

## Chapter 5, Recreation and Open Space Element

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## Executive Summary

Although Charlotte County has made significant strides in developing the Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department, the County still falls below the recommended level of service identified in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The progress made is greatly attributed to the successful implementation of the 1997 Recreation and Open Space Element (ROSE). The 1997 ROSE identified that Charlotte County lacked a park *system* and although the County has a large inventory of recreational lands many of these lands are not intended for activity based development. In fact many of these areas are preserves which at the very most may have limited passive use. Development of the parcels to include ball fields cannot occur. The Wallace Roberts & Todd Park and Recreation Master Plan (WRT) helped Charlotte County establish priorities for the development of park lands, and helped identify funding sources to pay for land acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks. In essence, the Wallace, Roberts & Todd Parks and Recreation Master Plan was the base onto which Charlotte County began to build their “*park system*”

The Recreation/Open Space Element is one component of a much larger comprehensive plan. The Future Land Use Element contains an overall blueprint for managing the direction and intensity of future growth and development in Charlotte County, and proposes a platted lands strategy which could provide additional park land for future use. The Transportation Element considers the future of two very important park-related facilities—linear parks and sidewalk/bike paths. The Natural Resources Element contains goals for protecting rare or sensitive natural resource areas, beaches and waterway access, and wildlife corridors. Finally, the Capital Improvements Element proposes the ways and means of long-term funding for parkland and open space acquisition and development.

### *Inventory*

Charlotte County contains a variety of properties that provide the residents and visitors with a wide range of recreational opportunities. The ROSE begins with an inventory of the County’s publicly-owned recreational facilities, followed by an analysis of the recreational opportunities - and deficiencies - presented by this inventory. This element identifies how these facilities can best be used and what deficiencies need to be addressed. The ROSE strikes a balance between inappropriately counting and ignoring the publicly owned lands by increasing the open space standard to 6.0 acres/1000 population. The ROSE also concludes that the County’s then-methods of measuring active, facility-based parks were also inadequate (in fact non-existent), and that the standards provided in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and similar, well-established guidelines should be used to determine and measure the County’s active recreational.

In addition to the properties that are owned and managed by the US government, the state of Florida, Charlotte County, the School Board of Charlotte County owns and maintains recreational facilities at 18 school sites. Charlotte County and the School Board implement interlocal agreements to utilize the school owned facilities throughout Charlotte County when necessary. A table summarizing these facilities and their features appears in Table 5.3.

There are a variety of parcels available county wide that will be useful in the coming years to be developed for parks. It is important to remember that the Parks Recreation and Cultural Resources Department serves a diverse population of many needs. The variety of parcels available provides the opportunity for the County to meet those future needs. These lands are identified as follows:

- In the 1997 ROSE a group of 44 parcels, for a total of 164.58 acres, which were undeveloped but owned by Charlotte County, were designated as park inventory. These parcels were located throughout the three planning districts and provided the department with an assortment of lands, already in County ownership, to meet the increasing demands of the population. There are currently 32 parcels listed as park inventory for a total of 115.83 acres which may be developed in the future.
- In the 1997 ROSE, 43 dedicated as parks with parcels, for a total of 173.38 acres which were obtained in 1994 as a donation from Atlantic Gulf Communities; these properties provide a similar benefit to the County for future park or cultural uses. There are currently 45 parcels listed as Atlantic Gulf Communities for a total of 170.48 acres which may be developed in the future as the need arises.
- In the 1997 ROSE, 15 sites, totaling 310.61 acres, including the 139.4 acre Myakka City tract, were obtained in the “GDC settlement agreement” in 1992. These properties were not designated as parkland, but had the potential to be used for that purpose. Plans are under way to develop the Myakka City tract as a Regional Park for the Gulf Cove Area. The above referenced parcels provide key connections in developing our communities and are essential in neighborhood planning. In addition, there are an additional 5 parcels listed as GDC Settlement for a total of 61.68 acres which may be developed in the future.

The continuing supply of additional properties provide a land banking system that allows the County flexibility and opportunities for providing a variety of community needs that will arise as the County continues to grow. Examples of these opportunities are expansion of the min-park and neighborhood park inventory, enhancements to greenway/blueway systems, and nature study.

In addition to the publicly owned facilities, Charlotte County has many privately owned recreational facilities, such as golf courses and bowling alleys. For many residents, indoor recreation, such as is provided by the Charlotte County Cultural Center, is a substitute for conventional outdoor recreation.

#### *Recreational Needs.*

The WRT Parks and Recreation Master Plan proposed a level of service (LOS) standard for parks and recreational facilities in Charlotte County based upon a thorough review of the inventory data which were gathered and prepared by county staff. The report compared Charlotte County's facility standards with those of four neighboring counties and with written standards of the National

Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The report examined current levels of facility use and reviews the results of a questionnaire survey of park users. Based upon the WRT study, Charlotte County chose not to adopt level of service standards for selected recreational types as well as for overall parkland acreage. The study utilized the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) population projections to the year 2010 in order to identify future parkland and facility needs. The WRT study determined that Charlotte County had an existing park acreage inventory of 884.78 acres - 555.28 of which are which located in West County, 204.5 in Mid County, and 125.0 in East/South County. Based upon the 2.07 acre per 1,000 population standard in the 1988 comprehensive plan, Charlotte County had a surplus of 603 acres of parkland in 1995.

By 2020, assuming a population of 185,800, originally projected by the WRT Report for 2010, Charlotte County will have limited facilities providing limited use for activity based recreation. This deficit in activity based recreation is a result of a methodology that included a very low level of service standard, which included tracts of passive recreation lands which are set up for preservation or conservation lands. Charlotte County's level of service continues to be low when compared to the nearby counties of Collier, Lee, and Sarasota. As previously stated Charlotte County's LOS standard falls far below that of the Florida *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP), a set of standards developed by the Division of Recreation and Parks of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards. Charlotte County still finds itself in a LOS deficit compared to these standards. This element defines an updated set of parks classifications in Table 5.8 and a phased process for the County to meet the LOS recommendations as identified in the SCORP.

This element previously established a standard of 3.0 total *acres* per 1,000 population for all active and multi-purpose parks, including Mini Parks/Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Regional Parks, and Special Purpose facilities; and 3.0 *acres* of passive parks/preserves per 1000 population. Community and Regional parks, defined as larger parks (20- 80+ acres) designed to serve up to 50,000 residents within a ten-mile radius will be the flagships of the system. It was reported that by 2010, this would be a deficit of only 136.7 acres should no new park property be developed before then. The previous supply of undeveloped parkland has provided development of some park uses throughout the County. The changes in park inventory are illustrated in Table 5.4. Although the Evaluation and Appraisal Report did not initially require a Level of Service increase, the revision of the tables and maps coupled with the SCORP standards indicate a need to increase the LOS. As stated in the SCORP report, all local governments are faced with the task of providing to the community the full range of recreational opportunities. This range is large including everything from cultural arts programs to nature trails. As populations grow, it becomes increasingly difficult to provide this wide range of activities. While the State concentrates their primary efforts on resource-based outdoor recreation, it does offer to assist local governments to the extent that it can, with a secondary effort of financial support and technical assistance to provide for meeting their resource and facility needs for user-oriented types of outdoor recreation. The state does take into

consideration the priorities and needs of the local governments when allocating available funds from the State Programs.

While the State may have the responsibility to encourage local governments to plan, acquire and develop outdoor recreation areas and facilities, their ability to meet local needs is limited. The State also realizes that those local governments have a very limited means of providing the recreational resources of any kind and that State funding assistance is vital to help meet their needs.

The preceding paragraph points out a challenge for many local governments. Additional facilities and services will be needed as the population continues to grow and the provision of these facilities and services becomes increasingly harder to fulfill with the limited funds available and the in supply of land, water, shoreline access and cultural resources are committed to non-recreational uses to support the expanding population.

#### *Implementation.*

The Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department is responsible for the acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of county parks and recreation facilities. Approximately 60 parks and recreation facilities are maintained by the department. The department operates with staff which consists of a director, one administrative —manager, seven full time administrative staff members, nineteen full-time and eighteen part time recreational staff, and 33 full-time and 12 part time parks maintenance staff, eleven full time and 13 part time additional staff.

Impact fees, ad valorem and sales taxes are the county's principal funding sources for parks and recreation. Impact fees can be used only for land acquisition and new park development, and must meet a rational nexus test as required by state law. Operation and maintenance expenses typically come from ad valorem taxes. A host of other, less reliable, sources exist - mostly in the form of grants. State acquisition programs (under the Preservation Forever umbrella) and some limited Federal funds can be used to acquire open space which may have passive recreational value. Charlotte County continues to supplement these funds by establishing a private civic fund to channel contributions and legacies to build parks. This fund could also help finance other projects such as museums and libraries.

The *Goals, Objectives, and Policies* section were adopted by ordinance. This section establishes an acreage-based level of service standard for parklands, identifies funding sources, proposes land management strategies, and policies concerning the acquisition of parklands. It also provides policies which implement the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 in all county recreational facilities.

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Purpose of the Element**

The purpose of the Recreation and Open Space Element (ROSE) of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide for a system of public and private recreation and open space sites which are available to all of Charlotte County's citizens and visitors.

In the broadest sense of the word, recreation can mean *any* leisure time activity conducted in an indoor or outdoor setting. Obviously, it would be impractical to plan and manage such a program for public recreation that deals with the most expansive definition. All outdoor activities - golf, baseball, tennis, horseshoes, and swimming, camping, boating and fishing - would be included. Spectator sports and events, concert-going, and even stamp collecting would also fit within this definition.

The concept of open space, like that of recreation, can mean many things to many people. Charlotte County defines open space as “that land area unencumbered by an impervious surface which may include water ways and vegetation areas,” while *Section 9J-5.003(63), Florida Administrative Code* calls open space “undeveloped lands suitable for passive recreation or conservation uses.” This open space, aquatic as well as terrestrial, serves many functions including wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and barriers to urban sprawl and development. Open space is a *significant* and abundant resource in Charlotte County. The Cecil Webb Wildlife Management Area, the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve, and the waters of Charlotte Harbor itself are a substantial part of our open space and recreational inventory.

There is no question that recreation and open space are vitally important to the welfare of individuals. However, as a provider of recreation and open space, local government has the added task of appealing to the greatest number of potential users. Therefore, it is important to define recreation and open space as they pertain to this element and to Charlotte County's specific needs and to create a rational program for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of a system of recreational facilities and open spaces that will provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number its citizens.

Most outdoor recreation takes place in parks, and parks come to mind when one thinks about recreation. Parks come in a vast array of sizes and types, each providing its own unique blend of recreational opportunities. (A half-acre tot lot is a park, and so is Yellowstone National Park). A *unified* collection of these parks and recreational facilities which seeks to serve all residents in an even-handed manner could then be thought of as a *park system*.

A park system attempts to serve all age groups, providing choices between activity-based, and resource-based recreation. Park systems provide a geographic balance, assuring that facilities are not

concentrated in one or a few small areas. Park systems, like commercial or residential developments, should be developed utilizing all the planning knowledge and tools available—site evaluation, environmental analysis, transportation access studies, recreational facility need assessment, and an evaluation of the appropriateness of each location. Location is as important in the development of a successful park as it is in the development of a successful shopping center.

At the time the 1997 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the County had just completed a comprehensive study of its recreation and park system, and had come to the realization that, like so many other facets of the community, the County's then-strategy for providing recreational opportunities was largely a reflection of the sales strategies of its major developers. For example, the Future Land Use Map illustrated many "park" sites as "Recreation, Non-Public"; meaning that the property so-designated was potentially a park site, but was in private ownership and that there was no guarantee that a park would indeed be developed at that location. These "developer leftovers" were too small and inappropriately located for a park, and if the County attempted to use them as the framework for a recreational system, such a system would be inefficient in terms of maintenance and operations. Thus, the platted lands problem manifests even in this most elemental aspect of society. With this realization, the County set about bringing the best of these leftovers into public ownership, and then began the task of developing a recreational strategy based not on the land-sales schemes of the developers, but rather the actual recreational needs of the community.

The key to developing a successful park system is to determine community needs and preferences, and to adopt LOS standards for those needs which, when implemented, will provide the land, facilities, and programs in locations that serve and satisfy the public. When the standards have been approved by the governing body, funding sources - to defray the costs of land acquisition, park and facility development, and operations and maintenance - must then be determined.

Because the total recreational needs of any community could never be met concurrently through a single, monumental programming effort, a considerable amount of long-range planning is required. In terms of land acquisition or capital development, some recreational needs must be given greater consideration than others. To guide the County toward meeting these recreational demands, land acquisition and development program priorities were established with regard to meeting those needs in areas where they occurred. Charlotte County created a base for a long-range park plan by hiring a consultant to begin the process of developing a recreation and park master plan.

In February 1995, the Board of County Commissioners commissioned the national design firm of Wallace, Roberts and Todd, to develop a plan which would become the base of the current park system. The Master Plan's findings and recommendations helped to define needed policy changes, in such areas as Level of Service (LOS) Standards, administrative and financial strategies for long term delivery of park and recreation services, criteria for evaluating potential park sites, and planning and design principles to guide park system development. However, it is the existing conditions data, inventories, and the review of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the Recreation and Open

Space Element that provided the foundation for this master planning process.

The ROSE begins with an inventory of the County's publicly-owned recreational facilities, followed by an analysis of the recreational opportunities - and deficiencies - presented by this inventory. This element identifies how these facilities can best be used and what deficiencies needed to be addressed.

This analysis quickly reveals that, based on the acreage standard provided in the 1988 Plan, Charlotte County had open space which would support mainly passive recreation through the 2010 planning horizon. However, the analysis points out that the 1988 standard (2.07 acres/1000 population) is lower than that applied by neighboring communities, and recommends that the per capita acreage be increased. It should be noted that, while the *inventory* includes all publicly owned lands (such as the 70,000+ acre Babcock/Webb Wildlife Management Area, the 30,000+ acre Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve and other properties) the *analysis* only considers County park land in its level of service. This was done in order to prevent the inclusion of properties beyond the County's control, and also to avoid presenting an "artificially" high standard for open space which may, as the county reaches build-out, be impossible to maintain. The ROSE strikes a balance between inappropriately counting and ignoring these other publicly owned lands by increasing the open space standard to 3.0 acres/1000 population. The ROSE also concludes that the County's then-methods of measuring active, facility-based parks were also inadequate (in fact non-existent), and that the standards provided in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and similar, well-established guidelines should be used to determine and measure the County's active recreational needs.

## **B. Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan**

There are several key linkages between the ROSE and other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan which include the following:

- The *Future Land Use Element* serves as an overall blueprint for managing growth in the County, defines the direction and intensity of future growth and development, and influences the analysis of future recreational demand and facility needs in different portions of the county. Major park and recreation sites that were identified by the County as a result of the Master Plan recommendations are incorporated into the Future Land Use Map.
- The *Transportation Element* provides input on the issue of accessibility of park and recreation facilities at the neighborhood, community and county-wide levels, and on linkage opportunities between parks, open space, and alternative transportation corridors such as bikeways and pedestrian ways.
- The *Infrastructure Element*, particularly the potable water and sanitary sewer sections, describes the availability of public water and sewer, and drainage patterns, will greatly help to shape

development trends within the planning horizon. This will, in turn, influence the analysis of recreational demand and facility need.

- The *Natural Resources and Coastal Planning Element* contains key data as well as broader goals concerning rare or sensitive natural resource areas, beach/waterway access, wildlife corridors, and other issues having implications for park and recreation location criteria and potential “greenway” linkages. Coastal protection and recreation (boat launches, public beaches) can go hand in hand.
- The *Intergovernmental Coordination Element* provides opportunities to improve County collaboration and coordination with other agencies, such as the School Board, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission or others, in the delivery of park and recreation services.
- The *Capital Improvements Element* reflects the County's strategy for the delivery of infrastructure and other public services, which will serve a primary role in growth management and help shape future demand for recreation. In addition, the Capital Improvements Element will reflect the five-year budget plan for park and open space capital outlay, which should support the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of this Element.

## II. Legislation

### A. State Regulations Governing Recreation and Open Space

The Recreation and Open Space Element is required by *Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes*, however, it does not provide specific guidelines as to its content or how the Element is to be prepared.

Perhaps the most profound impact to the revised ROSE resulted from the repeal of *Section 9J-5.014 Florida Administrative Code*, on February 20, 1996. This section provided guidelines as what information was required to be provided by the Element as well how it was to be provided.

*Chapter 163.318(2)(b), Part II, F. S.* requires:

*“Consistent with public welfare, and except as otherwise provided in this section, parks and recreation to serve new facilities to serve new development shall be in place or under actual construction no later than 1 year after issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent. However, the acreage for such facilities shall be dedicated or be acquired by the local government prior to issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent, or funds in the amount of the developer’s fair share shall be committed prior to issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent.”*

Objectives and policies address the issue of time limit in maintaining concurrency in this Element.

#### Americans with Disabilities Act ADA

*S. 933 of the Florida Statutes* is an Act passed July 26, 1990 to establish a clear and comprehensive prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability. Charlotte County has adopted the following goal with regards to this act: Charlotte County will operate their recreational programs so that when these programs are viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

#### Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act ESA (16 USC 1531-1544) was passed in 1973 and has been amended several times over the years. The ESA provides for the conservation of endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife, and plants, and for other purposes. Ultimately, the ESA will provide for the conservation of the Nation's natural heritage for the enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations.

### B. Regional Regulations Governing Recreation and Open Space

The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council adopted a Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) in 1987 and subsequently amended it in 1991, 1995, and 2002. The 2002 SRPP identifies the abundance of natural resources in Southwest Florida. These resources provide an alternative

recreation opportunity different from the activity based facilities of ball fields, basketball courts etc. The natural resources immediately affecting Charlotte Harbor, the Peace River and the Myakka River are discussed in detail in the SRPP. These natural resources include the marine and freshwater systems that create economic opportunities, recreational opportunities and provide a quality of life that is important to all the residents and visitors to, not only the region, but also to Charlotte County.

The report further states that the main problem in protecting these resources is the competition for these resources among the numerous and varied users. This section crosses over into the Natural Resources and Coastal Planning Element as well and is described in detail in that element.

In the 1997 Comp Plan, the following policies, were expanded and one additional policy was created to assist in fulfilling Florida Statutes regarding Natural Resources and Concurrency

Policy 2a. was appended to include “the protection of endangered and threatened species, and species of special concern,” should be part of the effective resource management practices.

Policy 2e. added “bikeways, pedestrian trails, and adequate parking, as appropriate” should be established as part of the park and recreation management systems.

Policy 2g. was added stating “utilization of the Florida Rails to Trails Program for conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to recreational use, if the corridors cannot be used for transportation purposes.”

In addition to activity based opportunities the County currently provides, the County continues to protect our greater natural resources through the acquisition of regionally significant lands which will provide for a variety of values and functions that serve both the seasonal as well as the permanent residents of Charlotte County. Through public awareness and educational programs recommended in the SRPP, through the existing policies of the ROSE, and through sound growth management planning practices Charlotte County will continue to promote proactive and strategic planning on these issues. These themes are incorporated into the revised goals, objectives and policies of the ROSE.

### **C. Local Regulations Governing Recreation and Open Space**

The County has utilized sales tax revenues augmented by grants from the Florida Communities Trust to purchase the land necessary to develop the regional park system the County was lacking. This one cent sales tax has been approved by the residents through the year 2008. If necessary, this one cent sales tax will be brought to the residents as a referendum for their consideration of extending the tax for another set number of years.

As a local regulation which affects recreation and open space, Charlotte County has an adopted Impact Fee Ordinance (89-85). This ordinance is intended to require development to contribute its

proportionate share of funds, land, or public facilities necessary to accommodate any impacts having a rational nexus to the proposed development. The park impact fee schedule is designed to raise a proportionate share of new park construction and improvement costs to provide needed parks due to new development. The fees should provide adequate revenue to fund the required improvements necessary to maintain public parks standards at the present level of service. Currently, the County is receiving \$402.00 per newly constructed dwelling unit.

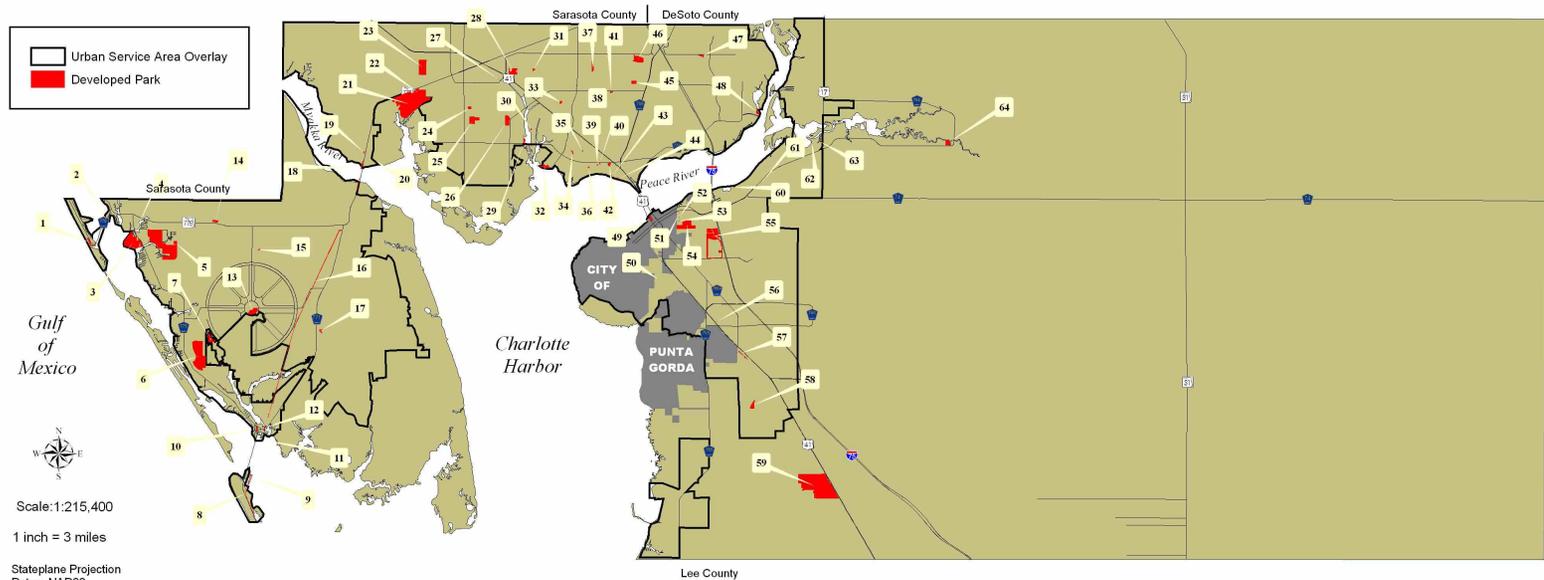
### **III. Inventory**

#### **A. Developed Publicly Owned Recreation Sites**

The County has completed acquisition of the property needed to develop regional parks within the three geographic planning districts. Mid-County Planning District will have a 100-acre Regional Park (previously known as O'Donnell Park renamed to North Charlotte Regional Park); West-County will have a 487-acre park known as Oyster Creek Regional Park, which includes the existing San Casa Park, and South County has the 90-acre South County Regional Park which opened in the fall of 2004. These properties were purchased by the County utilizing sales tax revenues augmented by grants from the Florida Communities Trust. The County has developed master plans for each of these parks, which incorporates a mix of active and passive uses. These Regional Parks are easily identified on Map 5.1.

This section provides an inventory of all existing publicly owned recreational facilities in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda. This inventory was assembled from information supplied by the Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department, the Charlotte County School Board, and the City of Punta Gorda's Planning Department. Table 5.1 provides the names, locations, ownership, acreage, facilities available, park classification, and predominant recreation type, of all county owned developed recreational sites in Charlotte County, including Punta Gorda. Map 5.1 depict the locations of these County owned park and recreational sites. Table 5.2 and Map 5.2 identify the State and Federal Owned Park Facilities and Sites. It should be noted that school sites which also contain limited public recreation facilities have been assembled into Table 5.3.

## Map 5.1 County Owned Park Facilities



Scale: 1:215,400  
1 inch = 3 miles

Stateplane Projection  
Datum NAD83  
Units meters

Source: Charlotte County GIS Department  
Community Development

This map is a representation of compiled public information. It is believed to be an accurate and true depiction for the stated purpose, but Charlotte County and its employees make no guarantee, implied or otherwise as to its use. This is not a survey or is it to be used for design.

Number	Park Name	Number	Park Name	Number	Park Name	Number	Park Name	Number	Park Name
1	Chadwick Park	14	Tringali Park	27	Price Circle Park	40	Lister Park	53	Reserved
2	Anger Fishing Pier	15	Englewood East Park	28	Franz Ross Park	41	Midway Park	54	South County Regional Park
3	Cedar Point Environmental Park	16	Cajal Haze Pioneer Trail	29	Spinn Lake Park	42	Edgewater Park	55	Carmelita Park
4	Anger Creek Park	17	South Gulf Cove Park	30	Lincoln Park	43	Bayshore Fishing Pier	56	Allapatchee Shores Park
5	Oyster Creek Regional Park	18	El Jobean Fishing Pier	31	Salyers Park	44	Bayshore Live Oak Park	57	South Punta Gorda Heights Park
6	Amberjack Environmental Park	19	El Jobean Park	32	Port Charlotte Beach Park	45	Maracabo Park / Kidspace	58	Bissett Park
7	G.C. Herring Park	20	El Jobean Boat Ramp	33	McGuire Park	46	Harold Avenue Park	59	Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park
8	Boca Grande Bike Path	21	Tippecanoe Environmental Park	34	Higgs Park	47	Deep Creek Park	60	Darst Park
9	Boca Grande Fishing Pier	22	Charlotte Sports Park	35	Sharon Circle Park	48	Harbour Heights Park	61	Helen Wroble Park
10	Placida Park	23	North Charlotte Regional Park	36	Saverin Park	49	Charlotte County Event Center	62	Riverside Park
11	Placida Fishing Pier	24	Shirley Park	37	Audubon-Pennington Park	50	Wisteria Boat Ramp	63	Clark Park
12	Coral Creek Fishing Pier	25	Olle's Pond Park	38	Lake Betty Park	51	Scott Park	64	Hatheway Park
13	Rotonda Park	26	Kwanis Park	39	Old Circle Park	52	Reserved		

Charlotte County Community Development  
Land Information Services-WSS  
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Map\_5\_1\_County\_Owned\_Developed\_Park\_facilities.mxd  
ArcMap Version 9.1

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Ainger Creek Park	west	2025 Placida Road	2	1 boat ramp, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Amberjack Environmental Park	west	6450 Gasparilla Pines Blvd	220	Nature preserve, nature/walking trails, picnicking, boardwalk	Resource based	Environmental
Anger Fishing Pier	west	SR 776	0.25	1 fishing pier – 360 linear feet	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Boca Grande Fishing Pier	west	Boca Grande Causeway	6.85	410 linear foot fishing pier	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Boca Grande Bike Path	west	N. end of Boca Grande	12	approximately 1.3 miles of bicycle paths Rails-to-Trails path	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Cape Haze Pioneer Trail	west	Rotonda East/SR 771	65	Nature/walking trails	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Cedar Point	west	2300 Placida Rd	115	Nature/walking trails, canoe/kayak launch, environmental center, fishing area, nature preserve, picnicking	Resource-based	Environmental
Coral Creek Fishing Pier	west	Placida Rd	1.5	251 linear feet fishing pier	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Englewood Beach at Chadwick Park	west	2100 N Beach Road	12.50	picnicking, 7 shelters, 1 basketball court, 2 horseshoe pits, 1 volleyball courts, 100' x 1700'saltwater beach, 1,020 linear feet of bayside waterfront, boardwalk, 1 playground, 3 pavilions, fishing pier (260 l.f.)	Resource-based	Special Purpose

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Englewood East Park	west	11120 Sunnydale Ave.	1.97	picnicking, 1 basketball court, 1 shuffleboard court, 1 playground, horseshoes	Activity-based	
G.C. Herring Park	west	3440 Indiana Rd.	18.78	outdoor track, 2 basketball courts, playground, multipurpose field/open space,	Activity-based	Neighborhood
Oyster Creek Regional Park	west	West Entrance Placida Road East Entrance San Casa Blvd.	272.00	2 lighted football fields, canoe/kayak launch, nature/walking trail, nature preserve, picnicking	Mixed Use	Regional Park
Placida Boat Ramp	west	Boca Grande Causeway	3.00	2 boat ramps, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Placida Fishing Pier	west	SR 775	6.85	665 linear foot fishing pier	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Placida Rotary Centennial Park	west	Placida Rd.	1.50	251 linear foot fishing pier, historical feature, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Rotonda Community Park	west	100 E. Rotonda Blvd.	35.00	2 tennis courts, playground, pavilion, picnicking, multipurpose field /open space, nature/walking trails	Mixed Use	Community Park
South Gulf Cove Park	west	10150 Amicola St.	4.91	1 Boat Ramp	Resource-based	Neighborhood

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Tringali Park	west	3460 N. Access Rd.	8.02	4 lighted tennis courts, play ground, recreation center, gymnasium, 1 lighted basketball court, outdoor in-line hockey rink and basketball court, 2 volleyball courts	Activity-based	Neighborhood
Audubon Pennington Park	mid	1153 Alton Road	.25	nature trails (partnership with Charlotte County Audubon Society)	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Bayshore Fishing Pier	mid	22967 Bayshore Road	.23	1 fishing pier (621 linear feet)	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Bayshore Live Oaks Park	mid	Bayshore Road	7.20	Walking trails, bike trails, boardwalk, canoe/kayak launch, public beach, picnicking	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Charlotte Sports Park	mid	2300 El Jobean Road	82.00	stadium has 6,026 seats, 2 recreation centers, 6 practice fields, 6 indoor batting cages	Activity-based	Special Purpose
Deep Creek Park	mid	25555 Sandhill Blvd.	5.00	1 basketball court, 2 tennis courts, 4 shelters, picnicking, 1 playground	Activity-based	Neighborhood
Edgewater Park	mid	22410 Glass Lane	4.00	picnicking, 1 shelter, 1 playground, 1 fenced paw park	Resource & Activity-based	Neighborhood
El Jobean Boat Ramp	mid	SR 776		1 single-lane boat ramp	Resource-based	Special Purpose
El Jobean Fishing Pier	mid	SR 776	8.42	2 fishing piers (north pier-926 linear feet, south pier-1198 linear feet)	Resource-based	Special Purpose

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
El Jobean Park	mid	Kerrigan Circle	3.56	1 basketball court, 2 shuffleboard courts, 3 horseshoe pits, 2 pavilions, picnicking, 1 playground	Resource-based	Neighborhood
Franz Ross Park	mid	19355 Quesada Blvd	33.00	3 lighted football fields, 4 lighted tennis courts, 2 playgrounds, concession/clubhouse, picnicking, nature and walking trails, nature preserve, pool access through YMCA partnership	Mixed Use	Community
Harbour Heights Park	mid	27420 Voyager Drive	8.10	picnicking, 1 pavilions, 1 basketball court, 4 shuffleboard courts, 2 lighted tennis courts, 1 playground, 1 double boat ramp, 2 horseshoe pits, canoe/kayak launch, 1 volleyball court	Resource & Activity based	Neighborhood
Harold Avenue Park	mid	23400 Harold Avenue	41.30	4 baseball fields, 3 softball fields, 2 concession stands, recreation center, 4 lighted tennis courts, 2 lighted basketball courts, gymnasium, 1 playground	Activity-based	Community
Hickory Bluff Park	mid		11.35	Historical feature	Resource based	Special Purpose
Higgs Park	mid	150 Higgs Court	4.04	picnicking, 1 multi-purpose/open space field, 1 playground, 24 lighted shuffleboard courts, 1 basketball court, 1 shuffleboard storage building, 1 pavilion, 2 bocce ball courts	Activity-based	Neighborhood

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Kiwanis Park	mid	3100 Danora Street	31.69	picnicking, 1 gazebo, 1 playground, 1 nature trail, 1 exercise trail, nature preserve, shelters	Resource-based	Neighborhood
Lake Betty Park	mid	3315 Conway Blvd.	2.99	picnicking, 2 shelters, 1 playground, 1 basketball court, multipurpose/open space field, fishing dock	Resource & Activity-based	Neighborhood
Lincoln Park	mid	Lincoln, Laurel, Springlake	3.66	Multipurpose field/Open Space		
Lister Park	mid	Edgewater & Lister	1.46	Multipurpose field/Open Space		
Maracaibo Park	mid	1505 Maracaibo Street	11.56	3 Little League fields, 1 concession stand, 1 playground	Activity-based	Neighborhood
McGuire Park	mid	32236 McGuire Avenue	4.96	picnicking, 4 lighted tennis courts, 8 horseshoe pits, 1 basketball court, 1 fishing pier (30 linear feet), 1 playground, 1 recreation center	Resource & Activity-based	Neighborhood
Midway Park	mid	32023 Midway Blvd.	3.49	2 tennis courts, picnicking, 1 multipurpose/open space field	Activity-based	Neighborhood
Midway Park	mid	32023 Midway Blvd.	3.49	2 tennis courts, picnicking, 1 multipurpose/open space field	Activity-based	Neighborhood
North Charlotte Regional Park	mid	1185 Odonnel Blvd.	100.00	3 lighted baseball fields, 3 soccer fields (2 lighted), disc golf course, picnicking, nature/walking trails, concession stand	Resource & Activity based	Community

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Ollie's Pond	mid	Felda & Bly Streets.	41.39	1 Bocci ball court, multipurpose field/open space, nature trail/walking trail		
Ott's Circle	mid	Ott's Circle & Gardner	1.31	Multipurpose field/open space		
Port Charlotte Beach Park	mid	4500 Harbor Blvd.	14.95	Picnicking, 2 pavilions, 6 shelters, 1 pool, 1 children's wading pool, 4 horseshoe pits, 2 bocce ball courts, 1 playground, 1 double boat ramp, 1 fishing pier (535 linear feet), 20' X 1500' beach, 2 tennis courts, 1 basketball court, 2 volleyball courts, recreation center	Activity based	Special Purpose
Price Circle Park	mid	122 Price Circle	.60	Multipurpose field/open space		
Salyers Park	mid	1333 Veronica Streer	3.01	Nature/walking trails	Resource-based	Neighborhood
Severin Park	mid	171 Severin Road	1.68	picnicking	Resource-based	Playground
Shirley Park	mid	Shirley Ave.	12.15	1 multipurpose/open space field		
Sharon Circle Park	mid	431 Sharon Circle	1.14	1 multipurpose/open space field	Activity-based	
Spring Lake Park	mid	3520 Lakeview Blvd	6.05	picnicking, 3 shelters, 1 boat ramp, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special purpose
Sunrise Park	mid		40.55	Nature preserve, nature/walking trails	Resource-based	Community
Tippecanoe Environmental Park	mid	2300 El Jobean Road	354.00	Nature/walking trails, nature preserve, canoe/kayak, boardwalk	Resource-based	Environmental

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Alligator Creek Park	east	Alligator Creek & Taylor Road	3.00	shoreline fishing	Resource based	Special Purpose
Allapatchee Shores Park	east	3100 Hickory Court	.32	Canoe/kayak launch, picnicking, fishing	Resource-based	Special purpose
Bissett Park	east	12455 Path Avenue	16.46	picnicking, 3 shelters, 1 pavilion, 1 basketball court, 4 shuffleboard courts, 1 tennis court, 1 horseshoe pit, 1 multi-purpose field, 1 playground	Resource & Activity-based	Neighborhood
Carmelita Park	east	Carmelita & Florida Streets	.33			
Charlotte Flatwoods	east	15801 Tamiami Trail	486.36	Nature preserve	Resource-based	Environmental
Clark Park	east	3100 Patio Ct.	1.74	1 boat ramp, 1 fishing pier	Resource-based	Special purpose
Darst Boat Ramp	east	537 Darst Avenue	0.78	1 boat ramp, picnic table, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special purpose
Charlotte County Memorial Auditorium and Civic Center*	east	75 Taylor Road	7.88	Recreation center, fishing, picnicking	Resource-based	Special purpose
John Hathaway Park	east	Washington Loop Rd.	28.00	picnicking, 1 boat ramp, 1 boardwalk, equestrian trail, canoe/kayak launch, nature preserve, nature/walking trails	Resource-based	Special purpose

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

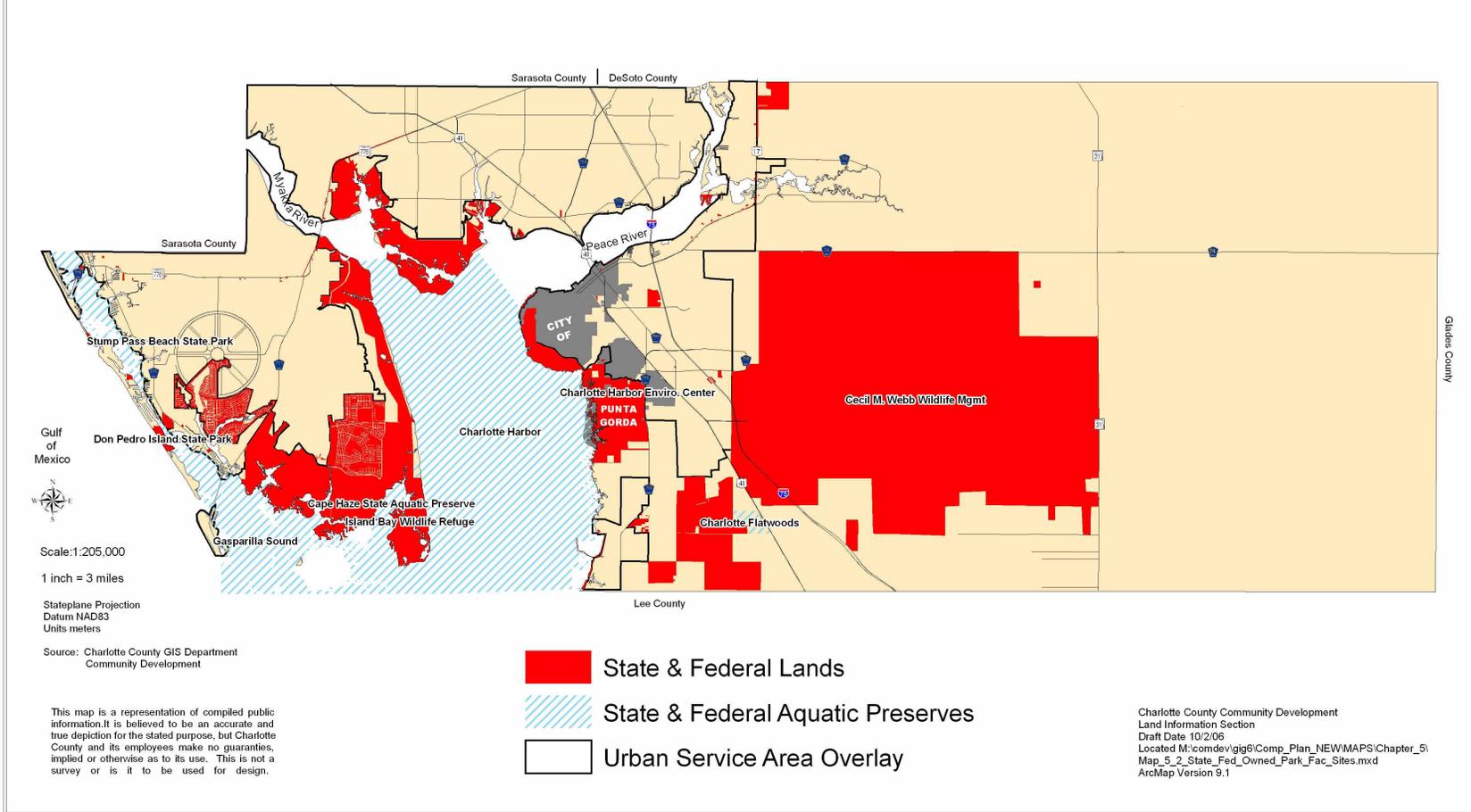
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Riverside Boat Ramp	east	Riverside Drive	1.00	1 boat ramp, picnicking, canoe/kayak launch	Resource-based	Special purpose
Scott Lots	east	1250 Cooper St	.32 ea	Multipurpose field/open space		
South County Park	east	11040 Pinetrail Road	8.00	picnicking, 1 pavilion, 1 basketball court, 4 shuffleboard courts, 1 tennis court, 1 volleyball court, 1 multi-purpose field, 1 playground, 1 civic/community building	Activity-based	Neighborhood
South County Regional Park	east	6550 Cooper Street	100.00	3 lighted baseball fields, 3 lighted soccer fields, 1 unlit, soccer field, 2 basketball courts, 2 lighted tennis courts, gymnasium, recreation center, community swimming pool, diving well, locker room, playground, picnicking, nature/walking trails, concession stand, fishing, multipurpose/open space field	Resource & Activity based	Community
Gilchrest Park	east	1000 West Retta Esplanade	12.00	Picnicking, 2 gazebo, 1 pavilion, 1 enclosed pavilion, 4 tennis courts, 1 playground, 4 basketball courts, 20' by 150' waterfront, fishing pier	Resource and Activity based	Special Purpose
Helen Wrobbles Park	east	Route 17 & Cleveland	.40	Multipurpose field/Open Space		
Laishley Park	east	200 Harbor Walk Dr	16.00	400' fishing pier, boat ramp	Resource based	Special Purpose

**Table 5.1 Charlotte County Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Ponce De Leon Park	east	End of West Marion Avenue	17.80	Picnicking, historical interest, 800' nature trails, boat ramp, wildlife sanctuary	Resource based	Special Purpose
New Operation Cooper Street	east	Cooper and Mary Streets	3.00	Picnicking, 2 basketball courts, 1 baseball/softball field, 1 multi-purpose/open space field, 1 playground, 1 recreation center	Activity based	Neighborhood
Nature Park	east		20.00	Picnicking	Activity based	Neighborhood
Paw Park	east					
Wisteria Park	east	End of Wisteria	20 ft	1 boat ramp		

Source: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department destroyed by Hurricane Charley  
 These facilities and sites can be easily seen on Map 5.1

**Map 5.2 State & Federal Owned Park Facilities & Sites**



**Table 5.2 State/Federal Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

<b>Park Name &amp; Ownership</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park State	All	Charlotte Harbor	17,375	Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, 7.75 miles of trails, pavilion,	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Don Pedro Island State Park State	West	Placida Road Don Pedro Island	225	70' X 5,750' saltwater beach area, 1 pavilion, 1 boat dock, boardwalk, ferry landing	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Stump Pass Beach State Park State	West	Beach Road, Manasota Key	245	100' X 6,400' saltwater beach	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Lemon Bay State Aquatic Preserve State	West			No facilities, open to water related activities	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Cape Haze State Aquatic Preserve State	West			No facilities, open to water related activities	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Gasparilla Sound / Charlotte Harbor State	All		161,511	No facilities, open to water related activities	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Charlotte Flatwoods State	East		3,900	None presently	Resource-based	Special Purpose
Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area State	East	S. of SR 74, E. of US 42, W of SR 31	65,335	1,280 acres for primitive camping, 25 acre camp sites, hunting, target range, 3 boat ramps, field trial area for hunting dogs	Resource-based	Regional

<b>Table 5.2 State/Federal Owned Recreation Facilities and Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda</b>						
<b>Park Name &amp; Ownership</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Island Bay Wildlife Refuge Federal	West	Charlotte Harbor	20	2 historic / archaeological sites	Resource-based	Special Purpose

These facilities and sites can be easily seen on Map 5.2

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department 2005

In addition to the properties that are owned and managed by the US government, the state of Florida, Charlotte County and the City of Punta Gorda, the School Board of Charlotte County owns and maintains recreational facilities at 18 school sites. Charlotte County and the School Board implement interlocal agreements to utilize the school owned facilities throughout when necessary. A table summarizing these facilities and their features appears in Table 5.3. These sites were updated following the aftermath of Hurricane Charley in 2004.

**Table 5.3 Publicly Owned School Recreation Facilities and Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Public Access</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>
Myakka River Elementary	west	Wilmington Blvd.	22.73	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Vineland Elementary	west	Boundary Blvd.	21	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
L.A. Ainger Middle	west	Cougar Way	36	baseball field, softball field, general play, field basket courts	X	Activity-based
Lemon Bay High	west	Placid Rd.	47	baseball field, softball field, general practice fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, track, football field	X	Activity-based
Deep Creek Elementary	mid	Harborview Rd	20	general play field, softball field, basketball courts	X	Activity-based
Kingsway Elementary	mid	Quasar Blvd.	9.74	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Liberty Elementary	mid	Atwater St.	12.24	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Meadow Park Elementary	mid	Lakeview Blvd.	12.92	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Neil A. Armstrong Elementary	mid	Breeze-swept Ave.	11	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Peace River Elementary	mid	Hancock Ave.	12.39	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based

**Table 5.3 Publicly Owned School Recreation Facilities and Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Facilities Available</b>	<b>Public Access</b>	<b>Recreation Type</b>
Murdock Middle	mid	Mariner Way	20.09	soccer field, baseball field, softball field, general play field, basketball courts	X	Activity-based
Port Charlotte Middle	mid	Midway Blvd.	19.40	baseball field, softball field, general play field, basketball courts, tennis courts	X	Activity-based
Port Charlotte High	mid	Toledo Blade Blvd.	47.38	baseball field, softball field, general practice field, swimming pool, tennis courts, track, football field	X	Activity-based
Baker Elementary	east	Charlotte Ave.	6.28	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
East Elementary	east	Fairway Dr.	16.3	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Sallie Jones Elementary	east	Narranja St	13.1	general play field, softball field, basketball courts, covered play area	X	Activity-based
Punta Gorda Middle	east	Carmalita St.	20	baseball field, softball field, general play field, basketball courts, tennis courts	X	Activity-based
Charlotte High	east	Cooper St.	49.54	baseball field, softball field, general practice field, tennis courts, track, football field	X	Activity-based

Source: Charlotte County School Board 2005

\* Damaged by Hurricane Charley New Facilities will be required

## **B. Undeveloped Publicly Owned Recreation Sites**

In addition to the inventory of developed parkland, there are a variety of parcels available county wide that will be useful in serving the future park needs of the various communities as these areas build out. Map 5.3 identifies the parcels county wide, while Maps 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 identify the location of the sites by District. It is important to remember that the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department serves a diverse population of many needs. The variety of parcels available provides the opportunity for the County to meet those future needs.

The first group of undeveloped parkland includes land that is part of the Parks Department inventory, but has not been developed for some reason, ranging from a lack of funding to inappropriate parcel size and lack of surrounding residential development. This group of 32 parcels, a total of 115.83 acres, is listed in Table 5.4: Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda, and identified as “Existing Park Inventory”.

The second group of parklands was obtained in 1994 from Atlantic Gulf Communities, Inc. as a donation to the County. These 45 parcels, for a total of 170.48 acres, have been illustrated on General Development Corporation Sales Maps as “parks” and were offered with the condition that the properties would revert to Atlantic Gulf Communities (AGC) should the County, at some time in the future, use these lands for any purpose other than recreation or open space. These parcels are also listed in Table 5.4 and identified as “AGC Land Donation”.

There is a third group of County owned parcels, not necessarily designated or intended for park use, that were acquired as a settlement agreement after General Development Corporation (GDC) declared bankruptcy in 1990. The lands were offered to the County in lieu of back-taxes owed on GDC owned property, and are currently held in trust. Unless these parcels are first purchased from the County, which means an acquisition fee must be added to any development costs, they are not available for County use. The parcels range in size from .25 acre to the large Myakka City tract of 139.4 acres which is proposed for development as a regional park. Although these properties have not been designated as parkland, many of them, because of their location, size, or natural features would make excellent sites for recreational facilities. These 5 sites, totaling 61.68 acres are designated as “GDC settlement agreement” in Table 5.4.

A number of the sites that were available in the past have been developed into a variety of parks, swapped for other parcels, or utilized for other County uses. The availability of these lands in county ownership provides for numerous opportunities and cost savings to the residents. As Charlotte County grows and the County continues to increase in its diversity, the need for additional and different types of parks and open space will also increase. The undeveloped available properties will support potential park, recreation or cultural opportunities in the future. These undeveloped lands provide a type of land banking that will allow for a(n),

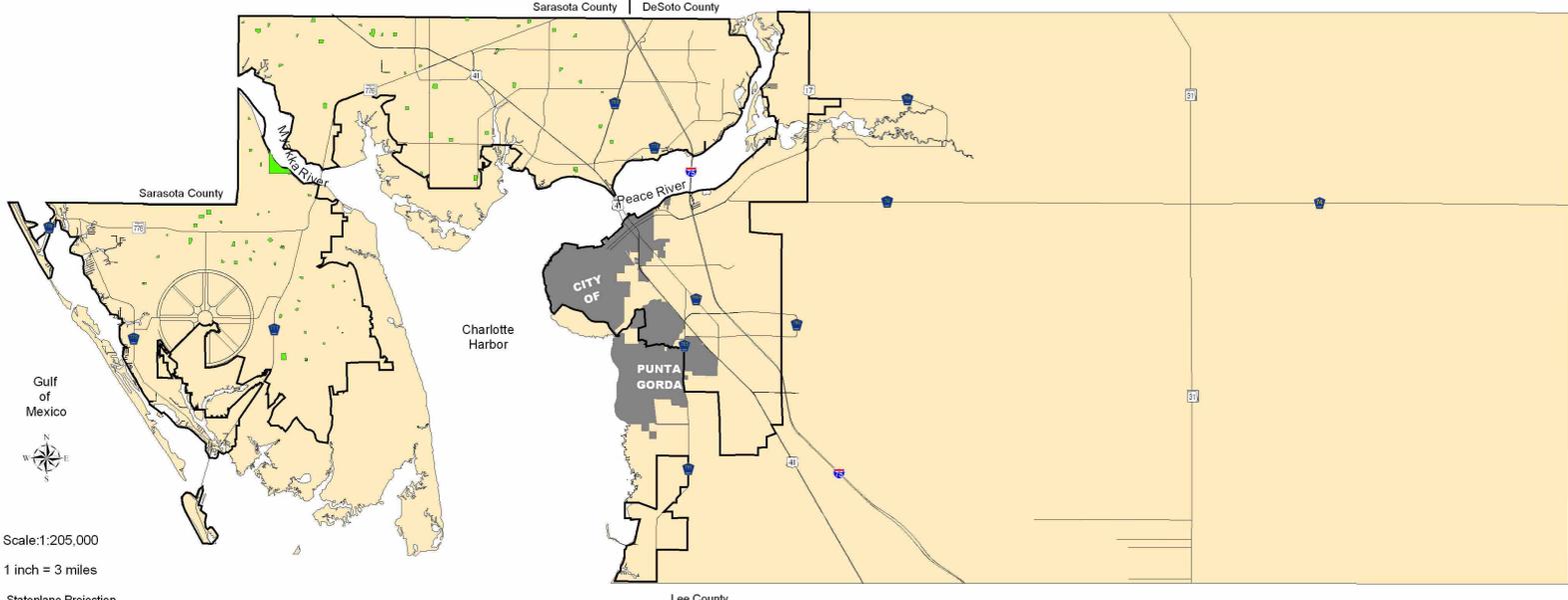
- variety of neighborhood parks to be developed as the individual needs of the community are identified as the communities build out;
- additional buffers between different land uses; and
- increase green space.

In addition, this land banking system allows for creative opportunities such as shared locations. By this method, a site that is comprised of several acres allows the county to utilize a portion of the property for a specific use (i.e. a fire station) while using the remainder of the site as a park (ie memorial park dedicated to the firefighters that have served the County and those that have died). These lands will be held and utilized as these and other opportunities arise within the County.

The undeveloped County owned properties are being reviewed for their inconsistencies with regards to the Future Land Use Map. Each property is being reviewed for their size, locations, and their ability to be developed, their grant funding ties, future land use designation (Parks and Recreation, Public Lands and facilities, Preservation and Resource Conservation), and zoning designation.

Zoning designations vary within the FLUM designation and will be reviewed to more accurately reflect the character of some parks, i.e., Government Use-Park. Staff is currently analyzing which of the following Zoning Districts are appropriate: Marine Park, Environmentally Sensitive, Planned Development, or Preservation. Table 5.4 identifies those lands available and the current status of the properties.

### Map 5.3 County Owned Undeveloped Park Lands



Scale: 1:205,000  
1 inch = 3 miles

Stateplane Projection  
Datum NAD83  
Units meters

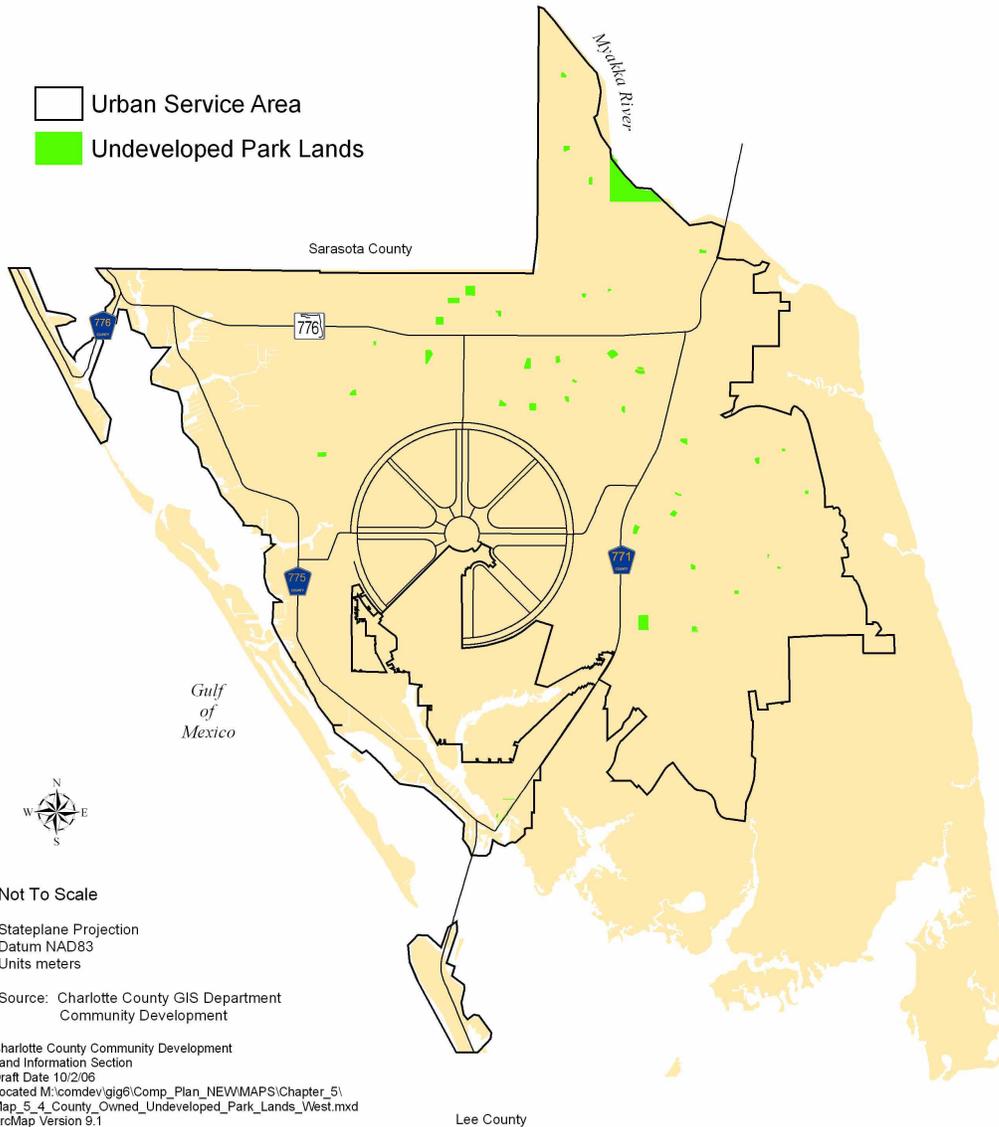
Source: Charlotte County GIS Department  
Community Development

This map is a representation of compiled public information. It is believed to be an accurate and true depiction for the stated purpose, but Charlotte County and its employees make no guarantees, implied or otherwise as to its use. This is not a survey or is it to be used for design.

Urban Service Area Overlay  
**STATUS**  
 Undeveloped Park Lands

Charlotte County Community Development  
Land Information Section  
Draft Date 10/2/06  
Located M:\comdev\gig6\Comp\_Plan\_NEW\MAPS\Chapter\_5\Map\_5\_3\_County\_Owned\_Undeveloped\_Park\_Lands.mxd  
ArcMap Version 9.1

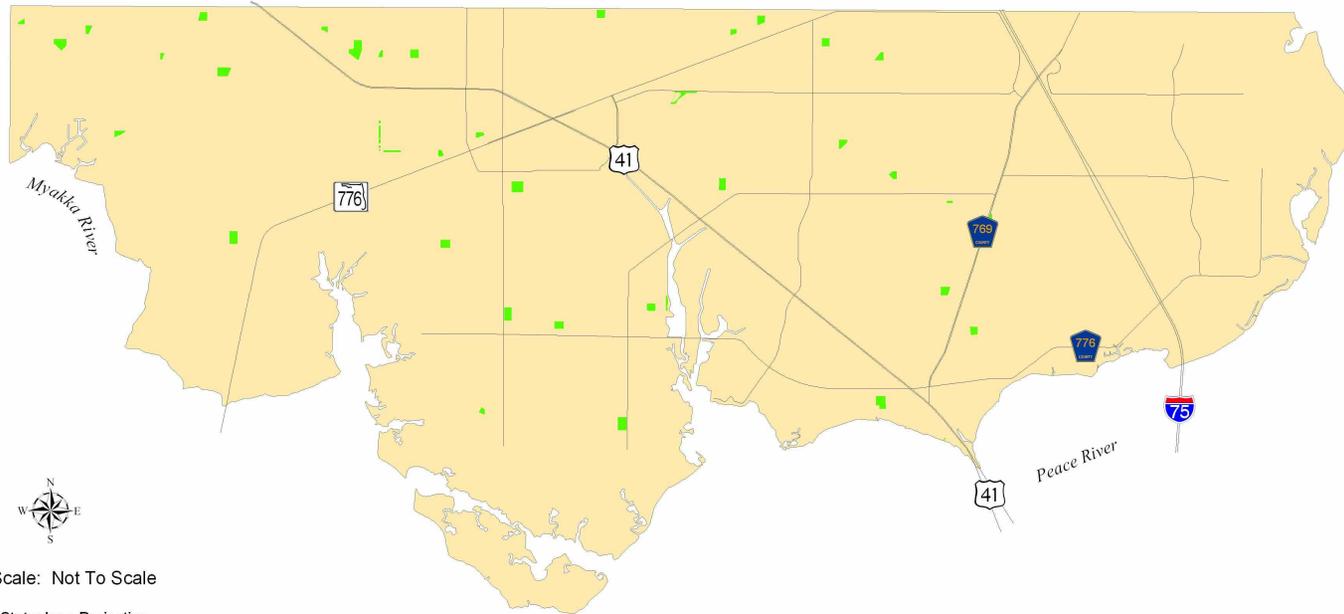
## Map 5.4 County Owned Undeveloped Park Lands (West County)



This map is a representation of compiled public information. It is believed to be an accurate and true depiction for the stated purpose, but Charlotte County and its employees make no guarantees, implied or otherwise as to its use. This is not a survey or is it to be used for design.

## Map 5.5 County Owned Undeveloped Park Lands (Mid County)

Sarasota County | DeSoto County



Scale: Not To Scale

Stateplane Projection  
Datum NAD83  
Units meters

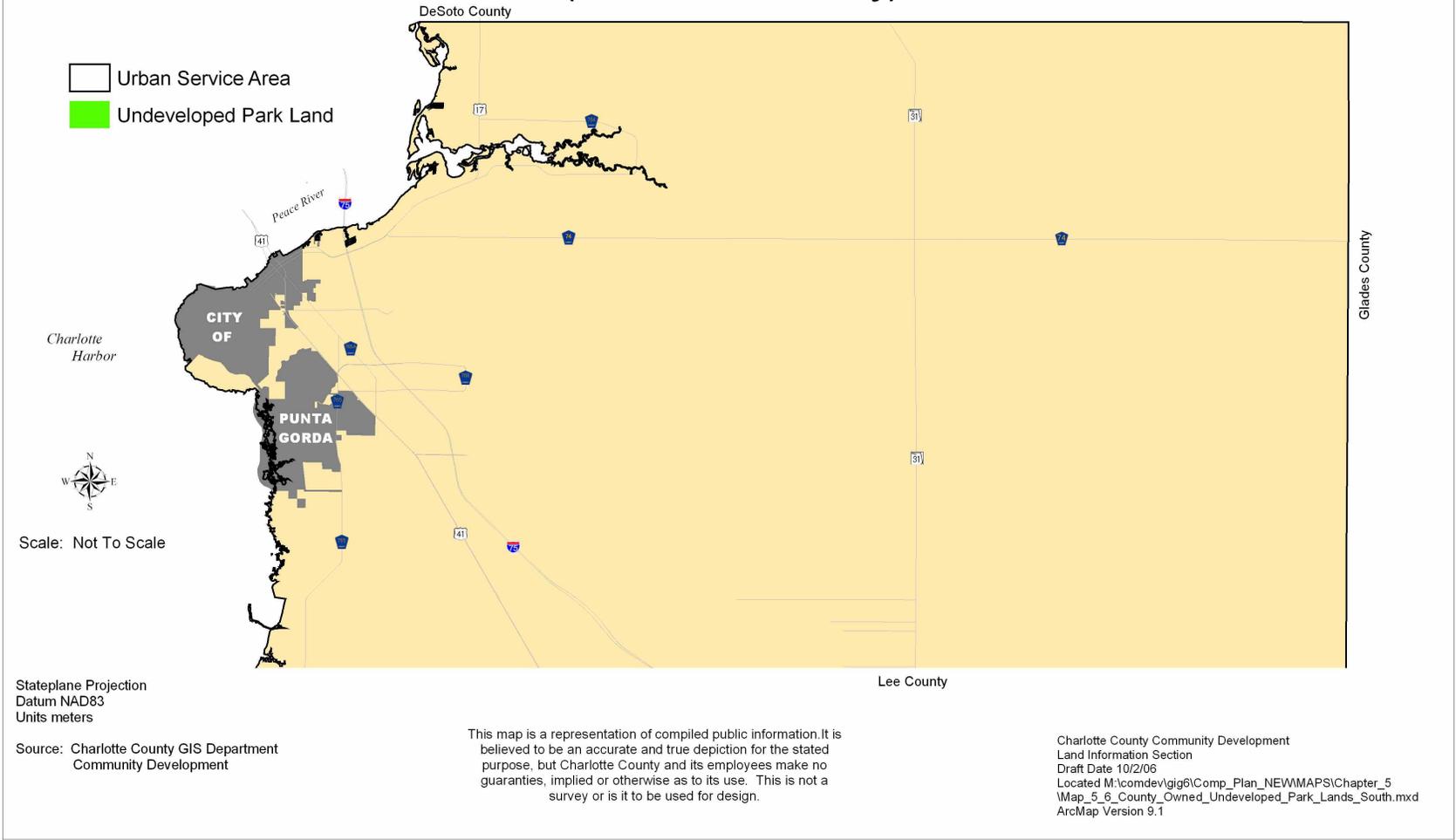
Source: Charlotte County GIS Department  
Community Development

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- Urban Service Area
- Undeveloped Park Land

Charlotte County Community Development  
Land Information Section  
Draft Date 10/2/06  
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Map\_5\_5\_County\_Owned\_Undeveloped\_Park\_Mid.mxd  
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## Map 5.6 County Owned Undeveloped Park Lands (South & East County)



**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Neighborhood Park	mid	Lorenzo Ave., Ashton St., Banner Ave., & Eagle St.	Section 18, Block 479	7.88	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Prest St., Elrose Ave., Porter St., & Spangler Terr.	Section 19, Block 895	3.20	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	mid	Kings Highway & Loveland Blvd.	Section 20, Block 2253	2.16	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	mid	McQuade Ave.	Section 20, Block 2477, Lake	1.36	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Tudball Ave., Ellington St., Dorman St., & Packard Ave.	Section 24, Block 2003	6.85	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	Baffle St., Appleberg Cir., & Afton Ct.	Section 95, Tract C	1.05	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	Appleberg Cir., Birtle Ave. & Aycock Pl.	Section 95, Tract D	2.13	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	west	Kevitt Blvd., and Gulfstream Blvd.	Section 95, Tract P	11.26	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	west	Thurman Rd.	Section 95, Tract Z	3.07	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	west	Pinedale Dr.	Section 95, Tract Z-1	3.99	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	David Blvd. Stacey Ln., Big Horn St., & Gretchen Ave.	Section 95, Tract BB	1.51	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	Atwell Terr., & Athens Terr.	Section 95, Tract CC	2.76	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	Mallen St. & Manville Terr.	Section 95, Tract DD	2.41	Existing Park Inventory

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Mini-Park	east	Riverside Park Subdivision	Unnamed Park in Block J	1.00	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	east	Peace River Dr., Island View Dr., & Darst Ave.	Bayshore Block H between lots 35 & 36	0.24	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	east	Winholm Ave., Island View Dr., & Peace River Dr.	Bayshore Block M & N	0.44	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	west	Concord Rd., Hunter Rd., & Indian Creek Rd.	Rotonda Heights, Part of Lot 679	3.95	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	River Dr. & Shell Creek (San Souci Park)		1.58	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	east	South Punta Gorda Heights (Notre Dame Park)		0.50	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	east	End of Morning Star Dr. (Wychewood Shores Park)		0.62	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Collingswood Blvd., Quincy Ave., Tody St., & Koala Ave.	Section 8, Block 298	9.48	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Suffolk St., Regan Ave., Northern Ave., & Fourwind St.	Section 21, Block 1673	7.67	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Brad Ave., Sherwood Rd., Gray Ave., & Villa St.	Section 13, Block 1307	6.99	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Dearman Ave, Baldur Dr., Yorkshire St. & Gimili St.	Section 34, Tract B, Block 874	6.17	AGC Land Donation

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Neighborhood Park	mid	Kildare St., Bingham Ave., Clinton Ave., & Birchcrest Blvd.	Section 34, Tract H, Block 1504	6.32	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Benz Ln., Alton Rd., Foote Ave., & Schenley St.	Section 51, Tract A, Block 3187	4.66	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Bombay Ave., Strasbrg Dr., Bounds St.	Section 51, Tract B, Block 3239	5.40	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Hillsborough Blvd., Stuyvesant Ave., Loftin St., & Musgrove St.	Section 17, Tract G, Block 953	6.80	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Crawford Ave, Rickardway Ave., Lantern Light St., Corell St.	Section 21, Block 359	12.22	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	mid	Pembroke Dr., Marceline Ave. & Timber St.	Section 30, Tract A, Block 1124	2.59.	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Parma Ave., Marceline Ave., Venango St., & Card St.	Section 30, Tract E, Block 2090	7.44	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	mid	Piedmont Ave., Schassler Ln., Ball St., & Adalia Terr.	Section 32, Tract B, Block 2426	2.89	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Juniper Ln., Richland Dr., & Leader St.	Section 41, Block 685	3.52	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	mid	Lawrence Ave., Buena Vista Cir., Harmon Dr., & Hoyt St.	Section 41, Block 716	2.71	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	mid	Foremost Ln., O'Hara Dr., & Joseph St.	Section 44, Block 3271	2.68	AGC Land Donation

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Mini-Park	mid	McCabe St., Kern Ave., Farber St., & Colburn Ave.	Section 38, Tract C, Block 2371	1.88	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Meister Ave., Dietrick Ave., Redington Ave., & Lindhurst St.	Section 47, Tract D, Block 2539	3.97	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	mid	Remsen St. Miles Ave., & Anzio Terr.	Section 47, Tract G, Block 2844	2.46	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Eisenhower Dr., Dodds Ct., & Sanford St.	Section 49, Tract A, & Block 2916	4.43	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Breezeway Ave., Bluesone St., & Hopewell Ave.	Section 52, Block 1697	3.08	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Benham Ave., Sims St., & Elvington Rd.	Section 56, Block 1924	4.01	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Divan Ave., Roan Terr., Burns Terr. & Mayer Terr.	Section 60, Tract D, Block 1897	3.18	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Stone St., & El Salvador Rd.,	Section 60, Tract A, Block 1985	2.39	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Valarie Ave., Woodland Ave., & Shasta St.	Section 62, Tract B, Block 3605	7.81	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Rockwell Ave., & Ocean Spray Blvd.	Section 63, Tract M, Block 3706	2.96	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Waterman Ave., Leon Ave., Castilla St., & Seamist Dr.	Section 65, Tract L, Block 3788	6.85	AGC Land Donation

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Neighborhood Park	west	Stetson Ln., Watercrest Ave., Memorial Dr., & Mill Terr.	Section 65, Tract I	3.94	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Brookside Ave., Gulfstream Blvd., Ritz St., & Melba Pl.	Section 65, Tract K, Block 3774	8.55	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Stacy Ln., & Embry St.	Section 67, Tract A, Block 3847	3.65	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Crugar Terr., & Charms Ave.	Section 74, Tract P, Block 3486	3.32	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Boca Grande Ave.	Section 84, Tract C, Block 4825	1.32	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Nittany St., Oneonta Ln., Wheeling St., & San Domingo Blvd.	Section 58, Block 4221	4.31	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Santa Lucia Dr., & Casey St.	Section 58, Tract J, Block 4282	3.69	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Trascoro Ave., Blake Dr., & Santa Cruz Waterway	Section 58, Tract K, Block 4269	1.50	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Waldrep St., & Jura St.	Section 78, Tract D, Block 4406	5.18	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Horace Circle	Section 81, Tract G, Block 4498	1.41	AGC Land Donation

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Mini-Park	west	Army Cir., & Altura Rd.	Section 81, Tract H, Block 4494	0.91	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	west	Amicola St., Coco Beach St., Oldmar Cir., & Santa Cruz	Section 85, Tract L, Block 4611	4.91	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Lillian Cir., & Allensworth Ave.	Section 87, Tract B, Block 4544	1.81	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Fruitport Circle	Section 87, Tract A, Block 4571	2.77	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Cir, & Sugartown Rd.	Section 87, Tract H, Block 4639	2.33	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Mars Ln., & Melpot Cir.	Section 93, Tract B, Block 4906	1.49	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Calumet Blvd., San Domingo Blvd., & Acorn Waterway	Section 93, Tract G, Block 4923	2.99	AGC Land Donation
Mini-Park	west	Calumet Blvd., & Arlewood Cir.	Section 93, Tract I, Block 4973	1.16	AGC Land Donation
Neighborhood Park	mid	Midway Blvd., O'Hara Dr., & Indianapolis Waterway	Section 79, Tract C, Block 4660	11.58	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	west	Sunnybrook Blvd. & Wilmington Blvd.	Section 63, Tract L, Block 3719	12.06	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	mid	Redington Ave., Bonsell Ln., & Hamden St.	Section 47, Tract B, Block 2509	10.82	GDC settlement

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Neighborhood Park	mid	Tarkio Ave., Sequoyah Dr., Canora Dr., Crest St., & Tigon St.	Section 30, Tract D, Block, 1171	16.35	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	mid	Berthoud St., Rita Ave., & Heather St.	Section 24, Tract C, Block 2041	10.87	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	west	Redondo St. & 34 residential lots	Section 85, Tact E, Block 4621	18.79	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	mid	Slack St., Elmira Blvd., Pierce St., & Gemstone Ave.	Section 13, Block 1359	8.75	GDC settlement
Neighborhood Park	mid	Hague St., Berwin Ave., St. Jude St. & Waldrun Ave.	Section 41, Block 616	7.64	GDC settlement
Mini-Park	mid	Lakewood Blvd. Springview Circle	Section 10, Block 137	2.54	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	mid	Bayshore Road	CHR, Block 2, Lot 5	.25	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Lister Street, Willow Street		11.25	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	east	Riversidde Drive Patio Ct.		.53	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Circle	PCH, Section 87, Block 4639	.25	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Circle	PCH, Section 87, Block 4639	.24	Existing Park Inventory

**Table 5.4 Publicly Owned Undeveloped Recreation Sites in Charlotte County and Punta Gorda**

Type/Purpose	District	Location	Description	Acres	Acquisition
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Circle	PCH, Section 87, Block 4639	.24	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Circle	PCH, Section 87, Block 4639	.23	Existing Park Inventory
Mini-Park	west	McAlester Circle	PCH, Section 87, Block 4639	.26	Existing Park Inventory
Neighborhood Park	mid	Coral Sea Ave., Kuehler St., Jacobs St., McKaig St.	Section 59, Tract A, Block	10.24	GDC settlement

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department and Charlotte County Community Development 2005

### **C. Publicly Owned Open Space Sites**

The County and State has acquired a significant amount of acreage as natural reserve and preserve land. Many acres of these tracts can and do include an outdoor recreational component in the form of hiking trails, nature trails, and other passive activities such as bird watching and photography. More importantly, these lands continue to provide the County with valuable open space. Over the last (5) years these environmental facilities have been environmentally managed and amenities have been developed to provide public access:

1. Amberjack Environmental Park: under construction
2. Cedar Point Environmental Park:
3. Charlotte Flatwoods: master plan being developed
4. Oyster Creek Regional Park: under construction
5. Tippecanoe Environmental Park: under construction
6. Sunrise Park: amenities to be constructed 2005-2006

### **D. Privately Owned Recreational Facilities**

Private recreation is difficult to inventory in a comprehensive manner, mainly because of its diversity and complexity, and because it often experiences rapid and frequent change. However, private recreation providers can generally respond quickly to opportunities for acquisition and development of properties suitable for recreational use, thus giving the private sector an advantage for providing highly desirable recreational facilities.

Private recreation can be broken down into four distinct groups: *private-commercial*, *private-nonprofit*, *private-club*, and *private-uninventoried*. *Private-commercial* recreation refers to the profit-driven commercial enterprises which supply recreation, and are a part of the community's economy. Quite often these facilities cater to the tourist or seasonal recreation demand. In Charlotte County, golf and boat fishing are two types of recreation most often provided by private-commercial enterprise. These are available to the general public, usually for a fee.

*Private-nonprofit* recreation refers to the private and quasi-public land and facilities, provided by groups such as churches, YMCA, scouts, and special interest organizations that are made available to its members and often the general public. The County has entered into a partnership with the YMCA at the Franz Ross County owned facility to provide a YMCA facility and included funds to aid in the construction of a swimming pool in Mid County. Additionally, maintenance of a YMCA park is being provided by the County in exchange for public use, and County owned land is being used to provide a child care center at the Dotzler property also located in Mid County.

*Private-club* recreation, which refers to recreation provided by country clubs, tennis clubs, yacht clubs, etc., is available to the organizations' members and their guests. Occasionally the facilities are

made available to the general public. Charlotte County has several private golf clubs which provide recreation to its members.

*Private-uninventoried* recreation refers to the recreational facilities which are privately owned and are most often unavailable to the general public. These facilities include those owned by apartment complexes, hotels, motels, and private single-family residences. Since these facilities are generally not available to the general public on a regular basis, it would be most difficult to inventory them, much less depend on them as contributing to the County's recreational needs. Nevertheless, private recreation programs and facilities do make a significant contribution to the overall supply of recreation within Charlotte County and should not be disregarded.

## **E. Current Conditions**

As previously mentioned, the County did undertake and fulfill a major park expansion program centered on the development of three regional parks. One regional facility now exists in three of the planning districts. The County has developed master plans for each of these parks which incorporate a mix of active and passive uses including ballfields, court sports (tennis and basketball), playground areas, picnic shelters and barbecues, walking trails, natural areas, restroom facilities, and other amenities. The development of the active recreational component complies with the 1997 ROSE's policy of following the SCORP guidelines, while the provision of passive use areas helps maintain the open space level established under the 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the three regional parks, the County's park expansion includes the acquisition and development of smaller, special needs facilities as well. For example, working with the property owners and developers of the Rotonda community, the County has accepted a donation of 35 acres in the center of the development which will be used for a combination of active and passive uses including tennis and basketball courts along with a Florida Scrub-jay preserve and nature area. Additional nature-oriented parks are being provided through the acquisition and management of the Oyster Creek Regional Park and Amberjack Slough Environmental Parks (which will be 100% nature-oriented). The County is increasing the public's access to coastal waters through improvements to its Spring Lake (Mid-County) and Ainger Creek (West County) boat ramps, and with the acquisition of the Sunrise property (Mid-County) and West County Boat Ramp property. Public access to the Gulf of Mexico was greatly enhanced by the County's acquisition of the "Winward" peninsula directly across from Englewood public beach (aka "Chadwick Park) to serve as an overflow parking and picnic area. The County received a grant from the Florida Communities Trust to aid this acquisition. The State of Florida and Charlotte County have also jointly improved public access to and enjoyment of the Gulf of Mexico through the provision of parking spaces, a boardwalk, and rest facilities at Stump Pass Beach (formerly known as "Port Charlotte Beach State Recreation Area). Pedestrian access to Charlotte Harbor has been substantially increased through the development of the "Bayshore Live Oak Park" which, by serving as an attraction, complements the efforts of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency to re-invigorate their community. Finally, through its neighborhood/community planning initiatives, the County is facilitating grass-roots park planning efforts. Communities such as South Gulf Cove, Grove City and

Harbor Heights have already identified areas for acquisition of both nature preserves and active recreational facilities as top priorities.

## **F. Inventory of Cultural Resources**

Cultural life in Charlotte County is diverse, vital and growing. Activities range from art lessons and gallery exhibits, to community theater, choral groups, and symphony orchestras. Some organizations present national concert stars, and the previously existing Charlotte County Memorial Auditorium which annually presented Broadway road shows. Cultural programs are in place throughout the County for both children and adults, which include painting, craft, piano, instrument and voice lessons. There are also various dance, music and theater groups.

The *Arts and Humanities Council* is the official arts agency for Charlotte County, promoting more than 60 associated organizations. The Arts and Humanities have suffered major funding cuts over the last ten years. The Council does still offers a variety of programs including educational activities, annual grants-in-aid awards, Art in Public Places, Very Special Arts, Arts in Education, and the annual

The *Society for Entertainment and Arts Development* (S.E.A.D.) provides educational programs for the youth of Charlotte County. Currently, they are sponsoring only three programs for the community as opposed to the ten programs they were sponsoring in 1997.

Other Charlotte County cultural groups and organizations include: The Charlotte Symphony Society, Inc., Charlotte County Jazz Society, The Charlotte Choral, The Englewood Artisan Guild, Charlotte County Art Guild, The Charlotte Players.

The Port Charlotte Cultural Center is a county-owned facility which is privately managed and operated by a non-profit Board of Directors. It is located in the mid county planning district and serves a wide variety of customers through its programs. It houses a 418-seat theater, the Port Charlotte Public Library, an Activities Center, Continuing Education classrooms and the offices of the County's Veterans Service Officer. Operated by a paid staff of approximately 30 people and a volunteer staff of over 1200, the Cultural Center facilities have helped to enhance the educational, recreational, physical and mental well-being of residents and visitors for 30 years. The Cultural Center is a focal point for many of the County's senior population, by providing adult education, cultural, recreational, and social activities. The Cultural Center was expanded and remodeled as part of the 1998 Sales Tax Extension.

The *Charlotte County Memorial Auditorium* which was located in Punta Gorda had a seating capacity for 2,000 people, a completely equipped stage, meeting rooms and sound system. It was used for all types of functions, including, ballet, Broadway shows, spectator sports, roller skating, dancing, and variety of trade shows and hobby fairs. This facility was destroyed as a result of

Hurricane Charley in 2004 and is being rebuilt. This facility provided a variety of recreational and social activities for the residents. While the loss of this building temporarily reduces the service that the County could provide to the residents, the opportunity that a new building will provide to the residents will allow for much better service. The County will supplement this facility with a temporary structure which will allow a variety of events to continue until a new improved facility is completed.

The *Florida Adventure Museum* offers natural history exhibits and displays. Four galleries present static exhibits while one gallery is devoted to frequently changing exhibits. The Museum was badly flooded in 2001. The Florida Adventure Museum was merged into the Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department. Funded in part through an FCT grant, a stilt building in Historic Charlotte Harbor was acquired and the Charlotte County Historical Center was created. The Historical Center features approximately 5,000 square feet, with 2,524 of exhibits, a classroom, and Historic Division administrative offices.

The *Sea Grape Artists' Gallery* is a co-operative of twenty-five local artists to showcase established and developing artists' work.

The *Visual Arts Center* in Punta Gorda is home of the Charlotte County Art Guild. It is a not-for-profit organization that has been in existence for over 30 years. It has an exhibit hall, gift shop, student galleries, classrooms, and the Wayne B. and Donna Goff Gallery which is an ever changing exhibit of the artistic talents of the Art Guild members.

Finally, the *Charlotte County Fair* held for two weeks annually, and hosted by the Charlotte County Fair Association, Inc., provides enjoyment to visitors and residents alike with a large variety of exhibits, activities, and musical performances.

The Charlotte County Performing Arts Theatre was a concept which began in 1996 and grew out of a school district project to replace a 1926 school auditorium. A collaborative funding effort between the Charlotte County School Board, The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners, The City of Punta Gorda, and the State of Florida, Division of Cultural Affairs Grant, resulted in the opening of the 900 seat theatre in 2003. The facility not only provides professional quality performing arts performances, but also meets the original high school demand for an auditorium, a band room, a choir room and adjacent classrooms.

## IV. Recreational Need Analysis

### A. Level of Service Standard for Parks

There is little dispute about the need for variety of recreation in Charlotte County, however, disagreement usually ensues concerning the *quantity* of each facility or activity. The State of Florida - as well as many other recreational agencies, such as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and the Florida Recreation and Parks Association (FRPA) - has developed guidelines to assist in making these determinations. The population guidelines, which are used in determining the amount of resources or facilities that are required to serve a given population, can be applied statewide. Of course, Charlotte County's needs are not identical with those of Boca Raton or Liberty County. Given Charlotte County's demographic characteristics (the oldest median age in the state) it can be assumed the recreational needs may also be different. While it is true that Charlotte County's population may differ from the state average, our recreational standards must also be based on factual data and not merely conjecture.

A vital component of the County-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan prepared by Wallace, Roberts, and Todd (WRT) was a review and analysis of current and projected needs for both developed parkland and selected, specific recreational facility types. The review and analysis used in the original study is utilized to some extent today. Recreational needs are analyzed utilizing the following steps and continue to be reviewed regularly.

- Inventory data continues to be gathered and prepared by County staff to see how it will be utilized, managed or acquired to meet the growing demands on the County as the county expands and diversifies;
- Charlotte County's park and recreational facility standards continue to be compared to those of four neighboring counties, as well as those published by the State of Florida and the National Recreation and Park Association;
- Current levels of facility use, and areas of unusual or rapid growth demand and other special conditions are evaluated through public meetings, when necessary, and phone calls received by Charlotte County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department personnel;
- Recommendations developed for a LOS Standard for parkland acreage as well as for guideline standards for selected recreational types are reviewed yearly to satisfy customer needs; and
- The recommended standards are compared to the existing inventory, against population figures provided by the Charlotte County Planning Department for 1995, 2005, 2010, and projected through 2020, to identify deficiencies.

One can hardly discuss the need for providing services without considering the Levels of Service (LOS) standards established for that provision. According to Section 9J-5.003(63), *Florida Administrative Code*, level of service is defined as the “indicator of the extent or degree of service provided by, or proposed to be provided by a facility based on and related to the operational characteristics of the facility. Level of service shall indicate the capacity per unit of demand for each public facility”.

Based on the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, Charlotte County's adopted Level of Service was 2.07 acres of developed parkland per thousand populations. This standard applied to “activity” based parks without further distinction as to park type or function.

The acreages of the entire County owned existing and planned parks are identified in Table 5.4 by Planning District. The breakdown of the parks by type assists in the Department in identifying specific needs when planning for future parks or when fulfilling residential needs. Areas that do not have available public access or limited have limited public access; the Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area the (state's) Charlotte Flatwoods, the Charlotte Harbor State Reserve, and Charlotte County School sites *are not included* in acreage calculations. Table 5.4 shows the distribution of parks and the acreages that have been used in all calculations in the County's current level of service analysis.

**Table 5.5 A, B, C & D Charlotte County Existing/Planned Parks Used in Acreage Calculation**

<b>5.5 A District 1 – West County</b>						
	<b>Regional</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Special Purpose</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Mini Park</b>
<b>County Facilities</b>	1. Oyster Creek Regional Park (272) 2. Myakka River Regional Park (109)	1. Rotonda Community Park (35) 2. Tringali Park (8)	1. G.C. Herring Park (18.78) 2. South Gulf Cove Park (4.91) 3. Sunnybrook Park (11)	1. Ainger Creek Park (2) 2. Anger Fishing Pier (.25) 3. Boca Grande Fishing Pier (6.85) 4. Boca Grande Bike Path (12) 5. Cape Haze Pioneer Trail (65) 6. Englewood Beach at Chadwick Park (12.5) 7. Placida Boat Ramp (3) 8. Placida Fishing Pier (6.85) 9. Placida Rotary Centennial Park (1.5) 10. Cattle Dock Boat Ramp(5)	1. Amberjack Environmental Park (220) 2. Cedar Point Park (115)	1. Englewood East Park (1.97)
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>34.69</b>	<b>114.95</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>1.97</b>

**Table 5.5 A, B, C & D Charlotte County Existing/Planned Parks Used in Acreage Calculation**

5.5 A District 1 – West County						
<b>State Facilities</b>					1. Don Pedro State Recreation Facility (225) 2. Stump Pass Beach State Park (245)	
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>					<b>470</b>	
<b>Federal Facilities</b>					1. Island Bay National Wildlife Reserve (20)	
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>					<b>20</b>	

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

**Table 5.5 A, B, C & D Charlotte County Existing/Planned Parks Used in Acreage Calculation**

<b>5.5 B District 2 – Mid County</b>						
	<b>Regional</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Special Purpose</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Mini Park</b>
<b>County Facilities</b>	1. North Charlotte Regional Park (185) 2. Charlotte Sports Park (82)	1. Harold Avenue Park (41.3) 2. Franz Ross Park (33) 3. Sunrise Park (40.55)	1. Deep Creek Park (5.0) 2. Edgewater Park (2.99) 3. El Jobean Park (1.49) 4. Harbour Heights Park (8.1) 5. Higgs Park (4.04) 6. Kiwanis Park (31.69) 7. Lake Betty Park (3.39) 8. McGuire Park (4.96) 9. Midway Park (3.49)	1. Port Charlotte Beach Park (14.95) 2. Bayshore Live Oaks Park and Fishing Pier (7.43) 3. Audubon Pennington Park (.25) 4. El Jobean Fishing Pier (8.42) 5. Hickory Bluff Park (11.35)	1. Tippecanoe Environmental Park (354) 2. Ollie’s Pond Park (41.39)	1. Severin Park (1.68) 2. Sharon Circle Park (1.14) 3. Salyers Park (3.01) 4. Price Park (.6) 5. Lister Park (1.46) 6. Lincoln Park (3.66) 7. Ott Circle (1.31)
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>114.85</b>	<b>65.25</b>	<b>42.40</b>	<b>395.39</b>	<b>12.86</b>
<b>State</b>	No State Parks in District 2 – Mid County					
<b>Federal</b>	No Federal Parks in District 2 – Mid County					

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

**Table 5.5 A, B, C & D Charlotte County Existing/Planned Parks Used in Acreage Calculation**

<b>5.5 C District 3 – South County</b>						
	<b>Regional</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Special Purpose</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Mini Park</b>
<b>County Facilities</b>	1. South County Regional Park (90)	1. Carmalita Park (33)	1. South Punta Gorda Heights Park (13.12) 2. Bissett Park (16.46) 3. Hathaway Park (28)	1. Darst Park (.78) 2. Riverside Park (1)	1. Charlotte Flatwoods (486.36)	1. Scott Park (.32) 2. Helen Wrobbles Park (.40) 3. Allapatchee Park (.32) 4. Clark Park (.57)
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>57.58</b>	<b>1.78</b>	<b>486.36</b>	<b>1.61</b>
<b>City of Punta Gorda</b>		1. Laishley Park 2. Cooper Street Park	1. Retta Esplanade 2. Alligator Creek	1. Punta Gorda Bike Path 2. Ponce de Leon Park 3. Gilchrest Park		
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>		

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

<b>5.5 D Countywide Acreage by Classification</b>						
	<b>Regional Parks</b>	<b>Community Parks</b>	<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	<b>Special Purpose Parks</b>	<b>Environmental Parks</b>	<b>Mini Parks</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>202.85</b>	<b>204.91</b>	<b>189.13</b>	<b>1,665.36</b>	<b>16.44</b>

<b>Grand Total , All Park Acreage, Countywide .....3,016.69</b>
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Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

The 1997 Comp Plan identified a discrepancy between the status of the park and recreation system measured against the LOS standard and its perceived performance in meeting community needs, largely due to the following factors:

- The 1988 LOS Standard was low compared to other counties' standards, and published state and national guidelines, as well as to the actual existing inventory; this creates an *artificially* high "surplus" in data terms.
- The 1988 LOS Standard did not address what types of parks and recreational facilities make up the total acreage, or the proportional quantities of each type. Deficiencies in the existing parks system, related to park types, the recreational facilities they contain, and their distribution, are exacerbated by the non-specific LOS standard which fails to measure or address these factors.

The previously adopted LOS standards of 2.07 and the current LOS 6.0 total parkland acres per thousand population continues to fall below comparable standards of four neighboring coastal counties (Collier, Lee, Manatee, and Sarasota). These comparisons are summarized in Table 5.5.

<b>Table 5.6 County Comparison of Regional LOS Standards</b>			
<b>County</b>	<b>LOS (Acres per 1,000 pop.)</b>	<b>Acres Required</b>	<b>Current Inventory</b>
Charlotte	6.0 Active and Multipurpose Parks	456	1,115.76
	4.0 Environmental Parks	456	1,665.36
Sarasota	20 All Parks (combined – conservation lands)	4,964	4,865

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department 2005

Although the current adopted LOS Standard of 6 acres per 1,000 population for each of active and resource-based parks (a total of 6 acres per 1,000 population for all parks as identified in the Future Land Use Element) falls far below standards recommended by the Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), *Outdoor Recreation in Florida 2000*. The SCORP recommendation for active and resource based parks are 9.5 acres and 20 acres per 1,000 population respectively. This recommendation is not mandated by the state at the current time and presently the County does meet the Level of Service standards previously adopted by the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. Classification guidelines from SCORP provide a serviceable framework for categorizing the Charlotte County park system, with minor modifications. Recommended modifications to the County's system of classifying parks, as reflected in Table 5.6, include the following:

<b>Table 5.7 Comparison of SCORP and Charlotte County Park Classifications</b>		
<b>SCORP</b>	<b>Charlotte County Existing Classification</b>	<b>Proposed Classification</b>
Equipped Play and Tot Lot	Mini-Park, or Mini-Park/Play Lot	Mini-Park
Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood Park
Community	Community	Community Park
Urban Open Space	n/a	n/a
Urban District	District	Regional Park
Regional	Passive Parks and Preserves	Environmental Park
Beach Access	Special Purpose Facility	Special Purpose Facility

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

Proposed park classifications generally exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Mini-Park (1-3 acres):** Intended to serve about 2,500 residents within walking or short biking distance (0.5 mile), but may have minimal parking. Facilities typically include a playground, benches, picnic tables and open space with few or no parking spaces.
- **Neighborhood Park (3-20 acres):** Intended to serve about 5,000 residents within a 1-mile service radius, primarily for walking or bicycle access, but may have limited parking. Facilities typically include play equipment, informal sports field(s), paved court(s), existing vegetation, picnicking, shelter and walking paths.
- **Community Park (20-80 acres):** Intended to serve an average of 25,000 residents within a 3-mile radius. Typically included are the same types of facilities as a neighborhood park, as well as (lit or unlit) sports fields and courts, group pavilion(s), restrooms, bicycle and walking paths, recreation center and other active and passive recreation areas to meet specialized needs. Ideally located on a street classification of collector or higher with adequate parking. Adequate plantings/buffers and some passive recreational area should be provided.
- **Regional Park (80 acres or more):** Intended to serve an average of 50,000 or more residents within a 10 mile radius or up to 30-minute driving time. Facilities may include the same type of facilities as neighborhood and community parks except in greater quantities and level of development (i.e. lighting, range of sizes and level of detail). Sophisticated parking and circulation, storm water management and infrastructure systems are typically involved. Trail systems allow for hiking/biking and interpretive use. Typically, significant passive recreational area, as well as special purpose facilities are included.

- Environmental Park (100 acres or more): Intended to preserve unique ecosystems, landscapes and/or open space while making available limited, passive recreational use. An environmental park may serve a population of 50,000 or more residents and because of the nature and location of its resources, access may require 30-60 minutes driving time. Facilities may include nature trails, picnicking, horseback riding, biking, group pavilions, fishing, boating, and limited group camping.
- Special Purpose Facility (size varies): A special purpose facility is a single facility that may be located within a park of any classification or may comprise an entire park unit. Special purpose facilities may include elements such as archaeological sites, a historically significant feature or location, waterways and blueway trails, greenways and trails, bike trails, linear parks, fishing pier, boat ramp, areas of rare or endangered flora or fauna, event/auditorium/conference facility, stadium, or beach and water access.

The intent of these recommendations is to better tailor the classification and level of service guidelines to current conditions, recent development and future projections of the park system in Charlotte County. The proposed classification system is summarized below in Table 5.7.

<b>Table 5.8 Summary of Proposed Charlotte County Parks Classification</b>		
<b>Proposed Park Type</b>	<b>Existing Size/Service Area</b>	<b>Proposed Size/Service Area</b>
Mini-Park	1 acre min./3-5 blocks	1 – 3 acres/0.5 mile
Neighborhood Park	5 acres min./1 mile	3 – 20 acres/1 mile
Community Park	20 acres min./3 miles	20 – 80 acres/3 miles
Regional Park	50 acres min./10 miles	80+ acres/10 miles
Environmental Park	2 acres min./varies	100+ acres/varies
Special Purpose Facility	varies/varies	varies/varies

Source: Charlotte County Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department, 2005

## **B. Existing Level of Service and Recommended LOS Standard**

The above comparisons with regional and published standards suggest that Charlotte County's adopted LOS Standard merits an increase. However, raising the LOS Standard, to the new SCORP standards, above actual levels of service would create an instant deficiency under the Concurrency Management requirements of *Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes*. The County previously recommended a “conservative strategy” which allowed for a slight increase of the LOS. The recommended LOS Standard was based on maintaining, approximately, the existing level of service, as the County grows. By not realizing the need for the LOS to keep up with the current standards, the County could find itself well below the LOS as the County nears buildout capacities. Therefore it is recommended that the County continue to follow a conservative strategy and provide a phased LOS increase toward SCORP standards over the next two planning decades. The parkland inventory

currently provided in Charlotte County is summarized in Table 5.8, according to park classifications and districts, based on the recommended LOS Standards.

The revised recommended LOS Standards seek to address three major shortcomings of the adopted standard:

- Its low level, of service as well as relevant comparables; and
- Its lack of recognition of the importance of the various types of parks that should make up the system.
- Its lack of recognition of the three district regions separated by the rivers in Charlotte County.

Therefore, the following levels of service acreage standards are set for all active and multi-purpose (combined active recreation and passive recreation) parks, to be satisfied in each park classification independently in each of the three County regions:

- Mini Parks – 0.5 acres/1000 population
- Neighborhood Parks – 1.5 acres/1000 population
- Community Parks – 2 acres/1000 population
- Regional Parks – 2 acres/1000 population
- Environmental Park – 4 acres/1000 population

**Table 5.9 Level of Service Acreage per Park Classifications -- Definitions Based**

District	West			Mid			South/East			Total			
Year	2005	2010	2020	2005	2010	2020	2005	2010	2020	2005	2010	2020	
<b>Population</b>	<b>35,287</b>	<b>41,928</b>	<b>45,320</b>	<b>82,714</b>	<b>94,338</b>	<b>113,300</b>	<b>33,999</b>	<b>38,434</b>	<b>47,380</b>	<b>152,000</b>	<b>174,700</b>	<b>206,000</b>	
<b>Mini-Park (1-3 acres)</b>	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	1.97			12.86			1.61			16.44		
	<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	(15.67)	(18.99)	(20.69)	(28.50)	(34.31)	(43.79)	(15.39)	(17.61)	(22.08)	(59.56)	(70.91)	(86.56)
<b>Neighborhood Park (3-20 acres)</b>	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	34.69			65.25			57.58			157.52		
	<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	(18.24)	(28.20)	(33.29)	(58.82)	(76.26)	(104.70)	6.58	(0.07)	(13.49)	(70.48)	(104.53)	(151.48)
<b>Community Park (20-80 acres)</b>	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	43.00			114.85			33.00			190.85		
	<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	(27.57)	(40.86)	(47.64)	(50.58)	(73.83)	(111.75)	(35.00)	(43.87)	(61.76)	(113.15)	(158.55)	(221.15)
<b>Regional Park (80 acres or more)</b>	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	381.00			267.00			90.00			738.00		
	<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	310.43	297.14	290.36	101.57	78.32	40.40	22.00	13.13	(4.76)	434.00	388.60	326.00
<b>Environmental Park (100 acres or more)</b>	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	335.00			395.39			486.30			1215.75		
	<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	193.85	167.29	153.72	64.53	18.04	(57.81)	350.30	332.56	296.78	608.69	517.89	392.69

Community and Regional Parks are the backbone of the system. In Charlotte County today, Community Park facilities are provided at a very modest level of 1.29 acres per thousand population, while an high proportion of the existing inventory has been developed in the form of small Neighborhood Parks, and in acreage associated with Special Purpose facilities. The types and distribution of these existing parks are shown on Map 5.2. Once the imbalance in the system has been improved, a standard or policy for levels of service by park type should be developed.

In addition to the recommended standard for combined active/multi-purpose types of parks, above, a standard of 4.0 acres per thousand population is recommended for passive parks and preserves (Environmental Parks) on a county-wide basis. This standard which is one-fifth the SCORP recommended standard, recognizes the unique contributions that State and Federal environmental areas make to Charlotte County. (The current inventory of these facilities provides 10.9 acres per thousand population. This does *not* include any portion of the 65,335 acres of the Cecil Webb Wildlife Management Area, the 3,900 acres of the Charlotte Flatwoods [or as it is officially known to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission], the Yucca Pen Addition to the Webb Wildlife Management Area currently in state ownership] or the 17,375 acres of the Charlotte Harbor State Reserve sites, for which inventory data are not available to indicate how much acreage is actually accessible for public use.) By adopting a standard for passive parks and preserves, Charlotte County will explicitly recognize, and commit to preserving, the valuable contribution these lands make to residents' recreational opportunities and quality of life.

Due to their unique nature and high public value, opportunities to acquire and develop Special Purpose Facilities should be taken when and wherever possible with no pre-set level of service.

Because the projected population growth of Charlotte County was slightly less than originally predicted in the WRT the expected deficit is smaller than originally predicted. Table 5.9 provides the best information as to the types of deficits the County can expect to experience in the future. The table identifies those areas where the County will experience deficits by planning district and by park classification at the proposed LOS.

At the proposed LOS standards of 6 acres/1000 population for active/multipurpose parks and 4 acres/1000 population for passive parks examination identifies current deficits in all planning districts for Mini Park (59.56 ac.), and Community Parks (113.15 ac.). Neighborhood Parks barely meet the standard in the South/East district, having a net deficit of (70.48 ac.) county-wide. These deficits are expected to increase through 2020 to 86.56 ac., 221.15 ac. and 151.48 ac., respectively.

There are virtually no Regional Park deficits through 2020 at the proposed LOS of 2 acres/1000 population; however, the proposed standard is recommended only as a phased approach toward eventually meeting the SCORP standard of 5 acres/1000 population. At that LOS, only West County district achieves the standard now or in the future with current inventory.

The Environmental Parks currently meet the proposed LOS of 4 acres/1000 population in all districts

now and in the future at current inventory levels. The proposed standard is recommended only as a phased approach toward eventually meeting at least one-half of the SCORP standards of 20 acres/1000 population. The reduced standard is recommended due to the extensive state and federal open space existing in Charlotte County, although access to those lands is very limited.

The County does however have some options to handle the smaller park deficits as the population continues to grow.

1. It shall be the policy of the County that future Mini-Parks shall be provided (land, facilities, and maintenance) by entities other than County government. Providers such as developers, homeowners' associations, property owners' associations, MSTUs, MSBUs, and the like would be appropriate entities to ensure that mini-parks are provided and maintained for public use in conformance with the level of service standards adopted herein.
2. Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks can be increased by a variety of options. The undeveloped County owned properties identified previously in Table 5.4 can assist in providing for the needs of the community as it continues to grow. A careful review of these properties with the LOS acreage per park classification should be undertaken prior to the release of any of the County Owned undeveloped lands. Perhaps new developments can provide required parks for their residents.
3. With regards to Regional Parks, South County still has a majority of vacant lands and perhaps through careful planning and land acquisition adequate lands can be obtained to meet the growing population in this section. In Mid County, as time goes on and the population nears buildout, the opportunity for additional lands for a Regional Park will be limited.
4. Environmental Lands will be limited as time goes on as well. Future deficits may be addressed by verifying the accessible acreage at existing facilities such as Cecil Webb Wildlife Management Area, the Charlotte Flatwoods and the Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve, which are not currently listed in the inventory and by the next planning decade—and by developing additional passive recreation facilities (trails, nature centers, etc.) at appropriate locations in existing preserve lands.

### **C. Recreational Facility Needs Analysis**

Guidelines for recreational facilities have been developed based on comparable standards from sources such as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the Florida Recreation and Parks Association (FRPA), and other local governments' adopted standards. These guidelines are not for the purpose of providing *mandatory* LOS standards. However, they reflect an important policy decision within the context of the County's provision of park and recreation services. Table 5.9 provides a quantitative listing of the State recognized recreational facilities which are currently provided at publicly owned park sites within Charlotte County. Charlotte County does not have an existing LOS Standard for these facilities. As such no update has been provided.

**Table 5.10 Quantitative Listing of State Recognized Recreational Facilities**

CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITY GUIDE	ADDRESS	District	Acreage	Square Feet or Linear Feet	BBQ Grills	Baseball Fields	Basketball Courts	Bike Trails	BMX	Boat Ramps	Bocci Courts	Canoe/Kayak	Concession Stand	Disc Golf	Environmental Center	Fishing	Fitness Trails	Football Fields	Gymnasium	Historic Center	Horse Arena	Horseshoes	Horse Trails	Inline Hockey Rink	Multi-Purpose/Open Space	Nature Preserve	Nature Trail/Walking/Trail	Paw Park	Picnicking	Picnic Shelters	Playgrounds	Room Rentals	Recreation Building	Restroom / Port-o-lets	Running Track	Shuffleboards	Skatepark	Soccer Fields	Softball Fields	Stadium	Swimming/Beach/Pool	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts		
Audubon-Pennington Nature Park	1153 Alton Rd.	Mid	0.3																						X	X																			
Bayshore Fishing Pier	22967 Bayshore Road	Mid	0.2	621												X																													
Bayshore Live Oak Park	Bayshore Road	Mid	7.2		X		X					X				X			X						X	X	X	X	X			X													
Charlotte Sports Park	2300 ElJobean Rd.	Mid	82	6,026 seats		6							X			X									X				X																
Deep Creek Park	Sandhill Blvd.	Mid	5				1																					X	X	X			X										2		
Edgewater Park	22410 Bayshore Road	Mid	4																							X	X	X	X			X													
El Jobean Boat Ramp	4224 El Jobean Road	Mid	0.2							1																																			
El Jobean Fishing Pier	SR 776	Mid	8.4	945												X																													
El Jobean Park	4333 Kerrigan Circle	Mid	3.6		X	1				1		X															X	X	X				X												
Franz Ross Park	19355 Quesada Blvd.	Mid	33		X													3L							X	X	X	X	X			X											4L		
G. C. Herring Park	3440 Indiana Rd.	Mid	19				2																	X			X		X		X	X	X												

CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITY GUIDE	ADDRESS	District	Acreage	Square Feet or Linear Feet	BBQ Grills	Baseball Fields	Basketball Courts	Bike Trails	BMX	Boat Ramps	Bocci Courts	Canoe/Kayak	Concession Stand	Disc Golf	Environmental Center	Fishing	Fitness Trails	Football Fields	Gymnasium	Historic Center	Horse Arena	Horeshoes	Horse Trails	Inline Hockey Rink	Multi-Purpose/Open Space	Nature Preserve	Nature Trail/Walking Trail	Paw Park	Picnicking	Picnic Shelters	Playgrounds	Room Rentals	Recreation Building	Restroom / Port-o-lets	Running Track	Shuffleboards	Skatepark	Soccer Fields	Softball Fields	Stadium	Swimming/Beach/Pool	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	
Harbour Heights Park	3350 San Marino Drive	Mid	8.1		X	1				1		X				X						X						X	X	X			X		4						2/L	1		
Harold Avenue Park	23400 Harold Avenue	Mid	41	13,015	X	4L	2/L						X						X										X	X	X	X					X	3L			4/L			
Hickory Bluff Park	4368 Lister Street	Mid	4.9																					X																				
Higgs Park	150 Higgs Court	Mid	4				1				2													X				X	X	X			X		24L									
Kiwanis Park	3100 Donora Street	Mid	32		X												X								X	X		X	X	X			X											
Lake Betty Park	3315 Conway Boulevard	Mid	3.4		X		1																	X				X	X	X			X											
Lincoln Park	357 Spring Lake Blvd	Mid	3.7																					X																				
Lister Park	4301 Lister Laner	Mid	1.5																					X																				
Maracaibo Park/Kidspace	Avocado & Maracaibo	Mid	12		X	3							X															X		X														
McGuire Park	32236 McGuire Avenue	Mid	5		X		1									X						X						X		X												4/L		
Midway Park	23023 Midway Boulevard	Mid	3.5																					X																		2		
North Charlotte Regional Park	1185 O'Donnell Blvd	Mid	103				4/L						X	X											X	X																		
Ollie's Pond Park	Felda and Bly Streets	Mid	41									X													X	X																		

CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITY GUIDE	ADDRESS	District	Acreage	Square Feet or Linear Feet	BBQ Grills	Baseball Fields	Basketball Courts	Bike Trails	BMX	Boat Ramps	Bocci Courts	Canoe/Kayak	Concession Stand	Disc Golf	Environmental Center	Fishing	Fitness Trails	Football Fields	Gymnasium	Historic Center	Horse Arena	Horeshoes	Horse Trails	Inline Hockey Rink	Multi-Purpose/Open Space	Nature Preserve	Nature Trail/Walking Trail	Paw Park	Picnicking	Picnic Shelters	Playgrounds	Room Rentals	Recreation Building	Restroom / Port-o-lets	Running Track	Shuffleboards	Skatepark	Soccer Fields	Softball Fields	Stadium	Swimming/Beach/Pool	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts			
Ott Circle Park	4320 Gardner	Mid	1.3																					X																						
Port Charlotte Beach Park	4500 Harbor Boulevard	Mid	15	6861.25 beach frontage	X	1				2	2/L	X				X												X	X	X	X	X	X								B/P	1	2			
Price Circle Park	1222 Price Circle	Mid	0.6																					X																						
Salyers Park	1333 Veronica Street	Mid	3																					X																						
Severin Park	171 Severin Road	Mid	1.7																								X																			
Sharon Circle Park	431 Sharon Circle	Mid	1.1			1																		X																						
Shirley Park	Shirley St.	Mid	12																					X																						
Springlake Park	Springlake/Lakeview	Mid	7.8				X					X				X									X	X		X	X				X													
Sunrise Park	Edgewater Dr at Pt. Charlotte Blvd.	Mid	41																					X		X																				
Tippecanoe Environmental Park	SR776	Mid	275																					X	X								X													
Allapatchee Shores Park	3100 Hickory Court	South / East	0.3									X				X												X																		
Alligator Creek Park	Taylor Rd and Alligator Creek	South / East	3													X																														
Bissett Park	12455 Path Avenue	South / East	16		X	1																		X			X	X	X				X		1								1			

<b>CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARKS &amp; RECREATION FACILITY GUIDE</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Square Feet or Linear Feet</b>	<b>BBQ Grills</b>	<b>Baseball Fields</b>	<b>Basketball Courts</b>	<b>Bike Trails</b>	<b>BMX</b>	<b>Boat Ramps</b>	<b>Bocci Courts</b>	<b>Canoe/Kayak</b>	<b>Concession Stand</b>	<b>Disc Golf</b>	<b>Environmental Center</b>	<b>Fishing</b>	<b>Fitness Trails</b>	<b>Football Fields</b>	<b>Gymnasium</b>	<b>Historic Center</b>	<b>Horse Arena</b>	<b>Horseshoes</b>	<b>Horse Trails</b>	<b>Inline Hockey Rink</b>	<b>Multi-Purpose/Open Space</b>	<b>Nature Preserve</b>	<b>Nature Trail/Walking Trail</b>	<b>Paw Park</b>	<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>Picnic Shelters</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>	<b>Room Rentals</b>	<b>Recreation Building</b>	<b>Restroom / Port-o-lets</b>	<b>Running Track</b>	<b>Shuffleboards</b>	<b>Skatepark</b>	<b>Soccer Fields</b>	<b>Softball Fields</b>	<b>Stadium</b>	<b>Swimming/Beach/Pool</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>Volleyball Courts</b>							
Carmalita Park	6905 Florida St.	South / East	33						X				X					2/L			X						X		X			X			X															
Charlotte County Event Center	75 Taylor Street	South / East	7.9	43,500												X												X				X	X	X																
Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park	15801 Tamiami Trail	South / East	486																						X																									
Clark Park	3100 Patio Court	South / East	1.7													X																																		
Darst Park	537 Darst Avenue	South / East	0.8							1		X																X																						
Hathaway Park	35461 Washington Loop Rd.	South / East	28							1		X										X			X	X		X					X																	
Helen Wrobbel Park	Route 17 & Cleveland	South / East	0.4																					X																										
Riverside Park	Riverside Drive	South / East	1							1		X																X																						
Scott Park	1250 Cooper St.	South / East	1.3																					X																										
Punta Gorda Heights Park	11040 Pinetrail Road	South / East	13				1																				X	X	X				X				4													
South County Regional Park	Carmalita & Cooper	South / East	100			4L	2L						X			X			X					X				X		X	X	X	X						4L	1L		P	2/L	2						
Wisteria Boat Ramp	end of Wisteria, off Rio Villa	South / East	0.1							1																																								
Ainger Creek Park	2025 Placida Road	West	2							1		X				X																																		

<b>CHARLOTTE COUNTY PARKS &amp; RECREATION FACILITY GUIDE</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Square Feet or Linear Feet</b>	<b>BBQ Grills</b>	<b>Baseball Fields</b>	<b>Basketball Courts</b>	<b>Bike Trails</b>	<b>BMX</b>	<b>Boat Ramps</b>	<b>Bocci Courts</b>	<b>Canoe/Kayak</b>	<b>Concession Stand</b>	<b>Disc Golf</b>	<b>Environmental Center</b>	<b>Fishing</b>	<b>Fitness Trails</b>	<b>Football Fields</b>	<b>Gymnasium</b>	<b>Historic Center</b>	<b>Horse Arena</b>	<b>Horeshoes</b>	<b>Horse Trails</b>	<b>Inline Hockey Rink</b>	<b>Multi-Purpose/Open Space</b>	<b>Nature Preserve</b>	<b>Nature Trail/Walking Trail</b>	<b>Paw Park</b>	<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>Picnic Shelters</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>	<b>Room Rentals</b>	<b>Recreation Building</b>	<b>Restroom / Port-o-lets</b>	<b>Running Track</b>	<b>Shuffleboards</b>	<b>Skatepark</b>	<b>Soccer Fields</b>	<b>Softball Fields</b>	<b>Stadium</b>	<b>Swimming/Beach/Pool</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>Volleyball Courts</b>			
Amberjack Environmental Park	Rotonda Shores and SR 775	West	220																						X	X		X																		
Anger Fishing Pier	Beach Road	West	0.3													X																														
Boca Grande Fishing Pier	Near 5800 Gasparilla Rd	West	6.9													X																														
Cape Haze Pioneer Trail	Rotonda Blvd. East/Rt. 771	West	65	18,480				X																		X	X																			
Cedar Point Environmental Park	2300 Placida Road	West	115									X			X	X									X	X		X																		
Chadwick Park/Englewood Beach	2100 North Beach Road	West	13		X		1									X												X	X	X												B		1		
Englewood East Park	11120 Sunnydale Avenue	West	2		X		1																				X		X																	
Oyster Creek Regional Park	6751 San Casa Dr	West										X	X			X		3/L							X	X	X																P			
Placida Fishing Pier	Intersection SR 776 / SR 775	West	2.1	410												X																														
Placida Park	Boca Grande Causeway	West	3							2		X																																		
Rotonda Park	100 Rotonda Blvd E.	West			X		X																	X	X	X		X	X	X													2			
South Gulf Cove Park	Amicola St.	West	4.8							1																																				
Tringali Park	3460 S Mcall Rd.	West	8	3,684			3												X					X						X	X	X	X											4L	2	

## **V. Implementation**

The Charlotte County Parks and Recreation Department continues to be responsible for the acquisition recommendations, development, operation, and maintenance of County parks and recreation facilities. Approximately 60 parks and recreation facilities are maintained by the department, ranging from mini-parks to the 90 acre South County Regional Park. Also maintained and operated are a number of special purpose facilities such as boat ramps and fishing piers. Daily maintenance and repair operations are managed in three separate districts - South County (which includes East County but not the City of Punta Gorda), Mid County, and West County.

The department's central administrative organization includes a director, one administrative manager, seven full time administrative staff members, nineteen full-time and eighteen part time recreational staff, and 33 full-time and 12 part time parks maintenance staff, eleven full time and 13 part time Project management staff.

Charlotte County has made substantial progress in its provision of recreational services and opportunities. The County has managed to meet or exceed the objectives and policies of its Recreation and Open Space Element pertaining to the acquisition and development parkland. The County can reduce the future LOS needs and prevent future development problems by phasing in the LOS over the next two planning decades. The County may still need to address the low level of service provided as compared to the SCORP recommendations.

### **A. Revenue Sources for Meeting Needs**

The County's main funding sources for parks and recreation are impact fees sales, and ad valorem taxes. Impact fees can be used only for land acquisition and new park development, and must meet a rational nexus test as required by State law. Operational and maintenance expenses typically come from ad valorem taxes. Currently, dozens of funding sources for recreational land acquisition or development have become available, most in the form of grants. Charlotte County has utilized several of these sources as noted in Table 5.10. The principal uses of these funding sources, and the amount of funds which the County has received are also listed.

Open space acquisition, in the form of environmentally sensitive lands, can often be funded utilizing many of the Federal and State acquisition programs currently available. Previously the County had a funding source for environmentally sensitive land which was the revenue from the .05 mills that the County has set aside for this type of acquisition. Although a viable sources for revenue, funding of this type has never been available for active parks or recreational facilities.

As the revised recreational level of service standard is implemented, the County will need to continue to find innovative ways to fund the deficient facilities which may result from this action. Since impact fees cannot be used to support deficiencies, and ad valorem monies are limited, options

such as user fees, grants, public-private co-operatives, special event fund raising, and other revenue generating tactics will need to be employed.

**Table 5.11 State and Federal Financial Assistance Available for  
Recreation and Open Space Acquisition and Development**

Program	Purposes	Funding	Conditions	Comments
<p><b>Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program</b>, established by Section 375.075, F.S, and Chapter 16D-5, Part V, F.A.C.</p>	<p>Can be used for acquisition or development or renovation of recreational sites. Acquisition can range from small areas serving a localized need to those of regional significance encompassing hundreds of acres. Development can include single-purpose facilities ranging from beach access, picnicking and ballfields to large multi-activity parks. Since 1991 renovation of older facilities was added as an eligible expense.</p>	<p>A project with a total cost of \$40,000 or less can be funded 100%. Projects with a cost of 50,001 to 150,000 can be funded 75% with a match from local government. Project costs exceeding \$150,000 must be funded at 50%:50% cost share.</p>	<p>Eligible Applicants are units of local government with the legal responsibility for the provision of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.</p>	<p>Currently, Charlotte County has been awarded \$543,156 from this funding source. This includes the \$100,000 in 1994 for the acquisition of property in West County to be used as a boat ramp.</p>
<p><b>Florida Boating Improvement Program</b>, established by Section <b>327.28 F.S.</b> and distributed according to Chapter 16D-5, Part III <b>F.A.C.</b></p>	<p>To provide for recreational channel marking, public launching facilities, and other public boating-related activities. Funds may also be used for manatee protection and recovery projects.</p>	<p>Funds collected from the registration of boats are returned to county governments in the form of grants.</p>	<p>No matching requirements.</p>	<p>Currently, Charlotte County has been awarded \$1,002,166 from this program. The funds have been used for dredging in open water, construction of piers, construction of boat ramps and support facilities, development of a Manatee Protection Guide and Marine Land Use Studies.</p>

**Table 5.11 State and Federal Financial Assistance Available for  
Recreation and Open Space Acquisition and Development**

<p>Florida Communities Trust, established by Chapter 380, Part III, F.S. administer funds two separate programs- the <b>Preservation 2000 Program</b> and the <b>Area of Critical State Concern</b>.</p>	<p>Funds are used to assist local government with matching grants, full grants and loans to purchase land for conservation and outdoor recreation purposes.</p>		<p>County governments and municipalities of Florida are the only entities eligible to receive Preservation 2000 funds from the Trust.</p>	<p>Charlotte County has received approximately \$10 million in funds for land acquisition. This includes the \$2.2 million for the acquisition of Don Pedro Island Beach Park, \$46,000 for the acquisition of Amberjack Slough, and \$600,000 for the acquisition of Tippecanoe Scrub.</p>
<p>The National Park Service's <b>Land and Water Conservation Fund Program</b>, administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to Chapter 16D-5, Part VI, F.A.C.</p>	<p>Funds are available for distribution to state agencies and local governmental entities for approved, high-quality outdoor recreation projects meeting needs identified in the State's comprehensive outdoor recreation plan. Florida has allocated its portion of these funds to local governments for resource-based and user-oriented public outdoor recreation projects.</p>	<p>Funding is on a 50:50 basis from state and local sources.</p>	<p>Local match may be cash, in-kind services, or land value. Local governments are eligible applicants.</p>	<p>Currently, Charlotte County has received \$831,500 from this funding source, this includes the \$65,000 approved in 1994 for the construction of John Hathaway park along Shell Creek.</p>

**Table 5.11 State and Federal Financial Assistance Available for Recreation and Open Space Acquisition and Development**

<p><b>The West Coast Inland Navigational District Waterway Development Program</b> established by Section 107, River and Harbor Act of 1960.</p>	<p>To provide financial assistance to eligible local governments to undertake projects such as beach renourishment; planning &amp; public navigation; public recreation; boating safety; research, study or test programs, relating to waterway construction; use, operation or maintenance; environmental education; and marine enforcement.</p>	<p>Certain projects require matching funds.</p>	<p>Eligible applicants are Charlotte, Lee, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties.</p>	<p>Charlotte County receives \$12,000 per year from this funding source. Projects from this funding source include dredging in open waters; construction of piers, jetties boat ramps, and matching funds for the John Hathaway Park construction.</p>
<p>The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 established the <b>National Recreational Trails Funding Program</b> and the <b>Transportation Enhancement Program</b>.</p>	<p>The Trails program was created to allocate funding assistance to the states for recreational trails construction and maintenance. The enhancement program was established for public agencies to receive funding for projects such as bicycle &amp; pedestrian facilities, scenic easements, scenic or historic sites, landscape beautification, historic preservation and others.</p>	<p>Funds are dispersed on an 80% federal, 20% State, and 0% local.</p>	<p>Projects must first be approved in the FDOT capital improvement plan. In 1994, the County had 2 projects for funding in the State fiscal year 1999-2000. They are the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail for \$600,000 and \$60,000 for the construction of bicycle paths on Harbor Blvd., from US 41 to the Port Charlotte Beach Complex.</p>	

Source: Charlotte County Budget Department, June 2005 and *A Guide to Florida State Programs*

In addition to the financial revenue sources identified in Table 5.10, there is a wide variety of other implementation tools available for the development of the parks and recreation system. Some of these, such as the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund (CARL) and Florida Communities Trust continue to be used with great success. Other tools, ranging from development regulations to volunteerism, may offer the County new or expanded opportunities to develop and operate a parks system.

## **B. Interface with Other Park and Recreation Providers**

Within Charlotte County there are a number of other park and recreation providers such as the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, and the City of Punta Gorda. Charlotte County also has an Interlocal Agreement with the Charlotte County School Board allowing for public access to school recreational facilities.

### *Interlocal Agreement*

In an effort to provide services to the Charlotte County residents, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department utilize and implement interlocal agreements to provide for the development and maintenance of parks in various locations, provide weekly inspections and minor maintenance of water control structures, maintain exotic nuisance vegetation and provide perpetual maintenance of several project sites. Like many other Counties, trying to get the most out of a facility or purchasing equipment unnecessarily can increase the budget of a department. Charlotte County in general utilizes interlocal agreements when they can accomplish a particular objective. They may be between homeowner associations, Environmental Organizations, the School Board, etc., Police Athletic League, Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority, The Museum Society, Inc., d/b/a/ Historical Center Society, Port Charlotte Little League, Englewood Area Athletic Association, Punta Gorda Little League Association and Pop Warner Association, Florida State Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Recreation, District, and Charlotte County Family Young Men's Christian Association, Inc. Many interlocal agreements are generated in response to the community needs. For instance, Parks and Recreation regularly deals with soccer, baseball, and football leagues. Periodically a new sport develops and they are lobbied by the new groups to utilize existing facilities. This will in turn generate new agreements specific to the newly identified need.

The County assists with the development of athletic facilities on School Board property and to provide field lighting at Charlotte High School and cooperates with the Water Management Districts in an effort to improve the environment and safeguard natural resources.

The Charlotte County School system was especially hard hit during the 2004 Hurricane Season. Every school within the county received some damage from Hurricane Charley which hit Charlotte County on August 13, 2004 two weeks after the 2004 – 2005 school year began. Many of the fields were unusable throughout the remainder of the year. Eight out of the 17 schools were significantly damaged with four campuses needing to be completely rebuilt.

The County's interlocal agreements provide for a series of additional recreational activities. In an effort to provide the general public with pool facilities, the County has entered into an agreement with the YMCA. The County provides funding of the YMCA pool and spa in exchange for the use of the facilities for the general public. Another YMCA agreement provide for operations and maintenance of the Dotzler YMCA Out Door Activity Center located at 22801 Bayshore Drive, Charlotte County This enables both parties to maintain a service well needed within the County.

These agreements are critical in providing the many needed services requested by a growing community. Interlocal Agreements will continue to be utilized by the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department when necessary to achieve a service for the good of the residents and the department.

### **C. Other Implementation Tools**

In order to adequately provide recreational facilities that will meet County needs, a number of policies related to the financing and implementation of the parks system need to be integrated. A comprehensive range of alternative financing and implementation needs to be considered. These may include:

- Raising funds through a concessions or commercial leisure land lease agreements;
- Investigate the potential to enhance and expand internal revenue sources, such as increasing user fee levels and identifying opportunities for new user fees;
- Maximize financial efficiency through joint use agreements with other recreation providers;
- Pursue and utilize state and federal grants for parks and open space that will meet multiple needs;
- Expand recreational programming by utilizing contracted instructors/coaches, with proceeds distributed at a 60%:40% or 70%:30% split;
- Establish MSTUs or MSBUs to develop and maintain parks;
- Identify non-earmarked funding sources to increase departmental flexibility; and
- Evaluate the potential for land disposal or land swaps to facilitate the development of network of parks, reduction of maintenance costs and increased level of service.

## VI. Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal 1:** Develop and maintain a park and recreation system that will provide a diverse, yet balanced, range of active and passive recreation opportunities and facilities which meets the needs of all persons, while maintaining the unique natural features of the land.

**Objective 1.1 (Planning):** Implement a Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan which is a long-range policy plan for the county park system to provide guidance for park acquisition, facility development, levels of service, resource management, park operations, and which addresses the need for active recreation.

**Policy 1.1.1:** Meet or exceed the level of service standards established within the adopted Master Plan of recreation and parks.

**Policy 1.1.2:** Adopt a Level of Service of 6.0 acres per thousand population for all active and multipurpose parks, including mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, and special-purpose areas.

**Policy 1.1.3:** Adopt a Level of Service of 4.0 acres per thousand population for all Environmental parks.

**Policy 1.1.4:** In order to meet category specific target Level of Service Standards of 6.0 acres per thousand population for active and multipurpose parks and in order to meet category-specific target Levels of Service guidelines in each planning district as follows:

- Mini Parks – 0.5 acres/1000 population
- Neighborhood Parks – 1.5 acres/1000 population
- Community Parks – 2 acre/1000 population
- Regional Parks – 2 acre/1000 population
- Special Purpose Areas – with no set level

Charlotte County will encourage developers of subdivisions, developments of regional impacts, and planned unit developments to plan and maintain public and/or private active recreational facilities or an appropriate alternative as coordinated with Charlotte County staff, as appropriate to the size and scope of proposed development and County development standards.

Due to their unique nature and high public value, opportunities to acquire and develop Special Purpose Facilities should be taken when and wherever possible with no pre-set level of service.

**Policy 1.1.5:** Develop management plans and implement work programs for each park in the county park system.

**Policy 1.1.6:** Implement a continuous public information program to increase resident and visitor awareness of the recreational opportunities available in the county.

**Policy 1.1.7:** Continue research efforts to obtain a clearer understanding of park visitation and park visitor characteristics as part of its overall program for increasing public awareness and use of county parks.

**Policy 1.1.8:** Continue to utilize the Recreation and Park Advisory Board, a citizen advisory board to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), to review park and recreation issues and opportunities and to make recommendations to the BCC which will continue to assist the BCC in achieving a high level of coordination in the provision and promotion of recreational opportunities in Charlotte County.

**Policy 1.1.9:** Charlotte County will consider geographic distribution of all its recreational services for the benefit and convenience of its citizens.

**Policy 1.1.10:** The Concurrency Management Program will ensure that within Charlotte County that:

1. At the time the development order or permit is issued, the necessary recreation and open space facilities are in place or under actual construction; or
2. A development order or permit is issued subject to the condition that, at the time of the issuance of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent, the acreage for the necessary recreation and open space facilities to serve the new development is dedicated or acquired by Charlotte County, or funds in the amount of the developer's fair share are committed; and
  - a. a development order or permit is issued subject to the conditions that the necessary recreation and open space facilities needed to serve the new development are scheduled to be in place or under actual construction not more than one year after issuance of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent as provided in the adopted 5-year schedule of capital improvements; or
  - b. at the time the development order or permit is issued, the necessary recreation and open space facilities are the subject of a binding executed agreement which requires the necessary facilities and services to serve the new development to be in place or under actual construction not more than one year after issuance of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent; or
  - c. at the time the development order or permit is issued, the necessary recreation and

open space facilities are guaranteed in an enforceable development agreement, pursuant to Section 163.3220, *Florida Statutes*, or an agreement or development order issued pursuant to Chapter 380, *Florida Statutes*, to be in place or under actual construction not more than one year after issuance of a certificate of occupancy or its functional equivalent.

**Objective 1.2 (Alternative Strategies):** Promote recreational activities outside the traditional system through the increased use of community and educational facilities and develop creative alternative recreational opportunities in order to serve a larger segment of the population.

**Policy 1.2.1:** Continue to involve the Charlotte County School Board in the provision of County parks and recreational opportunities consistent with the management objectives through the use of Interlocal Agreements, which assures general public access to school recreational facilities.

**Policy 1.2.2:** Explore new ways of involving the private sector in the provision of county park recreation opportunities consistent with the management objectives.

**Policy 1.2.3:** Establish a formal program for utilizing volunteers in all aspects of the County's recreation programs to supplement existing park and recreational personnel. As a corollary to this, appropriate inducements for encouraging volunteer donations of time and effort should be identified and instituted. Initiate the use of volunteer assistance in developing, operating, and maintaining county parks to supplement insufficient appropriations for these purposes.

**Objective 1.3 (Funding):** Identify, evaluate and initiate use of alternative sources of revenue such as user fees, bond referenda, grant programs, public/private partnerships, and others for acquisition, development and operation of recreation programs and facilities.

**Policy 1.3.1:** Encourage the use of public and private financial and other resources for the development of recreational opportunities.

**Policy 1.3.2:** Determine the potential for operating park or park facilities jointly with private suppliers, which could contribute start-up and construction costs for new recreation opportunities.

**Policy 1.3.3:** Encourage the establishment of non-profit organizations to solicit financial support and manpower to acquire and develop additional park lands and to help offset the operation and maintenance costs of existing facilities and resources.

**Policy 1.3.4:** Determine and monitor new trends in recreation funding needs and priorities.

**Policy 1.3.5:** The Board of County Commissioners shall create a recreation trust fund to accept bequests to provide an alternative funding assistance program for capital improvements to help serve County recreational needs.

**Policy 1.3.6:** Continue to utilize a task force to identify possible means for increasing private sector investment in recreation and solicit sponsorship. This group is composed of representatives from the Recreation and Parks Department, private recreation suppliers, and business groups.

**Policy 1.3.8:** Charlotte County shall continue to utilize, as a funding source, impact fees to finance land and facilities for parks and recreation to meet the needs of all residents.

**Policy 1.3.9:** Charlotte County may consider the desirability and feasibility of establishing a public golf course to help fund recreation in the County over the long-term and enhance adult organized activity. The feasibility shall be determined by the Board of County Commissioners.

**Objective 1.4 (Management):** Protect and maintain open space and parkland that will conserve forests, wetlands, fish, marine life, and wildlife and in order to retain their environmental, economic, aesthetic and recreational values.

**Policy 1.4.1:** Encourage multiple use of county resources, where appropriate, to provide for recreation, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, erosion control, and maintenance of water quality.

**Policy 1.4.2:** Protect and restore, where feasible, the ecological function of natural systems to ensure their long-term environmental, economic, and recreational values.

**Policy 1.4.3:** Develop an exotic plant eradication program for county parks and open space.

**Policy 1.4.4:** Charlotte County shall maximize the preservation of existing natural features, such as water bodies and vegetation, in the development of park land.

**Policy 1.4.5:** Ensure the public's right to reasonable access to beaches and waterfront property.

**Objective 1.5 (Acquisition):** Acquire park land and open space, as appropriate, to expand the parks system throughout the county.

**Policy 1.5.1:** Acquire, develop, and manage park lands to offer visitors and residents increased outdoor recreation experiences.

**Policy 1.5.2:** Acquire vacant properties that are adjacent to existing undeveloped park inventory to increase the size of the property, making it more developable for park and recreational facilities

**Policy 1.5.3:** Accelerate public acquisition of coastal and waterfront land where possible, to protect coastal and marine resources and to meet projected public demand.

**Policy 1.5.4:** All proposals for new park land shall be submitted to the County Recreation and Parks Department, Community Development Department, and Engineering Department, and the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, for comments on the suitability of the site as a park, prior to official BCC action to acquire, develop, accept dedication, or reserve the property except under exigent circumstances.

**Policy 1.5.5:** All separate land acquisition and/or physical developments expected to cost \$25,000 or more shall be scheduled into the Capital Improvements Element. An appraisal shall be required for all land purchases up to \$25,000. Two (2) appraisals shall be required for all land purchases over \$25,000.

**Policy 1.5.6:** Encourage state and federal governments to acquire certain properties within Charlotte County for recreational use if:

(a) the acquisition is beyond the scope that can be adequately addressed by local government and;

(b) the property is suitable for the express purpose, and meets criteria set forth by the specific federal or state land acquisition programs.

**Policy 1.5.7:** Charlotte County may consider acceptance of lands through donation and tax deed to convert directly or exchange for recreational land.

**Objective 1.6 (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990):** Charlotte County will operate their recreational programs so that when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

**Policy 1.6.1:** Charlotte County will not refuse to allow a person with a disability to participate in a service, program or activity simply because the person has a disability.

**Policy 1.6.2:** Charlotte County will provide programs and services in an integrated setting,

unless separate or different measures are necessary to ensure equal opportunity.

**Policy 1.6.3:** Charlotte County will eliminate unnecessary eligibility standards or rules that deny individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to safely enjoy their services, programs, or activities unless "necessary" for the provisions of the service, program or activity.

**Policy 1.6.4:** Charlotte County will make reasonable modifications in policies, practices and procedures that deny equal access to individuals with disabilities, unless a fundamental alteration in the program would result.

**Policy 1.6.5:** Charlotte County will furnish auxiliary aids and services when necessary to ensure effective communication, unless an undue burden or fundamental alteration of program would result.

**Policy 1.6.6:** Charlotte County may provide special benefits, beyond those required by the regulation, to individuals with disabilities.

**Policy 1.6.7:** Charlotte County will not place special charges on individuals with disabilities to cover the costs of measures necessary to ensure non-discriminatory treatment, such as making modification required to provide program accessibility or providing qualified interpreters.