An Interactive Comprehensive Recreational Opportunities Web Application

A Case Study

Highlights

- Use of a free web template to promote local data
- Collaboration between county offices to maximize information

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Return on Investment (ROI)

- Increased tourism and economic growth
- Better understanding of county assets and resources

Contact Us

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With the help and support of the Lake County Parks & Trails Division, the county's GIS and PASS Divisions have produced the ***Parks and Recreation Finder*** web application. This interactive web map allows the user to enter a local address and see what recreational facilities are nearby, discover what amenities are offered, and get driving directions to the facility. They can also search by park name or type of amenity such as biking, playground, etc.

Background:

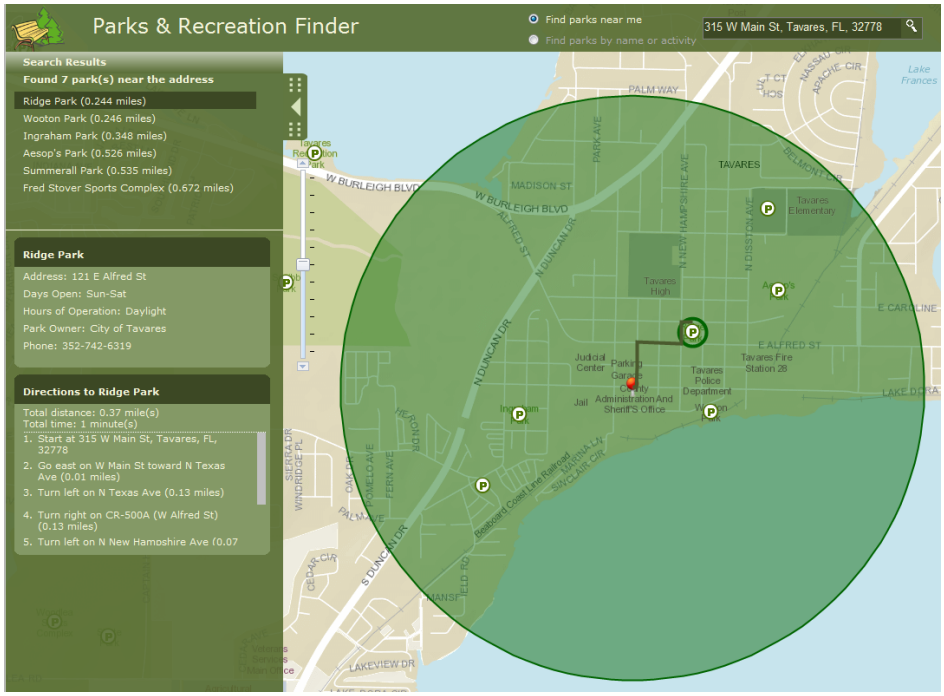
The Lake County Parks & Trails Division is responsible for dozens of parks, boat ramps, preserves and reserves. The many natural resources can be an oasis to those seeking to get away from the stresses of life and enjoy nature, and promoting these areas has become a priority with the staff in an effort to encourage tourism and economic growth.

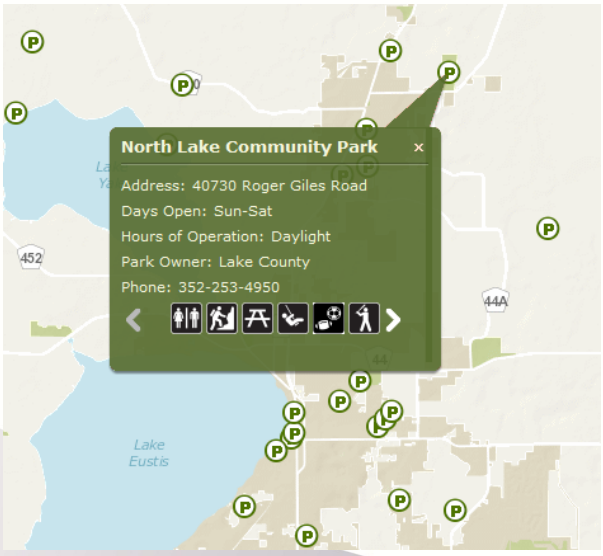
The Issue:

The large number of parks, trails, open spaces, preserves and reserves has made promotion problematic at best. The Parks & Trails Division web page has done a wonderful job in cataloging the county recreational opportunities, but it can be overwhelming to someone unfamiliar with Lake County. Also, it does not include municipal, regional, and state recreational sites. Lake County wanted a more interactive and intuitive way to locate all recreational opportunities in the county, and thus make it easier for residents and visitors alike to find what they are looking for.

The Solution:

The solution was to use a free web application template from ESRI called the ParkFinder Web Map Template. It was downloaded by county PASS Division staff and saved to the server. There it was moderately customized to meet the needs and desires of the Parks & Trails staff. Local data was mapped and all operational and amenities data was input by the GIS staff. Taking advantage of existing base maps and aerial photography kept the cost at $0.00 dollars to develop and deploy. The template was renamed to the **Parks & Recreation Finder** to better define the broader scope of the application which includes not only parks, but trail heads, open space preserves and reserves, and public boat ramps.





The Benefit:

Having all recreational opportunities shown geographically on a single map allows residents and visitors to quickly find the site that meets their needs. It is intuitive to use and can even be viewed on a mobile device such as a tablet or smart phone allowing a visitor to find a park near their current location as they travel through Lake County. Turn by turn driving directions get the visitor to the park with minimal effort and the list of available amenities allows them to know what to expect when they get there. It is anticipated that as more people become aware of what Lake County has to offer in the way of recreation, tourism will increase and the area will become even more popular with outdoor enthusiasts.