

**EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**  
**F. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

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Prepared September, 1998, by the Putnam County Planning, Zoning and Building Department  
Updated June, 1999, by the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council

**I. General Status of the Recreation And Open Space Element**

Below is an analysis of the Recreation and Open Space Element. The analysis is divided into four parts. Part A is an assessment of the background document on which the adopted portion of the element is based. Part B identifies recommended changes to the goals, objectives and policies based on the assessment of the background document and any changes to growth management laws and rules. Please note, further assessment of the objectives and policies is the subject of Section II of this document which includes additional recommendations for amendments to the objectives and policies and provides an assessment of the plan at the date of the EAR. Part C is an assessment of adopted figures, such as maps and lists, which includes a recommendation regarding whether to retain, delete or amend them. Part D is an assessment of adopted tables which includes a recommendation regarding whether to retain, delete or amend them.

The assessments in Parts A through D include where appropriate the following:

- < summary statements regarding the data and analysis at time of plan adoption
- < identification of changes in conditions described in the element since plan adoption including current conditions
- < provision of a new existing land use map
- < provision of a new table of existing land uses
- < provision of a new existing traffic circulation map
- < a summary of the condition and quality of all natural resources
- < identification of changes made to the element since adoption of the plan including background information, map changes and amendments to adopted maps and text (see Appendix 1)
- < identification of problems specifically listed in Rule 9J-5.0053(6)(a)4.a.-o.(each element will not include all items listed in a.-o., see Appendix 2)
- < identification of other unanticipated and unforeseen problems and opportunities and their impact on the comprehensive plan
- < statements regarding the effect on the comprehensive plan of changes to the State Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Regional Policy Plan, Rule 9J-5, F.A.C., and Chapter 163, Part II, F.S.
- < identification of any needed actions to address the issues raised in this section including provision of new, revised, minimum 5-year and minimum 10 year time frames and population

projections; updated population projections; new and revised goals, objectives, and policies; revised future conditions maps; new capital improvements element; new monitoring and evaluation procedures; and studies to be completed.

**A. Background Document** - Sec. 9J-5.014, F.A.C., providing minimum criteria for recreation and open space elements was repealed effective 2/20/96. Sec. 163.3177(6)(e), F.S., and the statute and rule requirements for concurrency and the Capital Improvements Element now regulate this element.

**Section I. Introduction** - This section describes how the element is set-up and makes some general statements about the method the County has chosen to provide recreation facilities and open space. The section has not been updated.

*Recommendation - Update section after completing necessary revisions to the sections described below.*

**Section II. Recreation and Open Space Data** - This section presents an inventory of the existing recreation facilities and open space sites in Putnam County. This section also focuses on the importance of sport fishing to the County. There are tables and descriptions of all publicly owned open space at the time of Plan adoption. Tables provided in 1991 are as follows:

- F-1: Putnam County Supply of Recreational Facilities
- F-2: Publicly Owned Open Space - Putnam County
- F-3: County Facilities Providing Access to Lakes, Streams and the St. John's River
- F-4: School Recreational Facilities Maintained by the County for Unlimited Community Recreation
- F-5: School Board Recreational Facilities Used by Students and Available to the Community for Time Limited Use
- F-6: School Board Recreational Facilities Used by Students and Available to the Community for Group Limited Use

The section has not been updated. In 1991 the County planned to build three parks, Triangle Park, West Putnam, and South Putnam. All three have been partially developed. The County is in the process of constructing two additional parks, the Francis Youth Sports Park and the Melrose Park utilizing grants from DEP and County and private sector contributions.

*Recommendation - Update tables and text to show the current conditions of recreation and open space facilities.*

**Section III. Recreation and Open Space Analysis** - This section established standards for providing recreational facilities and open space to County residents. 1990 demographics based on 1980 census data were used to determine recreational facility level of service needs to serve all County residents adequately through the year 2001. The following tables were used to present the data:

Table F-7: Population by Age Group Classification, 1980-2001, Total Putnam County

Table F-8: Population Groups Related to Use of Recreational Facilities by Type  
Table F-9: Level of Service Standards for Putnam County Recreational Facilities  
Table F-10: Recreation Facility Needs to Year 2001/Population Demands by Age Group Served

Ordinance 98-02 amended Policy F.1.3.2 to provide adjusted level of service standards. Changes were made in the tables in the background document tables to support the amendment. The changes to section III reflect revised population estimates and level of service standards. The original population projections were considerably higher than the actual population growth, which influences the number of facilities needed to supply recreation needs. The following tables were revised:

Table F-7: Total Putnam County Population, 1990-2001  
Table F-8: Population Groups Related to Use of Recreational Facilities  
Table F-9: Recreation Facility Needs to Year 2001  
Table F-10: deleted

The current number of recreational facilities and amount of open space meets the projected needs of County residents through the year 2001.

*Recommendation - Update tables and text to provide for new 5 and 10 year timeframes.*

Appendix A is the 1990 DNR Recreation and Parks Facility Inventory for Putnam County.

*Recommendation - Get new Inventory list.*

**B. Goals, Objectives and Policies** - Chapter 163.3177(6)(e) requires that each comprehensive plan have a recreation and open space element. Sec. 9J-5.014, F.A.C. was repealed 2/20/96, eliminating specific requirements for the Recreation and Open Space Element. Sec. 9J-5.0055(3)(b), F.A.C., states that parks and recreational facilities must be in place when a development permit is issued or that acreage or funds are dedicated to ensure that facilities are in place when development occurs. The County Capital Improvements Plan, required by 9J-5.016, sets funding for recreational facilities.

Ordinance 98-2 amended the Recreation and Open Space Element by listing revised LOS standards for Recreation in Policy F.1.3.2 which deleted Table F-9 from the adopted document. Table F-9 was previously referenced in Policy F.1.3.2. The Northeast Florida Comprehensive Regional Plan had a Goal section entitled Natural Systems and Recreational Lands. The section dealt with protecting natural resources, land management and parks and recreation. The Northeast Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan, adopted July 10, 1997, contains no recreation element or recreation goals. The Recreation and Open Space Element has policies that follow State Comprehensive Plan policies requiring the protection of existing facilities and the expansion of future recreational facilities and sites both man-made and natural.

*Recommendation - All proposed amendments to the goals, objectives and policies of Putnam County's plan must be reviewed for consistency with the SRPP, and the State Plan. This will take place as the*

*amendments to implement the findings in this report are prepared for public hearings. Delete all references to the CRPP.*

**C. Adopted Figures (Maps)** - There are no adopted maps in the element

**D. Adopted Tables** - Table F-9 was adopted by reference in Policy F.1.3.2, but amendments adopted by Ord. 98-02 eliminated the need for the reference.

## II. Achievement of Recreation And Open Space Objectives

Section 9J-5.0053(6)(a)3 of the Florida Administrative Code requires the County to complete an analysis to determine whether or not the objectives adopted in the County's Comprehensive Plan were achieved between December 1991 and June 1999. Below is an analysis of the Recreation and Open Space Element objectives. Under each objective is a statement indicating what measure should be used to determine whether or not the objective has been achieved, a status statement regarding what has been done to meet the objective, and a recommendation to retain, amend or delete the objective. Following the analysis of the objective, each policy under the objective is analyzed. The analysis includes a recommendation to retain, amend or delete the policy, and statements regarding how the policy has been implemented.

Sec. 9J-5.014 Recreation and Open Space was repealed 2/20/96. Sec. 163.3177(6)(e), F.S., and the statute and rule requirements for concurrency and the Capital Improvements Element now regulate this element.

**GOAL F.1:** Putnam County, through meeting established levels of service, shall ensure the provision of sufficient parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of the County's citizens and visitors.

**Objective F.1.1** [9J-5.014(3)(b)1]: Upon plan adoption, the County shall ensure public access to all identified recreational facilities, including rivers, and freshwater beaches through implementing the following policies.

***Measure:** % of identified recreational facilities accessible to the public*

***Status:** The County has many public boat ramps for access to the St. John's River, Lake George and Crescent Lake. The County has parks and sports complexes for use by the public. State and SJRWMD owned lands are open to the public as recreation facilities. SJRWMD owns and provides year round public access to Murphy Creek (854 acres), Caravelle Ranch (6573 acres) and Dunn=Creek (3186 acres) located within the County. Publications are available to the public detailing the various recreational facilities.*

***Recommendation:** Amend Objective F.1.1 to delete "Upon Plan adoption" and to reference where the facilities are identified.*

**Policy F.1.1.1** [9J-5.014(3)(c)3]: The County shall implement a program to acquire and develop rights-of-way for access to public parks and facilities where it is shown that deficiencies exist, to wit: The County Commission shall assign the Planning Commission the responsibility to identify, by 1993, access deficiencies and their locations, to public parks and facilities. Upon the identification of access needs, the Planning Commission shall determine ownership of property and property values for land needed to improve existing access. At this stage, acquisition of lands will follow the procedures specified in Policies F.1.4.1 and/or F.1.4.2.

*Amend Policy F.1.1.1 to delete references to Planning Commission and redirect to Recreation*

*Department as the responsible agency, and revise date to 2000. A study to determine whether or not there are access deficiencies to public parks and facilities has not been completed.*

**Policy F.1.1.2** [9J-5.014(3)(c)3]: The County shall review the availability of parking at boat ramps, freshwater beaches and other recreational facilities within the County and work with responsible agencies to establish parking levels of service for various recreational facilities/sites based upon the average daily use of each facility.

*Retain Policy F.1.1.2. The County's development review procedures address this policy for any new recreational facility. According to the Recreation Department, the only deficiency is at south Putnam Park located on Union Avenue. There is parking space available at all other recreation sites. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Policy F.1.1.3:** The County, through its Transportation for the Disadvantaged Program, shall ensure that the County recreational facilities shall be accessible to the handicapped, the elderly and the transportation disadvantaged.

*Retain Policy F.1.1.3. The NEFPRC has reviewed and found that the accessibility of these facilities is consistent with the 1998-2000 Transportation Disadvantaged Plan as prepared by the NEFPRC. The Recreation Department concurs that all County facilities are maintained by the Recreation Department and are accessible. The County's development review procedures address this policy for any new recreational facility.*

**Objective F.1.2** [9J-5.014(3)(b)2]: Upon plan adoption, the County shall coordinate public and private resources to meet County recreational needs through implementing the following policies.

**Measure:** *Number of recreation projects and programs accomplished through public and private sector partnerships.*

**Status:** *. We know of the following partnerships: West Putnam Park, Interlachen Little League, St Johns River Little League, Babe Ruth, South Putnam Park, Welaka, Pomona Park, US Tennis Association, Youth Sports Park, and Melrose Park, any additional partnerships reported by the Recreation Department will be included in the EAR amendments in the background document.. The Purchasing Department states that the Fishing Fund currently maintains fourteen boat ramps. Specific information about these sites will be included in the background document in the EAR amendments..*

**Recommendation:** *Amend Objective F.1.2 to delete "Upon plan adoption".*

**Policy F.1.2.1** [9J-5.014(2)(c)2]: The County shall implement incentives in its subdivision and zoning regulations which promote developers' interest in providing recreation and open space components in their development plans. Guidelines and incentives for the provision of additional recreation and open space facilities are included in Future Land Use Element Policy A.1.9.4.

*Amend Policy F.1.2.1. to make a proper reference to the land development code. The greenspace*

*ordinance provides incentives for dedication of open space and recreation areas in developments. The County's development review procedures address this policy especially through the application of the point score methodology provided in Policy A.1.9.4. and in PUD rezoning cases. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Policy F.1.2.2:** The County shall continue to work with local civic groups in sponsoring recreational activities for the County's youth and elderly citizens.

*Retain Policy F.1.2.2. . According to the Recreation Department, several civic groups sponsor Recreation Department Programs and have also constructed several buildings at recreational sites. We know of participation with the Melrose Youth Sports Association, and 3 youth baseball associations - Interlachen Little League, St. Johns River Little League, and Babe Ruth.*

**Policy F.1.2.3:** Wherever possible, the County shall coordinate its recreational plans with local private/civic groups to ensure that the greatest benefit is derived from County recreational funding.

*Retain Policy F.1.2.3. The Recreation Department says that the Recreation Committee makes recommendations on recreation related matters to all requests brought before them. The following partnerships exist: West Putnam Park, Interlachen Little League, St Johns River Little League, Babe Ruth, South Putnam Park, Welaka, Pomona Park, US Tennis Association, Youth Sports Park, and Melrose Park, any additional partnerships reported by the Recreation Department will be included in the EAR amenedments. In addition, the Purchasing Department states that the Fishing Fund currently maintains fourteen boat ramps.*

**Objective F.1.3** [9J-5.014(3)(b)3]: Upon plan adoption, the County shall continue to ensure that parks and recreational facilities are adequately and efficiently provided.

**Measure:** *LOS standards met, without periods where facilities are deficient.*

**Status:** *. There have been no identified deficiencies in recreation facilities LOS.*

**Recommendation:** *Revise Objective to delete "Upon plan adoption".*

**Policy F.1.3.1** [9J-5.014(3)(c)4]: The County shall ensure that there are sufficient recreational facilities to meet adopted levels of service in accordance with its Concurrency Management System and the requirements of 9J-5.0055(2)(b)1 and 2.

*Amend Policy F.1.3.1 to correct 9J-5 reference to 9J-5.0055(3)(b)1 and 2 or use a more generic term based on the language of the sections referenced. County's development review procedures address this policy. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy. The CIP committee will consider this policy in their annual review of capital improvement needs.*

**Policy F.1.3.2** [Rev. 98-2; 9J-5.014(3)(c)1 and 4]: The County shall adopt recreational levels of service as identified below:

- Neighborhood Parks: One acre per 3,500 persons
- Community Parks: One acre per 1,100 persons
- Boat Ramps: One lane per 3,700 persons
- Baseball/softball fields: One field per 3,500 persons
- Football/soccer fields: One field per 12,500 persons
- Basketball goals: One goal per 3,800 persons
- Tennis Courts: One court per 7,500 persons
- Equipped play area: One area per 9,250 persons
- Picnic Areas: One table per 6,000 persons

*Retain Policy F.1.3.2. County's development review procedures address this policy. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Policy F.1.3.3** [9J-5.014(3)(c)5]: Upon plan adoption, the County shall improve any existing deficiencies in parks or recreation facilities through budgeting for such improvements in its 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

*Amend Policy F.1.3.3 to delete "Upon Plan adoption" and note any currently existing deficiencies. The CIP committee will consider this policy in their annual review of capital improvement needs. Replace 5-year Capital Improvement Plan with 5-year Schedule of Capital Improvements, to be consistent with the requirement for an annually updated 5-year Schedule of Capital Improvements in Objective H.1.1.*

**Policy F.1.3.4** [9J-5.014(3)(c)5]: Where of mutual benefit, as determined by the participating jurisdictions, the County shall enter into interlocal agreements with local municipalities and adjacent counties to meet the recreational needs of Putnam County residents.

*Retain Policy F.1.3.4. According to the Recreation Department, the County has interlocal agreements with all municipalities and the school board.*

**Policy F.1.3.5** [9J-5.014(3)(c)2]: Designated open space/recreational lands shall be identified in the Future Land Use Element and on the Future Land Use Map or map series. These lands shall be protected from adjacent incompatible land uses and development through the adoption and implementation of land development regulations that control land use and density as outlined in Policies A.1.3.1, A.1.3.2, A.1.4.4, A.1.8.3, A.1.9.3 and A.1.9.4 of the Future Land Use Element.

*Retain Policy F.1.3.5. Maps need to be updated to include Melrose Park and the Youth Sports Park in Francis. County's development review procedures address this policy. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Objective F.1.4** [9J-5.014(3)(b)4]: Upon plan adoption, the County shall ensure the provision of open space by public agencies and private enterprise.

**Measure:** *Amount of open space provided by public and private sectors.*

**Status:** *The County provides boat ramps on the St. Johns River, and on some lakes. The SJRWMD provides access to District lands, including year round public access to Murphy Creek (854 acres), Caravelle Ranch (6573 acres) and Dunn=Creek (3186 acres) located within the County. The private sector provides boat ramps, picnic and camping areas and wildlife management areas.*

**Recommendation:** *Amend Objective to delete "Upon plan adoption".*

**Policy F.1.4.1** [9J-5.014(3)(c)2]: The County shall, in accordance with Open Space Level of Service requirements, continue to require the designation of open space in its subdivision and zoning regulations as a prerequisite of development approval.

*Amend Policy F.1.4.1 to make a proper reference to the land development code. The open space required in zoning and subdivision regulations is only for setbacks or yard requirements. The greenspace ordinance provides incentives for dedication of open space and recreation areas in developments. The County's development review procedures address this policy especially through the application of the point score methodology provided in Policy A.1.9.4. and in PUD rezoning cases. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Policy F.1.4.2** [9J-5.014(3)(c)2]: When deemed appropriate by the Board of County Commissioners, the County shall consider the implementation of an impact fee as a means of raising revenue to purchase land, construct recreational facilities and/or reserve open space to meet adopted levels of service.

*Amend Policy F.1.4.2 to consider charging fair share costs such as user fees. The County adopted and later rescinded impact fees. The draft land development code, to be adopted prior to EAR amendments, includes sections which implement this policy.*

**Policy F.1.4.3:** The County shall coordinate with the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce to ensure cooperation with the private sector in meeting recreational/open space needs of County residents; particularly, those needs that cannot efficiently be provided by the public sector, such as movie theaters, bowling alleys, etc.

*Amend Policy F.1.4.3. In response to Chamber of Commerce recommendations, amend policy to revise the phrase Acoordinate with the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce to ensure= and replace with A support the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce=s efforts to encourage= and remove Aetc.= and replace with Agolf courses and other recreational opportunities.*