

II. Parks and Recreation System Assessment

The parks and recreation assessment is based on an inventory of existing and planned recreation facilities, trails and environmental lands throughout Lake County, and an evaluation of how recreation services are provided by Lake County government.

1.0 Facilities Inventory

Lake County has thirty-five (35) parks and approximately 530 acres of park land, nearly half of which is contained in the 268-acre P.E.A.R. (Palatka Environmental and Agricultural Reserve) Park. An additional 50 acres for P.E.A.R. Park is being acquired through the Florida Forever program and was recently ranked high enough on the state list to receive funding in the 2003/2004 fiscal year. The majority of the parks owned and operated by Lake County are resource-based with limited development. Twenty-six parks provide access to a water body. Twelve of the parks that have access to a water body consist only of a boat ramp and range from just a few acres in size to less than an acre. Some ramps are simply easements. There are a total of five (5) parks classified as activity-based, the largest of which is the 10-acre Astor Lions Park. The heaviest used parks are Astor, Paisley, and McTureous Parks. McTureous Park (pictured below) is a resource-based park that contains a military memorial, WWII cannon, and a homestead/museum commemorating the life of Medal of Honor recipient Robert McTureous. Lake County park lands have been acquired through a variety of ways including dedication from community groups, developers, and home owners associations. (i.e. Astor Lions, Umatilla Veteran's Hall, Scott Park). The table on the following page is an inventory of Lake County Park lands.

Facilities such as athletic fields, community buildings, and picnic pavilions are scheduled on a first come first serve basis through the Lake County Parks and Recreation Section. The County provides no other direct recreation programming and instead relies on municipalities or private recreation providers to provide programs to its residents. To assist these recreation providers, the County has developed a recreation grant program to ease the burden on these providers.



Lake County Park Lands					
Parks	Acres	Proximity	Class	Type	Amenities
Astor Lions Park	10.0	Astor	Community	Activity	2 ballfields, basketball courts, football/soccer field, playground, tennis courts, port-a-johns, picnic shelter
Carlton Village Park	3.09	Lady Lake	Mini	Resource	undeveloped
Haines Creek Park	36.09	Leesburg	Neighborhood	Resource	undeveloped
Lake Idamere Park	45.0	Tavares	Community	Resource	fishing, hiking, picnicking, playground
Lake Jem Park & Boat Ramp	11.0	Tavares	Neighborhood	Resource	½ basketball court, fishing, boat ramp, trails, playground, port-a-johns
Lake Joanna Park	0.5	Eustis	Mini	Resource	swimming beach, picnicking
Lake Mack Park	1.65	Deland	Mini	Resource	½ basketball court, fishing, picnicking, playground, port-a-johns
Lake Thomas Cove Park	4.6	Okahumpka	Mini	Resource	undeveloped
Marsh Park & Boat Ramp	35.0	Eustis	Community	Resource	½ basketball court, boat ramp, dock, fishing, trails, picnicking
McTureous Memorial Park	2.56	Altoona	Community	Resource	Veteran memorial, picnic, playground, shelter, port-a-johns, volleyball
Mt. Plymouth Park	0.4	Mt. Plymouth	Mini	Resource	playground, picnicking
Paisley Community Park	8.1	Paisley	Community	Activity	picnicking, playground, shelters, library, comm. bldg., basketball, ballfield, port-a-johns
Palatka River Park	23.0	Clermont	Community	Resource	boat ramp, dock, fishing, trail, picnic, playground, port-a-johns, shelter, Scrub Jay habitat
PEAR Park	268.0	Leesburg	District	Resource	undeveloped
Pine Forest Park	48.0	Deland	Community	Resource	basketball, playground, trail
Scott Park	0.65	Mt. Plymouth	Mini	Resource	Playground, picnic
Sorrento Park	3.38	Sorrento	Mini	Activity	basketball court, picnic, playground, shelter, tennis, volleyball
South Umatilla Park	4.0	Umatilla	Mini	Activity	picnicking, playground, comm. center
Spring Lake Park	0.38	Fruitland Park	Mini	Resource	undeveloped
Sylvan Shores Park	4.94	Mount Dora	Neighborhood	Resource	trail
Trout Lake Park	0.31	Eustis	Mini	Resource	undeveloped
Twin Lakes Park	14.5	Leesburg	Neighborhood	Resource	picnic, playground, basketball, trail
Umatilla Veterans Hall	0.75	Umatilla	Special Use	Activity	comm. bldg., port-a-johns
Total Parks	525.9				

Lake County Boat Ramps					
Boat Ramps	Acres	Location	Class	Type	Amenities
Arnold Brothers Boat Ramp	0.15	Groveland	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp, fishing
Astatula Boat Ramp	0.25	Astatula	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Butler Street Boat Ramp	0.23	Astor	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
John's Lake Boat Ramp	1.3	Winter Garden	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp, dock
Lake Dalhousie Boat Ramp	0.7	Eustis	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Lake George Boat Ramp	0.7	Astor	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Lake Holly Boat Ramp	0.5	Umatilla	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Lake Saunders Boat Ramp	0.5	Tavares	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Lake Yale Boat Ramp-East	0.7	Eustis	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Lake Yale Boat Ramp-West	1.5	Eustis	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Pearl Street Boat Ramp	0.25	Astor	Special Use	Resource	boat ramp
Sparks Village Boat Ramp	0.23	Leesburg	Special Use	Resource	Boat ramp
Total Boat Ramps	7.01				



Lake County Cemeteries			
Cemeteries	Acres	Location	Owner
Evergreen	1.0	Silver Lake	County
Grand Island	2.0	Grand Island	W.A. Milton, Jr
Hinson	8.0	Altoona, Marion Co.	Ev. Lutheran Good Sam
Lisbon	3.25	Lisbon	United Methodist
Rigdon	1.0	Umatilla	Hawthorne Residents
Richmond	0.5	Okahumpka	R.W. Thiot
Smythmill	1.0		Lois W. Mize
Total Cemeteries	16.75		

2.0 Recreation Demand Assessment

For the purposes of this Master Plan recreation standards were based upon Florida's *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)*, which was adopted in 2000. Additional resources included *Park Planning Guidelines, 3rd Edition* by George E. Fogg (1981 and 1990), *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* by James D. Mertes, Ph.D, CLP and James R. Hall, CLP (1996) and *Management Planning for Park and Recreation Areas* by George E. Fogg and J. William Shiner (1981 and 1989). The National Recreation and Park Association standards were also reviewed. These commonly accepted standards were further refined to tailor them to the specific needs of Lake County.

2.1 Park Classifications

Parks can be classified in a number of ways and serve a variety of functions, from providing open space in urban areas to large athletic complexes, and everything in between. The size of the park, the population served, service radii, and the types of programming within the park generally determine park classifications. Programming can be passive or active, organized or 'drop-in'. Passive programming includes adult learning classes such as art or cooking. Active programming includes open fields for activities like flying a kite or a fitness trail. Organized programming includes league sports, like soccer or baseball and drop-in programming includes pick-up games that are not part of an organized group. At any given time, residents of Lake County may desire to use different park types and participate in different kinds of programming.

- ❖ Resource-based recreation facilities are those places where recreation is driven by the natural landscape, such as a river, forest or lake or cultural resources such as historical and archeological sites. Resource-based recreation can be passive such as walking along an interpretive trail or active such as mountain biking or scuba diving.
- ❖ Activity-based parks provide facilities for playing a specific sport or game such as basketball, baseball, and soccer. These facilities are geared toward team sports and are managed for frequent use. Such facilities are frequently located in neighborhood, community, and special use parks and are sometimes located within large resource-based parks as well.

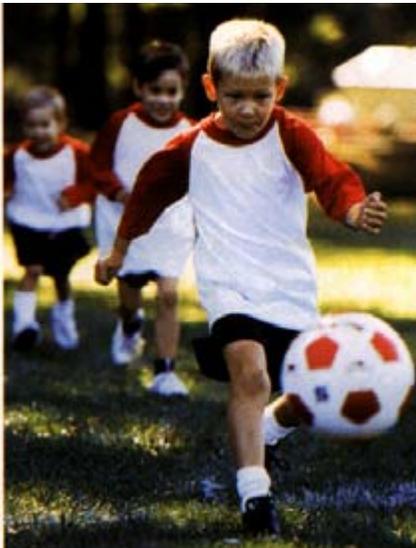
Activity-based and resource-based parks can further be classified by park type. Parks are typically designated as mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, district parks and regional parks.

Lake County currently classifies its parks as neighborhood, mini, community, special facilities, district and conservation. In general, counties typically provide the larger parks such as district and regional parks. This is not really the case for Lake County except for P.E.A.R. Park, which is classified as a district park; the County's parks are all less than 50 acres in size. Most of the County's parks are classified as neighborhood and mini-parks and are resource-based.

Counties also tend to focus on providing more resource-based parks and large scale specialized facilities. In this area, Lake County is more typical of a county parks department in that nearly all of the County's parks are resource-based. A key issue facing Lake County today is streamlining its parks system so that resources are used efficiently and provide the most recreation opportunities as possible. This may mean that the County decides to eliminate the smaller more limited parcels it currently has in its parks inventory.

Mini Parks

The mini park (also described as a 'pocket park') serves as the local park within neighborhoods or as small urban green spaces that provide a park-like atmosphere. These small areas are either natural or landscaped areas located within built-up areas. Urban open spaces may fall into this category. These parks can be small areas nestled within common areas of development or perhaps integrated into intersection or roadway designs on the periphery. Facilities may include walks, benches, gardens or memorials. No planned recreational programming occurs here. Most pocket parks are provided through developer agreements and the land development process with very little responsibility on the part of



counties or cities. The ideal community would have these scattered across urban/suburban areas within easy walking distance to many people. The following are typical characteristics of mini parks.

- ❖ <5 acres in size
- ❖ ½ acre per 1000 population
- ❖ ¼ mile service area radius
- ❖ takes advantage of unique opportunity (locality, resource, a view)
- ❖ accessible by low volume streets and trails
- ❖ can be located in high-density areas, including downtown areas.

Mini Park
Optimum Area: < 5 Acres
Cost: *Ranges from \$25,000 to \$75,000 depending on size and amenities*

Amenities:

I.	Pre-School Playground
II.	Picnic Area
III.	Sitting Area with Pergola
IV.	Open Lawn with Seating
V.	Walkway



Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are significantly larger than pocket parks and could include practice areas or greenspaces/playing courts for drop-in games of all types. Neighborhood parks could be located adjacent to an elementary school site. They are not designed for extensive programmed activities and are generally used by the immediate community they serve. In more urbanized areas, these parks should ideally be accessible on foot or on bicycle. Within suburban areas, they should be accessible by bicycle or a short drive by car. The following are secondary characteristics of neighborhood parks.

- ❖ 5-19 acres
- ❖ NRPA Optimum guidelines 10 acres
- ❖ 2 acres per 1000 population
- ❖ ¼ to ½ mile service area radius
- ❖ located within or adjacent to neighborhoods
- ❖ takes on character of surrounding areas
- ❖ accessible by walking, bike riding or short drive by car
- ❖ casual play with very little programming, if any at all
- ❖ provides a compatible balance of activities and resource-based recreation
- ❖ facilities may include playgrounds, multipurpose courts/fields, tennis courts, landscape areas, benches, recreation buildings, picnic areas, and walkways

Neighborhood Park	
Optimum Area:	10 Acres
Cost:	Ranges from \$50,000 to \$250,000 depending on size and amenities
Amenities:	
I.	Pre-School Playground
II.	Elementary Playground
III.	Pavilion
IV.	Picnic Area
V.	Basketball Court (70' x 110')
VI.	Open Lawn
VII.	Walking Trail
VIII.	Bike Rack
IX.	Landscape Buffers

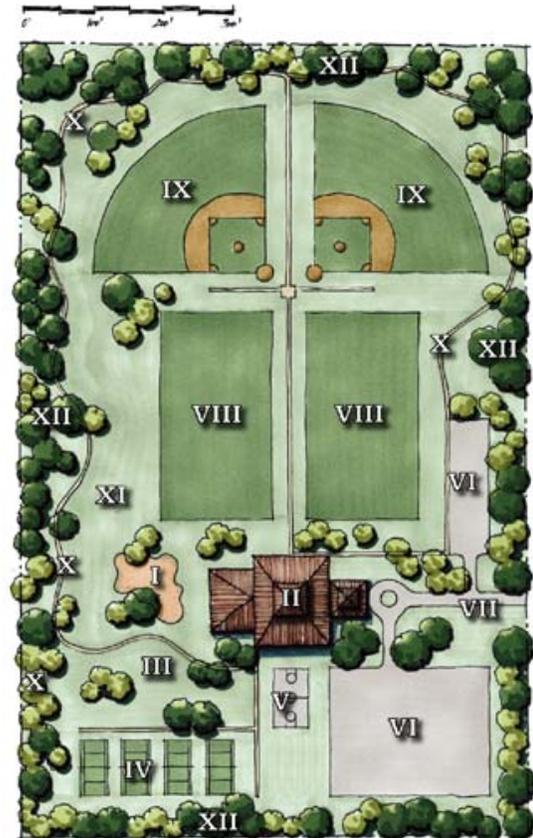


Community Parks

Recreational facilities in community parks should be designed for flexibility along with specific uses allowing the recreation provider to respond to changing programming trends. Community parks could be located adjacent to schools (elementary, middle or high school). The primary function of such parks is for providing places where typical recreation programming occurs. Community parks serve broader community areas and provide for a wide range of athletic or team sports opportunities as well as cultural and artistic programs and services. The following are secondary characteristics of community parks.

- ❖ 20-50 acres
- ❖ 5 acres per 1000 population
- ❖ up to a 3-mile service area radius for urban areas
- ❖ up to a 6-mile service area radius for rural areas
- ❖ access by walking, biking, but more often by car
- ❖ usually located near major collector streets or arterial roads
- ❖ serves needs of several neighborhoods
- ❖ more intensely developed than neighborhood parks
- ❖ are primarily activity-based recreation sites, but can be resource-based as well
- ❖ can include such facilities as athletic fields, swimming pools, multi-purpose fields, and recreation centers
- ❖ natural areas should be incorporated to provide biking, fitness, picnicking, and open space activities
- ❖ other community services (i.e., libraries, law enforcement substations, or fire/emergency services) may be located within a community park

Community Park	
Optimum Area:	<i>Between 20 and 50 acres</i>
Cost:	<i>Ranges from \$150,000 to \$20,000,000 depending on size and amenities</i>
Amenities:	
I.	Playground
II.	Recreation Center
III.	Picnic Area
IV.	Tennis Courts (30' x 70')
V.	Basketball Court (70' x 110')
VI.	Parking (200 spaces)
VII.	Park Entrance Drive
VIII.	Multi-Use Fields (150'x300')
IX.	Baseball Fields
X.	Trail
XI.	Open Lawn
XII.	Landscape Buffers

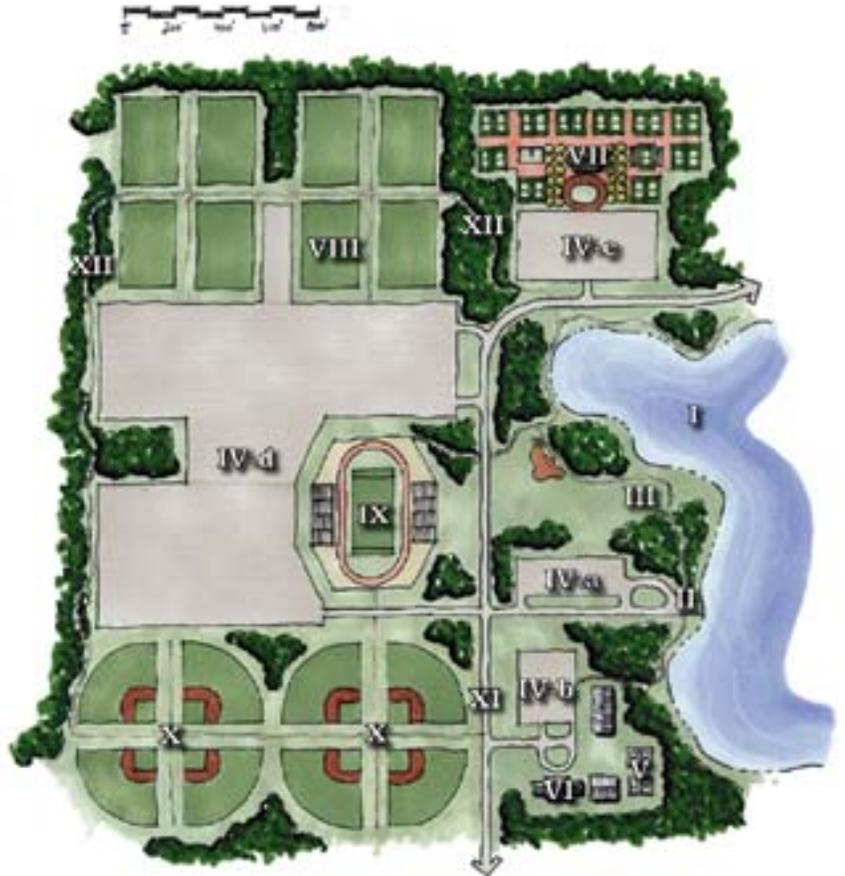


District Parks

District parks are usually resource-based and located contiguous to or encompassing natural resources. Activities and facilities may include picnicking, boating, swimming, hiking, camping, and play areas. These parks are usually 'drive to' parks and can be a 30-40 minute drive away, although, these parks should be connected to a community's trail system as well. In some cases, district parks can be multi-purpose large-scale activity-based parks that serve several communities. Such parks would be very appropriate in outlying areas of the County or in areas with a high concentration of unincorporated residents adjacent to cities. The service area for a district park is generally countywide, however given the geography and transportation network of Lake County, district parks should serve several communities. The following are secondary characteristics of district parks.

- ❖ 75+ acres (minimum of 50 acres)
- ❖ 5 acres per 1000 population
- ❖ 30-40 minute driving time
- ❖ access by car, bikeways or trails

District Park	
Optimum Area:	> 50 acres
Cost:	Ranges from \$2,000,000 to \$50,000,000+ depending on size and amenities
Amenities:	
I.	Existing Lake
II.	Boat Launch
III.	Lake Front Park w/Picnic Area & Playground
IV-a.	Parking Lakefront (130 spaces)
IV-b.	Parking Recreation Center (170 spaces)
IV-c.	Parking Tennis Center (250 spaces)
IV-d.	Parking Stadium, Soccer, Baseball (2,560 spaces)
V.	Basketball Court (70' x 110')
VI.	Recreation Center
VII.	Tennis Center/Courts (30'x70')
VIII.	Soccer Fields (225'x360')
IX.	Stadium
X.	Baseball Fields (300' Radius)
XI.	Park Entrance Drive
XII.	Trails



Regional Parks



Regional parks are almost always resource-based. Regional parks are usually located in areas of diverse natural resources such as lakes, rivers, flora, fauna or topography. These are usually very large tracts of land and provide camping, equestrian activities, canoeing, boating, fishing, and other resource-based activities. Such parks often serve to protect environmentally sensitive lands with facilities limited to resource-based activities. Care should be taken not to over use the land or allow activities that tax the stability of the resources contained within or adjacent to the park. The service area of a regional park could be multi-county. The following are secondary characteristics of district parks.

- ❖ 250+ acres
- ❖ 20 acres per 1000 population
- ❖ offers same type of activities as district but on a larger scale
- ❖ up to 60 minute driving time
- ❖ access by car, bikeways or trails

Special Facilities

Special facilities are parks that often have a particular function, resource or single activity located within them. The activity or natural/cultural resource opportunity found within the site drives these facilities. Special facilities can include a soccer complex, a large natural park with equestrian or hiking opportunities, or an aquatic facility with competition size swimming pools or interactive water play features. Community centers with multipurpose buildings also fit into this category. Additionally, large-scale cultural or natural facilities can be classified as a special facility. Special facilities can include resource-based facilities such as lakes or rivers, or cultural resources such as museums, history centers, or the fair grounds for example.

The following are secondary characteristics of a typical special facility.

- ❖ >1 acre
- ❖ optimally >20 acres for large scale competition facilities
- ❖ Acres per 1000 population is not applicable
- ❖ county-wide service area
- ❖ access by car, bikeways or trails
- ❖ may be resource-based; located contiguous to or encompassing natural resources or man-made facilities
- ❖ resource oriented facilities may include picnicking, boating, swimming, hiking, camping and play areas;
- ❖ activity-based facilities may include a single purpose or activity, such as an equestrian center, golf course, senior center, or museum;
- ❖ located based on the center of activity or where the population demands it; and
- ❖ size varies depending on facility.

2.2 Level of Service Evaluation

The following tables show the guidelines commonly used for user-based facilities (i.e. ball fields, tennis courts) and resource-based facilities (i.e. natural areas and/or passive parks).

Population Guidelines for Activity-Based Facilities				
Activity	Resource or Facility	Population Served		
		Minimum	Maximum	State Average
Baseball or Softball	Ball field	2,000	10,000	50,000
Basketball	Basketball Court	500	20,000	5,000
Football, Soccer or Rugby	Football/Soccer Field	4,000	25,000	6,000
Physical Exercise	Exercise/Parcourse Trails	10,000	50,000	15,000
Racquetball or Handball	Racquetball Court	2,500	20,000	10,000
Shuffleboard	Shuffleboard Court	1,000	12,000	6,000
Swimming (pool)	Swimming Pool	1,000	50,000	25,000
Tennis	Tennis Court	1,000	10,000	2,000
Volleyball	Volleyball Court	4,000	12,000	6,000

Source: 2000 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Population Guidelines for Resource-Based Facilities				
Activity	Resource or Facility	Population Served		
		Minimum	Maximum	State Average
Bicycling	Linear mile of trail	1,500	10,000	5,000
Boating	Boat Ramp Lane	1,500	12,500	5,000
Camping	Acre of camp area	5,600	25,000	6,750
Fishing	800 feet of fishing pier, jetty, or boardwalk	5,000	25,000	5,600
Hiking	1 mile of trail	5,000	10,000	6,750
Horseback Riding	1 mile of trail	5,000	10,000	5,000
Nature Study	1 mile of trail	6,250	10,000	5,000
Picnicking	Picnic Area	5,000	10,000	6,000
Swimming	1 mile of beach	25,000	211,000	25,000

Source: 2000 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

2.3 Acreage Standards for Park Types

As a general rule of thumb, other than regional parks, the per capita (i.e. acres per 1000 population) acreage standard for all parks combined is 10 acres per 1000 population within a community. These standards are also known as a Level of Service (LOS) standard and usually adopted into a community's Comprehensive Plan. However, the 10 acres per 1,000 population standard includes all providers of recreation; cities, counties, state, private providers, and other agencies that provide recreation opportunities. Therefore, you will rarely see a local government adopt a level of service LOS of 10 acres, but a more conservative number, usually ranging from 2 acres to 6 acres per 1,000 population. The table below shows the generally accepted standards for various park types per 1,000 population.

Acreage Standards for Parks		
Park Type	Population Served	Area per 1,000 Population
Mini Park	2,500	0.5 acre
Neighborhood Park	5,000	2 acres
Community Park	5,000	2 acres
District Park	50,000	5 acres
Special Facility	N/A	N/A
Regional Park	>100,000	20 acres

Source: 2000 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

2.4 LOS Comparison

For comparison purposes, Lake County's adopted LOS for parks is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Other cities in Lake County have adopted LOS standards ranging from 1.5 acres to 6 acres per 1000. Leesburg has a three-tiered LOS standard that requires a separate LOS for neighborhood parks (2 ac/1000), community parks (5 ac/1000), and overall parkland (6 ac/1000). Overall parkland consists of all other parks, open space, and special facilities. Eustis also has a tiered LOS for neighborhood parks (1 ac/1000) and community parks (2 ac/1000).

The tables on the following page compare Lake County's parks and activity-based facilities to state standards described above in section 2.2. Resource-based facilities are not compared because data is unavailable at this time. These figures are based on a 2000 unincorporated County population of 120,169 people. For logistical reasons the majority of county recreation departments do not provide mini and neighborhood parks due to the small populations served instead focusing on larger regional parks and community parks in rural/remote areas.

Lake County Comparison to State Standards by Park Type					
Park Type	Existing Acres	LOS Standard (acres/1000)	Existing LOS	Acres Needed	Surplus/ (Deficiency)
Mini Park	27.21	0.5	0.23	60.08	(32.87)
Neighborhood Park	43.60	2	0.36	240.34	(196.74)
Community Park	116.00	2	0.97	240.34	(124.34)
District	268.00	5	2.23	600.85	(332.85)
Conservation/Other ¹	78.10	20	0.65	2,403.38	(2,325.28)
Total Park Acres	532.91	2.5 ²	4.27	300.42	212.49

¹Conservation and other lands includes boat ramps and environmental lands owned by Lake County

²Lake County's adopted LOS for parks is 2.5 acres/1000

Lake County Comparison to State Standards by Facility			
Facility	Existing	Needed	Surplus/ (Deficiency)
Basketball Court	6	6	0
Football/Soccer Field	1	5	(4)
Exercise/Parcourse Trails	5	2	3
Racquetball Court	0	6	(6)
Shuffleboard Court	2	10	(8)
Swimming Pool	0	2	(2)
Tennis Court	2	12	(10)
Volleyball Court	4	10	(6)

Needed facilities are based on maximum population served (see section 5.13)

3.0 Service Areas

There are three, possibly four, basic service area types present in Lake County today, urban, suburban, emerging, and rural. Urbanized service areas are defined as places and communities with full service recreation departments and facilities. Suburban areas include cities transitioning from a rural character to a more urbanized character and having an established recreation program. Emerging areas are characterized by small towns and places located in more remote parts of the County. Rural areas could either be included in the Emerging category or categorized separately. For the most part, rural areas in Lake County could be considered as emerging based on growth trends and the changing character of Lake County.

Geographically, Lake County can be divided into several distinct service areas. These areas are the SR 50 corridor, the US 27 corridor, the Golden Triangle area, Citrus Ridge/Four Corners area, and unincorporated Lake County in general.

The US 27 Corridor includes Lady Lake, Fruitland Park, and Leesburg in the north. This area is fairly removed from the Orlando Metro area but is rapidly developing due to its small town character and the rapid development of the Villages, a popular retirement community located in nearby Sumter County.

The Four Corners/Citrus Ridge area is uniquely situated in 4 counties midway between the expanding Orlando and Lakeland urban areas. It has the unique characteristic of being part of four counties, four school districts, seven ZIP codes, three area codes, three water management districts, two regional planning councils and multitudes of service providers. This 90 square mile area is rapidly developing with retirees, seasonal residents and permanent residents. Several major highways converge in the area and provide access to Disney, Osceola and Orange County as well as Lakeland, making it readily accessible to jobs and housing.

The SR 50 Corridor includes the small towns located along SR 50 in south Lake County. This area is becoming a popular bedroom community of the Orlando Metro area. Cities include Mascotte, Groveland, Clermont, Montverde, and Minneola. Clermont is the largest city in the area and is home to The National Training Center, a private sports complex affiliated with South Lake Hospital and the Orlando Regional Health Center. The aim of the Center is to become the standard setter among specialized training facilities for cyclists, runners, sprinters, swimmers, rowers, canoeists, and more. The area is very popular among cyclists and folks seeking an active lifestyle and proximity to jobs in the Orlando Metro area. Because of the rapid growth, many cities are grappling with the demands of providing services at a level and scale they are unaccustomed to. Public meetings held in the area for the Master Plan were well attended and garnered the most consistent and largest turnouts.

The Golden Triangle area includes Mount Dora, Eustis, and Tavares. Leesburg can also be included in this area, which is home to the greatest concentration of urbanized areas in the County and the County Seat. The cities are all well established and have a good mix of older historic neighborhoods and new developments. Demographics are changing slightly as more families move to the area to escape the rapidly growing areas in Metro Orlando. All three (or four, if Leesburg is included) cities have established recreation programs and facilities.

The County has also created several Joint Planning Areas (JPA's) that could be used as a foundation for creating parks service areas or partnerships with the local governments involved since these planning areas already have established a partnership structure. Items that should be addressed are location of regional parks, trail opportunities and sharing of responsibilities as they relate to recreation in terms of funding, land acquisition, development, programming, and operations.

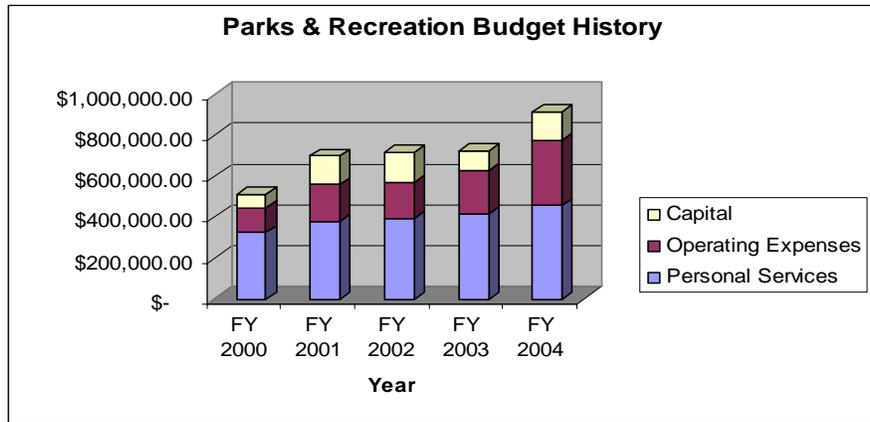


4.0 Operational Review

Historically, Lake County has not provided recreation programming and has instead relied upon municipalities and private youth associations to provide recreation opportunities to its residents. The County's Parks and Recreation Section is a component within the Public Works Department, rather than a stand alone Parks and Recreation Department. This is a typical arrangement for rural counties and communities where the parks and recreation system is primarily facility-based, rather than programming-based.

4.1 Funding

Funding for Lake County parks has been mostly geared towards maintenance of existing park land which was primarily resource-based with limited facilities. In recent years, (1995 to present), the County began a more aggressive capital improvements program to increase the recreational opportunities within County parks. The graph on the following page shows the County's Recreation and Parks budget for recent years. This budget summary does not include outside funds received through the state and other agencies in the forms of grants.



The Table below is a comparison of the County's budget for the Parks and Recreation Section for Fiscal Years (FY) 2003 and 2004 and shows an increase of 21% over last year's adopted budget. This budget comparison only includes monies appropriated for the running of Lake County's parks system and does not include grants or funds received for licenses and fees (boat registrations and fish licenses). It also does not include grant monies provided to municipalities, the School Board, or other private recreation providers through Lake County's grant program which is discussed in greater detail in section 4.2.

Lake County Budget Comparison			
Item	2003	2004	Percentage Increase
Personnel	\$415,309	\$455,309	9%
Operations	\$214,022	\$319,436	33%
Parks Capital Projects	\$93,478	\$138,069	32%
Totals	\$724,812.00	\$914,818.00	21%

Source: Lake County Annual Budget

A more detailed breakdown of the County's 2003 annual budget is shown below. This summary includes funds listed as revenues received through a variety of grant programs,

penny sales tax revenues, and monies from licenses and fees (boat registrations and fish licenses) that the County has been awarded to supplement money allocated through the County's general fund.

Based on a 2000 population of 210,528 people, Lake County is spending approximately \$12 dollars per resident per year for parks and recreation services including funds received through grants. If city residents are excluded, the County is spending a little over \$23 per unincorporated resident (120,169 people). Excluding grant monies, the County is spending

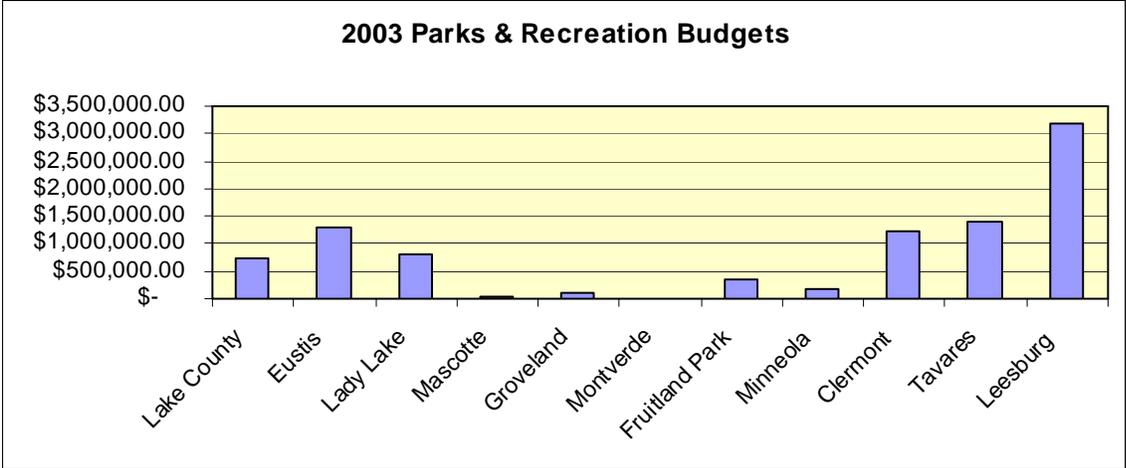
Lake County 2003 Budget Detail		
Item	Revenues	Expenditures
Recreation	\$350,000	\$949,505
Parks	Capital Outlay	\$0
	Parks Services	\$569,245
Boating Improvements	\$110,000	\$381,152
Fish Fund	\$105,248	\$105,248
Parks Capital Projects	\$741,623	\$741,623
Totals	\$1,306,871	\$2,805,398

Source: Lake County Annual Budget FY 2003

approximately \$7.60 per resident in the unincorporated areas for recreation services (unincorporated population).

Compared to the City of Leesburg, with a 2000 population of 15,956 and an annual parks and recreation budget of \$3,050,806, the County is spending significantly less per unincorporated resident (\$23 vs. \$191). In comparison, Orange County, which had a 2003 budget of \$45,700,000 and a population of 926,884 people, spends approximately \$48.50 per resident. Seminole County, by contrast, spends just under \$4 million dollars annually which equates to a little over \$10 per resident (387,600 people).

The table on the following page is a summary of the budget information obtained from the cities within Lake County for the 2003 fiscal year. Not all cities were able to provide budget information at the time of the writing of the report, so the information is not complete. Leesburg, by far, outspends all the other local governments in Lake County on parks and recreation services. However, it is worth noting that some of the smaller cities are spending nearly the same amount of money or exceeding the amount of money spent by Lake County. It is also worth noting that some of the money included in municipal budgets includes grant monies awarded by Lake County. The County's grant program is discussed in further detail in section 4.2.



4.2 Lake County Recreation Grant Program

The County recognized that municipalities and other recreation providers such as the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, the School District and the Water Authority were providing recreational opportunities to residents in unincorporated Lake County. To assist these recreation providers in meeting the needs of County residents in unincorporated areas, the County developed a recreation assistance grant program. The program has been quite successful; however, funds are limited and have not provided as great an impact as originally hoped. Many grant recipients praised the program and expressed a desire for the program to be expanded. The County’s grant program is actually made up of several grant programs described below.

- ❖ Recreation Facilities Grant
 - \$200,000 per year
 - Equally divided between each commission district
 - Infrastructure Sales Tax funds (penny sales tax)
 - Emphasis on youth recreation facilities
 - Requires 50% match which can be in kind services
- ❖ Regional Park Development Grant
 - \$150,000 per year
 - Infrastructure Sales Tax funds (penny sales tax)
 - Single project each year
 - Intended to provide for park development that will serve a regional area
 - Requires 50% match which can be in kind services
- ❖ Middle School Summer Grant
 - \$100,000 per year
 - General Fund supported
 - Grant funds are intended primarily for the School board, funds left over are distributed to cities for their middle school age group programs
 - Geared towards summer programs for middle school children
 - School Board, cities and non-profit groups are eligible

- ❖ Youth Recreation Grant
 - \$50,000 per year
 - General Fund supported
 - Geared towards year-round programs for elementary school children
- ❖ Boating Improvement Grant
 - \$1 of each boat registration sold in Lake County
 - \$100,000 budgeted for FY 02/03
 - \$235,350 was spent between 1997-2001 for an average of nearly \$59,000 per year
 - Used for countywide development of new boat ramps and improvements of existing boat ramps
- ❖ Fish Conservation Grant
 - \$1 of each fishing license sold in Lake County
 - \$105,000 budgeted for FY 02/03
 - Used for for countywide improvement of fish habitat and fishing opportunities

Projects that have been funded through the County's Recreational Facilities Grant program have included facilities such as playgrounds, sports lighting for athletic fields, park equipment such as benches, picnic tables and grills, access, athletic fields, and fencing. Funds have also been used for land acquisition in some communities. The table below shows the amount of grant funding that has been awarded by Lake County through the year 2001.

Lake County Grant Summary		
Program	Time Period	Amount
Recreation Facilities Grant	FY 1994-2003	\$2,074,860.00
Regional Park Grant Program	FY 1999-2003	\$750,000.00
Middle School Summer Program	FY 1999-2003	\$782,409.43
Youth Recreation Program	FY 1997-2003	\$349,992.81
Boating Improvement Grant Program	FY 1998-2001	\$235,350.00
	Grand Total	\$4,192,612.24