



Appendix A – Recommended Park and Open Space Guidelines



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Component	Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	< 1/4 mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 SF and 1 acre.
Neighborhood Park	Basic unit of park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	1/4 - 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres minimum; 5-10 acres optimal.
School Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex, and special use.	Determined by location of school district property.	Variable - depends on function.
Community Park	Serves broader service than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscape and open spaces.	Determined by quality and suitability of site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2 to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 & 50 acres.
Large Urban Park	Large urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by quality and suitability of site. Usually serves the entire community.	AS needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 or more acres being optimal.
Natural Resources Area	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 - 80 acres being optimal.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable - depends on specific use.	Variable.
Private Park - Recreation Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable - depends on specific use.	Variable.
Component	Description	Description of Each Type	
Park Trail	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with natural environment.	Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard- or soft-surfaced.	
Connector Trails	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation.	Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters located in independent row (e.g., old railroad row). Type II: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters located in road row.	
On-Street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Bike route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.	
All-Terrain Bike Trail	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes.	Single-purpose loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.	
Cross-Country Ski Trail	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing.	Loops trails usually located in larger parks and natural resources areas.	
Equestrian Trail	Trails developed for horseback riding.	Loops trails usually located in larger parks and natural resources areas. Sometimes developed as multipurpose with hiking and all-terrain biking where conflicts can be controlled.	

Source: Mertes, J. D. and J. R. Hall. (1995). *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*. Alexandria, VA: NPRA