

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

GOAL 6

To provide and maintain a full range of recreational activities to meet the cultural, social and athletic needs of the City and provide open space to meet the aesthetic, health, safety, and welfare needs of its citizens and visitors.

Objective 6.3 Provide Adequate Recreational Facilities and Open Space

The City shall maintain its existing recreational facilities and provide adequate facilities and parks for the current and future population.

Policies

 The City shall draft and adopt a Master Recreation Plan with the following purposes:

- a. Improve, sustain, and enhance the quality of life in Green Cove Springs.
- b. Make recommendations for prioritization of future land acquisition and park facility construction.
- c. Identify and make recommendations on how the City might partner with other agencies to maximize its parks and recreation resources.
- d. Locate and identify existing bicycle and pedestrian pathways in the City and recommend safe connections between these and recreation properties.
- e. Inventory and evaluate current park property and facilities.
- f. Identify current recreation issues and future needs of the community and make recommendations to resolve issues and meet those needs over a specific period of time.
- g. Engage the community and stakeholders in the future of the City's recreation through involving them in the development of the plan.

6.X.4 The Level of Service (LOS) standard for recreation shall be as follows:

(a) **Generally.** the LOS standard is 5 acres per 1,000 population for Neighborhood / Pocket Parks and 2 acres per 1,000 population for Community Parks. All residences should be within a quarter mile of a neighborhood or pocket park and a half mile of a Community Park. Residential developers shall pay a park dedication fee.

(b) **Private / Gated Neighborhoods.** Private / Gated neighborhoods shall provide within their community recreational facilities and open space meeting the LOS standard. This space, as it is not open to the public, will not count toward the City's LOS. Developers of such neighborhoods shall also pay the park dedication fee which may be reduced through construction of a public park.

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6.2.2 The City shall investigate and apply for State and Federal grants and assistance available for the enhancement and improvement of recreation and open space throughout the City.

6.3.1 The City shall continue to expand the Spring Park area as adjacent property, becomes available for purchase, with emphasis on adjacent properties located along the St. Johns River.

6.3.3 The City shall continue to provide funding on an annual basis for the maintenance of existing recreational facilities and budget for future parks, recreation and open space in accordance with the Capital Improvements Element.

6.3.6 The City should seek private/public partnerships and grant funding to increase recreational programming for residents of Green Cove Springs.

Objective 6.1 Public Access to Recreation.

~~To~~The City shall ensure public access to recreation sites throughout Green Cove Springs.

Policies

6.1.1 The City shall provide handicapped parking and barrier-free access for the elderly and handicapped population to all municipally owned recreation facilities.

6.1.2 The City shall prohibit development or activities; ~~which that~~ reduce ~~public~~ access to public recreation facilities; ~~including development or activities that restrict access to the St. Johns River.~~

6.1.3 The City shall ~~en~~ assure access to the St. Johns River is maintained and improved; by:
 (a) ~~not allowing the~~ closure of any street to the St. Johns River and maintaining the ~~rights-of-~~ ways to the St. Johns River;
 (b) ~~prohibiting development or activities that reduce or restrict access to the St. Johns River;~~
 (c) working with property owners/developers of riverfront property to increase public access to the St. Johns River during the Site Plan Review process

6.1.4 During the Site Plan Review process, the City shall work with property owners/developers of riverfront property to increase public access to the St. Johns River. ~~Reserved~~

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Objective 6.2 Meeting Future Needs.

~~To coordinate public and private resources to meet the recreation needs of the City~~
~~The City shall ensure new development does not diminish the Recreation Level of Service (LOS).~~

Policies

6.2.1 ~~New development~~ ~~Planned Unit Developments~~ shall provide parks, recreation facilities, and open space based on the ~~recreational need generated by the development~~ level of service (LOS) standards set forth herein in Policy 8.3.1 of the Capital Improvements Element.

~~6.2.2~~ ~~New development shall, when feasible, provide a trail or trails that connect into the City's existing or planned recreational facilities to support the establishment of an urban trail system.~~

~~6.2.2~~ ~~The City shall investigate state and federal grants and assistance available for the enhancement and improvement of recreation and open space throughout the City, including grants which improve public access to, and recreational opportunities for the St. Johns River.~~

6.2.3 Development permits shall not be issued if the size and nature of the new development lowers the adopted level of service standards.

6.2.4 The City shall continue to upgrade and improve Spring Park and facilities ~~at the park therein~~ that ~~improve support access to public use and enjoyment~~ of the St. Johns River, while preserving the historical Green Cove Spring.

~~6.2.5~~ ~~The City shall work towards the establishment~~ ~~establish~~ ~~of a greenway and blueway in Green Cove Spring and coordinate with Clay County for the establishment of a greenway and blueway throughout the County~~

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Commented [MPD2]: Where do we want the greenway/blueway?

~~6.2.6~~ ~~The City shall develop an "eco heritage" trail throughout Green Cove Springs.~~

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Objective 6.3

~~Maintain its existing recreational facilities and provide adequate facilities and parks for the future population.~~

Policies

~~6.3.1~~ ~~Continue to expand the Spring Park area as adjacent property, becomes available for purchase, with emphasis on adjacent properties located along the St. Johns River.~~

~~6.3.2 The City shall seek funds for the development of and improvements to Vera Francis Park.~~

~~6.3.3 Continue to provide funding on an annual basis for the maintenance of existing recreational facilities and budget for future parks, recreation and open space in accordance with the Capital Improvements Element.~~

~~6.3.4 The Level of Service standard for recreation shall be 5 acres per 1,000 population, for land designated as Recreation on the Future Land Use Map with type of facilities at each park based on the adopted Master Recreation Plan.~~

~~6.3.5 The City shall seek funds for the development of, and improvements to Augusta Savage Arts and Community Center.~~

~~6.3.6 The City should seek private/public partnerships and grant funding to increase recreational programming for residents of Green Cove Springs.~~

Objective 6.4

To preserve open space by limiting/prohibiting development of environmentally sensitive lands in Green Cove Springs.

Policies

6.4.1 The City shall continue to seek state and federal grants for acquisition and expansion of the lands for the Green Cove Springs Nature Preserve.

6.4.2 The City will seek donation of land or grant funds for the purchase of lands designated as environmentally sensitive lands and for property located along the St. Johns River to be preserved as permanent open space and/or use the land for bike/pedestrian trails, nature walks, greenways, etc.

6.4.3 Pursue available Federal and State grant sources for the acquisition and development of recreation and open space areas.

6.4.4 Conservation areas shall be designated on the Future Land Use Map as Conservation-Public and shall be developed for public recreation uses that are compatible with the environmental characteristics of the property. Any development in these areas shall not be allowed unless the appropriate agency (i.e., SJRWMD, COE, FDEP) issues a permit for the development and if the land was purchased with grant funds is developed in accordance with the grant requirements.

6.4.5 Open Space areas are defined as undeveloped lands suitable for passive recreation.

6.4.6 The City shall coordinate with the St. Johns River Water Management District and Clay County to purchase lands and develop a recreational trail system throughout the City and along the St. Johns River connecting Spring Park, the Green Cove Springs Nature Preserve, and the J. P. Hall Nature Preserve.