
RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Data, Inventory and Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Sewall's Point and the surrounding area contains numerous recreation areas for residents and visitors to the community. Though there are only four recreation and open space sites within the Town, there are a number of sites within very close proximity to the Town operated by neighboring jurisdictions including Martin County. There is a total of 663.13 acres of recreation and open space facilities in and within three miles of the Town. These facilities include beach and water access, boat ramps, marinas, piers, recreation centers, open spaces, and community centers.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Florida Statutes requires a Recreation and Open Space Element indicating a comprehensive system of public and private sites for recreation, including, but not limited to, natural reservations, parks and playgrounds, parkways, beaches and public access to beaches, open spaces, waterways, and other recreational facilities. The University of Florida's GeoPlan Center is an industry standard for comprehensive plan data sets. Data from Martin County and the Town of Sewall's Point was also utilized. These data sets were utilized as the data sources for the Town of Sewall's Point Comprehensive Plan Recreation and Open Space Element.

In evaluating the data from all sources, this data report will provide estimates of:

- The recreation and open space facilities in Sewall's Point
- The recreation and open space facilities in Martin County
- The availability of beach and water access, open space facilities and community centers
- Martin County impact fees for recreation and open space
- The need for new recreation and open space facilities based on Sewall's Point recreation and open space level of service

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE IN SEWALL'S POINT

There are four municipal recreation and open space facilities within the Town of Sewall's Point, totaling 6.54 acres. Three of the facilities are owned and operated by the Town including Sewall's Point Town Commons. This is a public water access facility located directly south of the Stuart Causeway that provides entry into the Jensen Beach and Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve. This Park is referred to as "Town Commons."

Lantana Park, also owned and operated by the Town, is a stormwater treatment area located at the intersection of Admiral's Walk and Lantana Lane. There is a small gazebo in the area to allow it to also serve as open space and a passive park to the surrounding neighborhood.

The third Town owned, and operated facility is Sewall's Point Town Hall, located across the street from Sewall's Point Town Commons. The Town Hall serves as a center for local government and community events. It's location at the intersection of A1A and Sewall's Point Road provides easy access for the residents of Sewall's Point as well as those in the general public commuting in from the Evans Crary Bridge or the Stuart Causeway/Ernest Lyons Bridge.

Table ROS 5-1 provides a summary of these municipal recreation and open space facilities. Of these sites, Sewall's Point Town Commons and Lantana Park were established after the last Comprehensive Plan update in 1989, showing an increase in available recreation and open space within the Town.

TABLE ROS 5-1 SEWALL'S POINT MUNICIPAL RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Name	Address	Acres	Category	Operating Entity
Sewall's Point Town Commons	Sewall's Point Rd	1.36	Water Access	Municipal
Lantana Park	14 Admirals Walk	0.49	Open Space	Municipal
Sewall's Point Town Hall	1 South Sewall's Point Rd	0.69	Community Center	Municipal
Stuart Causeway Park (West Side)	West Side of Ernie Lyons Bridge	4.0	Pavilions and Open Space	Municipal

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center and updated by Town Staff

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE IN MARTIN COUNTY

Though the options for recreation and open space are limited within the limits of Sewall's Point, there are a variety of recreation and open space facilities within three miles of the Town in Martin County. These 37 sites include beach and water access facilities, boat ramps, marinas, piers, recreation parks, open spaces, and community centers.

Boy Scout Island, located in the Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve, is located adjacent to the Town and is owned by the State of Florida and operated by Martin County. The facility provides a small beach that boaters can pull up to and enjoy. This location is commonly used for swimming, fishing, and camping.

Table ROS 5-2 summarizes the recreation and open space facilities within the Town limits and within three miles of Sewall's Point. There are 659.43 acres of recreation and open space in Martin County within this area. 556.96 acres are operated by Martin County, 9.53 acres are operated by the City of Stuart, and 92.94 acres are operated by private enterprise. These facilities are located in the Stuart, Jensen Beach, and Hutchinson Island areas.

TABLE ROS 5-2 MARTIN COUNTY RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Operating Entity	Number of Sites	Acreage
Within the Town of Sewall's Point		
Town of Sewall's Point	3	2.54
Martin County	1	4.0
Total	4	6.54
Outside of the Town		
Martin County	20	556.96
City of Stuart	10	9.53
Private	3	92.94
Total	33	659.43
Overall Total	37	663.13

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center and updated by Town Staff

BEACH AND WATER ACCESS

There are 17 park sites within three miles of the Town with beach or water access points. As shown in

Table ROS 5-3, there are 135.45 acres of beach and water access facilities; 12 operated by Martin County and five (5) operated by the City of Stuart. Only three of these parks were included in the 1989 Comprehensive Plan, including Stuart Beach Park, Tiger Shores Beach Park, and Fletcher Beach.

TABLE ROS 5-3 MARTIN COUNTY BEACH AND WATER ACCESS FACILITIES

Name	Location	Acres	Category	Operating Entity
Ross Witham Beach	Stuart	11.38	Beach	Martin County
Chastain Beach Access	Stuart	1.14	Beach	Martin County
Rio Nature Park	Jensen Beach	2.13	Water	Martin County
Stuart Neighborhood Park	Stuart	0.74	Water	City of Stuart
Hospital Pond Park	Stuart	2.04	Water	City of Stuart
Bathtub Beach Park	Stuart	3.96	Beach	Martin County
Bathtub Beach West Park	Stuart	1.82	Beach	Martin County
Bathtub Reef Beach Park	Stuart	0.98	Beach	Martin County
Clifton S. Perry Beach Park	Stuart	9.78	Beach	Martin County
Santa Lucea Park	Stuart	9.22	Beach	Martin County
Stuart Beach Park	Stuart	87.70	Beach	Martin County
Stuart Causeway	Martin County and Sewall's Point	12.6	Linear	Martin County
Tiger Shores Beach Park	Stuart	1.13	Beach	Martin County
Virginia Forrest Beach Park	Stuart	0.71	Beach	Martin County
Lake Clare Park	Stuart	1.18	Water	City of Stuart
Fletcher Beach	Hutchinson Island	1.08	Beach	Martin County
Pelican Park	Stuart	0.38	Water	City of Stuart
Riverside Park	Stuart	0.08	Water	City of Stuart

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center and updated by Town Staff

BOAT RAMPS, PIERS, AND MARINAS

There are six (6) parks within three miles of the Town that houseboat ramps, fishing piers, or marinas. The three boat ramps, Stuart Causeway Park and Boat Ramp, Jensen Beach Causeway Boat Ramp Park, and Indian Riverside Park and Boat Ramp are all operated by Martin County and provide access to the Jensen Beach and Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve.

As shown in **Table ROS 5-4**, there is a fishing pier located in Indian Riverside Park which is operated by Martin County. This regional park was established after the 1989 Comprehensive Plan. Notably, Indian Riverside Park is home to the Children’s Museum of the Treasure Coast, the Mansion at Tuckahoe, and Mt. Elizabeth Archaeological Site, providing a variety of recreational activities for both adults and children.

TABLE ROS 5-4 MARTIN COUNTY BOAT RAMPS AND PIERS

Name	Location	Acres	Category	Operating Entity
Stuart Causeway Park & Boat Ramp	Stuart	8.06	Boat Ramp	Martin County
Jensen Beach Causeway Boat Ramp Park	Jensen Beach	3.80	Boat Ramp	Martin County
Indian Riverside Park & Boat Ramp	Jensen Beach	62.00	Pier & Boat Ramp	Martin County

Source: University of Florida’s GeoPlan Center and updated by Town Staff.

RECREATION

As depicted in **Table ROS 5-5**, there are seven (7) recreation sites in the three-mile radius. These recreation facilities include a mixed-use recreation park, a regional park, a skate park, two golf courses, and two walking paths. Notably, the largest recreation and open space site within a three-mile radius of the Town is Sailfish Sands Golf Course (previously referred to as Martin County Golf and Country Club) accounting for 316.88 acres. This golf course is maintained by the Martin County Parks and Recreation Department. Sailfish Sands Golf Course, along with Langford Park and The Ocean Club (previously referred to as Indian River Plantation), are accounted for in the Town's 1989 Comprehensive Plan.

Since the 1989 Comprehensive Plan, a skate park (Rio Skate Park), a regional park (Indian Riverside Park) and two walking paths (Oriole Park and Eagle Nest Park) have been established as recreation options in the area. These sites provide proximate locations for skating, walking, water access, fountains, and other leisurely activities to the public.

TABLE ROS 5-5 MARTIN COUNTY RECREATION FACILITIES

Name	Location	Acres	Category	Operating Entity
Langford Park	Jensen Beach	19.70	Mixed Use Rec.	Martin County
Rio Skate Park	Jensen Beach	3.04	Athletic	Martin County
Indian Riverside Park	Jensen Beach	62.00	Regional Park	Martin County
Sailfish Sands Golf Course	Stuart	316.88	Golf Course	Martin County
Oriole Park	Stuart	0.64	Walking Path	City of Stuart
Eagle Nest Park	Stuart	0.16	Walking Path	City of Stuart
The Ocean Club	Stuart	84.56	Golf Course	Private

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center

OPEN SPACE

There are two (2) open space facilities within three miles of the Town, Menninger Park and Balboa Park, which are both operated by the City of Stuart. These facilities, as shown on **Table ROS 5-6**, are a combined 0.52 acres, and were both established after the 1989 Comprehensive Plan.

TABLE ROS 5-6 MARTIN COUNTY OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Name	Location	Acres	Operating Entity
Menninger Park	Stuart	0.13	Municipal
Balboa Park	Stuart	0.38	Municipal

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Table ROS 5-7 summarizes the two community centers within three miles of the Town, the Historical Society of Martin County, and the Jensen Beach Community Center, both of which are operated by Martin County. The Historical Society of Martin County is home to the Elliot Museum. The Museum has exhibits on art, technology, and the history of Martin County and Florida. The Museum site is listed in the National Registry of Historic Buildings. The Historical Society of Martin County predates the 1989 Comprehensive Plan, but the Jensen Beach Community Center was constructed afterwards. The Jensen Beach Community Center provides a place for nearby events and a social gathering point. It is located 3.4 miles away from Sewall’s Point Town Hall, in Downtown Jensen Beach.

TABLE ROS 5-7 MARTIN COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTERS

Name	Location	Acres	Operating Entity
Historical Society of Martin County	Stuart	26.59	Martin County
Jensen Beach Community Center	Jensen Beach	0.40	Martin County

Source: University of Florida’s GeoPlan Center

IMPACT FEES

Impact fees are fees charged to developers to pay for increased infrastructure demands created by new development, making them an effective method for communities to pay for new infrastructural needs. The Town of Sewall’s Point, as of 2021, does not charge impact fees for development. However, as per Article 6 of the County’s Land Development Regulations, Martin County does charge impact fees. These fees are implemented on both residential and non-residential development and provide funding for a variety of public resources, including parks and conservation/open space, within the county.

Table ROS 5-8 displays the impact fee schedule for parks and conservation/open space in Martin County effective 2016. These fees are utilized towards all of the Martin County parks and recreation facilities including those within the three-mile radius.

TABLE ROS 5-8 MARTIN COUNTY IMPACT FEE SCHEDULE

Residential/Non-Residential	Land Use	Unit	Parks Fee	Conservation/Open Space Fee
Residential	800 sq ft & under	Dwelling	\$1,196.55	\$540
Residential	801 to 1,100 sq ft	Dwelling	\$1,377.09	\$579
Residential	1,101 to 2,300 sq ft	Dwelling	\$1,971.91	\$661
Residential	2,301 sq ft & over	Dwelling	\$2,699.40	\$755
Non-Residential	Hotel/Motel	Room	\$1,058.46	\$654
Non-Residential	RV Park	Lot	\$753.40	\$491

Source: Martin County

LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD

The Town of Sewall's Point adopted the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance 198 in 1990 to implement and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan by requiring that all development in the Town is served by adequate public facilities. The ordinance recognized a Level of Service standard for Capital Recreation and Open Space Facilities of 0.8 acres for 3,200 people.

In contrast Policy 14.1A.2(6) in the Martin County Comprehensive Plan states that County parks and recreation facilities shall be developed at three (3) acres per 1,000 population as applied by the recreation planning district specified in the Recreation Element. The level of service for Active Parks is currently (FY18) at 7.07 acres per 1,000 County-wide population. The projected level of service in FY27 is 6.53 acres per 1,000 people. Similarly sized and situated jurisdictions have implemented LOS standards requiring two (2) to (5) acres of park and recreation land area per 1,000 residents.

For the 2022 update to the plan, an LOS for recreation and open space should be increased to 0.8 acres per 1,000 residents as shown in **Table ROS 5-9**. Based upon this new LOS, the Town meets the Parks and Recreation LOS for the population of the Town in 2020 as well as for many years to come based on the projected population for the Town.

TABLE ROS 5-9 SEWALL'S POINT RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE LEVEL OF SERVICE

	1989	2020
Population	1,722	2,127
Acres Required	1.4	1.7
Acres (2021)	3.70	3.70
Surplus/Deficient Acres	+2.3	+3.15

Source: University of Florida's GeoPlan Center

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

The Town of Sewall's Point meets the 1990 adopted LOS standard for Recreation and Open Space. However, the adopted LOS is significantly lower than that of the County and of similar, neighboring jurisdictions. This may be due to the date in which the Town's LOS was adopted, over 20 years ago, and due to the overall size of the Town. Increasing the LOS for recreation and open space may be beneficial for the community.

That said, there are over 600 acres of recreation and open space facilities within three miles of the Town, so residents can travel short distances and have a surplus of recreational opportunities. Even though the Town of Sewall's Point provides a limited number of recreation and open space opportunities, its proximity to the Martin County, Stuart, and Jensen Beach allows residents to find recreation and open space opportunities near their community.

The Town could increase the recreation and open space LOS and required facilities by transforming undeveloped Town-owned land into a recreation or open space facility. The Town could consider implementing local Town impact fees to allocate development and operating funds towards these future recreation and open space facilities.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Community Centers – A place where people from a particular community can meet for social, educational, or recreational activities.

Impact Fees – Fees charged to developers to pay for increased infrastructure demands created by new development, making them an effective method for communities to pay for new infrastructural needs. The different costs for impact fees based on development land use type is provided in the form of an impact fee schedule.

Level of Service (LOS) – Level of Service Standard, the number of units of capacity per unit of demand.

Mixed Use Recreation – A category for a public recreation facility that provides a variety of options for physical and outdoor activities.

Neighborhood Park – Intended to provide activities that, overall, are used more frequently and have a shorter duration of use. They should be located close to the area served. Neighborhood parks are typically smaller and are not highly visible from main roadways. They usually provide little to no parking and are typically used most heavily by the immediate surrounding neighborhood.

Open Space – Any open piece of land that is undeveloped (has no buildings or other built structures) and is accessible to the public.

Park – An area of natural, semi-natural or planted space set aside for human enjoyment and recreation or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats.