



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**CHAPTER VIII**  
**RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

Data and Analysis

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**DRAFT**

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## Data and Analysis

### Recreation and Open Space Element

#### A. PURPOSE.

The Recreation and Open Space Element examines the role of the parks and open space system of the City of Melbourne. Parks play a very important role in establishing the city's image; therefore, the recommendations of this element are intended to provide for the continued delivery of adequate recreation and park facilities and for the beautification of the city's parks in order to beautify the city.

#### B. STANDARDS.

##### 1. Existing Standards.

The planning of individual parks, and of a whole system of parks, could not be done in an orderly manner without assigning to each park a function, size, and a listing of facilities. A good system of classification and standards enables parks to be planned in a balanced manner for uniform and all-inclusive recreation service. All areas of the city can then be properly served, and all age groups and segments of population provided for on an impartial basis.

The State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, in the publication *Outdoor Recreation in Florida, 2000* (Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – SCORP), established a set of reference standards which provide a suitable basis for planning. The standards were derived from a statewide survey of leisure time and recreational preferences among tourists and Florida residents. The classifications and standards developed in the next few pages are based on the state standards.

Private recreation facilities are plentiful in the City of Melbourne and south Brevard County. While these private facilities serve much of the recreation demand in the area, the city has prepared this plan and adopted these standards strictly for the purpose of directing the city's leisure services program of providing public parks and recreation programs. The city will continue to provide public parks and recreation programs, and will continue to require the development community to contribute its fair-share toward providing public recreation facilities and open spaces.

##### 2. Park Classifications.

*Overview.* Generally, parks serve two purposes: They conserve open space and natural resources, and they provide outdoor recreation opportunities. Florida is still rich in open space resources such as forestlands, grasslands, wetlands, lakes, and beaches, although the supply is steadily dwindling. Conservation of open space through the acquisition of land is one means of maintaining examples of Florida's original domain. Demand for outdoor recreation opportunities

can be met by providing parks for such passive, resource-based pursuits as picnicking and nature study, and neighborhood or community parks for active user-oriented pursuits such as tennis, basketball, shuffleboard, softball, and soccer.

Parks that conserve open space and fulfill outdoor recreation demand can be subdivided into six types, depending primarily on the size of the tributary area they serve: Urban open space, neighborhood park, including equipped play area and tot lot, community park, regional parks, or urban district park, beach access sites, and special use facilities. These types of parks are described below, with specific criteria summarized in Table R-1.

**Table R-1.**

Site Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities

<i>Park Facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Service Area</i>	<i>Area per 1,000 Population</i>	<i>Population Served</i>	<i>Size</i>
Urban Open Space	Urban Areas	¼ to ½ mile	1 acre	NA	.10 acres minimum
Neighborhood Park including equipped play area and tot lot	Neighborhood area, adjacent to elementary school when feasible	¼ to ½ mile	2 acres	up to 5,000	2 - 5 acres
Community Park	Designed to serve residents of a group or neighborhood, adjacent to Jr. or Sr. High school when feasible.	½ - 3 miles	2 acres	over 5,000	5 - 20 acres
Regional Park or Urban District Park	On the periphery of an urban area.	30 minutes to 1 hour driving time	20 acres	50,000 to over 100,000	Minimum of 100 - 450 acres, upward to several thousand acres.
Special Use	Throughout the city	30 to 40 minutes driving time city wide	N/A	N/A	N/A
Beach access with parking	Within ¼ mile of coastal beach in an urban area or on its periphery, 1 access/ ½ mile	¼ to ½ mile	½ acre		1.0

	or shoreline				
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Source: Outdoor Recreation in Florida – 2000 , A Comprehensive Program for Meeting Florida’s Outdoor Recreation Needs, State of Florida, Department of Natural Resources.

- a. *Urban Open Space.* This usually consist of small areas developed or undeveloped that are not used for active recreation pursuits. They may contain landscaped vacant lots with passive recreation such as benches, shade trees, private uses and other public uses.
- b. *Neighborhood Parks including Equipped Play Area/Tot Lots.* The neighborhood park is a “walk to” park, generally located along streets where people can walk or bicycle without encountering heavy traffic. It services the population of a neighborhood in a radius of up to one-half mile (see Map R-1), and should have at least three acres for each 1,000 population. Its size usually ranges up to five acres in size, and it serves a population of up to 5,000.

*Equipped Play Area/Tot Lots* are small recreation areas specifically tailored for use by small children and includes playground equipment such as slides, jungle gyms, swings, etc. These facilities are generally on small lots or parcels and contain little additional open space but are intended to serve residents of a subdivision or group of subdivisions.

Because the service areas of a neighborhood park and an elementary school often coincide, it is desirable for the neighborhood park to physically join the elementary school when feasible. Both park and school serve the same basic population, share compatible land uses, and maintain recreation facilities that are of mutual benefit.

Because recreation needs vary from one neighborhood to another, site design should be flexible in order to meet the particular recreation needs of each neighborhood. Site design should also reflect the character of the neighborhood and incorporate compatible elements of both passive and active types of recreation.

Typical facilities developed in the neighborhood park may include play apparatus, multipurpose courts, sports fields, picnic areas, and free-play areas. Additional facilities may be added, depending on the recreation demands of the neighborhood. Neighborhood parks are not staffed. Some Passive parks are also included under this category. Passive parks are sites that are generally small in size and serve an aesthetic or urban open-space purpose.

- c. *Community Parks.* A community park is a park, located near major streets or arterials. It is designed to serve the needs of several neighborhoods, which may be said to constitute a more defined community, and serves community residents within a radius of up to three miles, or a service population of over 5,000 and up to 10,000. Ten to 20 acres for each community park is recommended, and where possible, the community park should be located near or adjacent to a junior or senior high school.

The community park offers a wide range of program and facility opportunities for all community individuals and families. Just as the neighborhood park fulfills the recreational needs of the neighborhood, so the community park is designed to meet the recreational needs of an entire community. Typical facilities at a community park include ball fields, tennis courts, play areas, picnic areas, multipurpose courts, swimming pools, recreation buildings and sports fields. Additional recreation facilities may be included to meet a particular recreation demand in the community. Adequate off-street parking is essential. Two important elements of every community park are the use of landscaping and the provision of passive recreation activity areas. Community parks often have on-site staff to manage the facilities. Community parks also may serve the function of neighborhood parks when located adjacent to residential areas.

- d. *Regional Parks.* Regional or Urban district parks are large resource-based areas that serve one or more communities and are usually located within one hour's driving distance of the residents they serve. The facility should serve a population of at least 50,000 and preferably over 100,000 and should range in size from a minimum of 250 acres to as large as several thousand acres.

Because regional parks are generally designed for resource-based activities, location is dependent upon the availability of high-quality natural resources capable of being developed and used for outdoor recreation.

Typical facilities include water-based recreation sites, camping areas, hiking and nature trails, picnic areas and other facilities not requiring extensive development. Parking areas are necessary and should be designed to minimize adverse effects upon the natural environment.

- e. *Special Use Facilities.* Special use areas and facilities fulfill a large part of the demand for specialized recreation experiences. All population segments participate in a wide range of recreation activities which generally occur at special use areas and facilities close to their residences. Typical areas and facilities might include golf courses, auditoriums, community buildings and boat ramps. These may be located within park areas or they may be situated at free-standing, individual sites. Many special use facilities may function as neighborhood parks.
- f. *Beach Access.* Beach access points primarily consist of an improved walkway, elevated above adjacent dunes from a public street or an improved parking area to the beach. These access ways are created primarily to provide public parking for beachcombers and fishermen, and to protect fragile dunes from erosion and loss of vegetation. Beach front parks usually contain beach access boardwalks.

### **3. Resource-Based Activity Standards.**

Resource-based activities are those which are dependent on the use of natural resources such as the beaches, the Indian River and the St. Johns River. The state developed standards in order to help it inventory these activities on a statewide basis. Beach access with parking is the category defined in DEP's preliminary guidelines. The city does provide access to the Indian River with boat ramps, boardwalks and parks. These are addressed as Special Use Facilities or as other parks.

**4. Recreation Facility Standards.**

The facilities at each park should be adequate to meet the recreation needs of the people in its service area. The standards in Table R-2 present these recreation facility standards.

**C. EXISTING CONDITIONS.**

**1. Background.**

The City of Melbourne has a long-standing history of offering recreation and open space areas for its residents. An inventory of existing recreation and open space areas is presented in Table R-2. The inventory is also presented in Map R-1 of the Map Atlas.

There are currently no existing deficiencies related to the recreation and open space system in the City of Melbourne.

**2. Level of Service Standards**

The level of service (LOS) standards adopted by the city establish the need for three acres of publicly owned park land per 1,000 residents. The city's population is 78,301 people (2008); therefore, 234.9 acres are required. There are currently 272.15 acres of park land, excluding two golf courses owned and operated by the city listed in the inventory on Table R-2. Based upon the City's current population, the 272.15 acres of parkland translates into approximately 3.48 acres of developed parks per 1,000 City residents, which exceeds the required LOS standard. In addition, several County maintained parks are located within or in close proximity to the city and are used by Melbourne residents. Approximately 558 acres of County maintained parkland is accessible to City residents. If the 558 acres of County maintained properties are included within the acreage available to City residents, the acreage of developed parkland is equivalent to 10.6 acres per 1,000 City residents. The established LOS standard mirrors Brevard County's adopted LOS and provides a consistent standard for both City and County residents. This consistency is important since a variety of County maintained parks are located within the City of Melbourne including a regional facility, Wickham Park (480 acres) and a large beach facility, Paradise Beach Park (11 acres) and Melbourne Riverview Park (16 acres).

**3. Existing Facilities.**

The city provides recreation programs through the city Leisure Services Department staff. The city's facilities are also used by volunteer and private nonprofit organizations for programs and activities. The result is an extensive system of recreation programming. Existing facilities include: three swimming pools, 25 tennis courts, 19 basketball courts, 12 shuffleboard courts (operated by the County at Wickham Park), 20 baseball/softball fields, three soccer fields, three football fields, and two 18-hole golf courses.



**Table R-2  
 Recreation and Open Space Inventory (Page 1 of 2)**

Item No.	Acres		Comm Bldg.	Tennis	V.B. Court	Base-Ball Field	Basket-Ball Courts	Foot Ball	Soccer	Hand Ball	Shuf-Board Court	Golf Holes	Swim Pool	Fresh Water	Salt Water	Fish Pier	Boat Ramp	Jog Path	Picnic Area	Bench	BBQ Grill	Play Ground	Security	Parking Spaces
		Footnotes		X		X	X							X				X	X					X
		<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>																						
1	.37	Bennie J. Hopkins, Sr., Park																	X	X		X		X
2	.47	Frink Park																	X			X		X
3	.12	Lagoon Park																	X	X				X
4	2.3	Joe Mullins Park				X	X	X			X								X	X	X	X		X
5	.52	Grand View Shores Park					X												X			X		X
6	.64	Magnolia Manor Park																	X			X		X
7	.23	Masterson Park																	X	X		X		X
8	3.96	N.D.P. Park (undeveloped)																						X
9	.48	Oxford Ridge Park					X												X			X		X
10	3.88	Ruffner Park				X													X	X	X	X		X
11	.6	Sunset Park																				X		X
12	.6	Tradewinds park					X												X		X	X		X
13	1.38	Bowe Gardens (undeveloped)												X										X
14	.22	Lincoln Ave. Gazebo																		X				X
		<b>North Core Park System</b>																						
15	3.61	Pineapple Park River Front													X	X			X	X		X		X
16	.23	Rossetter Park																	X	X				X
17	0.2	(Triangle park) Eau Gallie Point																						
		<b>South Core Park Systems</b>																						
18	.41	Promenade													X		X			X				X
19	.69	Bean Park																	X	X	X			X
20	0.10	Campbell Park (Historic)																		X				X
21	5.82	Claude Edge/Front Street Civic Center	X								X				X	X	X		X	X				X
22	0.80	Holmes Park																	X	X	X			X
23	.27	Babcock Park																		X				X
24	1.39	Gateway Park (undeveloped)																	X					X
25	.11	Harry Lawrence Park																						
26	.58	Glanton Park																	X					X

**Table R-2 (Page 2 of 2)**

Item No.	Acres		Comm Bldg.	Tennis	V.B. Court	Base-Ball Field	Basket-Ball Courts	Foot Ball	Soccer	Hand Ball	Shuf-Board Court	Golf Holes	Swim Pool	Fresh Water	Salt Water	Fish Pier	Boat Ramp	Jog Path	Picnic Area	Bench	BBQ Grill	Play Ground	Security	Parking Spaces
		<i>Special Use Facilities</i>																						
1	155.0	Harbour City Golf Course	X									X												X
2	125.0	Melbourne Municipal Golf Course	X									X												X
3	1.88	Senior Center**	X								X													X
4	1.15	Trailer Haven Park**	X								X													X
5	7.82	McGrath Field			X	X	X												X			X		X
6	1.85	Eau Gallie Civic Center	X		X		X																	X
7	30.0	Wells Park/Auditorium/ Honor America Park/MMMP Library/Botanical Garden	X											X				X	X	X				X
		<b>202.04</b> <i>Community Parks</i>																						
1	6.42	Brothers Park/Grant St. C.C.	X		X	X	X						X						X	X	X	X	X	X
2	11.7	Crane Field Park	X	X	X	X	X	X					X						X	X	X	X		X
3	12.76	Fee Avenue Park		X	X	X							X						X	X	X	X	X	X
4	13.4	Jimmy Moore Park		X		X								X					X	X	X	X		X
5	52.6	Lipscomb Park (w/Library)		X	X	X	X	X						X					X	X	X	X		X
6	40.0	Southwest Recreation Complex				X	X		X					X					X	X	X	X	X	X
7	9.9	Ballard Park		X			X								X		X		X	X	X	X		X
8	6.7	Sherwood Park				X							X						X	X	X	X		X
9	6.16	Carver Park	X		X	X	X	X											X		X	X		X

**4. Funding System.**

The city funds its recreation and open space system from several sources. These include general fund tax revenues, user fees, recreation impact fees from new residential developments, and grants from state and federal agencies. These revenues are programmed for expenditure through the city's annual budget, its Capital Improvements Program, and the CDBG program.

**5. Recreation needs are also satisfied by private facilities which are not owned or operated by the city, but are open to the general public. These facilities include:**

- Bowling centers (2).
- Health Clubs and Fitness Centers (5).
- Easter Seals Pool/Recreation Center
- Batter's Choice Batting Cages
- FIT athletic fields.
- FIT botanical gardens.
- BCC athletic facilities.
- Miscellaneous playgrounds and pools at hotels and restaurants.
- Miscellaneous private playgrounds and neighborhood recreation facilities provided within subdivisions, apartment and condominium facilities.

**D. FUTURE NEEDS.**

**1. Facilities.**

The existing parks and recreation system of the City of Melbourne is extensive and there are no current deficiencies. The future needs of the city will be oriented toward expanding and enhancing the City's existing recreational facilities and programs to accommodate future population growth.

Long-range future needs will increase with population growth. As growth occurs, the City will ensure that adequate park land is available to meet the recreational needs of its residents while maintaining the established LOS standard of three acres of park land per 1000 residents. Based upon a projected 2025 population of 99,450, the City will maintain an acceptable LOS through this time period.

**2. Issues.**

The major issues are:

- a. Establishing a system of parks with priority for expenditures given to the community parks.

This system includes:

*Regional parks.* Brevard County will continue to be responsible for providing this resource.

*Community parks.* The City of Melbourne needs to concentrate expenditures and focus on the enhancement of the eleven existing parks that offer extensive facilities and programs to the community. The model community park will have a community building, on-site managers and staff, athletic fields, ball fields (football/soccer, baseball/softball), picnic areas, playground, adequate lighting, trails, a water feature, a swimming pool, extensive landscaping, and adequate parking areas. The eleven community parks are:

- Ballard Park
- Brothers Park/Grant Street Community Center
- Crane Park
- Fee Avenue Park
- Jimmy Moore Park
- Lipscomb Park
- Southwest Recreation Complex (Park)
- Johnson Junior High Recreation Area
- Carver Park
- Sherwood Park
- Hoover Middle School

*Neighborhood Parks/Urban Open Space/Equipped Playgrounds and tot Lots.* The city will continue to operate and maintain these with a neighborhood orientation. These include some special use, active and passive parks. These may also include parts of community parks which serve the needs of neighborhood parks.

*Special use facilities.* The city will continue to operate and maintain these facilities. They have a diversity of function, hence their classification. Many of these facilities serve the needs of neighborhood parks and are generally within the acreage range for neighborhood parks. The existing special use facilities are:

- The North Core (Downtown Park System):
  - Eau Gallie Civic Center Site.
  - Pineapple Park/Eau Gallie Library
  - Rossetter Park.
  - Eau Gallie Point (Triangle Park).
  - Eau Gallie Causeway
  - Brevard Museum of Art & Science
- The South Core (Downtown Park System):

Bean Park.  
Campbell Park.  
Front Street Civic Center/Claude Edge Park.  
Holmes Park.  
Promenade (Crane Creek).  
Kiwanis Park @ Geiger Point.  
Melbourne Causeway.  
Wells Park/Auditorium/Melbourne Library.  
Babcock Park.  
Harry Lawrence Park.  
Melbourne Riverview Park

- Golf Courses:

Crane Creek Reserve  
Mallards Landing

- b. Developing and maintaining a centralized recreation facility to serve as the major facility for indoor-recreation programs and classes offered by the city, and to house the leisure services staff. This facility now is the present site of the Eau Gallie Civic Center.
- c. Beautifying the existing parks. The city's current program of landscaping, signage and facility development needs to be formalized with design standards and development plans for all facilities, especially the nine city maintained community parks.
- d. Continuing to improve the manageability of the entire system by organizing smaller facilities into larger systems and limiting the locations of community buildings to fewer sites where better service can be provided.
- e. Developing an additional community park in the north west part of the city.
- f. Maximizing the impact of special use facilities by:
  - (1) Planning and developing the north and south core area parks as downtown park systems.
    - The north core system consists of the Eau Gallie Civic Center, the Brevard Museum of Art & Science, Pineapple Park, Rossetter Park and Eau Gallie Point (Triangle Park) and the Eau Gallie Art District. These six individual activities should be considered as components of a downtown system that has a single identity, with related landscaping, signage, walkways and parking.

- The south core area consists of downtown Melbourne Main Street, Bean Park, Holmes Park, the Crane Creek Promenade, Front Street Civic Center/Claude Edge Park, Campbell Park, Babcock Park, Harry Lawrence Park, Kiwanis Park and streets in between. These components should be considered as a single system related by design elements such as landscaping, signage and walkways.
  - (2) Planning and developing Wells Park, the Auditorium, Melbourne Military Memorial Park, Honor America Museum and the Melbourne Library as a cultural district. This area is a single system with several components that should relate to each other in a coordinated fashion and to the south core area.
  - (3) The Melbourne Auditorium will continue to be used as an exhibition hall/ convention center. The goal for the Auditorium is to raise revenues to meet 70 percent of the facility’s operating cost. This facility may also be considered for expansion.
- g. Using impact fees to purchase and develop existing and additional parks.
  - h. Planning and developing facilities that will result in improvements which reduce maintenance requirements, i.e., provision of paved parking areas to replace unpaved areas; replacement of obsolete equipment with standardized facilities; provision of automatic sprinkler systems, including priority of reuse water; and provision of curbing and walkways.
  - i. Preserving Indian River water front along U.S. 1 for passive recreation - scenic vista use including possible cooperation with regional efforts to develop this corridor as a greenway and blueway.
  - j. Planning for land acquisition to expand the City’s park system.
  - k. Encourage and facilitate “green” facilities and development.
  - l. Encourage development of greenways and trails.

**F. PROGRAMMED IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES.**

**1. Background.**

Actions to be taken by the city over the next five years regarding new and expanded facilities fall into three categories – planning, acquisition (detailed in the Capital Improvements Element), and construction.

**2. Construction.**

The city's construction activities are described in the five-year Capital Improvements Plan.

### **3. Planning.**

The planning activities include:

- Preparing the atlas of all city-owned parklands, including boundary, topographic and existing facility information.
- Preparing and maintaining conceptual plans for land and facilities, outlining the types of improvements needed at each facility.
- Preparing design standards, budgets and schedules for beautifying the city's parks and tree preservation.
- Preparing plans for acquiring the twelfth community park.
- Preparing a scenic corridor plan that will address signs, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, landscaping, setbacks, lighting and curb cuts.
- Expanding public involvement and engagement in understanding the changing needs of our citizens.

The planning efforts for individual facilities will be conducted within an overall framework for creating functional, attractive and well-located parks. A first-class parks and recreation program will continue to be one of the hallmarks of the City of Melbourne.