
RECREATION ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal 7.1: Provide adequate parks, recreation facilities and open-space areas that offer a broad range of activities to all citizens and visitors of St. Lucie County.

Objective 7.1.1: Active and passive recreation facilities and open-space areas for the residents and visitors of St. Lucie County shall be provided in a manner consistent with the Level of Service Standards set forth in this element. Consistency with these standards shall be maintained in subsequent years.

Policy 7.1.1.1 - Level of Service for Recreation and Open Space shall be as follows:

- a. Community parks: 5 acres/1000 residents in the unincorporated area
- b. Regional parks: 2.5 acres/1000 population countywide
- c. Resource-based Parks: 21.2 acres/1000 population countywide.

Policy 7.1.1.2 - St. Lucie County shall expand and improve recreational facilities consistent with the needs and recommended strategies identified in the Parks and Recreation 10 Year Master Plan, dated and approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 11, 2022. The County shall achieve the Level of Service Standards as set forth in this Element and the Capital Improvements Elements, through an equitable and systematic land acquisition and development program.

Policy 7.1.1.3 - The County will continue to correct and improve upon existing deficiencies through additional land acquisition and development, and through expansion or renovation of existing parks and recreational facilities.

Policy 7.1.1.4 - All areas having the Conservation Public Land Use designation will be used solely for preservation and/or passive recreation. No residential or commercial development will be permitted other than development typically related to park service and security functions.

Objective 7.1.2: Through the use of public funds, gifts, contributions, mandatory fees and/or deductions, cooperative agreements, or other means, St. Lucie County will coordinate public and private resources to meet the recreation and open space needs of its residents and visitors.

Policy 7.1.2.1 - The County shall pursue development and enhancement of its recreational programs, facilities, open spaces, and natural preserves in the following programs:

- a. Continue to administer the countywide parks impact fee in order to partially fund new park development.
- b. Supplement facility needs through interlocal agreements, operational practices, user fees and public/private cooperative efforts.
- c. Utilization of municipal service taxing unit (MSTU) funds.
- d. Loans and bonds approved by referendum or by the Board of County Commissioners.

Policy 7.1.2.2 - The County shall continue to work with other units of local government to provide for the reciprocal use of recreation, school and other facilities, while ensuring neither party assumes an inequitable burden of expenses.

Policy 7.1.2.3 - The County shall allow, to the extent legally possible, financially feasible, and whenever practical, other governmental agencies, such as the St. Lucie County School Board, to use the St. Lucie County Sports Complex.

Policy 7.1.2.4 - The County shall maintain a detailed Recreation and Open Space Inventory that indicates the general location of existing and proposed sites and facilities as well as functional classification, nature of improvements, usage, size, priority, and other appropriate considerations.

Objective 7.1.3: St. Lucie County shall provide vehicular and pedestrian access to all public recreation facilities, including barrier-free design features at entrance points to facilities such as buildings used for group assembly, spectator seating areas, and beaches and shores.

Policy 7.1.3.1 - Acquire and develop easements or rights-of-way as required to provide adequate access for public recreation facilities. Construct access ways which are compatible with the character and needs of the facility, as well as being harmonious with surrounding development patterns.

Policy 7.1.3.2 - Continue to provide public access to Atlantic Ocean beaches, and continue to give careful consideration to providing related parking areas and dune cross-over facilities without disturbance to the dune environment, natural habitats, and designated areas of particular concern.

Policy 7.1.3.3 - To the extent financially feasible, implement the policies advanced in the adopted Bicycle, Pedestrian, Greenways & Trailways Master Plan, as it may be amended, to promote non-motorized access and connectivity to recreational facilities.

Objective 7.1.4: To the extent financially feasible, implement and update the vision of the January 2022 Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Policy 7.1.4.1 - Continue to assess the County's recreational needs based on the Level of Service Standards in this Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 7.1.4.2 - Continue to seek funding for acquisition, expansion, and development of recreational infrastructure, with an emphasis and focus on Community and Regional Parks.

Objective 7.1.5: Develop and implement strategies to encourage eco-tourism in St. Lucie County.

Policy 7.1.5.1 - Identify appropriate and sustainable sites to develop as eco-tourism destinations and passive recreational opportunities.

Policy 7.1.5.2 - Provide required infrastructure to attract visitors to and protect eco-tourism destinations.

Policy 7.1.5.3 - In conjunction with the County's Tourist Development Office; publicize the

improved eco-tourism sites and St. Lucie County as an eco-tourism destination.

Objective 7.1.6: Continue to preserve and enhance Environmentally Sensitive Lands in St. Lucie County.

Policy 7.1.6.1 - Encourage the State of Florida to provide future funding for acquisition and management of Environmentally Sensitive Lands.

Policy 7.1.6.2 - Seek funding from outside sources for acquisition, improvement and management of Environmentally Sensitive Lands.

Policy 7.1.6.3 - To the extent financially feasible, budget for personnel and equipment for management of Environmentally Sensitive Lands to ensure that these lands are preserved, enhanced, and developed for access and uses that will maintain wildlife habitat, open space, aesthetic value, and passive recreation.

Policy 7.1.6.4 - As financially feasible, provide educational programs that foster awareness, understanding, and respect for natural resources.

Objective 7.1.7: Provide for an integrated system of Greenways and Trails in St. Lucie County.

Policy 7.1.7.1 - To the extent financially feasible, implement the goals, objectives, and policies advanced in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, Greenways and Trails Master Plan for St. Lucie County.

Policy 7.1.7.2 - Seek funding from outside sources for development and management of greenways and trails.

Objective 7.1.8: The County shall protect environmentally significant areas with emphasis on native upland habitats, and the prevention of the net loss of listed species and their habitats. This shall be accomplished through the County Environmental Significant Lands Acquisition program, ongoing natural resource protection programs and the implementation of Land Development Code, including impact fees.