



# Strategic Plan

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## **Overview**

Every part of our organization contributes to our overall success and vitality to make Tampa a better place to live, work, learn, and play. Our Department supports the Mayor's Strategic Goals, particularly in the areas of strengthening community-centric services, enhancing workforce development, and establishing sustainability and resilience.

The Tampa Parks and Recreation Department 2020-2024 Strategic Plan reviews the present series of fundamental principles relating to the Department's vision, mission, values and objectives; and sets out the Department's proposed strategies, goals and action programs. Progress in achieving the goals is included as evidence.

## **Mission**

To provide and preserve quality parks and recreation opportunities for all.

## **Vision**

A quality park system that meets the community's need for recreation and learning opportunities to benefit health and well-being.

## **Values**

### ***R – Respect***

- Showing consideration or regard for an individual or institution.
- Recognizing all people on their merits.
- Being inclusive and appreciative.
- Celebrating individual differences.
- Welcoming and encouraging open dialogue.

### ***I – Integrity***

- Demonstrating sound moral and ethical principles.
- Being self-aware, accountable, responsible, trustworthy, dependable, and truthful.
- Making decisions that reflect the highest standards of proper stewardship and accountability of resources.
- Owning up to mistakes and learning from them.

### ***T – Teamwork***

- Working in full cooperation and mutual support that inspires trust and respect to achieve a common goal.
- Creating a spirit of service.

- Considering that each team member plays a role in achieving our mission, vision, goals, and objectives.
- Finding opportunities to commend and encourage other team members.

## ***E - Excellence***

- Being accountable for our actions.
- Delivering every product and service of city government in an outstanding manner.
- Developing a quality workforce.
- Showing pride in our effort and the community in which we live and work.

## **Guiding Themes**

The following guiding themes constitute the foundation which pervade the plans, goals, strategic initiatives, action strategies, and tasks.

### ***A Healthy Lifestyle***

Recreation and leisure is the key to maintaining overall health and wellbeing. Increasing evidence shows that recreation and leisure contributes to an individual being less prone to chronic health issues, better stress management and mental health, and improving their quality of life. Tampa's parks and tree lined streets offer a wide range of free and low-cost opportunities to get out, play, and be active.

### ***Sustainability and Resilience***

One of the Mayor's Strategic Goals, known as Transforming Tampa's Tomorrow (T3), is Establishing Sustainability and Resilience. We recognize that air, water, trees, and land, are our greatest natural treasures. Yet a growing population threatens the quantity and quality of these vital resources. Therefore, in support of the Mayor's T3 initiatives, conserving greenspaces and waterways is crucial for our very survival. Tampa's parks hold a key in preserving our precious natural resources for future generations.

### ***Strengthening Our Community***

What transforms a crowd of people into a community? Uniting individuals in a space that allows them to connect and discover common ground. Parks and recreation provides that opportunity through recreation and leisure. We offer spaces where lifetime friendships are formed, where the gap between generations is bridged, where people discover what they share, and where you can grow a sense of community while maintaining a small hometown feel.

### ***Economic Development***

Parks and Recreation is an essential public service and plays an important role in establishing and maintaining a quality of life in Tampa. Parks and open spaces are becoming an increasing influence on potential residents. Our scenic beauty and recreational opportunities are attractive aspects to many who consider making Tampa

their home. Not to be ignored is our ability to safely and successfully offer venues for community, regional, national, and even international events that draws visitors and economic impact into our own backyard.

## Strategic Initiatives

### ***1) Enhance recreation and educational opportunities for all***

We will provide quality recreational opportunities that support physical fitness and health for persons of all abilities. Our programs and services will focus on encouraging health and wellness, promoting respect and appreciation of the environment, and supporting the arts and culture.

#### **Objectives**

##### ***Encourage healthy and active lifestyles***

- Update existing facilities and explore training opportunities to promote health and fitness
- Evaluate opportunities to improve our fitness rooms, considering competition from other available facilities, community demand, and potential sponsorships
- Encourage youth and teen participation in health and fitness programs
  - Communicate the benefits of health and fitness and approaches to maintaining lifelong health to youth and teens
  - Investigate potential partnerships with American Heart Association, Steps to a Healthier Florida and other community partners
- Increase active recreation opportunities for people aged 50+ years
- Support programming and scheduling that increases recreational uses throughout the city for people with disabilities

##### ***Foster environmental appreciation and enjoyment through programming***

- Develop a comprehensive environmental education and engagement strategy that covers the full range of Parks and Recreation programs and facilities
- Develop stewardship and sustainability goals for Parks and Recreation that are aligned with Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful
- Develop materials in English and Spanish, such as trail maps and brochures, that support opportunities for the public to observe and enjoy nature
- Explore opportunities to partner further with environmental organizations such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), University of South Florida (USF), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), Sierra Club, Audubon Society, the National Arbor Day Foundation, and other non-profit organizations
- Expand environmental education programs for youth and teens

##### ***Promote creativity through opportunities in art and culture***

- Provide arts and culture related programs and services that engage youth early in their development
- Provide multicultural opportunities for people of all ages to engage in music, theater, and visual performing arts
- Encourage a diverse mix of amateur and professional artists to perform and provide benefits to the community
- Continue to collaborate and explore new art and cultural programming opportunities and partnerships with public and private agencies, arts organizations, and schools

### ***Develop recreation management policies and evaluation criteria***

- Establish measurable outcomes for recreation as a whole and for individual programs
- Evaluate Parks and Recreation's current programs, services, and outcomes
- Review existing program participation data to determine community needs, such as hours of use, age, etc.
- Identify and examine the demographic composition, trends, and needs of the community within the service area of each community center
- Inventory programming provided by other organizations to avoid duplication and to ensure coordination
- Review best management practices of organizations offering similar programs and services to determine if different approaches would increase our success
- Develop systems for making park and facility scheduling and registration more accessible to the public

### **2020/2021 Progress**

- New Tampa Rec Center Expansion
- Williams Park Center Expansion
- Greenways and Trails Marker Signs
- E-Learning Program made available
- Online Financial Assistance Applications - more accessible to public
- Tampa Palms bike trail tree pruning project

## ***2) Steward Tampa's parks and open spaces for long-term sustainability***

Tampa Parks and Recreation will sustain the City's park lands and plan effectively for their future. We are committed to the preservation of park land and open space to conserve the community's natural legacy and contribute to the ecological health of Tampa. We will plan for the future open space needs of the City; increase restoration of the urban forest and open space, with a focus on preservation through community partnerships and seek ways to revitalize City parks.

### **Objectives**

#### ***Enhance citywide planning for parks and open space***

- Analyze system-wide needs and develop criteria for acquisition of new land, facilities, and fixed assets
- Establish acquisition and development criteria
- Annually assess how well Parks and Recreation is meeting the community's needs and program the acquisition of additional land as needed and as funding becomes available

***Increase restoration of Tampa's natural ecosystem***

- Facilitate the coordination with other City departments in expanding and maintaining the City's tree inventory and canopy
- Plant and maintain trees to promote a healthy urban environment and reforestation.

***Increase planting for native species where appropriate and control invasive plant species***

***Look for opportunities to protect, invest in, and restore Tampa's water and shorelines***

***Expand Tampa's trail system and look for opportunities to connect people to nature***

- Evaluate possibilities to enhance park and open space linkages

**2020/2021 Progress**

- Picnic Island Beach Mangrove Planting
- Corona Park butterfly garden
- Picnic Island Sand Dune Project
- New Tampa Stormwater Improvements
- Rivercrest Park Boardwalk
- Increased funding for Tree-mendous Tree program

***3) Build up parks and facilities to enrich the recreational experience of patrons***

Tampa Parks and Recreation Department will manage its land and facilities in a manner that contributes to public pride and a high quality of life in Tampa. We value ecological preservation, environmental sustainability, and incorporate these values when making decisions about how land and facilities will be maintained and managed. Over the next five years, we will focus on: planning and preventive maintenance; ensuring public safety at parks and facilities; expanding green management; developing a strategic asset management plan; and preparing for citywide emergencies.

**Objectives**

***Evaluate maintenance efforts to determine appropriate staffing levels***

- Collect internal data, such as park usage, number of patrons/events, staff hours dedicated to maintenance, equipment use for maintenance, and how frequently a facility or park is cleaned to determine current maintenance levels

- Determine the hours needed to maintain a specific type of facility, based on industry standards

### ***Reaffirm consistent maintenance standards for all Parks and Recreation facilities***

- Create measurable goals for key indicators, such as litter pickup, recycling, maintenance response requests, and response times

### ***Develop a Maintenance Management System***

- Develop criteria for maintenance needs, including needs that are legally mandated or required for safety, reduce operations and maintenance costs, respect historic preservations, and/or improve a park or facility
- Identify and categorize current and ongoing park and facility renovation needs
- Create maintenance schedules that encourage preventive maintenance to ensure effective use of public dollars

### ***Ensure public safety at parks and facilities***

### ***Expand green management practices to reduce Parks and Recreation's carbon footprint and enhance habitat***

### ***Development of Asset Management Plan***

- Perform best practices research for asset management and data collection and analysis
- Assess and improve the current inventory of lands, facilities, and assets to be included in the Asset Management Plan
- Establish benchmarks that are routinely communicated to staff
- Develop a lifecycle-based facilities plan to ensure ongoing improvements and updates to facilities and fixed assets
- Develop and implement a plan that encompasses ongoing and preventive maintenance, capital improvement needs, major replacement strategies, and evaluation for divestiture or demolition
- Identify trends in program and service delivery that may have an impact on maintenance and operations for an asset or facility, and vice versa

### **2020/2021 Progress**

- ADA Improvements: Beach Mats at Picnic Island Park, Ben T Davis Beach, Cypress Point Park, and Davis Island
- Opening of Madison Street Park in the Channel District
- Dock and Boardwalk Replacements
- Curtis Hixon Shade Structure Playground
- Expansion of boundless Freedom Playground at Macfarlane Park
- New shade structure over playground and restrooms at Vila Brothers Park

- Renovations of Davis Islands and Lowry Park Boat Ramps
- Rivercrest Park Boardwalk
- Williams Park Center Expansion
- Purchase of new Work Order Software System for Parks Division – Web TMA
- Purchase of new Work Order Software System for Forestry – TreePlotter
- Recovery from storm damage in Rowlett Park, Takomah Trail Park, Cypress Point Park, Copeland Park, Temple Crest Park, Spring Hill Park, Woodlawn Cemetery and Greco Softball Complex

#### **4) Strengthen our team and organizational culture**

We will develop employee and workforce capacity and an organizational culture that provides the internal foundation to serve the public successfully. We consider employees our most important resource in carrying out our vision. Over the next five years, the department will focus on providing equal access and multiple avenues for employees to learn and grow by providing opportunities for professional development and team learning; promoting health and safety; and the implementation of a workforce succession plan.

##### **Objectives**

###### ***Adapt human resource practices and processes to align with evolving organizational priorities***

- Define valued qualities and competencies for all employees, including awareness of race and social justice issues, public engagement, and environmental responsibility
- Ensure that these values are integrated into all employee transactions, such as recruitment, training, and informal and formal performance evaluations
- Ensure that managers and supervisors are held accountable for communicating and incorporating these values into behaviors and actions

###### ***Develop a standard orientation process for temporary and regular staff***

- Work with managers and supervisors to develop an orientation manual for each employment category, which can be tailored or modified to fit specific job functions
- Include an overview of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department's vision, mission, and values in the orientation process and manual
- Examine existing orientation procedures to determine if they are being implemented and how they can be improved

###### ***Increase opportunities for professional development and team learning***

- Evaluate current training opportunities and identify employee and Parks and Recreation needs
- Ensure that training and growth are aligned with Parks and Recreation's vision, mission, values, and goals
- Provide clear information to staff about professional development and advancement opportunities

- Inventory and communicate current training, mentorship, and job shadowing opportunities, and identify gaps or areas of improvement based on need and demand
- Develop a format in which professional development opportunities are routinely and regularly presented

### ***Promote staff health and safety***

- Ensure that safety training is relevant and specific to job duties
- Provide staff training on safety and safety resources

### **2020/2021 Progress**

- Take 5 Risk Management Training Topics shared with staff and on the INET
- Numerous Health and Safety Trainings available to staff
- All staff members completed diversity training, ADA training and Human Trafficking training
- Increased virtual training with FRPA and NRPA
- Orientation has been modified to a virtual event with Human Resource and in person with Parks and Recreation. A new standard orientation has been developed to include all new PR staff members
- Provided RecTrac training virtually and posted new training videos on the INET

### ***5) Bolster organizational systems and structures***

Tampa Parks and Recreation Department will collect and analyze information that supports the efficient management of our land, facilities, staff, services, and partnerships to deliver quality programs and services. Over the next five years, we will focus on: identifying partnerships to support program delivery; refining our organizational model; enhancing and expanding the Management Information System; evaluating existing fees and charges policies; and enhancing our emergency response. We recognize that collecting, analyzing, and communicating information throughout the decision-making process is key to maintaining positive relationships with policy makers and communities.

### **Objectives**

#### ***Identify partnerships that support efficient and effective service and program delivery***

- Develop an active approach and the institutional capacity to build and nurture partnerships with private entities, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups
- Identify opportunities to partner with organizations that can more effectively provide services by leveraging skills and resources

#### ***Refine Parks and Recreation's organization to deliver quality services***

- Evaluate organizational structure and make changes to enhance delivery of quality programs and services

***Develop a comprehensive and integrated information system***

***Evaluate fees and charges policies for programs and services that consider cost recovery, consistency, and clear understanding for the public***

***Build on the citywide emergency management plan and prepare parks for citywide emergencies***

- Communicate clear lines of responsibility, communication protocols between staff and management, and resources to guide Parks and Recreation's disaster response
- Provide annual emergency response training for staff

**2020/2021 Progress**

- Reviewed fees and adjusted prices of programs
- Created disinfection/sanitization policies and procedures related to safe recreation
- Distributed face masks in parks
- Daily temperature checks at all facilities
- Increasing contactless initiatives including offering e-Learning, virtual rec, etc.
- Forestry purchased the TreePlotter Inventory and Work Order Management program for efficiency and streamlining of services

***6) Actively engage and build relationships with Tampa's diverse population***

Tampa Parks and Recreation Department strives to build and sustain trusting relationships with the public and all stakeholders. We recognize and support the tremendous cultural and economic value diversity brings to our city. Over the next five years, we will focus on ensuring that the public has the information and understanding they need to use our facilities, parks, programs, and services, and that staff has the information needed from the public to make sound decisions that help to create community and foster mutual respect and understanding.

**Objectives**

***Identify people who do not use Parks and Recreation's programs***

- Develop strategies to increase the number of people who use Parks and Recreation's programs and facilities
- Develop and implement approaches to reach youth who do not currently use Parks and Recreation's facilities and programs
- Identify and communicate with stakeholders in the design delivery, and evaluations of Parks and Recreation's programs and services
- Continue to strengthen our working relationships with neighborhood associations and other geographic alliances

### ***Effectively communicate Parks and Recreation***

- Inventory and evaluate existing marketing systems and protocols
- Develop a marketing management strategy
- Develop a cohesive Parks and Recreation story and key messages
- Promote Parks and Recreation's vision, mission, and values clearly and consistently in marketing materials
- Develop a strategic communications plan to share Parks and Recreation's story, successes, and challenges, and to guide outreach activities and promotion activities

### **2020/2021 Progress**

- Increased social media presence and engagement with public
- Utilized existing tools, such as Alert Tampa, to communicate advisories, notices, or other relevant information to affected communities
- Created a Department Marketing Plan
- Created a Department Community Relations Plan
- Created a Department Social Media Team
- Created policies for official use and personal use for social media
- Belmont Heights Estates Community Pruning Project