

space. Areas of wetland, riparian zones, or floodplains may be desirable for some purposes but not for others. It is just as true, however, that certain active-open-space features may be desirable to only a very few residents.

Recreation and open space must be planned with regard to the projected users, the physical space, and the capability of a management entity to maintain the facility. These considerations must be measured in the short and long terms. New facilities should be planned to work in conjunction with existing facilities. The development of complementing facilities maximizes the recreation—open-space dollar, provides a broader choice of activities to the user, and precludes the development of competing and redundant facilities. In developing active or passive open space, developers and communities alike must be concerned about the actual demand, current and future, for those facilities. The demand for a particular type of recreation opportunity or facility should be tied to the target population. If it is to be used exclusively by the inhabitants of the new development, then the demographics of the new population should lead the design. If the facility is to have a broad base of community use, then another set of considerations should lead the design. The unwanted facility is not an amenity; it does not attract users (or buyers, in the case of a new facility). In fact, such underutilized space may be an attractive nuisance that costs more in maintenance and liability insurance than it returns in value to the community.

Active open space must be compatible with the site as well as with the user. An analysis of the site must include existing features such as watercourses, tree masses, topography, adjacent land uses, and areas of historic significance. These concerns that might otherwise restrict development may be effectively coordinated with the open-space and recreation elements of the design. By first assessing the existing qualities and characteristics of the site, the compatibility of the site with a proposed open-space design can be evaluated.

Many studies have been conducted to determine the leisure activities of various age groups within communities. Caution, however, should be used in applying such studies, because the information in such studies has a shelf life. The study measures the preferences of a community at a given time, but the mix of preferences within a population changes with time. Analyzing the needs of a particular community should include (a) the age group (or expected age group, in the case of projections) or the age distribution within the population, (b) the projected number of users within the population, (c) the sources of funding, maintenance, and management and the capacity of the resource to maintain the facility, and (d) the availability and accessibility of existing facilities.

The sizing of facilities is also very important. The proposed active open space must be large enough to serve the user population but small enough to be maintained by the responsible parties. An evaluation of the appropriate size or number of facilities should include a projection of the future users. As the population grows older or younger within a community, the demand for facilities will change. Planning the active open space should include not only