



## STATE, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PARKS (1964, R1991, R2000, R2001, R2007)

### **Policy Statement**

The American Society of Landscape Architects believes that every state, regional and local government should continue to build on their strong nationwide legacy of parks to preserve lands of significance for future generations. Parks provide safe and healthful outdoor recreational opportunities for all citizens, while conserving landscape character and environmental, historical and cultural resources. As urbanization continues, communities should plan for and develop park systems as an integral part of the urban fabric. Efforts should be continued to set aside areas of special natural, scenic and cultural significance and rehabilitate the green infrastructure of existing parks and to protect the vanishing landscape in rural areas.

### **Rationale**

Recently, a number of states and local governments have taken positive steps such as revenue bonds, transfer of development rights, and partnerships with the private sector to create revenue. Managers should consider multiple use trails, rails-to-trails, "wild and scenic" and recreational river and greenways programs.

Parks make an important contribution to the quality of life in the places where we live by providing opportunities for recreation, aesthetic and spiritual benefits, social interaction, psychological renewal, environmental education and environmental benefits. Communities, professionals, and state, regional and local organizations should continue to invest in parks and other open spaces as a remedy to long-term urban, suburban and regional landscape decline. Managers should identify more efficient ways to do business and optimize resources without resorting to unwise solutions that provide only short-term benefits. All park systems managers should seek opportunities to: assure adequate funding for park maintenance, improve public access, protect park resources, acquire new park properties, develop the desired/needed range of recreational programs and expand environmental and other educational programs.

Because poorly planned developments threaten the integrity of parks, governments must plan for adjacent land use and zoning mechanisms that can ensure protection of these scarce resources. Integrated and comprehensive planning grounded in an understanding of human and natural systems, should be encouraged in every community, region and state.

The foundation of a good park system will only be as strong as its constituency. Knowledge of the outdoors and environmental values leads to the development of outdoor ethics. Active participation in park and recreation planning and well-integrated environmental education should be considered as essential avenues for developing this ethic and ensuring continued public concern for environmental and recreational resources.

Access to park facilities and recreation programs should be broadened to include the young, old and physically challenged, as well as other non-traditional park users.

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