

Board of County Commissioners Leon County, Florida

Policy No. 10-1

Title: Access Policy for Parks and Recreation Facilities

Date Adopted: January 19, 2010

Effective Date: January 19, 2010

Reference: N/A

Policy Superseded: N/A

It shall be the Policy of the Board of County Commissioners (the “Board”) of Leon County, Florida (the “County”) that:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Leon County Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation Division (the “Parks & Recreation Division”) provides safe and reasonable access points for visitors to enter various Parks & Recreation facilities.
- 1.2 The policy covers all lands managed by the Parks & Recreation Division.

2. Authority

- 2.1 The Florida Statutes, Chapter 125.01 – County Government Powers and Duties, specifically section 125.01(1) (f).
- 2.2 It is the mission of the Parks & Recreation Division to provide for the safety, comfort, and convenience of the public by creating, maintaining, and managing infrastructure and programs supporting recreation, parks, and open space. To that regard, the Parks & Recreation Division is responsible for communicating and monitoring policies, procedures, and standards adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.
- 2.3 Greenway Management Plans provide directive to the County, in its capacity as a state-lands managing agency, on policies and procedures that must be followed on Greenway facilities: *“..... access to the Greenway will only be allowed from vehicle parking areas and access points established by the managing agency.”*

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Active Park – A County Parks & Recreation facility that provides athletic fields and other venues for athletic sports.
- 3.2 Commercial Access – Access from a commercial business.
- 3.3 Community/Neighborhood – For this policy, the definition will be a group of at least 10 housing units that use a common entry point into the community/neighborhood.
- 3.4 Community Support Group – Any recognized formal group that has interest in a given County Parks & Recreation facility.
- 3.5 Greenways - Areas leased by the County from the State of Florida or designated by the Board to be managed as an environmental area with passive recreation. The area will be developed and managed for conservation and improvement of existing natural resources, including native trees, vegetation, and wildlife providing passive recreation trails for the public to use in accordance with a management plan approved by the Board.
- 3.6 Greenways Trailhead –A Public Access Point located at a junction in the Greenways trail system that affords the safest access with adequate sight distance along major thoroughfares and provides additional facilities other than access to a trail system. This may include a parking lot, restrooms, water, and informational signage. Greenways Trailheads will generally be located at major road intersections to the Greenways.
- 3.7 Individual Access Point – Access to a County Parks & Recreation facility from an individual residential property.
- 3.8 Major Roadway – A road of two or more lanes that is used for transportation access to destinations other than individual subdivisions.
- 3.9 Park – A Parks & Recreation facility owned or leased by the County and maintained by the Parks & Recreation Division.
- 3.10 Passive Park – A County Parks & Recreation facility that provides leisure activities such as walking trails, observation areas, picnic areas, and other activities that are not sports activities.
- 3.11 Private Access Point – An approved and limited safe point of entry into a County Parks & Recreation facility, which is maintained by someone other than the County.

- 3.12 Public Access Point – A point of entry into a County Parks & Recreation facility established and maintained by the Parks & Recreation Division for access by the general public.

4. Allowable Access Points

- 4.1 Established Greenways Trailhead or Public Access Point - these are the preferred access to a Greenway or a County Parks & Recreation facility. As new communities are built along the property lines of existing parks, recreation areas, and/or greenway facilities, the County will encourage and may require developers to include shared trailheads or shared public access points in the subdivision to provide access to a facility.
- 4.2 Access from Connections to Major Roadways - as Major Roadways are developed that cross, run adjacent to, or dead end at a County Parks & Recreation facility, consideration should be given for one major trail and vehicle access point along these Major Roadways.
- 4.3 Access from other Greenways or Trails Systems – where existing Greenways or Trails systems are using drainage easements, environmental easements, or other such common property available for the public use, access from such points will be allowed.
- 4.4 Access from other Government Facilities Including Schools – where a County Parks & Recreation facility could be accessed from a government facility or a school, such access points will be allowed.
- 4.5 Private Access Points – where a County Parks & Recreation facility could be accessed from a Private Access Point, as defined herein, such access points will be allowed.

5. Non-allowable Access Points

- 5.1 Individual Access Points – access to a County Parks & Recreation facility will not be allowed from an Individual Access Point, as defined herein.
- 5.2 Access across Major Roadways - where the permit review process, as described herein, has determined that sight distance is not adequate, access will not be allowed.
- 5.3 Insufficient Spacing between Access Points – access to a County Parks & Recreation facility will not be allowed at a point located less than one-quarter (1/4) mile from an existing allowable access point.
- 5.4 Unauthorized access for which approval has not been given – access to a County Parks & Recreation facility will not be allowed unless approved in accordance with this Policy.

6. Process for Requesting an Access Point to a Parks & Recreation facility

- 6.1 A request for an access point to a County Parks & Recreation facility shall be sent to the Director of the Parks & Recreation Division (the “Director”) for consideration. The Director will determine if the access request complies with the Policy for allowable access points and if it meets all of the following guidelines for an access point:
- a. Distance from the requested access point to the next nearest access point is greater than one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) mile and warrants additional access.
 - b. If the access point requires users to cross a roadway at a location not previously used for roadway crossings, applicant must obtain all necessary permits for the installation of a cross-walk or trail crossing from the governmental entity having jurisdiction over the roadway. Applicant must install or construct the crossing in accordance with those approved permits. This process will protect the public from an otherwise hazardous condition by the proper evaluation of sight distances, placement of advance warning signage, and the utilization of other features of a safe crossing.
 - c. Any access point application that abuts a canopy road zone or requires a new cut in a canopy road zone will be submitted to the County Canopy Roads Committee for review. Denial by the Canopy Roads Committee will result in denial by the Director.
 - d. The access point requested does not cross or adversely affect an environmentally sensitive area on the Parks & Recreation facility.
 - e. Identification of each neighborhood that will be utilizing the requested access point.
 - f. Adjoining property owners have been contacted and have provided written approval that they are in agreement with the requested access.
 - g. Easements to the County to cross private property (if needed) have been provided to and accepted by the County.
- 6.2 In making a determination regarding a request for an access permit, the Director shall obtain the recommendations of the Community Support Group with jurisdiction over a given County Parks & Recreation facility. If recommended by the Director and the Community Support Group, the Director will issue a permit for the access point which states the terms and conditions and remedies for failure to follow such conditions.
- 6.3 The access point permit issued by the Director will require the requestor of the access point be responsible to install and maintain this access point at the requestor’s cost. The access point shall be installed according to the specifications provided by the Director.

- 6.4 If the Director rejects the request, the application may be appealed to the Director of Leon County Department of Public Works.
- 6.5 In cases where the access point enters lands leased by the County, the approval of the access point, and any necessary easements, shall be subject to approval by the lessor identified in such lease.