

F. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Goal F.1

The development of a system of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of the County citizens and visitors.

Objective F.1.1

Park, Beach, and Waterway Access

The County shall improve public access to County parks, beaches, and waterways (rivers and their tributaries, creeks and/or branches) by providing: improved beach parking by constructing the necessary facilities for: (a) the US 1 /Intracoastal Waterway corridor between the City of St. Augustine limits and CR 210; (b) the St. Johns River and its tributaries; and (c) all other County rivers and creeks.

Policies

- F.1.1.1. The County shall improve physical access to parks and recreational sites by:
- (a) All new oceanfront development except Single Family and Two Family Dwellings on existing platted or legally documented lots of record prior to this amendment, with ocean frontage shall be evaluated on providing at least one public beach access for every 750 feet of ocean frontage. Public off-beach pervious (e.g. turf block, stone and similar materials) parking will be required at each public beach access at 5 spaces per beach access.
 - (b) Advocating the addition of bike lanes to State and County Roads.
 - (c) Requiring new development to provide walk/bike paths to connect its open space and recreational sites to residential areas.
 - (d) Developing a bike path plan which prioritizes the development of bike paths which link neighborhoods to schools and parks and uses the Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan as a guide.
 - (e) Providing adequate parking at beach and waterway access points or providing off-beach parking located where vehicle and pedestrian traffic identifies that there is a need to increase these facilities.
 - (f) Researching and applying for grants and other available funding to acquire and construct parking and access at chosen points
- F.1.1.2 All new development except Single Family and Two Family Dwellings on existing platted or legally documented lots of record prior to this amendment,

with frontage along the St. Johns River and Intracoastal Waterway shall be evaluated on providing at least one public access for every 750 feet of such frontage. The type of Public Access provided shall be determined based on site and environmental conditions and may include access suitable for the construction of a public boat ramp, dock, fishing pier or wildlife viewing area with parking.

- F.1.1.3. The County shall provide recreational opportunities, parking and accessibility to facilities for the handicapped and elderly.
- F.1.1.4. The County shall not vacate existing easements, walkways, and other access points to beaches and waterways without equivalent or greater mitigation.
- F.1.1.5. The County shall protect the accessibility of public beach access points and easements by:
 - (a) Identifying public beach access with signage or other mechanisms which identifies dune walkovers as public access. All constructed public dune walkovers shall be posted.
 - (b) Continuing to develop dune walkovers where the County owns beach access at one (1) dune walkover per year.
 - (c) Continuing to pursue additional beach access funding sources.
 - (d) Encouraging new development to provide beach parking at a ratio of three (3) parking spaces for every 100 square feet of dune walkover.
- F.1.1.6 The County shall protect its public beaches by pursuing additional funding sources to assist funding for future beach renourishment projects.
- F.1.1.7 St. Johns County shall require the design of beach access and parking areas to be constructed so that it enhances and protects the waterways adjacent to lands within St. Johns County. Such parking areas shall be designed to include (but not be limited to) existing trees and use of pervious (e.g. turf block, stone and similar materials) parking where ever feasible.
- F.1.1.8 On and off beach parking areas shall be paved with pervious surfaces (e.g. turf block, stone, and similar materials) which allow infiltration.
- F.1.1.9 The County shall continue to work with DEP Bureau of Protective Species in the design and construction of beach access and parking areas to ensure that sea turtle habitat and Anastasia Island Beach Mouse habitat is adequately protected during and after construction.

Objective F.1.2.
Coordination of Public and Private Recreation and Open Space Facilities

The County shall coordinate the provision of needed parks and recreation facilities through both public and private sources, which will at a minimum assure consistency with the LOS standards established in F.1.3.1.

Policies

- F.1.2.1. The County shall strive to maintain the existing interlocal agreements with St. Augustine, St. Augustine Beach and the Town of Hastings concerning the mutual use and support of recreational facilities.
- F.1.2.2. The County shall continue working with the School Board to provide recreational programs and facilities.
- F.1.2.3. The County shall continue to seek citizen advice for the development of recreational opportunities and facilities.
- F.1.2.4. The County shall continue to coordinate with the Tourist Development Council to provide tourist related recreational opportunities.
- F.1.2.5. The County shall continue to pursue Federal, State, regional, local and private funding sources for the acquisition and development of parks and open space areas.
- F.1.2.6. The County shall coordinate and support future park acquisitions with Federal, State, regional, local and private programs.
- F.1.2.7. The County will use its Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan and coordinate future land acquisitions for greenways, blueways and trails with the State Office of Greenways and Trails.

Objective F.1. 3.
Provision of Recreation and Open Space to meet County Growth

The County shall provide for the park needs of the County population through the year 2025.

Policies

F.1.3.1. The County minimum level of service (LOS) standard for the provision of parks and open space as follows:

Facility/Park	Level of Service Standard	Typical Facilities and Service Area*
Neighborhood Park	2 acres/1000 population	Playground equipment; open play fields; benches; walking paths; natural passive areas and landscaped areas; pool; generally no parking, lighting and restrooms; located interior of neighborhoods and generally intended to serve the walking population within ½ to 2 miles of the site; generally requires minimum 1-2 acres depending upon the facilities being provided
Community Park	3 acres/1000 population	Open play fields; multi-purpose fields; playground equipment; walking paths; natural passive areas; pool; community building and restrooms; generally not lighted except in specific locations such as community building; limited parking facilities; generally located on collector roadways; may be located adjacent to schools; generally requires 3-15 acres depending upon facilities being provided
District Park	3 acres/1000 population	Mixed use park with active and passive uses; walking paths; natural passive areas; open play fields; multi-purpose fields; playground equipment; pool; community building and restrooms; regulation soccer, football, baseball, fields, gymnasium; special event areas; generally lighted; parking facilities; staff office building; generally located on collector and arterial roadways; generally requires 25-100 acres depending upon facilities being provided
Regional Park	20 acres/1000 population	State parks; large open space areas; walking paths; natural passive areas; historical structures, commemorative structures; nature trails; picnic areas; camping, hiking and nature study; bicycle riding and equestrian trials; swimming; fishing; specific areas may be lighted; parking; community building; staff office building; located on local and collector roadways

* Service areas are generalized allowing for greater flexibility in park location and allows for market and demographic changes; however, neighborhood parks should be accessible to walking residents within neighborhoods. Community parks should be designed to serve a cluster of neighborhoods and be located within walking distance when feasible. Facilities are typical; while each park requires at least one facility not all facilities are required in each park.

- F.1.3.2. In selecting future park sites for public acquisition the County shall consider serving the population in the high growth areas and Development Areas depicted on the Future Land Use Map.
- F.1.3.3 In selecting park sites for site improvements, the County shall consider those Planning Districts which require immediate construction, maintenance or rehabilitation of existing facilities.
- F.1.3.4 In selecting future park sites for public acquisition, the County shall consider acquisitions that support Federal, State, regional, local, private programs, and recommendations made by the Land Acquisition Management Program (LAMP) Board, North Florida Land Trust, citizen visioning groups, and Scenic Corridor Advocacy Groups (e.g. Scenic and Historic A1A and William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway).
- F.1.3.5 St. Johns County will utilize the Master Park and Recreation Plan to identify park and recreational facility deficiencies and correct these deficiencies by establishing funding programs, development exactions, on-site dedication, fee-in-lieu preservation or other appropriate methods.
- F.1.3.6. The County shall identify existing and the future LOS needs based on the four designated Planning Districts and using the Master Park and Recreation Plan. Park and Recreation Master Plan,
- F.1.3.7. Recreational impact fees shall continue to be utilized as an additional funding source for new parks and recreation facilities.
- F.1.3.8. Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), Planned Developments (PUDs), PRDs) and other developments shall provide neighborhood-sized parks and playing fields within the development for their residents that meet the County LOS standard.
- F.1.3.9. DRIs, and PUDs which have met the required neighborhood park LOS requirements within their development, may dedicate other parks and open space requirements generated by the development through dedication to the County, private ownership, fee-in-lieu of payment for off-site acquisitions consistent with the master plan according to the adopted level of service standard. The choice of development of facilities, dedication or impact fee payment shall be negotiated.
- F.1.3.10. The County shall develop existing parks based on the generated needs by Planning District, according to the level of service standards adopted and as recommended by Master Park and Recreation Plan.
- F.1.3.11. The County shall work with other public agencies for the development of compatible multi-use programs for the public lands within the County.

- F.1.3.12. The County shall continue to annually budget for land acquisition and for the construction of public recreation facilities.
- F.1.3.13. The County shall consider the use of bonds, local infrastructure taxes and other alternative funding sources as revenue for recreation and open space.
- F.1.3.14. The County shall provide recreational opportunities, parking and accessibility to facilities for the handicapped and elderly.
- F.1.3.15. The County shall consider the use of wetlands and conservation areas for passive recreational and open space areas, provided these sites have been determined to not endanger public health, safety, and welfare.
- F.1.3.16. Public recreational and park sites shall not be diverted to other uses except in cases of overriding public need and when other equivalent sites are supplied.

**Objective F.1.4.
Provision of Open Space**

Through the planning and development process, the County shall coordinate the provision of needed open space through both public and private sources, which shall at a minimum assure consistency with the LOS standards established in F.1.3.1.

Policies

- F.1.4.1. The County shall continue to support the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands which can be set aside as open space and passive recreation areas, through Federal, State, regional, local, and private programs

- F.1.4.2. The County shall continue to pursue Federal, State, regional, local, and private grant sources for the acquisition and development of recreational sites and open space.

Objective F.1.5
Correction and Improvement of Existing Recreation and Open Space

The County shall correct or improve existing deficiencies in parks and recreation facilities.

Policies

F.1.5.1. The County shall prioritize capital improvement expenditures in accordance with the following criteria:

- (a) completion of projects underway
- (b) correct existing deficiencies and rehabilitating facilities
- (c) address future needs