



## 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 Hialeah Department of Parks and Recreation

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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.)

- The City of Hialeah has many community assets including over 15 parks with recreation facilities, a gymnasium and seven aquatic centers that serve as safe areas where youth can participate in sports and exercise activities. The parks total over 208 acres and have 23 baseball fields, batting cages, 15 mixed use fields, a soccer field, a track, an exercise walking trail, 37 basketball courts, 26 tennis courts, two hockey courts and 14 tot lots, most of which are fully accessible for persons with disabilities. Five community police substations keep each sector of the city safe, and police monitor all parks constantly. Furthermore, the City of Hialeah has annexed over 100 acres of land, which is currently under design and will provide resources, schools and parks to accommodate more activities, as well as allow more youth to benefit from physical activities.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for providing quality recreational, fitness, community service, cultural, and educational facilities and programs that serve the citizens of Hialeah. Our department seeks to fulfil our community needs through assessing and identifying the strengths and resources available in our community to meet the needs of the children, youth, and families that we serve. This continued assessment focuses on the capabilities of our staff, community, which also includes our citizens, agencies, and organizations within our city boundaries. We have used comment cards and open forums to gather further information from our community and staff on the activities and attractions they would like to see at our parks and special events.

- The Department of Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of recreation activities to area residents and visitors. Services include the provision of active parks, picnic and scenic areas. Active recreation programming includes youth and adult athletics (i.e. girls and boys, football, soccer, baseball, softball, volleyball, cheerleading, swimming and water polo), summer and holiday out of school camps and a host of other activities for citizens of all ages. City park facilities and community centers provide meeting space and host a number of arts and crafts and fitness activities.

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

- Daily

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

- It's a joint effort between our contracted vendors, in-house parks staff and in-house recreation staff.

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

### 2017 Goals

- Establish a Marketing plan for rentable facilities
- Permission for beer & wines at rentals
- Renting facilities (ALL)
- Adding gazebos at identified locations (for rentals)
- Adding specialized classes such as Karate & Cultural Arts
- Update Goodlet theatre (Systems & Restrooms)
- Add Adult Basketball programming
- Identify a location and build a dog park
- Supplement our current heating systems with Solar heating systems at designated pools
- Expand the virtual fitness program
- Renovate Bright Park
- Create a department master plan
- Host a 5K Run
- Host a Golf tournament
- Publish a rental booklet
- Renovate Milander Tennis Center
- Increase marketing of Aquatics/ Recreation Program with more diversified web tools
- Explore feasible locations to create bike and walking trails around Hialeah
- Identify locations in the City for Linear Parks

- Add to our summer program the implementation of healthy eating through Short Chef
- Establish a 501C3 for Parks and Recreation
- Program a new event at Milander Park / Pool called Splash and Dash
- Establish annual reports for each specific facility
- Add additional outdoor fitness areas in identified facilities

**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?**

- N/A

**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.