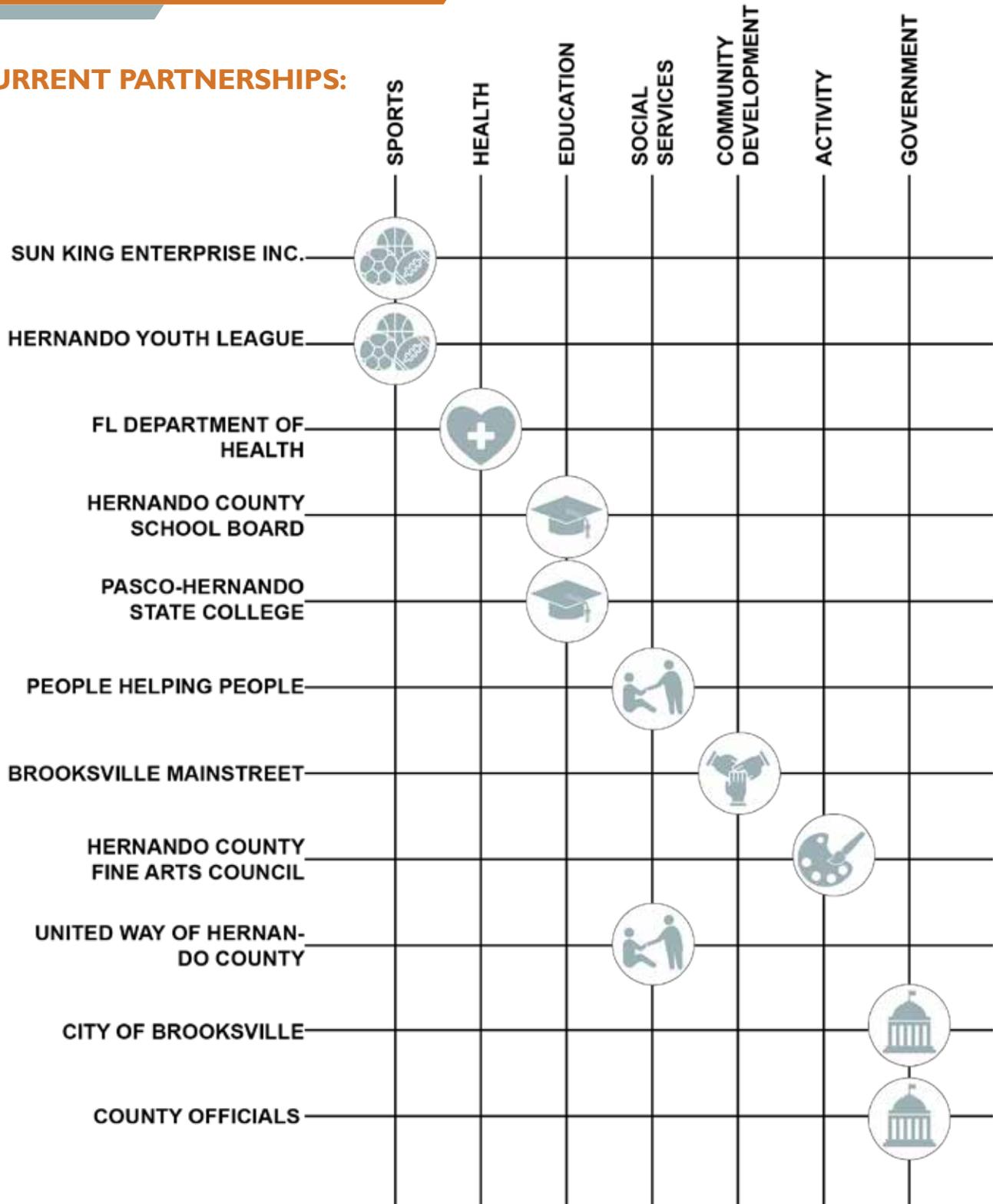
Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy	A program to support organizations and local governments that are implementing projects to build and improve multi-use trails.	Generally, \$30,000	100/0
Conservation Alliance Grants	Conservation Alliance	The Conservation Alliance seeks to protect threatened wild places throughout North America for their habitat and recreational values. As a group of outdoor companies, they help protect the wild lands and waterways on which our customers recreate, and wildlife thrives. To achieve that goal, they make grants to nonprofit organizations working to protect the special wild lands and waters in their backyards.	TBD	TBD

In addition, the table on the following pages is a list of grants that the City may wish to pursue to implement the City's Parks and Recreation Plan and future sport initiatives.

Grant Program	Agency	Summary	Maximum Request	Program/Cost Share
Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program	US Economic Development Administration	This program involves some funds awarded directly to every state. Another \$240 million is part of a competitive grant program. Funds go to communities that are diversifying their economies through outdoor recreation.	TBD	TBD. Typically 80/20.
Youth Sports Grants	All Kids Play	This organization provides organizational grants for non-profit organizations in low income communities that provide community-based recreational level sports for kids in grades K-12 on a case-by-case basis. For each of these types of grants, we provide full and partial grants, depending on qualification.	TBD	TBD
Youth Basketball Grants	NBA Foundation	This program is focused on Black youth within NBA markets. Grants go to non-profit groups.	TBD	TBD
Youth Baseball Grants	MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation (YDF)	This grant supports efforts that focus on improving the caliber, effectiveness and availability of amateur baseball and softball programs across the United States and internationally.	TBD	TBD
Scotts® Field Refurbishment Program	MBL	This program involves products and services to youth-serving organizations that are in need of renovations to existing ballfields.	\$50,000	TBD
Fields for Kids	The Twins Community Fund	This program provides financial support to improve baseball and/or softball facilities for youth in the Upper Midwest and <i>Southwest Florida</i> . The program makes matching grants to nonprofit organizations and local government units that operate baseball and/or softball programs.	\$1,000 to \$15,000	50/50

# Key Partners and Priorities

## CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS:



## OTHER POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

**Rotary Club of Brooksville** (social services): provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.

**Kiwanis club of Brooksville** (social services, community development): volunteers changing the world through service to children and communities.

**Mid Florida Community Services Inc.** (Social Services): Community Action agency dedicated to eliminating the causes of poverty through a comprehensive service delivery approach.

**Youth and Family Alternatives Inc.** (social services): is an emergency short-term shelter for youth experiencing ungovernable behaviors, legal truancy, and/or runaways in the Hernando County area.

**Vincent House** (social Services): assist, promote, and celebrate individuals with a mental illness in their effort to improve social and vocational skills and become employed in the community.

**The Arc Nature Coast Inc.** (Social Support): provide individually tailored quality support and advocacy to persons with disabilities and their families to promote their self-determination and inclusion in community life.

**YMCA of Suncoast-Hernando County** (social services, community development): a charitable non-profit organization that helps people live healthier lives by growing in spirit, mind, and body.

**Brooksville Youth Academy** (social services): Youth Opportunity is dedicated to empowering young people to become successful and independent by establishing the strong foundations of physical and emotional health, positive social and family.

**NAMI Hernando** (social services): promote mental health wellness in our community through education, support, advocacy, outreach, and empowerment.

**Hernando County Crime Stoppers** (community development): empower the community to have safer neighborhoods, schools, and work environments by providing a voice that citizens can use to stand against criminals without fear of retaliation.

**Hernando County Community Anti-Drug Coalition** (social services): serve as a collective voice for Hernando County residents working towards the health and wellness of community members, with a focus on youth substance abuse.

**Hernando County Public Library-Brooksville** (education): an institution that offers free resources and the expansion of knowledge.

**Florida's Adventure Coast Brooksville-Weeki Wachee Visitors Bureau** (Activity): helps people discover all the area has to offer, with ideas for activities, lodging, special events, and more.

# CHAPTER 7

## OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES



Downtown Main Street

# Estimated Levels of Service and Maintenance Costs

As described in the Phase 1 report, Brooksville has adopted levels of service in its comprehensive plan. These represent the number of amenities, such as swimming pools and tennis courts, the City intends to have in relationship to the number of people. The National Recreation and Parks Association has different benchmarks, but they are still based on the number of resources in relation to the population.

Brooksville is estimated to need approximately 150 acres of parkland to meet future demand and 8.7 miles of new trails.

Currently, the City is maintaining 296 acres of parkland and other areas and 24 miles of trails. The addition of the new parks would be an increase of 37%, and the trails would be an increase of 63%. Thus, the maintenance costs could increase by the same amount. However, it is important to remember that these increases would come as the City and its tax base expand.



**Parks & Recreation Department Office**



**Jerome Brown Activity Room**

# Facilities Operations and Staffing

The parks department currently operates on an annual budget of approximately \$1.5 million. In 2023, six full-time people and one part-time person were charged with maintaining a system of eight parks, plus other trails and open spaces. Three more positions are in the proposed 2024 budget, two park attendants and an inmate crew leader, for an additional cost of \$129,520.

With the addition of up to six new community parks and eleven neighborhood parks, plus trail expansion and a sports center, the demand for staff and budget increases is expected almost to double over time. However, the City has options for how to handle the increased maintenance responsibilities:

- additional staff can be hired, and it can be done in house,
- or maintenance can be contracted out.

The second option would be appropriate for facilities with specialized maintenance, like ballfields and splash pads. The park's staff currently has approximately 3,000 s.f. of office space in the Jerome Brown Community Center. With new staff, this space and maintenance space would have to be expanded.

## FUNDING OPTIONS

The department is funded with general tax revenue, user fees, impact fees, and community contributions. A future option could be the adoption of a recreation district.

### TAX REVENUE

As the city grows, tax revenues will increase. New development will bring in more funds, and it will increase property values. Moreover, new and improved parks can increase property values and by default tax revenue. Increased property values can offset increased mill rates on existing property owners.

### USER FEES

The City charges a variety of user fees for the use of courts and facility rental. Increasing these fees can cause a barrier to some people being able to use the facilities, it is better to focus on a larger population using the facilities and generating more revenue.

### IMPACT FEES

The City charges an impact fee when new building permits are issued. The fees are focused on residential construction and are designed to help fund parks improvements that are needed in light of the new development. This is a common tool successfully used through the country.

### COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Brooksville has a long history of volunteer contributions to the parks, and these efforts can be worked into a future maintenance plan that would involve volunteers participating in maintenance. . Contracting out maintenance is also possible, particularly for specialty needs.

### RECREATION DISTRICTS

Under Florida State Statutes, a recreation district can be established to “acquire, purchase, construct, improve, and equip recreational facilities of all types, including real and personal property, within the boundaries of the district” (source: Chapter 418 Florida Statutes). These districts must be approved by a vote of the electors in the proposed district. They can be managed by the governing body of the municipality or the board of supervisors elected by the residents of the district. This may be an option for future large development areas.

# Facilities Maintenance Guidelines

The parks department currently operates on an annual budget of approximately \$1.5 million. At the end of 2023, three full-time people and one part-time person were charged with maintaining a system of seven parks plus other facilities. Three more positions are in the proposed 2024 budget, two park attendants and an inmate crew leader, for an additional cost of \$129,520.

With the addition of up to three new community parks and nine neighborhood parks, plus the trail expansion and possibly a sports center, the demand for staff and budget increases is expected to double over time. Additionally, there is a need for parks and recreation staff to coordinate events and programming with the other entities in the community, such as Brooksville Main Street, Hernando County Health Department, and Hernando County Tourism.

With the anticipated increase in parks and recreation offerings, the city has options on how to handle the increased staffing and maintenance responsibilities:

- Additional staff can be hired, and all the functions can be done in house, or,
- Maintenance operations can be contracted to vendors and operators, and the department staff focus on management and event coordination.

The second option would be appropriate for facilities with specialized maintenance, like ballfields and splash pads. Currently, the parks staff operates out of approximately 600 SF of office space at the Jerome Brown Community Center. This includes a shared reception desk, meeting room, break room, and toilets, all of which are a part of the community center. With the enhanced operations and additional staff, it is anticipated that an office space of around 2,500 to 3,000 SF is needed. Maintenance equipment and storage facilities are located within the major parks. New maintenance equipment and storage facilities will be required to construct the major new parks.



Storage at Tom Varn Park

# CPTED and Safety Guidelines

Throughout the planning process, the feedback from families and discussions with community members has been focused on making the parks safe enough for use. There are a variety of preventative measures that could be incorporated into the design and planning of the parks system that would aid in combating crime, such as CPTED.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a methodology aimed at mitigating criminal activity and the associated fear of crime by diminishing opportunities for illegal behavior and promoting social engagement among people utilizing a given area. The design of parks can significantly influence the public's impression of safety and their subsequent inclination to use the park facilities. The implementation of CPTED can effectively inform recommendations for appropriate CPTED strategies. However, it is essential to note that this approach should not function autonomously as the exclusive way of preventing crime. Instead, it should be implemented in tandem with other community-oriented strategies.

The primary objective of the City of Brooksville Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines is to integrate principles and practices of CPTED into the design and development processes within the City. Brooksville will offer recommendations to promote the implementation of these principles and practices in the context of local development.

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, These guidelines are expected to benefit:

## Community Members

- Opportunities to play meaningful roles in community crime prevention.
- Improved sense of security and quality of life through reduced fear of crime
- Fewer crimes committed in neighborhoods, fewer victimizations of residents.
- Increased interaction among residents and stronger neighborhood bonds
- New crime prevention and problem-solving skills

and enhanced knowledge of city government agencies and other resources.

## Municipal Leaders

- Less crime in neighborhoods and business areas.
- Improved perception of safety and livability in public areas and neighborhoods.
- Enhanced consideration of public safety in planning, development, and redevelopment projects.

## Law Enforcement

- Sustainable links with planning, development, code enforcement, and other local agencies.
- Clarification and action on neighborhood priorities related to crime and quality of life.
- Opportunities to play meaningful roles in community crime prevention.
- New crime prevention and problem-solving initiatives.

## Business Owners

- Safer locations that are more attractive to customers and employees.
- Enhanced problem-solving partnerships with local government and community members.

## Planners/Architects

- A greater role in designing the environment; CPTED is recognized as an acceptable component of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or Green Building.
- A holistic approach to the development and planning process.

CPTED has the potential to facilitate and increase community engagement, mitigate maintenance costs, and enhance the overall quality of life for people. The following are guidelines and recommendations that could be integrated into the design and decision-making process.

### 4 CORE PRINCIPLES

**Natural Surveillance:** This idea highlights the significance of designing and constructing park areas to increase visibility. Pathways, seating places, and recreational facilities are strategically placed to ensure that areas are easily visible to both park users and onlookers. By minimizing options for concealment, proper lighting, open sightlines, and clear lines of sight can help deter criminal activities.

**Recommendation:**



**Well-placed Lighting:** Install proper lighting in high-traffic areas, entrances, and along pathways to ensure visibility at night.



**Trimmed Vegetation:** Maintain landscaping to eliminate hiding spots and improve sightlines within the park.



**Clear Sightlines:** Design open spaces and pathways that allow people to see and be seen from a distance, reducing opportunities for illicit activities.

**Natural Access Control:** This principle focuses on designing entrances, exits, and pathways in a way that guides people through the park in a controlled manner. By utilizing features like fencing, landscaping, and well-placed entrances, the flow of park visitors can be directed and controlled. This limits the potential for unauthorized access and enhances the feeling of safety within the park.

**Recommendation:**



**Defined Entrances and Exits:** Create clear entry and exit points to guide the flow of visitors and help manage park access.



**Physical Barriers:** Use landscaping elements, such as planters or bollards, to guide movement and prevent vehicles from accessing pedestrian areas.



**Fencing:** Install low, aesthetically pleasing fences to define park boundaries and discourage unauthorized entry.

**Territorial Reinforcement:** Creating a sense of ownership and territoriality among park users can deter potential criminal behavior. This can be achieved by defining clear boundaries and property lines within the park, using elements like landscaping, signage, and architectural features. Well-defined areas with a sense of purpose, such as playgrounds or sports fields, encourage positive use while discouraging illicit activities.

**Recommendation:**



**District Activity Zones:** Designate specific areas for different activities (playgrounds, sports fields, picnic areas) to help users identify and respect boundaries.



**Signage:** Use signage to communicate park rules, hours of operation, and community ownership, fostering a sense of responsibility among park users.



**Public Art and Landmarks:** Incorporate art installations or landmarks that foster a sense of ownership and pride, discouraging vandalism and illicit behavior.

**Maintenance/ Management:** Regular maintenance and active park management play a crucial role in preventing crime. A well-maintained park sends a message that the space is cared for and monitored, which can discourage criminal activity. Adequate lighting, clean surroundings, and prompt repair of any damage contribute to a positive environment that is less conducive to unlawful behavior.

**Recommendation:**



**Regular Maintenance:** Keep the park clean, well-maintained, and free from graffiti to show a sense of community care and deter criminal activity.



**Community Engagement:** Involve residents in park planning and programming to create a sense of ownership and active participation in park upkeep.



**Collaboration with Law Enforcement:** Work with local law enforcement to develop a presence and establish positive relationships, which can deter criminal behavior and enhance safety.

# APPENDICES



**Downtown Main Street**

# Appendix 1: Meeting Minutes

## DRAFT

**CITY OF BROOKSVILLE**  
**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Joseph E. Johnson III, Council Chambers**  
**201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, FL 34601**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**  
**August 21, 2023**

Present: Mayor Blake Bell; Vice-Mayor David Bailey; Council Member Casey Thieryung; Council Member Christa Tanner; Council Member W. Thomas Bronson

Also Attending: Interim City Manager Charlene Kuhn; City Attorney Becky Vose; City Clerk Jennifer Battista; Deputy City Clerk Lisa Morris; Fire Chief Brad Sufficool; Parks & Recreation Director David Howard; HR Director Kyle Martin; IT Administrator Brenda Nelson; Department of Public Works Alex Pennington

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The invocation was offered by Council Member Tanner, which was followed by the Pledge.

**C. APPROVAL/MODIFICATIONS OF THE AGENDA**

(Limited to City Council and Interim City Manager)

The agenda was approved by consensus.

**D. WORKSHOP MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. PARKS MASTER PLAN - QUARTERLY UPDATE BY AYERS AND ASSOCIATES**

- Project Update
- Park and Recreation Master Plan Vision
- Initial Park Recommendations

Binoy Panicker, AICP, Principal Urban Planner, Ayres Associates Inc and Chris Silewski, Landscape Architect, Ayers Associates, Inc. went over a presentation related to the parks Master Plan.

Mr. Panicker discussed how data was collected via public meetings and on-line polls as well as polling attendees at recent events. He noted items that were requested such as a splash pad, a pool, educational events in the parks, water features, sports, and art in the parks. He spoke about complementing the trail network, design of fields to allow for sports, and improving the

health and well-being of residents by including options for various activities. He spoke about possible partnerships with entities and agencies.

Mr. Silewski made a small presentation related to each park.

Key points were as follows:

- Expanding Jerome Brown Center
- Adding Sports Courts to McKethan
- Expand and focus on topography at Quarry
- Location of Restrooms at parks
- Target concept of neighborhood parks amenities to support community
- Multiuse Trails and amenities
- What a Community Park needs to contain
- Mayor would like to push more big events to the parks and away from the downtown area due to safety concerns
- Council Member Tanner supported investing in a central community building or amphitheater or stage. Mayor Bell felt the Quarry would be a great place for that and he felt there would be opportunities for partnerships for funding.
- Council Member Bronson supported adding courts to the JBCC
- Council Member Bronson reminded all that the Quarry is a great place to have a golf course or soccer or softball field
- One of the public comments received at the community meetings was the desire for a butterfly garden and Council Member Tanner wondered how that is maintained.
- Council Member Bronson wanted to push out the survey again through various means. Mr. Panicker said it had closed but another one could be opened.
- Vice Mayor Bailey discussed exercise equipment he had seen at a recent FLC conference and Mr. Silewski commented that alot of money is spent on outdoor exercise equipment that is never used and was unsure that is the best way to maximize funding. He added that location is critical.
- Council Member Thieryung noted comments about the desire for mountain biking and felt that was a great idea. Council Member Bronson expressed concern about liability and recreational liability immunities were discussed. Council Member Tanner felt Bud McKethan Park may be a good location.
- Mr. Panicker discussed the possibility of rezonings to make properties available for restaurants or other amenities.
- Council Members Tanner and Bronson supported pursuing partnerships
- Mayor Bell discussed the fact that once the trail connection is finished, it will draw more people.
- Regarding Russell Street Park, the Mayor discussed the problem with security. Mr. Panicker suggested that the City look at ways to work on neighboring properties that may be contributing to an atmosphere of vandalism. Mr. Silewski mentioned various options including a secure restroom concept known as the "Portland Loo". Vice Mayor Bailey offered further suggestions on the locking of restrooms. Council Member Bronson suggested a volunteer night watch and the liability and safety for that person was a concern.
- Parks and Recreation Director Howard spoke about the vandalism at the City Parks. Possibly installing "this area under surveillance" signs was discussed by Vice Mayor Bailey.
- The new DPW building may take the space on S. Brooksville Ave. shown for the heritage days event and a possible slight location adjustment was discussed.
- Council Member Thieryung wished the GNT could hook up to MLK, Jr. Blvd.

**The Special Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m. and the balance of the discussion would be**

heard during the regular City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Continuation of discussion during regular meeting:**

The following was discussed:

- Hernando Park was discussed, as it may potentially be a City park in the future. Library facilities could be expanded. Playground area could be moved closer to library. Restrooms could be relocated to a better location.
- Several Council Members did not support moving the playground, especially closer to the street. It would also take away from the grass space currently used for concerts. There was concern about what the benefit would be to move the restrooms.
- Shuffleboard and mini golf were discussed as a possibility for the Quarry.
- Corkboard instead of mulch could be used at playgrounds.
- Water features were discussed for Hernando Park. The consultant stated that water features are considered a splash pad
- Extra seating is unnecessary at this park
- Regarding Kennedy Park, it was looked at because it could possibly be a City park in the future. The consultants discussed recommendations at Kennedy Park.
- At this point, there is no indication that the County wants to relinquish that park.
- Council Member Bronson supported a football field at Kennedy Park, as well as a dirt bike trail.
- Mr. Panicker talked about the potential of a right of way bike corridors that would provide connectivity to the Good Neighbor Trail and they would be looking at that further. On the area utilizing Howell Ave., Vice Mayor Bailey was concerned about losing parking spaces on Howell Ave. Mayor Bell was not in support of ways to expand the trail at this time.
- Mr. Panicker advised that the Master Plan is based upon population growth of the future and the need for additional community parks is included in the projection. Looking at locations of land that could be used for more recreation athletic fields, aquatics, etc was included.
- Vice Mayor Bailey felt that instead of new facilities, a K-8 school could be established as it is needed as more growth comes to the City.
- Mayor Bell acknowledged the growth of the City and felt that opportunities to expand sports could generate more revenue
- Mr. Panicker advised they would take this information, go back to the community, open a second survey and report back to Council in October or November.

E. **CITIZEN INPUT** [limited To 3 Minutes Per Speaker]  
None

F. **RESPONSE BY INTERIM CITY MANAGER, STAFF OR COUNCIL**  
None necessary

G. **ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY**  
None

H. **ITEMS BY CITY INTERIM MANAGER**  
None

I. **ITEMS BY COUNCIL**

None

J. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Battista, CMC, City Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Blake Bell, Mayor

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

# DRAFT

**CITY OF BROOKSVILLE**  
**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Joseph E. Johnson III, Council Chambers**  
**201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, FL 34601**  
**TIME pm**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**  
**November 6, 2023**

Present: Mayor Blake Bell; Vice-Mayor David Bailey; Council Member Casey Thieryung; Council Member Christa Tanner; Council Member W. Thomas Bronson

Also: City Manager Charlene Kuhn; City Attorney Becky Vose; City Clerk Jennifer Battista;

Attending: Deputy City Clerk Lisa Morris; Finance Director Autumn Sullivan; Community Development Director David Hainley; Parks & Recreation Director David Howard; Fire Chief Brad Sufficool; IT Administrator Brenda Nelson; IT Support Zachary Ewing; HR/Risk Management Director Kyle Martin

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The invocation was given by Council Member Bronson, which was followed by the Pledge.

**C. WORKSHOP MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. Parks Master Plan Update**

Presented by: Binoy Panicker, Amanda Arnold and Jay Molokwu, Ayres Associates, Inc.

- a. Project Updates
- b. Draft Master Plan
- c. Park Improvement Recommendations - Existing and New Parks
- d. Next Steps/Implementation

Mr. Panicker reminded all that this was their third update to City Council and he went over the draft Parks Master Plan as it currently stands. He advised that there had been public community engagements, site visits and meetings with County and City staff. There were two on-line surveys and there will be a last one launched.

Jay Molokwu reported on the community engagements at the Elks Lodge on October 5, 2023 and at the neighborhood block party on November 4, 2023. She advised Council of

the most recent online survey which generated two responses.

Mr. Panicker set out the principles for creating and enhancing a vibrant park system. He went over the existing park space and the proposed increase of park acreage based on projected population growth.

The following was discussed by Ayres staff, City staff and Council:

- Recommendation of additional dedicated or shared bike lanes, including on Howell Ave.
- Recommendation of 12 new parks and Mr. Panicker touched on their proposed locations (3 community level parks including sports facility/aquatic center and 9 neighborhood parks)
- Tom Varn Park - more amenities, community garden, art festival and art walks, efficiency of ball field locations
- JBCC - STEM and other classes to be held there to make it stellar.
- Bud McKethan Park - Gateway to Quarry Park
- The Quarry Park - amphitheater, BMX track
- Russell Street Park - addition of a boardwalk
- Hernando Park - more programs, more restrooms, more lighting, community lawn with open play area or seating
- Kennedy Park - rehab the center, adding programming, enhanced sports offerings, ADA access, ball fields, splash pads
- Adding a north-south connector, including on-street, to expand the City trail network
- Adding amenities to existing GNT
- After the community engagements, the number one desire is for splash pads
- Mr. Paniker briefly went over CRA funding, partnership opportunities, grants and funding and these will be included in the final report
- Community Gardens are a "quick" win and easier to get partnerships on
- The full draft will include the high level costs based on improvements needed and the new community and neighborhood park concepts
- The next step for the week of November 6th or early the week of November 13th, is that the draft Parks Master Plan report and a final survey will be put online on the City's website for feedback.
- Ayres had hoped for more input from Community Engagement events
- The draft report will be finalized and submitted to Council in December, but they are not scheduled to make that as a presentation.
- The Mayor said he would never vote to expand the bike trail, especially on Howell Ave.
- The Mayor advised that there is some interest in the County having discussions about the City taking over Kennedy Park. However, the Mayor felt that the City did not have the capacity to handle that at this point.
- The Mayor recalled a recommendation of art in Tom Varn Park and he would like to focus that on Russell St. Park.
- The Vice Mayor felt that before bike lanes are added to Howell Ave., the sidewalks should be repaired. He was also concerned that bike lanes on Howell Ave. would jeopardize the parking that is there now.
- Regarding the recommendation of more splash pads, the Vice Mayor expressed concern that the City needs to have employees certified to work with chemicals to keep the water sanitary and to man it 24-7.
- Council Member Tanner called attention to Tom Varn, Bud McKethan, JBCC and the Quarry and wondered if those are what is referred to as the "westside parks", which Mr. Paniker confirmed. They are separate parks but do touch each other and have to

- go together to some degree.
- Regarding the concept of adding more community and neighborhood parks, and based on funding constraints, Tanner supported looking at upgrading existing parks and existing land first.
- The concept of a parking garage off of US 41 as a gateway into Bud McKethan and the Quarry Park was discussed. While Tanner agreed that more parking was needed and was not against a parking structure, she did not support the proposed location visible off of US 41. Especially since it is so near the heavy traffic merge off of US 98/Ponce de Leon Blvd. Mr. Panikier felt that if the City wants to hold bigger events to draw more people, parking would be important.
- Council Member Bronson did not agree with taking away fields from JBCC. He suggested adding on to the basketball complex (behind JBCC?), keep softball fields (behind JBCC?) and adding a mixed use field south of Tom Varn Park. He agreed with an amphitheater concept but was unsure about a BMX tract.
- Council Member Bronson agreed with continuing the arts theme at Russell Street.
- Council Member Bronson requested that when the final online survey is active, to please send him the link.

**D. CITIZEN INPUT [LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER]**

None

**E. RESPONSE BY CITY MANAGER, STAFF OR COUNCIL**

none necessary

**F. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY**

none

**G. ITEMS BY CITY MANAGER**

none

**H. ITEMS BY COUNCIL**

none

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

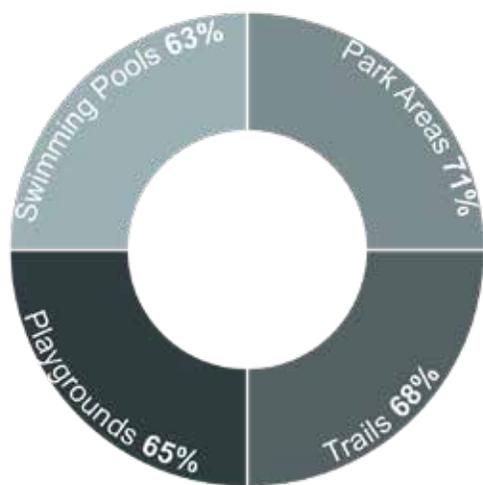
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Jennifer Battista, CMC, City Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Blake Bell, Mayor

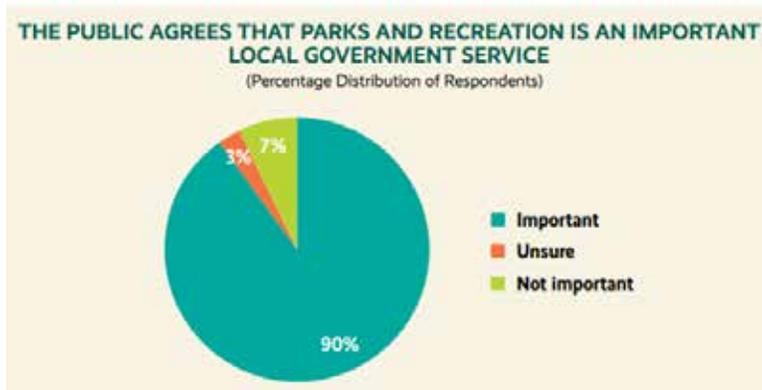
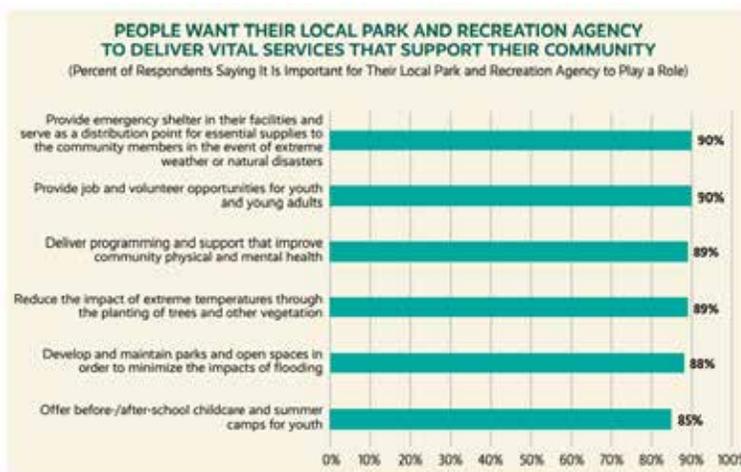
Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

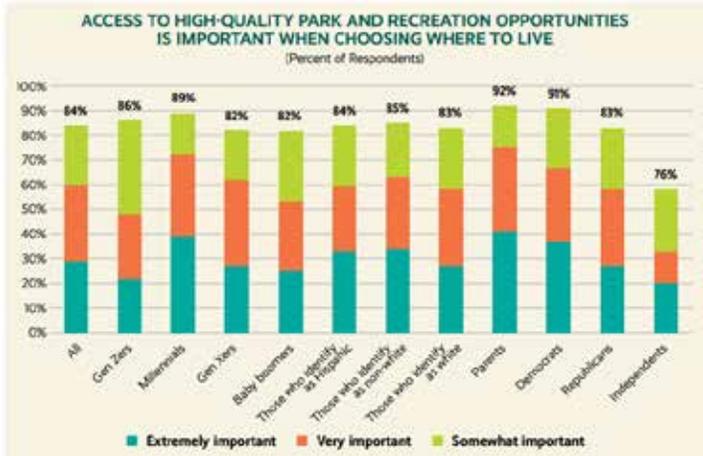
# Appendix 2: Demographics

## Community Features preferred by ages 25 to 40

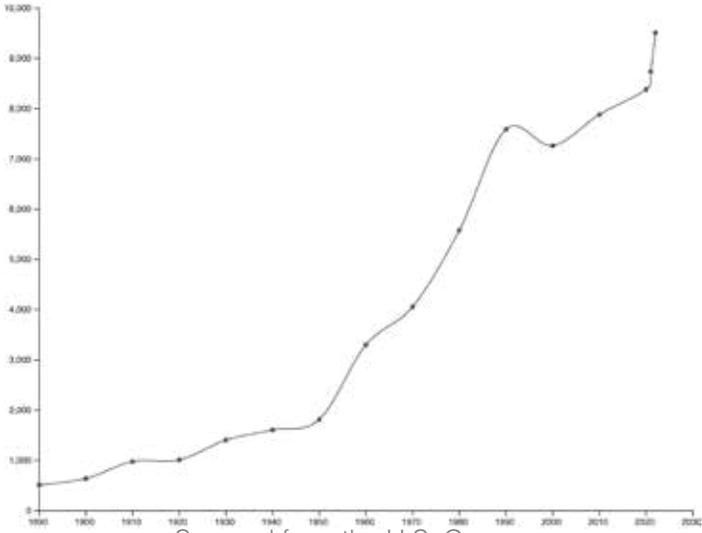


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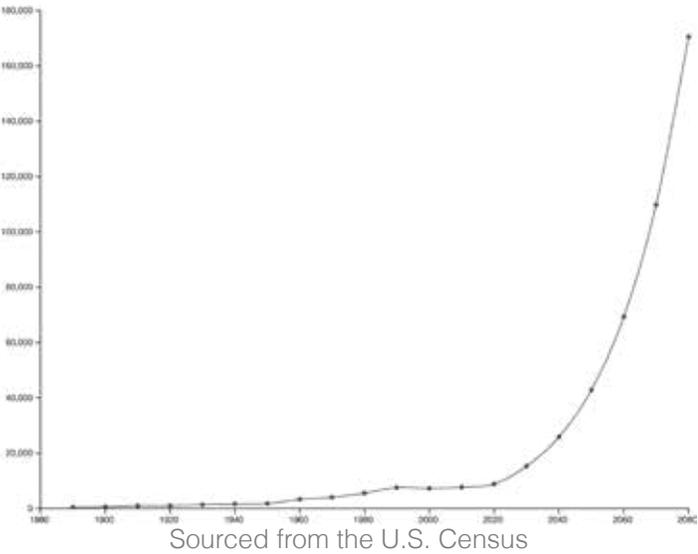




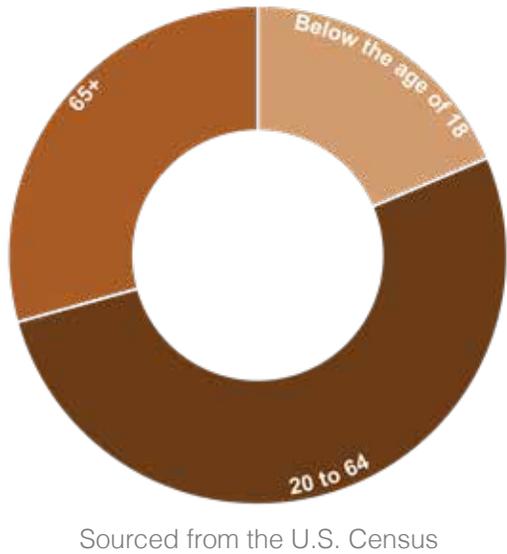
### Historic Population Growth, Brooksville, FL



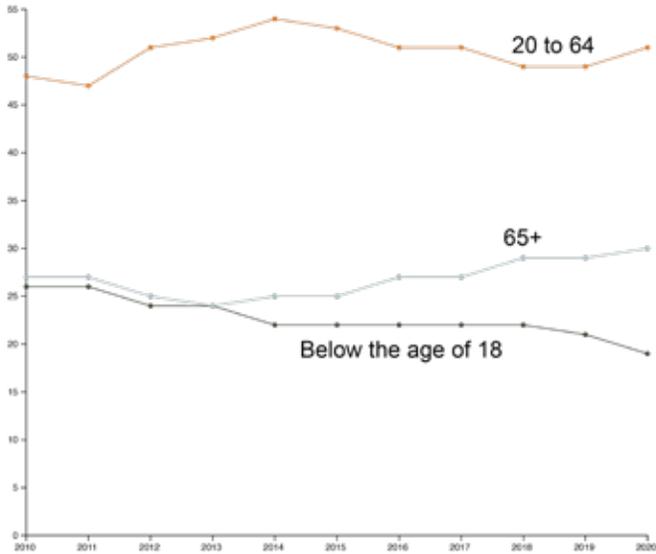
### Projected Population Estimate, Brooksville, FL



### Population by Age Range

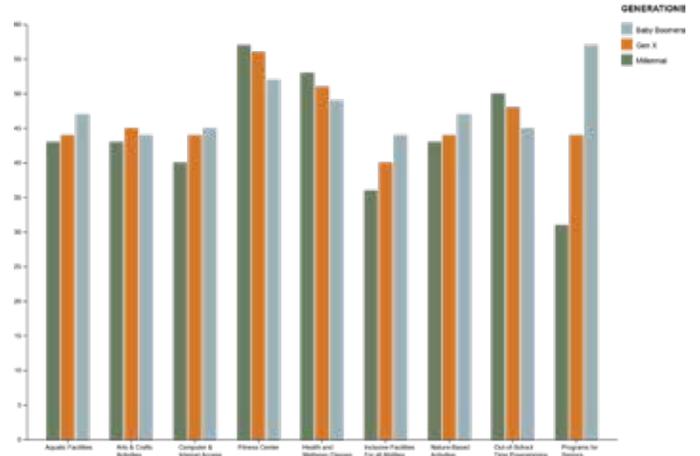


### Age Trends in Brooksville, 2010 to 2020



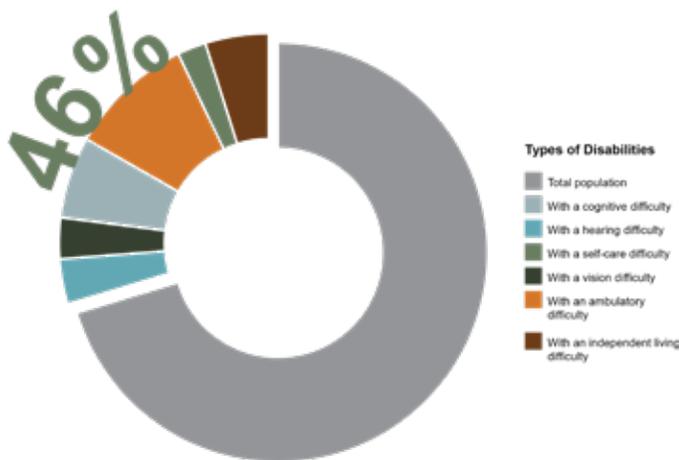
Sourced from the U.S. Census

### Traditional and Non-traditional Recreation Programs and Services are Important to Local Communities



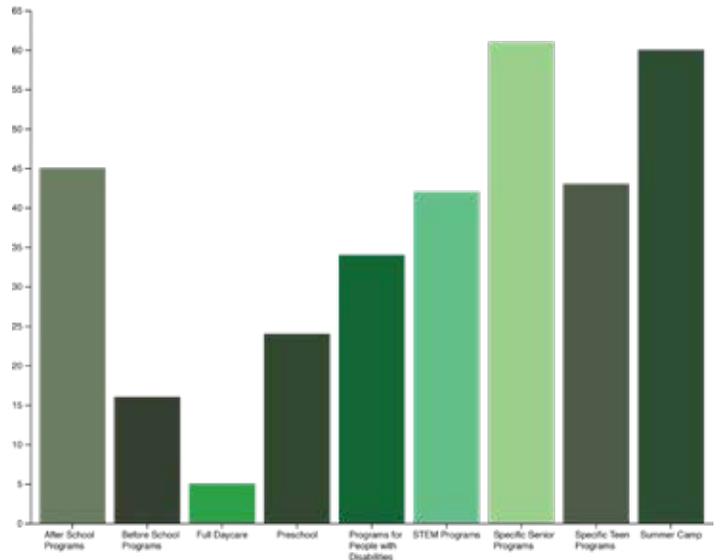
Sourced from the NRPA

### Persons with Disabilities in Brooksville



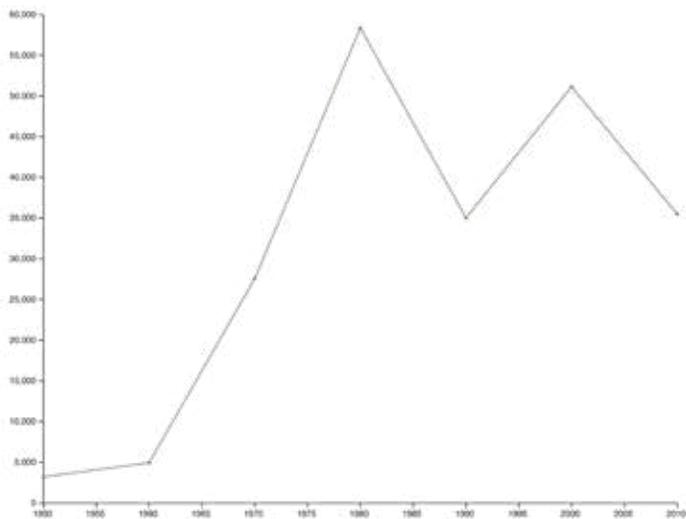
Sourced from the U.S. Census

### Persons with Disabilities in Brooksville



Sourced from the U.S. Census

### Net Migration per 100 people, Hernando County



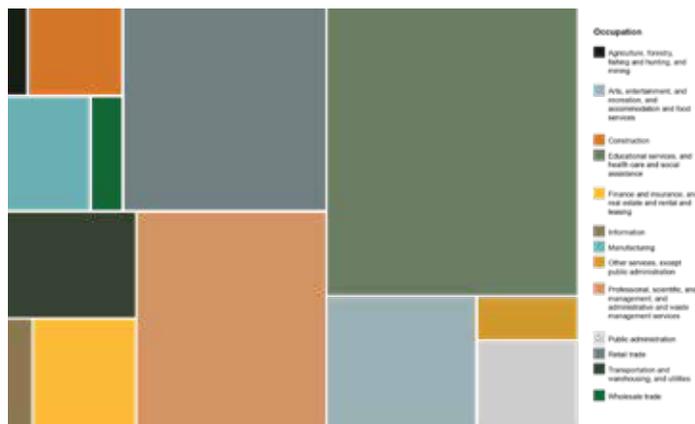
Sourced from Net Migration, University of Wisconsin

### People Moving to Brooksville



Sourced from Redfin Market Trends

### Net Migration per 100 people, Hernando County



Sourced from Net Migration, University of Wisconsin



Tom Varn Park



**AYRES**



**BROOKSVILLE**  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
MASTER PLAN