

1 **GOAL 1: The County will develop a parks and recreation and open space system to ensure**
2 **adequate opportunity for public access to, and use of, activity and resource-based recreation**
3 **sites for active and passive recreation to maintain and improve the quality of life of its citizens**
4 **and support economic diversity and development.**

5 **OBJECTIVE 1.1:** The County shall provide and manage parks and recreation and open spaces
6 using a county-wide Level of Service (LOS) in a financially feasible manner, and consistent with
7 the Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP), as amended.

8 **Policy 1.1.1:** The LOS standard for public outdoor parks and recreation facilities shall be two (2) acres per
9 1,000 persons. Marion County may develop and pursue intergovernmental and not-for-profit agency
10 partnerships to meet identified recreation needs, including, but not limited to, placing County-
11 owned/operated facilities on non-Marion County owned lands.

12 **Policy 1.1.2:** The County shall establish and maintain a Parks and Recreation Advisory Council (PRAC), or
13 equivalent authority, to provide recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding parks
14 and recreation and open space needs such as land, facilities, and programs as well as costs/funding.
15 Duties of the PRAC shall be established by the Board of County Commissioners and may include, but not
16 be limited to, the following:

- 17 a. Review and make recommendations regarding the maintenance of, and revisions/updates to, the
18 Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP);
- 19 b. Identify and provide guidance regarding opportunities to establish partnerships with other public
20 agencies (e.g., local, regional, state, or federal), quasi-governmental (e.g., community
21 development or special districts) and/or private entities (e.g., private trusts, non-profit trusts,
22 community groups, etc.) to meet parks and recreation and open space needs;
- 23 c. Identify and provide guidance regarding opportunities to obtain and/or develop funding and/or
24 funding mechanisms to maintain, provide, and meet current and identified parks and recreation
25 and open space needs such as lands, facilities, and/or programs;
- 26 d. Identify and provide guidance on location needs for parks and recreation and open space needs
27 in relation to the County's Future Land Use Map (FLUM), including identifying opportunities for
28 the use of existing public and/or private lands held for recreation and/or conservation purposes
29 or for surplus local, regional, state, or federal lands.

30 **Policy 1.1.3:** The County shall establish and maintain a Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan
31 (PRMP) which functions to inventory, assess, evaluate, and identify Marion County's existing and future
32 parks and recreation and open space needs and provide guidance on funding the maintenance,
33 improvement, and expansion of the existing and identified needs.

34 **Policy 1.1.4:** The County shall fund through a variety of mechanisms the maintenance, construction, and
35 operation of County-owned and/or operated parks and recreation facilities and open spaces along with
36 a variety of recreation programs through the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department (MCPRD),
37 or its equivalent.

1 **Policy 1.1.5:** The County shall provide reasonable public access to all County provided parks and
2 recreation and open space sites, facilities, and programs to the greatest extent practicable, in
3 conformance with applicable governmental requirements (e.g, state and federal disability standards) and
4 in a manner which will maintain and not create adverse impacts to such sites, facilities, and programs.

5 **OBJECTIVE 1.2:** The County shall plan for management, acquisition, facilities development, and
6 programs to meet the County's park and recreation and open space needs using the Marion
7 County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) which will include and/or address, at a
8 minimum, the items identified by the policies of this Objective.

9 **Policy 1.2.1:** The PRMP shall be developed and maintained in a manner which encourages, supports, and
10 includes public participation in all components of the PRMP.

11 **Policy 1.2.2:** The PRMP shall include policies on the provision of lands, sites, facilities, and programs.

12 **Policy 1.2.3:** The PRMP shall include provisions which identify and support a sound financial plan for
13 acquisition, development, and operations.

14 **Policy 1.2.4:** The PRMP shall include the following data:

15 a. An inventory of parks and recreation and open space lands, facilities, and programs provided by
16 the County, and those which are established, operated, and/or funded parks and recreation and
17 open space lands, facilities, and programs, under interlocal or partnership agreements, including
18 a summary of the status of the applicable agreements. The PRMP may also include similar
19 information on non-County parks and recreation and open space lands, facilities, and programs
20 for the purpose of assessing their availability and suitability to the citizens of the County and
21 economic opportunities for recreation and eco-tourism related activities.

22 b. Current needs for parks and recreation and open space sites, facilities, and programs based on
23 estimated recreation demand, and an analysis of the availability, accessibility, and adequacy of
24 existing parks and recreation and open space sites to the public;

25 c. Projected future needs for parks and recreation and open space sites, facilities, and programs
26 based on the established LOS and the projection of the necessary availability, accessibility, and
27 adequacy of the need for those parks and recreation and open space sites, facilities, and
28 programs;

29 d. An annual capital improvement program and budget for five years of proposed acquisition and
30 development shall be developed, including anticipated operations impacts from such
31 improvements for the first year.

32 **Policy 1.2.5:** The County shall utilize the PRMP and identified public land locations, if any, to locate existing
33 public lands appropriate for desired recreation facilities first before purchasing additional new land. If
34 existing public lands are deemed inappropriate for desired recreation facilities, the County shall utilize the
35 PRMP and the FLUM to identify new properties for desired recreation facilities.

36 a. The County, through the MCPRD shall assist non-profit participants with establishing public
37 recreation facilities when feasible and when adequate resources are available. These facilities can
38 include schools and municipalities.

- 1 b. The MCPRD and PRAC shall identify potential sites within delineated recreation service areas in
2 the county, including an initial ranking based on environmental characteristics, location within the
3 service area, accessibility, and potential for meeting existing or future needs for the area. This
4 inventory and ranking shall be maintained as the PRMP is updated. In addition, the MCPRD shall
5 consider any identified Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as noted in the FLUE, in the analysis for
6 potential parks and recreation sites.
- 7 c. The County shall encourage and provide access to public water bodies (e.g., Navigable waterways,
8 surface waters of the state, etc.) where feasible through land acquisition and development of
9 fishing and boating facilities.
- 10 d. The County shall encourage and support increasing the number of greenways connecting to
11 environmentally sensitive and locally important natural resources, which provide and promote
12 recreational opportunities, alternative transportation modes and wildlife corridors.
- 13 **Policy 1.2.6:** When the PRMP identifies any LOS deficiencies, the PRMP shall identify how resolution of
14 the deficiencies will be addressed and shall reflect any necessary funding needs appropriately in the PRMP
15 capital improvements component.
- 16 **Policy 1.2.7:** Opportunities to partner with public and private agencies and entities to productively and
17 economically operate and use County-owned and operated parks and recreation and open space sites and
18 facilities shall be evaluated by the PRMP.
- 19 **OBJECTIVE 1.3:** The County will utilize existing funding sources and develop new funding sources
20 to provide for parks and recreation and open space needs in a manner that seeks to comply with
21 the Comprehensive Plan LOS standards and any administrative standard established by the PRMP
22 (e.g., neighborhood, community, or regional parks, etc.).
- 23 **Policy 1.3.1:** The County shall annually review user and other appropriate fees to defray the operation
24 and maintenance costs of parks and recreational programs.
- 25 **Policy 1.3.2:** The County may utilize the information and data generated from the PRMP, as amended, to
26 identify deficiencies in parks and recreation facilities and correct such deficiencies using development
27 exactions, on-site dedication, fee-in-lieu payment, other funding programs, or other appropriate
28 methods.
- 29 **Policy 1.3.3:** The County may apply for financial assistance (e.g., grants, loans, etc.) to support funding
30 the acquisition and construction of parks and recreation and open space lands and facilities, as well as the
31 development and provision of recreation programs through the MCPRD to achieve and improve financial
32 feasibility and leverage County funds. In support of these efforts, a five year capital improvement plan
33 shall be created and annually adopted by the County Board of County Commissioners (BCC).
- 34 **Policy 1.3.4:** The LDC shall contain provisions requiring new residential developments (e.g., subdivisions
35 and particularly developments of regional impact) to provide minimum open space per dwelling unit
36 consistent with FLUE Policy 2.1.4 as a condition of approval.
- 37 a. Compliance with this provision may be satisfied by on-site development or, when on-site
38 provision is impractical or not selected by the developer, by providing for off-site development or

1 the payment of a fee-in-lieu to the County for off-site acquisition and/or development, consistent
2 with the PRMP. The LDC shall provide for of the determination of any fee-in-lieu for off-site
3 provision.

- 4 b. When on-site recreational sites and facilities are established to meet the open space requirement,
5 suitable mechanisms must be established to fund the management and maintenance of the
6 space, and the County may require the establishment of a municipal services taxing unit or
7 municipal services benefit unit for such, in addition to any private arrangements made by the
8 developer (e.g., property owners association, development district, etc.).

9 **OBJECTIVE 1.4:** The County will strive to ensure the design and development of parks and
10 recreation and open spaces provided within the County, whether public and/or private, serve as
11 a model for development to the greatest extent practicable and as further outlined in the policies
12 of this Objective.

13 **Policy 1.4.1:** Reasonable public access to all recreation sites and facilities shall be provided consistent with
14 applicable state and federal requirements (e.g., building codes, accessibility, etc.).

15 **Policy 1.4.2:** The County shall make the necessary provisions in location, design, and development of all
16 County-owned/operated recreation sites and facilities to ensure reasonable public access (e.g., building
17 codes, accessibility, etc.) for all new sites and facilities. For existing but access deficient sites and facilities,
18 the PRMP shall identify such deficiencies and propose/schedule improvements to address the
19 deficiencies.

20 **Policy 1.4.3:** All new sites and facilities planned and developed will be designed to minimize the impact to
21 the natural resources of the property. Existing sites and facilities shall be retrofitted when feasible and to
22 the greatest extent practicable when such facilities are renovated and/or expanded. Conformance with
23 local, regional, state, and/or federal best management practices applicable to the site will be a key focus
24 of the site design and development.

25 **Policy 1.4.4:** All new sites and facilities shall ensure connection to any available adequate public facility
26 consistent with the provisions of the LDRs and in a manner which meets the health and safety needs of
27 the public (e.g., centralized potable water, centralized sanitary sewer, roadway access improvements,
28 etc.). Existing sites and facilities shall be retrofitted to connect to or provide public facilities when feasible
29 and to the greatest extent practicable when such facilities are renovated and/or expanded.

30 **Policy 1.4.5:** All new sites and facilities shall be designed to provide connection to transportation facilities
31 and other developments. Existing sites and facilities shall be retrofitted where necessary and when
32 feasible and practicable to connect to transportation facilities and other developments when such
33 facilities are renovated and/or expanded. For sites within the Urban Growth Boundary, the design and
34 development shall address connection or future connection to non-automotive multi-modal
35 transportation methods such as but not limited to mass transit, sidewalks, bicycles, etc., including
36 addressing opportunities for integration with the *Ocala-Marion County Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan*
37 and any other "trail" plans within the County/UGB which will enhance/improve/maximize public access.

38 **Policy 1.4.6:** All new residential developments (e.g., subdivisions and particularly developments of
39 regional impact) shall be required to comply with the open space per dwelling unit standard established

1 by FLUE Policy 2.1.4, unless an alternative form of compliance is provided by the developer consistent
2 with Policy 1.3.4.

3 **OBJECTIVE 1.5:** The County recognizes the economic impact of parks and recreation and open
4 space areas and activities for both residents and visitors. The County shall continue to encourage
5 and develop economic opportunities for recreation and eco-tourism services.

6 **Policy 1.5.1:** The County shall collaborate with the public and private sectors in developing eco-tourism
7 opportunities using the public and private parks and recreation and open space lands within the County
8 and shall encourage and support efforts to market those opportunities.

9 **Policy 1.5.2:** The County LDC shall maintain provisions to address the establishment of private
10 conservation, eco-tourism, and recreation opportunities by government and/or private/non-profit sector
11 entities.