

**Best Practices**

The Florida Recreation and Park Association adopted a comprehensive Strategic Plan in 2015. That Plan is based on four foundational pillars – Health, Community Building, Environmental Sustainability and Resiliency, and Economic Impact/Development.

The Association is in search of Best Practices in each of these four areas, which can serve as a resource for parks and recreation professionals. We realize that “Best Practice” can be broadly applied and the meaning varies depending on the environment and industry one works within.

For the purposes of the FRPA Strategic Plan, the Association’s Board of Directors has adopted and will apply the following definition:

FRPA Strategic Best Practices – Methods, professional guidance, benchmarks and technical expertise centered around a FRPA strategic pillar (Health, Environment, Community Building, Economic Impact) that are evidence-based or proven through experience to support positive results and may be replicated or utilized by other parks and recreation agencies toward achieving a similar desired outcome.

“Evidence-based or proven through experience” indicates that the best practice has had some research, or long term monitoring conducted to show that the practice is having a positive outcome when applied. For example: When applying the best practice of mowing and over-seeding in this manner, for a period of one year, we have been able to extend the life of our turf by 6 months thus reducing expenses $X; OR When integrating physical activity and nutrition education in our after school programming, we partnered with the University of XYZ to measure increased health of participants, and have shown a 24% reduction in BMI of participants.

We realize that there may be a plethora of “success stories” that are not evidence based, but have produced positive results for an agency, and may also have value as a shared resource.

Submissions will be evaluated by the Best Practice Workgroup to determine if the submission meets the criteria of “Best Practice” as we have defined, or if it should be catalogued as a “success story”.



**Best Practice Submission**

Agency: City of Winter Haven

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**Area of Best Practice:**COMMUNITY BUILDING PILLAR: Assessing Community Needs and Resources   
ex: assessment of built environment and sense of community, how do you gather input

**Summary of Best Practice:** (include description of the practice, reason for adopting/implementing best practice, measurement of effectiveness of the practice, what is your evidence that the practice is working, etc.)

*Every 10-15 years the Chamber of Commerce has spearheaded a Community Visioning Effort which has resulted in a Community Visioning Document. The first adopted in 2002 “Our Future By Design” outlined a plan based on Community input on priorities of the Community. The plan included priorities related to quality of life such as park enhancements, multimodal trail development, environmental/lake preservation, downtown redevelopment, etc.. This document has served as the Community’s/City’s Blueprint for initiatives and projects. The document has been and is cited frequently when allocating funding or support for projects. Most recently a refresh document called “Aspire Winter Haven” was completed in 2012, which contains many of the same goals and objectives.*

*These documents were based on many public input sessions, surveys and focus groups. The City and Community has stayed very focused on these documents and many projects and initiatives have been achieved/are in the pipe line because of a uniform support for the documents. Much of the success of the Winter Haven Community can be found in the original document from 2002. They have been very effective.*

**Frequency Best Practice is Applied:** (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually)

*Daily as in much of our work and projects are derived from the plan.*

**Who Performs the Best Practice Function within your Agency:** (contracted, in-house parks staff, in-house recreation staff, citizens, etc.)

*The City Commission has established that we will follow these documents.*

**Positive Outcome of the Best Practice** (please summarize the evidence based benefit that has been derived by the agency from the best practice)**:**

*Essentially, when following items in the plans we are successful and have overall support within the Community. With some exceptions.*

**Awards/Recognitions/Designations Received as a Result of the Best Practice** (please share any awards or designations received, or publications that have featured this best practice)**:**

Links to the plans are below:

<http://aspirewinterhaven.com/wp-content/uploads/Full%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>

<http://www.egovlink.com/public_documents300/winterhaven/published_documents/Winter%20Haven/Our%20Future%20by%20Design/Our%20Future%20by%20Design%20-%20Vision%20Achieved%20-%202002%20to%202011.pdf>

**Grants or Funding Received (if any):**

**What other Best Practices would you suggest we collect?**

**Submit this Form electronically to** [charla@frpa.org](mailto:charla@frpa.org)

Type directly onto this document, copy and paste form for as many practices as you would like to submit, and submit as a Word Document. Please DO NOT pdf the form.