

# A RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL RECREATION

## OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Acres / 1,000 Population
<b>Mini-Park</b>	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre in size.	0.25 to 0.5 A
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>	Neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	$\frac{1}{4}$ -to $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.	1.0 to 2.0 A
<b>School-Park</b>	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.	Variable
<b>Community Park</b>	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.	5.0 to 8.0 A
<b>Large Urban Park</b>	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 the quality and suitability of the 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.	Variable.
<b>Natural Resource Areas</b>	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Variable.

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<b>Regional / Metropolitan Park</b>	Land set aside for preservation of natural beauty or environmental significance, recreation use or historic or cultural interest use.	Located to serve several communities within 1 hour driving time.	Optimal size is 200+ acres, but size varies based on accommodating the desired uses.	5.0 to 10.0 A
<b>Greenways</b>	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Variable.
<b>Sports Complex</b>	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 to 80 acres being optimal.	Variable.
<b>Special Use</b>	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable-dependent on specific use.	Variable.	Variable.
<b>Private Park/ Recreation Facility</b>	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable-dependent on specific use.	Variable.	Variable.

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Classification	General Description	Description of each type	Acres / 1,000 Population
<b>Park Trail</b>	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with natural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists / in-line skaters.</li> <li>Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters.</li> <li>Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard or soft-surfaced.</li> </ul>	Variable.
<b>Connector Trails</b>	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists / in-line skaters located in independent r.o.w. (e.g., old railroad r.o.w.)</li> <li>Type II: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Typically located within road r.o.w.</li> </ul>	Variable.
<b>On-Street Bikeways</b>	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	<p>Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.</p> <p>Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.</p>	Variable.
<b>All-Terrain Bike Trail</b>	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes.	Single-purpose loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.	Variable.
<b>Cross-Country Ski Trail</b>	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.	Variable.
<b>Equestrian Trail</b>	Trails developed for horseback riding.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas. Sometimes developed as multipurpose with hiking and all-terrain biking where conflicts can be controlled.	Variable.

Adapted From:

Lancaster, R. A., Ed. Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines. Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1983.  
 Mertes, J. D. and J. R. Hall. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1995.