



CITY OF BARTOW
RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE JOINT CITY COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026 AT 5:30 PM
OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
450 NORTH WILSON AVE., BARTOW, FL 33830

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL
2. INVOCATION
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - a. January 14, 2026
5. PUBLIC COMMENT
6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT
 - a. Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Director Jason Hargrove
 - b. Restroom Murals - Community Redevelopment Agency Director Howard Smith
7. OLD BUSINESS
8. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Catalyst Design Group - Master Plan Presentation
9. ADVISORY BOARD COMMENTS
10. CITY COMMISSIONER COMMENTS
11. NEXT MEETING DATE
 - a. March 11, 2026
12. ADJOURNMENT

Please be advised that if you desire to appeal any decisions made as a result of the above hearing or meeting, you will need a record of the proceedings and in some cases, a verbatim record is required. You must make your own arrangements to produce this record. (Florida Statute 286.0105) If you are a person

with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 450 N. Wilson Avenue, P.O. Box 1069, Bartow, Florida 33831-1069, or phone (863) 534-0100 within 2 working days of your receipt of this meeting notification; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 1-800-955-8771. Posted at City Hall and the City's Website www.cityofbartow.net on February 4, 2026.

**CITY OF BARTOW
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026 – 5:30 P.M. (EST)
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBER, CITY HALL
450 N. WILSON AVENUE, BARTOW, FL 33830**

MINUTES

The City of Bartow Recreation Advisory Board held a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the City Commission Chamber, 450 N. Wilson Avenue, Bartow. Notice of this meeting was posted at City Hall, Bartow Public Library, and on the City's website www.cityofbartow.net.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Keith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. INVOCATION

Board Member Bohde gave the invocation.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board Members gave the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America Flag.

4. ROLL CALL

Assistant City Clerk Kaylee Fussell called the roll and attendance was as follows:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Board Member Bill Bohde, Board Member Leslie Green, Board Member Troy Lung, and Board Member Sheila Keith, Chairperson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Board Member Carver Young, Vice-Chairperson

CITY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Tanya Tucker

STAFF PRESENT: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Director Jason Hargrove, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Kyle Lasek, and Assistant City Clerk Kaylee Fussell.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026

a. Nominations for and election of Chairperson

MOTION was made by Board Member Bohde, seconded by Board Member Green to re-elect Chairperson Keith in her current role for another year. Chairperson Keith accepted the nomination.

VOTE TO THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYE: Bohde, Green, Keith, Lung
NAY: None

b. Nominations for and election of Vice-Chairperson

MOTION was made by Board Member Bohde and seconded by Board Member Green to re-elect Vice-Chairperson Young in his current role for another year.

VOTE TO THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYE: Bohde, Green, Keith, Lung
NAY: None

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. November 12, 2025 – Regular Meeting

MOTION was made Board Member Bohde, seconded by Board Member Lung to approve the minutes from November 12, 2025, Regular Meeting as presented.

VOTE TO THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYE: Bohde, Green, Keith, Lung
NAY: None

Motion carried.

5. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – At this time, the Board will receive comments from the public regarding matters not appearing on this agenda.

Chairperson Keith opened and closed the floor to receive comments from the public regarding matters not appearing on this agenda. There were no comments.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Director Hargrove

Director Hargrove provided an update on Richland Manor Park:

- He reported that the Grand Opening was well attended, with Mayor Tucker, Chairperson Keith, Vice-Chairperson Young, and Board Member Bohde present. He expressed his appreciation for their participation, noting that their presence was meaningful both to him and the city.

Assistant Director Lasek provided an update on several key areas, including:

- Parks and Recreation \$3.3M Improvement Projects: He presented a status report on major improvement projects totaling \$3.3 million, outlining progress on park enhancements, recreational facility upgrades, and community amenity improvements currently in progress or under development.
 - Polk Street Community Center: updates included the replacement of basketball goals, repainting of dugouts, installation of an insulated foam roof to replace the former wooden one, and repainting of the concession stand.

(A copy of the presentation is attached therein and described as Exhibit A)

Director Hargrove said the new dugout roofs are graded for a category three hurricane.

- MLK Gazebo: The grill was replaced, and a new two-stall family restroom was added.
- Pittas Baseball Park/Bartow Civic Center: Upgrades included replacement of baseball field lighting, renovation of the Civic Center kitchen, construction of eight new tennis courts to replace the old ones, installation of new tennis court lighting, and replacement of overhead bleacher covers.
- Carver Recreation Center: the Christine McCoy Room received new flooring, trim, and wall paint, as well as a kitchen upgrade. Additional improvements included replacement of playground platforms, roof replacement on the south building, and installation of new fire alarm panels.
- Bartow Sports Complex: Enhancements included installation of new football field fencing behind the facility, updates to football goalposts, new fencing around the RC track, and a new cover for RC track seating.
- Mary Holland Park: All pavilions were repainted, entryway fencing was replaced, concrete benches were replaced with aluminum powder-coated benches, and rubber mulch was installed in playground areas.
- Summerlin Park: Improvements included installation of fencing around the court, a new concrete apron, new basketball goals and backboards, resurfacing of the court, and restroom repainting.
- Restroom Facilities: Installations were completed at MLK Gazebo, Mosaic Park, Richland Manor Park, Over the Branch, Downtown, Mary Holland Park and Carver Recreation Center. There will be security cameras installed at all locations including existing Mary Holland Park, Summerlin, and Nye Jordan Park.

- Richland Manor: Additions included a new playground, four pickleball courts, one tennis court, a restroom facility, a covered seating area, and new landscaping.
 - Budget: Funding contributions included \$603,000 from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for restroom construction and \$25,000 from the Kiwanis Club. With these contributions, the total \$3.3 million project came in under budget by \$256,511.53.

Assistant Director Lasek reported that for the year 2026, a grant proposal will be submitted to the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) for the construction of a pump track, along with plans for an all-inclusive playground at McLeod Park. He also noted that the skatepark at Mary Holland Park will be funded through the General Fund. Additionally, lighting improvements at the multipurpose field at Carver Recreation Center will be included in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) proposal, and plans are underway for the construction of a new cart barn at the golf course.

Director Hargrove commented that the proposed location for the pump track at Mary Holland Park is ideal, as the design will incorporate existing trees without the need for tree removal.

Mayor Tucker inquired whether the proximity of the pump track to the trees presents any safety concerns.

Director Hargrove stated that the pump track will be constructed at a sufficient distance from the trees, emphasizing that no trees will be removed to create a larger open area.

Board Member Lung requested clarification on what a pump track is.

Director Hargrove explained that a pump track is like a BMX track, but instead of pedaling, riders use momentum to navigate the course. He noted that a group of middle school students from Union Academy had previously presented the concept to both the Board and the City Commission. The City intends to apply for the FRDAP to fund the pump track and the improvements at McLeod Park. The grant totals \$400,000, with \$200,000 allocated to each project. Notification of the grant award is expected in July.

Board Member Bohde asked whether the type of bike is used on a pump track matter.

Assistant Director Lasek responded that a pump track is designed as an all-wheel surface, accommodating bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, and a variety of other wheeled equipment. He added that the students who presented the proposal are active in mountain biking.

Chairperson Keith inquired about the lighting installation plans for the Carver Recreation Center field, noting that the image shown in the presentation resembled a baseball field. She asked for clarification on whether the field is designated as a baseball field or a multipurpose field.

Assistant Director Lasek clarified that the field at Carver Recreation Center is a multipurpose field, explaining that it accommodates various activities, including baseball and flag football.

Chairperson Keith stated that she does not want the field to be limited to baseball use.

Director Hargrove noted that the presentation images were intended only to illustrate the general concept of the planned improvements.

Chairperson Keith acknowledged that renderings are conceptual but reiterated the importance of asking specific questions to ensure the field remains intended for multiple uses rather than solely baseball.

Assistant Director Lasek reaffirmed that the facility would remain a multipurpose field used for a variety of sports and community activities.

Director Hargrove reported on general projects:

- Polk Street Community Center: The rusted door and frame are being replaced.
- Civic Center: Floors are being resurfaced, and door chimes will be installed to signal when visitors enter the building.
- Nye Jordan Park: Installation of the new water fountain is expected to be completed soon. The parking lot located next to the pickleball area there will be millings added, this will be completed once Public Works starts their paving projects.
- Christine McCoy Room: Renovations have been completed, and new signage has been installed.
- Carver Recreation: Gym light switches have been installed. Audio system installation in the south gym has been completed.
- Polk Street Community Center – Code Enforcement: The new Code Enforcement sign has been installed. Frosted window film will be applied to the hallway windows leading to the Code Enforcement office to enhance privacy and security. This measure follows a recent safety concern involving an attempted unauthorized entry, which required police response. The frost film will be removed once the department is relocated.

- Civic Center: A fence has been installed outside Assembly Room 1 to block the view of the pool area. Appreciation was expressed to Assistant Director Lasek and his team for their efforts. The divider between Assembly Rooms 1 and 2, which had deteriorated, has been repaired.
- Golf Course: Provided updates on ongoing operations and facility maintenance, including the Cart Barn Capital Improvement Project (CIP), highlighting progress on design, construction scheduling, and funding. New plumbing will be installed in Mulligans Restaurant, with health department updates to follow. Golf Course revenue for the year is reportedly excellent, and a detailed presentation will be provided at a future meeting.
- Bartow Sports Complex: Plans are underway to issue a public bid for lighting installation
- Perry Weather System: Paperwork for the Perry Weather System has been completed. The system will be installed at various locations throughout the city to detect lightning activity and provide all-clear notifications when weather conditions are safe.
- Parks and Recreation General Projects: Provided an overview of ongoing departmental initiatives, with a focus on improving operational efficiency, enhancing community engagement, and aligning projects with long-term strategic objectives.
- Pittas Baseball Complex: Construction of the concession stand is underway. Restroom reconstruction is scheduled to begin following the conclusion of the spring season.
- Chairs: Delivery of new chairs for the recreation centers has been rescheduled for May

Chairperson Keith inquired whether the Pittas Baseball Complex is located adjacent to the Civic Center.

Assistant Director Hargrove confirmed that it is.

Chairperson Keith requested an update regarding the basketball court lighting at the Polk Street Center.

Director Hargrove reported that a work order has been submitted to the Electric Department. Once the issue has been identified, an update will be provided. Chairperson Keith asked which door is being replaced at the Polk Street Community Center.

Director Hargrove stated that the east entry door near the weight room is being replaced. The door is temporarily repaired until the vendor completes the full replacement.

Board Member Bohde asked about plans for the old chairs being replaced at the centers and whether there was any trade-in value.

Director Hargrove explained that the chairs will be transferred to the Fleet Department for auction. Some chairs will be retained for use during summer camp programs.

Purpose of the Board

Advise our local government on matters related to parks, programs, and facilities. Provide recommendations and being the voice for the community – letting us know what programs/activities that they would like to see, their interests. The Director always has an open-door policy.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- **Board Member shirts update**

Director Hargrove reported that the city has adopted a new logo and is awaiting final authorization to proceed with ordering staff uniform shirts featuring the updated design. The uniform order will be placed upon receipt of approval.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- **Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Recreational Trails Program Grant Application**

Director Hargrove reported that the city is collaborating with Hale Innovations to apply for a Florida Department of Environmental Protection Recreation Trails Program grant. The proposed \$450,000 matching grant would support development of a walking trail connecting the Story Trail to Mary Holland Park. The grant application process requires presentation to the Recreation Advisory Board, including project updates and scope details.

Director Hargrove presented an overview of the planned trail connector project. The portion eligible for grant funding includes segments identified as Points #2–#8 on the presentation map. Point #2 begins at the connection to the Story Trail behind the library. The subsequent segments include fitness stations (3), benches along the trail (4), shaded seating areas (5), open recreation space (6), a pedestrian bridge linking the trail to Mary Holland Park (7), and a raised pedestrian crosswalk for safer access (8). Due to an existing FRDAP grant for the pump track at Mary Holland Park, overlapping grant funding is not permitted;

therefore, the new trail will stop at the park boundary. Plans also include the installation of exercise equipment, pedestrian bollards to restrict vehicle access, and a connecting sidewalk leading to the Story Trail, Mary Holland Park, the Civic Center, and the tennis courts.

(A copy of the presentation is attached therein and described as Exhibit B)

Chairperson Keith inquired whether the trail project would restrict traffic travel between the library and the Civic Center.

Director Hargrove clarified that the project would not impede traffic flow between those locations. He explained that vehicle access would only be restricted on the man-made road located past the library near the racquetball courts.

Director Hargrove further noted that the new trail will connect to the proposed pedestrian bridge leading into Mary Holland Park. He commended former Commissioner Steve Githens and his team for their work in clearing the site and stated that he will explore grant opportunities to assist with ongoing cleanup, including the removal of Brazilian pepper trees and other invasive growth.

Mayor Tucker added that Mr. Githens has been removing trees, brush, and debris manually.

Director Hargrove reiterated that the proposed grant is a \$450,000 matching grant, potentially providing up to \$900,000 in total project funding. As the project is estimated at \$1.5 million, the city would need to contribute approximately \$600,000, either through direct funding, sponsorships, or donations. He also indicated that local businesses have expressed potential interest in sponsorships, which could include trail naming rights if grant funding is awarded. Director Hargrove emphasized the goal of securing all necessary funding to begin construction in a timely manner.

Mayor Tucker asked whether, in the event of multiple sponsors, the trail naming could be divided into sections to recognize all contributors.

Director Hargrove confirmed that sponsorship opportunities are being explored, noting his goal to secure a company to sponsor the pedestrian bridge and additional sponsors for the trail, fitness equipment, and benches. He added that Mary Holland Park already has a walking trail around the lake, and the proposed trail would connect to that existing path.

Board Member Lung asked whether the fitness equipment would be concentrated at a few designated stations.

Director Hargrove explained that the plan is to locate fitness stations in shaded areas, with varied equipment available at each station.

Board Member Lung further inquired whether the city could proceed with the project in phases if the grant is not awarded.

Director Hargrove responded that phased completion would be possible if necessary; however, the preferred approach is to complete the project in full to ensure quality and long-term efficiency. He noted that the City Manager supports this philosophy. Director Hargrove stated that at the next meeting, he will present a cost analysis outlining the \$1.5 million project budget, including expenses for the trail, bridge, landscaping, lighting, equipment, and other elements.

Board Member Bohde expressed support for the project and asked whether similar projects should be incorporated into the City's annual budget, given that the \$3.3 million in reserves has been spent. He also questioned how the City would provide the \$600,000 matching funds if grant and sponsorship funding were not fully secured.

Director Hargrove explained that project funding would come from reserve funds, provided those reserves remain available. He noted that the \$3.3 million expenditure was a one-time withdrawal from reserves, and while the city continues to receive annual revenue, large-scale capital expenses typically draw from the reserve balance. He further reported that a budget amendment has been prepared and will be presented to the City Commission on February 2, 2026, to include the trail project in the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) plan, making it eligible for the grant. Funding would be allocated from reserves when possible; otherwise, alternative sources would need to be identified.

Board Member Bohde commented that the City's reserve funds exist to support projects of this nature.

Mayor Tucker noted that in the past, funds were set aside in reserves without being used to address citywide issues. He emphasized that the current approach prioritizes utilizing those funds to make meaningful improvements throughout the community.

Board Member Bohde agreed, stating that tax dollars should be reinvested into the community rather than left unused.

Director Hargrove concurred, adding that tax revenue represents another important source of funding. He highlighted several priorities that could benefit from the reserves support, including the need for a new fire station estimated to be between \$3 million and \$7 million. He stated that the proposed walking trail is a valuable community project that residents can enjoy daily at little long-term cost to the city.

Board Member Bohde expressed his support, describing the trail as a wonderful project and an excellent enhancement to Mary Holland Park.

Director Hargrove then requested that the Board vote on whether to move forward with the grant application process in partnership with Hale Innovations.

MOTION was made by Board Member Green, seconded by Board Member Lung to move forward with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts to move forward with the grant process for the Story Trail Extender Project Grant.

VOTE TO THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYE: Bohde, Green, Keith, Lung

NAY: None

Motion carried.

- **FY2026-27 CDBG Possible Projects – Presentation**
 - **Wheelchair swing – NJP**
 - **Paving Driveway – Carver Recreation Center back areas**

Director Hargrove informed the Board that applications for the upcoming Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) are now being accepted for enhancement projects. He presented two proposed project options for consideration under this grant program. A total of \$102,000 in CDBG funding is available to support improvements at either the Carver Recreation Center or Nye Jordan Park. The purpose of the grant is to enhance amenities at one or both locations. Director Hargrove requested that Board members provide recommendations on which project they would prefer to see funded.

Here's a refined and professional version of your text formatted for meeting minutes:

Director Hargrove reported that the Carver Recreation Center recently received a new outdoor restroom located behind the main building. The site also includes a multipurpose field, outdoor basketball court, playground, and pavilion. He noted that the driveway leading to these amenities is currently composed of sand and rock and is in poor condition for vehicle access. He proposed paving the driveway up to the existing handicap parking spaces adjacent to the restroom and creating a circular turnaround around the large tree in the area.

(A copy of the presentation is attached therein and described as Exhibit C)

Board Member Green asked whether parking would remain in the grassy area.

Director Hargrove confirmed that parking would continue to be in the grass and emphasized that the proposed paving would apply only to the driveway up to the

handicap-accessible parking area, ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Chairperson Keith inquired whether there were still two entrances to the area.

Director Hargrove responded that only one entrance remains in use—the existing rocky road—while the other had been a man-made access route. The existing pavement transitions into dirt before reaching the recreation area.

Assistant Director Lasek added that the primary entrance is considered a non-pour surface. In consultation with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), the city confirmed that only previously authorized surfaces remain. The current proposal involves resurfacing the existing millings and degraded asphalt with new pavement, maintaining the same square footage and therefore not requiring additional SWFWMD permitting.

Director Hargrove noted that paving the driveway would improve access to all rear facilities, enhance ADA accessibility and emergency response capability, and strengthen overall infrastructure. The estimated cost for the paving project is under \$57,000, leaving additional CDBG funds available for another project. He further stated that other City departments also plan to submit CDBG applications.

Here’s a polished, professional rewrite of your text formatted for meeting minutes:

Director Hargrove presented the second proposed project for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which involves the installation of a wheelchair-accessible swing at Nye Jordan Park. He explained that adding this amenity would complete the park as an All-Inclusive Playground. The park currently features standard playground equipment and an ADA-compliant merry-go-round; the addition of the new swing would further enhance accessibility. The proposed location for the swing is between the pickleball courts and the playground.

The project scope includes the swing structure, pour-and-play safety surfacing, and a sidewalk connecting the surfacing to the handicap parking area. The purpose of the project is to expand accessibility and promote an improved quality of life for low- to moderate-income residents. Director Hargrove emphasized that the project aligns with ADA requirements, supports social inclusion, enhances access to public facilities, and benefits caregivers by improving equitable recreation opportunities.

Estimated costs for the project are as follows: swing structure—under \$61,000; surfacing—\$26,500; and installation and permitting—\$66,000, for a total of approximately \$153,297. As this exceeds the available \$102,000 in CDBG funding, Director Hargrove stated he would approach the Kiwanis Club regarding potential contributions to cover the balance. He noted that the Kiwanis Club, who previously sponsored the pickleball courts at Nye Jordan Park, had expressed interest in supporting this project.

Board Member Green inquired about the location of the nearest All-Inclusive Playground and whether one currently exists in Bartow.

Director Hargrove responded that, aside from the ADA-compatible merry-go-round at Nye Jordan Park, there are no All-Inclusive Playgrounds in Bartow at this time. However, plans include developing a fully All-Inclusive Playground at McLeod Park through the FRDAP grant, if awarded. Nye Jordan Park would continue to feature components of inclusive play.

Chairperson Keith confirmed that McLeod Park would serve as the site for the All-Inclusive Playground and questioned the need for similar amenities within proximity, given the parks' locations.

Director Hargrove acknowledged her question, clarifying that she was referring to placing a single piece of inclusive equipment at Nye Jordan Park when a full inclusive playground may be developed nearby.

Board Member Green observed that Nye Jordan Park's combination of pickleball courts and playground facilities allows families to enjoy diverse activities in one location.

Director Hargrove agreed, adding that offering similar amenities across multiple parks broadens accessibility and convenience for residents.

Board Member Green noted that this approach is consistent with having pickleball courts both at Nye Jordan Park and the Polk Street Community Center. Chairperson Keith observed that Nye Jordan Park and the Polk Street Community Center are located on opposite sides of town, while Nye Jordan Park and McLeod Park are situated close to one another.

Assistant Director Lasek noted that Polk Street Community Center and Richland Manor Park are also in proximity, and both offer pickleball facilities.

Board Member Green emphasized the importance of ensuring that each park remains accessible and offers diverse recreational opportunities for residents.

Director Hargrove agreed, commenting that adding inclusive equipment at Nye Jordan Park would benefit all users and strengthen the park's appeal as a community asset.

Board Member Lung inquired whether the McLeod Park project would be developed exclusively as an All-Inclusive Playground.

Director Hargrove confirmed that it would.

Board Member Green asked if any data was available regarding the usage of the wheelchair-accessible merry-go-round at Nye Jordan Park.

Director Hargrove responded that usage data is not currently available.

Board Member Lung mentioned that he frequently observes children using the merry-go-round, both with and without disabilities.

Chairperson Keith clarified that her concern is not about the need for an accessible swing—acknowledging that the City would benefit from such an amenity—but rather the proximity of Nye Jordan Park to McLeod Park. She noted that the two parks' close locations may make installing similar equipment redundant, suggesting a need for better geographic distribution of inclusive amenities.

Board Member Bohde stated that he does not support additional spending at Nye Jordan Park until the parking lots on both sides are improved. He noted that the current parking lots retain water and, while full paving may not be necessary, drainage improvements should be prioritized to make the park more complete.

Director Hargrove responded that milling will be placed on the east side parking area to improve conditions.

Board Member Bohde then asked whether funding for the milling project has already been included in the current budget.

Director Hargrove explained that the milling project does not need to be included in the City's budget. The millings will be supplied by the Public Works Department as part of their paving operations, with leftover material placed at Nye Jordan Park rather than disposed of. He noted that while the west parking area remains open field, it includes paved handicap parking that will connect to the project site via a new sidewalk.

Board Member Lung asked whether a timeline had been established for placing the millings and how that schedule would align with the potential installation of the wheelchair swing.

Director Hargrove responded that, if approved, the wheelchair swing installation would occur in the 2026–2027 fiscal year. The parking area millings would be completed prior to that time.

Director Hargrove then requested that Board members vote on which project should move forward or, alternatively, rank the two proposed projects by priority, identifying one as priority and the other as second.

Mayor Tucker asked if both projects would qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) community benefit objective. He noted that CDBG projects

must meet at least one of three national objectives and that final approval rests with the county, even after City submission.

Director Hargrove confirmed that both projects meet the required objective. He added that, in the future, the Carver Recreation Center may fall under the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) district, which could open additional funding opportunities for facility improvements through CRA partnerships.

Board Member Bohde expressed support for prioritizing the Carver Recreation Center paving project, noting that the center already provides valuable community facilities that residents need improved access to. He emphasized that the existing road is currently inadequate for regular use.

Mayor Tucker added that if any department project receives grant funding, some of the millings could be allocated to improve the road behind Carver Recreation Center.

Director Hargrove stated that he would coordinate with Public Works Director Groover to determine whether sufficient materials would be available for that purpose.

Board Member Lung agreed, stating that prioritizing the Carver Recreation Center project makes the most sense given the number of amenities and the importance of accessibility. He expressed support for both projects but recommended Carver Recreation Center as the higher priority.

Here's a clear, professional rewrite of your text prepared for meeting minutes:

Chairperson Keith stated that she supports the installation of a wheelchair-accessible swing but does not agree with placing it at the proposed location. She expressed concern that Nye Jordan Park is located near McLeod Park, where the city may develop an All-Inclusive Playground offering similar amenities. She recommended considering another park elsewhere in the city to ensure equitable access across neighborhoods.

Director Hargrove asked the Board to consider the possibility that the city might not receive the grant for the McLeod Park project, noting that this could result in a missed opportunity to install ADA-compliant equipment elsewhere.

Chairperson Keith clarified that relocating the swing to another park would not eliminate the City's opportunity for accessible recreation; it would simply place the equipment in a different location.

Director Hargrove acknowledged her perspective but noted that the proposal for Nye Jordan Park includes a partnership opportunity.

Mayor Tucker emphasized that the wheelchair swing costs more than the available grant funding. The existing partnership with the Kiwanis Club would help offset costs if the swing is placed at Nye Jordan Park. Installing it at a different park would forgo that partnership since no other parks currently have similar collaborative opportunities.

Chairperson Keith acknowledged that no other partnerships are currently in place but maintained her view in favor of placing the equipment at a different location.

Director Hargrove stated that he wanted to ensure full transparency by providing all relevant factors for the Board's consideration.

Chairperson Keith responded that she understood his position but respectfully disagreed.

Board Member Green asked whether the city has a long-term plan to expand ADA-compliant playground equipment across other parks.

Director Hargrove confirmed that accessibility improvements are part of the City's long-term goals. He stated that upgrading all playground equipment—including ADA-compliant features—was discussed in the City's master plan with Catalyst Design Group.

Mayor Tucker noted that ADA-compliant playground equipment is costly and suggested that it is more practical to centralize such amenities at a single location, ensuring that families with accessibility needs can find all necessary features in one place.

Chairperson Keith commented that residents in her neighborhood lack park resources and have difficulty accessing Nye Jordan Park.

Mayor Tucker reiterated that distributing individual ADA-compliant pieces across multiple parks could be inefficient, emphasizing that consolidating them provides better access for families requiring specialized equipment.

Chairperson Keith shared that she often observes that City projects tend to focus on three core areas—Carver Recreation Center, the Civic Center, and Nye Jordan Park—while the west side of Bartow, including Richland Manor and Miller Manor, tends to receive fewer improvements. She explained that she advocates for west Bartow not in opposition to other areas, but to promote balanced citywide investment.

Director Hargrove stated that he disagreed that the west side only receives secondary attention, noting that Richland Manor recently benefited from the construction of a new park.

Chairperson Keith responded that the improvements at Richland Manor are recent and highlighted that her comments were reflective of long-standing patterns.

Director Hargrove added that when new projects were initiated, improving Richland Manor Park was one of the City's earliest priorities, and future efforts include planned upgrades to the Polk Street Community Center, contingent on partnerships and available funding.

Mayor Tucker asked what factors led to selecting McLeod Park as the location for the proposed All-Inclusive Playground.

Assistant Director Lasek explained that McLeod Park's former basketball court provided sufficient open space to accommodate the planned playground facilities.

Director Hargrove noted that McLeod Park's proximity to the Jean O'Dell Learning Center, which serves students with disabilities, makes it an ideal site for an All-Inclusive Playground.

Chairperson Keith expressed agreement with McLeod Park as the chosen site but reiterated her broader concern about equitable distribution of projects. She clarified that her comments arise from long-term observations and a desire to ensure that west Bartow receives prioritized investment alongside other areas. She emphasized her commitment to the betterment of the entire city while continuing to advocate for balanced development.

MOTION was made by Board Member Bohde, seconded by Board Member Green to prioritize the Community Development Block Grant to Carver Recreation Center paving project as number one and the Wheelchair swing installation at Nye Jordan Park as project number two.

VOTE TO THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYE: Bohde, Green, Keith, Lung

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Director Hargrove concluded that he would present the Carver Recreation Center paving project as the primary priority and the wheelchair swing project at Nye Jordan Park as the secondary project for submission under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

10. ADVISORY BOARD COMMENTS

a. Bill Bohde

Board Member Bohde commended the progress made through the \$3.3 million in completed projects, noting it represents significant improvement compared to three years ago. He expressed hope that property tax revenues remain stable and acknowledged the current Commission's understanding of the importance of funding for maintaining and modernizing City facilities.

b. Leslie Green

Board Member Green commended the recent improvements throughout the city, stating that all completed projects look excellent. She noted that the Aquatics Project at the Civic Center has generated significant discussion on social media and added that the renovations at Richland Manor Park have been a tremendous improvement for that neighborhood, receiving many positive comments from the community.

Director Hargrove reported that an update on the Aquatics Project will be provided within the next two months. He explained that while the project was originally budgeted at \$3.5 million, the estimated cost has increased to \$6.5 million, with annual operating expenses projected at approximately \$1.5 million. He cautioned that the potential elimination of property tax revenue would have a substantial financial impact, possibly making long-term operation of the facility unsustainable.

Board Member Green encouraged continued communication and transparency so that citizens can ask questions and express concerns directly.

Director Hargrove stated that City Manager Herr will be leading the discussions related to the Aquatics Center project.

c. Sheila Keith

Chairperson Keith thanked the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department for their outstanding work and commended the recent ribbon-cutting ceremony at Nye Jordan Park. She expressed appreciation for the productive discussions held during the meeting and noted that such collaboration is vital to the City's continued progress and future success.

d. Troy Lung

Board Member Lung had no comments.

e. Carver Young

Vice-Chairperson Young was absent.

11. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS

a. Mayor Tucker

Mayor Tucker remarked that the food served at the Nye Jordan Park ribbon-cutting event was excellent and contributed to the success of the celebration.

12. NEXT MEETING – December 10, 2025

Chairperson Keith announced the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Keith adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Chairperson Keith

ATTEST:

Asst. City Clerk Kaylee Fussell

(SEAL)

AQUATICS CENTER PROJECT HISTORY

Jason Hargrove

Director- Parks, Recreation &
Cultural Arts



City of Bartow



PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

- Aquatics
 - 6 Lane Recreation Pool
 - Zero Depth Entry Pool
 - Splash Pad
 - Updated Pump and Filter System
- Demolition
- Shade Pavilions
- Pool Furnishings, Lighting
- Restrooms- no renovations, just modified
- Site Work/Landscaping
- Permits/Design Services

Zero Depth Entry Pool



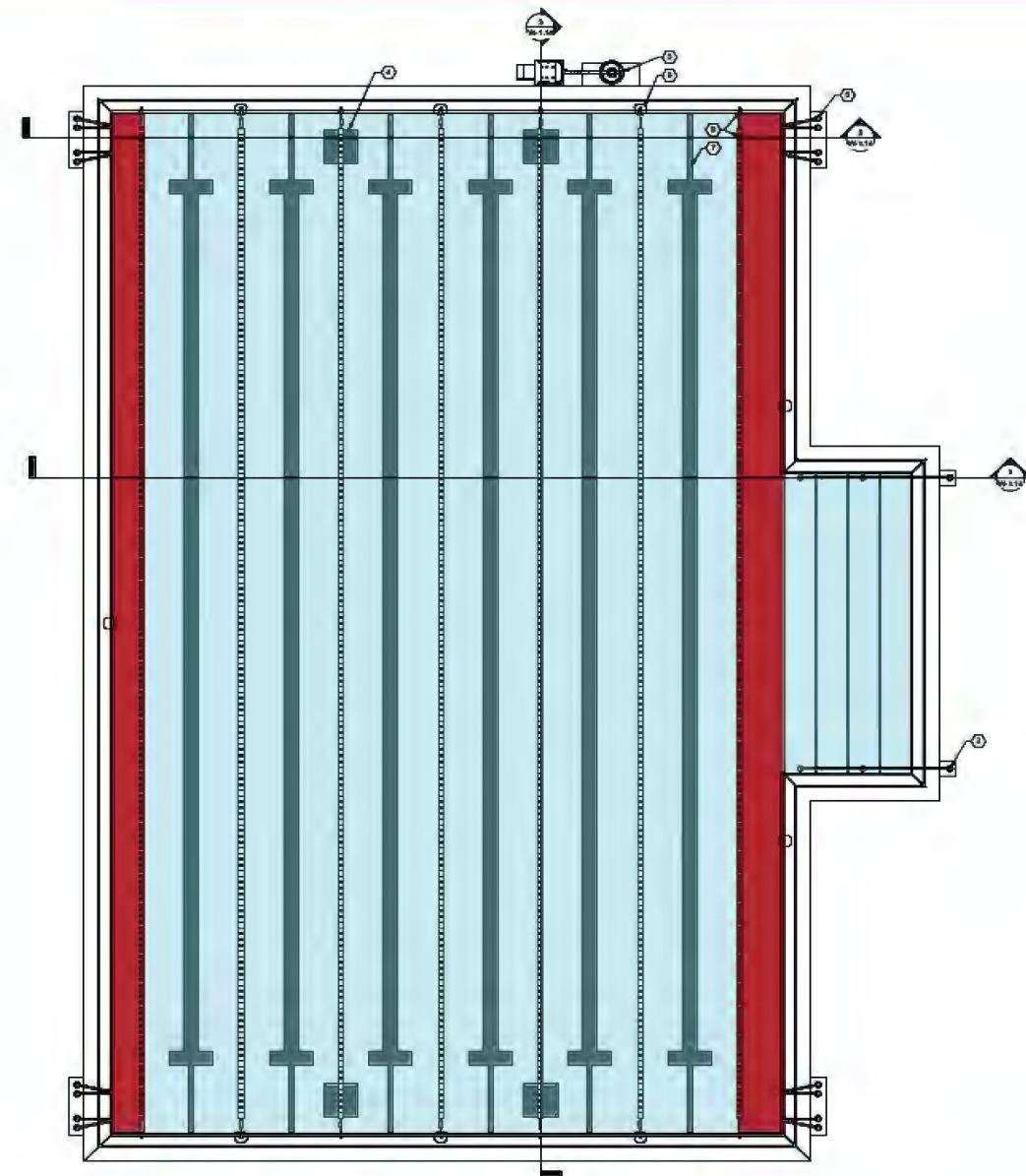
Splash Pad



OR

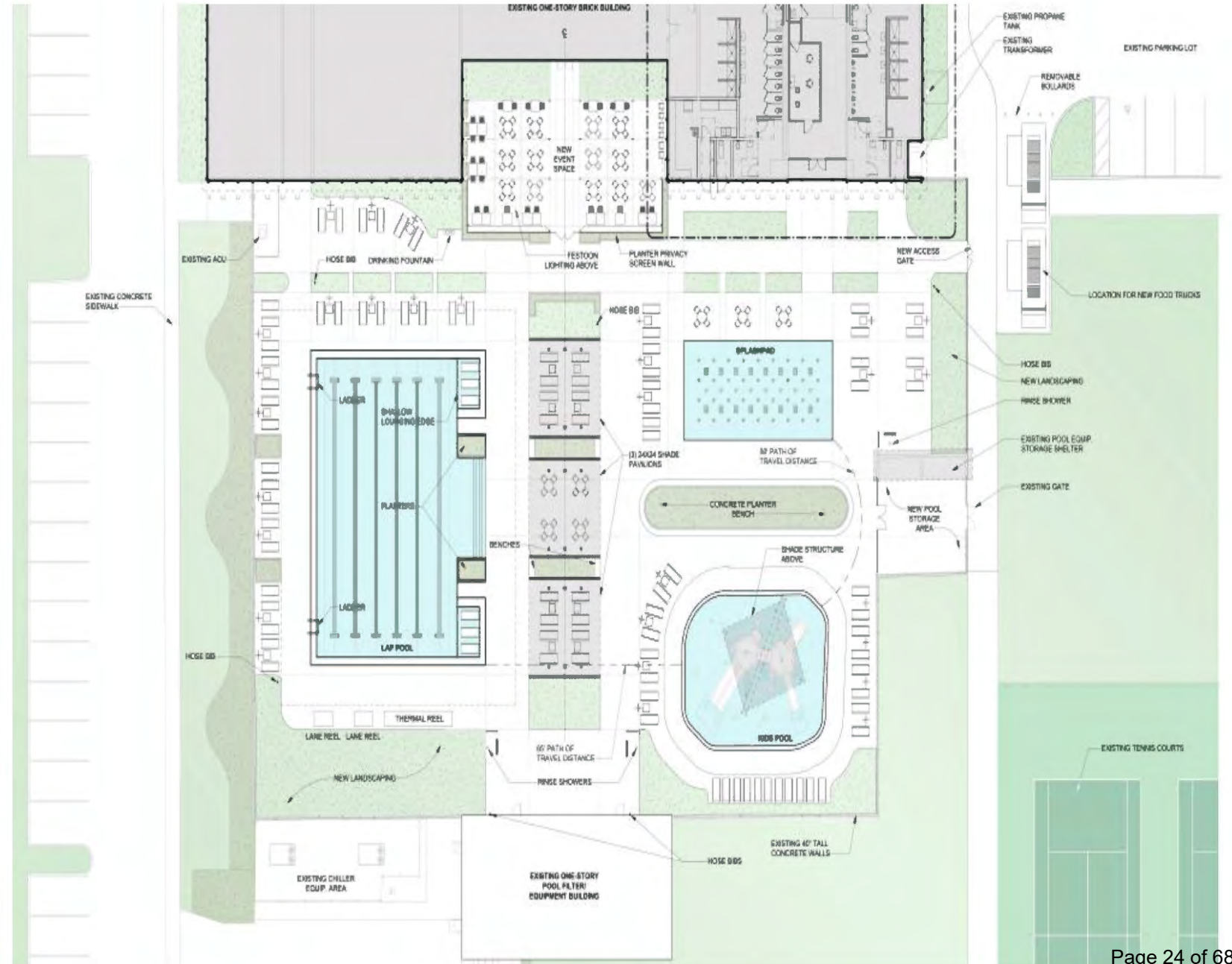


Combo- Zero Depth & Splash Pad



6 Lane Pool

LOCATION: BARTOW CIVIC CENTER



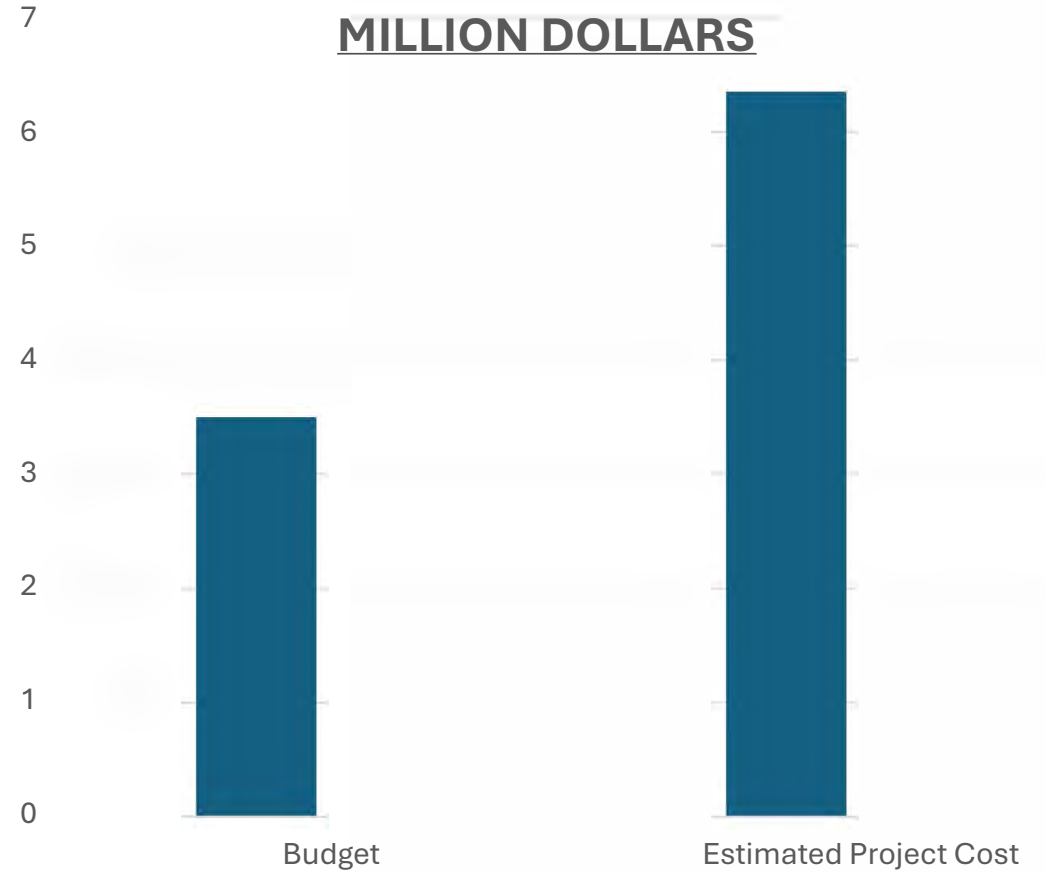


PROJECT BUDGET

- \$3.5 MILLION

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

- \$6.03 TO \$6.35 MILLION



*Estimate Provided by Straughn Trout and Martin Aquatics- July 2025

REACURRING COSTS



Estimated Personnel Cost

Year Round:

Contracted- \$1.29 Million

City- \$1.2 Million

Seasonal:

City- \$530,000

(25 Weeks)

19 total staff- Swim Lessons, Water
Aerobics, Open Swin, Rentals, Practice,
office, maintenance



Estimated Operating Costs

Year Round:

\$210,000

Seasonal:

City- \$101,000

(25 Weeks)

Utilities, chemicals, water treatment,
maintenance/repairs, insurance,
supplies



Estimated Total Yearly Reoccurring Costs:

Year Round:

Contracted- \$1.5 Million

City- \$1.41 Million

Seasonal:

Contracted- \$680,358

City-\$631,000

(25 Weeks)

LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Peter Lear
Finance Director



City of Bartow

Upcoming Legislative Financial Impacts



- **Property Tax Changes**
 - Elimination of homestead property taxes – This will result in \$3,147,831 in lost General Fund revenue based on current budget
- **Limit Enterprise Fund Transfers to 10%**
 - This will result in reduced General Fund revenue of \$2.2M
- **Florida CFO proposal of 10% reduction in budget**
 - This would require a General Fund reduction of \$3.8M
- **Total Impact of proposed legislation - \$9.2M reduced General Fund Budget**



Upcoming Legislative Financial Impacts

- **Current General Fund Revenue** **\$38.4M**
- **Legislative Reductions** **(\$ 9.2M)**
- **General Fund New Budget** **\$29.2M**

- **Pool Costs**
 - **Additional Capital Needed** **\$2.5M to \$2.85M projected**
 - **Operating Costs** **\$1.4M/year minimum**




Competing General Fund Priorities

- **Police Department Budget** \$ 10.9M
- **Fire Department Subsidy** \$ 1.4M
- **Parks & Recreation Budget** \$ 7.5M
- **Employer of Choice** \$ 1.5M
- **Transportation Budget** \$ 1.0M
- **Golf Course/Mulligans Subsidy** \$ 1.4M

Recommendation



- **Based on current legislative proposals, additional capital costs of pool and annual operating costs, the City cannot reasonably afford to build and operate a community pool at this time.**



Bartow CRA Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

Mural Renderings

Wednesday, January 28, 2026



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Two Concepts for the Over the Branch Park

715 W. Polk Street Bartow, FL 33830



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Over the Branch Park Rendering Exhibit A



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Over the Branch Park Rendering- Exhibit A2



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Three Concepts for the Downtown Restroom

277 Summerlin Street Bartow, FL 33830



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Downtown Restrooms Renderings- Exhibit B



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Downtown Restroom Renderings-Exhibit B2



Rendering Concepts for Public Restrooms

Downtown Restroom Renderings-Exhibit B3





Bartow Parks Planning Process

Commissioner Workshop

February 11th, 2026

5:30-7:00PM





Agenda

Introductions

Why Are We Here Tonight?

Overview Master Plan and Facilities

Precedent Imagery and Programming

Questions

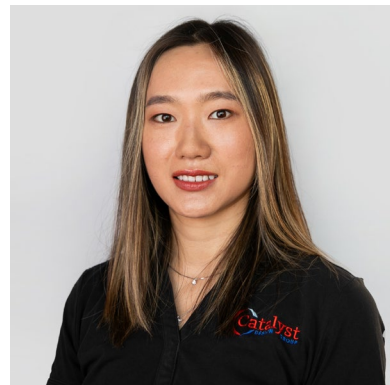
Meet the Design Team



Bruce Hall
Catalyst
Principal
Landscape
Architect



Tim Salka
Catalyst
Landscape
Architect

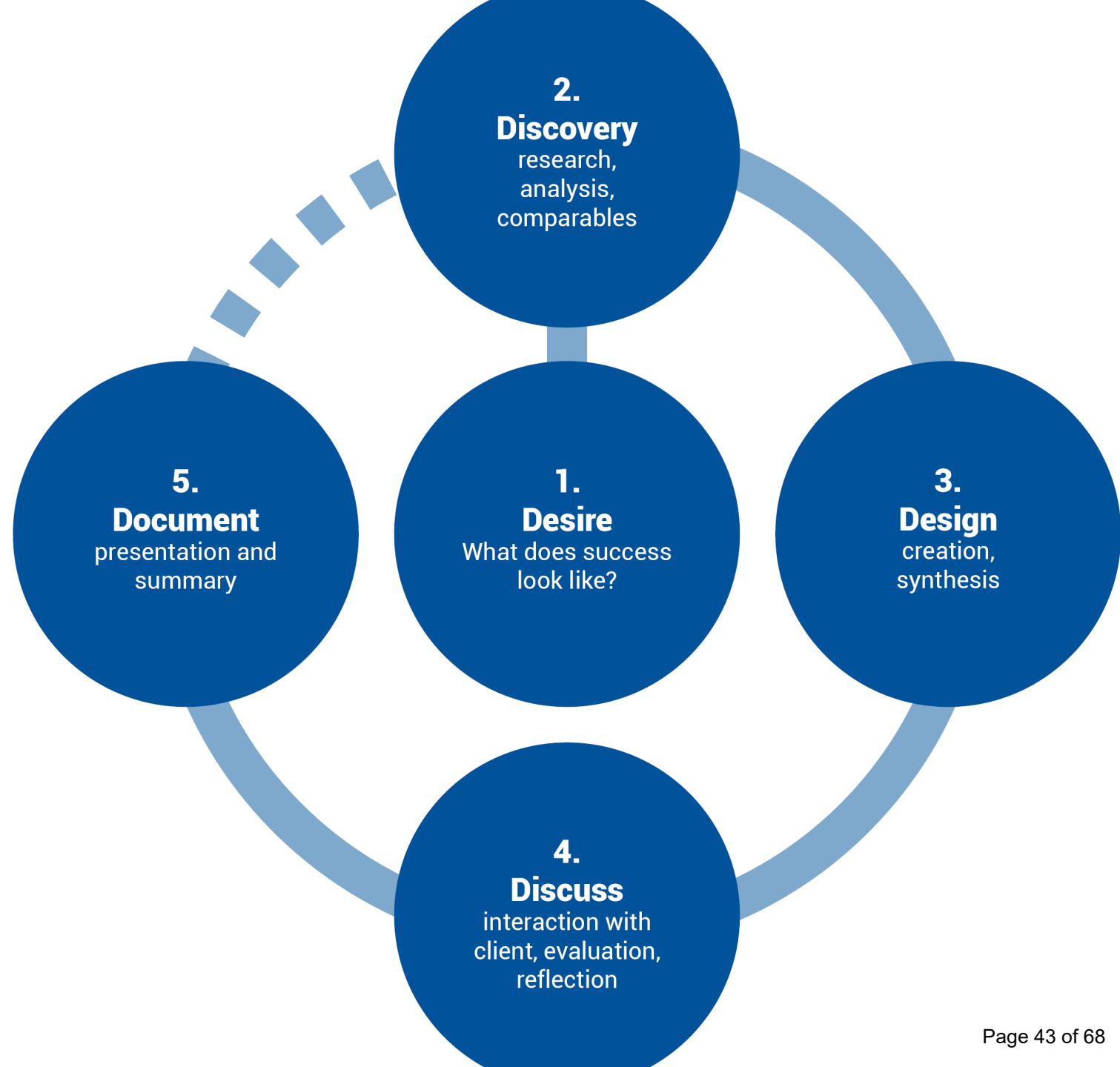


Wanchen Wang
Catalyst
Landscape
Designer

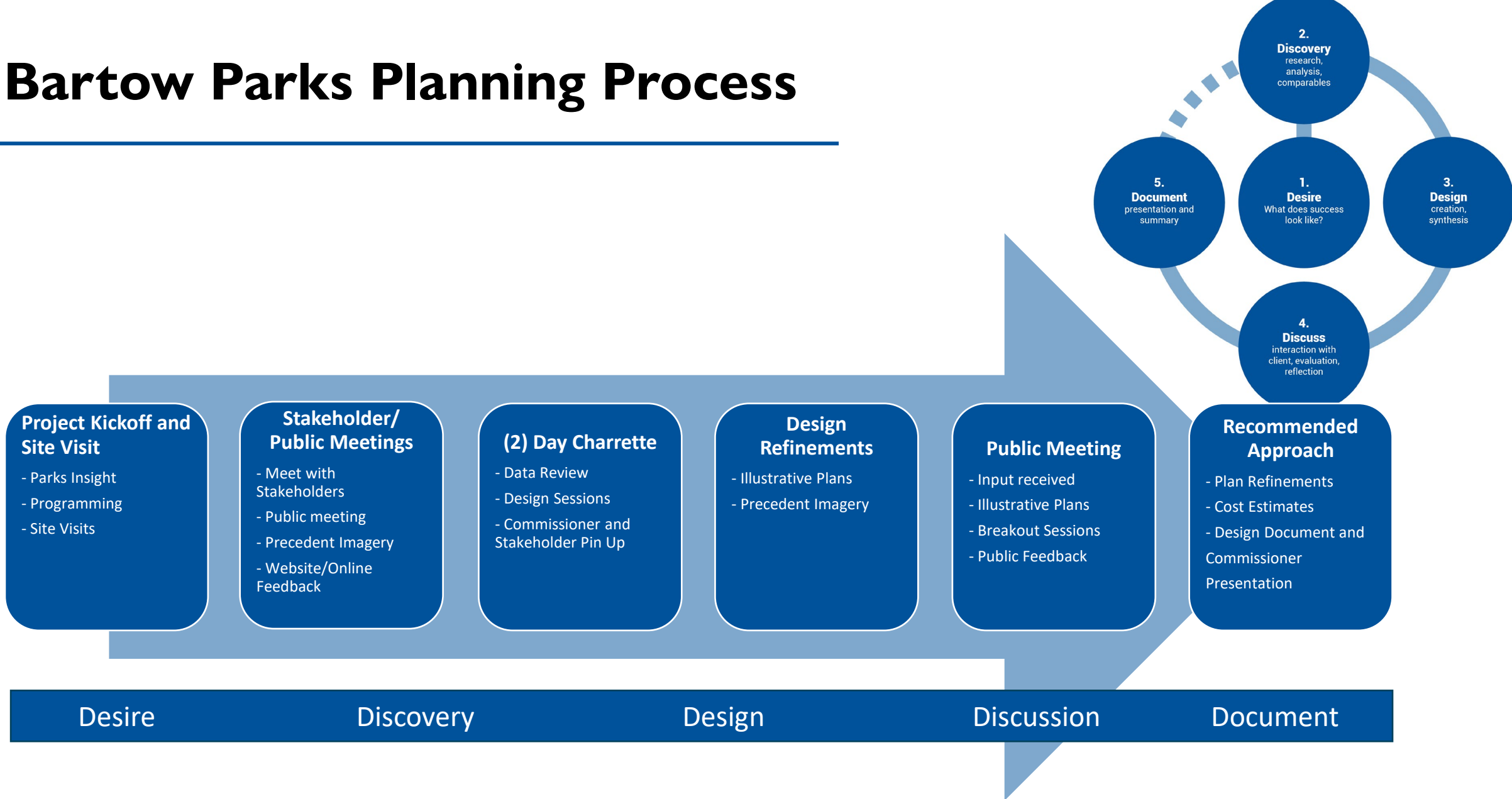


Erick Gomez
Catalyst
Landscape
Designer

5-D Design Process



Bartow Parks Planning Process



PUBLIC INPUT – SOCIAL PINPOINT



[About the Project](#)

[Provide input!](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Advancing our City Parks

The City of Bartow is excited to gather ideas and advance the services provided in our parks system. This site will provide information and provide opportunities for public input on the planning and design of our city parks.

PUBLIC INPUT – PUBLIC MEETING



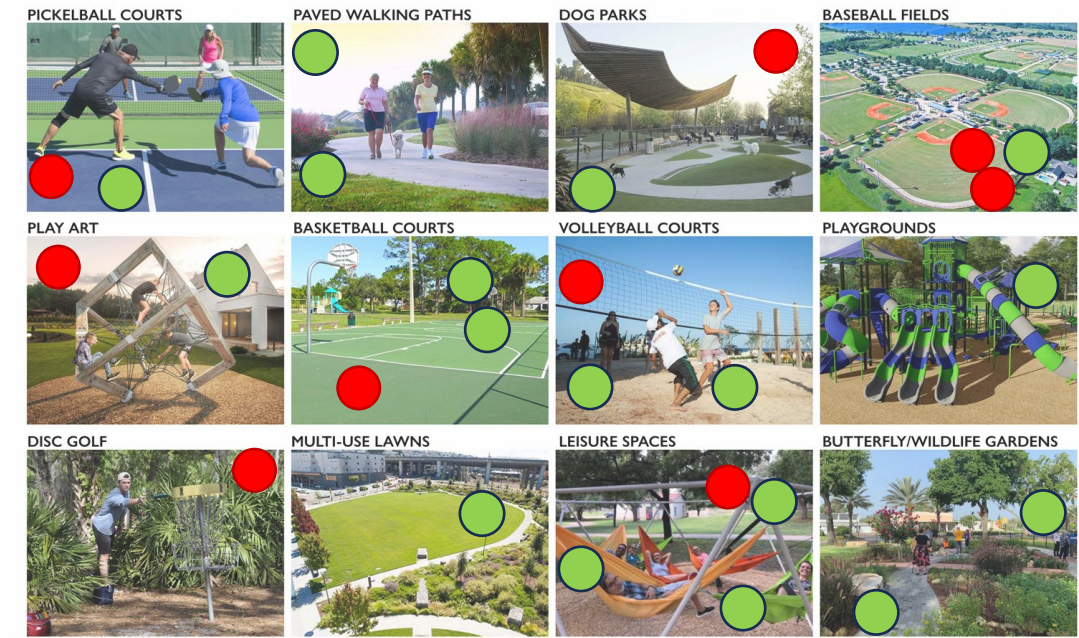
CHARRETTE – WORKING SESSION



Public Meeting Stations

- (5) Stations
 - **Station 1** - Bartow Sports Complex
 - Existing Features
 - Opportunities
 - **Station 2** – Mary Holland Park
 - Existing Features
 - Reading Trail and Amphitheater
 - Opportunities
 - **Station 3** – Bartow Civic Center, Mosaic, Pittas
 - Existing Features
 - Opportunities
 - **Station 4** – Community Centers, Pocket Parks and Cemetery
 - Existing Features
 - Opportunities
 - **Station 5** – Parks Programming
 - Active, Passive, Playgrounds, Sports

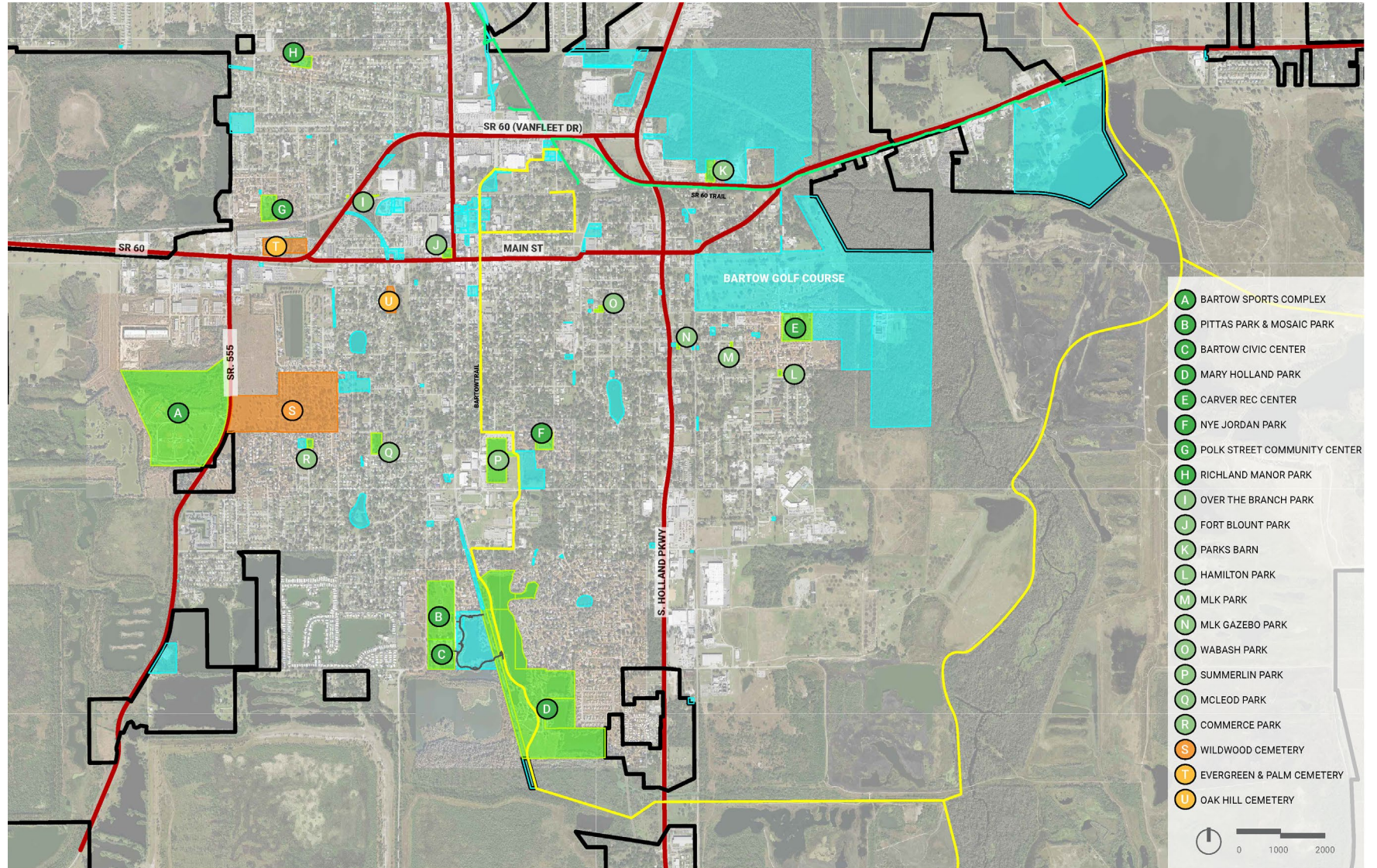
***Each station will have Post-it Notes and Flip Charts for written input.



Parks Distribution

Overview:

- Park Distribution
- Parks Programming



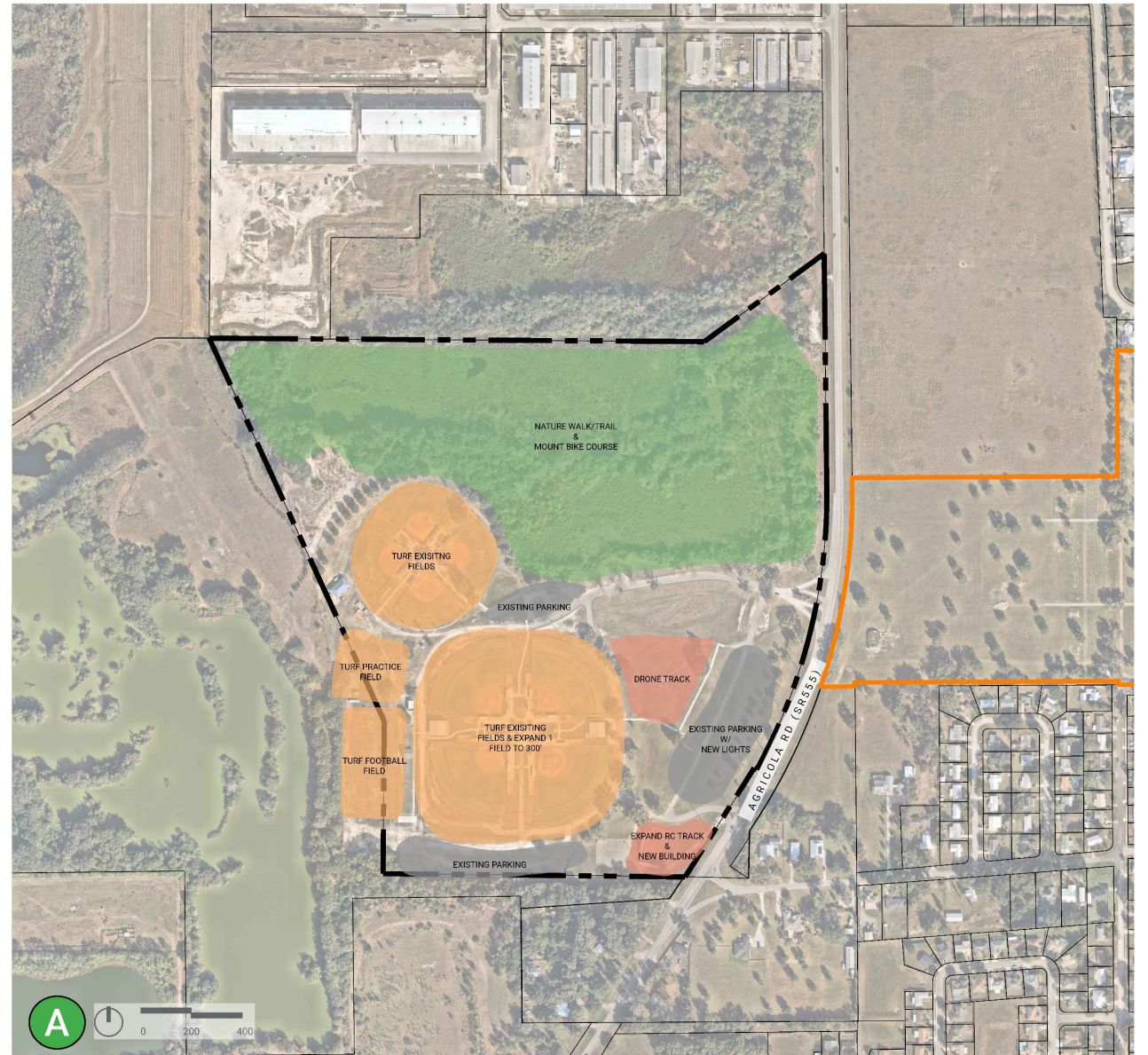
Bartow Sports Complex

Existing Program:

- North Softball Fields
- South Softball Fields
- Football Field with Concessions/Seating
- RC Track
- Parking

Potential Program:

- Drone Course
- Expanded RC Facilities/Restroom/Viewing Platform
- Synthetic Turf Football Field
- Nature Trail
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Expansion of Softball



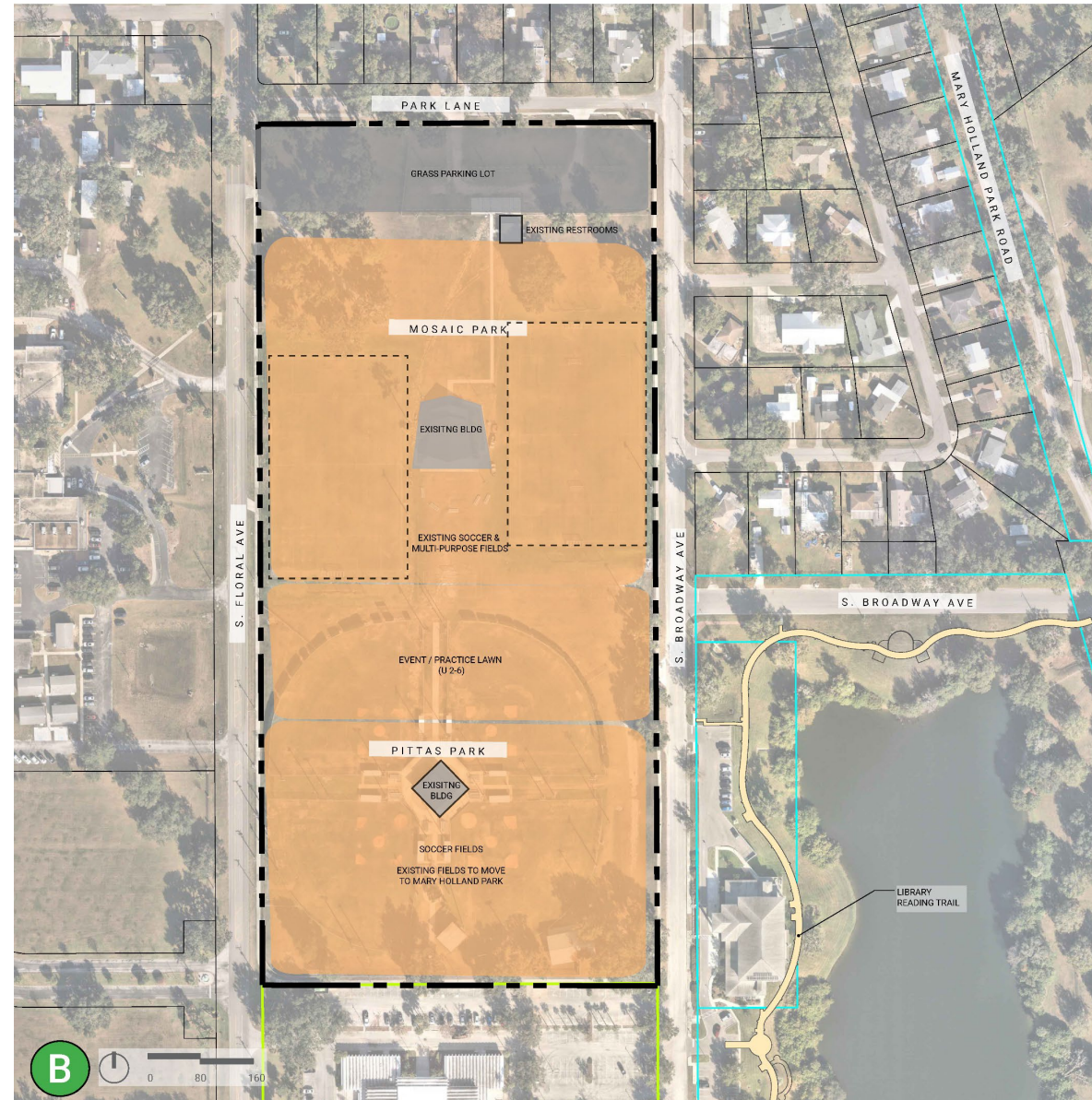
Mosaic Park and Pittas Baseball Complex

Existing Program:

- Grass Parking
- New Restrooms
- Multipurpose Fields
- Fencing
- Baseball Fields
- Bandshell/Stage

Potential Program:

- Multipurpose Field Expansion
- Potential Baseball Relocation to MHP
- Food Truck Area
- Expanded Parking
- Park Enhancements for Events and Festivities



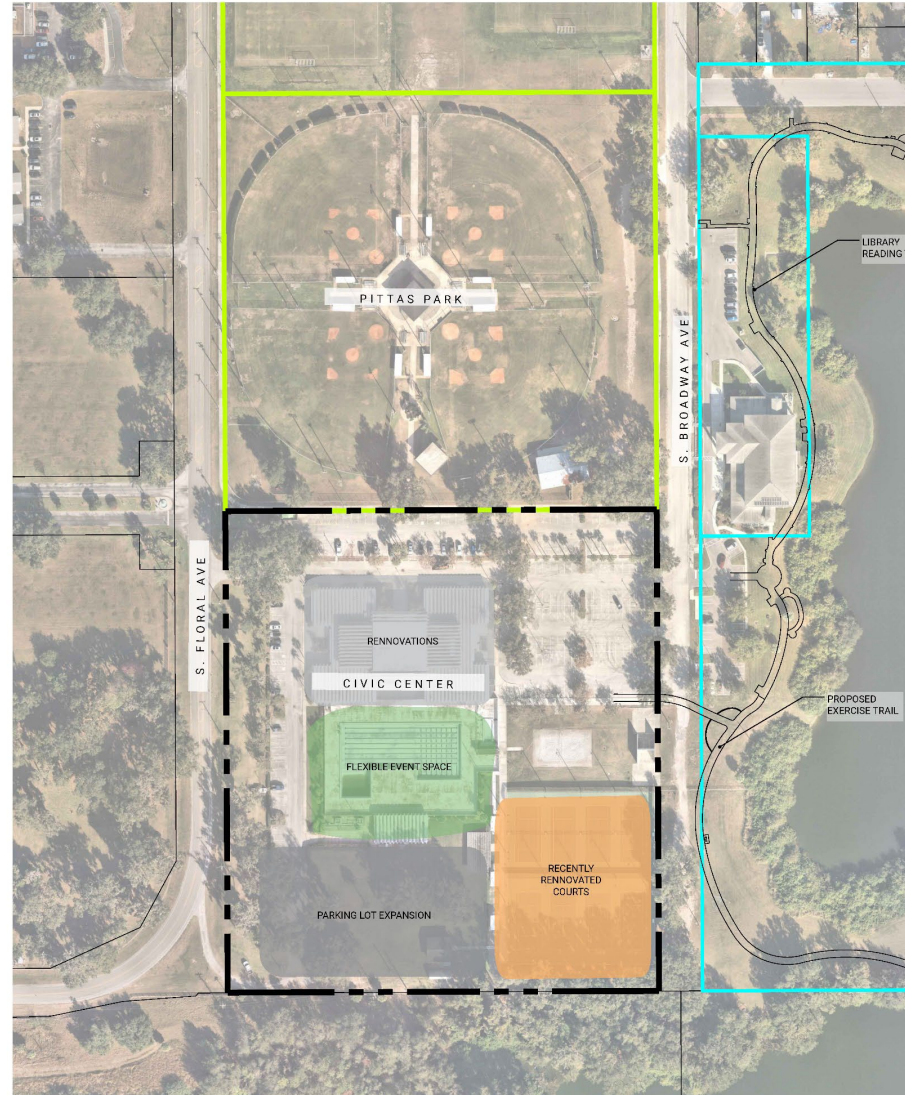
Bartow Civic Center

Existing Program:

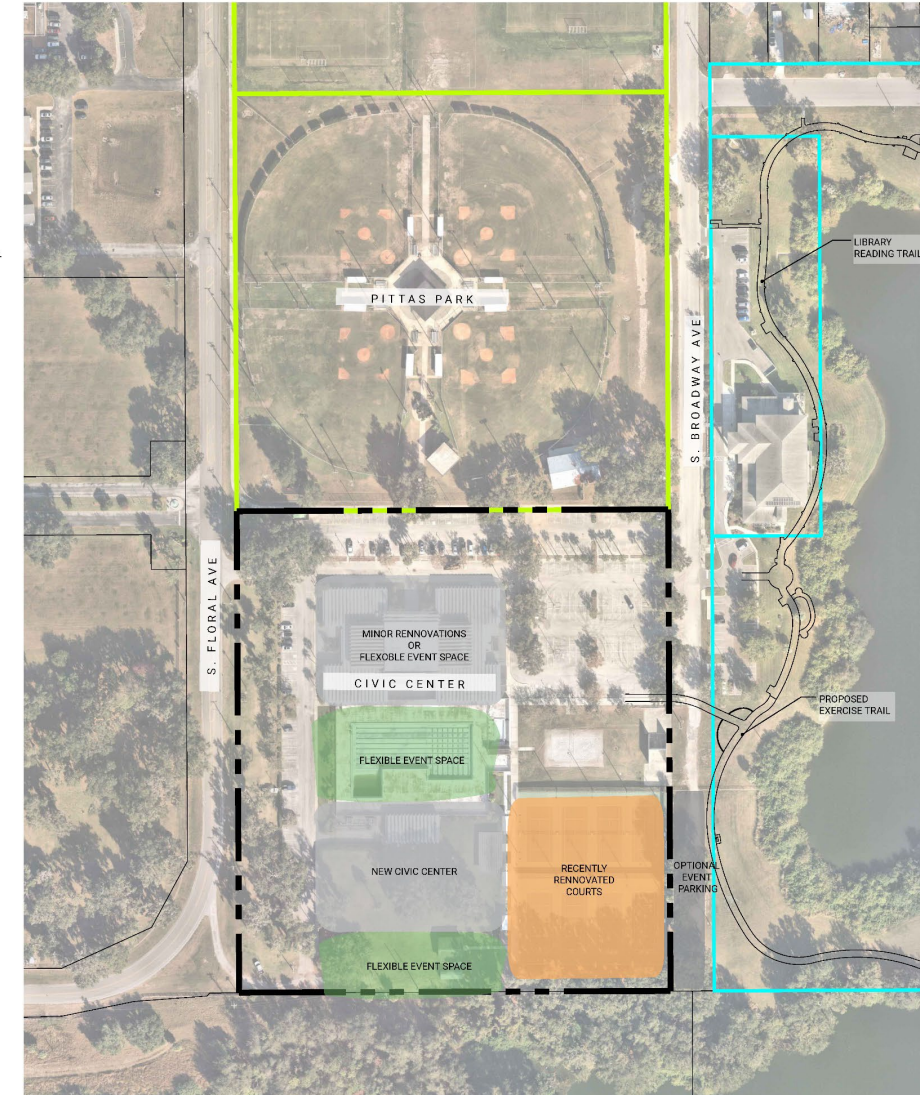
- Civic Center
- Parking
- Renovated Tennis Facility
- Aquatics Center (non-functioning)
- Volleyball and Wall Ball

Potential Program:

- Civic Center Renovations
 - To Current Building
 - Complete Rebuild
- Flexible Event Space/ Weddings
Rentals/Outdoor Passive Play Courtyard
- Additional Parking
- Potential Enhanced Connections to Pittas



OPTION 1



OPTION 2



Bartow Library - Amphitheater Alternatives

Existing Program:

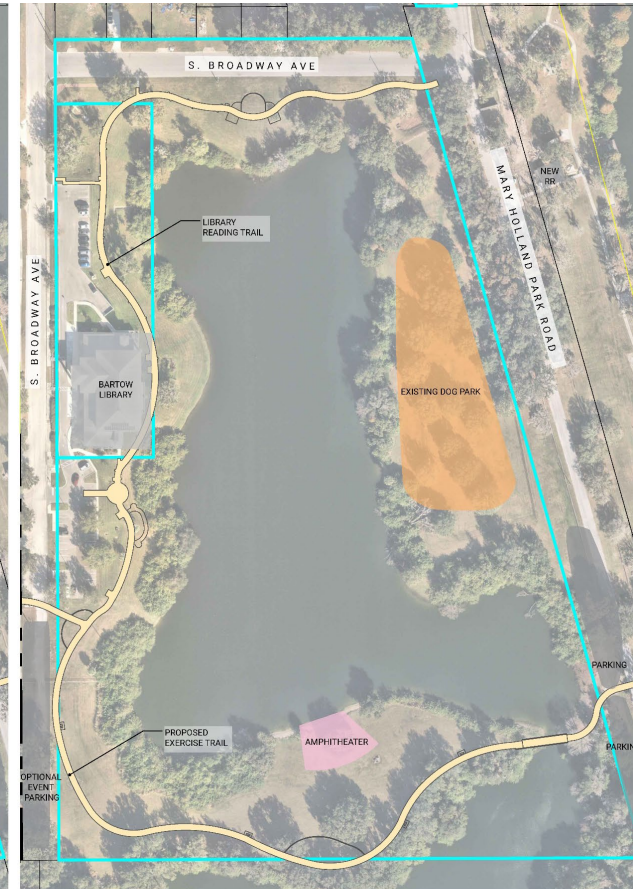
- Reading Trail (under construction)
- Musical Play Features
- Small Playground/Climbing Structure

Potential Program:

- Trail Connections to Mary Holland Park on North and Southside
- Exercise Stations
- Benches
- Amphitheater (3) proposed locations for consideration



OPTION 1



OPTION 2



OPTION 3



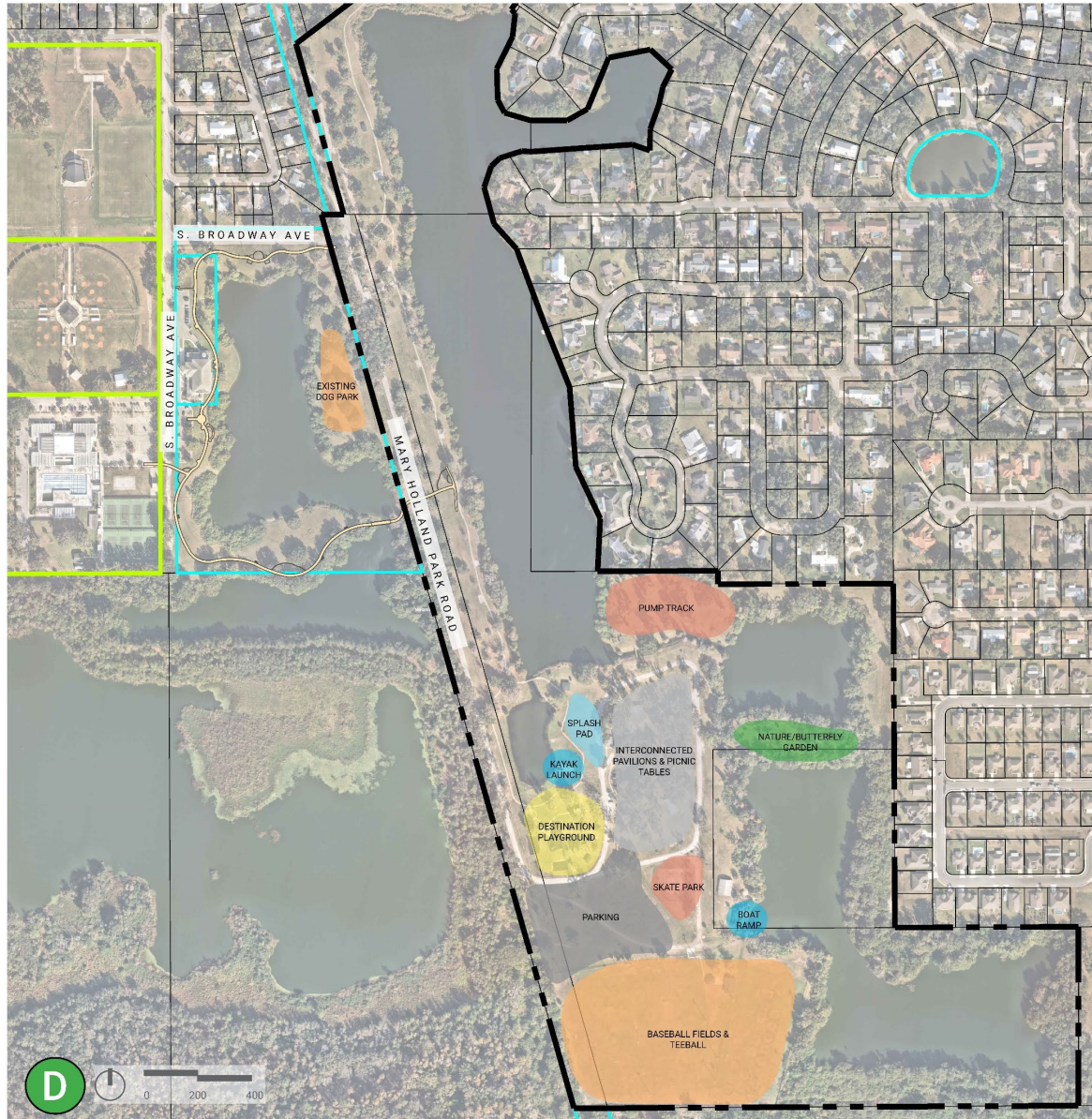
Mary Holland Park

Existing Program:

- Dog Park
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Soccer Fields
- Boat Launch
- Kayak Launch (not ADA compliant)
- Camp Cricket (abandoned)

Potential Program:

- Pump Track
- Skate Park
- Splash Pad
- Destination Playground
- Baseball Fields
- Accessible Kayak Launch
- Pollinator/Butterfly Gardens
- New Boat Launch
- Interconnected Pavilions



Bartow “Central Park” Concept

Bartow Recreation Destination:

- Encompasses – Mosaic, Pittas, the Civic Center, Library and Mary Holland Park
- Viewed as the Primary Recreation Asset for City of Bartow
- Consolidated top tier amenities
 - Civic and Event Center
 - Soccer Fields
 - Baseball Fields
 - Trail and Fitness Enhancements
 - Multipurpose Fields
 - Destination Playground
 - Splash Pad
 - Skate Park
 - Pump Track
 - Dog Park
 - Amphitheater
 - Water Access
 - Boat Launch
 - Kayak Ramp and Rentals



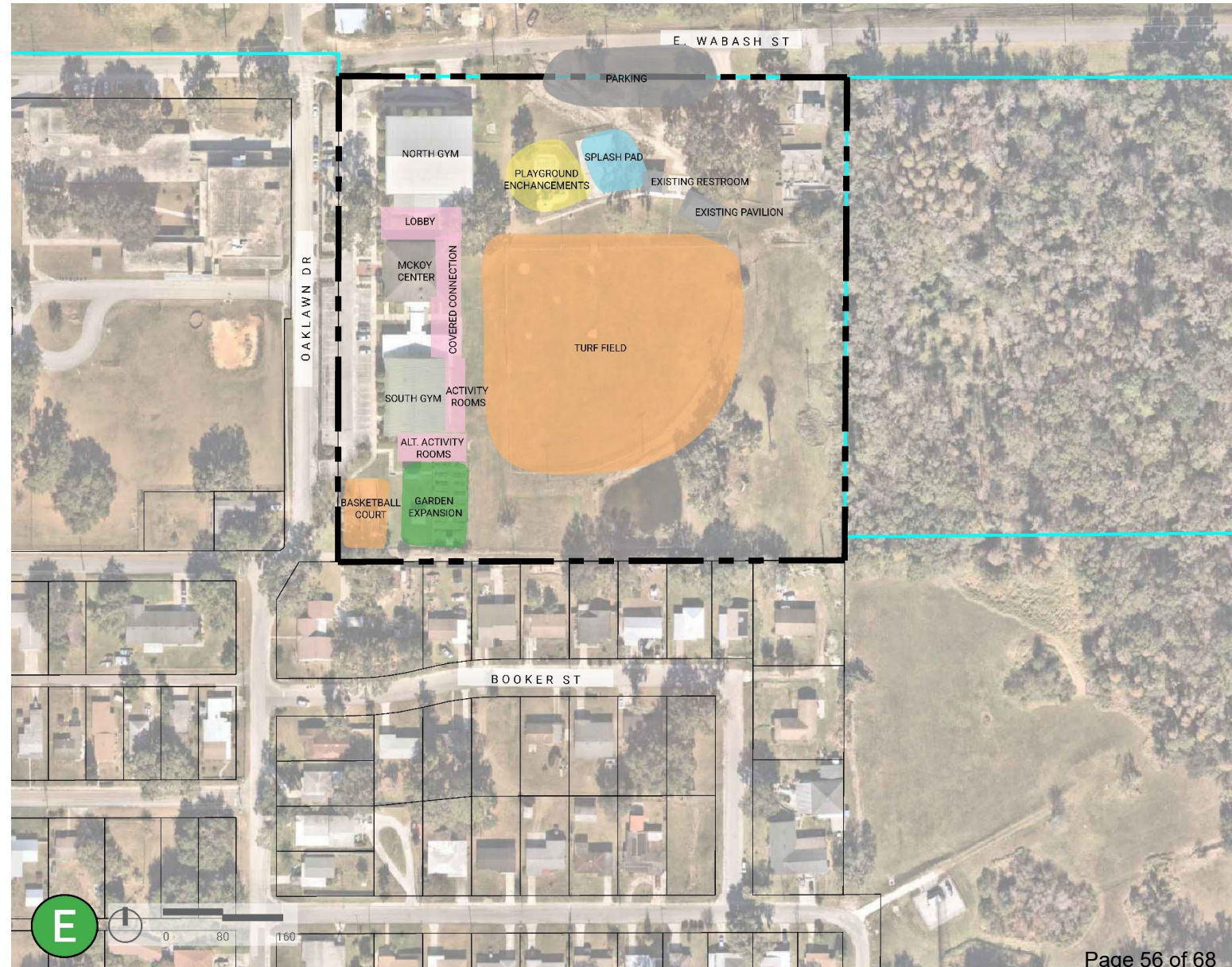
Carver Recreation Center

Existing Program:

- North Gym
- McCoy Center
- South Gym
- Wall Ball
- Community Garden
- Baseball Field
- Playground
- New Restroom Facility
- Pavilion

Potential Program:

- Splash Pad
- Basketball Court
- Community Garden Expansion
- Playground Enhancements
- Central Lobby Space and connections between buildings
- Activity Rooms



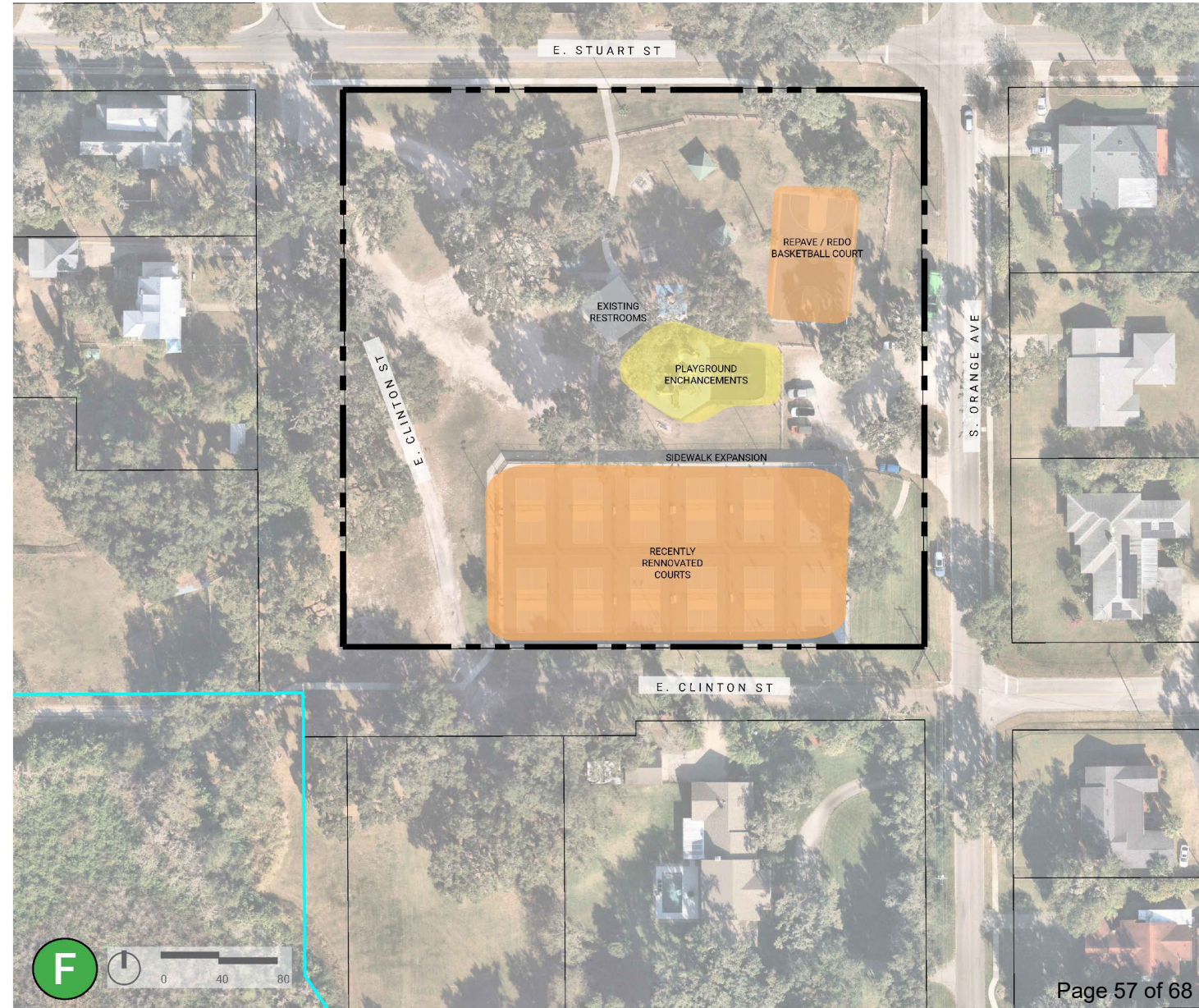
Nye Jordan Park

Existing Program:

- New Restroom
- New Pickleball Courts (12)
- Playground
- Basketball Court

Potential Program:

- Playground Enhancement
- Basketball Court Renovation
- Sidewalk Expansion



Polk Street Community Center

Existing Program:

- Basketball Court
- Playground
- Condemned Restrooms
- Baseball Field
- Batting Cages

Potential Program:

- Resurfacing Basketball and New Lighting
- New Pavillion/Restrooms
- Splash Pad
- Inclusive Playground
- Field Renovations
- ¼ Mile Walking Trail



Richland Manor Park

Existing Program:

- New Restrooms
- New Tennis (1) and Pickleball Courts (4)
- Renovated Playground

Potential Program:

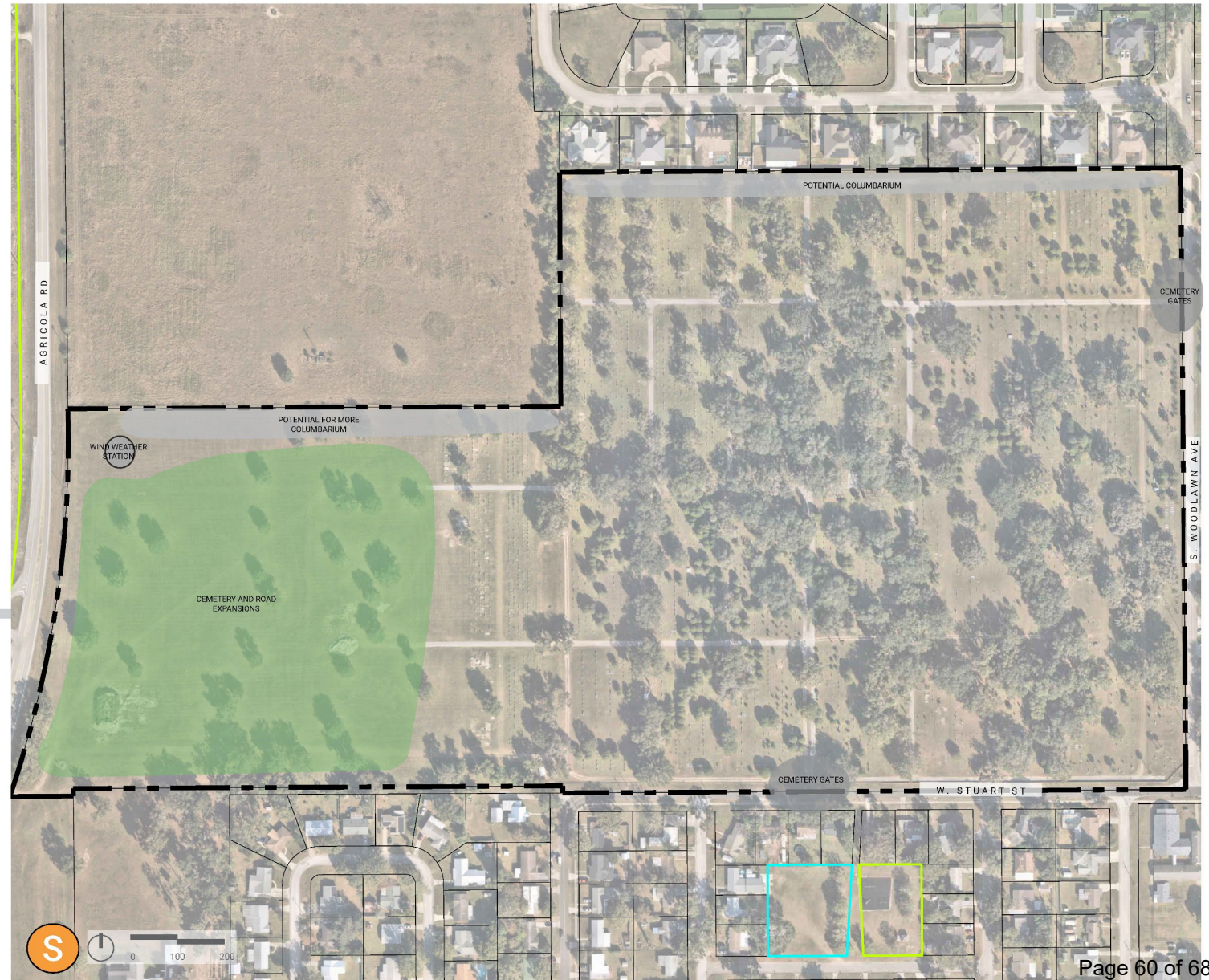
- Playground Enhancements



Wildwood Cemetery

Potential Program:

- Westward Expansion and Driveway Network
- Cemetery Gates
- Columbarium along Northern Perimeter
- Landscape Buffers



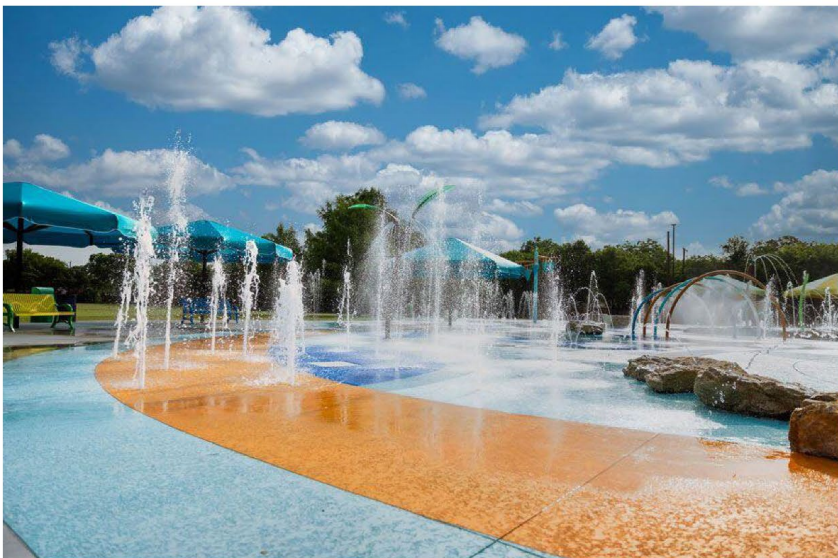
Active Recreation - Imagery



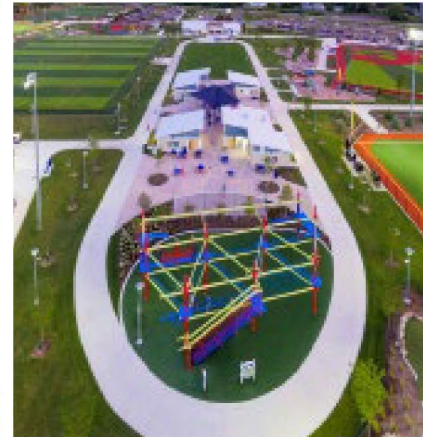
Active Recreation - Imagery



Active Recreation - Imagery



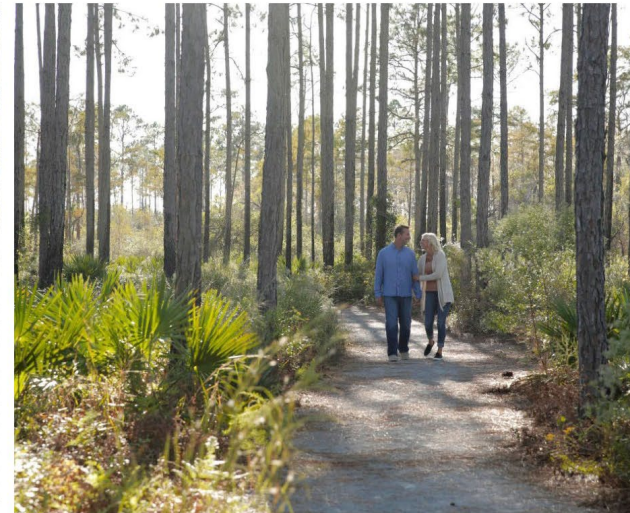
Playground- Imagery



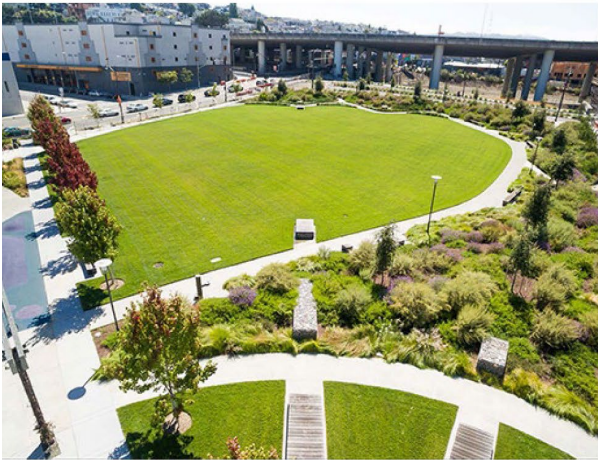
Playground- Imagery



Passive Recreation - Imagery



Programming- Imagery



Discussion- Questions

