

## RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

### *GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES*

#### **GENERAL GOAL:**

Enhance the quality of life in Cape Coral by developing a system of public parks, recreational facilities, and open space which meets the varied needs of present and future populations.

#### **SUBORDINATE GOALS:**

Acquire and develop a system of park lands, recreational facilities, and open spaces, which keep pace with community growth and changing community needs.

Provide a balanced and varied system of park lands, recreational facilities, and open spaces which are conveniently located, and accessible to all members of the public regardless of age or disability.

Objective 1: The City of Cape Coral will develop and maintain a system of parks and recreational facilities meeting the needs of the City's permanent and functional residents and shall identify and plan park and recreation improvements to 2030.

Policy 1.1: The City hereby adopts the "Plan for Recreation and Open Space in Cape Coral" and these goals, objectives, and policies, as the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.2: The City hereby adopts the definitions of Regional, Community, Neighborhood, and Special Parks ("The Plan for Recreation and Open Space") and adopts the following standards for recreational facilities:

<b>Park Classification</b>	<b>Acres per Service Population*</b>	<b>Emphasis</b>
Regional Park	4 acres per 1,000 population	Passive Recreation (e.g.

		hiking, picnicking, nature study
Community Park	2 acres per 1,000 population	Senior center, swimming pool, tennis, racquetball, picnicking, shelter houses, community rooms, etc.
Neighborhood Park	2 acres per 1,000 population	Playground, restrooms, picnic tables, bicycle and pedestrian access, other features as per neighborhood interest
Specialty Parks*	½ acre per 1,000 population	Gridiron or diamond sports, restrooms, refreshment area, bleachers

\*Includes Athletic Fields, Environmental Parks, Aquatic Facilities, and Golf Courses.

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Unit of Measure</b>
Basketball Goal	1 goal per 2,500 persons
BMX Bicycle Course	1 course per 400,000 persons

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Boat Ramp Lanes	1 lane per 10,000 persons
Bocce Courts	1 court per 30,000 persons
Diamond Sports Fields	1 field per 4,000 persons
Exercise Course	1 course per 50,000 persons
Golf Courses	1 course per 100,000 persons
Gridiron –Soccer	1 field per 10,000 persons
Gridiron - Football	1 field per 20,000 persons
Horseshoe Pits	1 court per 15,000 persons
Picnic Tables	1 table per 725 persons
Play Areas, Equipped	1 area per 10,000 persons
Racquetball Courts	1 court per 25,000 persons
Senior Center	1 center per 50,000 persons
Shuffleboard Courts	1 court per 25,000 persons
Swimming Pools	1 pool per 50,000 persons
Tennis Courts	1 court per 7,500 persons
Volleyball Courts	1 court per 25,000 persons

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Nature Trails	1 mile per 50,000 persons
Bicycle/Jogging Paths	0.56 mile per 1,000 persons

Policy 1.3: Funding of capital costs for park and recreational facilities, including acquisition, development and maintenance, shall be met using the following sources:

- Proceeds of impact fee collections (provided that such monies are not used to correct a deficiency);
- Federal, State or private grants, loans and bonds; and,
- Private donations.

Ad valorem tax revenues will only be used, when necessary, to provide the balance of necessary funding.

Policy 1.4: User fees will be used as a funding source for the operation and maintenance of City-owned parks and recreation facilities.

Policy 1.5: All parks and recreation facilities proposed within the Urban Services Infill area will be completed and functioning by the end of 2012.

Policy 1.6: Parks and recreation facilities within the Urban Services Reserve Area will be acquired and developed in proportion to the rate of growth within the service area of the park or facility.

Policy 1.7: Acquisition of lands within the Urban Services Reserve Area will be via Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) or by direct purchase funded by the City's revolving Recreational Land Acquisition Fund, as provided in the "Land Banking" section of the Future Land Use Element. The City will seek additional funding from private sources. Condemnation shall not be used to obtain lands within the Urban Services Reserve Area, except as a last resort.

Policy 1.8: Excepting only such projects as described under Policy 1.9, below, a proposed residential development shall be determined concurrent for park and recreational facilities and services if any of the following conditions are met:

- At the time a development order or building permit is issued, the necessary park and recreational facilities and services are in place or under actual construction; or
- A development order or building permit is issued subject to the condition that the acreage for the necessary facilities and services has been dedicated to or acquired by the City of Cape Coral or funds in the amount of the developer's fair share have been committed by the time of issuance of the building permit; or,
- At the time a development order or building permit is issued, the necessary park and recreational facilities and services are the subject of a binding executed agreement which requires the necessary park and recreational facilities and services to serve the new development to be in place or under actual construction no more than three (3) years after the issuance of a building permit; or
- At the time a development order or building permit is issued, the necessary park and recreational facilities and services are guaranteed in an enforceable development agreement, pursuant to Section 163.3220, Florida Statutes, or an agreement or development order issued pursuant to Chapter 380, Florida Statutes, to be in place or under actual construction not more than three (3) years after issuance of a building permit.

Policy 1.9: For the purpose of issuing a development order or building permit, a proposed development may be deemed to have a de minimis impact on the affected park and recreational facilities and not subject to concurrency requirements of Policy 1.8 only if all of the following conditions are met:

- The development proposal is for an increase in density less than or equal to two (2) times the density or intensity of existing development, or for the development of a vacant parcel of land, residential development proposal is for a density of less than four (4) dwelling units per acre; and
- The park and recreational impact of the proposed residential development does not exceed 0.1 percent of the adopted level-of-service of the affected park and recreational facilities.
- If the affected park and recreation facilities do not meet adopted level-of-service standards, the cumulative park and recreational impact from the de minimis exemption does not exceed three (3) percent of the adopted level-of-service standard.

Policy 1.10: Design and development of park and recreation facilities shall consider environmental and neighborhood conditions.

Policy 1.11: The City shall meet the recreational needs of all population groups through the development of recreational facilities.

Objective 2: The City will acquire lands at least sufficient to provide the recreational facilities and improvements identified in the Comprehensive Plan as needed by 2012 and shall identify lands needed to meet future recreational demands in 2030, in order to preserve open space, and protect from intrusion the existing open space owned by the State of Florida.

Policy 2.1: The City will explore methods for preserving corridor open space and enhancing landscaping along the City's multi-lane divided roadways.

Policy 2.2: The City will cooperate with State authorities to protect State-owned preservation lands as a source of open space, passive recreation, nature study, and personal enrichment.

Policy 2.3: The City will coordinate with other government agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire and manage natural areas and open space.

Policy 2.4: The City will adopt, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 163.3202 (1), Florida Statutes, land development regulations which include incentives to encourage the provision of open space within future developed areas.

Policy 2.5: In selecting lands for acquisition and future park development the City shall strive to locate and acquire environmentally sensitive lands.

Policy 2.6: By 2012, the City of Cape Coral will develop a master plan, including conceptual maps, for a network of recreational trails and conservation greenways. The network will be designed, to the degree feasible, around existing facilities. Land for the network, including land for destinations, trailheads and associated parking facilities, will be acquired as opportunity and resources allow.

Objective 3: The City of Cape Coral will continue to provide a system of parks, recreational facilities, and open space which is accessible to all members of the public.

Policy 3.1: All park facilities will be built and maintained in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Policy 3.2: The City will ensure that all new Community, Specialty and Regional Parks have adequate parking, and are accessible to automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic.

Policy 3.3: The City will assure the safety of all public park users.

Policy 3.4: Neighborhood Parks will be accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, and adequate parking shall be provided in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Limited vehicular parking will be provided for all other users.

Policy 3.5: By 2010, the City will provide at least one (1) additional boat ramp lane to provide access to the Caloosahatchee River or Charlotte Harbor.

Policy 3.6: The City will seek funding for additional boat ramp lanes by applying for its share of Lee County's Recreational Vehicle and boat tax funds and for Florida Recreation and Park Development Assistance Project (FRDAP) grants.

Policy 3.7: The City will permit no diminution in the length of fresh or salt-water shoreline which is available for public use and enjoyment and, as opportunity and resources allow the City will increase the length of such shoreline.

Policy 3.8: The City will ensure that the existing level of vehicular and non-vehicular access to fresh and salt-water shorelines is maintained and, as opportunity and resources allow, the City will increase the level of access to the City's fresh and salt-water shorelines.

Policy 3.9: The City will continue to explore opportunities for obtaining beach access to Charlotte Harbor. The selection of the beach access shall be such that the environmental integrity and ecological function of the area is maintained.

Policy 3.10: In order to prevent the loss of fresh or salt water beach access, the City will pursue grants from the Federal, State, and County governments for beach renourishment and maintenance.

Objective 4: By 2012, City parks and recreational facilities will be as safe as, or safer than, they were during the period from 1996 through 2002. The number of accidents occurring in City parks, as a function of usership, will remain constant, or decrease.

Policy 4.1: The City will promote safety at public parks and recreational facilities through regular risk assessment and safety inspections. The frequency of the inspections for each facility will be a function of use and number of accidents, on a schedule to be established by the City Risk Manager within one year of adoption of this plan.

Policy 4.2: The City will promote safety at public parks and recreation facilities through the use of information signage, lighting, rails, fences, and other appropriate measures.

Policy 4.3: The City will promote playground safety through the use of impact-absorbing ground materials, by separating playgrounds from vehicular traffic, and by selecting safe play equipment.

Objective 5: The City will continue to provide adequate levels of funding to properly and efficiently maintain park and recreation facilities within Cape Coral.

Policy 5.1: The City will maintain park maintenance standards consistent with accepted national standards as set forth in the publication "Park Maintenance Standards" published by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Policy 5.2: The City will establish a maintenance program for each park and recreational facility and will prepare a schedule of expenditures required to maintain each park and recreation facility.

Objective 6: The City will aggressively pursue an increase in private and public funds for the acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation of parks and recreational facilities.

Policy 6.1: The City will continue and enhance its agreements with Lee County government and with the School Board of Lee County for the joint development and operation of parks and recreational facilities, and shall, when possible, extend these agreements to cover new school facilities.

Policy 6.2: The City will continue to study the feasibility of the privatization of park concessions by non-governmental vendors, including community-based, not-for-profit organizations. If determined feasible, the City will amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate a Schedule for privatization of services.

Policy 6.3: The City will adopt, as a part of its land development regulations, in accordance with s. 163.3202 (1), F.S., incentives for private developers to create recreational facilities, which are available for public use. These incentives may include, but are not limited to, park impact fee credits or density bonuses.

Policy 6.4: The City will, within one year of the adoption of this comprehensive plan, commission a study to explore joint ventures between the City and private donors; and will create a method for soliciting, receiving, and disbursing dedicated contributions.

Policy 6.5: The City will encourage contributions from private sources by creating matching funds, and identifying and creating other inducements.

Policy 6.6: The City shall diversify and expand its revenue base for park and recreation facilities.

Policy 6.7: The City shall explore and initiate cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations, civic clubs, religious organizations, and other organizations in the development and maintenance of park and recreation facilities.

Policy 6.8: In acquiring and developing parks, especially neighborhood parks, the City shall seek to obtain the financial, physical, and political support of the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 6.9: The Parks and Recreation Department shall investigate the feasibility of revising the application of park impact fees to include special and neighborhood parks.

Objective 7: The City will maintain and/or expand public opportunities for participation in the creative and performing arts.

Policy 7.1: The City will promote the creative and performing arts by providing appropriate outlets for artistic expression.

Policy 7.2: The City will identify other fine arts organizations, which provide visual and performing arts. The Parks and Recreation Department will attempt to coordinate their efforts with such organizations to avoid duplication of services.

Policy 7.3: The City will evaluate, for purposes of long-term development, a broad variety of arts facilities, including: outdoor performing arts facilities, community theater activities, museums, and fine arts workshops. The City will amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate those facilities into its Capital Improvement Element for which adequate demand can be established and for which a cost/benefit analysis indicates financial feasibility.

Policy 7.4: The City will construct arts facilities capable of multiple uses when such construction will increase the use of the facility without creating scheduling conflicts.

Policy 7.5: The City will promote the efficient utilization of existing cultural and performing arts facilities located at Cultural Park, as well as other existing facilities throughout the City.