

CITY OF GREENACRES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

September 2008
Amendments resulting from the 2006 EAR

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. HISTORY OF RECREATION AWARENESS

The City of Greenacres is located in Central Palm Beach County. It is approximately six (6) miles west of the Atlantic Ocean and is about twenty-two (22) miles south of Martin County and (22) miles north of Broward County.

The population of the City of Greenacres increased by approximately 14,000 residents from 1975 to 1990. With the rapid increase in population, the demand for greater recreational opportunities and the need to protect valuable open space resources had become a major issue.

In recognition of this need, the City of Greenacres City Council instructed city staff to create a "recreation fund" in November 1977, which established the first step towards creating a separate Parks and Recreation Department. Prior to the adoption of this fund, maintenance, salaries, equipment and supplies for parks, were managed through the Public Works budget.

In February 1983, the City prepared the Recreation/Open Space Plan to guide the City in acquisition and development of recreational areas, facilities and open space. The standards incorporated in this plan were taken from "Outdoor Recreation on Florida – 1976", the official outdoor recreation plan for the State of Florida and the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan, (1980). Later that year, City Council created an interest-bearing account known as the "Parks and Recreation Fund", to be used for the acquisition, improvement and expansion of recreational park and open space areas. This fund was financed by the collection of impact fees.

A parks and recreation supervisor position was created in the public works department during the summer of 1986, "Parks and Recreation" became independent of Public Works only a year later, October 1, 1987 and became known by its present name of Leisure Services Department. This department now oversees the operation and planning for recreation in the City.

B. RECREATION FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

All parks and recreational facilities are not used equally by the same groups of people. The City of Greenacres Leisure Services Department has recognized the diverse preferences among different age groups for recreational activities, time of facility use and location of facilities. Some parks and facilities are especially designed for active senior adults, preschoolers, and others for all age groups.

C. THE OUTDOOR RECREATION EFFORT - COOPERATION

The City of Greenacres must plan for the development of new recreational facilities and must acquire additional recreational facilities and sites in order to keep pace with demands generated by growth. The City must provide a greater share of the financial, technical and physical resources necessary to satisfy these growing demands for leisure activities in the outdoors.

In 1996, the City of Greenacres allocated 7.1% of the City's total operating budget to the Leisure Services Department. This is an increase from 5.5% of the total operating budget in 1988, the figure provided on the last update of the Comprehensive Plan. With other communities spending as much as 16% of their budget on the provision of leisure activities, the City of Greenacres may need to consider an increase, however, the City alone cannot provide the volume or variety in types of leisure pursuits that will be demanded by its present and future populations. Therefore, to maximize the total outdoor recreation effort and direct it most effectively and efficiently, the City must work closely with its residents, the County and private enterprise. Nowhere will this coordination be more critical than in the public recreation sector, which can expect a continuation of the financial constraints experienced during recent years. Every resource must and will be utilized in keeping the City of Greenacres. . . "A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE".

II. DEFINITION OF RELEVANT TERMS

- A. OPEN SPACE - is defined as "land that is either undeveloped or is relatively free of buildings and other structures". Open space is usually thought of as public parks and playgrounds; in its broadest definition, however, it includes all public land acting as a contrast to the man-made environment," property whose leisure oriented value lies almost entirely in the enhancement of the immediately surrounding streetscape or neighborhood with recreation or conservation uses.
- B. PARK - is defined as "an area permanently dedicated to recreation and generally characterized by its natural and landscape features".
 - 1. Resource - Based - acknowledges the presence of unique, desirable natural features to a site relating to land, water or air resources that provide opportunities for recreational activities and/or an aesthetic enhancement to a recreational site. Examples of resource-based recreation would include beaches, boat ramps, natural wooded areas, lakes, waterways, etc.
 - 2. User - Based - recreational sites or usages that require no specific natural features for site selection or development. These facilities can be located essentially at the convenience of the user. They are, for the most part, structured, rule-oriented, and in many instances conducted as part of formal, local recreation programs under the supervision of trained staff.
- C. PUBLIC ACCESS - is defined as "the ability of the public to physically reach, enter or use recreation sites including beaches and shores".
- D. RECREATION - is defined as "the infinite variety of activities which people elect to occupy their leisure time and satisfy their need for diversion." These non-work moments are used reacquainting one's self with nature, participating in a sport or craft, or just enjoying a temporary release from the routine demands of life.

1. Active - active recreation is generally thought of as requiring some level of physical exertion like team sports, racket sports, swimming, cycling, jogging, etc.
2. Passive - passive recreation, by contrast, requires little or no physical exertion and typically requires little to nothing in the way of support structures and facilities. Examples of passive recreation might include walking, sitting, family picnics, or participation in a special interest class.

III. INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In 1975, the Florida Parks and Recreation Association and the Florida Planning Association published "Criteria for Leisure Facilities", which established recreation facility standards, including minimum acreage and service area requirements. Those standards were to be utilized by communities as general guidelines to evaluate existing and future recreation facilities. Many of the standards established in this publication were incorporated in "Outdoor Recreation in Florida"(1976)--the official outdoor recreation plan for the State of Florida.

"This document, updated in (1987, 1994, and 2000), constitutes Florida's basic policy plan for outdoor recreation. It sets forth the framework for a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation planning and implementation process." This document is now known as Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). These standards, together with the policies of the "Recreation and Leisure Element" of the State's 1985 Comprehensive Plan, form the basis of the present chapter.

B. PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

The City's classifications are comparable to both the county and state classifications/definitions for open space and recreation, and also provide for the necessary modifications tailored to the unique features of the community, the context of an urban park system and the Department's operations.

The Recreation and Open Space Element of the Palm Beach County Regional Plan of 1980 that was composed by the Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County, recognize six (6) classifications of public recreation areas: Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Metropolitan Parks, Regional Parks, Nature Preserves and Special Areas. The Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan of 1989, altered the classifications to five (5) which are now: Neighborhood, Community, District, Regional and Beach. These standards have been applied to the City's classifications and modified for use with the City. The City of Greenacres subdivides the "neighborhood park" classification into two (2), creating a new mini-park category.

The City's five (5) classifications for open space and recreation were determined based on the following considerations:

- * Inherent aesthetic or leisure-oriented value
- * Size and natural features
- * Type and variety of developed recreational amenities
- * Service population and character
- * Support services associated with maintenance and operation
- * Usage patterns
- * Demonstrable and apparent potential for further future development, programming and usage.

The City's classifications are: 1) Mini-Parks/Tot Lot, 2) Neighborhood Parks, 3) Community Parks, 4) Regional Parks, 5) Open Space.

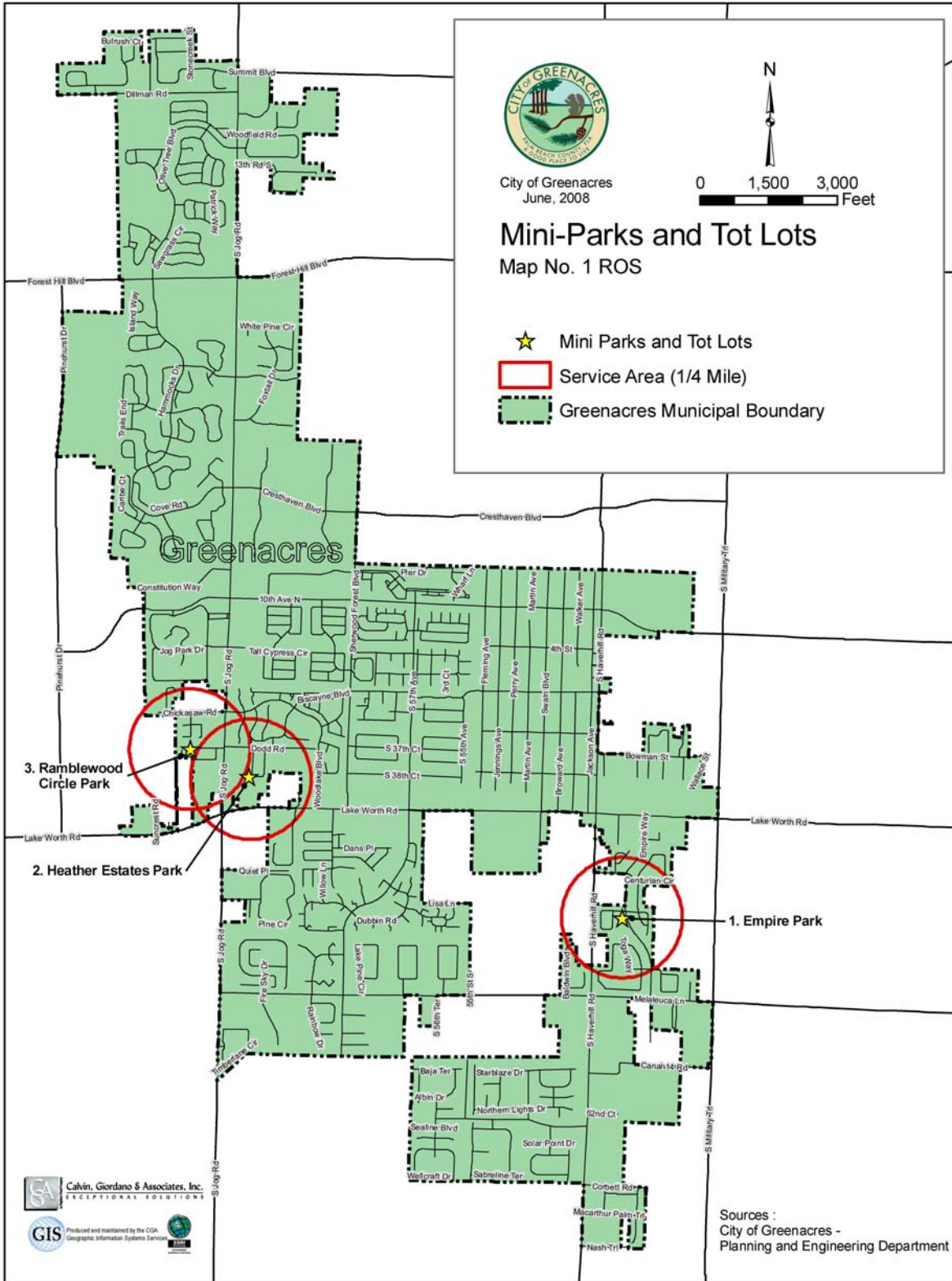
1. Mini-Parks/Tot Lot

Description: Areas of developed City property of sufficient size, (generally 1/4 - 2 acres), to support some level of structured, passive or active recreational activity or programming. Typical development may include turf, trees, shrubs, irrigation, benches, trash receptacles, picnic tables, play apparatus, vehicular barriers, paved parking or walkways, signage and lighting. The design, maintenance and operation of these sites distinguish them as "parks" as opposed to just green or open spaces. These facilities are maintained entirely without the benefit of user fees, though they are suited to some limited cooperative public-private projects. Specifics of each park are found on Table 1 with corresponding locations shown on Map. No. 1.

**TABLE 1
MINI-PARKS/TOT LOT**

Park Name	I.D.	Status	# of Acres			PICNIC TABLES	SHELTERS	BBQ PITS	EQUIPPED PLAY	MULTIPURPOSE	PARKING
			Land	Water	Total						
Empire Park & Lake	1	Dev.	0.66	2	2.66	3	1	0	1	-	9
Heather Park	2	Dev.	0.40	0.04	0.44	2	-	2	1	-	-
Ramblewood Circle	3	Dev.	0.22	0.15	0.37	1	-	-	1	-	-
Total			1.28	2.19	3.47	6	1	2	3	0	9

Source: Planning and Engineering Department – February 2008



2. Neighborhood Parks

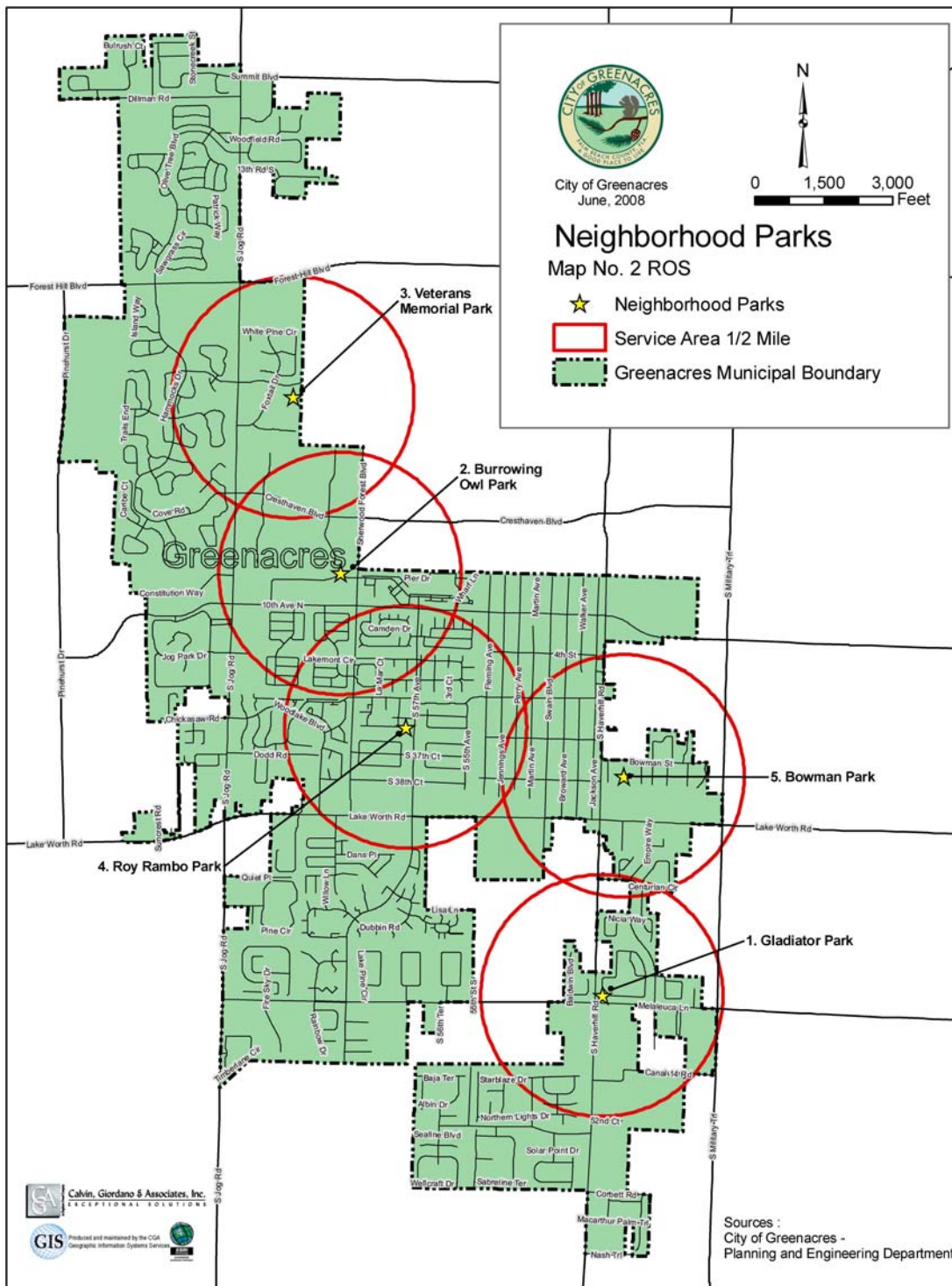
Description: "The neighborhood park is a walk-to park, generally located along streets where people can walk or bicycle without encountering heavy traffic." These parks are owned by the City and developed for passive and active recreational activities. These parks are generally 2-5 acres and are typically not staffed or programmed, but may periodically be so on a seasonal or part time basis only. All of the operations are conducted without the benefit of user fees, although some nominal permit, entrance, or registration fees may be charged. These parks are prime candidates for cooperative projects involving the City, civic associations, P.T.A.'s, the School Board and/or other private businesses and organizations.

Typical facilities developed in the Neighborhood Park may include play apparatus, recreation buildings, multipurpose courts, sports fields, picnic areas and free play areas. Additional facilities may be added, depending on the recreation demands of the neighborhood. Specifics of each park are found on Table 2 with corresponding locations shown on Map No. 2.

**TABLE 2
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

Park Name	I.D.	Status	# of Acres			PICNIC TABLES	SHELTERS	REC CENTER	SHUFFLEBOARD	TENNIS	BBQ PITS	EQUIPPED PLAY	JOGGING PATH	SOFT/BASEBALL	BASKETBALL	FOOTBALL/SOCCER	HAND/RACQUETBALL	MULTIPURPOSE	POOL	RESTROOM-BLDGS	PARKING
			Land	Water	Total																
Gladiator Park	1	Dev.	1.23	0.00	1.23	4	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	10
Burrowing Owl	2	Dev.	2.00	0.00	2.00	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-
Veterans Memorial	3	Dev.	4.36	0.29	4.65	2	-	-	-	1	0	1	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	38
Roy Rambo Park	4	Dev.	2.00	0.00	2.00	3	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	14
Bowman Park	5	Dev.	4.67	0	4.67	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	10
Total			14.26	0.29	14.55	17	2	0	0	3	3	5	1	1	8	0	2	1	0	1	72

Source: Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008



3. Community Parks

Description: "A community park is a "ride to" park, owned by the City and designed to serve the needs of 4-6 neighborhoods which constitutes a community. A minimum of 20 acres is the recognized standard by the State;" however, in the City of Greenacres such facilities are generally 7- 20 acres, well within the County standard of 2-50 acres.

In the City these parks are entirely operated without the benefit of user fees, although these facilities characteristically involve more "pay as you play" recreational opportunities. A fee structure for these facilities could help to offset the costs of service delivery to some limited extent, but more importantly, would serve to enhance the perceived value of services.

Typical facilities at a community park may include ball fields, tennis courts, play areas, picnic areas, multipurpose courts, recreation buildings, sports fields and swimming pools. Adequate off-street parking may be needed to contain parking overflow. Two important elements of every community park are the use of landscaping and the provision of passive recreation activity areas. Specifics of each park are found on Table 3 with corresponding locations shown on Map No. 3.

**TABLE 3
COMMUNITY PARKS**

Park Name	I.D.	Status	# of Acres			PICNIC TABLES	SHELTERS	REC CENTER	SHUFFLEBOARD	TENNIS	BBQ PITS	EQUIPPED PLAY	JOGGING PATH	SOFT/BASEBALL	BASKETBALL	FOOTBALL/SOCCER	HAND/RACQUETBALL	VOLLEYBALL	MULTIPURPOSE	POOL	RESTROOM_BLDGS	PARKING
			Land	Water	Total																	
GREENACRES COMMUNITY PARK	1	Dev.	16.75	0	16.75	25	3	-	6	2	11	2	1	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	87
IRA VAN BULLOCK REC. COMPLEX	2	Dev.	8.84	0	8.84	12	2	3	-	-	7	1		2	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	208
GREENACRES FREEDOM PARK	3	Dev.	43.39	8.54	51.93	5	2	-	-	-	2	1	1	2	-	2 (S)	-	1	1	-	2	183
Total			68.98	8.54	77.52	42	8	3	6	2	20	4	2	6	2	2S	2	1	1	0	7	478

Source: Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008

4. Regional Parks

"Regional parks are large, resource-based areas that serve two (2) or more communities or counties and are usually located within an hour's driving distance of the residents they serve. These parks should range in size from a minimum of 250 acres to as much as several thousand acres."

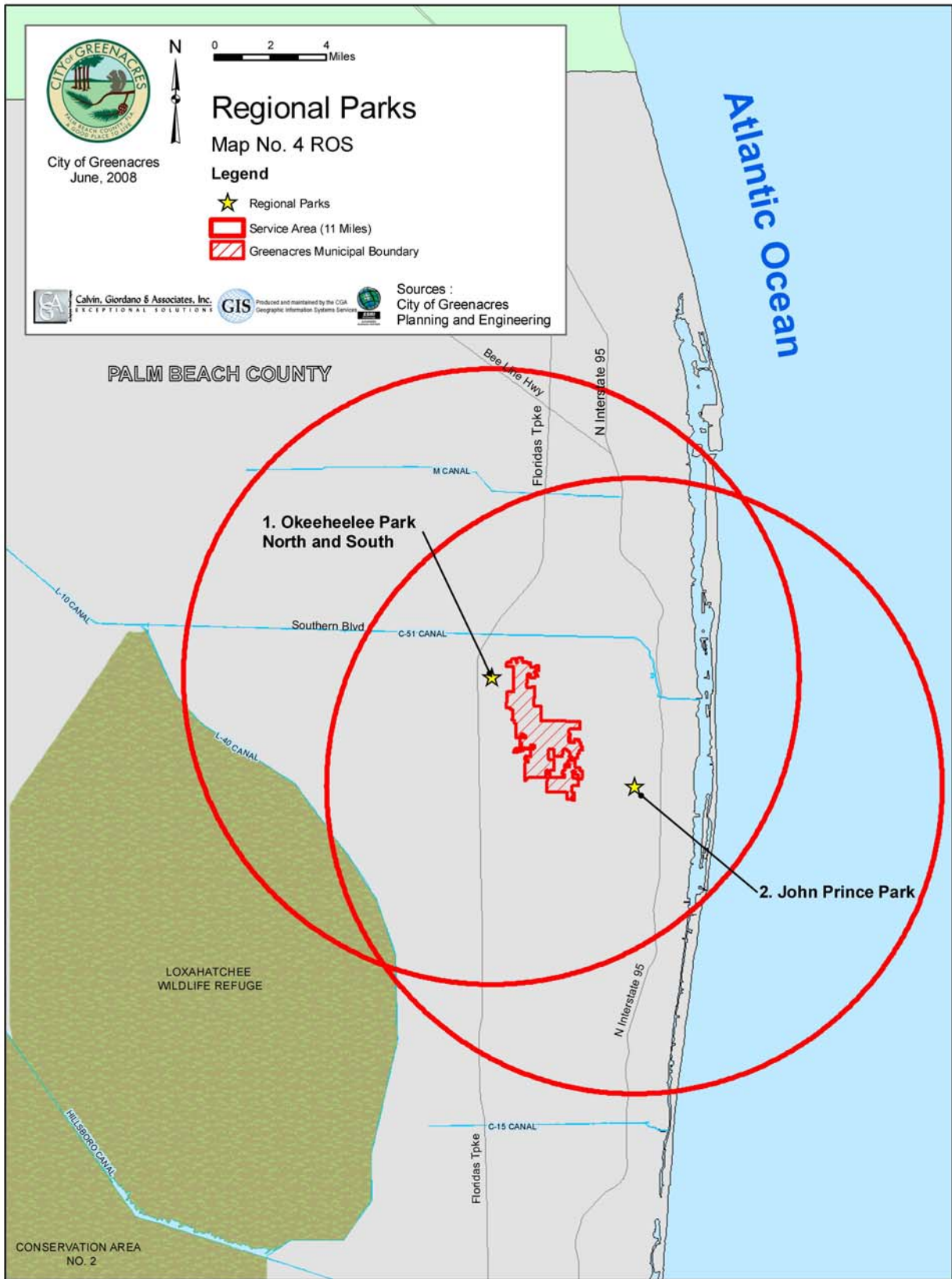
Typical facilities provided at a regional park include water-based recreation sites, camping areas, hiking and nature trails, picnic areas, and other facilities not requiring intensive development. The most prominent feature of a regional park is that it provides recreational opportunities that, through the design and development of outdoor recreation resources and facilities, capitalize on the natural environment and promote an atmosphere of beauty and serenity.

Although none of these parks are located within the City limits, Greenacres is well within the prime service areas of several regional parks.

Specifics of each park are found on Table 4, with corresponding locations shown on Map No. 4.

**TABLE 4
REGIONAL PARKS**

Park Name	I.D.	Status	# of Acres			PICNIC TABLES	SHELTERS	REC CENTER	SHUFFLEBOARD	TENNIS	BBQ PITS	EQUIPPED PLAY	JOGGING PATH	SOFT/BASEBALL	BASKETBALL	FOOTBALL/SOCCER	HAND/RACQUETBALL	VOLLEYBALL	MULTIPURPOSE	POOL	RESTROOMS
			Land	Water	Total																
*OKEEHHEEL North & South	1	County			1702.01	40+	4	-	-	8	Unk	5	3	9	-	-	6	5	-	Unk	
JOHN PRINCE MEMORIAL	2	County	388.36	338	726.36	Unk	4	1	-	8	Unk	10	3	3	4	-	6	0	-	Unk	
Total			388.36	338	2428.37	40+	8	1	0	16	Unk	15	6	12	4	0	0	12	5	0	Unk
Source: Palm Beach County Parks & Recreation Department 2006 Park Directory																					
Note: These parks are not within Greenacres City Limits. Separate land & water figures not available for Okeehheel Park.																					
* Adjacent to the City of Greenacres																					



5. Open Space

Description: The concept of open space incorporates a whole range of resources, only some of which are included in the more traditional definition. Open space, as defined in this plan, refers only to City-owned property which determines the parameters of the open space inventory.

These open space sites are landscaped or natural open areas, located within built-up areas. Depending on their location, open space sites may serve populated areas ranging in size from a single neighborhood to an entire city. Their principal function is to intersperse congested urban environments with aesthetically pleasing buffer areas. Table 5 contains an inventory of City owned open space land existing within the City of Greenacres, with corresponding locations shown on Map No. 5. A vacant land analysis is included in the Future Land Use Element.

**TABLE 5
CITY OWNED
VACANT/OPEN SPACE LAND**

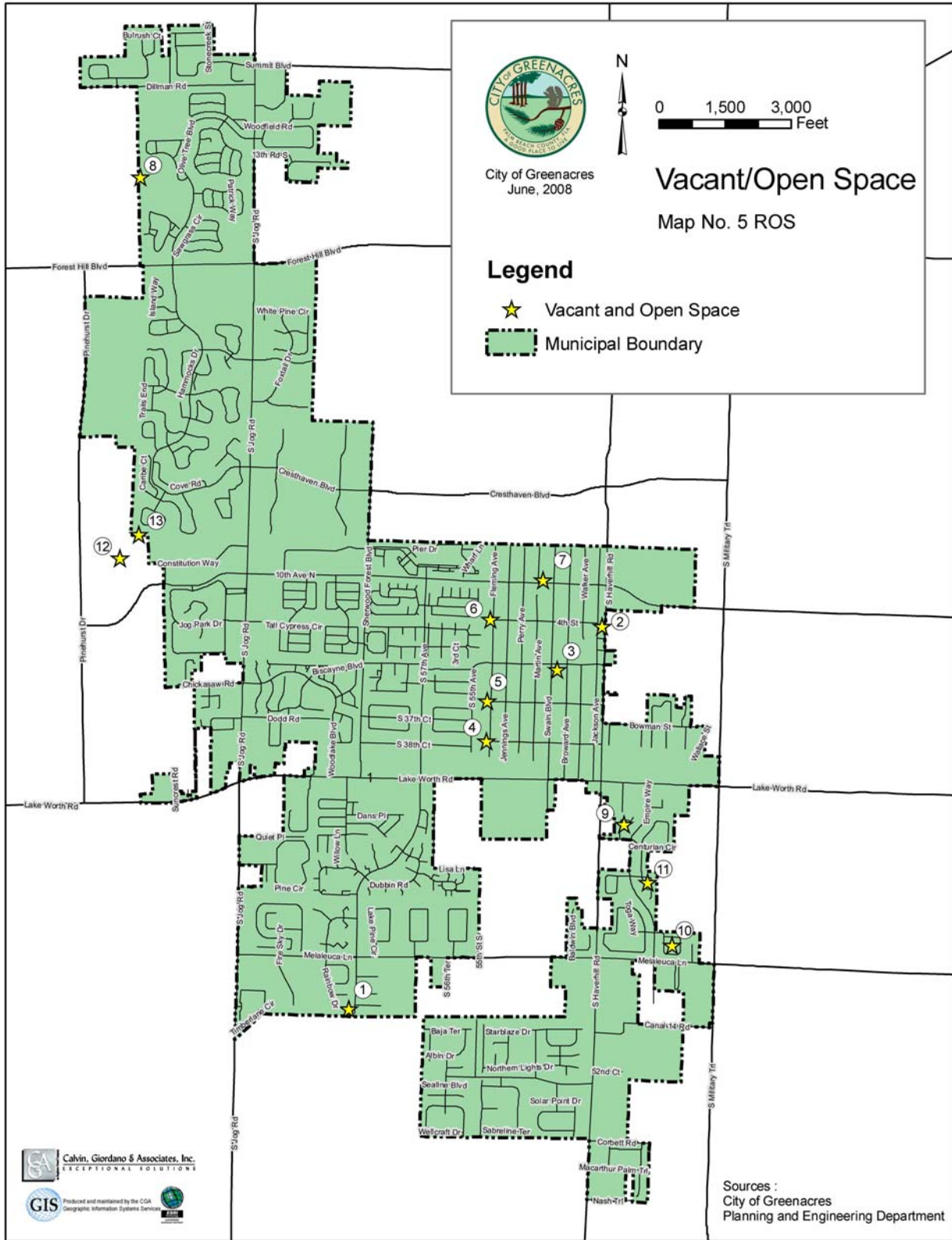
MAP I.D.	LOCATION	ZONING		ACRES	COMMENTS
1	NWC of L-14 Canal and Sherwood Forest Blvd.	GU		1.38	Recommended use of Neighborhood Park Site
2	NEC of Jackson and Fourth St.	RL-3		0.28	Landscaped with benches and trash containers ("Oasis Park")
3	40' South of SEC of Swain and Biscayne Dr.	MXD		0.28	Leased to American Legion Post 258
4	NWC of First St. and Fleming Ave.	RL-3		0.15	Vacant right-of-way
5	NWC of Second St. and Fleming Ave.	RL-3		0.15	Vacant right-of-way
6	NWC of Fourth St. and Fleming Ave.	RL-3		0.15	Vacant right-of-way
7	NEC of Martin Ave. and 10th Ave. North	GU		0.22	Landscaped ("Friend Park")
8	Olive Tree Buffer Strip	GU		7.12	_____
9	Caesar Circle	GU	___	0.25	_____
10	Chariot Circle	GU	___	0.42	_____
11	Nicia Way	GU	___	0.54	_____
<u>12</u>	Path to Pinehurst Drive	COUNTY		0.82	Asphalt path & Open Space
<u>13</u>	Path North of WTP 2	COUNTY		0.20	Vacant

TOTAL

11.96

Source: Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008

Note: Acreage estimates are based on February 2008, Palm beach County Property Appraisers Data.



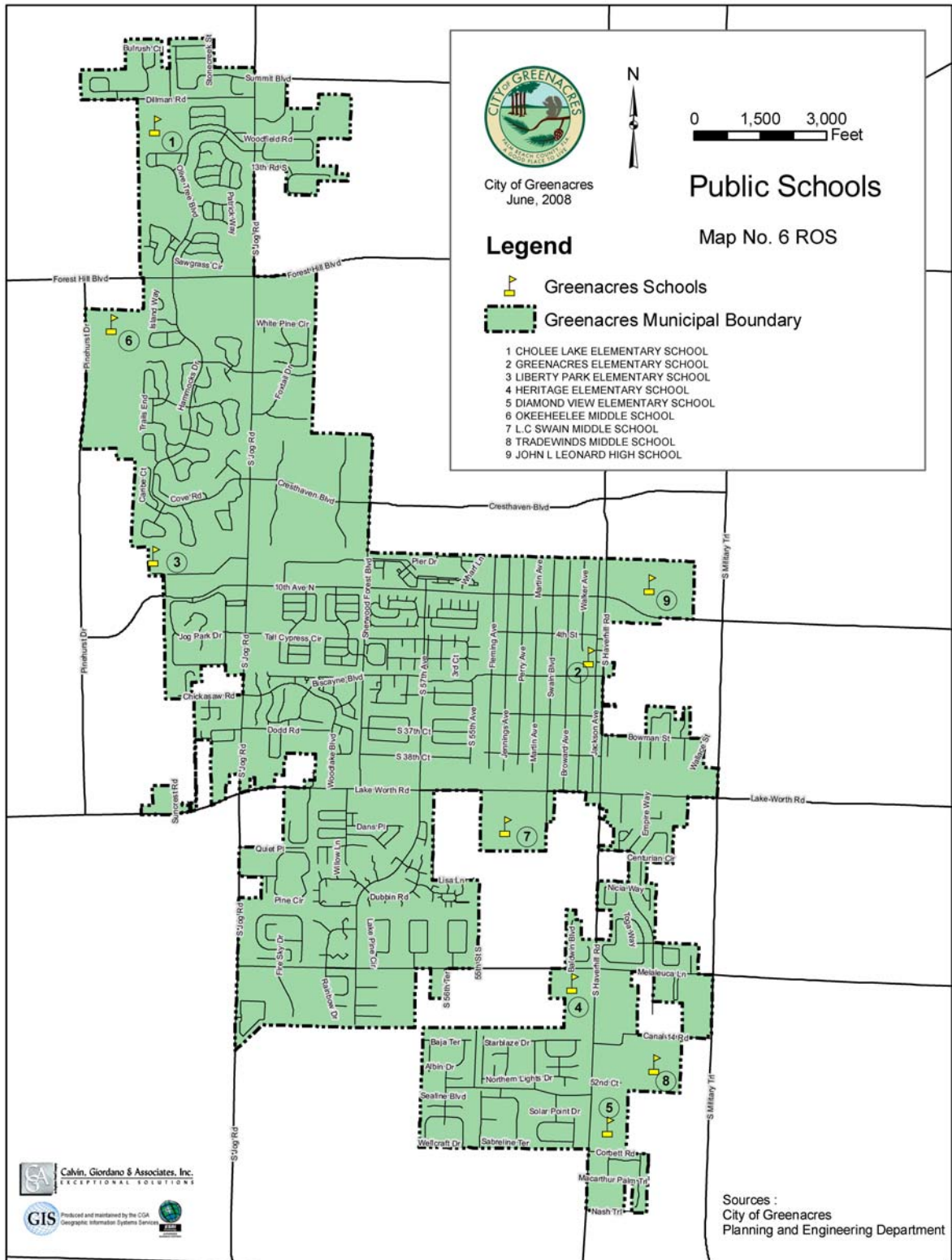
6. Public Schools

Description: The community school concept is designed to utilize the schools, after hours through various recreation and community programs. The City of Greenacres has a shared use agreement with Liberty Park Elementary School sharing approximately 4.75 acres of multi-purpose fields in the west end of Community Park. The City also has a shared use agreement with Okeeheelee Middle School sharing approximately 33.65 acres of baseball, softball and multi-purpose fields north of Greenacres Freedom Park (fka Pinehurst Park), and has utilized recreation space at L.C. Swain Middle School recently. None of the Palm Beach County School Board property has been included in the total acreage figures of the City's recreational inventory. Table 6 shows those schools affecting public recreation in the City, with corresponding locations shown on Map No. 6.

**Table 6
PUBLIC SCHOOLS – RECREATION AREAS**

Map I.D.	SCHOOL	LOCATION	ACRES	
			TOTAL	REC.
1	Greenacres Elementary	405 Jackson Avenue	7.25	3.00
2	Liberty Park Elementary	6601 Constitution Way	11.74	0.57
3	John I. Leonard High School	4701 10th Avenue North	37.97	18.57
4	Okeeheelee Middle	2200 Pinehurst Drive	17.50	13.31
5	Cholee Lake Elementary	6680 Dillman Road	19.96	2.08
6	L.C. Swain Middle	5332 Lake Worth Road	30.48	13.24
7	Heritage Elementary	5100 Melaleuca Lane	19.72	2.80
8	Tradewinds Middle	5090 S. Haverhill Road	47.89	13.21
9	Diamond View Elementary	5300 Haverhill Road	24.61	6.62
Total			217.12	73.4

Source: -Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008



This "shared use" concept has also made possible the continuation of a Community Park jogging trail through School Board property, the provision of additional parking facilities, combined landscaping efforts, and the joint design of security and safety features.

As funding levels fail to keep pace with increasing costs of outdoor recreation, and the availability of land diminishes, the City must continue to utilize effective methods of coordinating the capabilities of present and potential suppliers of recreational opportunities.

C. CITY-RECREATIONAL

The City's recreational inventory includes all open space within the classification of: Open/Green Space, Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks. Combined, these areas total 107.5 acres. The following is an account of open and recreational space and alternative leisure service providers for the City of Greenacres.

Table 7 demonstrates each of the City Park classifications in terms of selected service characteristics consistent with similar tabulations included in both Palm Beach County and State of Florida planning documents for outdoor recreation. Table 8 lists the total parks and open space located within the City in terms of total recreational space by park classification. Total acreage figures include both land and water portions of each site.

**TABLE 7
SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS**

CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	SERVICE RADIUS	SERVICE POPULATION
Open/Green Space	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mini-Parks/Tot Lot	(1) Max 2 acres (2) min 1/4 acres, adjoining school; min 1.acres.	up to .25 miles	(1) 2,500 (2) 500-2500
Neighborhood Parks	up to 10 acres	up to .50 miles	5,000
Community Parks	(1) 2 to 50 acres (2) min of 20 acres, near a school; min 5 acres	.50 to 3.0 miles	(1) 5,000 (2) up to 25,000
Regional Park	(1)250 to 10,000 acres	(1) 30 min. to 1 hour drive	100,000

Source: (1) Palm Beach County Regional Comprehensive Dev. Plan – Area Planning Board of PBC-1980
(2) Outdoor Recreation in Florida 1994; Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Rec. Plan pg. 6.11-6.12

**Table 8
Total Recreation/Open Space**

Classification	No. Sites	Acres	
		Total	Avg. Size
Open/Green Space	13	11.96	0.92
Mini-Parks/Tot-Lot	3	3.47	0.73
Neighborhood Parks	5	14.55	2.91
Community Park	3	77.52	25.84
Total	24	107.5	

Source: Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008

Total acres divided by total number of sites = Average Size.

D. PRIVATE - RESIDENTIAL

Private recreation is defined as recreational facilities provided by independent residential developments. Currently, there are over ninety-six 96 acres of both active and passive private recreation areas (not including water bodies). It is apparent that this supply is substantial enough to warrant mention; particularly in the areas of swimming pools, racquet sports and play apparatus. Many citizens are able to provide for their recreational needs in the residential setting. This is true due to the following factors:

1. The number of multi-family/condominium housing developments that provide on-site recreational facilities;
2. The socioeconomic dynamics of the more affluent neighborhoods;
3. The seasonal leisure characteristics of the community generally.

An awareness of this supply is a meaningful consideration to public recreational planning and service delivery. It should also be noted that the City is supportive of these private initiatives apart from and in addition to those that are regulated by impact fees, building and landscape codes. Table 9 shows a total account of private recreation facilities offered.

**TABLE 9
PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES**

TOTAL REC. AREA (ACRES)	Clubhouse	Shuffleboard	Tennis Courts	Pools	Picnic Areas	Bike Jog Path	Racquetball Handball	Equipped Playground	Volleyball	Baseball	Basketball	Golf Course
96.09	44	20	53	58	8	25	14	23	5	1	14	0

Source: Prepared by the Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008

IV. ANALYSIS: DEMAND AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A. RECREATION STANDARDS

1. Overview

It has been the standard practice for parks and recreational professionals to typically evaluate or demonstrate the adequacy of open space and recreation based on per capita acreage ratios. Since public recreation resources and facilities are generally felt to be "free" goods and services, "demand", as an economic concept, cannot readily be adapted for practical application. As a result, the use of the term "outdoor recreation demand" has become a means for expressing the actual participation (amount, volume, frequency, etc.) in recreation activity by some defined group or population over a fixed period of time.

The recognized national authority for the parks and recreation profession is the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). NRPA standards are reflected in the State's currently effective comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, "Outdoor Recreation in Florida – 1994", and is helpful for an assessment and overview of statewide outdoor recreation issues. It is emphasized that these standards merely are "benchmarks" that can be used to evaluate the City's parks system, not mandates for public acquisition.

2. Concurrency Management System

The concurrency management system ensures that the adopted level of service standards required for recreation will be maintained prior to the issuance of a development order and development permit. However, the City is committed to provide adequate levels of open space and recreational facilities and services higher than the existing inventory.

As a result, the City of Greenacres adopted two levels of service standards; 1) a currently realistic or "Policy" level of service standard based on existing conditions and population projections for 1993 (1.4 acres per 1,000 people) and 2) a higher (more stringent) standard referred to as "Target" thresholds for future or planned facility and service improvements (3.0 acres per 1,000 people).

Through the acquisition and development of additional park area (such as Bowman Park, Greenacres Freedom Park, and enhanced Ira Van Bullock Park), the City is now able to meet and maintain the "Target" level of service of 3 acres per 1,000 population.

B. CURRENT NEED AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

This section of the element will identify past and present operations assuring service delivery consistent with public need and demand. The majority of these efforts are ongoing, standard operating activities.

1. Open and Recreation Space and Development Guidelines

The City of Greenacres has established guidelines expressed in numbers of facilities per thousand population. Table 10 compares park facility standards of the City with State and County standards. It will be noted that the City does not provide a standard for each of the four (4) park types, but rather includes all four (4) in its park facility threshold of 3 acres per 1,000 population. Individual statistics have been included for each park type so a comparison can be made.

**TABLE 10
OUTDOOR RECREATION RESOURCE STANDARDS
Acres per 1000 population**

Type	Established			Greenacres Actual	Acres
	P.B.C.	N.R.P.A.	Greenacres		
Open/Greenspace	0	1	-	0.37	11.96
Mini/Tot Lot	0	0.5	-	0.11	3.47
Neighborhood	2.5	2	-	0.45	14.55
Community	2.5	2	-	2.41	77.52
Total	5	5.5	3	3.34	107.50

Source: (1) City of Greenacres Planning and Engineering Department, February 2008
 (2) Recreation & Open Space Element of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan, 1989
 (3) Actual standard based on population of 32,105 in 2007 (BEBR).

The recreational activity standards for the City are shown in Table No. 11 and were based on standards developed by the Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County in 1980 and the State Plan, "Outdoor Recreation in Florida – 1997", but also allowing for modifications as appropriate to account for unique local characteristics and conditions.

**TABLE NO. 11
PARK ACTIVITY THRESHOLD FOR GREENACRES**

	Greenacres	Palm Beach County	State Median
1	Swimming Pool (small)	1 pool/2,000	N/A
2	Golf (18 holes)	1/35,000	9 holes/25,000
3	Tennis Courts	1court/4,000	1court/4,000
4	Baseball/Softball	1field/5,000	1 field/3,000
5	Basketball	1court/4,000	1court/4,000
6	Football/Soccer	1field/10,000	1field/8,000
7	Handball/Racquetball	1court/10,000	1court/6,000
8	Shuffleboard	1 court/6,000	1/5,000
9	Picnicking	1ac./6,000	1ac./6,000
10	Bicycling	1 mile/10,000	5 mile/5,000
11	Equipped Play	1 area/3,000	1/3,000

Source: (1) City of Greenacres Engineering, Planning & Building Department, Jan. 16, 1997
(2) Recreation & Open Space Element of the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan, 1989

The target thresholds above are not adopted standards and are not tied to the adopted level of service standard for parks and open space. The approval of development orders and permits is not conditioned upon meeting these thresholds. When a threshold above is reached, the City will investigate the applicability of providing such activity or facility.

2. Outdoor Recreation/Population Ratios-Demand

The use of resident projections provides an indicator of conditions at any time during the year. These needs are expressed in five (5) year intervals in order to facilitate the analysis of future demands on the City. Table 12a depicts the future demand for recreation/open space land based on adopted level of service (LOS) thresholds. Existing acreage includes the inventory of green/open space, mini parks, neighborhood parks and community parks.

**TABLE 12a
REC./OPEN SPACE - DEMAND per ADOPTED L.O.S.**

YEAR	POPULATION	ACRES		
		DEMAND	EXISTING	(DEFICIT) / SURPLUS
2007	32,105	96.32	107.50	11.18
2012	33,095	99.29	107.50	8.21
2017	34,124	102.37	107.50	5.13

Source: Population projections from Palm Beach County Planning Division Allocation Model based on March, 2008 BEBR projections.

Note: Demand figures represent the Level of Service (L.O.S.) of 3 ac. per 1,000 population. [(Population/1,000)*3]

The projected surplus of 5.13 acres per one thousand (1,000) population in 2017 is based on the adopted level of service (LOS) for City-owned recreation area. Table 12b, includes additional projections based on state standards and includes the recreation areas within private developments which are restricted to recreational uses. Together with those "existing" acres of City recreation space, they represent the "potential" amount of recreation/open space offered in the City.

**TABLE 12b
REC/OPEN SPACE - DEMAND PER STATE STANDARDS**

TYPE	DEMAND PER STATE STANDARD				ABOVE/BELOW		
	2007	2012	2017	Existing	2007	2012	2017
Mini & Neighborhood	80.26	82.74	85.31	114.11	+33.85	+31.37	+28.80
Community	64.21	66.19	68.25	77.52	+13.31	+11.33	+9.27
TOTAL	144.47	148.93	153.56	191.63	+47.16	+42.70	+38.07

- Notes: (1) Demand per state standard is based on a ratio of 2.5ac./1000 for mini & neighborhood and 2.0 ac./1,000 for community parks.
 (2) Existing supply includes both public and private areas, with all of the private recreation (96.09 acres) allocated to the Mini & Neighborhood category. Thus:
 Private + Public Mini + Public Neighborhood = 96.09 + 3.47 + 14.55 = 114.11.

C. FUTURE SUPPLY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Assessment Strategy

Generally, the City's posture with respect to open and recreational spaces, focuses on putting existing areas to their highest and best use in terms of the community's aesthetic and leisure-oriented needs and demands. This strategy arises from the fact that there are very limited opportunities for the City to develop or acquire additional parkland in the future. Despite this reality, the plan has identified several areas of initiative that might allow for the expansion of the park system and/or improved service levels.

The proper location of future park sites is dependent upon a number of factors other than availability of land. Existing and future residential land use patterns must also be considered. It is important to consider not only the size of future populations, but also the demographics and in what manner will the population be distributed spatially.

Regarding the analysis of existing land use patterns and the planning of future land use which are not strictly the concern of recreation, please refer to the analysis section of the Future Land Use Element for additional details.

Table 13 identifies the projected recreational demand per the target thresholds established in Table 11 for the City.

**TABLE 13
PROJECTED RECREATIONAL DEMAND
PER TARGET THRESHOLDS**

FACILITY	PROJECTED DEMAND				ABOVE/BELOW		
	2007	2012	2017	Existing Supply	2007	2012	2017
Swimming Pool (small)	16	17	17	58	+42	+41	+41
Golf (18 holes)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tennis Courts	8	8	9	58	+50	+50	+49
Baseball/Softball	6	7	7	8	+2	+1	+1
Basketball	8	8	9	24	+16	+16	+15
Football/Soccer	3	3	3	4	+1	+1	+1
Handball/Racquetball	3	3	3	18	+15	+15	+15
Shuffleboard	5	6	6	57	+52	+51	+51
Picnicking	5	6	6	19	+14	+13	+13
Bicycling	3	3	3	19	+16	+16	+16
Equipped Play	11	11	11	36	+25	+25	+25
Volleyball	0	0	0	6	+6	+6	+6

Note: See Table 12a for projected population.
Existing supply includes public and private recreation.

a) Public Leisure Activity

In order to properly analyze the City's supply of selected recreational facilities/activities, two factors must be considered: 1) private recreation suppliers and 2) priority resource/facility needs proposed and analyzed for this planning region set forth in the State's currently effective comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, "Outdoor Recreation in Florida –1994 and 2000".

b) Private Leisure Activity

Private developments satisfy a considerable portion of the overall demand for recreational opportunities and must be included in the analysis to properly determine those areas of greatest concern.

In addition, the City code requires "40% of the land within a planned unit development (PUD) be used as open space and recreation". Subdivision regulations also require developers to provide parks and recreation facilities within subdivisions or provide a cash amount equal to the required land dedication.

The existing supply of public & private recreational facilities has been included in the tabulation in Table 13. Through 2017, the current supply of public and private recreation amenities is projected to meet or exceed demand with the exception of

being very close to the need for 1 golf course in 2017. However, Palm Beach County is currently over-supplied with golf courses (with some closing due to lack of business) and there are a number of public, semi-public and private courses adjacent to Greenacres to meet the City's needs.

c) State Recreation Plan Analysis

Once those areas of greatest need have been identified based upon the City's "target" projections, they are evaluated using regional ranking criteria, as well as per capita participation figures supplied through the State's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan SCORP. In the State Plan, the City of Greenacres lies within Region 10. The resource facility needs analysis in the state plan shows that the entire Region 10 will need additional salt water beach activities, bicycle riding, freshwater fishing (no boat), hiking and outdoor swimming pools. The City should consider those needs in planning future recreational opportunities for the residents.

2. Recreation Needs for Special Population Groups

The disabled population often requires special recreation opportunities. The City recognizes a shared responsibility with other governmental entities to provide opportunities for all. Facilities such as special exercise courses and trails should be included in community parks and some neighborhood parks. Special trails can also be constructed for the enjoyment of the disabled. At the very least, all facilities should be accessible.

Senior citizens sometimes encounter access difficulties and sometimes prefer to enjoy their leisure apart from youths and children. Planning with senior citizens in mind should translate into the provision of adequate access and facilities for the pursuit of leisure activities.

Another special group is young children, who also require recreational facilities and opportunities. Tot-lot equipment in parks would help meet the demand of this younger generation for recreation opportunities. The "mini-park/tot lot" park classification is especially designed for preschoolers.

3. Access to Recreational Facilities

Development of parks and recreation facilities serves little purpose if residents have no way of accessing them. Facilities must be developed to provide adequate access to facilities for residents and visitors. "The State's emphasis, however, is on the location of facilities in such a manner as to be fully accessible and convenient to the users for whom a demonstrated need exists for the facility."

Access to recreational parks and facilities is usually provided by roads, bicycle paths, and pedestrian ways. All parks and facilities have adequate access in the City.

Planning for future recreational facilities and parks should take into account the

special barrier-free accessibility needs of the disabled and of the elderly. Accessibility requirements include wheelchair ramps, railings, restroom facilities designed to provide access to the handicapped and other facilities constructed to allow safe use by all.

4. Annexation

It will be important for the City to consider the availability and condition of open and recreational spaces to assure that the desired and equitable levels or standards of services can be provided for both existing and new City residents. This is likely to prove an extremely difficult and challenging task primarily for the Leisure Services Department. For this reason, it will warrant some advance planning and consideration, even though the prospects of acquiring other facilities and additional service areas is only speculative at best. Land use conditions in areas of possible future annexation are discussed in the Annexation Element of this Plan. See Future Land Use Map for possible locations of future recreation areas.

5. Dedications/Options

a) Impact Fee Policies

As growth of the population requires additional park and recreation areas, funding mechanisms must be augmented with impact fees. In similar manner as Palm Beach County, it is presumed that future public park dedications would be a form of payment of park impact fees; however, the park and recreational areas addressed within the parameters of the Palm Beach County Impact Fee schedule are countywide in the population served; therefore, neighborhood and community parks are excluded.

The City of Greenacres addresses the provision of neighborhood and community parks through Ordinance No. 83-41, which established additional standards and criteria for parks and recreation land dedication. "The formula of two and one-half (2 1/2) acres of property for each one thousand (1,000) persons for neighborhood parks and two and one-half (2 1/2) acres for each one thousand (1,000) persons for community parks should be adequate to satisfy future City recreation needs." These standards may result in a combination of many acceptable and desirable dedications to satisfy the intent of a parks and recreation land dedication as follows:

1. A developer may wish to dedicate the entire five (5) acres per thousand population or cash in lieu thereof. "Provisions are made for the payment of fees to the City, equal to the appraised value of this same amount of land, which are to be spent toward the enhancement of existing facilities or future acquisition."
2. A developer may construct private recreation satisfying the neighborhood standard of two and one half acres per thousand population and dedicate the remaining two and one half acres per thousand population or cash in lieu thereof to satisfy the community

park recreation standard.

3. A developer may wish to donate a combination of cash and/or land for facilities and/or improvements. In the past, because of the small size of the areas resulting from these formulations or because the provision of this open space would drastically impact/reduce the remaining areas for development and thereby detract from the economic feasibility or marketability of this development, the City has tended to allow for the payment of fees as opposed to acquiring new park land. Attention should also be given to how the fee structure can be legitimately and defensibly modified to address the open space needs or impacts associated with commercial development. Any of these may prove viable opportunities to further enhance the City's park system and associated recreational services.

b) Land Donations

The City should remain open to and perhaps actively pursue opportunities for expanding its parks system through the donation of land. While the benefits of such acquisitions must be evaluated in terms of populations served, accessibility, development and maintenance costs, etc., donations remain a desirable acquisition alternative for the future. This is particularly true as land values within the City continue to escalate while the public's dollar remains in limited supply.

c) Grants

The City of Greenacres has continued to submit applications through the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP). "The purpose of this program is to provide grants to qualified local governmental entities to acquire or develop land for public outdoor recreational purposes." The City has also used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for park improvements.

The City of Greenacres secured grants to develop Community Park, Rambo Park, Greenacres Freedom Park and Ira Van Bullock Park, which are designed to maximize the outdoor recreation benefit to the citizens of the City and will implement the State's comprehensive outdoor recreation plan for this region. In order to offset the rising costs of development, the City will continue to pursue these allocations of funds made by the federal and state governments for future development and land acquisition.

D. THE PLAN FOR OPEN SPACE

In addition to the inventory of existing open space, the City considered another classification, "streetscapes". There are areas in the City that could be part of the open space network because they can fulfill potentially important open space functions. Within the City, these corridor open spaces are present in the form of road right-of ways that could be developed into a scenic corridor providing such recreational opportunities as hiking and bicycling.

Typical improvements include irrigation, sod, shrubbery, planting beds, trees, curbing, brickwork, pavers and signage. These projects would also include County and State roadway maintenance arrangements and other cooperative efforts with private property owners to assure the attractive development and maintenance of right-of-ways. To date the City has streetscaped Tenth Avenue North, Jog Road, Lake Worth Road, Forest Hill Boulevard, Sherwood Forest Boulevard, and Swain Boulevard within the City limits. The City should continue with this effort to include South 57th Avenue and Melaleuca Lane. See Map No. 7.

The City's role and responsibilities in these areas is to promote specific aesthetic objectives and broad interests for assuring design and maintenance continuity throughout the City. This responsibility tends to be subsidized in its entirety, though there has been some success and some further potential for pursuing alternative funding strategies, i.e., maintenance contracts and agreements, cooperative projects, special taxing assessments, and highway beautification grants.

1. Planning Options

Recreation in some areas is viewed as a luxury. The problem with that view is that recreational programs are usually then the first casualties of budget cutbacks. This is understandable from a short range perspective of expediency, and when balanced against the more utilitarian needs of a community. But when viewed from a long range perspective, and particularly within the context of a place's identity, recreation should not be seen merely as a luxury. In fact, historically, Palm Beach County has taken the long range perspective. Thus an impressive number of parks and recreation facilities exist countywide; however, the City of Greenacres has begun a long-range commitment to make the City equal or exceed many municipalities of the County as leisure service providers.

In future years, the City will have three (3) major options:

- a) The first is to acquire no new parks and to maintain the existing level of funding for maintaining and protection of existing ones. This "status quo" option, in the short run is the least expensive one. However, such would result in overcrowded recreation sites as population increases. As maintenance costs increase with inflation, the level of maintenance would continue to decline, resulting in an erosion of overall quality of the facilities and sites.
- b) A second option is contingency planning, whereby new park sites and facilities are acquired as the needs are recognized. Funding for maintenance, when possible, will be increased to achieve the desired level of service and to overcome the impacts of inflation.
- c) A third option is to include recreation and open space planning within the framework of a comprehensive plan. With effective planning and management, population growth and the provision of facilities, including recreation, can be synchronized through this option. Benefits from recreation expenditure could be maximized and allocated to the areas of greatest need, with overlap and duplication minimized. Individual parks could be managed from within a framework that also included transportation, conservation, and land use elements.

Until the City devises a more specific acquisition strategy, potential new recreational sites cannot be mapped with any certainty. The City was successful in dialogue with the County to secure, by lease, a portion of Palm Beach Pines (now known as Okeeheelee Park South). The leased land is developed as Greenacres Freedom Park.

V. GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- A. GOAL: The development of a recreation/open space system that adequately provides for the needs of City residents and enhances the overall environmental characteristics of the City.

PROVISION OF PARKS AND FACILITIES

Objective 1:

The City shall adopt a comprehensive program to ensure that, at a minimum, the level of service for parks and recreation facilities is maintained at 3.0 acres per thousand population, with an even distribution and supply of parks and recreational facilities throughout the City that meets the needs of all citizens and visitors.

Policy a)

The City hereby adopts the standards shown in Table 12a as the Recreation and Open Space Level of Service standard.

Policy b)

The City will collect impact fees for the "Parks and Recreation Fund", to raise revenues for the acquisition, improvement and expansion of recreational park and open space areas.

Policy c)

The City shall develop an official "City Park Map" to identify generalized locations for future acquisition and improvements within one year of adoption of this plan, with provisions for updates at a minimum of five year intervals.

Policy d)

The City will acquire additional land by 2017 (or earlier if the population growth warrants it) in order to maintain the adopted level of service standards, giving allowance for the time necessary to acquire and develop the parkland.

OPEN SPACE

Objective 2:

Lands designated as "open space" will be protected from incompatible land uses and will remain functionally intact through the year 2017.

Policy a)

The City shall enforce land development regulations which include specific open space definitions and standards addressing protection of open space, natural vegetation, landscape and signage.

Policy b)

The City shall protect existing natural areas found along the corridors of existing right-of-ways through the development of a "Streetscape" enhancement program.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Objective 3:

Continue to provide automobile, bicycle and pedestrian access to all public recreation facilities.

Policy a)

The City shall acquire and develop right-of-ways for access to those public parks and facilities identified herein with access deficiencies.

Policy b)

The City shall provide the necessary handicap facilities, parking spaces and bicycle racks at recreation sites where such facilities are needed.

COORDINATION OF RESOURCES

Objective 4:

The City shall negotiate with private and other public entities in an effort to attain or maintain adopted levels of service for recreational opportunities in the community.

Policy a)

Maintain the existing joint-use agreements between the City and School Board of Palm Beach County concerning the joint use of parks and recreational facilities.

Policy b)

The City shall provide incentives for developers to provide recreational and clubhouse facilities in their developments through land dedication credits.

Policy c)

The City shall coordinate efforts with Palm Beach County Utilities, and other county agencies, to identify those sites to be phased out of use in the future and that are available for park purposes.

Objective 5:

The City shall continue to ensure that adequate provision and efficient distribution of parks and recreation facilities will be provided according to Tables 11 and 12a.

Policy a)

When a park activity threshold listed in Table 11 is reached, the City shall investigate the applicability of providing such activity or facility.

Policy b)

The City will utilize such tools as public hearings and user surveys to encourage public input during the investigation.

Objective 6:

The City shall continue to exercise its authority to designate land for open space.

Policy a)

The City shall continue to acquire public park land or fees in lieu of land dedications from private developers through the subdivision and PUD regulations.

Policy b)

The City shall continue to convert publicly-owned vacant land to passive and active recreational areas.

VI. NOTES

1. U.S. Census 1980, 1993 Special Census
2. City of Greenacres Leisure Services Department "Operating Expense Survey", Dec. 12, 1988.

Boynton Beach	12%
Boca Raton	16%
Palm Springs	8%
Lake Worth	5.5%
West Palm Beach	12%
City of Greenacres	5.5%

3. Open Space - Marilyn Spigel Schultz and Vivian Loeb Kasen, Encyclopedia of Community Planning and Environmental Management (New York, New York: Facts on File Publications, 1984)
4. State of Florida, Department of Natural Resources, "Outdoor-Recreation In Florida - 1987, User-Oriented Outdoor Recreation
5. State of Florida, Dept. of Community Affairs - 9J-5.005 "Concurrency Management System", (1)(a) - Level of Service Standards, pg. 4.
6. Greenacres City "Zoning Ordinance Chapter 32", Article VII, Section 32-69, Planned Unit Development - Standards and Criteria, pg. 60.
7. City of Greenacres Ord. No 83-41, Oct 10, 1983., Section 26 51, B.1., General Standard

REVISION HISTORY

September 15, 2008 Ord. 2008-03