

# CLEARWATER

A bright and beautiful future.

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45

## *Parks & Public Places*





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# INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers guidance for ensuring the city's parks system continues to provide opportunities for all residents and visitors. This chapter offers recommendations for equity opportunities but is mostly the existing Open Space and Recreation Element with small edits. The Parks and Recreation Department is currently undergoing an update to the Parks Master Plan, and that update is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2023. It is anticipated that upon adoption of the updated master plan, amendments to this chapter will follow to capture the most up to date data.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Over the last decade, the Parks and Recreation Department has shifted focus from new park development to park redevelopment and renovation. As the majority of park infrastructure was built prior to 2010, future focus and planning efforts should be centered around the reconstruction, renovation, and improvement of those existing facilities.

Some of the major facility improvements and projects over the past decade include the following:

- Rejuvenation project of Beachwalk Promenade
- BayCare Ballpark Scoreboard and structural repairs
- Development of Walter C. Campbell Park and Buccaneer Field
- Pier 60 Park renovations and Play Plaza
- Papaya Street Plaza & Pier at Clearwater Beach
- Crest Lake Park Renovations & Veterans Plaza improvement

There are numerous future projects including the ongoing development and activation of Imagine Clearwater and Downtown Waterfront, Ream Wilson Trail Head enhancements, BayCare Ballpark capital improvements, and Beachwalk refurbishment. Planned projects that are awaiting funding include the development of Cooper's Point Park, enhancements to neighborhood parks, and retrofit of ballfield lighting with LED technology.

There are 12 different types of facility types for which existing levels of service (LOS) identify surpluses or potential gaps, found in Table PPP A. These standards are based upon guidelines from professional associations such as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), as well as management practices such as the Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation (SCORP).

Table PPP A. Facility LOS

| Type of Facility  | Guidelines              | Recommended | Clearwater | Gap/Surplus |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Basketball Courts   | 1 court per 7,340       | 16          | 22         | 6           |
| Recreation Centers  | 1 center per 24,683*    | 5           | 7          | 2           |
| Diamond Fields (Ballfields)   | 1 field per 2,900*      | 40          | 34         | (6)         |
| Dog Parks   | 1 park per 43,333       | 3           | 3          | 0           |
| Golf Course (9 hole)  | 1 course per 24,952*    | 5           | 6          | 1           |
| Multipurpose Fields   | 1 field per 3,783*      | 31          | 18         | (13)        |
| Playgrounds   | 1 per 3,364 (ages 0-14) | 6           | 27         | 21          |
| Indoor Swimming Pools   | 1 pool per 47,800*      | 2           | 1          | (1)         |
| Outdoor Swimming Pools  | 1 pool per 33,128*      | 4           | 4          | 0           |
| Tennis Courts   | 1 court per 4,375*      | 27          | 42         | 15          |
| Volleyball Courts   | 1 court per 5,000       | 23          | 10         | (13)        |
| Bike Trails   | 1 mile per 2,000        | 58.5        | 17         | (41.5)      |
| <i>Estimates based on 2020 population estimates (117,084)</i><br><i>*Parks &amp; Recreation National 2013 Database Report (median jurisdiction population per facility)</i> |                         |             |            |             |

However, these standards for determining levels of service are being phased out with the prevalence of community performance-based models. Performance-based models afford local communities the opportunity to engage in defining service levels based on the varying geographical, cultural, climatic, and socioeconomic characteristics of the service area. These standards grant cities the ability to remain responsive to shifting community priorities over time, in anticipation of meeting the needs of residents alongside development efforts.

Currently, the city retains a surplus of vacant land that was purchased for future neighborhoods parks. The decision to develop these parks is based on numerous management conditions, including the existing community preferences, available fiscal resources, and the ability to maintain landscapes concurrent with adopted citywide standards and expectations.

The city is also currently providing just over twice as much acreage of core parkland acreage, 8.85 acres per 1,000 people, then the current adopted LOS of 4 acres per 1,000 people. Core parkland is defined as community, neighborhood, and environmental parks, with the city currently providing 1,048.38 acres of core parkland. Additionally, the city maintains 722.17 acres of special facilities and open space parkland. When coupled with core parkland, the city has a total of 1,770.55 acres in total parkland, which equates to 14.94 acres per 1,000 residents, based on 2022 population estimates. Currently, there are 109 parks within the city broken down as follows: 7 community, 28 environmental, 24 neighborhood, 23 open space, and 27 special facilities which include golf courses, baseball/softball fields, or multiuse fields.

*Pier 60 Park*





# PPP 1. Parks Facilities

Clearwater 2045

Community

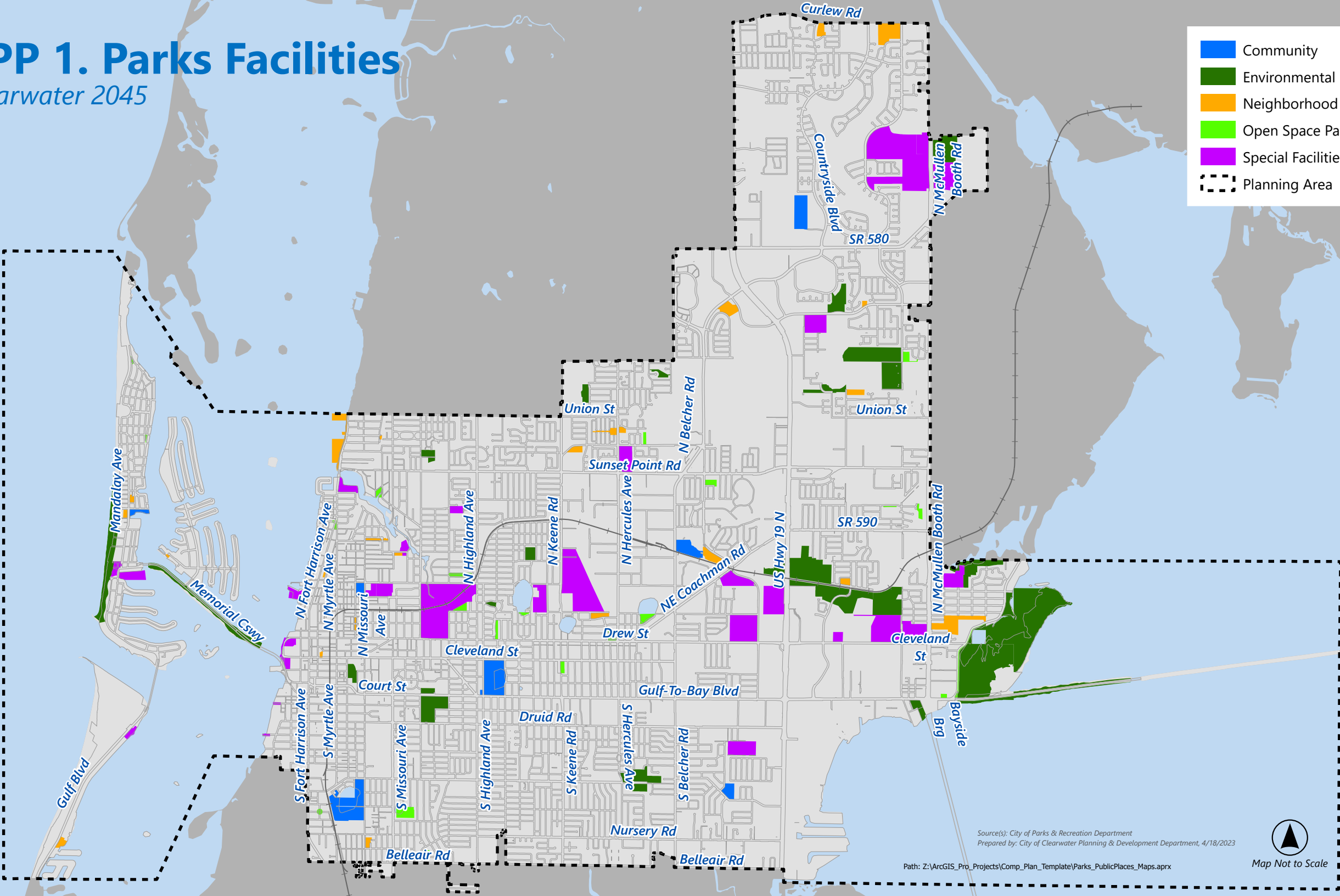
Environmental Park

Neighborhood

Open Space Park

Special Facilities

Planning Area



Source(s): City of Parks & Recreation Department  
Prepared by: City of Clearwater Planning & Development Department, 4/18/2023

Path: Z:\ArcGIS\_Pro\_Projects\Comp\_Plan\_Template\Parks\_PublicPlaces\_Maps.aprx



Map Not to Scale



## GOAL PPP 1

Consider the needs of all users when designing open spaces, trails, and parks and recreation facilities.

### OBJECTIVE PPP 1.1

Consider the equity of all users when designing, developing, or redeveloping open spaces, trails, and parks and recreation facilities.

#### POLICIES

##### PPP 1.1.1

Ensure that parks and open space amenities provide equal opportunities for all users.

##### PPP 1.1.2

Consider a transit program that would assist residents with disabilities to easily access the city's parks, trails, recreation facilities, or open spaces.

##### PPP 1.1.3

Evaluate and update the Aging Well Master Plan as necessary.

##### PPP 1.1.4

Expand access to beach-friendly wheelchairs and the use of beach-accessible mats on public beaches.

##### PPP 1.1.5

Continue to provide accessible bicycle parking at all park and recreation facilities.

Shared Use Path





## GOAL PPP 2

Ensure that natural features of the city are preserved, and that parkland, trails, open spaces, and parks and recreation facilities are located in appropriate areas of the city.

### OBJECTIVE PPP 2.1

Ensure that an adequate supply of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreation facilities are developed and maintained to meet the level of service standards established by the city.

#### *POLICIES*

##### *PPP 2.1.1*

Maintain the established minimum level of service standard of 4 acres of parkland for every one thousand persons for citywide application.

### OBJECTIVE PPP 2.2

Continue to increase the supply of parkland in areas needing additional parks and recreational facilities.

#### *POLICIES*

##### *PPP 2.2.1*

Continue to review service radii and primary service guidelines for recreation facilities.

##### *PPP 2.2.2*

Continue to acquire parkland for new supplemental parks to meet deficiencies.

##### *PPP 2.2.3*

Maintain the provisions of the city charter regarding the required referendum prior to approval the sale of public parklands to ensure adequate public recreation and open space lands within the city.



### **PPP 2.2.4**

Address the varying needs of the city's diverse population when creating and implementing parks and recreation plans with special attention to the needs of those who may have significantly limited recreational alternatives.

### **PPP 2.2.5**

Continue to locate new neighborhood parks near schools, local or collector roads, and transit routes if feasible.

### **PPP 2.2.6**

Continue to locate new community parks and expansions to existing community parks adjacent to arterial streets and/or transit routes whenever possible.

*Playground at Del Oro Park*



## **OBJECTIVE PPP 2.3**

Preserve natural open space areas which constitute aesthetic, and/or ecological community assets.

### **POLICIES**

#### **PPP 2.3.1**

Continue to administer landscape, drainage, and impervious surface regulations in the Community Development Code to maintain adequate open space within the city.

#### **PPP 2.3.2**

Pursue designation and acquisition of open space through the creation of green permeable areas in easements, traffic islands, etc., in compliance with the city's Community Development Code.

#### **PPP 2.3.3**

Continue to protect existing lands designated as Preservation and Recreation/Open Space on the Future Land Use Map and designate appropriate city-owned lands as Preservation or Recreation/Open Space on the Future Land Use Map whenever feasible.

#### **PPP 2.3.4**

Provide open space properties which have the diversity of resources necessary for nature study and the enjoyment of natural assets in order to assure environmental understanding whenever possible.

#### **PPP 2.3.5**

Coordinate recreation planning with other plans concerning water quality, stormwater management, fish and wildlife management, and environmental education.



## OBJECTIVE PPP 2.4

Enhance and maintain the city's unique physical characteristics by making the best use of existing and potential open spaces and recreation lands.

### POLICIES

#### PPP 2.4.1

Continue to maintain environmental integrity of city-owned parks, recreation, and open spaces.

#### POLICIES 2.4.2

Prohibit land uses and known actions with adverse impacts from locating near recreational areas.

#### PPP 2.4.3

Utilize and preserve areas of ecological, historical, or archaeological value for parks and recreation when possible.

#### PPP 2.4.4

Continue to enhance city-owned open space and natural areas by restoring degraded natural communities and eradicating non-native vegetation.

## OBJECTIVE PPP 2.5

Develop new and enhance existing blueways, greenways, and recreational trail systems throughout Clearwater.

### POLICIES

#### PPP 2.5.1

Continue to develop greenways and trails as identified in Shifting Gears-Clearwater's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

#### PPP 2.5.2

Provide new access or enhance/maintain existing access to blueways where possible for recreational use.

*Bicyclist at Coachman Ridge*





## OBJECTIVE PPP 2.6

Utilize the city's 2013 Parks and Recreation System Master Plan to guide park development throughout the city.

### POLICIES

#### PPP 2.6.1

Complete the process of updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Impact Fee ordinance by the end of 2023.

#### PPP 2.6.2

Incorporate findings from the 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan into the Parks and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan no later than 2025.

#### PPP 2.6.3

Continue to implement the priority, medium-term and long-term actions, and continuous actions/policies as detailed in the 2013 Parks and Recreation System Master Plan as funds become available.

*Outdoor Basketball at Countryside Recreation Center*



## GOAL PPP 3

Utilize the parks and recreation impact fee to improve the park system within the city.

### OBJECTIVE PPP 3.1

Continue administration of the parks and recreation impact fee.

#### POLICIES

##### PPP 3.1.1

Continue to enforce the adopted requirements of Chapter 54 of the city's Community Development Code for the express purpose of maintaining the existing levels of service of recreation lands and facilities.

##### PPP 3.1.2

Expend funds collected under Chapter 54 requirements at any location in the city for recreation facilities and open space uses.

##### PPP 3.1.3

Consider the needs of primary users in conjunction with this plan or as determined by the Parks and Recreation Department Director and approved by the City Manager or designee when expending funds collected under Chapter 54.

##### PPP 3.1.4

Provide an incentive within the city's recreation facility impact fee structure for private developers to affordable housing dwelling units.

##### PPP 3.1.5

Review, and revise if necessary, the city's recreation and open space land dedication requirements.