

**DRAFT RECREATION
ELEMENT GOALS,
OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining and improving the quality of life that is attracting unprecedented growth to Lake County is one of the key issues facing Lake County government today. Provision of a cohesive recreation and parks system that fosters an active and healthy lifestyle, protection of natural resources, and connections to these assets is the intent of this Element. The Recreation Element establishes a framework for a parks and recreation system the community desires for today and the future as well as fulfilling the recreation needs of Lake County residents.

GOAL REC 1

Lake County shall facilitate the development and management of parks and facilities for a recreation system that includes environmental lands, trails, and other recreational opportunities that meets the diverse needs of a growing community.

OBJECTIVE REC 1.1: CUSTOMERS

Lake County shall take the necessary actions to ensure that the residents in Lake County are our most important customer.

Policy REC 1.1-2: Parks and Recreation System

Lake County will develop, operate, and promote a parks and recreation system that provides all residents with quality leisure opportunities.

Policy REC 1.1-2: Lake County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

The Lake County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board shall include citizen representatives to further the goal envisioned by this Element. A representative from the Public Lands Acquisition Advisory Committee (PLAAC) and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC) shall also be included on the advisory board.

OBJECTIVE REC 1.2: COMMUNICATION

Lake County shall develop programs to communicate the recreational amenities of Lake County to residents and visitors alike.

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Policy REC 1.2-1: Coordination

Lake County Parks and Recreation shall coordinate with Lake County Economic Development and Tourism to help promote Lake County's parks, trails, cultural events, natural areas, and special events to visitors.

Policy REC 1.2-2: Facility Development

Lake County should support the development of top-notch athletic and community facilities to attract state, regional, and even national tournaments and events to Lake County. Such facilities should also be available to residents of Lake County for cultural and athletic programs when not hosting special events.

Policy REC 1.2-3: Promotional Program

Lake County shall develop and distribute a promotional guide for parks and recreation facilities, environmental lands, and trails owned and operated by the County. Such brochures and promotional materials should be available at all public facilities, schools, libraries, and other public facilities throughout the County.

Policy REC 1.2-4: Logo and Signage Program

A logo and signage program should be initiated that becomes an identifier for the Lake County parks and recreation system, strengthening the image and recognition factor by residents of, and visitors to, Lake County.

Policy REC 1.2-5: Recreation Resource Center

Lake County should establish a recreation resource center or clearinghouse to provide the public with up to date information about all recreation providers, programs, and facilities.

Policy REC 1.2-6: County Website

Lake County should develop a presence on the County's website specifically for the Parks and Recreation Division

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that is updated regularly and contains useful information regarding programs, facilities, an interactive map, other recreation providers, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming events.

OBJECTIVE REC 1.3: FACILITY LOCATION

There are different expectations and service requirements based on the nature of the urban, suburban, or rural character of the different areas within the county. Lake County will strive to locate facilities that address these differences.

Policy REC 1.3-1: Recreation Planning Areas (RPAs)

Recreation Planning Areas (RPAs) will be established based on location, growth patterns, and the individual character of each particular area.

1.3-1.1 Northwest Lake County (SR 27 Corridor) – This area (from the turnpike north) includes Lady Lake, Fruitland Park and parts of Leesburg in the north. Lake County should coordinate with the towns of Lady Lake and Fruitland Park to provide a regional park with facilities such as athletic fields and cultural/civic space.

1.3-1.2 South Central Lake County (SR 50 Corridor) – This area includes the towns of Mascotte, Groveland, Clermont, Minneola, and Montverde located along SR 50 in south Lake County. Rapid growth and a large number of residents interested in an active lifestyle characterize this area of the County. Team sports as well as individual sports are extremely popular. Lake County should consider partnering with the National Training Center to develop regional high quality athletic and wellness facilities, as well as coordinate with ~~Mascotte and Groveland~~ all of the above mentioned South Central Lake County communities in developing their recreation facilities and programs.

1.3-1.3 Southeast Lake County (Four Corners/Citrus Ridge) This area is uniquely situated in four (4) counties midway between the expanding Orlando and Lakeland urban areas. Unique issues face the developing area because of the many local governments and agencies with jurisdiction in the ninety square mile area. Lake County should plan for community facilities to support the expanding population

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as well as being an active participant in the overall planning for the area.

1.3-1.4 Central Lake County (Golden Triangle) – This area includes Mount Dora, Eustis, Tavares, Howey-In-the-Hills, Astatula, and southeast portions of Leesburg. This area is primarily urbanized and most municipalities are already providing significant recreation programs and facilities. The smaller towns of Astatula and Howey-in-the-Hills do not have extensive parks and recreation programs. Lake County’s role in the area should be primarily to coordinate and partner with the public and private providers to provide facilities and programs.

1.3-1.5 Northeast Lake County (SR 19 Corridor) – This area includes Umatilla, Astor, Paisley, Lake Mack, and Sorrento/Mt. Plymouth as well as portions of the Ocala National Forest and Wekiva River Protection Area. The area is characterized by rural development. There are several well-established youth associations as well as the City of Umatilla who have the potential to partner with the County in providing facilities and programs in the area. Because of the number of unincorporated residents in the area Lake County should take on a more proactive role as a recreation provider with focus being on facility development.

Policy REC 1.3-4: Partnership Plan

Lake County shall work toward creating a model for a City/County/Private Partnership plan.

OBJECTIVE REC 1.4: FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Lake County will facilitate the development of a well-balanced system of community and regional facilities that include active and resource based recreational opportunities to meet a variety of needs for individuals as well as groups.

Policy REC 1.4-1: Park Classification System

The park classification system in Lake County will be limited to community parks, regional parks, and special

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facilities. Parks will be further classified as either resource-based or activity-based.

Policy REC 1.4-2: Existing Parks

Existing mini parks, neighborhood parks and parcels of undeveloped land less than 10 acres in size currently maintained by Lake County should be evaluated for potential phase out. Any new parks developed by Lake County shall be community parks or larger.

Policy REC 1.4-3: Level of Service

Lake County shall ~~consider increasing the adopted~~ adopt a Level of Service ~~from 2.5 acres to~~ of 4 acres per 1000/population.

Policy REC 1.4-4: Park Facilities Inventory

Lake County Parks and Recreation shall maintain an up to date inventory of all Lake County maintained park facilities.

Policy REC 1.4-5: Mandatory Dedication of Land for Recreation Space

Lake County shall incorporate provisions within its Land Development Regulations which require new residential development to provide recreation space consistent with the concurrency Management System. The provision of open space for ~~activity-user~~-based recreation shall be in addition to the area required for open space. Open space dedication is also addressed in the Future Land Use Element.

~~**Policy REC 1.4-5A: Land or Cash-in-lieu**~~

~~The County shall require, through the subdivision provisions of the Land Development Regulations a subdivider to convey to the county for park, playground, or other public purposes, up to five percent of the area being subdivided in the final plan. Alternatively, the County may accept in lieu of the land requirements a sum of money equal to five percent (5%) of the assessed value of the proposed lots, or combination of land and money. The~~

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~~County may waive or reduce the requirements of this policy where:~~

- ~~1. only one new lot is created by the same owner in the same calendar year; or~~
- ~~2. buildings legally exist on the created lots; or~~
- ~~3. the lots created are to change to size and shape of existing lots and new lots would be of insignificant size to permit further development for residential purposes. (we need to do more research in to this, it may be close to something we're already doing with park impact fees).~~

Policy REC 1.4-6: State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Lake County will use, as a guideline, the activity standards suggested in the 'State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan' (SCORP) for Florida, as updated on a regular basis.

Policy REC 1.4-7: Planning Process

When developing new parks and facilities, Lake County shall include nearby residents and other interested parties in the planning process.

Policy REC 1.4-8: Outsourcing

Lake County should consider the possibility of outsourcing park maintenance for activities where appropriate.

Policy REC 1.4-9: Phased Development and Renovation Plan

Lake County will create and approve a phased development and renovation plan for the existing parks in the System to determine appropriate development of new facilities and/or phase out of parkland that does not meet the objectives of the Master Plan.

OBJECTIVE REC ~~1.7~~1.5: FINANCE

Lake County shall identify and implement methods to finance the on-going operation and management of its recreational facilities.

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Policy REC ~~1.7-1~~ 1.5-1:

Streamlining of Facilities

Lake County will streamline its parks and recreation facilities and programs to focus on providing larger scale facilities to supplement existing city recreation facilities, natural resource based parks, and a trails system linking them all together.

Policy REC ~~1.7-2~~ 1.5-2:

Revenue Generation

Design of new facilities should incorporate revenue-generating opportunities that could offset operational costs and/or enhance the recreational experience of participants (i.e. concessions, rentals, etc).

Policy REC ~~1.7-3~~ 1.5-3:

Grant Program

The County's grant programs should be refined to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan and expanded to more adequately address the impact of unincorporated residents on municipal recreation facilities and programs.

Policy REC ~~1.7-4~~ 1.5-4:

Capital Funding Source

A reliable and consistent capital funding source for recreation facilities and operations should be established to help implement the policies contained in this Element.

Policy REC ~~1.7-5~~ 1.5-5:

Fees and Charges

The County shall adopt fees and charges, where appropriate, for the Parks and Recreation System that is fair and equitable to residents and visitors that use County facilities.

Policy REC ~~1.7-6~~ 1.5-6:

Increase Park Impact Fees

Funding of new programs shall be supported by an increase in the Parks Impact Fee.

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Policy REC ~~1.7-6~~1.5-7: Facility Maintenance Costs

New park and trail development shall address the cost to maintain each facility prior to implementation. Design/maintenance techniques, materials, and procurement methods should be used that provide the most cost effective measures to develop, as well as maintain, the park and trail facilities.

OBJECTIVE REC ~~1.8-1.6~~: PARTNERSHIPS

Lake County shall develop and maintain partnerships with the municipalities, the Lake County School Board and the Lake County Water Authority as well as not-for-profit agencies and the private sector.

Policy REC ~~1.8-1.6-1~~: Coordination and Facilitation

Lake County shall primarily act as a coordinator for the development of recreational facilities and work with other agencies to facilitate recreation programs.

Policy REC ~~1.8-1.6-2~~: Alternative Funding Sources

Lake County shall continue to investigate alternative funding sources and relationships to provide for public park facilities, programs, and management.

Policy REC ~~1.8-1.6-3~~: Co-location

Lake County and the School Board should further work to co-locate sites for new and existing schools and parks where feasible. Lake County should work with the School Board to identify possible joint opportunities to provide athletic and recreation opportunities for students and citizens. A school/park design model should be developed to be used for planning such joint facilities. Lake County and the School Board should also work to identify existing school sites for possible improvements to better accommodate public recreation usage.

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Policy REC ~~1-8~~ 1.6-4:

Mutual Use Agreement

Lake County should work with the School Board to develop a model 'Mutual Use Agreement' for the use of school and park facilities for public use.

Policy REC ~~1-8~~ 1.6-5:

Interlocal Agreements

Lake County shall coordinate with the County's municipalities and adjacent counties for the provision of public parks and recreational programming through the use of interlocal agreements.

Policy REC ~~1-8~~ 1.6-6:

Non-Profit Recreation Providers

Lake County shall develop agreements with non-profit recreation providers such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club to provide recreational programming and facilities.

Policy REC ~~1-8~~ 1.6-7:

Joint Agency Funding

Lake County shall pursue joint agency funding for the purchase, development, and management of public parks, environmental lands, and trails.

GOAL REC 2

Sensitive ~~springshed~~ environmental resources offer an opportunity for the development of local greenways. Utilize identified ~~springshed~~ environmental resources and coordinate efforts with citizens, regional agencies, and the State of Florida to protect and incorporate these resources into a County parks, recreation and greenways and trail plans.

OBJECTIVE REC 2.1: COUNTY GREENWAY NETWORK ~~WITHIN THE SPRINGSHED~~

~~Within the springshed,~~ Implement a County greenway network to provide, for integrated natural resource management and protection, resource-based recreation, educational and historical interpretive opportunities, and increased opportunities for alternative modes of transportation with an emphasis on connectivity among these resources.

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**Policy REC 2.1-1: Develop a Master Management Plan for the ~~Springshed~~
County Greenway Network**

Develop a master management plan for the ~~springshed~~
county greenway network, and specific plans for lands acquired, preserved, or otherwise included in the greenways network that addresses natural resources protection, public access, recreation, education, and opportunities for resource-based economic development that is complementary to maintaining the network.

Policy REC 2.1-2: Interconnectivity

Strive to interconnect existing dedicated open space areas, trails, pedestrian pathways, and where appropriate, utility corridors, in the greenways network.

Policy REC 2.1-3: Incentives

Provide incentives to private landowners to encourage their participation in the creation of the ~~springshed~~ greenways system.

Policy REC 2.1-4: Greenway Land Acquisition Priority List

Adopt a greenway land acquisition priority list to assist in identifying and coordinating the acquisition or protection of the elements of the greenway.

OBJECTIVE REC ~~1.5-2.2~~: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Lake County shall foster the development of a comprehensive greenway, blueway, trails, and bikeway system that provides scenic, eco-tourism, and resource-oriented recreation.

Policy REC ~~1.5-1~~ 2.2-1: Trails Program

Lake County shall continue working towards implementing its trails program by coordinating with federal, state, regional, and local public agencies and private organizations.

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Policy REC ~~1.5-2~~ 2.2-2:

Greenways and Blueways

Lake County shall add greenways and blueways to its trails and bikeways program to help connect natural resources and parks to the trail system.

Policy REC ~~1.5-3~~ 2.2-4:

Guidelines

Lake County shall adopt as a guideline the Florida Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Handbook by FDOT and the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails Reference and Resource Guide. These documents shall be used in the planning and development of trails.

Policy REC ~~1.5-4~~ 2.2-5:

Maintenance and Operation Standards

Maintenance and operation standards shall be developed and approved prior to new trail design and development.

OBJECTIVE ~~1.6~~ 2.3:

ACCESS and AVAILABILITY

Lake County will ensure equal access and maximum availability to all facilities to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the protection of natural resources.

Policy REC ~~1.6-1~~ 2.3-1:

Access ways

Lake County shall design, construct, and manage parks and trails with access ways that are compatible with the natural features and character of the individual park site.

Policy REC ~~1.6-2~~ 2.3-2:

Linkages

Sidewalks, bikeways, and/or trails should be provided to link residential areas, community facilities, schools, and other park sites where feasible.

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Policy REC ~~1.6-3~~2.3-3: **Parking**

Parking areas and bicycle racks, where appropriate, will be provided at recreation sites. The inverted U or other rack that supports two contact points of the bicycle should be the preferred style of bicycle parking.

Policy REC ~~1.6-4~~2.3-4: **Barrier-free Access**

Lake County shall ensure the provision of disabled parking spaces and barrier-free access to activity-based parks and facilities, where practical and appropriate.

GOAL REC 3

Lake County shall guide the acquisition, protection and management of lands for the development of parks, open space and the development of recreation opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: ASSURE PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE THROUGH PROTECTION OF NATURAL AREAS.

Lake County shall assure the provision of open space through land acquisition and through designation of ~~land for open space use~~ Conservation areas on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 3-1.1: Provision of Access to Lake County's Lakes

Lake County shall ensure the provision of open space by public and private entities throughout the unincorporated area by maintaining access to lakes and waterways through maintenance and enhancement of its public boat ramp parks. Additional public boat ramp parks ~~shall~~ may be provided when the demand caused by future residents warrants additional sites and facilities and if consistent with the protection of natural resources.

Policy 3-1.2: Protect and Preserve Environmentally Sensitive Lands as Open Space

Lake County shall, through ~~the Land Development Regulations,~~ provide a mechanism to the Lake county Land Acquisition Program and in partnership with state, federal,

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and private entities as appropriate, protect and acquire environmentally sensitive and environmentally endangered lands for use as passive recreation or open space. The protection and acquisition of these lands shall be consistent with the Conservation Element.

Policy 3-1.3: Participation in the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Program for the Protection and Provision of Open Space

Lake County shall continue its assistance with the purchase of lands ~~in the Wekiva River Protection Area and shall recommend through resolution one new CARL proposal, as identified in the Conservation Element, per year within~~ identified state acquisition project areas, including but not limited to the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway, Green Swamp, and Lake Wales Ridge. The County shall recommend through resolution new CARL proposals as appropriate. Upon favorable receipt of this resolution, the County shall assist in the preparation of the CARL application.

Policy 3-1.4: Protection from Incompatible Land Uses

The Land Development Regulations shall require through the site plan and development review process the protection of conservation, recreation and open space areas from incompatible adjacent land uses.

Land uses that are considered incompatible with recreation and open space areas include Heavy Industrial and Light Manufacturing. All other land uses shall use screening and vegetated buffers to control any off-site impacts to the adjacent recreation and open space site. Land uses near resource-based recreation sites shall be of a low density and intensity as defined in the Future Land Use Element. The required buffer for adjacent land uses shall be 100 feet. No structures shall be built within the 100 foot buffer and the buffer shall remain in permanent open space and designated as such on a recorded plat for the property. Recreation and open space sites shall be of sufficient size to provide an on-site vegetated buffer of 100 feet from adjacent property lines. Resource-based recreation sites shall provide an on-site buffer of 250 feet to enhance compatibility between the recreation site and the adjacent land use.

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- Policy 3-1.5: Open Space Definition and Standards**
For all new development, Lake County shall define open space for conservation purposes as permanently protected, undeveloped, and naturally vegetated pervious areas including natural resource preserves and passive recreation lands. Stormwater retention areas may contribute to open space if enhanced as amenities utilizing native vegetation and literal zone plantings as appropriate. For the purpose of calculating minimum open space requirements within a development site, open space shall exclude water bodies, wetlands, private lots, parking and street right-of-way, impervious surfaces and 50% of active recreation including golf courses. Standards which provide for open space requirements for varying development types including: residential, commercial and industrial developments shall be developed in the Land Development Regulations. Clustering of units shall be required within Planned Unit Developments in order to create or maintain large usable open space areas.
- Policy 3-1.5A: Environmentally Sensitive Lands as Open Space**
Any required open space shall include the environmentally sensitive lands on the project site. Further, to the maximum extent practical, all development shall be clustered away from any environmentally sensitive lands.
- Policy 3-1.6: Open Space Requirements for Planned Unit Developments**
Lake County shall continue to require within the Land Development Regulations that Residential Planned Unit Developments set aside 25 percent of the project site as open space. The provision of open space shall emphasize the utilization of existing natural areas containing native plant and animal species.
- Policy 3-1.7: Open Space Definitions to be Consistent with Land Use Designations of the Future Land Use Map.**
Lake County hereby adopts the following definitions of open space types to be designated on the Future Land Use Map under the general category of Public Resource Lands:
- Conservation Open Space: Natural or Historic areas in need of protection from significant adverse impacts associated

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with the encroachment of development. Such areas include soils that are unsuitable for development. Conservation open space is defined in the Conservation Element.

Utility Open Space: Areas unsuitable for development because of the potential threat to public health and safety as a result of the presence of a public utility or service, and areas that are not suitable for development because of the presence of a man-made service that would destroy the character of the site and adversely affect the value of investments constructed thereon. Such areas include cemeteries, drainage canals, airport flight paths clear zones, and regional utility lines.

Corridor Open Space: This open space type constitutes areas separating development from transportation corridors, ~~areas preserved for proposed transportation routes,~~ and areas used to improve aesthetic character of a transportation corridor. Such areas include open areas adjacent to roadways and bicycle/pedestrian/equestrian paths, ~~reserved rights-of-way for future transportation corridors,~~ and abandoned railroad rights-of-way

Multiple-Purpose Open Space: This type of open space can serve one or more of the above open space types.