

7.0 Recreation and Open Space Element Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 7.1 • Provide parks, recreational facilities and open space to satisfy the health, safety and welfare needs of citizens and visitors, including special groups, such as the elderly, handicapped and pre-school age children.

Objective 7.1.A • Ensure public access to recreation sites, open spaces, beaches and shores on a continuing basis.

Policy 7.1.A.1 • The County will maintain public access onto Navarre Beach and will pursue the development of additional areas where feasible.

Policy 7.1.A.2 • The County shall continue to install and maintain signage so as to identify public areas, beach access points and other shoreline access points.

Policy 7.1.A.3 • The County shall continue to utilize the Florida Boating Improvement Fund proceeds for improvements to the various boat ramps located within Santa Rosa County.

Policy 7.1.A.4 • The County shall improve the physical access to recreation sites, open spaces, beaches and shores by:

A) Advocating the addition of bike lanes to State and County Roads.

B) Requiring developments to provide walk/bike paths to connect its internal open space and recreational sites to residential areas.

C) Prioritizing the development of bike facilities, sidewalks, and multi-use trails that link neighborhoods to schools and parks.

D) The provision of adequate parking at beach and waterway access points or off-beach/waterway parking shall be located where vehicle and pedestrian traffic identifies that there is a need to increase these facilities.

E) The County shall continue to research and apply for grants and other available funding to acquire and construct parking and access at chosen points.

Policy 7.1.A.5 • Santa Rosa County shall require the design of parking areas and access ways to be constructed so that they enhance and protect the waterways adjacent to lands within the County. Such parking areas shall be designed to include (but not limited to) existing trees and use of pervious parking wherever feasible.

Policy 7.1.A.6 • The County shall not vacate existing easements, walkways and other access points to Navarre Beach without equivalent or greater mitigation.

Policy 7.1.A.7 • The County will encourage the establishment of recreation trails and bike trails to increase, where feasible, the opportunity for biking, walking, in-line skating and other forms of outdoor recreation.

Objective 7.1.B • Continue cooperative efforts between the public and private sectors in the provision of recreational opportunities and assure that such efforts are coordinated.

Policy 7.1.B.1 • The County shall continue to maintain and improve the county-owned parks, recreation sites and open spaces within the County.

Policy 7.1.B.2 • The County shall continue its cooperative efforts with the Cities of Gulf Breeze, Milton and Jay as well as with other communities within the County and with the private sector and non-profit organizations (i.e., YMCA, Little League, etc.) and the Santa Rosa County School Board in the provision of recreational facilities and open space areas.

Policy 7.1.B.3 • The County shall continue to apply for all available state and federal funds to implement recreation programs and provisions of this element.

Policy 7.1.B.4 • The County shall work with other public agencies for the development of compatible multi-use programs for the public lands within the County.

Policy 7.1.B.5 • Planned Unit Developments and other large developments containing large scale residential development in excess of 300 residential units shall provide neighborhood-sized active parks, playing fields, usable open space, trail systems water access or other recreational or open space areas/facilities as amenable to the development within the development within the development.

Policy 7.1.B.6 • The County shall continue to acquire (through lease, acquisition or dedication) open space and natural areas so as to maintain and improve: (1) recreational opportunities for all residents; and (2) the natural function of open space, wetlands and other sensitive lands within the County.

Objective 7.1.C • . Establish funding priorities for recreational facilities and open spaces within the County.

Policy 7.1.C.1 • In selecting future park sites for site improvements, the County shall give full consideration to those commission districts which require immediate construction, maintenance or rehabilitation of existing facilities.

Policy 7.1.C.2 • Public recreational and park sites shall not be diverted to other uses except in cases of overriding public need and when other equivalent sites are supplied.

Policy 7.1.C.3 • The County shall continue to provide for the handicapped, elderly and pre-school age children: parking, accessibility to facilities and recreational opportunities.

Policy 7.1.C.4 • The County shall continue to seek advice from citizens for the development of recreational opportunities and facilities.