

6. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

GOAL 6-1: PROVIDE ADEQUATE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE. TO PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN ADEQUATE PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE 6-1.1: PROVISION OF RECREATION LAND AND FACILITIES. The City shall provide recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of Altamonte Springs residents, consistent with the needs of the population as determined by the levels of service (LOS) standards and through implementation of the policies listed below.

Policy 6-1.1.1: LOS Standards for Parks and Recreation Facilities. The City of Altamonte Springs hereby adopts the following LOS for recreational land:

(a) Recreational Land - 3.37 acres per 1,000 persons.

Policy 6-1.1.2: Maintain Existing LOS Standards. The City will continue to ensure that there is no deficiency in park land and/or recreational facilities in accordance with the adopted Recreation and Open Space Element LOS standard by maintaining the schedule of capital improvements. Annually the City shall evaluate the recreation LOS for recreation space and facilities for the scheduling of funds for land acquisition or facility improvements in the City's annual budget and within the Five-Year Capital Improvements Schedule that accompanies the annual budget.

Policy 6-1.1.3: Mandatory Residential Impact Fees for Recreation. The City will continue to collect new residential development impact fees for parks and recreation services to raise revenues for capital expenditures on additional park land, recreational facilities and site improvements.

Policy 6-1.1.4: Facilities for Groups with Special Needs. The City will continue to provide organized leisure programs and facilities that consider the needs of all age groups, including the elderly and handicapped.

OBJECTIVE 6-1.2: PROTECT OPEN SPACE SYSTEMS. The City will protect its open space through implementation of the policies listed below.

Policy 6-1.2.1: Implementing Minimum Open Space Standard in the Land Development Code. The City will continue to require a minimum of 25 percent usable open space and green space in all public and private developments in accordance with Policy 6-1.2.7. Within Activity Centers for infill and redevelopment projects only, a portion of the minimum open space requirements may be located off-site but must be created within the same drainage basin. When open space is located off-site, a minimum of 10 percent shall be retained on-site.

Policy 6-1.2.2: Preservation of Designated Wetland Areas. It is the intent of the City to continue to preserve the City's Lake Lotus and the Florida Audubon Lake Florida wetland areas. Only such uses as recreation, open space, natural stormwater retention/detention, bird sanctuaries, or other similar land uses will be approved by the City for these two wetland areas.

Policy 6-1.2.3: Median Beautification. The City will continue to provide median beautification along Maitland Avenue, SR 436, SR 434, Montgomery Road and Central Parkway, and as may be provided for in existing commitments with Seminole County and the private sector. The City may also coordinate with property owners and businesses regarding their participation in beautification programs along these roadways and others.

Policy 6-1.2.4: Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Any proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan which proposes an increase in density or intensity of land use greater than that allowed under the existing Future Land Use Map should insure protection of identified sensitive resources, including most effective recharge areas, karst features, and sensitive natural habitats including Longleaf Pine, Sandhill Pine, and Xeric Oak Scrub.

Policy 6-1.2.5: Optimize Open Space. The City shall optimize open space by implementing planned community initiatives that promote sustainable growth and patterns of development, and protect identified sensitive resources, including most effective recharge areas, karst features, and sensitive natural habitats including Longleaf Pine, Sandhill Pine, and Xeric Oak Scrub.

Policy 6-1.2.6: Land Use Strategies. The City shall incorporate additional land use strategies that will continue to optimize open space and protect the health of the Wekiva River System in support of the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act, which may include but are not limited to:

1. Conservation designed subdivisions;
2. Conservation easements and other less-than-fee acquisition strategies;
3. Coordinated greenway plans;
4. Land acquisition, including fee simple and less-than-fee;
5. Density incentives and density credits which result in permanent protection of open space;
6. Transfer of development rights;
7. Off-site mitigation;
8. Clustering of development and,
9. Low density development.
10. Low impact development

Policy 6-1.2.7: Open Space Defined. Open space is defined as any portion of a parcel or area of land left undeveloped or minimally developed as part of a natural resource preserve, passive recreational area, or stormwater management area, buffers, and landscaped areas, with consideration of wildfire minimization. Such designated open space excludes waterbodies, street rights-of-way, impervious surfaces, and active recreation areas, such as golf courses. Developing properties shall adhere to the following open space requirements;

Land Size	Open Space Requirements	
	Non-Residential	Residential
5 Acres and less	25%	40%
Greater than 5 Acres	30%	45%

Mixed-use development shall develop at the non-residential standards. These requirements apply to all development within the jurisdictional boundary of the City regardless if the property is within, or outside of, the Wekiva Study Area.

OBJECTIVE 6-1.3: ACCESS FACILITIES. The City shall continue to provide access at all public recreation facilities and City waterfront properties through implementation of the policies listed below.

Policy 6-1.3.1: Facilities for Handicapped. Barrier-free accessibility for handicapped persons will continue to be provided at all developed public parks.

Policy 6-1.3.2: Provision of Access Points. Automobile, bicycle or pedestrian access will continue to be provided at all developed public parks; however, the City shall not require automobile access to neighborhood or smaller parks.

Policy 6-1.3.3: Maintain Lake Orienta Access. The City will maintain public access to the Lake Orienta boat ramp.

OBJECTIVE 6-1.4: COORDINATION IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS. The City will continue to coordinate the provision of recreation facilities with the Seminole County School Board and appropriate government agencies as well as expanding its coordination efforts with the private sector through implementation of the policies listed below.

Policy 6-1.4.1: Recreation Facilities Open to Non-Residents. The City of Altamonte Springs will continue to offer use of its recreational facilities to non-residents based on availability.

Policy 6-1.4.2: Coordination with School Board. The City will continue existing coordinated efforts with the Seminole County School Board for the following activities:

- (a) Use of the meeting rooms/auditorium at the City's Eastmonte Park Civic Center by the Seminole County School Board.
- (b) Use of Seminole County School Board property by the City of Altamonte Springs' men and women's softball leagues and men's basketball league .

Policy 6-1.4.3: Coordination with Seminole County. To assure safety for trail patrons, the City will continue coordination with Seminole County if maintenance needs are identified along the Seminole Wekiva Trail. Coordination with the County shall also address the extension of the Seminole Wekiva Trail to other regional trail systems.

Policy 6-1.4.4: Recreation Facilities Allowed in Appropriate Zoning Districts. Private recreation facilities will be allowed within zoning districts where such activities are compatible with and complementary to principal activities allowed within the zoning district. The Land Development Code shall continue to include provisions supporting this policy.

Policy 6-1.4.5: Recreation Standards for Multi-Family Developments. The City hereby sets the following criteria for the provision of active/passive recreational facilities in new multi-family housing projects. A minimum of four percent of the property shall be designated for recreational use with a

minimum of 60 percent utilized for active recreation and a maximum of 40 percent utilized for passive recreation.

Policy 6-1.4.6: Density Bonuses for Activity Centers. The City will continue to allow Activity Center intensity/density bonuses when developers provide increased landscaping, increased open space, and/or capital improvements contributions for land acquisition, streetscape improvements, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Policy 6-1.4.7: Pursue Recreation and Open Space Grant Funds. To assist with the implementation of new recreation lands, open space, and recreation facilities, the City shall review and evaluate state and federal grant assistance programs for potential funding sources, as needed.

Policy 6-1.4.8: Additional Recreation Facilities. The City shall provide additional recreation facilities to meet demands generated by future growth. Recreation facilities will be provided based on the adopted LOS standard.

GOAL 6-2: WEKIVA SPRINGS PROTECTION. PROTECT SPRINGS AND SPRINGSHED AREAS INCLUDING SURFACE WATER AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES OF THE WEKIVA STUDY AREA, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 369.316 FLORIDA STATUTES, AS FRAGILE RESOURCES NECESSARY FOR SUSTAINING THE COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE, DRINKING WATER AND HEALTH OF THE WEKIVA RIVER SYSTEM.

OBJECTIVE 6-2.1: PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE WEKIVA STUDY AREA. The City shall protect most effective recharge areas, karst features including springs, and sensitive natural habitats including Longleaf Pine, Sand Hill, Sand Pine, and Xeric Oak Scrub, as identified on Future Land Use Element Maps I-1.13, I-1.14, and I-1.15 respectively, within that portion of the Wekiva Study Area in the City's jurisdictional boundaries through the following policies.

Policy 6-2.1.1: Adverse Land Use Activities. Limit new land use activities within the Wekiva Study Area, within and adjacent to most effective recharge areas, karst features and sensitive natural habitats, that have a potential to adversely impact ground water and surface water quality; such as mining, landfills, sprayfields, heavy industrial, intense animal operations and high density residential using on-site septic systems for wastewater treatment.

Policy 6-2.1.2: Best Management Practices. Where avoidance of impacts through the limitation of land use activities is not feasible, implement Best Management Practices and development standards such as buffering, setbacks and open space standards that will minimize the impact of land use and development within the Wekiva Study Area, consistent with Objectives and supporting policies applicable to the Wekiva Study Area.

Policy 6-2.1.3: Required Surveys and Studies. For vacant sites over 20 acres within the Wekiva Study Area, the following surveys and studies are required to be submitted with a site plan application to provide an analysis and evaluate the location and presence of most effective recharge areas, karst features, and sensitive natural habitats including Longleaf Pine, Sand Hill, and Xeric Oak Scrub:

- a. Using Map I-1.13, Most Effective Recharge Areas as a basis, provide an analysis of soils, by a qualified professional, to determine the location of any most effective recharge areas as the term is used in Rule 40C-41.063(3), F.A.C., or soils determined by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service to be Type "A" Hydrologic Soils Group which are considered to be the most effective recharge areas.
- b. Using Map I-1.14, Karst Features as a basis, provide an analysis of the site, by a licensed professional geologist, to determine the location and nature of any sinkholes and other karst features of the property, such as stream-to-sink and other direct connections to the aquifer including an analysis to determine the depth of the water table, location of the Floridan Aquifer relative to ground surface and thickness and extent of the bedrock or other confining layers over the aquifer. This analysis may include the use of existing geophysical surveys, such as microgravity and ground penetrating radar surveys, and may be supplemented with documented locations of sinkholes, light detection and ranging surveys and aerial photographs.
- c. Using Map I-1.15.15, Sensitive Natural Habitats as a basis, provide an analysis of the site, by a qualified biologist, to determine the location of any sensitive natural habitats including Longleaf Pine, Sand Hill, Sand Pine and Xeric Oak Scrub. This analysis shall be coordinated with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Policy 6-2.1.4: Protection of Environmental Areas. For properties within the Wekiva Study Area, in order to protect most effective recharge areas, karst features and sensitive natural habitats, including Longleaf Pine, Sand Hill, Sand Pine, and Xeric Oak Scrub, the City shall require all new development to preserve and dedicate open space, through comprehensive plan future land use map assignment as Conservation, or a conservation easement, plat, or other recordable instrument.

- a. All new residential and non-residential development proposals greater than 20 acres shall be required to use conservation subdivision design standards as provided in Policy 6-1.2.7 with the exception of low density residential development;
- b. Clustering of development units is required and open space shall be connected, to the greatest extent possible, to adjacent open space to create habitat and corridors of larger areas;
- c. All open space shall be contiguous with protected open space on adjacent parcels to the maximum extent feasible; and
- d. Nonresidential development shall be required to minimize the size of contiguous impervious areas.

Policy 6-2.1.5: Dedication of Open Space. Priority for preservation and dedication of open space shall be given to the following resources: most effective recharge areas, springs, spring runs, sinkholes, caves, and other karst features, as well as sensitive natural habitats including: Long Leaf Pine, Sand Hill, Xeric Oak Scrub, and Sand Pine Scrub vegetative communities.

Policy 6-2.1.6: Other Significant Resources. Other significant resources, such as wetlands and floodplains and other sensitive natural habitats, within the City, shall be protected consistent with the other comprehensive plan’s objectives and policies requiring their protection.

OBJECTIVE 6-2.2: CONSERVATION DESIGN STANDARDS. For sites greater than 20 acres, development within the Wekiva Study Area shall meet the conservation design standards as set forth below.

Policy 6-2.2.1: Conservation Subdivision Designs. All residential and non-residential development within the Wekiva Study Area shall be clustered, based on conservation subdivision design standards, with the exception of low density residential development. Conservation subdivision designs shall include:

- a. Clustering of units on small lots in the areas with the lowest priority for open space;
- b. Establishment of open space, consistent with Policy 6-1.2.7, which shall be connected whenever possible, in recordable easements, plat, or other recordable instrument;
- c. Central water and sewer treatment facilities that can be connected to the City system as soon as available; and
- d. Minimal site disturbance.

Policy 6-2.2.2: Springs Setbacks. For sites greater than 20 acres within the Wekiva Study Area, all development shall be setback from any springs, spring runs, sinkholes, and other karst features as shown below. The setback area shall consist of a buffer that excludes development and retains all natural vegetation within the setback area, with the exception of the setback area from subsurface caves and flow corridors.

Development Setbacks

Feature	Minimum Setbacks (feet)
Springs	300
Spring runs	100
Sinkholes, with a direct connection to the aquifer	200, measured from the drainage divide
Other sinkholes	100, measured from the drainage divide
Other karst features with a direct connection to the aquifer (swallet or stream to sink)	200, measured from the drainage divide

Land uses with a high potential to impact groundwater resources such as mining, landfills, sprayfields, heavy industrial, intense animal operations and high density residential using on-site septic systems for wastewater treatment, will be prohibited within one mile of the springhead and ½ mile of the surface centerline of the cave systems.

Land Use Setbacks

Feature	Minimum setback (feet) for land uses identified as having a high potential to
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	impact groundwater resources.
Caves (subsurface caves and flow corridors)	½ - mile, measured on the surface from the centerline of the cave system
Springhead (vent)	One mile, measured from the springhead in all directions

Policy 6-2.2.3: Alternative Setbacks. Within the Wekiva Study Area where an existing lot of record as of the effective date of this Policy, is too small to accommodate the minimum amount of development necessary for the setbacks set forth in Policy 6-2.2.2 and the open space standards in Policy 6-1.2.7, the allowable use may be established provided that the building and associated paved areas are located the maximum distance possible from the karst features, and further provided that a swale and berm are located between the development and the karst feature with a direct connection to the aquifer. The swale and berm shall be designed to direct drainage away from the karst feature.

Policy 6-2.2.4: Minimize Impervious Surfaces. Development shall use joint or shared access and stormwater facilities to the maximum extent feasible in order to minimize impervious surfaces.

Policy 6-2.2.5: Shared Parking. Non-residential development shall use shared parking to the maximum extent feasible in order to minimize impervious surfaces.

Policy 6-2.2.6: Minimize Connections Between Impervious Surfaces. Design of parking lots, sidewalks, buildings, and other impervious surfaces shall minimize connections between impervious surfaces through techniques shown on a site plan such as:

- a. Directing flows from roof drains to vegetated areas or to rain barrels or cisterns for reuse of the water;
- b. Directing flows from paved areas to vegetated areas;
- c. Locating impervious surfaces so that they drain to vegetated buffers or natural areas; and
- d. Breaking up flow directions from large paved surfaces.

Policy 6-2.2.7: Street Drainage. Within the Wekiva Study Area drainage for streets and roads within new development shall be through roadside swales and berms. Curb and gutter design should not be approved, except where safety issues exist. Infill and redevelopment within existing urban areas with existing curb and gutter are exempt from these requirements. Where curb and gutter is approved and to the extent feasible, the curb and gutter shall be designed to provide adequate curb cuts to allow run-off to be directed to roadside landscaped swales for infiltration and treatment prior to discharge.

Policy 6-2.2.8: Minimization of Site Disturbance. Within the Wekiva Study Area development shall be designed to minimize site disturbance by limiting clearing to the minimum area necessary to accomplish development through the following:

- a. Avoid or minimize the removal of existing trees and vegetation;

- b. Minimize soil compaction by delineating the smallest disturbance area feasible; and
- c. Maximize disconnection of impervious surfaces to reduce water runoff flows and increase opportunities for infiltration.

Policy 6-2.2.9: Landscaping Best Management Practices. The following landscaping BMPs shall be instituted to reduce nitrate loading:

- a. Planted turf grass and landscaping within residential lots shall be restricted wherever feasible to minimize the use of fertilization and water for irrigation;
- b. Drought tolerant and native landscaping shall be required wherever feasible; and
- c. All development shall require best management practices as dictated by the principles and practices of the Florida Yards and Neighborhood Program.