

OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Recreational Open Space

Park Distribution and General Requirements

Public parks in Southeast Orlando can be divided into three categories. Community Parks provide facilities that serve the needs of greater Southeast Orlando, such as organized playing fields, swimming pools, amphitheaters, tennis and basketball complexes, and larger picnic areas. Neighborhood parks, by contrast, provide local centers of activity and recreation immediately accessible to residents, and include modest amenities such as tot-lots, small hard-surface courts, multi-purpose lawn areas, and informal natural settings. Village Greens and Plazas provide a place to focus civic activity at the center of town or a neighborhood. Park acreage should be distributed to provide adequate facilities throughout the community while emphasizing neighborhood recreation within walking distance of most residents. See also Parks/Open Space Landscape Design Standards.

Distribution of Parks

- a. *Distribution.* To avoid extraordinary and potential debilitating demands on existing parks, new parks must be available to residents as they move into newly developed areas. To satisfy this requirement for new parks, all new development shall meet the following park dedication or cash in lieu of dedication requirements:

Park Type	Acreage (minimum to optimum)	Standard (acres per 1,000 population)	Unit Equivalent (acres per residential unit)
Village Greens and Plazas and Conservation/PCN	0.25 to 1 acre n/a	1.2/1000	0.0027
Neighborhood Parks	2 to 6 acres	0.75/1000	0.0017
Community Parks	8 to 15 acres	1.3/1000	0.003
<i>Total</i>		3.25/1000	0.0074

- b. The City's current LOS standard of 3.25 acres/1000 population shall be maintained in Southeast Orlando. At least 2.05 acres/1000 population shall be in functional community and neighborhood parks. The remaining 1.2 acres/1000 population may be made up of village greens and plazas, conservation buffers and the Primary Conservation Network if such areas are visually accessible by the general public (not private backyards).

Location of Parks



Green at Mizner Park in Boca Raton, Florida

- a. *Greens and Plazas.* At least one Green and/or Plaza should be provided within all Town, Village, Neighborhood and Residential Centers, unless served by a Neighborhood Park. Greens and Plazas should also be included in the mixed-use components in the Airport Support District-Medium Intensity.
- b. *Neighborhood Parks.* Neighborhood Parks should be distributed throughout neighborhoods, to allow a minimum of 60% of the residents to be within 1/3 to 1/4 mile of a local park. Most users should not need to cross any arterial streets to get to the park. Where possible, Neighborhood Parks should be shared with elementary schools and should connect with the trail and greenway network.
- c. *Community Parks.* Sites for community parks should be distributed to allow each major area within the Southeast Orlando to be within bicycling or driving distance of an active recreation area. Where possible, link these sites and their facilities with the trail and greenway network.

Recommended Park Program

In general, park areas should include sufficient trees to provide shaded areas. Existing vegetation should be saved where appropriate.



Plaza at Mizner Park in Boca Raton, Florida

- a. *Greens and Plazas.* Greens and Plazas should provide opportunities for public gathering, such as:
 - multi-purpose lawn areas,
 - tot lots,
 - informal picnic areas,
 - amphitheaters,
 - raised stages and gazebos,
 - larger hardscaped areas, and
 - seating.
- b. *Neighborhood Parks.* Neighborhood Parks should provide modest and flexible recreation opportunities that meet basic neighborhood needs and accommodate multiple purposes. Recommended features include:
 - multi-purpose lawn areas,
 - tot lots,
 - small court game areas,
 - community gardens,
 - informal picnic areas, and
 - seating.

- c. *Community Parks.* Community Parks should contain features that serve the larger community. Recommended features include:
- multiple playing fields (suitable for organized play),
 - multiple tennis and basketball courts,
 - swimming centers, amphitheaters,
 - group picnic areas,
 - tot lots,
 - storage, and
 - off-street parking.

Park Design

- a. *Perimeter Frontage.* Parks shall be surrounded by streets and/or building fronts, except where they are bound by woodlands, creeks, agricultural uses, or other significant open space features. In any event, at least 50% of a park's perimeter should front onto a public street. Under no circumstances may the edge of a park be formed by a rear yard fence unless such property consists of a linear park or trail with the facing edge being a natural system; surrounding buildings shall have entries and windows facing the park.
- b. *Paths.* Park paths should support direct connections from neighborhoods and surrounding commercial areas into parks. A fence should not prohibit access from neighborhoods into a park.
- c. *Climatic Design.* Parks should provide comfortable areas for sitting and recreation year-round. Parks should include adequately shaded areas for comfortable summer use and sun-exposed areas for comfortable winter use.
- d. *Natural Features.* Parks should be designed to conserve valuable natural features including creeks, significant habitats, woodlands, and existing heritage trees.
- e. *Views.* Vistas from surrounding streets that end in a park shall be encouraged. Loading and storage areas shall not occupy these vistas.
- f. *Crime Prevention.* All greens, plazas, parks and trails shall incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts.



Neighborhood Park at The Crossings in Mountain View, California

LANDSCAPING STANDARDS

Street Landscaping



Boulevard Street in Upland, California

Streets provide a highly visible element in the public realm. For this reason the appearance of the landscape along the streets and the functional aspects of pedestrian comfort, scale, shade, and air quality enhancement is of vital importance in defining the theme and quality of life of the area. The guidelines for street landscape shall be consistent with the CONVENTIONAL LDC.

Irrigation

Irrigation of the street landscape shall be provided as follows:

- a. All right-of-ways shall be provided with an automatic irrigation system utilizing reclaimed water if available.
- b. Bedding areas shall be irrigated with low volume (non-sprayhead) type of irrigation.
- c. Separate zones shall be provided for plants with dissimilar water needs. Turf areas and bedding areas should generally be irrigated on separate zones.
- d. Preserved natural areas within rights-of-way may not require irrigation.

Utilities

To protect the appearance of the street landscape, utilities shall be regulated as follows:

- a. Major public utility lines should be located underground. All electrical, fiber optic, cable, telephone, water, sewer service, and distribution lines within private developments shall be located underground. Stub-outs should be provided at shared property lines.
- b. All above ground utility structures such as backflow preventers, switching gear, control panels, etc. shall be placed in such a manner so as to be out of primary public view. Such structures shall be screened.
- c. Manhole covers, meter boxes, and other at-grade structures which fall within sidewalks shall be painted to match the concrete or pavers.

Street Trees

- a. *Selection.* Plant materials selected to meet the requirements for street tree planting shall be consistent with the CONVENTIONAL LDC. Plantings should be selected based on soil conditions, water requirements, surrounding environment, and intended theme and are subject to review and approval by the City.
- b. *Spacing.* In order to develop a positive pedestrian environment, and consistent with GMP Future Land Use Policy 4.1.17, required street trees shall be spaced according to species type and in accordance with the requirements of the CONVENTIONAL LDC.

General Landscaping Guidelines

Protected Habitats

Exotic species shall be precluded from natural areas left as Conservation Use areas, and from landscaped areas adjacent to these features to the maximum extent possible. Management for these areas should be aimed at sustaining the integrity of preserved natural systems. Design concepts that should be considered to prevent the encroachment of exotic, or nuisance vegetation into areas intended to remain natural include the following:

- a. Naturally-vegetated buffers shall be preserved adjacent to conservation areas consistent with the GMP Conservation Element.

In residential areas, restrictions should be placed within Homeowner Organization criteria to ensure compliance with buffer requirements. Further, homeowners should be educated about the potential impacts to preserved habitats from inappropriate uses of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

- b. Conservation easements may be developed for natural preserves which minimize human disturbance except for the purposes of education, or passive recreation with a focus on natural resources.
- c. The natural processes that sustain the functions of preserved areas should be considered in landscape maintenance plans. This should include the maintenance of pre-development wetland hydroperiods, patterns of fire, and nutrient loads to the maximum extent possible.
- d. Native plant materials shall be used in landscape plans wherever possible. Non-native materials should consist of plants that are shown not to invade natural landscapes, and comply with CONVENTIONAL LDC.
- e. Incompatible land uses should not be allowed adjacent to preserved natural areas. These land uses include development types that are likely to result in environmental contamination, a change in wetland hydroperiod, or an adverse impact to the quality of receiving waterbodies.

- f. Potential sources of exotic vegetation should be kept under control to prevent the spread of undesirable species into conservation areas. For example, cattails (*Typha* sp.) should be controlled in retention ponds before seeds disperse into adjacent areas. In many instances, this is most effectively done by planting retention ponds to desirable species at the time of construction.

Water Conservation Guidelines

- a. *Planning and Design.* Planning is the most important step to a successful water conserving landscape. All landscape and irrigation plans for non-residential developments, multifamily residential, public parks and open spaces shall be designed by a Landscape Architect, registered to practice in the State of Florida.

For residential, many homeowners create their own designs with excellent results. Landscape professionals may also serve as helpful resources. They can provide advice, critique, and/or develop plans.

- b. *Preservation of Existing Vegetation.* Existing vegetation should be incorporated into the design of parks and open space. The edge of these areas should be mulched with appropriate organic mulches. Cypress mulch should not be use.
- c. *Soil improvements.* Soil improvements allow for better absorption of water and improved water-holding capacity of the soil. Soils that have organic matter also provide beneficial nutrients to plants. Soils should be improved prior to the installation of any irrigation system. Soil additives should be added to planting areas to reduce water demand.
- d. *Efficient Irrigation.* Well planned irrigation/sprinkler systems can save significant amounts of water. For efficient water use, irrigate turf areas separately from other plantings. Landscape plantings should also be grouped according to similar water needs. Turf is best watered with sprinklers. Trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground covers can be watered efficiently with low volume drip, spray, or bubbler emitters.

- e. *Practical Turf Areas.* Locate turf only in areas where it provides functional benefits. Turf is best separated from planting of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and flowering plants so that it may be irrigated separately. Often turf can be replaced with other, less water demanding materials, such as groundcovers, low water demand plants, or mulches. Turf serves to slow runoff from landscape areas and should be practically placed in areas such as swales, recreational areas, and area of high pedestrian use.

The amount of recreation/open space areas planted in ornamental landscape and turf should be limited so that a portion of the site may have existing vegetation or replanted natural areas.

- f. *Drought-Tolerant Plants.* Utilize low water use plants in the design of landscaping. Plantings should relate to the existing adjacent plant associations and existing soil conditions. Drought-tolerant turf grasses should be utilized.
- g. *Mulch.* Mulched planting beds should be utilized as a replacement for turf areas. Mulches cover and cool soil, minimize evaporation, reduce weed growth, and slow erosion. Acceptable organic mulches include bark chips, wood grindings, or pine straw. Place mulch directly on the soil or on breathable or biodegradable material. Avoid using sheet plastic in planting areas. Cypress mulch should not be used.
- h. *Maintenance.* Regular maintenance preserves the intended beauty of the landscape and saves water. Water conservation designs can help reduce maintenance costs. Proper mowing, pruning and weeding, limited fertilization, pest control and irrigation system use further water savings.

Residential Landscaping

Starter Landscaping

To improve the appearance from the street, new residential development shall include a minimum starter package for landscaping. At a minimum, these starter packages should include: turf grass, shrubbery, at least one street tree, a front yard tree, and an efficient irrigation system necessary to sustain the vegetation.

Fencing and Wall Standards

- a. Two types of fences are allowed within residential areas: “picket” fences and “privacy” fences.

Front Yard

1. Picket fences shall be not more than 3 foot-6 inches in height. Picket fences shall not be solid and must be at least 50% opaque above 30 inches in height.
2. A possible alternative to a picket fence is a hedge which shall be maintained at a maximum height of not more than 3 foot-6 inches. A trellis, gate, or arbor shall be exempt from the maximum height when located where the walk (from the public sidewalk to the porch) passes through the fence or hedge.
3. Picket fences or hedges can be located at the back of sidewalks along the front or street side of a lot. They may also be located along the alley to give privacy to an ancillary unit yard, with a minimum setback of 10 feet from the rear property line.

Rear and Side Yard

4. Privacy fences shall be not more than 6 feet in height and may be located along interior lot lines to within 5 feet of the front facade of the principle building. Fences in the street side yard shall be subject to the requirements of front yard fencing.
- b. All fencing shall be built out of attractive, long-lasting materials, such as wood, PVC, masonry, stone, wrought iron, aluminum, vinyl or vinyl-coated wire.

- c. Fences visible from public streets shall be constructed of durable material and be detailed to include a distinctive cap/coping; columns of pilasters can also be used to provide detail. Chainlink, whether vinyl coated or galvanized, is prohibited for fences or walls that are visible from public streets.
- d. With masonry fences, the use of exposed or unfinished/unpainted concrete block is prohibited. For wood fences, the unfinished side shall not be visible from public streets.
- e. Screening of loading areas, refuse areas, transformers, heating units and other ground-mounted equipment shall be consistent with the Land Development Code.
- f. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) shall be considered. Landscaping should not create blind spots or hiding spots, particularly between the driveway or street sidewalk and the primary entrance of a residential structure. Properly maintained landscaping should provide maximum viewing to and from the house. The street address should be clearly visible from the street with numbers a minimum of 5 inches high that are made of non-reflective material that provides significant contrast to the affixed background.

Non-Residential Landscaping

Screening and Buffer Standards

- a. *Mixed-Use Buffers.* In town centers, village centers, and neighborhood centers, no supplemental buffers shall be required between office/commercial/residential uses.
- b. *Airport Support District Buffers.* Where Airport Support District uses abut residential, buffer yards shall in general be required as outlined in the City of Orlando Land Development Code. However, the City may require that areas zoned PD contain more stringent buffers. Such conditions shall be made part of individual PD ordinances.

Fencing and Wall Standards

Fences and walls shall be used consistent with the CONVENTIONAL LDC. CPTED shall be considered in the design of fences and walls.

Primary Conservation Network and Ecological Systems

Design standards and criteria have been established for the development proposed to occur within Southeast Orlando in order to comply with existing regulatory guidelines and restrictions while protecting the ecological integrity of the natural resources within the study area. These standards are not meant to restrict landowners developmental potential, but to guide and direct development in an ecological sensitive direction. The Primary Conservation Network (PCN), as envisioned, would protect wetland communities and habitat for numerous common and protected wildlife species while allowing passive recreation uses such as pedestrian and bike trails. The following standards are broken down by those required under normal regulatory review processes (primarily applicable to wetland/habitat areas outside the defined PCN); and those applicable to the entire planning area. These standards should provide for a more functional natural environment within the proposed development as well as provide opportunities to enhance and preserve natural communities and existing wildlife corridors.

Definitions and Terms



Lake Nona in Southeast Orlando planning area

- a. The wetland limits shown on the Master Plan map are approximate and not binding to any government agency. The wetland boundaries are based on the Orange County Land Use Maps, 1989, with limited field verification and digital information provided by others.
- b. The landward extent of potential jurisdictional wetlands should be field verified by the appropriate regulatory agencies.
- c. All impacts proposed to jurisdictional wetlands shall require permitting by regulatory agencies. Appropriate management plans for threatened or endangered species and species of special concern may require approval from the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Regulatory Agency Requirements

- a. Consistent with GMP Conservation Policies 1.4.4 and 1.4.5, a minimum 50 foot upland buffer is required for those wetlands designated as protected by the City's Q-WET rating system. Most of the wetlands designated as protected have been incorporated into the PCN and meet the minimum buffer requirements.
- b. Consistent with GMP Conservation Policies 1.4.4 and 1.4.5, an area of 25 feet (15 feet minimum) of upland buffer shall be provided around wetlands remaining within the study area but outside of the PCN.

- c. Roads or infrastructure crossings through wetland systems shall be limited to the narrowest point of the wetland.

Storm Drainage

- a. *Storm Drainage Requirements.* All future development in the Southeast Orlando planning area shall be required to discharge stormwater at rates not to exceed historic runoff rates and volumes. Stormwater detention and water quality facilities will be required for all development within the Southeast Orlando planning area, as determined during the review process for each development. The specifications and standards of the Southeast Orlando Stormwater Master Plan, when developed, shall be followed to the greatest extent feasible. In the interim, the City's OUSWMM standards shall apply.
- b. *Integration with Existing Storm Drainage Systems.* Existing drainageways and wetlands should be maintained or enhanced in a natural state to the greatest extent feasible. In lower-density areas, drainage systems should recharge on-site groundwater by using swales and surface systems, rather than concrete-lined or underground storm drains. All urban runoff should be treated on-site with biological retention and filtration areas.
- c. *Joint Use Stormwater/Open Space Opportunities.* the location, function, and design of all stormwater facilities should be coordinated with open space and park areas, in order to provide for joint use opportunities, wherever possible.
- d. *Interconnected System.* Where possible, greenways with trails should line riparian corridors and storm drainageways connecting to destinations such as schools, parks, and Neighborhood Centers. Coordinate an open lands system among property owners to use land efficiently and retain wildlife movement corridors.

Additional Development Guidelines

- a. Roads crossing wetland systems should be fitted with oversized culverts where feasible to facilitate and maintain wildlife corridors.
- b. Upland buffers, preservation areas, and wetland systems should be maintained so as to prevent invasion by nuisance and/or exotic species listed.
- c. Recreation opportunities within or adjacent to the PCN should be limited to passive uses such as biking or hiking trails or other educational opportunities. Golf

courses can provide valuable linkages in the overall PCN, but should not be eligible for PCN credits except where active vegetation has been retained.

- d. Every attempt should be made to mitigate for impacts to wetlands and listed wildlife species such as gopher tortoise within the study area through preservation and/or enhancement of habitat.
- e. Retaining existing native vegetation and the use of native drought-resistant plants in both residential, commercial, and common use areas is encouraged.
- f. Minimize additional roads crossing and encroachments across/into the PCN.
- g. Encourage the placement of stormwater management ponds, utility facilities, and other non-residential land uses adjacent to the defined PCN.
- h. While not a requirement, the City and developers should attempt to maintain a 500 foot minimum width for environmentally sensitive lands to allow wildlife movement.
- i. Design surface water management systems to discharge pre-treated stormwaters to preserved wetlands in such a way as to maintain and/or enhance their current hydrology.
- j. Reduce and/or eliminate fencing as a means to delineate property ownership's wherever practicable.
- k. Create an area-wide signage program designating PCN boundaries, alerting drivers at critical intersections of roads and the PCN, and educating residents within Southeast Orlando of the value, functions, and restrictions within the PCN.
- l. Encourage a domesticated animal control program including free or reduced price sterilization, community sponsored humane society, and other programs to reduce displacement and harm to existing animal species.