

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN



City of GULFPORT Fla. 1976



LOCAL PLANNING ASSIST. PROVIDED BY THE PINELLAS COUNTY PLANNING DEPT.

CITY OF GULFPORT, FLORIDA
PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN
1976

1. Justification

a. The provision and protection of park and recreation lands and their related facilities, is a recognized responsibility of government.

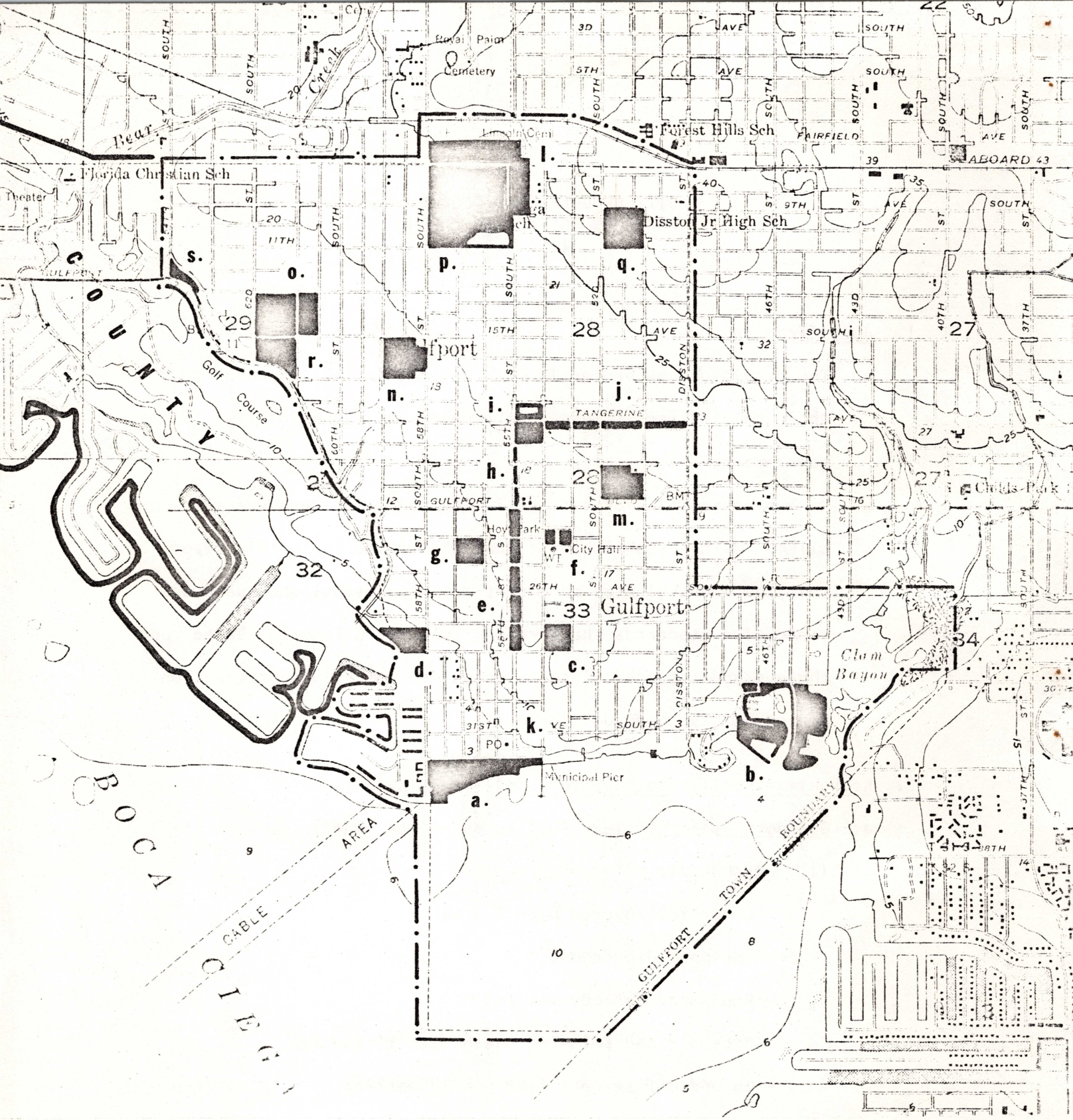
b. No two communities or sets of living conditions are exactly alike. Using established standards as guidelines, this report analyzes and evaluates pertinent data and establishes park and recreation standards that are suitable for Gulfport. Based upon these standards and existing recreation potentials, recreation proposals have been developed.

2. Recreation Facilities Inventory (See Map, page 2)

a. Gulfport Beach Complex (10.1 acres - City owned)

(1) Beach Area:

- Concrete, covered picnic areas
- Equipped playground
- Equipped, fenced, tot lot
- Buoy defined swimming beach with lifeguard
- On and off street, free public parking
- Citizens, decal only, parking area
- Sheltered bus stop
- Public phones
- Exterior lighting
- Bike parking



PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY (See Narrative)

Scale: 1" = 2,000 Ft.

- Bocci ball pit with covered benches
- Horseshoe pits with benches

(2) Fishing Pier:

- Covered benches overlooking small beach
- Auto and bike parking
- Sea food market and bait shop (Leased)
- Benches on pier head
- Exterior lighting

(3) Casino:

- Dance floor, bandstand
- Snack bar (Leased)
- Bathrooms
- Public phones
- Concrete benches, tables, outside
- Auto and bike parking
- Exterior lighting

(4) Community Center:

- Recreation director and staff
- Auditorium
- Gymnasium
- Weight lifting, work-out room
- Serving kitchen w/service bar inside and out
- Two meeting rooms w/piano and wet bar
- Dressing rooms and baths
- Administrative offices w/baths
- Two outdoor paved and lighted basketball courts
- Marked trotting path
- Bike parking
- Paved and lighted auto parking

- Landscaped

Critique

This exceptional beach complex is the city's major recreational area and is well utilized by the local citizenry. Facilities take full advantage of the site. Potential does exist for expanded non-resident usage, with improved traffic patterns and parking facilities, however, such use does not reflect the desires of the general population.

Maintenance and upgrading of high usage equipment located in the corrosive atmosphere of the beach front, is an ongoing problem to the Parks and Recreation Director. New bath facilities at the casino and the replacement of the metal playground equipment with wood, is in process.

b. Gulfport Marina Complex (21± acres - City owned)

(1) Marina:

- 150 Covered boat slips
- 20 Uncovered boat slips
- Launch ramp
- Gas dock
- Concession stand
- Paved and lighted parking

(2) Osgood Marine Ways: (Leased)

- Boat building and repair
- Marine hardware and supplies

(3) Coast Guard Auxiliary (Leased)

(4) Boca Ceiga Yacht Club (Leased)

(5) Lions Club (Leased)

Critique

Although its location and natural harbor make it potentially one of the finest small yacht basins on Boca Ciega Bay, the marina facility has deteriorated to a dangerous state. Boat sheds, gas dock, paving sink holes and channel silting are major problem areas that have been identified and recognized. The city administration has studied various proposals including City vs. Lessee operation to remedy this situation. The city is now refurbishing the marina, which will continue as a city operation.

A potential passive recreation, open green space area of approximately 4 acres exists in the northeast corner of this site. The Gulfport City Police have a small pistol range here. This land is bordered on the east by the environmentally sensitive mangrove growth of Clam Bayou and should be permanently committed to green space usage. A reverter clause in the State deed restricts the city to "public purposes" use of this 21 acre complex.

c. Chase Park (3.1 acres - City owned)

(1) Tennis Area:

- Two doubles courts, fenced and lighted
- Two paved practice courts w/backboards
- Spectator benches

(2) Gulfport Shuffleboard Club (Leased)

(3) Girl Scout Building and Grounds

(4) Red Cross Building

Critique

This site has numerous, large moss covered trees. Approximately one acre is undeveloped. Landscaping this area and providing benches and pre-school equipment would complement the other facilities.

d. Wood Ibis Park (3.4 acres - City owned)

- Small, city nursery, holding area
- No usable facilities.

Critique

Previous development consisting of one small sitting area and an exterior light fixture, has been vandalized. Other than open green space, no recreation facilities exist.

This site has vast potential for development into a neighborhood park. It has natural landscaping, good traffic pattern, in an area of need, and acts as a buffer between low density residential and commercial/high-rise land use.

e. 55th Street South Parkway (8.0 acres - City owned)

Note: Consists of 5 parcels of 1.6 acres each. For the purpose of this report parcels are numbered 1 thru 5, north to south.

(1) Clymer Park:

- Natural landscaping complemented by extensive botanical architecture.
- Paved walkways w/pool deck finish
- Wheelchair ramps
- Large pavilion, rough hewn cypress, w/paved deck
- Covered bridges, rough hewn cypress
- Cypress benches
- Cedar,tree surround, benches
- Brick paved sitting areas
- Flower beds w/brick or wood retaining walls
- Sun dial and bird bath
- Exterior lighting

(2) Thru (4) parcels:

- Extensive natural landscaping
- No facilities

(5) Library:

- Landscaped grounds w/large moss covered trees, maintained lawn and flower beds
- Benches
- Paved and lighted, off street, parking.

Critique

The successful development of parcel (1), Clymer Park, exemplifies the ideal of citizen involvement in the planning and realization of recreation facilities.

The development of parcels (2) thru (4) is planned. It is recommended that these areas, while remaining primarily passive, provide some off street parking and facilities useful to all age groups.

f. Gulfport Fire Station (1.8 acres - City owned)

- Large moss covered trees
- Landscaped

Critique

Approximately 1.3 acres of this site is open green space and should be identified, maintained and protected from encroachment other than possible expansion requirements of the fire department.

g. Hoyt Park (2.8 acres - City owned)

- Baseball field
- Bleachers
- Fenced and lighted
- Bath facilities

Critique

Site is bordered by large moss covered trees. The bath facilities are located outside the fence on a narrow strip of land on the north border. This space is inadequate for proper parking, however, it could be landscaped to serve as a passive mini-park. There is no off street parking available.

h. 55th Street North Parkway (0.5 acres - City owned)

- Three block long (300' each) by 30' wide, open green space.

Critique

By providing landscaping on this parkway a continuous scenic vista would be realized, extending north from the library to Tomlinson Park, and upon development, east on Tangerine Avenue to 49th Street South. Over a mile of green belt through the center of Gulfport.

i. Tomlinson Park Complex (5.0 acres - City owned)

(1) Playfield (3 acres)

- Little league field
- Fenced and lighted
- Small covered grandstand
- Bleachers
- Practice field w/backstop

(2) Park (2 acres)

- Half acre lake
- Benches
- Maintained grounds

Critique

Approximately 1 acre on the north of the playfield is available for development into a needed parking area.

The passive park would be complemented by additional trees to the north and west, flower beds and ornamentals, stocking the lake for children fishing and the provision of additional sitting areas. Tomlinson Park is located at the geographical center of the city. With the development of the 55th Street North and Tangerine Avenue Parkways, it will become the intersection of the city's major scenic drives.

j. Tangerine Avenue Parkway (4.5 acres - City owned)

- Two blocks, west end, 100 x 400 feet each (.9 acres each) open green space
- Two blocks, east end, 100 x 600 feet each (1.4 acres each), open green space.

Critique

This site offers a vast potential for development into the mini-park concept. Such recreation facilities are lacking, both here, and in the service area to the north. This parkway would join the Beach Boulevard Parkway at the Tomlinson Complex, for a one mile scenic vista through the center of Gulfport. Local neighborhood citizen involvement would complement the development of this area.

Both residential and commercial parking encroachment is presently noted on this land.

k. Gulfport Adult Center (small downtown building - City owned)

- Game room w/pool tables
- Meeting rooms
- Office

Critique

The city conducts many and varied adult recreation programs at this center with particular emphasis on the needs of the senior citizen. Among these, is the unique Reassurance Program whereby the solitary elderly, sick or infirm are contacted on a daily basis.

l. Southern Regional Headquarters, Little League Complex (13 acres - Private ownership)

- Modern grandstand on fenced and lighted ball park
- (3) fenced ball diamonds in use, (1) under construction
- Baseball summer camp w/quarters, training facilities and ball diamond.

Critique

This is a comprehensive complex ideally located between the open green space of a cemetery and high school playground. Greater user demand is envisioned with the recent inclusion of female ball players in the program.

m. Gulfport School (5.5 acres - County owned)

- Approximately 4 acres open green space
- Large shade trees
- Playground equipment
- Obstacle course

Critique

The rustic obstacle course was constructed by the city. A bike path entrance is planned. The Gulfport Parks Department leases the facilities from the county, provides blanket insurance coverage and conducts a daily recreation program. The program is supervised by four recreation aides and services 40 to 60 children daily, most of whom have working parents.

n. Holy Name Catholic School (7 acres - Private ownership)

- Totally fenced and lighted playground.
- (6) surfaced basketball courts
- (4) surfaced, doubles, tennis courts
- Playfield space for baseball, football, soccer, etc.

Critique

The recreation facilities of this complex serve the needs of their private parochial students. Public bingo games are conducted on the site.

o. Stetson University (12.4 acres - Private ownership)

- Large, open, landscaped green space
- (2) surfaced, fenced and lighted, doubles tennis courts
- Basketball court, surfaced and fenced

Critique

This complex was originally built as a luxury hotel. The landscaped grounds make a significant contribution to the city's open green space. A university conducted recreation program is provided for their enrollment.

p. Boca Ciega High School (40 acres - County owned)

Critique

This is one of the largest high schools in Pinellas County with a controlled enrollment of 2,650 students. The expansive grounds contain all of the recreation facilities associated with an operation of this magnitude. Among these is a competitive sized football, track and field sports stadium. The recreation program is operated by the school for its students.

q. Disston Middle School (8.3 acres - County owned)

Critique

This complex is located within a completely fenced city block containing all of the recreation facilities associated with a middle school. The recreation program is conducted by the school for its students.

r. Undeveloped Land (5.5 acres - Owner, Stetson University)

- Located south and abutting Stetson University Campus.

Critique

The size of this property and its location in the northwest city's present area of recreational need, offers vast potential for development into a neighborhood park. This existing need would be greatly aggravated by the annexation of the developed county properties to the west of Gulfport's present city limits. With the exception of the inadequately sized site described below, or encroachment onto Pasadena Golf Club property, there is no other undeveloped land in this area.

s. Undeveloped Land (1.5 acres - Private Ownership)

- Located on the northeast corner of the intersection of 64th Street and Gulfport Boulevard.

Critique

This triangular shaped site would be difficult to utilize for residential development. It is located in an area of need for mini-park services. With the exception of "r" above, this is the only undeveloped site in this area.

3. Objectives and Standards

a. Objectives

1. To foster and protect park and recreation land, in perpetuity, against encroachment and non-recreation purposes.
2. These lands should not be considered the "path of least resistance" for freeways, highways, city streets, public utilities, and public non-recreation buildings. There should be protective legislation to insure that all lands secured will be dedicated to the uses for which they were designated; and that such properties will not be entered upon without full compensation in sufficient amount to replace the land and improvements in kind in an equally acceptable location.
3. To determine what and how many recreation facilities are needed to best serve the people and where they should be provided.
4. To provide justification for the acquisition and/or development of park and recreation lands and facilities and to

determine priorities.

5. The parks and recreation system should provide a diversified and balanced recreation program meeting the needs of all segments of the population.

b. Standards

1. Effective standards must reflect the needs of the people in Gulfport's neighborhoods. They must be acceptable and usable to the citizens and the policy makers and they must be based on the best available information.

2. Analysis of socio-economic characteristics, local traditions, and climate of the City of Gulfport indicates that local recreation standards are influenced by the following:

a. The age composition (see demographic data, attached) and predominantly retiree economic status of the general population, complemented by the climate, results in more free hours during which recreation and relaxation may be pursued.

b. Age composition effectively reduces the service area radius of the parks and recreation facilities because a significant number of the elderly do not use personal automotive transportation.

c. Passive parks and open green space, totally separated and divided from the activity and noise of children and young adults at play, is of primary concern to the approximately 55% of the population who fall in the 50 year or older age grouping. This majority group of

property owner, tax paying citizens, are justifiably well represented by the local government.

d. Non-resident use of parks and recreation facilities is not restricted by local policy, however, such use is not solicited.

f. The primary factor (age composition) that dictates a current requirement for predominantly passive, neighborhood recreation facilities, may also indicate that long range planning options are called for to progressively convert to the more active needs of the younger population as the city's age composition evolves over a period of time.

3. The following standards have been developed by analyzing and applying the City of Gulfport's variables to the recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association, the Florida Planning and Zoning Association and the Pinellas County Department of Planning.

CITY OF GULFPORT
DESIGN STANDARDS AND QUANTITIES FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

TYPE	SIZE (Acres)	AREA PER 1000 POPULATION (Acres)	SERVICE AREA	CHARACTERISTICS
Mini-Park	0-1.5	1	1/4 Mile radius	Small landscaped open areas, senior citizen orientated, that may have equipment for pre-school groups; useful to all age groups
(Responsibility of the city)				
Neighborhood Park	3-5	2	Specific neighborhood area within a pop. of 2500-7500	Dependent upon natural boundaries; extensive natural landscaping; may includ playground equipment, ballfield, tennis courts, shuffleboard, etc.
(Responsibility of the city)				
Community Park	5-10	2	The entire City of Gulfport	Facilities beyond that of neighborhood park to service entire family; i.e. swimming, game courts, picnic areas, bathrooms, parking, multi-purpose building, etc.
(Responsibility of the city)				
Urban or Regional Park	50+	2-5	Several Communities 5-10 mile radius	Picnic and hiking facilities; may have areas for boating, swimming and fishing, etc. Desirable within large urban areas
(Usually the responsibility of County or State)				
Special Facilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	Designed for a specific activity, i.e. golf, tennis, swimming, ball games, fishing, boating, etc.
(Responsibility of the private owner, lessee and/or city)				
Preservation Areas	N/A	N/A	N/A	Wetlands, flood control areas and areas of unique environmental beauty or sensitivity
(Responsibility of all levels of government)				

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
CITY OF GULFPORT, FLORIDA
1970 CENSUS DATA
(Population: 9,730)

RACE	
Male	**4 357**
White	4 345
Negro	-
Indian	6
Japanese	3
Chinese	-
Filipino	1
All other	2
Female	**5 373**
White	5 348
Negro	3
Indian	9
Japanese	6
Chinese	2
Filipino	-
All other	5
AGE BY SEX	
Male, all ages	**4 357**
Under 5 years	180
5 to 9 years	209
10 to 14 years	283
15 to 19 years	273
20 to 24 years	302
25 to 29 years	233
30 to 34 years	116
35 to 39 years	126
40 to 44 years	195
45 to 49 years	185
50 to 54 years	274
55 to 59 years	210
60 to 64 years	268
65 to 69 years	340
70 to 74 years	404
75 years and over	758
Under 18 years	847
21 years and over	3 378
65 years and over	1 502
Median age	51.4
Female, all ages	**5 373**
Under 5 years	202
5 to 9 years	227
10 to 14 years	253
15 to 19 years	296
20 to 24 years	282
25 to 29 years	191
30 to 34 years	130
35 to 39 years	141
40 to 44 years	231
45 to 49 years	278
50 to 54 years	356
55 to 59 years	365
60 to 64 years	449
65 to 69 years	517
70 to 74 years	623
75 years and over	832
Under 18 years	869
21 years and over	4 338
65 years and over	1 972
Median age	56.4
RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	
All persons	**9 730**
In households	**9 590**
Head	4 317
Primary individual	1 344
Wife of head	2 544
Other relative of head	2 540
Not related to head	189
In group quarters	**140**
Inmate of institution	46
Other	94
Persons per household	2.22
RELATIONSHIP OF PERSONS UNDER 18 YEARS	
Persons, under 18 years old	**1 716**
Head or wife of head	3
Own child of head	1 597
In husband-wife families	1 338
In families with female head	240
Other relative of head	104
Other	12
RELATIONSHIP OF PERSONS 65 YEARS AND OVER	
Persons, 65 years old and over	**3 474**
Head of family	1 307
Wife of head	919
Other family member	216
Primary individual	910
Not related to head (in households)	85
In group quarters	37
Inmate of institution	29
Other	8

Population		Median Age
Male	4,357	51.4
Female	5,373	56.4

Average Age = 53.9 Years

Largest single age group (5 years per group) is 75 years or older.

758 Male
832 Female
1,590 (16%)

Population 50 years or older:

2,254 Males
3,142 Females
5,396 (55%)

Population 18 years or younger:

847 Males
869 Females
1,716 (17%)

Population Estimates April 1, 1976

Permanent	Seasonal	Total
12,080	1,050	13,130

Note: Population Characteristics Remain Basically Unchanged with a Possible Rise in Average Age Due to the Majority of the Population Increase Occurring in Large Retirement Orientated Condominimum Complexes.

4. Proposed Program and Guidelines

a. Policies and Guidelines

Before entering a specific program, it is imperative to have general policy guidelines which give the city a framework that can be applied to particular circumstances. These policy statements are a decision-making tool which provide the principles to be considered when deliberating a course of action. Policies set the general tone in which the city will proceed. The following policies are recommended:

1. Preserve wetlands, floodways, marshes and lakes in their natural state to enable them to perform their drainage, storage and wildlife functions.
2. Encourage the granting of easements or dedication as open space of the major natural features, especially drainageways and lakes.
3. Encourage early acquisition of future park sites.
4. Creatively use open space to provide visual relief between different scales and types of development.
5. Continue to coordinate facility and program planning efforts with other units of government, such as the school board and the county to avoid unnecessary duplication of costs and efforts.
6. Promote the development of recreation facilities in the northwest city as a first acquisition priority.
7. Encourage input prior to development of a park from those residents to be serviced by the park.
8. Require park dedication in the form of cash or land from new residential developments according to an equitable formula.

Land would be accepted only when of sufficient size and desirability. This is particularly important in the undeveloped waterfront landfill to the west of the city.

9. Retention areas for residential plats should be coordinated so as to provide a dual function of drainage retention and open space or mini-park for that particular development.
10. Programs and facility plans shall be monitored and reviewed periodically to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the population as it changes.
11. To pursue public and private financial funding that will prove beneficial in the long run to the park program.

The city is often approached by land owners wishing to sell their property to the city. While early acquisition of land is advisable, it does not apply universally. Haphazard purchase of land can be just as detrimental to a city as no purchase. Therefore, in addition to the above policies, the following criteria are offered to aid the city in deciding whether a particular purchase would be advantageous or not:

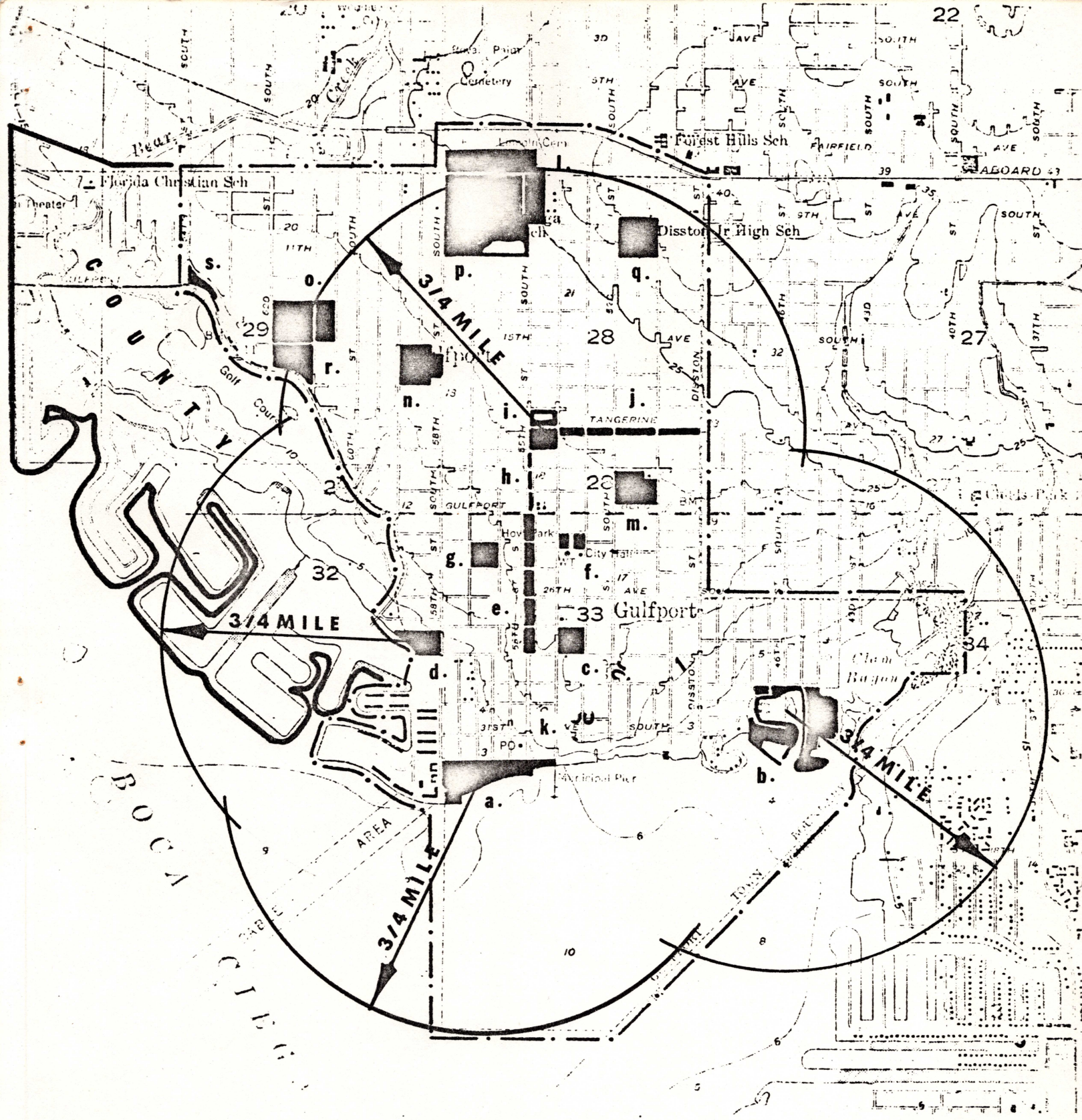
1. Is it in a service area without existing adequate facilities?
2. Is it a natural area adjacent to a waterway?
3. Is it adjacent to existing facilities so that it would allow for complementary expansion?
4. Does the area have any unique environmental aspects?
5. Would the area be consistent with the general park plan?
6. Is purchase the only method of preservation, or does the land lend itself to other tools of control?
7. If the answer is yes to any of the above, how immediately vulnerable is the land to development?

PREFACE TO PROPOSED PROGRAM

This study and development of design standards for the City of Gulfport indicates a requirement for neighborhood park facilities within a population radius range of 2,500 to 7,500 persons. Other factors indicate a service area not to exceed 3/4ths of a mile.

The attached graphic portrays these statistics as applied to either existing or proposed neighborhood park sites. Other parks and recreation facilities fall within these parameters and have been elsewhere described.

It is evident that the northwest city is not served by a neighborhood park or complemented by mini-park facilities. Should the City of Gulfport annex the county properties to the west, this situation would be aggravated as there are no other park facilities on these properties.



PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY (See Narrative)

Scale: 1" = 2,000 Ft.

b. Proposed Program

1. Development of a neighborhood park of approximately five acres to serve the northwest and far west city. The site directly south of Stetson University, and in their ownership, is the only adequate undeveloped land in this area situated within the Gulfport city limits. However, certain outstanding sites can be identified along the city's western border that are in private ownership and under county administration. These sites are located upon the Pasadena Golf Course and on the undeveloped, critically scarce waterfront, landfill fingers abutting it. It is recommended that all of the existing action programs be investigated for possible participation in this project by the county, state and/or federal agencies of concern. No other park facilities or undeveloped property exists to serve the citizens in this entire area presently under county administration.
2. Development of the mini-park sites and green space along the 55th Street North and South, and Tangerine Avenue Parkways, and the upgrading of the Tomlinson Park Complex leading to a mile long scenic vista through the geographic center of Gulfport.
3. Development of Wood Ibis Park into a neighborhood park with egress from Lakeview Avenue and 58th Street South.
4. Restoration of the user facilities and channel depths of the Gulfport Marina to the full potential of this excellent harbor.
5. The legal designation and protection of all remaining undeveloped lands in the Clam Bayou delta and under the authority of the City of Gulfport, as environmentally endangered land restricted to passive green space usage.

6. The preparation and implementation of a strict, city landscaping and tree ordinance to protect and perpetuate these vital environmental features so peculiarly well represented in Gulfport.

7. Careful monitoring for possible expanded lease and usage of county school recreational facilities.

8. The planning of a true pedal powered vehicle path system. Such trails should normally be totally separate from roadways. Where this is not possible, paths are proposed to be built according to accepted standards on the right-of-way between the pedestrian sidewalk and the road. Besides surfacing, this would require posting and crossing markings.

9. The continued support of the exceptional Gulfport Parks and Recreation Department, its Director and his plans and programs, all of which have been concurred with and many included in this study. This expertise should be consulted and utilized in carrying out the recreational related management decisions of the City administration.

5. Cost and Priorities

a. No attempt is made herein to project costs or to determine priorities with the exception of highlighting the existing need for recreational facilities in northwest Gulfport.

b. Land acquisition costs, to the city, can vary from "plus" market value to zero under certain federal community grants.

c. Materials and manpower could be estimated at today's prices with an attempt to predict the economy over the time span of a capital improvements program. These figures would be relatively realistic, however, many factors would influence them.

d. Therefore, at times a recommended priority may cost more than estimated, while another less. The system suggested would allow the City administration and its Parks and Recreation Department to rationally move to another phase or, after weighing a cost change's effect on the total program, may choose to eliminate an element and go to a new alternative.

6. Conclusion

a. A plan is only successful if carefully monitored and updated. These proposals and recommendations are generally flexible and each step should be reviewed prior to its actual implementation. A complete evaluation of assumptions should be carried out at the end of a five year period. This time frame should reflect changes in population and growth patterns, as well as new concepts in leisure activity.

b. The program proposed here would leave the city with a well balanced open space and recreation system that meets the needs of the people. Regardless of whether or not the specific recommendations are carried forth, the important factor is that the City follow a logical process. By doing this, it can assure itself and its people that they will have recreational facilities that both they and their visitors can be proud of.

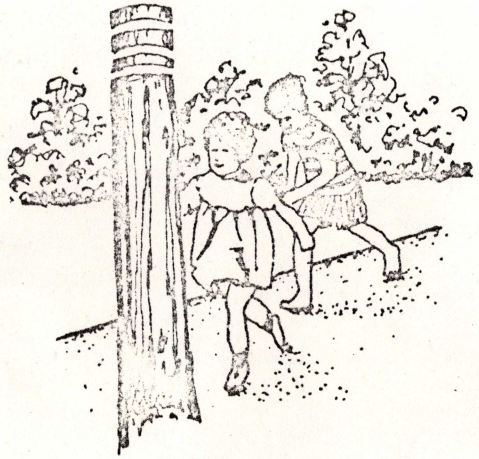
Funds available for financing open space and recreation projects.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS - The federal government has quite a few programs for which local governments may qualify for financial assistance in open space and recreation projects.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund enables local governments to acquire and develop quality outdoor recreation resources on a 50-50 matching basis. The local government expends all necessary funds to complete the project and then requests 50% reimbursement from the state. Projects may vary in type from relatively small recreation sites of a localized nature to large multi-purpose recreation complexes with regional significance.

The Farmers Home Administration Loan Program can make loans to develop community facilities for public use in rural areas and towns of up to 10,000 people. The loans can be for a period of up to 40 years and at a low interest rate.

H.U.D. Community Development Block Grants authorize the Federal Government to finance 100% of the cost



of a new community development program for up to 3 year periods. This program will include acquisition of property for beautification of urban lands, conservation of open spaces, natural resources, and scenic areas, and the provision of recreational opportunities. In addition, this program will provide for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction or installation of pedestrian malls and walkways, parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities where assistance for such facilities under other federal programs is unavailable.

The Soil Conservation Service provides assistance with recreational projects through activities such as the Small Watershed Program or Resource Conservation and Development Projects. This service offers up to 100% technical assistance and up to 50% financial assistance with any recreational facility that is water-based and open to the public.

Under the Federal Revenue Sharing Program, the local government receives a direct appropriation from the Federal Government. These funds can be extended for any capital improvements that the city can legally develop. The funds can be expended for the operation of a recreation department.

STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS - The State of Florida offers financial assistance programs to local governments for open space and recreation facilities.

Through the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Programs, local governments are able to acquire and develop land, water and related resources for recreational purposes. The State of Florida, Department of Natural Resources may provide 100% of the project cost up to $50,000. Any cost in excess of $50,000 must be matched by the project sponsor on a 50-50 matching basis up to a maximum participation by the state of $100,000.

The Florida Boating Improvement Program will fund projects that will serve to directly improve boating as a recreational activity. Assurance must be made by project agreement that any proposed project will, when completed, serve as a public recreational boating facility for the use and benefit of the general public.

Historic Preservation Grants can be used for acquisition of historic property and to finance development costs such as research, project costs, preparation of plans and specifications. Qualified applicants involved in historic preservation efforts are eligible to receive funds on a matching basis.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS - Besides the Federal and State Assistance Programs, there are general programs that will assist local governments in the acquisition and development of recreation and open space lands.

Gifts and Trusts - Park lands that are either donated or sold at a reduced price to local communities by private citizens are considered gifts and trusts.

Ad Valorem Tax - Ad Valorem Taxes are the most important form of local government revenue, used mainly for operating and capital expenditures. Ad Valorem Taxes are levied against real property and usually placed in a general fund.

User Fees and Charges - User fees and charges collected from park facilities, such as food concession stands, marinas, golf courses and others, have become an increasingly important method of financing capital improvements and paying for operating expenses.

General Obligation Bonds - General Obligation Bonds are the most commonly used form of borrowing money for use in developing public open space and recreation facilities. Borrowing allows local government to smooth out fluctuations in the annual budget.

Revenue Bonds - Revenue Bonds are used at times to obtain money to finance projects that can be expected to produce enough money to return what was borrowed. This usually applies to large facilities such as golf courses.

Revolving Land Acquisition Fund - A revolving land acquisition fund will enable departments to acquire land, based on sound planning, prior to the time it is needed. This would insure the preservation of adequate space and save the taxpayers' dollars by buying land before the cost increases. This could also serve as a means of guiding development of desirable locations for recreation facilities.