

1

# INTRODUCTION

---

*This page was intentionally left blank.*



## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the Village of Palmetto Bay (Village) embarked on the creation of a comprehensive Villagewide Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Plan) to address latent community park and recreation needs and provide the professional framework to improve public recreation and leisure facilities throughout the Village.

The professional team (Team) selected to prepare the Plan was led by Bermello Ajamil & Partners (BA) as the prime consultant. Assisting BA

with the development of the detailed plan was Ballard King & Associates (B\*K), ETC Institute (ETC), and the Bosch Group (TBG). This document outlines the process utilized to arrive at the Plan and its proposed recommendations.

There are many benefits to creating a Villagewide Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Improvements to the Village's recreation offerings foster the betterment of its children, teens, adults, and seniors. Cross-generational parks and community centers help bring together all age groups and build a sense of place and community.

These master plans are intended to be a community-driven, user-oriented process guided by the professional team’s research, analysis, and the collaborative support of Village staff. The process identifies recreation needs, evaluates the available program and physical facility resources, proposes changes and improvements to programs and facilities to meet these needs, and defines a path to implement and finance the future improvements of the full park system.

The process is a highly collaborative one shared amongst the government entity, the community, and the professional team.

The Plan is intended to provide a road map for improving the Village’s park and recreation system, with particular emphasis on physical improvements of existing facilities that require updating and expansion. The Plan is a living document that may be improved, elaborated, and amended as conditions vary over time, new influences occur, and more detail is developed for specific park design and their future construction.

The Villagewide Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides an evaluation of existing park conditions, Villagewide and neighborhood park needs, park and recreation development policies, programs, and specific park design where required. As a community-driven plan, it places special emphasis on the identification of neighborhood-specific and Villagewide recreational needs through participation and input from Village residents, elected officials, administration, and parks and recreation staff. Its content reflects the findings of community forums convened to gather citizen preferences and priorities for improving recreation facilities and program offerings along both short- and long-term horizons.

The Plan serves as the basis for future investments in parks and recreation facilities and programs. It supports the pursuit of recreation

grant applications and provides a potential capital investment path for implementing the proposed park improvements. These include varied funding sources and future bond referendums.

### GOALS

The Plan is comprised of three overarching thematic goals:

- Improve the Villagewide system of park and recreation amenities to meet the needs of the citizens of the Village of Palmetto Bay
- Provide improvements that enhance the quality of life of all citizens
- Improve the neighborhoods through investments in the Village’s park system

### OBJECTIVES

The following specific guiding objectives were established to meet the Plan’s goals:

- Identify perceived and real community recreation needs
- Maximize to the greatest extent possible, the use of available recreation lands and facilities resources
- Provide multi-use fields and multi-use spaces in buildings to meet the cross-generational needs of the Palmetto Bay Community
- Provide for the rational and equitable distribution of recreational facilities throughout Palmetto Bay and improve accessibility to said facilities
- Plan park and recreation investments to create the most significant benefit for all citizens of Palmetto Bay while limiting duplication of high-maintenance facilities

## 1.2 PLANNING PROCESS

The Planning Process was organized into seven principle tasks, encompassing the following:

### INITIAL TARGETED COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The process began with an Initial Targeted Community Outreach campaign to present the process and the Team in a more informal venue, while obtaining the initial pulse of the community. One-on-one meetings with elected officials, stakeholders, community leaders, and Village-staff were conducted to understand the community in the initial stages of project development, including the major issues and opportunities for improvement of the park system.

### INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

The Inventory and Assessment began with a high-level, thorough understanding of existing conditions, including the identification of issues and the opportunities that present to improve the park system. The Team evaluated park system resources, including physical park conditions, recreation programs and services, their delivery, as well as an assessment of existing funding sources.

### NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Needs Assessment was comprised of a comprehensive analysis of the existing parks and recreation system. A statistically valid community recreation survey (the Survey) was carried out to help identify recreation and open space needs, both latent and actual. The Survey identified public interests, desires, expectations, and priorities for the future, including the public’s willingness to fund expanded programs and services. The ETC Institute, a nationally recognized firm in this field, administered the survey and evaluated its findings. One of the Survey



highlights is the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), which identifies the facilities and recreation programs that residents rank as the highest priority for investment. Through a demographic analysis, the Team evaluated the community’s composition and identified the distribution of parks and community access to these recreation facilities. Lastly, the Team evaluated any regulatory requirements for recreation Levels-of-Service (LOS) and their relationship to the community, including community recreation trends and preferences.



### SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Upon completion of the first three principle tasks, the Team organized the findings in a Summary of Issues and Opportunities to be considered to improve the park system. The purpose was to ensure buy-in on the issues and opportunities to be addressed. At this juncture, the Team conducted the first community outreach meeting. Through discussions with the Village of Palmetto Bay Parks and Recreation Department, it was determined that three separate meetings would be held across different sectors of the Village to maximize participation.

### MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Master Plan Development Phase included formulating physical improvements, recommending new recreation programs or program changes, and other improvements identified through the analysis. The Team closely considered capital and operation costs to avoid false expectations. The Team worked intimately with the Village of Palmetto Bay Parks and Recreation Staff. Upon development of this task, the second community outreach meeting was conducted. In this meeting, the Team presented the proposed improvements and obtained community input. With valid community comments, and through consultations with Village Officials and Staff, a consensus was arrived at for the proposed master plan improvements.

### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Without an Implementation Plan, the master plan would be a shelf-bound document. As the master plan moves forward, the Village shall establish the priorities in implementing the recommendations. For more detailed information refer to Chapter 6 for recommendations to improve the delivery of recreation programs and services. In addition, refer to Chapter 7 for the recommendations to improve each park facility and funding sources for these improvements.

### MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

A comprehensive document guides the future processes and provides documentation for potential future funding solicitations. Finally, once all the master plan elements were accepted, the Team prepared the Master Plan Document to record the process, findings, recommendations, formulated designs, and implementation. At the conclusion of the report, the Team presented the complete master plan to the Village Council for adoption. This presentation concluded the master plan's long collaborative effort.

The master plan is a living document that may be revised or expanded as time progresses. BA and the sub-consultant team will be available to assist the Village in implementing the master plan. Once adopted, a new process will begin for the Village of Palmetto Bay, implementing the recommendations.

## **I.3 COMMUNITY DRIVEN PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The planning process was deliberately framed around the organized collection of community input and comments through area-specific



community/neighborhood outreach campaigns, meetings and Village Council workshops. Three major outreach efforts guided the development of the master plan.

- A statistically valid community survey performed by ETC Institute was distributed to collect a Villagewide perspective on community needs and preferences.
- To maximize community participation workshops were held at Palmer Trinity School, during the evening hours. These meetings were held to obtain community-specific input on recreation facilities/program needs, concerns, and aspirations.
- Village Council workshops were conducted to obtain elected official input to address sector-specific and Villagewide recreational issues and investments. The Village Council workshops were geared to gather input from all sectors and areas of the community and to provide a forum for active discussions with elected officials and Village staff.

Following is a list of elected officials, community workshops/meetings, and public workshops held during the project process:

- **Village of Palmetto Bay Tree Board Meeting (08/18/2022):** The Team conducted an interactive workshop with the Tree Board to discuss issues/opportunities for the future of the parks, and receive input.
- **Village Council One-On-One Meetings (Various):** One-on-one meetings were held between the Team and various Village-staff and other elected-officials. The purpose of these meetings served to provide a check-in on the process, gain focused input and provide updates.

- **Community Workshop Meeting No. 1 (09/30/2022)** The first meeting occurred at the conclusion of the summary of issues and opportunities task. The Team presented and obtained input on the research and the issues and opportunities identified for individual parks within the overall park system.
- **Community Workshop Meeting No. 2 (12/08/2022):** The second meeting occurred once the master plan development options were fully conceived and vetted with staff. The primary intent of the meeting was to obtain buy-in on the preferred concept plans at this meeting.
- **Village Council One-on-One Meetings (Various):** These meetings were held following the second community workshop to review and discuss input received and the proposed improvements for the master plan.
- **Village Council Presentation Meeting No. 3:** The third meeting occurred at the end of the implementation plan task. At this meeting, the Team presented the final master plan. The master plan process was concluded with a final presentation to elected officials for adoption.

Each public workshop was duly advertised to the public for maximum participation

Community driven public engagement outreach shall not end at the Plan's adoption. This coordination shall continue as individual parks are contemplated for design and implementation. Prior to any significant milestone updates, community participation shall be solicited to confirm that the final venue reflect the needs and aspirations of the immediate community and the residents of the Village.

## I. 4 MASTER PLAN SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

### Village of Palmetto Bay Comprehensive Plan

The adopted (February 2015) Village of Palmetto Bay Comprehensive Plan’s “Element No. 7- Recreation and Open Space (ROS)” defines long-term goals, objectives, and policies for the Village parks and recreation system. Goal 7, the guiding goal, states that the Village will “Provide a balanced, multi-purpose system of excellent parks, greenways, and trails that meet and exceed the needs of Palmetto Bay’s residents, Businesses, and Visitors.”

Under this overarching goal, Objective 7.1, “Parks and Recreational System Needs,” states that the Village will “Maintain and enhance Village parks and open space lands and facilities consistent with the adopted level-of-service (LOS) standard.” Refer to Chapter 5. 4 for additional details.

### Adopted Village Resolutions

Over the course of 2019-2020, a series of public meetings were held in the Village to ascertain public input from citizen’s regarding proposed revisions to several of the Village’s parks’ facilities. Subsequently, the Mayor and Village Council approved by resolution individual master plans for the parks, with item-by-item recommendations for improvements. The resolution and recommendations are provided:

- **Resolution No. 2019-48 Coral Reef Park Master Plan**
- **Resolution No. 2019-104 Palmetto Bay Park Master Plan**
- **Resolution No. 2019-149 Thalatta Estate Park Master Plan**
- **Resolution No. 2020-26 Ludovici Park Master Plan**
- **Resolution No. 2020-27 Perrine Wayside Dog Park Master Plan**

## I. 5 REPORT ORGANIZATION

This document is organized into eight chapters that follow the master plan process, approach, and methodology. The chapters are presented as follows:

### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter is comprised of a statement of the purpose and intent of the master plan and its overall goals and objectives; the public outreach process; the planning process; master plan supporting documents; and report organization.

### CHAPTER 2: MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This chapter includes a summary of proposed physical improvements to the Village’s parks and proposed design concepts for some of the individual park facilities.

### CHAPTER 3: URBAN CONTEXT

This chapter includes a detailed understanding of the form of the Village of Palmetto Bay and its influences on the parks system, the location and service area of each park, and regional and neighboring Village parks accessible to Palmetto Bay residents. The intent of this section is to clarify geographic and physical accessibility to recreational venues.

### CHAPTER 4: EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS

Identifying existing park conditions and the needed improvements is a major thrust of the Master Plan. This chapter includes an outline of the design team’s visit to each park, including a summary inventory of



each of the Village's parks and recreation facilities. The summary of existing parks and facilities includes a general description of the facility and identifies initial observations by the design team across numerous site visits. Issues and opportunities were identified during these visits, along with preliminary recommendations to improve each facility.

#### **CHAPTER 5: NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

This chapter is comprised of the necessary analyses required to establish recreational facility needs:

- Summary of the statistically valid community survey, the Community Interest and Opinion Survey, prepared by the ETC Institute, which presents citizen-identified priority investments;
- A demographic analysis evaluating the effect of population characteristics on recreational demand;
- Level of Service Analysis to define how the Village meets the anticipated park acreage as a function of its population numbers and distribution.

#### **CHAPTER 6: RECREATION SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT**

This chapter includes an assessment of the existing recreation programs and services, parks, and facilities as well as maintenance and operations of the Parks and Recreation Department.

#### **CHAPTER 7: RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter includes a set of recommendations to improve the delivery of parks and recreation programs and services.

#### **CHAPTER 8: DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

This chapter includes general guidelines for park facility design excellence to be considered in the future implementation of the master plan's park improvements recommendations.

#### **APPENDIX**

The Appendix includes the full documentation and analysis used to formulate the recommendations of this Plan, in their originally presented format. These included the following:

- Adopted Village Resolutions
- Public Workshop #1 Presentation
- Public Workshop #2 Presentation
- Community Interest and Opinion Survey