

CASE STATEMENT



THE MISSION

The mission of Bonnet Springs Park is to enrich our community through nature, culture, recreation, and education.

THE VISION

Bonnet Springs Park creates a destination within walking distance of downtown Lakeland, where art, recreation, flora, fauna, and tranquility intersect by design. This unique place will provide social and economic benefits for all in a blended urban/natural park, and make the quality of life for future generations of Floridians better.

THE NEED

Great parks complement the personality of a city and serve to unify a city's diverse population by offering public spaces that serve the needs of many.

- Fulfill the need for an urban park that unites the city, bridging the gap between socio-economic disparities.
- Connect downtown to northwest Lakeland, geographically and demographically diverse areas.
- Improve a neighborhood that is significantly under-served and economically challenged, a community where the median annual household income is less than \$29,000.
- Reverse the ecological contamination of former rail operations, and preserve the property in and around Lake Bonnet and Bonnet Springs.
- Strengthen the local tourism economy.
- Enhance the quality of life for residents and bring visitors to our community.

THE PLAN

We endeavor to create a privately funded, public urban park that will provide economic and social benefits for the entire community, in a county with the nation's 5th highest rate of suburban poverty. A 10-minute walk from downtown Lakeland, Bonnet Springs Park sits on 168 acres that are located between West Memorial Boulevard and George Jenkins Boulevard.

The land was previously approved for industrial use, but it has undergone extensive land preparation and remediation to enable safe recreational use. Sasaki, a Boston-based group of world-renowned park designers, has designed a transformational, multi-use urban park that will benefit all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Explorations V Children's Museum, which has served the community's children for over 28 years, will relocate from downtown Lakeland and function as the anchor institution for Bonnet Springs Park.

Additional plans include a welcome center with a restaurant, extensive botanical and sculpture gardens, a 400-person event center, café, boathouse, nature center with a classroom and exhibit space, treehouse, nature playgrounds, and 2.5 miles of shaded walking, biking, and nature trails. A primary focus for the entire project will be an environmental improvement, conservation, and long-term sustainability.

Bonnet Springs Park's public spaces will connect people to one another and to unique outdoor experiences, and will provide engaging and diverse opportunities in education, recreation, and service to residents and visitors.

CASE STATEMENT (CONT.)



WHY NOW?

The uniqueness of this location enables a needed connection from downtown to the northwest quadrant of Lakeland, while promoting the economic development and expansion of the downtown area.

Growth: The projected population growth for the City of Lakeland is 15% over the next decade, now is the time to evaluate public spaces and urban development for current and future use. While the City of Lakeland provides its citizens with a developing park system, Bonnet Springs Park will create spaces to learn, dine, explore, and celebrate.

Generosity: This vision will only be realized with the support of the community through funding and advocacy.

THE COSTS

The estimated cost of creating our vision is \$110 million. This includes land acquisition, preparation, and remediation for recreational use; design consultants; and construction of several large, multi-use buildings. Through the generous support of private, local philanthropists, and anticipated grant funding, there is a projected need of \$25 million from the community.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Bonnet Springs Park provides our Community with a unique opportunity to be part of a great legacy for Lakeland, Polk County, and the State of Florida. Your partnership will help achieve the vision of a transformational urban park that will enhance our community now and for generations to come. There will be a silent phase and public phase in the capital campaign with all levels of giving opportunities from \$50-\$5 million, which will include a number of Naming Opportunities for major gifts.

With the grand opening scheduled soon, Bonnet Springs Park will be a world-class urban park that defines our community now and for future generations. JOIN US on this journey to create a legacy park for our great community.