

Nassau County 2030 Comprehensive Plan

Recreation and Open Space Element (ROS)

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal

Provide and maintain sufficient public parks, recreation facilities, and open space to meet the recreational needs of County residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVE ROS.01

The County shall acquire, develop and efficiently maintain adequate community and regional recreation facilities to achieve and maintain the adopted Level of Service (LOS) in order to meet projected recreational needs through the year 2030.

Policy ROS.01.01

The County shall prepare and maintain a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in cooperation with appropriate agencies to guide the development and maintenance of County parks and recreation facilities. The Plan should accomplish the following:

- A) Inventory the County parks system;
- B) Recommend guidelines for the size, timing and phasing of parks in the County by using population trends and projections;
- C) Establish criteria for, and priority ranking of, lands for acquisition and development;
- D) Consider existing and potential funding sources as well as programs for implementation and a long-range capital improvements plan for future parks and recreation facilities.

Policy ROS.01.02

The County should select and assemble an advisory committee representing both the public and private sector to guide the development of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Extensive public involvement including surveys, public workshops, and extensive discussions with community organizations should be required in order to develop a plan that reflects the needs and values of the County.

Policy ROS.01.03

Parks shall be defined in this Plan as follows:

- A) "Neighborhood Park" shall mean a local park, which is typically less than 10 acres in size and may include landscaping and recreational improvements such as sandboxes, play sculpture, playground equipment, benches, shelters, trees and fencing. These parks are used by the residents of one or more nearby neighborhoods, typically those within a half-mile radius of the park.
- B) "Community Park" shall mean a park, which is designed to serve the recreation needs of

several communities in the unincorporated areas of the County generally within a 1-5 mile service radius. They may include restrooms, onsite parking, large landscaped areas, community centers, lighted sports fields, athletic complexes, large swimming pools, and other specialized recreational facilities. These parks are generally at least 10 acres in size.

- C) "Regional Park" shall mean either water-based recreation sites or a large, resource-based park of at least 30 acres or more in size and intended to serve residents of the entire unincorporated area, as well as residents of the municipalities. These parks contain recreation uses, such as water-based recreation, beach access sites, boating facilities, camping, fishing, trails and nature study, but may also provide specialized recreational facilities, such as a sports complex.

Policy ROS.01.04

The County shall acquire, maintain, or manage through agreement, community and regional park facilities to achieve and maintain the adopted levels of service (LOS) shown below.

Type	Service Radius	Minimum Size	Area /1000 Residents	Other Requirements
Community Parks	1- 5 miles	10 Acres	3.35 Acres	
Regional Parks-General	County -wide	30 Acres	10 Acres	
Regional Parks- Beach Access	County -wide	Variable	.25 Acre	At .5 mile linear increments with adequate space for parking
Regional Parks- Boat Facility	County -wide	Variable	.40 Acre	1 ramp lane per 5,000 population

Policy ROS.01.05

In general, the County shall not seek to acquire neighborhood park facilities. Land and improvements for neighborhood parks shall be provided by new development through the site plan review process. Criteria for the location and design of such facilities shall be included in the Land Development Code (LDC), Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Development of Regional Impact (DRI) development order.

Policy ROS.01.06

In order to address existing deficiencies and future needs in a fiscally responsible manner, the County should consider the development of a 10 year + long range capital improvements plan for parks and recreation facilities to achieve and maintain the adopted level of service (LOS).

Policy ROS.01.07

The County shall plan recreation facilities based on the following planning guidelines from the State Comprehensive Recreation Program (2000). These guidelines are for planning purposes only and may be used to help determine how grant funds and county funds could be used to improve county recreation facilities. Upon adoption of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan as described in Policy ROS.01.01, these guidelines may be updated to reflect the needs of county residents.

Resource/Facility	Population per Unit (Median)
Baseball/Softball field	2,500
Basketball Court	5,000
Football/Soccer Field	6,000
Equipped play area	10,000
Exercise/Parcours Trails	15,000
Aquatic Center	25,000
Tennis Court	5,000

Policy ROS.01.08

Recreation impact fees may be implemented and updated as necessary as a funding source for new parks and recreation facilities.

Policy ROS.01.09

The County should investigate flexible administration of impact fees and land dedication to help accomplish the County's parks and recreation goals. This may include payment in lieu of land or purchase of credits from the County.

Policy ROS.01.10

The County shall seek interlocal agreements for the collection and disbursement of recreation impact fees with the municipalities within the County.

Policy ROS.01.11

The County shall cooperate with public agencies and private landowners to continue to provide public access for hunting and fishing.

Policy ROS.01.12

The County shall encourage and create incentives such as cluster development standards, density bonuses, mixed use development etc., for the dedication of recreational land.

Policy ROS.01.13

The County shall pursue available grant sources for the acquisition and development of park and recreation areas, including but not limited to Federal and State funding.

Policy ROS.01.14

The County shall maintain and develop existing parks to their optimal level with consideration given to the needs of the community served and the functional capacity of the parks.

Policy ROS.01.15

The County shall review each new development as to the need for public parks and recreation facilities that are necessary to maintain adopted levels of service. Required park land should be identified for dedication during the review process for a subdivision, Planned Unit Development (PUD), or Development of Regional Impact (DRI) and a schedule should be established for construction of facilities. The County may consider funds to be donated in lieu of land in cases where the required aggregate land dedication is less than the minimum standard of useable acres established in Policy ROS.01.03.

Policy ROS.01.16

To increase efficiency and convenience in the recreation system, the County will coordinate through interlocal agreements with other public agencies which have recreation areas in the County.

Policy ROS.01.17

Whenever possible, recreation sites should be established with multi-use purposes to provide both recreation facilities and to ensure preservation or conservation of environmentally sensitive lands.

OBJECTIVE ROS.02

The County shall assure appropriate multi-modal access to all public recreation areas maintained by the County, including beach and waterfront facilities. Recreational facilities required for new development shall be constructed to maximize appropriate multi-modal access.

Policy ROS.02.01

The County will provide for adequate vehicular parking and bicycle racks at all new County recreation areas and will ensure the installation of such facilities at the time of the reconstruction or additions to existing County recreation areas.

Policy ROS.02.02

Sidewalks, bicycle paths and multipurpose trails shall be provided at the time of construction or reconstruction as defined in the County Land Development Code along public roads which provide access from neighborhoods to County parks.

Policy ROS.02.03

The County will provide accessible parking and barrier-free access to all types of County recreational facilities.

Policy ROS.02.04

The County shall require as a condition of site plan approval, that easements for public beach access be provided by a developer of beachfront property, at an average of one-half mile intervals.

Policy ROS.02.05

As a condition of development approval, all developers constructing recreational facilities shall be required to provide adequate access of all kinds to recreational facilities and public water bodies to meet Objective ROS.02.

Policy ROS.02.06

The County shall provide in the Land Development Code a requirement that any access to public beaches and shorelines or other recreational sites required as a condition of concurrency or development approval, shall be of sufficient size to accommodate adequate vehicular parking and bicycle racks within the access easement.

Policy ROS.02.07

The County shall require developments with significant frontage along navigable waterways to provide, at a minimum, easements for, or the construction of, boat ramps and/or parking facilities for public use. Such easements may be calculated as part of the development's open space requirements. Criteria for developments subject to this requirement are to be specified in the Land Development Code (LDC).

Policy ROS.02.08

The County shall consider greenways to link existing and proposed nature reserves, parks, cultural and historic sites with each other. Greenways may include pedestrian and/or bike trails.

OBJECTIVE ROS.03

The County shall ensure the provision of open space as required in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Policy ROS.03.01

The County shall adopt ,in the Land Development Code, specific standards for the provision and protection of open space.

Policy ROS.03.02

The County shall regularly review the Land Development Code to maximize the preservation of open space consistent with the goals ,objectives, and policies of this element and the future recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Policy ROS.03.03

PUD and other mixed use developments shall be encouraged to provide large areas of open space and to provide recreation facilities beyond those necessary to be concurrent with the additional community needs they create.

Policy ROS.03.04

Conservation areas, including wetlands shall be reviewed for inclusion in a greenway system if they would provide a link to nature reserves, parks, cultural or historic sites or extensive floodplains, wetlands, lakes or waterways. Any area designated as a greenway shall count towards the development's open space requirement.

OBJECTIVE ROS.04

The County shall support and encourage appropriate and effective participation and partnership with non-governmental organizations in meeting Level of Service for parks and recreational facilities

Policy ROS.04.01

The county shall maintain partnerships with organizations such as Florida Communities Trust, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), The Nature Conservancy, The North Florida Land Trust, and other organizations to assist in providing the necessary funds to implement a long-range, financially feasible plan for the identification and acquisition of environmental resources, including lands for parks and recreation facilities of all types.

Policy ROS.04.02

The County shall encourage the creation of appropriate public-private partnerships as a model for structuring, funding and operating certain parks and recreation facilities, when it is beneficial to the citizens of the County.