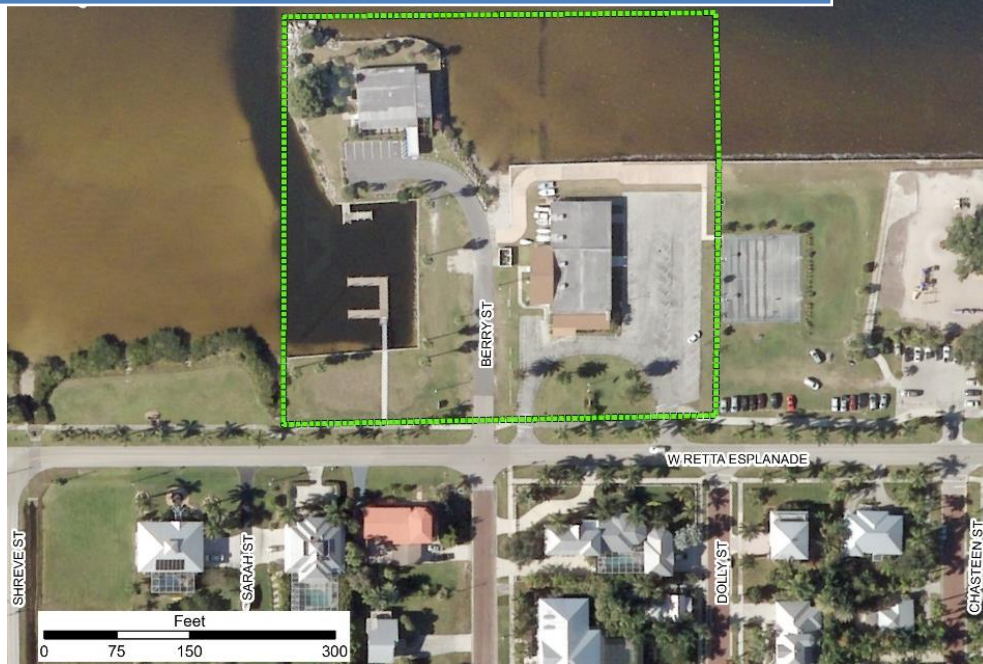


2018

# Gilchrist Park Activity Center Project Report



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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**Figure 1: Aerial Photo of the area of study. Boat Club building is on the small peninsula to the left & the Bayfront Center is to the right within Gilchrist Park**

At the request of the City of Punta Gorda, volunteers from TEAM Punta Gorda conducted a preliminary study seeking citizen input on current and future possible uses for the portion of Gilchrist Park which currently houses the Punta Gorda Boat Club and the Bayfront Center. Funding mechanisms for developing the property have not yet been identified. City officials wanted to take this opportunity to gather public input well in advance of developing specific plans, actions and timelines.

**PROJECT PROCESS**

The TEAM Committee responsible for the study gathered data in the following ways:

- Face-to-face interviews were conducted with representatives from seven stakeholder groups which currently use the Gilchrist facilities.
- Interviews were also conducted with other interested parties such as business leaders and city council members.
- A 15 question Survey Monkey survey was developed and distributed. The intent of the survey was to determine current use patterns in the facilities and desires for future building uses and activities.

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## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviews with representatives of the stakeholder groups currently using the facilities and other interested parties, revealed the following:

- Stakeholder groups currently using the facilities have a total membership exceeding 1,250.
- The YMCA pays the City \$9,600 per year to rent the Bayfront Center. The YMCA and the Punta Gorda Boat Club collect approximately \$11,000 in rents and fees annually from the other regular user organizations and special event groups. Since the City owns the land, there are no tax revenue receipts.
- Current stakeholders see themselves providing opportunities for fellowship, exercise, education, instruction, and boating.
- Information gathered from stakeholders allowed us to create a pro-forma event calendar which revealed high levels of activities by current tenants. In some cases, there are up to seven activities per day with as many as four concurrent activities, including large activities of 150+.
- Stakeholders all desire to offer more youth opportunities in the future.
- Stakeholders would like to see infrastructure that is family-friendly, viewed as a waterfront destination, and is an alternative to the Punta Gorda Civic Association for those people who do not live in Punta Gorda Isles.

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## COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

There were 1,031 responses to the Survey Monkey survey which was released on January 26, 2017 and was open for seven weeks. According to Survey Monkey, this response rate provides 95% confidence that the results are consistent with the views of the overall community. Results and observations are as follows:

- There were 826 written comments indicating significant engagement from respondents. All written comments were reviewed and categorized by members of the TEAM Committee.
- Survey respondents' demographics closely mirror those of the population of Punta Gorda.
- Nearly 40% of those who responded to the survey indicated they use Gilchrist Park once per week or more.
- Over 50% of respondents did not belong to one of the current user organizations.
- Two-thirds of respondents not affiliated with a boat club indicated the current facilities do not meet their needs.
- By a margin of two to one, respondents felt Punta Gorda would benefit from a new facility.
- During the survey design portion of the study, committee members assumed building replacement was a given in the project. We later learned, as we reviewed survey comments, some respondents wanted the land to be left natural.
- Only 9% of survey respondents felt that the park buildings should be used solely for waterside activities.
- The water related activities which were most favored by survey respondents were kayaking and canoeing with some 60% of respondents indicating those preferences.
- Picnic areas and meeting rooms were the most highly rated non-water related activities.
- 55% of survey respondents agreed that the city should enhance its image as a boating destination while 39% disagreed.

## SUMMARY

Overall, it appears the people of Punta Gorda are supportive of building new facilities in Gilchrist Park including amenities that need not necessarily be focused solely on water related activities. As the city moves forward with developing Gilchrist Park, we invite officials to consider some of the themes which emerged from this study, including:

- Creating a multi-use meeting facility in a non-waterfront location.
- Possible expansion of popular water related activities such as kayaking and canoeing, perhaps in advance of the larger new construction efforts.
- Improved public access to buildings and amenities at Gilchrist Park.
- Further investigation into issues that the park does not meet the needs of persons under 55.
- The potential for public/private partnership to help provide additional services at an affordable cost.
- Determining future needs as it relates to break waters, channels, dredged basins, docks, moorings balls, etc., to assist in prioritizing building replacement versus infrastructure build out.

As one survey respondent wrote in their comments, Gilchrist Park is a jewel, loved by all. This was a consistent theme in many of the surveys. We applaud city leaders for continuing to seek community input as they develop plans for this remarkable piece of property.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Work is nearing completion on the first phase of improvements to Gilchrist Park, a linear park in Punta Gorda located between the Peace River waterfront and West Retta Esplanade Road. The City foresees additional improvement phases after the current work is complete. Already scheduled are improvements to the playground area. Another possible phase would be to improve the area where the Punta Gorda Boat Club (Boat Club) and Bayfront Center buildings are currently situated. The broad concept would be to demolish these buildings and replace them with a single multi-use facility. TEAM Punta Gorda and the Punta Gorda City Council agreed to have TEAM run an unbiased process to collect community input. The purpose of the project was to collect and collate the opinions of effected stakeholders and individual citizens to help the City determine steps for moving forward on this potential project. In an effort to consider a wide range of possibilities for this property located along the waterfront, the committee elected to name the project the *Gilchrist Park Activity Center*. The project team coordinates and provides information through the office of the City Manager.



Figure 2: Boat Club Building constructed in 1962, the building has a total floor area of 4,230 square feet.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The project objective is to provide unbiased information regarding the desires of community members as it relates to the activities potentially offered on the site in the event a project moves forward. The project deliverable is a report to the City Manager and, at his option, a presentation to the City Council.



Figure 3: The Bayfront Center, built in 1965 and originally known as the Scout House, this building has a total floor area of 8,520 square feet

## PROCESS REVIEW

The project team used the following process in completing its work.

- Preparation – The TEAM Punta Gorda executive committee sought out individuals from the community with neutral viewpoints to serve on the committee. This work began in late winter 2016. The project team held its first meeting in March 2016. This meeting, and all subsequent meetings, are documented with agendas and meeting minutes retained on the project team’s website. The project team regularly reports progress to the CEO of TEAM Punta Gorda and the project team includes two members of the TEAM Board of Directors.
- The project team developed and agreed on the following approach.
  - Identify current stakeholder organizations and conduct structured face-to-face interviews.
  - Develop a brief citizen survey administered through Survey Monkey aimed at clarifying these questions:
    - Individual current use of existing park facilities.
    - Desirable future activities to be offered on site.
    - Desired future facility capability.
  - Outreach to non-stakeholder organizations for support in distributing citizen survey.
  - Informal one-on-one discussion with current members of the city council to obtain their thoughts on the issue.
  - Analyze survey results.
  - Combine survey results with interviews and develop a concise set of observations and possible next steps.
  - Deliver written report to the City Manager.

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## ASSUMPTIONS AND CURRENT STATUS

- Assumptions
  - Existing buildings would be replaced with a new structure. Creating a natural park was not considered.
  - Project deliverable is a report identifying the most desirable future activities to be located on the site.
- Current status of property
  - The Boat Club owns the existing building located on city land. A long-term land lease will expire in April 2021 and will convert to a month-to-month land lease thereafter.
  - The Bayfront Center is managed by the YMCA of Charlotte County with a lease that expires in March 2018 with two annual renewal clauses included.
  - The Boat Club and the YMCA of Charlotte County are the primary lease holders. There are six other organizations that are regular site users and have either formal or informal agreements with the primary lease holders. Two of these organizations include the Punta Gorda Sailing Club (Sailing Club) and the Peace River Sail and Power Squadron (Power Squadron.)
  - Total membership in stakeholder organizations exceeds 1,250 before eliminating duplicate memberships.
  - Total square footage of both buildings is approximately 12,000 sq. ft. The buildings are approximately 50 years old. They are not listed on the historic register of Punta Gorda.
  - The pro forma calendar shows that during the tourist season an average of seven events are held during any given weekday with potentially four concurrent events. Events sizes vary from a few people to the maximum capacity of the Boat Club (approximately 150.)
  - The YMCA pays the City \$9,600 per year to rent the Bayfront Center. The YMCA and Boat Club collect approximately \$11,000 in rents and fees from the other regular user organizations and special event groups. Since the City owns the land, there are no tax revenue receipts.



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ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN PROJECT SCOPE

- No discussion of facility design (size or style) was undertaken. This is considered to be a follow-on activity.
- No discussion on cost changes or how to cover changes in cost was included. We did not create an operational plan or pro forma budget.
- No discussion on how to manage a new facility was included. Currently the Boat Club is self-managed by volunteers. The Bayfront Center is managed by the YMCA of Charlotte County.
- No time frame is projected. The City will need to determine priority and funding for the project.
- “Best practice” reviews of other, similar communities were not conducted as part of this study.

**PROJECT RESULTS****STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEW SUMMARY**

- The stakeholder organizations currently serve over 1,250 people not including the YMCA. The projected overall membership growth of stakeholders is in line with the projected city population growth.
- As shown in Section 9.3, the current calendar is busy with many overlapping events. Group sizes vary from a few people to very large groups.
- The groups describe their missions as:
  - classroom education
  - classroom exercise
  - youth and adult
  - charitable
  - offering international boating
  - safe boating
  - instructional classes
- Future desired capabilities include:
  - waterfront base
  - YMCA youth programs
  - youth oriented programs
  - large group self-catered functions
- Future opportunities are described as:
  - the Sailing Club reestablishing its presence on waterfront
  - increases in number and sizes of boats
  - prevention programs supporting healthy lifestyles
  - hosting Sea Scouts
- Concerns regarding facility replacement include:
  - space availability
  - access
  - downtime resulting from construction
  - managing visiting boaters bathroom facilities in conjunction with youth programs
  - cost increases
- Visions for the Punta Gorda waterfront include:
  - a fully functioning family friendly park
  - a waterfront destination for local and visiting boaters including dockage, moorings, and supporting facilities
  - organizations hope to continue offering membership options for those people who do not live in Punta Gorda Isles or belong to the PGICA
- As non-profits, all felt cost increases needed to be met with increased dues and fees, and some felt it would have an adverse impact on membership levels.

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

- The individual survey was developed and tested in January 2017.
- The survey was comprised of 15 questions taking approximately 5 minutes to complete. The survey was available on line at Survey Monkey for a total of seven weeks. One response per email address was allowed.
- The survey measured these themes:
  - Individual’s current use of existing facilities.
  - Individual views of desirable future activities to be offered on the site.
  - Individual views of desired future facility capability.
- The survey went live on January 26, 2017 and was open for completion for 7 weeks. The survey was promoted in the weekly columns of the City Manager and individual members of the city council. Announcements were placed in local publications including the Charlotte SUN, Florida Weekly, and the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association. Various homeowner’s associations were contacted to encourage participation. TEAM Punta Gorda, the Boat Club, the Sailing Club, and the Power Squadron sent out member email blasts. The YMCA targeted communication to those members using the Bayfront facility. New Operation Cooper Street made available hard copies of the survey for residents with limited access to the internet.
- 1,031 completed surveys were received. According to Survey Monkey, there is 95% confidence that our error rate is within 3%. 826 individual written comments were received. 100% of the comments were reviewed by a team member and grouped into broad categories.
- Survey result observations:
  - People responding to the survey are involved in the park. 39% said they use the park daily or once a week or more.
  - Over 50% of respondents did not belong to one of the current user organizations.
  - 58% of respondents believe the current buildings do not meet the needs of the citizens. When the responses from the boat clubs are factored out, approximately 66% of the remaining respondents do not believe the current facilities meet citizen needs.
  - 56% of respondents believe that Punta Gorda would benefit from a new facility. If the “no opinion” responses are factored out, then those who believe a new facility would be beneficial outweigh those who do not by more than a two to one margin.
  - We divided activities into broad categories of water related and non-water related activities. The top identified activities were:
    - Water related:
      - Kayaking or canoeing – the top overall activities referenced by 60% of respondents
      - Paddle boarding
      - Sailing
    - Non-water related
      - Picnic areas – it appears many of our respondents look at Gilchrist Park as a single entity and make no distinction among the various sections of the park. The desire for picnic areas is likely best addressed in the overall park master plan.
      - Meeting rooms
      - Instructional programs
      - Educational programs
    - Non-water related activities were the #2 to #5 top identified activities. This may indicate a desire for some type of community or senior center to be created within the city.
    - We received many written comments to leave the space open or natural. This was not a listed option based on our focus on the buildings. We are not sure how open space would have ranked had it been an option. There appear to be a number of respondents who transit the park while walking, jogging, or biking.

- When asked to rank the top three activities, respondents favored:
  - Meeting rooms – the number one preference.
  - Picnic area – again likely a general comment for the entire park complex.
  - Kayaking – the city may want to explore making immediate improvements to the existing launch ramp.
  - Exercise programs.
  - Small Boat Sailing.
  - Non-water related activities occupied 6 of the 8 top spots.
  - Support for showers, dayrooms, and snack bar fell to the bottom of the list with the preference question.
- When considering respondent’s top choices for activities, some change in use would occur but not as much as we thought. Daily use would remain unchanged. Those using once per week or more would increase by 9% and those using it a few times a month would increase by 6%.
- 89%of respondents rejected the idea that the park be used solely for waterfront activities. This group was evenly split between giving preference to waterfront activities and having it open to all activities.
- Support for commercial operations was below 40% with an equal number saying they would seldom or never use commercial operations on the site.
- 53% of respondents supported facilities for visiting boaters and favored Punta Gorda enhancing its image as a boating destination. This result was inconsistent with results from the earlier preference question where developing onshore support facilities finished at the bottom of the list.
- Survey respondents’ demographics appear to closely mirror those of Punta Gorda. People age 55-65 were most likely to change their use patterns if the desired activities were present. Those under 55 were least supportive of the current facilities meeting their needs at 29%. The current stakeholder organizations indicated difficulty in attracting the under 55 age group as new members.
- Full time residents were less likely to agree the current facility met their needs versus seasonal residents. Seasonal residents were more likely to currently use the park and less supportive of a new facility.
- Work status did not influence results except in the area of a new facility. Only 52% of retirees support a new facility while 66% of working respondents offered support.
- Boating activity had limited impact on results. The only area we see a difference is in support for visitor boating. 65% of respondents claim to be active boaters and two-thirds of these support amenities for visiting boaters. Less than 40% of non-boaters support visitor boating amenities.

**EMERGING THEMES AND POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS**

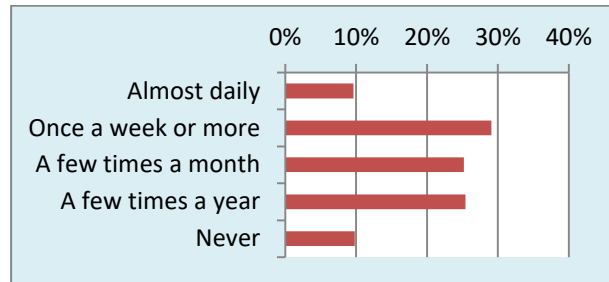
It appears people are supportive of new facilities in Gilchrist Park. People like the ambiance of being on the waterfront even if the activity they are doing is not a true water related activity. The work of the GPAC team has created one input into the process of improving the park. Moving forward the city may find it desirable to explore:

- Possible support for a multi-use facility away from the water.
- Possible expansion of the most popular water related activities (paddle sports) in advance of a larger building project.
- The factors which contribute to citizens feeling that the current facilities do not meet their needs. Such factors might include the facility capability or conditions, and the ability to access to the facility.
- Features people desire in a facility that does not offer water related activities.
- Creating a focus group for under age 55 to better understand why they are dissatisfied with the current situation in this area of the park.
- Contacting potential commercial partners and assess interests and requirements.
- Reviewing the current infrastructure and determine future needs as it relates to break waters, channels, dredged basins, docks, moorings balls, and etc. in order to prioritize building replacement vs. infrastructure build out.

APPENDIX

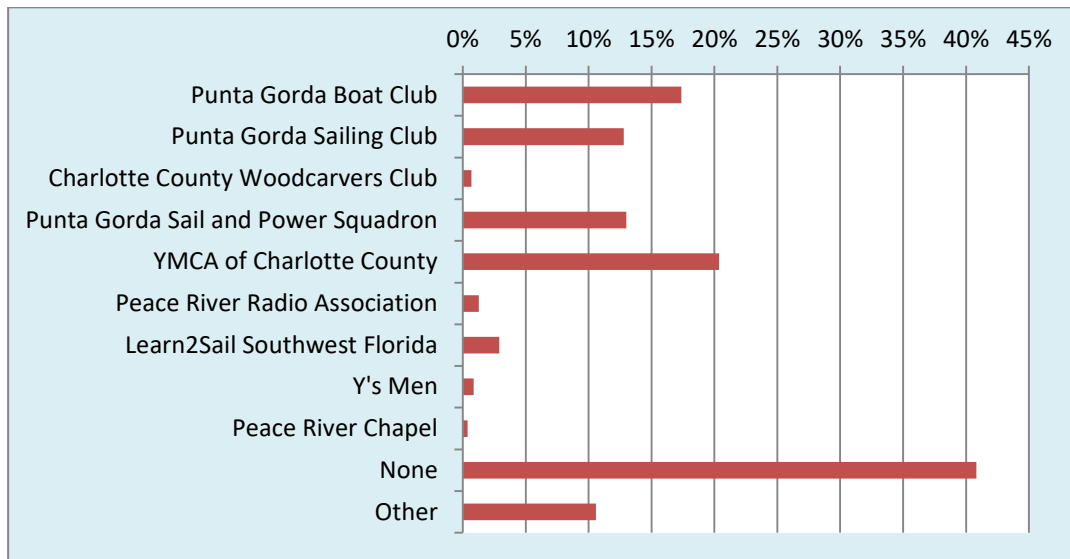
DETAILED SURVEY QUESTION RESPONSES

**Question 1: How often do you participate in an activity on this site (when you are in town?)**



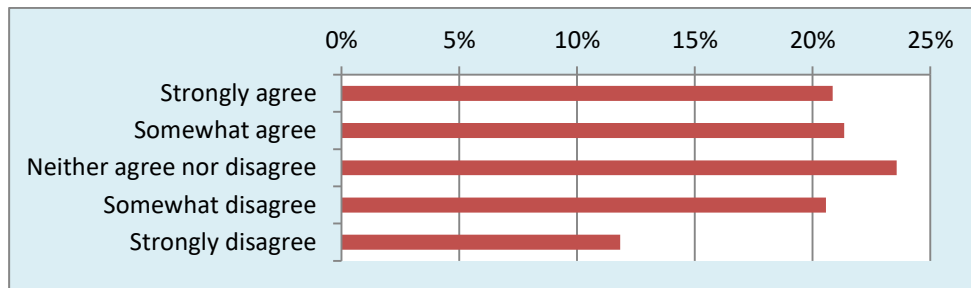
- This question pertains to how often someone uses the site in general, not specifically the buildings on the site.
- In general, the survey respondents actively use the site. Two-thirds of the respondent’s report using the site a few times per month or more. For the organizations currently using the buildings, frequent usage (daily or a few times a week) is higher. 39% of respondents reported using the site daily or one time per week or more, 10% responded never, and 50% responded a few times per week or month. The YMCA affiliated respondents were most active with 62% reporting frequent use. 44% of Boat Club members also reported frequent use while the Power Squadron and Sailing club were lower at 31%. Respondents that had no club affiliation reported 27% frequent use. This group includes a significant demographic that emerged in the comments, people who use the facility for various group dance activities.
- Many respondents may be using the site for walking or jogging purposes and not actually using the site facilities.

**Question 2: Do you currently belong to, or participate in, activities of any of the onsite clubs/organizations listed below? (check all that apply)**

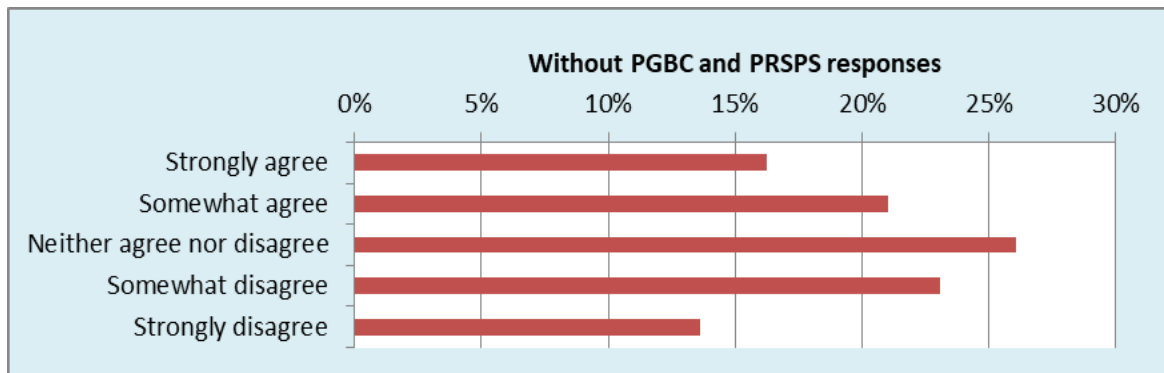


- This question addresses each respondent’s membership in current stakeholder organizations.
- 52% responded “none” or “other” and these two groups can be combined. “Other” includes activities not identified in the survey such as the Bayfront Center dance groups, pickleball, and passersby including walking jogging and biking.
- 102 respondents belong to the Boat Club, 77 to the Sailing Club, and 64 to the Power Squadron. Some respondents held multiple memberships; 40% belonged to two clubs while 11 respondents belonged to all three.
- The average response rate from club members was higher than the public at large. This was expected as these groups helped to distribute the survey by targeted mailings. The Boat Club had the highest response rate at 56%. The Power Squadron response was 44% while the Sailing Club was 38%. It appears that 45% of those belonging to a boat club responded. Clearly a strong response. The YMCA did not provide membership numbers so a response rate cannot be determined.
- The 530 respondents with no club affiliation represent over half of the 1,031 responses.
- Assuming a City population of 15,000, the overall city response rate is more than 3.5% of the population.
- Later survey questions will show that, in general, club affiliation did not create significant differences in how people responded to individual questions.

**Question 3: I believe the amenities and size of the current facilities meet the needs of residents.**



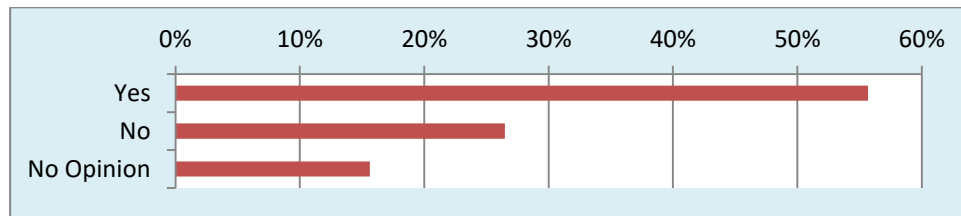
- This question attempts to explore the adequacy of the current buildings.
- Overall, 42% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed with this.
- Looking more deeply, 70% of the Boat Club and 56% of the Power Squadron either strongly or somewhat agree. This is not surprising since the Boat Club built and maintain their facility and the Power Squadron active calendar is supported by their exclusive use of the classroom in the Bayfront Center.
- If the Boat Club and the Power Squadron are excluded from the results (see graphic below,) then the “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” responses drop to 36.5%. For those disagreeing, 50% of the Sailing Club finds the facilities to be inadequate. This makes sense as it is too small for this group to hold meetings during the tourist season. 37% of those with no club affiliation also found the facilities inadequate. This is likely due to the fact they currently cannot access the facilities. The large number of “neither agree nor disagree” responses may also be a result of lack of access to current buildings.



- 24% of respondents had no opinion including 25% of the YMCA respondents. If the “no opinion” is scored with the “disagrees”, then almost two-thirds of respondents who do not belong to the Boat Club or the Power Squadron believe the current facilities do not meet the needs of the residents.

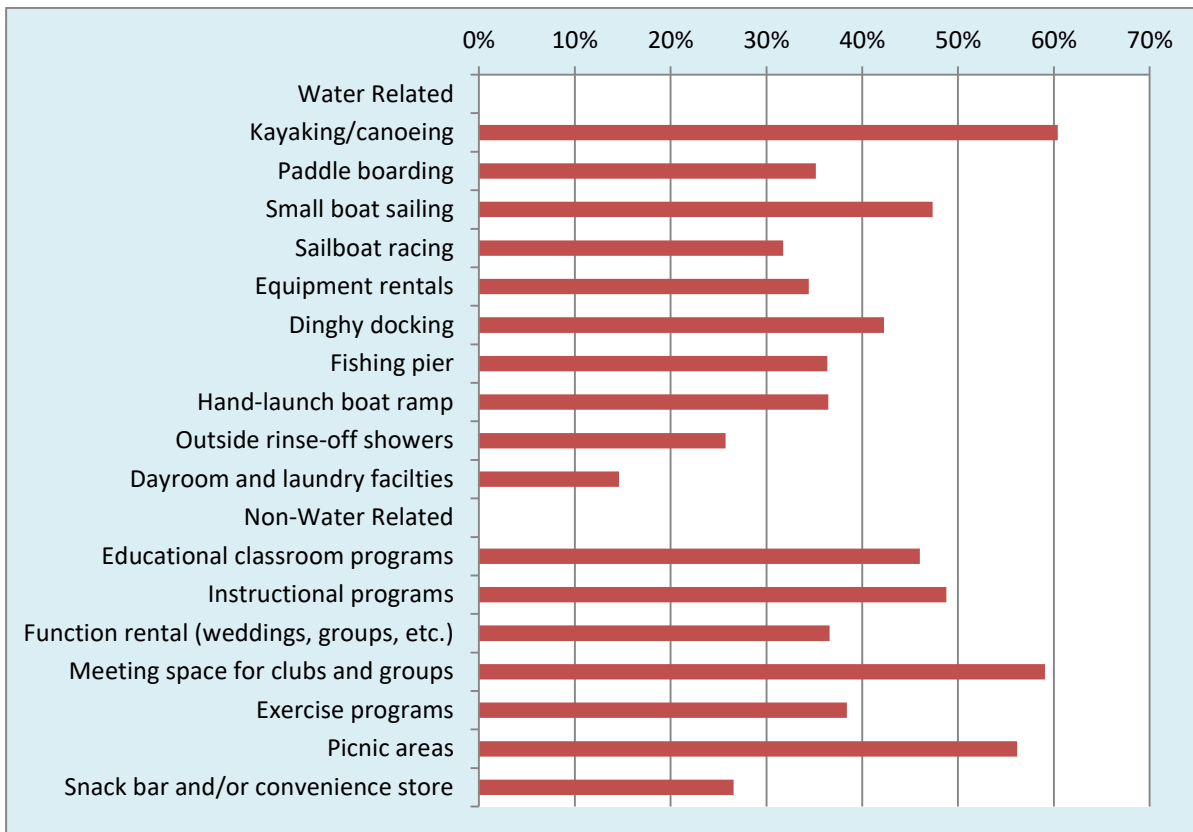


**Question 4: Do you believe the citizens of Punta Gorda would benefit from the replacement of the buildings at the Punta Gorda Boat Club and Bayfront Center locations with a newly constructed facility?**



- This question asks if people believe the citizens of Punta Gorda would benefit if a new facility were constructed on the site.
- 56% of respondents said “yes” while 26% said “no.” The affirmatives were two times the negatives. When the results are considered along with the “adequacy of amenities and facilities” results from question 3, there is a strengthening of the yes responses in question 4 suggesting even stronger support for building replacement.
- In question 4, 47% of the Boat Club favored a new facility while in question 3, 70% responded that the facility was adequate. This shows that while Boat Club members may find today’s situation adequate, support of a new building grows provided their needs are met.
- The Power Squadron offers a similar picture with 62% favoring a new facility while in question 3, 56% felt the facility met their current needs. The YMCA and no club affiliation groups both favored a new facility at 59%.
- It appears when looking at question 3 responses, those people who responded, “no opinion” in question 3 favored a new facility in question 4.

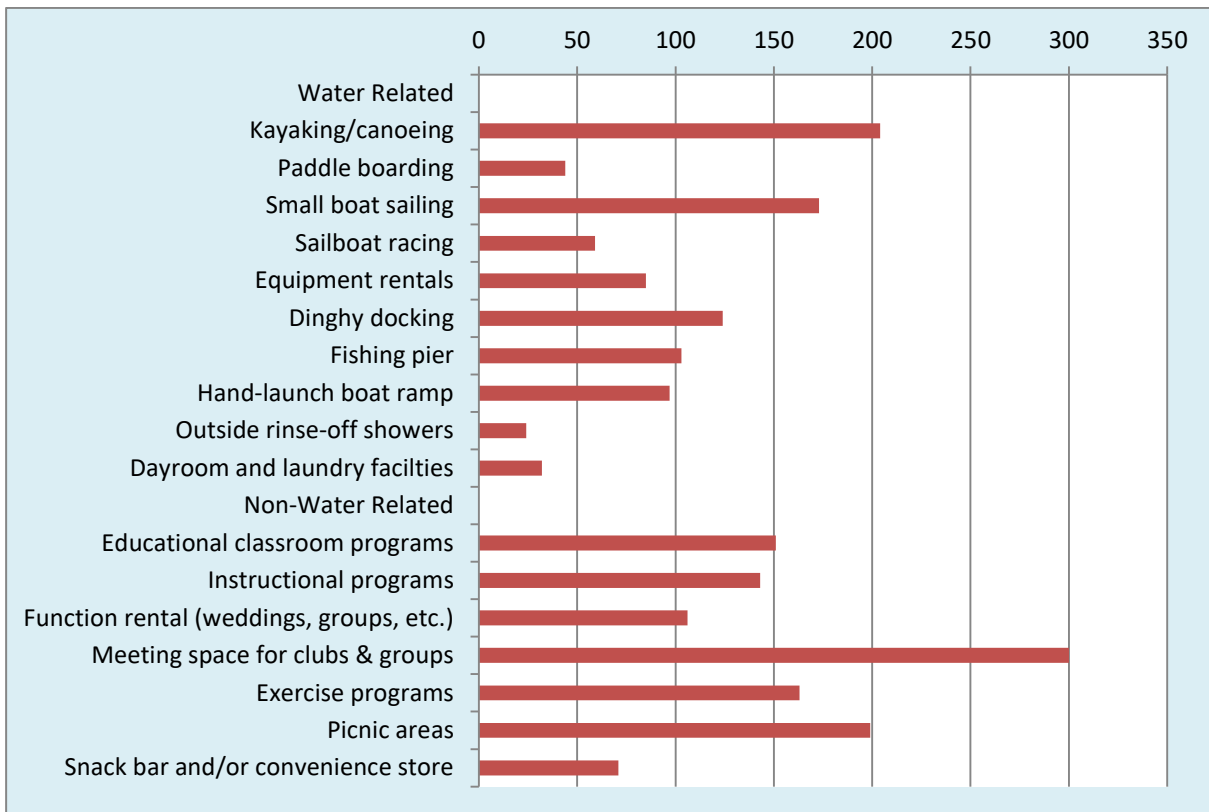
Question 5: *Identify the activities which are important to you to be available at this location. (Check all that apply.)*



- This question attempts to determine the activities respondents would like to see offered on site.
- The survey was pre-populated with 17 possible responses plus a general response of “Other”. For analysis purposes, the options were separated into water related and non-water related activities. A total of 6,934 activities were identified by respondents which is an average of 6.7 per respondent.
- Water related activities were identified 47% of the time with non-water related taking the majority at 53%. Many non-water related activities are associated with water related organizations which conduct club meetings, education classes on boating, etc.
- The number one activity of kayaking and canoeing was identified by 60% of respondents. The next two most popular water related activities were paddle boarding and sailboat sailing. All together these three groups accounted for 44% of the water related responses and 21% of the overall response.
- Surprisingly, picnic area was the #2 overall response and the top non-water related response with 600 respondents selecting this. 50% (300) came from respondents who do not belong to one of the existing clubs. Further, 141 of this group also identified snack bar which may point to an idea that people would like to have a place to stop and have a snack along the waterfront.
- It should be noted that we have seen an underlying theme with survey respondents where they are completing the survey while considering the entire Gilchrist Park, not just where the buildings are located. This may explain the high response rate for picnic areas.
- Meeting place (598 responses), Instructional programs (502) and Educational programs (485) were the next groups of activities identified most often and complete the top 5 activities desired by respondents.

- There seems to be a strong desire for community meeting space and to continue the education and instruction programs currently offered on site.
- Providing facilities to support visiting boaters received lower ratings as showers, dayrooms, and snack bar were ranked 16, 17, and 15 respectively. Outside showers, on the other hand, were identified 273 times. Not surprisingly the boat related clubs were 45% of those outside shower responses. What was surprising was that those respondents who were not affiliated with one of the groups on the survey rated outside showers at 40% while members of the YMCA ranked at 15%. This would suggest that there is a desire to have a shower-off space to be used after completing activities.
- In summary, preference seems to be towards non-motorized sports (kayak, paddle, and sailing) and a building that offers meeting space with educational and instructional programs.

Question 6: Write in the item number (from 1 -17) from the list above telling us your top three activity priorities.

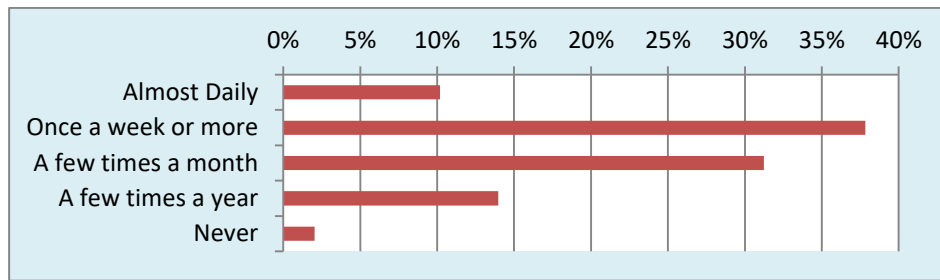


- This question asks people to become more specific in identifying their top three activities.
- This question had the most blank or incomplete responses of any question in the survey. The question allowed of a possible 3,093 responses (1,031 surveys x 3). We received 2,597 responses to selections 1-17 for an 83% completion rate. 44 surveys did not answer this question at all accounting for 26% of the incomplete responses. Other respondents may have picked 1 or 2 favorites, but not a full three. The question was unable to accommodate responses where other (selection 18) or a written comment was supplied in question 5. This was selected 27 times. Based on written comments received, this accounts for some of the incomplete responses.
- The responses were separated by water related (40% of total) versus non-water related (60%) activities.

	Water related	Non Water Related	Total
Priority 1	384	492	876
Priority 2	355	525	880
Priority 3	331	510	841
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>2,587</b>

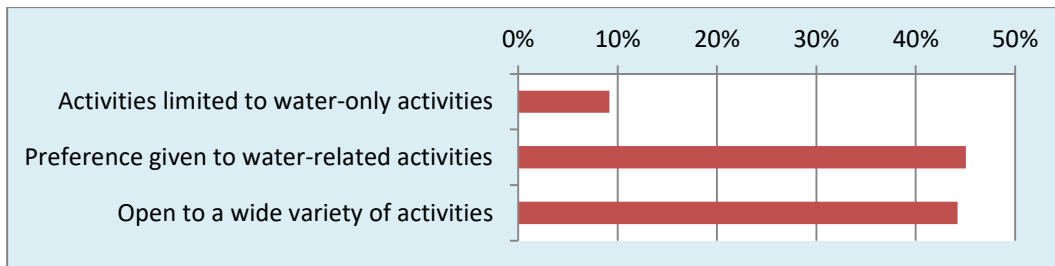
- The top 5 identified activities account for 51% of the responses.
- Meeting rooms was the #1 identified activity with 14% of the total (360 identifications). 60% of the people who selected this made it their top priority.
- Picnic Area was the #2 identified activity with 10% of the total (266 identifications). 44% of the people who selected this made it their top priority.
- Kayaking was the #3 identified activity also with 10% (264 identifications), 43% of the people who selected this made this their top priority.
- Exercise programs was the #4 activity with 9% (230 identifications), 53% of the people who selected this made this their top priority.
- Small Boat Sailing was the #5 activity with 8% (198 identifications), 42% of the people who selected this made it their top priority.
- Education and Instruction occupy the #6 and #7 spots. Surprisingly, preference support for showers, dayrooms, and snack bar fell to the bottom when people were asked to force rank the top three.
- In summary, non-water related activities took the top ranking and 6 of the 8 top spots. There appears to be a desire for some type of community center or senior center that does not necessarily need to be located on the waterfront, although the strong support for the picnic area is likely a result of the location.

**Question 7: *If my top three activities selected in prior question were available, I would use them.***



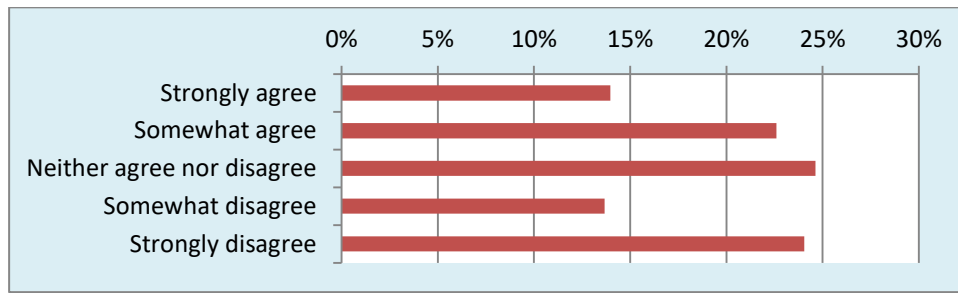
- This question seeks to determine how much park usage would increase if people’s preferred activities were offered.
- If people’s preferred activities are available there will be an increase in usage. While daily use would remain at 10%, we see a step up in occasional use. The categories “once a week or more” and “a few time s per month” increased by 9% and 6% respectively. Consequently, the least use categories declined. Basically, 69% of respondents indicated they would increase participation by one level.

**Question 8: *The buildings in Gilchrist Park are located on the water. To what extent do you believe activities at the site should be confined to water-related activities only?***



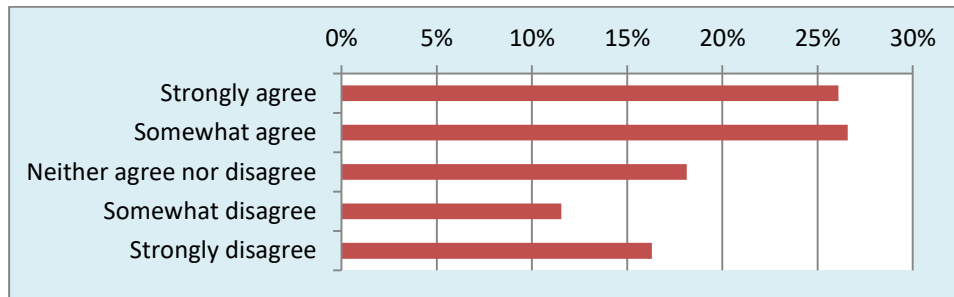
- This question asks people to affirm if the facility activities should be confined to water only related activities.
- The respondents overwhelmingly rejected the idea that activities be confined to water only related activities. 89% indicated either preference for water related activities or open to a wide variety of activities. This was roughly equally split between those still willing to give preference to water activities and desiring it to be open to all activities.
- 91 respondents indicated they wanted the activities limited to water related activities. This was 9% of respondents. Not surprising the largest group came from the Boat Club (41). Non-duplicate Sailing Club respondents totaled 18. Those with no club affiliation totaled 22. Thus identifying 81 of the 91 responses.

**Question 9: *If commercial operations, such as snack bars or convenience stores, are available at the activity center, I would strongly support and use whenever possible.***



- This question attempts to assess support for commercial operations on site.
- Commercial operation support was divided by organization affiliation.
- 32% of YMCA and 43% with no club affiliation professed either strong support or somewhat strong support for commercial operations. Surprisingly the Sailing Club had 38% supporting commercial operations. This may indicate a desire to purchase small items after participating in class or while passing through.
- The Boat Club was more against commercial operations with 59% of members either somewhat or strongly disagreeing. The Boat Club had 32% of the strongly disagree responses and represented 44% of that groups responses.
- While there appears to be support for commercial operations the intensity of the support should be evaluated along with potential erosion of support if Fisherman's Village continues to expand.

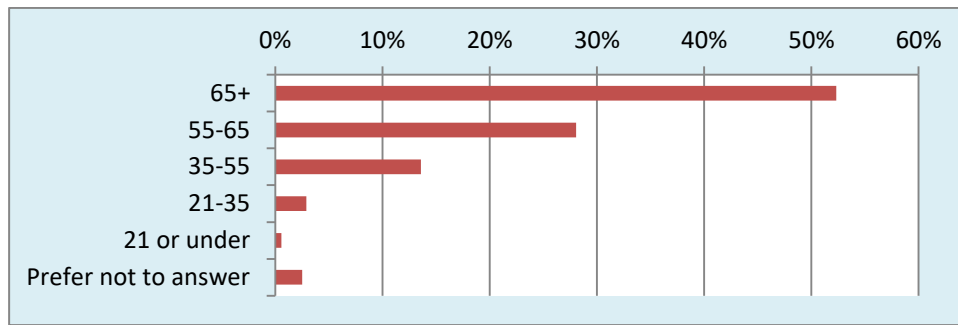
**Question 10: The City of Punta Gorda is working to enhance its image as a boating destination. This may require additional facilities. I support development of transient boating amenities on site such as showers, laundry, day rooms, etc.**



- This question is aimed at assessing respondent support of visitor boating facilities.
- 53% of respondents either somewhat or strongly favored supporting visiting boaters with amenities. 33% were against and 18% or 1 in 5 had no opinion. There is no clear reason why the relatively high “No opinion” response occurred.
- Surprisingly, the Boat Club offered slightly less support for visitors and had much higher negatives (33% to 28%). This may be because accepting visitor facilities almost certainly means replacing the Boat Club building and fundamentally changing the current relationship.
- The Sailing Club had an overwhelming 82% support. These boaters may tend to be more active cruisers and undertake destination travel. They use the current buildings approximately 20 times per year for monthly meetings, new member welcome sessions, regatta events, etc.
- The Power Squadron showed 62% favorability with average negatives. This group also tends to cruise to destinations.

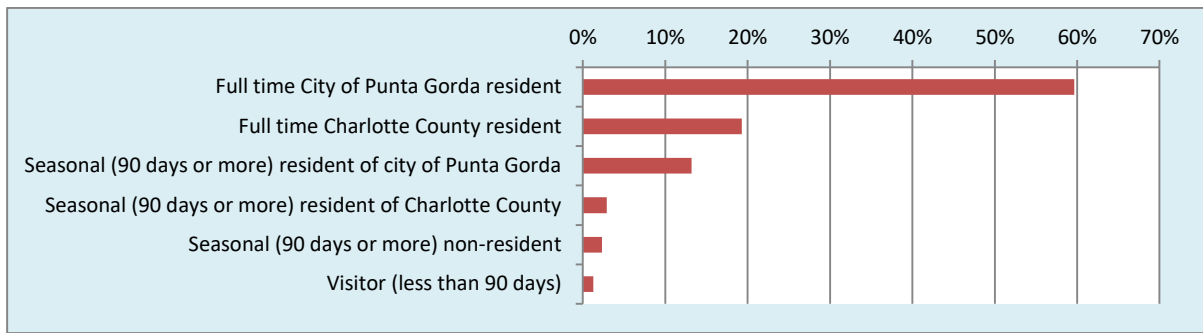


Question 11: *My age is:*



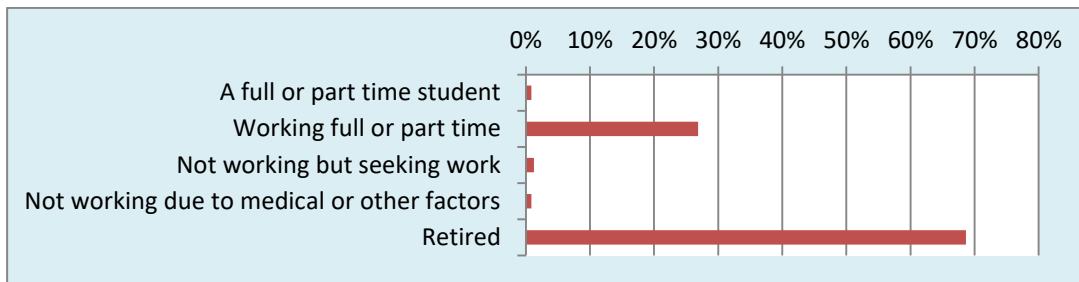
- This is a demographics question.
- We believe the responses roughly track similar demographic profiles within the city of Punta Gorda. When we take a deeper dive into the results by age, we find some differences.
- The age group 65+ was less likely to increase their use of the facilities if their chosen activities were available. This group was also less likely to support snack bar by 8% points and they saw less benefit to the community in replacing the building by 6% points. For the remaining questions they tracked with the other age groups.
- The 55-65 age group showed highly increased use patterns of use (+16%) if their desired activities were available. They were slightly less supportive of visitor boating than the average (4% points)
- While a smaller demographic, the under 55 age groups were the least supportive of the current buildings with only 29% saying they are adequate. 75% said the city would benefit from new facilities. This is 19% points above the average. They were also significantly more supportive of snack bar at 19% points over the average.
- The takeaway here is, younger people view the current facilities less positively and want new facilities. If their activities are available, they will increase their use significantly.
- The under 55 age group is 17% of total respondents. They make up only 8% of the Boat Club respondents, 7% of the Sailing Club, and 3% of the Power Squadron indicating issues within these organizations in attracting younger members.

**Question 12: I am a:**



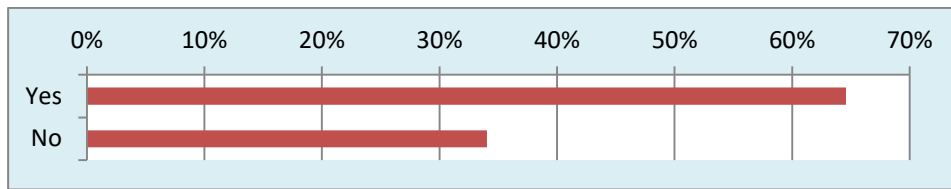
- This is a demographic question about where respondents currently reside.
- 73% of respondents were City Residents. 22% Charlotte County residents.
- Living in the city of Punta Gorda vs. Charlotte County showed no difference in responses for visiting boaters, snack bar, preference for activity type, or benefits of a new facility. City residents were somewhat more negative about the adequacy of the current facilities by a factor of 9%. The age demographics of seasonal people are the same as for full time residents.
- Seasonal residents were more likely to use the park on a regular basis by a factor of 6%. They also indicated they would use the park more often if their desired activities were there by the same 6%.
- Seasonal residents were 7% less positive that the community would benefit from a new facility.
- No questions were asked regarding owner/renter status of respondents, nor was the “home” origin of seasonal residents captured. Despite this oversight some written comments indicated these individual data points; however, the overall numbers were not significant.

**Question 13: I am currently:**



- This question helps to explore differences by work status.
- 69% of respondents were retirees; 27% working, and the remaining 4% fell into the other 3 categories.
- Work Status (retired vs. working) does not have a meaningful impact on current park use patterns.
- 41% of people claiming to be retired have at least one membership in either the Boat Club, Power Squadron or Sailing Club. Only 22% of working people belong to these clubs.
- Retired vs. working did not impact YMCA membership with 22% to 18% respectively belonging to the Y.
- Retired vs. non-retired had no meaningful impact except in snack bar where the retirees favored this option only 30% of the time versus 37% overall.
- 52% of retirees thought the city would benefit from a new facility. Support for a new facility among non-retirees was greater at 66%.
- Some feedback was received regarding needing more work status choices options such as not working and not looking, stay at home parent, and other options. Overall, this was a small group of respondents.

**Question 14: I consider myself an active boater**



- This question helps to explore differences by boating interests.
- 65% of respondents identified themselves as active boaters.
- Within the three main boat organizations (Boat Club, Sailing Club, and Power Squadron) 94% identified as active boaters.
- Within those with no club affiliation and YMCA groups, only 42% identified as active boaters.
- Of the 666 self-described active boaters, 67% somewhat or strongly support visitor boating.
- Of the 351 non-active boaters, only 38% support visitor boating.
- Whether identifying as an active boater or not had no impact on how often someone uses the current park facilities.
- Approximately 50% of those identifying as active boaters belong to either the Boat Club, the Power Squadron, or the Sailing Club. Virtually none of those identifying as non-boaters belong to any of the mentioned clubs.
- Being an active boater made no difference in how adequacy of the current buildings is perceived.
- Being an active boater made no difference in the perception of benefit to the city by replacing these structures.

**Question 15: Do you have any other comments or input. Please provide below.**

826 individual written comments were received. 100% of the comments were reviewed by a team member and grouped into broad categories. The results, comments and suggestions in this report reflect that input.

**HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

The Gilchrist Park complex consists of Gilchrist, Alice, Pittman, Berry, and Shreve parks and runs along West Retta Esplanade from the PG Waterfront Hotel until the street ends at the path to Fishermen’s Village. The park was deeded to the City of Punta Gorda on November 6, 1914 when the city took the park by eminent domain from the bankrupt Florida Southern Railway Company.

The use of the park is governed under Chapter 16 Park Regulations contained in the Code of Ordinances for the City of Punta Gorda. Changes to these ordinances can be made by the City Council. The city maintains the park grounds, boat docks, and launching ramp. The launching ramp is permitted for hand launched water craft only.

Work is underway to make improvements to the park from The PG Waterfront Hotel to the current playground and basketball court area. The improvements include replacing the restrooms and pavilions with new structures, relocating the parking, and other beautification steps. The playground equipment will be replaced using a combination of public and private monies. The work will be completed in multiple phases.

A subsequent phase under consideration is to replace the two buildings located adjacent to the current playground. These are commonly known as the Boat Club and Bayfront Center buildings.

**PUNTA GORDA BOAT CLUB**



**Figure 4: Boat Club as seen from Charlotte Harbor. The land lease for this facility expires in 2021, after that it is renewable in 1-year increments with a 30-day cancellation clause.**

The Punta Gorda Boat Club has a long history with the City of Punta Gorda. The club began in 1951 with 56 members and a goal to promote tourism for the City. In 1952 the club hosted the first American Power Boat Association regatta with 9000 people attending the event.

By the 1960’s the club was seeking a permanent home. In 1961 the City agreed to a series of 5-year renewable land leases. The membership raised \$28,000. With this money and many hours of volunteer labor they built the 100 x 150-foot seawall, filled it in, constructed the building, and hand dug the current channel and basin. The building opened in October 1962.

In 1981, the lease was changed to a 40-year lease to coincide with an expansion of the building and the membership to more than 100. Additional work on the facility continued through the 1980’s and 1990’s. The current building is 4,230 square feet. In 2012 the City

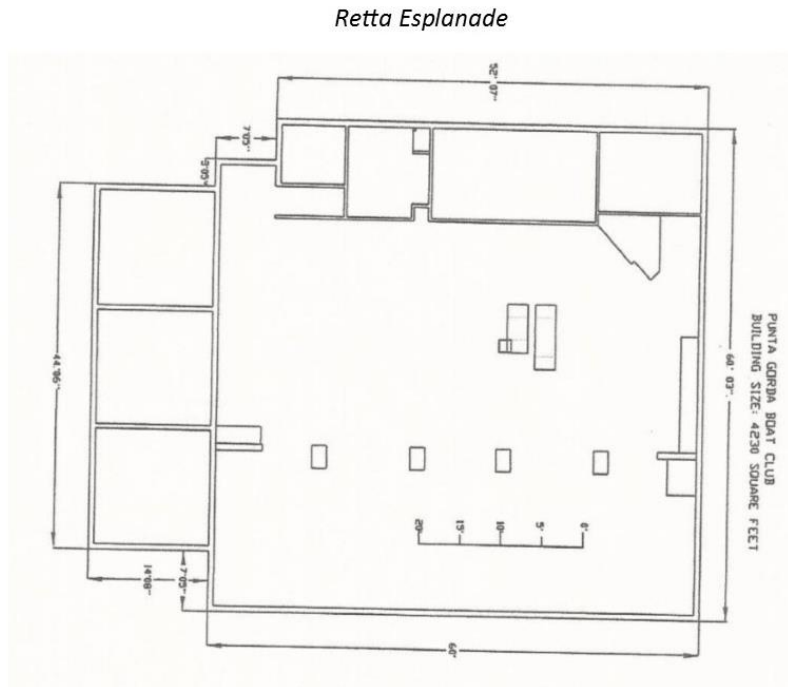
dredged the basin, installed the current floating docks, and assumed responsibility for maintenance of the docks.

The club continues to maintain the building exterior and interior. The existing land lease will expire on April 30, 2021. Changes adopted in 2016 make the lease renewable with the Punta Gorda Boat Club in 1-year increments starting in April 20, 2021, and added a 30-day cancellation clause. The lease documents are maintained by the City Clerk. The City Council approves the lease.

The club membership is open to any current boat owners and currently numbers approximately 310. The club allows regular use of the building by the Power Squadron, Charlotte County Woodcarvers, Sailing Club, and Peace River

Radio Association. The building is available for rent for functions by contacting the Boat Club. The building is accessible only when there is a meeting or function in progress.

BOAT CLUB - BUILDING SCHEMATIC



BOAT CLUB - INTERIOR PHOTOS



Figure 5: Boat Club main meeting space set with tables and chairs



Figure 6: Boat Club warming kitchen

BAYFRONT CENTER

The Bayfront Center is currently leased to the YMCA of Charlotte County. The YMCA lease expires in March 2018 and contains (2) 1-year renewal options. The City Clerk's offices maintain the paperwork. The lease is approved by City Council. The Bayfront Center was built in 1965. The Bayfront Center formerly housed City offices temporarily after Hurricane Charley and became available to the YMCA when these offices were relocated to the Cooper Street complex. The YMCA runs regular exercise class and after-school programs at this site. The YMCA subleases a portion of the building to the United States Power Squadron. The Boy Scouts of America have met there for many years and continue to



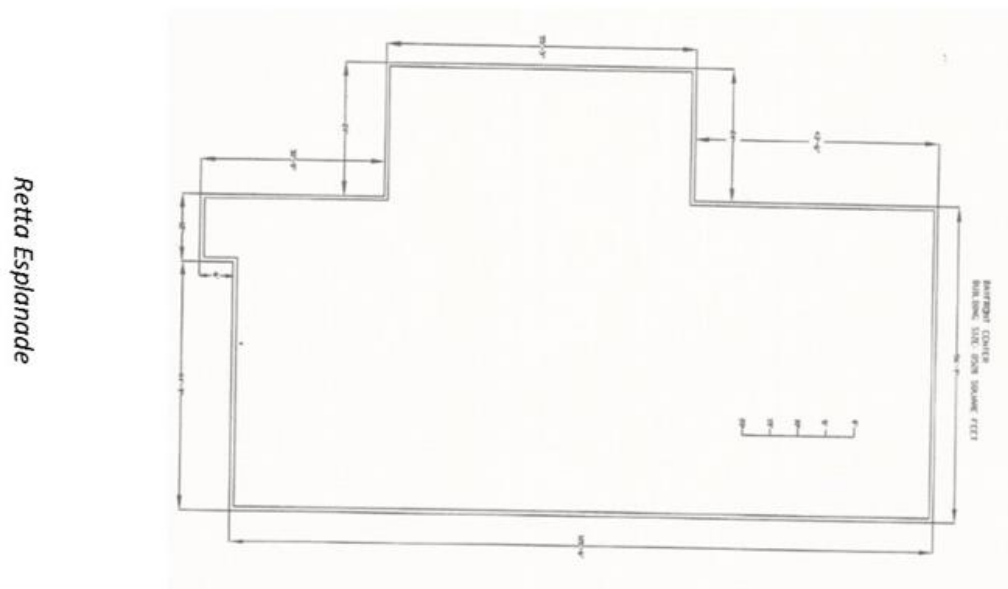
Figure 7: The Bayfront Center as seen from Charlotte Harbor. This facility is under lease to the YMCA until March of 2018 with options for up to two 1-year renewals.



Figure 8: "Learn to Sail" boats behind the Bayfront Center

do so. The building is available for rent for regular and special events through the YMCA. Access to the buildings is controlled by the users. The Bayfront Center is 8,520 square feet in size.

BAYFRONT CENTER - BUILDING SCHEMATIC





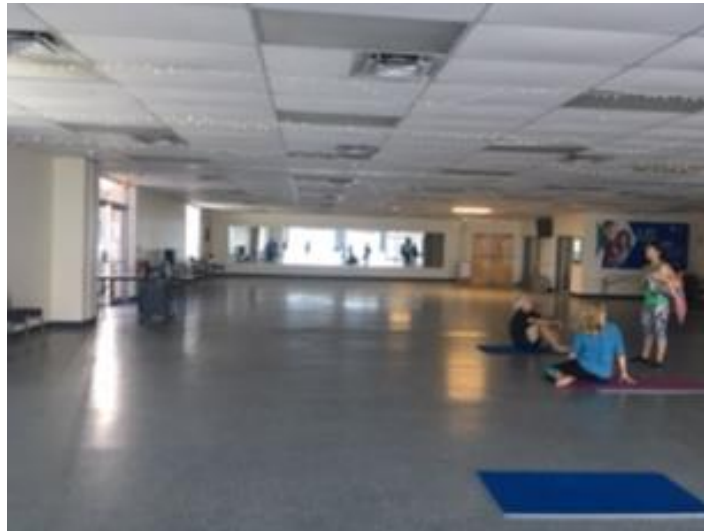


Figure 9: Bayfront Center main space set for a YMCA exercise class



Figure 10: Bayfront Center warming kitchen

PRO-FORMA CALENDAR FOR ALL EVENTS (BOTH CURRENT BUILDINGS)

The pro-forma calendar lists scheduled and anticipated events for the current stakeholder users during the winter season. As expected usage is highest during the week, but all days show some activity. At least 2 days per week include evening activities. Weekdays show from 5-9 scheduled group activities per day with 3-4 of these activities potentially running concurrently.

Charles Wolley, Holidays in United States							Dec 2018 (Eastern Time)
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
2 12pm - PGSC Race	3 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Forever Fit 10:20am - Yoga w/ 11am - Meditation 3pm - Piloting	4 8am - Charlotte 8:30am - Learn 2 8:30am - Power 9:30am - Engine 10:05am - Aerobic 11:15am - Yoga 2pm - JR Navigation	5 8:30am - Instructor 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Marine 9:35am - Yoga 11:30am - Silver 6pm - PGSC meeting 6:30pm - Sail	6 8:25am - Pound 8:30am - Learn 2 9:30am - Power 9:30am - Weather 10:45am - Yoga w/ 1pm - PGBC Mah 1pm - Piloting	7 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Fitness Blend 9:30am - Advanced 10:30am - Silver	8 3pm - YMCA Special	
9	10 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Forever Fit 10:20am - Yoga w/ 11am - Meditation 3pm - Piloting	11 8am - Charlotte 8:30am - Learn 2 8:30am - Power 9:30am - Engine 10:05am - Aerobic 11:15am - Yoga	12 8:30am - Instructor 8:30am - Learn 2 9:35am - Yoga 10am - PGBC Board 11:30am - Silver 7pm - PGSC Monthly	13 8:25am - Pound 8:30am - Learn 2 9:30am - Power 10:45am - Yoga w/ 1pm - PGBC Mah 1pm - Piloting	14 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Fitness Blend 9:30am - Advanced 10:30am - Silver	15 3pm - YMCA Special	
16 12pm - PGSC Race	17 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Forever Fit 10:20am - Yoga w/ 11am - Meditation 3pm - Piloting	18 8am - Charlotte 8:30am - Learn 2 8:30am - Power 9:30am - Engine 10:05am - Aerobic 11:15am - Yoga	19 8:30am - Instructor 8:30am - Learn 2 9:35am - Yoga 11:30am - Silver 2pm - Electronic 4pm - PGBC Dinner	20 8:25am - Pound 8:30am - Learn 2 9:30am - Power 10:45am - Yoga w/ 1pm - PGBC Mah 1pm - Piloting	21 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Fitness Blend 9:30am - Advanced 10:30am - Silver 11am - PGBC	22 3pm - YMCA Special	
23	24 Christmas Eve 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Forever Fit 9:30am - Partner In 10:20am - Yoga w/ 11am - Meditation	25 Christmas Day	26 8:30am - Instructor 8:30am - Learn 2 9:35am - Yoga 11:30am - Silver 2pm - Electronic 4pm - PGBC Social	27 8:25am - Pound 8:30am - Learn 2 9:30am - Power 10:45am - Yoga w/ 1pm - PGBC Mah 1pm - Piloting 7pm - PRRA General	28 7:50am - Dynamic 8:30am - Learn 2 9am - Fitness Blend 9:30am - Advanced 10:30am - Silver	29 3pm - YMCA Special	
30 12pm - PGSC Race	31 New Year's Eve 8:30am - Learn 2 3pm - Piloting	1 8am - Charlotte 8:30am - Learn 2 8:30am - Power 9:30am - Engine	2 8:30am - Learn 2 2pm - Electronic	3 8:30am - Learn 2 10:45am - Yoga w/ 1pm - PGBC Mah	4 8:30am - Learn 2 9:30am - Advanced 10:30am - Silver	5 3pm - YMCA Special	

**LISTING OF IDENTIFIED STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS**

- Punta Gorda Boat Club – primary land lease holder with city
- YMCA of Charlotte County – leaseholder for Bayfront Center
- Boy Scouts of America
- Charlotte County Woodcarvers Club
- Learn 2 Sail
- Peace River Sail and Power Squadron
- Peace River Chapel
- Peace River Radio Association
- Punta Gorda Sailing Club

All stakeholders are non-profit organizations. Some organizations have qualifying member requirements.

**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES AND COMMENTS**

*The following are notes and comments from GPAC Committee members who interviewed representatives from stakeholder organizations currently using facilities at Gilchrist.*

**How many members did you have in 2016? What are recent membership trends?**

- Learn2Sail - 53 students in 2016; 39 in 2015; 25 volunteers.
- The Sailing Club has around 400 individual members representing about 180 memberships. 2016 & 2017 membership levels are rising, no reason to believe that trend will stop with City and County growth rising.
- YMCA - The 2016 regular membership for the Charlotte County YMCA Health and Wellness programs is 5,034.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club - Membership ranges between 320 and 350 members. Our by-laws limit membership to 400 which we have been unable to obtain since the mid 1990's. The PGICA boat clubs compete with us for membership. Approximately 50% of our members live in the City of Punta Gorda. The 400-member limit is partially driven by space constraints with the current building.
- Power Squadron membership was 305 in 2016. Trending up slightly. Up approximately 50 in the last 10 years.
- Woodcarvers - Approx. 80 members now, downward trend from 100 four years ago.
- Peace River Radio Association has 87 members.
- Total membership of all groups, including duplicates: approximately 1,270 not including YMCA.

**What are the expectations for membership growth over the next 10-15 years?**

- Sailing Club predicts the Club's growth will mirror at least the City's growth. What is hard to determine/guess is growth based on utilizing a new Activity Center. If the new facility provides launching, hoist capabilities and dockage, it can only increase membership. In that annual dues are \$50 a year the SAILING CLUB is affordable to most of the City's population.
- Learn 2 sail Goal - 10 % growth per year.

- The YMCA expects growth in membership to be commensurate with general population growth within the region. In the future, the Charlotte County Y may come under the umbrella of other larger YMCA organizations that may positively impact growth to make it higher than general population growth.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club - We do not expect our numbers to change much from the 320/350 members. When the Civic Assoc. started the 3 boating organizations in the 1990's, we have been competing with them for membership.
- The Power Squadron - Approximately 1% per year or up 10% in the next 10-15 years.
- Woodcarvers – Hopefully steady.
- Peace River Radio Association – Steady.
- Overall membership growth will be low. Best case would be to grow at same rate as City or County population.

**How many separate events or meetings does your group hold a year (month)?**

- Punta Gorda Sailing Club - Twelve monthly general meetings annually with speakers and presentations relative to Sailing. Twelve monthly Board meetings annually. Three of the general meetings include dinners. 18 Sunday sailboat races a year. 18 after race Picnics (at PGICA). One major Regatta annually over a three-day period involving both racing and cruising. Approximately 200 participants from the County and near region. Includes three days of shore side activities. Approximately 6 Social activities ashore at Restaurants or recreational facilities. Active in the annual canal and harbor clean-ups.
- Learn 2 Sail - 1-3 committee meetings every month; May through August, used every weekday, all day; September to April, offer one week of instruction to one group of 4-8 trainees each month.
- The Charlotte County YMCA operates from three separate locations in North Port and Punta Gorda. The main locations are open daily. The Bayfront Center is open for scheduled classes. There are currently 16 classes scheduled per week. In addition, the Y is open for special functions as required. Currently this is 5-8 per month depending on the time of year.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club - Outside organizations that use our building are Charlotte County Woodcarvers, Peace River Radio Association, Power Squadron, and Sailing Club who use our building up to 20 times per year for social events. Please see below the P.G.B.C. monthly schedule. It is difficult to estimate the number of different groups/people who use our building. A best guess would be 30 hours per week. Some meetings may be ½ day others 1 hr.
- The Power Squadron - For details, see calendar. Generally, 10 business meetings at Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club (CHYC), 12 education meetings at CHYC, 12 executive committee meetings at CHYC, 5 Silver Trident meetings at CHYC. Daily classroom usage at Bayfront Center from 9:00AM-6:00PM with some nights. 30 days at the Boat Club.
- Woodcarvers' Regular meetings once a week throughout the year. Two special events/shows a year held at Event Center.
- PRRA -One regular meeting per month. Two special events per year (Hamfest in March, Field Day in June.)
- During season the calendar is busy with many overlapping events.

**Where do you currently hold your meetings?**

- Sailing Club - Eight months a year at PGICA. Four months a year at Boat Club building.
- Learn2 sail - Bayfront Center.
- YMCA Bayfront Center.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club at the Boat Club building.
- The Power Squadron Bayfront Center, Boat Club, Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club with special events at places like Ponce De Leon and Harbor Heights parks.

- Woodcarvers – PG Boat Club and 2 events at Charlotte County Event Center.
- PRRA - PG Boat Club.

**What would be an estimate of the average group size?**

- Sailing Club - Average summer lows of 65 to season average high of 120. 200 maximum.
- Learn 2 sail - 6-12 students.
- YMCA - 23-41 per class with the capability to go to 50. The Bayfront Center can accommodate larger groups than the other Punta Gorda facility. Maximum occupancy for rental functions is 200.
- The Punta Gorda Boat Club business and social events average about 150 people. Most other events have smaller attendance.
- The Power Squadron Educational classes are a maximum of 16 due to space constraints. ABC classes in the BOAT Club are 15-20. Social functions are 80-100.
- Woodcarvers Seasonal - 50-60 during peak season declining to 10-15 in May-October.
- PRRA - 40-50 for monthly meetings; 150-200 for special events.
- Group sizes for events vary widely.

**How often do you utilize the boat club for your meetings?**

- Punta Gorda Sailing Club - At present we “do” use the facility 19 times a year. We “could” use the facility a minimum of 45 times a year.
- Learn 2 Sail - 1-3 committee meetings every month; May through August, used every weekday, all day; Sept to April, offer one week of instruction to one group of 4-8 trainees each month all held at the Bayfront Center.
- YMCA - Never
- Punta Gorda Boat Club - 100% of meetings are there
- The Power Squadron - Our agreement with the Boat Club allows use the use the facility up to 30 days per year at a fixed rate and purchase additional days at a reduced rate. We currently use all 30 days and purchase some additional days.
- Woodcarvers - Every Tuesday from 8am-12pm
- PRRA - Once per month
- A total of 5 different groups use the boat club

**Please describe your organization’s current activities.**

- “The mission of the Punta Gorda Sailing Club is to foster sailing as a sport and recreation for its members and the community.” To accomplish our mission **both** racing sailboat and cruising sailboat programs are organized. The adult large sailboat racing programs organized and managed by the Sailing Club are the only programs like it on the Harbor. The organized short and long range cruises provide an affordable organization open to the general community. Members of the PGSC live in Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda Isles but not exclusive to PGI.
- Learn 2 sail - Provide classroom and on the water sailing instruction to youth and adults in approximately 16-20 one-week sessions, Monday-Friday, 9 am to 3 pm. Other activities include maintaining fleet of sailboats, safety equipment, instructional materials which are stored on location at Bayfront.
- YMCA - Exercise classes including Zumba, Yoga, Silver Sneakers, Meditation, and Dance. It is estimated the facility is ¾’s full during the season.
- Current Punta Gorda Boat Club activities include: every month there is a board meeting (2 hrs.), business meeting with carry in dinner (5 hrs.), at least one social event (some are catered, some the food is prepared by a committee), a trivia night, mah-jongg is played weekly (4 hrs.), weekly line dancing, skipper’s meetings

(1 hr.), and some additional meetings for special events, attitude adjustment, ladies craft days (2/mo.). We also do a charitable event once a year (S.T.A.R. day cruise) where we bring the participants back to the club for a luncheon. Also, a kayaking event with AIM boys (full day 2x per year).

- The Peace River Sail and Power Squadron is an international boating club dedicated to safe boating through education. We offer educational, social, and boating events including on water cruises. We are an active community service organization and participate in coastal cleanup, civic parades and other activities. We actively support the SEA-Tow life jacket program with responsibility for 13 stations throughout Charlotte Harbor. A part of the national organization, we sponsor the poster contest in the public-school system. In recent years we have had winning entries at the national level which create awareness and recognition for Punta Gorda as well as a small monetary award to the winning students.
- Woodcarvers - Weekly 4-hour meetings are spent with woodcarving activities by the members. There are also instructional classes ongoing for interested members.
- PRRA - Monthly member meetings last 2 hours. Special events are full day or full weekend and are attended by public. Involved in emergency preparedness as service to the community. Approximately 250 to 300-member hours per month testing and preparing the emergency communications at 4 local hospitals, 4 schools, 2 emergency shelters, and Emergency Operations Center near airport.

**What additional activities would your organization like to offer if a new facility had the capability to do so.**

- The Sailing Club establish a waterfront base where to fulfill our mission, sustain and grow.
- Learn2 sail - Kayak and Paddle Board instruction.
- YMCA - Group type youth programs. It would be desirable to have a gymnasium so sports such as basketball, volleyball, and gymnastics could be held. Older adult activities are expanding. We often have to turn participants away from popular classes during the busy season. The ability to offer larger class sizes or concurrent classes is desired.
- The Punta Gorda Boat Club would like a fully functioning kitchen to prepare, cook, and serve a meal to a large group. Exterior grounds space for outdoor activities/picnics.
- The Power Squadron - We would like to offer more youth oriented programs such as Sea Scouts.
- Woodcarvers - Better lighting needed. Also would like to see facility have capability for power tool use indoors. Currently members must go outside for this use.
- PRRA - Once or twice a year would like to offer Ham radio classes to the public in 8-10 week sessions. Ideally would involve simultaneous use of 3 classrooms for 20 students per class.

**What opportunities do you see for your organization with the development of a new facility?**

- Punta Gorda Sailing Club members are first concerned with reestablishing its presence at the new facility. Members expressed their support of sharing the facility with the community at large but more specifically with other waterfront activities, like youth sailing, kayaks, paddleboards, local and visiting boaters at anchor using dinghy docks.
- Learn to Sail - Could increase types and sizes of boats; increase security if covered, locked security was available which would lower insurance costs and help maintain the fleet. A covered facility would make it possible to work on boats out of the elements. Shower facilities for students would be helpful so students do not have to sit around in wet, salty clothing.
- The YMCA is moving into the area of supporting healthy lifestyles by offering prevention programs such as diabetes and nutrition. A modern well-equipped classroom for 25-40 people would be required.

- Punta Gorda Boat Club - We are going to lose our building and it is our hope this new facility will be a home for P.G.B.C. The P.B.G.C. has been in our current building and location for almost 65 years and it will allow us to stay in the same locale without the responsibility of maintaining an old structure.
- The Power Squadron - A larger facility would allow us to host a Sea Scouts ship. The closest Sea Scouts today is located in Cape Coral. A larger facility would allow ease of access for materials. We currently rent approximately 200 square feet of off-site storage in two locations.
- Woodcarvers - If facility was expanded, it could possibly accommodate larger events/shows currently held at Event Center. A power tool room would be a big benefit.
- PRRA - Fixed onsite radio equipment with antennas would enhance all activities. New facility could also serve as a central communications center for disaster and emergency operations.

**What concerns does your organization have regarding the replacement of the current facilities with a new facility?**

- Punta Gorda Sailing Club - That the new facility will be large enough or affordable enough for a public, community based organization like the Punta Gorda Sailing Club. Other concerns were for the present youth sailing program to have the infrastructure and facilities they need.
- Learn2Sail - Not clear where we would operate from. How long will we be displaced once construction of a new facility starts?
- YMCA - The downtime resulting from construction on the site. It could take a long time to build a new facility. A transition plan for alternate space would need to be developed. The current building has some problems and the Y supports the replacement of the current building.
- While the YMCA is not opposed to the idea of visiting boater facilities such as day rooms and showers, they would need to be carefully regulated due to our youth summer camp program. Separate adult and youth facilities would need to be created and monitored.
- The Punta Gorda Boat Club - It is hard to accept the loss of a building we have owned for 65 years where we have an identity. We have had exclusive use of a building and will now have to share time with many groups and may run into difficulty with scheduling. What will our costs be in a new facility? Who will manage this new facility? How will times be allocated?
- The Power Squadron - We are concerned about the transition plan and what we will do during the facility construction phase. We want to make sure that our unlimited access remains available. We are concerned in sharing a space with schedule conflicts. Today, we are the sole occupants of our classroom space and free to schedule classes as we wish. We want to make sure that the facility and our belongings are secure. The biggest concerns are time away from site during construction and increased usage fees. The group would prefer a renovation of current facility rather than totally new construction.
- PRRA - Primary concern would be increase in cost for use by the organization.

**Does your organization have a long-term vision for the waterfront and related maritime activities for the land under discussion?**

- Consensus from focus groups conducted by the Sailing Club. Having a facility to conduct meetings, socials and regattas was universal. Have storage for sailboat race equipment. Create a destination for local and visiting boaters. Include hoists, ramps, launches, docks, and mooring balls. Have parking for 200. Have outdoor grills, picnic tables, and pavilion. Restrooms with possibly showers. Consider leasing space to business. Wide range from concessions to Kayak rentals, sailboat rentals or sailboat instruction schools.

- Learn2Sail - Written document with this info will be provided.
- YMCA - Currently this is not a place that lends itself to youth activities. Creating a fully family friendly park would be our priority and vision. A place for easy and safe water access particularly for athletes. A place that could draw outside sports events such as a triathlon and make Punta Gorda a destination. Make use of best practices in modern building design by adding outside features such as a climbing wall to create an impact. After all a wall is also a space to utilize. The North Port Y runs a kayak program and interactive fountains are always popular.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club - Our membership is diverse, local, Port Charlotte, etc. However we all have a love affair with Punta Gorda and are very happy with how our little town has developed. This facility, when built and renovations to the park will be a waterfront show place. Hopefully it will help make Punta Gorda a boating destination.
- The Power Squadron - Not at this time.
- Woodcarvers - The site on the waterfront is wonderful and the views are an inspiration to the members in attendance.
- PRRA - Realize that the waterfront is a significant focal point for the community. While the Radio Assoc. does not necessarily have to be situated at this location, it is an attraction to its membership and guests to be here.

**Are you currently charged for the use of a facility for your meetings? How much?**

*Due to the sensitive nature of financial information, actual dollar amounts not included.*

- Sailing Club In total, all facilities = \$X annually.
- Learn 2 sail - Yes, \$X per month, 12 months per year for total \$X.
- YMCA - The current rent is \$800 per month. We recover some of this through sub-leases to the United States Power Squadron, Peace River Chapel, Learn2Sail program and, rentals for special functions. The Y maintains the interior of the building but will ask the city to support special requests.
- The Punta Gorda Boat Club owns the facilities. Annual expenses are largely offset by rental revenues from other. The Boat Club avoids incurring substantial expenses as the Boat Club members volunteer to perform many maintenance tasks.
- The Power Squadron - We pay the YMCA \$X per year, billed quarterly, to use the Bayfront Center. We pay the Boat Club an annual fee of \$X for 30 days use. We pay additional monies if we exceed the 30 days. The Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club is free because we have a sponsoring member and purchase meals during our meetings.
- Woodcarvers - \$X/year which equates to \$X/weekly meeting
- PRRA - \$X per meeting or \$X/yr.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club revenue from others - \$X not including SAILING CLUB.
- YMCA – Revenue \$X not including special events offsetting \$X annual rent plus utilities.
- Total fees of all organizations paid directly to a third party are \$21300 not including some offsite special events rents.



**Please describe how an upward change in expenses would potentially impact your organizations.**

- Punta Gorda Sailing Club - An increase in rentals would diminish or eliminate the money the Sailing Club donates to the three youth sailing organizations on the Harbor.
- Learn2 sail - Any increase in expenses to an all-volunteer organization with a shoe-string budget is a big deal.
- YMCA - We would expect any change in expenses to be related to increased facility capabilities and would look to offset these with increased revenue from expanded membership driven by increasing the programs offered.
- Punta Gorda Boat Club currently owns and maintains a building. Depending on our costs in a new building, there may not be a significant change in expenses. We have known for some time we would not have a building after 2021 so we have been preparing financially. If those expenses are raised dramatically, it would cause a decline in our membership.
- The Power Squadron - We are a nonprofit, all volunteer organization. Any increases in rents or other expenses would need to be offset by increasing our fees for classes or social events. Our concern is that increased educational fees may result in lower class enrollment which is contrary to one of our primary missions.
- Woodcarvers - Any increase in rent fees charged would be unwelcome and likely result in the group moving elsewhere.
- PRRA - Increase in expenses would require increase in dues. Organization just had a recent dues increase. They could adjust to slight increase in expense for enhanced facility capability, but a significant increase could have an adverse effect on dues and possibly membership growth.

**Other: POWER SQUADRON Comments:**

- We draw members from all over Charlotte County as well as Lee (Burnt Store Marina) and Sarasota Counties. The Power Squadron is a regional organization.
- We see the Power Squadron as a relevant community service organization and take our civic responsibilities (promote safe boating) seriously.
- We encourage the City to think through the transition plan. The impact of not having a building to meet in will be significant. Portable classroom trailers will not be a workable solution for us.
- We question why the buildings need to be demolished. We think renovation with a facelift upgrade is sufficient and perhaps more practical. There is space on the existing land footprint to expand. We have previously been told that the Boy Scouts of America portion of the Bayfront Center was of historical significance and could not be altered or destroyed. The thinking to replace these buildings runs counter to that statement.

**PARTIAL LIST OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED**

- TEAM Punta Gorda Maritime Committee
- Boaters Alliance
- Punta Gorda Civic Association
- Burnt Store Isles Association
- Isles Yacht Club
- Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club
- Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
- Fishermen’s Village
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce
- New Operation Cooper Street
- Blanchard House
- Seminole Lakes Homeowners Association
- Burnt Store Meadows HOA
- Burnt Store Lakes POA
- Charlotte County School Board

**TEAM PUNTA GPAC TEAM MEMBERS**

- Joan LeBeau – Liaison from City of Punta Gorda Urban Design Division
- Betzy Blaustein
- Carol Geiger
- Vicki Welsch
- William Welsch
- John Welsh – Director TEAM Punta Gorda
- Charles Wolley
- William Wood – Director TEAM Punta Gorda