



## Community Profile

WINTER PARK, FL

2017



### **Winter Park's AIB Participation History:**

- 2013 participated and won best in population category and two special awards for Best Arbor Day Celebration and Most Effective Water Management Program.
- 2014 participated
- 2015 participated and won an Overall Impression Outstanding Achievement Award.
- 2016 participated and won a Heritage Preservation Outstanding Achievement Award. Entered the Circle of Champions

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## ***Introduction to Winter Park***

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Winter Park, FL., is considered by many to be the premier urban village in the Sunshine State. With its rich heritage, strong sense of community, vast parks system, diverse economic base, and beautiful chain of lakes, the city provides a high quality of life to both its residents and visitors alike.

Located just three miles north of and adjacent to Orlando in Orange County, the “City of Culture and Heritage” is nine-square miles with over 28,000 residents. Winter Park is known for its Old World charm, elegant homes, chain of lakes, quaint bricked streets, extensive tree canopy, first-class shopping and dining, world-class museums and Rollins College. Described as a small New England village with a European flavor with quaint shops and scrumptious restaurants, Winter Park is as beautiful as it is unique. In addition to its town-and-gown relationship with Rollins College, the oldest private college in Florida, the city has developed significant partnerships among area businesses, schools, cultural organizations, civic groups and neighborhood associations.

Winter Park is not only known for its abundance of upscale shopping and unique restaurants, but also its Hannibal Square district, Winter Park Village and nationally-ranked schools. With four museums right in its downtown core, Winter Park is a Mecca for those interested in world-class art and rich cultural experiences.

One of the best ways to get acquainted with the city is to take a leisurely boat ride on the Winter Park Scenic Boat Tour. This one-hour, open-air cruise provides breathtaking views of our city’s beautiful homes and expansive chain of lakes as you listen to a narrated history of Winter Park. You can also take a walking tour of the city by picking up a brochure at the Winter Park Historical Museum.

In addition to numerous significant buildings in Winter Park, the Downtown Historic District is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district, which runs along Park Avenue, was deemed significant in the areas of early settlement, architecture, community planning, commerce and transportation.

Among the city’s 75 beautiful large and small parks, the main parks include Central Park, Mead Garden, Kraft Azalea Gardens, Ward Memorial Park, Lake Baldwin Park, Shady Park, and Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Be sure to make plans to attend the nationally-recognized Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival during the third weekend in March, the Winter Park Autumn Art Festival during the second weekend in October, the Old Fashioned 4th of July Celebration, and many other community and city-sponsored events that are held throughout the year.

We are sure you’ll agree after visiting our parks, shops, restaurants, museums, historic sites and other points of interest throughout the city, that the City of Winter Park is truly a unique community with an international appeal.



*The Emily Fountain is an icon in downtown Winter Park's Central Park  
(Image compliments of the City of Winter Park's Communications Department)*

## **2017 MUNICIPAL INFORMATION**

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**Population:** 28,000

**City Website:** <http://cityofwinterpark.org/>

**City Contact Name:** Abby Gulden, City of Winter Park

**AIB Committee (Winter Park Blooms) Chair Contact:** Stephen G. Pategas

**Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable (KWPB&S)** is a city advisory board that integrates, manages and documents the sustainability efforts. Winter Park Blooms is a KWPB&S committee that organizes the beautification and America in Bloom efforts.

**Town Area in Square Miles:** 9

**Acres of Active Recreation:** 152.44

**Acres of Passive Recreation:** 145.33

**Sustainability Coordinator:** Abby Gulden, City of Winter Park

**Government** Winter Park is a city located within Orange County. The county, which has its own government in control of the unincorporated land, runs the public school system, the courts, recycling facility and the municipal landfills. Winter Park has an elected Mayor and four City Commissioners that direct the City Manager in the day to day operation of the city. Winter Park controls its potable water, electric distribution system, recycling/trash pickups (private hauler) and waterways management.

**Note:** *Winter Park, Central Florida and other parts of Florida are currently experiencing a drought (this March was the second driest on record). Expect to see some plant materials suffering due to lack of water.*

## ***Floral Displays and Landscaped Areas***

The Central Florida climate allows year 'round growing and the use of annuals requires at least four change outs a year. Outside of the resorts and theme parks, bedding plants in the ground are used sparingly in Central Florida due to the budget constraints of frequent replanting and their need for extra water.

**MUNICIPAL** - The floral arrangements that exist today on Park Avenue are part of a long tradition dating back to when Winter Park was founded as an oasis for wealthy northerners to escape harsh winters. More recently, plans were developed in the early 90's to create a more inviting environment for visitors and residents. These plans were completed in phases from 1995 to 1998 and included:

- Wider sidewalks with larger tree planting areas that allow restaurants to expand their outdoor seating
- The removal of asphalt to return to brick streets which help slow traffic and create a more pedestrian friendly environment
- New light poles with irrigation within the poles for hanging baskets and electrical outlets for holiday season lighting. Banner displays on these poles promote cultural events that further enhance foot traffic
- Raised planter beds
- Removal of sabal/cabbage palms and the addition of live oaks to extend the urban canopy into the downtown and create more shade for outdoor dining
- Hanging baskets that are installed following a conscious design
- Clusters of large terra cotta containers
- Addition of irrigation to all containers, hanging baskets and raised planters



*Park Avenue in downtown Winter Park (Image compliments of the City of Winter Park's Communications Department) and color at a storefront (Image compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

The Parks and Recreation Departments Landscape Division is now the sole provider of design, installation and maintenance on Park Avenue and other areas. There is always color and filler (which is semi-permanent) in the baskets. For years the City planted each basket with plugs and liner material. Now they contract to have the twelve-inch baskets grown and then the City finishes them to the twenty-inch size on display.

Many of the plantings from the late 1990's are still evident today. The raised brick planters contain a wide diversity of garden design styles and plants. Amongst them you will find:

- Small formal plantings
- A Japanese Tsuboniwa (small scale) garden
- A Florida native plant garden
- A planter with an Arizona cypress paired with an Arizona boulder
- A kapok tree with striped bark and fluffy white blooms erupting from the leafless sculptural branches.
- An arid garden with a Dr. Seuss quality
- Southern style
- Tropical gardens

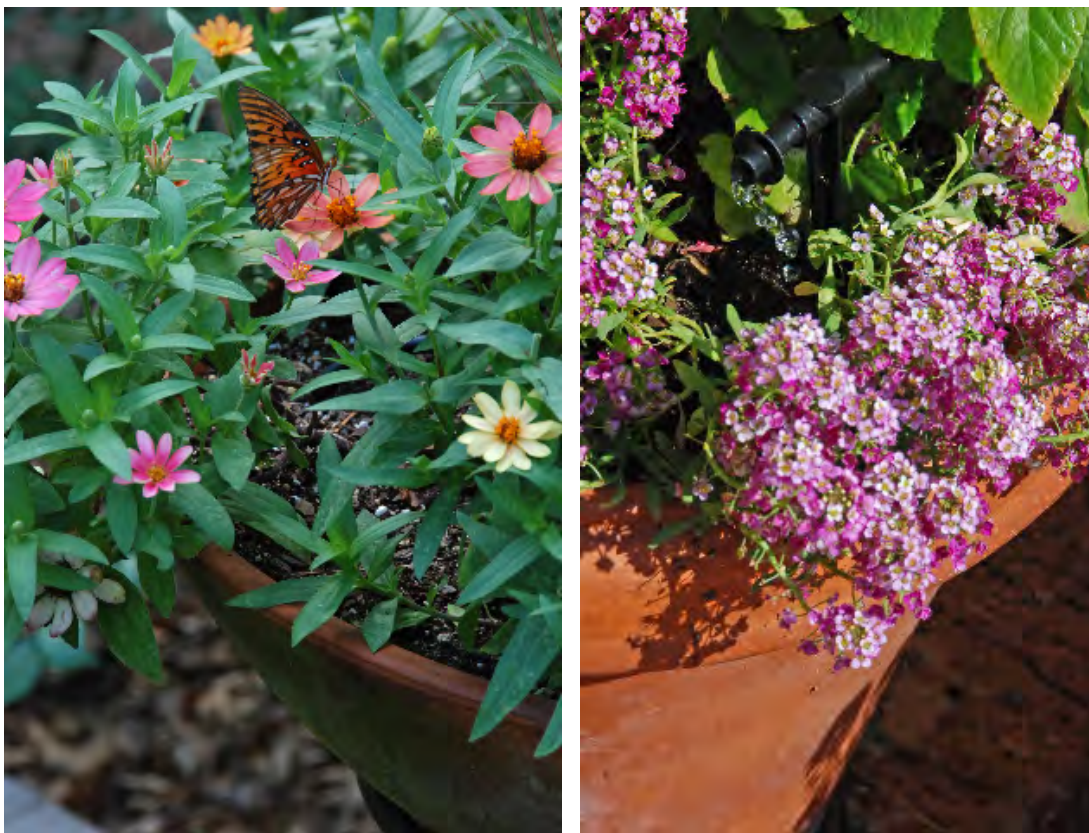
The majority of the 191 Italianate and Grecian style containers that dot the City landscape are found along Park Avenue and in Hannibal Square which is a short walk from Park Avenue. These containers are typically positioned in groups of three and hold



a wide variety of floral displays and landscape material. Ninety hanging baskets are also displayed in the Central Business District adding colorful floral displays at and above eye level.

The Landscape Division services many other City properties throughout Winter Park. Examples of their floral displays include Shady Park, Mead Garden, Winter Park Country Club, Trismen Park, Winter Park Farmers Market (formerly a freight depot) where there is a topiary peacock that is the city's symbol, City Hall and Winter Park Civic Center.

Florida Best Management Practices are used on all of the landscape beds and floral displays. Micro irrigation (Winter Park Community Center, LEED facility is a good example) and adherence to St Johns Water Management District's water restrictions are two examples of how Winter Park is doing its part in conserving natural resources. Two more are the use of slow release phosphorus-free fertilizers to protect lakes and waterways and Integrated Pest Management practices. Using the "right plant in the right place" is a philosophy that has been used for years.



*Attracting pollinators and conserving water are two goals of the Parks and Recreation staff.  
(Images compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

The maintenance plan for sports facilities and event venues includes cultural practices for the healthiest plant material and turf possible. Landscapes and turf are continuously evaluated with replacement as needed.

To help increase local food, the city's Parks Department and Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable have partnered on a public orchard that is a more informal take on community gardens. Residents and visitors are able to pick fruit from public trees along North Park Avenue near Casa Feliz.

**BUSINESS** - There is a strong collaboration amongst the City and the Chamber of Commerce, the Park Avenue Merchant's Association and individual business owners because it is to everyone's advantage to have a well-maintained business core. Park Avenue businesses maintain their own plantings which are typically in containers and not within the city ROW. The Alford Inn has set a higher standard with its landscaping and street side flower beds. At the southern terminus of Park Avenue is Rollins College, a private, liberal arts institution that is also the second largest employer in the city. Rollins is consistently ranked as one of the most beautiful campuses in the country, with an appealing mixture of floral displays, a rose garden, landscaped areas, native vegetation, a community garden run by the students and an active program to remove invasive species, especially

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on the shores of Lake Virginia. Displays throughout campus are changed every two months to highlight the colors of the season. The Gardens at DePugh Nursing Center maintains a memory/sensory garden used by the residents and their visitors. The Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Garden located on Lake Osceola has a winding walkways through the extensive gardens with sculptures. Community gardens are also found at The Mayflower retirement community, Mead Botanical Garden and the Winter Park Community Center. The First Green Bank uses a garden of totally native plants as its calling card.

**RESIDENTIAL** - While the efforts of City staff and private businesses maintain the City's center, the true beauty of Winter Park is in its residential neighborhoods. The pride that residents take in their homes is obvious, with permanent landscape areas being enhanced with seasonal floral displays. Many Winter Park neighborhoods are associated with small, public pocket parks that are often at least partially cared for by members of voluntary neighborhood associations with support from the City.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT** - Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable (KWPB&S) is a volunteer city advisory board that with its Winter Park Blooms committee heads up the beautification and America in Bloom efforts. They are raising funds and adding foliage color to gardens throughout the city with the sale of donated caladium bulbs at the Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings and at Earth Day. A Winter Park High School student organized an IDEAS4US Chapter and numerous students volunteered to sort, label and bag the thousands of bulbs. Over \$1, 500 was raised in 2016 and the program is being repeated in 2017. Mead Botanical Garden is supported by one of the largest volunteer organization within Winter Park, with more than 300 individuals contributing 3,500 hours annually. It runs a variety of educational and restoration projects throughout the year, including the first community garden which started in 2010. Its beds are fully rented, leading others to replicate this project including Rollins who in 2015 created a student-run garden with produce used in the dining halls. The Winter Park Garden Club is also based at Mead Garden and has 108 active members.

## ***Urban Forestry***

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**MUNICIPAL** - The City of Winter Park Forestry Division's mission is to maintain and increase a safe and healthy urban forest. The community's more than 75,000 trees and collectively the urban forest, is one of the first impressions upon visitors. In February, 2014, the City Commissioners passed Winter Park's first formal **Urban Forest Management Plan** (<https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/administration/urban-forestry/helpful-information/>) providing city staff and residents with critical information to ensure we are always planting the right tree in the right location.

The **Street Tree Inventory** assists our Forestry Division with the management of the City's more than 25,000 street trees. The software incorporates a mapping component allowing the user to view, select, and locate trees or groups of trees. The dynamic link between the mapping component and the database provides a unique and powerful tool. Trees were located in the field by using a Global Positioning System (GPS). A number of tree characteristics are assessed and recorded, including a maintenance recommendation, the height, diameter, condition and species of the tree. The Urban Forestry division is currently using the inventory to address hazard mitigation by both removing trees and pruning. In the fall of 2015, they completed the second phase of the street tree inventory and risk assessment and in 2016 the tree inventory for Central Park. Both were funded by an Urban & Community Forestry Grant from the U.S. Forest Service.

Conflicts between street trees and overhead and underground utilities, sidewalks and curbs are avoided by the Forestry Division through established tree planting policies. The minimum planting distance between two large shade trees is 60 ft., and 30 ft. for all other plantings. Large shade trees are not planted under primary power lines. Large shade trees are not planted within 6 ft. of any above ground utility i.e. water meters, fire hydrants, power transformers, or driveway aprons.

The Urban Forestry Department has also created a "touch a tree at one time" protocol: while pruning for overhead utilities, the street trees are pruned for street and sidewalk clearance as well as hazard mitigation. This procedure increased labor efficiency while minimizing resource expenditure. The city currently utilizes two vendors for pruning and removals, two vendors for planting and three contracted watering technicians

Following a successful City-wide referendum, Winter Park purchased the rights to operate its own electrical utility company eleven years ago and has made the undergrounding of all power lines a top priority. As of 2017, 50% of the eighty-seven miles of overhead wires have been undergrounded. This has enhanced the aesthetics, improved reliability and eliminated thousands of conflicts between trees and overhead wires.



The **Tree Protection Ordinance** protects trees on private property and requires businesses and residents to acquire a permit for removal if the tree is not an invasive species. It also requires replacement trees and protects existing trees during construction. The City has a **tree planting program** to help perpetuate the City's urban forest and in 2016 over 500 trees were planted not counting the hundreds of small trees given away.

In residential neighborhoods, if the right of way in front of a resident's home meets all the requirements for tree replacement, a 2 ½- to 3-inch caliper tree is planted for free. While watering bags are used, the residents are asked to provide supplemental watering. The division also provides free mulch and firewood to city residents.



*Register for a free tree at the Arbor Day event and bring home the right tree. Or, maybe learn a new skill.  
(Images compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

During the annual Earth Day celebration (held April 9<sup>th</sup> in 2017), we also celebrate **Arbor Day**. The city's Urban Forestry Division gives away printed information and an assortment of containerized trees for city residents to plant at home, in an effort to enhance our urban forest canopy. They also have certified arborists on hand to answer resident's questions and help them select the right tree for their home and yard, promoting the theme of "right tree, right place". Urban forestry also gives away trees at the annual Duck Derby event at Mead Botanical Gardens and during the 5k Run for the Trees event.

Winter Park has received the National Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" award for the 37th consecutive year and the Tree City USA Growth award for the 27th year and the Tree Line USA Utility recognition for the third year. Recently the division installed native trees to create a visual barrier at the water treatment plant as well as at the municipal golf course. They also worked with the Winter Park Police Department by designing a landscape area to discourage loitering and damage in a public right-of-way. Annually Urban Forestry assists Eagle Scouts in the completion of their projects. In 2017 these included a wetland restoration and upgrading the landscaping at one of the municipal golf course tees.



**BUSINESS** – As a follow-up to a recommendation in the America in Bloom 2016 Evaluation Report, Rollins College became a Tree Campus USA through the Arbor Day Foundation. The Mayflower retirement community’s trees and palms are maintained annually by a professional arborist.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT** – The city’s Tree Protection Advisory Board works on ordinance revisions and reviews policies as well as tree removal requests. The Urban forestry division assists the board in reviewing all tree removal permits to ensure compliance with the tree preservation and landscape ordinance prior to submittal to the board.

The “Trees for Peace” project is an annual event and represents a continuing effort to encourage children to appreciate diversity while building positive relationships with people of other faiths. It is dedicated to teaching students to be “stewards of the earth” by learning lessons about environmental responsibility from each faith and sharing them with one another. The Urban Forestry Division supervises the students in planting trees and donates a tree to each school so the students can hold their own tree planting ceremony on their respective school properties to remind them of the event for years to come. In 2017 45 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders celebrated by planting trees in Phelps Park.

## ***Environmental Effort – Sustainable Development and Awareness***

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**MUNICIPAL** - The City of Winter Park’s sustainable development efforts started on January 14, 2008 with the passage of a resolution stating that the City would pursue measures to become a certified Green Local Government through the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC). That led to a multitude of new projects, policies and programs, culminating in 2011 with the city being officially certified as a Green Local Government at the Gold level and earning the highest score for a local government that year. This initial effort was spearheaded by KWPB&S.

KWPB&S continued to partner with the City staff to push efforts forward and on February 9, 2015, the City Commission unanimously adopted our first **Sustainability Action Plan**. The Sustainability Action Plan outlines a set of goals and both short-term and long-term actions to reach those goals (<https://cityofwinterpark.org/departments/building-and-permitting-services/sustainability-program/sustainability-action-plan/>). This plan was used as a springboard for a City visioning exercise that was completed in late 2016.

The Sustainability Action Plan addresses Waste Diversion and Recycling, Mobility and Urban Form, Buildings and Energy, Natural Systems and Resources, Community Engagement and Green Economy, Local Food and Agriculture and Local Government Operations. A few of the goals include:

- Divert 75% of solid waste by 2020
- Create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods where Winter Park residents can easily walk or bicycle to meet basic daily needs and have safe pedestrian and bicycle access to transit
- Reduce water consumption and increase watershed health
- Reduce community wide greenhouse gas emissions, and
- Increase production of energy from on-site renewables

Each year, an annual report is written for the City Commission to inform them of the progress and to highlight areas of emphasis for the coming year. These are provided to the Commission during annual budget negotiations, so that mutually-identified priorities can be funded appropriately.

**Energy** - One of our largest efforts has been in the area of energy conservation and we have tackled that holistically across all city sectors. The City began in 2010 by performing a series of energy retrofits on municipally-owned buildings. The scope of work included high performance heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC), energy efficient lighting and reflective roof materials. These upgrades help the city achieve the triple bottom line (Environment, Economy and Social) by saving money on energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, creating a healthier environment for occupants and extending the buildings’ lifespan. The building retrofits were made possible through funding from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) and the Florida Energy & Climate Grant. In 2015 the city created maps that showed the

energy use of every structure in Winter Park. They will allow the city to pinpoint homes and businesses that may be lacking insulation and weather proofing.

We have moved these efforts at energy conservation to commercial and residential customers through free energy audits that provide the commercial property or homeowner with a checklist of items that, if accomplished, will help save energy. The City then provides rebates to these businesses and citizens so that they can actually accomplish these measures. The rebates help serve as a financial incentive to those in Winter Park that want to help save money and reduce their carbon footprint. In 2015, the City also received a \$64,000 grant from Toyota Together Green to fund homeowner energy efficiency workshops and no cost upgrades for lower income families. Local contractors were hired to retrofit 40 homes, 5 churches, and one day care/nursery facility on the west side of Winter Park with attic insulation, duct repair, window film, and LED lighting at no cost to the participants.

Creating more renewable energy is also a priority for the City. In 2014, the City installed its first solar photovoltaic array at the public works facility, generating 100kW of clean green energy each day and is currently in the planning stages for another major project. These types of projects are being extended to business owners and residents through the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program. This program provides a unique financing model for property owners to invest in energy conservation and renewable energy generation. Winter Park is the first city in Orange County to offer this program for residents.

Our focus on energy has led Winter Park in 2015 to be selected as a **semifinalist for the Georgetown University Energy Prize**, competing for a \$5 million prize. We are one of only 50 cities nationwide and the only city in Florida to receive the honor. Selection as a semi-finalist honors the work we have already done in energy-efficiency and challenges us to rethink our energy use and develop creative ways to improve efficiency.

**Transportation** - Along with energy, issues of transportation have been another city focal point, both today and historically. In fact, Winter Park was the first planned community in the State of Florida. Winter Park was laid out in the 1880's with the train station in the center and development based on 5-10 minute walks out from there. The train station continues to serve that role today, located within Winter Park's Central Park and running parallel with historic main street Park Avenue. Commuter rail (SunRail) began in Central Florida in 2014, with Winter Park being the most popular station stop on the entire line. The city contributed by designing and building a new train station to accommodate both Amtrak and SunRail.

This building is both aesthetically beautiful and has achieved a LEED Silver certification. Design features include efficient HVAC, LED lighting, ENERGY STAR appliances, Water Sense fixtures, no VOC paints and adhesives, Florida Friendly landscaping and non-potable water for irrigation. The building's future energy and water usage is tracked through ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager, a free tool from the EPA – <http://energystar.gov/porfoliomanager>.

Once you step off either the commuter rail or Amtrak trains, you can walk to many destinations, but the City has also partnered with a national car share company (ZipCar) to provide transportation alternatives for train riders whose destination is a bit further away. The Winter Park Public Library is also within walking distance and has a bike check-out program complete with maps to local museums.



*Checkout Bikes at the Winter Park Public Library (Image compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*


The City understands that it takes careful planning to truly make the community a wonderful place to walk and bike. In 2011, the Commission passed a Complete Streets resolution stating that all future street projects will be designed to accommodate all modes of transportation equally. Complete streets that are enjoyable to walk or bike on become public amenities that are capable of attracting new tenants and residents to the area. Complete streets joined with human-scaled urban development

create a more aesthetically pleasing atmosphere while creating a “sense of place.” Examples in Winter Park include Park Avenue, Hannibal Square and the Winter Park Village. The site of the SunRail/Amtrak Station at 151 Morse Blvd near Park Ave has a Walkscore of 91, which is considered a “walker’s paradise.” The Community Center in Hannibal Square scores at 86 “very walkable” while Winter Park Village achieves an 80, also “very walkable.” It is no coincidence that these walkable places also have the highest concentrated property values within the city. Overall the city has a Walkscore of 47 with a goal of 80 by 2030.

The Winter Park Commute Challenge is an annual event in December, which was expanded in 2016 from City Hall participation to include an open invitation to all Winter Park employers and commuters. Teams were formed in collaboration with Florida Department of Transportation’s Rethink Your Commute program ([www.rethinkyourcommute.org](http://www.rethinkyourcommute.org)), this event provides commuters to the Park Avenue area with a friendly competition regarding commuter options and also incentives, including a chance to win a prize for “trying out” an alternative commute for the day, including Sunrail, carpool, bicycle, and walking. A launch event was hosted by the Chamber of Commerce during the December “Good Morning Winter Park”, where a panel of speakers talked about their experiences with alternative commuting. 2016 saw a record number of participants, with 43 participants from 10 Winter Park employers logging a total of 308 commute trips!

In 2015, the Commission decided to reduce one of our major thoroughfares (Denning Drive) from four lanes of traffic to two lanes, widening its sidewalks and bike lanes. We installed the first cycle track in the city near one of our elementary schools. The cycle track is the result of a public/private partnership between the City of Winter Park, its Pedestrian & Bicycle and Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable advisory boards, and the Winter Park Health Foundation. The cycle track encourages bicycling and safety by combining two bike lanes on one side of the street, separating them from traffic with a 2-foot buffer area and flexible vertical markers. This greatly improves bike safety around the school and has encouraged more parents to allow their children to bike to school. The city received the 2016 Urban Land Institute Trendsetter Award in recognition for its design and construction of the Cady Way Cycle Track. Both of these projects send a powerful message to the city businesses and residents that we are committed to spreading the walkability and livability of our downtown core out into the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Local Food** - In early 2017, through grants from Healthy Central Florida, the Winter Park Health Foundation, and the Florida Organic Growers Association (FOG), the City of Winter Park created the first organized SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Acceptance Program, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) in Central Florida. It replicates an evidence based approach that essentially mimics an ATM and minimizes coordination efforts from individual markets and opens the SNAP and EBT benefits to a wider customer base. Cities that have implemented this type of program have seen significant increases in sales at farmers markets. Tokens that users receive at the booth will be good for produce and other non-prepared goods. Matching funds and “double points” from the FOG “Fresh Access Bucks” programs will also increase the affordability of local and organic options for lower income households that require assistance benefits.



**Trash and Recycling** – We are proud to be the first city in the nation utilizing the standardized Recycle Across America labels for residential roll out carts. Each residential home in Winter Park received new solid waste and recycling carts at the end of October 2016 which display the standardized labeling. The free recycling carts replaced bins which tended to be overflowing. There continues to be weekly pickups for trash (twice) and recycling (once) and yard waste (once). All containers now have stickers identifying what is allowed in each one. There is a free yearly household bulky waste pickup and a household hazardous/e-waste (in 2016 a total of 16,802 pounds electronics were diverted from the landfill drop-off event. There are now cigarette butt waste receptacles along Park Avenue.

**Programs targeting local business** - A strong sense of civic pride creates a high level of activity conducive to good business. Winter Park businesses have plenty of resources, including the City’s Economic Development Department and Community Redevelopment (CRA), Winter Park Chamber of Commerce, Park Avenue Merchants Association and more. The CRA provides incentives through a Business Facade Matching Grant program while the city owned Electric Utility provides businesses with free energy audits and rebates for energy efficiency related work, including green roofs. At the rear of Park Avenue businesses there are trash compactors and one for cardboard boxes.

#### Lakes and Waterways

Most of the city lies within the Howell Branch Drainage Basin. Howell Branch Creek, also known as Howell Creek, is a tributary of the St. Johns River. All of the land area that contributes runoff to Howell Branch is referred to as its drainage basin. There are

approximately 17 square miles of land that drain to Howell Branch before it leaves Winter Park. The city has over 2,300 stormwater inlets and 46 miles of stormwater pipes.

The Lakes Division manages and maintains all city lakes and waterways through aquatic weed control, access management, canal maintenance, and water quality monitoring. This division also performs shoreline permitting activities including boat dock and vegetation removal permits, assists with stormwater management activities and educates the residents on how to protect the waterways.

All of the large, public lakes meet Florida's new Numeric Nutrient Criteria for water quality. We have also recently completed a large scale exotic plant removal on a stretch of Howell Creek that now allows that section to be used as a natural canoe trail and is a component of the Howell Branch Preserve expansion. Currently floating vegetation mats which absorb nutrients from the water are in use in one lake.

**BUSINESS** – In 2015, Winter Park challenged local businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations and buildings through participation in the Green Workplace Challenge. The pilot group of nine businesses was challenged to create a green, healthy, and involved workplace in a friendly competition with other businesses. These businesses were honored for their pioneering efforts during our Earth Day celebration as Environmental Heroes. The success in Winter Park caused the program to expand in 2016 to the City of Orlando and Orange County and be renamed the Central Florida Workplace Challenge, thereby increasing the recognition received by local businesses.



**Rollins College** has a number of sustainability programs:

- Solar panels on residence halls to produce all the hot water for the building
- Single-stream recycling
- Controlling the entire irrigation system with software to optimize water usage
- Air conditioning is produced using chilled water
- At the end of each semester pods for the recycling of dorm room furnishings are provided and promptly filled. Not only are useful items recycled but parents are thrilled.
- Student involvement is quite large with 65 active participants with the Eco-Rollins student group <http://www.rollins.edu/sustainability/student-involvement/index.html> , the Sustainability House where 10 students live together in a living-learning environment and 12 Sustainability Coordinators who live throughout the campus to work with all students on sustainability issues.
- Banned plastic bags at the campus convenience store and food service operations in March 2017
- Over 100 rental bikes are available through a student run library check-out program.

**Mead Botanical Garden** is operated by the not for profit Friends of Mead Garden and is a unique natural area of fifty acres just a few miles from the downtown business district. Once there you'll find a great place to enjoy a lazy afternoon traversing the nature trails, wandering through the Legacy Garden or dipping your feet in the freshwater ponds. Mead Garden is unusual because it is a natural island of diverse habitats within an otherwise developed landscape, and these diverse habitats including flowing streams, riparian forest, wetlands, secondary growth, upland/sandhill, protect a variety of living things including epiphytes and the endangered gopher tortoise.

Programs include community gardening; summer camps; horticulture in the little greenhouse; guided bird, herb and fantasy walks; and classroom field trips. During the summer when the Young Naturalist Summer Camp is in session, Young Naturalist campers explore Mead Garden's unique wildlife habitats, play games and engage in age-appropriate arts and crafts and outdoor adventure. Will young naturalists be inspired by the fact William Bartram hiked near Mead Botanical Garden in 1774?





**Acomb, Ostendorf & Associates (AOA)** is Winter Park's first Best Workplace for Commuters (BWC). AOA received this national designation by offering 100% employer subsidized monthly SunRail passes, giving employees access to their free internal bikeshare program, and promotion of a flexible work schedule, along with additional office perks! reThink presented this award to AOA at a Winter Park Transportation Advisory Board meeting October 9, 2016.

At **The Mayflower** retirement community, the Director of Building Services created an efficient energy management system resulting in lower energy consumption and lower costs. Light fixtures in the buildings and outside lamps are being converted to LEDs

The **Winter Park Public Library** is partially funded by the city but raises a majority of its own funds.

- The Library was the recipient of a book bike from a local Eagle Scout candidate. The bike has a large box attached that can carry 250 pounds of weight, making it an ideal vehicle for transporting books and other library materials out of our building. The mobile library is a full-service library allowing a librarian the ability to check out materials, register new library cards, answer reference questions, demonstrate materials downloads, distribute programming information and provide a Wi-Fi hotspot. In less than a year it has made 31 trips, meeting over 2,000 people.
- Grant monies procured to provide gardening boxes and an education program run with help from a volunteer and directed at youth. This year's garden is a salsa garden: tomatoes, peppers and cilantro were planted in March to be harvested in May.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT** – Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable with its seven person volunteer board takes the lead on sustainability volunteerism. The Lakes Division has a formal partnership with Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable to conduct at least two large scale volunteer projects focused on watersheds each year.

The City's signature community event each year is Earth Day, held on April 9<sup>th</sup> in 2017. Organized by the Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board (KWPB&S) and supported by sponsorships from local businesses, Earth Day is committed to educating all community members on ways they can contribute to a healthier planet. Events this year included:

- Representatives of each city volunteer advisory board with an environmental component discussing their agendas.
- Representatives of a large variety of local environmentally-focused non-profits
- A display of electric cars owned by local Winter Park residents
- A bike rodeo sponsored by the Transportation Advisory Board, along with a Bike Valet so visitors can check-in their bicycles for free
- The presentation of Green School Grants to local schools
- The annual Arbor Day celebration with tree giveaways



(L)Students accept a their Green School Grant on stage during Earth Day in the Park (R)Attendees of Earth Day trying their hand at planting seeds

*(Images compliments of City of Winter Park's Communications Department)*

KWPB&S hosted a recycling education day, as sustainability students from Rollins College, members of the Rollins College EcoRollins Club, and Winter Park High School's IDEAS4US chapter visited neighborhoods to distribute 10,000 door hangers provided by Waste Pro®. They reinforced the message that plastic bags and film are not recyclable in the city's single-family, curbside recycling collection program. Plastic bags should be recycled at local retail locations, or better yet, residents are encouraged to use reusable cloth bags. Plastic bags and film are the number one contaminant in our residential recycling program, and the leading cause of equipment breakdown at the recycling sorting facility.



*The Lakes & Waterways Advisory Board plays a lead role in protecting our many lakes and canals.  
(Image compliments of the City of Winter Park's Communications Department)*

The city's Sustainability Coordinator position began purely as an effort to pick up litter in waterways and while still honoring that mission has evolved into a true leadership role, coordinating a variety of major city sustainability initiatives. This includes coordination with groups that wish to accomplish a philanthropic project in the city, student project groups and city staff members. The Sustainability Coordinator uses social media and the City's communication department to get the word and troops out.

The newest and most innovative signature Winter Park Event is a large marine debris abatement volunteer event (about one hundred volunteers) that we host quarterly. The "Watershed Cleanup" events are focused on lakes in Winter Park, and provide not only an avenue for litter pick up, but also an education opportunity for residents and visitors to learn that litter dropped on any of our city streets will directly impact our precious waterways. The lakes are cleaned from within by scuba volunteers, while the shorelines are skimmed by boaters, rowers, canoeists, stand up paddle boarders, and kayakers. All streets within the watershed (as mapped by GIS) are assigned to groups and picked up simultaneously, with predetermined drop off locations for the litter bags. To date we have collected over a half ton of debris.

We also host smaller events (about twenty – thirty volunteers). The majority of these events are hosted in collaboration with Mead Botanical Gardens.

Recent Volunteer Events include:

- Lake Maitland Watershed Clean-up – Lake litter clean-up with 100 volunteers from a number of groups
- Lake Virginia Watershed Clean-up – Lake litter clean-up with 77 volunteers from a number of groups
- Mead Gardens Cleanups- Valencia College, Boy Scouts, Rotary, Fishbone Grill, and UVA Alumni are among the groups that have participated
- Earth Day in the Park & Arbor Day Tree Giveaway with 40 volunteers
- Green-Up Winter Park High School – Landscape, mulch and plant a tree
- Lake Baldwin Park – Litter clean-up
- Bike Valet at Winter Park Art Festival and Earth Day in the Park – We keep your bike safe while you play!
- Great American Cleanup- "Choose your own adventure" clean ups conducted by groups on April 11 2015 with supplies from KWPB&S
- Winter Park Public Library – Re-mulched the landscaped areas

The Volunteer Coordinator developed an amazing list of available volunteers:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| • Individuals outside of organizations that want to be contacted about volunteer opportunities | • Cambrian Foundation         |
| • Hard Rock Café   | • Dayo Scuba                  |
| • Summit Church  | • Paddle Board Orlando        |
| • Target   | • Do Good Bus                 |
| • Rotaract (Rotary youth)  | • Rebuilding Together Orlando |

- Rollins College (Community Engagement Office and other departments)



- And more...



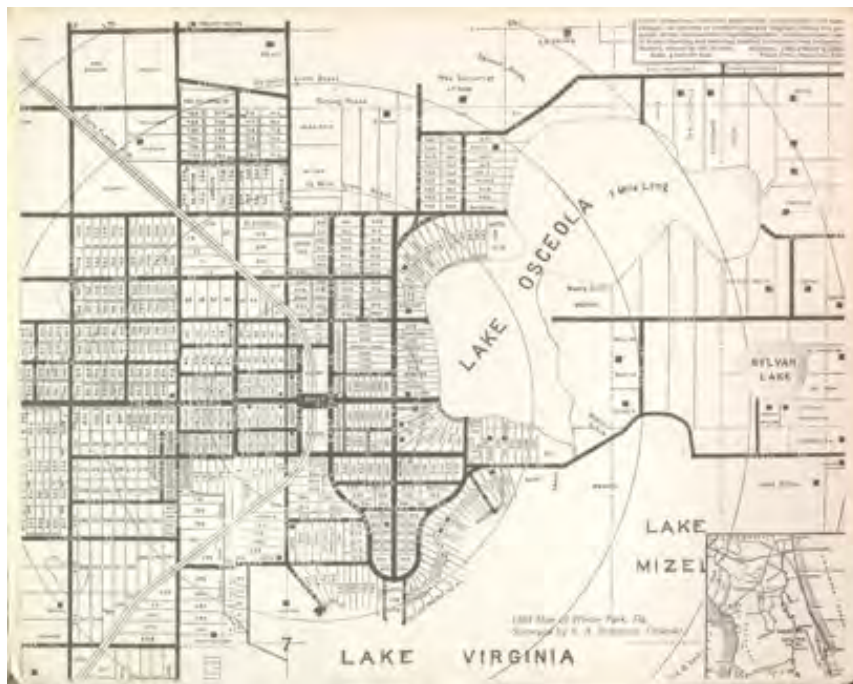
*Lake Virginia clean-up*

*Dayo Scuba, Paddleboard Orlando, and some kayak/canoe groups really came through as well as a local Rotaract club and about 13 bags of debris from around and under the surface were collected.*

## ***Heritage – Preserving the Past for Future Generations***

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**History** - Winter Park was founded in 1881 by New Englanders wintering in Florida looking for health – not property. At the urging of an acquaintance, Loring Chase went to Orlando and took a buggy ride northward to where a single set of railroad tracks had recently been laid past lakes, orange groves and rustic homesteads. 600 acres were purchased and was from the start a planned community with a business district, a central park, a system of rectilinear and curved streets, and several large lots reserved for churches, schools and a resort hotel.



*Original Winter Park Plan with the train station in the center (the rings show walking distances).*

Along with the production of citrus, Winter Park was all about “health and wealth.” Chapman and Chase aggressively marketed their new development to well-to-do Northerners seeking a healthful and warm climate. Hotels for winter guests were constructed and the downtown began to develop with the form it has today.

The Congregational Church in Winter Park led directly to one of the most important events in the town’s history – the founding of Rollins College in 1885. Since its founding as the oldest recognized college in Florida, Rollins College has played a significant role in the educational, cultural, and economic life of Winter Park. The site for the new college was an attractive parcel located on the north shore of Lake Virginia. The buildings were laid out in a semicircular arrangement or horseshoe shape around a central green. Pinehurst, completed in 1886, is a beautifully preserved two-story, Shingle Style frame building and is the last remaining original Rollins College building.

African-Americans were an integral part of Winter Park’s population from the beginning. The original Chapman-Chase plan designated land on the west side of the railroad track, known as **Hannibal Square**, for the homes of African-Americans who worked as servants, laborers, porters, and carpenters on the eastern half of town. African-Americans played a vital role in the town’s early economic, political, and social life. Today the Hannibal Square Heritage Center represents a first-of-a-kind experience in Central Florida where the history of a community is told by members of the community itself through The Heritage Collection: Photographs and Oral Histories of West Winter Park, The Hannibal Square Timeline, which chronicles significant local and national events in civil rights and African-American history, and public art installations and educational programs that explore the African-American experience, southern folklore and cultural preservation. The center also features a Visiting Exhibition Series. The exhibitions and programs held at the center weave the stories of this unique and proud neighborhood together with African-American history and experience in general. The center also hosts an annual Unity Heritage Festival and a Folk Art and Craft Festival.

The Town of Winter Park was incorporated in 1887. Winter Park had begun as a planned community, but in 1904 much of the town still consisted of scattered residences and buildings surrounded by extensive orange groves. The most important feature of Winter Park history during the 1904-1930 periods was the rapid subdivision and development of these large properties.

By the 1920s, the pace of residential development quickened throughout the town. Winter Park, like much of Florida, was caught up in a dramatic real estate boom, during which land speculation, land prices, and building activity all escalated at a fever pitch. Both large and small subdivisions were developed in Winter Park during the 1920s, most of them selling out rapidly soon after individual lots were placed on the market. The Florida Boom reached its peak in 1926, before crashing precipitously and sparking a depression in real estate values in the 1930s.

The largest concentration of Spanish and Mediterranean buildings in Winter Park is located on the Rollins College campus. They provide a striking contrast with the frame Shingle Style buildings erected during the college’s formative years.





*Mediterranean style architecture at Rollins College (Image compliments of the City of Winter Park's Communications Department)*

The excellent collection of Spanish buildings at Rollins College is mirrored in the equally fine collection of residences designed during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s by Winter Park's premier architect **James Gamble Rogers II** (1901-1990).

As the town rebounded from the Great Depression, the Colony Theater designed by Roy A. Benjamin opened downtown in 1940. In 1945 realtor and later Mayor Raymond W. Greene hired architect James Gamble Rogers II to design a retail court on Park Avenue. Rogers was already recognized for his exceptional home designs and he carried a romanticized Spanish theme to the design of Greeneda Court as well. The richly detailed buildings of Greeneda Court wrap around an interior "secret" courtyard, and its design continues to inspire architects and city planners today.

Frank Lloyd Wright protégé Nils Schweizer designed the Mid-Century Modern Schweizer building on Park Avenue which features wood panels, beams and blocks to create brise soleils to screen the second floor windows from the sun. Other fine architect designed buildings that completed the development of downtown include city hall and the post office. The 1965 post office is decorated with bas-relief murals by a Florida artist.

**MUNICIPAL** - The historic brick railroad freight depot is on the Winter Park Historic Register and permanently protected. The spacious warehouse portion of the interior is used for events and the former offices house the Winter Park Historical Museum with changing exhibits on Winter Park history. The depot is the site of the top rated weekly Winter Park Farmers' Market.

The northern end of downtown is anchored by the city-owned nine hole Winter Park Golf Course and Winter Park Country Clubhouse. The Golf Course is one of the very few golf courses listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Shingle style clubhouse (on the Winter Park Historic Register and the National Register) was built in 1914 and is a popular venue for social events.

The **Winter Park Public Library's History Center** is the repository of a large collection and is available to the public for viewing. Honoring that importance of heritage, the city successfully nominated the Downtown Winter Park Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. The district includes buildings from the earliest days of development to the middle of the last century when significant development was complete.

**Central Park** is an original central feature of Chase and Chapman's 1881 plan for Winter Park and it is the heart of historic downtown to this day. The park is associated with the late nineteenth century movement to beautify America's cities – a movement that largely sprang from Frederick Law Olmsted's design for New York City's Central Park. The train station is located here and over the decades, various elements and amenities have been installed:

- The 1920 War Memorial Fountain dedicated to the veterans of World War I
- The 1920 Friendship Rose Garden (upgraded several times over the years) and now including the Peacock fountain in the center. This is the result of a 2015 project created and funded by a high school student in memory of a recently deceased classmate.
- The fountain in the north end of the park was embellished with the “Emily” sculpture by artist Albin Polasek whose home and studio is a museum with sculpture garden



*The historic War Memorial Fountain attracts the young. (Image compliments of the City of Winter Park's Communications Department)*

Winter Park finds many ways to create its heritage as well as celebrate it:

- For fourteen years the City has hosted Dinner on the Avenue. Park Avenue is closed to vehicular traffic and 150 tables replace the vehicles and over 1,200 patrons gather together with friends, family, co-workers and neighbors to dine under the stars on beautiful Park Avenue. Creativity is encouraged and each group is challenged to develop its own unique look and individual décor for its table. Patrons are encouraged to donate canned food items at the event for the “Dinner Drive” in support of Second Harvest Food Bank.
- St. Patrick's Day and Christmas Parades and the Holiday Boat Parade
- Old Fashioned 4th of July Celebration
- Winter in the Park: for almost two months each year over the last six years, the City has sponsored a holiday ice skating rink in the Central Park West Meadow.
- The City of Winter Park along with the Hannibal Square heritage Center holds the Unity Heritage Festival each year. The community festival promotes family history and raises funds for the Educational Fulfillment Fund to benefit local economically disadvantaged youth.
- Over one thousand colorful holiday globes of light are suspended from trees along Park Avenue and throughout Central Park.

**BUSINESS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT** - Adaptive reuse is strong and includes the former Thomas Lumber and (now retail) State Auto Body (now a coffee shop, brewery and distillery) buildings, Casa Feliz and Capen House. The Coop is a successful restaurant in a former neighborhood grocery market. While Winter Park contains many historic structures most of them were saved solely due to sympathetic individuals. There were no legal mechanisms to review or delay demolition or preserve a structure for perpetuity. Little did noted architect James Gamble Rogers II know that one of his signature works would change everything. It was just near the beginning his career in 1933 when he was hired to design a winter home for inventor and manufacturer Robert Bruce Barbour and his family. Rogers was given a budget and the number of rooms wanted but otherwise was given free rein on the design. The resulting home, “**Casa Feliz**”, was designed to resemble a well-worn Spanish Andalusian

country courtyard home (look for the intentional sag in the roof). It was one of Rogers' favorite designs and considered a masterpiece. It had to be relocated in 2001 to avoid demolition. It has since been beautifully restored by the award winning Friends of Casa Feliz and listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Winter Park Historic Register. Casa Feliz is open to the public as a house museum and hosts numerous events and weddings. The Friends host an annual Colloquium on preservation which includes a tour of historic structures. There are also historical archives, regular Parlor Talks on preservation issues, a Music at the Casa series and advocacy for historic preservation.

The near loss of Casa Feliz spawned a movement by the Friends of Casa Feliz and residents to lobby the city to create the Historic Preservation Ordinance which created the Historic Preservation Board and the Winter Park Register of Historic Places. City staff receives applications for designations to the register, as well as Certificate of Review applications for additions and alterations to listed historic properties. They also educate the citizens about preservation:

[https://cityofwinterpark.org/docs/departments/planning-community-development/historic-preservation/LRHP\\_Q&A\\_Brochure.pdf](https://cityofwinterpark.org/docs/departments/planning-community-development/historic-preservation/LRHP_Q&A_Brochure.pdf)

There are two National Register Historic Districts including Downtown Winter Park and Interlachen Avenue. The district includes commercial, residential and religious buildings. Individual buildings or places listed on the National Register of Historic Places include the city-owned Winter Park Golf Course and the Clubhouse, the Woman's Club of Winter Park (both celebrated their centennials in 2014), the Knowles Memorial Chapel and the Annie Russell Theater on the Rollins College Campus, private homes "Eastbank" and "The Palms", The Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Garden, and "Casa Feliz. The oldest residential building is the Shingle style 1882 Osceola Lodge and is best known as the winter home of industrialist Charles Hosmer Morse whose granddaughter Jeannette Genius McKean founded the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art (in downtown Winter Park) with its exceptional Tiffany collection.



*Historic Casa Feliz after its move and restoration. (Image compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

From the near disastrous loss of Casa Feliz came the awareness of how fragile our historic structures are and the means to further the protection of these treasures. Another near loss occurred in 2013 with the near demolition of the **Capen House** built in 1885. Once again residents rose to the occasion and Preservation Capen raised over \$600,000 dollars to split the house in two and move it by barge across Lake Osceola to its new home on Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Garden property. The two sections were reunited and the house is now open to the public for events.





*The first half of the Capen House on the barge. (Image compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*



*One-half of the Capen House delivered to the site and two halves to rejoin. (Images compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

**RESIDENTIAL** - Many of Winter Park's subdivisions from the 1920s still exist as well-defined areas of Winter Park, possessing a general uniformity of vintage architectural styles, scale, and materials. As of April 2017, two districts, the College Quarter and the Virginia Heights East Historic Districts are listed on the Winter Park Register of Historic Places along with 82 individual structures. They are all protected from demolition by ordinance. This is something that the National Register of Historic Places does not do.



## Overall Impression

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Winter Park prides itself on its clean lakes, heavy tree canopy throughout the city, Rollins College and a downtown that has a touch of New England – all set in Central Florida. Winter Park is often considered the respite from the theme parks and tourist areas.

The major lakes with connecting canals are plied by the Scenic Boat Tour. The numerous museums, shops and restaurants with outdoor dining areas attract residents as well as visitors from Florida and beyond.

The city has made a concerted effort to denote it's gateways with attractive signage and developed a wayfinding signage system to guide visitors to the downtown and help them find amenities. Look for the blue signs with the peacocks!







Over the years the City of Winter Park Neighborhood Council's matching grants allowed neighborhood associations in College Quarter and Orwin Manor to install signage. Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable's Community Garden and Pocket Park Grants provided funds for a number of projects:

- Winter Park Public Library container beautification
- The entry park at Park Grove pergola, patio and landscaping
- The Park at Orwin Manor container beautification
- Winter Park Chapel landscaping



*Orwin Manor signage and the entry park at Park Grove. (Images compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

There are also private initiatives such as a resident who could no longer tolerate the horrific landscape at the funding deprived downtown United States Post Office. He funded a re-landscaping and is still covering the maintenance costs. The Winter Park Health Foundation funded the design and installation of the Memory/Sensory Garden at The Gardens at DePugh Nursing Center



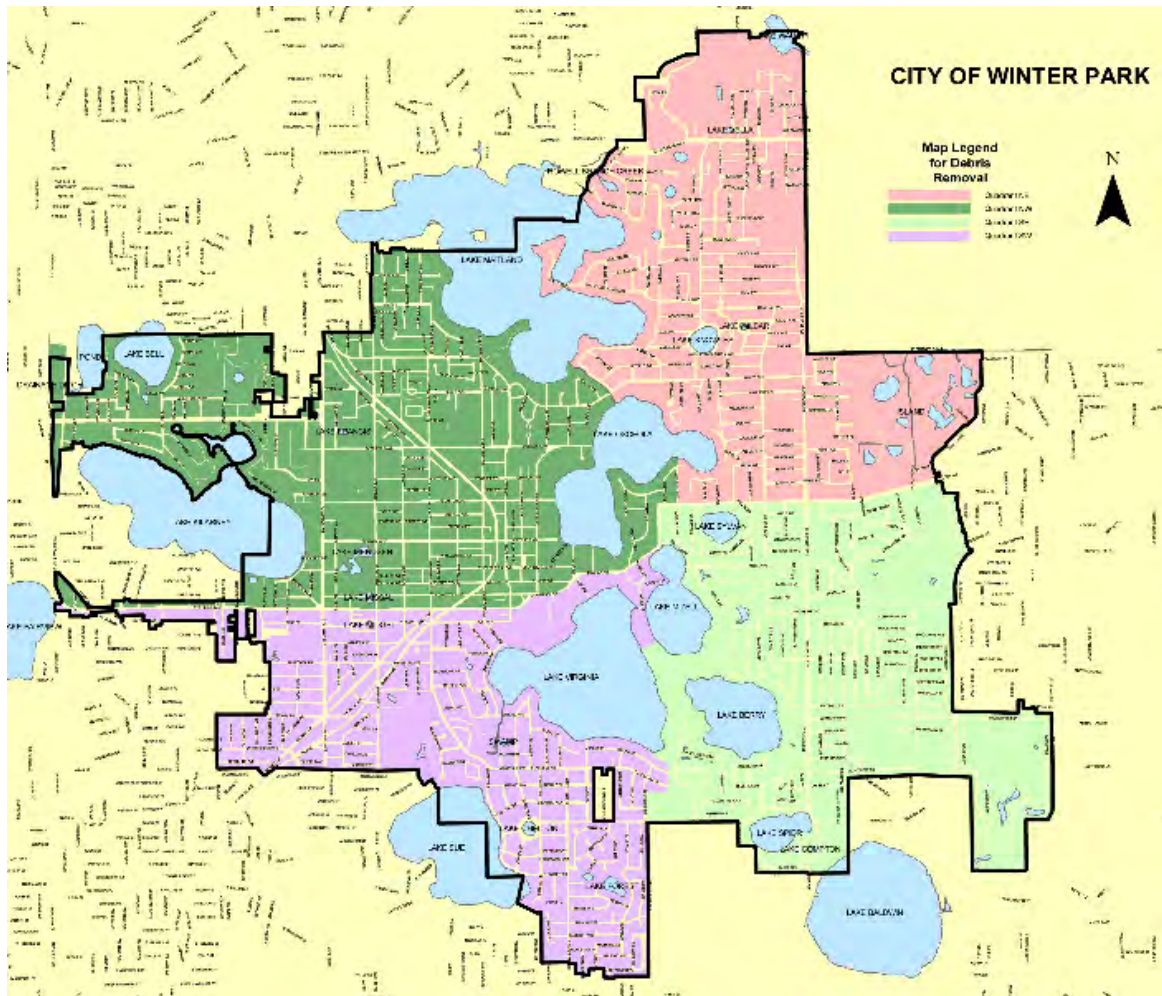


*Volunteers from the Lamson League installed containers at the Winter Park Public Library.  
They were partially funded by a grant from KWPB&S.  
(Images compliments of Stephen G. Pategas)*

## ***Best Idea***

Winter Park Bloom's created a totally volunteer driven project that raises funds and brings long term foliage color to the city. Caladium bulbs donated by caladium growers in Lake Placid, FL (two hours south) are sold over the months of March and April at the Winter Park Farmers' Market, Earth Day and garden club meetings. Interaction with residents and visitors creates an opportunity to encourage beautification, raises funds and beautifies the city with perennial foliage color that can last up to nine months. Bulbs which are bagged by high school volunteers are easily stored in boxes without any need for sun or water. They are then easily transported between the venues where they are sold.

## Map of Winter Park, FL



*The City of Winter Park in quadrants with the chain of lakes in the core. The judge's route is not shown.*



## Contacts (listed in the general order of the tour)

Name (*did not meet)/Address	Affiliation/title	Email	Phone
Stephen Pategas/ 1425 Berkshire Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789	Chair of Winter Park Blooms/ Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Board (KWB&S)	<a href="mailto:spategas@hortusoasis.com">spategas@hortusoasis.com</a>	O: 407.622.4886 C: 407.579.9352
Kris Stenger/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park Manager Building & Sustainability/ Liaison to KWB&S	<a href="mailto:kstenger@cityofwinterpark.org">kstenger@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.643.1660 C: 407.335.6304
Jesse Martinez*/ 300 E New England Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789;	The Alford Inn, Manager	<a href="mailto:jmartinez@thealfondinn.com">jmartinez@thealfondinn.com</a>	O: 407.998.8090
Steven Leary/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park Mayor	<a href="mailto:SLeary@cityofwinterpark.org">SLeary@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3234
Carolyn Cooper/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park Commissioner	<a href="mailto:1carolyncooper@gmail.com">1carolyncooper@gmail.com</a>	O: 407.599.3235
Abby Gulden 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park Sustainability Coordinator	<a href="mailto:agulden@cityofwinterpark.org">agulden@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3364 C: 828.712.5716
Tim Eagan/401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Environmental Resource Manager	<a href="mailto:tegan@winter-park.fl.us">tegan@winter-park.fl.us</a> <a href="mailto:AGiannotti@cityofwinterpark.org">AGiannotti@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3599 C: 321.303.5216 Amy Giannotti: 407.259.7090
Susan Skolfield PO Box 51, Winter Park, FL 32790	Executive Director Winter Park History Museum	<a href="mailto:sskolfield@wphistory.org">sskolfield@wphistory.org</a>	O: 407.647.2330 C: 321.948.4172
Joe Smirti 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Assistant Chief of Parks	<a href="mailto:jsmirti@cityofwinterpark.org">jsmirti@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	C: 321.303.4875
Dru Dennison/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Forestry Manager	<a href="mailto:ddennison@cityofwinterpark.org">ddennison@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	C: 386.209.7429
Rick Kilby/ P.O. Box 591, 656 Park Ave. North, Winter Park, FL 32790	Friends of Casa Feliz, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:rkilby@cfl.rr.com">rkilby@cfl.rr.com</a>	C: 321.217.3854
Lambrine Macejewski 151 E. Welbourne Ave Winter Park, FL 32789	Cochina 214, Partner,	<a href="mailto:lambrine@cocina214.com">lambrine@cocina214.com</a>	407.949.4993
Jana Ricci 620 Mayflower Ct. Winter Park, FL 32792	The Mayflower, Marketing Director	<a href="mailto:jana@themayflower.com">jana@themayflower.com</a>	C: 407.415.2829
Hannah Ricci	Rollins College Student/volunteer at The Mayflower community garden	<a href="mailto:HRICCI@Rollins.edu">HRICCI@Rollins.edu</a>	C: 407.712.5820
Caroline Chomanics	Fleet Farming, Program Manager	<a href="mailto:fleet@ideasforus.org">fleet@ideasforus.org</a>	C: 407.970.6135
Debbie Komanski 633 Osceola Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789	Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Garden, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:dkomanski@polasek.org">dkomanski@polasek.org</a>	O: 407.647.6294 C: 407.312.8386
Mary Edwards 1000 Holt Ave., PO. Box 2748, Winter Park, FL 32789	Rollins College, Manager of Landscape & Grounds	<a href="mailto:medwards1@rollins.edu">medwards1@rollins.edu</a>	C: 321.303.4714

Shawn Shaffer 460 E. New England Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	Winter Park Public Library, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:sshaffer@wppl.org">sshaffer@wppl.org</a>	O: 407.623.3277 C: 312.213.8535
Jody Lazar 460 E. New England Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	Winter Park Public Library, Community Librarian	<a href="mailto:jlazar@wppl.org">jlazar@wppl.org</a>	C: 321.439.1007
Barbara Chandler 642 W. New England Ave. Winter Park, FL, 32789	Hannibal Square Heritage Center, Manager	<a href="mailto:bchandler@crealde.org">bchandler@crealde.org</a>	O: 407.539.2680 C: 321.594.3922
Peter Schreyer/ 642 W. New England Ave. Winter Park, FL, 32789	Hannibal Square Heritage Center, Founder/Lead Curator	<a href="mailto:pschreyer@crealde.org">pschreyer@crealde.org</a>	O: 407.671.1886 C: 407.797.5168
Lindsey Hayes/ 401 S. Park Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, CRA Project Manager	<a href="mailto:Lhayes@cityofwinterpark.org">Lhayes@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3498 C: 407.304.0588
Brooks Weiss/ 401 S. Park Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Architect	<a href="mailto:bweiss@cityofwinterpark.org">bweiss@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	C: 407.619.1381
Cindy Hasenau PO Box 1227, Winter Park, FL 32790	Mead Botanical Garden, Inc., Executive Director	<a href="mailto:cynthiahasenau@yahoo.com">cynthiahasenau@yahoo.com</a>	C: 407.677.5568
<b>Media:</b> Clarissa Howard/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Director of Communications	<a href="mailto:choward@cityofwinterpark.org">choward@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3428 C: 407.539.2680
<b>Media:</b> Craig O'Neil/ 401 S. Park Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789	City of Winter Park, Assistant Director of Communications	<a href="mailto:coneil@cityofwinterpark.org">coneil@cityofwinterpark.org</a>	O: 407.599.3506
<b>Media:</b> Rick Cable	The Park Press	<a href="mailto:rick@theparkpress.com">rick@theparkpress.com</a>	C: 407.252.2382
<b>Media:</b> Isaac Babcock	Winter Park/Maitland Observer	<a href="mailto:ibabcock@turnstilemediagroup.com">ibabcock@turnstilemediagroup.com</a>	O: 407.902.8563
<b>Media:</b> Tim Freed	Winter Park/Maitland Observer	<a href="mailto:tfreed@turnstilemediagroup.com">tfreed@turnstilemediagroup.com</a>	O: 407.563.7054
<b>Media:</b> Ryan Gillespie	Orlando Sentinel	<a href="mailto:ryangillespie@orlandosentinel.com">ryangillespie@orlandosentinel.com</a>	O: 407.420.5002