



HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Board of County Commissioners
January 13, 2026 Presentation





Project Process



Key Findings:

- Currently deficit of 107 acres of Neighborhood/Community/District park land
- Park acreage needs grow to +185 acres by 2050

Park Types	Acreage		Current Hernando LOS (acres/1,000 pop)***	Hernando County LOS Standard (acres/1,000 pop)	Park Acreage Needed to Meet Standard LOS
Neighborhood	41.3		0.2 acres	2.0 acres	+ 107 acres
Community	65.0		0.3 acres		
District	212.5		1.0 acres		
Preserves	1,582.2		7.4 acres	2.0 acres	0 acres
Total	1,901.1		8.9 acres	4.0 acres	





Public Engagement

Multiple Events:

- In-Person Session: Feb 12, 2025, at Utilities Department Training Room
- Virtual Session: Feb 26, 2025
- Focus Group Interviews
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Events: Swamp Fest, United Way, Brooksville Live
- Online Survey
- Statistically-valid Survey
- Open House (12/3/25)

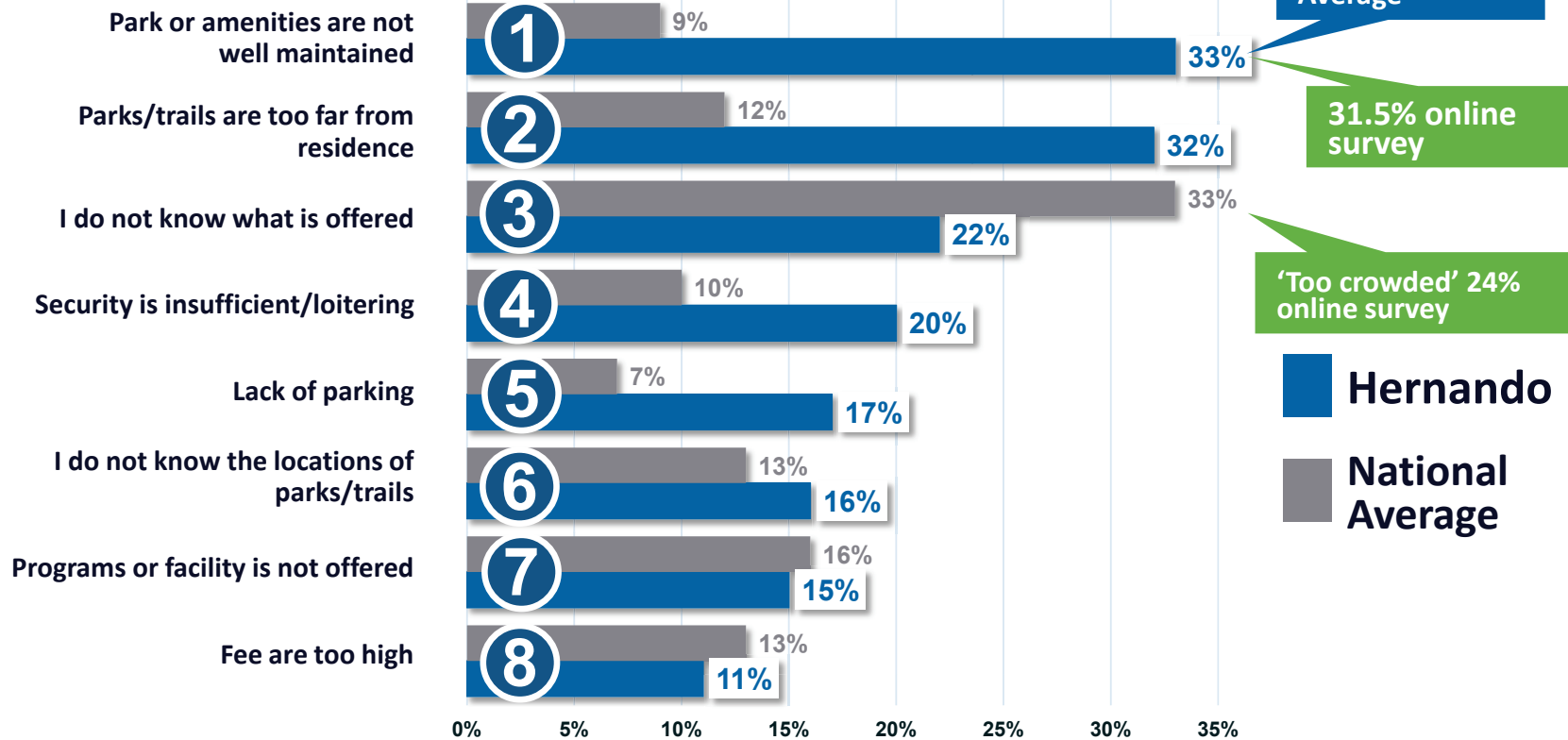


Public Engagement



Top 8 results

Reasons that prevent you from visiting parks or participating in recreation programs and events more often.

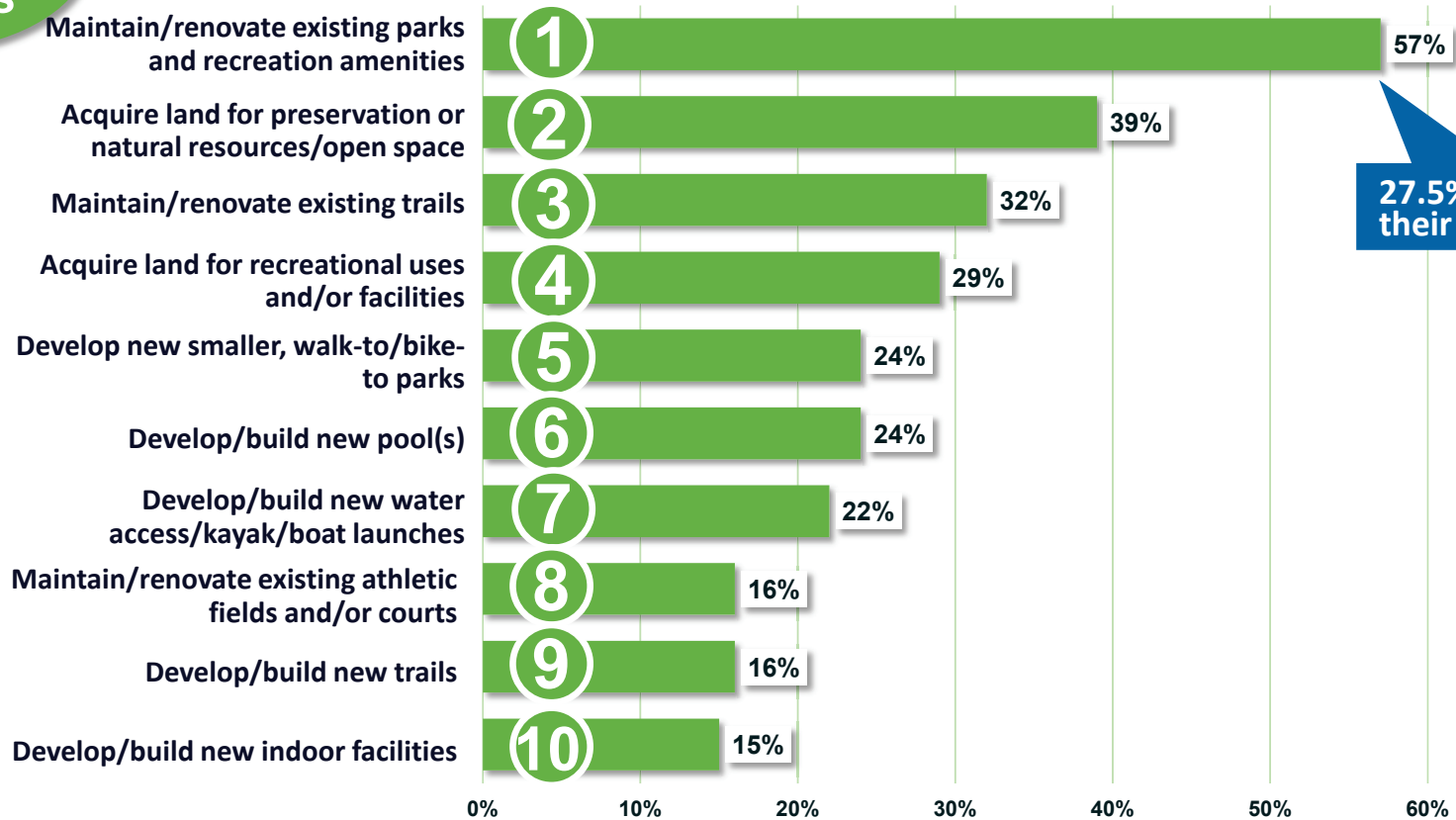


Statistically Valid Survey



**Top 10
results**

Actions most willing to support with your tax dollars:



27.5% selected as their #1 choice



Statistically Valid Survey



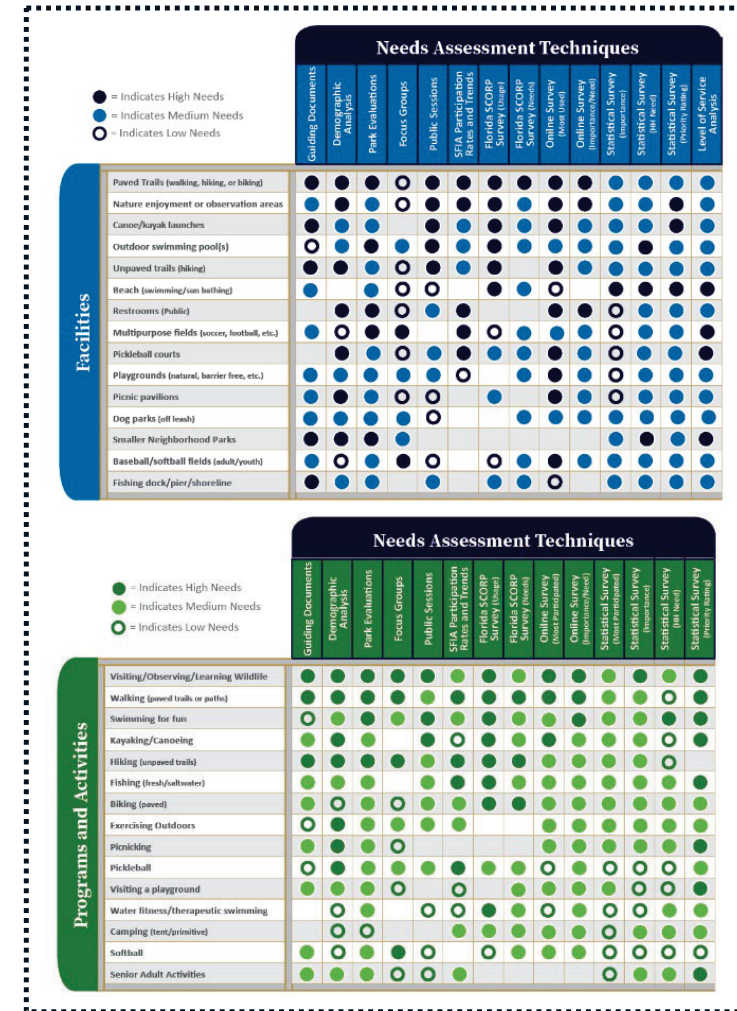
Top Needs & Importance Across All Methods:

Facilities:

- Trails (paved/unpaved)
- Water access & pools
- Restrooms
- Fields & courts
- Dog parks
- More parks

Activities:

- Visiting/observing wildlife
- Walking/hiking/biking
- Swimming
- Fishing
- Exercising & athletics
- Senior adult activities



VISION COMPONENTS

- **Five components** all unique to Hernando County:
 - Regional Parks
 - Local Serving Parks
 - Preserves/Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESLs)
 - Programs
 - Indoor/Outdoor Athletic Facilities
- Each has a set of guiding principles.



Long-Range Vision



VISION GOALS

1. Increase consistent funding and financial resources
2. Expand and improve parks, facilities, and amenities
3. Balance and grow adequate staffing and resources to meet needs
4. Expand development of recreation programming
5. Improve safety and security in parks and preserves
6. Enhance community engagement, access, and transparency
7. Expand trails and connectivity countywide
8. Enhance indoor recreation and aquatic opportunities
9. Enhance maintenance, resilience, and sustainability
10. Enhance access and geographic balance to recreation and open space opportunities
11. Promote sports and eco-tourism countywide



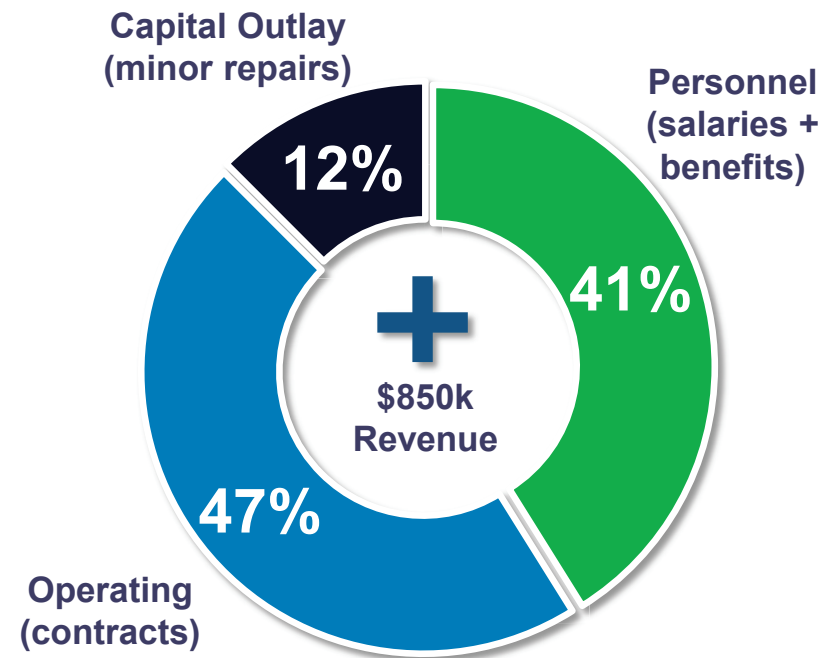
Long-Range Vision



IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING ANALYSIS

Takeaways:

- **Inflation** has resulted in less value to recent funding increases
- Department **cost recovery rate** approximately 11% for 2025, lower than the national average of 27%.
- Recreation Programming has high-cost recovery, but is limited due to **lack of indoor space** to expand offerings
- Historical average for capital improvements and minor repairs has been \$5.98 million, annually

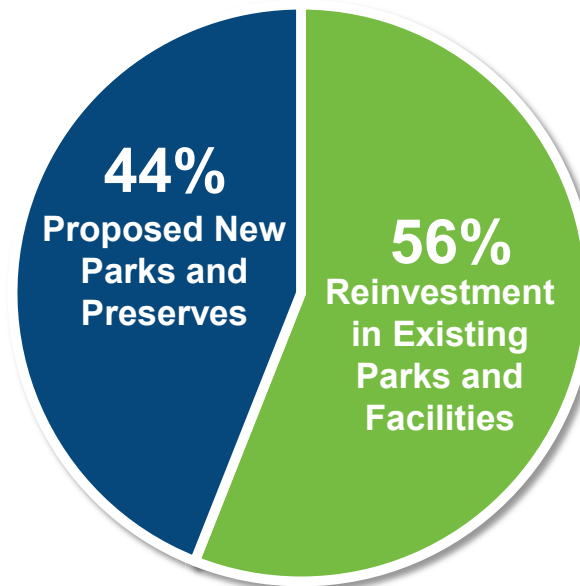


IMPLEMENTATION COST ESTIMATE

Takeaways:

- \$111 million in reinvestment in existing parks and preserves
- \$200 million in total proposed capital projects.
- Historic capital improvement funding trends may provide approximately \$75.2 million, or **38% of needed funding** for the full plan, **requiring additional sources**

Vision Capital Costs:
Reinvestment vs. New



Type of Cost:



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- **Phasing projects:**
 - Short-Term (1-5 Years); highest needs
 - Medium-Term (6-10 Years); identify partners
 - Long-Term (10+ Years); longest to implement
- **Alternative Sources:** Parks foundation, additional revenues (new programming fees).
- **Grant Stacking:** leveraging match funding.
- **Cost Recovery:** Re-evaluate goals, capture more for reinvestment into parks.
- **Complimentary providers and partners:** non-profits, private, faith based, business community, etc.
- **Project Prioritization:** weighted criteria, all 110+ projects scored:
 - Intended to be reviewed and updated regularly
 - Not intended to be the order of completion

Capital Project Prioritization Criteria

Criteria	Score Range
Improves Access or Connectivity Goals	0-5
Improves or Enhances Open Space Goals	0-3
Supports Identified Public Need/Demand	0-5
Leverages Alternative Funding Sources/Matches	0-5
Capital/Operations Partnership Potential	0-5
Revenue Generation Potential	0-4
Deferred Maintenance or Lifecycle Need	0-5
Enhances Critical Infrastructure	0-3
Promotes Tourism	0-4
Total Potential Score	39

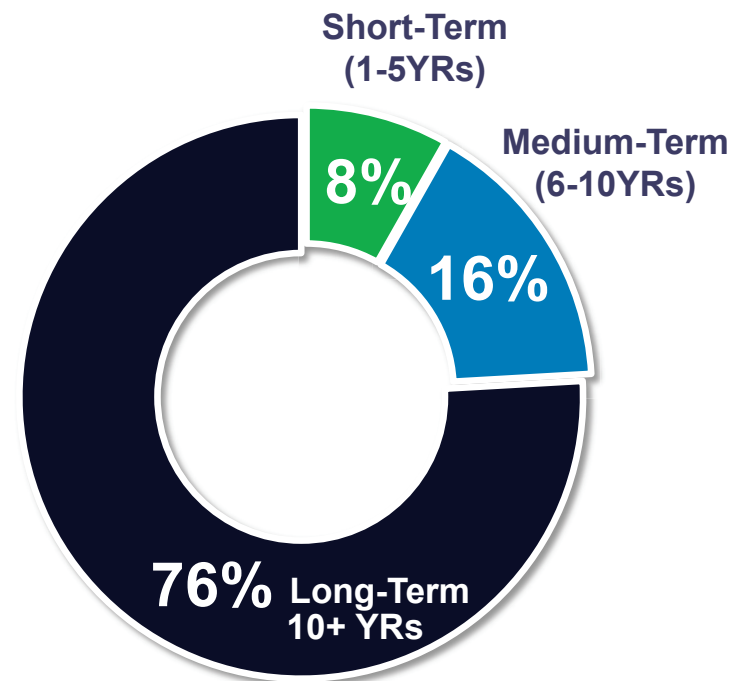


IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

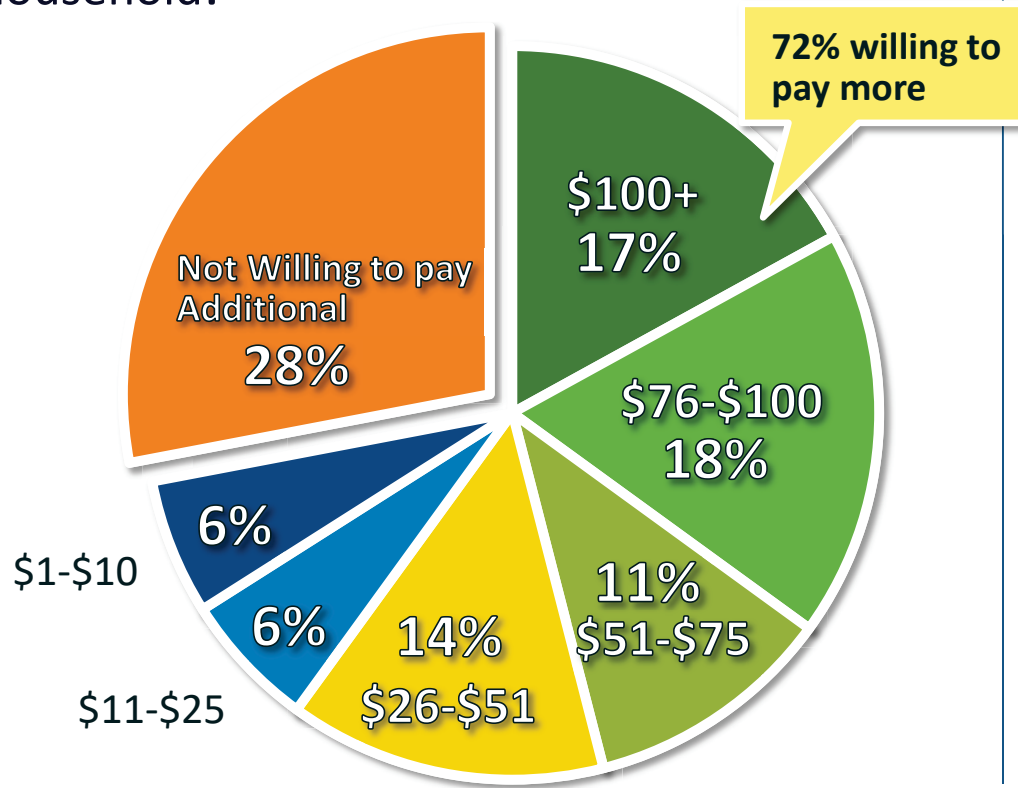
Takeaways:

- **24%** of total capital costs projects in the **next ten (10) years**
- Short and Medium-Term capital projects have a probable cost estimate of \$48.2 million
- Short-term projects will require an **additional \$583k in operating** costs annually, resulting in approximately **6-8 additional FTE positions**
- Medium-term projects will require an **additional \$1.115 million in operating** costs annually, resulting in approximately **22-26 additional FTE positions**

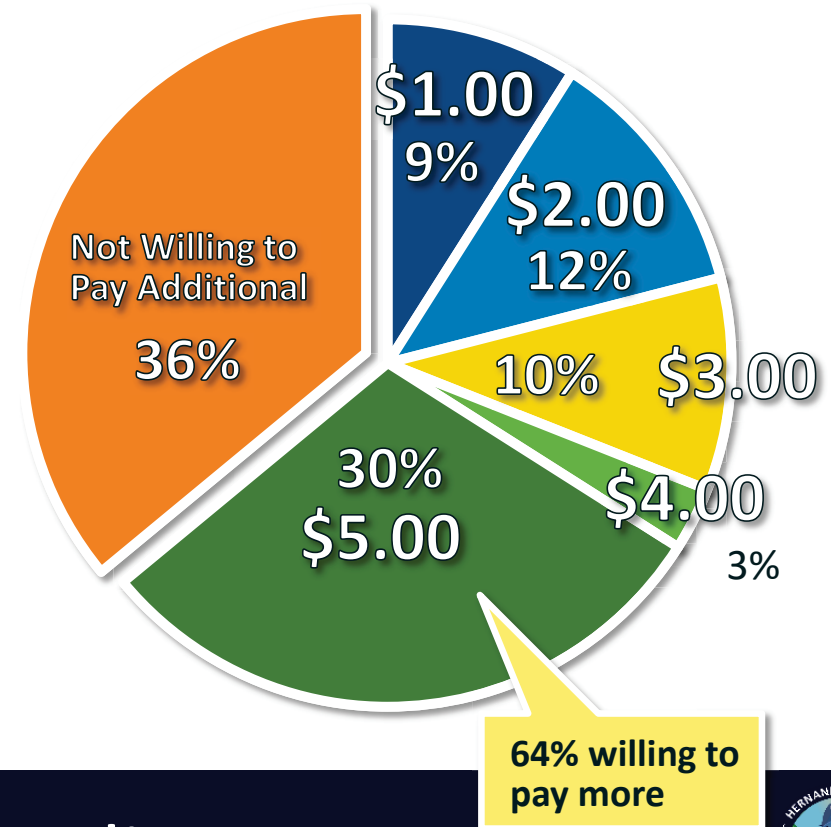
Percentage of Capital Costs by Phase



Additional amount you would be willing to pay to fund the actions most important to your household:



Additional amount you would be willing to pay in user fees or charges (per person/per event or program)



Statistically Valid Survey - Funding



STRATEGIC PLAN ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

Takeaways:

- **11 goals & 62 measurable objectives**
- Each objective includes a defined timeframe and role for the Department.
- Emphasizes:
 - Meeting residents' needs and priorities
 - Identifying and securing resources and staffing needed
 - Effective and efficient best practices
 - Maintaining public investment in infrastructure

Goal	Objective / Action	Timeframe	Action Type	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partnerships
1. Increase consistent funding and financial resources					
A	Hire or contract a grant writer within Dept. to pursue state/federal funding	Short-term	Policy / Staffing	General Fund, Grants (admin)	County Admin., Finance
B	Reevaluate development of a "Friends of Parks" non-profit support organization	Short-term	Policy / Partnerships	Partnerships, Donations	County Civic Orgs.
C	Complete a Park Impact Fee Study and Allocation Plan	Short-term	Policy / Finance	Impact Fees	Planning Dept.
D	Create a Sponsorship & Naming Rights program for parks and facilities	Short-term	Communications / Policy	Sponsorships, General Fund	Tourism Bureau, Local Businesses
E	Develop a comprehensive fee policy for programs, rentals, and leagues	Short-term	Policy / Finance	General Fund	Finance Dept., County Commission
F	Establish cost recovery targets by program type and facility	Short-term	Policy / Finance	General Fund	Finance, Parks Board
G	Update league and rental agreements for consistency and cost recovery alignment	Short-term	Policy / Operations	General Fund, Rental Revenue	Sports Associations
H	Reinvest event and tournament revenues directly into a Parks Fund for maintenance and lifecycle costs	Medium-term	Policy / Finance	Operational Revenues, Tourism Tax	County Finance, Tourism Dept.
I	Reevaluate Park Impact Fee with an update study and allocation plan tied to priority needs to address growth	Medium-term	Policy / Finance	Impact Fees	Planning Dept., Public Works
2. Expand and improve parks, facilities, and amenities					
A	Implement top-priority capital projects including park renovations, field upgrades, restrooms	Short-term	Capital	General Fund, Impact Fees, Grants	Public Works, Contractors
B	Modernize infrastructure (lighting, restrooms, ADA upgrades) at older parks	Short-term	Capital / Maintenance	General Fund, Grants (ADA/Resiliency)	Public Works, ADA Board
C	Upgrade and add more lighting fixtures for sports fields and courts to new, more efficient LED options with anti-light pollution technology	Medium-term	Capital	General Fund, Rental Revenue, Impact Fees	Tourism Bureau, Local Sports Leagues
D	Develop new neighborhood parks; target priority high-growth areas of the County	Medium-term	Acquisition / Capital	Impact Fees, Grants	Planning Dept., Developers
E	Add boat/kayak ramps at coastal and inland locations	Medium-term	Capital	FWC Grants, Impact Fees	FDEP, FWC, Tourism Bureau
F	Add additional soccer fields and renovate existing diamonds to tournament-level	Medium-term	Capital	Impact Fees, Grants	Tourism Bureau, Local Sports Leagues
G	Study the converting of multi-use field to lighted synthetic-turf to expand use capacity	Medium-term	Capital	Impact Fees, Grants	Tourism Bureau, Local Sports Leagues, Schools
A	Evaluate and install self-locking gates, lighting, and security cameras in high-use parks	Short-term	Capital / Technology	General Fund, FEMA Mitigation	Sheriff's Office, IT Dept.
B	Create volunteer "Park Watch" or Adopt-a-Park safety program	Short-term	Programming / Policy	Volunteer Program	Neighborhood Groups, Rotary
C	Contract or hire park rangers / security patrol	Medium-term	Staffing	General Fund	Sheriff's Office
D	Conduct CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) review of major parks	Medium-term	Policy / Planning	Grants (DOJ, FEMA)	Public Safety, Planning
3. Enhance maintenance and lifecycle management					
C	Develop a deferred maintenance and lifecycle replacement cost dashboard for countywide and public publication and update annually	Short-term	Technology / Capital	Grants, Operational Funds	Utilities, Sustainability Partners
D	Implement energy and water efficiency upgrades (LEDs, irrigation tech)	Short-term	Technology / Capital	Grants, Operational Funds	Utilities, Sustainability Partners
E	Establish and integrate low-impact design practices into new park and facility projects	Medium-term	Policy / Capital	FDEP Grants, Impact Fees	Utilities Dept., FDEP
F	Establish annual maintenance and storm recovery reserve fund	Medium-term	Policy / Finance	General Fund, FEMA Reimbursement	Emergency Mgmt., Finance



Strategic Plan





Project Process

