

BROOKSVILLE

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Phase 2: Parks Master Planning and Design Ideation



September 2023



AVRES





We would like to thank the City Council, residents, and officials for their valuable input and feedback on the project.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Tom Varn Park

The Brooksville Parks and Recreation Master Plan **Phase 2 Parks Master Planning and Design Ideation** deliverable presents a draft vision for the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and specific improvement ideas based on the feedback received from the public engagement process. This report is to be read in conjunction with the Phase 1 Parks Inventory, Existing Conditions Analysis, and Needs Assessment report, which is the basis for the plan and recommendations.

Following the Phase 1 studies and assessment, the project team engaged with the community and decision-makers to present the initial assessments and gather feedback on improvement ideas for the improvement of the City's parks and recreation facilities and long-term aspirations. Based on this, draft vision and planning principles were crafted to guide the direction of all future park locations, planning, and design activities for the City's parks system. This was presented to the City Council, staff, and stakeholders for further feedback and affirmation. The overall community sentiment for the City's parks master plan is undisputed in wanting to provide vibrant, safe, and accessible facilities that meet City residents' needs and promote economic development. A set of planning principles based on this vision and best practice is established to guide the planning process. Initial ideas specific for each park and future parks were mapped out and presented to staff and City leadership for review. Ideas such as an enhanced event space at the Quarry Park, neighborhood parks within all the larger parks, an improved Jerome Brown Community Center, additional passive and sensory recreation for all groups, bike tourism, and a robust citywide bike-pedestrian connected system leveraging the City's "Trail Town" designation are among the main ideas put forth. The feedback received throughout the planning process has been incorporated and presented here. These ideas, preliminary plans, and designs will be further refined with community feedback through the upcoming public meetings and surveys.

Public engagement continues to be a key aspect of the planning process. This report presents the key engagements and feedback received since the Phase 1 assessment work. Key meetings in this phase include Public Meeting 1, Online Survey 1, Meeting with County Staff, and the Back-to-School Bash event, in addition to regular, focused discussions with stakeholders and City staff.

This deliverable is structured into four sections: Section 1 presents a brief overview of the planning process and Phase 1 work that underpins the design and ideation work in this phase; Section 2 presents the public engagement activities undertaken in phase 2; Section 3 presents the initial vision and master planning principles; and Section 4 presents the initial park recommendations.

The planning and design team will continue to engage with the community, stakeholders, City staff, and decision makers and refine the plan to best meet the residents' aspirations. The updated plans and implementation strategies will be presented in the Phase 3 – Final Master Plan and Implementation Strategies report by the end of the year.

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SECTION I

Overview and Progress Update



Downtown Main Street

Planning Process Overview

The City of Brooksville is a charming, small town with great culture and heritage that could only be improved by **further organizing the City's parks, recreation, and open spaces** through the proposed systemwide Brooksville Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Improving existing facilities, adding new ones in the right locations with the **right programs**, and most importantly **maximizing access** to these facilities will greatly 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 will be the main topics.

This will be based on a realistic projection of the City's future greenspace and recreational needs based on a **demographic trends analysis** and conditions on the ground. The Master Plan will provide a **realistic guide** with regards to **park, buildings, and facilities** usage; policy, **operations**; short- and long-term maintenance costs; and future **capital improvement** expenses.

Our project team will utilize **local knowledge and our multidisciplinary expertise** to undertake this project through a **collaborative approach** with the public, key stakeholders, decision makers and the City's project team.



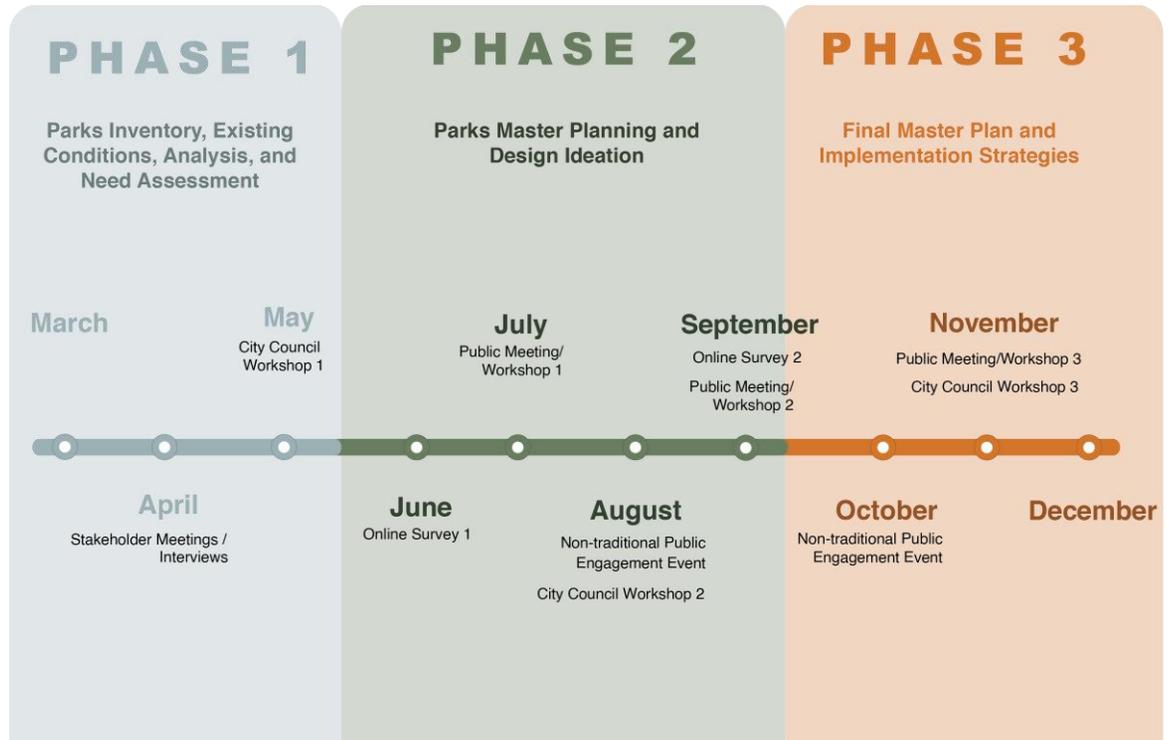
Hernando Park

Phases and Timeline

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is split into three phases spanning 36 weeks. Phase 1 was completed in June and the project is undergoing tasks outlined in phase 2. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

The first online survey was distributed in June to garner community support and gather feedback about the City's parks and recreation facilities. The survey aided in the decision-making process and informed the parks master planning and design ideation.

In addition to several meeting with staff, project stakeholders and decision makers, two public engagement meetings were held – the first in June and the Back to School Bash in August. The public meetings were held to spark a discussion and gather ideas about priority areas in need of improvements and opportunity areas for new public spaces. Community and stakeholder engagement will continue to be a key element of the planning process as the master plan is finalized.

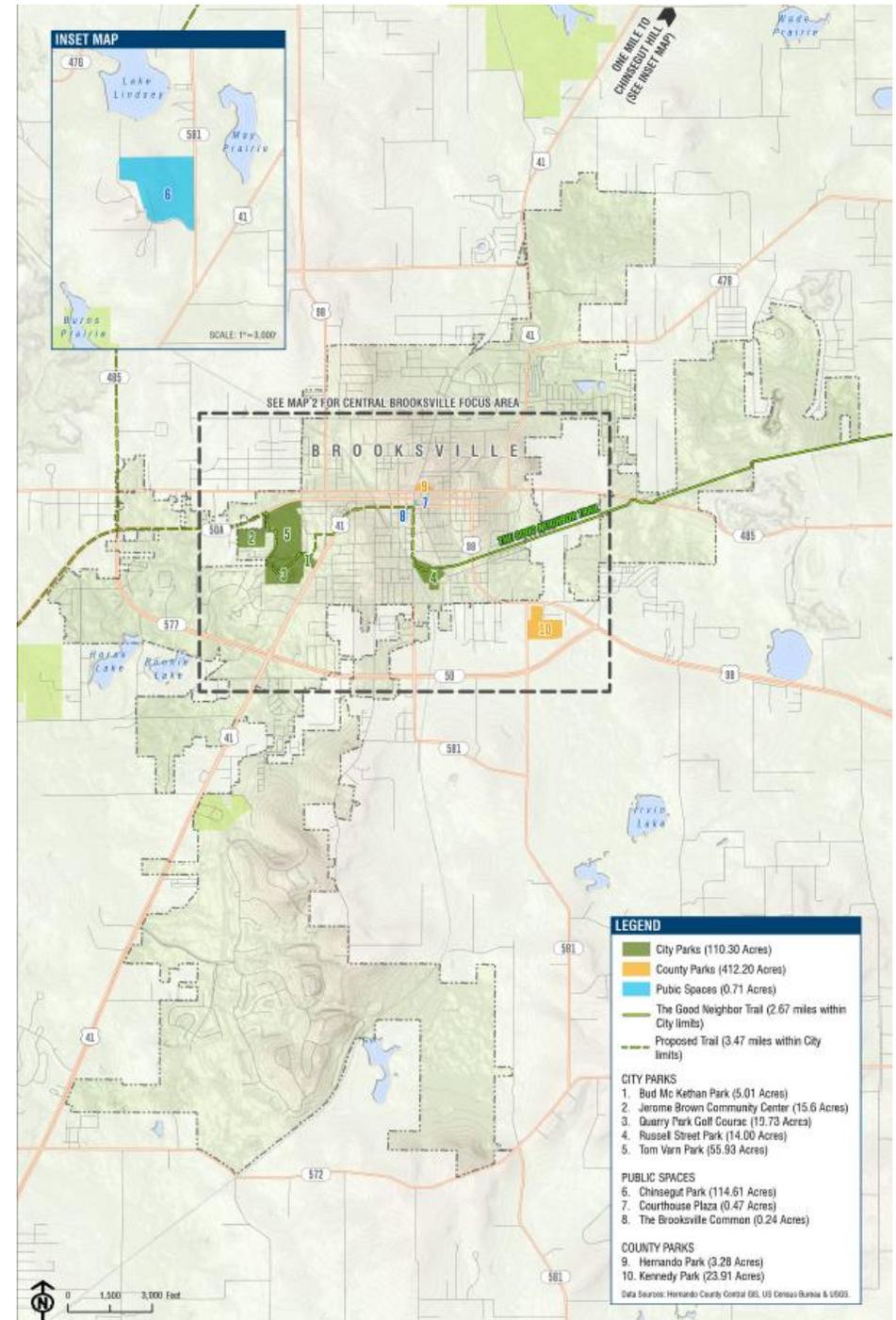


Existing City Parks Facilities

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, though they have great potential subject to funding for improvements. Hernando Park within downtown is well-maintained and popular and could be programmed and retrofitted for wider urban activities. Kennedy Park, a county facility, is also in need of 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 Phase 1 Report for a comprehensive facilities inventory, citywide assessments, and GIS mapping.



Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities Map

1



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.

2



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.

3



The downtown Main Street and 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.

4



THE GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL is built in collaboration with the FDEP 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.

5



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, a children's play area, and a bandshell adjacent to the Chamber of Commerce building. Walking paths and a restroom are additional features within this park.

6



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.

7



KENNEDY PARK is another County park that is just outside the eastern City limits but primarily serves the City's residents. 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.

8



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.

9



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

10



QUARRY DISC GOLF COURSE is part of the same large parcel and on the southern side of the 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.

11



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 a variety of events that occur dispersed between downtown area and the parks.

These events celebrate the culture, history, and diversity within the community of Brooksville whilst attracting tourists and public-private partnerships with businesses for potential sponsorship opportunities.

Events Calendar

A Special Events Calendar was created cataloging events held in Brooksville for the public dispersed between 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 parks system and potential sites.

The events calendar is a working document and will be updated accordingly.

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	24			
FR							31	28	25			
SA								29	26			
SU								30	27			

EVENTS

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

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 will be developed in relation to the regulatory, cultural, historic, and development context of the City, and the larger ideals that will benefit the City's residents and visitors.



SECTION 2

Public Outreach



Back to School Bash

Public Engagement Strategy



A robust public engagement strategy was deployed for the project. Refer to the Phase 1 Report for more details on the public engagement plan and process.

City Council Workshop

August 21 WORKSHOP

The 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.
- Discussed areas within the Quarry that a designated stage/amphitheater could go. Also 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. Discussed designating another portion for a mixed-use field.
- 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 12th to July 17th

Highlights:

1. The two favorite and most frequented parks are Tom Varn and Hernando Park.
2. Tom Varn, Russell Street, The Quarry, Kennedy, Bud Mc Kethan, Hernando Park, and the Good Neighbor Trail were all identified as needing improvements.
4. Residents feel that their needs are not currently being met for families, toddlers, children, adolescents, adults, seniors
5. Residents identified that the existing facilities need to be maintained with added improvements and develop new facilities with additional programming and increase staffing.
6. Currently Facebook and word of mouth are the 2 ways residents are informed about events/new/activities. There is potential to explore other means of advertisement.
7. 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.

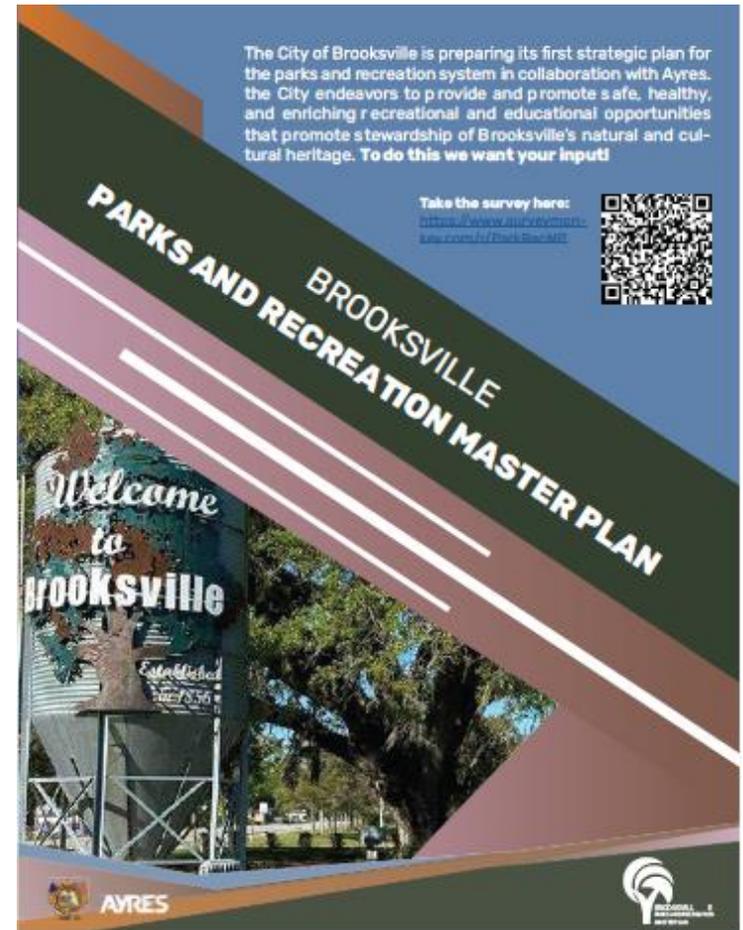
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP 2 - August 21, 2023



Online Survey

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. Online Survey 1 ended in June. The feedback will inform the Phase 2 plan development. Highlights of the survey results are:

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



Online Survey 1 Flyer

Non-Traditional Public Engagement Meetings

Back to School Bash

The Back to School Bash was held on August 12, 2023. This event was organized by the City's Parks & 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

Key feedback included:

- The community expressed the need for a splash pad and pool to accommodate capacity issues within the community.
- Creation of educational programs for children, adults, and those with physical and mental limitations.
- Leverage partnerships with local businesses to help sponsor events like Movies in the Park.
- Kennedy Park and Russell Street Park are severely underutilized in terms of programs and activities offered.
- Leverage partnerships with the Department of Health and the Arts Council.



Back to School Bash

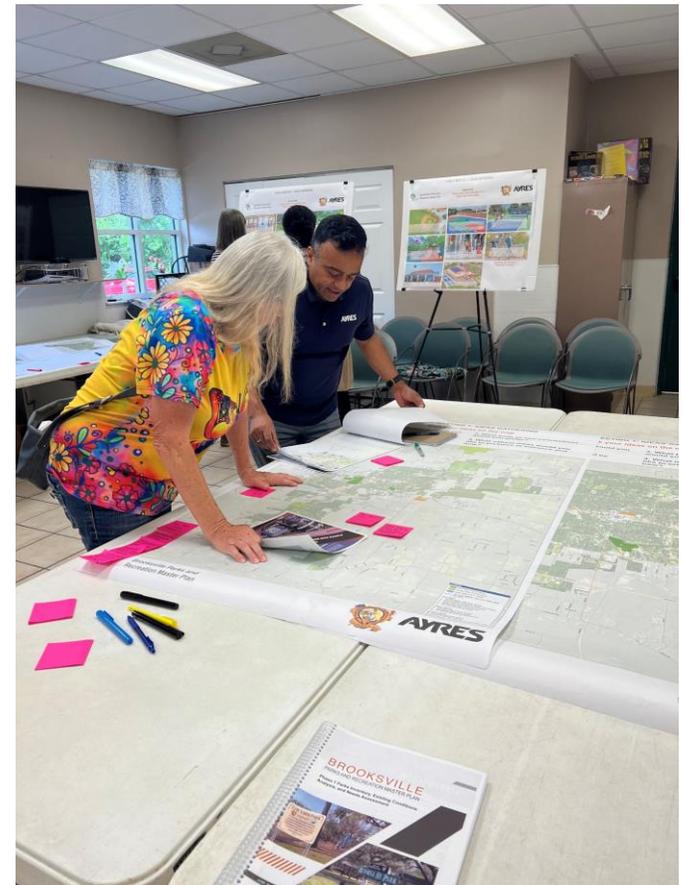
Public Meetings

Public Meeting 1

The first public meeting was held on July 11, 2023. The purpose of the first public meeting was to gather ideas from the community by facilitating discussions that would lead to fruitful collaboration.

Key feedback included:

- Improve the use and facilities of the Good Neighbor Trail.
- Unsafe feeling at Bud McKethan and Quarry Park.
- Look into the utilization of the County Fairgrounds for park use.
- The community would benefit from a pool and/or splash pad.
- Space for yoga, meditation, arts would be good.
- Leverage the Trail Town designation and consider bike tourism.
- Add more staff and programs.
- Specific ideas and suggestions for individual parks were also discussed at length.
- Community members were asked to place a dot on the map indicating where they lived.
- Out of the eight people who participated, four live outside City bounds, one lives in the far west region of the City distant from any of the parks, and three live close to downtown Brooksville near Hernando Park.
- Information on the project, project website, and ongoing survey were also shared at the workshop.



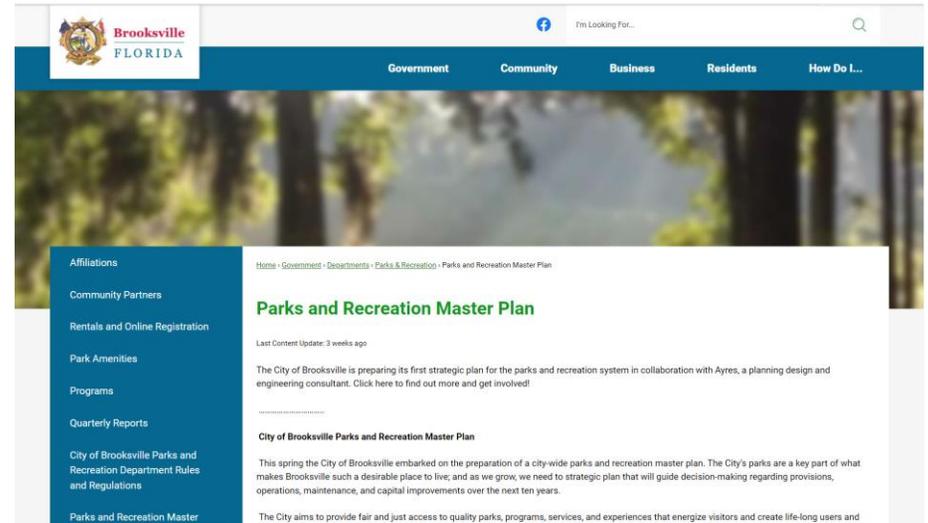
Public Meeting 1

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.

1. What's been done so far?
2. How can I be involved?
3. 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.



Parks and Recreation Project Website



Parks and Recreation Facebook Page

SECTION 3

Parks and Recreation Vision & Structure



Adventure Coast Tourism Map

Vision Statement

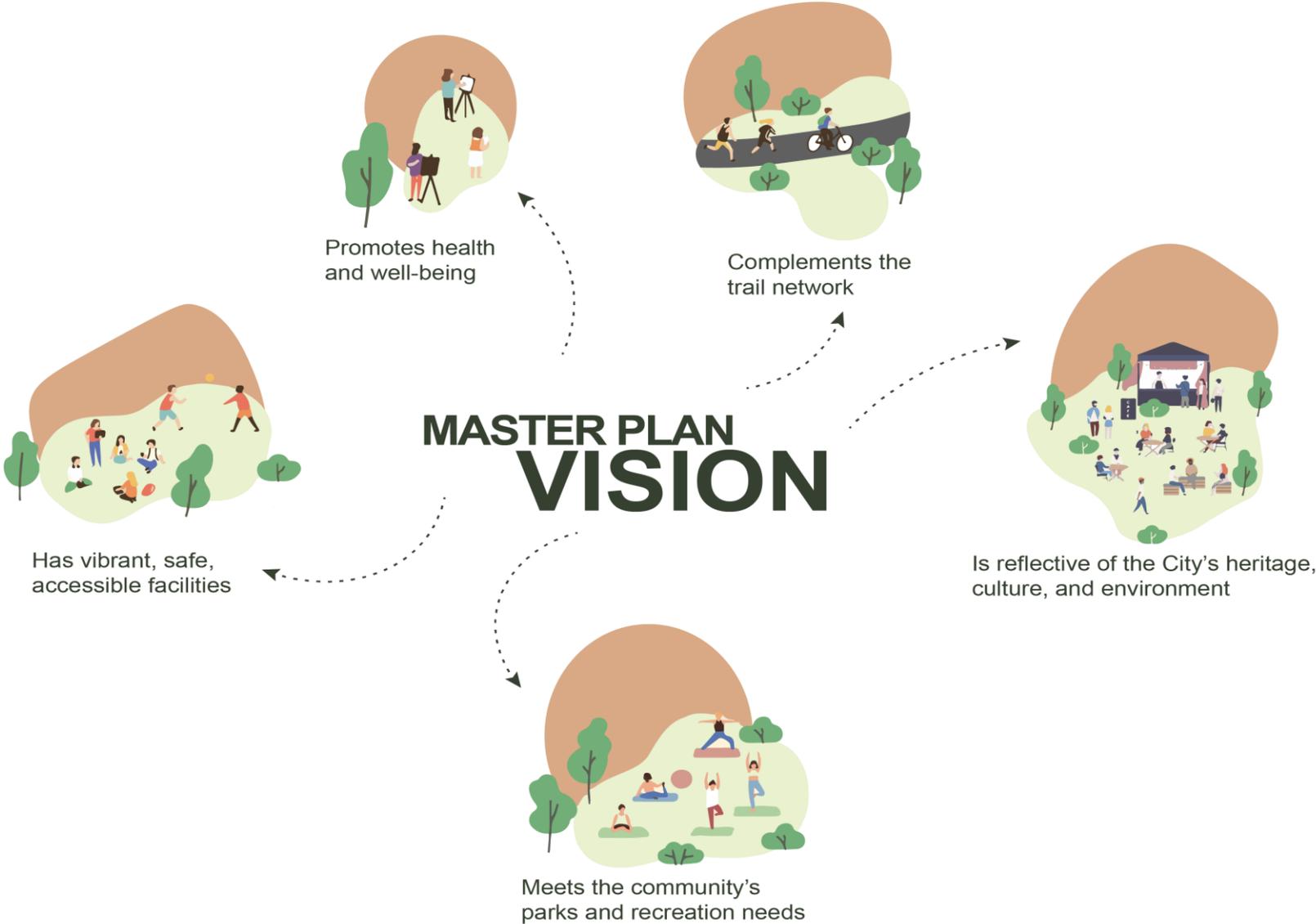
Brooksville's vision is to create a **vibrant and inclusive** community by highlighting the Good Neighbor Trail as a foundation for active recreational activities. The City is committed to providing designated **facilities for all ages**, ensuring that parks cater to the diverse needs and abilities of all individuals, 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 quality of life of the community. 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 the green spaces and parks that cater to the needs of residents. Moreover, Brooksville will address the growing population and current needs of the City by **developing new parks** with state-of-the-art athletics and sports facilities. A prominent feature for 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 a sense of community, health, well-being, and connection among residents.

The City of Brooksville desires a parks system that:



City Resident Needs + Economic Development

Parks and Recreation Master Planning 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.

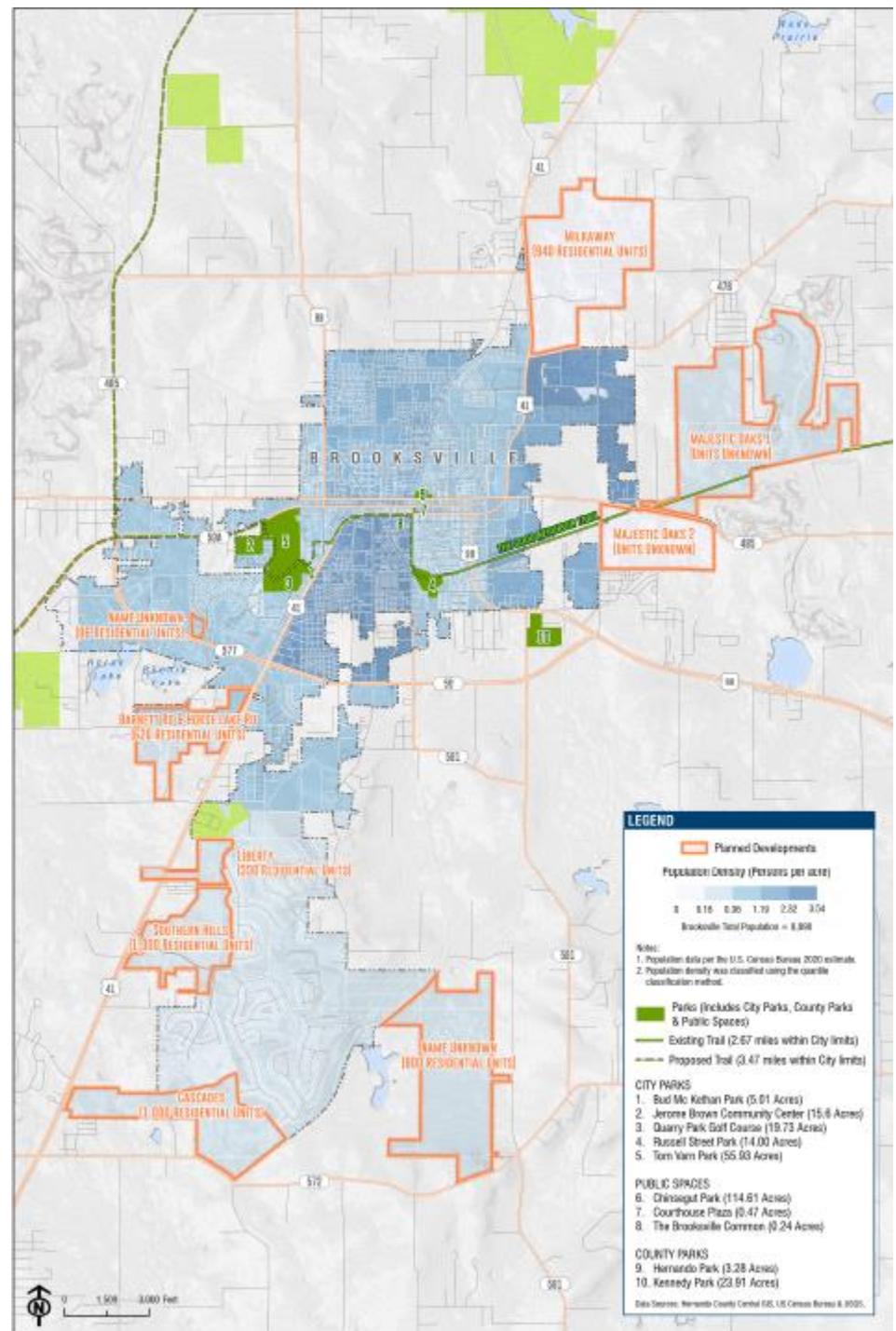


Park Demands

In 2021, there were 8,735 people living in Brooksville. Based on the development solicitations received by the City's Planning Department, new developments could potentially 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 currently has around 140 acres of park space including the County parks. An additional requirement of 110 to 120 acres of park spaces is anticipated to meet future demand.

It is anticipated that the City will require a designated regional park and or community park that will have updated athletic and sports facilities in addition to several neighborhood parks.



Anticipated Developments Map

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 level of activity. They can be primarily based on natural resources, or organized sports to 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, to preserve distinctive localized environmental features, and to accommodate community-based social and civic events and organized sports.

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 unique identity of the neighborhood, and enhance the overall quality of life for those living within the vicinity.



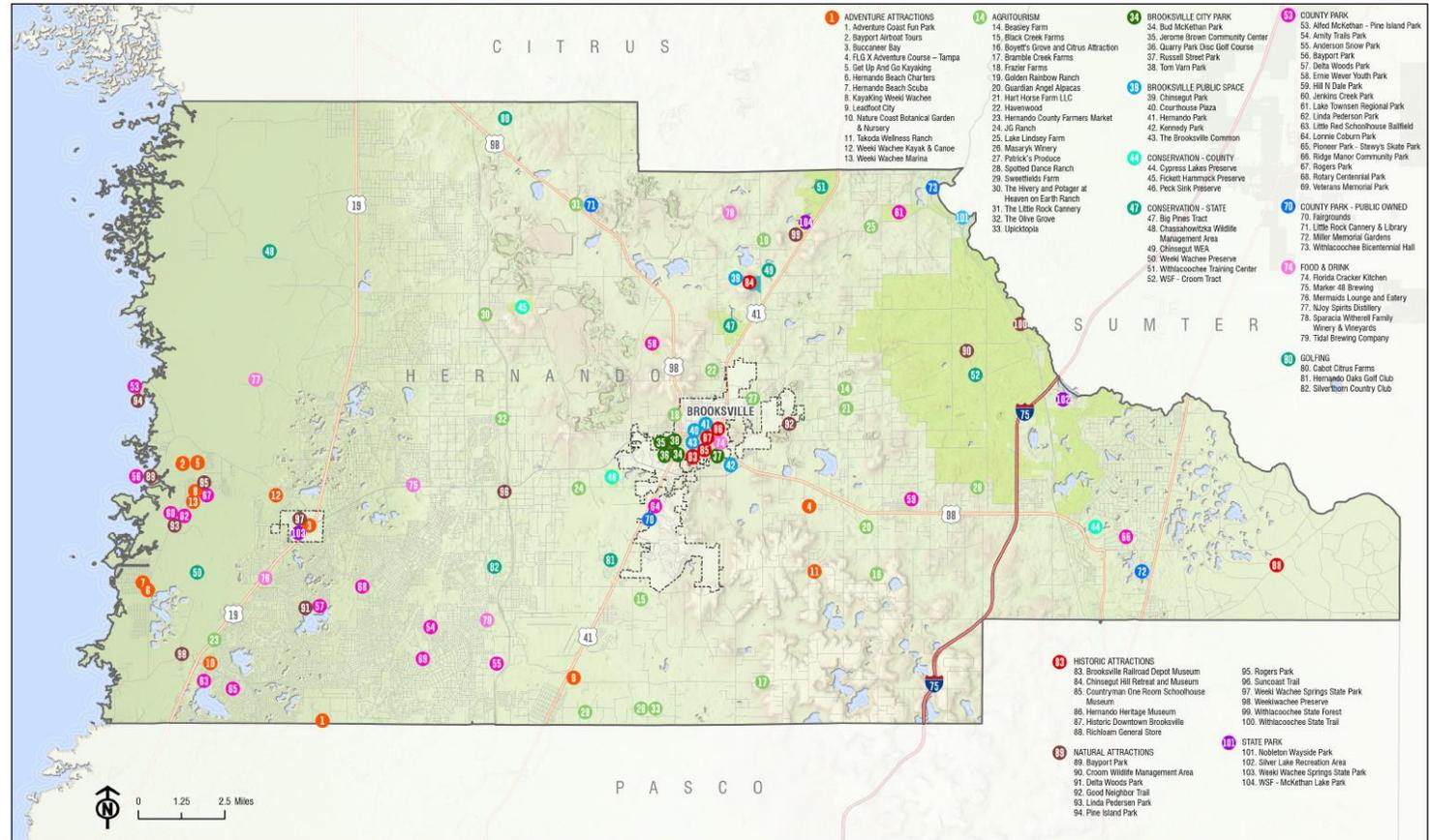
Park Hierarchy

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 as 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 a diverse array of entertainment within Brooksville.



Recreational Map of Hernando County

SECTION 4

Systemwide Parks and Recreation Improvements



Playground

Tom Varn Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- 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.



“West Side Parks” Relationship Diagram

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

1. A sports complex that will house traditional recreational activities, meet the demand of the sports community, and aid in economic development of Brooksville.
2. Neighborhood Park houses events and activities and facilities serving a smaller population.
3. Community Park will house passive and active amenities, activities, and facilities that serve the larger population.
4. 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.

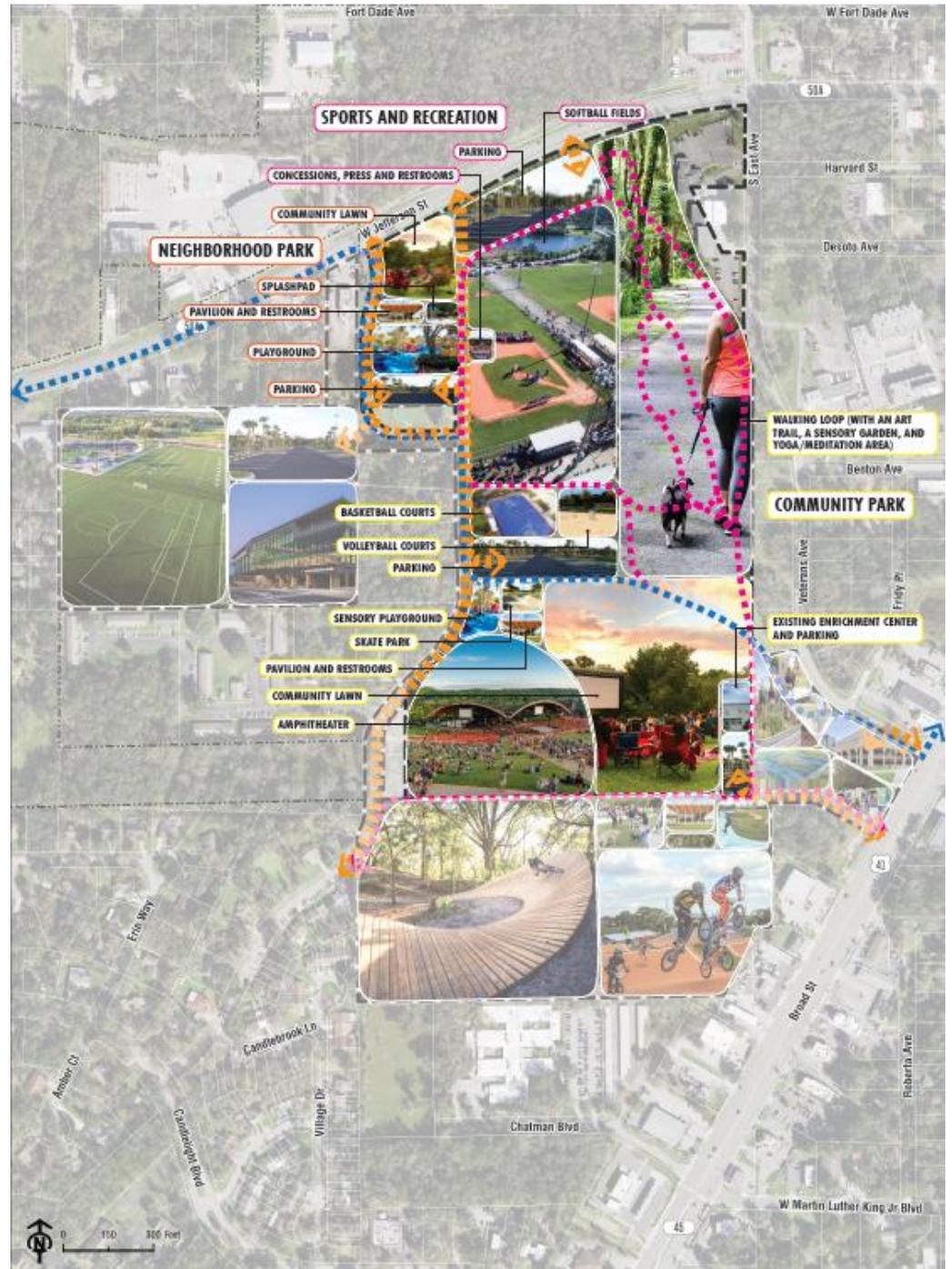


Tom Varn Park Concept

The layout of Tom Varn Park is improved in the concept diagram to increase 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. To the east is the sports and recreation area that 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.



Jerome Brown Community Center

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

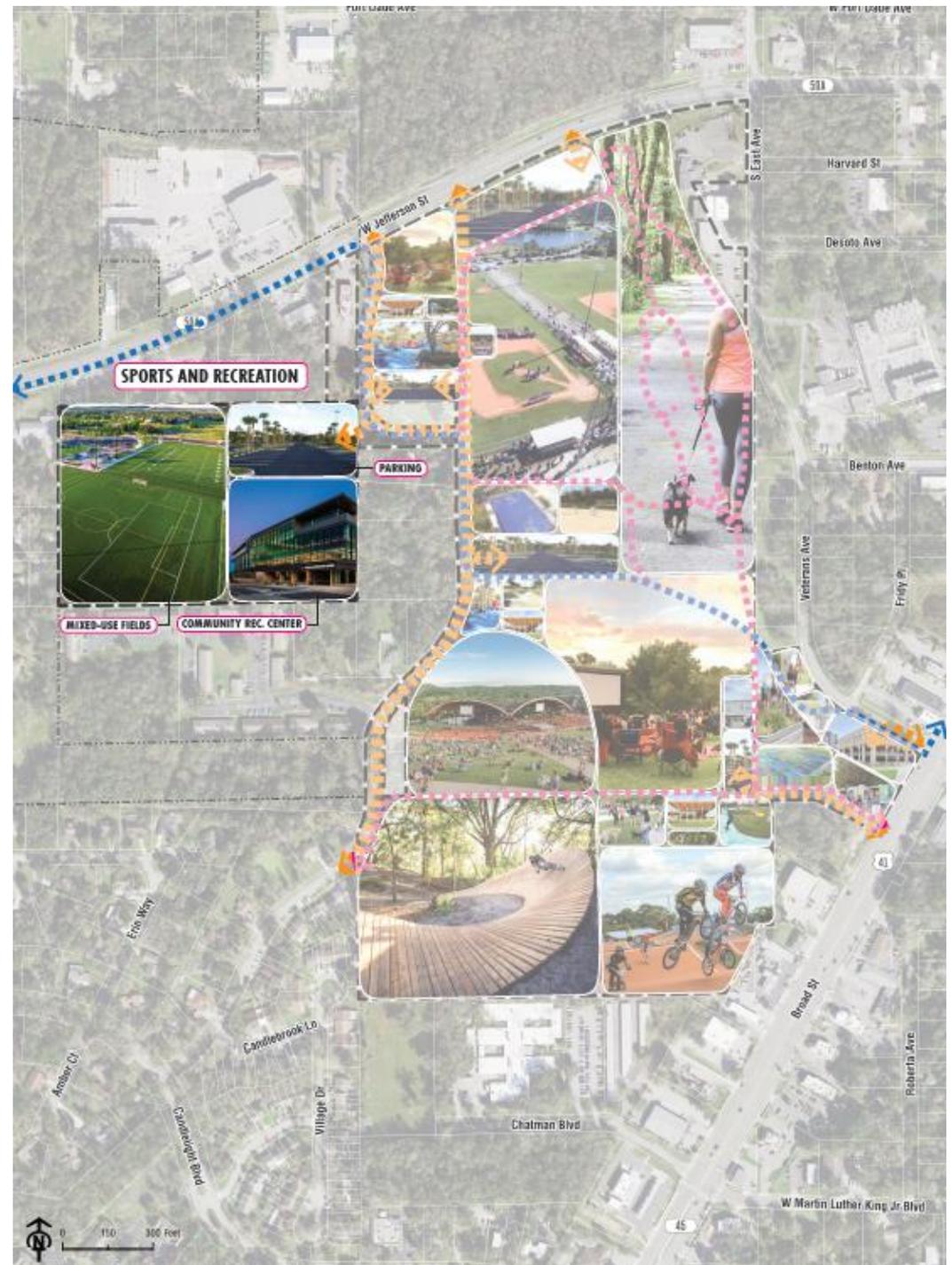
- Expand the Community Center (gymnasium/courts) as a state-of-the-art facility to include:
 - Classrooms.
 - Offices.
 - Fitness center.
 - Basketball courts.
 - Volleyball courts.
 - Yoga and meditation space.
- Expand offerings in the Center to include:
 - Flex space for innovation.
 - STEM and STEAM programs.
 - E-sports.
 - After-school programs.
 - Arts classes and educational programs.



Jerome Brown Facility Concept

This area is transformed into a sports and recreation hub, with an expanded and renovated community center that accommodates indoor sport 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.



Bud McKethan Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- 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.



Quarry Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

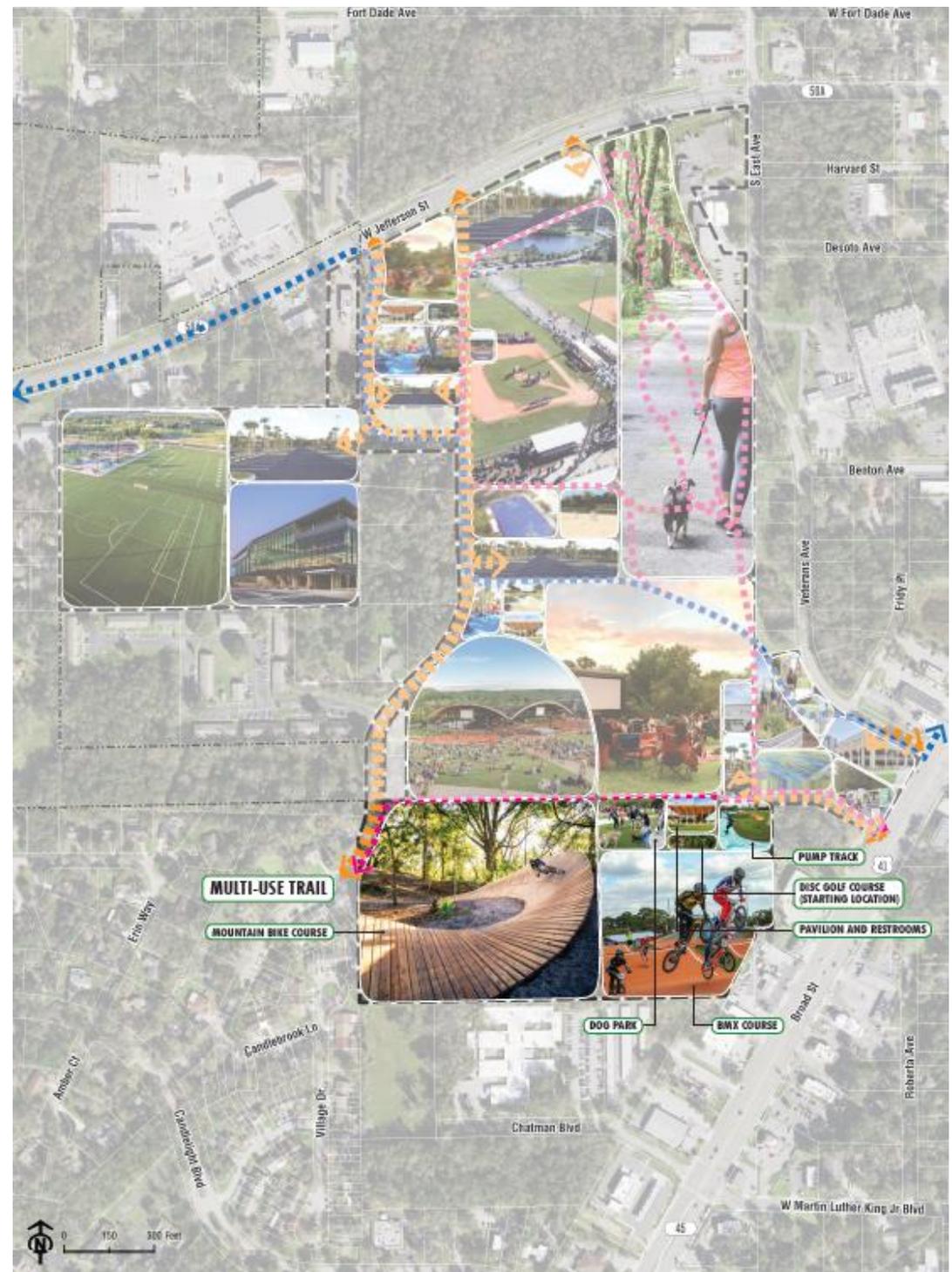
- Incorporate an amphitheater/stage capitalizing on the grade for large events.
- Integrate bike and BMX riding circuit (sports tourism) in association with the trail extension.
- Space for more family programs.
 - Spooky Halloween.
 - Walk-in-the-park.
 - BBQ events.
 - Block parties.
- Relocate or 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.



Quarry Park Concept

The quarry is dedicated to a multi-use trail which includes a mountain bike course, BMX course, and pump track as well as 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.



Russell Street Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- 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.
 - Improve 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.



Russell Street Park Relationship Diagram



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 adjacent community lawn and 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.



Hernando Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- Programs geared toward kids and urban visitors.
- Update playground.
- Arts 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.



Hernando Park Relationship Diagram



Hernando Park Bubble Concept

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

Within the park, 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.



Kennedy Park

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- 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; add turf area for children.



Kennedy Park Relationship Diagram



Kennedy Park Concept

Kennedy Park is updated to host more types of 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 sport courts, STEM classrooms, and gathering spaces. A central community lawn ties together all amenities.



New Facilities: To meet the community's needs as the City grows

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

REGIONAL SPORTS FACILITY

- 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
 - Multi-use courts – basketball, handball, volleyball, pickleball
 - Flex space
 - Meeting spaces
 - Exercise equipment
 - Gym
 - Swimming pool
 - Locker rooms

COMMUNITY PARK

- 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

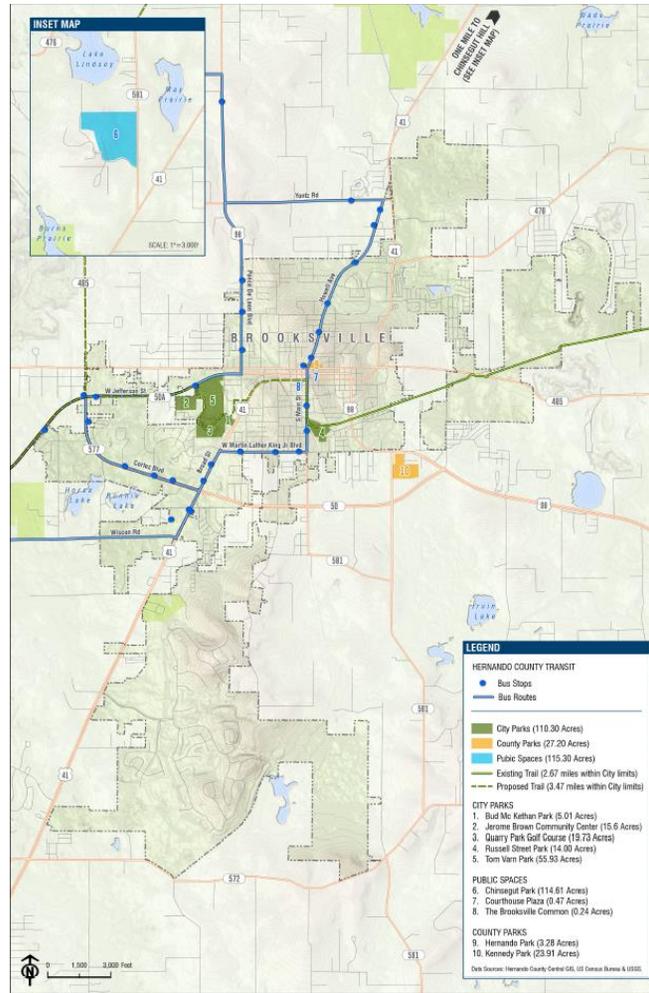
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

- 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

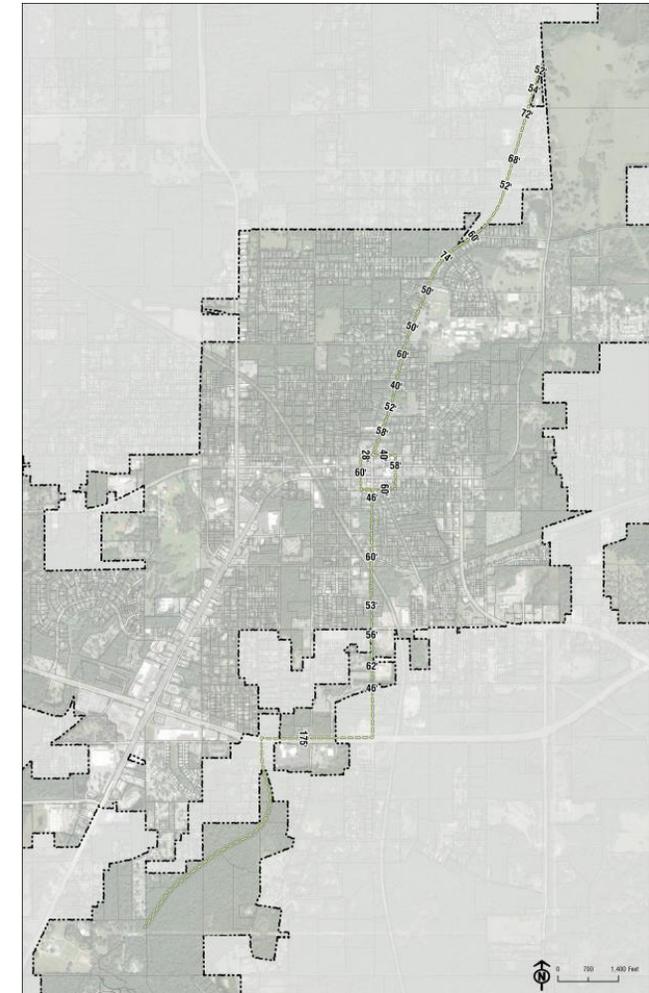
City Trail Network Expansion

IMPROVEMENTS BRIEF (derived from the planning process)

- 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.



City Public Transportation Map



Proposed N-S bike route under consideration

Regional Sports Facility Relationship Diagram

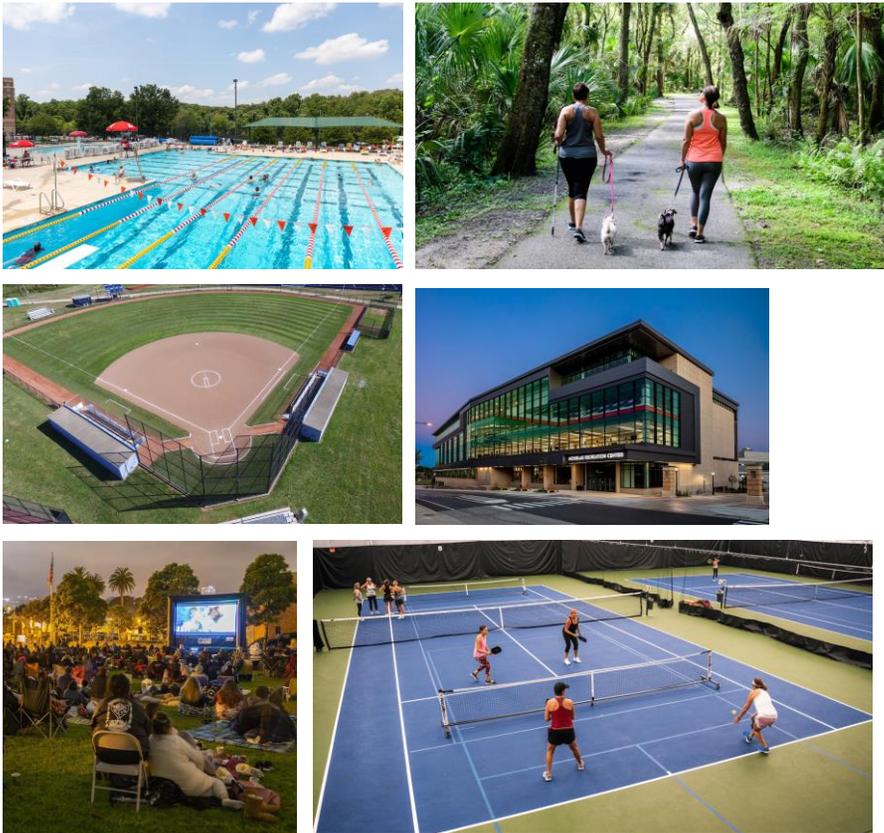
In the proposed regional park, sports tourism is emphasized to draw more visitors from around the County and beyond. A new recreational facility will host indoor sport courts and fitness and wellness centers.

An outdoor sports complex will accommodate Little League baseball, softball, football, flag football, soccer, pickleball, and aquatics.

A flexible hardscape, flexible performance area, and activity lawn can host a wide range of events. Multi-use trails and outdoor fitness amenities increase opportunities for active recreation in the regional park.



Regional Sports Facility



Recommended Regional Sports Facility Programs

Space Allocation Example

Square Footages for Sports Tourism Park

<i>Program Element</i>	<i>Approx. Sq Ft</i>	<i>Amount desired</i>	<i>Totals</i>
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
Grand Total:			756660 sq. ft.

Community Park Relationship Diagram

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 includes a flexible performance area, community lawn, community garden, sensory garden with art features, dog park, and walking loop with outdoor fitness amenities.



Neighborhood Park Relationship Diagram

A smaller neighborhood park in Brooksville can provide a space for residents that don't have easy access to other parks in the community.

In this park, a playground, community lawn, mixed-use sport courts, and walking loop with outdoor fitness amenities provide both passive and active recreation opportunities. Restrooms and small picnic shelters are also available in the park.



Chinsegut Hill

- 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.

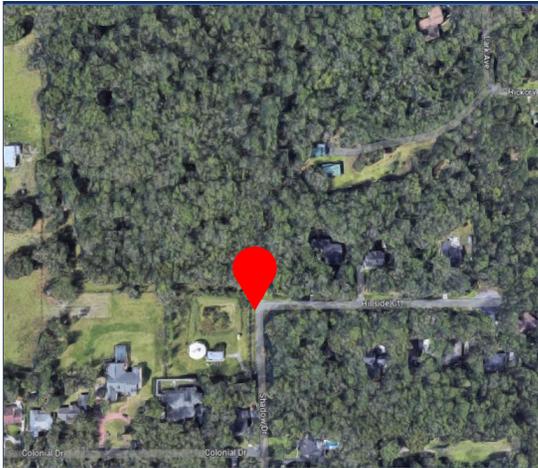


Recommended Activities



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

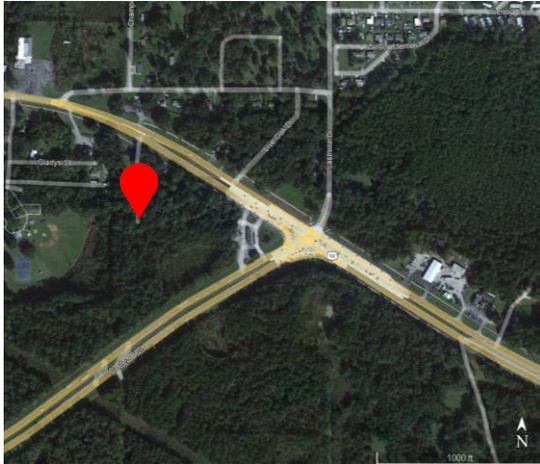
Access: Fenced and gated.
"No Trespassing" sign.

Development Constraints:
Wooded/Utility easement



Potential Park Location 2

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

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

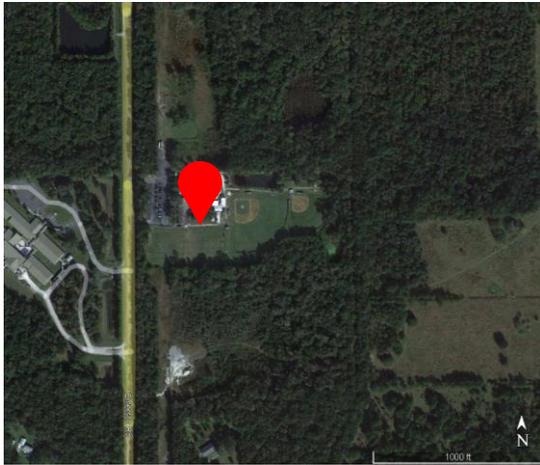
Observations:

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

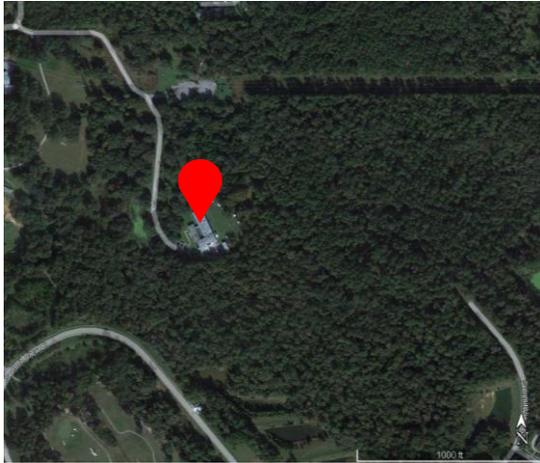
Access: Gate with "No Trespassing" sign on Emerson Rd.

Development Constraints: Wooded



Potential Park Location 4

Park Type: Regional/Community



Sourced from Google Maps

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

Observations:

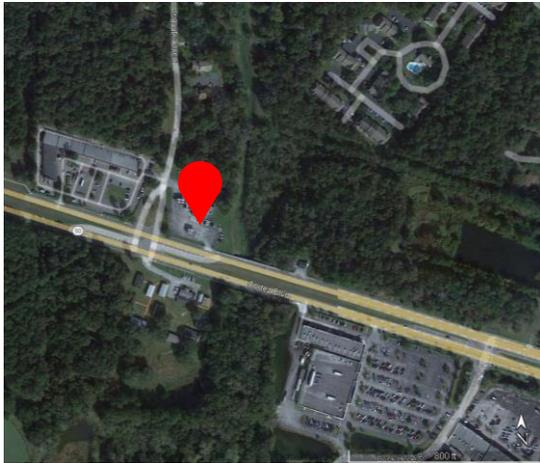
- Wooded site with terrain
- Next to animal service
- Mature trees
- Possible swamp
- Behind fairgrounds

County fairgrounds can be upgraded to regional park



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

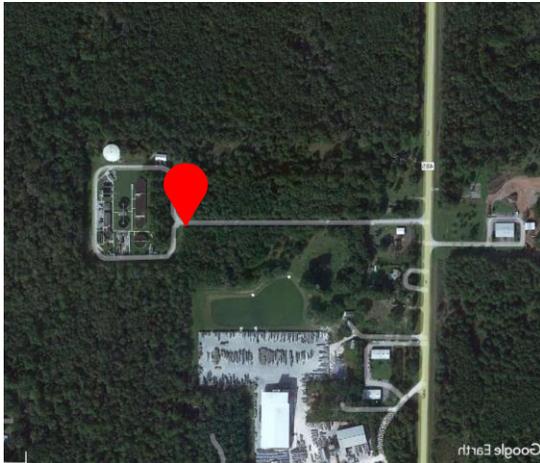
Observations:

- 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

Observations:

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

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



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

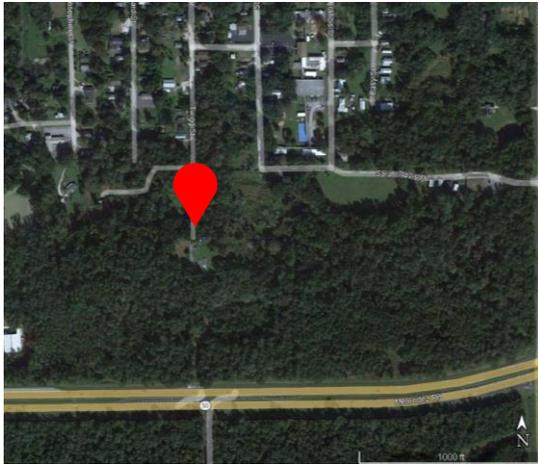
Access: Driveway on MLK Jr. Blvd.

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

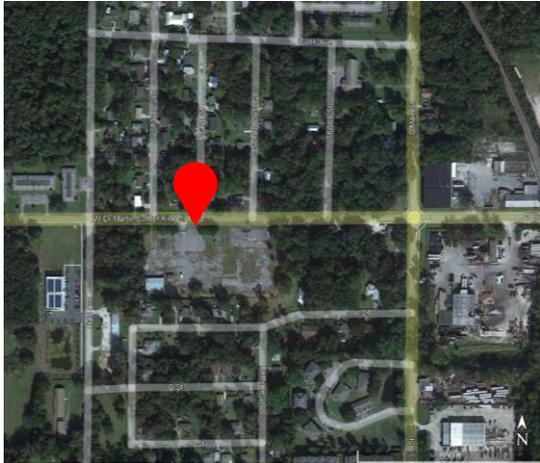
Access: Fenced. Gated entrance on School St.

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

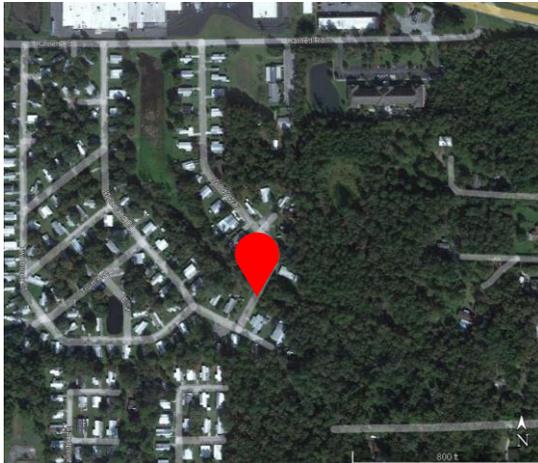
Observations:

- Redevelopment site
- Scraped building pads
- Doesn't seem ideal



Potential Park Location D

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

Observations:

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

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

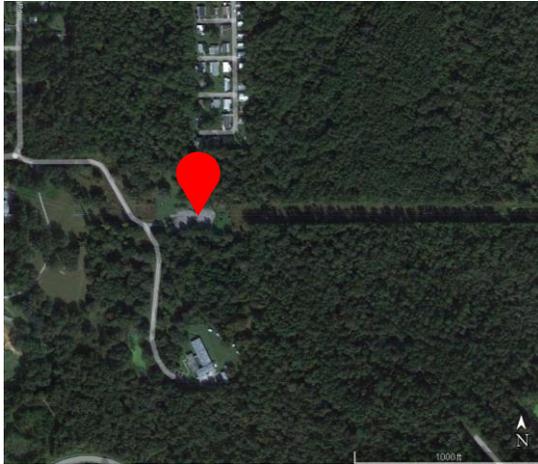
Development Constraints:

Drainage area/wooded



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

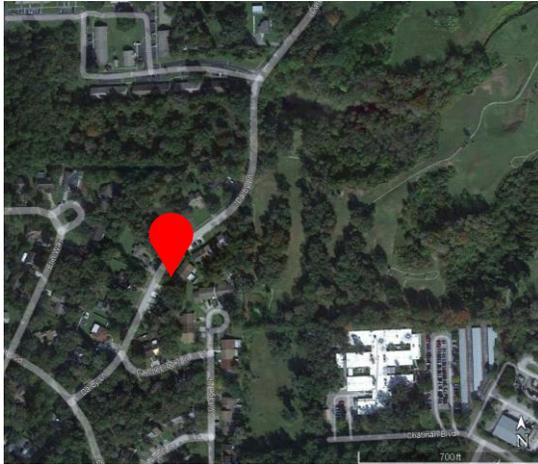
Observations:

- 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

Observations:

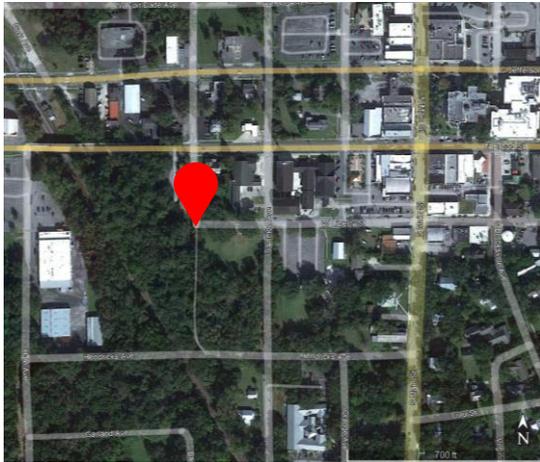
- Not ideal marshland
- Depressed
- Neighborhood can be connected to Tom Varn Park by trail
- Reconfigure Tom Varn Park entrance

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



Potential Park Location G

Park Type: Neighborhood



Sourced from Google Maps

Observations:

- Construction in the area

Address: S. Lemon Ave. & Hendrix Ave.

Size: 1.01 acres

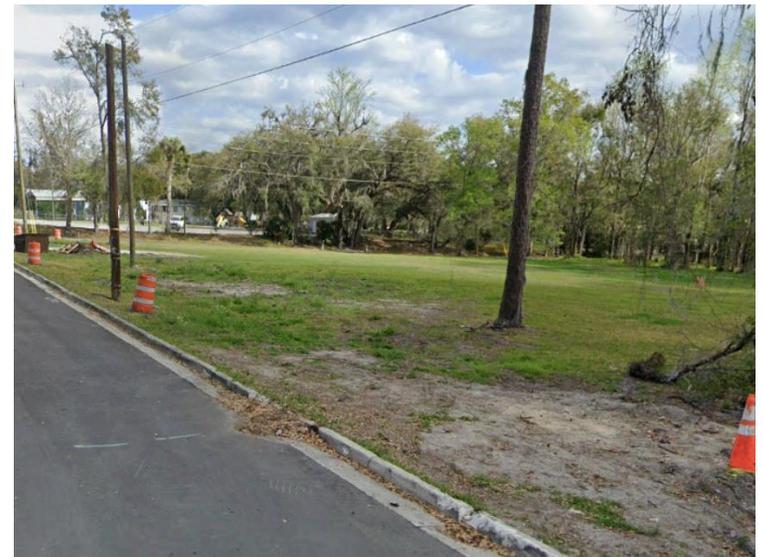
General Location: Central Brooksville

Existing Use: Wooded, Vacant Lot - Mobile Home/Multi-Family Residential Land Use

Context & Surrounding Use: Mobile Home/Multi-Family/ Commercial/Public Facility

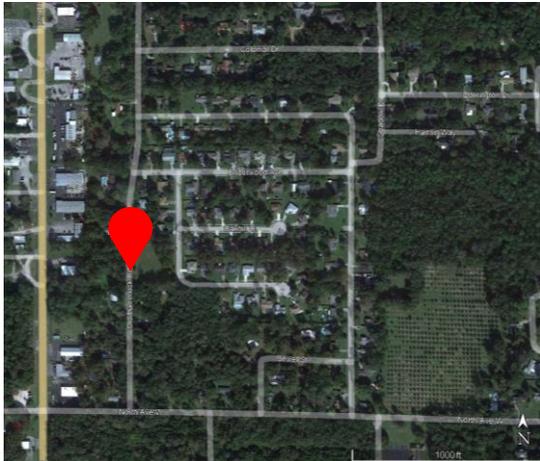
Access: S. Lemon Ave.

Development Constraints: Wooded



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.

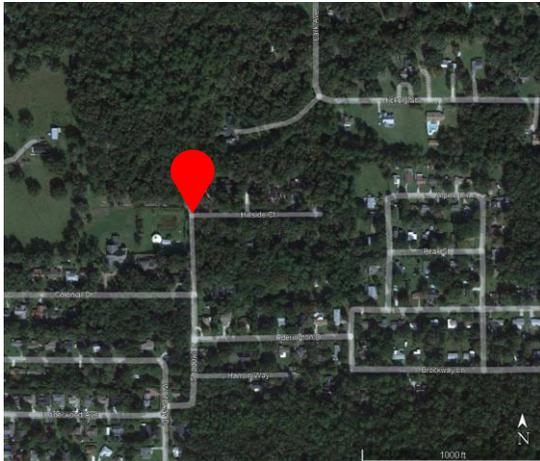
Observations:

- 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

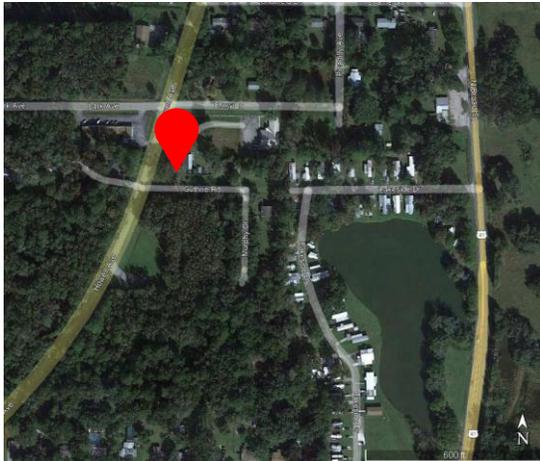
Observations:

- 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

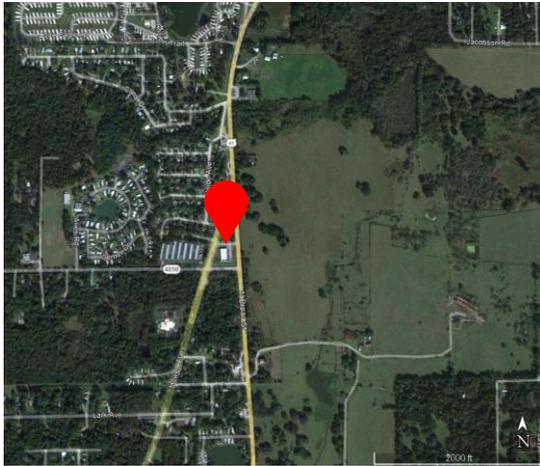
Observations:

- 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



Next Steps

Parks master plan ideation and public engagement is underway in conjunction with phase 2 and phase 3 activities. The team will proceed to prepare the phase 3 work as per the project program.

Phase 3 Tasks

- Parks and Open Space Hierarchy – Neighborhood, Community, Regional, Nature
- Proposed Park and Recreation Improvements for Existing Park Expansion and New Facilities
- Greenways, Trails, and Multi-Use Path Strategies
- Signage and Wayfinding Strategies
- Park Programs and Special Events Strategies
- Initial Implementation Strategies - Feasibility, Costs, Acquisitions, Grants, Funding, Timelines
- Public engagement



Back to School Bash



AYRES