



**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"



**Appendix A**  
**Charlotte County**  
**Parks Needs Assessment**

# Charlotte County Parks Needs Assessment Study

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Charlotte County Parks Needs Assessment Study was to prepare background research and information in preparation for the county parks master plan.

There were several components to this project that provide a solid research foundation for a master plan. This needs assessment study was comprised of several different elements, including a demographic study of users and associated growth trends; recreational trends research; an exhaustive policy, plan, and regulatory framework review; and a level of service analysis comparing Charlotte County standards with other measures.

As part of the process of data collection, the researchers interviewed representatives from the South Florida Water Management District, The Southwest Florida Water Management District, Charlotte County Natural Resources, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, and the Charlotte County Community Development Department.

As much of this study was designed to be supporting data for future use, it is not primarily formatted for readability. Its intent was to collect and present data that could later be used as part of the parks master plan. As a result, the researchers erred on the side of providing more data, rather than less. Further, emphasis was placed on providing references for documents and data sources to be located at a later point.

Among the next steps in the development of a parks master plan will be to inventory existing parks, identify level of service and level of service gaps, map facilities relative to the needs and inventory, and develop an implementation plan for park acquisition and funding. Much of the data requirements to develop these next steps are compiled in this report.

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# Section I

## Demographic Research



# SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

## INTRODUCTION

This demographic profile and spatial analysis of Charlotte County focuses on key variables of the population as it relates to parks and recreation utilization. Population characteristics such as age group, income level, presence of disability, race and ethnicity, and English language proficiency are covered in this profile.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The data used to assemble the demographic profile was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), and the Charlotte County government website. All data was acquired between March 2014 and May 2014. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau was derived specifically from the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is a continuous data collection undertaking conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau to produce annual estimates on characteristics of the United States population at the national, state, and local level. Information is collected from approximately three million addresses in the United States annually. The ACS consists of one-year, three-year, and five-year estimates. In order to provide consistency throughout this report, a decision was made to use only one of these datasets. The three-year estimates were selected as the primary data source. There were two key reasons for this decision: 1) the three-year estimates represent the mid-point between precision and reliability against the one-year and five-year data estimates, and 2) using the three-year estimates allowed for the use of datasets from the years 2007 to 2012, whereas the five-year estimates are only available as of 2009. The three-year estimates were used to illustrate current demographics in Charlotte County as well as for the basis of calculating population projections focused on specific demographic variables.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections for Charlotte County vary depending on the source of the estimates. For example, the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies estimates the county population to be 201,101 by the year 2040. Whereas, the figures provided in the *Smart Charlotte 2050* report estimate this figure to be higher at 228,362. Projections according to several demographic variables were calculated for this report to update those provided in the *Smart Charlotte 2050* report (Table 3) based on more recent estimates from the ACS. The projected estimates were calculated using a simple linear regression projection methodology. The ACS estimates for the years 2007 through 2012 were used as the basis for the projections. The updated projections for each demographic variable examined in this report are provided in the sections relevant to the specific variable.

## SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The spatial analysis completed for this needs assessment also utilized data from the ACS. However, the ACS 2012 five-year estimates were used for this effort. This change is due to the spatial analysis being conducted at the census tract level. The five-year estimates provide the best data when examining census tracts and other smaller geographies. Census tracts are routinely used as a unit for spatial analysis as they provide a solid level of detail and specificity. A variety of digital maps, known as shapefiles, was used for the geographic analysis. The shapefiles were obtained from the Charlotte County geographic information system layer index and the U.S. Census Bureau. The spatial and demographic data were analyzed using the ArcGIS software platform (Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. [ESRI], Version 10.1, 2012). A series of maps have been produced on a majority of the demographic variables examined in this report. These maps are available in the Appendix K.

## CURRENT POPULATION

### POPULATION ESTIMATES

Among Florida's sixty-seven counties, Charlotte County currently ranks 29<sup>th</sup> in terms of population density at approximately 235 persons per square mile. According to the American Community Survey 2012 three-year population estimate, the population of Charlotte County is estimated to be 160,602. According to the three-year estimates from 2007 to 2012, the population increased in Charlotte County by approximately 4.92% during that period, equating to a 0.98% annual growth rate.

**TABLE 1: ACS 2007-2012 THREE-YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATES (COUNT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total Population	153,063	151,781	157,308	160,029	160,088	160,602

As noted in the first section of this report, projections were calculated on a variety of demographic variables that were examined for this report. The first projection provided is for the total population of Charlotte County. These projections provide figures that are higher than those provided in the *Smart Charlotte 2050* report starting with year 2020 (Table 2).

**TABLE 2: SMART CHARLOTTE 2050 REPORT VS. LINEAR REGRESSION POPULATION PROJECTIONS (COUNT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Smart Charlotte 2050 (Permanent Residents)	168,000	176,500	184,701	192,601	206,701	217,901
Linear Regression Projections (Total Population)	167,412	176,746	186,080	195,414	214,082	232,749

### GENDER

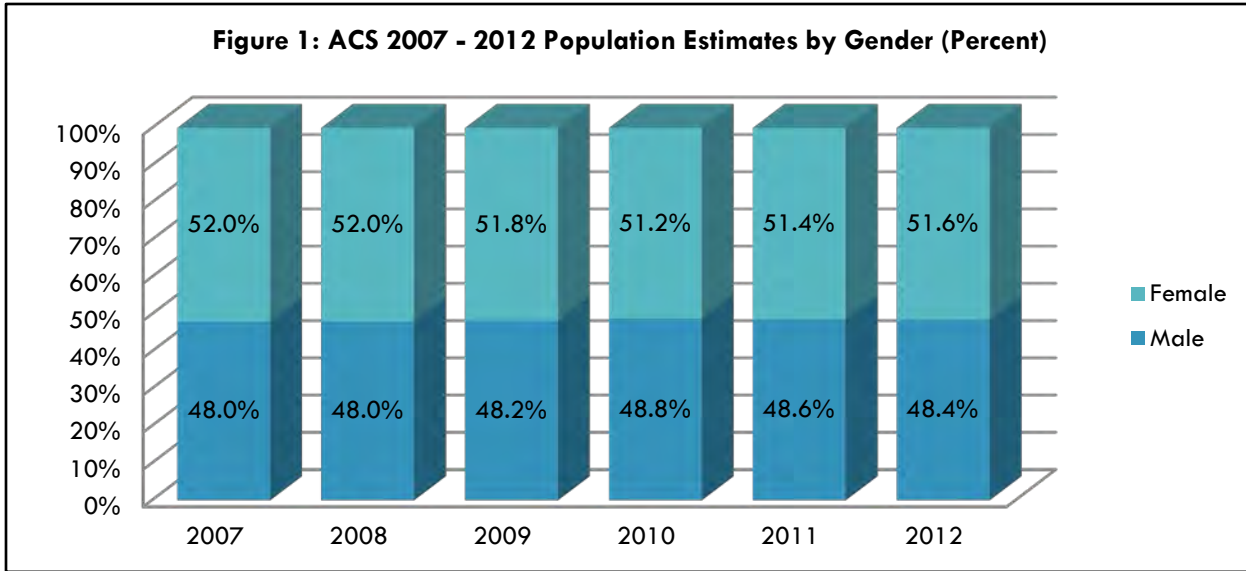
The population shows to be evenly distributed in terms of gender, a trend that has persisted since 2007 (Table 3 & Figure 1). The percentage of women to men has consistently been slightly higher. However, the estimates show a small but gradual change has been occurring in this regard. Projections estimate this trend will continue and that men will become a small majority by year 2030 (Table 5).

**TABLE 3: ACS 2007-2012 3-YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATES BY GENDER (PERCENT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Male	48.0%	48.0%	48.2%	48.8%	48.6%	48.4%
Female	52.0%	52.0%	51.8%	51.2%	51.4%	51.6%

**TABLE 4: ACS 2007-2012 3-YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATES BY GENDER (COUNT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Male	73,449	72,796	75,870	78,086	77,745	77,780
Female	79,614	78,985	81,438	81,943	82,343	82,822



**FIGURE 1: ACS 2007-2012 POPULATION ESTIMATES BY GENDER (PERCENT)**

**TABLE 5: LINEAR REGRESSION POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY GENDER (PERCENT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Male	49.0%	49.5%	50.0%	50.5%	51.2%	51.9%
Female	51.0%	50.5%	50.0%	49.5%	48.8%	48.1%

**TABLE 6: LINEAR REGRESSION POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY GENDER (COUNT)**

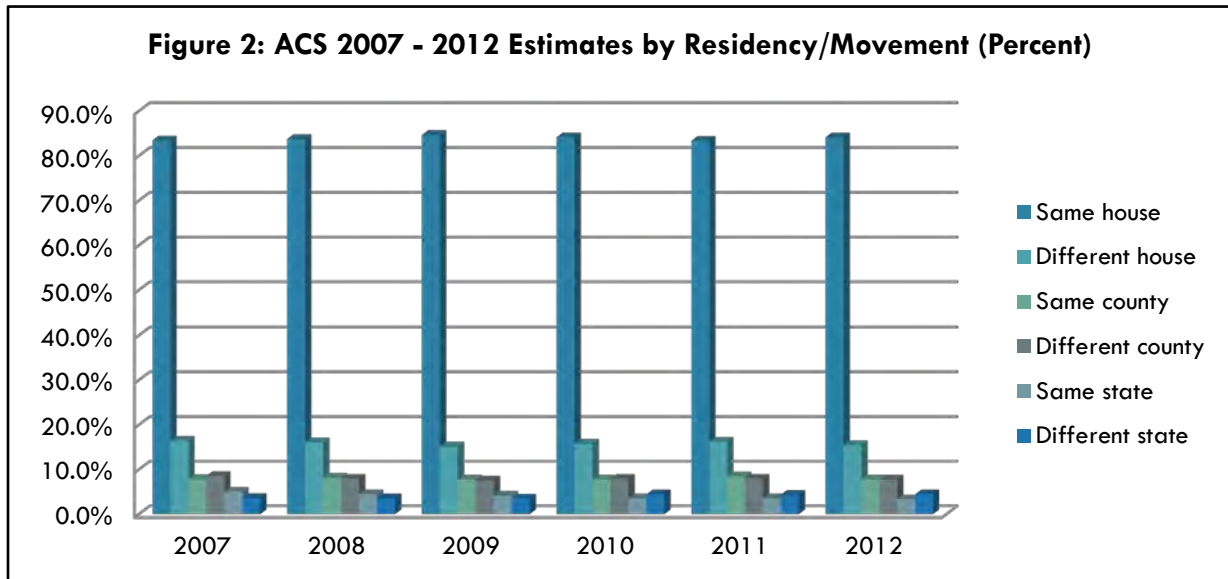
	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Male	82,039	87,570	93,101	98,632	109,694	120,757
Female	85,374	89,177	92,979	96,782	104,387	111,993

**RESIDENCY**

The population of the county is stable in terms of residency as a high percentage of the population (84.1)% are estimated to have resided in the same house in Charlotte County over the past year. Furthermore, among individuals who moved into a new home, 7.7% remained in Charlotte County. These figures have been consistent since 2007 (Table 7 & Figure 2).

**TABLE 7: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF RESIDENCY/MOVEMENT (PERCENT)**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Same house	83.4%	83.7%	84.6%	84.1%	83.3%	84.1%
Different house	16.4%	16.0%	15.1%	15.7%	16.2%	15.4%
Same county	7.8%	8.1%	7.7%	7.7%	8.4%	7.7%
Different county	8.5%	7.9%	7.5%	7.9%	7.9%	7.7%
Same state	5.0%	4.4%	4.1%	3.5%	3.5%	3.3%
Different state	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%	4.4%	4.3%	4.4%



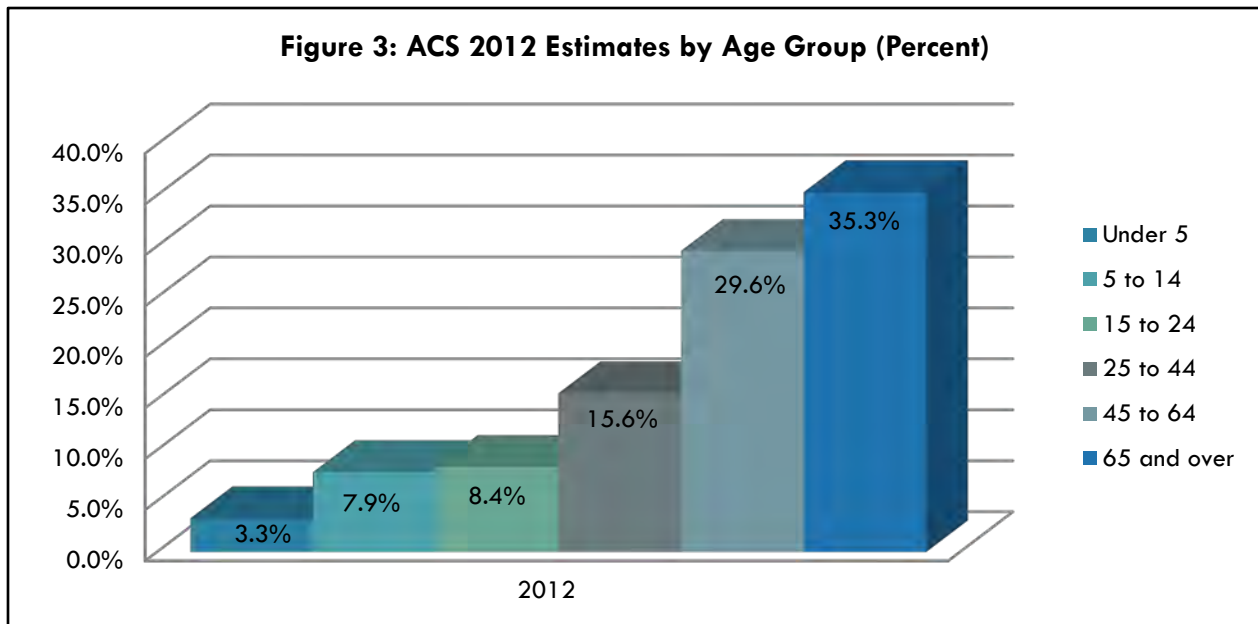
**FIGURE 2: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY RESIDENCY/MOVEMENT (PERCENT)**

**SELECTED AGE GROUPS**

The 2012 median age estimate of all individuals in Charlotte County is 56.5 years, with the median age of the female population (56.5 years) being slightly higher than the male population (54.6 years). The highest percentage of the county population is currently held by individuals aged 65 and over (34%), the group aged 45 to 64 (30%) follows closely (Table 8 & Figure 3).

**TABLE 8: ACS 2012 ESTIMATES BY AGE GROUP (COUNT AND PERCENT)**

	Count	Percent
Under 5	5,325	3.3%
5 to 14	12,609	7.9%
15 to 24	13,424	8.4%
25 to 44	25,036	15.6%
45 to 64	47,489	29.6%
65 and over	56,719	35.3%



**FIGURE 3: ACS 2012 ESTIMATES BY AGE GROUP (PERCENT)**

A review of the three-year estimates from 2007 to 2012 shows that the 45 – 64 and 65 and over age groups have consistently been the highest and have been steadily increasing while other age groups display steady decreases (Tables 9-10 & Figure 4).

**TABLE 9: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY AGE GROUP (PERCENT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Under 5</b>	3.8%	3.9%	3.7%	3.5%	3.4%	3.3%
<b>5 to 14</b>	9.1%	9.1%	8.3%	8.1%	7.9%	7.9%
<b>15 to 24</b>	9.1%	9.0%	8.7%	8.6%	8.5%	8.4%

<b>25 to 44</b>	20.1%	20.7%	16.5%	16.1%	15.7%	15.6%
<b>45 to 64</b>	26.5%	26.9%	29.4%	30.2%	30.1%	29.6%
<b>65 and over</b>	31.5%	30.5%	33.4%	33.5%	34.4%	35.3%

TABLE 10: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY AGE GROUP (COUNT)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Under 5 years	5,853	5,856	5,863	5,654	5,475	5,325
5 to 14 years	13,884	13,743	13,019	12,978	12,689	12,609
15 to 24 years	13,883	13,716	13,692	13,715	13,589	13,424
25 to 44 years	30,691	31,347	25,984	25,719	25,061	25,036
45 to 64 years	40,611	40,800	46,195	48,290	48,199	47,489
65 years and over	48,141	46,319	52,555	53,673	55,075	56,719

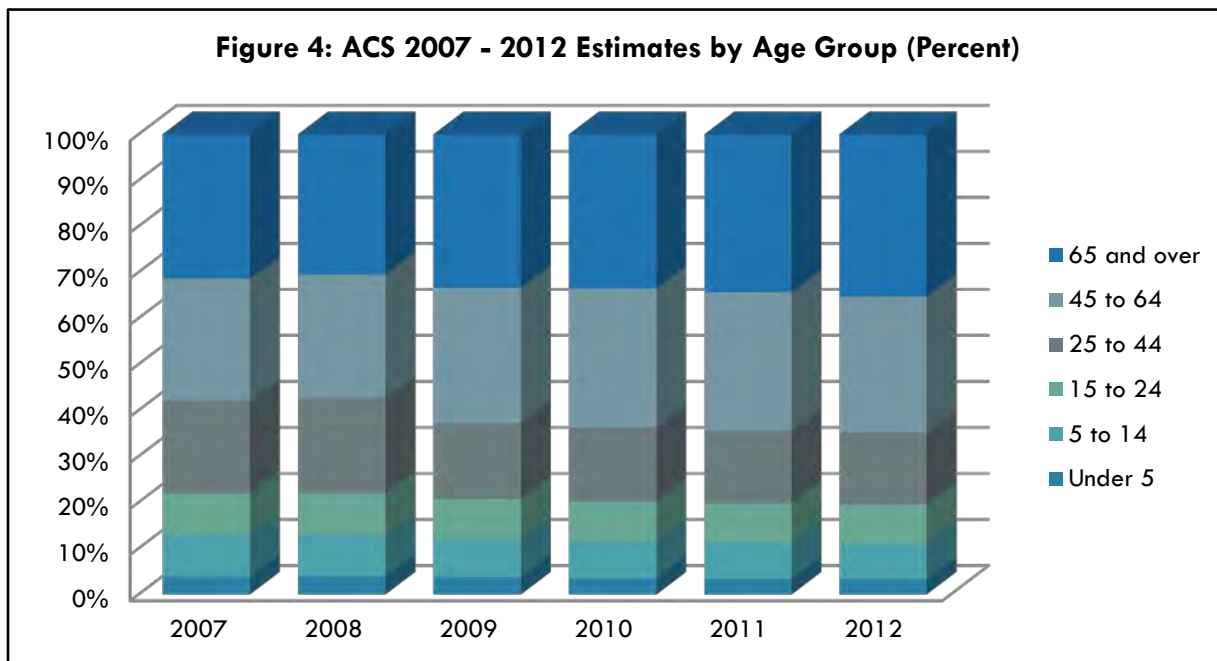


FIGURE 4: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY AGE GROUP (PERCENT)

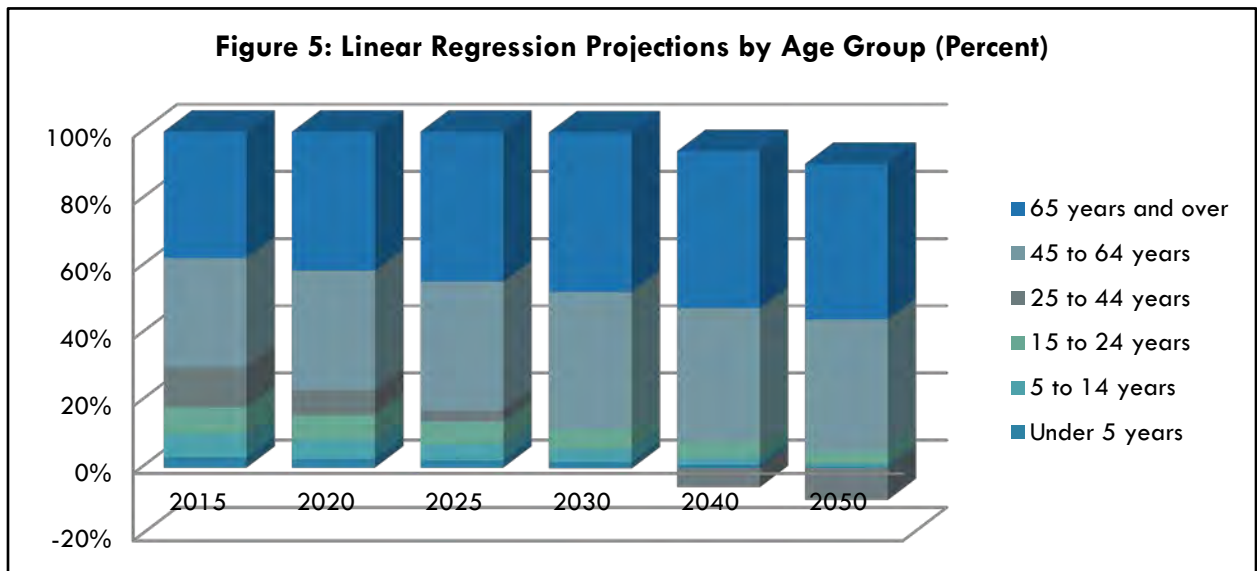
Projections suggest this trend will continue with the two most senior age groups continuing to increase as all other age groups decline (Tables 11-12 & Figure 5).

**TABLE 11: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP (PERCENT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Under 5 years	3.0%	2.5%	2.1%	1.7%	1.0%	0.5%
5 to 14 years	7.0%	5.8%	4.8%	3.9%	2.2%	0.9%
15 to 24 years	7.9%	7.3%	6.7%	6.2%	5.3%	4.6%
25 to 44 years	11.9%	7.4%	3.4%	-0.2%	-6.5%	-11.8%
45 to 64 years	32.5%	35.6%	38.3%	40.8%	45.0%	48.6%
65 years and over	37.7%	41.4%	44.7%	47.7%	52.9%	57.3%

**TABLE 12: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP (COUNT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Under 5 years	5,044	4,473	3,903	3,333	2,192	1,052
5 to 14 years	11,649	10,280	8,912	7,544	4,807	2,071
15 to 24 years	13,253	12,874	12,495	12,116	11,358	10,600
25 to 44 years	19,858	13,087	6,316	(455)	(13,998)	(27,540)
45 to 64 years	54,485	62,869	71,252	79,635	96,401	113,167
65 years and over	63,124	73,163	83,203	93,242	113,321	133,400



**FIGURE 5: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP (PERCENT)**

RACE, ETHNICITY, & LANGUAGE

The population of Charlotte County is limited in terms of racial diversity. Approximately 85.5% of the population identifies as White with no single minority population representing more than 7% of the remaining population (Tables 13-14 & Figure 6)<sup>1</sup>. The 'Black or African American' (5.5%) and 'Hispanic or Latino' populations<sup>2</sup> (6.1%) are similar in terms of size but remain small in comparison.

TABLE 13: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY RACE CATEGORY (PERCENT)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
White	87.4%	86.6%	86.8%	86.0%	85.9%	85.5%
Hispanic or Latino	4.8%	5.2%	5.1%	5.7%	5.8%	6.1%
Black or African American	5.2%	5.3%	5.0%	5.2%	5.2%	5.5%
Asian	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%
Two or more races	1.1%	1.3%	1.7%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%

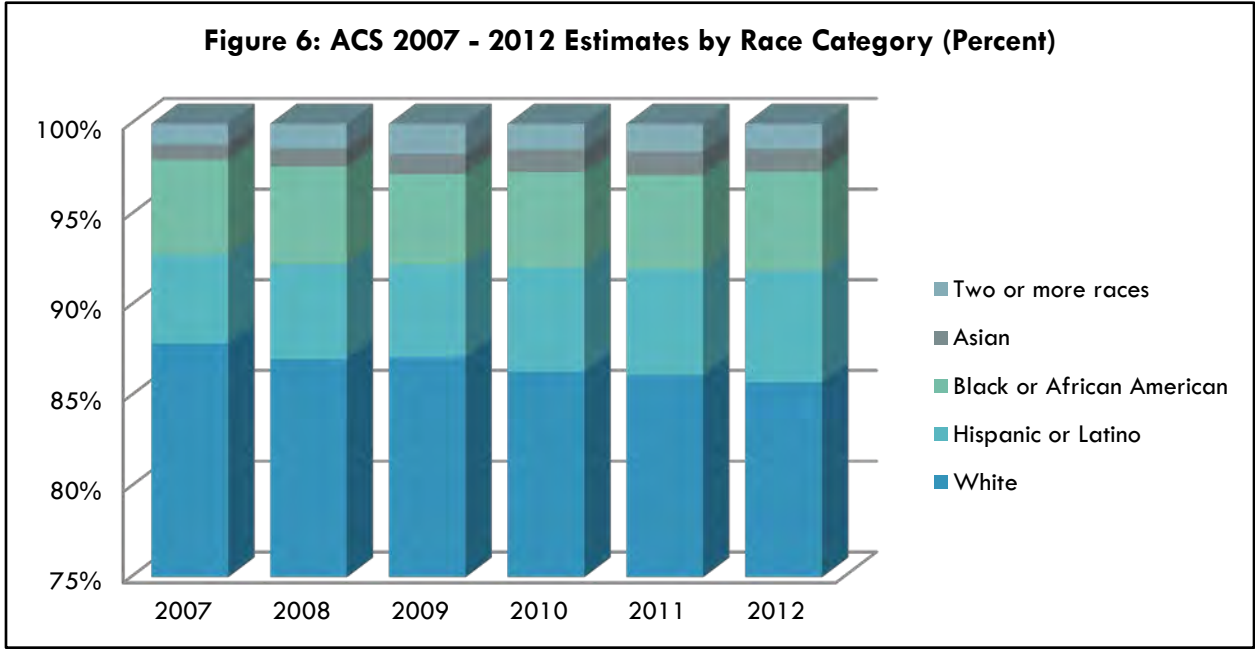
TABLE 14: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY RACE CATEGORY (COUNT)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
White	133,811	131,476	136,609	137,627	137,506	137,309
Hispanic or Latino	7,402	7,925	8,012	9,151	9,305	9,789
Black or African American	8,009	8,099	7,819	8,343	8,278	8,802
Asian	1,315	1,569	1,779	2,005	2,069	2,003
Two or more races	1,725	2,025	2,618	2,254	2,467	2,228

<sup>1</sup> The following race categories are not displayed as they represent less than 0.5% of the population: Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander, American Indian, and 'Some other race'.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that the Census Bureau does not measure Hispanic/Latino as a different race, but rather as an ethnicity that could be reported as part of other race categories.





**FIGURE 6: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY RACE CATEGORY (PERCENT)**

Projections show that while the ‘White’ population will maintain a significant majority, all minority groups will exhibit some level of increase. Both the ‘Hispanic/Latino’ and ‘Asian’ populations will nearly double in terms of percentage with the ‘Hispanic/Latino’ population eventually becoming the only minority group to exceed 10% of the total county population (Tables 15-16 & Figure 7).

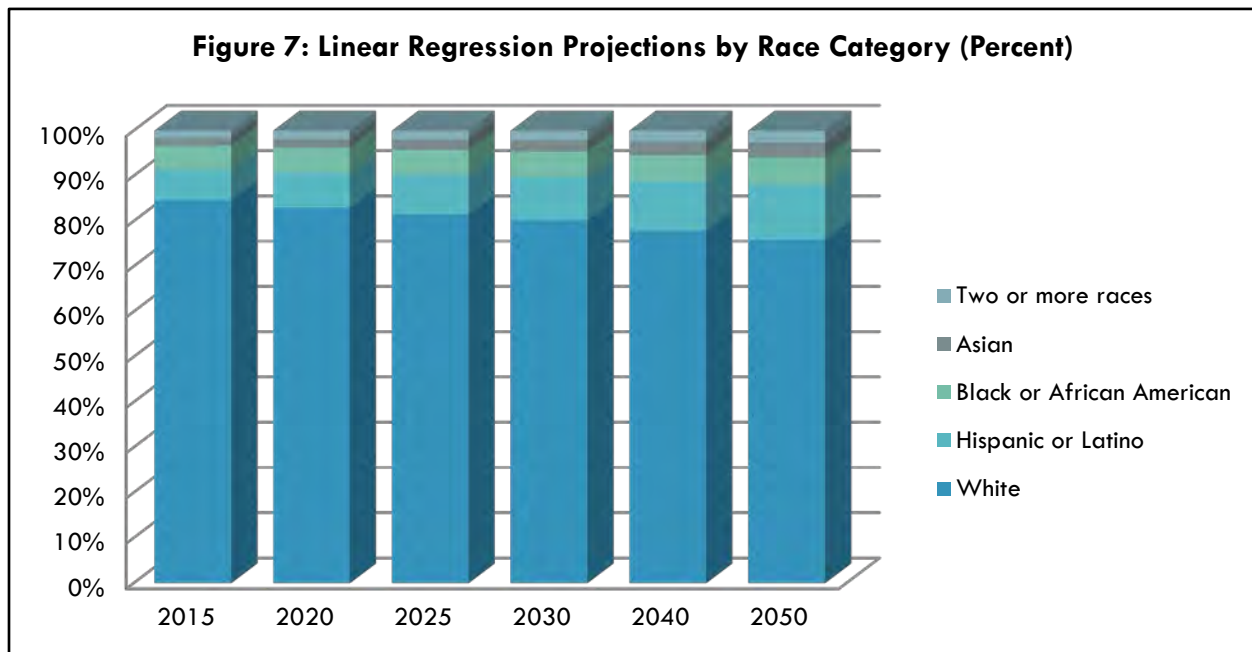
**TABLE 15: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY RACE CATEGORY (PERCENT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
White	84.5%	83.0%	81.6%	80.4%	78.3%	76.5%
Hispanic or Latino	6.8%	7.8%	8.7%	9.6%	11.0%	12.3%
Black or African American	5.4%	5.5%	5.6%	5.7%	5.9%	6.0%
Asian	1.6%	1.9%	2.2%	2.5%	2.9%	3.3%
Two or more races	1.7%	1.8%	2.0%	2.2%	2.5%	2.7%

**TABLE 16: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY RACE CATEGORY (COUNT)**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
--	------	------	------	------	------	------

White	141,474	146,702	151,931	157,159	167,616	178,072
Hispanic or Latino	11,302	13,762	16,221	18,680	23,598	28,516
Black or African American	9,015	9,733	10,451	11,169	12,605	14,041
Asian	2,602	3,340	4,078	4,816	6,292	7,768
Two or more races	2,766	3,263	3,759	4,256	5,249	6,243



**FIGURE 7: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY RACE (PERCENT)**

In terms of ethnicity, excluding the categories of ‘American’ and ‘English’, German (16.8%), Irish (14.9%), Italian (9.1%), French (4.0%), and Polish (3.8%) all hold percentages above 3% with the remainder falling below this threshold. A small, yet consistent, West Indian ethnic population (2.7%) is also noted in the county as well. The ethnic makeup of the county has been consistent overall with the population identifying as ‘German’ showing the most notable decline (Table 17).

**TABLE 17: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY ETHNIC GROUP (PERCENT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
German	19.8%	18.0%	17.8%	17.3%	18.0%	16.8%
Irish	15.6%	15.6%	15.2%	14.7%	14.8%	14.9%
Italian	9.5%	10.0%	9.1%	8.5%	8.8%	9.1%
Polish	4.8%	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%	3.8%	3.8%
French (except Basque)	4.6%	4.8%	5.0%	4.5%	4.3%	4.0%
West Indian (excluding Hispanic origin)	3.2%	3.1%	2.8%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%

The majority of the county population age five and over speaks English only (88.5%), while approximately 11.5% of the population speaks a language other than English. Of the population that speaks a language other than English, only 3.4% report speaking the English language “less than very well” (Table 18). Among individuals who speak a language other than English, a large majority speak Spanish (46.9%) while the next largest group speaks other Indo-European languages (38.7%) which include but are not limited to French, Russian, and German.

**TABLE 18: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME (PERCENT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
English only	92.1%	91.9%	91.1%	89.6%	88.9%	88.5%
Language other than English	7.9%	8.1%	8.9%	10.4%	11.1%	11.5%
Speak English less than "very well"	3.0%	3.1%	2.8%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%

Estimated patterns suggest that the number of individuals who speak a language other than English is increasing in the county. Again, the primary language displayed in this increase is Spanish. The English language fluency of these individuals is rapidly increasing as well (Table 19).

**TABLE 19: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY SPANISH LANGUAGE (PERCENT)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Speak Spanish	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%	4.7%	4.8%	5.4%
Speak English less than "very well"	47.1%	46.1%	31.7%	30.2%	28.3%	27.9%

**INCOME**

Household income represents the earnings of all persons age 16 years or older that live together in a housing unit. This characteristic is reported in terms of both median household income (the midpoint of all household income figures) as well as mean household income (the average of all household income figures). The estimated 2012 median household income for Charlotte County is \$44,047. This figure is below both the statewide figure of \$45,637 as well as the national figure of \$51,771. The median household income has fluctuated over the past few years but has shown an increase from 2011 to 2012 (Table 20).

**TABLE 20: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
\$44,576.00	\$47,387.00	\$44,118.00	\$43,021.00	\$42,338.00	\$44,047.00

The estimated 2012 mean household income for Charlotte County is \$56,987. This figure is below both the statewide figure of \$64,623 as well as the national figure of \$71,579. As expected, the mean household income has also fluctuated over the past few years but has shown only a slight increase from 2011 to 2012 (Table 21).

TABLE 21: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF MEAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
\$57,491.00	\$59,658.00	\$57,294.00	\$55,748.00	\$56,021.00	\$56,987.00

The largest segment of county households (21.4%) has an income of \$50,000 to \$74,999 with more than half of households (55.9%) falling below this range (Figure 8).

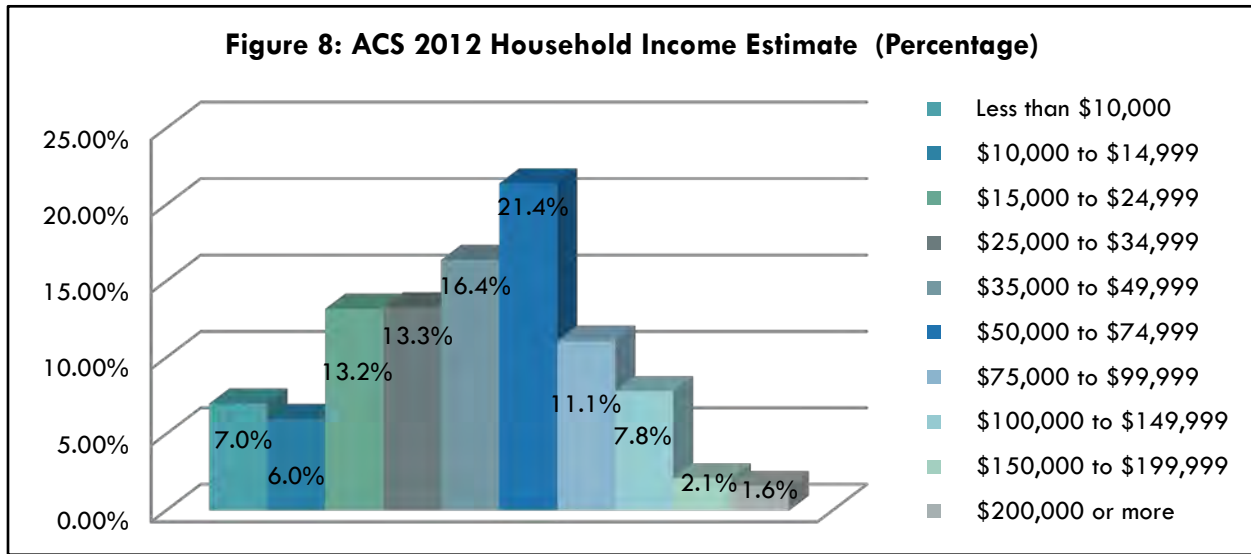


FIGURE 8: ACS 2012 HOUSEHOLD INCOME ESTIMATE (PERCENT)

The household income estimates have remained relatively stable over time (Table 22-23). While fluctuations have been seen in each of the income categories, they have remained constant overall. The 'less than \$10,000' income group has shown a somewhat steady increase since 2007 while the '\$35,000 to \$49,000' and '\$200,000 or more' groups have shown relatively steady decreases since 2007 (Figure 9).

TABLE 22: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (PERCENT)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Less than \$10,000	5.30%	4.70%	6.10%	7.60%	7.20%	7.00%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.10%	5.40%	5.50%	5.90%	6.40%	6.00%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13.20%	12.40%	13.80%	13.40%	13.90%	13.20%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.90%	12.90%	13.00%	12.80%	12.40%	13.30%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.90%	18.30%	18.70%	18.60%	17.90%	16.40%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.40%	21.60%	20.70%	20.40%	20.40%	21.40%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.40%	11.80%	10.60%	9.90%	10.80%	11.10%

\$100,000 to \$149,999	8.10%	8.30%	7.20%	6.90%	7.20%	7.80%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.70%	2.40%	2.60%	2.90%	2.30%	2.10%
\$200,000 or more	2.10%	2.10%	1.80%	1.60%	1.50%	1.60%

TABLE 23: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (COUNT)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Less than \$10,000	3,741	3,381	4,484	5,466	5,102	4,934
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3,570	3,867	3,995	4,251	4,500	4,195
\$15,000 to \$24,999	9,265	8,854	10,133	9,698	9,764	9,214
\$25,000 to \$34,999	9,781	9,235	9,539	9,236	8,748	9,332
\$35,000 to \$49,999	13,336	13,086	13,680	13,395	12,632	11,497
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14,362	15,500	15,130	14,736	14,372	15,022
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7,992	8,481	7,786	7,180	7,618	7,802
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5,684	5,933	5,306	5,012	5,051	5,432
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,202	1,728	1,892	2,079	1,651	1,476
\$200,000 or more	1,443	1,529	1,307	1,151	1,037	1,131

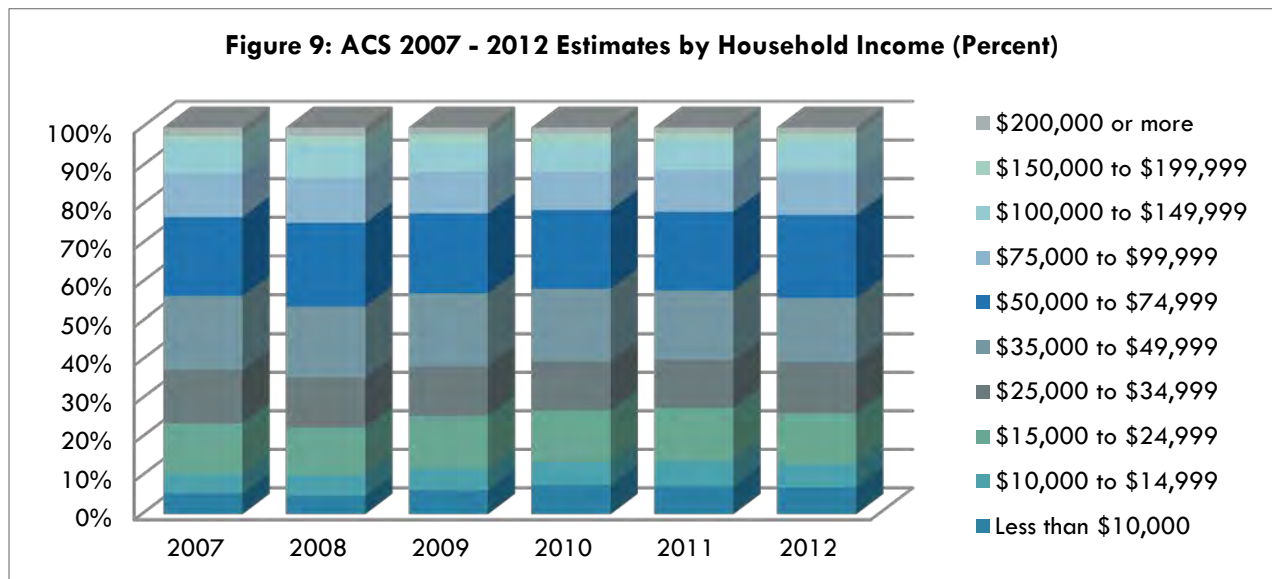


FIGURE 9: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (PERCENT)

Projections for each income group show that four of the five lower income groups show varying trends. The two lowest income groups are projected to increase while the three highest income groups will virtually disappear. In addition, the '\$35,000 to \$49,999' group is projected to decrease drastically (Table 24-25 & Figure 10).

**TABLE 24: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (PERCENT)**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
Less than \$10,000	3.8%	4.6%	5.3%	5.9%	7.0%	8.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2.9%	3.2%	3.4%	3.7%	4.0%	4.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	5.9%	5.7%	5.6%	5.5%	5.3%	5.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	5.2%	4.6%	4.1%	3.6%	2.7%	2.0%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	6.7%	5.5%	4.4%	3.4%	1.6%	0.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	8.8%	8.3%	7.9%	7.5%	6.7%	6.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	4.3%	3.7%	3.2%	2.8%	2.0%	1.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	2.8%	2.3%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	0.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%
\$200,000 or more	0.5%	0.2%	-0.1%	-0.3%	-0.7%	-1.0%

**TABLE 25: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (COUNT)**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
Less than \$10,000	6,421	8,151	9,881	11,611	15,071	18,531
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4,893	5,647	6,401	7,156	8,664	10,173
\$15,000 to \$24,999	9,809	10,100	10,391	10,683	11,266	11,849
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8,682	8,109	7,536	6,964	5,818	4,673
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11,234	9,685	8,136	6,587	3,490	392
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14,779	14,710	14,642	14,574	14,437	14,301
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7,158	6,566	5,974	5,382	4,198	3,013
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4,743	4,143	3,543	2,943	1,743	543
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,880	2,069	2,259	2,448	2,827	3,206
\$200,000 or more	765	309	(147)	(603)	(1,515)	(2,427)

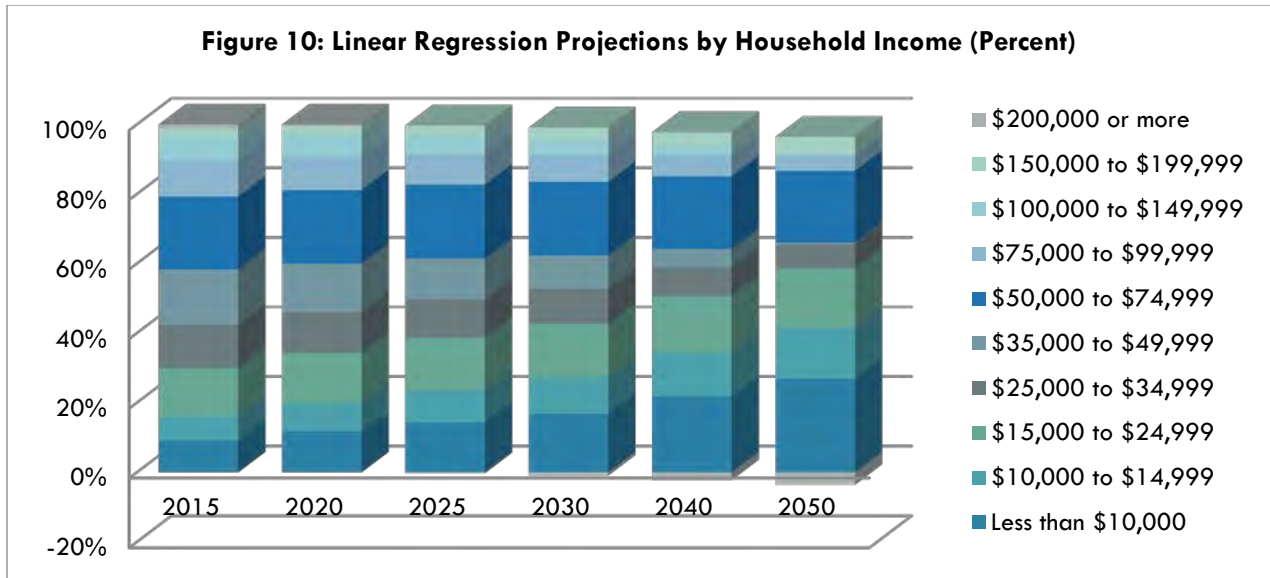


FIGURE 10: LINEAR REGRESSION PROJECTIONS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (PERCENT)

Approximately 12.8% of individuals living in Charlotte County have incomes that are below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This figure has increased by almost 4% since 2007, which coincides with the severe decline of the U.S. housing market and the subsequent domestic economic crisis that began in 2007-2008 (Table 26). The GIS maps associated with this analysis identified five of the Census tracts with the highest poverty in the county. These five tracts also had approximately 20% or more of individuals within that tract living below the poverty line.

TABLE 26: ACS 2007-2012 ESTIMATES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH INCOME BELOW THE FPL

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Individuals with income below the FPL	8.7%	8.7%	10.4%	12.3%	12.8%	12.8%

DISABILITIES

Approximately 19.4% of the county population aged five and over identifies as having some type of disability (Table 27).<sup>3 4</sup> These disabilities include vision, hearing, and/or ambulatory difficulties. Individuals who identify having an ambulatory disability generally have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. The 65 and over age group displays the highest percentage of individuals (30.7%) identifying as having some type of disability with ambulatory difficulties being primarily cited (17.5%).

<sup>3</sup> The three-year disability characteristics data is not available from the American Community Survey for years 2008 through 2009. To provide some consistency, only the years shown above were used as a result.

<sup>4</sup> Additional disability categories deemed irrelevant to the content of the report are not shown above. These are 'cognitive difficulty', 'self-care difficulty', and 'independent living difficulty'.

TABLE 27: INDIVIDUALS WITH A DISABILITY BY AGE GROUP AND TYPE FOR ACS 2012

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Population who identify as having a disability</b>	18.2%	19.3%	19.4%
<b>Population under 5 years</b>			
With a hearing difficulty	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
With a vision difficulty	0.0%	2.1%	3.2%
<b>Population 5 to 17 years</b>	5.8%	6.9%	8.0%
With a hearing difficulty	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%
With a vision difficulty	1.4%	0.9%	1.0%
With an ambulatory difficulty	0.6%	0.1%	0.4%
<b>Population 18 to 64 years</b>			
With a hearing difficulty	2.8%	2.7%	3.1%
With a vision difficulty	2.2%	1.6%	2.4%
With an ambulatory difficulty	7.1%	7.4%	8.6%
<b>Population 65 years and over</b>			
With a hearing difficulty	16.3%	15.9%	14.7%
With a vision difficulty	5.3%	6.1%	5.1%
With an ambulatory difficulty	18.2%	18.7%	17.5%

DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

The population of Charlotte County will be growing in size over the next 10-15 years. With this growth in population, the county will see a significant rise in the most senior age groups. The racial diversity of the county will not change significantly from its current makeup. However, the Hispanic/Latino population is projected to grow in keeping with national population projection trends. Related to this projection, an increase is also projected in the number of individuals who speak Spanish. This population is also projected to have a high degree of English-language fluency. Households currently among the highest in terms of income are projected to decrease over time. The number of individuals identified as having some type of disability is highest among the population age 65 and over but is increasing slightly over all age groups.



## Section II

### Trends Research

## SECTION II: TRENDS RESEARCH

There are several sources that are helpful to obtain current trends research. These are as follows:

- 2011 Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study conducted by Responsive Management completed 3,961 surveys with residents and 2,890 surveys with tourists. This study focused on a snapshot of participation in Florida outdoor recreational activities, rather than generating participation trends over time.
- The Outdoor Foundation's research into outdoor recreational activity studies activities and trends over time. The Outdoor Foundation's 2013 study compares annual trends over a seven-year period.
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.
- The Physical Activity Council's 2013 Participation Report covering sports, fitness, and recreation participation in the United States. This report is produced by six major US sport, fitness, and leisure industry trade associations and summarizes levels of activity in the U.S.

The relevant data is divided into Florida and national trends. These two perspectives are important, as Charlotte County has distinct resources that other areas in the country do not (e.g., beaches). The trends separated by user groups are significant for an overall perspective. These can be helpful as park needs are tailored to the county's predominant user groups.

The 2011 Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study helps to frame participation levels across the state. The study provided some information by region. Charlotte County was included in the Southwest region. While the study covered such areas as satisfaction and importance of recreation, that data is not included in this report. The Florida study helps to provide context for both residents and tourists. The 2011 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's study provides important data focused on Florida recreation, however, it is limited to fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

Other sources provide some good information relative to national trends for outdoor and other sports participation. These include the studies conducted by the Physical Activity Council and the Outdoor Recreation Council.

## ACTIVITY TRENDS

### POPULAR ACTIVITIES

#### FLORIDA RESIDENTS

The state study found that saltwater beach activities were the most popular with residents. The top five most popular activities based on what respondents enjoyed in the last 12 months were as follows:<sup>5</sup>

TABLE 28: FLORIDA RESIDENTS POPULAR ACTIVITIES

Activity	% enjoyed in last 12 months
Saltwater beach activities (not including fishing)	63%
Wildlife viewing <sup>6 7</sup>	49%

<sup>5</sup> Responsive Management. (2011). *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*. Retrieved May 8, 2014, from [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp\\_survey.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp_survey.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> The 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Survey confirmed the popularity of these results. That study found that of all participants in these three activities, 68% of participants enjoyed wildlife watching and 49% enjoyed fishing.

Fishing <sup>8</sup>	46%
Bicycling	44%
Picnicking	40%

#### FLORIDA TOURISTS

The state study found that tourists' top activity preference was saltwater beach activities. The top five most popular tourist activities were as follows: <sup>9</sup>

**TABLE 29: FLORIDA TOURISTS POPULAR ACTIVITIES**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>%</b>
Saltwater beach activities (not including fishing)	49%
Wildlife viewing	47%
Picnicking	37%
Swimming in Outdoor Pools	29%
Visiting historical or archeological sites	26%

#### NATIONAL TRENDS

Nationally, the most popular activities as defined by percentage of Americans who participated in these activities show a somewhat different picture of popularity.<sup>10</sup> The Physical Activity Council's findings in Table 30 below show that of all sports, fitness and outdoor sports are the most popular.<sup>11 12</sup>

**TABLE 30: NATIONAL POPULARITY OF ALL SPORT ACTIVITIES**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>%</b>
Fitness Sports	61.2%
Outdoor Sports	49.2%
Individual Sports	36.3%
Team Sports	20.6%
Racquet Sports	12.6%
Water sports	12.4%

Table 31 below shows that the most popular outdoor activity is running, jogging, and trail running. This is consistent with the Physical Activity Council's finding that fitness sports consistently generate the highest percentage of individuals over age 6.<sup>13</sup> The difference is likely due to the wide availability of beaches in the state that attract both residents and tourists:

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. (2014). *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce.

<sup>8</sup> The 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Survey confirmed the popularity of these results. That study found that of all participants in these three activities, 68% of participants enjoyed wildlife watching and 49% enjoyed fishing (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Responsive Management. (2011). *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*. Retrieved May 8, 2014, from [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp\\_survey.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp_survey.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> The Outdoor Industry Association. (2013). *2013 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*. Retrieved May 8, 2014, from <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchParticipation2013.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Fitness sports include treadmill, elliptical, walking for fitness, running/jogging, aerobics, etc. Outdoor sports include bicycling, fishing, hiking, rafting, trail running, triathlon, and non-traditional/off road triathlon.

<sup>12</sup> Physical Activity Council. (2014). *2014 Participation Report*. Boston: Physical Activity Council.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

TABLE 31: NATIONAL POPULARITY OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Activity	% of Americans
Running, jogging, and trail running	19%
Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing	16%
Road biking, mountain biking, and BMX	15%
Car, backyard, and RV camping	13%
Hiking	12%

## CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION RATES

### FLORIDA RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS PARTICIPATION TRENDS

The Florida Recreation Participation study showed that the participation rates of most activities have remained relatively constant since 2002.<sup>14</sup> These include such activities as hiking, tennis, camping, fishing, and hunting. This was mostly confirmed in the 2011 National Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Survey. However, that study found that the most significant growth was in wildlife viewing around the residents home that grew between 2001 and 2011 by 26%.<sup>15</sup>

### ALL SPORT ACTIVITIES: NATIONAL PARTICIPATION TRENDS

According to the Physical Activity Council, Outdoor, Water, and Fitness sports participation have remained mostly constant. The largest drop in participation has been in individual sports (a decrease of 3.7% since 2008). There were no notable increases in any other sport.

### OUTDOOR SPORTS: NATIONAL PARTICIPATION TRENDS

However, for outdoor sports, the Outdoor Industry Association has shown that the biggest growth in over the past five years has been in the following sports.<sup>16</sup>

1. Adventure racing (211% growth)
2. Triathlon (non-traditional/off-road)(199%)
3. Triathlon (traditional/road)(174%)
4. Telemarking (136%)
5. Freestyle skiing (90%)

### OUTDOOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION FOR FIRST TIMERS

It is also helpful to know what activities are the most popular if one is to try a new activity. Over the age of 6, the following activities generate the most first time participants:

1. Stand up paddling
2. Boardsailing/windsurfing
3. Triathlon (non-traditional)
4. Triathlon (traditional)
5. Adventure racing

<sup>14</sup> Responsive Management. (2011). *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*. Retrieved May 8, 2014, from [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp\\_survey.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/scorp_survey.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. (2014). *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce.

<sup>16</sup> The Outdoor Industry Association. (2013). *2013 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*. Retrieved May 8, 2014, from <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchParticipation2013.pdf>

The study also found that people in their late 20s to early 30s are most likely to start a new sports activity. If the county intends to promote a new activity to residents, this data may be helpful to assess its likely target audience by age.<sup>17</sup>

## PARTICIPATION BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Participation by age is also an important consideration as the master plan should also meet the needs of the population and estimates of the county.

### AGE

Much of the Outdoor Recreation study separates individuals into five age groups, which has some use for Charlotte County.<sup>18</sup> Still, more research is needed to understand the participation of older (over 65) groups, as this comprises a large part of the population in Charlotte County. The Table 32 below outlines the average rate of participation by age group:

**TABLE 32: AVERAGE RATE OF PARTICIPATION BY AGE**

<b>Age</b>	<b>6-12</b>	<b>13-17</b>	<b>18-24</b>	<b>25-44</b>	<b>44+</b>
Average rate of participation: 2006-2012	66%	62%	56%	54%	38%

While the trends show younger age groups participating more than older groups, participation rates for younger groups have dropped for 6-12 year olds and 13-17 year olds since 2006.<sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> On the other hand, the rate of participation has grown among 25-44 year olds.<sup>21</sup> This is supported in another study that showed that adults 35 years and older increased their activity from 2008-2013.<sup>22</sup>

However, certain sports attracted older participations. For example, the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife found that the highest participation in wildlife viewing was among 45-54 year olds.<sup>23</sup>

Regardless, female participation in all activities (team, outdoor, and indoor activities) begins to decline after the age of 21-25. For men, participation begins to decline after the age of 31-35.

The Outdoor Recreation Study focuses on the most popular activities for youth participants (6-17 years) and young adults (18-24 years).<sup>24</sup>

### *Most Popular Activities (6-17 Year Olds)*

1. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (27% of American youth)
2. Running, jogging, and trail running (24% of American youth)
3. Car, backyard, and RV camping (20% of American youth)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Physical Activity Council. (2014). *2014 Participation Report*. Boston: Physical Activity Council.

<sup>21</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Council.

<sup>22</sup> Op. Cit., Physical Activity Council.

<sup>23</sup> Op. Cit., U.S. Fish & Wildlife.

<sup>24</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Council.

4. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (20% of American youth)
5. Hiking (12% of American youth)

*Most Popular Activities (18-24 Year Olds)*

1. Running, jogging, and trail running (36% of young adults)
2. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (15% of young adults)
3. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (15% of young adults)
4. Hiking (14% of young adults)
5. Car, backyard, and RV camping (14% of young adults)

*Most Popular Activities by Generation*

Another study reveals the most popular activities by generation, as seen in Table 33 below.<sup>25</sup>

**TABLE 33: POPULAR ACTIVITIES BY GENERATION**

<b>Birth Generation</b>	<b>Fitness Sports</b>	<b>Outdoor Sports</b>
Gen Z (2000+)		X
Millenials (1980-1999)	X	
Gen X (1965-1979)	X	
Boomers (1945-1964)	X	

**GENDER**

Overall, males prefer outdoor over indoor activities across almost all age groups. After age 66, males participate in indoor activities.<sup>26</sup> However, females (53%) make up a larger percentage of participants engaged in wildlife viewing as compared to males (47%).<sup>27</sup>

There are many more females participating in outdoor activities between the ages of 6-20. However, after the age of 16-20, females largely begin to prefer indoor activities.<sup>28</sup>

Team sports across the board are more popular for both males and females before the age of 15, at which point they decline for both groups.<sup>29</sup>

**ETHNICITY**

The Outdoor Recreation Study also focused on recreation among diverse groups. The rates of participation were reported for 2012. Table 34 reports the rates of participation among each ethnicity as well as the most popular activity by ethnicity. Running, jogging, and trail running were consistently the most popular activity among all ethnic groups.<sup>30</sup> The 2011 Florida Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife study found that Non-Hispanic Whites made up the majority of wildlife viewing participants both away from and around the home.<sup>31</sup> More data by ethnicity for

<sup>25</sup> Op. Cit., Physical Activity Council.

<sup>26</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Association.

<sup>27</sup> Op. Cit., U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

<sup>28</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Association.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Association.

<sup>31</sup> Op. Cit., U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

Florida-specific activities are available in the 2011 Florida Outdoor Recreation Study and should be analyzed in context of the public input and demographic data.<sup>32</sup>

TABLE 34: RECREATION BY ETHNICITY

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>
Participation Rate 2012	58%	44%	50%	53%
Most popular activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Running, jogging, and trail running (18%)</li> <li>2. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (17%)</li> <li>3. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (16%)</li> <li>4. Car, backyard, and RV camping (16%)</li> <li>5. Hiking (14%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Running, jogging, and trail running (19%)</li> <li>2. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (11%)</li> <li>3. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (11%)</li> <li>4. Birdwatching/ Wildlife viewing (5%)</li> <li>5. Car, backyard, and RV camping (4%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Running, jogging, and trail running (22%)</li> <li>2. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (17%)</li> <li>3. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (14%)</li> <li>4. Car, backyard, and RV camping (11%)</li> <li>5. Hiking (9%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Running, jogging, and trail running (24%)</li> <li>2. Road, mountain, and BMX biking (14%)</li> <li>3. Hiking (13%)</li> <li>4. Car, backyard, and RV camping (10%)</li> <li>5. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing (9%)</li> <li>5. Cross-country, alpine, freestyle, telemark skiing (8%)</li> </ol>

**INCOME**

Comparisons by income were only provided in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife studies. Most trend data tracks expenditures on recreational activities, rather than representation by income levels. In Florida, the income levels of fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing participants were somewhat different in comparing these two activities.<sup>33</sup> Participants in fishing or hunting were more often represented by a higher income level than those of wildlife participants.

TABLE 35: FISHING, HUNTING, AND WILDLIFE VIEWING BY INCOME

<b>Income</b>	<b>% fished or hunted</b>	<b>% of Wildlife Participants</b>
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<sup>32</sup> Op. Cit., Responsive Management

<sup>33</sup> Op. Cit., U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

Less than \$20,000	8%	11%
\$20,000 - 29,999	7%	39%
\$30,000-39,999	9%	20%
\$40,000-49,999	17%	24%
\$50,000-74,999	31%	37%
\$75,000-99,999	18%	34%
\$100,000-149,999	18%	26%
\$150,000 or more	21%	25%

## OTHER RELEVANT TRENDS

In addition to participation trends relative to popular activities and demographic group, other trends might inform the development of the Master Plan.

### TECHNOLOGY

The use of technology as a part of outdoor recreation has been studied. Music players and smart phones are the most used technology by all ages and genders, followed by laptops, fitness monitors, and tablets.<sup>34</sup> Hispanics use smart phones and music players at a rate higher than any other ethnic group, followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders (smart phones) and Blacks (music players), respectively. The use of technology may have implications for interpretive devices or apps in Charlotte County parks programs and facilities.

### MOTIVATION

Another set of trends research is related to the motivation for participants to participate in outdoor activities. This data may be helpful in determining priorities for the development of park facilities and amenities. This data shows that for over 70% of outdoor participants, getting exercise is their primary motivator. This is followed by being with family and friends (54%), keeping physically fit (51%), and being close to nature (47%).<sup>35</sup>

### POTENTIAL FACILITY USAGE TRENDS

The Outdoor Recreation Survey also includes the rate of change for indoor fitness, team sports, and other activities (archery, bowling, etc.). Further review of this study may be warranted within the context of public input.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Op. Cit., Outdoor Industry Association.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



# Section III

## Document and Regional Plan Review

## SECTION III: DOCUMENT AND REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW

### SUBSECTION A: PLAN REVIEW

The purpose of the plan review section is to review relevant documents, plans, and policies for development of the master plan. The summary below is accompanied by a more extensive description of relevant policies in the Appendices. This section reflects the multilayered jurisdictional environment within which the county operates.

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY

#### CHARLOTTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for the creation of a master plan.<sup>37</sup> The County's Comprehensive Plan is specific as to how the County will "establish an integrated system of parks, open space and recreational resources that provides a diverse, yet balanced, range of user-based and resource-based recreational opportunities which are available to all of Charlotte County's citizens and visitors." The Plan also establishes the framework for the parks level of service (LOS) upon which the master plan needs are based.

The three broad goals within the recreation and open space element are:

1. Establish an integrated system of parks, open space and recreational resources that provides a diverse, yet balanced, range of user-based and resource-based recreational opportunities.
2. Promote, conduct and provide for high-quality, professional programs that are accessible, and provide traditional and alternative recreational venues and opportunities serving the needs of both residents and visitors.
3. Identify opportunities and promote and execute strategies that add value and validity to the delivery of community services including parks, recreation, libraries, historic preservation, arts and humanities.

Other relevant elements of the comprehensive plan include:

- **Future Land Use:** The Future Land Use (FLU) Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOPs) implement the Smart Charlotte 2050 Framework. This element focuses on the principles of Smart Growth as the underlying standard for the creation of land use policy; the Urban Service Area policies to establish a clearer focus on future neighborhood development in the right place and form; the recognition and introduction of "incentives" as the primary method for achieving the desired land use form; and a focus on economic development. These GOPs help to guide the role of parks within the larger context of the county's land use system.<sup>38</sup>
- **Natural Resources:** The purpose of the Natural Resources element is to promote the conservation and protection of natural resources and guide the acceptable use of resources. The goals of this element speak to reducing pollution, protecting important flora and fauna, and protecting wetlands. Protecting ground and surface water from harmful pollutants is an important theme throughout the policies of this element. The other important theme is protecting habitat and promoting

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<sup>37</sup> The relevant provisions of the Comprehensive Plan appear in Appendix A of this document.

<sup>38</sup> See Future Land Use GOPs at:

[http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view\\_doc.aspx?show\\_comments=true&docid=5](http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view_doc.aspx?show_comments=true&docid=5)

interconnections between existing preserved lands in order to provide adequate shelter for Florida's plant and animal life.<sup>39</sup>

- Intergovernmental Coordination: This element is important to the development and implementation of a parks master plan. Collaborative and cooperative relationships between departments and agencies are important for the creation of recreational opportunities.<sup>40</sup>

## BLUEWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

Charlotte County currently has 57 blueway trails. As needs are identified through the public input and analysis stage(s) the blueway trail system may deserve additional attention.<sup>41</sup>

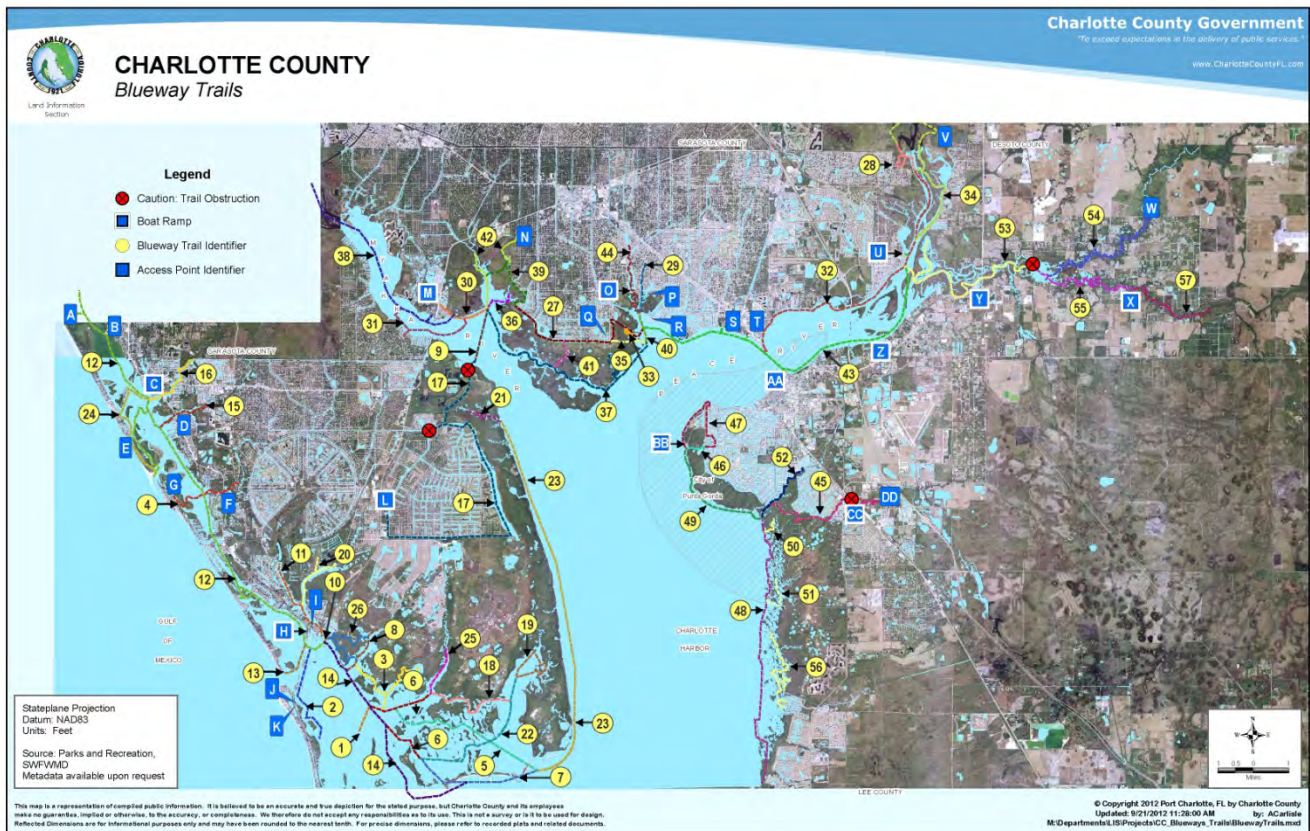


FIGURE 11: CHARLOTTE COUNTY BLUEWAY TRAILS<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> See the Natural Resources Element at:

[http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view\\_doc.aspx?show\\_comments=true&docid=5](http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view_doc.aspx?show_comments=true&docid=5)

<sup>40</sup> [http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view\\_doc.aspx?show\\_comments=true&docid=1](http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view_doc.aspx?show_comments=true&docid=1)

<sup>41</sup> <http://charlottecountyfl.com/communityservices/CalendarsRecreation/BWTbrochure.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/communityservices/CalendarsRecreation/BWTmap.pdf>

## INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITIES

### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA

To develop a parks master plan for Charlotte County, it is also important to understand the plans of incorporated municipalities, which also contain parks-related goals, objectives, and policies.

The Parks and Grounds Division of the City of Punta Gorda is responsible for the development, operation and maintenance of city parks and recreation facilities. Approximately 17 developed parks and recreation facilities are maintained by the department. Impact fees and ad valorem taxes are the City's principal funding sources for parks and recreation. Impact fees can be used only for land acquisition and capital improvements that increase the level of service. Operation and maintenance expenses typically come from ad valorem taxes. There are 19 park locations that are classified as city parks, totaling about 109 acres. The City uses an acreage based LOS standard at 5.0 acres of developed parklands per functional or seasonal resident.<sup>43</sup>

Details regarding the following document are located in Appendix B.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

#### PARK AND RECREATION ELEMENT

The Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan contains a park and open space element which states the following goal: The City of Punta Gorda will act to provide public and private recreation resources; provide public parks appropriately located to the population they are intended to serve; coordinate the City facilities with those of other governments; and acquire important open space systems that protect property from storm surge events and/or preserve important habitats. It also contains four broad objectives, each with underlying policies for which to accomplish these objectives:

1. Punta Gorda will continue to develop a system of, neighborhood and community parks that serve the residents of the City and serve as part of a comprehensive outdoor recreational system consisting of city, county, state, and national parks.
2. Punta Gorda will maintain a system of open spaces that will conserve and preserve marine and terrestrial flora and fauna and their associated habitats.
3. Punta Gorda will promote the use of public and private resources to meet recreation demands.
4. Punta Gorda will promote access and/or public enjoyment of all parks and open space systems in the City.

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan may be important for future collaboration with the City. That element states: "the County shall notify the City of Punta Gorda at the time of application for initial staff review of plan amendments, actions affecting shared boundaries, zoning, subdivision, site plan approval processes, and conditional use permits within the South County planning area to provide the City with an opportunity to provide meaningful input regarding those changes. The City of Punta Gorda is requested to reciprocate by extending the same courtesy to the County."<sup>44</sup>

#### PARKS MASTER PLAN

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<sup>43</sup> [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/CompPlan/Rec\\_OpenSpacesApp012009.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/CompPlan/Rec_OpenSpacesApp012009.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> [http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view\\_doc.aspx?show\\_comments=true&docid=13#contentelement\\_6024](http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view_doc.aspx?show_comments=true&docid=13#contentelement_6024)

Punta Gorda also has a Parks Master Plan which reviews the City's current and future delivery of recreation services for its growing population and as a vital component of its economic sustainability.<sup>45</sup> As a component of the County with legally binding policies, the City's Parks Master Plan provides goals in relation to recreation service delivery. These goals may highlight opportunities and gaps in service delivery.

1. Offer a wider variety of water based activities throughout the park system.
2. Maintain the unique small town, old Florida charm of Punta Gorda through the preservation and reinforcement of Historic Resources
3. Provide and encourage public spaces to soften the urban landscape – to put the right park with the right amenities in the right neighborhood.
4. Provide tree-lined avenues to connect parks, neighborhoods, and community destinations.
5. Utilize multi-use recreational trails that connect parks, neighborhoods, civic places and other community destinations
6. Design parks to accommodate multi-generational recreational needs
7. As transit becomes available, utilize it to reinforce community access to the Park system
8. Encourage events and activities in the parks to enliven the public realm
9. Provide opportunities for continued economic and social development and sustainability
10. To ensure conservation areas and critical habitats are protected and preserved
11. Enhance existing and underdeveloped parks to maximize potential and increase neighborhood benefits

The Parks Master Plan also provides objectives for the short, intermediate, and long term.

#### PUNTA GORDA PATHWAYS

The Punta Gorda Pathways is a system of approximately 18 miles of Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails and Paths that will connect the City's neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas. See map provided in Figure B below. The Punta Gorda Pathways project is being funded through a combination of Federal Transportation Funds, 1 Cent Local Option Infrastructure Sale Tax, and private sector development projects. Three projects of importance are Harborwalk, Linear Park, and US 41 Multi-Use Recreational Trail<sup>46</sup>.

Pathways are a source of recreational opportunity and provide a service for a multitude of amenities. Understanding what services the City provides or intends to provide as it relates to greenways, pathways, and trails will assist the County in planning for future development or redevelopment.

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/rec&openspacemastplan.html>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/ringaroundcity.html>



FIGURE 12: PUNTA GORDA PATHWAYS<sup>47</sup>

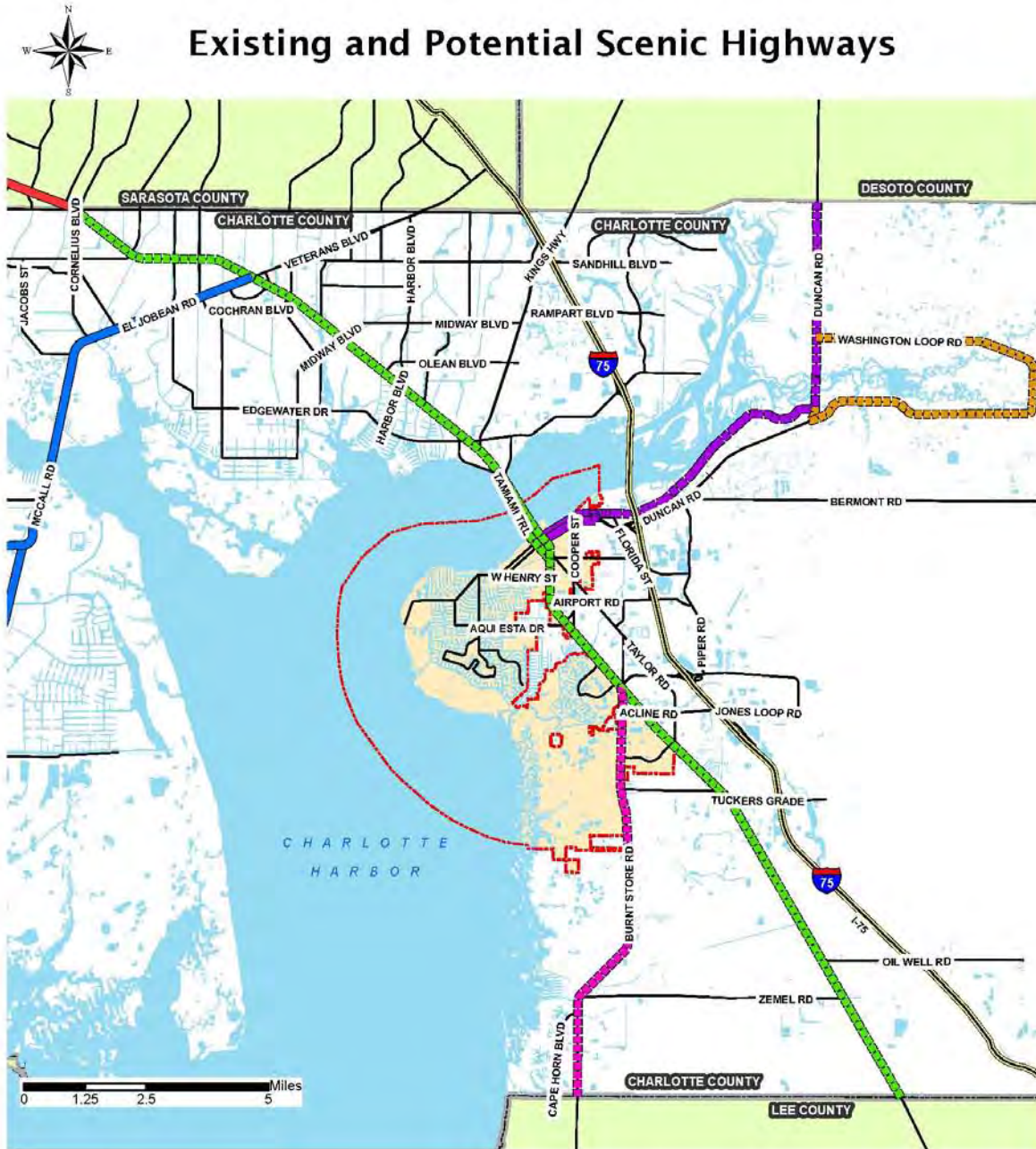
<sup>47</sup> <http://ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/documents/MAPPuntaGordaPathways.pdf>



#### SOUTH COUNTY GATEWAY PLANNING AND SCENIC HIGHWAYS

The Charlotte County Growth Management Staff, TEAM Punta Gorda and City Staff have held two South County Gateway Meetings. These public meetings were held to solicit public input regarding the future development and desired community character in the South Charlotte County Area. One of the outcomes of the planning process was the creation of potential scenic routes. These were identified as: Tamiami Route along US 41 from Sarasota County to Lee County, Peace River Route along the Peace River via US 17 and Riverside Drive, Burnt Store Route along Burnt Store Road from US 41 to Lee County, and Washington Loop Route along the entire course of Washington Loop Road from US 17 to US 17. This map appears below in Figure 13.

# Existing and Potential Scenic Highways



## Legend

### Potential Scenic Highway Routes

- Tamiami Route
- Peace River Route
- Burnt Store Route
- Washington Loop Route

### Existing Scenic Highways

- Tamiami Trail-Windows on the Gulf Coast Waters Scenic Highway
- Lemon Bay-Mayakka River Scenic Highway
- City of Punta Gorda

FIGURE 13: EXISTING AND POTENTIAL SCENIC HIGHWAY MAP<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/ScenicHighwayStaffMap.pdf>



## PUNTA GORDA ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2030

The parks plan may also benefit from connections to the City's Alternative Transportation Plan 2030. The plan provides guidance for the logical long-range expansion of a network of pedestrian, bicycle, and kayak/canoe facilities. It encompasses the entire city of Punta Gorda, but due to a number of enclaves, some logical system connections cross into unincorporated Charlotte County. The plan aims to improve the quality of life for residents, creating a more sustainable environment, providing greater opportunity for recreation, reducing traffic congestion, and vehicle noise. The Plan is designed to maximize access, safety, recreation, and transportation through a logical plan for the long-range development of sidewalks, bicycle routes, and kayak/canoe facilities. This document provides three areas of importance: Downtown, South of Downtown, and Punta Gorda Isles, Burnt Store Isles, and Burnt Store Meadows.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/documents/AlternativeTransportation2030.pdf>

## UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

The documents and community plans of unincorporated municipalities provide guidance for the creation of a parks plan. The following is a list of communities and areas with relevant recreational goals, objectives, and policies.

The relevant portion of these plans are cataloged in Appendix C:

1. Parkside
2. South Gulf Cove
3. Placida
4. Boca Grande
5. Grove City
6. Little Gasparilla Island
7. Manasota and Sandpiper Key
8. Charlotte Harbor
9. Murdock Village
10. Babcock Ranch Recreation Master Plan
11. Burnt Store Area Plan
12. Fred C. Babcock – Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area

## FEDERAL AGENCIES

The federal government has responsibility for developing recreational facilities and programs that provide public opportunities that are not, or cannot, be made available by state or local government. Many federal agencies offer programs that provide guidelines and standards to local recreation development. Federal agencies also offer opportunities for funding.

A more expansive discussion each of the following Departments can be found in Appendix D.

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior has a goal to conserve the scenery and natural resources of national parks and provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Most relevant to the development of a master plan in Charlotte County is the management of the National Register of Historic Places, which provides a comprehensive list of nationally registered places.<sup>50</sup>

#### NATIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM

The National Trail System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-543), authorized creation of a national trail system comprised of National Recreation Trails, National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. In order to be certified as a National Scenic Trail, a trail must contain outstanding recreation opportunities and encompass more than 100 miles of a continuous, primarily non-motorized trail. Currently, there are no National Trails in Charlotte County.<sup>51</sup>

#### U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for enforcing federal wildlife laws, protecting endangered species, managing migratory birds, restoring nationally significant fisheries and conserving and restoring wildlife habitat including wetlands. It is also responsible for the administration of federal aid programs, including Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act and Wallop-Breaux Act), Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) and Wildlife Partnership Act (conservation of non-game species). These grant programs are managed in Florida by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Grants to Florida under the Clean Vessel Act (clean boating programs) are managed by the Clean Marina Program in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of External Affairs<sup>52</sup>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages the National Wildlife Refuges. The only National Wildlife Refuge in Charlotte County is Island Bay.

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

#### U.S. FOREST SERVICE

The responsibility of USFS in the field of outdoor recreation is to fully develop the recreational potential of national forests and protect landscape aesthetics. USFS also cooperates with other federal, state and local agencies in planning and developing recreational resources on other federal, state, local and private lands. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) provides leadership in the management, protection and use of the nation's forests and rangelands. The agency is dedicated to multiple-use management of these lands for sustained yields of renewable resources such as wood, water, forage, wildlife and recreation to meet the diverse needs of people.

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<sup>50</sup> Retrieved from: <http://www.nps.gov/state/fl/index.htm?program=parks>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/nts/maps/National%20Trails%20map.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/refugeLocatorMaps/Florida.html>

There are no National Forests in Charlotte County.<sup>53</sup>

#### U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Along with its primary responsibilities for navigation, flood risk management, environmental restoration and beach renourishment, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has made considerable efforts to provide recreational facilities. It is the policy of USACE to plan for and provide outdoor recreation resources and facilities at all of its water resources projects. The agency also leads in the development of the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan. In relation to Charlotte County, the USACE acts in coordination with SWFMD to fulfill its water management/recreational objectives.<sup>54</sup>

#### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) within the U.S. Department of Transportation provides grants to state and local governments for various recreational trail projects.

#### RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program is responsible for providing funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trail uses. At a state level, the FL DEP Office of Greenways and Trails acts as the managing agency.<sup>55</sup>

#### NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

Recognizes roads having outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational and archaeological qualities by designating them as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways or State Scenic Byways. The national program provides grant opportunities to develop and maintain national scenic byways. There are no federal byways currently in or near Charlotte County.<sup>56 57</sup>

#### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

The National Ocean Service provides assistance to Florida in observing, understanding and managing coastal and marine resources<sup>58</sup>.

##### NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVES

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is a network of estuarine areas across the nation established for long-term stewardship, research and education. Each reserve has developed an organized ecological research program containing extensive teacher training, education, research and monitoring. Findings are communicated to coastal managers and other decision makers, as well as local citizens. Florida contains three of these reserves: Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay. None of these are located in Charlotte County<sup>59</sup>.

##### NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

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<sup>53</sup> <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.usace.army.mil/>

<sup>55</sup> [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/)

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/nearby?q=charlotte+county>

<sup>57</sup> The federal and state programs are distinct entities. See the Florida Scenic Highway program at: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways)

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.legendary.noaa.gov/NIYS/>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.nerrs.noaa.gov/ReservesMap.aspx>

The National Marine Sanctuary Program designates and manages areas of the marine environment with special national significance due to their conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archaeological, educational or aesthetic qualities. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is the only sanctuary in Florida; there are none in Charlotte County<sup>60</sup>.

#### NATIONAL COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

In 2002, the National Coastal Zone program initiated the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. The program is aimed at protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values and that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses. The Florida Coastal Management Program manages this grant program, which provides up to \$3 million for each eligible project.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/>

<sup>61</sup> <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html>

## REGIONAL AGENCIES

Regional agencies include those that manage several recreational related activities or interlocal agreements in the Southwest Florida, or Charlotte County area. These agencies provide goals, policies, and objectives that relate to proper and allowable development of recreational opportunities. All regional agency details and document details are located in Appendix E.

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

As in many communities, the County's schools are a strong hub of activity regarding outdoor and indoor sports and athletics. The County has agreed to maintain an inter-local agreement with the Charlotte County School Board to provide for mutually beneficial utilization of resources and provision of recreational, educational and extracurricular opportunities. Charlotte County has an Interlocal Agreement with the Charlotte County School Board allowing for public access to school recreational facilities on a case-by-case basis. The School District would benefit from joint use of parks adjacent to or in the vicinity of public schools. This includes the shifting of recreational facilities to adjacent parks to reduce maintenance costs or the amount of property needed to accommodate the new school. There are several opportunities for joint use of existing facilities and proposed school sites. However, potential sites for future schools have not been yet been determined by the School District beyond the twenty-year planning period.<sup>62</sup>

### SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has responsibility for the southeastern portion of Charlotte County, which is generally in the less urbanized portion of the county. Based on interviews with SFWMD staff, the agency has no acquisition plans for open space in Charlotte County. However, some relatively minor opportunities for water management open space exist on private land adjacent to I-75. This is unlikely to affect the park planning process in Charlotte County.<sup>63</sup>

### CHARLOTTE HARBOR PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN (CERP)

The primary goal of the CERP is to restore, preserve and protect the South Florida ecosystem through improved water management while providing for other water related needs of the region such as flood protection and water supply. The Everglades Restoration Plan has minimal effects on Charlotte County operations. However, SFWMD aims to improve water quality throughout the Caloosahatchee Estuary through inflows from the Charlotte Harbor Area.<sup>64</sup>

### MASTER RECREATION PLAN (MRP)

The Master Recreation Plan developed by the SFWMD is somewhat important to consider in the development of the County Master Plan because it offers regulations and guidelines when developing and maintaining parklands under the management of SFWMD. The primary goal of the CERP MRP is to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing recreational needs within the C&SF Project consistent with the project's authorized purpose. The plan has the following objectives:

- Provide the best possible combination of responses to regional needs, resource capabilities, and suitability, and expressed public interests and desires consistent with authorized purposes.

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<sup>62</sup><http://webapps.dep.state.fl.us/DrpOrpccr/UpdateInventoryView.do?submitTo=UpdateInventoryPark&selectedSite=CHARLOTTE+COUNTY+SCHOOL+BOARD>

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Phil Flood, South Florida Water Management District.

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.evergladesplan.org/>

- Contribute towards providing restoration compatible recreational opportunities, public access, activities and diversity within CERP projects.
- Emphasize the particular quantity, quality, character and potential of each of the nine CERP regions when developing recreational, educational, and public access opportunities.
- To the extent possible, minimize impacts to existing recreational uses.
- Seek consistency and compatibility with national, state and regional programs, goals, and objectives.
- Identify public, private, and intergovernmental partnerships to enhance and promote recreational, educational, and public access opportunities.
- Develop and implement guidelines for recreation planning, needs and impact assessments, on a regional basis for integration into the CERP Project Implementation Report (PIR), Pilot Project Design Report (PPDR), and feasibility study (FS) processes for each specific project.
- Develop measures to assess change in recreational opportunities and types of uses as it relates to CERP.<sup>65</sup>

#### LOWER CHARLOTTE HARBOR SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The SFWMD defines Lower Charlotte Harbor (LCH) as the basins of Pine Island Sound, Matlacha Pass, East and West Caloosahatchee, Estero Bay, and the southern portion of Lower Charlotte Harbor. The SWIM Plan for Lower Charlotte Harbor has the following goals:

1. Protect and improve surface water quality
2. Preserve and restore, where appropriate, native ecosystems along with their water resource related functions
3. Maintain the integrity and functions of water resources and related natural systems
4. Improve degraded water resources and related natural systems to a more natural functionality

It also provides 2025 land use estimations for Charlotte Harbor, including urban and built-up land, agriculture, range and upland forest, wetlands, and open water usage. The plan includes initiatives in order to achieve its goals. The SWIM Plan provides some collaborative opportunities for water-based recreational opportunities in Charlotte Harbor.<sup>66</sup>

#### CHARLOTTE HARBOR FLATWOODS INITIATIVE

The Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative is in its planning and development stages with the following objectives:

- Sheet flow restoration
- Restoring more natural flows to Charlotte Harbor
- Water Quality Improvement
- Ground Water Recharge
- Enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats

The Initiative makes the following recommendations:

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<sup>65</sup> [http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/pm\\_docs/master\\_rec\\_plan/111204\\_pmp\\_master\\_rec\\_mainbody.pdf](http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/pm_docs/master_rec_plan/111204_pmp_master_rec_mainbody.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> [http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd\\_repository\\_pdf/lower\\_charlotte\\_harbor\\_swim.pdf](http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd_repository_pdf/lower_charlotte_harbor_swim.pdf)

- Re-establish sheet flow east of US 41
- Water storage and treatment west of US 41
- Enhance sheet flow across Yucca Pens
- Restore flow across Burnt Store Road
- Implement monitoring network

The Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative is important as it may limit available development of alternate recreational uses.

#### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED PLAN

Although a project of the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the SWFCWP is a regional plan designed to produce a regional restoration plan that addresses water resources issues within all watersheds in southwest Florida. The SWFCWP primarily addresses ecosystem restoration, although it also recommends seven flood risk management studies to investigate water resources problems and opportunities in all or parts of Lee, Collier, Hendry, Glades, Charlotte, and Monroe counties, Florida.

Regional problem descriptions developed by the project delivery team (PDT) with extensive public involvement include:

- Loss of natural ecosystems and landscape connectivity/degradation of critically endangered wildlife habitat
- Altered, unnatural freshwater flows to wetlands and estuaries (Altered Surface Water Hydrology);
- Water quality degradation in surface waters;
- Saltwater intrusion into aquifers and surface waters; and
- Flooding and/or drought in various locations within the study area.

The areas in Charlotte County affected by the Comprehensive Watershed Plan include Lemon Bay, Gasparilla Sound, and Charlotte Harbor.<sup>67</sup>

#### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The SWFWMD has jurisdiction over approximately 46,609 acres of preserved land within Charlotte County, in joint management with either the State or the County. The SWFWMD has responsibility for northwest Charlotte County and covers the majority of the urbanized area(s). The Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park and the Prairie/Shell Creek Preserve are under SWFWMD management.

#### RECREATION EVALUATION 2013

The SWFWMD created and conducted a recreation evaluation for all of the recreational lands under their jurisdiction. The evaluation provides a preliminary inventory of available resource-based recreation opportunities, levels of service for each recreation use, and information on current and projected recreation trends and demands. SWFWMD has provided LOS recommendations that appear in Appendix E. As the second phase of the evaluation continues, it may be desirable to periodically check whether or not Charlotte County managed parks are meeting SWFWMD recommendations.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>[http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Planning/ReviewPlans/South%20West%20Florida%20Comprehensive%20Watershed%20Plan\\_508.pdf](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Planning/ReviewPlans/South%20West%20Florida%20Comprehensive%20Watershed%20Plan_508.pdf).

<sup>68</sup> [http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/evaluation/files/Recreation\\_Evaluation\\_Findings.pdf](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/evaluation/files/Recreation_Evaluation_Findings.pdf)



## SWFWMD FLORIDA FOREVER WORK PLAN

The Florida Forever Work Plan outlines those eligible projects that the District could fund through the Florida Forever program over a five-year period and for which future Florida Forever funding under the Florida Forever Act may be available. The Florida Forever Act provides for the issuance of up to \$3 billion in bonds through 2020 to be used for land acquisition (including less-than-fee purchases), water resource development, storm water management, water body restoration, recreational facility construction, public access improvements, invasive plant control and related projects. Over the life of the program, at least 50 percent of the funds allocated to the water management districts must be spent on land acquisition. Based on the work plan documents and interviews with SWFWMD staff, there are currently no land acquisition plans in the Charlotte County area.<sup>69</sup>

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

The Strategic Initiatives section provides information on each of the SWFWMD initiatives, including goals and strategies. While the Strategic Initiatives identify activities implemented throughout the District, the water resource needs vary from one planning region to another. The top water resource priorities for each region, along with measurable objectives, are identified in the Regional Priorities section of this document.

The two areas of concerns within the strategic plan are the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park and the Prairie and Shell Creek watersheds. The initiatives in this plan should be consulted as public input and recreational needs are finalized.<sup>70</sup>

## CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL REPORT

The Consolidated Annual Report provides an update on the completion and cost of several ongoing projects. These projects include active water supply and resource development, and water protection and sustainability trust fund projects. The report provides a recap of projects within Charlotte County that were funded with FY2014 Funds.<sup>71</sup>

## CHARLOTTE HARBOR PRESERVE STATE PARK- UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park falls under partial management by the SWFWMD. The Unit Management Plan provides several goals, as well as proposed additional development, including water-based recreational activities, facility management, and trail expansion projects. Details of these goals and additional developments can be found in Appendix E.<sup>72</sup>

## SHELL CREEK AND PRAIRIE CREEK WATERSHEDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of this document is to provide "reasonable assurance" that the Shell Creek and Prairie Creek Watersheds Management Plan (SPCWMP) will restore and maintain water quality conditions to the water quality criteria set forth in Chapter 62-302, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). This document identifies management plans and projects specifically developed by the Shell, Prairie, and Joshua Creeks Watershed Management Plan.<sup>73</sup>

## CHARLOTTE HARBOR SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT (SWIM) PLAN

The Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Act of 1987, directed the State's water management districts to "design and implement plans and programs for the improvement and management of surface water" and under the SWIM Act, water management districts prioritize water bodies based on their need for protection and/or restoration. The goals of the Charlotte Harbor SWIM plan are:

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<sup>69</sup> [https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/FFworkplan\\_2013Final.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/FFworkplan_2013Final.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/about/strategic-plan/assets/StrategicPlan.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/reports/2014\\_CAR.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/reports/2014_CAR.pdf)

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/landusemgmt/files/CharlotteHarborPreservestatePark.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> [https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site\\_file\\_sets/2477/spjc\\_wmp.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site_file_sets/2477/spjc_wmp.pdf)

- Improve the environmental integrity of the Charlotte Harbor study area.
- Preserve, restore and enhance seagrass beds, coastal wetlands, barrier beaches, and functionally related uplands.
- Reduce point and non-point sources of pollution to attain desired used of the estuary
- Provide the proper fresh water inflow to the estuary to ensure a balanced and productive ecosystem
- Develop and implement a strategy for public participation and education
- Develop and implement a formal Charlotte Harbor management plan with a specified structure and process for achieving goals for the estuary

The SWIM Plan lists several priority projects. These elements are important for consideration in the development of a Parks Master Plan for Charlotte County in its development proposals.<sup>74</sup>

## FLORIDA SEA GRANT

The Florida Sea Grant is Florida Sea Grant is a university-based program that supports research, education and extension to conserve coastal resources and enhance economic opportunities. The program is a partnership between the Florida Board of Education, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Florida's citizens and governments.

### RECREATIONAL BOATING CHARACTERIZATION FOR THE GREATER CHARLOTTE HARBOR

The Sea Grant program developed a study that analyzes the preferences, activities, and water-use patterns of boaters on the basis of trip departure type. The Greater Charlotte Harbor study region extends approximately 70 miles from Englewood (Lemon Bay) in the north to Bonita Springs (Estero Bay) in the south, in Charlotte, and Lee counties. An estimated 61,540 pleasure boats are currently registered in the study region according to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The results of the study will help determine level of service needs and demands. Appendix E provides details of the statistics obtained from survey results.<sup>75</sup>

### THE FUTURE OF RECREATIONAL BOATING ACCESS TO CHARLOTTE COUNTY WATERWAYS

This document provides a regional trend of recreational boating in Charlotte County. It differs from the previous document in that it provides future estimations of needs and demands in recreational boating. This is a key document for park planning in the area of future boating recreational opportunities.<sup>76</sup>

The objectives of this project were:

- To profile the supply-demand characteristics of boating access;
- To inventory and map current land-side infrastructure and water access characteristics adjacent to parcel locations;
- To assess the suitability of expanding existing marinas and ramps, siting new ones on vacant saltwater parcels, and siting mooring fields to meet projected public access demand;
- To identify regulatory policies that affect development and use of Charlotte County's marine resources;
- To present results to the BOCC for adoption as plan amendments to the Smart Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

## SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

<sup>74</sup> [https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site\\_file\\_sets/34/charlotte\\_harbor.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site_file_sets/34/charlotte_harbor.pdf)

<sup>75</sup> <http://nsgl.gso.uri.edu/flsgp/flsgps05004.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf)

The purposes of the SW Florida Regional Planning Council (RPC) is to serve as the regional coordinator for members, to exchange, interchange and review various programs of member jurisdictions relating to regional problems; to promote communication between members for the conservation and compatible development within the region; and to cooperate with federal, state, local and non-governmental agencies to accomplish these objectives. The Regional Planning Council identifies opportunities and gaps in land use development around Southwest Florida.

#### REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) for Southwest Florida is a long range guide for the physical, economic, and social development of the region. The overall purpose of the SRPP is to steer the region toward a more healthy and sustainable future. There are several initiatives with corresponding goals include:

1. Public Awareness Initiative
2. Natural Resource Protection
3. Water Resource Management
4. Regional Cooperation
5. Livable Communities<sup>77</sup>

The goals and policies relevant for Charlotte County appear in Appendix E.

#### CHARLOTTE HARBOR NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

##### COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program created a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) that addresses four priority problems common throughout the CHNEP study area and that have been identified to impede the health of the watersheds and estuaries. They are water quality degradation, hydrologic alterations, fish and wildlife habitat loss, and stewardship gaps. The CCMP includes a series of graphic vision maps, quantifiable objectives, priority actions and many support documents. It identifies priority problems within five distinguished areas:

1. Myakka River
2. Peace River
3. Caloosahatchee River
4. Dona, Roberts, and Lemon Bays
5. Charlotte Harbor, Myakka and Peace Estuaries<sup>78</sup>

The goals and objectives within this plan implement regulatory suggestions for land use and development within these areas and will be beneficial when identifying recreational needs and opportunities in Charlotte County.

Based on an interview with CHNEP staff, the program does not have current acquisition plans in Charlotte County. However, the program's NEPORT report tracks restoration and acquisition projects that may be opportunities for future collaboration.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> [http://www.swfrpc.org/content/Regional\\_Planning/SRPP/EAR/SWFRPC\\_SRPP\\_EAR\\_Final10-20-11.pdf](http://www.swfrpc.org/content/Regional_Planning/SRPP/EAR/SWFRPC_SRPP_EAR_Final10-20-11.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> This link provides more details on strategies to reach these goals: <http://www.chnep.org/CCMP/CCMP2013.pdf>

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Judy Ott, CHNEP conducted 5/14/14.

## STATE AGENCIES

The State of Florida's responsibilities for providing public recreation are fulfilled through a variety of facilities and programs, each unique to the mission of the separate entities listed below. State agencies provide guidelines, standards, and funding opportunities for local government entities, including Charlotte County.

Details of each department and their subsequent divisions and offices can be found in Appendix F.

### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Department of Environmental Protection is directed by the Florida Legislature to cooperate with state and federal agencies, private organizations, and commercial and industrial interests in the promotion of a state outdoor recreation program. Florida's outdoor recreation program is a diverse, connected and balanced system of outdoor recreational resources, facilities and programs.

#### SOUTH DISTRICT PROJECTS

The Florida DEP currently has one dredging project in the South District affecting Charlotte County. It is the Charlotte County Dredging.<sup>80</sup>

#### DIVISION OF RECREATION AND PARKS

The Division of Recreation and Parks is an important agency relationship for park development. In addition to administering Florida's state park system, DRP also administers the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program provides financial assistance to eligible local governments, including the 67 county general governments and 412 incorporated municipalities of Florida. It also provides the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan which is the state's official document regarding outdoor recreation planning. The SCORP provides an analysis of LOS demands and needs, as well as identifies goals for recreation in Florida.<sup>81</sup> A detail of these demands, needs, opportunities, and goals can be found in Appendix F.

#### POTENTIAL COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

FDEP manages the state park system. Based on an interview with park staff, there are several key opportunities for Charlotte County parks.<sup>82</sup> These include the following:

- Coordination and marking of blueway trails
- Nature trail along sunrise water way
- Nature trail along Tippe East with potential parking access
- Boat ramps at Cattedock Point with potential parking access to primitive trail
- Creation of public access to Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park through mining area to the South of Robin Road with potential equestrian trails and collaborative development and acquisition
- Biking trails between parks for mountain bike access
- Collaborative planning for GC Herring Park for active recreation
- Fishing, kayak, and canoe launch in the Linx Lane Cape Haze neighborhood
- Potential collaboration on Don Pedro State Park for kayak concessionaire
- CHEC collaboration for educational programs

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<sup>80</sup> <http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/SDRO/ERP/CharlotteCountyDredging/Application.pdf>

<sup>81</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/outdoor/scorp.htm>

<sup>82</sup> Interview with John Aspilea, Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park.

#### OFFICE OF GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

OGT coordinates with and provides technical assistance regarding the acquisition, development, designation and management of greenways and trails projects that fulfill the FGTS plan and vision. OGT administers the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), a federally funded competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local communities for the development of trails.

The Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) Plan 2013-2017 identifies goals and objectives which can be found in Appendix F. OGT also maintains and updates the vision maps that are a companion to the FGTS Plan, encompassing land-based trails, paddling trails and ecological greenways that may be key collaborative opportunities for the park plan.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan)



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Florida Greenways & Trails System Plan

0 5 10 20 Miles

\* 2012 LAND TRAILS OPPORTUNITY

FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL OPPORTUNITY

A1	A2	A3	A4
B2	B3	B4	B5
C4	C5		
D4	D5		
E4	E5		

\* The different colors of the Land Trails represent the beginning and ending points of individual corridors. Map Date: 1/25/12

FIGURE 14: GREENWAYS AND TRAILS SYSTEM PLAN<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan/](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/)

## BUREAU OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources supports the Florida Park Service mission by providing technical and professional services to coordinate and standardize effective preservation and management of the natural and cultural resources in Florida's state parks. The Resource Management Annual Report published by the Bureau contains goals towards the management of natural systems and resources as it relates to recreational opportunity.<sup>85</sup>

## DIVISION OF STATE LANDS

The Division of State Lands (DSL) administers land acquisition programs on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund and DEP. DSL also provides administrative oversight for approximately 11 million acres of state owned lands, including 700 freshwater springs, 4,510 islands of ten acres or more and 7,000 lakes. The DSL also administers the Florida Forever program. Florida Forever supports a variety of land acquisition purposes, including the preservation of environmental, conservation, and water management lands and to provide grants to local governments. Appendix F provides a chart of the funding distribution of Florida Forever funds across the state, as well as lists several Florida Forever projects conducted within Charlotte County borders.

The Florida Communities Trust is another source of recreational project funding administered by the DSL. The Florida Communities Trust (FCT), established in 1989 to help local governments preserve parks, open space, beaches and natural areas, has created more livable communities throughout Florida. The source of funding for Florida Communities Trust comes from *Florida Forever* proceeds.

Lastly, the DSL manages the Bureau of Land Acquisition which provides guidelines and regulations for negotiation and closing, as well as details of the land acquisition process and stewardship opportunities<sup>86</sup>.

Details of these separate entities and responsibilities can be found in Appendix F.

## OFFICE OF COASTAL AND AQUATIC MANAGED AREAS

The Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) is the principal manager of submerged lands and their associated marine and aquatic resources in Florida. The Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 (Chapter 258, Part II, Florida Statutes), authorizes the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to maintain state owned submerged lands with exceptional biological, aesthetic and scientific value as aquatic preserves. These areas offer prime opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming, paddling, snorkeling, diving and other water-related types of recreation. Two of these aquatic preserves are located in Charlotte County: Cape Haze Aquatic Preserve and Gasparilla Sound-Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve. Links to details about these preserves can be found in Appendix F.<sup>87 88</sup>

## DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Division of Water Resource Management (DWRM) is responsible for protecting the quality of Florida's drinking water as well as its rivers, lakes and wetlands, and for reclaiming lands after they have been mined for phosphate and other minerals. Its programs establish the technical basis for setting the state's surface water and ground water quality standards, which are critical to maintaining the viability of water resources for public outdoor recreational use.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bncr/forms/12-13\\_res\\_mgt\\_annual\\_report.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bncr/forms/12-13_res_mgt_annual_report.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/>

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/capehaze/info.htm>

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/gasparilla/info.htm>

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/>

The Florida Beaches Habitat Conservation Plan has a mission to aid the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems in obtaining an Incidental Take Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This will be accomplished by developing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that will minimize and mitigate the take of federally listed species resulting from activities permitted through FDEP's Coastal Construction Control Line Program. The HCP will enable FDEP to fulfill its statutory responsibilities under Florida law and the Federal Endangered Species Act.<sup>90</sup>

#### OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

The Office of Sustainable Initiatives manages the Clean Marina Program which is a voluntary designation program with a proactive approach to environmental stewardship. Participants receive assistance in implementing Best Management Practices through on-site and distance technical assistance, mentoring by other *Clean Marinas* and continuing education.<sup>91</sup>

Currently, there are no designated Clean Marinas in Charlotte County, but Appendix F lists details of how to become designated, as well as links to further information.

#### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

The mission of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) involves conserving and protecting the state's agricultural and natural resources by reducing wildfires, promoting environmentally safe agricultural practices, and managing public lands.

#### FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE

The Florida Forest Service is managed by the FDACS and identifies a mission to protect and manage the forest resources of Florida, ensuring that they are available for future generations. Wildfire prevention and suppression are key components to protect homeowners from the threat of damage in a natural, fire-dependent environment. In addition to managing over one million acres of State Forests for multiple public uses including timber, recreation and wildlife habitat, the FSS also provided services to landowners throughout the state with technical information and grant programs.

The closest state forest to Charlotte County is the Myakka State Forest, located in the south western portion of Sarasota County within the city limits of North Port.<sup>92</sup>

#### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

##### DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Appendix F contains a list of links and sources characterizing a dataset of historic resources in Charlotte County, a list of regulations and guidelines in the preservation of historic resources, and a compliance review module for agencies interested in development through the integrity maintenance of historical resources. Appendix F also provides a summary of the Florida Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, which utilizes the State Comprehensive plan to identify regulations and statutes regarding historic preservation, especially in the areas of urban downtown revitalization, cultural and historic resources, and historic preservation in general.<sup>93</sup>

#### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

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<sup>90</sup> <http://www.flbeacheshcp.com/>

<sup>91</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cleanmarina/marina/default.htm>

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Our-Forests/State-Forests/Myakka-State-Forest>

<sup>93</sup> [http://archive.org/stream/62683\\_FDS\\_84Pg\\_Publication#page/n0/mode/2up](http://archive.org/stream/62683_FDS_84Pg_Publication#page/n0/mode/2up)



## RURAL LAND STEWARDSHIP AREA PROGRAM

The Rural Land Stewardship Area Program relates to resource management and land use through a “long-term incentive-based strategy to balance and guide the allocation of land to accommodate future land uses in a manner that protects the natural environment, stimulates economic growth and diversification, and encourages the retention of land for agriculture and other traditional rural land use”.<sup>94</sup> Landowners may request that the local government designate their lands as a rural land stewardship area. Currently, there are no designated Rural Land Stewardship Areas in Charlotte County.

## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PROGRAM

Two purposes of the Conserve by Bicycle Program are to: 1) provide recreational opportunities for Florida’s residents and visitors, and 2) provide healthy transportation and recreation alternatives to help reduce the trend toward obesity and reduce long-term health costs. The plan summary, found in Appendix F, outlines goals, objectives, decision influences, and recommendations, which are helpful to Charlotte County officials when determining recreational opportunities in the area.<sup>95</sup>

## FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### DIVISION OF HABITAT AND SPECIES CONSERVATION

The core mission of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation is to ensure healthy populations of all native species and their habitats on a statewide basis. The division integrates scientific data with applied habitat management for the purpose of maintaining stable or increasing populations of fish and wildlife. Appendix F lists of the several functions of the DHSC as it relates to recreational usage.

### DIVISION OF FRESHWATER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The Fisheries Management section ensures the best freshwater fishing opportunities in Florida’s lakes, rivers and streams through stocking desirable sport fish, regulating harvest, enhancing habitats and maintaining fish management areas. Fisheries Management coordinates with stakeholders and federal, state and local entities to protect and conserve freshwater resources and maintain fishing quality.

### DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The Division of Marine Fisheries Management (MFM) works with many agencies and groups to accomplish its mission to sustain the long-term health and abundance of Florida's marine fisheries. Fishery management requires coordination with federal agencies and other states, including the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. As a local entity located on the coast with access to the Gulf of Mexico, it is important that Charlotte County officials be aware of the goals and responsibilities of the MFM, for which details can be found in Appendix F.

### DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Division of Law Enforcement bases its patrol efforts on resource protection, environmental protection, boating and waterways, and public safety. Details regarding these services can be found in Appendix F. Being aware of these functions will aid officials in designating regulations and rules to different recreational services and opportunities.

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<sup>94</sup> <http://www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/programs/technical-assistance/planning-initiatives/rural-planning/rural-land-stewardship-area-program>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/4-Reports/Bike-Ped/CBBphase1%20Report062907.pdf>

#### DIVISION OF HUNTING AND GAME MANAGEMENT

The Division of Hunting and Game Management provides for the safe and responsible use of wildlife species that are hunted. Many of the recreational sites in Charlotte County, including the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park, Babcock Ranch, and Babcock-Webb Preserves allow hunting on their grounds. Understanding the regulations set forth by the DHGM are important for compliance standards.

#### OFFICE OF PUBLIC ACCESS

The Office of Public Access and Wildlife Viewing Services (OPAWVS) provides opportunities for Floridians and visitors to view wildlife and experience the expanses of Florida's wildlife management area system. OPAWVS works with agency biologists to develop wildlife-viewing sites and recreational trails. They also develop recreation guides and interpretive products to increase visitors' enjoyment and understanding of wildlife and wildlife habitat and how the FWC works to sustain them.

Coordinating with the Office of Public Access will allow Charlotte County to utilize innovative ideas towards this recreational frontier and expand on services regarding educational opportunities within their parks system.

## NONPROFIT AND PRIVATE ENTITIES

In addition to other government agencies, there are several nonprofit and private entities providing recreation services in the Charlotte County area.

### LEMON BAY CONSERVANCY

Lemon Bay Conservancy is a not-for-profit land trust based in Englewood, Fl. Its long-range vision is: “To forever protect and preserve the natural features of Lemon Bay, Charlotte Harbor, their surrounding waters and uplands, and vital fish and wildlife habitat, through property preservation, environmental education and advocacy for sustainable land and water conservation policies and practices.”<sup>96</sup> To support that long-range vision, the Conservancy focuses the mission in three areas: saving land; environmental education; and advocacy for sustainable environmental policies.

The Lemon Bay Conservancy is involved in protecting land from development. They work with individuals, businesses, government agencies, and other environmental groups to create conservation corridors for the protection of the water supply, to deter storm surge, to provide critical habitat for wildlife, and to sustain the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors to the communities. Often, the land is placed into public ownership. In other cases, private land owners choose to preserve the natural resources on their property. In some cases, Lemon Bay Conservancy becomes the land owner.

Lemon Bay Conservancy has the following owned properties:

1. 1.8 acres – Cedar Point Environmental Park – contiguous with county-owned property
2. 52 acres – James E. Cook Memorial Park; Buttonwood and Rookery Islands
3. 1 acre - Mangrove Place, donated by the Eleanor Dietzel Hillebrand Trust
4. 9.8 acres – Hidden Lakes
5. 80 acres – Wildflower Preserve
6. Four Lots – Harbour Heights Scrub Jay Preserve

### CHARLOTTE HARBOR ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER, INC. (CHEC)

The Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center “CHEC,” a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, founded in 1987, provides environmental education, recreation, environmental research, and conservation lands management services to the citizens and visitors of the greater Charlotte Harbor area.<sup>97</sup> CHEC provides over 20 different educational programs, manages 8 environmentally sensitive lands, and provides a total of over 8 miles of hiking trail and other recreational opportunities to the community.

CHEC locations include the following:

- Alligator Creek Preserve (adjacent to the 30,000+acre Charlotte Harbor State Park Preserve). CHEC is located on property owned by the State of Florida and the Center’s portion is leased to the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Inc. for environmental education and recreation. The Alligator Creek Preserve includes four miles of nature trails.
- Cedar Point Environmental Park – owned by Charlotte County and includes trails and visitor center. CHEC has been actively involved in its management and the coordination of its educational and recreational

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<sup>96</sup> <http://lemonbayconservancy.org/about-us/>

<sup>97</sup> <http://www.checflorida.org/>

programs. Cedar Point Environmental Park is a 115-acre Charlotte County Park that borders Ainger Creek, Oyster Creek and Lemon Bay. Three trails lead directly to Lemon Bay.

CHEC Activities include the following

- School Programs including fourth grade field studies of 2 days; second grade wading trips are available to public, private and home-schooled 2nd grade level classes; and 3rd grade estuary & manatee programs held in the classroom.
- Youth Programs. CHEC holds a week long summer camp at Alligator Creek Preserve and Cedar Point Environmental Park each summer.
- Public Programs. Wading Sea Grass Adventures, guided hikes, estuary pontoon boat journeys, speaker programs, volunteer water monitoring programs, and adopt-a-pond programs.

In addition, CHEC has a biodiversity project whose goal is to assess and educate citizens relative to Charlotte Harbor biodiversity.

## FLORIDA TRACKS AND TRAILS

Located within the City of Punta Gorda, Florida Tracks and Trails is a private outdoor recreational facility that is currently under development with an anticipated completion date of 2016.<sup>98</sup> When completed it plans to provide the following:

- Approximately 26 miles of one directional Off-Road Trails in Florida's natural setting
- Off-road Vehicle Repair and Rental Facility
- 40 acres of action-packed Paintball Scenario and Speedball fields
- Concerts and Special Events at our outdoor 15,000 seat Outdoor Amphitheater
- A total of 5 Off-Road Vehicle Tracks, including Motocross, Mud Track, and a Kid's Track
- Special Event Facilities for Birthdays and other Private Parties
- Camping with approximately 500 slips, including amenities exclusive to Camping guests
- General Store

Florida Tracks & Trails is designed for up to 20,000 visitors a day. There are 6 different parking areas on the grounds, with extra parking capacity as needed for concerts and special events.

The park includes a 12-acre fresh water recreation lake and white sand beach, with beachside food and beverage service, play areas for children and shaded cabanas.

## REDNECK YACHT CLUB

The Redneck Yacht Club Mud Park was established and began construction in 2008.<sup>99</sup> It offers amenities such as:

- Trail Riding (vehicular)
- ATV Riding Area
- Primitive Camping Areas
- Concessions
- Mud Park open every weekend from Friday to Sunday

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<sup>98</sup> <http://www.floridatracksandtrails.com/general-information/>

<sup>99</sup> <http://redneckyachtclubmudpark.com/>

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

Using the data collected through the policy and plan review and the interviews, there are several opportunities for collaboration as the parks plan goes forward. These include the following:

### Florida State DEP

- Coordination and marking of blueway trails
- Nature trail along sunrise water way
- Nature trail along Tippe East with potential parking access
- Boat ramps at Cattedock Point with potential parking access to primitive trail
- Creation of public access to Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park through mining area to the South of Robin Road with potential equestrian trails and collaborative development and acquisition
- Biking trails between parks for mountain bike access
- Collaborative planning for GC Herring Park for active recreation
- Fishing, kayak, and canoe launch in the Linx Lane/ Cape Haze neighborhood
- Potential collaboration on Don Pedro State Park for kayak concessionaire
- CHEC collaboration for educational programs

### City of Punta Gorda

- Assist in the development of the Harborwalk, Linear Park, and US 41 Multi-Use Recreational Trail pathways
- Continue participation in the South County Gateway Planning Meetings

### Parkside Community

- Cleanup Sunshine Lake and Sunshine Waterway
- Transform McGuire and Lake Betty Parks into Destination Attraction
- Install interconnecting Multi-use Trails
- Connect district areas with multi-use bridges

### South Gulf Cove

- A linear waterfront park at Calumet and St. Paul on County-owned property adjacent to the lagoon waterfront along Section 93.
- Connect the pathways system to the "Pioneer Trail" using a single access point at Ingraham Blvd. and CR 771.

### National Park Service

- Federal Lands-to-Parks Program, which enables states and local governments to establish park and recreation areas on federal properties which are no longer needed for military or civilian uses by conveying lands for that purpose
- Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program by providing planning assistance to communities for projects that are designed to protect rivers, trails and greenways on lands outside of the federal domain

#### U.S. Department of Transportation

- Recreational Trails Program: Provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trail uses.

#### South Florida Water Management District

- Recreational opportunities on private lands acquired by SFWMD
- Work in conjunction on Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative

#### Southwest Florida Water Management District

- Apply for recreational grants through the Florida Forever Work Plan – land acquisition, recreational facility construction, and public access improvements.
- Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park developments and improvements (outlined in appendix)

#### Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

- Establish non-regulatory, educational, urban non-listed wildlife programs
- Have programs based on scientific modeling to protect surface water, potable wells, wellfields, and contributing areas from contamination

#### Florida Department of Transportation

- Accommodate bicycling on roadways
- Build new multi-use paths, especially in scenic areas and near population centers
- Establish minimum standards for bicycle accommodation on roadways
- Implement education and marketing programs to promote bicycle commuting and recreational bicycling

## SUBSECTION B. REGIONAL PLANNING RESEARCH AND COORDINATION PERMITTING RULES AND POLICIES

The permitting review for Charlotte County parks development largely depends on the type, size, and location of projects. The following section outlines these regulations. Because there are complex, multiple, and overlapping jurisdictions in Charlotte County, this section is outlined as follows:

- Water Management: County-wide considerations, Southwest Florida Water Management, South Florida Water Management District, Charlotte County, and the City of Punta Gorda
- Beach / Coastal and Shoreline Protection: County-wide regulations, Charlotte County, and Punta Gorda
- Land Development: Project Location, Site Design, and Architectural at the county and municipal level(s)

### WATER MANAGEMENT

#### COUNTY-WIDE WATER MANAGEMENT: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is responsible for issuing some types of Environmental Resource Permits throughout the county. For the purpose of Charlotte County parks planning, these include mining; docking facility boardwalks; shore protection structures and piers; activities seaward of coastal construction control line; navigational dredging conducted by governmental entities; seaports and adjacent development; activities conducted in wetlands that are not part of a larger development, including boat ramps, ski jumps, ski slalom courts, aids to navigation, mooring buoys and fields, piling supported structures not physically connected to uplands, and aquatic plant management activities; mitigation banks for government solid waste facilities; or magnetic levitation demonstration projects.<sup>100</sup>

#### AQUIFER & WELL HEAD PROTECTION PROGRAMS

FDEP's program implements the Underground Injection Control (UIC) regulations that prevent degradation of the quality of other aquifers adjacent to the injection zone. This program would apply in where projects might use injection wells. Generally, park development may be concerned about Class V injection wells that include air conditioning return flow wells, swimming pool drainage wells, stormwater drainage wells, lake level control wells, domestic waste wells, and aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) wells.<sup>101</sup>

The Wellhead Protection Program establishes rules for the Wellhead Protection Rule that establishes a 500-foot radius circular Wellhead Protection Area around all wells which serve community and non-transient non-community public water systems.<sup>102</sup>

#### WASTEWATER

In the instance that park development may involve wastewater treatment, the FDEP's Wastewater Program may permit these facilities.<sup>103</sup> However, it is more likely that the program will involve sewer water or septic tank wastewater treatment, depending on the area in which the park may be located. Septic tanks are permitted by the State Department of Health.<sup>104</sup>

#### NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)

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<sup>100</sup> [http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site\\_file\\_sets/33/S-ERP-FDEP-Summary-P1--2.pdf](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site_file_sets/33/S-ERP-FDEP-Summary-P1--2.pdf)

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/uic/index.htm>

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/groundwater/wellhead.htm>

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wastewater/>

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/onsite-sewage/index.html>

The Florida NPDES program controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of Florida. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. Industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters. Where there are projects that discharge to surface waters, these permits may apply.<sup>105</sup>

#### UNINCORPORATED CHARLOTTE COUNTY NPDES

Charlotte County works with the state to regulate stormwater and non-stormwater discharge as part of NPDES. Its provisions aim to reduce pollutants in discharges and prohibits non-stormwater discharges into the storm drain system.<sup>106</sup>

#### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA NPDES

The City of Punta Gorda has jurisdiction over stormwater discharge and erosion and sediment control within its jurisdiction and unincorporated Charlotte County served by the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. Projects that disturb over one acre as part of construction activity require FDEP Generic Permit for Stormwater Discharge.<sup>107</sup>

#### WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

Two water management districts each cover a portion of Charlotte County: The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). The SFWMD covers the eastern and less urbanized area of the county, while SWFWMD covers the more urbanized western portion. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) shares some responsibility for managing water resources for certain projects to protect water resources. These resources include wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, estuaries, coastal systems, springs, groundwater and surface water supplies.

#### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SWFWMD)

##### COVERAGE AND SCOPE

The SWFWMD covers the northwestern portion of Charlotte County. The SWFWMD is responsible for maintaining the balance between the water needs of current and future users while protecting and maintaining water and related natural resources which provide the District with its existing and future water supply. The SWFWMD oversees flood protection, water use, well construction and environmental resource permitting, water conservation, education, land acquisition, water resource and supply development, and supportive data collection and analysis efforts.

##### RESOURCES AND TRAINING

SWFWMD provides an ePermitting portal that provides fast access to permit information and allows applicants to complete and manage many different types of applications online. Information about environmental resource, water use and well construction permits can be accessed through ePermitting.<sup>108</sup> In addition, the regulatory program offers a variety of handbooks for applicants.

#### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: PERMITS AND COMPLIANCE CONSUMPTIVE WATER USE

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<sup>105</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/stormwater/npdes/index.htm>

<sup>106</sup> Certain exemptions apply. See Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level4/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTVSTFLWE\\_DIV2NAPODIELSYNPOR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level4/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTVSTFLWE_DIV2NAPODIELSYNPOR.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>107</sup> Certain exemptions apply. See City of Punta Gorda: [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_6An.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_6An.pdf)

<sup>108</sup> See ePermitting link: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/>



Water use is divided into seven types and many permits are for a combination of those uses. These include, public supply, industrial, mining/dewatering, landscape/recreation, agricultural, institutional, or other. Permits are based on the amount of water needed and are categorized by thresholds.<sup>109</sup> Depending on where the project is located, there may be additional rules, as they may fall into Water Use Caution Areas or Areas of Water Resource Concern.<sup>110</sup> Portions of Charlotte County fall into the Southern Water Use Caution Area.

### WELL CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

SWFWMD governs permitting of wells. The purpose is to ensure that all water wells, soil borings and foundation holes within the District are located, constructed, maintained, used, and abandoned in a manner that protects the water resources. When a Water Use Permit is required, it must be obtained before seeking a Well Construction Permit.<sup>111</sup>

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PERMITS

An environmental resource permit (ERP) is required before beginning any construction activity that would affect wetlands, alter surface water flows, or contribute to water pollution.<sup>112</sup> The review process of an environmental resource permit application ensures that the permit will authorize activities or situations that are not harmful to the water resources or inconsistent with the public interest. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection shares responsibility for this activity, as described below. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection works with the water districts on ERPs.<sup>113</sup>

## SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SWFWMD)

### COVERAGE AND SCOPE

SWFWMD is responsible for managing Environmental Resource permits, consumptive and water use permits, well construction permits, and works of the district permits. They are also responsible for overseeing monitoring reports and other compliance documentation. The scope of projects that need authorization include construction or abandonment of wells and systems, large volume water usage, development or new construction, storm water management and wastewater discharges and activities in, on or near wetlands and other water resources.

### RESOURCES AND TRAINING

There are several resources from SWFWMD to assist with the permitting processes that they manage. ePermitting allows users to register online and can sign up to be notified of permitting information and access helpful guidelines and assistance. The ePermitting links directs users to help videos, regulatory documents, and training webinars. Additionally, application and permit coverages are available using Google Earth.<sup>114</sup>

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: PERMITS AND COMPLIANCE

### LAKE OKEECHOBEE WORKS OF THE DISTRICT PERMITS

Permits are required for certain land uses that are in the Lake Okeechobee Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan area. The goal is to reduce phosphorus flowing into Lake Okeechobee and are generally in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Basin. These permits outline target reductions in phosphorus, monitoring and reporting requirements and Best Management Practices (BMPs) for private and public landowners

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<sup>109</sup> See water consumption thresholds at: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/wup/>

<sup>110</sup> See: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/wup/>

<sup>111</sup> See: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/wellconstruction/>

<sup>112</sup> <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/erp/>

<sup>113</sup> [http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Start\\_an\\_Application.htm](http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Start_an_Application.htm)

<sup>114</sup> SWFWMD EPermitting:

<http://www.swfwmd.gov/ePermitting/MainPage.do;jsessionid=E7A11C893CC32ECAD8B75151DAC9ACA9>

in tributary basins. Permits are required of landowners or entities within or discharging to drainage basins in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) or C-139 Basin that ultimately drain to the Everglades. Generally all lands are required to apply for an EWOD Permit, however, there is a very small portion of south eastern Charlotte County within which this applies and these lands are primarily within private ownership and unlikely to affect park development.

#### CONSUMPTIVE USE PERMITS

These permits allow the holder to withdraw a large but specified amount of water, either from the ground, a canal, a lake or a river. The water can be used for a public water supply; to irrigate crops, nursery plants or golf courses; or for industrial processes. Individual homeowners do not need consumptive water use permits. Projects in the south eastern portion of Charlotte County may have to apply for this type of individual or general permit, depending on the type of project<sup>115</sup>.

#### WELL CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

In the instance that a well is installed as part of a project, a well construction permit may be required. Firefighting water wells and saltwater use or reclaimed water use wells do not need a permit.<sup>116</sup>

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

SFWMD's Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) is required before beginning any land use or construction activity that could affect wetlands, alter surface water flows or contribute to water pollution. SFWMD regulates residential and commercial developments, while the Florida Department of Environmental Protection oversees power plants, wastewater treatment plants and single-family home projects. An ERP covers activities such as dredging and filling in wetlands, constructing flood protection facilities, providing stormwater containment and treatment, site grading, building dams or reservoirs and other activities affecting state waters. The ERP process is streamlined by combining wetland resources permitting with management and storage of surface waters permitting into a single permit. As with water management, the majority of SFWMD lies within privately held lands in south eastern Charlotte County<sup>117</sup>. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection works with the water districts on ERPs.<sup>118</sup>

#### RIGHT OF WAY PERMITS

Right of Way Permits apply to the use of the canal and levee rights of way for compatible public and private uses such as docks, fences or walkways. The regional system includes canals and levees, major rivers and lakes, water conservation areas, the works of the Big Cypress Basin and certain other canals and rights of way. The permits, acknowledge that the requested use is consistent with the applicable rules and District missions, is required prior to connecting with, placing structures in or across, discharging into or making use of the canal and levee system or "Works of the District" and certain other canals and Works, and, applies to rights of way acquired for the canal and levee system that makes up the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Central and Southern Florida Project and other canals and works. The Right of Way Occupancy Permit Program does not apply to lands acquired under Save Our Rivers, P-2000 or other District-sponsored land preservation or restoration projects. The specific information required for Right of Way Occupancy Permits depends on the type of use proposed<sup>119</sup>.

#### NUTRIENT SOURCE CONTROLS

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<sup>115</sup> <http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20-%20release%202/water%20use%20permits>

<sup>116</sup> See: <http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20-%20release%202/well%20construction%20permits>

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20-%20release%202/environmental%20resource%20permitting>

<sup>118</sup> [http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Start\\_an\\_Application.htm](http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Start_an_Application.htm)

<sup>119</sup> <http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20-%20release%202/right%20of%20way%20permits>

Portions of south eastern Charlotte County are within the Caloosahatchee River Watershed and are a part of the SFWMD's source control program. The source control program addresses the reduction of pollutants through on site activities that prevent or reduce pollution at its source, such as agricultural and urban Best Management Practices (BMPs) and regulations. Nonpoint source control programs, regional construction projects, and point source programs are designed to achieve mandated water quality standards. These programs are further documented in SFWMD's reports.<sup>120</sup> The Florida DEP also has some responsibility for implementing nonpoint source controls.<sup>121</sup>

## BEACH, SHORELINE, AND WETLANDS

### FDEP HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN / COASTAL CONSTRUCTION CONTROL LINE PROGRAM

Where there are parks that fall within the coastal areas, development may need to comply with the requirements established through the CCCL program's Habitat Conservation Plan(s). The CCCL establishes criteria for the preservation and protection of the state's beaches from construction jeopardizes the stability of the beach-dune system, accelerates erosion, provides inadequate protection to upland structures, endangers adjacent properties, or interferes with public beach access. Activities regulated under the CCCL program fall into include: New construction or rebuilding of single- or multi-family residences, commercial developments, stormwater facilities, beachfront lighting, swimming pools, parking lots, garages, decks, cabanas, beach-dune walkovers, public infrastructure, etc; armoring, such as seawalls, bulkheads, retaining walls, revetments, and geotextile bags or tubes; beach maintenance, such as beach raking and debris removal; beach berm and dune restoration, such as placement of beach fill landward of the Mean High Water Line (MHWL), and planting of native vegetation; special activities, concerts, rallies and other beach events; post-storm emergency activities, such as removal of hurricane-generated debris, repair of public facilities, return of sand to the beach-dune system, repair or reconstruction of coastal armoring, foundation repairs, and reconstruction of major and minor structures; and other miscellaneous minor activities permitted or explicitly authorized by the FDEP through its CCCL program.<sup>122</sup>

### JOINT COASTAL PERMITTING

The FDEP now has an additional program that allows for concurrent processing of applications for coastal construction permits, environmental resource permits and sovereign submerged lands authorizations. These permits and authorizations, which were previously issued separately, and by different state agencies, have now been consolidated into a "joint coastal permit" or JCP. JCPs are required if an activity meets all of the following locational criteria and include beach restoration or nourishment; construction of erosion control structures such as groins and breakwaters; public fishing piers; maintenance of inlets and inlet-related structures; and dredging of navigation channels that include disposal of dredged material onto the beach or in the nearshore area.<sup>123</sup>

- Located on Florida's natural sandy beaches facing the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Straits of Florida or associated inlets;
- Activities that extend seaward of the mean high water line;
- Activities that extend into sovereign submerged lands; and
- Activities that are likely to affect the distribution of sand along the beach.

### SEA TURTLE PROTECTION

Sea turtle protection consists of construction, lighting, vehicular circulation and parking, beach-dune stabilization, and other disruptive activities. Regulation of construction activity is shared with FDEP. Construction within the nesting

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<sup>120</sup> See:

[http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/pg\\_grp\\_sfwmd\\_sfer/portlet\\_prevreport/2014\\_sfer/v1/chapters/v1\\_ch4.pdf](http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/pg_grp_sfwmd_sfer/portlet_prevreport/2014_sfer/v1/chapters/v1_ch4.pdf)

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/nonpoint/index.htm>

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.flbeachshcp.com/docs/FLBHCP%20Primer.pdf>

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/programs/envpermt.htm>

zone is limited to non-nesting season to the maximum extent possible (November 1 through April 30). During any portion of the nesting period construction is to be conducted during daylight hours. Builders are required to obtain written approval from the FDEP pursuant to 62B-33, Florida Administrative Code, F.S. Ch. 161, and F.S. section 370.12 and provide a copy to Charlotte County Community Development Department.<sup>124</sup>

#### CHARLOTTE COUNTY SHORELINE PROTECTION

Charlotte County also regulates structures and activities in areas seaward of the CCCL unless permitted by FDEP. This includes dune walkover structures in publicly owned lands, artificial and dune based shoreline stabilization structures.<sup>125</sup>

#### CHARLOTTE COUNTY WETLAND PROTECTION

The county regulates development within wetlands and surface waters of the county without a federal or state-issued permit. This applies to surface waters, wetlands, buffers in wetland and surface water areas, and marinas. The county has adopted additional permitting criteria for consideration in its development review process.<sup>126</sup>

#### LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SITE DESIGN

There are two separate regulatory bodies that may affect park development. These are in the jurisdictions of Charlotte County and in the City of Punta Gorda. These regulations affect site development, site design, and construction. The following section compiles these regulations by jurisdiction.

#### COUNTY-WIDE REGULATIONS

##### SITE LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS: ZONING AND CONCURRENCY

Certain aspects of site location are covered in the Charlotte County code. These include site location criteria as areas of flood damage, protection, and control.<sup>127</sup> Much of the considerations for site review, however, are addressed in county code by zoning district. It is important to note that the county is currently in the process of developing a parks district. The draft regulations are provided in Appendix G.

##### ZONING DISTRICTS

Charlotte County has established zoning districts wherein certain uses are allowed.<sup>128</sup> Some zoning districts also have additional regulatory design standards. Zoning districts form a key consideration for planning of future park spaces. This is because the zoning districts prescribe use, density, lot coverage, height limits, and conditions for special exceptions and variances.

Gasparilla Island Conservation District. Certain unique regulations apply within the area of the Gasparilla Island Conservation District. The boundaries of the district are Gasparilla Island, including Boca Grande Isles and Gasparilla Golf Course Island, Three Sisters Island, Hoagen's Key, and Loomis Island, situated in Lee County and Charlotte County, including all adjacent submerged lands, tidal lands, overflow lands, and tidal ponds. These

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124 Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXIISETUPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXIISETUPR.html#TOPTITLE)

125 Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXIIISHPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXIIISHPR.html#TOPTITLE)

126 Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXVSUWAWEPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXVSUWAWEPR.html#TOPTITLE)

127 Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-2BUBURE\\_ARTVIIIIFLDAPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-2BUBURE_ARTVIIIIFLDAPR.html#TOPTITLE)

128 Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-9ZO\\_ARTIIDIRE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-9ZO_ARTIIDIRE.html#TOPTITLE)

regulations cover use, density, signage, and height requirements. However, much of these regulations are directed at constraining residential, commercial, and industrial development.<sup>129</sup>

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY CONCURRENCY

County regulations require that adequate public facilities are available concurrent with development impacts. These regulations implement the concurrency program outlined in the county's comprehensive plan. Concurrency applies to roads, parks, sewer, water, solid waste, drainage, and schools. Concurrency conditions may or may not apply to park development.<sup>130</sup>

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY SITE DESIGN

Elements of County code provide regulations for site-related concerns. Not all of these codes can be found in one section of the code. These are outlined here:

- tree requirements, including placement, design, and maintenance<sup>131</sup>
- land clearing, filling and soil conservation; these provisions cover such areas as erosion control, stabilization, and conservation. They are in addition to those required by the FDEP, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, and the relevant water management district<sup>132</sup>
- waste cleanup. The Florida Division of Waste has responsibility for implementing state and federal laws to protect the environment from the improper handling and disposal of solid and hazardous wastes. In the unlikely case that cleanup of hazardous waste sites are required, DEP's waste management program oversees waste facilities and pollutant storage systems, and non-regulatory activities such as financial and technical assistance for recycling and waste reduction.<sup>133</sup>
- Historic preservation, including conservation, rehabilitation, moving, maintenance, repair, use, and demolition of historic structures<sup>134</sup>
- Open space / habitat reservation; these provisions define open space percentages for development<sup>135</sup>
- landscaping and buffering requirements; these provisions establish standards to ensure the aesthetic, green space, soil conservation, and adjoining property compatibility throughout the county<sup>136</sup>
- additional site design is applied to commercial zoning areas regulating parking, pedestrian access, and architecture

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY STRUCTURES

County code covers various aspects of building codes and design that may impact park facilities. These include:

- Adherence of Florida Building Code and additional building material and radon mitigation standards<sup>137</sup>
- Green Building Program<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTVIGAIS.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTVIGAIS.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>130</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXIVCOMA.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXIVCOMA.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>131</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-2BUBURE\\_ARTIXTRRE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-2BUBURE_ARTIXTRRE.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>132</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTIVCLFISOCORE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTIVCLFISOCORE.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>133</sup> See: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/wc/default.htm>

<sup>134</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXHIPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXHIPR.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>135</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXVIOPSPHARE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXVIOPSPHARE.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>136</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-5PLDE\\_ARTXVIIIABU.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-5PLDE_ARTXVIIIABU.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. See: [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-2BUBURE\\_ARTIVBURE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-2BUBURE_ARTIVBURE.html#TOPTITLE)

- Fire Prevention Code <sup>139</sup>

## CITY OF PUNTA GORDA

### SITE LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS: ZONING AND CONCURRENCY

#### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA ZONING DISTRICTS

The City of Punta Gorda has established zoning districts within which certain uses are allowed. For example, the City's Environmental Preserve District allows for uses such as: public and private game preserves and wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries, refuges, parks and open spaces; nature conservation areas, water reservoirs and control structures, drainage, and water wells; noncommercial piers, docks, wharves; single-family homes, excluding mobile homes; and any governmental use. Additional uses, such as recreational facilities are allowed with conditions.<sup>140</sup> Further, districts define development standards, such as residential density and lot coverage, but establish special exceptions for some uses (varies by district).

#### PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

The City also allows for recreational facilities within planned developments. A planned development district also defines the appropriate level of service. However, this may be relevant to the extent that there is private provision of recreational space within the district.<sup>141</sup>

#### CO-LOCATION OF PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The City also encourages recreational facilities to be built adjoining school campuses, parks, greenbelts, parkways, greenways, or waterfronts.

#### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA CONCURRENCY

City regulations also require that properties are concurrent, meaning that the necessary roadway, potable water, sanitary sewage, stormwater, drainage, solid waste, public schools, and park services and facilities are in place prior to approval. These conditions may or may not apply to park development.<sup>142</sup>

#### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA SITE DESIGN

Elements of the City code provide additional site design guidance for the design and construction of the following elements of the site. These include:

- Parking <sup>143 144 145 146</sup>
- Seawall construction<sup>147</sup>
- Setbacks on water bodies <sup>148</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See:

[https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-2BUBURE\\_ARTVGRBUPR.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-2BUBURE_ARTVGRBUPR.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., [https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-3FIPRCO\\_ARTIINGE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIIILADEGRMA_CH3-3FIPRCO_ARTIINGE.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>140</sup> [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_26\\_013.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_26_013.pdf)

<sup>141</sup> City of Punta Gorda Land Development Code, Chapter 26, Section 5.6-5.9. See: [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_26\\_013.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_26_013.pdf)

<sup>142</sup> See Ibid., Art., 16, Sec. 16.4.

<sup>143</sup> City of Punta Gorda Land Development Code, chapter 26, Section 4.2.9. See: [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_26\\_013.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_26_013.pdf)

<sup>144</sup> See also Ibid., Article 7.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., Article 10.

<sup>146</sup> Parking landscaping regulated in Art. 12, Sec. 12.4 (a)

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., Chapter 6.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., Section 8.19

- Streets and sidewalks <sup>149</sup>
- Traffic and parking <sup>150</sup>
- Landscaping placement, design, materials selection, and maintenance designed to reduce heat, glare, dust; ensure privacy; prevent soil erosion, excessive water runoff, ground water depletion and pollution; and protection of plant species from canker and other disease<sup>151 152</sup>
- Fire Prevention and hydrants <sup>153</sup>

#### CITY OF PUNTA GORDA STRUCTURES

City code requires that outdoor recreational facilities meet certain building construction, screening, fencing, lighting, and operating standards.<sup>154</sup> Chapter 26 of the City's code covers such site development regulations as building type, definition, style, and character. These include:

- Setbacks, height, and use are components of a building's frontage and type.<sup>155</sup>
- Exterior lighting and fences <sup>156</sup>
- Placement and design of underground utilities<sup>157</sup>
- Placement, design, and maintenance of signage and flagpoles<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> City of Punta Gorda Land Development Code, Chapter 20. See: [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_20\\_005.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_20_005.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> City of Punta Gorda Land Development Code, Chapter 23. See: [http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch\\_23\\_008.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/cityclerk/Ch_23_008.pdf)

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., Article 12.

<sup>152</sup> Landscape plans and surveys are required for commercial developments. See Ibid., Art. 12, Sec. 12.6, and 12.8.

<sup>153</sup> Charlotte County, Florida Code of Ordinances. See:

[https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA\\_CH3-3FIPRCO\\_ARTIINGE.html#TOPTITLE](https://library.municode.com/HTML/10526/level3/PTIILADEGRMA_CH3-3FIPRCO_ARTIINGE.html#TOPTITLE)

<sup>154</sup> Op. Cit, Chapter 26, Art., 4, Sec. 4.2.4

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., Article 7.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., Section 8.4-Section 8.5.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., Section 8.17

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., Article 11.

## SUBSECTION C: CHARLOTTE COUNTY LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS RESEARCH

There are two components of assessing the level of service standard assessment system in preparation for a park master plan. The purpose of this section is to compare the current point system used by Charlotte County with the guidelines recommended by other agencies. As a result, it was important to compare the park typology system used for those relevant agencies. The second part of this analysis is to summarize the history of the Charlotte County LOS point-based system, compare changes since the initiation of the point system, update the analysis, and provide national benchmarking data.

### PARK TYPOLOGIES

Table 36 (below) illustrates the definitions of park types established within the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan. In addition, this study also research typologies used by the National Recreation and Parks Association 1995 standards, and those from the Florida Department of Environmental Protections' State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).<sup>159</sup>

The following sources provide written typologies for park systems:

1. Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan
2. National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)
3. Florida Department of Environmental Protection SCORP

These typologies are used in part for the level of service point-based system and comparison. The full comparison table appears in Appendix H.

### LEVEL OF SERVICE COMPARISON

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARLOTTE COUNTY LOS POINT SYSTEM

Calculating the parks level of service in Charlotte County has evolved from an acreage system into a points system. Currently the measure bases its points on a per 1,000 residents ratio. The Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan has set a goal LOS of 16 points per 1,000 residents. Points are based off of a variety of elements, including the amenities in each park in the County and the type of park (active or environmental).

The Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Open Space LOS system combines three primary factors that are often individually used to assess level of service: size (acreage), amenities and location (service radius). The resulting composite LOS standard enables a more balanced perspective regarding the provision of a park system that is intended to meet evolving and emerging needs over time.<sup>160</sup>

As summarized by Charlotte County staff, many local governments, including Charlotte County, formerly used a standard of acres/population. This is considered a normative, or norm-referenced, standard. Although this type of standard allowed maximum flexibility, it presented many limitations in its practical implementation:

- an unclear determination of when the threshold of “developed” (as dictated by SB360) is reached

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<sup>159</sup> Florida's SCORP does not offer comprehensive definitions of park types as it once had, due its new LOS system (discussed below).

<sup>160</sup> Most of this section has been provided by David Milligan, Director, Facilities Construction & Maintenance Dept. “Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Level-Of-Service Rating System Description.” Charlotte County, Florida.



- defined a standard that may or may not contribute to most-needed improvements
- did not address how phased development contributes to the LOS
- gave no credit for park amenity infill
- often required very costly expenditures to keep up with LOS requirements
- did not allow credit for responding to naturally changing and evolving needs
- did not accommodate small incremental increases in level of service requirements

The new point system moved toward a performance-based standard, but retained its norm-referenced characteristics (acreage). In addition, it retained some guidance for amenity provision. This system has allowed flexibility within established boundaries, yet recognizes interdependency among assessment factors. It allows Charlotte County to achieve level-of-service credit for most every dollar spent while addressing its unique park and recreational needs.

Unlike a strict acreage-based standard, this system responds to changes over time.

- As new technology and recreational trends emerge, the points system will allow the opportunity to apply weighted points to factors such as green development and eco-tourism.
- As other recreational interests wane, point scales can be adjusted to reward high-demand and discourage low-demand activities.
- It can be structured to reflect the value of the parks and recreation system to the quality of life in Charlotte County, not just the content of its components.
- It can respond quickly and efficiently to incremental increases in mandated level of service.
- Recognizing that, in addition to County-owned facilities, other federal, state, non-profit, and private parks, open space and recreational facilities contribute toward quality of life, this point system may be may accommodate pro-rated credits for those parks and facilities.

The following factors play a role in assessing the relative value and contribution of individual elements to an overall public parks and recreation system. The point system assigns 'points per unit' relative to the following considerations:

- size
- distribution
- amenity type
- supply/demand
- initial cost
- uniqueness
- operations and maintenance

## LOS POINT SYSTEM METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the point system relies on data elements that are generated from a comprehensive park inventory. This inventory consists of the following data elements:

- acreage by type of park (environmental / active)
- park type (neighborhood, community, special purpose, etc.)
- amenity inventory by park (e.g., basketball court, linear feet of paved trail, etc.)

- distribution of parks (e.g., number and proximity of special purpose parks)
- population

Additional features of the point system are important for the LOS calculations. These include:

- points were not awarded on an amenity basis for those parks that are considered 'reduced level of service'
- amenities not listed on the point scale were assigned a point value equal to the closest comparable amenity
- support facilities and elements required by codes, such as parking, stormwater management, and landscaping, are required to be developed in proportion to primary facilities sufficient to adequately support the intended activity
- no additional credit points were to be awarded for required support facilities. Amenities must be sized relative to their intended function and role within the park classification system

Because the basis of the system requires a comprehensive park inventory, the researchers as part of this study have provided a "Park LOS Spreadsheet Tool" that calculates the LOS points using the existing parks inventory and relative to the methodology above. The park inventory reflected in the Park LOS Spreadsheet Tool is designed to be consistent with the GIS layer maintained by Natural Resources. Future park acquisitions might use this spreadsheet to assess how changes will affect LOS, including population increases, park acquisition, or increased level of service on existing parks.

The LOS analysis using these elements appear below.

## LOS POINT SYSTEM DATA ELEMENTS AND ESTIMATED NEED

### ACREAGE DATA

The current parks inventory by park type is outlined below in Table 36.<sup>161</sup> A comprehensive inventory appears in the Appendix J and is included in the Park LOS Spreadsheet Tool. This table below summarizes the basis for a county-by-county comparison based on acreage (see LOS comparison section below).

**TABLE 36: CURRENT PARK ACREAGE BY PARK TYPE**

Park Type	Count	Acreage
Mini-Park <sup>162</sup>	0	0
Neighborhood Park	29	194.69
Community Park	6	210.70
Regional Park	3	237.64
Environmental Park	13	4337.51
Special Purpose Park	24	353.82
Total	74 <sup>163</sup>	5320.02

In addition, the LOS point system assigns points for overall park acreage, including environmental and active. This means that the LOS points are sensitive to any changes in the park inventory. This includes organizational changes where existing lands held by another department would be counted as part of the parks inventory. This was the case as Parks and Natural Resources were reorganized, affecting the park inventory. While some of this acreage increases may have been due to land acquisition, others were due to reorganization. This may give a false sense that LOS provision has been increased or decreased, but may in fact be due to reorganization. This analysis highlights that further consideration should be given to methods to ensure that the inventory that represents the basis for the points system reflects comparable LOS points over time. The table below compares the old and new acreages.

**TABLE 37: LOS ACREAGE BASED POINTS COMPARISON**

2010 LOS	Acreage	Factor	Points	2014 LOS	Acreage	Factor	Points
Environmental	1330	0.1	133.0	Environmental	4338	0.1	433.8
Active	1008	0.3	302.5	Active	936	0.3	280.9
			435.5				714.7

<sup>161</sup> Source: Charlotte County Community Services Department, (formerly Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department) and Growth Management Department, 2014.

<sup>162</sup> Mini-Parks conflated with neighborhood parks per M. Koenig.

<sup>163</sup> The total number of parks adds to 75. However, Ann Dever Memorial Regional Park has both active recreation and environmental features and were treated as separate parks in the typology count. To adjust for this, total number of parks was reduced by one.

AMENITIES DATA

In addition to the park type inventory, the Charlotte County points-based LOS system counts amenities provided in the system. The current provision by amenity appears below in Table 38.

TABLE 38: CURRENT PROVISION BY AMENITY

Amenity	Measure	Unit of Measurement
Shuffleboard/Bocci/Horseshoes/Volleyball	55	courts/fields
Single Picnic Shelter	18	shelter
Nature Trail/Walking Trail (unpaved)	196,000	linear feet
Dock/Boardwalk/Fishing Pier	8,600	square feet
Sports Lighting (Court)	24	courts
Remote Control Car Track/Boat Basin	3	tracks/basins
Skatepark/In-Line Hockey Rink	3	rinks
Multi-Purpose Trail (paved)	39,000	linear feet
Environmental and/or Historical Interpretive Features	10	sets
Specialty Garden	4	garden
Group Pavillion	36	pavilion
Sports Lighting (Ballfield)	29	lighted fields
Paw Park	2	parks
Canoe/Kayak Launch	10	launches
Basketball Court/Tennis	48	courts
Playground/Fitness Trail/Disc Golf Course	21	trails/courses
Horse Arena	1	arenas
Restroom	31	restrooms
Concession Building	7	buildings
Meeting Room	4	rooms
Soccer Field/Football Field	13	fields
Baseball Field/Softball	26	fields
Boat Ramp	15	ramps
Environmental/Historical Center	2	centers
Swimming Pool	3	pools
Gymnasium/Recreation/Fitness Center	8	centers
Special Event Venue	2	venues

POPULATION DATA

Finally, population estimates drive the LOS calculations as articulated in the Smart Charlotte 2050 plan. As part of this study, the estimated population has decreased from previous analyses. The 2009 population estimate was based on a permanent and seasonal population of 178,193, whereas the current population estimate for 2012 is 176,217. This estimate used the current permanent population estimates in concert with the Smart Charlotte 2050 seasonal estimates (see table below). This yields a somewhat, but not significantly different LOS.

TABLE 39: POPULATION DATA FOR LOS SUMMARY

	2012	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
FGCU Linear Regression Projections	160602	167412	176746	186080	195414	214082	232749
Smart Charlotte Seasonal Estimates	15615	16081	16538	16943	17292	17776	17944
<b>Total</b>	<b>176217</b>	<b>183493</b>	<b>193284</b>	<b>203023</b>	<b>212706</b>	<b>231858</b>	<b>250693</b>

CHARLOTTE COUNTY LOS POINTS SUMMARY

Using the data discussed above, the research updated the Charlotte County LOS Points summary. This data is also captured in the LOS Spreadsheet Tool. Estimated future needs into 2050 follow.

TABLE 40: LOS POINTS SUMMARY

LOS Points Summary				
Factor	Quantity	Unit	Points per Unit	County-wide Points
<b>Acreage</b>				
Acreage Environmental	4338	ac.	0.1	433.8
Acreage Active*	936	ac.	0.3	280.9
<b>Amenities</b>				
Shuffleboard/Bocci/Horseshoes/Volleyball	55	ea.	0.2	11.0
Single Picnic Shelter	18	ea.	0.5	9.0
Nature Trail/Walking Trail (unpaved)	196	1000 l.f.	1	196.2
Dock/Boardwalk/Fishing Pier	86	1000 s.f.	1.5	128.7
Sports Lighting (Court)	24	ea.	2	48.0
Remote Control Car Track/Boat Basin	3	ea.	3	9.0
Skatepark/In-Line Hockey Rink	3	ea.	3	9.0
Multi-Purpose Trail (paved)	39	1000 l.f.	3	118.1
Environmental and/or Historical Interpretive Features	10	set	3	30.0
Specialty Garden	4	ea.	3	12.0
Group Pavillion	36	ea.	4	144.0
Sports Lighting (Ballfield)	29	ea.	4	116.0
Paw Park	2	ea.	4	8.0
Canoe/Kayak Launch	10	ea.	4	40.0
Basketball Court/Tennis	48	ea.	5	237.5
Playground/Fitness Trail/Disc Golf Course	21	ea.	5	105.0
Horse Arena	1	ea.	5	5.0
Restroom	31	ea.	6	186.0
Concession Building	7	ea.	6	42.0
Meeting Room	4	ea.	6	24.0
Soccer Field/Football Field	13	ea.	6	78.0
Baseball Field/Softball	26	ea.	8	208.0
Boat Ramp	15	lane	8	120.0
Environmental/Historical Center	2	ea.	20	40.0
Swimming Pool	3	ea.	25	75.0
Gymnasium/Recreation/Fitness Center	8	ea.	30	240.0
Special Event Venue	2	ea.	40	80.0

<b>Distribution</b>				
Park location follows FLU Policy 4.1.1 neighborhood framework prioritization, OR	62	ea.	3	186
Park is resource-based, OR				
Park contains a Special Purpose Facility				
<b>Total Points, Current (2012)</b>	<b>3220.2</b>			
<b>Population (2012)</b>	<b>176,217</b>			
<b>Points per 1000 people</b>	<b>18.3</b>			

\*Active does not include reduced LOS Parks

#### FUTURE POINTS NEEDED

Based on the population projections and given the current inventory, future LOS needs will become apparent by 2025 (or in less than 11 years) at the Smart Charlotte LOS standard set at 16 points, given no changes in inventory.

TABLE 41: FUTURE LOS NEEDS TO 2050

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
	176217	183493	193284	203023	212706	231858	250693
Points	3220.20	3220.20	3220.20	3220.20	3220.20	3220.20	3220.20
Estimated LOS	18.27	17.55	16.66	15.86	15.14	13.89	12.85

## FURTHER LOS COMPARISONS

Other LOS comparisons can be made based on acreage and other (older) standards. However, the changing nature of LOS assessment measurement in the field makes the task of comparison somewhat difficult. The following section uses both older acreage-based and new performance-based standards as the basis for comparison. Because these are very different systems, performance based measurement must be addressed separately from acreage-based measures.

### ACREAGE-BASED COMPARISON(S)

The last time the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) published guidelines for parks acreage was in 1995, when it recommended a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 residents.<sup>164</sup> The previous LOS system in Charlotte County required 6 acres of active parkland per 1000 people and 4 acres of environmental parkland per 1000 people.

Currently, Charlotte County has 4,337.51 acres of environmental parklands and 982.5 acres of active parklands (note that this includes those parks with reduced LOS). Utilizing a permanent and seasonal 2012 population of 176,217 and the previous acreage-based standards it becomes clear that the county needs 74.8 acres of active park lands. However, it had many more acres of passive land than was needed.

Incorporating the current NRPA Proragis median acres of parkland offers a meaningful comparison. It demonstrates that Charlotte County is above the national median of the 84 counties that have entered their data into the Proragis system. However, this is due to the significant overage of passive / environmental park lands.

**TABLE 42: LOS ACREAGE-BASED COMPARISON**

	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Acres Required</b>	<b>Current Inventory</b>	<b>Acres Needed</b>
	6 acres active	1057.30	982.50	74.80
Charlotte (2008 Standards)	4 acres passive	704.87	4337.50	-3632.63
NRPA 1995 Standards	10 acres/1000	1762.17	5320.00	-3557.83
Current NRPA Proragis Median (84 counties nationwide)	13.1 acres/1000	2308.44	5320.00	-3011.56

### PERFORMANCE-BASED LOS COMPARISON

The NRPA Proragis system offers the best promise for a performance-based LOS system. However, it is important to also discuss the standards as measured by the FDEP SCORP. Comparison with the SCORP is not recommended without significant and more comprehensive analysis.

### FLORIDA SCORP

Florida's 2013 Draft Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) published level of service standards based on amenity/activity, drawing from samples of participants, rather than total population. In other words, existing facility LOS is calculated for each region not based on total population, but on the percentage of residents and tourists within that region that actually use that facility.

<sup>164</sup> Lee and Manatee County data was not available on a per acreage basis.



The 2013-2018 SCORP divides the state into eight planning regions to establish consistency with VISIT FLORIDA planning regions. Charlotte County is part of the SCORP's Southwest Region, along with the Manatee, Sarasota, Desoto, Glades, Lee, Hendry, and Collier counties.

However, using the SCORP as a LOS comparison gives inaccurate results. For example, when compared against the SCORP Southwest Region Standard, Charlotte County appears to have less facilities; including user-based recreation such as football fields, baseball fields, and basketball courts. Further, it appears that Charlotte County is behind in boat ramp provisions. This is misleading as there is a marked difference in measuring *participants* at a regional level versus the facilities as measured by the county *population* (which would be some portion of the region). Further, assessing these numbers causes measurement issues, as Charlotte County and the SCORP use different labels and measurements for their amenities.

**TABLE 43: EXAMPLE OF INACCURATE SCORP COMPARISON: AMENITIES AND PARTICIPANT CONFLICTS**

	SCORP Standard Southwest Region - Per 1000 <b>Participants</b>	Existing Amenities Charlotte County - Per 1000 <b>Population</b>
Non-Boat Fishing	88.38 feet of pier	481 square feet
Boat Ramp	.18 lanes	.08 lanes
Historic Sites	.12 sites	.07 sites
Nature Study Trails	.23 miles	884 linear feet
Picnic Areas	4.60 tables	.1 shelter
Paved Trails	.13 miles	218.36 linear feet
Unpaved Trails	.76 miles	884 linear feet
Horseback Areas	.53 miles of trail	.006 horse arenas
Baseball Fields	1 field	.17 field
Basketball Courts	1 court	.28 courts
Football Field	.56 fields	.096 fields
Swimming Pool	.1 pool	.017 pools
Soccer	.53 fields	.096 fields
Tennis	1.7 courts	.28 courts

If desired, the county may develop measures that can be accurately compared across the region. However, this may be unnecessary, as other existing benchmarking standards used by the NRPA can offer more accurate comparisons.

## NRPA PRORAGIS

### ABOUT PRORAGIS

Recently the NRPA published the PRORAGIS Database Report: Counties. The report detailed findings from system profiles submitted by 83 counties nationwide.<sup>165</sup> The median acreage LOS was 13.1 acres per 1,000 residents. Among these 83 entries, a median of 70% percent of parkland was undeveloped.

<sup>165</sup> [http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/PageBuilder\\_Proragis/Content/common\\_elements/PRORAGIS-Database-Report-Counties.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/PageBuilder_Proragis/Content/common_elements/PRORAGIS-Database-Report-Counties.pdf)

Charlotte County's point system relates well to the NRPA ProRagis data because all methods account for recreational opportunities beyond the acreage of parklands. Utilizing these averages, Charlotte County officials will be able to determine their standing. The NRPA ProRagis data is useful for the measurement of its LOS standard because it gives averages for other systems nationwide. It accounts for all types of recreational amenities and the data can be pulled for different jurisdictional ranges. The analysis of park systems in the ProRagis system is determined based on data that is entered in by the agency. The data collected includes demographics, department responsibilities, programs information, budget and funding, personnel, facilities, and park land acreages.

Charlotte County data was collected from a variety of resources, including Census data, budget documents, the Comprehensive Plan, and Parks and Natural Resources staff. The data entered into ProRagis was limited to 2013.

#### PRORAGIS BENCHMARKING RESULTS

The research staff pulled several exemplary tables; however the ProRagis data is much more comprehensive than is shown here. Charlotte County staff or consultants can tailor the data to specific needs.

A category under the "Charlotte County" column denoted by an "x" indicates that data was entered for Charlotte County. Numbers in this column are actual reported numbers and calculations. Blank cells in this column represent that Charlotte County does not offer this feature or no data was entered / available.

The second column is data collected from counties nationwide. There were 49 counties in the United States that entered in information into the ProRagis system to be used as benchmarking for the 2013 year. Note that these tables only represent the current (2013) year. The data may or may not be consistent with the previous year's reports produced by NRPA.

The third column represents data collected from cities and counties in the state of Florida only. This column includes 23 respondents - 61% of which are cities, and 39% are counties. The data in these benchmarking columns are measured by either averages or medians. Only one category of this data portrays an average (percentage of your total operating expenditures by category). All other numbers in the columns, including percentages, are the median. Most benchmarking ratios within the system report as a median so they are not skewed by outliers like averages can be. For many of the measures, the ProRagis system shows the Lower Quartile, Median, and Upper Quartile. Below is a summary of those measures:

- Median (50th Percentile): a measure of central value that is not affected by extreme values; calculated by arranging all responses in numerical order and selecting the value that falls exactly in the middle, with half higher and half lower.
- Lower Quartile (25th Percentile): when responses are ordered from lowest to highest, the lower quartile is the response 25% from the bottom. In other words, 75% of all responses are higher than this measure.
- Upper Quartile (75th Percentile): when responses are ordered from the lowest to highest, the upper quartile is the response 25% from the top. In other words, 25% of all responses are higher than this measure.

The table below reflects median values. Charlotte County data can then be compared to these measures to assess where they fall in relation to national numbers and Florida statistics.

When comparing the figures, several percentages are of those municipalities that indicated that they do offer a certain feature. For example, in the Programs Benchmarks table, Charlotte County officials indicated that they do

not offer visual arts and crafts programs. However, 62.5% of counties nationwide and 80% of cities and counties in Florida indicate that they do offer these types of programs.

Several of the categories are also standardized in order to provide an accurate comparison. These categories include:

- Program Participations per Jurisdiction Population - An indication of how much of the population participates in offered programs
- Operating Expenditures per Capita -An indication of how many dollars are spent in relation to population data
- Median Jurisdiction Population per Facility - An indication of how many people there are per one facility
- Acreage of Parkland per 1,000 Population
- Park Attendance per Jurisdiction Population - An indication of how much of the population contributes to park attendance

Below is a summary of each of several exemplary tables that compare Charlotte County to the state and nation.

**TABLE 44: PRORAGIS DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON**

<b>Jurisdiction Ethnic Distribution</b>	<b>Charlotte County</b>	<b>Nationwide Median</b>	<b>FL Cities and Counties</b>
White/Caucasian Persons	90.80%	74.40%	71.27%
Black/African American Persons	6.10%	14.21%	14.10%
American Indian/Alaska Native Persons	0.30%	1.61%	0.37%
Asian Persons	1.30%	3.04%	2.10%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Persons	0.10%	0.12%	0.08%
Hispanic or Latino (any race) or Spanish Origin Persons	6.50%	12.32%	22.63%
Other	1.40%	5.60%	0.44%

TABLE 45: PRORAGIS PROGRAM BENCHMARKING DATA

	Charlotte County	% of Counties Nationwide (Median)	FL Cities and Counties
Total annual number of participants attending programs, classes and small events	59,604	30,254	30,298
Non-resident fees		45.00%	50.00%
Program or Class Offerings			
Visual Arts and Crafts		62.50%	80.00%
Performing Arts	X	48.78%	56.25%
Health and wellness	X	83.33%	100.00%
Fitness	X	78.05%	100.00%
Martial Arts	X	56.10%	75.00%
Trips and tours		58.54%	56.25%
Organized team sports	X	63.41%	93.75%
Youth sports leagues	X	68.18%	83.33%
Adult sports leagues	X	81.82%	83.33%
Golf program		23.81%	35.29%
Tennis programs		53.66%	87.50%
Water safety	X	56.10%	70.59%
Environmental Ed//Nature Study//Cultural History	X	82.93%	75.00%
Summer Camp	X	76.19%	94.12%
Weeks of camp	12	9	9
Number of campers per week	150	138	900
Feeding programs for summer camp		42.31%	69.23%
Before and after school programs		31.71%	60.00%
Preschool		21.43%	17.65%
Full Daycare		4.76%	12.50%
Specific Teen programs	X	47.62%	64.71%
Senior Programs		51.22%	81.25%
Programs for people with disabilities	X	60.00%	85.71%
Accommodation for inclusion in activities	X	85.71%	100.00%
Assessments of clients w/ significant disabilities		52.38%	54.55%
Opportunities for people w/ significant disabilities		85.71%	90.91%
Community gardens	X	43.59%	60.00%
Edible garden program	X	60.00%	50.00%
Farmer's market		20.00%	20.00%
Rental or permit spaces for gardens	X	45.00%	50.00%
Major Special Events	X	79.31%	88.89%
Program Participants per Jurisdiction Population	0.37	0.09	0.02

TABLE 46: PRORAGIS BENCHMARKING BUDGET DATA

	<b>Charlotte County</b>	<b>Nationwide Median</b>	<b>FL Cities and Counties</b>
Jurisdiction Total Operating Budget	\$142,243,449	\$142,243,449	\$23,866,202
Jurisdiction Capital Budget	\$45,594,310	\$20,831,910	\$2,710,414
TOTAL operating expenditures for your fiscal year	\$15,025,112	\$5,300,000	\$12,367,029
Percentage of total operating expenditures are in the following categories			
Personnel Services	43.00%	58.83%	47.71%
Operations	52.00%	33.17%	35.79%
Capital	4.00%	4.45%	9.25%
Other	1.00%	3.55%	7.25%
Total capital budget	\$11,139,000	\$2,036,049	\$384,500
Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$93.55	\$22.55	\$62.06

TABLE 47: PRORAGIS BENCHMARKING FOR PARK LANDS

	Charlotte County	Nationwide Median	FL Cities and Counties
Park Attendance - including visitors and program participants	No Data	500,000	1,190,500
Number of Parks	74	15	29
Number of Park Acres	5,325	1,624	389
Total Number of Park and Non-Park Acres	5,343	2,310	885
Acreage for parks & recreation purposes	No Data	55%	71%
Designated Open Space Acres	1,637	3,102	1,976
Conservation Lands - Managed Habitat	2,658	3,822	6,650
Preservation Land Acres (no management)	18	2,358	5,601
Percentage of Undeveloped Land that is:			
Designated Open Space Acres	0.40%	12.71%	6.57%
Conservation Lands - Managed Habitat	0.60%	14.32%	22.84%
Preservation Land Acres (no management)	0.00%	5.85%	6.06%
Total mileage of greenways and trails managed			
a. Multi-purpose - No Equestrian	14.69	19.59	21.79
b. Multi-purpose - Equestrian permitted	0.2	14.63	21
c. Hiking/walking only	36.24	10.63	0.67
d. Bicycling only	0	2.15	12.44
e. Equestrian only	2.35	0.91	0
f. Other	0	3.39	0
Total	53.48	51.3	55.9
Acreage of Parkland per 1,000 Population	33.3	11.3	12.1

## NEXT STEPS

The following appendices cover all of the policies and plans outlined in the body of this report. With these and the data analysis presented earlier in this document, the future consultant for the Charlotte Parks Master Plan will have a comprehensive set of data from which to begin analysis.

Future work for the consultant may consist of a brief verification of the park inventory amenities, analysis of location-based collaboration opportunities, an assessment of needs based on population demographics and public input, policy recommendations, and future implementation and funding opportunities.

Data from this study has been made available to the future consultant, including electronic maps, charts, data files, spreadsheets, and GIS layers. In addition, a comprehensive list of documents and how to access those documents is provided.

## APPENDIX A: CHARLOTTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### The Foundation of the System

The County's current Comprehensive Plan provides the regulatory foundation of the existing system. Unlike many communities, the County's Comprehensive Plan is very specific as to how the County will "establish an integrated system of parks, open space and recreational resources that provides a diverse, yet balanced, range of user-based and resource-based recreational opportunities which are available to all of Charlotte County's citizens and visitors."

The following goals and objectives address the current and future parks and open space system:

### REC GOAL 1 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Establish an integrated system of parks, open space and recreational resources that provides a diverse, yet balanced, range of user-based and resource-based recreational opportunities.

#### REC OBJECTIVE 1.1 PLANNING, ACQUISITION, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

To plan for a park and open space system, acquire sites and facilities, design and develop parks that will ensure that residents and visitors to Charlotte County are afforded opportunities to readily access a variety of parks and open space.

##### **REC Policy 1.1.1 Park Classifications**

The County has developed park classifications based on park size, function and service area. These classifications include the following:

- Mini-park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Regional Park
- Environmental Park
- Special Purpose Facility
- Greenway
- Blueway

##### **REC Policy 1.1.2 Park System**

The County shall classify the role of each park in the park and open space system in order to create an integrated and balanced system, and shall pursue efforts toward the identification, acquisition, and preservation or development of essential components of the park system.

##### **REC Policy 1.1.3 Waterfronts and Beaches**

The County shall continue public acquisition of waterfront property and, through public resources and public/private partnerships, seek new opportunities to preserve recreational and commercial working waterfronts, expand and maintain public beach and water access and protect coastal and marine resources.

##### **REC Policy 1.1.4 Boating Access**

The County shall encourage responsible use of waterways and marine resources by evaluating the characteristics and needs of the County's boating population, both residents and visitors, and providing public access for motorized and non-motorized watercraft and mooring facilities.

##### **REC Policy 1.1.5 Coordination of Efforts**



The County shall coordinate with developers, property owners associations, private business, citizen-based neighborhood and community planning initiatives, special funding districts and governmental agencies to plan and provide for parks, open space, and recreational facilities in order to achieve common development goals through synergy of efforts.

**REC Policy 1.1.6 Concurrency**

The County shall develop a park, recreation, and open space system that is, at a minimum, consistent with Florida State Concurrency Management requirements by incorporating elements of County, State, Federal, and private park and recreation opportunities. The County shall meet a Level of Service (LOS) Standard based on Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) points of 16 PROS points/1,000 population. Assignment of PROS points shall consider factors such as, but not limited to, acreage, distribution, specific amenities, demand, facility capacity, maintenance and operations impacts, and availability for public use.

**REC Policy 1.1.7 Private Development Participation**

The County shall consider amending its Code of Laws and Ordinances within one year of the effective date of this comprehensive plan to require private residential development to participate in the provision and development of public parks and recreation facilities through land dedication, in-kind services or fees-in-lieu thereof. This participation shall be in addition to paying all required impact fees.

**REC Policy 1.1.8 County-wide Master Plan**

The County shall develop a formal, comprehensive, county-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan by 2012.

**REC Policy 1.1.9 Park Site Master Plans**

The County shall create master plans for park sites in order to: plan for parks that function in harmony with the environment; incorporate active and passive opportunities together; and to guide phased park development providing a uniform basis for establishing management and maintenance practices and levels of service.

**REC Policy 1.1.10 Park Design and Construction Standards**

The County shall create standards for public park design and construction that establishes a consistent functional and aesthetic vocabulary while allowing for unique response to site and program.

**REC OBJECTIVE 1.2 PARK AND RECREATION MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

To protect and maintain existing parks and assets to preserve physical, environmental, functional, recreational and aesthetic values.

**REC Policy 1.2.1 Public Awareness**

The County shall protect, restore, and manage natural resources in parks and provide interpretive information regarding environmental resources, conservation easements and ecosystems within parks. The County shall consider the proper long-term ecological functions and recreational value of the land and will work to increase public awareness and understanding of ecological systems.

**REC Policy 1.2.2 Park Management and Maintenance Guidelines**

The County shall develop and implement guidelines for all park assets and improvements that will serve to provide a uniform basis for establishing management and maintenance practices and criteria which consider periodic, short and long-term needs.

**REC Policy 1.2.3 Invasive Species Removal**

The County shall develop and pursue invasive, exotic plant and animal eradication programs for parks and open space by 2012.

**REC GOAL 2 RECREATION**

**Promote, conduct and provide for high-quality, professional programs that are accessible, and provide traditional and alternative recreational venues and opportunities serving the needs of both residents and visitors.**

REC OBJECTIVE 2.1 RECREATION, ATHLETICS AND AQUATICS PROGRAMS

To create and provide for events, programs and staffing to enhance the quality of life and physical well-being of residents and visitors.

**REC Policy 2.1.1 Programming**

The County shall annually create programming plans considering factors such as implementation strategies, utilization of resources and assets, scheduling and public needs.

**REC Policy 2.1.2 Promoting Recreation**

The County shall program, promote and conduct activities to fulfill the diverse needs of County residents and visitors for recreational, educational and leisure activities. The County shall facilitate and participate with vendors, event sponsors and organizations in the use of parks and facilities.

**REC Policy 2.1.3 Quality through Collaboration**

The County shall maintain high quality recreational programming by working with and utilizing best practices and program curriculum of recognized organizations such as National Recreation and Park Association, American Red Cross, Little League Baseball, Florida Recreation and Parks Association, and other national and State professional organizations.

**REC Policy 2.1.4 Sports Fields**

The County shall provide a variety of sports fields, maintained and programmed in compliance with recognized standards to serve active recreation needs of youth and adults.

**REC Policy 2.1.5 Aquatic Facilities**

The County shall provide a variety of recreational aquatic facilities to be maintained, programmed and staffed in compliance with recognized standards to serve active recreation needs of youth and adults.

REC OBJECTIVE 2.2 SPECIAL PURPOSE VENUES

To provide special purpose venues that are capable of offering high-quality, professional-level, diverse events and programs attracting and meeting the needs of residents and visitors on a regional, State and national level.

**REC Policy 2.2.1 Sports Park**

The County shall maintain and provide for operation of a multi-field sports park capable of hosting a number of diverse events and programs throughout the years

**REC Policy 2.2.2 Event Center**

The County shall maintain and provide for operation of an indoor/outdoor event and conference center capable of hosting a number of diverse meetings, conferences, events and programs throughout the year.

**REC Policy 2.2.3 Contracts and Partnerships**

The County shall enter into contracts and partnerships with businesses and groups such as local restaurants, hotels, promoters, trade organizations and business, civic and fraternal organizations for advertising and marketing and other event-related services at special purpose venues in order to provide the best possible experience for clients and guests.

**REC Policy 2.2.4 Food, Beverage and Sundries Services**

The County shall ensure provision of professional food, beverage and sundry services catering to both popular-type fare as well as specialized culinary services when needed.

**REC Policy 2.2.5 Marketing**

The County shall market the special event venues locally, regionally and nationally through a broad spectrum of resources including but not limited to press releases, sales kits, website, advertising and public outreach opportunities.

**REC Policy 2.2.6 Technology**

The County shall research and implement technological improvements and best-practice enhancements that contribute to competing with like facilities in order to maintain standing as a premiere special event venue.

**REC GOAL 3 – Library Services**

The goal is not immediately relevant to the development of a parks master plan.

**REC GOAL 4 SERVICE DELIVERY**

**Identify opportunities and promote and execute strategies that add value and validity to the delivery of community services including parks, recreation, libraries, historic preservation, arts and humanities.**

**REC OBJECTIVE 4.1 FUNDING**

To identify, evaluate and use alternative sources of revenue for acquisition, development and operation of facilities and programs.

**REC Policy 4.1.1 Grants**

The County shall seek and, where necessary, provide matching funds as financially feasible to use State, Federal, foundation and other grant programs to assist with the provision of facilities and services.

**REC Policy 4.1.2 Alternative Funding**

The County shall create procedures and mechanisms to allow the County to accept donations, exchanges-in-kind, bequests, and to solicit and use private sector investment through sponsorships in order to assist in the provision of real property, capital improvements and delivery of programs.

**REC Policy 4.1.3 Usage Fees**

The County shall establish a schedule of fees appropriate to the provision of facilities and services, and shall provide for reevaluation every two years or sooner, as appropriate.

**REC Policy 4.1.4 Capital Investments**

The County shall use impact fees, bonds, sales tax and other alternative sources of revenue to finance land, facilities and capital investment in accordance with State Statutes.

**REC Policy 4.1.5 Concession Agreements**

The County shall determine the potential for providing and operating facilities, programs and services through concession-type agreements.

**REC Policy 4.1.6 Special Revenue Fund**

The County shall maintain a special revenue fund that provides need-based assistance for children to attend summer and other specialty camps through donations, sponsorships, grants and other revenue opportunities as they become available.

**REC Policy 4.1.7 Library Funding**

The County shall investigate and make a recommendation regarding the establishment of a dedicated property tax millage to fund the provision of libraries and library services by 2015.

**REC Policy 4.1.8 Self-sufficiency**

The County shall identify and promote strategies that contribute to the financial self-sufficiency of facilities and programs.

REC OBJECTIVE 4.2 SERVICE BASE

To promote availability, expand accessibility and ensure sustainability of activities by taking advantage of emerging and alternative strategies and recognizing opportunities to serve broader segments of the population.

**REC Policy 4.2.1 Green Practices**

The County shall encourage the use of green building, conservation and recycling practices in the sustainable design, construction and operation of facilities and programs.

**REC Policy 4.2.2 Inclusiveness**

The County shall provide facilities and operate programs so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities and other special needs populations.

**REC Policy 4.2.3 Trends**

The County shall monitor, evaluate and incorporate as appropriate new trends in the provision of amenities, programs and service delivery methods.

**REC Policy 4.2.4 Web-based Accessibility**

The County shall implement interactive, web-based access to information at each level of citizen contact.

**REC Policy 4.2.5 Interlocal Agreements**

The County shall maintain an interlocal agreement with the Charlotte County School Board to provide for mutually beneficial utilization of resources and provision of recreational, educational and extracurricular opportunities.

REC OBJECTIVE 4.3 CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

To actively seek and encourage citizen involvement to assist with and improve the provision of facilities, programs and services.

**REC Policy 4.3.1 Public Input**

The County shall periodically identify, evaluate and respond to residents' and visitors' needs, desires and satisfaction with respect to their use and participation in amenities and programs.

**REC Policy 4.3.2 Park and Recreation Advisory Board**

The County's Park and Recreation Advisory Board, a citizen advisory board to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), shall review park and recreation issues and opportunities and make recommendations to the BCC for the provision and promotion of recreational opportunities.

**REC Policy 4.3.3 Accreditation**

The County shall meet high standards in the delivery of a park and recreation program as evidenced by the pursuit of accreditation through a recognized State or national program by 2020.

**REC Policy 4.3.4 Partnerships**

The County shall expand and enhance the delivery of facilities, programs and services through the establishment of cooperative partnerships with businesses, organizations, and governmental agencies.

**REC Policy 4.3.5 Support Groups**

The County shall encourage and facilitate the establishment of non-profit organizations in order to leverage available public resources to solicit financial support and provide manpower to acquire, develop and operate programs and services.

**REC Policy 4.3.6 Volunteer Programs**

The County shall establish formal programs, including appropriate inducements, for using volunteers in constructing, operating and maintaining facilities, library services and historical division services, and assisting with and providing programs, services and research to supplement available public resources.

**REC Policy 4.3.7 Internships**

The County shall encourage and facilitate the use of interns to enable students and other qualified individuals to formally participate in the delivery of services as part of an educational pursuit.

Future Land Use Map Series: [http://www2.charlottefl.com/compplan/external/1-FLU/NGOP/1-FLU\\_AppII\\_July24-2013.pdf](http://www2.charlottefl.com/compplan/external/1-FLU/NGOP/1-FLU_AppII_July24-2013.pdf)

[http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view\\_doc.aspx?show\\_comments=true&docid=11](http://www2.charlottefl.com/CompPlan/main/view_doc.aspx?show_comments=true&docid=11)

## APPENDIX B: CITY OF PUNTA GORDA Comprehensive Plan

The Parks and Grounds Division of the City of Punta Gorda is responsible for the development, operation and maintenance of city parks and recreation facilities. Approximately 17 developed parks and recreation facilities are maintained by the department. Impact fees and ad valorem taxes are the City's principal funding sources for parks and recreation. Impact fees can be used only for land acquisition and capital improvements that increase the level of service. Operation and maintenance expenses typically come from ad valorem taxes. There are 19 park locations that are classified as city parks, totaling about 109 acres. The current LOS standard for the City is 5.0 acres of developed parklands per functional or seasonal resident.

**Goal:** The City of Punta Gorda will act to provide public and private recreation resources; provide public parks appropriately located to the population they are intended to serve; coordinate the City facilities with those of other governments; and acquire important open space systems that protect property from storm surge events and/or preserve important habitats.

**OBJECTIVE 5.1.1:** PUNTA GORDA WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF, NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS THAT SERVE THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY AND SERVE AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL SYSTEM CONSISTING OF CITY, COUNTY, STATE, AND NATIONAL PARKS.

Policy 5.1.1.1: Punta Gorda will maintain and improve the park system through continual redesign and renovation of existing parks and by the acquisition and development of new parks.

Measurement: Maintenance activities improvements and land acquired for parks.

Policy 5.1.1.2 : Punta Gorda will cooperate with Governmental entities for the use of appropriate e facilities as neighborhood or community parks.

Measurement: Agreements with governmental entities for use of recreational facilities.

Policy 5.1.1.3: The Punta Gorda park system will include intensive play areas, nature oriented activity areas, extensive natural areas, special activity areas, and urban scenic and passive areas.

Measurement: Amount of such areas in City parks.

Policy 5.1.1.4: Punta Gorda will incorporate its historic districts and structures, and the multi-use recreational trails into the overall park system.

Measurement: Number of multi-use recreational trails connecting the historic districts to the park system.

**OBJECTIVE 5.1.2:** PUNTA GORDA WILL MAINTAIN A SYSTEM OF OPEN SPACES THAT WILL CONSERVE AND PRESERVE MARINE AND TERRESTRIAL FLORA AND FAUNA AND THEIR ASSOCIATED HABITATS.

Policy 5.1.2.1: Punta Gorda will preserve or restore the natural features to include native plant species and natural water flows of a site when acquiring or developing City owned open spaces.

Measurement: Amount of lands, vegetative cover types, restored or preserved for such properties acquired or developed by the City.

Policy 5.1.2.2: Punta Gorda will encourage the protection of privately owned environmentally sensitive lands by public acquisition, conservation easements, transfer of development rights, or by voluntary dedication.

Measurement: Acres of conservation lands protected by the aforementioned means.

Policy 5.1.2.3: Punta Gorda will consider the following criteria when pursuing the acquisition of open space:

a. Unique features such as plant communities, wildlife populations, mangrove stands, saltwater marshes, freshwater wetlands, beaches, or sand flats.

- b. Critical ecological features such as protection of surface and groundwater quality or as a protection from severe storms surge events.
- c. Locations suitable for outdoor educational programs.
- d. Relatively undisturbed examples of biological communities.

Measurement: Documentation of the aforementioned factors of any open space purchase by the City.

Policy 5.1.2.4: Punta Gorda will make available density bonuses, or other appropriate incentives for developments that preserve environmentally sensitive lands.

Measurement: Acres preserved through development incentives.

Policy 5.1.2.5: Punta Gorda will assist Charlotte County in the development of a scenic wildlife corridor or trail system around the perimeter of the City and which connects to the populated City areas or the Charlotte Harbor State Preserve.

Measurement: Amount of funding, staff support, or other assistance leading to such a corridor or trail system

**OBJECTIVE 5.1.3: PUNTA GORDA WILL PROMOTE THE USE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RESOURCES TO MEET RECREATION DEMANDS.**

Policy 5.1.3.1: By 2010, Punta Gorda will develop a park and open space plan with standards that will integrate public, semi-private, and private recreational facilities into an overall plan.

Measurement: Drafting and adoption of such a plan

Policy 5.1.3.2: Punta Gorda will require developers of residential subdivisions or planned unit developments to dedicate or set aside lands for parks, or to develop and maintain a private or semi-private park system as part of their development, or otherwise contribute to the acquisition and/or development of parks.

Measurement: Amount of land or contributions received.

Policy 5.1.3.3: Punta Gorda will assist Charlotte County through the County General Fund revenues received from City taxpayers, or other appropriate financing mechanisms, in the acquisition of regional or district park sites which complement the City's neighborhood and community park systems.

Measurement: Charlotte County tax funds received from City residents and used for acquisition of park sites.

Policy 5.1.3.4: Punta Gorda will acquire, when possible, property for parks and open spaces in advance of annexation to provide an adequate amount and distribution of recreation and open space lands.

Measurement: Acres of park land acquired.

Policy 5.1.3.5: Punta Gorda will work with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) in the development of bicycle/sidewalk and passive recreation facilities.

Measurement: Planning and development accomplished for such a system in and around CHEC.

**OBJECTIVE 5.1.4: PUNTA GORDA WILL PROMOTE ACCESS AND/OR PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF ALL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEMS IN THE CITY.**

Policy 5.1.4.1: Punta Gorda will operate a park and open space system in a manner that will promote an equal opportunity for enjoyment by all persons including those with disabilities.

Measurement: Accessibility features included in City parks.

Policy 5.1.4.2: Punta Gorda will not charge user fees at its park and open space facilities, but may require fees for events taking place at a park or to maintain its specialized recreation facilities such as boat ramps and night lighting for tennis facilities.

Measurement: Absence of user fees prohibited by this policy.

Policy 5.1.4.3: All public parks will have public access via a public street.

Measurement: Documentation of public street access to public parks.

Policy 5.1.4.4: Punta Gorda will seek to distribute parks and open spaces so as to serve all neighborhoods.

Measurement: Park and open space acres acquired that satisfy locational needs identified by plan described in Policy 5.1.3.2

[http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/CompPlan/Rec\\_OpenSpacesApp012009.pdf](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/CompPlan/Rec_OpenSpacesApp012009.pdf)

## City of Punta Gorda Parks Master Plan

The Plan reviews the City's current and future delivery of recreation services as it relates to the City's growing population and as a vital component of the continued economic sustainability of the City.

### Goals

1. Offer a wider variety of water based activities throughout the park system.
2. Maintain the unique small town, old Florida charm of Punta Gorda through the preservation and reinforcement of Historic Resources
3. Provide and encourage public spaces to soften the urban landscape – to put the right park with the right amenities in the right neighborhood.
4. Provide tree-lined avenues to connect parks, neighborhoods, and community destinations.
5. Utilize multi-use recreational trails that connect parks, neighborhoods, civic places and other community destinations
6. Design parks to accommodate multi-generational recreational needs
7. As transit becomes available, utilize it to reinforce community access to the Park system
8. Encourage events and activities in the parks to enliven the public realm
9. Provide opportunities for continued economic and social development and sustainability
10. To ensure conservation areas and critical habitats are protected and preserved
11. Enhance existing and underdeveloped parks to maximize potential and increase neighborhood benefits

### Level of Service

Historically the Level of Service for components of a Park System has been measured on a simple acres-per-thousand of population basis. This flat analysis does not provide any data relative to the quality of service for the delivery of the parks as a public good. Over the past decade a number of studies by local governments, universities, and others have illustrated the personal, environmental, social, and economic benefits associated by being within ¼ - ½ mile radius of a park.

#### *Regional and Environmental Parks*

The City of Punta Gorda currently relies on the Charlotte County Parks System for the provision of Regional Park facilities. South County Regional Recreation Center and Carmalita Athletic Park provide the City with sufficient access to athletic fields, Skate Park, BMX track, recreational center and public pool facilities. The Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) provides the regional environmental educational component serving both local and regional populations. In addition, the City's waterfront parks (Gilchrist, Laishley, and Ponce De Leon) serve as a regional attraction for parts of Charlotte, Sarasota, Desoto & Lee County. Level of Service shall be: 5 mile radius (Primary Service Area); 10 mile (Secondary Service Area).

#### *Urban Parks*



The Urban Park provides a green relief from the intensity and excitement of the urban landscape. This green relief creates a public gathering place for the exchange of ideas and the random social interactions that provide the lifeblood of a city, town, or village. Level of Service shall be: ¼ mile radius (Primary Service Area); ½ mile (Secondary Service Area).

#### *Waterfront Parks*

Waterfront Parks such as Gilchrist, Laishley & Ponce de Leon, serve regional and local users. Citizen and Council input seeks to increase recreational opportunities and restore some of the historical activities that once occurred along the waterfronts. Level of Service shall be: ¼ mile radius (Primary Service Area); ½ mile (Secondary Service Area).

#### *Neighborhood Parks*

Neighborhood Parks generally serve a small geography with the park amenities deemed vital to the function of that particular neighborhood. These facilities should occur within a reasonable walking/biking distance of the neighborhood it is intended to serve. Level of Service shall be: ¼ mile radius (Primary Service Area); ½ mile (Secondary Service Area).

#### *Linear Parks*

Linear Parks serve the vital function of connecting the varied park types to each other and to the communities they serve. They are designed to move residents and visitors safely and logically through the Park System in a seamless manner. This linkage was the general consensus among the citizens and business owners surveyed during the Charrette. The proximity to these facilities is a good secondary determining factor of quality of life within the context of the Parks System. These facilities should occur within a reasonable walking/biking distance of the neighborhoods they are intended to serve. There are currently no Linear Parks in the City, however many are in the planning, engineering or construction phases and once completed, will be a major component of the Ring Around the City. Level of Service shall be: ¼ mile radius (Primary Service Area); ½ mile (Secondary Service Area).

### **Implementation**

#### *Short Range*

1. Linear Park Development Phase I-III
2. Bike Path and Multi-Use Recreation Trail Phase I-III
3. Harborwalk- Best Western to Fisherman's Village
4. Harborwalk- Patty Avenue Trail Head (Trabue Park)
5. Shreve Street Connector: An alternative route for a system of greenways connecting community parks, recreation areas to the Linear Park system (phase III) by means of a trail along the Rail Road Right-of-Way
6. Waterfront Sports Activity Park: Proposed project to include boat storage for nonmotorized boats (sailboats, kayaks, canoes) and a facility Staff is to gather preliminary needs analysis and report back to Council.
7. Park Safety Equipment: Implement provision of police patrol on paths, trails and other hard to access areas through the purchase of a T-3 electric 3 wheel vehicle.
8. Laishley Parking Improvements: Improvements to Laishley Park to include grading, drainage & turf improvements to the Center Drive Circle

9. Day Docks: Construction of docks for boaters and tourists allowing access to the downtown businesses, Harborwalk, Gilchrist and Lashley Parks and the Charlotte County Events Center
10. East Mooring Field: Creation of a 40 ball mooring field approximately 1,000 feet offshore (1100' X 1100' SF)
11. Lashley Park: Rework the main Event Lawn, to include regarding, drainage, irrigation & turf management

#### *Intermediate Range*

1. Intersection Enhancements: Pedestrian Safety and Access
2. Retta Esplanade Improvements: to enhance street parking, sidewalks, and lighting and increase open space in Gilchrist Park along the north side of W. Retta Esplanade
3. Tree Inventory: update the existing tree inventory to include Historic Overlay district
4. Colony Point Drive: community garden, small pavilion, on street parking
5. Nature Park Improvements: restrooms, bus loop, parking, educational pavilion, and paddle craft launch.
6. Trabue Park: US 17S/ Marion Ave streetscape, pavilions, restrooms, play area, environmental mitigation, observation pier.
7. Gilchrist Park Improvements: replace bathroom and picnic pavilion; regarding, drainage, irrigation & turf for event lawn; new playground equipment, play surface, restroom, pavilion, picnic area & fencing
8. Summer houses gazebo in style of original pavilions associated with the Punta Gorda Hotel
9. Park Improvements: carousel house
10. Develop partnerships

#### *Long Range*

1. Royal Poinciana Avenue Improvements: Bicycle Pedestrian improvements, street trees, overhead utilities, drainage modifications
2. Burnt Store Meadow Neighborhood Park: neighborhood meetings and concept design, construction and permitting documents for neighborhood park. Construction of playground area, picnic pavilion, parking and other improvements.
3. Monaco to Madrid Improvements: Bicycle/pedestrian improvements, street trees, overhead utilities, drainage modifications
4. Bal Harbor Avenue Apartments: Bicycle/pedestrian improvements, street trees, overhead utilities, drainage modifications
5. Park Beach Circle Park: "Summer Houses" gazebo in style of original pavilions associated with the Punta Gorda Hotel, on street parking, landscape improvements
6. Gilchrist Park Boat Club/Bayfront Redesign and Construction: concept design, construction, permitting design documents. Construction of community facilities, parking, and site improvements.

<http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthgmt/Rec&OpenSpaceMastPlan.html>

## **Punta Gorda Pathways**

The Punta Gorda Pathways is a system of approximately 18 miles of Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails and Paths that will connect the City's neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas. The Punta Gorda Pathways project is being funded through a combination of Federal Transportation Funds, 1 Cent Local Option Infrastructure Sale Tax, and private sector development projects. This major infrastructure investment represents a down payment on the path to a more sustainable Punta Gorda. The Punta Gorda Pathways is composed of four various projects.

## **Harborwalk**

Punta Gorda Harborwalk established in 2010, is situated along scenic Charlotte Harbor. The Harborwalk encompasses approximately three (3) miles of Punta Gorda Pathways. This signature feature connects East Punta Gorda at Charlotte Regional Medical Center to West Punta Gorda at Fishermen's Village with safe means of access under both US 41 bridges. Featured destination points along the Harborwalk include:

- Laishley Park Marina
- Laishley Park
- Interactive Fountain
- Gilchrist Park
- Trabue Park
- Fishing Pier
- Restaurants/Shops/Hotels
- Spirit of Punta Gorda Sculpture

### **Linear Park**

The City's Linear Park transformed the historic railroad right-of-way, once the southern terminus of railroad service on the western coast of Florida, into a scenic trail. Connecting the Harborwalk, to the north, to US 41 at the southern end of downtown, the path traverses for approximately two miles through the City's historic neighborhood district. Accessible from Linear Park Pathways are:

- Fisherman's Village (Restaurants/Shops/Marina)
- Visual Arts Center
- Sculpture Park
- Educational Markers
- Connection to Harborwalk

### **US 41 Multi-Use Recreational Trail (MURT)**

Approximately four miles long the US 41 Multi-Use Recreational Trail provides visitors and residents an opportunity to connect to neighborhoods and commercial areas south of the historic core of Punta Gorda:

- Burnt Store Meadows
- Burnt Store Isles
- Seminole Lakes
- History Park
- Punta Gorda Library
- Golf Course
- Muscle Car Museum
- Hounds on Henry
- YMCA (gym & tennis)
- Shopping & Dining

### **Connector Projects**

Bridges: A 30 mile ride runs over 13 bridges in the Punta Gorda area including a round trip over Charlotte Harbor

Tropical Gulf: A 31 mile ride runs south to the Webb-Babcock National Wildlife Refuge and back to Downtown Punta Gorda

Punta Gorda: A 17 mile ride runs west from Downtown Punta Gorda through the Punta Gorda Isles neighborhood, then east past Edison State College, and back Downtown.

Washington Loop: A 30 mile ride runs east from downtown past the Punta Gorda Airport on a route in the countryside around Washington Loop Rd and Riverside Dr.

<http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/ringaroundcity.html>

## South County Gateway Planning Meetings

The Charlotte County Growth Management Staff, TEAM Punta Gorda and City Staff have held two South County Gateway Meetings. These public meetings were held to solicit public input regarding the future development and desired community character in the South Charlotte County Area.

Based on the public input received at the meeting City Staff created this map: <http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/userdata/growthmgmt/ScenicHighwayStaffMap.pdf>, which illustrates four potential routes: Tamiami Route along US 41 from Sarasota County to Lee County, Peace River Route along the Peace River via US 17 and Riverside Drive, Burnt Store Route along Burnt Store Road from US 41 to Lee County, and Washington Loop Route runs the entire course of Washington Loop Road from US 17 to US 17.

The Planning Meetings are still a work in progress. More attention should be given to further community dialog.

<http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/southcountygateway.html>

## Alternative Transportation Plan 2030

The Alternative Transportation Plan 2030 provides guidance for the logical long-range expansion of a network of pedestrian, bicycle, and kayak/canoe facilities. It encompasses the entire city of Punta Gorda, but due to a number of enclaves, some logical system connections cross into unincorporated Charlotte County, so funding for these areas should be sought through Charlotte County, FDOT, and other sources. The plan works towards the goal of improving the quality of life for residents, creating a more sustainable environment, providing greater opportunity for recreation, reducing traffic congestion, and vehicle noise. The Plan is designed to maximize access, safety, recreation, and transportation through a logical plan for the long-range development of sidewalks, bicycle routes, and kayak/canoe facilities.

### **Downtown Punta Gorda**

Downtown has a great potential to be a place where primary transportation can be by walking or bicycling. The goal for this area is the completion of the Harborwalk and additional beautification through additional landscaping, street furniture, and decorative pavers, bricks or stamped concrete where appropriate. Priority is also focused on enhancing the bicycle facilities within the downtown through signage, bicycle lanes and the development of the Linear Park multi-use path. Additionally, two kayak/canoe launch points will be designated through signage and possible site improvements at Laishley Park and Gilchrist Park.

## **South of Downtown**

The primary goal in this area is increasing connectivity from the surrounding neighborhoods to the school locations, which are densely packed in this area. Through new private development, the city would work toward providing sidewalks along all streets in these areas that have multifamily or commercial zoning designations. Additional funding for sidewalks in this area may be available through the Safe Route to School Program administered by the FDOT.

## **Punta Gorda Isles, Burnt Store Isles, and Burnt Store Meadows**

The primary goal for this area is to construct sidewalks on the remaining connecting streets. The second goal will be to better connect Burnt Store Meadows, Burnt Store Isles, and Punta Gorda Isles to the rest of the City's pedestrian and bicycle network by multiuse path linkages along Burnt Store Road, Aqi Esta Road, and US 41.

## **Standards**

Standard sidewalks shall be a minimum of 5-feet wide concrete with engineering standard. Street intersections and major driveways shall require textured and colorized concrete meeting generally accepted engineering practices designed to visually and tactilely warn pedestrians of the potential of vehicular conflicts.

In areas of new commercial development or in existing urban areas, minimum of 8 feet-wide sidewalks constructed of concrete, special pavers, bricked, or stamped concrete, curb and gutter drainage is required. Sidewalks shall be separated from the street by a minimum 6-feet wide planning strip or a minimum 5-foot wide strip of paving material with tree cutouts at regular intervals.

Special sidewalks predominately located near schools shall be a minimum of 8-feet wide. Sidewalks shall be separated from the street by a minimum 6-feet wide planning strip.

Trails shall be constructed a minimum of 8-feet wide shell, sand, and Portland cement construction to simulate shell with a higher durability factor. This standard is designated for park settings and not associated with standard road right-of-ways.

Boardwalks shall be a minimum of 8-feet wide and constructed of wood or similar material and elevated from the surface by piers to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Railings shall be constructed to a height of 43-inches with a grab bar at 36-inch height. This standard is designated for park settings with environmentally sensitive areas and not associated with standard road right-of-ways.

Multi-use paths shall be a minimum of 8-feet wide concrete, or asphalt engineering standard. Hybrid bicycle lanes for motor vehicle and bicycle traffic shall be a minimum of 14 feet wide but no wider than 14-feet-9-inches not including gutter. A width of 14 feet allows a motor vehicle to safely pass a bicycle without crossing into the adjacent travel lane, and the maximum 14'9" width prohibits a motor vehicle from passing another motor vehicle on the right. Standard bicycle route and share the road signage shall also be required. Standard bicycle lanes shall be a minimum of 5-feet wide from the outside edge of the outer lane marker to the edge of pavement.

<http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/depts/growthmgmt/documents/AlternativeTransportation2030.pdf>

## APPENDIX C: UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

### Parkside

- **Objective 1: Safe and Attractive**
  - Implement a Park Watch Program
  - Regulate Alcohol and Tobacco Use in District Parks
  - Currently, two parks McGuire and Lake Betty are within the district. They are configured as individual, isolated neighborhood parks. McGuire has large tennis courts, basketball, horseshoes, playground equipment, a Girl Scout facility, and public restrooms. Most of these features are old and broken. There is very poor line of sight visibility into the park, so it is very comfortable and convenient for groups of homeless people to spend their day sitting, drinking in the park. Poor line of sight visibility also makes this park a magnet for criminal activity. Lake Betty has a basketball court, picnic facilities, a small children's playground, and fishing. The district also contains several canals as open space. These facilities, particularly the Sunshine waterway and Sunshine Lake, are in need of dredging to enhance both the drainage control function and area aesthetics.
- **Objective 2: Urban in Character**
  - Cleanup Sunshine Lake and Sunshine Waterway
- **Objective 3: Known for Great Public Spaces**
  - Transform McGuire and Lake Betty Parks into Destination Attraction
  - Acquire and Construct New Events Square as Destination
  - Establish Pocket Parks and Waypoint
    - The County shall develop nine pocket parks within the district providing an active venue for recreation and attractive waypoints between district parks and other destinations. The County shall develop a pocket park on the south side of the Cultural Center of Port Charlotte as a bocce ball court and shall develop a checker/game board park near the corner of Aaron Street and Brinson Avenue. Other park themes are yet to be determined. Pocket parks shall have active features within them to promote healthy living. The County shall consider providing benches every one-eighth of a mile between pocket parks within the core commercial area and in other locations, as it determines appropriate.
  - Facilitate Design Charrettes for Parks and Pocket Parks
  - Consider Dedicating Park in Memory of "Younique" Miller
- **Objective 4: Fostering Community**
  - The County shall promote community events and encourage community gatherings within the district.
- **Objective 5: Livable and Walkable**
  - Install Interconnecting Multi-use Trails
  - Connect District Areas with Multi-use Bridges
- **Objective 6: Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth**
  - The quality of amenities anticipated in the district must be appropriate to attract and encourage land development by technology companies and new medical, professional, and financial service offices, and other quality employers.
- **Objective 7: An Identifiable Destination**

- The district will have signature features such as well-identified gateways, lighting, wayfinding signs and landscaping.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/CRA/Parkside/Pages/default.aspx>

## South Gulf Cove

Although SGC has generally smaller parks, the combination of a to-be-identified-and-assembled community park site, the lagoon waterfront park, the publicly owned larger parcels and the securing of park boundaries and needed parcels as recommended in this plan, SGC could achieve a minimum level of service of 3.40 acres per 1,000 population in comparison to the countywide 3.29 acres per 1,000 population.

- **Objective 1:** Create a well-planned system of open space and recreation lands to reduce the impact of urbanization, reduce density, and serve the leisure and aesthetic needs of all residents. The system will recognize the relationship between developed areas and the natural character of the land and drainage ways.
- **Objective 2:** Provide a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly community by establishing a pedestrian/ bicycle system on major trafficked roadways to allow easy access from residential areas to major parks/recreation, public facilities, private parks/recreation and commercial areas. Anchors to the system will be:
  - Northeast: A linear waterfront park at Calumet and St. Paul on County-owned property adjacent to the lagoon waterfront along Section 93.
  - North: A waterfront park at Calumet/San Domingo enhanced by the three private park and recreation tracts at the same intersection.
  - Northwest: An active neighborhood park at San Domingo/Wheeling.
  - Southwest: A large park to include sports fields.
  - Central: A community park to be assembled in a location central to SGC and accessible from the pedestrian bikeway and at least one main road.
  - Commercial concentrations along C.R. 771 and on Ingraham, Keystone, and Appleton. The system will be further supported by small parks, urban open spaces and vistas along and proximate to the system, neighborhood parks and special facilities throughout SGC, and private park/recreation sites, church and public/semipublic sites.
- **Objective 3:** Bridge crossings for the pedestrian/bicycle system will need to be worked out as they may have inadequate width, although they do provide a pedestrian walkway. Buffer, maintain and beautify these small parks and spaces so they do not become obtrusive to surrounding properties.
- **Objective 4:** Where possible use waterfront parks as special facilities for picnicking and similar low intensity uses. Preserve vistas in these parks and prohibit parking.
- **Objective 5:** Connect the system to the "Pioneer Trail" using a single access point at Ingraham and C. R.771. Other accesses to commercial along C. R. 771 should end at the easternmost boundary of the commercial to discourage access to the interior of SGC by nonresidents. County owned parcels along C. R. 771 should be landscaped and beautified by the county using thematic vegetation as specified by SGC.
- **Objective 6:** Strengthen the waterfront identity of the community by stressing water vistas and access wherever possible

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/boards-committees/sgcac/Site%20Documents/SouthGulfCove.pdf>



## Placida

To create the citizen's master plan for the Placida community, there were "vision" sessions held in order to conduct a needs assessment focused on three central areas of recreation:

### ***Sidewalks***

- The Ad Hoc committee recommended extending sidewalks along the entire length of the project corridor on C.R. 775 and C.R. 771. The extension of the sidewalks should be considered part of the proposed Coral Creek Bridge Project. Extension beyond the Bridge should be considered secondary phase.
- Coral Creek Bridge Sidewalks should join with the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail.
- The Extension of the sidewalks to the boundary of the Placida community should be funded through extension of the 1% sales tax.

### ***Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails***

- The consensus was not to extend the bicycle path to the Boca Grande Causeway beyond C.R. 775.
- Recommendation to endorse the inclusion of Phase III of the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail into the Coral Creek Bridge project to complete the last leg of the trail two years ahead of time.

### ***Boat Ramps***

- The boat ramps within the Placida Community are located within the Charlotte County boat ramp facility. Citizens do not want additional ramps or parking associated with the County facility. Citizens also want "No Parking" signs and associated fines for the area along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771.
- It is proposed that the County should consider requiring a permit to use the boat facility, providing a vehicular decal to identify permit holders. The permit would be free for Charlotte County residents.

<http://www.charlottefl.com/OutReach/pzdocs/Placida/PlacidaCommunityPlan.pdf>

## Boca Grande

The Boca Grande community has a goal to promote, protect, and enhance existing and potential open space, recreational facilities, and the quality of life for the residents and stakeholders of Boca Grande. These efforts will enhance the aesthetic qualities of Boca Grande and benefit its residents while preserving the characteristics of its fragile barrier island system. The following objectives align with this goal:

- **Objective 1:** Charlotte County will seek to enhance and protect the quality of life for residents, visitors, and stakeholders through the preservation of functional open space and recreational opportunities while seeking to limit demands upon a restricted infrastructure and enhance the aesthetic qualities of Gaspirilla Island.

<http://www.charlottefl.com/OutReach/pzdocs/bocagrande/CommunityPlanDraft/BocaGrandeCommunityPlan.pdf>

## Grove City

Grove City has developed parks and facilities within and surrounding the community. Funds from the Grove City MSBU have gone towards a variety of community enhancements including community entrance signage, Placida Road median beautification, and development of the Colorado Walking Park, which serves to link other amenities and initiatives. The community has within its boundaries a large portion of the 420 acre Oyster Creek Regional Park. Cedar Point Environmental Park is a 115 acre park situated adjacent to Lemon Bay. Ainger Creek has an affiliated Boat Ramp. Below are objectives relating to park and recreation development within the community:

- **Objective 1:** partner with agencies and organizations to educate the public regarding the protection of critical habitats and the reestablishment of habitat connectivity through greenways, water courses, and habitat corridors.
- **Objective 2:** liaison with the Parks and Recreation Department to facilitate community programs involving youth.
- **Objective 3:** promote opportunities to experience the natural beauty of the community's location along Lemon Bay and surrounding waterways through the protection of view corridors, open spaces, vistas, and related resources.
- **Objective 4:** maintain lines of communication with appropriate County and agency staff with regards to programs focused on the protection of the environment and affiliated natural resources.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/boards-committees/gcab/Site%20Documents/GroveCityCommunityPlan.pdf>

## Little Gasparilla Island

Little Gasparilla Island is approximately 2.5 miles in length and averages between ¼ and ½ mile in width. The island is physically connected to Don Pedro Island to the north; however, the Don Pedro State Park serves as a buffer that only allows for pedestrian access. The goal of the Little Gasparilla Island community is: to “maintain and protect Little Gasparilla Island’s low-density residential nature, while providing for limited non-residential uses to meet community needs...and manage growth and the rate of growth in a manner that ensures the sustainability of its resources and the attainability of its community vision.” There is a privately owned church that serves as a meeting place for the residents. Other than the church there are no community facilities. There is a small library that operates on an honor system, attached to a home owned by a stakeholder.

- **Objective 1:** Charlotte County will coordinate with the LGI Advisory Committee to identify an island site that serves as the location from which community services may be provided.
- **Objective 2:** while low-density residential is the principal land use, Charlotte County will explore zoning revisions and other measures to promote limited commercial and community land uses on the island.
- **Objective 3:** Land acquisition for conservation and green space will be promoted. The acquisition of land and partnership opportunities should be explored.
- **Objective 4:** Charlotte County will encourage the LGI Advisory Committee to work with private entities to reduce platted lots through assembly and deplating, public acquisition, transfers of density rights, and the possibility of lot swaps.
- **Objective 5:** Maintain boat access to the island through ensuring the water-based network for residents and visitors is navigable.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/boards-committees/lgiac/Site%20Documents/FinalCommunityPlan.pdf>

## Manasota and Sandpiper Key

The purpose and intent of the environmentally sensitive district is to preserve and protect certain land and water areas in unincorporated Charlotte County which have overriding ecological, hydrological, physiographic importance to the public at large. It is intended to preserve and protect open spaces, park lands, wilderness areas, marshlands, watersheds and water recharge areas, scenic areas, beaches and native flora and fauna in those areas designated ES or LD on the comprehensive plan map. It is intended to allow limited public/private recreational/educational uses and their incidental accessory uses and structures. It is of high interest that the existing green spaces on Manasota Key are preserved as much as possible. The loss of this resource will adversely affect not only the quality-of-life of residents and visitors, but will also have a profound impact on the wildlife that currently exists.

- **Objective 1:** extend sidewalks from the public beaches to the side roads so all main roads have a sidewalk on at least one side.
- **Objective 2:** Charlotte County must test all outflow pipes into Lemon Bay Preserve to ensure pollution requirements compliance.
- **Objective 3:** Attention must be given to the lack of adequate public and private parking near the beach.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/boards-committees/mskac/Site%20Documents/ManasotaKeyCommunityPlan.pdf>

## Charlotte Harbor

The Charlotte Harbor CRA is located in the Mid-Section of Charlotte County beginning on the west side of the Peace River Bridge and measures approximately 766 acres in size. There are four main districts within this CRA.

### *Riverwalk District*

- Coordination with the Punta Gorda CRA will allow for enhanced recreational and marketing opportunities.
- By building a pedestrian walkway under the US 41 northbound bridge, pedestrians could access river walks on either side of the bridge, connecting Laishley Park, Gilchrist Park, and Bayshore Live Oak Park. The county should consider acquiring waterfront easements to complete the Riverwalk east and west of the bridge.

### *US 41 Gateway District*

- The CRA includes a portion of an older commercial corridor, US 41. The CRA currently has ordinances that enact architectural guidelines and sign restrictions, which will be enforced as buildings are rebuilt and new businesses start up. To improve the appearance of the corridor, investment in landscaping, sidewalks, signage, wastewater, and stormwater management plans are needed. In addition, the CRA will need to coordinate with the private water utility franchise to improve waterlines in the area. While there is already pressure to develop the waterfront properties, the CRA should develop incentives to businesses and property owners along the corridor to expedite the cohesion of architectural styles and infrastructure improvements by offering such incentives as facade-improvement low-interest loans and/or grants, tax increment rebates, or height and/or density bonuses.

### *Charlotte Harbor Neighborhood District*

- The county realizes that it may need to acquire some land to implement the stormwater master plan and to provide future parking. Currently some of the neighborhood still uses wells and septic tanks. To improve the quality and level of development in the neighborhood, financing options need to be developed to allow for the completion of a wastewater system and improved water lines within the district.
- The Parks and Recreation Department has set aside funds to create the Bayshore Live Oak Park, which will include a water feature, playground, concert pavilion, picnic facilities, restrooms, and historical and environmental interpretative signage. The County continues to seek additional funding to complete the land acquisition of the designated park boundaries.

### *Melbourne Neighborhood District*

- The residential district west of US 41 requires infrastructure improvements including water, wastewater, and stormwater management. Many of the improvements will be accomplished as new developments are built because of the larger tracks of land available for development. The CRA will work with this neighborhood to provide financing and grant opportunities to complete the infrastructure improvements identified. Melbourne Street provides direct access to Harper Avenue which leads to I-75. Because of this connection, the neighborhood is impacted by vehicular traffic that at times exceeds posted speed limits. The goal of preserving and enhancing this neighborhood is centered on improving the traffic conditions, by encouraging traffic-calming devices and improving pedestrian and bicycle access.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/CRA/CharlotteHarbor/Pages/default.aspx>

## Murdock Village

Murdock Village is a neighborhood located in the northwest section of Charlotte County, within one mile of the spring training complex of the Tampa Bay Rays and measures approximately 1200 acres. Intended use of property for public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities and public improvement includes:

- The Community Redevelopment Area will be redeveloped as a pedestrian and environmental friendly mixed-use community. Public facilities such as parks, recreational facilities, greenways, streets, utilities, government buildings and services shall be located throughout the community in a manner that provides for convenient and safe access while enhancing the aesthetic character of the area.
- Development of a vibrant and attractive gathering place for the entire community in the form of a Town Center, "five minute walk" access to parks, facilities and services, a pedestrian friendly street and access network, and interior greenway and blueway open space linkages that integrate the Community Redevelopment Area with existing County and community resources.
- This Community Redevelopment Plan specifies that the County, CRA and the redevelopment partner will strive to dedicate 20% of the total acreage within the Community Redevelopment Area to parks, recreation and open space; therefore the provision of parks, recreation and open space will exceed the County's level of services standard.

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/CRA/MurdockVillage/Pages/default.aspx>



## Babcock Ranch Recreation Master Plan

The Babcock Ranch Recreation Master Plan utilizes a strategy of analyzing existing amenities and proposed land uses in six neighboring counties, Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee and Sarasota, in order to determine how recreation on the Ranch might be affected. The surveys identified areas of low provision throughout the region and identified opportunities for the Ranch to provide these services. In particular is camping.

### Recommended Low Impact Recreational Uses

- Trails (Hiking, Equestrian, and Mountain Biking)
- Hunting
- Primitive Camping
- Remote Improved Campsites (Potentially located at or nearby former hunt camp sites)
- Guided and Self-Guided Nature Study
- Wildlife Viewing

### Recommended Intensive Recreational Uses

- Visitor and Environmental Education Center
- Ecological and Heritage Tours and Events (Wilderness Adventures)
- Equestrian Facilities and Program
- Full Facility Camping (RV, Camper, Tent)
- Trap, Skeet and Sporting Clays Range
- Specialty Lodging and Meeting Facilities

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. The Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) is in the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park, but is a private nonprofit entity that operates an environmental research and education center on the 3,000 acre Alligator Creek Preserve leased from the State. The Center is located a few miles south of Punta Gorda and has a number of facilities and programs. Facilities include the Caniff Visitor Reception Center, Watershed Resource Center and CHEC Nature Gift Shop, a bird blind, wildlife display structure called the Animal Clubhouse, a butterfly garden, three nature trail loops totaling 5.25 miles, along which there are a number of picnic tables, and a screened picnic pavilion. Volunteers lead nature walks. The Caniff Center is elevated on stilts to facilitate views out over the Preserve. Free nature information and publications are available at the Watershed Resource Center. The Nature Gift Shop has shirts, handmade birdhouses and various other articles for sale. The Center also provides ecocruises on nearby waterways with pontoon boats. Admission to the Center and trail system is free.

### Goals for Babcock Ranch:

1. Achieve financial self-sufficiency in recreational operations by maximizing compatible recreational uses while minimizing costs.
2. Provide a diverse mix of low impact and clustered/more intensive day use and overnight use activities.
3. Plan, market, and operate the BRP recreation opportunities as a unique combination of experiences that are not typically available to the public, while maintaining the natural features and not impacting the ranching activities.

4. Consider utilizing contract concessionaires/private operators wherever possible for equipment rentals, guided tours, guided hunts, food services, lodging operations, and other facilities and activities in order to fund the recreation activities and minimize public operating costs.

Low impact recreational opportunities and uses most desirable and suitable for the BRP are:

1. Trail System
  - a. Networks of unpaved single use and multiuse trails for hiking, horseback riding, bicycle riding and nature study should be provided throughout the Preserve to take advantage of and provide exposure to the varied high quality natural environments found in the Preserve, including woodlands, ranch lands and the Telegraph Swamp
2. Hunting
  - a. Hunting will be continued in the Preserve, although not through private land leases as in the past. Recognizing the importance of continuing the hunting experience in the Preserve, 17,000 acres in the northeast corner of the property has been designated as the initial public hunting area. Hunting and related activities should also be permitted on other areas of the property generally east of Telegraph Swamp. Hunting related activities for which the Preserve is very well suited include deer, hog, quail, turkey, and hunting dog field trials.
3. Primitive Camping
  - a. Sites for primitive individual and group camping, including horseback campers, should be provided in the areas generally east of Telegraph Swamp. Infrastructure would generally be limited to tent sites, composting or vault toilets and fire pits. Development of screened shelters would provide welcomed amenities in these remote areas for walking, campers, horseback campers and hunters.

More intensive recreational opportunities and uses most desirable and suitable for the BRP are:

1. Visitor and Environmental Education Center
  - a. A nature research center is proposed in the Kitson section of the Babcock Ranch Community on a 100 acre site near the Babcock Wilderness Adventures facility. The possibility of utilizing and expanding the Babcock Wilderness Adventures facility as the main visitor introduction point to the Preserve should be considered, at least until a permanent center is developed in a manner and location compatible with the interests of both the Preserve and the Babcock Ranch Communities.
2. Ecological and Heritage Tours and Events
  - a. Eco-tourism supports numerous businesses in Southwest Florida including public and commercial attractions and tour guides and operators. Fees for individual and group tours and special outings can be significant revenue generators. Babcock Wilderness Adventures is already a well-established and popular attraction and can be the basis for expanding offerings available in the Preserve, including exclusive group eco-tours, day safaris and overnight tour packages.
3. Equestrian Facilities and Programs
  - a. The BRP has potential for hosting a number of more intensive equestrian activities and events including endurance rides and trail challenges. These will require large well drained event staging and parking fields for trucks and trailers, food vendors, and other activities that support these events.
4. Full Facility Camping
  - a. Provision of 100-150 RV/trailer/tent campsites is recommended for the BRP. The campground should be located clustered within the core recreation area and have showers, electric and

water hookups, sewage pump out facility, and recreational amenities. Development and operation of this facility is an opportunity for the private sector.

5. Trap, Skeet and Sporting Clays Range
  - a. Adding trapshooting, skeet shooting, and five stand shooting should be considered to broaden the range of potential users and events. In addition, consideration should be given to include an archery range.
6. Specialty Lodging and Meeting Facilities
  - a. The addition of several (4-6) cabins/cottages would increase the overnight capacity of the Lodge and allow for accommodation of larger groups. Cabins/cottages in natural outdoor settings were mentioned by several contacts as being very desirable to add to the mix of overnight lodgings available in the region.

**Table 4-3**

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)			
SETTING Characterization			
<b>Primitive (P)</b>	essentially an unmodified natural environment motorized use in area is not permitted	interaction between users is low	minimal evidence of other users
<b>Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)</b>	predominantly natural or natural appearing environment of moderate to large size motorized use is not permitted	interaction between users is low	often evidence of other users
<b>Semi-Primitive (SP)</b>	predominantly natural or natural appearing environment of moderate to large size motorized use is permitted	concentration of users is low	often evidence of other users
<b>Roaded Natural (RN)</b>	predominantly natural appearing environments with evidence of the sights and sounds of man conventional motorized use is provided for in construction standards and facility design	interaction between users is low	evidence of other users prevalent
<b>Rural (R)</b>	substantially modified natural environment facilities for intensified motorized use and parking are available	interaction between users is moderate to high	sights and sounds of humans is readily evident
<b>Urban (U)</b>	substantially urbanized environment facilities for intensified motorized use and parking are available with forms of mass transit often available to carry people throughout the site	large number of users	sights and sounds of human on sight are predominant

Source: Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Userguide Published by US Department of Agriculture and US Forest Service

[http://myfwc.com/media/304827/BRP\\_RMP\\_final.pdf](http://myfwc.com/media/304827/BRP_RMP_final.pdf)

## Burnt Store Area Plan

The area studied includes land bordered on the south by the Charlotte/Lee County line, on the east by US 41 and on the north by Tuckers Grade.

### **Transportation**

The top priority expressed by the majority of stakeholders was improvements to Burnt Store Road and East/west connector roads. Residents and community leaders voiced concerns about safety, and they strongly encouraged the county to four-lane Burnt Store Road as soon as possible for improved safety, hurricane evacuation, economic development and quality of life. The county is planning to complete the following improvements within the next year: safety improvements to Burnt Store Road, the paving of Zemel Road and the installation of a traffic signal at Tuckers Grade. According to the county's current plans, the four-laning of Burnt Store Road is not planned until 2015.

### **Infrastructure**

The Area Plan proposes the siting of commercial nodes within the corridor to eliminate the need for residents to travel long distances to Punta Gorda or Cape Coral to access general commercial services.

### **Water Management**

Residents also expressed concern about flooding problems and the current drainage system. The general consensus was that new development should restore natural systems and alleviate flooding problems. The Area Plan identified the lack of existing data on the stormwater systems throughout the corridor. The Plan recommends a complete inventory of existing facilities and the creation of a maintenance program. This watershed study will recommend specific improvements, identify potential storage sites and develop a system to treat run-off to Outstanding Florida Waters standards.

It is recommended that restoration projects to improve the quality of existing run-off from the subdivisions east of Burnt Store Road be undertaken. Such projects include exotic vegetation removal and filling in existing ditches that were dug through wetlands on the west side of Burnt Store Road. It is recommended that Municipal Services Benefit Units (MSBU) be created or, in cases of existing MSBUs, be expanded, to cover the cost of design and implementation to convert the existing conveyance drainage systems of the existing subdivisions to stormwater management systems that would provide attenuation and treatment of run-off prior to discharge from the development. The designed systems would not only improve the quality and quantity of discharge downstream to Charlotte Harbor, but also would improve the drainage and reduce flooding within the subdivisions. The system would be designed to meet the level of service standards established in the Comprehensive Plan. Other sources of monies that may be available include the state, through SWFWMD and the SWIM Program.

### **Environmental**

A significant portion of the Study Area is under public ownership. The Area Plan recommends that these areas be linked by a wildlife corridor – Clark's Canal – designed for specific wildlife species. In addition, green spaces are recommended to offer opportunities for enhanced public enjoyment of the corridor.

A potential current obstacle to the proposed alignments is that portions of them exist on private property. Public acquisition and/or cooperation from current owners would be necessary to implement the flow way,

greenway/corridor, and wildlife corridor. If a large mammal corridor is desired for the proposed wildlife corridor alignment, public land acquisition funding to develop the large mammal wildlife corridor should be given the top priority out of all of the corridors. Opportunities for mitigation of projects in the Burnt Store Area Plan should include purchase of land for preservation along proposed corridors, funding for wildlife crossings under Burnt Store Road, and funding for the management and maintenance of the corridors. Other issues to consider would be to determine if there are any prohibitions on land uses or potential land uses that may be permitted adjacent to the alignments that would prevent them from functioning as a flow way, greenway/corridor, and wildlife corridor. This must be determined through site-specific studies conducted for the corridors.

### **Land Use**

This study proposes amendments to the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan. Several new policies are added to the Future Land Use Element and changes are proposed to the county's Future Land Use Map that would provide form and structure to future development as well as ensure that services become available for the existing development as well as future development.

### **Policies**

Policy 2.5.17 Charlotte County shall encourage, through incentives that may include impact fee credits, the provision of water storage and/or water quality capacity in the internal water management systems of new developments fronting Burnt Store Road for storm water run-off from Burnt Store Road. The intent is to assist Charlotte County in making the necessary improvements to Burnt Store Road in an economical and efficient manner by minimizing the amount of right-of-way necessary for widening Burnt Store Road.

Policy 2.5.18 Prior to 2008, Charlotte County will coordinate with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to conduct a Watershed Flood Study to quantify water quality discharges, conveyance systems capacity and adequacy, identify existing LOS, recommend improvements over and above those requirements specified in Policy 2.5.17, and specify the LOS after improvements.

Policy 2.5.19 Based on input and recommendations from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and the National Estuaries Program, the county shall coordinate with property owners to the following natural resource connections as shown on the Future Land Use Map:

- a. Blueway –To assist in alleviating stormwater drainage concerns, Charlotte County will require, through the Planned Development process, a restored or created flow way. The proposed flow way could connect surface water management lakes and on-site wetlands. Littoral shelves should be planted along the proposed flow way to provide water quality treatment and foraging areas for wading birds. Road crossings may be constructed where the flow way is proposed, so long as the hydrological integrity of the flow way is maintained through drainage crossings.
- b. Greenway – Charlotte County will work with private property owners to preserve property along the greenway to link up with the proposed “Wildlife Utilization Areas” in the Tern Bay DRI. The intent is to provide for a visual link of narrower width than the wildlife corridor, ranging from a minimum of 20 feet to 75 feet depending on existing vegetation and wildlife habitat. The greenway should include the preservation or enhancement of natural habitats. Enhancement activities can include plantings of native vegetation and removal of exotic and nuisance vegetation. Recreational open space may be incorporated in to the greenway. Development along a greenway is encouraged to provide for public use of the greenway by providing sidewalks and pedestrian connections to adjacent properties. Where greenways

are required for public use, the developer shall be granted credits toward park impact fees in an amount to be determined through the Planned Development process.

- c. Wildlife Corridor – Charlotte County, as an incentive to preserve land within and along wildlife corridors, will allow the transfer of density from such lands to other developable lands. Charlotte County will also coordinate with appropriate environmental agencies, and will consider using funding that may include Land Acquisition Trust Fund monies, to acquire properties along the wildlife corridor for preservation. Charlotte County will incorporate into the widening of Burnt Store Road, a wildlife crossing to be constructed of a sufficient size to accommodate small to medium size animals. The width of the corridor should be a minimum average width of 100 feet, where possible, to accommodate small to medium size mammals. The corridor should include the preservation and/or enhancement of natural habitats. Enhancement activities can include plantings of native vegetation and removal of exotic and nuisance vegetation. The corridor should provide sufficient cover to encourage use by wildlife through compliance with the following provisions:
  - a. A 25-foot buffer will be established between the corridor and proposed development activities. The buffer will consist of native habitats where these native habitats currently exist. In areas where native vegetation does not currently exist, native vegetation plantings will be conducted within the 25-foot buffer.

Policy 2.5.23 In order to create an interconnected and integrated community within the Burnt Store Planning Area, all new development must provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities from within the development to exterior pedestrian and bicycle corridors.

Charlotte County will work with property owners within the Burnt Store Planning Overlay to acquire the approximately 90 acres of land needed for active recreational uses. Methods of acquisition may include the granting of density bonuses, TDU bonuses, impact fee credits or property acquisition.

### **Parks and Recreation Needs Analysis**

This analysis assumes there will be an average of 2.05 people per dwelling unit. This is a very conservative approach as seasonal and occasional use units will generally generate a significantly smaller population than year around residents.

The new demand generated for facilities such as pools, tennis courts and club facilities are likely to be provided on-site within private or semi private developments. However, there is now and will likely need to be additional facilities for active recreation including soccer fields, baseball fields and similar activities that are common in public parks, but not typically found within planned communities.

To offset some of the passive and active recreational, and cultural needs of future residents, the Department of Parks, Recreation and cultural Resources has suggested policies to the Overlay which would provide for certain types of recreational activities. These policies encourage the provision of neighborhood parks, private or public, within residential areas, the construction of bike lanes on new major roadway corridors, more emphasis on public passive recreational use of the greenway corridors and the establishment of an area wide trail system that links up with the conservation lands within the Study Area. A requirement to conduct a study for archeological sites has also been added, as archeological sites have been found in the area.

<http://www.charlottefl.com/outreach/pzdocs/BurntStore/BurntStoreAreaPlan110705.pdf>

## Fred C. Babcock – Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area

Fred C. Babcock – Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area (BWWMA) is located five miles southeast of Punta Gorda in Charlotte County. The FWC is the designated lead managing agency by the DEP's DSL, with the Division of Forestry (DOF) a designated cooperating agency on lands for which the trustees hold title. Prior to its purchase by the commission, BWWMA was used primarily for its range and timber resources. The majority of land within BWWMA was acquired in 1941 for wildlife management and public hunting under the auspices of Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act. The acreage referred to as the Yucca Pens Unit was purchased by the state through the P-2000 Program...according to the 1997 CARL Annual Report, the Yucca Pens portion of the BWWMA will be "designated for use as a wildlife management area. Public uses will include hiking, environmental education, and hunting". FWC manages the area for public resource-based outdoor recreation including, but not limited to, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. All uses are consistent with the types of activities encouraged by the Conceptual State Lands Management Plan.

The multi-use potential of the BWWMA includes:

1. Hunting
2. Fishing
3. Wildlife observation
4. Hiking
5. Bicycling
6. Horseback Riding
7. Target Shooting
8. Camping
9. Linear Facilities
10. Off-Road Vehicle Use
11. Environmental Education
12. Preservation of archeological and historic sites

Potential additions and inholding within BWWMA, Charlotte County Florida

Landowner	Acres
Larry Boyette	3Total
McWilliams and Smith	21
Bud Cole Estate	41
Gary Ennis	66
Ansin	622
Zemel	3636
Various Subdivided parcels	6466
<b>Total</b>	<b>10855</b>

2002 Florida Forever Project	Remaining Acres
Hall Ranch	8520
Babcock Ranch	91361
Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods	5838

### Natural and Cultural Resource

### *Topography*

The drainage of the area is through interconnecting sloughs that eventually lead to the perimeter of the area.

### *Soils*

The BWWMA is composed of sedimentary deposits composed principally of limestone, marls, and calcareous sandstones. Soil disturbing activities will be confined to areas that have the least likelihood of experiencing erosion problems.

### *Fish and Wildlife*

The FWC is currently conducting a contracted population dynamics study of the Northern bobwhite of BWWMA to determine effects of varying harvest rates. Results of this study will be used to develop management strategies to assist in the reestablishment of Northern bobwhite populations to historical levels.

### *Forest Resources*

Florida Statute requires that plans for 1000+ acre parcels contain an analysis of multiple-use potential, to include a professional forester's assessment of the resource conservation and revenue-producing potentials of the tract's forest.

### *Scenic Resources*

Scenic resources include an extensive example of a relatively large and pristine South Florida flatwoods ecosystem. This ecosystem comprises a pine flatwoods and wetlands complex, including wet prairie and marsh areas, as well as cypress sloughs and domes.

### *Water Resources*

Consist primarily of seasonal ponds, marches and depressions, excavated ponds and Webb Lake.

### *Cultural, Archeological and Historic Resources*

Management activities on the area will be planned to minimize any disturbance to sites with a potential for archeological site presence. Procedures outlined by DHR will be followed to preserve such sites. The FWC will continue to consult with the previous landowner and DHR in an attempt to locate other features on the area, and will contact professionals from DHR for assistance prior to any ground-disturbing activity on the area.

## **Resource Management Goals and Objectives**

1. Manage for healthy and productive wildlife
  - a. Maintain game populations which are self-sustaining and harvested on an optimum sustainable yield basis.
  - b. Protect, maintain, and increase, where feasible, threatened and endangered species.
  - c. Maintain at present levels and increase nongame wildlife populations.
  - d. Manage plant communities to increase their carrying capacity for wildlife.
  - e. Eradicate and prevent the reintroduction and spread of exotic plants.
  - f. Identify activities that can disrupt wildlife and destroy natural resources
  - g. Close unneeded roads and trails and allow to revegetate



- h. Identify a central location for ingress and egress
  - i. Manage all resources using sound management techniques
- 2. Manage all natural resources in an efficient, productive manner which is compatible with wildlife management practices
  - a. Manage the timber resources for optimum benefit to wildlife
- 3. Restore natural hydrology and the connection with Charlotte Harbor
  - a. Coordinate with the Florida DOT to maintain the watershed's connection with the Harbor
- 4. Identify and protect archaeological, historical, and cultural resources.
  - a. Keep the location of undisturbed sites as proprietary information.
- 5. Develop facilities and infrastructure to facilitate the management of the area.
- 6. Provide for revenue generating activities other than hunting and fishing
  - a. Continue to collect a day-use fee for area utilization

### **Recreation**

The BWWMA is intended to be an area available for a variety of nature-based recreational opportunities. These include, but are not limited to, fishing, hunting, camping, bird watching, horseback riding, hiking, target shooting, and nature study. Inasmuch as possible, these activities are managed to provide uncrowded, quality outdoor experience. Recreational uses are limited to those activities that are consistent with the goals of environmental conservation and user balance. FWC intends to develop a self-guided interpretive driving tour of BWWMA.

### **Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission – Goals**

- 1. Increase participation and satisfaction levels for participants in fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing.
- 2. Increase outdoor recreational opportunities
- 3. Protect and conserve natural habitats and fish wildlife populations
- 4. Improve public safety in the outdoor environment
- 5. Reduce regulation violations and other careless and abusive acts

[http://myfwc.com/media/132225/CMP\\_Babcock\\_Webb\\_2003\\_2008.pdf](http://myfwc.com/media/132225/CMP_Babcock_Webb_2003_2008.pdf)

## APPENDIX D: FEDERAL AGENCIES

Information regarding the responsibilities of federal agencies was found in the Florida DEP SCORP.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/outdoor/scorp.htm>

### U.S. Department of the Interior

#### National Park Service

Conserve the scenery and natural resources of national parks and provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

- Responsibilities:
  - Partnering with other federal agencies as well as state and local government programs designed to achieve national goals such as clean air, protection of wilderness areas, clean water and access to waterways and coastal areas under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Water Resources Development Act.
  - Providing matching grants through the Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid Program, an expansion of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, to government, private groups and individuals for historic preservation surveys, planning activities and community education. These programs are administered in Florida by the Division of Historic Resources (DHR) within DOS.
  - Administering the Federal Lands-to-Parks Program, which enables states and local governments to establish park and recreation areas on federal properties which are no longer needed for military or civilian uses by conveying lands for that purpose.
  - Coordinating the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program by providing planning assistance to communities for projects that are designed to protect rivers, trails and greenways on lands outside of the federal domain.
- National Park Service Activities in Charlotte County:
  - National Register of Historic Places:
    - Clarence L. Babcock House, February 25, 2009, Punta Gorda
    - Big Mound Key-Bogges Ridge Archeological District, December 3, 1990, Placida
    - Charlotte High School, December 12, 1990 Punta Gorda
    - El Jobean Hotel, September 29, 1999, El Jobean
    - El Jobean Post Office and General Store
    - El Jobean Post Office and General Store, August 27, 1999, El Jobean
    - A. C. Freeman House, January 7, 1987, Punta Gorda
    - Icing Station at Bull Bay, April 11, 1991, Off Bull Key in Bull Bay, Placida
    - Mott Willis Store, May 30, 1997, Charlotte Harbor Demolished in 1998
    - Old First National Bank of Punta Gorda, March 14, 1991, Punta Gorda
    - Punta Gorda Atlantic Coast Line Depot, December 12, 1990, Punta Gorda
    - Punta Gorda Ice Plant, December 12, 1990, Punta Gorda
    - Punta Gorda Residential District, January 7, 1991, Punta Gorda
    - Punta Gorda Woman's Club, April 5, 1991, Punta Gorda
    - H. W. Smith Building, July 25, 1991, Punta Gorda
    - Villa Bianca, November 28, 1990, Punta Gorda

- West Coast Fish Company Residential Cabin at Bull Bay, April 11, 1991, Placida
  - Willis Fish Cabin at Bull Bay, April 11, 1991, Placida
- Retrieved from: <http://www.nps.gov/state/fl/index.htm?program=parks>

## National Trail System

The National Trail System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-543), authorized creation of a national trail system comprised of National Recreation Trails, National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails.

- In order to be certified as a National Scenic Trail, a trail must contain outstanding recreation opportunities and encompass more than 100 miles of a continuous, primarily non-motorized trail.
- No current National Trails in Charlotte County:  
<http://www.nps.gov/nts/maps/National%20Trails%20map.pdf>

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Enforcing federal wildlife laws, protecting endangered species, managing migratory birds, restoring nationally significant fisheries and conserving and restoring wildlife habitat including wetlands

Administration of federal aid programs, including Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act and Wallop-Breaux Act), Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) and Wildlife Partnership Act (conservation of non-game species). These grant programs are managed in Florida by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Grants to Florida under the Clean Vessel Act (clean boating programs) are managed by the Clean Marina Program in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of External Affairs.

- National Wildlife Refuges in Charlotte County:
  - Island Bay
    - Managed as a natural area. Periodic biological and wildlife population surveys are conducted by staff to assess wildlife communities utilizing the area. Law enforcement patrols are routinely conducted for the protection of wildlife species and Calusa Indian artifact sites located on the island. Occasionally, the refuge staff chemically treats Brazilian Pepper, an invasive exotic plant that threatens the overall plant community.
    - Closed to the Public
    - Education and Recreation Opportunities:
      - Environmental Education
      - Fishing
      - Hunting
      - Interpretation
      - Photography
      - Wildlife Observation

Retrieved from: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/refugeLocatorMaps/Florida.html>

## U.S. Department of Agriculture

### U.S. Forest Service

The responsibility of USFS in the field of outdoor recreation is to fully develop the recreational potential of national forests and protect landscape aesthetics. USFS also cooperates with other federal, state and local agencies in planning and developing recreational resources on other federal, state, local and private lands. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) provides leadership in the management, protection and use of the nation's forests and rangelands. The agency is dedicated to multiple-use management of these lands for sustained yields of renewable resources such as wood, water, forage, wildlife and recreation to meet the diverse needs of people.

There are no National Forests in Charlotte County.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/>

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Along with its primary responsibilities for navigation, flood risk management, environmental restoration and beach renourishment, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has made considerable efforts to provide recreational facilities. It is the policy of USACE to plan for and provide outdoor recreation resources and facilities at all of its water resources projects. USACE's general authority for recreational development stems from the Flood Control Act of 1944, which was later expanded by the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers acts in coordination with SFWMD and is the lead agency for the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan.

<http://www.usace.army.mil/>

## Florida National Scenic Trail

USFS is the federal administering agency for the Florida National Scenic Trail. The Florida National Scenic Trail, designated by Congress in 1983, extends from the Big Cypress National Preserve north to the Gulf Islands National Seashore in the Florida Panhandle. Along the way, the Florida Trail passes through lands managed by more than two dozen public land managing agencies in more than 40 separate management units. USFS acts as a partner with state and management agencies and private landowners to obtain through-trail access for the project. The non-profit Florida Trail Association, Inc., through its volunteer membership of hiker-volunteers, provides nearly 70,000 hours of manpower each year to build and maintain the Florida National Scenic Trail and other hiking trails throughout Florida.

## U.S. Department of Transportation

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) within the U.S. Department of Transportation provides grants to state and local governments for various recreational trail projects.

### Recreational Trails Program

[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/)

Provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trail uses.

FL DEP Office of Greenways and Trails acts as managing agency.

## National Scenic Byways Program

Recognizes roads having outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational and archaeological qualities by designating them as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways or State Scenic Byways.

Grant Opportunities: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic\\_byways/grants/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/grants/)

No byways in or near Charlotte County:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/nearby?q=charlotte+county>

## U.S. Department of Commerce

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

The National Ocean Service provides assistance to Florida in observing, understanding and managing coastal and marine resources.

<http://www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS/>

### National Estuarine Research Reserves

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is a network of estuarine areas across the nation established for long-term stewardship, research and education. Each reserve has developed an organized ecological research program containing extensive teacher training, education, research and monitoring. Findings are communicated to coastal managers and other decision makers, as well as local citizens. Florida contains three of these reserves: Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay. None of these are located in Charlotte County.

<http://www.nerrs.noaa.gov/ReservesMap.aspx>

### National Marine Sanctuaries

The National Marine Sanctuary Program designates and manages areas of the marine environment with special national significance due to their conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archaeological, educational or aesthetic qualities. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is the only sanctuary in Florida; there are none in Charlotte County.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/>

### National Coastal Zone Management Program

In 2002, the National Coastal Zone program initiated the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. The program is aimed at protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values and that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses. The Florida Coastal Management Program manages this grant program, which provides up to \$3 million for each eligible project.

<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html>

<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/initiatives/welcome.html>

<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/funding/welcome.html>

## APPENDIX E: REGIONAL AGENCIES

### Charlotte County School District

As in many communities, the County's schools are a strong hub of activity regarding outdoor and indoor sports and athletics. The County shall maintain an inter-local agreement with the Charlotte County School Board to provide for mutually beneficial utilization of resources and provision of recreational, educational and extracurricular opportunities. Charlotte County has an Interlocal Agreement with the Charlotte County School Board allowing for public access to school recreational facilities on a case-by-case basis. The School District would benefit from joint use of parks adjacent to or in the vicinity of public schools. This includes the shifting of recreational facilities to adjacent parks to reduce maintenance costs or the amount of property needed to accommodate the new school. There are several opportunities for joint use of existing facilities and proposed school sites. Potential sites for future schools have not been yet been determined by the School District beyond the twenty-year planning period.

<http://webapps.dep.state.fl.us/DrpOrpcr/UpdateInventoryView.do?submitTo=UpdateInventoryPark&selectedSite=CHARLOTTE+COUNTY+SCHOOL+BOARD>

### South Florida Water Management District

#### Charlotte Harbor Plan and Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)

The primary goal of the CERP is to restore, preserve and protect the South Florida ecosystem through improved water management while providing for other water related needs of the region such as flood protection and water supply.

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan provides a framework and guide to restore, protect, and preserve the water resources of central and southern Florida, including the Everglades. It covers 16 counties over an 18,000-square-mile area, and centers on an update of the Central & Southern Florida (C&SF) Project. The current C&SF Project includes 1,000 miles of canals, 720 miles of levees, and several hundred water control structures. The C&SF Project provides water supply, flood protection, water management and other benefits to south Florida. Since 1948, the C&SF Project has performed its authorized functions well. However, the project has had unintended adverse effects on the unique and diverse environment that constitutes south Florida ecosystems, including the Everglades and Florida Bay.

The Water Resources Development Acts in 1992 and 1996 provided the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the authority to re-evaluate the performance and impacts of the C&SF Project and to recommend improvements and or modifications to the project in order to restore the south Florida ecosystem and to provide for other water resource needs. The resulting Comprehensive Plan is designed to capture, store and redistribute fresh water previously lost to tide and to regulate the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of water flows.

The Plan was approved in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. It includes more than 60 elements, was estimated to take at least 30 years to complete and originally estimated to cost \$7.8 billion in October 1999 dollars (or at 1999 price levels).

The major Plan components are:

1. Surface Water Storage Reservoirs

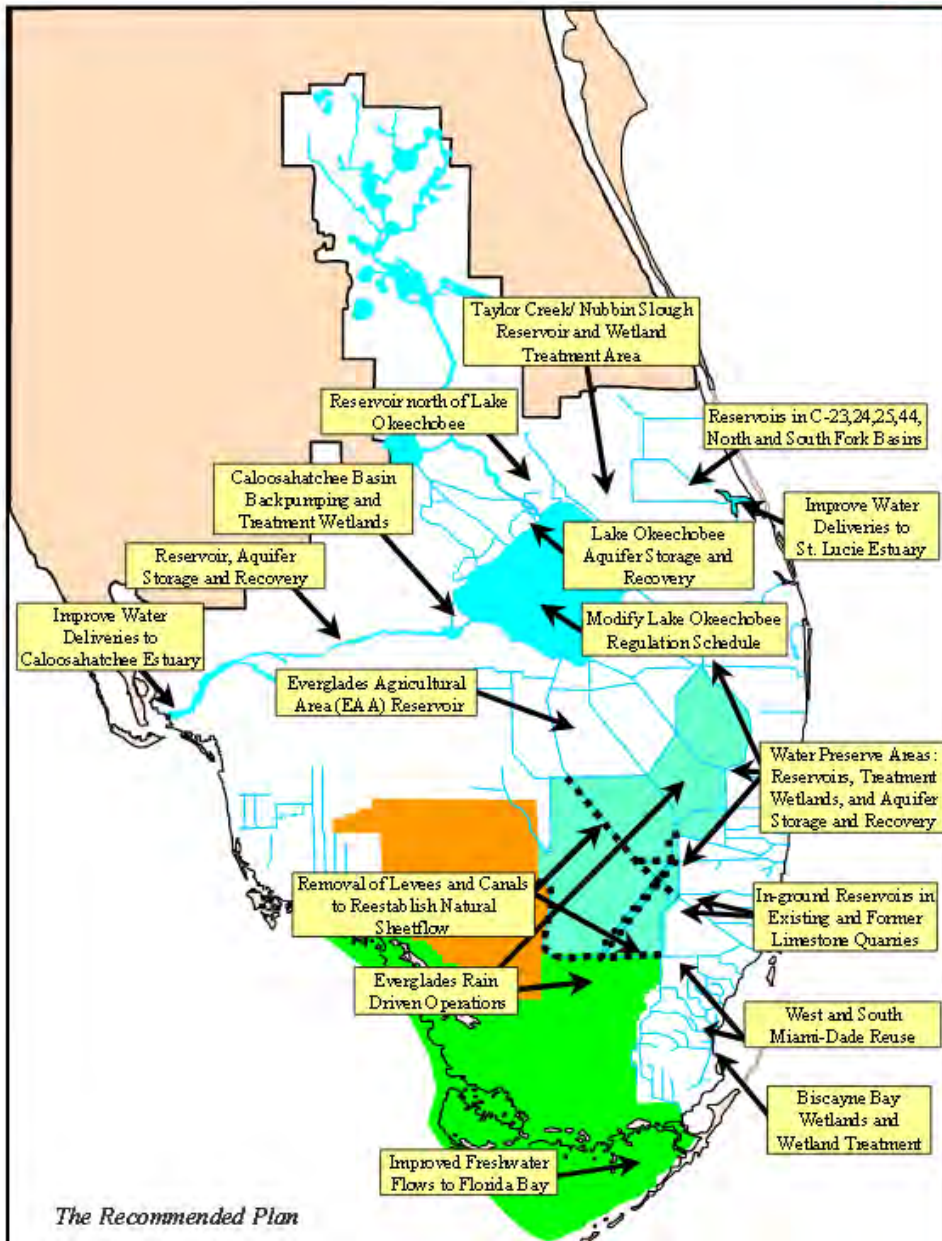
2. Water Preserve Areas
3. Management of Lake Okeechobee as an Ecological Resource
4. Improved Water Deliveries to the Estuaries
5. Underground Water Storage
6. Treatment Wetlands
7. Improved Water Deliveries to the Everglades
8. Removal of Barriers to Sheetflow
9. Storage of Water in Existing Quarries
10. Reuse of Wastewater
11. Pilot Projects
12. Improved Water Conservation
13. Additional Feasibility Studies

Projects already underway or scheduled:

- Modifications to the Corps' Central and Southern Florida Project, including:
  - Kissimmee River Restoration
  - C-111 Project
  - Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park
  - C-51 Project
  - Manatee Protection
  - Critical Restoration Projects
- Everglades Construction Project
- South Florida Water Management District Interim Plan for Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply
- Northwest Dade County Lake Belt
- State of Florida Save Our Rivers Program
- Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program



## RECOMMENDED PLAN



<http://www.evergladesplan.org/>

[http://www.evergladesplan.org/docs/the\\_plan\\_restudy\\_overview\\_30\\_pages.pdf](http://www.evergladesplan.org/docs/the_plan_restudy_overview_30_pages.pdf)

### Master Recreation Plan (MRP)

The primary goal of the CERP MRP is to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing recreational needs within the C&SF Project consistent with the project's authorized purpose. The plan has the following objectives:

- Provide the best possible combination of responses to regional needs, resource capabilities, and suitability, and expressed public interests and desires consistent with authorized purposes.
- Contribute towards providing restoration compatible recreational opportunities, public access, activities and diversity within CERP projects.
- Emphasize the particular quantity, quality, character and potential of each of the nine CERP regions when developing recreational, educational, and public access opportunities.
- To the extent possible, minimize impacts to existing recreational uses.
- Seek consistency and compatibility with national, state and regional programs, goals, and objectives.
- Identify public, private, and intergovernmental partnerships to enhance and promote recreational, educational, and public access opportunities.
- Develop and implement guidelines for recreation planning, needs and impact assessments, on a regional basis for integration into the CERP Project Implementation Report (PIR), Pilot Project Design Report (PPDR), and feasibility study (FS) processes for each specific project.
- Develop measures to assess change in recreational opportunities and types of uses as it relates to CERP

The Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965, requires that full consideration be given to opportunities for recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement; that recreation planning be based on coordination of use with existing and planned Federal, State, and local recreation; and the non-Federal, administration of recreation and enhancement areas be encouraged. It further states that, without a cost-sharing sponsor, facilities may not be provided for recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement except those justified to serve other project purposes or as needed for public health and safety.

#### Land Allocation and Classification

All lands will be allocated in accordance with the authorized purposes for which they were or are to be acquired. A program map delineating land according to land allocation will be provided. Land will be allocated into one of the following categories:

1. Operations. Lands acquired in accordance with the authorizing documents for operation of the program, i.e., restoration, flood control, hydropower, navigation, water supply, etc.
2. Recreation. Separable lands acquired in accordance with authorizing documents for public recreation/access.
3. Fish and Wildlife. Separable land acquired in accordance with authorizing documents for fish and wildlife management.

Land shall be classified into one of the following categories:

**Program Operations.** In many cases, the majority of lands (rim lands etc.) will be allocated to program operations. This classification category should include those lands required for the structure, operations enter, office, maintenance and other areas that are used solely for program operations.

**Recreation.** Land developed for intensive recreational activities by the visiting public, including developed recreation areas and areas for concession, resort, and quasi-public development. At new projects, recreation areas planned for initial development will be included in this classification. Future areas will be classified as multiple resource management until initiation of the development.

Environmental Sensitive Areas. All lands will be evaluated for scientific, ecological, cultural, and aesthetical features of merit. Compatibility analyses may be conducted to determine compatible public uses and/or potential impacts from public uses on such features in these areas. Normally limited or no development of public use is contemplated on land in this classification. No agricultural or grazing uses are permitted on this land.

Multiple Resource Management. Lands managed for one or more, but not limited to, these activities to the extent that they are compatible with the primary allocation(s). The activities should be fully explained in the narrative portion of the MRP.

- Recreation– Low-Density. Low-density recreation activities such as hiking, primitive camping, wildlife observation, hunting, or similar low-density recreational activities.
- Wildlife Management General. Fish and wildlife management activities. Lands in this sub-category shall be evaluated for consideration for lease or license to other federal, state or local managing agencies.
- Vegetative Management. Management activities for the protection and development of forest and vegetative cover.
- Inactive and/or Future Recreation Areas. Recreation areas planned for the future or that have been temporarily closed. These lands will be classified as multiple resource management in the interim.
- Easement lands. All lands for which the Corps or the SFWMD holds an easement interest but not fee title. Planned use and management of easement lands will be in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of the easement estate acquired for the project

*Conceptual Development*

Conceptual development plans will be designed where needs and opportunities for public access and recreation opportunities have been identified. The purpose of the Conceptual Development Plan is to outline a general description of the proposed area, complete a site analysis, develop design objectives, outline proposed public access and recreation facilities, and develop a cost estimate at the feasibility level. Additionally, funding and partnering opportunities may be identified. CERP Projects will be prioritized into three phases and addressed based on the CERP implementation schedule.

[http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/pm\\_docs/master\\_rec\\_plan/111204\\_pmp\\_master\\_rec\\_mainbody.pdf](http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/pm_docs/master_rec_plan/111204_pmp_master_rec_mainbody.pdf)

**Lower Charlotte Harbor Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan**

The SFWMD defines Lower Charlotte Harbor (LCH) as the basins of Pine Island Sound, Matlacha Pass, East and West Caloosahatchee, Estero Bay, and the southern portion of Lower Charlotte Harbor. Please note that the Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) represents these Basins as one whole FDEP Basin (Caloosahatchee) and portions of two other FDEP basins (Charlotte Harbor and Everglades West Coast).

2000 Land Use by Basin:

<b>BASIN Area, in acres</b>	<b>Urban and Built-Up Land</b>	<b>Agriculture, including Pasture</b>	<b>Range and Upland Forest</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Open Water</b>	<b>Total</b>
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Lower Charlotte Harbor	64,502	11,215	51,066	57,014	176,759	360,556
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2025 Estimated Land Use:

<b>BASIN Area, in acres</b>	<b>Urban and Built-Up Land</b>	<b>Agriculture, including Pasture</b>	<b>Range and Upland Forest</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Open Water</b>	<b>Total</b>
Lower Charlotte Harbor	78,344	9,255	41,814	54,384	176,759	360,556

On June 1, 2003, Charlotte County submitted an application to obtain an NPDES permit. The City of Punta Gorda is a co-permittee with Charlotte County for the NPDES program.

*Goals:*

5. Protect and improve surface water quality
6. Preserve and restore, where appropriate, native ecosystems along with their water resource related functions
7. Maintain the integrity and functions of water resources and related natural systems
8. Improve degraded water resources and related natural systems to a more natural functionality

*Initiatives:*

1. Water Quality
  - a. Utilize the Existing Water Quality Monitoring Network to Assess the Origin and Fate of Pollutants
  - b. Hydrologic and Hydrodynamic Water Quality Modeling
  - c. Enhancement and Maintenance of Surface Waters
2. Stormwater Quantity
  - a. Improve the Timing of Freshwater Flows into Lower Charlotte Harbor
  - b. Regulatory Assessment
3. Watershed Master Planning and Implementation
  - a. Evaluate Existing Watershed Master Plans
  - b. Assist in the Development and Endorsement of Local Master Stormwater Plans and Implementation Schedules
  - c. Partner with Local Governments to Implement Existing Plans
4. Habitat Assessment, Protection and Restoration
  - a. Habitat Mapping and Resource Assessment
  - b. Habitat Protection and Management
  - c. Provide Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
5. Outreach
  - a. Provide Public Education and Outreach
  - b. Provide Regulatory Outreach
6. Funding

a. Funding Development

[http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd\\_repository\\_pdf/lower\\_charlotte\\_harbor\\_s\\_wim.pdf](http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd_repository_pdf/lower_charlotte_harbor_s_wim.pdf)

## Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative

Includes 5 watershed totaling 90 square miles in both Lee and Charlotte County.:

1. Yucca Pen Creek
2. Durden Creek
3. Greenwell Branch
4. Longview Run
5. Gator Slough

*Project Objectives:*

- Sheet flow restoration
- Restoring more natural flows to Charlotte Harbor
- Water Quality Improvement
- Ground Water Recharge
- Enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats

*Recommendations:*

- Re-establish sheet flow east of US 41
- Water storage and treatment west of US 41
- Enhance sheet flow across Yucca Pens
- Restore flow across Burnt Store Road
- Implement monitoring network

2010 Feasibility study that started the initiative:

<http://dev.chnep.wateratlas.usf.edu/upload/documents/Yucca-Pens-Hydrologic-Restoration-Plan-2010-web.pdf>

## Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan

[http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Planning/ReviewPlans/South%20West%20Florida%20Comprehensive%20Watershed%20Plan\\_508.pdf](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Planning/ReviewPlans/South%20West%20Florida%20Comprehensive%20Watershed%20Plan_508.pdf).

The SWFCWP primarily addresses ecosystem restoration, although it also recommends seven flood risk management studies to investigate water resources problems and opportunities in all or parts of Lee, Collier, Hendry, Glades, Charlotte, and Monroe counties, Florida.

Regional problem descriptions developed by the project delivery team (PDT) with extensive public involvement include:

- Loss of natural ecosystems and landscape connectivity/degradation of critically endangered wildlife habitat

- Altered, unnatural freshwater flows to wetlands and estuaries (Altered Surface Water Hydrology);
- Water quality degradation in surface waters;
- Saltwater intrusion into aquifers and surface waters; and
- Flooding and/or drought in various locations within the study area.

*Objectives:*

1. By the year 2050, establish total freshwater flows discharging into coastal estuaries within the project area from point discharges in channels, overland sheet flow, and groundwater seepage, to be within 10 percent of the pre-development natural system flow quantity conditions.
2. By the year 2050, increase habitat connectivity for large mammals (such as the Florida panther and black bear) throughout the project area by 20 percent above 2050 without project.
3. By the year 2050, establish freshwater flows to the coastal estuaries in the study area to maintain an annual average salinity of 10 -25 parts per thousand (ppt) in the Caloosahatchee Estuary; 15 -25 ppt in Estero Bay; 20 -30 ppt in Rookery Bay, Blackwater Bay, Buttonwood Bay, and Pumpkin Bay; 10 - 30 ppt in Faka Union Bay; 20 -30 ppt in Fakahatchee Bay; and 16 -30 ppt in the Ten Thousand Islands and Barron River Estuary.
4. By the year 2050, establish an annual average Total Nitrogen load reduction of 5.7 Million lbs/yr in the freshwater Caloosahatchee watershed, 12.0 Million lbs/yr in the tidal Caloosahatchee watershed, 753 Thousand lbs/yr in the Estero Bay watershed, and 3.5 Million lbs/yr in the Big Cypress Basin watershed.

Figure 1. SWFCWP Study Area



### Southwest Florida Water Management District

The SWFWMD has jurisdiction over approximately 46,609 acres of preserved land within Charlotte County, in joint management with either the State or the County. The two regions under their management are the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park and the Prairie/Shell Creek Preserve.

### Recreation Evaluation 2013

The SWFWMD created and conducted a recreation evaluation for all of the recreational lands under their jurisdiction. The evaluation provides a preliminary inventory of available resource-based recreation opportunities, levels of service for each recreation use, and information on current and projected recreation trends and demands. The table below illustrates the LOS recommendations provided by SWFWMD.

<b>Amenity</b>	<b>LOS Recommended per 1,000 Participants</b>
Unpaved Biking	1.3 miles of trail
Equestrian Camping	1.6 sites
Tent Camping	.8 sites
Hiking	1 mile of trail
Horseback Riding	2 miles of trail
Hunting	628 hunting acres

As the second phase of the evaluation continues, it will be important to periodically check whether or not Charlotte County managed parks are meeting SWFWMD recommendations.

[http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/evaluation/files/Recreation\\_Evaluation\\_Findings.pdf](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/evaluation/files/Recreation_Evaluation_Findings.pdf)

## Florida Forever Work Plan

The District's approach to the Florida Forever Work Plan is to provide a discussion of those eligible projects that the District could fund through the Florida Forever program over a five-year period and may receive future Florida Forever funding under the Florida Forever Act. The Florida Forever Act provides for the issuance of up to \$3 billion in bonds through 2020 to be used for land acquisition (including less-than-fee purchases), water resource development, storm water management, water body restoration, recreational facility construction, public access improvements, invasive plant control and related projects. Over the life of the program, at least 50 percent of the funds allocated to the water management districts must be spent on land acquisition. Currently, there are no land acquisition or development needs in Charlotte County areas.

[https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/FFworkplan\\_2013Final.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/FFworkplan_2013Final.pdf)

## Strategic Plan 2014-2018

The Strategic Initiatives section provides information on each of the Initiatives, including goals and strategies. While the Strategic Initiatives identify activities implemented throughout the District, the water resource needs vary from one planning region to another. The top water resource priorities for each region, along with measurable objectives, are identified in the Regional Priorities section of this document.

- **Regional Water Supply Planning**
  - Strategies
    - Develop accurate and reliable demand projections
    - Identify sufficient regional water supply sources to meet projected demands
    - Encourage the development and use of regional water supply authorities to plan and coordinate water supply solutions
    - Incorporate adaptive management processes in water supply planning
    - Coordinate with other water management districts on water supply and regulation approaches
    - Proactively coordinate with water supply utilities
    - Demonstrate the District's financial commitment to assist in the development of regional water supply needs
- **Alternative Water Supplies**



- Strategies
  - Develop surface water capture, desalination and brackish groundwater systems
  - Partner with the agricultural community to provide alternative water supplies
  - Continue to leverage District funds to facilitate the development of alternative water supplies
  - Continue to support research into aquifer storage and recovery viability
  - Promote conjunctive use approaches through regulation and funding incentives
- **Reclaimed Water**
  - Strategies
    - Increase availability by increasing storage capacity
    - Increase availability by promoting interconnects
    - Leverage District funds to maximize efficient and beneficial use of reclaimed water
    - Improve efficiency through measures such as metering and volume-based pricing
    - Continue to support reclaimed water research, monitoring and public education
    - Augment reclaimed water with traditional sources when appropriate
    - Provide regulatory incentives to increase beneficial use and offsets
    - Increase benefits by promoting recharge and environmental enhancement projects
- **Conservation**
  - Strategies
    - Promote water conservation through public engagement programs
    - Support research and implementation of conservation techniques and practices
    - Promote water-conserving rate structures
    - Utilize financial incentives to further encourage effective conservation practices
    - Utilize regulatory program to establish effective conservation practices
- **Water Quality Assessment and Planning**
  - Strategies
    - Continue to develop and maintain long-term water quality monitoring networks to collect, analyze and distribute accurate water quality information
    - Continue to support the District's internal data governance process
    - Continue to promote partnerships through District water quality programs
- **Water Quality Maintenance and Improvement**
  - Strategies
    - Use cooperative funding to support local government efforts in development and implementation of basin management action plans (BMAPS)
    - Continue to monitor the USEPA Numeric Nutrient Criteria process
    - Promote Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles and other behaviors that help protect water quality
- **Minimum Flows and Levels Establishment and Recovery**
  - Strategies
    - Continue to incorporate MFLs in District water use permit application review processes and compliance monitoring
    - Monitor and report hydrologic conditions to ensure compliance with MFLs
    - Continue to review and refine scientific methodologies used in establishing MFLs
- **Natural Systems Conservation and Restoration**
  - Strategies

- Evaluate acquisition opportunities, placing priority on ecological value, inholdings, additions, core conservation areas, realistic landowner expectations, and leveraging partnership dollars
  - Innovative restoration projects and partnerships
  - Promote conservation of land through recreation and education opportunities
  - Regulate to avoid impacts or minimize and mitigate unavoidable impacts
  - Partner to continue wetland, lake and river monitoring and analysis
  - Provide technical assistance to state, regional and local governments for linking land and water
  - Utilize management tools to enhance maintenance of conservation lands
- **Southern Region Priorities and Objectives**
    - *Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park.* Charlotte Harbor is Florida’s second largest open water estuary at 270 square miles. Challenges to the 4,400-square-mile Charlotte Harbor watershed include alteration and loss of wetlands, an increase in nonnative and plant species, and water quality degradation from point and non-point source pollutants. The District is working with other government agencies on a comprehensive conservation and management plan, implementation of water quality improvement projects, and restoration of the balance between coastal upland, wetland and intertidal habitats. The District and its cooperators have completed 13 natural systems projects which have restored 1,083 acres of coastal habitats for Charlotte Harbor.
    - *Prairie/Shell Creek.* The Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creek (SPJC) watersheds are located in the southern region of the Peace River Basin. Combined, the SPJC watersheds comprise a surface area of 487 square miles, or approximately 20 percent of the Peace River Basin. The City of Punta Gorda obtains its potable water supply from the Shell Creek in-stream reservoir. Prairie and Shell Creeks (and their associated tributaries) are designated as Class I waters, which means they are designated for use as potable water supplies. These creeks converge at, and sustain, the City’s reservoir. The Shell Creek and Prairie Creek Watersheds Management Plan was adopted in 2004 to improve water quality degraded by increased salinity in the watersheds to achieve Class I surface water standards throughout the Shell Creek and Prairie Creek watersheds. The signatories of the Plan agreed to assess sources of salinity to Shell Creek, Prairie Creek and Joshua Creek to optimize reductions in concentrations to waters of these watersheds emphasizing voluntary, incentive-based programs for protecting the environment and public health. Water quality issues in the Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creeks watersheds developed from various inputs over an extended period of time.

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/about/strategic-plan/assets/StrategicPlan.pdf>

## Consolidated Annual Report

### Active Water Supply and Resource Development Projects

The Water Supply and Resource Development (WSRD) projects receive funding from the Governing Board, multiple Basins, and local cooperators. Depending upon the size and scope of the project, some WSRD projects may also involve additional state and federal funding. The table below shows current active projects within Charlotte County.

Project	Local Cooperator	Total Cost	District Contribution	Water Provided (MgD)
Charlotte County Regional Reclaimed Water Expansion Phase 2 (H085)	Charlotte County	\$2,800,000	\$1,485,400	TBD

### Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund Projects

The state did not allocate any WPSTF-related funds in FY2014. The District anticipates that, should the state resume funding, projects will be identified through the District's ongoing cooperative funding programs, which have been funding alternative water supply development for two decades. Additional projects, developed in cooperation with regional water supply authorities and their member governments, are also anticipated to be identified in the future to be eligible to receive funds. The table below identifies the list of all FY2006-FY2009 WPSTF projects, including District funding, cooperator funding, funding from other sources as well as the amount of water provided.

Project	Local Cooperator	State WPSTF Contribution & Fiscal Year (\$ & FY)	District Contribution	Local Cooperator Contribution	Total Project Cost	Water Provided (MgD)
Charlotte County Regional Reclaimed Water (H027)	Charlotte County	\$400,000 FY2006 \$680,010 FY2008	\$3,084,995	\$3,084,995	\$7,250,000	1.27
Charlotte Co. East/West Connection (H085)	Charlotte County	\$90,900 FY2006 \$80,000 FY2008	\$1,314,550	\$1,314,550	\$2,800,000	TBD

### Projects funded with FY2014 Funds

- Charlotte County Reclaimed Water Expansion (H027)
  - Type of Alternative Supply: Wastewater Reuse
  - Cooperator: Charlotte County
  - District: Governing Board; Peace River Basin
  - Locale: Charlotte County
  - Project Description: Design, permitting and construction of reclaimed water transmission mains from the Charlotte County East Port Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), west through Port Charlotte. The project will also include the design and construction of two 500,000-gallon storage tanks and associated pumping systems.
- PRMRWSA Regional Loop System-PRMRWSA Facility to Charlotte to Punta Gorda (H069)
  - Type of Alternative Supply: Surface Water
  - Cooperator: PRMRWSA
  - District: Governing Board; Peace River, Manasota Basins
  - Locale: Desoto and Charlotte County
  - Project Description: The project consists of approximately 12 miles of a 24-inch diameter line interconnecting Punta Gorda's Shell Creek facility with the Authority's Peace River facility. Components include a 1.3 mile sub-aqueous crossing of the lower Peace River, a pumping station with chemical feeds and 0.5 mg storage, and multiple tie-ins to Charlotte County's distribution system. The project has a bilateral transmission capacity of 6 mgd.
- Charlotte County Regional Reclaimed Water Expansion Phase 2(H085)
  - Type of Alternative Supply: Wastewater Reuse
  - Cooperator: Charlotte County
  - District: Governing Board; Peace River Basin
  - Locale: Charlotte County

- Project Description: Design, permitting and construction of a reclaimed water pipeline, and also using existing and abandoned pipeline, to interconnect the east and west service areas of Charlotte County's reclaimed water system

[https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/reports/2014\\_CAR.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/reports/2014_CAR.pdf)

## Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park- Unit Management Plan

- Goals:
  - Continue to provide quality resource based outdoor recreational and interpretive programs and facilities at the state park.
  - Seek funding to expand recreational and interpretive opportunities through the improvement of programs and the development of new use areas and facilities, as outlined in this management plan.
    - Pursue release of a portion of preserve lands for Charlotte County to develop, maintain and operate a boat ramp at Cattle Dock Point.
    - Coordinate with local governments and other entities to evaluate the potential for additional canoe/kayak access within the preserve.
    - Establish day use areas for picnicking, fishing, paddling and hiking at Cape Haze, Rotonda Boulevard South, Sam Knight Creek and Allen's Creek.
    - Implement improvements necessary to provide limited day use access to the Garrod Lakes area for fishing and wildlife observation.
    - Coordinate with local governments and other entities to provide additional, improved or expanded hiking opportunities in the preserve.
    - Provide additional boardwalks, viewing platforms or other structures and trim vegetation where needed to enhance landscape, open water or wildlife viewing areas.
    - Create and develop brochures and field guides for use on staff-led field trips and self-guided walks for informational, orientation and interpretive purposes.
    - Evaluate existing interpretive signage, kiosks, and update and/ or install additional ones in accordance with current and future needs.
  - Provide well-designed and well-maintained public facilities.
    - Conduct regular inspections of use areas and facilities and correct deficiencies when necessary.
    - Provide clear, consistent identification and informational signage at primary public access points.
    - Provide universal access to new facilities consistent with current federal standards.
    - Collect and compile data on visitor attendance, use patterns and preferences to assist in evaluating existing facilities and recreational opportunities and make informed decisions on future access needs.
    - Design structures and signage to minimize impacts to the visual landscape.
  - Promote community support and bolster preserve staff and funding resources through education, training and partnership opportunities.
    - Provide staff and volunteers with ongoing training opportunities in visitor services, resource management, preserve operations, general maintenance and interpretation.

- Recruit and maintain a cadre of volunteers to assist with management and interpretation of the preserve.
    - Pursue funding alternatives to the legislative budget appropriation process.
    - Actively educate the public and local governments about the natural resources, management activities, needs and problems and recreational opportunities of the preserve.
  - Establish measures to protect the preserve's integrity restrict unauthorized access, use and damage to public resources and maintain public health and safety.
    - Evaluate the existing network of designated public access points and, if necessary, make adjustments that provide a variety of visitor experiences yet maintain effective visitor capacity.
    - Construct up to two additional staff residences within the preserve.
    - Construct and maintain boundary fencing where necessary and feasible to delineate preserve property.
    - Continue to work in cooperation with Florida Park Patrol, Lee and Charlotte County Sheriffs Offices and other law enforcement agencies (FFWCC, USFWS, etc.) to bolster law enforcement on park lands.
  - Support land use planning policies, regulations and acquisition initiatives that serve to enhance management and protection of preserve resources.
    - Network with other land and water management and regulatory entities to coordinate and enhance regional resource management and protection efforts.
    - Continue to coordinate resource management activities with Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves, Gasparilla Island Administration, SWFWMD, SFWMD, Lee County, Charlotte County and other appropriate entities.
    - Monitor proposed land use changes in the vicinity that may impact resource integrity, and engage in the land use planning process, when necessary, to advance the long-term interests of the preserve.
    - Pursue acquisition of areas deemed important to be managed as part of the preserve.
- The Division coordinates management activity with the SWFWMD on lands the District shares 50/50 title interest with the Trustees. SWFWMD also provides grant funding through the Surface Water Improvement Program (SWIM) for water quality improvement projects and habitat restoration that addresses water quality and quantity concerns. South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has also been instrumental in funding wetlands enhancement programs in the south Cape Coral unit. At the local level, the park interacts, and where mutually beneficial, cooperates with county (Lee and Charlotte, primarily) and city (Punta Gorda and Cape Coral) governments. The preserve manager is a member of the governing board of CHEC, Inc. The CHEC provides trail access to the preserve and preserve staff coordinates education and outreach functions for the local community and schools through the Center. Management coordination is also vital with the county Mosquito Control Districts to protect public health and environmental resources. Permits and agreements with several institutions advance the knowledge regarding the species and management needs of resources in the park, such as, Audubon, Archbold Biological Station, Selby Gardens, and the Lake Wales Ridge Work Group.
- Growth pressure in this region indicate that existing developable lands will eventually be converted to residential and/or commercial uses, including areas designated Agriculture. Future uses are likely to mirror existing land use patterns of primarily low to medium density residential

uses. Anticipated changes along the Burnt Store Road corridor have the potential to directly impact preserve lands. While much of this corridor is currently comprised of open land or low-density development, significant changes are anticipated from the Lee County line north to Highway 41. According to likely development scenarios identified in the Burnt Store Area Plan (2005), a public private planning initiative, an additional 7,138 dwelling units and 445,000 square feet of commercial space may be located in this area. Of particular note is the Tern Bay project (formerly Caliente DRI) with 1,800 proposed units and 170,000 square feet of commercial space located on the southern boundary of the PGMA. In addition, proposed transportation improvements include the four-laning of Burnt Store Road. This road project is included in the Charlotte County 2015 Cost-Feasible Plan and the Lee County 2020 Financially-Feasible Plan. As vacant or under-developed lands are converted to uses that are more intensive, additional resource and visitor management challenges could occur. Development adjacent to the preserve can exacerbate exotic species control, limit opportunities for using prescribed fire and alter existing patterns of hydrology. In addition, as preserve boundaries become more populated incidents of unauthorized access, illegal uses and encroachments onto preserve lands may increase. Increased urban activity adjacent to the preserve has the potential to impact the visitor experience through increased noise, light pollution and a more visible built environment. The Division will monitor land use changes adjacent to the preserve and provide feedback on proposed development plans to local planning officials to ensure the protection of preserve resources.

- Proposed Additional Development:
  - The Coral Creek Day Use Area is proposed on a borrow pit surrounded by scrubby flatwoods off Rotonda Boulevard South. Existing walk-throughs at gates 2 and 3 provide public access to the area with parking in the road right of way. Proposed improvements include a fishing platform, picnic facilities (one small and one medium shelter, scattered picnic tables and grills), parking area for up to 15 vehicles and a small restroom. A marked trail system through flatwoods and adjacent to the west branch of Coral Creek is recommended to provide up to 2.5 miles of designated hiking trail.
  - The Catfish Creek Trail is recommended to be expanded to a double-loop system that would provide over two miles of hiking opportunity. The proposed southern loop would meander through hydric hammock and would be a limited access trail passable during the dry season.
  - The Sargassum Scrub Day Use Area is proposed on a borrow pit surrounded by mesic flatwoods and ruderal areas off Rotonda Trace. Access to the area is currently provided by a walk-through at Gate 3 with parking in the road right of way. Proposed improvements include a shoreline canoe/kayak launch, picnic facilities (one small and one medium shelter, scattered tables and grills), access drive and parking area for up to 25 vehicles and a small restroom. A marked hiking trail circling the borrow pit and providing access to adjacent flatwoods communities is recommended to provide up to 1.5 miles of hiking opportunity.
  - Improvements are recommended to provide access to Sam Knight Creek. A canoe/kayak launch, scenic overlook, access drive and parking for up to 15 vehicles are proposed within the flatwoods between two branches of the Creek. Access would be from Highway 776, a 4-lane divided highway, and may require roadway improvements to provide safe ingress/egress. The proposed overlook would entail constructing a boardwalk through tidal wetlands that culminates in an observation platform to provide views down the creek

toward Tippecanoe Bay. The proposed use area location coincides with FMSF site CHOO463, a single artifact or isolated find.

- A primitive group camp is proposed among oaks and cabbage palms within a ruderal area approximately 1,000 feet east of Burnt Store Road and 2,000 feet south of the CHEC, Inc. The facility would provide opportunities for overnight stays for organized groups and include a restroom with outside showers, campfire circle and medium picnic shelter. Access would be from Burnt Store Road.
- The Garrod Lakes are manmade features west of the preserve office complex that provide excellent fishing and wildlife observation opportunities. A stabilized road and parking area for up to 10 vehicles at the edge of existing pasture are recommended to get visitors within hiking distance of the lakes. A short hiking trail from the parking area is proposed that would provide access to the water. Fishing platforms and wildlife overlooks/blinds should be developed at a minimum of two locations to control visitor access and minimize environmental disturbance.
- The existing Datsun Trailhead parking lot is recommended to be expanded to accommodate up to 15 vehicles. A second staff residence and additional shop facilities are proposed within the vicinity of the existing shop and maintenance compound.

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/documents/plans/landusemgmt/files/CharlotteHarborPreservestatePark.pdf>

## Shell Creek and Prairie Creek Watersheds Management Plan

- Goals:
  - Implement water quality measures to the greatest extent practicable throughout the Shell Creek and Prairie Creek watersheds to achieve Class I surface water standards.
  - Avoid duplication and maximize the efficient coordination of agency resources and programs, including consolidated and coordinated funding of projects.
  - Use a comprehensive water management approach to address Class I surface water quality standards and encourage implementation within the watersheds
  - Seek reasonable, incentive based solutions that can be embraced by leaders and stakeholders at all levels of government and the community.
  - Achieve results that satisfy regulatory requirements.
  - Ensure water quality monitoring to measure the effectiveness of implemented water quality improvement measures.
- Proposed Management Activities:
  - Shell, Prairie, and Joshua Creek (SPJC) Well Back Plugging Program
    - Wells that exhibit poor water quality can be reduced in depth or "back-plugged" to improve water quality.
    - Back plug 40 wells per year beginning 2003
  - District Resource Regulation
    - Well Construction Permitting
    - Water Use Permitting
    - The District will re-evaluate 89% of the water use permits during the next 10 years (2014) with the addition of water quality improvement conditions applied as needed. This equates to approximately 98% of the permitted quantities within the Shell, Prairie, and Joshua Creek Basins.

- Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) projects
  - FARMS is a voluntary public/private partnership designed to provide financial assistance for BMP projects that provide water quality improvement, and/or reductions in upper Floridan withdrawals, and/or conservation, restoration, or augmentation of an area's water resources and ecology. Project cost-share rates are generally capped at 50% for water quality or water quantity BMPs, and at 75% for projects that incorporate both water quality and quantity. Participants are required to enter into a contractual agreement with the District, from five-to-twenty years in duration.
  - Initiate 5 projects per year beginning 2003 and increase to 20 projects per year beginning 2005.
- Federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers who face threats to soil, water, air and related natural resources on their land.
  - However, the Shell and Prairie Creek watersheds are a priority for project implementations as evidenced by funding increases in Charlotte County and specific funding that has been allocated for this region to address water quality concerns.
- Best Management Practices Manuals
  - BMPs for Peace River Valley / Manasota Basin Area Citrus Groves
  - Water Quality BMPs for Cow/Calf Operations
  - Water Quality/Quantity BMPs for Florida Vegetable and Agronomic Crops
- Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) and Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) Recovery Strategy
  - Sufficient sources of water are available within the SWUCA to meet the projected needs if other potential sources of water are developed as an alternative to Upper Floridan aquifer ground water withdrawals. These sources include: 1) surface water and storm water, 2) reclaimed water, 3) agricultural water conservation, 4) non-agricultural water conservation 5) brackish round water and, 6) seawater desalination. An estimated 41mgd could be saved through agricultural conservation using the most water-conserving irrigation system technologies with all applicable BMPs.
- Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)
  - This program attempts to prevent inter-aquifer exchange of varying water quality types. As of October 1, 2003, the QWIP has inspected 5,721 wells and plugged 3,349 wells throughout the District's southern ground water basin. Specifically, in Charlotte County a total of 252 wells have been plugged.
  - Plug 10 wells per year beginning 2003
- Land Acquisition Programs
- Mobile Irrigation Labs
  - Approximately 30-40 properties will be evaluated using the MIL each year
- Education and Outreach Activities
- Research Activities

[https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site\\_file\\_sets/2477/spjc\\_wmp.pdf](https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/files/database/site_file_sets/2477/spjc_wmp.pdf)



## Charlotte Harbor Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan

- The Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Act of 1987, directed the State's water management districts to "design and implement plans and programs for the improvement and management of surface water" and under the SWIM Act, water management districts prioritize water bodies based on their need for protection and/or restoration.
- Concentrations of phosphorus in the Peace River and Charlotte Harbor are considerably higher than the median value for Florida estuaries. Also, nitrogen concentrations and chlorophyll a values from the Peace River and Charlotte Harbor can be higher than median values for both Florida's streams and estuaries.
- Goals of the Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan:
  - Improve the environmental integrity of the Charlotte Harbor study area.
  - Preserve, restore and enhance seagrass beds, coastal wetlands, barrier beaches, and functionally related uplands.
  - Reduce point and non-point sources of pollution to attain desired use of the estuary
  - Provide the proper fresh water inflow to the estuary to ensure a balanced and productive ecosystem
  - Develop and implement a strategy for public participation and education
  - Develop and implement a formal Charlotte Harbor management plan with a specified structure and process for achieving goals for the estuary
- One way that the District achieves wetlands protection is through regulatory programs. Wetlands protection is addressed under Chapters 40D-2, 40D-3, 40D-4, 40D-40 and 40D-45, F.A.C. Land acquisition at the District is currently guided and funded by two major statewide initiatives: The Water Management Lands Trust Fund (a.k.a. Save our Rivers Program or SOR), and Preservation 2000 (P-2000). In 2000, the P-2000 Program for land acquisition will "sunset." Funds for land acquisition and management will be available through Save our Rivers through 2000, however, the SOR funds may not be used for land acquisition after 2001. The Florida Forever Act, passed by the Florida Legislature in 1999, will make funds available, beginning in 2001, to the water management districts for both land acquisition and restoration, including funding for SWIM projects
- Priority Projects:
  - Minimum flows and levels priority list and schedule
  - Ongoing efforts to restore the hydrogeology of the Flatford Swamp and upper Myakka River
  - Assessment of the Hydrologic Restoration of Cow Pen Slough
  - Develop a water and nutrient budget for Lake Hancock for water quality Improvement
  - Develop a linked nutrient budget and water quality model for Lemon Bay
  - Potential development of a resource based pollutant load reduction goal for Charlotte Harbor "Proper"
  - Continuation of existing water quality monitoring program
  - Continuation of existing seagrass mapping program
  - Various additional technical tasks identified by the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
  - Implementation of the restoration plan for Alligator Creek addition to the Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve

## Florida Sea Grant

### Recreational Boating Characterization for the Greater Charlotte Harbor

This project's goal is to characterize the preferences, activities, and water-use patterns of boaters on the basis of trip departure type. The Greater Charlotte Harbor study region extends approximately 70 miles from Englewood (Lemon Bay) in the north to Bonita Springs (Estero Bay) in the south, in Charlotte, and Lee counties. An estimated 61,540 pleasure boats are currently registered in the study region according to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The results of the study will help determine level of service needs and demands.

- The average number of months per year that respondents reside in Florida is approximately 10.5 based on information gathered from 1,441 of the 1,449 survey respondents
- Survey respondents were, on average, 58 years of age
  - Respondents that departed from marinas and private docks were slightly older than the average survey respondent
  - Public boat ramp users tended to be markedly younger than respondents associated with other departure categories
- Survey respondents that departed from marinas traveled, on average, 33 minutes from home to the marina from where their trips started
- The average drive time to boaters first-choice launch location/ramp is approximately 42 minutes based on 432 responses
- Responses suggest a year-round boating season in the study region, with a peak-use period running roughly from March through June and an off-peak period from December through January. The peak use month is April.
- The average respondent reported taking about 52 boating trips per year
- Based on the ranked average response, survey respondents preferred departure sites that (a) had adequate and safe parking; (b) were proximate to their favorite boating spots/destinations; (c) were close/proximate to their home; and (d) where boat launch and retrieval was easy

**Table 33. Boating Needs by Primary Category.**

<b>Primary Need Category</b>	<b>Response Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Infrastructure Improvements	289	20.6	1
Increased Access	279	19.9	2
Less Regulation	245	17.5	3
More Regulation/Enforcement	202	14.4	4
Boater Education	197	14.1	5
Environmental Protection	127	9.1	
Information	30	2.1	
No Needs	33	2.4	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,402</b>	<b>100.1</b>	

- Dredging of channels and passes was identified as the leading “Infrastructure Improvement” need with 29.1% of category responses (fifth leading sub-category overall), followed closely by better channel marks with 24.9%. The sub-categories comprising full service marina needs (i.e., marinas offering fuel docks, pump out stations, etc.) and better ramp facilities (e.g., ramps with restrooms or better security) together account for approximately 28% of category responses and 5.8% of total responses. The need for improved waterway signs made up just fewer than 2% of total responses (8.7% of category), followed closely by the need for waterway destination provision, specifically waterside restaurants.
- “Increased Access,” the second highest primary category under “needs,” is dominated by responses citing the need for ramps and ramp parking, in turn the second highest sub-category overall (12.3% of total responses). Whereas ramps and ramp parking were considered separately in the detractor analysis, they were more often linked in the responses to Question 27 and so were made a single sub-category. Water access via marinas and slips was a principal need expressed in 14.3% of category responses. More public and transient dockage together with more anchorages and public moorings were identified as needs in 52 responses, or 3.7% of the total overall. Generating less than 1% of the total responses was the conveyed need for more access to dry storage facilities and public beaches
- Regulation issues were fairly split between responses indicating a need for less regulation and those indicating a need for more (Tables 36 and 37). Manatee zones figured only in the former category, with 93 responses (third highest sub-category overall) indicating a need for less, more reasonable, or more science-based manatee protection. Less regulation of speed zones and no wake zones together comprise 7.8% of total response, approximately twice the need expressed for more regulation/enforcement in the same areas in Table 37. By contrast, a need for more boating regulation in general was indicated in 3.4% of all responses, almost twice the incidence of responses comprising “less governmental boating regulation.” Required boat operator licensure was cited as a principal need in a significant percentage of responses under “more regulation,” as was a greater presence of water patrols (2.4% of the total, as compared to just 0.5% conveying the need for a lesser presence). In addition, PWCs were targeted for more regulation in 1.4% of total responses to Question 27. Finally, additional regulations governing no wake zones, crab traps and alcohol consumption while boating were cited.
- The need for boater education, principally in the form of required courses such as offered by the USCG, and independent of the above operator licensure sub-category, is the fifth leading primary category. All aspects of boater education, from matters of etiquette to boat handling to existing law, were considered together in this single largest sub-category under “needs” (13.6% of total responses). The latter ranking conforms to the number one detractor sub- category, the “lack of boater courtesy and seamanship.”
- Improved water quality and no red tide account for approximately 40% of all responses tallied under “environmental needs”, followed by more fish, with 27.6% of category responses. Combining “more fish” with “less prop scarring” (comparable to the combined detractor consideration of lack of fish and destruction of grass flats) boosts this aspect of boating experience needs to 34.7% of the category total. The fewer boaters sub-category might have been omitted as a response with little recourse, as with “better weather,” but was retained with the sense of less boater impact. Finally, a small group of 30 responses indicated a need for information led by the expressed need for current detailed charts.

**Table 41. Top-10 Needs by Sub-Category.**

<b>Need Sub-Category</b>	<b>Response Number</b>	<b>Overall Percentage</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Boater Education in Etiquette/Skills</b>	190	13.6	1
<b>More Ramps and Ramp Parking</b>	173	12.3	2
<b>Less Manatee Zone Regulation</b>	93	6.6	3
<b>Less Speed Zone Regulation</b>	87	6.2	4
<b>Channel and Pass Dredging</b>	84	6.0	5
<b>Channel Marks Improvement</b>	72	5.1	6
<b>More Boating Regulation in General</b>	48	3.4	7
<b>More Access to Marinas/Slips</b>	40	2.9	8
<b>Operator Licensure</b>	37	2.6	9
<b>Improved Water Quality</b>	36	2.6	10 tie
<b>More Public, Transient Dockage</b>	36	2.6	10 tie

<http://nsgl.gso.uri.edu/flsgp/flsgps05004.pdf>

## The Future of Recreational Boating Access to Charlotte County Waterways

The regional trend in the projected number of pleasure boats registered in Charlotte County differs somewhat from the state-wide trend. The forecast shows a leveling off in the number of pleasure boats from 2011 through 2020, a modest increase in the number from 2020 to 2035, followed by another leveling off from 2035 to 2050. The growth rate of pleasure boats registered in Charlotte County from 2010 through 2030 is expected to be approximately 17.8%, a rate that is significantly less than the expected 22.5% growth of pleasure boats state-wide. Note, however, that the number of pleasure boats per 1,000 of the population in Charlotte County is roughly two-and-a-half-to-three times higher than the figure for the state as a whole; with figures that range from a low of 122.6 vessels per 1,000 population (projected) in 2020 to an observed high of 142.9 in 2005. The projected number of pleasure boats registered in Charlotte County in the year 2050 is 28,125, representing an expected increase of approximately 38% over the 20,355 pleasure boats observed in 2010. This represents an increase of 7,770 boats over a 40-year period, with an average expected increase of approximately 194 boats per year from 2010-2050. Over time, Charlotte County is expected to maintain a fairly stable percentage of the state's pleasure boats (with projected percentages ranging between a low of 2.0% in 2025 and a high of 2.3% in 2015).

To calculate a demand estimate for 2010 and projections for 2020, 2030, 2040 and 2050, the assumption was made that this same proportion of boat use remains constant for the duration of the planning horizon.

The share of county residents who keep their boats at a marina located in Charlotte County likely is somewhat less than 73 percent

Thus, of the total estimated resident demand in 2010, the number of those slips that were demanded within Charlotte County ranged from 1,378 to 1,766. The projected resident demand in 2030 for marina slips located in Charlotte County ranges from 1,717 to 2,201, and from 1,827 to 2,342 in 2050.

Approximately 51% of occupied marina wet and dry slips in Charlotte County are used by county residents and 49% by non-residents. Thus, given an estimated resident demand ranging from 1,378 to 1,766 in 2010, the corresponding non-resident demand ranged from 1,343 to 1,721. The projected non-resident demand for marina slips in Charlotte County ranges from 1,672 to 2,144 in 2030 and 1,780 to 2,282 in 2050.

Given an average launch/retrieval time of 20 minutes, the Upper Lemon Bay region (1 lane currently) is estimated to need a second lane to meet current demand and is projected to need a third lane by 2030. The Stump Pass/Gasparilla region (3 lanes currently) needs a fourth lane to meet current demand and would need a total of five lanes by 2020 and six by 2040. The Myakka River region (1 lane currently) is projected to not need a second lane until 2050. The Lower Peace River region (7 lanes currently) is projected to need an eighth lane by 2020 and a ninth lane by 2050. Finally, the Upper Peace River region (3 lanes currently) appears to have a surplus of two ramp lanes that are projected to more than satisfy demand through 2050. Given an average launch/retrieval time of 40 minutes, the Upper Lemon Bay region (1 lane currently) is estimated to need three additional lanes to meet current demand and is projected to need a fifth lane by 2030. The Stump Pass/Gasparilla region (3 lanes currently) needs five additional lanes to meet current demand, and would need a total of ten lanes by 2020 and eleven by 2040. The Myakka River region (1 lane currently) needs an additional lane to meet current demand and would need a third lane by 2050. The Lower Peace River region (7 lanes currently) is estimated to need six additional lanes to meet current demand and is projected to need a total of fifteen lanes by 2020, sixteen by 2030, and seventeen by 2050.

Given that a majority of on-the-water destinations are in south Charlotte County waters and 80% of ramp users live in Central and East Charlotte County, future demand might be better met by placement of new ramps in South Charlotte County, particularly in the south portion of East Charlotte County where none currently exist.

Demand for saltwater accessible docks in Charlotte County for the year 2010 was estimated at 10,614 (Table 4-21). Between 2010 and 2030, the demand for docks is projected to increase by 25% to 13,223, and between 2010 and 2050, by 33% to 14,074. Overall, the estimated demand for private boat docks in 2010 represents approximately 67% of the current supply of non-vacant residential parcels that are saltwater accessible. In addition, there are 9,947 vacant (developable) residential parcels in Charlotte County that are saltwater accessible. Taking only these vacant residential parcels into account, by the year 2030 the projected demand is estimated at approximately 26% of the capacity of vacant saltwater accessible parcels within the county and, in 2050, at 35 percent.

The Charlotte County parcel layer was reviewed and 9,696 saltwater accessible parcels were identified that have the potential to serve as locations for future ramps and/or marinas. Parcels (NOT associated with existing saltwater boating facilities) greater than or equal to 1 acre, within 50 feet of water and sewer service and 100 feet of a road (major, arterial, dirt, or private), having dredged water access (or unknown) greater than or equal to 3 feet MLLW (or unknown), and not adjacent to an aquatic preserve were evaluated to assess their relative potential for siting new saltwater ramps. Thirty-three parcels out of a potential 9,695 met these criteria. Parcels eligible for consideration as a potential marina site had to meet the same criteria, except that they had to be within 100 feet of a major road or an arterial road: 32 of the 33 parcels met these criteria.

[https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf)

## Blueway Trail System

Charlotte County currently has 57 blueway trails. There is no master plan designated to the blueway trail system in Charlotte County, but details can be found at

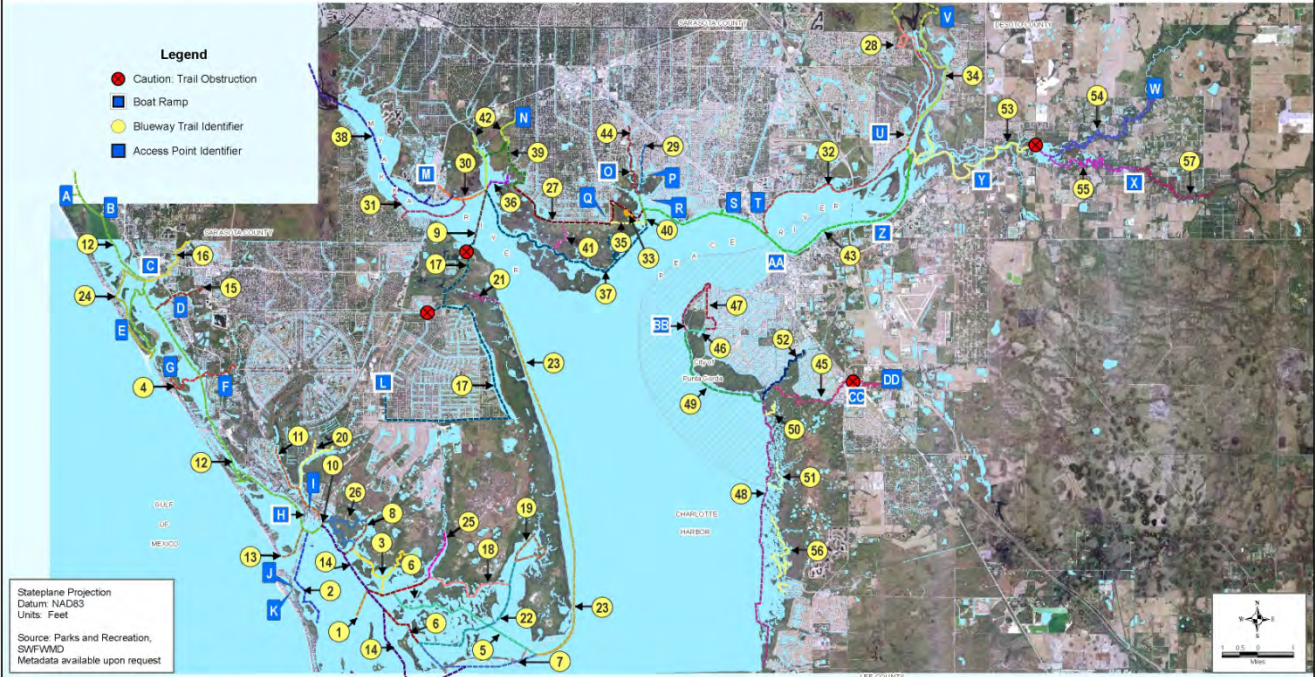
<http://charlottecountyfl.com/communityservices/CalendarsRecreation/BWTbrochure.pdf>.

A detailed map of blueway trails in Charlotte County is replicated below and can be found at:

<http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/communityservices/CalendarsRecreation/BWTmap.pdf>.



# CHARLOTTE COUNTY Blueway Trails



Charlotte County Blueway Trail System Trailhead Access Points

ID	Facility	Access Type	Condition	Food	Water	Restrooms	Parking Fee	Launch Fee
A	Middle Beach (Sarasota County) Manasota Key Dr., Englewood	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	No	No
B	Indian Mound Park (Sarasota County) 210 Winsor Ave., Englewood	Beach	Good	No	No	Yes	No	No
C	Ainger Creek Park 2025 Placida Rd., Englewood	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
D	Oyster Creek Environmental Park 2333 Placida Rd., Englewood	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
E	Stump Pass State Park Manasota Key Rd., Englewood	Beach	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
F	Dr Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek* Placida Rd.; Englewood 5350	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
G	Thorton Key Preserve Thorton Key, Englewood	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
H	Placida Park 5499 Gasparilla Rd., Placida	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
I	Grande Tours 12575 Placida Rd., Placida	Ramp	Good	No	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
J	Uncle Henry's Marina (941.964.0154) 5800 Gasparilla Rd., Boca Grande	Ramp	Fair	No	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
K	Boca Grande Fishing Pier Gasparilla Rd., Placida 5810	Sand	Fair	No	No	Yes	No	No
L	South Gulf Cove Park 10150 Arnicola St., Port Charlotte	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
M	El Jobean Boat Ramp 4224 El Jobean Rd., El Jobean	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
N	Tippecanoe Environmental Park 2300 El Jobean Rd., Port Charlotte	Grass	Good	No	No	No	No	No
O	Spring Lake Park 3520 Lakeview Dr., Port Charlotte	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No



P	Sunrise Park Edgewater Dr.; Port Charlotte 20499	Sand	Good	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Q	Tropical Paradise B&B (941.624.4533) 19227 Moore Haven Ct.; Port Charlotte	Dock	Fair	No	Limited	Limited	No	No
R	Port Charlotte Beach Park Harbor Blvd.; Port Charlotte 4500	Beach	Good	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
S	Bayshore Live Oak Park Bayshore Rd.; Charlotte Harbor	Sand	Fair	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
T	Chester Roberts Park 5064 Melbourne St.; Port Charlotte	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
U	Harbor Heights Park 27420 Voyageur Dr.; Harbor Heights	Ramp	Good	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
V	Nav-a- Gator Grill (DeSoto County) 9700 SW Riverview Ct.; Arcadis	Ramp	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
W	Prairie Creek Preserve* 1900 Duncan Rd.; Punta Gorda	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
X	Hathaway Park 35461 Washington Loop Rd.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Y	Riverside Park Riverside Dr.; Punta Gorda 8120	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
Z	Darst Park 537 Darst Ave.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
AA	Laisheley Marina Park 100 Nesbit St.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
BB	Ponce de Leon Park 4000 W. Marion Ave.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
CC	Allapatchee Shores Park 3100 Hickory Ct.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
DD	Taylor Rd. Access Taylor Rd.; Punta Gorda	Roadside	Poor	No	No	No	No	No

\*Currently under development/construction (2012)

## Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

The purposes of the Council include:

- responsibilities set forth by Chapters 163, 180 and 186 of Florida Statutes and other applicable state, federal and local law
- to serve as a regional coordinator for members, to exchange, interchange and review various programs of member jurisdictions relating to regional problems;
- to promote communication between members for the conservation and compatible development within the region; and
- to cooperate with federal, state, local and non-governmental agencies to accomplish these objectives.

Babcock Ranch Inc. : <http://www.swflregionalvision.com/BRI.html>

### Strategic Regional Policy Plan

[http://www.swfrpc.org/content/Regional\\_Planning/SRPP/EAR/SWFRPC\\_SRPP\\_EAR\\_Final10-20-11.pdf](http://www.swfrpc.org/content/Regional_Planning/SRPP/EAR/SWFRPC_SRPP_EAR_Final10-20-11.pdf)

“The Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) for Southwest Florida provides a long range guide for the physical, economic, and social development of the region. The overall purpose of the SRPP is to steer the region toward a more healthy and sustainable future. The SRPP is not merely a plan for the Council; it is a plan for the region and all those who are active participants in shaping its future.”

#### 1. Public Awareness Initiative

- a. Goal: The Region’s environmental awareness educational programs will be supported and directed to as many audiences as possible.
  - i. The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council will assist School Boards and Environmental Education Centers in the design of awareness programs
  - ii. Local, regional and state agencies should establish non-regulatory, educational, urban non listed wildlife programs, which include:
    1. The identification of wildlife living in urban areas
    2. Public education concerning the behavior and needs of urban wildlife
    3. The benefits of maintaining urban wildlife
    4. Measure to avoid conflicts between urban wildlife species and man, and the means to resolve such conflicts

#### 2. Natural Resource Protection

- a. Goal: The diversity and extent of the Region’s protected natural systems will increase consistently. The increase will be based upon 1998 acreage of existing conservation, preservation and stewardship lands.
  - i. Provide a regional clearing house and inventory of lands included in all land acquisition programs in a regional Green Print shared at the SWFRPC website.

#### 3. Water Resource Management

- a. Goal: The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management Districts, and local governments must have programs based on scientific modeling to protect surface water, potable wells, wellfields, and contributing areas from contamination.

- i. SWFRPC will coordinate as requested the long-term planning for potable water supplies and sources in the region as pursued by the South and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts.
- 4. Regional Cooperation
  - a. Goal: Effective resource management is maintained across the borders of sovereign public agencies
    - i. The SWFRPC will play an active role on the Management Conferences for the Charlotte Harbor and Sarasota Bay National Estuary Programs.
- 5. Livable Communities
  - a. Goal: A stable economy based on a continuing excellent quality of life.
    - i. Assist in the identification and acquisition of Potential Park and recreational sites and other resources in future growth areas.
    - ii. Participate in studies, plans, and programs for public access to beaches and other resources.
    - iii. Work in cooperation with agencies and local governments to ensure that beaches and inlets that have been damaged by human activity are replace/renourished and/or managed in order to have the system function naturally.
    - iv. Working in cooperation with agencies and local governments to ensure that new public facilities, facility expansions and additions, and transportation projects avoid designated natural resource protection areas.

## Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program

### Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

The Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) addresses four priority problems that are common throughout the CHNEP study area and that have been identified to impede the health of the watersheds and estuaries. They are water quality degradation, hydrologic alterations, fish and wildlife habitat loss and stewardship gaps. The CCMP includes a series of graphic vision maps, quantifiable objectives, priority actions and many support documents.

#### Priority Problems:

1. Hydrologic Alterations: Adverse changes to amounts, locations and timing of freshwater flows, the hydrologic function of floodplain systems and natural river flows.
  - a. When people modify the level of the water table, dam rivers or divert freshwater flows, the amount, timing and placement of fresh and salty water can change dramatically.
2. Water Quality Degradation: Pollution from agricultural and urban runoff, point-source discharges, septic systems and wastewater treatment systems, atmospheric deposition, ground water and other sources.
  - a. When sewage treatment plants process residential and commercial waste, they remove most of the nutrients from the water. However, water discharged from sewage treatment plants still contains some nutrients. These discharges are point sources of nutrients to the lakes, estuaries and streams where they are located, but they must meet state standards. The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council adopted a resolution that provides guidance for improved standards for sewage treatment plants in order to reduce nutrient levels within discharges. As an extension of this resolution, the Council is working with plant managers to identify infrastructure needs for a regional funding effort.

3. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Loss: Degradation and elimination of headwater streams and other habitats, conversion of natural shorelines caused by development, cumulative impacts of docks and boats, invasion of exotic species and cumulative and future impacts.
  - a. The CHNEP study area has lost more than 43 percent of its original wetland habitat—mostly to agricultural drainage, mining and urban development. Land drained by connector ditches for farming accounts for the largest loss of freshwater wetlands. More recently, wetland conversions to farmland or open water have accelerated, especially in smaller unregulated wetlands.
4. Stewardship Gaps: Limitations in people’s knowledge of choices and management decisions that will lead to sustainability within their community. These gaps include overarching issues such as public outreach, advocacy and data management.

#### *Myakka River*

In the lower portion of the Myakka River watershed, urban development is displacing agriculture. Former grazing lands along the banks of the lower Myakka River are now being converted to urban uses, mostly homes. Construction is occurring on the vast inventory of lands that were platted in the 1960s. At that time, these plats displaced agriculture in western Port Charlotte and in the City of North Port. The Myakka River now becomes even more important to these areas, supplying their drinking water as well as habitat for fish and wildlife.

#### *Peace River*

At 2,315 square miles, the Peace River watershed is the largest and most diverse in the CHNEP study area. South of Lake Hancock, canals and tributaries combine to define the main channel of the Peace River that eventually flows more than 100 miles southwest to Charlotte Harbor. The Peace River is the largest freshwater contributor to Charlotte Harbor. It is a source of drinking water for about 90,000 people in Charlotte, DeSoto and Sarasota counties. With the effects of reduced rainfall, combined with mining, agriculture and municipal water uses, freshwater flows have declined, threatening the ecology of the river system and Charlotte Harbor.

#### *Caloosahatchee River*

Twentieth century transportation, drainage, irrigation and waste disposal have been hard on the Caloosahatchee River and its watershed. The channels have been straightened, shorelines hardened and oyster reefs dredged. Remnants of the old river course, termed “oxbows,” have been neglected. The river has been assaulted by raw sewage, stormwater runoff, great counter-seasonal freshwater releases, pesticide spills, thermal effluent and exotic nuisance species.

#### *Dona, Roberts, and Lemon Bays*

Bays, beaches, barrier islands and mangroves dominate Dona and Roberts bays to Cape Haze. The barrier islands separate the waterway running from Venice Inlet through Lemon Bay from the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico and Charlotte Harbor. Gasparilla Sound, a broad open water body, forms the exception to this pattern of lagoons. Southward, Gasparilla Sound merges into Charlotte Harbor proper. This area has some important resource management challenges:

- Restoration of historic basin boundaries and resulting freshwater flows to estuaries.
- Effects of boat traffic and dredging on the Intracoastal Waterway and other channels.
- Retention of mangrove areas and protection of seagrass.
- Large areas of undeveloped platted lots.
- Effects of septic systems and stormwater runoff from development on water quality.

- Dynamically unstable tidal inlets.
- Nuisance exotic vegetation removed

#### *Charlotte Harbor, Myakka and Peace Estuaries*

Charlotte Harbor proper lies primarily in Charlotte County and connects to the Gulf of Mexico through Boca Grande Pass. Although the Harbor has an area of about 130 square miles, much of it is very shallow. Areas of deep Harbor water extend up into the lower Myakka and Peace rivers. The Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves are five contiguous aquatic preserves within the greater Charlotte Harbor estuary complex designated by the state Legislature for inclusion in the aquatic preserve system under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975. The preserves are (from north to south): Lemon Bay Aquatic Preserve, Cape Haze Aquatic Preserve, Gasparilla Sound–Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve, Matlacha Pass Aquatic Preserve and Pine Island Sound Aquatic Preserve.

#### *Economic Activities in the Watershed*

Tourism and recreational industries contribute an annual total income of \$2,196,941,059 to the CHNEP study area.

### **Goals and Objectives**

#### *Water Quality Degradation*

1. Maintain or improve water quality from year 2000 levels. By 2018, bring all impaired water bodies into a watershed management program such as reasonable assurance or basin management action plan. By 2015, remove at least two water bodies from the impaired list by improving water quality.
2. By 2020, develop and meet water quality criteria that are protective of living resources for dissolved oxygen, nutrients, chlorophyll *a*, turbidity, salinity and other constituents.
3. By 2025, reduce severity, extent, duration and frequency of harmful algal blooms (HABs), including macroalgae, phytoplankton and periphyton, through the identification and reduction of anthropogenic influences.
4. By 2025, meet shellfish harvesting standards year round for the Myakka River conditionally restricted area and the conditionally approved areas of Lemon Bay, Gasparilla Sound, Myakka River, Pine Island Sound Western Section and Pine Island Sound Eastern Section.

#### *Hydrologic Alterations*

1. By 2020, identify, establish and maintain a more natural seasonal variation (annual hydrograph) in freshwater flows
2. By 2020, restore, enhance and improve where practical historic watershed boundaries and natural hydrology for watersheds within the CHNEP study area, with special attention to Outstanding Florida Waters and Class I water bodies
3. By 2020, enhance and improve to more natural hydrologic conditions water bodies affected by artificially created structures throughout the CHNEP study area
4. By 2020, for each watershed, identify and recommend additional reforms to improve linkages between local, water management district, state and federal government development permitting and capital programs affecting water storage, flood control and water quality

#### *Fish and Wildlife Habitat Loss*

1. Protect, enhance and restore native habitats where physically feasible and within natural variability

2. By 2020, achieve a 100 percent increase in conservation, preservation and stewardship lands within the boundaries of the CHNEP study area.
3. Encourage and support the removal and management of invasive exotic plants and exotic nuisance animals on private lands.

#### *Stewardship Gaps*

1. By 2025, a minimum of 75 percent of all residents will have recalled attending a watershed event, reading watershed material or hearing watershed/estuary information on radio or TV. A minimum of 50 percent of all residents in the CHNEP study area can recognize estuaries and watersheds. A minimum of 10 percent of all residents will be able to claim personal actions that protect the estuaries and watersheds.
2. By 2020, the CHNEP will expand its role as a recognized resource to elected officials or their agents from local, state and federal government for policy advice.
3. Though 2020, key geographic and scientific information will be presented in ways that are meaningful to the majority of people.

This link provides more details on strategies to reach these goals: <http://www.chnep.org/CCMP/CCMP2013.pdf>

## APPENDIX F: STATE AGENCIES

### Florida Department of Environmental Protection

#### South District Projects

##### **Charlotte County Dredging**

<http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/SDRO/ERP/CharlotteCountyDredging/Application.pdf>

#### Division of Recreation and Parks

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) is a state competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local governments to develop and/or acquire land for public outdoor recreational purposes. Funding for the program has been awarded to approximately 1,031 projects for the last 10 fiscal year funding cycles.

This link provides a listing of all the park sites in Charlotte County:

<http://webapps.dep.state.fl.us/DrpOrpcr/UpdateInventoryView.do?submitTo=UpdateInventoryPark&selectedSite=CHARLOTTE+COUNTRY>

#### SCORP

Florida's outdoor recreation providers can be classified into five categories: federal government, state government, county government, municipal government and private sector providers. Both federal and state agencies are concerned with areas and facilities designed to accommodate the demand for resource-based outdoor recreation. County and municipal governments are the primary suppliers of the public facilities needed for user-oriented recreation, although some also provide areas and facilities to meet part of the need for resource-based outdoor recreation. Private recreation providers, non-profit organizations, clubs and other organizations not certified as non-profit by the Florida Department of State, such as hunt clubs, country clubs, yacht clubs and others, are a vital component of the state's outdoor recreation supply and meet a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation in Florida.

#### **2011 Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study**

Top Reasons for Resident Participation:

- For health/physical fitness
- To be with family and friends
- For relaxation/fun/enjoyment
- To be outdoors/close to nature
- To enjoy the scenery

Top Reasons for Tourist Participation:

- For relaxation/fun/enjoyment
- To be with family and friends
- Florida has good/attractive recreation opportunities/climate

- To be outdoors/close to nature
- Beach (specifically mentioned)

#### Top Desired Facilities- Residents

- Community parks
- Biking paths
- Playgrounds
- Outdoor public swimming pools
- Hiking/walking trails

#### Top Desired Facilities- Tourists

- Improved amenities at existing recreation areas (bathrooms, etc.)
- Community Parks
- Beach Access/Parking
- Waterpark
- Saltwater Boat Access/Ramps

### **Goals for Recreation in Florida**

1. Highlight the economic impact of outdoor recreation
  - a. DEP and relevant state agencies, in coordination with all recreation providers, should produce a report on the overall economic impact of outdoor recreation in Florida.
  - b. Local recreation providers should work with local economic development councils to promote Florida's recreation opportunities as a means to attract businesses.
  - c. Recreation providers should communicate with private developers on the connection between property values and availability of natural landscapes and recreation opportunities.
2. Emphasize outdoor recreation's impact on health and quality of life
  - a. Public recreation providers should partner with county health departments and local health care providers to promote active, healthy lifestyles through community-level health improvement initiatives.
  - b. DEP should assist DOH in implementing recreation-related objectives in the State Health Improvement Plan.
  - c. DOH and county health departments should determine ways to further incorporate outdoor recreation opportunities into community health assessments, utilizing tools such as the Florida Outdoor Recreation Inventory to determine existing opportunities and measure their impact on community health.
3. Ensure and identify future resources for programs essential to recreation
  - a. Recreation providers should seek partnerships with private sector companies that share the common vision of creating healthy, active and livable communities.
  - b. Recreation providers should work with stakeholders and the general public to advocate the provision of adequate funding for existing land and water conservation programs.
  - c. DEP should coordinate with DEO in working with local governments to identify sources of public and private grant funding to meet recreational programming and park development needs.
  - d. The Florida Recreation and Park Association, the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy and other organizations should continue to provide technical assistance to local



governments and citizen groups for identifying alternative sources of funding and enacting local land acquisition programs.

4. Maintain and manage adequate availability of resources for a growing population
  - a. Given Florida's current economic situation, public land management agencies should focus efforts on enhancing existing access points and facilities, as present resources allow.
  - b. By working with local business communities, land management agencies should work closely with local recreation suppliers and outfitters on how they can benefit from nearby public lands to stimulate local economies, create jobs and facilitate public recreational access.
  - c. Agencies should ensure that all public lands are open for appropriate public access as soon as possible after acquisition, without compromising the agencies' mission or the resources of the land.
  - d. Resource management and restoration activities on public lands should be greatly expanded. Activities such as prescribed burning, exotic species removal and hydrological restoration are vital to providing and maintaining the natural and cultural resources that support resource based recreation.
5. Coordinate recreation providers to better connect lands and opportunities
  - a. State agencies should work cooperatively with VISIT FLORIDA to create a single, coordinated data source for accessing public information about outdoor recreation opportunities on Florida's public lands.
  - b. DEP, in cooperation with other groups, should continue to strengthen state agency coordination in conjunction with SCORP planning. This will keep open lines of communication on statewide recreation issues and trends and methods of addressing them.
  - c. DEP should pursue efforts to conduct a statewide forum on outdoor recreation to enhance the coordination of efforts among public and private suppliers.
  - d. Recreation agencies should continue sharing information for the SCORP outdoor recreation inventory and periodic assessments of demand to minimize unnecessary duplication of efforts and ensure a single data source that is kept accurate and up to date.
6. Increase and improve universal accessibility
  - a. State land management agencies should partner with organizations such as the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association to establish specific programs for visitors with disabilities to be uniformly available throughout the state.
  - b. Outdoor recreation providers should develop and implement schedules for identifying and eliminating architectural barriers in existing facilities under their management.
  - c. Upon construction or renovation of trails, agencies should complete UTAP trail assessments and provide trail accessibility information to the public.
  - d. All recreation providers should stay current on information technology, following best practices for distribution of information to the public.
  - e. Outdoor recreation providers should develop and strengthen partnerships with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and organizations such as Florida Disabled Outdoors Association to educate themselves and the public, and to provide recreation activities and programs for people of all ages and abilities.
7. Protect Florida's waters while providing adequate public access
  - a. All levels of government, working with the private sector, should identify alternative means of meeting public demand for water through developing alternative water supplies such as brackish surface and groundwater, storm water and reclaimed wastewater.

- b. DEP should continue to provide funding to support construction of public recreational facilities in springs, monitor spring water quality, and oversee other restoration activities to help ensure that springs remain available for public use.
  - c. DEO should continue to provide planning assistance to local governments protecting Florida's springs, consistent with reports "Protecting Florida's Springs: Land Use Planning Strategies and Best Management Practices" and "Protecting Florida's Springs: An Implementation Guidebook."
  - d. Funding should continue to be made available through the Florida Forever program to acquire land or conservation easements and fund capital improvements for increased public access, to conserve the state's natural and cultural heritage, including working waterfronts, and for environmental restoration, and water resource protection and supply.
  - e. Federal, state and local governments should work to reduce the amount of nutrient pollution that enters Florida's waters through programs that teach the public about where nutrients come from and what they can do to help.
  - f. Public agencies and private organizations should continue clean-up and rehabilitation efforts for specific water bodies, such as Lake Okeechobee, the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers, the Everglades and the waters surrounding the Florida Keys.
  - g. Local governments should maximize the use of local comprehensive planning processes to increase public access to Florida's waters by preserving recreational and commercial working waterfronts and identifying sites for public and private recreation.
  - h. Public recreation providers should identify water areas under their jurisdictions where inadequate recreational access exists or where existing water access can be improved, and give priority to making the needed improvements.
8. Improve urban recreation opportunities
- a. Municipal planning and recreation departments, along with FDOT, should continue to incorporate walking and biking into transportation plans, with a focus on safe and connected opportunities.
  - b. Public recreation providers should continue and strengthen all federal, state and local initiatives which support the creation, enhancement and expansion of urban parks and open spaces.
  - c. Cities should create central, cornerstone parks to revitalize their communities and facilitate active, healthy living.
  - d. Communities should attempt to restore abandoned commercial developments, particularly sites of environmental concern, back to their natural state.
9. Connect all people to the outdoors
- a. All public recreation providers should encourage family-centered programming that appeals to both youth and adults. This multi-generational approach will join all ages in a shared appreciation for natural resources.
  - b. Public schools in Florida, in partnerships with Department of Education, should continue to integrate environmental education throughout their curricula to increase awareness of the benefits of and threats to Florida's natural systems. Schools should seek funding through grants, partnerships and sponsorships with public and private entities to fund environmental education based activities such modeled after best practices identified by the Learning in Florida's Environment (LIFE) Program.
  - c. Agencies should establish and promote packaged interest programs, which harness interest in natural and cultural resource based recreational, interpretive or educational activities to stimulate interest and lead participants to greater participation in the outdoors.

- d. Recreation providers should adapt recreation programs and facilities to meet the needs of a changing population, particularly the needs of Hispanics and seniors.
10. Facilitate participation through accessible information
- a. DEP should continue to develop and enhance the Florida Outdoor Recreation Inventory website centralizing comprehensive information about outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida.
  - b. Recreation providers should continue to incorporate technological advancements as means to facilitate and encourage outdoor recreation participation, such as smartphone applications and interactive maps online.
  - c. Recreation providers should offer technology-driven programs and events, blending technology with traditional
11. Encourage volunteerism, stewardship, and advocacy
- a. All park and recreation agencies should maximize the use of volunteers and citizen based support organizations to supplement their existing resources and personnel. Agencies should develop new, innovative and enjoyable volunteer opportunities that engage all generations and retain volunteers for future projects.
  - b. Agencies should coordinate the distribution of information regarding volunteer opportunities to potential volunteer groups.
  - c. Recreation providers should work with organizations such as FRPA, the Trust for Public Land, and other recreation groups and businesses to educate the public about the benefits of volunteerism on public lands and encourage expanded opportunities for the public to participate in volunteer programs.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/outdoor/scorp.htm>

## Office of Greenways and Trails

OGT coordinates with and provides technical assistance regarding the acquisition, development, designation and management of greenways and trails projects that fulfill the FGTS plan and vision. OGT administers the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), a federally funded competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local communities for the development of trails

## Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) Plan 2013-2017

### Goal and Objectives:

- Identify and prioritize trails and greenways to facilitate completion of the FGTS
  - Land Trails Opportunity Map (Page 11 Charlotte County):  
[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan/PDF/LANDTRAILS\\_MapBook.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/PDF/LANDTRAILS_MapBook.pdf)
  - Paddling Trails Opportunity Map:  
[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan/PDF/PADDLING\\_TRAILS\\_Mapbook.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/PDF/PADDLING_TRAILS_Mapbook.pdf)
  - Priority Map Southwest:  
[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan/PDF/Gap%20Maps/Top%20Tier%20Maps/PrioritySouthwestRegion\\_top\\_tier\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/PDF/Gap%20Maps/Top%20Tier%20Maps/PrioritySouthwestRegion_top_tier_FINAL.pdf)
    - The Priority Trails Map encompasses the most important corridors and connections within the FGTS Land Trails Opportunity Map and Paddling Trails Opportunity Map

- Ecological Greenways Opportunity Map:  
[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS\\_Plan/PDF/New\\_FEGN\\_Priorities\\_Map\\_Adopted12-2013\\_byFGTC.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/FGTS_Plan/PDF/New_FEGN_Priorities_Map_Adopted12-2013_byFGTC.pdf)
  - Represents the areas necessary to protect a statewide network of conservation land and connecting wildlife corridors designed to maintain large landscape- scale ecological functions.
- Direct resources and programs to establish and connect the FGTS
  - OGT will provide greenways and trails assistance and resources to communities, organizations and individuals, with emphasis on assisting projects and plans that advance and complete FGTS priorities
  - Encourage local, state and federal programs that provide funding for greenways and trails to advance the FGTS with emphasis on completing priorities.
  - Identify and maintain, on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com, a database of funding sources that facilitate the acquisition, development, management and promotion of the FGTS.
  - Pursue public/private partnerships to take advantage of public and private sources of funding and in-kind contributions to support implementation of the FGTS
  - December 2013, OGT will coordinate and complete the revision of Chapter 62S-1, FAC, to focus the Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program to closing gaps and completing corridors on the FGTS Priority Trails Map.
  - Ensure that state conservation and recreation land acquisition programs, such as Florida Forever, consider FGTS priorities during project analysis and selection.
  - Encourage all public conservation and recreation land acquisition programs to consider FGTS priorities and opportunities during project analysis and selection.
  - Encourage the use of transportation and other linear infrastructure rights of way that coincide with FGTS priorities and opportunities to include trails.
- Promote and communicate information about greenways and trails to advance the FGTS.
- Link and support complementary programs, planning and partnership efforts to coordinate the FGTS
  - Coordinate the FGTS to enhance public access to and provide connections between Florida's diverse recreational opportunities.
  - Advance the SCORP by coordinating the FGTS plan to connect and increase access to public recreational opportunities.
  - Promote the FGTS Plan and SCORP as companion efforts for state level outdoor recreation planning.
  - Coordinate with the Florida Outdoor Recreation Coalition, the Florida Recreation and Parks Association and other related non-profits regarding recreational efforts and initiatives that advance and are supported by the FGTS.

## Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources

### Goals:

- Providing system-wide review and assistance regarding management, restoration and protection of natural systems, listed species, coastal systems, archaeological sites, historic structures, collections and archival materials.

- Ensuring that natural and cultural resource protection is inherent in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of park facilities.
- Providing management and interagency coordination for planning and implementing coastal restoration and erosion control projects.
- Developing and updating standards for resource management, operational procedures, policy guidelines and directives.
- Developing and conducting training for FPS staff on resource management methods and procedures, including organizing and/or contributing to professional meetings, workshops, conferences and publications to maintain and improve resource management skills.
- Tracking and analyzing resource management activities, preparing reports to document trends and disseminating that information throughout the division.
- Issuing statewide Scientific Research and Collecting Permits, in addition to reviewing and coordinating other natural and cultural resource permits.
- Managing the Florida Park Service Archives, including historic records, plans and photographs, which are open to the public for research.
- Coordinating with other agencies and organizations on natural and cultural resource issues.

Here is a link to the Resource Management Annual Report:

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bncr/forms/12-13\\_res\\_mgt\\_annual\\_report.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bncr/forms/12-13_res_mgt_annual_report.pdf)

Land Management Brochure: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bncr/landmanagement.pdf>

## Division of State Lands

The Division of State Lands (DSL) administers land acquisition programs on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund and DEP. DSL also provides administrative oversight for approximately 11 million acres of state owned lands, including 700 freshwater springs, 4,510 islands of ten acres or more and 7,000 lakes.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/>

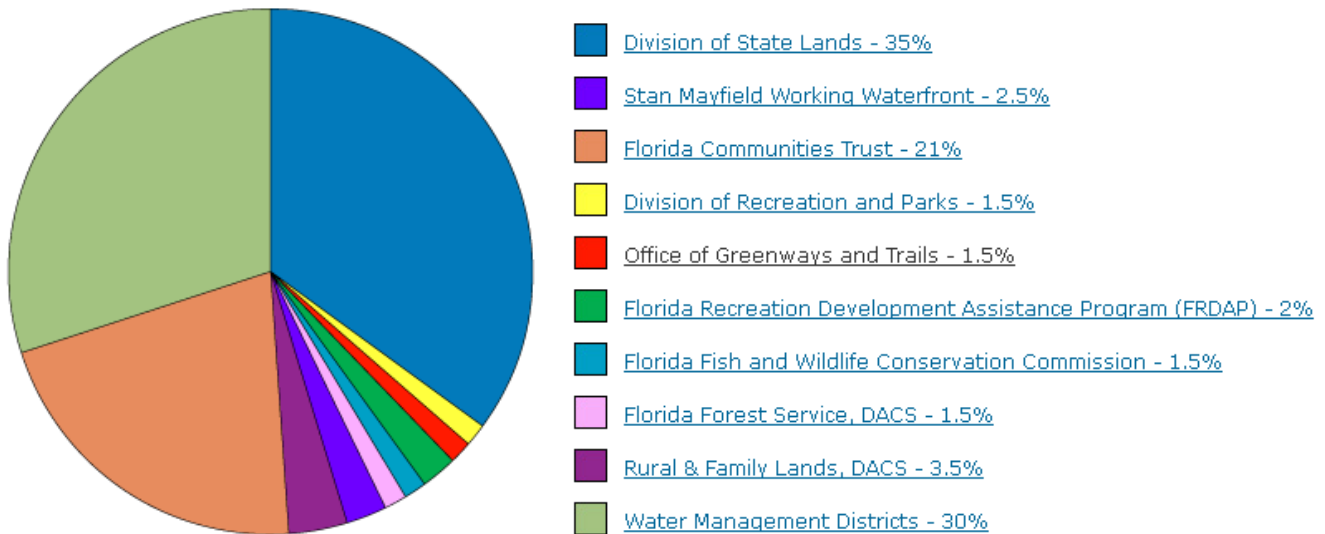
### **Florida Forever**

DSL administers the Florida Forever program, which was created by the 1999 Florida Legislature as the successor program to the Florida Preservation 2000 program established in 1990. Florida Forever supports a variety of land acquisition purposes, including the preservation of environmental, conservation, and water management lands and to provide grants to local governments.

### Florida Forever Funding Distribution

When *Florida Forever* funding is appropriated by the legislature it is distributed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to a number of state agencies and programs to purchase public lands in the form of parks, trails, forests, wildlife management areas and more. All of these lands are held in trust for the citizens of Florida.

Pursuant to 259.105(3) F.S. the breakdown to agencies is:



Link to this page: [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/fl\\_forever.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/fl_forever.htm)

#### Florida Forever Projects- Charlotte County:

##### *Charlotte Harbor Estuary*

- The Myakka Estuary project will protect the largest natural area left around northern Charlotte Harbor
  - The DRP will manage that portion of the project west of SR 775. Florida Forest Service/FFS (aka Division of Forestry/DOF), Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will manage the western portion of the Myakka Estuary portion of the project, with the DRP managing the east side.
- The primary goals of management of the Charlotte Estuary project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish, or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites
- After the core of the Myakka River forests are acquired, the FFS and DRP will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the sites, providing public and fire management access, inventorying resources, removing trash, and eradicating exotic plants.

##### *Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods*

- Northwest of Fort Myers lies the largest and highest-quality slash-pine flatwoods left in southwest Florida.
- Managed by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
- The project is designated as a wildlife management area, with such uses as hiking, environmental education and hunting.
- The primary goals of management of the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods project are: to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs can adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation
- The first year of management activity will entail controlling public access with gates and/or fencing, and controlling the littering and dumping problems. Additional emphasis will be placed on planning and on establishing an adequate and appropriate fire regime. Subsequent years should result in this project becoming an integral part of the management scheme for Babcock-Webb WMA

#### *Hall Ranch*

- The Hall Ranch project will help preserve a corridor of natural land—slash pine flatwoods, marshes, and cypress swamps—from Charlotte Harbor to Telegraph Swamp.
- This project qualifies as a wildlife management area, with uses such as hunting, various sorts of trails, camping, and picnicking, among other activities.
- This project consists of one major owner—the Hall Ranch Corporation. The essential parcel is the Hall ownership south of State Road 74. There are multiple small ownerships scattered throughout the Hall ownership north of SR 74.
- Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. The project includes much of the undeveloped land between the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area and Telegraph Swamp and consequently has the size and location to achieve its primary objective.
- The FWCC is recommended as Manager

#### **Florida Communities Trust**

The Florida Communities Trust (FCT), established in 1989 to help local governments preserve parks, open space, beaches and natural areas, has created more livable communities throughout Florida. The source of funding for Florida Communities Trust comes from *Florida Forever* proceeds.

FL Communities Trust Annual Report:

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/FL\\_Communities\\_Trust/parksandopenspace/AnnualReport2012\\_2013.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/FL_Communities_Trust/parksandopenspace/AnnualReport2012_2013.pdf)

Florida Communities Trust Act:

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0380/0380PartIIIContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2010&Title=-%3E2010-%3EChapter%20380-%3EPart%20III](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0380/0380PartIIIContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2010&Title=-%3E2010-%3EChapter%20380-%3EPart%20III)

#### **Bureau of Land Acquisition**

#### Negotiation Section:

- Appraisal Map: completed through the Bureau of Survey and Mapping,
- Appraisal Report: completed through the Bureau of Appraisal,
- Negotiate Offer and Contract Terms: based on appraised value of highest and best use of the property. Conservation easements and other less-than-fee transactions may take longer to negotiate agreeable terms, and
- Board of Trustees' Approval: an approximate six-week process wherein the acquisition is presented to the Board of Trustees (Governor and Cabinet) for approval.

#### Closing Section:

- Prepares the transaction for conveyance to state ownership. The agents utilize contractors to perform some aspects of the closing process, such as title searches, title insurance, closing services and environmental site assessments. The statewide contracts for these services are managed within the Division's Bureau of Land Acquisition Closing Section for accuracy and compliance with Florida Statutes and DEP's policies and procedures. The closing component of the acquisition process includes the steps necessary to close the transaction and acquire title to the subject property.

#### Land Acquisition Process:

1. Due Diligence: Through the use of private contractors, title work, an environmental site assessment and a survey are obtained to aid in the identification of any issues which may impact the title, boundary, value, manageability and long-term ownership of the property.
2. Issue Resolution: Staff reviews the due diligence products to identify and evaluate any issues. The seller must resolve those issues prior to closing. Staff may assist in the resolution of issues.
3. Closing: This phase of the closing process consists of execution of all legal documents between the parties and the delivery of monies necessary to complete the transaction on the terms and conditions of the contract. Title is transferred to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida (Governor and Cabinet).

**Stewardship of State Lands:** <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/stewardship.htm>

## Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas

The Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) is the principal manager of submerged lands and their associated marine and aquatic resources in Florida. The Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 (Chapter 258, Part II, Florida Statutes), authorizes the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to maintain state owned submerged lands with exceptional biological, aesthetic and scientific value as aquatic preserves. These areas offer prime opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming, paddling, snorkeling, diving and other water-related types of recreation. CAMA manages Florida's 41 aquatic preserves, including 37 saltwater and four freshwater sites, encompassing more than two million acres of sovereign submerged lands of the state.

Cape Haze Aquatic Preserve: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/capehaze/info.htm>

Gasparilla Sound – Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve:  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/gasparilla/info.htm>

## Division of Water Resource Management



<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/>

The Division of Water Resource Management (DWRM) is responsible for protecting the quality of Florida's drinking water as well as its rivers, lakes and wetlands, and for reclaiming lands after they have been mined for phosphate and other minerals. Its programs establish the technical basis for setting the state's surface water and ground water quality standards, which are critical to maintaining the viability of water resources for public outdoor recreational use.

### **Florida Beaches Habitat Conservation Plan**

<http://www.flbeacheshcp.com/>

<http://www.flbeacheshcp.com/docs/FLBHCP%20Primer.pdf>

The mission of this project is to aid the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems in obtaining an Incidental Take Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This will be accomplished by developing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that will minimize and mitigate the take of federally listed species resulting from activities permitted through FDEP's Coastal Construction Control Line Program. The HCP will enable FDEP to fulfill its statutory responsibilities under Florida law and the Federal Endangered Species Act.

The Biological Goal of the Florida Beaches HCP is to implement a statewide conservation strategy that sustains the basic life history traits and ecology of all covered species within the Plan Area and supports the conservation goals of Federal recovery plans and state management plans for those species.

Four primary biological objectives extend from this goal. They are as follows:

1. Maintain and, where possible, improve the quality, quantity and function of habitat for all covered species within the Plan Area.
2. Minimize impacts resulting from CCCL-permitted activities.
3. Adequately mitigate impacts resulting from CCCL-permitted activities to ensure a net conservation benefit for all covered species.
4. Ensure the long-term persistence of covered species within the Plan Area in consideration of large-scale environmental changes, such as sea level rise

### **Bureau of Mine Reclamation**

Mine Reclamation Rules and Regulations: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/rulesprog.htm#mines>

## **Office of Sustainable Initiatives**

### **Clean Marina Program**

The Florida *Clean Marina* Program is a voluntary designation program with a proactive approach to environmental stewardship. Participants receive assistance in implementing Best Management Practices through on-site and distance technical assistance, mentoring by other *Clean Marinas* and continuing education. To become designated as a *Clean Marina*, facilities must implement a set of environmental Best Management Practices (BMP) designed to protect Florida's waterways. These BMP's address critical environmental issues such as sensitive habitat, waste management, storm water control, spill prevention and

emergency preparedness. Designated facilities and those facilities seeking designation receive ongoing technical support from the Florida *Clean Marina* Program and the *Clean Boating* Partnership.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cleanmarina/marina/default.htm>

A list of Clean Marina Resources, including a Guidebook and an Action Plan:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cleanmarina/resources.htm>

Currently, there are no designated Clean Marinas in Charlotte County:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cleanmarina/marinas.htm#sw>

## Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The mission of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is conserving and protecting the state's agricultural and natural resources by reducing wildfires, promoting environmentally safe agricultural practices, and managing public lands.

### Florida Forest Service

“Outdoor recreational opportunities on Florida's State Forests are as diverse as the resources themselves. Most recreational opportunities in Florida's State Forests are passive in nature. Utilizing old roadbeds and fire lanes as trails, people can physically brush up against Florida's natural and untamed resources. Whether it's by bicycle, horse, or foot, visitors to State Forests in Florida can experience first-hand the same outdoor elements that early settlers and inhabitants once experienced. In addition to providing outdoor recreation, state forest trails serve as outdoor classrooms for people of all ages to explore and learn. State Forests are open to public access. Some forest roads may require a State Forest Use Authorization for vehicle access. In addition, any group activity requires a State Forest Use Authorization and possibly a fee. These authorizations may be obtained in advance by contacting the state forest you plan to visit.”

Closest State Forest: Myakka State Forest is located in the south western portion of Sarasota County within the city limits of North Port. The forest was purchased in 1995 as part of the Myakka Estuary Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) project using Preservation 2000 and Save Our Rivers funds.

- Recreation available at this location includes:
  - Camping, hiking, off-road bicycling, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and small game hunting.
  - The streams on the forest provide a source for fishing, boating, canoeing and kayaking.

### Wetland Restoration on State Forests

- Much of the land now managed by the Florida Forest Service has been impacted to varying degrees by previous human activities. Many wetlands found today on State Forests had been drained, while others had been impounded or filled for varying land use purposes in the past.
- In 2007 the Florida Forest Service began conducting a Wetland Restoration Needs Assessment on all State Forests with impaired wetlands. This information is made available to the public through postings on the Department of Environmental Protection's Florida Ecological Restoration Database (FERI) as the information becomes available.

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Our-Forests/State-Forests/Myakka-State-Forest>

## Florida Department of State

### Division of Historical Resources

List of Historic Resources in Charlotte County:

<http://www.flheritage.com/facts/reports/places/index.cfm?fuseaction=ListAreas&county=Charlotte>

A list of regulations and guidelines in the preservation of historic resources:

<http://www.flheritage.com/preservation/compliance/guidelines.cfm>

Compliance Review module: <http://www.flheritage.com/preservation/compliance/docs/Module2.pdf>

### Florida's Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan

[http://archive.org/stream/62683\\_FDS\\_84Pg\\_Publication#page/n0/mode/2up](http://archive.org/stream/62683_FDS_84Pg_Publication#page/n0/mode/2up)

The State Comprehensive Plan (Section 187.201, Florida Statutes) includes goals that directly relate to historic preservation. For URBAN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION, the goal is:

- In recognition of the importance of Florida's vital urban centers and the need to develop and redevelop downtowns to the state's ability to use existing infrastructure and to accommodate growth in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally acceptable manner, Florida shall encourage the centralization of commercial, governmental, retail, residential, and cultural activities within downtown areas.

Many of the objectives under this goal utilize the concepts embodied in the Florida Main Street Program.

Concerning CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES:

- Florida shall increase access to its historical and cultural resources and programs and encourage the development of cultural programs of national excellence.

Objectives related to HISTORIC PRESERVATION under this goal include:

- Promote and provide access throughout the state to performing arts, visual arts, and historic preservation and appreciation programs at a level commensurate with the state's economic development;
- Ensure the identification, evaluation, and protection of archaeological folk heritage and historic resources properties of the state's diverse ethnic population;
- Stimulate increased private sector participation and support for historical and cultural programs;
- Encourage the rehabilitation and sensitive, adaptive use of historic properties through technical assistance and economic incentive programs; and
- Ensure that historic resources are taken into consideration in planning of all capital programs and projects at all levels of government and that such programs and projects are carried out in a manner which recognizes the preservation of historic resources.

The Architectural Preservation Services staff also administers a program of state grants for the rehabilitation, restoration, and acquisition of historic buildings, the survey of historical resources, the excavation of archaeological sites, and the funding of preservation education and museum exhibit programs.

The 11-member Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) makes recommendations about acquisition, management and disposal of state-owned lands. This advisory group includes private citizen members with backgrounds in scientific disciplines of land, water, or environmental sciences as well as wildlife management, forestry management, and outdoor recreation, in addition to five state agency representatives, including the Department of State.

More efforts, such as the 2011 listing of the Parrot Jungle in the National Register of Historic Places, need to be focused on such historic tourism resources. Other types of recreational resources should also be identified, such as historic golf courses, jai-alai frontons, lawn bowling clubs, and racing facilities.

The comprehensive plan provides a ranking of seven topics that are considered the most important ones facing Florida:

1. Development
2. Economics of Historic Preservation
3. Downtown Districts
4. Property Rights
5. Perception that Florida has no Historical Resources
6. Heritage Tourism
7. Historic Preservation Education

*Goals and Objectives:*

1. Increase and widen awareness of Florida history and engagement in historic preservation activities
  - a. Place more historic preservation information in local and statewide media
  - b. Increase outreach through the Internet, webinars and other web-based media
  - c. Support community based programs such as Florida Main Street
  - d. Increase technical and grant assistance for developing educational and promotional products such as brochures, interpretive signage, pamphlets, and school curricula
  - e. Integrate local history into local school curricula
  - f. Develop a statewide Young Preservationists Program (e.g., youth summits and service-learning opportunities)
  - g. Establish Historic Preservation Girl Scout and Boy Scout badges
  - h. Establish a Historic Preservation prize in the Florida History Fair
  - i. Interface with university/college history and historic preservation programs (e.g., develop internship program)
  - j. Continue to work with "Geocaching Society" to develop local history geocaching trails
  - k. Increase capacity of the Mission San Luis summer camp program
  - l. Provide Mission San Luis summer camp opportunities for underprivileged children through scholarships
2. Increase technical knowledge of historic preservation among those in a position to impact archaeological and historical resources

- a. Further develop and publicize the educational resources available from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
  - b. Develop local policies and programs that encourage and provide incentives for redevelopment that incorporates historic preservation
  - c. Develop more education programs and materials for developers and real estate professionals
  - d. Provide training and online resources for project managers and developers on how to identify and report archaeological issues
  - e. Create instructional materials to enhance understanding of the archaeological and historic preservation compliance and review process
  - f. Hold community workshops for home and business owners on economic development and historic preservation topics, such as repair/maintenance, appropriate restoration, architectural styles, and easements
  - g. Create 5-10 minute training presentations on key topics to educate property owners on preservation issues such as property rights, benefits of historic preservation, and best practices
  - h. Promote rehabilitation and reuse of existing facilities, structures, and buildings as an alternative to new construction
3. Improve historic preservation advocacy beginning at the grassroots level
    - a. Develop economic, cultural, and lifestyle impact measures for Florida historic preservation activities, using the Florida Main Street Program's model for collecting data from across the state, and provide training on how to use the system.
  4. Increase the diversity of historic preservation funding sources
  5. Improve networking among Florida's preservation partners

## Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

### Rural Land Stewardship Area Program

<http://www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/programs/technical-assistance/planning-initiatives/rural-planning/rural-land-stewardship-area-program>

Chapter 2011-139, Laws of Florida, substantially amended the Rural Land Stewardship Area program. Now at Section 163.3248, Florida Statutes, the law provides that one or more landowners may request that the local government designate their lands as a rural land stewardship area. Upon receipt of such a request, the local government may adopt a future land use overlay to designate all or portions of the lands as a rural land stewardship area if the properties currently are classified as predominantly agricultural, rural, open, open-rural, or a substantively equivalent land use. Rural Land Stewardship Areas are areas within which planning and economic incentives are applied to encourage the implementation of innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and the use of creative land use planning techniques to support a diverse economic and employment base.

A rural land stewardship area must be at least 10,000 acres, must be located outside of municipalities and established urban service areas, and must be designated by a plan amendment by each local government with jurisdiction over the rural land stewardship area. Development within a designated rural land stewardship area is exempt from the development of regional impact program.

There are no designated Rural Land Stewardship Areas in Charlotte County.

## Florida Department of Transportation

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Program

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/4-Reports/Bike-Ped/CBBphase1%20Report062907.pdf>

The purposes of the Conserve by Bicycle Program are to:

- Save energy by increasing the number of miles ridden on bicycles, thereby reducing the usage of petroleum-based fuels.
- Increase efficiency of cycling as a transportation mode by improving interconnectivity of roadways, transit and bicycle facilities.
- Reduce traffic congestion on existing roads.
- Provide recreational opportunities for Florida's residents and visitors.
- Provide healthy transportation and recreation alternatives to help reduce the trend toward obesity and reduce long-term health costs.
- Provide safe ways for children to travel from their homes to their schools by supporting the Safe Paths to Schools Program

The 1998 FDOT Project Development and Environment Manual also includes the requirement to provide bike lanes for all new and reconstructed roadways. FDOT's Design Standards was revised to include examples of how to stripe bike lanes through intersections. Since 1995, several research projects have substantiated bike lanes as safe facilities for cyclists who ride as prescribed by the traffic laws. In addition to providing design criteria for bike facilities, and guiding their inclusion on projects, FDOT has developed tools for local governments to use in planning and evaluating their transportation networks for bicyclists.

Two purposes of the Conserve by Bicycle Program are to:

- Provide recreational opportunities for Florida's residents and visitors, and
- Provide healthy transportation and recreation alternatives to help reduce the trend toward obesity and reduce long-term health costs.

The provision of bicycle lanes and shared use paths will increase perceived safety and comfort on the part of the bicyclists, and more bicyclists will engage in recreational bicycling on those facilities.

The following characteristics of bicycle facilities influence decisions to make recreational bicycle trips:

- Facility length
  - The length of a facility is likely to impact the number of recreational bicyclists, as they have longer preferred riding lengths. Few recreational bicyclists will want to ride on a very short facility (below some minimum length) because it will not be worth the effort to get ready and to access the facility.
- Intersections/interruptions
- Amenities/points of interest
- # of other trail users
- Crime

- Scenery/aesthetics
- Density-weighted population
- Bicycle LOS

Concluding Recommendations include:

1. Public agencies accommodate bicycling on all roadways in Florida
2. Require Recreational Infrastructure in New Developments
3. Build New Multi-Use Paths, Especially in Scenic Areas and Near Population Centers
4. Establish Minimum Standards for Bicycle Accommodation on Roadways
5. Retrofit the Existing Roadway and Street System
6. Relax Motor Vehicle Level of Service Standards and Increase Bicycle Level of Service Standards in Areas with Mixed Land Use, Especially where Employment and Residential Population Are Dense
7. Adopt Land Use Policies that Encourage Mixing of Higher-Density Residential and Employment Uses
8. Continue Research Regarding Provision of End-of-Trip Facilities for Bicyclists
9. Implement Education and Marketing Programs to Promote Bicycle Commuting
10. Study and Implement Education and Marketing Programs that Promote Recreational Bicycling

## Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/strategic-plan/>

### Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

The core mission of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation is to ensure healthy populations of all native species and their habitats on a statewide basis. The division integrates scientific data with applied habitat management for the purpose of maintaining stable or increasing populations of fish and wildlife. Integration efforts focus on the ecosystem or landscape scale to provide the greatest benefits to the widest possible array of fish and wildlife species. Accomplishing this mission requires extensive collaboration and partnering with local, state and federal agencies to maintain diverse and healthy fish and wildlife populations for the benefit of all Floridians and visitors. Direct benefits include ecological, economic, aesthetic, scientific and recreational benefits. This program provides:

- aquatic habitat management for marine, estuarine and freshwater systems;
- habitat management for terrestrial systems including public lands management;
- land acquisition;
- scientific support and assistance for habitat-related issues to private and public sector landowners and local, state and federal governments;
- species management and recovery plan development and implementation;
- exotic species coordination focused on prevention and control programs;
- manatee, Florida black bear, Florida panther and sea turtle population recovery;
- invasive plant management on public lakes, rivers and conservation lands.

### **Wildlife and Habitat Management**

Florida has one of the nation's largest systems of state-managed wildlife lands. The Wildlife Management Area program includes 5.8 million acres. Wildlife and Habitat Management is the FWC's lead manager on 1.4 million acres and coordinates management on another 4.4 million acres. This section's activities benefit plant and animal populations as it acquires land, develops site-specific land-management plans, guides managers in sound land-management practices and supports quality, wildlife-based public use, including a variety of hunting opportunities on managed lands. Additionally, the Wildlife and Habitat Management section restores degraded plant and wildlife communities and acquires new land that provides vital additions and linkages or conserves imperiled wildlife.

Habitat management programs use prescribed burns on fire-dependent plant communities, and chemical and mechanical vegetation treatments to control exotic or invasive plant infestations. These treatments restore ground cover and hydrologic conditions on altered landscapes to conserve wildlife and enhance critical habitat. The section develops and tests techniques to recover high-risk populations. It monitors programs to detect trends in the status and populations of imperiled species.

### **Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Restoration**

This section uses a multidisciplinary approach to develop and implement comprehensive management programs to improve the ecological health of freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats. Its primary focus is identifying high-priority water bodies and implementing a variety of management treatments to maintain quality habitat for wetland-dependent fish and wildlife. Working with other agencies and user groups, this section builds cooperative relationships to address various issues affecting aquatic resources, including nutrient enrichment, water-use policy, and protection of rare and imperiled fish and wildlife.

### **Conservation Planning Services**

Working with private and public sector landowners, this section develops and helps implement comprehensive, habitat-based management plans and incentive programs for landowners. Conservation Planning Services also provides managers of publicly owned lands with technical assistance to implement land-use plans that reduce negative impacts on fish and wildlife. This section uses scientific data to review and comment on FWC-regulated activities that may affect wildlife habitat.

### **Species Conservation Planning**

Conserving Florida's native wildlife diversity is the mission of this section. It develops and implements high-priority conservation activities for native wildlife, with an emphasis on threatened species. Partnerships with other governmental agencies (local, state and federal), nongovernmental organizations and individuals help achieve conservation goals for wildlife. This section manages most of the state's threatened species and coordinates activities relating to Florida's listing process and permitting of human activities that may affect listed species. Examples of these efforts included creating a rule for wildlife and airport safety, working with stakeholders to finalize revised rules for managing threatened species, and revising guidelines for gopher tortoise permitting. In addition, this section continues development of the Coastal Wildlife Conservation Initiative and a shorebird partnership network called the Florida Shorebird Alliance.

### **Imperiled Species Management**

This section is responsible for conservation of manatees, sea turtles, panthers and black bears through implementation of federal recovery plans and state management plans. Key tasks include development of rules and regulations that provide needed protections, providing technical assistance to local governments



and other state agencies for planning purposes and permit reviews, and addressing human-wildlife conflicts. The section coordinates with the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute's researchers to identify information needs that will assist in making management decisions. The section also provides answers to numerous public questions and requests and conducts a variety of outreach activities to encourage the public to become watchful stewards over Florida's threatened species.

### **Exotic Species Coordination**

This section works with the FWC's Division of Law Enforcement's Captive Wildlife staff to prevent nonnative species from harming native fish, wildlife and marine plants. Together, they develop science-based regulations to prevent the release and establishment of nonnative species. Partnerships with other local, state and federal groups seek to promote responsible pet ownership and increase awareness of the problems of introduced species, while also managing nonnative species present in Florida. This section's database has 10,000 records of observations of nonnative species, primarily introduced birds. New programs and regulations were introduced to combat the invasion of the Burmese python in south Florida.

### **Invasive Plant Management**

This section is responsible for directing, coordinating and funding two statewide programs controlling invasive upland plants on public conservation lands and invasive aquatic plants in public waterways. This section regulates, through a permitting program, projects for control of aquatic plants that do not meet the eligibility requirements for state funding. The FWC protects Florida's native plant and wildlife diversity with controls to manage invasive plants on public lands and waterways, dissemination of information, public education efforts, contractual research, and surveillance of plant communities on public lands and waterways. This section's goal is to protect native fish and wildlife habitat by reducing existing populations of invasive plants and preventing new invasive plant populations from becoming established.

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/hsc/>

## **Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management**

### **Fisheries Management**

The Fisheries Management section ensures the best freshwater fishing opportunities in Florida's lakes, rivers and streams through stocking desirable sport fish, regulating harvest, enhancing habitats and maintaining fish management areas. Fisheries Management coordinates with stakeholders and federal, state and local entities to protect and conserve freshwater resources and maintain fishing quality. Fisheries management information and a strong aquatic stewardship, ethics and ecology message are communicated through publications, electronic media, fishing camps, seminars and events.

### **Hatchery Operations and Stocking**

The state has two freshwater hatcheries: the Florida Bass Conservation Center at Richloam Hatchery and the Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center. They produce a dependable quantity of size-specific, high-quality freshwater fish, which are stocked annually in more than 200 Florida lakes, rivers and community-managed waters.

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/ffm/>

## Division of Marine Fisheries Management

The Division of Marine Fisheries Management (MFM) works with many agencies and groups to accomplish its mission to sustain the long-term health and abundance of Florida's marine fisheries. Fishery management requires coordination with federal agencies and other states, including the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. Other activities include issuance of special activity licenses, recovery of lost or abandoned lobster and crab traps, coordination of federal programs to provide disaster relief assistance to commercial fishers, and review and comment on proposed development projects that may affect marine resources. This division also conducts wholesale-dealer audits.

### **Analysis and Rulemaking**

This section compiles fishery data, coordinates with other governmental agencies and research institutions, and solicits information from the public regarding fishery management strategies for state saltwater fisheries regulations. Section employees use this information to develop management and rule-making recommendations for Commission consideration.

### **Federal Fisheries**

This section serves as liaison between the FWC Commissioners and the councils that have been created to assist in providing input into the management of federal marine fish species, such as snapper and grouper. The Section staff members serve on these regional fishery councils and coordinate with stakeholders on federal fisheries issues.

### **Services**

This section works as a liaison between the marine fishing community and the FWC, promoting responsible recreational and commercial fishing activities. The Marine Fisheries Services section also works to resolve issues related to proposed regulations, commercial license applications and wholesale-dealer compliance; coordinates with the industry to document fisheries disasters, seeks fisheries disaster-relief financial assistance and distributes funding; operates a trap-retrieval program; administers the statewide artificial reef programs; and comments on environmental projects

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/mfm/>

## Division of Law Enforcement

The Division bases its patrol efforts on its core missions:

### **Resource Protection**

This includes educating the public and enforcing state and federal fisheries and wildlife laws; protecting threatened and endangered species and habitats; managing captive and nonnative wildlife; investigating fish and wildlife crimes; and participating in youth projects to develop the next generation that cares about conservation.

### **Environmental Protection**

This includes educating the public and enforcing state and federal environmental laws; protecting and preserving cultural and natural resources; protecting state lands and water quality; investigating environmental crimes; and participation in education and outreach programs about environmental protection and enjoying state resources.

### **Boating and Waterways**

This includes enforcing boating rules and regulations, coordinating boating safety campaigns and education; managing public waters and access to them; conducting boating accident investigations; identifying and removing derelict vessels; and investigating vessel theft and title fraud.

### **Public Safety**

FWC officers respond to natural and manmade disasters and search and rescue missions. Specialized response units are equipped to operate by air, land and sea. The Division is a partner in Florida's Mutual Aid Plan, administered by the Florida Division of Emergency Management. The FWC works with other law enforcement agencies to provide intelligence and security support, general law enforcement services and critical incident investigations.

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/le/>

## **Division of Hunting and Game Management**

The Division of Hunting and Game Management provides for the safe and responsible use of wildlife species that are hunted. Specifically, they:

- offer scientific expertise on game wildlife such as alligators, deer, small game, waterfowl and wild turkeys;
- develop science-based management strategies for game wildlife, including hunting regulations;
- provide hunter safety training and certification to citizens through volunteer instructors. This training includes:
  - instruction in safe and lawful use of firearms;
  - principles of wildlife conservation;
  - outdoor ethics.
- develop and manage public shooting ranges;
- develop regulations and brochures for wildlife management areas, wildlife and environmental areas, and other public hunting areas throughout the state.

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/hgm/>

## **Office of Public Access**

The Office of Public Access and Wildlife Viewing Services (OPAWVS) provides opportunities for Floridians and visitors to view wildlife and experience the expanses of Florida's wildlife management area system. OPAWVS works with agency biologists to develop wildlife-viewing sites and recreational trails. They also develop recreation guides and interpretive products to increase visitors' enjoyment and understanding of wildlife and wildlife habitat and how the FWC works to sustain them.

OPAWVS staff develop statewide wildlife-viewing projects such as the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail and provide technical assistance to local governments and other agencies to help them develop wildlife-viewing sites and programs that conserve wildlife habitat while creating economic benefits in their communities. Hundreds of volunteers help develop recreational trails, offer interpretive programs and conduct conservation work through the volunteer projects coordinated by this office.

<http://myfwc.com/about/overview/programs/pawvs/>

## APPENDIX G: DRAFT CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARK DISTRICT REGULATIONS

**Section 6. Parks and Recreation (PKR)**

- (a) *Intent*: The purpose and intent of this district is to provide land for recreational opportunities, as well as to protect and preserve submerged lands in the County extending seaward from the mean high-water line or bulkhead line. Canals, manmade lakes, ponds, and water impoundment areas are specifically excluded from the operation of this section.
- (b) *Permitted Uses and Structures (P)*:
- (1) The following uses and structures shall only apply to uplands:
    - a. Public building.
    - b. Cemetery, mausoleum.
    - c. Outdoor educational facility.
    - d. Park, public or not-for-profit.
    - e. Golf course.
    - f. Recreation, indoor.
    - g. Recreation, outdoor.
  - (2) The following uses and structures shall only apply to submerged lands:
    - a. Uses such as boating, swimming, fishing, diving, water skiing, surfboarding, wading and similar activities.
    - b. Boat docks, boat lifts, and piers.
    - c. Seawalls, bulkheads, riprap and similar structures.
    - d. Navigational markers and signal devices.
    - e. Public utility lines.
- (c) *Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures*: and structures which are customarily accessory and clearly incidental to permitted and conditional uses and structures are permitted in this district .
- (1) Fences or walls may be permitted prior to the principal uses and structures.
- (d) *Conditional Uses and Structures (C)*: (For rules and regulations for any use designated as a Conditional Use or Structure, see Article 3.3. Conditional Uses and Structures)
- (1) Livestock breeding, training, and boarding.
  - (2) Telecommunications facility, 50 feet or less in height. (see Division 3.7.5. Communication Towers)
  - (3) Campground.
  - (4) Leisure vehicle rental, motorized and non-motorized.
- (e) *Prohibited Uses and Structures*: Any use or structure not expressly or by reasonable implication permitted herein or permitted by special exception shall be unlawful in this district.
- (f) *Special Exceptions (S)*: (For procedure see Division 1.1.5. Special Exceptions)
- The following uses shall only apply to uplands:
- (1) Animal sanctuary, zoo.

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- (2) Community garden. (see Division 3.7.4. Community Garden)
- (3) Amphitheater.
- (4) Auditorium, convention center, performing arts center.
- (5) Clubhouse, community center.
- (6) Place of worship. (see Division 3.7.4. Place of Worship)
- (7) Motor sports track, venue.
- (8) Outdoor market or exhibition space. (see Division 3.6.2. Special Use Standards)
- (9) Marina.
- (10) Telecommunications facility, greater than 50 feet in height. (see Division 3.7.5. Communication Towers)

The following uses shall only apply to submerged lands:

- (1) Structures and uses which relate directly and immediately to permitted uses in upland zoning classifications abutting a PKR district.
- (2) Covered boat slips and boat houses.
- (3) Houseboats and boats used for living purposes in accordance with Division 3.8.3. Houseboats; Boats Used for Living Purposes.
- (4) Mooring fields.

Such other uses in uplands and submerged lands as determined by the Zoning Official or his/her designee to be:

- a. Appropriate by reasonable implication and intent of the district.
- b. Similar to another use either explicitly permitted in that district or allowed by Special Exception.
- c. Not specifically prohibited in that district.

The BZA shall review a favorable determination of the Zoning Official under this provision at the time the Special Exception application is presented to it. An unfavorable determination of the Zoning Official or his/her designee shall be appealable pursuant to Division 1.1.1. BZA.

All uses within this district are subject to all regulations and permitting procedures of all agencies having jurisdiction over County waters.

(g) *Development Standards:*

	PKR
<b>Lot (min.)</b>	
Area (sq. ft.)	5,000
Width (ft.)	25
<b>Setbacks (min. ft.)</b>	
Front	10
Side	10
Rear	10
Abutting water	20
<b>Bulk (max.)</b>	

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Lot Coverage for All Buildings (active park)	40%
Lot Coverage for All Buildings (passive park)	10%
Height (ft.)	38
Density (units/acre)	0

See Division 3.8.1. Boat Docks; Boat Houses; Boat Lifts.

Where properties lie anywhere on a barrier island or within one thousand two hundred (1,200) feet of the water of Charlotte Harbor, the Gulf of Mexico, Lemon Bay, Gasparilla Sound, Placida Harbor, Red Fish Cove, the Myakka River, the Peace River, or Coral Creek, structures must also be constructed in accordance with Article 4.12. Waterfront Property.

- (h) *Off-street parking.* Off-street parking shall be in accordance with Article 4.9. Parking Standards.
- (i) *Signs.* Signs for uplands should be in accordance with Article 4.10. Sign Code. All signs for submerged lands are prohibited except signs for navigation, warning, trespassing and caution.



## APPENDIX H: PARK TYPOLOGIES AND LOS

		<b>Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>National Recreation and Parks Association (1995 definitions)</b>	<b>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</b>
<b>Mini-park</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	Within walking or short biking distance (.5) miles.	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs	
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Typically includes a playground, benches, picnic tables, and open space with few or no parking spaces.		
	<b>Size</b>	1-3 acres	Between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre in size	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	serves approx. 2,500 residents within a .5 mile	Less 1/4 mile distance in residential setting	
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	Primarily for walking or bicycle access, but may have limited parking	Neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal activity and passive recreation.	A park which serves the population of a neighborhood and is generally accessible by bicycle or pedestrian walkways.
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Typically includes play equipment, informal sports fields, paved courts, existing vegetation, picnicking, shelter and walking paths		
	<b>Size</b>	3-20 acres	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	serve 5,000 residents within a 1 mile radius	1/4 mile to 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers	

		<b>Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>National Recreation and Parks Association (1995 definitions)</b>	<b>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</b>
<b>Community Park</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	Community Parks are ideally located on a street classification of collector or higher with adequate parking. Adequate plantings/buffers and some passive recreational area should be provided.	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces; Determined by the quality and suitability of the site.	A park located near major roadways and designed to serve the needs of more than one neighborhood.
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Typically included are the same types of facilities as a neighborhood park, as well as both lighted and unlighted sports fields and courts, group pavilion(s), restrooms, bicycle and walking paths, recreation center and other active and passive recreation areas to meet specialized needs	N/A	
	<b>Size</b>	20-80 acres	Usually between 30 and 50 acres	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	serve 25,000 within a 3 mile radius	Typically serves two or more neighborhoods within a 1/2 to 3 mile distance	
<b>Regional Park</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	Typically, significant passive recreational, as well as special purpose facilities are included. 80+ acres serving 50,000+ within a 10-mile radius or 30 minute drive	Large Urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces; Determined by the quality and suitability of the site.	

		<b>Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>National Recreation and Parks Association (1995 definitions)</b>	<b>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</b>
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Facilities may include the same type of facilities as neighborhood and community parks except in greater quantities and level of development (i.e. lighting, range of sizes and level of detail). Sophisticated parking and circulation, stormwater management and infrastructure systems are typically involved. Trail systems allow for hiking/biking and interpretive use.	N/A	
	<b>Size</b>	80+ acres	Usually a minimum of 50 acres with 75 or more acres being optimal	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	-serving 50,000+ within a 10-mile radius or 30 minute drive	Usually serves the entire community. As needed to accommodate desired uses.	
<b>Environmental Park</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	Intended to preserve unique ecosystems, landscapes and/or open space while affording limited, passive recreational use. Environmental Parks may have some sensitive environmental habitats that are less important to the guiding influence of management. Management will focus on both environmental preservation and the management of the natural resources from a human dimension.	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space and visual aesthetics or buffering.	
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Facilities may include nature trails, picnicking, horseback riding, biking, group pavilions, fishing, boating, and limited group camping.	Varies	
	<b>Size</b>	Varies	Varies	

		<b>Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>National Recreation and Parks Association (1995 definitions)</b>	<b>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</b>
	<b>Access LOS</b>	serve 50,000+ residents within a 20-mile radius or a 30-60 minute drive	Varies	
<b>Special Purpose Facility</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	may include elements such as a historically or archaeologically significant feature or site	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use	
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	may include biking, hiking or multimodal trails; linear parks; fishing piers; boat ramps and canoe/kayak launches; areas of rare or endangered flora or fauna; event/conference facility; stadium; or beach or water access	N/A	
	<b>Size</b>	Varies	N/A	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	Varies	N/A	
<b>Greenway</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	A linear land route along either a natural corridor, such as a slough or shoreline; or, designated open space such as railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a scenic roadway, utility easement, or conservation corridors. Greenway trails are intended primarily for pedestrian or bicycle use rather than motorized vehicles, but in some cases may accommodate equestrian use. Connectivity among parks, preserves and points of interest is a key purpose for greenway trails.	Effectively tie the park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	

		<b>Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>National Recreation and Parks Association (1995 definitions)</b>	<b>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</b>
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Surfacing may range from in-place materials to paving or boardwalks. Support facilities are typically minimal and may include parking, resting points and interpretive signage.	Varies	
	<b>Size</b>	Varies	Varies	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	Varies	Varies	
<b>Blueway</b>	<b>Core Function</b>	An identified route along a body of water intended primarily for small, human-powered watercraft such as canoes and kayaks.	N/A	
	<b>Potential Facilities</b>	Blueway trails and support facilities may be identified by navigational markers and signage bearing an identification logo. Landside support facilities may be either public or private and may provide rental watercraft, parking, improved launch/landing points, intermediate stopping points and supplies.	N/A	
	<b>Size</b>	Blueway trails will vary in length, type of water body, aquatic environment, points of origin, exposure, and difficulty.	N/A	
	<b>Access LOS</b>	N/A	N/A	

## APPENDIX I: INTERVIEWS

## **Interview with Charlotte County Natural Resources**

Andy Stevens and Tina Powell

May 6, 2014

### Overview

The interview with the Natural Resources staff was a result of the intent to better understand the Fish and Wildlife involvement with Charlotte County with respect to parks and park development.

### Findings

#### *Florida Scrub Jay HCP*

Staff communicated that one of the more significant initiatives was the Habitat Conservation Plan that is under development for the Florida Scrub Jay. The HCP is under review from the U.S. FWS, with whom the original plan was developed in partnership. Currently, it is approximately four months from completion and upon approval will include a 30-year permit from the U.S. FWS. The HCP will accomplish the following:

- Acquire additional 1,300 acres of preservation lands
- Acquire and Manage land in perpetuity
  - o Currently, 14,000 platted lots will be affected
  - o The initiative will connect major parcels with smaller parcels, which is beneficial since currently there is not much recreational access on smaller parcels
  - o Major parcels will have passive recreation access- trail, equestrian, kayak and Canoe
- Contiguous lands offer opportunities for acquisition
- Establish general development standards in which platted lots will have future land use as parks

#### *Park Development*

Additional park development information gathered from the interview included that the Director is requesting a zoning district for parks and recreation that will allow for flexibility in park design and permitting. Inga William 743-1242 Principal Planner in Community Development is a good contact for the LDRs and the Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

#### *Bicycle Pedestrian and BlueWay Planning*

Additional items relevant to the development of the parks master plan relate to bicycle/pedestrian planning. Bike/Ped planning is important for connectivity and meeting the recreational needs of residents. The Metropolitan Planning Organization for Charlotte County contact is Venkat Vattikuti at 941-575-3676. Further, Punta Gorda has bike/ped in their existing plans.

Natural Resources staff is looking into permitting for designated markers for the BlueWay system. There are challenges to the south side for water access. Where there used to be kayak access before community reactions changed the rules. There is a desire to want to find a way to incorporate access.

### *Other Agencies*

When asked about other agencies that we should talk to, the staff recommended:

- Lemon Bay Conservancy
  - o Nonprofit owned private park with some public access
  - o Used for “environmental education”
- Stephanie Green at SWFWMD
- Mike Kemmer at FWC Contact

### *Funding*

Staff also discussed future funding initiatives with potential development through an upcoming sales tax initiative. The current sales tax ends at the end of the year. The sales tax committee reviewed funding. 25 parks projects were submitted and only 2 didn't get recommendation for funding. The staff has gotten good success in board approval - \$3 million bicycle/pedestrian trails to connect parks



## Interview with Florida Department of Environmental Protection

John Aspiolea

May 16, 2014

### *Overview*

The interview was set up to have a broad discussion of opportunities for collaboration and any/or plans to develop parks that might be of interest to Charlotte County. John described the general location and map of the state park within Charlotte County as well as its mitigation area. The state had put a hold on its acquisition program. However, a potential list of acquisitions is still available.

Newer requests in the area of recreation management in the state parks include

- Pickleball
- Converted tennis courts
- Geocaching – state parks have started providing opportunities. There are now 150 geocaches in the state park

### *Opportunities for collaboration with Charlotte County Parks:*

- Blueways- marking blueway trails
- Suitable kayak launches in state park
- Nature Trail along Sunrise Park – there are existing state leases and managed areas on south of sunrise park – would like to provide some fishing, nature trail, kayak launches
- Charlotte Sports park – Tippecanoe Park active recreational area
- Sam Knight Creek, State had planned access and launch
- “Tippe East” – nature trail collaboration. Interest in a lollipop or ‘loop’ trail
- L. Jobean or Tippe West – potential to develop “traditional state park” where there might be access to a drive-in-trail or camping opportunities.
- Settlement around boat lock – opportunity to remove the boat lock – agreed to put in sewer and moved forward. State is going to be doing restoration in that area.
- Cape Haze Management Area- Rotunda Area. Would like to collaborate on Cattedock Pt. Boat Ramp. County
- Cape Haze Mound Area – area is part of a restoration. State would welcome in lieu of constructing boat ramp – would love to get parking and public access to the primitive trail – would create access to Mayakka at that point.
- South of Robin Road there is an active mine that will be nearing end of permit. (Area is to the east of Widden Creek). The area to the east is the largest contiguous area to park. Currently, there is no public access. As the mine is nearing end of permit, there may be an opportunity for the county to acquire land for parking state would manage land from the mine. The state might be interested in building a road along the northern edge of the mine. Lots of opportunities to Looking to sell waterfront sites- could affect area – maybe develop cabins. Opportunities could

be suitable for ATV or off-road biking, equestrian trails (and concessions for equestrian facilities). The developer gave county waterway to manage. Would help state to avoid taking mine to court. SWFWMD might partner with property to acquire the areas around the mine. Area can provide access to Widden, Coral, and Catfish Creeks. Further, the WMD has had water quality issue in the neighborhood North of the mining area. Could maybe restore flows. Public Works staff might be available to provide context (Chuck or Joanne Vernon with County Public Works). 5-6 years ago Weiler Engineering offered to talk about flow ways options.

- There may be trail opportunities along 771. There are current no trails in the area.
- Opportunity for bike trails between parks. There are several places for suitable access points – would be happy to open to maintain biking and/or trail opportunities. Examples include directly South of Rotunda area where there may be access to the park from the bike trail. Could use county park areas – parking already there, just need marking of areas of access.
- GC Herring Park. Would like to transfer lease to county where Charlotte County could provide active recreation
  - Amber Jack slough and Rotunda Community Park in close Proximity – both perfect for active recreation Linx Lane – off of Cape Haze. Will be in state management plan for 2017. Opportunities for fishing, kayak, canoe launch. Part of resolution for developer who dumped raw sewage into lake and filled area on Coral Creek (north of dam). State may consider working with concessionaire for kayak trips as it is a rare freshwater in natural area. State plans to offer more upland trails in area.
  - State may also consider some concessions at Don Pedro Park and Gasparilla for kayak launches/tours as well as work to see if a ferry service to Don Pedro Island from Amber Jack Slough makes sense. Could go through all of area as one contiguous conservation corridor.
  - Stump Pass- limited opportunities – not a whole lot of things changing.
  - Opportunities to collaborate with CHEC - active nonprofit in natural resources education. John is on CHEC Board of Directors. Interest in collaborating with Charlotte Parks and Recreation for funding education programs, especially for bus funding.
  - Tern Bay and West of Tern Bay. Already in conservation. There may be an opportunity to collaboration on conservation funding.

#### *Discussion of Volunteer Programs*

John described the volunteer program that helps to maintain state park lands. Considerable man hours (approximately 1-2.5 million hours) to maintain park campgrounds state-wide. Funding for the parks program is up to approximately 65-70% self-sufficiency (statewide). The state system is moving toward developing a volunteer campground at (CR 771) where volunteers provide 20 hours/ week volunteer and are allowed to stay for 6 weeks. Volunteers staff visitor centers, take admission fees, clean up trash, do trail maintenance; tractors mowing and are park of park burn teams.

Interview with Judy Ott  
Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program  
5/14/14

The interview was conducted with Judy Ott due to Lisa Beever's schedule conflicts. The questions posed related to what Charlotte County would need to know regarding future parks development.

The program does not do any direct restoration projects, but provides grants to help larger projects seek funding. Every Fall Judy is required to provide to the EPA a comprehensive list of projects with a brief paragraph (called the NEPORT). This data includes the lead restoration implementer and the associated restoration and acquisition programs.

The CHNEP also provides some conservation GIS maps of projects. The program also prepares a summary report of the 7-county watershed.

Judy reported that a lot of efforts have gone from acquisition to restoration and hydraulic restoration.

Judy suggested additional contacts including:

- SWFWMD's Stephanie Powers for their projects in Coral Creek, fishery restoration, and potentially DEP-owned property.
- Lemon Bay Conservancy
- Julie Morris with Wildlands conservation with private non-profit with private land to create conservation in private ownership - July has connection with conservation projects in cattle-owned connections.
- Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve's John Aspoleia to discuss the E/W/N acquisition and restoration projects.

## **Interview with South Florida Water Management District**

Phil Flood

May 9, 2014

### *Overview*

The interview with the SFWMD was a result of the intent to better understand the role of the water management district and its regulatory effects on park and recreation development and management, as well as to identify collaboration opportunities.

### *Role and Capacity*

With management over only an isolation portion of Charlotte County, the SFWMD has very little involvement in Charlotte County. Staff indicated that most of their involvement exists in collaboration and management of the Babcock Ranch Preserve and Fred C. Babcock/Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area. A major initiative of the SFWMD is their Everglades Restoration Project, which minimally, if at all, affects recreational development in Charlotte County.

### *Flood Control*

A major function of the SFWMD is regulatory flood control at a regional level. Staff identified that there is regional flooding in Charlotte County because the flatlands of Babcock Ranch has drainage issues due to highway and electric development on the Eastern inlands. SFWMD anticipates the following actions:

- Reestablishing flows back into Charlotte Harbor
- Acquiring a few parcels inland to create passageways for water to drain
- Purchasing a parcel along I-75 that will be a regional facility likely to be turned over to wildlife management

### *Stormwater Management*

As it relates to their relationship with Charlotte County, the SFWMD conducts smaller stormwater projects as well. Recently, local governments are being required to treat their own stormwater which entails the creation of filter marshes and/or reservoirs; this presents the opportunity to create passive recreation amenities. For example, the Fort Myers County Club is improving the golf course through utilization of stormwater facilities while still maintaining an aspect of recreational development. Staff identified opportunities in Charlotte County to tie in recreation with stormwater development similar to that of Lee County opportunities.

### *Collaboration and Development Opportunities*

Staff at SFWMD strongly suggested that there are many collaboration and development opportunities. Several of those include:

- A parcel of land that is currently a private ranch along I-75 & 41 would be a perfect acquisition to establish a conveyance.
- Instituting the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative

- Charlotte County recreation expansion and new development along the coast
- SFWMD works with DOT, which provides another avenue for collaboration at a statewide level.

Interview SWFWMD  
May 13, 2014

FGCU met with SWFWMD's Stephanie Green and Manny Lopez regarding their plans in Charlotte County.

*Information Available*

SWFWMD has shape files of district lands and boundaries for their acquired and proposed projects. Maps are available at: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/data/gis/>

SWFWMD deals with areas of concern and potable water supply. They prioritize projects that help with water quality and Charlotte Harbor.

*Projects*

- Prairie Shell Creek doesn't have any land management plan because it was considered open access property and gets basic treatment.
- Deep Creek Preserve does have a land management plan for Deep Creek - Sheryl Hill and Steve Blaschka can provide. The LMP has a resource evaluation attached to it that might be useful.

*Permitting Rules*

SWFWMD likes to do preliminary design and/or pre-app meeting. They can help guide which rules and mitigation requirements will apply. Anything with pavement will have some need for SWFWMD review. Setbacks from wetlands will also apply. If there is a breach into the wetlands, there is a need for mitigation.

*Funding*

If county has plan for development, SWFWMD can assist with some co-funding, especially with restoring wetlands and stormwater. The link to co-funding ventures can be found at: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/business/>

SWFWMD is always looking for projects to do wetland restoration where partners can help with implementation.

*Other agencies*

Other agencies that have open space are as follows:

- CHEC (Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center) that is adjacent to the Charlotte Harbor State Park.
- Trail connection for Mayakka and Peace River in Sarasota County.
- Game Commission at Cecil Webb - Jennifer Turner
- Bill Wilcox at Edison State College - used to be involved in Babcock Ranch and wrote the Conceptual Management Plan.
- Ed flowers Babcock Ranch and Forestry
- Mayakka State Forest in Charlotte County
- Audubon local chapter: Involvement in Peace River

- Fish and Wildlife: has gaming coordinator who may have some information on Florida Birding Trails. They also have panther team has maps for panther mitigation and bear habitat. Corridors might be opportunity for open space.

## APPENDIX J: PARK INVENTORY



PARKS	Acreage	CLASS	Reduced LOS	Shuffleboard/Bocci/ Horseshoes/Valleyball	Single Picnic Shelter	Nature Trail/Walking Trail (unpaved) (1000 lf)	Dock/Boardwalk/ Fishing Pier (1000 sf)	Sports Lighting (Court)/ Walkway Lighting	Remote Control Car Track/Boat Basin	Inline Hockey Rink/ Skatepark	Multi-purpose Trail (paved) (1000 lf)	Historical/Environmental Interpretive Feature	Specialty Garden	Group Pavilion/ Amphitheater	Sports Lighting (Ballfield)	Paw Park	Canoe/Kayak (nonmotorized only)	Basketball/Tennis Court	Playground/Fitness Trail/Disc Golf Course	Horse Arena	Restroom	Concession Building	Meeting Room	Football Fields/ Soccer Fields	Baseball/Softball Fields	Boat Ramp (lane)	Environmental/ Historical Center	Swimming Pool (with Locker/Restroom)	Gymnasium/Recreation / Fitness Center	Special Event Venue			
Ainger Creek Park	1.98470	Special Purpose	No				0.5																			1							
Allapatchee Shores Park	0.32220	Neighborhood	No				0.5										1																
Ann Dever Mem. Reg. Park @ Oyster Creek*	50.00000	Regional	No																														
Ann Dever Mem. Reg. Park @ Oyster Creek*	128.15000	Environmental	No																														
Amberjack Environmental Park	223.33000	Environmental	No		1	29.3	4.1					1																					
Anger Fishing Pier Park	0.14440	Special Purpose	No				4.2																										
Audubon-Pennington Nature Park	11.11100	Special Purpose	No			1.3																											
Bay Heights Park	2.68140	Special Purpose	No																														
Bayshore Live Oak Park	10.38000	Special Purpose	No				7.4				2.7	1		3			1					2						1					
Bissett Park	19.10800	Neighborhood	No	1										1					2	1		1											
Boca Grande Fishing Pier Park	10.02700	Special Purpose	No				1.6																			1							
Butterford Waterway Park	6.87610	Special Purpose	No				0.5																			1							
Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park	87.71800	Special Purpose	No		2						29	2										1											
Carmalita Park	56.00300	Community	No							1					7				1	1	2	1	1	1	2.5	5							
Cedar Point Environmental Park	136.09000	Environmental	No			13.7	0.3					1	1	1			1					1						1					
Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park	487.36000	Environmental	No			37.0						1																					
Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center	7.82000	Special Purpose	No								0.7																				1		
Charlotte Sports Park	80.30600	Special Purpose	No						1					1	1							1			6				1	1			
Chester Roberts Park	0.30220	Special Purpose	No									1					1																
Clark Park**	0.52620	Neighborhood	Yes																														
Coral Creek Fishing Pier	3.01340	Special Purpose	No				2																										
Darst Park	0.56030	Special Purpose	No																							1							
Deep Creek Park	6.09890	Neighborhood	No		3														3	1		1											
Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek**	79.03800	Environmental	No			3.7																											
Edgewater Park	3.88150	Neighborhood	No		1											1						1											
El Jobean Boat Ramp	1.25380	Special Purpose	No																							1							
El Jobean Fishing Pier Park	10.51200	Special Purpose	No				7.8																										
Englewood Beach / Chadwick Park	12.67000	Special Purpose	No	4			13.9							12					0.5	1		1											
Englewood East Park	1.99340	Neighborhood	No	2															1	1		1											
Franz Ross Park	30.85300	Community	No		1			4			0.7			1	3				4	1		1	1	2.5									
G. C. Herring Park	19.31700	Neighborhood	Yes						1										2	1		1											
Gulfstream Park**	3.17190	Neighborhood	Yes																														
Harbour Heights Park	8.20790	Neighborhood	No	5			2.3	2						1					3	1		1				1							
Harold Avenue Park	41.27300	Community	No					6							7				6	1		2	2		7					1			
Hathaway Park	28.99900	Special Purpose	No		1	4.4	1.4							2			1					1				1							
Hickory Bluff Park	11.24800	Special Purpose	No																														
Higgs Park	4.86250	Neighborhood	No	26										1					1	1		1											
Kiwanis Park	31.68700	Neighborhood	No		1	5.0	6.6							4								1											
Lake Betty Park	3.37210	Neighborhood	No				0.2							2					1	1													
Lincoln Park**	1.83130	Neighborhood	Yes																														
Lister Park**	1.44940	Neighborhood	Yes																														
Learning Garden	1.54370	Neighborhood	No										1																				
Maracaibo Park/Kidspace	11.55700	Neighborhood	No																			1	1		3								
McGuire Park	4.96200	Neighborhood	No	8				4											5	1		1		1									
Midway Park	3.49060	Neighborhood	No																2														
Myakka Park**	134.32000	Environmental	No																														
North Charlotte Regional Park	103.30000	Regional											1		9							1	2	2	4	5							



Shirley Park  
South Punta Gorda Heights Park

Notes

Bayshore Fishing Pier and Bayshore Live Oak Park Combined

Chadwick Park Combined as Englewood Beach/Chadwick Park

Ann Dever Memorial Park @ Oyster Creek separated into two parks: 50 acres regional & 128.15 Environmental

Ann Dever Memorial Park amenities incorporated as Oyster Creek

S. Punta Gorda Heights Civic Association not included. County-owned but not Parks & Rec building - no programming

Tippecanoe Environmental Park & Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area total combined trails are 8.7 miles

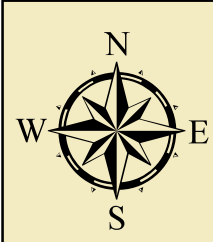
\*Park count is -1 due to Ann Dever listed as 2 parks

\*\*Verify amenities as part of master plan process

\*\*\*Active excludes reduced LOS Parks

\*\*\*\*Mini Parks designated as neighborhood parks re: M.Koenig

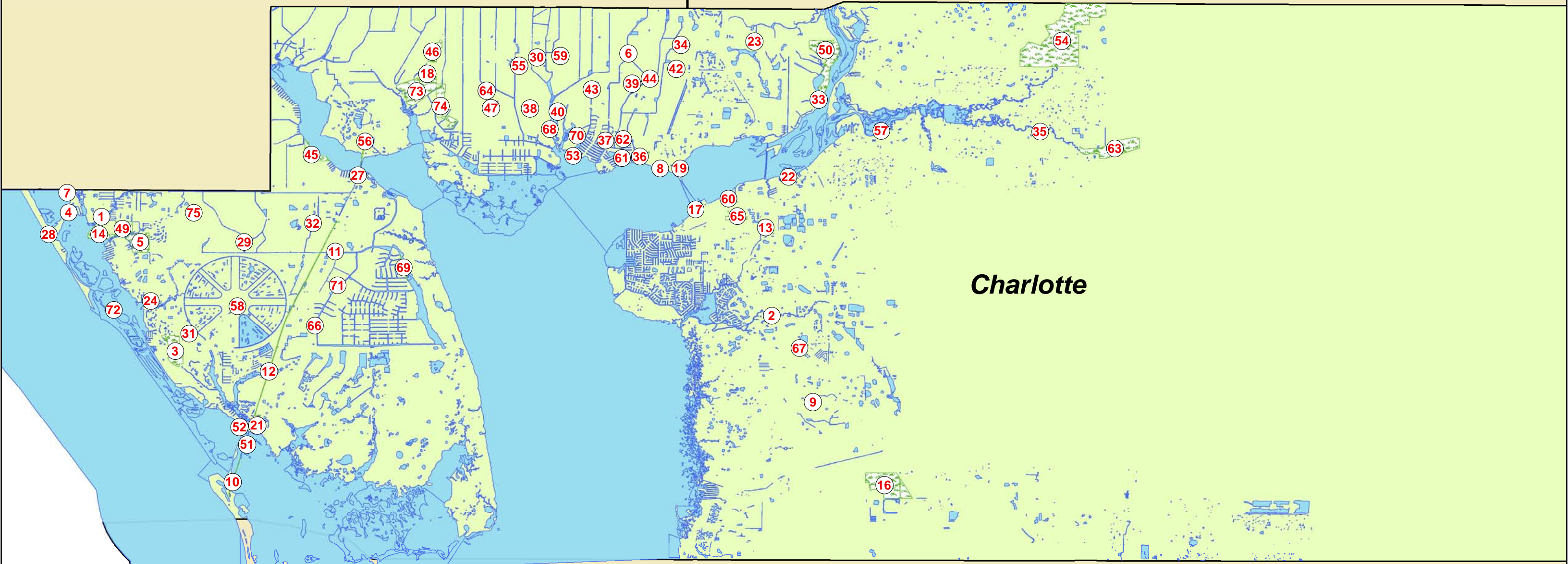
## APPENDIX K: SPATIAL ANALYSIS MAPS



# Charlotte County Developed Parks

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



Charlotte

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

**Legend**

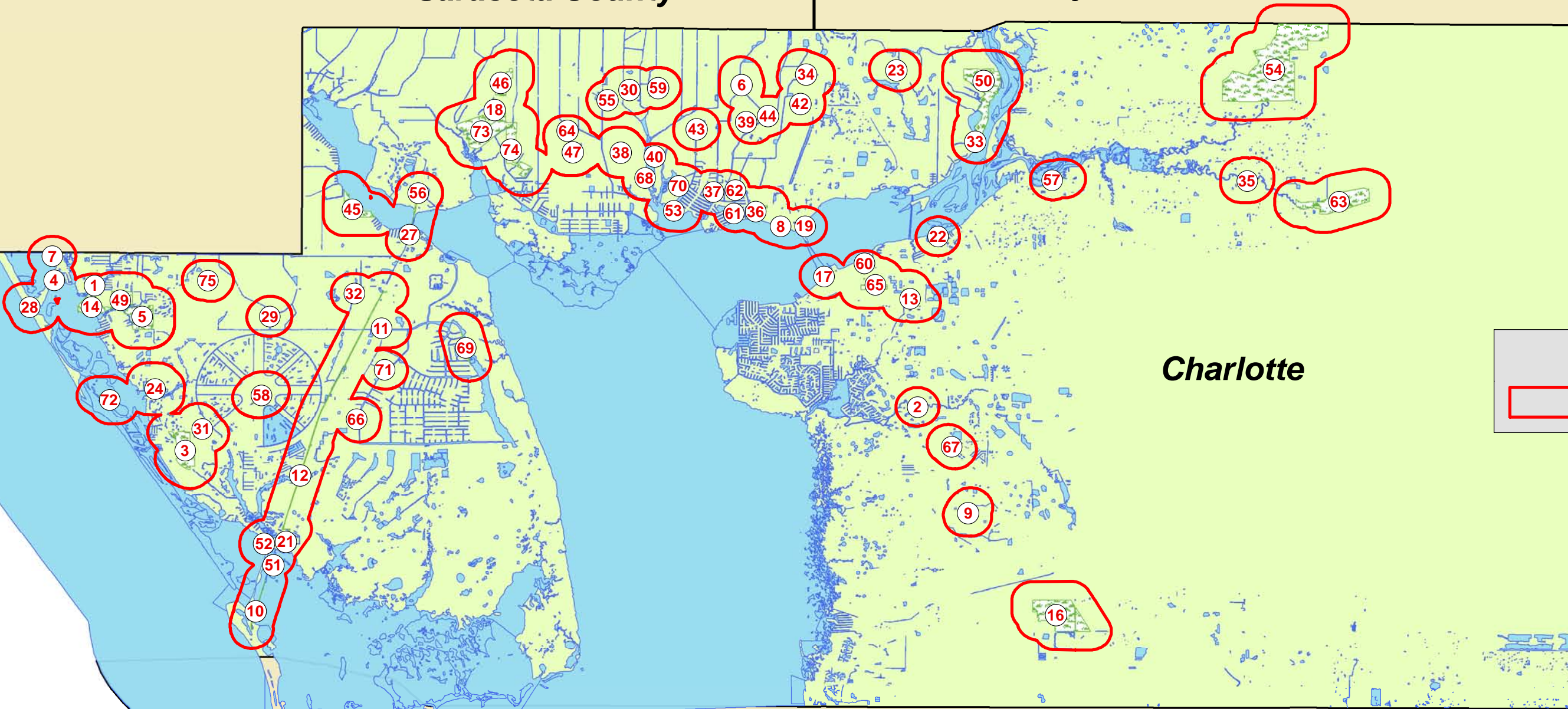





# Charlotte County Developed Parks with Half-Mile Distance Buffers

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

 Half-Mile Buffer

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
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| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

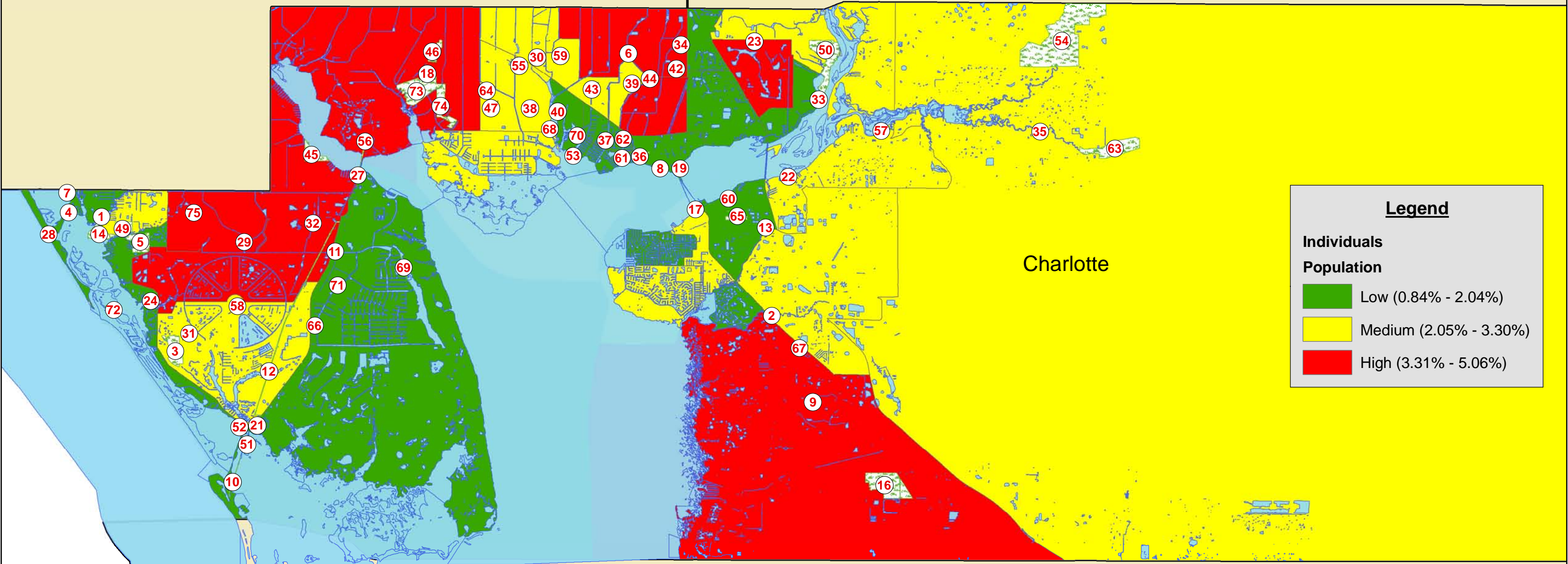




# Charlotte County Total Tract Population (Percent of Total County Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals  
Population**

- Low (0.84% - 2.04%)
- Medium (2.05% - 3.30%)
- High (3.31% - 5.06%)

**Lee County**

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
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| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

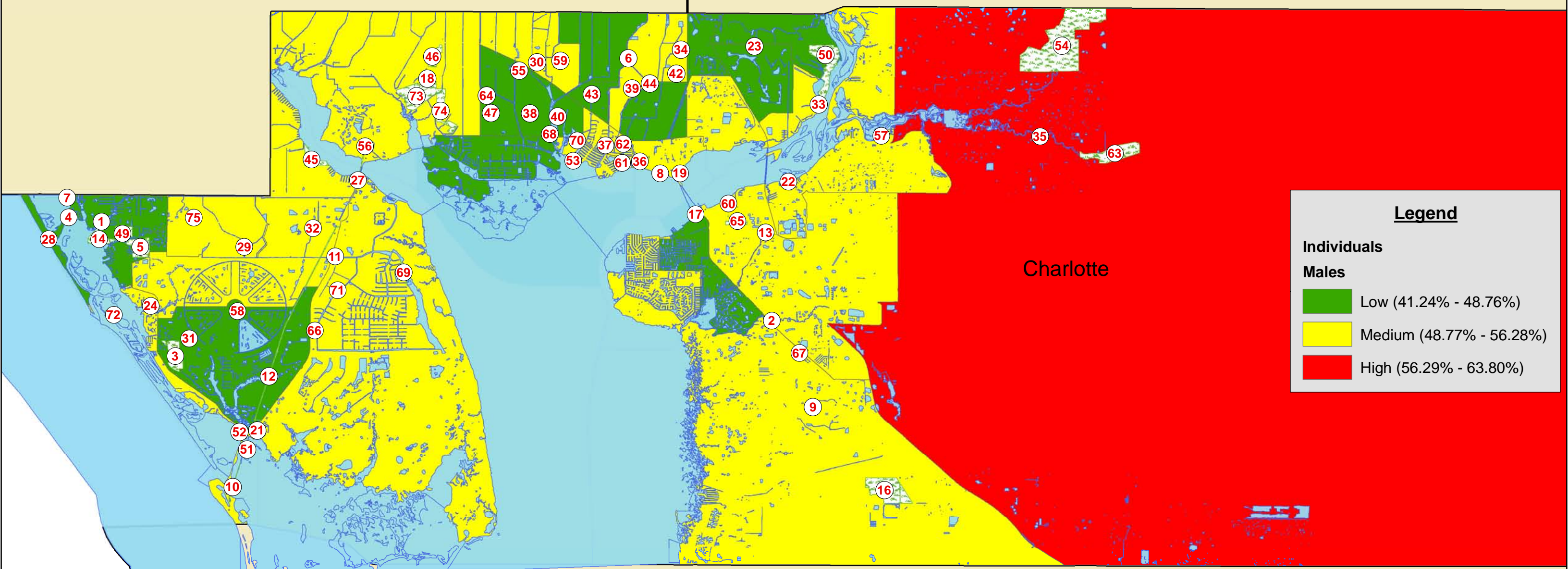




# Charlotte County Male Population (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals**

**Males**

- Low (41.24% - 48.76%)
- Medium (48.77% - 56.28%)
- High (56.29% - 63.80%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

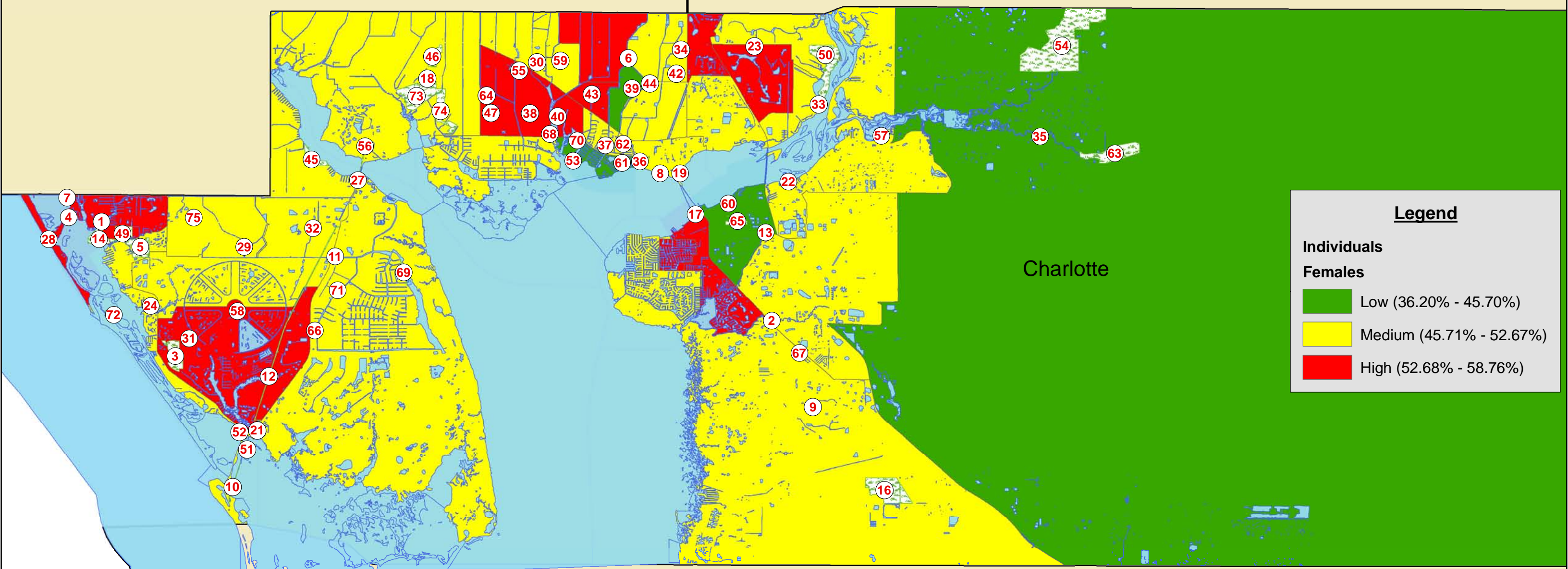




# Charlotte County Female Population (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

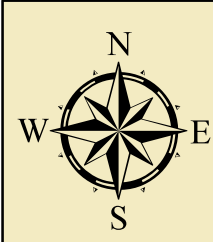
**Individuals**  
**Females**

- Low (36.20% - 45.70%)
- Medium (45.71% - 52.67%)
- High (52.68% - 58.76%)

**Lee County**

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

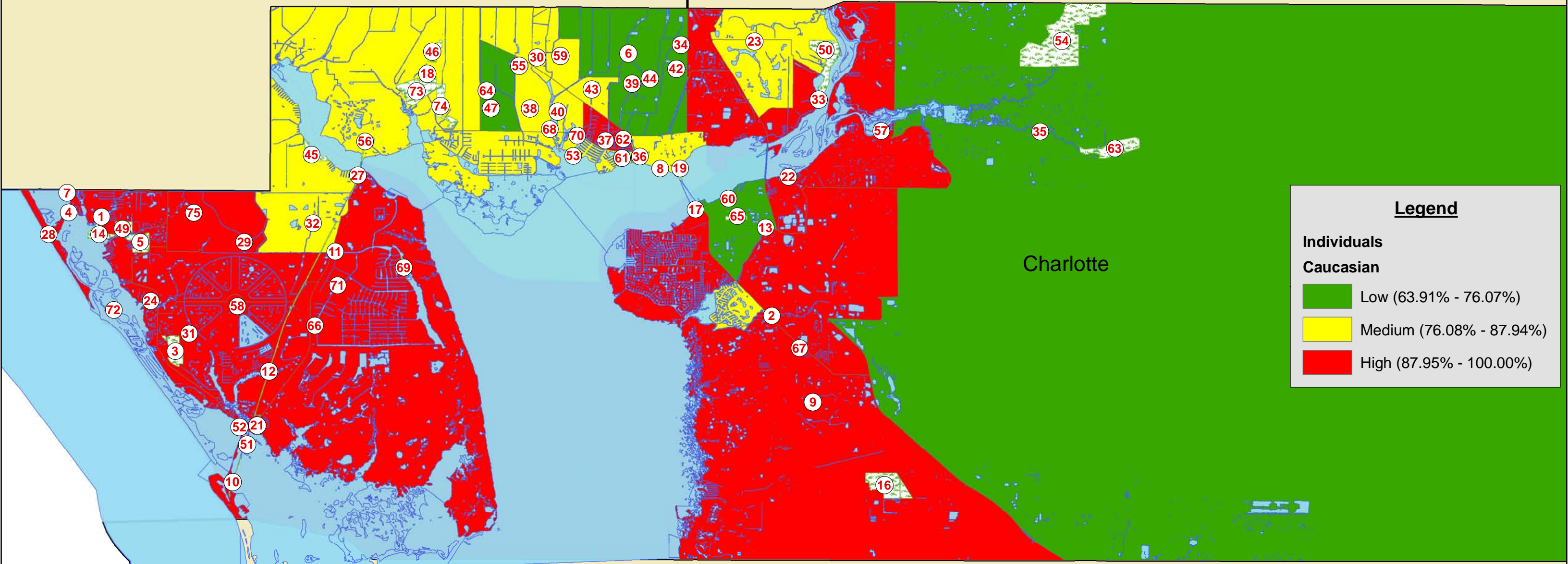




# Charlotte County Individuals Identifying as Caucasian (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals Caucasian**

- Low (63.91% - 76.07%)
- Medium (76.08% - 87.94%)
- High (87.95% - 100.00%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
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| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

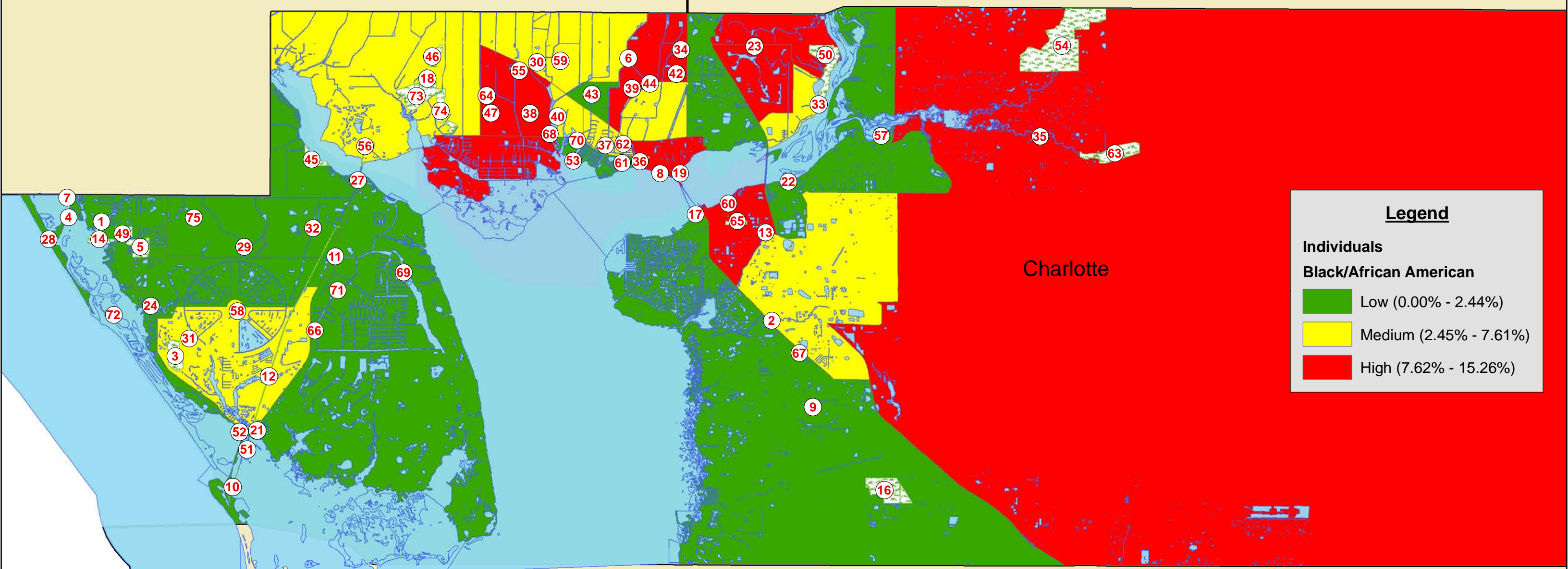




# Charlotte County Individuals Identifying as Black/African American (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals  
Black/African American**

- Low (0.00% - 2.44%)
- Medium (2.45% - 7.61%)
- High (7.62% - 15.26%)

**Lee County**

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

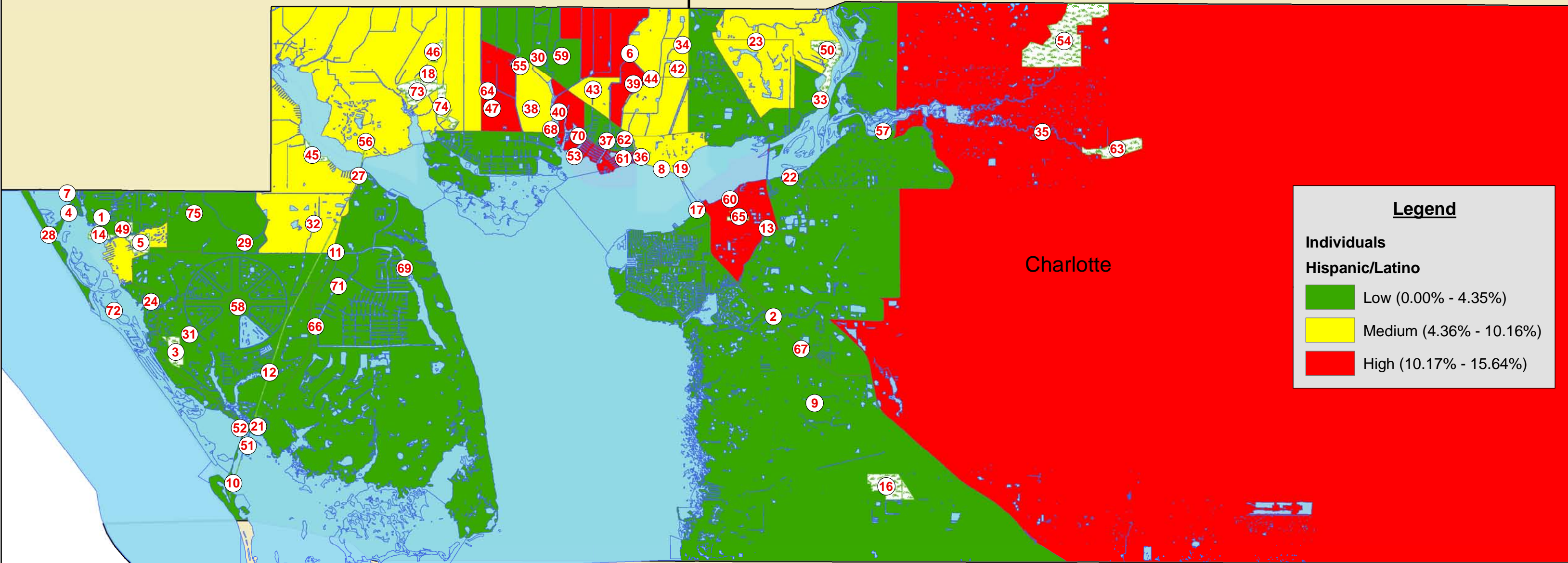




# Charlotte County Individuals Identifying as Hispanic/Latino (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals  
Hispanic/Latino**

- Low (0.00% - 4.35%)
- Medium (4.36% - 10.16%)
- High (10.17% - 15.64%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

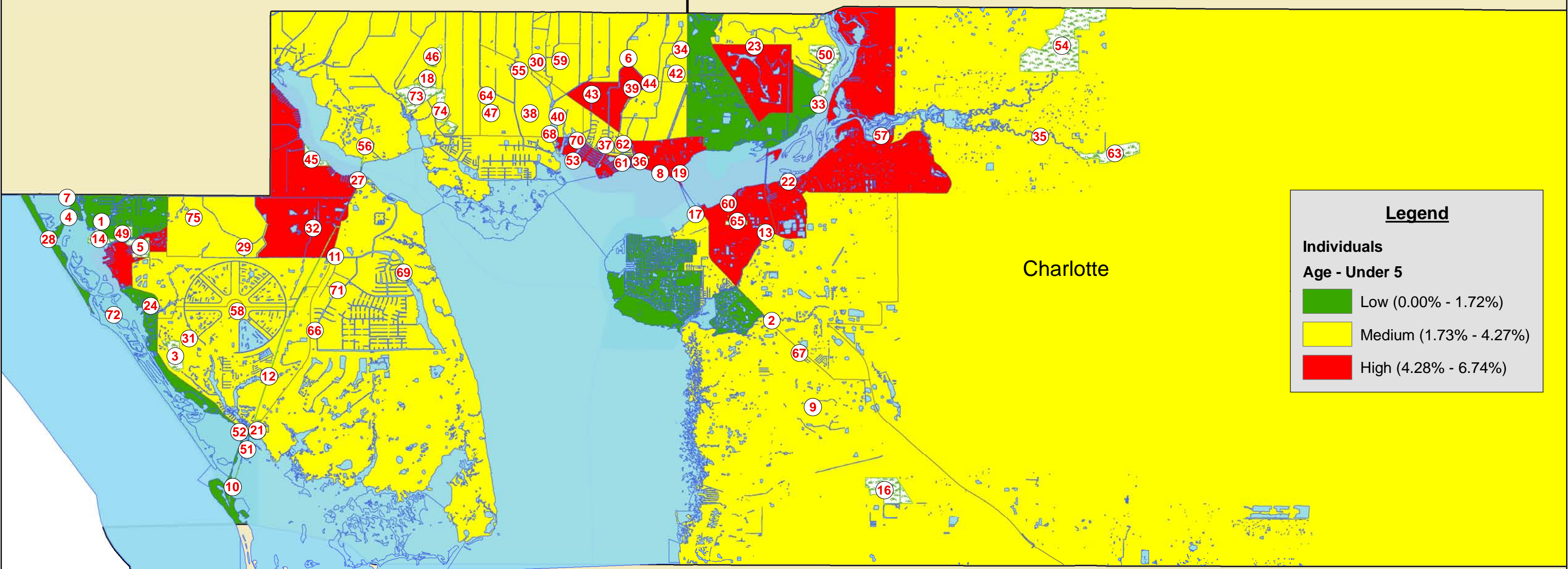




# Charlotte County Population Under 5 Years Old (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

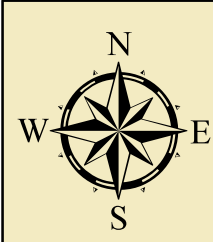
**Individuals  
Age - Under 5**

- Low (0.00% - 1.72%)
- Medium (1.73% - 4.27%)
- High (4.28% - 6.74%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

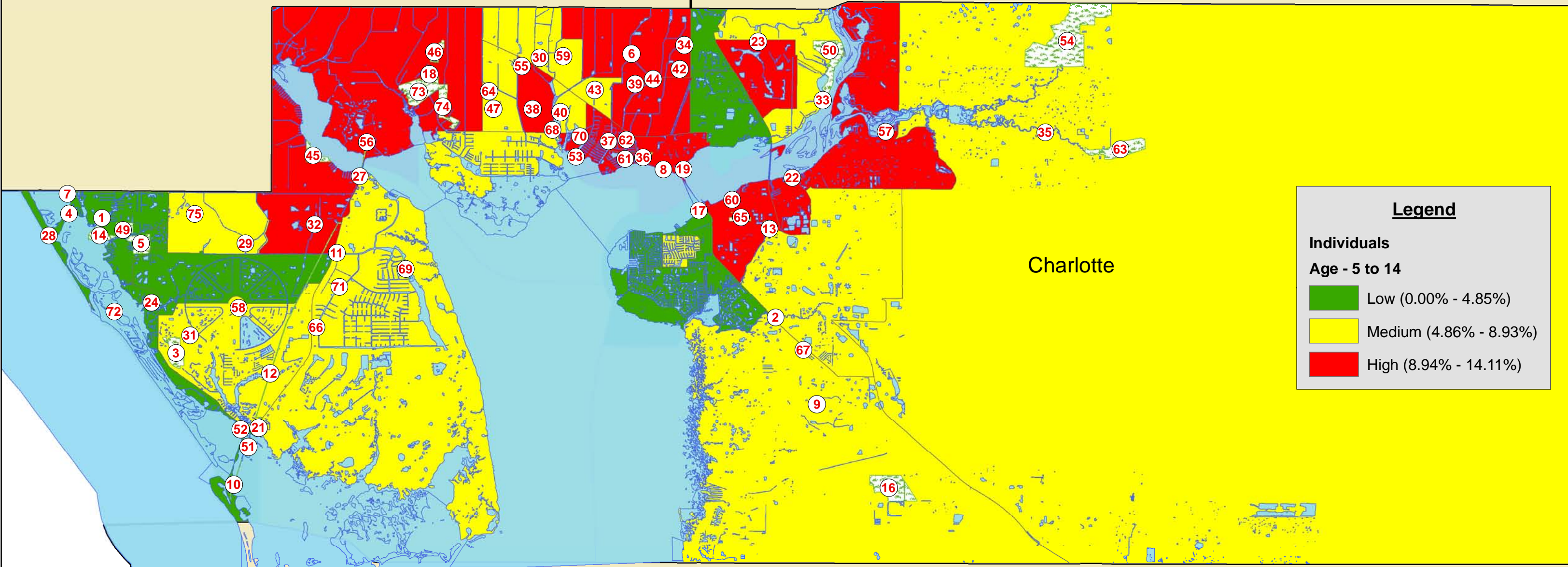




# Charlotte County Population 5 to 14 Years Old (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

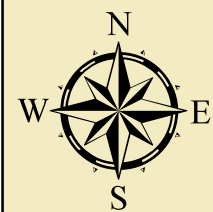
**Individuals  
Age - 5 to 14**

- Low (0.00% - 4.85%)
- Medium (4.86% - 8.93%)
- High (8.94% - 14.11%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

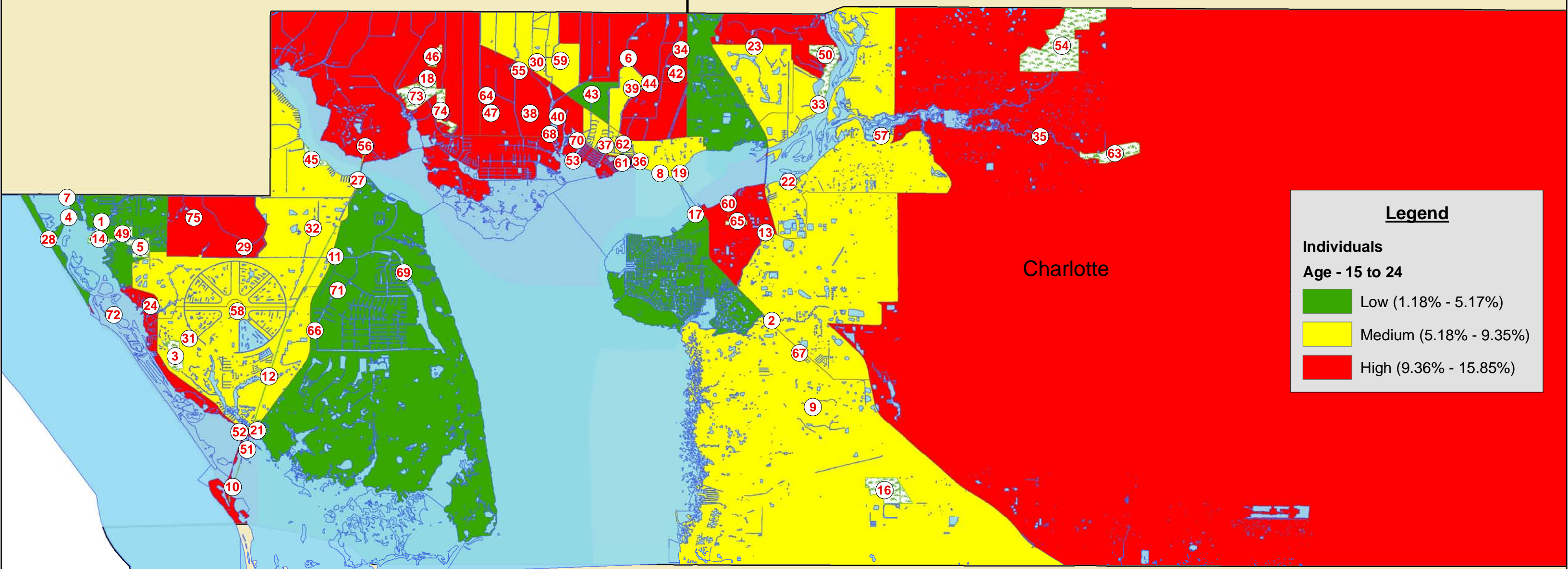




# Charlotte County Population 15 to 24 Years Old (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals**  
**Age - 15 to 24**

- Low (1.18% - 5.17%)
- Medium (5.18% - 9.35%)
- High (9.36% - 15.85%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

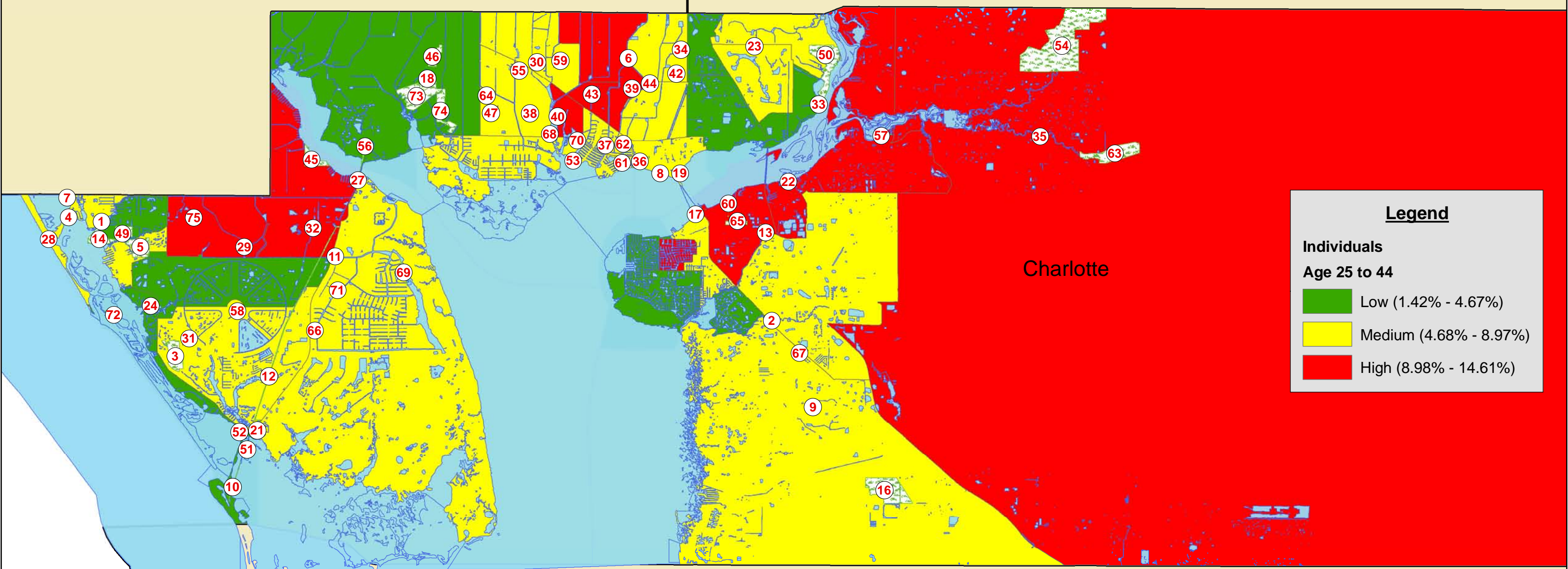




# Charlotte County Population 25 to 44 Years Old (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

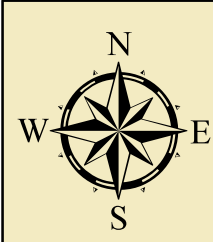
**Individuals  
Age 25 to 44**

- Low (1.42% - 4.67%)
- Medium (4.68% - 8.97%)
- High (8.98% - 14.61%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
| 5) Ann Dever Memorial Reional Park at Oyster Creek | 20) Clark Park                                    | 35) Hathaway Park           | 50) Peace River Preserve      | 65) South County Regional Park     |
| 6) Audubon-Pennington Nature Park                  | 21) Coral Creek Fishing Pier/Centennial Park      | 36) Hickory Bluff Park      | 51) Placida Fishing Pier      | 66) South Gulf Cove Park           |
| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
| 12) Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park                   | 27) El Jobean Fishing Pier                        | 42) Maracaibo Park/Kidspace | 57) Riverside Park            | 72) Thornton Key Preserve          |
| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

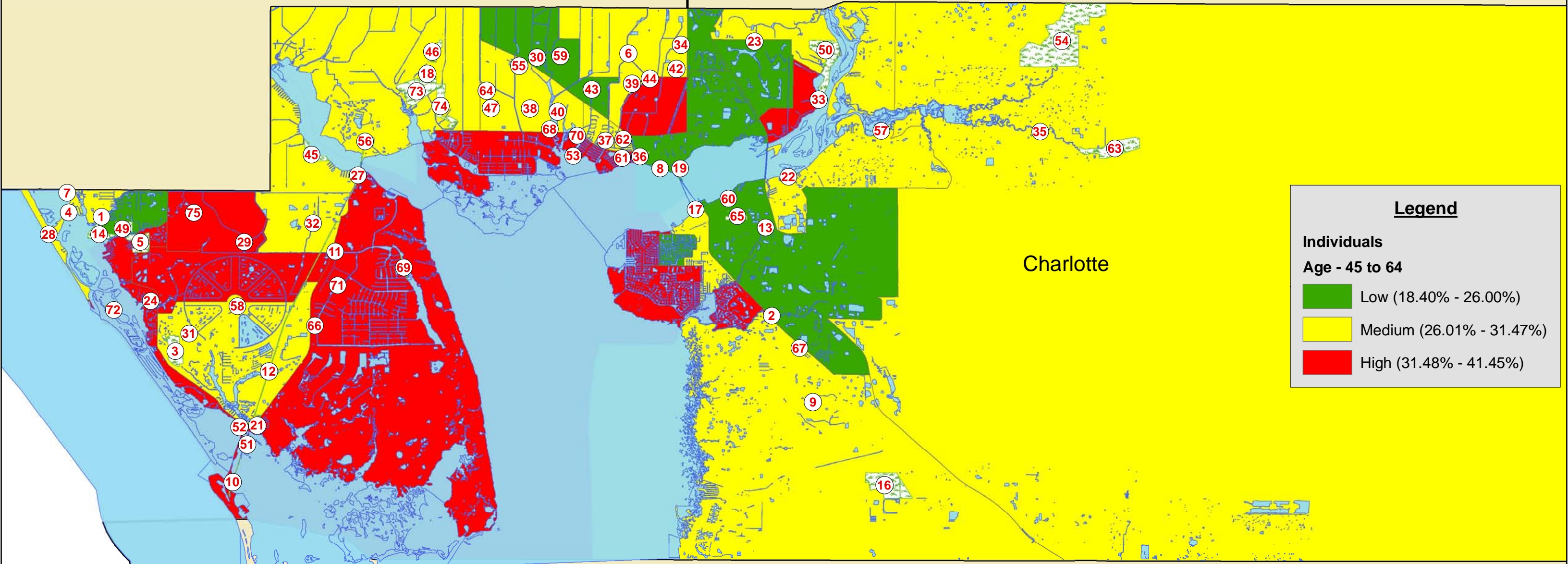




# Charlotte County Population 45 to 64 Years Old (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals**  
**Age - 45 to 64**

- Low (18.40% - 26.00%)
- Medium (26.01% - 31.47%)
- High (31.48% - 41.45%)

**Lee County**

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
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| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
| 8) Bayshore Live Oak Park                          | 23) Deep Creek Park                               | 38) Kiwanis Park            | 53) Port Charlotte Beach Park | 68) Spring Lake Park               |
| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
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| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
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| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

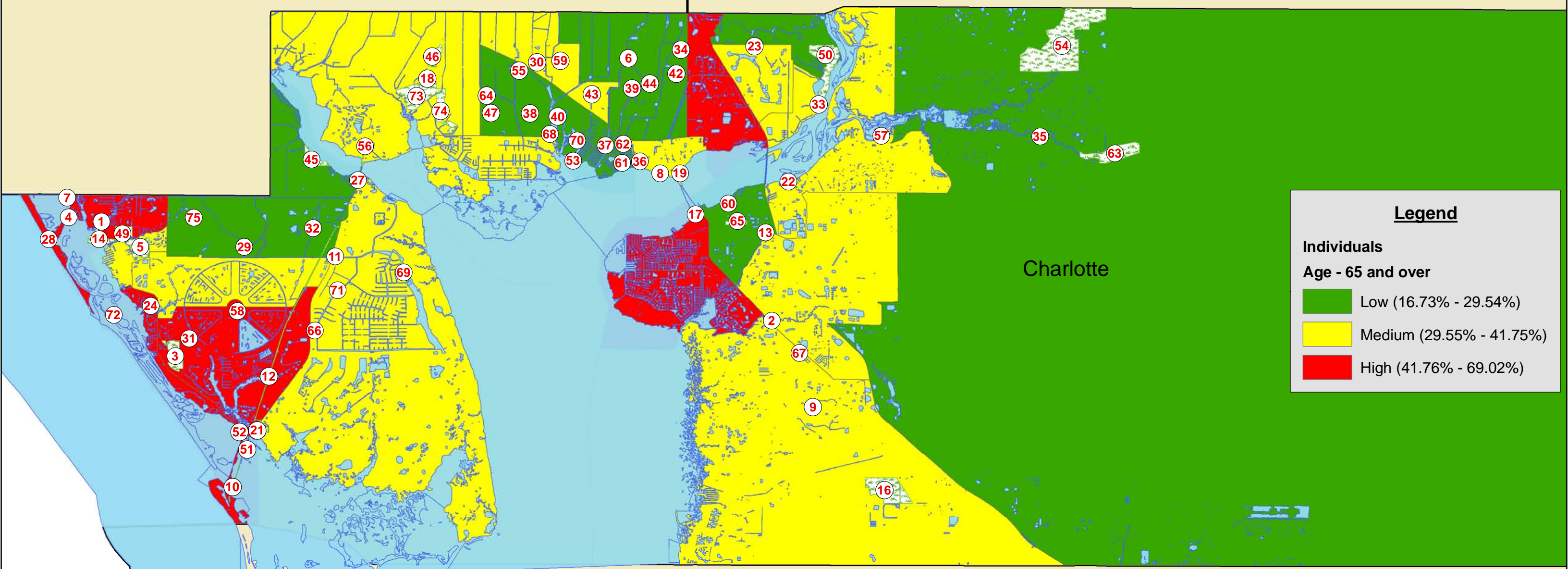




# Charlotte County Population 65 Years and Over (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals**  
**Age - 65 and over**

- Low (16.73% - 29.54%)
- Medium (29.55% - 41.75%)
- High (41.76% - 69.02%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
| 3) Amberjack Environmental                         | 18) Charlotte Sports Park                         | 33) Harbour Heights Park    | 48) Ott Circle Park           | 63) Shell Creek Preserve           |
| 4) Anger Fishing Pier Park                         | 19) Chester Roberts Park                          | 34) Harold Avenue Park      | 49) Oyster Creek Regional     | 64) Shirley Park                   |
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| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
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| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

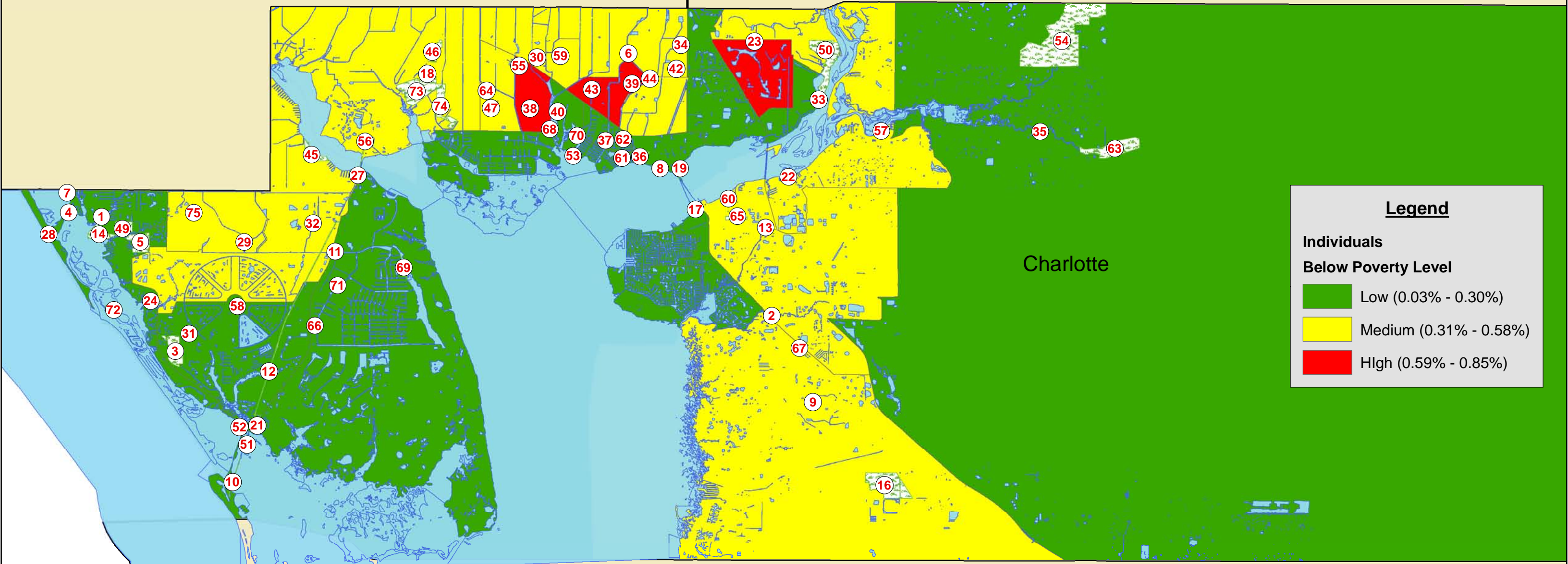




# Charlotte County Individuals Living Below Poverty Level (Percent of Total County Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals Below Poverty Level**

- Low (0.03% - 0.30%)
- Medium (0.31% - 0.58%)
- High (0.59% - 0.85%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
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| 9) Bissett Park                                    | 24) Dr. Willard "Bill" Coy Preserve on Buck Creek | 39) Lake Betty Park         | 54) Prairie Creek Preserve    | 69) St. Paul Linear Park           |
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| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

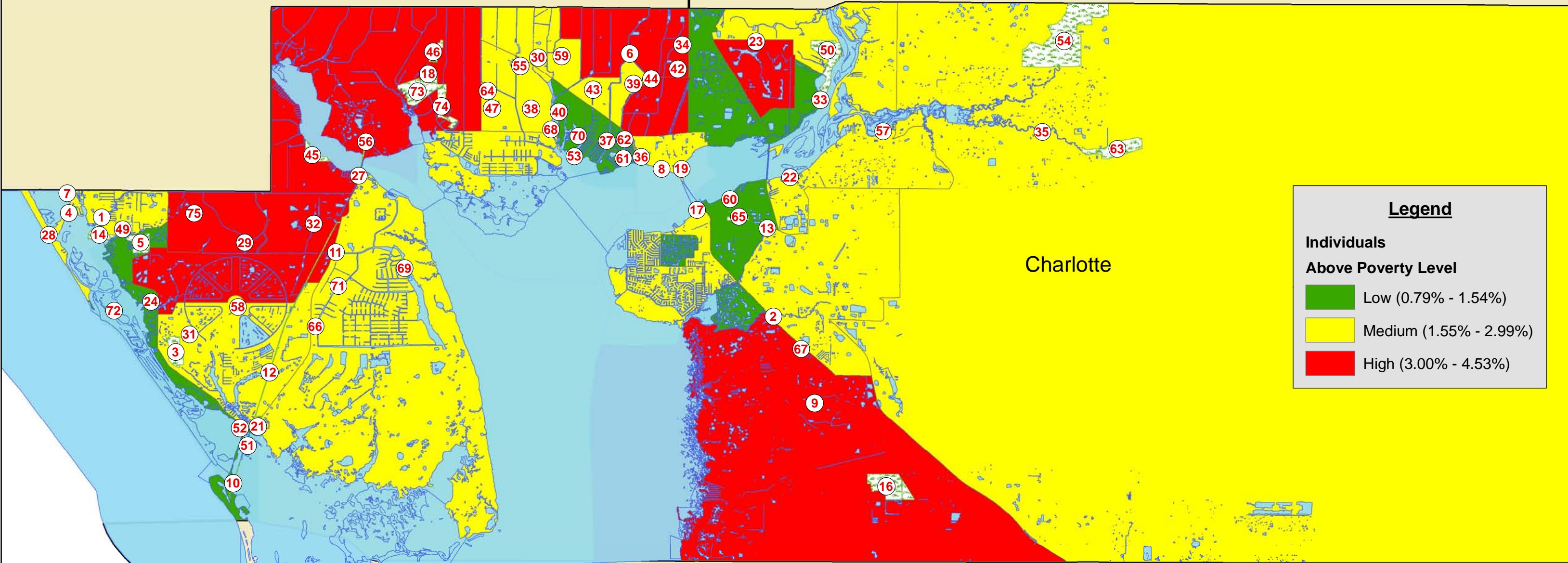




# Charlotte County Individuals Living Above Poverty Level (Percent of Total County Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals Above Poverty Level**

- Low (0.79% - 1.54%)
- Medium (1.55% - 2.99%)
- High (3.00% - 4.53%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
| 2) Allapatchee Shores Park                         | 17) Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center    | 32) Gulfstream Park         | 47) Ollie's Pond Park         | 62) Sharon Circle Park             |
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| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
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| 13) Carmalita Park                                 | 28) Englewood Beach                               | 43) McGuire Park            | 58) Rotonda Park              | 73) Tippecanoe Enviromental Park   |
| 14) Cedar Point Environmental Park                 | 29) Englewood East Park                           | 44) Midway Park             | 59) Salyers Park              | 74) Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area  |
| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

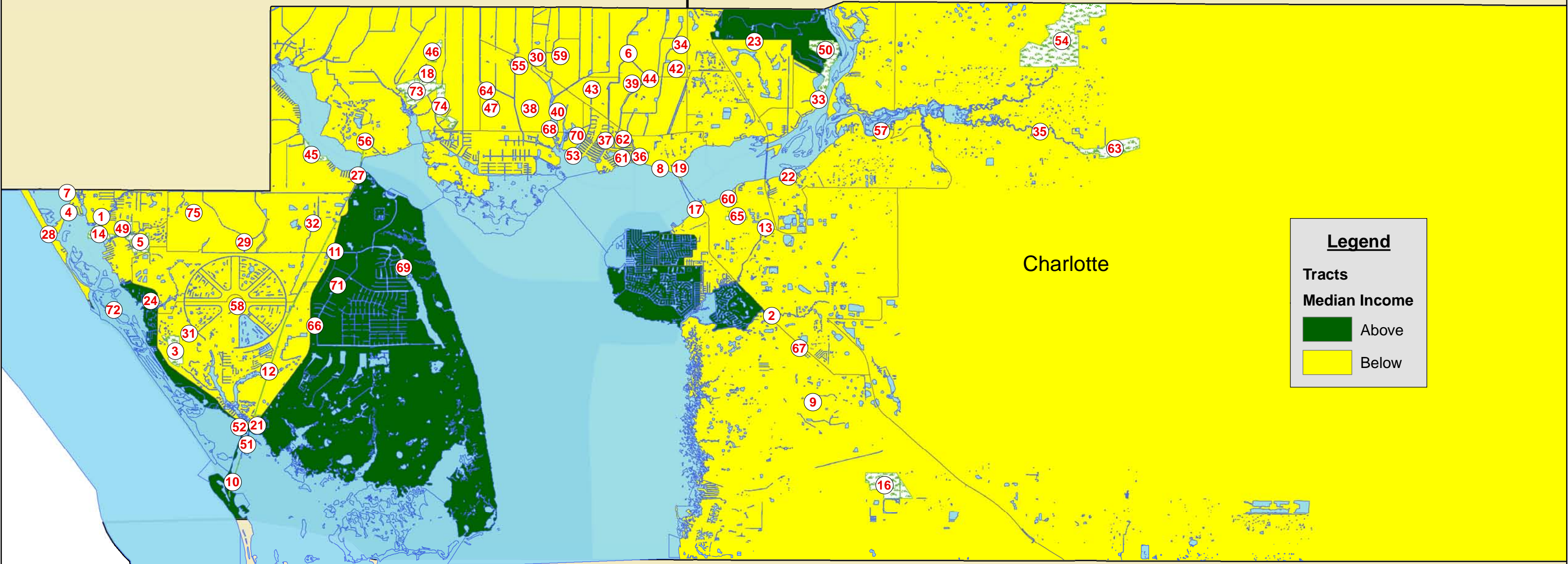




# Charlotte County Median Income of Tracts Compared to County Median Income

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

Tracts

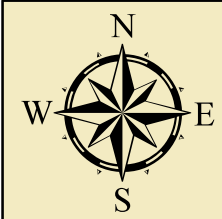
Median Income

- Above
- Below

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
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| 7) Bay Heights Park                                | 22) Darst Park                                    | 37) Higgs Park              | 52) Placida Park              | 67) South Punta Gorda Heights Park |
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| 10) Boca Grande Fishing Pier                       | 25) Edgewater Park                                | 40) Lincoln Park            | 55) Price Circle Park         | 70) Sunrise Park                   |
| 11) Butterford Waterway Park                       | 26) El Jobean Boat Ramp                           | 41) Lister Park             | 56) Randy Spence Park         | 71) The Learning Garden            |
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| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |

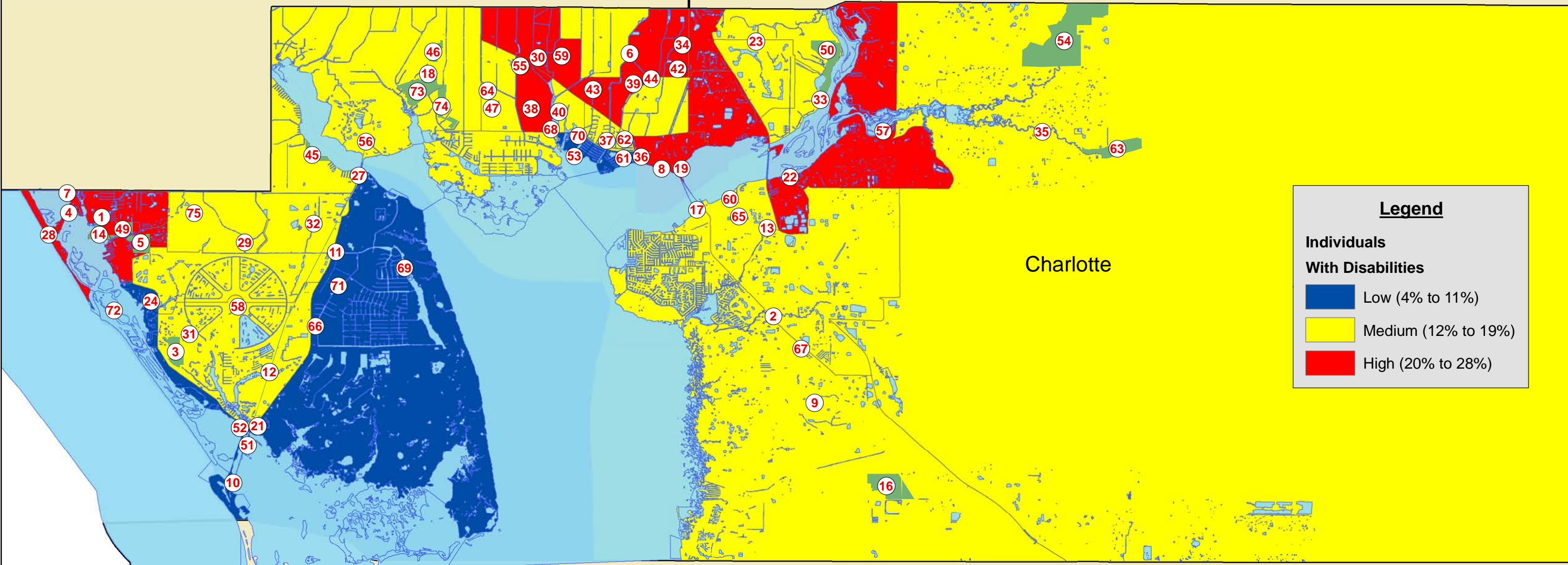




# Charlotte County Individuals with Disabilities (Percent of Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

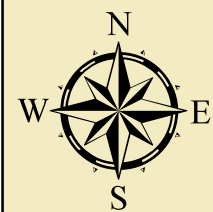
**Individuals With Disabilities**

- Low (4% to 11%)
- Medium (12% to 19%)
- High (20% to 28%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
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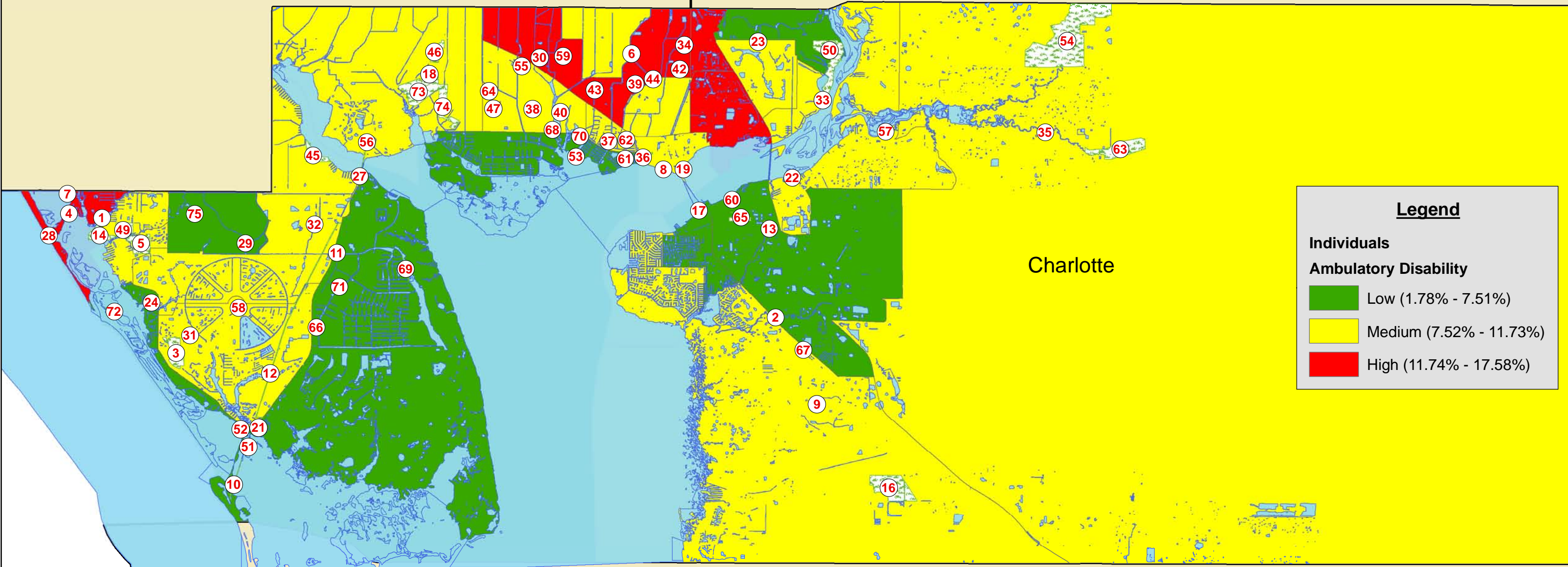




# Charlotte County Individuals with an Ambulatory Disability (Percent of Total Tract Population)

Sarasota County

DeSoto County



**Legend**

**Individuals  
Ambulatory Disability**

- Low (1.78% - 7.51%)
- Medium (7.52% - 11.73%)
- High (11.74% - 17.58%)

Lee County

- |  |   |                             |                               |                                    |
|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Ainger Creek Park                               | 16) Charlotte Flatwoods Enviromental Park         | 31) G.C. Herring Park       | 46) North Charlotte Regional  | 61) Severin Park                   |
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| 15) Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach               | 30) Franz Ross Park                               | 45) Myakka Park             | 60) Scott Park                | 75) Tringali Park                  |







**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"

**Appendix B**  
**May 2015 Workshops**  
**Results & Findings**

**May Public Workshops  
 Opinion Questionnaire  
 "How do you want to play in the Future?"  
 Results & Findings**

In May 2015, Charlotte County held three (3) public workshops to solicit information regarding how people currently recreate, their opinions regarding existing facilities, programs and services and how the public would like the County to focus future parks and recreation resources. The workshops were held in different geographical areas (Englewood, Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda) to increase the ease of access to the meetings. This document presents the results from the questionnaire and an assessment of the information collected.

**Total Workshop Public Attendance & Questionnaires Returned**

Date	Location	# in Attendance	# of Questionnaires Returned
May 19, 2015	Tringali Rec. Center (Englewood)	13	10
May 20, 2015	Harold Rec. Center Port Charlotte	21	15
May 21, 2015	South County Regional Center Punta Gorda	43	40
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>77</b>	<b>65 (84% return rate)</b>

**Questions & Responses**

1. Do you agree with the Mission Statement?                      **65** yes    **5** no    **2** No Response

5/19	Yes - 10	No - 0
5/20	Yes - 14	No - 1
5/21	Yes - 34	No - 4
Online	Yes - 7	No - 0

If no, please explain or add comments

- Emphasize what is important to residents and visitors (**2 similar comments**)
- Emphasize the importance of diversity
- Sounds great but is utterly devoid of particulars (noted he had not read handout)
- Add the importance of the economic value of parks
- Emphasize regional & community parks as priorities
- Emphasize "preservation"

---

**Public generally liked the mission. Should considered strengthening importance of regional and community parks, preservation & economic value that parks bring to the community.**

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2. Do you agree with the Vision Statement? **65** yes **5** no **2** No Response

5/19	Yes - 10	No - 0
5/20	Yes - 13	No - 2
5/21	Yes - 35	No - 3
Online	Yes - 7	No - 0

If no, please explain or add comments

- Emphasize what is important to residents and visitors (**2 similar comments**)
- Sounds great but is utterly devoid of particulars (noted he had not read handout)
- Neighborhood Framework does not seem inclusive enough as I understand the term, it should come out of the vision and be a guiding principle
- Care must be given to the "Neighborhood Framework"
- County should focus on Regional and Community Parks
- Add language regarding health and wellness in vision statement and create either a g

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**Public generally liked the vision statement. Discussions were held regarding the County's primary role is to provide Community and Regional parks. There was also a concern about not having the neighborhood framework emphasis in the vision but perhaps as part of the diversity & distribution inventory guiding principle.**

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3. Rank the Guiding Principles, with 1 being your highest priority and 6 being the lowest

**Diversity & Distribution of Inventory 5**

5/19	1 -2; 2 -0; 3 -2; 4 -0; 5- 4; 6-2;
5/20	1 -4; 2 -3; 3 -3; 4 -1; 5-0; 6-2; no response - 2
5/21	1 -6; 2 - 1; 3 - 7; 4 -4; 5-8; 6-11; no response - 3
Online	1-5; 2 - 0; 3 - 0; 4 - 0; 5 - 1; 6 - 1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1 -17; 2 -4; 3 -12; 4-5; 5-13; 6-14; no response -5</b>

**Economic Vitality through Parks 4**

5/19	1 -2; 2 -2; 3-3; 4 -1; 5-2; 6-0
5/20	1 -3; 2 -2; 3-0; 4 -1; 5-2; 6-5; no response -2
5/21	1 - 7; 2-6; 3-9; 4-4; 5- 4; 6-8; no response -2
Online	1 - 1; 2 - 0; 3 - 3; 4 - 1; 5 - 0; 6 - 2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1-13; 2 -10; 3 -15; 4 - 7; 5-8; 6-15; no response -4</b>

**Positive Partnerships 6**

5/19	1 -2; 2 -1; 3 -2; 4 -2; 5-0; 6-3
5/20	1- 3; 2 -2; 3 -3; 4 -2; 5-3; 6-0; no response -2
5/21	1-2; 2 -8; 3 -9; 4 -4; 5-6; 6-7; no response -4
Online	1 - 1; 2 - 0; 3 - 4; 4 - 2; 5 - 0; 6 - 0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1-7; 2-11; 3-14; 4-8; 5-9; 6-10; no response -6</b>

**Service Excellence** **1**

5/19 1- 4; 2- 2; 3 -0; 4- 4; 5-0; 6-0  
 5/20 1 -11; 2-1; 3 - 2; 4 -0; 5-0; 6-1; no response -0  
 5/21 1 - 7; 2- 9; 3 - 8; 4 - 8; 5- 3; 6-2; no response -3  
 Online 1 – 2; 2 – 4; 3 – 0; 4 – 0; 5 – 0; 6 - 1  
**Totals 1-24; 2-16; 3-10; 4-12; 5-3; 6-4; no response -3**

**Sustainable Practice** **3**

5/19 1 -6; 2 -1; 3 -2; 4 - 0; 5-1; 6-0  
 5/20 1 -3; 2 -0; 3 -2; 4 -4; 5-2; 6-2; no response -2  
 5/21 1 -8; 2 -2; 3 -8; 4 -8; 5- 8; 6- 2; no response -3  
 Note from 5/21 - added the following as their number 1 – Contribution of economic and neighborhood health

Online 1 – 1; 2 – 1; 3 – 1; 4 – 3; 5 – 1; 6 - 0

**Totals 1 -18; 2 - 4; 3-13; 4-15; 5-12; 6-4; no response -5 plus 1 for the above statement**

**Continuous Improvement** **2**

5/19 1 -4; 2 -1; 3 -3; 4 -2; 5-0; 6-0  
 5/20 1 -7; 2 - 3; 3-0; 4 -2; 5-3; 6- 0; no response -0  
 5/21 1-10; 2-10; 3 -7; 4- 2; 5- 3; 6- 5; no response -3  
 Online 1 – 2; 2 – 3; 3 – 0; 4 – 0; 5 – 2; 6 - 0  
**Totals 1 -23; 2 -17; 3 -10; 4-6; 5-8; 6-5; no response -3**

---

The following is a priority ranking of the "Guiding Principles" based on input gained from the public workshops.

- 1 – Service Excellence
- 2 – Continuous Improvement
- 3 – Sustainable Practices
- 4 – Economic Vitality through Parks
- 5 - Diversity & Distribution of Inventory
- 6 – Positive Partnerships

There was a discussion regarding adding health & wellness as either a guiding principle or key theme. It was also noted that there appears to be somewhat of a redundancy between guiding principles and key themes.

---

4. Rank the Key Themes, with 1 being your highest priority and 6 being the lowest

	<b>Regionality &amp; Recreational Diversity</b>	<b>3</b>
5/19	1 -1; 2 -2; 3 -2; 4 -1; 5-2; 6-2	
5/20	1 -5; 2 -4; 3 -2; 4 -1; 5-1; 6-2; no response -0	
5/21	1 -5; 2 -3; 3-16; 4-4; 5- 4; 6- 2; no response -6	
Online	1 - 4; 2 - 0; 3 - 0; 4 - 1; 5 - 1; 6 - 0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1-15; 2 -9; 3 -20; 4-7; 5-8; 6-6; no response -6</b>	
	<b>Taking Care of What We Have</b>	<b>1</b>
5/19	1 -6; 2 -1; 3 - 3; 4 -0; 5-0; 6-0	
5/20	1-10; 2 -1; 3 -0; 4 -3; 5-1; 6-0; no response -0	
5/21	1-19; 2 -5; 3 - 6; 4-2; 5-2; 6-1; no response -5	
Online	1 - 3; 2 - 0; 3 - 1; 4 - 2; 5 - 0; 6 - 0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1 -38; 2 -7; 3 -10; 4-7; 5-3; 6-1; no response -5</b>	
	<b>Economic &amp; Community Development</b>	<b>5</b>
5/19	1 -1; 2 -0; 3 -1; 4 -5; 5-1; 6- 2	
5/20	1 -3; 2 -2; 3 -5; 4 -2; 5-1; 6-2; no response -0	
5/21	1 -4; 2 -5; 3 -3; 4 -8; 5-6; 6-8; no response -6	
Online	1 - 1; 2 - 0; 3 - 3; 4 - 1; 5 - 1; 6 - 1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1 -9; 2 -7; 3 -12; 4-16; 5-9; 6-13; no response-6</b>	
	<b>Something for Everyone</b>	<b>2</b>
5/19	1 -3; 2 -1; 3 -0; 4-2; 5-0; 6- 4	
5/20	1 -4; 2 -3; 3 - 2; 4-0; 5- 3; 6-3; no response -0	
5/21	1 -4; 2 -11; 3 -7; 4-4; 5- 3; 6-5; no response -6	
Online	1 - 2; 2 - 2; 3 - 1; 4 - 2; 5 - 0; 6 - 0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1-13; 2 -17; 3 -10; 4-8; 5-6; 6-12; no response -6</b>	
	<b>Organizational Readiness</b>	<b>6</b>
5/19	1 -1; 2 -1; 3 -5; 4 -1; 5-1; 6- 1	
5/20	1 -4; 2 - 0; 3 -2; 4 -3; 5-5; 6-1; no response -0	
5/21	1 -3; 2 - 2; 3 -7; 4 -4; 5-8; 6- 8; 7 - 2; no response -6	
Online	1 - 1; 2 - 3; 3 - 0; 4 - 0; 5 - 0; 6 - 2	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1 -9; 2 -6; 3 -14; 4-8; 5-14; 6-12; 7-2; no response-6</b>	
	<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	<b>4</b>



5/19 1 -3; 2 -3; 3 -0; 4 -0; 5-4; 6-0  
 5/20 1 -3; 2 -3; 3 -1; 4 - 3; 5-1; 6- 4; no response -  
 5/21 1 -3; 2 -8; 3 -5; 4 - 8; 5-5; 6- 6; no response -5  
 Online 1 - 2; 2 - 1; 3 - 2; 4 - 0; 5 - 1; 6 - 1  
**Totals 1-11; 2 -15; 3 -8; 4-11; 5-11; 6-11; no response - 5**

**Health & Wellness 7**

5/19 Was not ask  
 5/20 Generated from 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting but not measured  
 5/21 1 - 7; 2 - 4; 3 -4; 4 - 1; 5- 0; 6- 0; no response 24

---

**The following is a priority ranking of the "Key Themes" based on input gained from the public workshops.**

- 1 – Taking Care of What We Have
- 2 – Something for Everyone
- 3 – Regionality & Recreational Diversity
- 4 – Financial Sustainability
- 5 – Economic & Community Development
- 6 – Organizational Readiness
- 7- Health & Wellness (only ranked at the 5/21 meeting)

**There was a discussion regarding adding health & wellness as either a guiding principle or key theme. It was also noted that there appears to be somewhat of a redundancy between guiding principles and key themes. Consider reworking key themes into guiding principles.**

---

5. Have you been to a County Park in:

**Cumulative**

- 0 - once in past 12 months
- 0 - 2 times in past 12 months
- 2 - 3-4 times in past 12 months
- 2 - monthly
- 6 - 2 times per month
- 9-weekly
- 43 -more than once a week

10-daily

---

***It appears that those present at the workshops are active park patrons and support specific facilities and program, especially tennis, pickleball, softball, disc golf and general park development. May want to think about ways to reach out to nonusers or limited users.***

---

6. Are there park facilities not provided that you think should be available?

**5/19 Englewood -- No Response – 4**

- More bicycle paths/trails (**3 similar comments**)
- Place water fountains at tennis courts
- More water fountains
- Need electricity for GC Herring for racers
- Tringali should have bathrooms with outdoor access
- Please no more port-potties

**5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Response – 4**

- Restrooms at all parks (**4 similar comments**)
- Water fountains close to all facilities (**4 similar comments**)
- More playgrounds – have them shaded (**2 similar comments**)
- Marked canoe/kayak trails/blueways (**2 similar comments**)
- More regional trails throughout the County (**2 similar comments**)
- Horse, bike and walking trails in the North Charlotte Regional Park
- Add league tennis courts for tournament play at Gilchrist Park (City of Punta Gorda) to replace Village Racquet Club
- Place doors on both sides of tennis court fences
- Add restrooms at Carmelita Park near fields 4-5
- Small Boat Sailing Center at the Beach Complex (is in process but not built yet)
- Softball Complex for tournaments
- Make the Sports Park more multi-purpose

**5/21 Punta Gorda -- No Response – 13**

- Dedicate more outdoor pickleball courts and add more indoor pickleball courts & increase times they are available for play (**11 similar comments**)
- Add shade structures over courts or at least at bleachers or players benches at tennis courts (**5 similar comments**)
- No – everything is fine (**4 similar comments**)
- Add restrooms to parks throughout County (**4 similar comments**)
- Convert 2 court tennis court batteries into pickleball courts (**3 similar comments**)
- Climbing walls (**3 similar comments**)

- Need additional group pavilions in parks throughout County (**2 similar comments**)
- Zip lines (**2 similar comments**)
- Splash Playground in Parkside (**2 similar comments**)
- BMX track (**2 similar comments**)
- Boat Ramp in Rotunda
- South County Regional Park is nice
- Increase kayak/canoe launches

**Online Responses --**

- West County / Englewood area should have a water pad
- More coverage of the Counties
- Englewood gets less representation
- More Pickleball (**5 similar comments**)
- Buildings for group meetings by the public and organizations

---

**Workshop participants supported the following**

1. **Mmore water fountains throughout parks**
  2. **Ccreate facility for tournament level tennis**
  3. **Ccreate more pickleball facilities**
  4. **DDid not want to co-locate pickleball and tennis on 3-court batteries**
  5. **RRegional trails, including blueways**
  6. **SShaded playgrounds**
  7. **Mmore group pavilions**
  8. **ddestination play areas such as zip line, climbing walls, RC updated track, BMX course and splash playground**
- 

7. Is there recreation programs not offered that you would like to see offered?

**5/19 Englewood -- No Response –9**

- Disc golf in the Englewood area

**5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Comment – 9**

- Need to have more tournaments of all kinds all year long (**2 Similar comments**)
- More special events that become annual draws
- Baseball/softball programs for women
- Professional tennis matches at the baseball park (sports park)
- Bike safety programs – create a mock road to provide training
- Paintball

**5/21 Punta Gorda -- No Comment – 17**

- No – everything is fine (**6 similar comments**)



- More indoor pickleball courts and programs for beginners and immediate players (**4 similar comments**)
- Increase hours and access to pickleball courts (**3 similar comments**)
- More health and fitness classes
- Training for Senior Olympics
- Hold more classes of all types at the regional parks
- Classes on gardening such as indoor gardens, container gardening, herb gardens
- Have a survey at recreation centers to see what they would like to do
- Increase adult sailing classes.

#### **Online Responses --**

- Rec centers do a good job of offering variety
- More open to younger children
- More Pickleball (**5 similar comments**)

---

***Looks like the programs desired are to enhance existing programs such as tennis, pickleball and softball. New program ideas included health and wellness, community gardening and water based activities. There was a little confusion on what was currently offered. The GUIDE was given out and group was impressed. This demonstrates that the County needs to continue and enhance efforts to better market programs. There was a suggestion to implement an annual program survey to determine effectiveness of existing programs and test new programs.***

---

8. Are there improvements needed at specific park facilities, if so what are they?

#### **5/19 Englewood -- No Response – 5**

- Need to upgrade GC Herring RC Park (**2 similar comments**)
- Myakka Park – add trails, picnic area, education kiosks/area, canoe/kayak area (**2 similar comments**)
- Need to add electricity to GC Herring at drivers stand and new pit lane
- If the RC Track was upgraded this will increase activity and revenue at GC Herring
- After resurfacing of the courts – there should be more upkeep

#### **5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Response – 4**

- Restrooms, benches and more shade at all parks (**3 similar comments**)
- Have doors on both sides of tennis courts at Franz Ross Park (**2 similar comments**)
- Parking improvements at Midway Courts (enlarge the parking area) (**2 similar comments**)

- Fix the post and net at Sunrise Park – it's falling down **(2 similar comments)**
- Resurface tennis courts at Franz Ross Park the correct way **(2 similar comments)**
- At North Charlotte Regional Park add the following per master plan **(2 similar comments)**
  - Basketball court
  - Large enclosed pavilion
  - More passive areas
- Restrooms at Midway Courts
- The pine trees at Midway are dropping needles on the courts making them unplayable
- Carmelita infield has a "lip" that could be improved upon
- Sailing Center at Beach Complex
- Continue to develop Sunrise Park
- Partner with State of Florida to allow access to conservation lands

#### **5/21 Punta Gorda -- No Response – 9**

- Keep up with maintenance at all parks **(5 similar comments)**
- Add sunshade structures with seating near courts **(4 similar comments)**
- Need more outdoor pickleball courts **(4 similar comments)**
- South County tennis courts need bleachers that are shaded **(3 similar comments)**
- Add a group pavilion at South County Regional Park **(3 similar comments)**
- Need outside restroom near tennis/pickleball & basketball courts at South County Regional Park **(2 similar comments)**
- Need permanent pickleball lines at South County Recreation Center **(2 similar comments)**
- Franz Ross, resurface, re-line for tennis and add water fountains **(2 similar comments)**
- Resurface all courts, add water fountains and shaded seating **(2 similar comments)**
- Placida Boat Ramp – need an additional ramp and more parking **(2 similar comments)**
- Need to have separate tennis courts and separate pickleball courts – do not make them multipurpose
- Harold Gym – indoor pickleball courts get a lot of glare from window – need to put blinds or covering over windows
- Gilchrist Park (City of Punta Gorda) – needs more children's play equipment
- McGuire Park – needs to be revamped
- McGuire Park – restore the tennis courts
- McGuire Park – make a pickleball complex here
- Hathaway Park – paved!
- Midway Park – the tennis courts need to be improved, including the net, surfacing and consider removing the pine trees that drop needles on the courts or make this area the playground and move the courts
- Port Charlotte Beach needs more shade
- More playground equipment in parks

- Better signage in parks
- Better wayfinding signage to parks
- Parking structures at beaches and perhaps in Parkside so we do not have to have so many surface parking lots
- Need more trees and shade
- No, everything is good
- All parks listed in the GUIDE should be open to the public and not for special groups

**Online Responses --**

- Pickleball in South County
- Coverage at tringali, upkeep on bug spraying
- Separate pickleball and tennis courts
- Increased available hours and staffing

---

***Continue to upgrade existing park facilities, especially tennis courts, playgrounds and the addition of shade. Participants seemed to appreciate the work the County has been doing and understands funding challenge.***

---

9. Do you think recreational trails are needed within the County, if so where?

**TOTAL Responses      16 - No Response      42 - yes      14 - no**

**5/19 Englewood -- No Response 0      10 - yes      0 - no**

- Wherever we can
- San Casa
- Since I do not bike I am not sure

**5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Response 5      9- yes      1 - no**

- Elkam (**2 similar comments**)
- Border the Peace River
- Charlotte Harbor shoreline
- Within and connecting to the North Charlotte Regional Park
- North Charlotte County area

**5/21 Punta Gorda – No Response 11      19 - yes      10 - no**

- Focus on Blueways and water trails (**3 similar comments**)
- Need to focus on connecting our existing trails (**2 similar comments**)
- Need to have pet friendly trails
- Our trail system is sufficient
- I am new to the community and am not familiar with what is available

- Along the Harbor in Punta Gorda
- South on 775
- North of Placida
- North PC
- Port Charlotte side of the Peace River
- You decide

**Online – No responses 0            4 – yes            3 - no**

- Port Charlotte/hospital area
- West County

---

***If appears that there is support for trails; an especially connection to parks, along the waterfronts, blueways and kayak trails.***

---

10. Are there parks in the County that are underutilized or not needed? If yes, please list:

**5/19 Englewood -- No Response – 9**

- Not sure

**5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Response – 9**

- Elkam Park needs to be refurbished and available as tennis courts **(3 similar comments)**
- Need to make the courts at Sunrise a 3 court battery for league play or use the Sunrise Courts for pickleball and not Franz Ross
- Midway needs to be expanded
- Need to expand Sunrise
- McGuire Park
- We have lost 4 tennis courts and need to replaced them

**5/21 Punta Gorda -- No Response – 22**

- Focus on repairing and expanding existing parks before building new parks. **(2 similar comments)**
- Keep parks maintained, especially the restrooms **(2 similar comments)**
- The County should focus on community and regional parks and not neighborhood or small parks **(2 similar comments)**
- Sunrise Park needs to have improvements including trails, restrooms closer to the launch, the launch needs to be improved. The park is nice but the bugs keep the people away from the park. **(2 similar comments)**

- Midway Park – repurpose the tennis courts to a playground or make them pickleball
- Prairie Creek Park is underutilized but that is part of its charm
- Even if a park is underutilized it should not be eliminated but perhaps maintained as open space
- I am not sure where they are but realize that they probably are some that should be looked at, maybe sold or repurposed
- Bissett Park

**Online Responses – No Response - 5**

- Underutilized Tringali Rec
- I'm sure there are, but not aware

---

***There seemed to be an understanding that small lots were a burden and that primary focus should be community and regional parks.***

---

11. Are you willing to pay to play (depending upon the amount)? **CUMULATIVE**

**6 - No Response      55 -yes      11 -no**

If yes, please check all that may apply:

40 - user fees	18 - sales tax	4- impact fees
3 - special assessments	6 - property taxes	0 - other

---

***There seems to be an acceptance of the pay to play concept in addition an openness for other revenue sources. Many did voice a concern that the County should not price out youth or those in need of economic assistance.***

---

12. List parks and recreation priorities that should be addressed in the Master Plan

**5/19 Englewood -- No Response - 4**

1. Maintain what we have first before building new (**3 similar comments**)
2. Place parks near population centers (**2 similar comments**)
3. Trails (**2 similar comments**)
4. Intelligent & sustainable design (**2 similar comments**)

5. Economic considerations (**2 similar comments**)
6. Fitness centers and trails
7. Destination parks
8. Upgrade GC Herring
9. Preserve the environment
10. Need pay to play
11. Upgrade Ann Dever
12. Upgrade Tringali

**5/20 Port Charlotte - - No Response - 4**

1. Preserve Franz Ross for League Tennis Play (**6 similar comments**)
2. McGuire Park - (**5 similar comments**)
3. Harold Avenue - tennis (**4 similar comments**)
4. Maintain tennis courts (**2 similar comments**)
5. North Charlotte Park Tennis Courts
6. Family Recreation
7. Community
8. Allowing advertisement at softball fields
9. Expand trails of all types, walking, biking and horse trails
10. Diversity
11. Expand Bicycle Trails to and at Tippy Canoe
12. Swimming pools
13. Excellence

14. Disc Golf expansion at North Charlotte Regional Park

#### **5/21 Punta Gorda – No Response – 12**

1. Dedicated pickle ball courts throughout County (**6 similar comments**)
2. Increase hours that people can play pickle ball (**6 similar comments**)
3. Upgrade Harold Ave (**6 similar comments**)
4. Upgrade Franz Ross (tennis) (**6 similar comments**)
5. Outdoor pickle ball at South County (**5 similar comments**)
6. Upgrade Gilchrist Courts (City – **5 similar comments**)
7. Recreational Trails (**3 similar comments**)
8. Upgrade South County (**3 similar comments**)
9. Parks should be designed to be family oriented, have community gathering areas and activities for all ages for the demographics that live near them (**2 similar comments**)
10. Upgrade Laisley (**2 similar comments**)
11. Upgrade Tringali Center and Courts (**2 similar comments**) Upgrade and Maintenance of playgrounds (**2 similar comments**)
12. Keep restrooms maintained and cleaned (**2 similar comments**)
13. Preservation of our natural resources (**2 similar comments**)
14. Upgrade existing facilities first before building new (**2 similar comments**)
15. Parks should be located within a 5-10 minute walk
16. Upgrade Beach Complex
17. Upgrade Bayshore
18. Upgrade Harbor Heights
19. Upgrade Sunrise Park
20. Upgrade McGuire
21. Upgrade Cooper Street



22. Improve tennis courts throughout county

**Online Responses --**

1. Outdoor pickleball
2. Indoor pickleball
3. pickleball (**5 similar comments**)
4. community meeting space
5. education activities at parks
6. Getting youth to and from parks from school and home

---

***There was a strong emphasis that the County should first upgrade what they have and maintain them before initiating new park projects. There appears to be a desire for trails, blueways and kayak opportunities in addition to health and wellness programs.***

---

13. Do you have any additional comments?

**5/19 Englewood – No Additional Comments**

- Leave Mayaka Environmental Park Alone
- If you build adequate pickleball courts it would lessen the conflict with adding lines to existing tennis courts – there is a conflict between the joint use of tennis and pickleball
- I think the pickleball players would also prefer their own courts too
- Thank you for your time and consideration
- We need to provide better connectivity for bikes, walking and for animal migration routes
- User fees should be competitive to private facilities

**5/20 Port Charlotte -- No Additional Comments - 8**

- Provide separate pickleball courts from the tennis to avoid conflicts (**3 similar comments**)
- If you have to have multi-tennis and pickleball courts, make the 2-court battery the ones you do this too – not the three courts. (**2 similar comments**)
- Please repair Franz Ross & Harold Ave Tennis Courts (**2 similar comments**)
- Stay the Course
- Family Recreation
- I am all for the Community Gardens
- We already pay through our leagues and our property taxes
- Public facilities should be free to all residents. For some fees make sports, parks, and facilities unaffordable.



- Increase the disc golf course at North Charlotte Regional Park – there is additional land for more baskets.
- Consider disc golf at South Charlotte Regional Park
- Add a canoe/kayak launch at Tippy Canoe
- Allow advertising at parks by businesses and league sponsors (softball)
- Increase water access and sailing activities – especially families
- Need more playgrounds for kids since schools are not accessible
- More neighborhood parks

**5/21 Punta Gorda -- No Additional Comments - 14**

- Sunshade over courts or at least seating areas at South County (**7 similar comments**)
- Keep tennis and pickle ball courts separate (**7 similar comments**)
- More indoor pickle ball courts too for year round play – includes longer hours (**6 similar comments**)
- Dedicated pickle ball courts throughout County (esp outdoor at South County) (**5 similar comments**)
- The on line calendars should be updated when scheduled change quicker (**2 similar comments**)
- Sunshade over seating and courts (**2 similar comments**)
- Design dedicated tennis court batteries in at least sets of 3 (**2 similar comments**)
- Remove teaching line on the Harold Ave Courts
- Need to provide more educational partnership regarding ecological preservation with the school board and the county
- Have the your be involved with the master planning process
- What about fishing programs
- Pay stations at Charlotte Beach Complex should be improved
- We need more pet friendly trails
- We have a 1,800 strong tennis program and we need the county to reserve days for League Play – after all we pay

**Online Responses – No Response - 6**

- Keep up the good work

---

***There is a little of a mix, and it is clear that the meetings were heavy on tennis and pickleball participation. Again trails, health and fitness and upgrade existing facilities, top the list.***

---

**Just a few more questions about yourself to assist in classifying your responses . . .(Cumalitive)**

1. Please indicate your gender:                    **39** - Male                    **32**- Female

What is your age?

- 2** -- No Response
- 0** -- Under 24
- 4** -- 25-34
- 3** -- 35 – 44
- 6** -- 45-54
- 24** -- 55-64
- 27** -- 65 - 74
- 5** -- 75 or over

2. What part of the County do you live?

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Punta Gorda -- 16       | Port Charlotte -- 8  |
| North - 4               | Charlotte Harbor – 3 |
| Charlotte - 3           | Gulf Cove – 2        |
| Kings Highway - 2       | Mid-county - 2       |
| Murdock - 2             | North Port – 2       |
| Sarasota – 2            | S. Punta Gorda - 3   |
| Yucatan Circle – 2      | West – 2             |
| Burnt Store Village – 1 | SW – 1               |

3. Are you a permanent or seasonal resident?

- 67** - permanent            **2**-seasonal            **1**- do not live in the County            **1**- No Response

4. What race do you consider yourself to be?

- 63** White
- 0** Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin
- 2** Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander
- 0** Native American
- 0** Black or African American
- 6** No response
- 1** Other: \_Human Race



**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"

The background of the lower half of the page is an aerial photograph of a park facility, including buildings, parking lots, and sports fields. This image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The top half of the page is a solid blue color, separated from the green by a white, wavy, torn-paper-like border.

**Appendix C**  
**Park Inventory**  
**LOS Matrix**



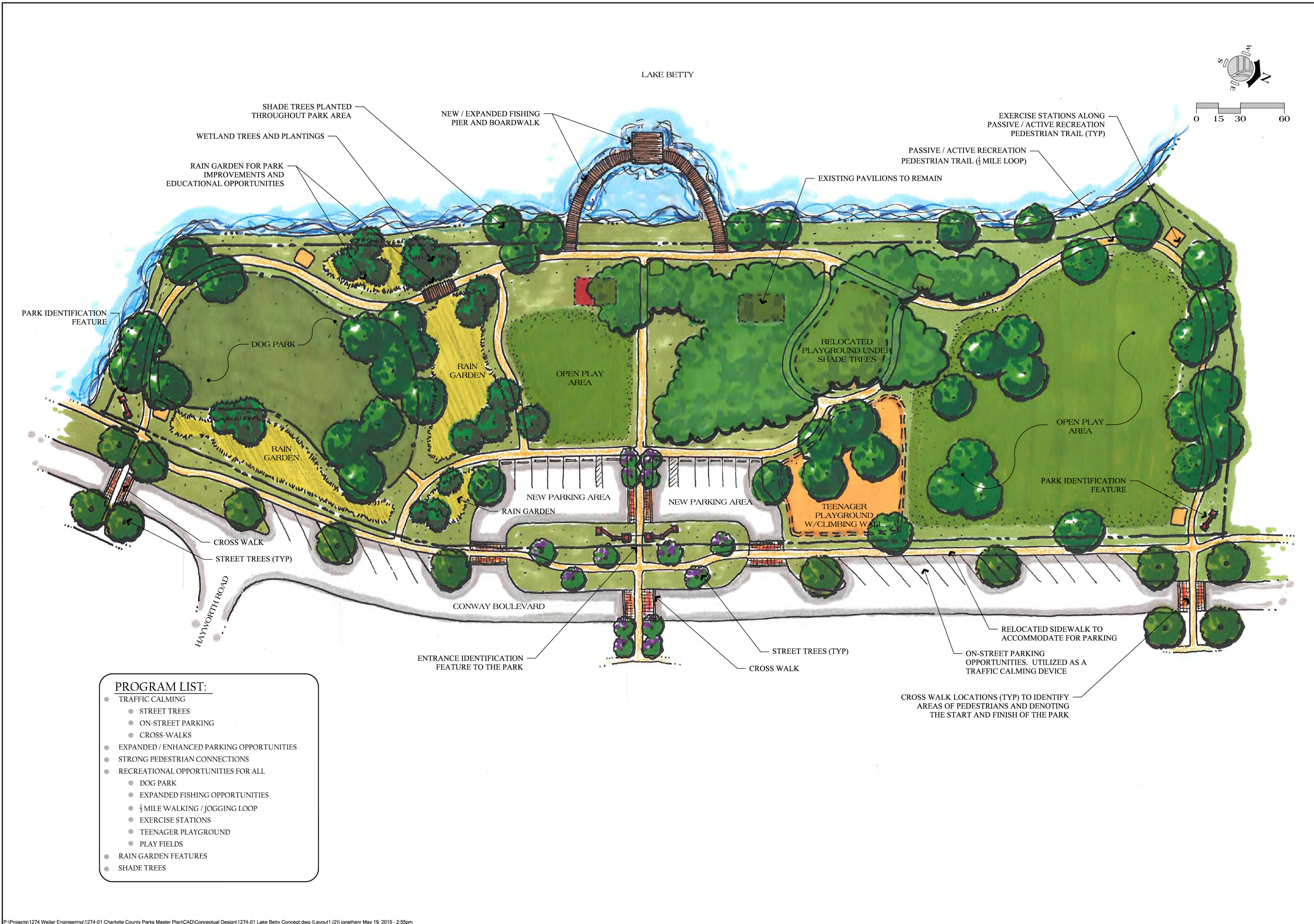




**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"

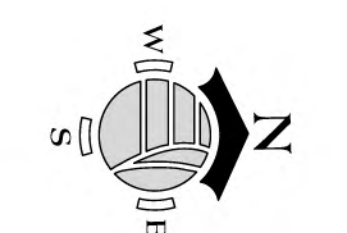
**Appendix D**  
**Park Concepts**





- PROGRAM LIST:**
- TRAFFIC CALMING
    - STREET TREES
    - ON-STREET PARKING
    - CROSS-WALKS
  - EXPANDED / ENHANCED PARKING OPPORTUNITIES
  - STRONG PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
  - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
    - DOG PARK
    - EXPANDED FISHING OPPORTUNITIES
    - 1/4 MILE WALKING / JOGGING LOOP
    - EXERCISE STATIONS
    - TEENAGER PLAYGROUND
    - PLAY FIELDS
  - RAIN GARDEN FEATURES
  - SHADE TREES





- PROGRAM LIST:**
- EXPANDED / ENHANCED PARKING OPPORTUNITIES
  - STRONG PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
  - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
    - CAMPING
    - FISHING
    - SUNNING
    - PASSIVE RECREATION TRAILS
    - BOATING / KAYAKING / CANOEING
  - RAIN GARDEN FEATURES
  - SHADE TREES
  - WETLAND PRESERVATION
  - BATHROOM AND SHOWER FACILITIES
  - CANOE / KAYAK LAUNCH



Weller Engineering  
 201 West Marion Ave,  
 Ste 1306  
 Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Charlotte County Parks & Rec Master Plan  
 Placida Park Improvements

NO.	REVISION	DATE

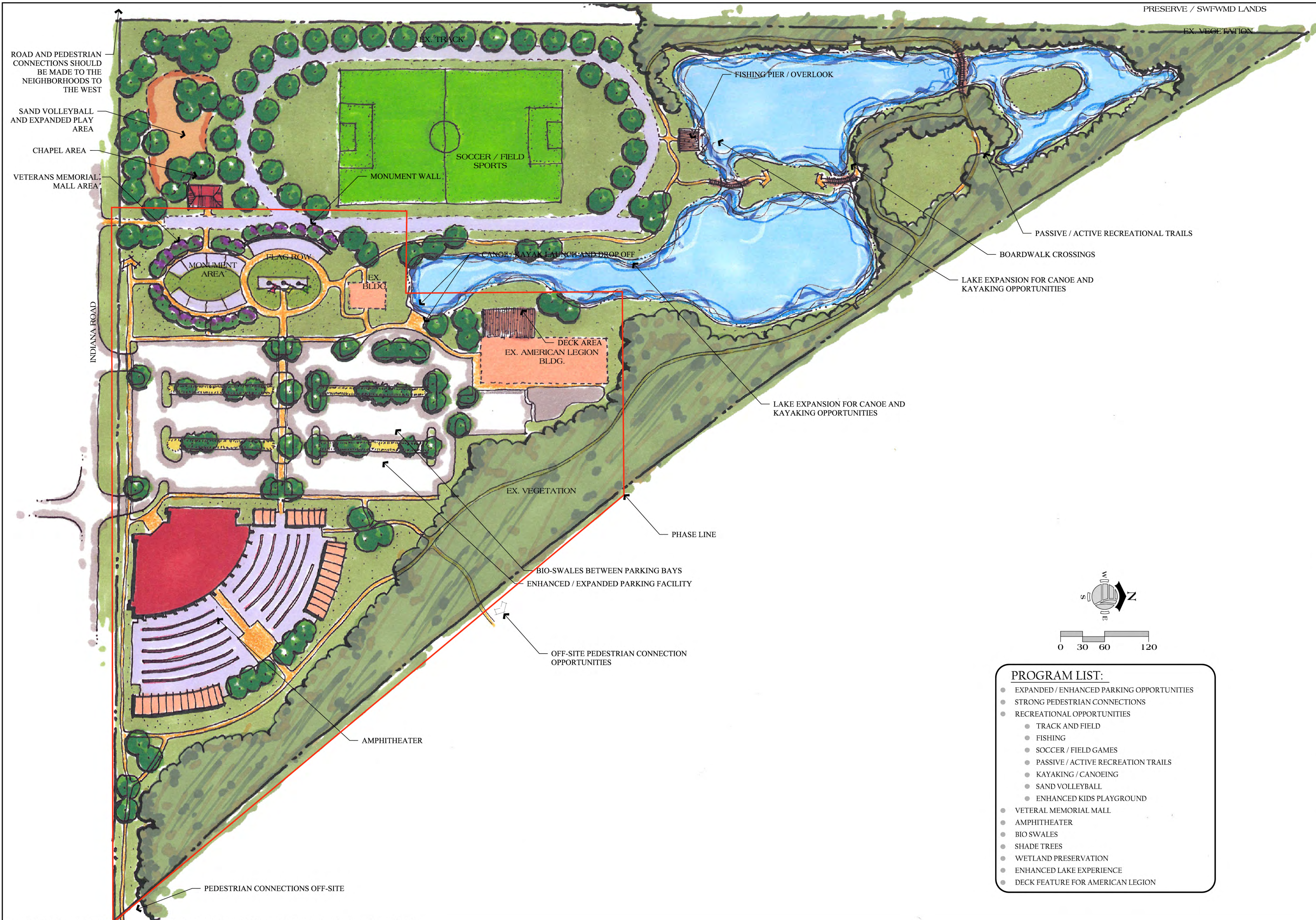
NO.	REVISION	DATE

DATE: 04-07-15  
 PROJECT NO.: 1274-01  
 FILE NO.: 1274-01 Placida Park  
 SCALE: See Sheet

PLACIDA PARK  
 CONCEPT  
 PLAN

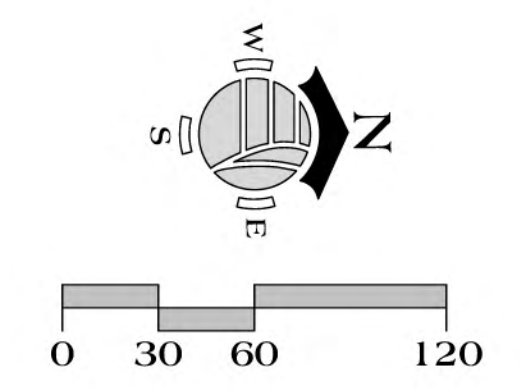
CP-01





Weller Engineering  
201 West Marion Ave,  
Ste 1306  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Charlotte County Parks & Rec Master Plan  
Veterans Park Improvements



- PROGRAM LIST:**
- EXPANDED / ENHANCED PARKING OPPORTUNITIES
  - STRONG PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
  - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
    - TRACK AND FIELD
    - FISHING
    - SOCCER / FIELD GAMES
    - PASSIVE / ACTIVE RECREATION TRAILS
    - KAYAKING / CANOEING
    - SAND VOLLEYBALL
    - ENHANCED KIDS PLAYGROUND
  - VETERAL MEMORIAL MALL
  - AMPHITHEATER
  - BIO SWALES
  - SHADE TREES
  - WETLAND PRESERVATION
  - ENHANCED LAKE EXPERIENCE
  - DECK FEATURE FOR AMERICAN LEGION

REVISIONS		DATE
NO.	DESCRIPTION	

DATE: 04-13-15  
PROJECT NO.: 1274-01  
FILE NO.: 1274-01 Veterans Park  
SCALE: See Sheet

VETERANS  
PARK  
CONCEPT  
PLAN

CP-01





**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"

**Appendix E**  
**Charlotte County**  
**Annual Park Assessment Form**



**INDOOR FACILITY COMPONENTS (POINT)**

GIS Point	Park Component	Score	Quantity	Lights Y = Yes	Comments (add age of element if known)

**CONNECTIVITY COMPONENTS (POINT) (Sidewalks, trails, pathways, bike lanes)**

GIS Point	Park Component	Score	Quantity	Lights Y = Yes	Comments

**Explanation of high or low overall park score:**

**Additional Comments:**

**NOTE: Photograph each element and combine in report.**

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**PARKS &**  
*Recreation*  
-----  
**MASTER PLAN**  
"Get Up, Get Out, Get Active"

The background of the lower half of the page is an aerial photograph of a park facility, including a baseball field, tennis courts, and various buildings. This image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The top half of the page is a solid blue color, separated from the green by a white, wavy, torn-paper-like border.

**Appendix F**  
**Charlotte County**  
**Potential Grant Programs**

# Grants List

The following identifies potential grant programs that may support the projects and initiatives identified in the Charlotte County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update. This list should be updated as new sources are identified or information changes.

## Go Greenfields Grants

Assists parks nationwide in providing their communities with funding for outdoor exercise zones.

888-315-9037 x123

[Grants@GreenfieldsFitness.com](mailto:Grants@GreenfieldsFitness.com). Or [www.GreenfieldsFitness.com](http://www.GreenfieldsFitness.com).

Submission date: November 15, 2015, selection November 30, 2015

50-50 grants - Matching funds available for orders at a minimum of \$20,000 and a maximum of \$100,000.

## Beach restoration and nourishment, dune restoration, dune

Walkover construction, project design, engineering and environmental studies, and other erosion related activities.

Paden Woodruff, Administrator (850) 922-7703

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 300

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/programs/bcherosn.htm>

Application Submission Period: Annually/ August

Local Governments Only

1 ½ yr. (18months) grant if approved

Grant Match - up to 50% of request

## Florida Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program

Formerly known as the Florida Rails-to-Trails Program, provides acquisition funds for the purchase of greenways and trails for recreational and conservation purposes.

Cynthia Radford, Program Admin. (850) 245-4079

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 795

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Development of Recreational Trails (850) 245-2052

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 795

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/community>

Application Submission Period: Ongoing.

Acquisition State Program

State Agencies, Local Governments

Grant Match Not Require

## Clean Vessel Act Grant Program

A federal program that provides funding to public and private recreational boating facilities to install or renovate pump out or waste dump reception facilities.

Brenda Leonard (850) 245-2847

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 665

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/law/Grants/CVA/default.htm>

Application Submission Period: Ongoing

Federal Program

State Agencies, Local Govt., Non-

Profits (Public & Private)

Grant Match – 25% - 75% of requested amount

## DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

□

### Land and Water Conservation Fund

A federal program that provides grants to local governments for acquisition of park land and development of park facilities.

#### Office of Information and Recreation Services

(850) 245-2501

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 585

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

[www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/oirs](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/oirs)

Application Submission Period: Annual/February

Federal Grant Award – 3yr. Grant if Approved

Local Governments Only (No State Agencies, No Non-Prof.)

50%-50% Grant Match (Cash, in-kind, land value)

### Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program

Limited to local community acquisition of park land and development of park facilities

#### DEP

Office of Information and Recreation Services

(850) 245-2501

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 585

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

[www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/oirs](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/oirs)

Application Submission Period: Annual/September

State Grant – 3yr. Grant if Approved

Local Governments Only (No State Agencies, No Non-Prof.)

50%-50% Grant Match (Cash, in-kind, land value)

## DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

□

### Florida Communities Trust

Provides grant and loan assistance to local governments for the acquisition and conservation of outdoor recreation lands that are needed to implement local government comprehensive plans.

Grant Gelhardt, Environmental Administrator.

(850) 922-1704

2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

<http://www.floridacommunitiestrust.org>

Application Submission Period: Annual/February - June

State Grant Award

Local Governments & Non-Profits

25% Minimum Grant Match (for counties w/ populations >75,000 and municipalities w/ populations > 10,000)

100% Grant Award for municipalities < if they are above thresholds

## DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT OF STATE

□

### Florida Forever Program

(formerly Conservation & Recreation Lands Program, CARL)

State acquisition program to preserve significant natural and other resource values.

Jim Farr (850) 245-2766

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 140

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

[www.floridaforever.org](http://www.floridaforever.org)



### **Transportation Enhancement Program**

Transportation enhancement projects: Bike and pedestrian trails and facilities, landscaping, and restoration of historic transportation structures.

Mariano Berrios, Environmental Administrator  
(850) 414-5250

605 Suwannee Street, MS 37  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/enhance/enhance.htm>

Application Submission Period: Annually/Spring and ongoing as funds become available.  
State & Federal Grant Awards State Agencies, Local Governments, Districts. No Non-Profits  
50%-50% Grant Match (Cash, in-kind, land value)

### **Waterways Assistance Program Grant**

Public navigation, recreation, and environmental education projects along the Intracoastal Waterway.

Mr. Mark Crosley (561) 627-3386

1314 Marcinski Road  
Jupiter, Florida 33477

<http://www.aicw.org/wap.htm>

Application Submission Period: Annually/January – April  
State Grant Award - 2yr Grant if Approved  
Local Governments Only (No State)  
Grant Match - 50% of requested amount

### **Waterways Assistance Program Grant**

Public navigation, recreation, and environmental education projects along the Intracoastal Waterway

Mr. Charles Listowski (941) 485-9402

Post Office Box 1845  
Venice, Florida 34284-1845

<http://www.wcind.ne>

### **Tommy Hawk foundation**

Skate parks in low income area

Website: <http://tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant-application/>

1611-A S. Melrose DR #360  
Vista, CA 92081

January 20, 2016 (for awards announced in February 2016. Application will be available here after December 7, 2015); June 15, 2016 (for awards announced in July 2016. Application will be available here after May 3, 2016)

1,000.00 - 25,000.00; No match

### **The USTA Facility Assistance Program**

The need for new tennis facilities or improvements at existing facilities is not, in and of itself, sufficient justification for a grant. The Facility Assistance Program is intended to have a major impact on the growth of tennis in a community and the clients served by that organization. Agency review includes a thorough evaluation of the programmatic, administrative, financial and organizational accomplishments of the applicant. The USTA Facility Assistance process begins with submission of a [Tennis Facility Inquiry Form](#). After review of the Tennis Facility Inquiry Form and initial follow-up conversation with a USTA representative, some applicants will qualify to submit a full Funding Application.

**National Contact:** Facilities Team, [Facilities@usta.com](mailto:Facilities@usta.com)

**Grant Amount:** Category I - up to \$4,000 with possible section or district match; Category II - up to \$10,000 or 50% project total; Category III - up to \$20,000 or 50% project total

Additional information about submitting a grant proposal - [foundation@usta.com](mailto:foundation@usta.com).

Beginning in 2015, the USTA Foundation will award grants once per year. The application will be available online beginning September 1, 2015. The deadline is midnight (EST) on October 2, 2015.