

**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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Orange County Parks and Recreation Division\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_Alicia Baxter\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Contact Phone with Area Code: \_\_\_407-836-6205\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**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.)

* All citizens are given the opportunity to provide their input to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, regardless of their age, abilities or culture. This committee is comprised of 10 members appointed by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners, each of whom represents a different Orange County District (1-6), the Mayor’s office, Bicycle/Pedestrian, Nature Resource/Environmental, Senior Citizens or Youth Recreational Activities. During the committee’s monthly meetings with the Manager and Assistant Manager of Parks and Recreation and the Planning Department Project Manager, members pass along citizen input they have received.
* Parks and Recreation Planning staff is involved in external boards, such as the Development Review Committee, that afford the public an opportunity to provide input during scheduled meetings. Additionally, all new parks and all capital improvement projects are reviewed before the Board of County Commission for public input as part of the budgeting process.
* Another way in which the entire community is involved in the planning of new facilities and programs is through participation in public meetings. Events are advertised well in advance on the Orange County Parks and Recreation website and in local media outlets.
* Staff continuously seeks input from the community through various surveys. Data collected from these surveys influences what programs are offered, where and when these programs are offered as well as what improvements can be made at individual sites. Additionally, Marketing Staff utilizes Survey Monkey to gather information from the general public not interested in attending public meetings.
* Citizens can provide feedback and gather information online through Orange County Government’s 311 program. This is a citizen’s link to government, allowing them to be involved in the process by not only requesting information but by also providing feedback. Citizens can ask questions and provide input via the parks@ocfl.net email on a wide range of topics related to parks.
* Lastly, the entire community is involved in the planning process is through direct interaction with staff. In most cases, this transpires during regularly scheduled meetings between staff and various groups that represent a diverse cross-section of the community (Neighborhood Associations, Friends Of groups, etc.). During these meetings, information on a broad range of topics is routinely exchanged between the various parties.

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

As outlined above.

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

Planning Staff, Public Relations Information Officer, Managers, Site Supervisors

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

The main benefits include government transparency, better identification of user needs and priorities, and more quality customer service/heightened public relations.

**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)**:**

N/A

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

N/A

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

**Submit this Form electronically to** 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.