

GOALS - OBJECTIVES - POLICIES

Based on the analysis of recreation issues in this element, the following goals, objectives, and policies are adopted into the Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan:

GOAL 10: To provide residents and visitors of all ages a comprehensive, accessible system of parks, active recreation areas, open spaces, beach accesses, natural preserves, private recreational facilities, and cultural activities that provide a variety of recreational opportunities and promote an understanding of our community's environmental and cultural heritage.

OBJECTIVE 10-A NATURAL RESOURCES — Assume a leadership role with other agencies to improve the viability of the natural areas around the town as an integral part of a comprehensive recreational system. Measures of success may include public acquisition of additional beachfront land; designation of canoe trails or water shuttle service linking Fort Myers Beach to surrounding natural resources; or the successful implementation of a plan for the coordinated use and protection of Matanzas Pass.

POLICY A0-A-1 Expand the purview of the town's Marine Resources Task Force to include the sustainability of

POLICY B0-A-1 Encourage Lee County to plant native shade trees at Bowditch Point and control the spread of invasive exotic vegetation such as Australian pines to improve wildlife habitat and enhance opportunities for bird watching. If the Australian pines are destroyed by

recreational use of marine resources along with the activities described in Conservation Policy 6-A-4.

POLICY A0-A-2 Implement Coastal Management Policy 5-F-1 initiating a cooperative planning process for Matanzas Pass and surrounding waterways by 1998.

POLICY A0-A-3 Actively participate in the Agency on Bay Management and the Southwest Florida Regional Harbor Board.

POLICY A0-A-4 Promote the use of a water shuttle to link the components of the town's recreational system without adding traffic on the roads.

POLICY A0-A-5 Support the following priorities for public land acquisition outside the town's boundaries:

1. Land that will contribute to the sustainability and enhancement of the comprehensive recreation system;
2. Land that can provide opportunities for public appreciation of environmental and archaeological resources;
3. Land that will provide additional beach access (such as Bunche Beach) for visitors who cannot reach Fort Myers Beach due to congested roads.

OBJECTIVE 10-B BOWDITCH POINT PARK — Enhance the natural resources at Bowditch Point Park while increasing its accessibility for recreational purposes.

high winds, the town encourages their replacement with native shade trees. This encouragement may be expressed by resolution of the town council if requested by Lee County.

POLICY B0-A-2 Actively promote alternate means of access to Bowditch Point Park such as electric trams and more frequent and free trolley service, and especially the construction of public docks on the Bay side for private boats and a water taxis stop. Actions to support these activities shall include appropriate changes to the Land Development Code, any required rezonings, and formal requests for funding to Lee County, and may also include further public transit subsidies or financial support for dock construction.

POLICY B0-A-3 If requested by Lee County, consider the costs and benefits of assuming management responsibility for Bowditch Point Park while ensuring its continued accessibility to visitors from throughout the county and beyond.

POLICY B0-A-4 Encourage Lee County to provide on-site parking for the general public at Bowditch Point (in addition to the existing spaces for the handicapped) by adopting an appropriate resolution of support by the town council and by granting the required zoning changes.

OBJECTIVE 10-C DOWNTOWN AS A RECREATION HUB — Make the Times Square area the nucleus of the town's comprehensive recreational system.

POLICY C0-A-1 LYNN HALL MEMORIAL PARK:

1. Enhance Lynn Hall Park as recommended in Community Design Policy 3-D-12,
2. MARINA PLAZA — Work with the private sector to establish a site for a new public pedestrian plaza at the north end of

including continuing beach renourishment and the addition of beach volleyball areas.

2. In cooperation with the town's Main Street Program, encourage entertainment that appeals to residents and visitors while reinforcing the downtown as a recreation and entertainment destination. These could include musical or art-in-the-park events, community festivals, and other family-oriented special events.
3. After at least one year of experience with such events, consider the feasibility of including a performance pavilion in the southeast corner of Lynn Hall Park.
4. In cooperation with local environmental and business interests, consider the feasibility of constructing a boardwalk along the beachfront to connect the beach access near the Lani Kai to Lynn Hall Park on the landward side of the dune line (see Community Design Policy 3-D-4(iii)).

POLICY C0-A-2 PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS

1. TIMES SQUARE — Maintain Times Square as a pedestrian mall and civic plaza consistent with Community Design Policy 3-D-5(ii). Integrate the park with the plaza by creating pedestrian friendly pass-through areas in place of the current fence. Old San Carlos to increase public activity to the marina and cruise ship docks, consistent with Community Design Policy

3-D-4(v). Investigate the feasibility of improving the existing pier within the town's right-of-way under the Skybridge for public docking, and incorporating the pier and parking area into the Marina Plaza concept. This will provide a second focus for a "walking path" around the core area and a close-by neighborhood common area for local residents; and will link the Times Square area to the water taxi system and dinghy dock. The town can assist in locating grant funding to develop this amenity.

3. **CENTRAL GREEN** — Promote the establishment of a third public pedestrian plaza to serve the south end of the island by implementing Community Design Policies 3-C-1 and 3-C-2 regarding the redevelopment of Villa Santini Plaza.

OBJECTIVE 10-D COMMUNITY RECREATION — Increase the already high level of access to recreation facilities, and maintain the required level of service for community parks.

POLICY D0-A-1 Negotiate with Lee County to determine an appropriate balance for operating Bay Oaks Recreation Center without excluding non-town residents, and establish an equitable system of user fees to help fund its operation and enhancements.

POLICY D0-A-2 Support the efforts of the "Build-a-Pool Committee" which has committed to the Town Council to be responsible for raising the funds for the ongoing operation and maintenance of the new public swimming

pool. Sources of funds will include user fees, concessions, special events, business sponsorships, and community fund raisers.

POLICY D0-A-3 The town adopts the following level-of-service standard for community parks: for each 7,500 permanent residents, 1 centrally located recreation complex that includes 2 ballfields, 2 tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, play equipment, an indoor gymnasium, and community meeting spaces. Programming shall address all age groups and encompass active recreation, physical improvement, and social, educational, and cultural activities. The town also will maintain a cultural and environmental learning center at the historic Mound House, and contingent on obtaining grant funding for property acquisition, will purchase the Newton estate to serve as an oasis park with interpretive and rest facilities for those traversing Lee County's "Great Calusa Blueway," Estero Boulevard, and the walking trail provided by the public beachfront.

POLICY D0-A-4 To identify important gaps in the recreation system, the town shall conduct a community-wide survey to evaluate the adequacy of facilities and programming and measure willingness to pay fees or raise taxes to provide additional services. These services may include the following items that have been suggested in previous community workshops:

1. more emphasis on inter-generational programs
2. in-line skating and skateboarding facilities
3. dog walk areas
4. little theater group
5. shuffleboard courts

6. more tennis courts

POLICY D0-A-5 If the survey indicates sufficient demand, the town should investigate acquiring the privately owned Bay Beach Tennis Club which may be replaced by future phases of development of Bay Beach. A tennis club could be the nucleus of a "satellite" recreation center at the south end of the Island.

OBJECTIVE 10-E NATURAL PRESERVES — Enhance public access to the town's nature preserve areas, while ensuring their ecological sustainability and providing for their long term maintenance.

POLICY E0-A-1 MATANZAS PASS PRESERVE — Prepare for the transition of the long-term maintenance responsibility of the Matanzas Pass Preserve from Lee County in accordance with Conservation Policy 6-B-3.

POLICY E0-A-2 LITTLE ESTERO ISLAND CRITICAL WILDLIFE AREA — Enhance the public enjoyment and protection of the area in accordance with Conservation Policy 6-B-2.

POLICY E0-A-3 OTHER NATURAL PRESERVES — Establish a citizen task force to evaluate opportunities to designate additional open spaces and natural preserves, and to identify potential funding sources including grants and a 3% utility tax.

OBJECTIVE 10-F CULTURAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS — Achieve a heightened appreciation of the town's recent and ancient history and cultural life.

POLICY F0-A-1 Manage the Cultural and Environmental Learning Center in the historic "Mound House" (formerly known as the Long Estate). Thoroughly

analyze the archaeological remains on this site. Link this facility to other cultural and recreational points of interest by providing appropriate dockage to serve the Great Calusa Blueway paddling trail and water taxis as well as links to bike and pedestrian paths.

POLICY F0-A-2 Establish a task force on eco/heritage tourism to develop and implement the town's "eco/heritage" program. The task force would work closely with the Marine Resources Task Force to advise the town on appropriate components of the statewide plan of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Eco-Heritage Tourism when adopted.

POLICY F0-A-3 Acquire the beachfront estate of James and Eleanor Newton and operate it as a small community park with close links to the paddling trail in Matanzas Pass, the pedestrian and bicycle facilities on Estero Boulevard, and the adjoining public beach.

OBJECTIVE 10-G PUBLIC ACCESS — Increase the number and quality of public access points to the Gulf beaches and Estero Bay.

POLICY G0-A-1 Maintain or improve existing levels of beach and bay access pursuant to Coastal Management Policies 5-E-1, 5-E-2, and 5-E-3 which provide for the continued maintenance of existing beach access points, and evaluate the need for more parking.

POLICY G0-A-2 Support and participate in Lee County's "Great Calusa Blueway" paddling trail by making convenient links between the trail and the town's environmental, cultural, and historical points of interest.

POLICY G0-A-3 Acquire one or more beach access points at the southern end of the island in addition to acquiring the Newton estate (see Policy 10-F-3) for additional public access to the beach and as a mid-island interpretative facility and rest area for the "Great Calusa Blueway" and the natural walking trail that is provided by the continuous beachfront along Estero Island.

OBJECTIVE 10-H NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS — Within five years, begin providing small-scale parks to serve individual neighborhoods and pedestrians.

POLICY H0-A-1 Provide a mechanism for requesting neighborhoods to create and manage a small children's play area or "visiting" area, as a part of the "hidden paths" and/or "residential streets" programs described in the Community Design Policies 2-A-1 and 2-B-2. Develop a program of guidelines and technical assistance available to requesting neighborhoods. Evaluate the program within two years of initiation and, based on actual demand, and set standards if necessary to regulate the pace and equity of implementation.

POLICY H0-A-2 As provided in Community Design Policy 2-A-1, facilitate the establishment of a local foundation or community land trust which among other responsibilities, would be responsible for planning and acquiring vacant parcels or easements for the hidden path and "postage stamp" park concept.

POLICY H0-A-3 Provide occasional "oasis" areas (resting places for pedestrians and bicyclists) at selected trolley stops and other strategic locations along Estero Boulevard as a part of the Estero Boulevard Streetscape Plan described in Community Design Policy 1-A-3(iv).

The first oasis area shall be the Newton estate at Strandview Avenue (see Policy 10-F-3) which shall be closely linked to the Great Calusa Blueway paddling trail, the public trolleys and sidewalks/bike paths along Estero Boulevard, and to the public beachfront.

OBJECTIVE 10-I IMPLEMENTATION — Provide a comprehensive and cost-effective recreational system that meets the future needs of Fort Myers Beach.

POLICY I0-A-1 Demonstrate through the annual budget and five-year Capital Improvements Program that the park and recreation standards of this plan are being met.

POLICY I0-A-2 The town shall work with the county, surrounding jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, national, state and local land trusts, private organizations and corporations, and other groups to identify funding sources and mechanisms and to structure partnerships to implement the policies of this Recreation Element.

POLICY I0-A-3 Promote a cooperative effort among the town, Lee County, city of Sanibel, and other counties and regional agencies to develop cost-sharing mechanisms for improvements needed to improve the experience of visitors.

POLICY I0-A-4 The town shall require through its development regulations that major redevelopment activities include adequate private recreational facilities for their residents.