Lakeland, FL

PARKS AND RECREATION

Lakeland has 60 parks with amenities that include fishing and boating, playgrounds, a skate park, outdoor pools, the Beerman Family Tennis Complex, and the public Cleveland Heights Golf Course.

Located in the heart of downtown Lakeland, Munn Park was named for the city’s founder and is home to numerous popular events, including Brewz Crewz Craft Beer Festival, Spring Obsession, the Thursday Squared food truck rallies, and First Friday events. The park’s landscape includes green space, shade trees, flowers, a fountain, and a monument that honors those who died in the Civil War.

The Lake Mirror Complex is a multifaceted entertainment complex located on Lake Mirror also in the downtown area. Hollis Garden is a formal garden that features a neoclassical architectural environment complete with patterned flower beds, public art, and ornamental fountains. Barnett Family Park features a large playground, a water play area, and a large picnic pavilion. The complex also contains the Lake Mirror Auditorium and Lake Mirror Theatre, Magnolia Building, Amphitheater, and Peggy Brown Building.

The much larger Lake Parker and its park offers fishing, boating, basketball, tennis, soccer, roller hockey, playground, shuffleboard, jogging and walking trails, and lawn bowling. Lake Parker Park has over 100 acres of native Florida vegetation and is perfect for bird watching.

Lake Hollingsworth has a very popular walking/biking path. Not far from Lake Hollingsworth, the Common Ground Inclusive Playground offers play opportunities for children of all ability levels.

Commonly called Swan Lake because of the large number of black and white swans inhabiting it, Lake Morton is home to many other types of birds, including seagulls, pelicans, ducks, and geese. It also is the site of the annual Mayfaire by-the-Lake, an outdoors Art Festival held every Mother’s Day weekend.

Celt Creek State Park’s numerous recreational opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, biking, picnicking, and nature study. The park has three freshwater man-made lakes for fishing and boating.

Joker Marchant Stadium hosts the Detroit Tigers Spring Training and Florida State League Lakeland Flying Tigers baseball games.

EDUCATION

Polk County Public Schools educate more than 94,000 students from Lakeland and 16 other municipalities and 24 unincorporated areas in 66 elementary, 4 elementary/middle, 7 elementary/middle/high, 18 middle, 3 middle/high, 18 high, 2 technical career centers, 2 adult, 11 alternative education, and 24 charters. The district offers magnet, choice, charter schools, and the Polk County Virtual School.

Higher education is available at Florida Southern College, which offers undergraduate majors and pre-professional programs, along with graduate programs in business, nursing, and education. Southeastern University is a Christian institution with undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Opening in 2014, Florida Polytechnic University is the newest state college and will grant bachelor’s and master’s degrees in technology and engineering. Polk State College is a multicampus institution and offers bachelor’s and associate’s degrees and a wide range of certificate and workforce training options. Florida Technical College Lakeland campus also offers associate’s and bachelor’s degrees in several fields. Whitefield College & Seminary is a conservative confessional classical Reformed seminary that provides associate and bachelor degree programs in selected fields. Career-focused education in selected fields is available at Keiser University’s Lakeland campus.