

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Element Guide:

- Objective 1 Public Park and Recreation**
 Park and Recreation Level of Service Standards
 Public Boat Ramps
 Public Fishing Piers
 Canoe Trail System

- Objective 2 Public and Private Recreation**
 Recreational Development Guidelines
 Community and Neighborhood Park Development

- Objective 3 Open Space**
 Open Space Level of Service
 Natural Resource Protection
 Flood-prone Areas
 Mitigation

Goal:

Maintain and improve activity and resource based recreation facilities and open space systems to meet the future needs of residents in Levy County.

Objective 1 Public Park and Recreation

Ensure that park and recreational opportunities are adequately provided and available to the public including, access to beaches, shoreline, and other waterways, at the adopted level of service to accommodate the County’s population growth.

Park and Recreation Level of Service Standards

Policy 1.1 The level of service will be measured by summing the total County and public owned acreage by park type and dividing by the current estimates of County population in the unincorporated areas.

Policy 1.2 The level of service standard for public parks and recreation shall be two (2) acres per one thousand (1,000) persons. The County shall incorporate adopted level of service standards in the Land Development Regulations and ensure that no development will lower the level of service below minimum standards.

Policy 1.3 Roadways, parking and other facilities will be properly maintained and improved based on recreational demands and Transportation Element scheduling and development guidelines.

Policy 1.4 Construction and improvement plans to existing freshwater and saltwater beaches and in vegetative areas adjacent to rivers, springs and freshwater lakes will be coordinated with appropriate

regulatory agencies during the permitting process to ensure the protection of the County's natural resources.

Public Boat Ramps

Policy 1.5 County owned and/or maintained boat ramps will be continually monitored by the Parks Department to evaluate the efficiency of existing facilities, and identify needed improvements and modifications.

Policy 1.6 The County shall pursue Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) funds and other grant programs for the development of boat ramps. Priorities and future expenditures of those monies will be based on the recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Department.

Policy 1.7 New boat ramp locations will be evaluated and selected based on the environmental suitability of the site. Selection criteria will include, but is not limited to, rating the potential level of environmental disturbance and the adverse impacts to the manatees.

Public Fishing Piers

Policy 1.8 The County will investigate the feasibility of constructing and maintaining public fishing piers and boat docks and identifying alternative facility locations. The Parks Department will evaluate funding sources, needs and options, in coordination with appropriate municipalities, state and federal permitting agencies, the Grants Coordinator and the County Engineer. To promote self-supporting facilities, the leasing and rental of the facilities may be considered.

Canoe Trail System

Policy 1.9 The County supports the development and promotion of the Big Bend Paddling Trail, a system of inter-connected freshwater and saltwater canoe trails, utilizing the Suwannee, Wekiva and Withlacoochee Rivers and the Gulf of Mexico. This effort will be coordinated with the various agencies maintaining public ownerships which might own land to be utilized as primitive or improved camping and/or rest areas.

Objective 2 **Public and Private Recreation**

Coordinate public and private resources to meet the recreational needs based on population growth and the demands generated by new development.

Policy 2.1 The County shall develop and adopt incentives in local ordinances for developers to provide recreation facilities and buffers for open space in their developments.

Policy 2.2 The County shall develop and adopt incentives and/or require developers to provide recreation facilities in their developments, before pursuing funds from state or federal sources to provide recreational facilities and infrastructure.

Recreational Development Guidelines

Policy 2.3 Standards in the Land Development Regulations shall require developments of certain sizes and densities including, but not limited to, residential Planned Unit Developments and Developments of Regional Impacts to provide on-site recreational land dedications to serve the new residents. To the maximum extent possible, open space and recreation lands shall be designated in a manner that protects environmentally sensitive features of the land.

Policy 2.4 The following park types and sizes shall be utilized as guidelines and may be the basis for the providing of recreational sites for public acquisitions and by proposed developments of a certain size, density and intensity.

Type of Park	Standard	Minimum Size
a. Neighborhood Park - <i>Description-</i> a park that serves the population of a neighborhood and is generally accessible by bicycle and pedestrian ways	Two (2) acres per one thousand (1,000) persons	five (5) acres
b. Community Park- <i>Description-</i> a park located near major roadways, and designed to serve the needs of more than one neighborhood	Three (3) acres per one thousand (1,000) persons	Twenty-five (25) acres

Policy 2.5 The County will consider the adoption of alternative methods for new developments to meet recreational requirements. Options may include, but are not limited to, on site dedication of land for neighborhood or community recreational facilities, fee in lieu of providing land dedication, and off-site acquisition and management of land for recreational purposes. Fees obtained in lieu of on-site development of recreational facilities shall be utilized for current or future community recreational site and facility improvement needs.

Community and Neighborhood Park Development

Policy 2.6 The development of community and neighborhood parks will be encouraged in or around the most rapidly developing urban areas. Funding of recreation facilities will be allotted to each municipal recreation service area based on its population.

Policy 2.7 The site selection process for community and neighborhood parks will be coordinated through the Parks Department, Planning Department and Development Department. County, municipal and/or school sites will be utilized as the nucleus for these parks to reduce costs and maximize utilization.

Policy 2.8 The County will seek to establish an interlocal agreement with the Levy County School Board to provide the multiple-use of school recreational facilities to meet the community need for playgrounds.

Policy 2.9 The County will pursue agreements with the appropriate entity to provide for recreational uses of designated Natural Reservation on the Future Land Use map, consistent with park management plans.

Funding

Policy 2.10 Municipal, state and federal financial assistance for County recreational expenditures shall be pursued annually and incorporated in the County budget.

Policy 2.11 The County will investigate methods to fund infrastructure and services to encourage self-supporting recreational facilities, including users fees, leases and rentals.

Objective 3 Open Space

Promote efficient and attractive development patterns and preserve the environmentally sensitive features of the land through the adequate provision of open space by public agencies and private enterprise.

Open Space Level of Service

Policy 3.1 The level of service standard for Open Space is one hundred (100) acres per one thousand (1,000) persons.

Policy 3.2 The dedication of open space shall be required in new subdivisions through Land Development Regulations. Standards for the provision of open space for new developments will be implemented through the Subdivision Regulations. Using the Greenbelt Law shall be a means of achieving the open space standard.

Natural Resource Protection

Policy 3.3 Promote the acquisition of open space by public agencies and private enterprise and the development of natural environmental areas with picnicking, camping, hiking, boating and other improvements.

Policy 3.4 In coordination with appropriate state and federal agencies, identify areas of local interest for acquisition of open space and natural reservations and, promote the education of local landowners on potential tax and public relations benefits associated with land dedications and donations.

Policy 3.5 Natural Reservation areas, owned by state or federal entities, shall be designated on the Future Land Use map series and protected from incompatible land uses.

Policy 3.6 The County endorses the acquisition and development of natural areas that will continue to improve the quality of resource-based recreation opportunities throughout the County. The County is generally opposed to, and does not support, efforts to place large acreage in public ownership with no plans for public utilization.

Flood-prone Areas

Policy 3.7 Identify flood-prone areas on public and private lands and reserve those areas for open

space, and/or appropriate recreational activities [ball fields, picnic areas, nature trails, open space, etc.]

Mitigation

Policy 3.8 Promote the reclamation of mined areas for recreational and other purposes.

Policy 3.9 Prepare and consider for adoption local ordinances dealing with mine reclamation for recreation purposes. For pre-existing (prior to July, 1996) mines overburden will be leveled pursuant to LDR's upon closure and prior to the issuance of new permits.