



**LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
OLD LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
2120 MAIN STREET, FORT MYERS, FL 33901
BOARD CHAMBERS**

**MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2012
8:30 AM**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Review of Affidavit of Publication
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Forum
4. Approval of Minutes – March 26, 2012
5. [CPA2011-00018 \(Corkscrew Woods\)](#)
6. Land Development Code Amendments
 - A. [Lee County Wind Borne Debris Region and Basic Wind Speed Maps](#)
7. New Horizon 2035: Plan Amendments
 - A. [CPA2011-00011 – ICE Intergovernmental Coordination Element](#)
 - B. [CPA2011-00012 – Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element](#)
8. Discussion: Promoting Green Planning Initiatives
9. [Other Business](#)
10. Adjournment – Next Meeting Date: Thursday, May 31, 2012

Any person appealing a decision made at this hearing must ensure a record of the proceedings is made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Reasonable Accommodations will be made upon request. If you are in need of a Reasonable Accommodation or would like additional information, please contact Janet Miller at 239-533-8583.

**CPA2011-12
LEE PLAN
PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE
BOCC SPONSORED
EAR BASED AMENDMENT
TO THE**

LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE LEE PLAN

Publically Sponsored Amendment and Staff Analysis

**LPA Public Hearing Document
For the
April 23rd, 2011 Public Hearing**

*Lee County Planning Division
1500 Monroe Street
P.O. Box 398
Fort Myers, FL 33902-0398
(239) 533-8585*

April 18, 2012

**LEE COUNTY
DIVISION OF PLANNING
STAFF REPORT FOR
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT
CPA2011-11**

Text Amendment

Map Amendment

This Document Contains the Following Reviews	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff Review
	Local Planning Agency Review and Recommendation
	Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Transmittal
	Staff Response to the DCA Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report
	Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Adoption

STAFF REPORT PREPARATION DATE: April 18, 2011

PART I - BACKGROUND AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

1. APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE:

Lee County Board of County Commissioners, represented by Lee County Division of Planning.

2. REQUEST:

Amend the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element of the Lee Plan to incorporate the recommendations of the March 1, 2011 Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

B. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF FACT SUMMARY

1. RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendment to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element of the Lee Plan as shown on Attachment 1. The attachment shows the proposed Element in clean codified language.

2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:

- The Board of County Commissioners initiated this plan amendment on March 1, 2011, with the adoption of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.
- The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element of the Lee Plan is intended to provide for the varied public spaces and civic place needs of the county residents and visitors in an array of public and private resources and facilities.
- The adopted New Horizon 2035 Evaluation and Appraisal Report found that the updated Lee Plan should address issues regarding element clarity and effectiveness.
- The proposed amendments to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element are consistent with the Evaluation and Appraisal Report recommendations.
- The proposed amendments meet the statutory requirements of FS 163.3177(6)(e).

C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the planning and development of public spaces and civic places within Lee County. The purpose of the element is to promote Lee County's livability through a park, recreation, and open space system that meets the varied needs of the residents and visitors. Originally incorporated into the Lee Plan in 1984, this element defines the components, design features, level of service, and types of parks. This element also helps ensure public and private development efforts support the design and character of the county's different communities.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element is a required element as defined by Chapter 163.3177(6)(e), Florida Statutes (F.S.). Specifically, the statute states, "A recreation and open space element indicating a comprehensive system of public and private sites for recreation, including, but not limited to, natural reservations, parks and playgrounds, parkways, beaches and public access to beaches, open spaces, waterways, and other recreational facilities."

PART II - STAFF ANALYSIS

A. STAFF DISCUSSION

The 2011 EAR established that the revisions to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element needed to address the following findings and recommendations:

- Update level of service standards consistent with national parks standards;
- Emphasize the relationship between the development and surrounding community;
- Ensure that parks and public space considerations are coordinate with other comprehensive plan components including land use, transportation, and natural resource conservation;
- Update policy language and overall plan organization to be clearer and better defined;

- Develop new policies that support the design of multi-use facilities particularly in mixed-use development areas and along multi-modal transportation corridors;
- Create policies that support the physical and visual connection between park facilities and surrounding uses through architecture and site design, landscaping, and multi-use trails; and
- Establish design criteria for private neighborhood parks and community gathering spaces in mixed-use centers to ensure they contribute to the character of the surrounding community and provide for pedestrian and bike access to adjacent developments.

The element has been reorganized with additional policies in order to address the EAR's findings regarding community character, connections, and services. As such, all goals have been redrafted.

Below are the proposed amendments to the Lee County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, shown in strikethrough and underline format, with an analysis of the proposed changes.

B. GOALS TO BE DELETED

Staff recommends deleting the following policies in order to address the EAR's findings regarding the element's organizational structure and policy content. Additionally, staff found that the policy language needed to be redrafted in order to address issues related to community character, connections, and services.

~~GOAL 76: DISTRIBUTION OF FACILITIES. To provide, maintain and preserve a diverse park, recreational, and open space system which provides equitable access and distribution to all residents of unincorporated Lee County regardless of interest, age, sex, income, race, handicap, or location of residency within unincorporated Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 76.1: During each five year Evaluation and Appraisal Report, or subsequent to each decennial census, the county will examine the composition and location of population growth to determine if redistricting of community park impact fee districts is warranted. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 76.1.1: Based on community needs and interests, the county will equitably distribute community park facilities within impact fee districts in unincorporated Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 76.1.2: Due to the nature of regional parks and the limit on the availability of appropriate sites, regional park facilities will be distributed throughout the entire county. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 76.1.3: By using the experience and knowledge of community groups and professionals and by using data garnered from surveys and public hearings, the county will distribute facilities based on interest and need. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 76.2: The County will maintain inventories, surveys, and records essential to the park planning process, and will periodically update park planning documents and inventories. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 76.3: The County will continue to maintain a systematic approach to survey users of park facilities and residents of Lee County as to their needs, desires, preferences, and evaluations of park and recreation facilities and programs. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22, 07-12)~~

~~POLICY 76.3.1: Park users and residents will be surveyed in order to establish a reliable data base for future planning and decision-making.~~

~~POLICY 76.3.2: The results of user and resident surveys are an integral part of the planning process for park and recreation facilities and programs. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 07-12)~~

~~GOAL 77: DEVELOPMENT DESIGN REQUIREMENTS. To require new development to provide adequate open space for improved aesthetic appearance, visual relief, environmental quality, preservation of existing native trees and plant communities, and the planting of required vegetation. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 02-02)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 77.1: Development regulations will continue to require that new residential developments provide sufficient open space to meet the needs of their residents. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22, 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.1.1: The County will continue to review the open space requirements of the Land Development Code to determine if these requirements should be modified in any way to best meet the open space requirements of residents of new developments. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 77.2: Development regulations will continue to require that new commercial and industrial developments provide sufficient open space for the benefit of their patrons and the general public. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.2.1: The County must continue to review the open space requirements of the Land Development Code to determine if these requirements should be modified in any way to best meet the objectives of open space requirements within new commercial and industrial developments. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 77.3: New developments must use innovative open space design to preserve existing native vegetation, provide visual relief, and buffer adjacent uses and proposed and/or existing rights of way. This objective and subsequent policies are to be implemented through the zoning process. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.1: Any new development with existing indigenous vegetation is encouraged to provide half of the required open space as existing native plant communities. Any new~~

~~development with existing native trees without associated native groundcover or understory is encouraged to provide half of the required open space with areas containing existing native trees. The planting of native shrub species within native tree protection areas is encouraged. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.2: Open space areas must be designed with adequate widths to preserve and allow the continued growth and viability of existing native trees. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.3: The County encourages new developments to incorporate existing native plant communities and/or native trees along proposed and/or existing rights-of-way. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.4: The County encourages new developments to incorporate large, contiguous open space areas in the development design. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.5: Proposed planned developments must submit an open space design plan with an assessment of the existing native plant communities and native trees. The open space design plan must delineate the indigenous preserves and/or native tree preservation areas. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-02)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.6: Coordinate trails and greenway planning and construction efforts with private landowners to identify, protect, develop, and manage linear open space connectors for recreation and conservation greenway corridors and encourage private landowners to dedicate greenway facilities for public recreational use through incentives and impact fee credits. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.7: New development and redevelopment in areas containing a component of the greenways trail system, as identified by the Greenways Master Trail Plan, must incorporate the greenway trail into their development design. In addition to counting towards the projects's general open space requirements, developments constructing the onsite portions of the greenway trail will be eligible for community and regional park impact fee credit. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 77.3.8: Criteria for local monitoring and enforcement for native vegetation will also consider southwest florida specific needs, such as attention to irrigation water content of chlorides and conductance, and to low nutrient fertilizers. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-16)~~

~~GOAL 78: LANDSCAPE/WAYSIDE PARKS. To improve the aesthetics of the community by providing Landscape/Wayside Parks where feasible and appropriate.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 78.1: The county will maintain its current inventory of Landscape/Wayside parks, evaluate the need for such facilities to serve the traveling public, and provide additional such facilities in the future to improve the beauty of the county.~~

~~POLICY 78.1.1: The County will continue to seek input from other County, State and Federal agencies and from community groups for the purpose of developing guidelines for landscape/wayside parks. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94 30, 00 22)~~

~~POLICY 78.1.2: The County will investigate alternative funding sources for the provision of landscape/wayside parks such as public/private partnerships, community involvement programs, and community groups. (Added by Ordinance No. 94 30, Amended by Ordinance No. 00 22)~~

~~GOAL 79: BOAT RAMPS. To provide a share of the boat ramps needed to allow county residents and visitors inexpensive access to public waterways.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 79.1: Lee County will provide one boat ramp lane with adequate parking per 35,000 population of the entire county ("non regulatory" minimum acceptable level of service, see Policy 95.1.3). (Amended by Ordinance No. 00 22)~~

~~POLICY 79.1.1: Lee County will maintain a classification system for boat ramps which addresses location guidelines, types of boat ramp facilities for different areas, and needs and standards for parking for the different types of facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94 30, 00 22)~~

~~GOAL 80: Increase the recreation potential of Lee County's natural waterways. (Added by Ordinance No. 07 09)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 80.1: Expand the Great Calusa Blueway and Lee County Paddling Trail System. (Added by Ordinance No. 07 09)~~

~~POLICY 80.1.1: Establish locations, design standards, and implementation techniques for providing public access to appropriate waterways. (Added by Ordinance No. 07 09)~~

~~POLICY 80.1.2: Designate canoe access points on appropriate waterways in accordance with the Lee County Greenways Master Plan. (Added by Ordinance No. 07 09)~~

~~GOAL 81: [RESERVED]~~

~~GOAL 82: MAINTAINED WATER ACCESSES. To improve access to public beaches and other bodies of water.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 82.1: WATER ACCESS STANDARD ACQUISITION. The county will maintain its current inventory of water accesses and will acquire additional water accesses whenever and wherever economically feasible ("non regulatory" desired future level of service, see Policy 95.1.4). (Amended by Ordinance No. 94 30, 00 22)~~

~~POLICY 82.1.1: The County will continue to pursue grants and other initiatives such as the "Save Our Coast" program as funding sources for additional water accesses. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94 30, 00 22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 82.2: WATER ACCESS STANDARD DEVELOPMENT. Lee County will retain the current inventory of water accesses and develop and/or redevelop at least 3 water accesses per year ("non-regulatory" minimum acceptable level of service, see Policy 95.1.3). (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 82.2.1: The development of each water access will be evaluated on an individual basis in order to provide the correct level of development for each site. Development of water accesses will vary from simple signage on some to parking areas, beach crossovers, and dune restoration on others.~~

~~POLICY 82.2.2: Lee County will provide parking at all water accesses where such development is appropriate and feasible. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 82.3: INVENTORY OF WATER ACCESSES. Lee County will continue to research and maintain available data to determine if there are any additional publicly owned water access which could be added to the current inventories. This research will include the Gulf of Mexico frontage as well as the back bays. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 82.3.1: Lee County will reclaim any water accesses which are legally county owned property. This reclamation process will include removing any encroachments that have been placed in the access. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~GOAL 83: COMMUNITY PARKS. To provide for the active recreational needs of the residents of unincorporated Lee County by providing adequate community park facilities appropriately located.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 83.1: STANDARD COMMUNITY PARK STANDARD. Lee County will provide for the active recreational needs of unincorporated Lee County in standard community parks by providing 0.8 acres of developed Standard Community Parks open for public use per 1,000 population (minimum acceptable level of service, see Policy 95.1.3). By 1996 this standard will be increased to 1.75 acres per 1,000 population (desired future level of service, see Policy 95.1.4). By 1998 the county will provide 2 acres per 1,000 population (desired future level of service, see Policy 95.1.4), unincorporated county only. The population used for calculating these standards is the unincorporated Lee County permanent population. The acres used in calculating these standards are improved Standard Community Parks acres that are open for public use. The 1996 and 1998 standards are non-regulatory, desired level of service standards and are not required for concurrency purposes. (Amended by Ordinance No. 93-25, 94-30, 98-09, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 83.1.1: Typical facilities at a community park may include ball fields, tennis courts, play areas, picnic areas, multipurpose courts, recreation buildings and sports fields. The specific design for community parks will be tailored to meet the needs of the community to be served while recognizing the particular attributes of the park site. A standard community park may or may not include a community recreation center and/or a community pool. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 98-09, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 83.1.2: Standard community parks should be designed and developed to allow for passive uses as well.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 83.2: COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER STANDARD. Lee County will provide 250 square feet of community recreation center per 1,000 population of unincorporated Lee County ("non regulatory" minimum acceptable level of service, see Policy 95.1.3). (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 83.2.1: Community recreation centers should be designed to accommodate active indoor recreation, physical improvement, meeting places for the community, and social, educational, and cultural activities.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 83.3: COMMUNITY POOL STANDARD. Lee County will maintain and operate community pools. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 83.3.1: The County will continue to research national or regional standards for pool development and make recommendations, as needed for adoption of a local, non regulatory standard. (Added by Ordinance No. 94-30, Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-12)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 83.4: SCHOOL PARKS. Lee County will develop active recreational facilities on School Board property in cooperation with the School Board when necessary to meet community needs. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 83.4.1: The county departments/divisions responsible for park development and park maintenance will work with the School Board in an attempt to develop a revised interlocal agreement between the School Board and the Board of County Commissioners. The agreement will clearly set out the existing use of each other's properties and facilities, will establish the pattern for future use of these properties and facilities, and will establish procedures for maintenance of the facilities and properties. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~GOAL 84: REGIONAL PARKS. To preserve a portion of the county's natural environment to augment that which is set aside by the state of Florida and the federal government, in order to preserve natural habitats, protect the water supply, and preserve the natural heritage; and to make these natural resources available to the general public for resource-based recreational activities, enjoyment of nature, and educational enrichment.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 84.1: Lee County must provide 6 acres per 1,000 population (minimum acceptable level of service, see Policy 95.1.3). By 1998 this standard will be increased to 8 acres per 1,000 population (non regulatory, desired future level of service, see Policy 95.1.4). The population used for calculating this standard is the total seasonal population for all of Lee County. The acres used in calculating this standard are improved Regional Park acres that are open for public use. Federal and state facilities in Lee County are to be counted in meeting this standard. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 98-09, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 84.1.1: Regional parks will be resource based facilities which preserve natural amenities. Lee County will avoid locating incompatible uses in regional parks. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 84.1.2: Lee County will work with the East County Water Control District to establish a regional park at Harns Marsh. (Added by Ordinance No. 10-16)~~

~~GOAL 85: PARK PLANNING AND DESIGN. To plan, design, and construct parks, trails and greenways as identified in the Lee County Greenways Master Plan, and recreation sites to comply with the best professional standards of design, landscaping, planning, and environmental concern. (Amended by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 85.1: FUTURE PARKS. The planning, design, and construction of all park and recreation facilities including trails and greenways and programs will be supervised and monitored by the appropriate county agencies. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22, 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.1.1: Parks will be designed with buffers to minimize conflicts between different recreational uses and between recreational and adjacent uses. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 85.1.2: Parks will be linked to bike paths, trails and greenways, and other parks as identified in the Lee County Greenways Master Plan and the Lee County Bikeways/Walkways Facilities Plan where feasible. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.1.3: The feasibility of converting canal, railroad, and power line easements and right of ways into linear parks, trails and greenways in accordance with the Lee County Greenways Master Plan will be explored by county staff. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.1.4: The linking of parks, open spaces, linear parks, bike paths, and natural streams and sloughs will be in accordance with the Lee County Greenways Master Plan. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.1.5: The County will continue to participate in the formation, expansion, and management of those greenways identified in the Lee County Greenways Master Plan and the six regionally significant greenways identified in the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council's Strategic Regional Policy Plan. The six regionally significant greenways are: the Charlotte Harbor/Pine Island Sound Coastal Greenway, the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Greenway, the Estero Bay/Wiggins Pass Coastal Greenway, the Hickey Creek Greenway, the Sanibel Island Greenway, and the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Greenway. (Added by Ordinance No. 98-09, Amended by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 85.2: EXISTING PARKS. Any conversion of public parks, easements, and open spaces will be considered only after due public notice. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 85.2.1: Public parks, easements, and open spaces which have a demonstrated public benefit are to be protected from conversion to incompatible public or private uses.~~

~~POLICY 85.2.2: All persons will submit proposed conversions from public parks, easements, and open spaces to other land uses to Lee County for review and approval. Approval will be granted only if the proposed conversion is consistent with the public interest and this plan. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 85.3: PLANNING AND DESIGN. The county will rely on in-house capabilities in the planning and design of new or re-developed facilities. (Added by Ordinance No. 94-30, Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 85.3.1: Using in-house resources, county staff will design facilities using best professional practices for the development or re-development of parks. (Added by Ordinance No. 94-30, Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 85.4: To provide multi-use trails within Lee County and its municipalities for recreation, transportation, and economic development consistent with the Greenways Master Plan. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.4.1: Implement and update as necessary the Lee County Greenways Master Plan to provide multi-use non-motorized trails throughout Lee County. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~POLICY 85.4.2: Prepare design plans and begin construction of trails consistent with the Lee County Greenways Master Plan Program, identifying available state, national, and local funding sources such as (but not limited to) the State and Local Transportation Enhancement Program, Local Capital Improvement Program, Florida Communities Trust Florida Forever Program, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), Florida Office of Greenways and Trails Land Acquisition Program, as well as the Land and Water Conservation Fund. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)~~

~~GOAL 86: ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC PROGRAMS. To provide programs and information to promote knowledge and understanding of Lee County's unique environmental and cultural heritage.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 86.1: The County will provide information and education programs regarding its cultural history and its environment at appropriate facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 86.1.1: The County, in cooperation with the School Board's Department of Environmental Education and the Caloosa Nature Center of Lee County, will provide environmental education programs and information at appropriate facilities. These programs will be designed to provide a broad understanding of Southwest Florida's historic and archaeological past and its ecological systems. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 86.1.2: The County will place informational plaques or markers at its facilities which have significance for cultural history. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 86.1.3: The County will work with the Lee County Historic Preservation Board to provide historically significant information at the appropriate facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~GOAL 87: CAPITAL PLANNING. To plan, budget, and fund a comprehensive park system that properly meets the needs for the future of Lee County.~~

~~OBJECTIVE 87.1: As part of the annual adoption of the five year Capital Improvements Program, County staff will demonstrate how the standards in this plan relating to parks and recreation facilities are implemented in the five year plan. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.1.1: The adopted Capital Improvements Program reflects the distribution of park facilities throughout the unincorporated county. The use of community park impact fee districts provides a mechanism to distribute facilities based on population, travel patterns, and existing facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30)~~

~~POLICY 87.1.2: The Capital Improvements Program will identify how park impact fees, other earmarked capital funds, and all general funds are to be used for capital projects.~~

~~POLICY 87.1.3: Land development will be required to bear a proportionate cost of the provision of new or expanded parks required by such development. Park impact fees are the most equitable means of capturing these costs. Lee County will therefore require impact fees for regional and community parks. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.1.4: The County will periodically review the parks impact fee ordinance and park impact fee districts to determine if changes are warranted. Such review will include an analysis of land/development costs, administrative costs/changes, and population/development pattern changes. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 87.2: PUBLIC/PRIVATE COORDINATION. Lee County will coordinate with other public agencies and with private organizations, corporations, and individuals to use all available and potential resources to meet recreation demands. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.1: Lee County will work with state and federal agencies and other groups to explore the possibility of grants, matching funds, contributions, joint use agreements, sharing of facilities, leasing of land, and volunteer labor which will further the goal of providing a comprehensive park system that properly meets the needs of the county. These cooperative efforts should also include working with private organizations and corporations to form public/private partnerships to achieve the goal. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.2: Where feasible, Lee County will enter into interlocal agreements or other such cooperative efforts with the School Board, the municipalities, regional agencies, and the state and federal governments to enhance the park and recreational facilities/services of Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.3: Lee County will continue to cooperate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (or its successor in title) to develop a land management plan for the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and its buffer area. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.4: Lee County will assist the efforts by the School Board and Florida Power and Light to establish a manatee park on the Orange River. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.5: Lee County will implement the Matanzas Harbor Plan by encouraging private/public coordination. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 87.2.6: Lee County will adopt an administrative code which sets forth procedures to accept private and corporate donations of items to be placed in Lee County parks. (Amended by Ordinance No. 94-30, 00-22)~~

~~GOAL 88: PARKS AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION. To protect the county's investments by providing for the continued maintenance of parks infrastructure and the administration of programs utilizing the parks. (Added by Ordinance No. 94-30)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 88.1: Lee County will ensure that the costly investment that has been made in parks and recreation is protected through proper maintenance of facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 88.1.1: The County will adopt an administrative code and/or a procedures manual which requires the establishment of maintenance procedures based on facility type/need throughout the county parks system. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 88.2: Lee County will ensure that a variety of interests are reflected in the programs and events which utilize park facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

~~POLICY 88.2.1: The County will adopt an administrative code and/or a procedures manual which regulates the scheduling, programming and organization of events and activities at all county park facilities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)~~

C. GOALS TO BE ADDED

The intent of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element is to ensure Lee County considers the varied park, recreation, and open space needs of county residents and visitors and to provide these needs in an array of public and private resources and facilities. Additionally, the element recognizes opportunities to utilize parks and open spaces to connect neighborhoods, commercial areas, and mixed-use centers as well as link together wildlife corridors and conservation areas. Successful implementation of this element will result in a high quality of life and the wellbeing of residents and visitors and create highly desirable communities to live, work, and play.

Staff recommends adding the above intent statement in order to address the EAR's finding regarding the need to better define and articulate the purpose of each element.

Goal 1: Public Parks, Recreation, and Open Space System.

Promote Lee County's livability by creating, maintaining, and supporting a public park, recreation, and open space system that meets the varied needs of the residents and visitors and supports the unique character of its different communities.

Staff recommends that the above goal be added to direct the development, maintenance, and operations of publically owned park, recreation, and open space resources and facilities as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 1.1 Variety of Facilities and Resources: Create, retain, and maintain a variety of public park, recreation, and open space facilities which provide places to meet, recreate, and play; preserve natural habitats; protect water supply; and promote cultural, historic, and natural heritage through:

- a. Nature preserves;
- b. Regional parks;
- c. Community parks and facilities;
- d. Multi-use paths and trails;
- e. Water access, beaches, and boat ramps; and
- f. Interagency Coordination.

Policy 1.1.1: Provide access to the public park, recreation, and open space system by distributing resources and facilities to all residents and visitors throughout Lee County.

Policy 1.1.2: Design parks, recreation, and open space facilities, and resources in a manner that is compatible with and supportive of the character in the surrounding community by:

- a. Utilizing parks and public spaces to act as transition between uses;
- b. Incorporating the surrounding architectural design features into park facilities; and
- c. Establishing parks and open space areas in locations where they can improve connections between and within the community.

Policy 1.1.3: Foster the awareness and knowledge of historic, cultural, and natural heritage of Lee County by:

- a. Identifying and incorporating historic resources within the county's parks and facilities in order to preserve and protect the cultural and natural heritage;
- b. Promoting historic events and places with informational tools, such as kiosks, plaques or markers; and
- c. Working with the Historic Preservation Boards to provide historically significant information at the appropriate facilities.

Policy 1.1.4: Provide for the use, maintenance, and planning of resources and facilities by establishing administrative codes and procedures that:

- a. Implement the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) standards for best park practices.

- b. Direct maintenance procedures and practices.
- c. Regulate the scheduling, programming, and organization of events and activities.

Policy 1.1.5: Protect public parks, easements, and open spaces from conversion to public or private uses by protecting against encroachment, restricted use, or transfer of public lands for private purpose.

Policy 1.1.6: Utilize park inventories and data base information, community and user surveys, and other records to ensure that the parks and recreation facilities, programs, and locations continue to meet the needs of the community that they serve.

Policy 1.1.7: Periodically review the park impact fee ordinance and park impact fee districts to determine if changes are warranted. The review should include an analysis of land and development costs, administrative costs and changes, and population and development pattern changes.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added to the Lee Plan in order to ensure that the element provides for a well-coordinated system for planning, reviewing, constructing, and implementing county park, recreation, and open space resources and facilities as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 1.2 Natural Preserves: Provide for the protection of the ecological diversity, processes, and functions of natural communities through natural preserve and conservation lands.

Policy 1.2.1: Promote, maintain, and protect natural resources, ecological habitats, and native species by establishing natural preserves and conservation lands. Areas of special consideration include the habitats of natural communities identified as threatened or endangered by state and federal law.

Policy 1.2.2: Utilize programs (such as the Conservation 20/20 program) to expand the county's protected natural preserve lands through the following efforts:

- a. Acquire properties of environmental significance;
- b. Restore lands to their natural state and condition;
- c. Manage in an environmentally responsible manner; and
- d. Provide public recreational opportunities compatible with the natural resources.

Policy 1.2.3: Develop a Stewardship Plan for every preserve to guide the use and protection of natural preserve areas by determining physical and natural resources, management needs, and appropriate resource-based recreational opportunities.

Policy 1.2.4: Improve public access to natural preserve and Conservation 20/20 lands by evaluating the appropriate activity levels and types. Natural preserves and Conservation 20/20 lands with public access facility improvements may be considered regional parks for the purpose of meeting desired level of service standards.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to ensure the county provides for the conservation, use, and protection of natural resources as required by FS 163.3177(6)(d).

Objective 1.3 Regional Parks: Maintain a system of regional parks based upon location-specific resources such as a sport complexes and stadiums, trails, beaches, and natural preserves. Regional parks and natural preserves are intended to serve the needs of all of Lee County residents and visitors.

Policy 1.3.1: Lee County will provide 8 acres of regional parks per 1,000 residents based on the total Lee County permanent and seasonal population. According to the following conditions:

- a. The acres used in calculating this standard consist of improved Regional Park acres open for public use; and
- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory;

Policy 1.3.2: Regional parks will be location-specific facilities that provide for cultural and recreational needs of the entire county, preserve natural amenities, and protect vital resources. Regional park facilities include:

- a. Sport complexes, arenas, and aquatic facilities;
- b. Parks and natural preserves;
- c. Beaches and boat ramps;
- d. Water accesses and blueways; and
- e. Greenways and trails.

Policy 1.3.3: Due to the character of regional parks and natural preserves and the limit on the availability of appropriate locations, regional park facilities and natural preserves will be distributed throughout the entire county to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 1.3.4: Ensure that the pool complex at Florida Gulf Coast University remains open and accessible to the public until and unless FGCU refunds the Lee County regional park impact fee monies used to pay for the facility as per the interlocal agreement.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to provide for the needs of regional parks system that meet the needs of the entire Lee County community as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 1.4 Community Parks and Facilities: Provide for the recreational needs of the residents of unincorporated Lee County through an array of appropriately located community parks, programs and facilities.

Policy 1.4.1: Lee County will provide 2 acres of community parks per 1,000 permanent population within unincorporated Lee County. According to the following conditions:

- a. The acres used in calculating these standards are improved community park acres open for public use; and

- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory.

Policy 1.4.2: Design and maintain community parks to meet the unique needs of the community to be served, recognizing the particular amenities of the park site such as but not limited to:

- a. Community and recreation centers;
- b. Community pools;
- c. Athletic fields and courts;
- d. Playgrounds and fitness equipment;
- e. Picnic and seating areas;
- f. Walking paths & exercise areas; and
- g. Pavilions.

Policy 1.4.3: Provide and maintain four recreation centers of 25,000 square feet or more located within community parks.

Policy 1.4.4: Design and maintain recreation centers to accommodate active indoor recreation, physical activity, meeting places for the community, social, educational, and cultural activities.

Policy 1.4.5: Lee County will retain the existing community centers located within unincorporated Lee County Community Parks.

Policy 1.4.6: Retain, maintain, and operate existing community pools within Lee County community parks.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to provide for the needs of community parks system that meet the park, recreation, and open space needs of the different community areas within Lee County community as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 1.5 Multi-use Paths and Trails: Utilize the existing county right-of-ways as opportunities to provide recreational opportunities, improve community connectivity, enhance the landscaping and beauty of Lee County by planning and creating a comprehensive system of multi-use paths and trail corridors with landscaping and other elements of green design for multimodal transportation, economic vitality, connectivity, livability, including but not limited to the following resources:

- a. Greenways;
- b. Blueways;
- c. Interconnected trails and pathways;
- d. Roadside Sidewalks and bikeways; and
- e. Wayside and linear parks.

Policy 1.5.1: Facilitate the construction of multi-use paths and trails that link recreational destinations. Prioritize the completion of missing pedestrian and bicycle connections to provide a cohesive network linking activities or destinations such as schools and residential areas, adjacent neighborhoods, and various recreational facilities.

Policy 1.5.2: Coordinate the landscaping, development, and design of multi-use paths and trails with other local, regional, state, and federal agencies as well as local community groups.

Policy 1.5.3: Investigate alternative funding sources for multi-use paths and trails such as grants, public/private partnerships, community involvement programs, and community groups.

Policy 1.5.4: Provide for the care of the county's roadways and its vegetation by ensuring that landscaping maintenance along the county's roadways is completed in accordance with industry standards and to promote complete streets and multi-modal goals in Lee County.

Policy 1.5.5: Enhance the appearance of the county's roadways and beautify the overall character of its local communities by implementing roadway landscape improvements such as those identified through the LeeScape Master Plan.

Policy 1.5.6: Support the development, expansion, and management of the Lee County public open spaces and greenways by:

- a. Linking existing multi-use trails and linear parks resources and facilities to the greenway system;
- b. Designing future resources to link to and support nearby greenway systems;
- c. Explore the feasibility of utilizing canal, railroad, and power line easements and right-of-ways;
- d. Preparing design plans and constructing trails consistent with the Greenways Master Plan Program;
- e. Provide for non-motorized multi-use trails;
- f. Supporting the implementation of the Greenways Master Plan, Bikeways/Walkways Facilities Plan, and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council Strategic Regional Policy Plan; and
- g. Pursue available state, national, and local funding sources to fund the planning, design, implementation, and construction of this effort.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to provide for the needs for multi-use trails and pathways that support the park and recreational needs of the Lee County community as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e) and furthered by the pedestrian and bikeway transportation requirements in FS 163.3177(6)(b)3c.

Objective 1.6 Water, Beaches and Boat Ramps: As a coastal and riverfront county, the county will retain, maintain, and expand public access to its waterways – particularly through access to beaches, boat ramps, canoe and kayak access, fishing resources, and other water resources.

Policy 1.6.1: Retain and maintain existing public access to Lee County's waterways. Additionally, the county will acquire and develop new public water accesses as available and feasible. The types of water access will vary depending on site features and location.

Policy 1.6.2: Reclaim legally county owned property water accesses. This reclamation process will include removing encroachments and private restrictions.

Policy 1.6.3: Maintain a classification system for water accesses and boat ramps based on location guidelines, types of facilities, and needs.

Policy 1.6.4: Provide for the water access needs of Lee County residents & visitors by providing one boat ramp lane with adequate parking for vehicles with boat trailers for every 12,500 Lee County's total population. According to the following conditions:

- a. Boat ramps will include federal, state, county, municipal, and non-government facilities that are open to the public and have adequate on-site parking; and
- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory.

Policy 1.6.5: Improve and enhance the Great Calusa Blueway and Paddling Trail System and other boating opportunities by establishing locations, design standards, and implementation techniques for providing public access to waterways.

Policy 1.6.6: Continue to pursue grants and other initiatives funding sources for additional water accesses.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to provide for the needs for multi-use trails and pathways that support the park and recreational needs of the Lee County community as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e) and furthered by the waterway resource conservation requirements in FS 163.3177(6)(d)1e.

Objective 1.7 Interagency Coordination: Partner with local, regional, state, and Federal organizations for the maintenance and development of parks, recreation, and public spaces.

Policy 1.7.1: Expand the county's comprehensive park system by partnering with local, regional, state, Federal and private agencies and organizations to:

- a. Explore additional funding sources such as grants, matching funds, and contributions;
- b. Provide for joint-use of facilities through co-location, leasing facilities, and shared resources;
- c. Develop and connect parks, community centers, greenways, blueways and trails; and
- d. Provide multi-modal access, including transit.

- e. Coordinate the acceptance of donations of recreational amenities, such as land and facilities, where appropriate.

Policy 1.7.2: Develop interlocal agreements between local, regional, state, and Federal agencies that:

- a. Clearly set out existing use of each other's properties and facilities;
- b. Establish a pattern for use by the citizens and visitors of Lee County; and
- c. Establish procedures for maintenance.

Policy 1.7.3: Coordinate with interdepartmental and intergovernmental agencies and organizations to provide multi-modal transportation options to the county's parks, recreation, and open space resources and facilities.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added to plan in order to provide well coordinated intergovernmental public services and facilities as required by the intergovernmental coordination regulations stipulated in FS 163.3177(6)(h).

Goal 2: Development of Civic Places and Open Spaces

Enhance the quality of life for the residents, business people, and visitors of Lee County by facilitating the development of civic places and open spaces that support the livability, connectivity, and character of Lee County through a high quality built and natural environment.

Staff recommends that the above goal be added to address the development of private and public civic places and open space facilities as required by 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 2.1: Civic Places and Open Spaces: Encourage the development of civic places and open spaces through both private and public development efforts in order to provide for public spaces, protect key environmental features, interconnect neighborhoods, business centers, park areas, and other community resources, and provide for the overall livability of the local community.

Policy 2.1.1: By 2015, modify the land development code to address the need to provide different types of civic spaces and public places depending on the form, type, location, purpose of the development.

Policy 2.1.2: By 2015, revise the land development code to encourage new development and redevelopment, especially mid- and high-density residential areas, and mixed-use developments, to provide to parks, civic places, recreation opportunities, and open space. The inclusion of recreational uses in close proximity or within more intensive developments is recognized as an important amenity and inclusion of these features is strongly encouraged.

Policy 2.1.3: Utilize the zoning and development order processes to encourage all developments to provide an array of public places and spaces to meet the community's needs by considering:

- a. The type and function of desired public places and open space resources;
- b. The location and number of resources in relationship to other amenities – such as commercial districts, professional and governmental buildings, residential areas;
- c. The proximity of other public places and open spaces both within the development and the surrounding area;
- d. The form and layout of buildings within the development; and
- e. The location of natural features and amenities such as water bodies, existing trees and native vegetation, and wetland areas.

Policy 2.1.4: Land development must bear a proportionate cost for providing new or expanded park facilities required to meet the development's needs. Since park impact fees are the most equitable means of capturing these costs, Lee County will continue to require impact fees for regional and community parks.

Staff recommends that the above objective and set of policies be added to establish how to utilize the planning and development process to provide an array of public and private civic places as required by 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective: 2.2 Civic Places and Public Places Features: Strive to create a mixture of public civic places and public places in a variety of sizes and in various locations to provide social and recreation opportunities, establish community linkages, and foster a distinct development character.

Policy 2.2.1: Planning and development of areas located within designated mixed-use areas will support a system of public space and public civic places that provide for the needs of residents, visitors, and employees including:

- a. Common areas for public or private use;
- b. Community places to gather, socialize, and recreate;
- c. Open space areas and public spaces that provide an array of public open and public space resources for the community;
- d. Protect greenway and natural resources;
- e. Improved accessibility as well as pedestrian and bicycle connections; and
- f. Linkages between the mixed-use center and its surrounding development areas.

Policy: 2.2.2: Facilitate urban public spaces within mixed-use centers by establishing a unified design theme for the center's public realm. The features of this design theme should consider the integration of streets, sidewalks, streetscape infrastructure—i.e.: lighting, trash receptacles, trees, landscaping and public seating areas.

Policy 2.2.3: By 2015, modify the land development code to provide for public civic places and public places within mixed-use centers, recognizing that such areas may include an array of diverse hardscape and landscape features.

Staff recommends that the above objective and set of policies be added to identify what types of features are needed to support and develop an array of civic place and open space facilities as required by 163.3177(6)(e).

Objective 2.3 Linkages and Connections: Improve access within and between neighborhoods, business centers, park areas, and other community resources by supporting the development of an integrated network of multi-use paths and trails.

Policy: 2.3.1: Promote the construction of multi-use trails, sidewalks, and bikeways as part of new development efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and to link new developments to surrounding uses including residential, recreational & commercial destinations.

Policy 2.3.2: By 2015, amend the land development code to ensure that developments promote walkability through the inclusion of pedestrian oriented design features such as shade and landscaping, boardwalks, outdoor seating, multi-use paths, and trails.

Policy 2.3.3: Residential development is encouraged to incorporate sidewalk access into an overall development plan. Issues to be addressed include:

- a. Mobility features;
- b. Pedestrian accessibility and connectivity;
- c. Landscaping and hardscaping components; and
- d. Community design.

Policy 2.3.4: Future development efforts will improve community linkages and connections by providing trails and paths that:

- a. Connect existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- b. Link surrounding schools and residential areas;
- c. Connect parks, recreational facilities, open spaces, and civic places; and
- d. Establish linear open space connectors, greenways, and natural open space corridors.

Policy 2.3.5: New development and redevelopment in areas containing a component of the greenways trail system, as identified by the Greenways Master Trail Plan, must incorporate the greenway trail into development design. In addition to counting towards the projects' general open space requirements, developments constructing the onsite portions of the greenway trail may be eligible for community and or regional park impact fee credits.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added in order to direct development of private and public multi-use trails and pathways that support the park and recreational needs of the Lee County community as required by FS 163.3177(6)(e) and furthered by the pedestrian and bikeway transportation requirements in FS 163.3177(6)(b)3c.

Objective 2.4 Community Open Space: Ensure new developments are planned, developed, and constructed in a manner that supports the livability of its residents and overall character of the community through the provision of open spaces.

Policy 2.4.1: Require new development to provide adequate open space for improved aesthetic appearance, visual relief, environmental quality, preservation of existing native trees and plant communities, and the planting of required vegetation.

Policy 2.4.2: Utilize the zoning and development order processes to ensure that new developments incorporate innovative open space design that preserves existing native vegetation, improves the development's character and beauty, helps transition the different sections from one to another, provides connections between adjacent developments, and supports the overall character of the community.

Policy 2.4.3: Proposed planned developments must submit an open space design plan with an assessment of the existing native plant communities and native trees. The open space design plan must:

- a. Delineate the indigenous preserves and native tree preservation areas;
- b. Provide adequate amounts of open space to preserve and allow the continued growth and viability of existing native trees; and
- c. Incorporate large, contiguous open space areas in the development design.
- d. Policy 2.4.4: Protect indigenous native vegetation as part of the development process by working with new development to protect native species and encouraging developments to:
- e. Provide half of the required open space as existing native plant communities;
- f. Provide half of the required open space with areas containing existing native trees, this applies to property with existing native trees without associated native groundcover or understory; and
- g. Plant native shrub species within native tree protection areas.

Staff recommends the above objective and set of policies be added to plan in order ensure that future development efforts provide for for the conservation, use, and protection of open space resources as required by the conservation regulations stipulated in FS 163.3177(6)(d)2k.

D. CONCLUSIONS

Staff recommends deleting and adding new and revised goals, objectives, and policies to better address issues related to community character, connections, and services through a more clear and concise organizational structure.

E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

County staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendments to the Lee County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element as provided in Part I(B)(1) on page 1 of this report.

**PART III - LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: April 23, 2012

A. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY REVIEW

**B. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF
FACT SUMMARY**

1. RECOMMENDATION:

2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:

C. VOTE:

NOEL ANDRESS	_____
WAYNE DALTRY	_____
JIM GREEN	_____
MITCH HUTCHCRAFT	_____
RONALD INGE	_____
ANN PIERCE	_____
ROGER STRELOW	_____

TEXT AMENDMENTS:**12. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

The intent of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element is to ensure Lee County considers the varied park, recreation, and open space needs of county residents and visitors and to provide these needs in an array of public and private resources and facilities. Additionally, the element recognizes opportunities to utilize parks and open spaces to connect neighborhoods, commercial areas, and mixed-use centers as well as link together wildlife corridors and conservation areas. Successful implementation of this element will result in a high quality of life and the wellbeing of residents and visitors and create highly desirable communities to live, work, and play.

Goal 1: Public Parks, Recreation, and Open Space System.

Promote Lee County's livability by creating, maintaining, and supporting a public park, recreation, and open space system that meets the varied needs of the residents and visitors and supports the unique character of its different communities.

Objective 1.1 Variety of Facilities and Resources: Create, retain, and maintain a variety of public park, recreation, and open space facilities which provide places to meet, recreate, and play; preserve natural habitats; protect water supply; and promote cultural, historic, and natural heritage through:

- a. Nature preserves;
- b. Regional parks;
- c. Community parks and facilities;
- d. Multi-use paths and trails;
- e. Water access, beaches, and boat ramps; and
- f. Interagency coordination.

Policy 1.1.1: Provide access to the public park, recreation, and open space system by distributing resources and facilities to all residents and visitors throughout Lee County.

Policy 1.1.2: Design parks, recreation, and open space facilities, and resources in a manner that is compatible with and supportive of the character in the surrounding community by:

- a. Utilizing parks and public spaces to act as transition between uses;

- b. Incorporating the surrounding architectural design features into park facilities; and
- c. Establishing parks and open space areas in locations where they can improve connections between and within the community.

Policy 1.1.3: Foster the awareness and knowledge of historic, cultural, and natural heritage of Lee County by:

- a. Identifying and incorporating historic resources within the county's parks and facilities in order to preserve and protect the cultural and natural heritage;
- b. Promoting historic events and places with informational tools, such as kiosks, plaques or markers; and
- c. Working with the Historic Preservation Boards to provide historically significant information at the appropriate facilities.

Policy 1.1.4: Provide for the use, maintenance, and planning of resources and facilities by establishing administrative codes and procedures that:

- a. Implement the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) standards for best park practices.
- b. Direct maintenance procedures and practices.
- c. Regulate the scheduling, programming, and organization of events and activities.

Policy 1.1.5: Protect public parks, easements, and open spaces from conversion to public or private uses by protecting against encroachment, restricted use, or transfer of public lands for private purpose.

Policy 1.1.6: Utilize park inventories and data base information, community and user surveys, and other records to ensure that the parks and recreation facilities, programs, and locations continue to meet the needs of the community that they serve.

Policy 1.1.7: Periodically review the park impact fee ordinance and park impact fee districts to determine if changes are warranted. The review should include an analysis of land and development costs, administrative costs and changes, and population and development pattern changes.

Objective 1.2 Natural Preserves: Provide for the protection of the ecological diversity, processes, and functions of natural communities through natural preserve and conservation lands.

Policy 1.2.1: Promote, maintain, and protect natural resources, ecological habitats, and native species by establishing natural preserves and conservation lands. Areas of

special consideration include the habitats of natural communities identified as threatened or endangered by state and federal law.

Policy 1.2.2: Utilize programs (such as the Conservation 20/20 program) to expand the county's protected natural preserve lands through the following efforts:

- a. Acquire properties of environmental significance;
- b. Restore lands to their natural state and condition;
- c. Manage in an environmentally responsible manner; and
- d. Provide public recreational opportunities compatible with the natural resources.

Policy 1.2.3: Develop a Stewardship Plan for every preserve to guide the use and protection of natural preserve areas by determining physical and natural resources, management needs, and appropriate resource-based recreational opportunities.

Policy 1.2.4: Improve public access to natural preserve and Conservation 20/20 lands by evaluating the appropriate activity levels and types. Natural preserves and Conservation 20/20 lands with public access facility improvements may be considered regional parks for the purpose of meeting desired level of service standards.

Objective 1.3 Regional Parks: Maintain a system of regional parks based upon location-specific resources such as a sport complexes and stadiums, trails, beaches, and natural preserves. Regional parks and natural preserves are intended to serve the needs of all of Lee County residents and visitors.

Policy 1.3.1: Lee County will provide 8 acres of regional parks per 1,000 residents based on the total Lee County permanent and seasonal population. According to the following conditions:

- a. The acres used in calculating this standard consist of improved Regional Park acres open for public use; and
- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory;

Policy 1.3.2: Regional parks will be location-specific facilities that provide for cultural and recreational needs of the entire county, preserve natural amenities, and protect vital resources. Regional park facilities include:

- a. Sport complexes, arenas, and aquatic facilities;
- b. Parks and natural preserves;
- c. Beaches and boat ramps;

- d. Water accesses and blueways; and
- e. Greenways and trails.

Policy 1.3.3: Due to the character of regional parks and natural preserves and the limit on the availability of appropriate locations, regional park facilities and natural preserves will be distributed throughout the entire county to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 1.3.4: Ensure that the pool complex at Florida Gulf Coast University remains open and accessible to the public until and unless FGCU refunds the Lee County regional park impact fee monies used to pay for the facility as per the interlocal agreement.

Objective 1.4 Community Parks and Facilities: Provide for the recreational needs of the residents of unincorporated Lee County through an array of appropriately located community parks, programs and facilities.

Policy 1.4.1: Lee County will provide 2 acres of community parks per 1,000 permanent population within unincorporated Lee County. According to the following conditions:

- a. The acres used in calculating these standards are improved community park acres open for public use; and
- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory.

Policy 1.4.2: Design and maintain community parks to meet the unique needs of the community to be served, recognizing the particular amenities of the park site such as but not limited to:

- a. Community and recreation centers;
- b. Community pools;
- c. Athletic fields and courts;
- d. Playgrounds and fitness equipment;
- e. Picnic and seating areas;
- f. Walking paths & exercise areas; and
- g. Pavilions.

Policy 1.4.3: Provide and maintain four recreation centers of 25,000 square feet or more located within community parks.

Policy 1.4.4: Design and maintain recreation centers to accommodate active indoor recreation, physical activity, meeting places for the community, social, educational, and cultural activities.

Policy 1.4.5: Lee County will retain the existing community centers located within unincorporated Lee County Community Parks.

Policy 1.4.6: Retain, maintain, and operate existing community pools within Lee County community parks.

Objective 1.5 Multi-use Paths and Trails: Utilize the existing county right-of-ways as opportunities to provide recreational opportunities, improve community connectivity, enhance the landscaping and beauty of Lee County by planning and creating a comprehensive system of multi-use paths and trail corridors with landscaping and other elements of green design for multimodal transportation, economic vitality, connectivity, livability, including but not limited to the following resources:

- a. Greenways;
- b. Blueways;
- c. Interconnected trails and pathways;
- d. Roadside Sidewalks and bikeways; and
- e. Wayside and linear parks.

Policy 1.5.1: Facilitate the construction of multi-use paths and trails that link recreational destinations. Prioritize the completion of missing pedestrian and bicycle connections to provide a cohesive network linking activities or destinations such as schools and residential areas, adjacent neighborhoods, and various recreational facilities.

Policy 1.5.2: Coordinate the landscaping, development, and design of multi-use paths and trails with other local, regional, state, and federal agencies as well as local community groups.

Policy 1.5.3: Investigate alternative funding sources for multi-use paths and trails such as grants, public/private partnerships, community involvement programs, and community groups.

Policy 1.5.4: Provide for the care of the county's roadways and its vegetation by ensuring that landscaping maintenance along the county's roadways is completed in

accordance with industry standards and to promote complete streets and multi-modal goals in Lee County.

Policy 1.5.5: Enhance the appearance of the county's roadways and beautify the overall character of its local communities by implementing roadway landscape improvements such as those identified through the LeeScape Master Plan.

Policy 1.5.6: Support the development, expansion, and management of the Lee County public open spaces and greenways by:

- a. Linking existing multi-use trails and linear parks resources and facilities to the greenway system;
- b. Designing future resources to link to and support nearby greenway systems;
- c. Explore the feasibility of utilizing canal, railroad, and power line easements and right-of-ways;
- d. Preparing design plans and constructing trails consistent with the Greenways Master Plan Program;
- e. Provide for non-motorized multi-use trails;
- f. Supporting the implementation of the Greenways Master Plan, Bikeways/Walkways Facilities Plan, and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council Strategic Regional Policy Plan; and
- g. Pursue available state, national, and local funding sources to fund the planning, design, implementation, and construction of this effort.

Objective 1.6 Water, Beaches and Boat Ramps: As a coastal and riverfront county, the county will retain, maintain, and expand public access to its waterways – particularly through access to beaches, boat ramps, canoe and kayak access, fishing resources, and other water resources.

Policy 1.6.1: Retain and maintain existing public access to Lee County's waterways. Additionally, the county will acquire and develop new public water accesses as available and feasible. The types of water access will vary depending on site features and location.

Policy 1.6.2: Reclaim legally county owned property water accesses. This reclamation process will include removing encroachments and private restrictions.

Policy 1.6.3: Maintain a classification system for water accesses and boat ramps based on location guidelines, types of facilities, and needs.

Policy 1.6.4: Provide for the water access needs of Lee County residents & visitors by providing one boat ramp lane with adequate parking for vehicles with boat trailers for every 12,500 Lee County's total population. According to the following conditions:

- a. Boat ramps will include federal, state, county, municipal, and non-government facilities that are open to the public and have adequate on-site parking; and
- b. This standard is a desired level of service and is not regulatory.

Policy 1.6.5: Improve and enhance the Great Calusa Blueway and Paddling Trail System and other boating opportunities by establishing locations, design standards, and implementation techniques for providing public access to waterways.

Policy 1.6.6: Continue to pursue grants and other initiatives funding sources for additional water accesses.

Objective 1.7 Interagency Coordination: Partner with local, regional, state, and Federal organizations for the maintenance and development of parks, recreation, and public spaces.

Policy 1.7.1: Expand the county's comprehensive park system by partnering with local, regional, state, Federal and private agencies and organizations to:

- a. Explore additional funding sources such as grants, matching funds, and contributions;
- b. Provide for joint-use of facilities through co-location, leasing facilities, and shared resources;
- c. Develop and connect parks, community centers, greenways, blueways and trails; and
- d. Provide multi-modal access, including transit.
- e. Coordinate the acceptance of donations of recreational amenities, such as land and facilities, where appropriate.

Policy 1.7.2: Develop interlocal agreements between local, regional, state, and Federal agencies that:

- a. Clearly set out existing use of each other's properties and facilities;
- b. Establish a pattern for use by the citizens and visitors of Lee County; and
- c. Establish procedures for maintenance.

Policy 1.7.3: Coordinate with interdepartmental and intergovernmental agencies and organizations to provide multi-modal transportation options to the county's parks, recreation, and open space resources and facilities.

Goal 2: Development of Civic Places and Open Spaces

Enhance the quality of life for the residents, business people, and visitors of Lee County by facilitating the development of civic places and open spaces that support the livability, connectivity, and character of Lee County through a high quality built and natural environment.

Objective 2.1: Civic Places and Open Spaces: Encourage the development of civic places and open spaces through both private and public development efforts in order to provide for public spaces, protect key environmental features, interconnect neighborhoods, business centers, park areas, and other community resources, and provide for the overall livability of the local community.

Policy 2.1.1: By 2015, modify the land development code to address the need to provide different types of civic spaces and public places depending on the form, type, location, purpose of the development.

Policy 2.1.2: By 2015, revise the land development code to encourage new development and redevelopment, especially mid- and high-density residential areas, and mixed-use developments, to provide to parks, civic places, recreation opportunities, and open space. The inclusion of recreational uses in close proximity or within more intensive developments is recognized as an important amenity and inclusion of these features is strongly encouraged.

Policy 2.1.3: Utilize the zoning and development order processes to encourage all developments to provide an array of public places and spaces to meet the community's needs by considering:

- a. The type and function of desired public places and open space resources;
- b. The location and number of resources in relationship to other amenities – such as commercial districts, professional and governmental buildings, residential areas;
- c. The proximity of other public places and open spaces both within the development and the surrounding area;
- d. The form and layout of buildings within the development; and
- e. The location of natural features and amenities such as water bodies, existing trees and native vegetation, and wetland areas.

Policy 2.1.4: Land development must bear a proportionate cost for providing new or expanded park facilities required to meet the development's needs. Since park impact fees are the most equitable means of capturing these costs, Lee County will continue to require impact fees for regional and community parks.

Objective: 2.2 Civic Places and Public Places Features: Strive to create a mixture of public civic places and public places in a variety of sizes and in various locations to provide social and recreation opportunities, establish community linkages, and foster a distinct development character.

Policy 2.2.1: Planning and development of areas located within designated mixed-use areas will support a system of public space and public civic places that provide for the needs of residents, visitors, and employees including:

- a. Common areas for public or private use;
- b. Community places to gather, socialize, and recreate;
- c. Open space areas and public spaces that provide an array of public open and public space resources for the community;
- d. Protect greenway and natural resources;
- e. Improved accessibility as well as pedestrian and bicycle connections; and
- f. Linkages between the mixed-use center and its surrounding development areas.

Policy: 2.2.2: Facilitate urban public spaces within mixed-use centers by establishing a unified design theme for the center's public realm. The features of this design theme should consider the integration of streets, sidewalks, streetscape infrastructure (i.e.: lighting, trash receptacles, trees, landscaping and public seating areas).

Policy 2.2.3: By 2015, modify the land development code to provide for public civic places and public places within mixed-use centers, recognizing that such areas may include an array of diverse hardscape and landscape features.

Objective 2.3 Linkages and Connections: Improve access within and between neighborhoods, business centers, park areas, and other community resources by supporting the development of an integrated network of multi-use paths and trails.

Policy: 2.3.1: Promote the construction of multi-use trails, sidewalks, and bikeways as part of new development efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and to link new developments to surrounding uses including residential, recreational & commercial destinations.

Policy 2.3.2: By 2015, amend the land development code to ensure that developments promote walkability through the inclusion of pedestrian oriented design features such as shade and landscaping, boardwalks, outdoor seating, multi-use paths, and trails.

Policy 2.3.3: Residential development is encouraged to incorporate sidewalk access into an overall development plan. Issues to be addressed include:

- a. Mobility features;
- b. Pedestrian accessibility and connectivity;
- c. Landscaping and hardscaping components; and
- d. Community design.

Policy 2.3.4: Future development efforts will improve community linkages and connections by providing trails and paths that:

- a. Connect existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- b. Link surrounding schools and residential areas;
- c. Connect parks, recreational facilities, open spaces, and civic places; and
- d. Establish linear open space connectors, greenways, and natural open space corridors.

Policy 2.3.5: New development and redevelopment in areas containing a component of the greenways trail system, as identified by the Greenways Master Trail Plan, must incorporate the greenway trail into development design. In addition to counting towards the projects' general open space requirements, developments constructing the onsite portions of the greenway trail may be eligible for community and or regional park impact fee credits.

Objective 2.4 Community Open Space: Ensure new developments are planned, developed, and constructed in a manner that supports the livability of its residents and overall character of the community through the provision of open spaces.

Policy 2.4.1: Require new development to provide adequate open space for improved aesthetic appearance, visual relief, environmental quality, preservation of existing native trees and plant communities, and the planting of required vegetation.

Policy 2.4.2: Utilize the zoning and development order processes to ensure that new developments incorporate innovative open space design that preserves existing native vegetation, improves the development's character and beauty, helps transition the different sections from one to another, provides connections between adjacent developments, and supports the overall character of the community.

Policy 2.4.3: Proposed planned developments must submit an open space design plan with an assessment of the existing native plant communities and native trees. The open space design plan must:

- a. Delineate the indigenous preserves and native tree preservation areas;
- b. Provide adequate amounts of open space to preserve and allow the continued growth and viability of existing native trees; and
- c. Incorporate large, contiguous open space areas in the development design.

Policy 2.4.4: Protect indigenous native vegetation as part of the development process by working with new development to protect native species and encouraging developments to:

- a. Provide half of the required open space as existing native plant communities;
- b. Provide half of the required open space with areas containing existing native trees, this applies to property with existing native trees without associated native groundcover or understory; and
- c. Plant native shrub species within native tree protection areas.