

GOAL 6A: ENSURE ADEQUATE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES ARE PROVIDED AND PRESERVED WITHIN HOLMES COUNTY AND THE TOWNS OF ESTO, NOMA, PONCE DE LEON, AND WESTVILLE.

Objective 6.1: Identify New, Preserve Existing, and Provide Public Access to Recreational Facilities and Open Spaces.

Policy 6.1.1: As funding is available, the County and the Towns of Esto, Noma, Ponce De Leon, and Westville will provide areas for bicycle racks within recreational facilities and areas.

Policy 6.1.2: Bicycle transportation lanes and pedestrian walkways shall be provided to access recreational facilities which are within or within a mile radius of an existing town limit, pending available funding. Funding opportunities shall be identified in the annually updated Capital Improvements Plan.

Policy 6.1.3: All new recreational facilities shall provide usability for all segments of the population including, but not limited to, younger, elder, and disabled populations.

Policy 6.1.4: Holmes County and the Towns of Esto, Noma, Ponce De Leon, and Westville adopt the following level of service standards and definitions for park space. These standards shall be determined by each individual town and the unincorporated area of the County for each respective governmental agency by population.

Neighborhood Park: A recreational area of a size between 0.5 acres and 2.0 acres serving a population of two acres per one thousand (1,000) population within a mile radius. This standard only applies to areas within a town boundary.

Water-dependent Neighborhood Park: Any area with public boat or pedestrian access to a water body. The number of water-dependent neighborhood parks shall not decrease from those listed below:

- Baker Landing (aka Warehouse Landing), Westville
- Bear Hewitt Landing, Westville
- Cerrogordo Landing Boat Ramp, Westville
- Curry Ferry Landing Boat Ramp, Bonifay
- East Pittman Landing Boat Ramp, Bonifay
- Lake Victor Public Boat Ramp, Westville
- Ponce De Leon Sprins State Park, Ponce De Leon
- Ward Landing Public Boat Ramp, Caryville
- Wrights Creek Wayside Park and Canoe Launch, Bonifay

Community Park: A recreational area of a size between 2.01 acres and twenty (20) acres serving a population of two (2) acres per one thousand (1,000) population

Regional Park: A recreational area of a size greater than 20.01 acres serving a population of two (2) acres per one thousand (1,000) population. This standard does not apply to areas within a town boundary.

Policy 6.1.5: Holmes County and the Towns of Esto, Noma, Ponce De Leon, and Westville shall negotiate with property owners to obtain ownership or easement rights for public access to waterways as opportunities arise.

Policy 6.1.6: Holmes County and the Town Westville shall participate in the preservation of paddling trails and trail stops, specifically the Choctawhatchee River Blueway, through coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways & Trails and any other government sharing jurisdiction over the waterway, when appropriate, with the intent to protect and maintain the environmental character and promotion of the safe and peaceful enjoyment of the waterway.

Policy 6.1.7: Holmes County shall require the dedication of upland property for recreational uses, or a fee in lieu of land, for all future residential development with a cumulative impact of greater than ten (10) dwelling units. No wetlands shall be accepted for recreational dedication credit. If the fee in lieu of land is the chosen alternative, such funds shall be earmarked for existing park improvements or for the purchase of additional recreational areas, and shall be included in the Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan within a year of collection. The method of determination of the fee shall be included in the Land Development Code.

Policy 6.1.8: Create a planned recreation spaces maintenance program by 2026. The program shall:

- a) Identify funding sources for the provision of recreation site maintenance and operations.
- b) Consider prioritizing improvements and maintenance by county commissioner district boundary.
- c) Highly prioritize improvements that increase accessibility and safety, to include emergency vehicle access.
- d) Include maintenance and/or improvements that require capital improvement funding in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- e) Utilize the inclusion of natural vegetation, to reduce maintenance costs to the County and the respective towns, and to create conditions that require less water, durability, and are conducive to north Florida's environmental conditions.
- f) Annually review and calibrate the maintenance program to changing population growth, by district.

Policy 6.1.9: Holmes County shall coordinate with the Tourist Development Council regarding the recreation spaces maintenance program to understand usage and inquiries (demand of services) of recreational activities.

Policy 6.1.10: The Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area is hereby designated as a natural reservation to provide open space and recreational uses as administered by the Northwest Florida Water Management District and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Objective 6.2: Provide and Retain Ample Open Space.

Policy 6.2.1: In addition to open space provided through natural reservations, protected environmental lands, and stormwater management areas, the provision of open space shall be required in all future developments at a minimum of twenty (20) percent of the site, unless the site is within a town limit. Standards for those properties within a town limit shall be addressed by each town respectively.

Policy 6.2.2: To ensure a vibrant, attractive, and welcoming community, utilize public investments in rights-of-way beautification through installation of vegetation including street trees when projects are within a town limit and within a mile radius of a city or town limit.

Policy 6.2.3: Holmes County and the respective towns shall coordinate beautification efforts and programs with funding agencies, neighborhood associations, and the business community. Grant opportunities shall be sought and coordinated for such efforts.

Policy 6.2.4: Holmes County, Town, and State parks are identified on Map 8.