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Introduction

The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan is designed to provide a framework for Unincorporated Hillsborough County to be a place where future growth, infrastructure, and environmental protection decisions are aligned with the values of the community, support the health, wellbeing, and prosperity of all community members, and protect and preserve natural areas. The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range policy document used by county officials, staff, and residents as a guide to direct community development decisions, assist with community infrastructure provision, and protect our valuable natural environment.

Local government planning in Florida has been guided for more than 30 years by the 1985 Growth Management Act and subsequent amendments. The Growth Management Act required that every local government in Florida adopt a Comprehensive Plan to guide growth and development. A Comprehensive Plan must have chapters or elements that address specific concerns, such as land use, transportation, recreation and open space, housing, potable water, conservation, and capital improvements. The changes generated by the 2011 Community Planning Act allow the Planning Commission to develop a plan tailored more towards specific community issues, needs, and desires.
How to use the Comprehensive Plan

The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan is a formally adopted, legally binding plan. The policies in this document direct the County as it considers future actions and guides the County’s Land Development Code through detailed regulation via the quasi-judicial rezoning process.

The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan is composed of chapters organized around four overarching topics: the Built Environment, Natural Open Space, One Water, and Governance. The four Chapters house a series of Sections connected by a corresponding theme or topic. Each section begins with an introduction followed by goals, objectives, and policies. The introductory text is provided for general explanatory purposes only. The terms “goal,” “objective,” and “policy” are used specifically in this Comprehensive Plan to mean:

**Goal**
A general statement about a desired future outcome. Goals provide the long-term vision and serve as the foundation of the plan but do not indicate specific actions to achieve the desired outcomes. Goals provide the basis for the more specific direction provided by the objectives and policies.

**Objective**
A statement that provides a specific direction to achieve a given goal. There are typically several objectives associated with each goal contained in the plan.

**Policy**
Specific courses of action or rules of conduct used to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. They are intended to be used regularly to guide day-to-day decision-making and direct actions to be taken by the County to implement the plan.

The policies of the various Sections are interrelated and together create the County’s policy framework for future development of land, economic growth, resource protection, and the provision of public services and facilities. The policies in the Comprehensive Plan vary in their scope and degree of direction. Some provide general guidance or call for more specific direction; others recommend additional study, community outreach, or consideration to modify existing policies or develop new policies; still, others are actions the County has committed to follow in its programs and practices. The common theme of all the policies is that each represents the County’s approach toward community problem-solving and goal realization.
Built Environment

Future Land Use

Property Rights

Mobility

Housing

Livable Communities
Future Land Use

Introduction

The current Future Land Use Section can be viewed here. This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.

The current Economically Disadvantaged Groups Section can be viewed here. This Section will be updated and incorporated into the Future Land Use Element in 2022.
Property Rights

Introduction

House Bill 59 (2021), Chapter 2021-195, Laws of Florida, which requires that each local government adopt a property rights element into its comprehensive plan, became effective on July 1, 2021. The inclusion of this element is intended to acknowledge and respect private property rights and to ensure they are considered in the local decision-making processes of Hillsborough County.

At the direction of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Planning Commission staff drafted the new element based, in part, on the model Property Rights Element developed by the 1000 Friends of Florida.

The overarching goal of the Hillsborough County Property Rights Element notes Hillsborough County “...will make decisions with respect for property rights and with respect for people’s rights to participate in decisions that affect their lives and property...”. Transparency, predictability, and reliability are the three main objectives of the Hillsborough County Property Rights Element.
Hillsborough County will make decisions with respect for property rights and with respect for people’s rights to participate in decisions that affect their lives and property.

Objective 1

Hillsborough County will respect judicially acknowledged and constitutionally protected private property rights.

Policies

1.1 Hillsborough County will consider in its decision-making the right of a property owner to physically possess and control his or her interests in the property, including easements, leases, or mineral rights.

1.2 Hillsborough County will consider in its decision-making the right of a property owner to use, maintain, develop, and improve his or her property for personal use or for the use of any other person, subject to state law and local ordinances.

1.3 Hillsborough County will consider in its decision-making the right of the property owner to privacy and to exclude others from the property to protect the owner’s possessions and property.

1.4 Hillsborough County will consider in its decision-making the right of a property owner to dispose of his or her property through sale or gift.

Objective 2

In Hillsborough County decision-making will be transparent so that all people may participate in decisions that affect their lives and property. PR Policies 2.1 through 2.4 provide minimum standards for some planning and development decisions. Land development regulations may provide for additional processes and standards.

Policies

2.1 Hillsborough County must follow the procedures in PR Policies 2.2 through 2.4 when Hillsborough County amends this comprehensive plan or changes the zoning designation of property.
2.2 A decision PR Policy 2.1 identifies must occur following a public hearing meeting the standards of this policy.

A. Hillsborough County recognizes that planning and development decisions affect complex systems and have impacts that occur beyond the site of development including, but not limited to, impacts interests related to health and safety, police and fire protection, densities or intensities of development, transportation facilities, health care facilities, equipment or services, and environmental or natural resources. Any member of the public may participate in a hearing on a decision this policy governs.

B. Hillsborough County recognizes that it should make planning and development decisions in response to true and accurate information. In all decisions this policy governs, Hillsborough County will provide the general public an opportunity to be heard, to present evidence, and to have access to all record materials on which Hillsborough County bases its decision.

2.3 Hillsborough County recognizes that a person cannot participate in decisions about which they are unaware. In addition to providing notice as other laws require, when Hillsborough County makes a decision PR Policy 2.1 identifies that relates to a piece or to pieces of real property that can be specifically identified, Hillsborough County will mail notice of the hearing to the owners and to residents to which the decision relates. The requisite notice timeframes, distances, and other procedures, as well as additional notification requirements through the use of signage and the placement of legal advertisements in the newspaper or on websites will be outlined in the Hillsborough County Plan Amendment Procedures Manual and/or Land Development Code, as appropriate.

2.4 Hillsborough County recognizes that planning and development decisions raise complex issues and that the best decisions are made when all members of the public have the opportunity to participate early and throughout the decision-making process. Hillsborough County encourages and facilitates public information and participation throughout the process. For decisions noted in PR Policy 2.1, applicants may be required to meet with neighbors and other members of the public prior to hearings as outlined in the Hillsborough County Plan Amendment Procedures Manual and Land Development Code.
Objective 3

People rely on this comprehensive plan and on the zoning designations of properties when deciding how to use property. Hillsborough County's decision-making will be reliable and predictable to promote sound, long-term investments in the community. PR Policies 3.1 through 3.3 provide minimum standards for some planning and development decisions. Land development regulations may provide for additional processes and standards.

3.1 Hillsborough County must follow the procedures in PR Policies 3.2 and 3.3 when amending this comprehensive plan or changes the zoning designation of property.

3.2 Hillsborough County may only make a decision as identified within PR Policy 3.1 by the affirmative vote of at least a majority plus one of the total membership of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners for a comprehensive plan amendment or at least four affirmative votes to approve or deny a rezoning.

3.3 Hillsborough County respects the right of people, including elected officials, to fairly evaluate proposed decisions this objective governs. The Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners may only make a decision PR Policy 3.1 identifies when public access to all record materials is afforded, inclusive of those materials that are part of the written record provided to the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.

Strategies for Implementation

As with other policy statements in the Future of Hillsborough Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Hillsborough County, staff will consider these provisions when advising and formulating their recommendations on land use, zoning and other issues to be brought before any governmental entities, including but not limited to, the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.
Mobility

Introduction

This Section of the Comprehensive Plan was formerly called the Transportation Element. It incorporates new themes and policies to promote:

Working Towards Equity
Past discriminatory policies and practices have marginalized racial or ethnic minorities and excluded them from planning and decision-making. The effects are still felt to this day; equity and fairness require proactive steps to rectify them. The Mobility Section seeks to identify and overcome barriers to full participation, alleviate disproportionate burdens and ensure that underserved communities receive a fair share of benefits.

Focusing on Safety
Vision Zero is an international movement aimed at ending roadway deaths. At its core is the belief that death and serious injury on our streets are preventable. The Mobility Section establishes policies to focus on high-crash corridors, manage speeds, design more forgiving roadways, promote better behavior and observance of traffic laws.

Preserving the System
Maintaining the County’s multimodal transportation system in good repair, improving its evacuation capability and enhancing its resiliency to withstand and recover from a disaster are also addressed by the Mobility Section.

Promoting Connectivity
To achieve a truly connected system, the Mobility Section addresses safe and convenient connections for multimodal access to community focal points and other destinations.

Putting People First
Streets are recognized as part of a public realm that should accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including transit riders, walkers, bicyclists, wheelchair users, motorists, freight handlers and even electric scooter riders. This approach is known as Complete Streets and can help achieve a safer system, higher quality of life and greater economic development. Enabling people who cannot drive or choose not to own an automobile is another priority of the Mobility Section.

Preparing for New Technology
The transportation landscape is changing rapidly because of the onset of technology such as connected or self-driving vehicles and smart infrastructure. These have been facilitated by the convergence of communication, computer and vehicular technologies. Likewise, shared mobility enables the short-term use of transit, ride-hailing services, shared cars, bicycles and even scooters to get around. The Mobility Section contains policies to evaluate, prepare for and leverage new technology for the greatest public benefit.

Respecting the Context
Context means the area traversed by a transportation corridor. Context-sensitive roads respect the natural environment, the planned land uses and development patterns adjacent to the public right-of-way. Context-based planning and design is a flexible approach to address multimodal needs in different contexts. The Mobility Section classifies the road network into several contexts appropriate for rural, suburban or urban settings.
GOAL

1

Build and maintain a transportation system that supports the needs of all users with respect to ability, resources, identity and mode preference.

Objective 1.1

Engage the public to ensure that all individuals or groups have opportunities to collaborate with the County and provide input in all aspects of transportation planning and implementation.

Policies

1.1.1 Encourage community organizations and representatives, especially those who have been traditionally underrepresented, to participate in developing community plans and transportation strategies for their area and act as liaisons between government and citizens in representing area interests.

1.1.2 As resources are available, utilize a proactive pre-project public engagement process to determine needs in neighborhoods and to provide guidance for future projects, especially within underserved communities.

1.1.3 Expand efforts to involve members of underserved communities in planning activities and decisions by hosting meetings and conducting public outreach in those communities.

1.1.4 Use appropriate field outreach techniques, such as door-to-door or street canvassing, that will most effectively maximize participation in the communities affected before, during and after transportation planning and project implementation.

1.1.5 Build positive rapport with the public by ensuring and demonstrating that their comments are heard, analyzed and followed up on.
Objective 1.2

Consider both positive and negative socio-economic, physical and mental health impacts of transportation projects, especially on underserved communities including people with disabilities, chronic diseases and limited resources.

1.2.1 Support projects and strategies that lead to lower vehicle emissions, improved air quality, lower rates of asthma and other chronic diseases, or promote active transportation such as walking and bicycling.

1.2.2 When prioritizing projects, support routine roadway maintenance and infrastructure improvements benefiting underserved communities.

1.2.3 Prioritize projects that enhance multimodal access to parks, recreation, health care, healthy food, better jobs, schools and other community elements.

1.2.4 Consider the effect of tolls and managed lanes on low-income households and ensure that there are alternative facilities for those who aren't able to pay the toll, or that they have other ways to access such facilities, such as transit and high-occupancy vehicles.

1.2.5 Any potential tolling strategy should mitigate induced demand and support the County's growth management approach.

Objective 1.3

Recognize and avoid repeating past injustices, strive to alleviate or mitigate disproportionate burdens on underserved communities and ensure that they receive a fair share of benefits.

1.3.1 Prioritize transportation projects in underserved communities, especially low-income and minority communities, that increase access to community services and employment opportunities.

1.3.2 Ensure projects serving a larger need are aligned to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts, particularly those resulting from expanded right-of-way, to neighborhoods and underserved communities.
1.3.3 Increase access to convenient and affordable transportation options, such as frequent bus service, prioritizing those communities that have historically been underserved, underrepresented or have borne unequal burdens.

1.3.4 Engage business stakeholders to assess workforce mobility needs, ensuring companies and employment centers have access to the full range of the labor force, including those without personal transportation.

1.3.5 Encourage private transportation network company (TNC) operators to share data that supports ongoing transportation planning and implementation with a focus on equity and access for all.
2.1.1 Utilize speed management, re-evaluating design and posted speeds to achieve target speeds based on context classification and other applicable best practices.

2.1.2 When prioritizing transportation projects, consider increased funding for safety and speed management projects.

2.1.3 Employ context-sensitive and user appropriate complete streets guidelines and standards to implement strategies such as buffered bike lanes, sidewalks on both sides, appropriately spaced crosswalks, safety lighting, trees and separation of modes traveling at different speeds to calm traffic.

2.1.4 Implement travel lane width reductions appropriate to the context to provide space for sidewalks, bike facilities and other multimodal enhancements.

2.1.5 Ensure that funding for context-sensitive street lighting is provided to enhance the safety of collector and arterial roadways.

2.1.6 Pursue improvements to retrofit existing roadways that require little capital outlay (i.e., signage, re-striping, shared-use lanes and appropriate traffic control measures), but will integrate multimodal facilities and improve safety, comfort and access of bicyclists and pedestrians.

2.1.7 Where bike facilities or sidewalks are not currently part of the road, include these facilities in maintenance, resurfacing or restriping projects when feasible.
Objective 2.2

Protect vulnerable users, such as bicyclists, pedestrians, children, seniors and people with disabilities, through a Safe Systems Approach, speed management techniques and context-sensitive multimodal facility design.

Policies

2.2.1 Employ context-sensitive and user appropriate complete streets guidelines and standards for the design of streets that inform and provide for pedestrian crossings, target speeds, modal separation and visibility appropriate to ensure that vulnerable users are prioritized, and fatal and severe crashes are eliminated.

2.2.2 Provide safe, convenient, signalized or unsignalized roadway crossings that are easily identifiable by pedestrians and motorists, spaced at appropriate intervals given the context of the roadway.

2.2.3 Utilize techniques such as extended crossing times, audible pedestrian signals, leading pedestrian intervals and other assistive devices to enable all users to cross streets safely.

2.2.4 Utilize innovative materials for pedestrian facilities where feasible, especially if they improve mobility and safety for people with disabilities.

2.2.5 Design driveway crossings of sidewalks, pathways and bike facilities so that motorists have adequate visibility to react and yield to approaching users.

2.2.6 Minimize driveways near intersections and lessen their entry speed to reduce conflict with vulnerable users and prevent serious injuries or fatalities.

2.2.7 Implement Safe Routes to Schools improvements and other walk and bike education programs to increase safety and to reduce school-related vehicle trips.
Objective 2.3

Assist in the equitable education of road users and the fair enforcement and administration of traffic laws, consistent with established Vision Zero principles.

Policies

2.3.1 Support measures to implement consistent, equitable and fair enforcement of traffic safety laws, reduce violations and ensure vulnerable users’ rights to share the roadway.

2.3.2 Support law enforcement strategies that aim to reduce traffic violations that contribute to severe injuries and fatalities, using a data-driven approach.

2.3.3 Support education programs for the proper use of multimodal facilities by all users.

2.3.4 Consider technologies such as red-light cameras, near-miss detection and vehicle to infrastructure (V2I) technology.

2.3.5 Consider technological applications, such as radar feedback signs and messaging, to emphasize that the speed limit is the maximum allowable speed.

Objective 2.4

Use a Safe Systems Approach to identify current and potential future high-injury corridors and make improvements to them.

Policies

2.4.1 Improve transportation system safety for all modes by reducing the Countywide crash rate, adhering to Vision Zero principles and using the Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO) adopted performance measures, targets and monitoring to track progress on reducing fatalities and serious injuries.

2.4.2 Collaborate with the TPO, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Sheriff’s Department, the School Board, the Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) and other related agencies to implement Vision Zero strategies.
2.4.3 Program improvements, such as design features, improved traffic controls, and increased public awareness and enforcement, on high-injury corridors to address factors contributing to those injuries.

2.4.4 Establish pre- and post-project evaluation measures with qualitative and quantitative techniques, such as measuring injury/fatality reduction, capturing user observations and gathering input from user surveys to refine and update the Safe Systems Approach to high-injury corridors.
3.1.1 Maintain existing transportation infrastructure to ensure safe operating conditions and avoid costly and premature reconstruction or replacement.

3.1.2 Maintain roadway markings and visibility, especially at intersections, by providing streetlights, well-maintained signals and signage, and appropriately spaced and preserved landscape.

3.1.3 Monitor sidewalks, on-road bikeways and trails to keep them clean, free of debris and overgrowth, and in good repair to accommodate adequate and safe bicycling and walking.

3.1.4 Prior to full replacement of deficient or underutilized facilities, evaluate the need to continue operating those facilities.

3.1.5 Repair or replace deficient transportation infrastructure, including but not limited to bridges, pavement, sidewalks, trails and traffic control devices.

3.1.6 Ensure transportation system design and construction is consistent with adopted County or State design standards and the Context-Based Classification Plan.

3.1.7 Prioritize non-mobility fee transportation improvement funds to ensure that ongoing maintenance needs are balanced with those that increase capacity.

3.1.8 Explore installation of underground utilities where appropriate to the context and feasible to protect them from extreme weather, remove roadside obstacles and reduce the need to prune trees.
Objective 3.2

Support the maintenance of public transportation assets.

3.2.1 Prioritize roadway maintenance along Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) corridors to ensure reliability of the transit service, with special consideration for resurfacing projects.

3.2.2 Prioritize sidewalk repairs and maintenance of connections to HART bus stops, including crosswalk improvements, signals and streetlights as necessary and feasible to enhance pedestrian safety and access.

3.2.3 Where feasible, support transit by providing County-owned property for park and ride lots and maintenance facilities, as requested by HART.

3.2.4 Support Sunshine Line in maintaining their vehicles, equipment and facilities in a state of good repair and replacing them when they reach the end of their service life.

Objective 3.3

Maintain or improve the capability of the multimodal system to evacuate vulnerable populations and enhance the system’s resiliency to withstand and recover from a disaster.

3.3.1 Coordinate with public and private sector organizations on the provision of infrastructure such as evacuation routes and shelter capacity, on the preparedness of target populations such as those who are historically marginalized or have mobility challenges, and on post-disaster recovery.

3.3.2 Coordinate with the TPO to prioritize transportation improvements for evacuation routes.

3.3.3 Mitigate or avoid disruption and damage to roads, bridges, terminals, transit fleet, facilities and equipment from inundation and storm surge.

3.3.4 Support diversified modes of transportation to aid in evacuation and resiliency.
3.3.5 Continue to educate the public about who needs to evacuate and who can shelter in place under given circumstances, as well as the nearest safe locations and shelters, to minimize traffic and reserve road capacity for other emergency purposes.

3.3.6 Evaluate, harden, repair or relocate critical facilities that are most vulnerable to flooding.

3.3.7 Implement technologies, strategies and improvements that ensure that facilities are operational after a disaster.
GOAL 4

Provide safe and convenient connections within the transportation network that support multimodal access to key destinations, such as community focal points, employment centers and services throughout the County.

Objective 4.1

In urban and suburban contexts, design communities around a grid network of streets, or a modified grid, which will improve interconnections between neighborhoods and surrounding neighborhood-serving uses.

Policies

4.1.1 Update standards and guidelines for the context-sensitive spacing of arterial, collector and local roads to create a grid or network that supports the safety and mobility of expected users.

4.1.2 Require pedestrian and bicycle interconnections between adjacent, compatible development, and where appropriate, require vehicular interconnections.

4.1.3 Incorporate context-sensitive subdivision and access management standards that provide for multiple connections for modes and routes.

4.1.4 Ensure that roadways accepted by the County for ownership and/or maintenance serve a public purpose by:
   A. Completing the connection between two or more roadways defined as arterial, collector, or major local roads; or
   B. Stubbing out to adjacent properties that can reasonably provide opportunities to complete connections between two or more roadways defined as arterial, collector, or major local road; or
   C. Providing a significant public health benefit through enhanced multimodal connectivity and/or improved safety; or
   D. Connecting community facilities to the surrounding population.

4.1.5 Identify and communicate to residents where multimodal connections exist or are planned.
Objective 4.2

Update the Corridor Preservation Plan to protect future right-of-way from encroachment, provide connectivity and ensure multimodal transportation corridors are adequate to serve planned growth and to support development patterns as defined in the Future Land Use Element.

Policies

4.2.1 Collaborate with FDOT, the TPO, HART, Plant City, Tampa and Temple Terrace to develop and maintain a Corridor Preservation Plan Map (Map 1). This map will identify the number of lanes, general right-of-way needs, alignments and multimodal facilities for all transportation corridors, including transit and multi-use trails, primarily within the Urban Service Area.

4.2.2 Review and update the Corridor Preservation Plan to address the growth and mobility needs of the County prior to each update of the TPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

4.2.3 Ensure that new developments are consistent with the adopted Corridor Preservation Plan by reviewing them during the site and subdivision plan review process.

4.2.4 Coordinate the design of roadway improvements with the jurisdictions in which those roadways are located. The preservation of right-of-way will be based on the Corridor Preservation Plan or policies of the relevant jurisdiction.

4.2.5 Collaborate with FDOT, HART, the TPO, Plant City, Tampa and Temple Terrace to integrate the Future Transit Corridors Plan with the Corridor Preservation Plan to address the growth and mobility needs of the County. Continue to preserve transit right-of-way consistent with the Transit Right-of-Way Preservation Corridors Map (Map 2).
GOAL 5

Create a sustainable transportation system that allows people to take their mode of choice to access necessities, opportunities, recreation and each other.

Objective 5.1

Balance the need for single-occupant vehicle capacity on the multimodal transportation network with sustainable fiscal, environmental, social or economic outcomes by prioritizing investments in Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) and alternative forms of transportation.

Policies

5.1.1 Maintain the listing of deficient roads within the transportation system. Deficient roadways, found in Table 3 of the Capital Improvements Element (CIE), are those roadways that, based on the Level or Quality of Service Report, do not meet the adopted standards.

5.1.2 With each update of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), prioritize funding parallel facilities to constrained roads. Where this action impacts non-County owned roads, it will be coordinated with FDOT and respective jurisdictions.

5.1.3 State and County roadways that cannot be widened further due to neighborhood or business impacts, adopted community plans, policy, environmental or other right-of-way constraints, have been identified and designated as constrained. The Constrained Roadway List can be found in Table 4 of the CIE.

5.1.4 Prior to each update of the TPO’s LRTP, reevaluate the Constrained Roadway List to fairly balance community preservation, safety and the protection of established communities with reducing growing traffic congestion.

5.1.5 Reduce existing multimodal deficiencies by completing the projects listed in the CIE.
5.2.1 Establish the multimodal levels or quality of service standards for all State and County roads on the multimodal transportation network within the CIE.

5.2.2 On a periodic basis, update the Level or Quality of Service Report to include existing and anticipated capacities, multimodal levels or quality of service and other relevant metrics and publish it for public review and use.

Objective 5.3

New development shall mitigate its impact on the multimodal transportation network.

Policies

5.3.1 Use mobility fees to help maintain the multimodal level or quality of service standards on the multimodal transportation network, pursuant to the Mobility Fee Ordinance.

5.3.2 Provide funding, as established in the County’s Transportation Mobility Fee Program ordinance, to assist the FDOT with projects within the County.

5.3.3 Implement measures to reduce average trip distance, such as additional street connectivity, fostering more local retail and service business to support a mix of land uses.

5.3.4 Consider existing and future development allowed under adopted Future Land Use Element categories in projecting future multimodal transportation needs.
5.3.5 Evaluate the availability of multimodal transportation infrastructure when considering Future Land Use Map changes that increase density and intensity. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to, connections to transit, proximity to employment or affordable housing, internal trip capture, support of multimodal system, and increasing connectivity.

5.3.6 Discourage sprawl, which disproportionately increases the cost of providing and maintaining multimodal facilities and services.

**Objective 5.4**

Support HART in efforts to identify and increase frequency of service to higher density and intensity areas, bus emphasis corridors, transportation disadvantaged communities, Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas and Low-Moderate Income Areas as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**Policies**

5.4.1 Serve lower-density areas with alternatives such as flexible routes, on-demand service, carpools, vanpools and mobility hubs.

5.4.2 Collaborate with HART to work toward achieving the appropriate transit quality of service based on the density and intensity of the surrounding land use, as shown in Table 6 in the CIE.

5.4.3 Prioritize redevelopment areas and infill job centers for investment to ensure modern infrastructure for movement of vehicles, services and the workforce so that these areas can reach their full potential as marketable locations for office and industrial development.

**Objective 5.5**

Collaborate with HART and other providers to support the needs of the community through increased efficiency and competitiveness of the transit system.

**Policies**

5.5.1 Collaborate with HART to implement technologies and traffic management strategies that support the efficiency and reliability of the transit system, such as queue jumps at key intersections and transit signal prioritization.

5.5.2 Collaborate with HART in the development review process to identify opportunities for design and facility improvements to encourage transit use.
5.5.3 Coordinate with HART to design designated new roadways and roadway improvements with transit lanes, pull-off areas and/or comfortable and well-lit bus stops, where appropriate.

5.5.4 As requested by HART, require bus stop facilities and appropriate access to those facilities to be designed as part of new private development projects.

5.5.5 Promote access to transit via a safe multimodal network through street and site design guidelines and capital improvements that complete the network in the vicinity of existing and planned transit stops and encourage bicycle, pedestrian and public transit use.

**Objective 5.6**

*Work with HART, the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged and other providers to improve the mobility of transportation disadvantaged populations through paratransit and other services.*

5.6.1 Continue to work as the designated Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) to coordinate, plan for and expand services to the transportation disadvantaged.

5.6.2 In consultation with affected stakeholders, develop strategies to incentivize the location of new facilities that have a high percentage of clients who are transportation disadvantaged (e.g., new nursing homes, group homes and Community Residential Homes) within HART's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service area.

5.6.3 Identify capacity within the coordinated system and fund expanded service to work, school, healthcare, shopping and social destinations for the transportation disadvantaged population. Prioritize transportation disadvantaged trips in areas outside of the HART service area.

5.6.4 Continue to implement the County's ADA Transition Plan for the construction of sidewalks, crosswalks, wheelchair ramps and improved access to bus stops on all County-maintained facilities.
5.7.1 Incorporate a bicycle and pedestrian network adequate to support population growth at adopted levels of service into the Corridor Preservation Plan.

5.7.2 Seek opportunities to construct multi-use trails or side paths adjacent or parallel to limited access highways, along drainage channels, shorelines, and various utility and railroad right-of-way.

5.7.3 Use trails and shared-use paths to connect schools, neighborhoods, parks, greenways, and civic, residential, and commercial districts, excluding paths through preserves and conservation parks. Use techniques such as cooperative agreements, easements, public right-of-way and Land Development Code standards.

5.7.4 Connect or accommodate future connections to planned and/or existing trails within new development.

5.7.5 Encourage the creation of nonmotorized connections in areas where roads are unlikely to be added, including large residential developments.

5.7.6 Provide access to trailheads, especially those serving coastal resources, lakes and other natural areas for residents and “ecotourism.”

5.7.7 Coordinate trail planning among neighboring jurisdictions to enhance the trail network and linkages.

5.7.8 Evaluate ways to fund trails and shared-use paths used for mobility (including, but not limited to, developer contributions) and implement those initiatives supported by the BOCC.

5.7.9 In cooperation with state, regional and local entities, ensure no actions are taken that impair the access to or use of trails and shared-use paths used for mobility.
GOAL 6

Build a smart system that utilizes technology and strategies to improve safety, efficiency and reliability for all modes of transportation and to meet the needs of all users.

Objective 6.1

Address roads that are deficient regarding level of travel time reliability, user delay cost and safety of all users.

Policies

6.1.1 Monitor effectiveness of strategies to reduce deficiencies, maximize existing roadway capacity and improve travel time reliability. Adjust or further implement them as CIPs are updated.

6.1.2 Establish an ongoing program to evaluate intersection capacity and traffic signals to determine if context-sensitive improvements can be made to safely enhance traffic flow and improve crossings for non-motorized travelers.

6.1.3 Cooperate with FDOT on the issuance of permits for driveway curb cuts and median openings on the State Highway System during development site plan review prior to the issuance of permits.

6.1.4 Encourage consolidation of site access points on the multimodal transportation network during the site and subdivision plan review process.

6.1.5 Consistently implement standards for providing cross-access among parcels fronting arterial roads, consistent with access management policies and the need for safe, consolidated access points.
Objective 6.2

Modernize the County’s traffic management center to monitor and optimize the performance of pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicle travel, expand the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) network and leverage “big data” for improved real-time monitoring of system and assessment of multimodal needs.

Policies

6.2.1 Monitor roadway conditions, minimize disruptions, provide predictable travel times, respond to emergencies and inform road users.

6.2.2 Implement TSM&O and ITS strategies to enhance traffic flow, manage access, improve safety, support multiple modes and increase the throughput of people and vehicles.

6.2.3 In conjunction with FDOT and municipalities, update or replace existing traffic control devices as needed to ensure that they are compatible with ITS, interoperable with legacy systems and devices owned by other jurisdictions, provide transit signal priority and take advantage of advances in technology.

6.2.4 Implement an arterial surveillance program to detect and manage incidents, establish protocols with first responders to clear lane blockages and achieve improved reliability and operations.

6.2.5 Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions, technology providers and the private sector to ensure coordination across City and County lines for leveraging new technologies.

6.2.6 Include bicycle-sensitive traffic control signals, appropriately identified with road markings and signs, in all intersection improvement projects and new construction.
Increase person-trips and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), especially in peak periods, by supporting sustainable transportation alternatives, off-peak travel, closer destinations and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies.

6.3.1 Continue to support ridesharing and transit usage by encouraging County employees to enroll in ridesharing programs, such as providing discounted vanpool and bus passes to employees for commute trips, and by developing flex-time and telecommuting programs.

6.3.2 Continue to support public/private partnerships such as micromobility opportunities and Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs) to promote TDM strategies and programs in regional activity centers and other densely developed areas.

6.3.3 Coordinate with TMOs to encourage employers to adopt strategies such as flexible work hours, compressed work weeks, staggered start times and telecommuting to reduce peak period congestion.

6.3.4 Develop strategies to reduce vehicular travel on deficient roadways, including specific timeframes and measurable goals for reducing VMT, and monitor their performance.

6.3.5 Utilize standards and guidelines to ensure that new development and redevelopment provide onsite bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect to adjacent, offsite facilities.

6.3.6 Create incentives supportive of transit, vanpool and carpool usage, such as requiring transit amenities and facilities in development projects, and promoting pedestrian-friendly, disability-friendly environments in development and redevelopment.

6.3.7 Encourage mode shift through the provision of pedestrian and bicycle commuting amenities such as secure bicycle storage, showers, lockers and curbside amenities such as weather protection, benches and canopies/shading at County facilities and within private commercial and office developments.
Develop and implement comprehensive multimodal parking and curb space management programs.

Policies

6.4.1 Work with the private sector to provide incentives for trip reduction through strategies such as pricing and preferential parking and drop-off for carpool, vanpool and other shared vehicles in mixed-use developments and major employment centers.

6.4.2 Update the Land Development Code to provide context-sensitive standards and incentives for private development to integrate transit connections and facilities identified in the Transit Development Plan.

6.4.3 Encourage private development to provide pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities onsite through context-sensitive regulatory changes including but not limited to reducing parking requirements.

6.4.4 Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide bike parking facilities.

6.4.5 Manage curb space to meet the dynamic demands for space, support food and package deliveries, and facilitate TNC drop offs in appropriate locations.

Pursue corridor widening strategically, maximizing existing roadway capacity and increasing capacity for vehicular and transit movement while considering lower-cost alternatives, such as increased frequency on existing transit routes.

Policies

6.5.1 Evaluate corridors with frequent transit service for improvements to increase reliability, such as dedicated transit lanes and signal prioritization, especially in cases where transit compares favorably with the cost and convenience of driving and parking.

6.5.2 Develop plans to provide cross access for developments that front on collector or arterial roadways. FDOT participation shall be requested in the planning process for projects fronting on the State highway system.
Objective 6.6

Policies

Improve multimodal surface transportation connections to major military installations, tourist destinations, airport, port, ferry, rail and intermodal terminals for passengers and freight.

6.6.1 Coordinate with MacDill Air Force Base on mobility and transit improvements that impact the base, including but not limited to, express bus, vanpool and ferry connections.

6.6.2 Encourage the development and implementation of transportation and wayfinding programs that further enhance the connectedness of tourism assets, including hospitality, local businesses, event centers, conservation parks and preserves, and other destinations.

6.6.3 Collaborate with Port Tampa Bay (PTB), the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority (HCAA), the TPO and FDOT to assess the need to provide or improve intermodal links to airports, seaports and rail/trucking facilities when Master Plans are updated.

6.6.4 Work with the PTB, HCAA, HART, TBARTA and other transportation agencies in the pursuit of efficient passenger and freight connections between Tampa International Airport (TIA), regional transit, the cruise ship terminals on the Garrison Channel and other port facilities.

6.6.5 Coordinate with HART, TBARTA, FDOT and other agencies to ensure that rail terminals, whether for light rail, commuter rail or inter-city rail, are accessible by bus transit.

6.6.6 Manage and maintain a safe, efficient and reliable freight street network to provide freight access to and from intermodal freight facilities, industrial and commercial districts, and the regional transportation system.

6.6.7 Invest to accommodate growth of freight volumes and ensure designated routes and facilities are adequate for over-dimensional trucks and emergency equipment.

6.6.8 Every five years, review and, as necessary, update the Truck Route Plan, ordinance and associated map to balance the efficiency of goods movement with neighborhood traffic concerns associated with truck traffic.
6.6.9 In collaboration with the TPO and FDOT, maintain and update the inventory (including maps) of the major commercial truck and railroad terminals, freight activity centers and intermodal logistics centers within Hillsborough County documented in the Tampa Bay Regional Strategic Freight Plan.

**Objective 6.7**

Monitor and support emerging technologies and strategies that improve safety, sustainability, efficiency and access for all modes of travel on existing and planned transportation facilities, as appropriate for the context.

**Policies**

6.7.1 Examine evidence-based practices and methods for implementation of autonomous and connected vehicle technology and shared mobility and micromobility solutions, such as electric scooters and bicycles.

6.7.2 Create a more connected traffic network through emerging technologies.

6.7.3 Consider context, equitable access, maintenance needs and necessary storage space when considering where and how particular technologies will be implemented.

6.7.4 Consider how new technologies and emerging alternative transportation options will impact vehicle trips, pedestrian and bicycle networks, parking and curb space demand, and the safety of vulnerable users.

6.7.5 Prioritize safety where different modes of transportation, particularly electric-powered options, share the same facility.

6.7.6 Work with transportation providers, such as car and bike share providers, to provide access and maintain affordability of their services throughout the County where feasible.

6.7.7 Incentivize the use of electric vehicles through the implementation and expansion of electric vehicle charging stations.
GOAL 7

Provide a multimodal transportation system that supports planned Future Land Use, respects historical and cultural assets, supports the identity of the surrounding community and protects the natural environment.

Objective 7.1

Design roadways appropriate to the Future Land Use category that they traverse.

Policies

7.1.1 The Context-Based Classification Plan for County roads in the multimodal transportation network, with context classifications defined in Table 1 (page 37) and depicted on Map 3 is hereby established.

7.1.2 Follow the complete street guidelines that refine the Context-Based Classification Plan and prioritize vulnerable users, informs standards for on-street parking provision and management, access management, interactions among modes, street design and curbside management.

7.1.3 Consider the scale and character of surrounding land use and complete streets concepts in the design and construction of new roadways and the widening of existing roadways.

7.1.4 Set speeds based on context classification and expected users of roadways. Within urban and developed rural areas, the criteria that applies to all public roadways includes the consideration of the character of surrounding land uses, existing and potential pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and recent crash history.

7.1.5 Examine freight activity centers to understand the type of traffic activity and context of the areas surrounding them when implementing transportation projects.

7.1.6 Where applicable, the County will implement standards like building placements, building volumes, architectural features, and landscaping features using Context-Based Classification to link mobility and land use plans.
Objective 7.2

Minimize adverse impacts to residential and commercial neighborhoods and environmentally sensitive land.

Policies

7.2.1 Conduct corridor studies, including an environmental justice analysis, prior to any right-of-way acquisition for new road construction or major road widening to assess the impacts to adjacent areas and provide avoidance, minimization or mitigation mechanisms for adverse impacts.

7.2.2 Require the location and design of public roads and bridges to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts to wildlife habitats and vegetative communities.

7.2.3 Wildlife underpasses and overpasses shall be used to address transportation infrastructure’s potential impact on wildlife corridors and habitats.

7.2.4 Coordinate mobility improvements with natural resource agencies and County environmental staff to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts on wetlands, wildlife habitats and corridors, and other environmentally sensitive lands.

7.2.5 In coordination with the One Water Chapter, integrate green infrastructure into capital improvements planning and transportation infrastructure projects when feasible, including but not limited to roadways, sidewalks, medians and transit stations.

7.2.6 Coordinate with the Tampa Regional Office of the Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, natural resource and environmental agencies to provide for the consideration of the area’s historic, cultural, tribal and natural resources when new and expanded roadways are proposed.

7.2.7 Preserve existing stands of trees and/or provide new tree plantings associated with any roadway expansion or new construction.
Objective 7.3

Protect neighborhoods from adverse impacts of through traffic and travel speeds while providing reasonable access to and from residential areas.

7.3.1 Future roadway construction and reconstruction shall be designed and planned to mitigate adverse impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods through such techniques as, but not limited to, landscaping to buffer visual effects and the use of sound walls.

7.3.2 Continue to utilize appropriate traffic calming devices and roadway design principles to ensure speed is managed based on context.

7.3.3 Continue to provide support to community and civic groups that undertake voluntary roadway landscape programs in their local communities through education and assistance in addressing requirements.

Objective 7.4

Construct complete streets to achieve safety, comfort and aesthetics for appropriate users and modes.

7.4.1 Implement complete streets typologies based on the Context-Based Classification Plan.

7.4.2 Evaluate retrofitting roads with mid-block crossings, consistent with context classifications and surrounding land uses that attract non-motorized travelers.

7.4.3 Implement regulations to improve the appearance of roadway corridors, including but not limited to, adding plantings to medians and regulating the number of billboards along a corridor.

7.4.4 Provide design features to emphasize the gateway character of designated roadways at the entrances to the County and to local communities.

7.4.5 Where appropriate, include art, creative design, cultural and historical markers, and other similar enhancements within the public right-of-way.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context-Based Classification</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Future Land Use Typically Surrounding the Corridor</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong> (C1&amp;C2)</td>
<td>Preserved land in a natural or wilderness condition, sparsely settled lands, may include agricultural land, grassland and wetlands</td>
<td>Natural preservation, agriculture, mining, planned environmental community, low density residential</td>
<td>Includes all areas outside the Urban Service Area. Excludes areas that can be designated Suburban Town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburban</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential (C3R)</td>
<td>Most residential uses within a disconnected or sparse roadway network</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Includes land uses that constitute the Suburban Development Area and Non-Residential Development Area, as well as land uses within the Urban Development Area that are expected to grow to suburban population or employment densities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial (C3C)</td>
<td>Mostly non-residential uses with large building footprints and large parking lots within a disconnected or sparse roadway network</td>
<td>Suburban mixed-use, neighborhood mixed-use, research/corporate park, light industrial, heavy industrial, energy industrial park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburban Town</strong> (C3T)</td>
<td>Small concentrations of mixed-use areas or town centers, or developed areas which are immediately surrounded by low to medium density residential areas</td>
<td>Suburban mixed-use, neighborhood mixed-use, low to medium density residential</td>
<td>Areas with planned development forms where lower speed is required, including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Areas described in the Livable Communities Element as walkable centers, walkable Overlay Districts identified in the Land Development Code and developed town centers in Mixed-Use Developments of Regional Impact (DRI);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) The top 20 Severe Crash Corridors involving people walking or biking identified in the Vision Zero Plan that are not otherwise designated C4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban General</strong> (C4)</td>
<td>Mixed-use set within a well-connected roadway network, highest densities within Urbanized Areas</td>
<td>Community mixed-use, urban mixed-use, office commercial, regional mixed-used, innovation corridor mixed-use, higher density of residential</td>
<td>Includes the land uses that constitute the Urban Development Area and are expected to reach urban population and employment densities or are described in the Livable Communities Element as walkable centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Housing

Introduction

The current Housing Section can be viewed here.
This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.
Livable Communities

Introduction

The current Livable Communities Section can be viewed here.
Natural Open Space

Recreation and Open Space

Coastal Management

Environmental & Sustainability
Natural Open Space

Introduction

Managing, conserving and protecting Hillsborough County’s natural environment, coastal areas, and recreational amenities requires the collective vision of the people who make the County their home. The concern for environmental quality is a County hallmark. The County and its citizens have made great efforts to acquire, preserve, restore, and maintain the function of important natural habitats. It is essential to maintain this diversity while being the economic and cultural epicenter of Central Florida’s West Coast.

A key component of our natural spaces is the relationship between quality of life, economic development, citizen access, and natural environments. Conservation efforts in the County do not solely apply to land features. The interconnected landscapes including rivers, wetlands, and uplands serve as the foundation for the quality of life we all enjoy. Air quality is also an important aspect to the health and sustainability of the County. As the County continues to experience growth, the air quality has remained at a high standard.

The role of recreation parks, conservation parks, preserves, and trails in our community includes not only the traditional view of parks as places to play, exercise, relax, and preserve the natural environment, but also recognizes they play a critical role in the community’s physical, social, and economic health and sustainability. The diversity of our built and natural environment creates a range of opportunities for residents to enjoy and recreate, and protection and support of these recreation opportunities is paramount.

A major storm carries with it potential costs. Depending on the storm’s severity, the threat to
Natural Open Space

The people have a vital interest in the conservation of their natural resources; in the prevention of wasteful practices. – Herbert Hoover

human life and the costs to public, private, financial, and natural resources can be substantial. While the County is fortunate that a major hurricane has not severely impacted the area for decades, the potential exists. In the event of a destructive storm, the County is financially responsible for several costs, including evacuation, providing shelter, cleaning up, rebuilding damaged infrastructure, and a share of federal insurance payments. Recent federal policies have shifted construction costs and risk of loss to the private sector and to state and local governments. Local governments are now responsible for contributing to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to repair and construct public facilities. Minimizing the County’s costs can be accomplished by implementing policies that mitigate hazards and enhance its resiliency and sustainability.

Our community is committed to ensuring our unique natural resources are maintained for future generations to enjoy and have integrated this goal into the decision-making process of long-range planning. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan serves as a tool to evaluate new development requests, direct capital improvement expenditures, preserve and conserve natural habitat and environmental resources, and provide guidance in public policy in a way that ensures Hillsborough County continues to be the community its citizens desire.

In this chapter, the framework for environmental protection will be established in the goals, objectives, policies that will manage the “Natural and Open Space” in which our community can thrive and continue to grow. This chapter sets forth the policy direction for the following sections: Environmental and Sustainability, Recreation and Open Space, and Coastal Management.
Recreation and Open Space

Introduction

Hillsborough County is responsible for a broad system of recreation parks, conservation parks, trails and preserves. These varied and diverse amenities serve as gathering places and connections within the community, provide access to nature, recreation and open space, and offer opportunities for enrichment, physical and mental wellness, and community activities. The importance of recreation and conservation parks, as well as providing equitable access for all, is paramount to the long-term quality of life for residents and visitors in the community.

With respect to recreation parks, Hillsborough County facilitates community connections with a system of over 3,200 acres of neighborhood and community parks, playgrounds, dog parks, recreation facilities, fitness and community centers, athletic and special use facilities/complexes, and programming. On the conservation parks, preserves and trails side, a system of approximately 80,000 acres offers opportunities for activities such as wildlife viewing, picnicking, canoeing/kayaking, fishing, hiking, biking and horseback riding, all while protecting water quality and wildlife habitat. The County trails system also serves as connecting multimodal features linking residential areas, parks, commercial/retail areas and public uses and provide another choice for walking/biking mobility in Hillsborough County.

The last time the Recreation and Open Space language was significantly updated was in 2008. The plan has undergone a holistic, comprehensive revision to address today's priorities and strategic objectives. Key concepts in the update include safe and equitable access, diverse programming opportunities, continued inclusive engagement and involvement, strategic partnerships, and integrating parks with the built environment in a manner that enhances the overall community.

The language was developed via a collaborative approach with staff from Hillsborough County's Parks & Recreation and Conservation & Environmental Lands Management Departments. In addition to providing significant public and community outreach, the project team ensured the Hillsborough Greenways Committee and Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation & Conservation Board also had an opportunity to weigh in. The Section is coordinated with master planning efforts and incorporates best practices in both comprehensive planning and parks planning.
Objective 1.1

Provide a system of recreational parks, conservation parks, preserves and trails that is adequately and equitably sited, maintained, and where feasible, interconnected, to serve County residents and visitors.

Policies

1.1.1 Ensure parks and recreation facilities are inclusive, accessible and reflect current needs of the community; routinely assess the latest available demographic information as part of facility evaluation.

1.1.2 Provide recreational parks, conservation parks, preserves and trails in a proportional and equitable manner to meet the needs of the current and projected future population and among all socioeconomic groups, as feasible given budgetary constraints and environmental conditions. Consider historic gaps in park infrastructure and historically underserved communities when planning and prioritizing new facilities.

1.1.3 Routinely review County-owned and potential acquisition lands for additional opportunities for parks, trails, preserves and recreation facilities, as well as consideration of co-location and shared use of sites in strategic master planning.

1.1.4 Continue to explore opportunities for connection and continuity of parks, recreation and conservation assets and other public lands and facilities via rights of way, trails, and other open space corridors. The Hillsborough Greenways Master Plan, ELAPP Strategic Acquisition Map or other parks/preserve planning efforts shall be used to guide these connections, dedications and any acquisitions where appropriate.

1.1.5 Pursue a balance between creation of new parks/facilities and the maintenance, operation, and upgrades to existing parks/facilities. Evaluate long-term operation and maintenance costs and ensure resources for adequate maintenance prior to the development of any new park.
1.1.6 Utilize natural materials and green maintenance practices for parks where feasible.

1.1.7 Understanding the public health and environmental benefits of trees, consider the development of an arboriculture program for both conservation and recreational parks, which includes a certified arborist and urban forester along with other appropriate resources.

1.1.8 Consider the following factors when acquiring or creating new parks or trails facilities:
A. Areas that are currently underserved by parks or trails facilities
B. Responding to needs analysis feedback from the community
C. Locations either adjacent to existing parks or in growth areas where new development limits availability of land
D. Addressing demand for specialty facilities (dog parks, skate parks, adaptive playgrounds, etc.)
E. Maximizing the benefits of co-location and shared use with other public facilities
F. Existing or proposed transportation options that would enable greater accessibility for the community
G. Maximizing the number of residents within a half-mile walk
H. Providing greater access to economically disadvantaged residents
I. Continue to prioritize ELAPP lands acquisition by environmental value and/or threat by development

1.1.9 Prioritize additional amenities, facilities and park improvements for the following:
A. Regional (Conservation) Parks proposed as “Destination Sites” by the Conservation and Environmental Lands Management (CELM) Master Plan
B. Neighborhood parks and athletic complexes as identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

1.1.10 Explore the feasibility of land banking for future recreational park creation.

1.1.11 Meet or exceed the adopted Levels of Service for Regional (Conservation) and Local Parks as outlined in the Capital Improvements Element.
Objective 1.2

Integrate recreational parks, conservation parks, preserves and trails with other aspects of the built environment in a manner that enhances the overall community.

Policies

1.2.1 Utilize parks to inspire a sense of place and as gathering spaces for the community.

1.2.2 Integrate and design recreational facilities to be well-connected and walkable to residential areas and community serving uses and facilities. Continue to connect parks to sidewalks and other infrastructure for walking, bicycling, and public transportation; incorporate design features to ensure safety, accessibility and functionality for all users.

1.2.3 As parks are developed or redeveloped, consider design features that reflect and promote community identity, reflecting community input or as outlined in the Livable Communities Element and other community-focused documents.

1.2.4 Ensure the preservation of cultural, historical, archeological, scenic, and natural resources to promote resource-based recreation; provide public access where such access does not impact the resource.

1.2.5 Integrate environmentally sensitive and natural areas into parks, preserves and recreation amenities while retaining natural character and function.

1.2.6 Protect and maintain connectivity of natural systems when planning recreation opportunities. To protect sensitive ecosystems and wildlife corridors, locate and design trail/greenway facilities and other recreational amenities in an environmentally sensitive manner, consistent and compatible with natural resource protection and conservation.

1.2.7 Enable multi-use recreation opportunities and co-location of recreational facilities with other public or publicly beneficial uses.

1.2.8 Explore methods to increase the reservation of corridors to complete the trail network.
1.2.9 Retain lands and trails publicly dedicated for existing and future recreation; these shall be held inviolate against conversion to other uses except in instances of overriding public interest as defined by the BOCC or, where appropriate, state and federal agencies, in which case they will be effectively replaced. Pursue modifications to the appropriate ordinances or regulatory documents to strengthen implementation of this policy.

1.2.10 Continue to use incentives to encourage developers to provide public recreation facilities that meet County standards; employ incentives to encourage new development projects containing waterfront sites suitable for parkland to provide public access to the water. Incentives may include, but are not limited to, credits for density or impact fee credit.

1.2.11 Require new development to contribute to recreational facilities through payment of impact fees (preferred) or the dedication to Hillsborough County of usable open space. Any usable open space shall be accessible to the public. The regulatory framework for open space dedication requirements shall be routinely reviewed and updated to provide defined criteria for usable open space and consider a minimum size requirement of 10 acres (a smaller size may be considered for open space providing public access or navigable access to natural water bodies – lakes, rivers, freshwater springs, the bay, or major tributaries or canals connected to these water bodies). The size and location of dedicated park land shall continue to be analyzed.

1.2.12 Land development regulations shall address standards for recreation and open space areas pertaining to landscaping, protection and signage.

1.2.13 Ensure new development is compatible with the uses of adjacent public recreational lands; incompatible uses shall be eliminated or mitigated via site design techniques such as buffering and screening.
Objective 1.3

Promote strategic and complementary partnerships to maximize park resources and enhance facility and programming opportunities.

1.3.1 Continue to use cooperative agreements or other coordination methods with government agencies, public and private schools, colleges and universities, non-profits, churches and the private sector to assure facilities and access for recreational opportunities and/or potential connectivity to trails, with a particular focus on enhancing recreational opportunities for residents in economically disadvantaged or historically underserved areas.

1.3.2 Coordinate public and private resources to provide residents with a balanced program of athletic, aquatic, community recreational, educational, heritage and resource-oriented park activities.

1.3.3 Collaborate with local, regional and state agencies to encourage the strategic acquisition and connection of existing publicly owned parcels of land.

1.3.4 Target partnerships with entities responsible for creating linear public facilities, such as electrical utilities or drainage improvements, to combine the objectives and funding of these projects with the Hillsborough Greenways Master Plan or other trail planning efforts.

1.3.5 Analyze operation and maintenance cost-sharing opportunities periodically to identify and establish cost recovery partnerships for the operation and maintenance of recreational facilities.

1.3.6 Pursue joint financing for activities and programs that can be combined.

1.3.7 Maintain an active volunteer program and explore additional opportunities for volunteer assistance in new areas.

1.3.8 Public/private beautification efforts on public property shall continue, provided resources are available to maintain the additional inventory.
Objective 1.4

Provide diverse recreational programming opportunities that reflect community needs for all ages and abilities, facilitate athletic and outdoor activities, promote the overall health of the community, and support tourism while prioritizing programming and activities for residents.

Policies

1.4.1 Ensure that programming opportunities continue to reflect the input and needs of the community and are updated as growth and development occurs.

1.4.2 Explore opportunities to connect programming with public health, health equity, community inclusion, and community education. This includes support of 1) out of and after-school activities and youth athletic opportunities that benefit the next generation and build a strong sense of community; 2) programs and services that support the ability to age in place and community engagement for seniors; 3) programs affordable to residents of all incomes; and 4) youth and adult recreation opportunities that facilitate connections between residents.

1.4.3 Prioritize community athletic facilities for recreation style leagues that allow for social equity and opportunity for all players from the community.

1.4.4 Continue to provide active and passive recreational opportunities and programming related to the County’s water resources.

1.4.5 To ensure adequate programming, inventory, analyze, and recommend specific programming responsibilities among various public and private organizations such as those focused on athletics, community improvement, health, the arts and nature.
1.4.6 Support sports tourism’s role in enhancing the local economy via dedicated facilities for tournaments, competitive travel leagues, adaptive sports and other athletic opportunities while ensuring this does not supersede provision of athletic facilities for residents.

1.4.7 Expand ecotourism in Hillsborough County. Promote, as a Destination Site, the Tampa Bay Wilderness Area as an interconnected network of conservation parks and preserves with adequate public access.

1.4.8 Focus on future programming for wilderness area Destination Sites, including enrichment and educational programs centered on environmental education, ecotourism, adventure sports, fitness activities, historical/cultural programs, special events, and rentals.

1.4.9 Continue to support and promote trail-related and cycling tourism.

**Objective 1.5**

Ensure safe and equitable access to recreational parks, conservation parks, preserves, trails and waterfront lands for all members of the community.

**Policies**

1.5.1 Continue to implement the ADA Transition Plan and other enhancements to ensure parks and recreation facilities, programs and communications are accessible and inclusive for citizens of all ages and abilities, embed accessibility and universal design within park and recreation operations and facility design, and continue to offer sensory-friendly recreation opportunities.

1.5.2 Continue to provide, maintain and improve public access to beaches, lakes and rivers as well as conservation lands. Such access shall be designed to protect natural system integrity and be compatible with site management plans for ELAPP preserves.

1.5.3 Ensure equity and access for residents of all income levels and ability to pay. To enhance access to amenities and programming, ensure scholarships, vouchers or reduced/sliding scale fees are made available and these opportunities are effectively communicated to the public.
1.6.1 Utilize both new (social media, websites, apps, interactive mapping) and traditional (trail, bike path, and other illustrative maps, wayfinding, media, signage, brochures) communication platforms to promote and communicate programs, events, and recreational/conservation amenities to the community. As applicable, continue interdepartmental coordination and other related approaches to achieve these promotional and communication objectives.

**Objective 1.6**

Continue an inclusive engagement strategy to increase awareness and use of parks and recreation opportunities and programming; enable opportunities for ongoing community feedback and input.

**Policies**

1.5.4 Retain ownership rights to any property providing or having the potential to provide public access to passive open space, public access to waterfronts/coastal areas (e.g., avoid vacating dead-end streets and undeveloped dedicated rights-of-way in these instances). Formally established public access to parks, preserves or other recreation facilities through private lands shall be maintained and in no way diminished or rendered unusable.

1.5.5 Seek opportunities to expand recreational access to public lands, facilities and assets during land acquisition for other public facilities.

1.5.6 Enhance public access and equity via coordination of present and future parks/recreation sites with multimodal transportation options.

1.5.7 Design and plan future parks to maximize the number of residents within a half-mile walk. For existing parks, incorporate both walkability criteria and acreage per capita to measure equity and access.

1.5.8 In cooperation with state, regional and local entities, ensure no actions are taken which impair the access to or use of trails.

1.5.9 Ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all park users across age, culture, race, ability and gender via implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, staff training and diligence, continued partnerships with law enforcement, and use of technology to enhance safety.
1.6.2 Routinely survey the community on awareness of and any challenges or barriers in accessing facilities/amenities, programming needs, and satisfaction; provide opportunities for multilingual digital and paper-based comments and input.

1.6.3 Ensure marketing, communication and information is disseminated across the community in a manner so that residents of different socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds and abilities are aware of all opportunities in County parks and conservation lands.

1.6.4 Explore new information sharing and community input opportunities with neighborhood associations and other community-based organizations.

1.6.5 Explore outreach programs to introduce members of the public to recreational parks, preserves, conservation parks and trails.

1.6.6 Communicate the need to responsibly maintain, connect and preserve the complexity of natural systems in Hillsborough County.

1.6.7 Track demographic and socioeconomic participation and use of County parks facilities and programs; use this information to inform community outreach.

1.6.8 Continue consistent branding and messaging for recreational parks, conservation parks, preserves and trails.

1.6.9 Provide information to community residents about methods to preserve and maintain recreational amenities.

Objective 1.7

Strategically ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of recreation parks, conservation parks, preserves and trails facilities via traditional and innovative funding and financing tools.

Policies

1.7.1 Continue to prioritize park and recreational needs through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process; ensure a separate list of additional project needs is maintained to supplement the CIP and to be available for unexpected or specialized funding opportunities.
1.7.2  Continue to seek grants and foundation funding from state, federal, community, and non-profit sources for parks and recreation development.

1.7.3  Balance fee structures to provide cost recovery for programs and facilities without excluding users from participation; explore differentiated fee structures between destination sites and traditional conservation parks.

1.7.4  Explore opportunities for revenue generating activities/programs, as well as initiatives that enhance the overall economic development of Hillsborough County.

1.7.5  Continue to support park and recreational facility development via multiple funding sources, including but not limited to developer contribution.
Coastal Management

Introduction

The Hillsborough County coastline overlooks much of Tampa Bay. An estuary of national significance, the bay is fed by three major rivers and more than 100 small tributaries. More than 200 species of fish, bottlenose dolphins, manatees, oysters, scallops, clams, shrimp, crab, brown pelicans, heron and egret, roseate spoonbills, cormorants and laughing gulls inhabit the bay’s seagrass beds, mudflats and mangrove wetlands. A 43-foot deepwater shipping channel is at the bay’s entrance. It leads to Port Tampa Bay, the largest port in the state (in terms of physical size), handling over 37 million tons of cargo per year.

The abundance of scenic resources, recreational opportunities, shipping opportunities, waterways and natural habitat makes coastal Hillsborough County both a desirable location to live, work and recreate, as well as being vulnerable to natural hazards such as tropical storms and hurricanes.

The Coastal Management Section provides a framework to guide the County’s decisions and programs to maintain the responsible use and management of coastal resources related to development activities, protection of human life, the limitation of public expenditures in areas subject to natural disaster and protection of wildlife and natural habitat. It is the intent of the County to responsibly manage its coastal area and protect working commercial waterfronts and coastal natural resources. The proper management and use of this area is necessary for the protection of life and property from natural disasters in addition to the conservation of natural resources.

The Coastal Management Section provides plan and policy direction for development activities in the Coastal Planning Area of Hillsborough County. The Coastal Management Section’s role is to ensure that development in the coastal area does not adversely impact public accessibility to the coast, that adequate public hurricane shelter space is available to coastal inhabitants, that levels of service on evacuation routes are maintained, that water-dependent and water-related land uses are given priority on the coast, that coastal natural resources are conserved and protected, and that public decisions will include consideration of coastal hazards in the decision-making process.

Additionally, coastal planning spans the Comprehensive Plan Sections. Please refer to the Future Land Use Section for additional policies regarding land use suitability in the Coastal High Hazard Area and Coastal Planning Area. Policies related to infrastructure in the Coastal High Hazard Area and the Coastal Planning Area can be found in the Capital Improvements Section. Policies referring to rivers, tributaries and wetlands can be found in the Environmental and Sustainability Section. Policies referring to stormwater management and green infrastructure can be found in the One Water Chapter.
Support the Tampa Bay Estuary through the implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP).

1.1.1 Support the TBEP Habitat Master Plan as a component of the CCMP.

1.1.2 Continue membership, support, participation and coordination on inter-jurisdictional boards, such as the Agency on Bay Management, to address the estuarine environmental quality of Tampa Bay.

1.1.3 Collaborate with the TBEP to achieve a measurable annual increase in restored tidal wetland acreage.

1.1.4 Protect, maintain and enhance the abundance and diversity of living marine resources in the Tampa Bay.

1.1.5 Consider public education and the adoption and enforcement of marine turtle protection regulations, including marine turtle friendly exterior lighting.

1.1.6 Prohibit unmitigated development activities on submerged lands containing seagrass habitat and seek to restore seagrass coverage appropriately, except in cases of overriding public interest.

1.1.7 Investigate the capacity of the Tampa Bay and its surrounding natural features, soils, wetlands, and other water bodies to serve as “blue carbon” sequestration reserves.
1.1.8 Encourage wetland design changes that allow for the landward migration of wetlands for resilience to sea-level rise.

1.1.9 Identify priority areas for land acquisition based on their strategic capacity to absorb floodwaters and support coastal ecosystem migration in order to reduce loss to flooding.
Increase community resiliency to protect property, cultural and natural resources from natural vulnerabilities.

**GOAL 2**

Maintain beaches and coastlines in an environmentally sensitive manner.

**Policies**

2.1.1 Protect and restore beaches to provide storm protection, recreational opportunities, and a natural habitat for endemic flora and fauna.

2.1.2 Encourage shoreline softening through vegetative projects, submerged vegetation and living shorelines in order to minimize flood damage, stabilize the shore, and maintain adaptability to future sea-level rise conditions.

2.1.3 Incorporate living coastlines into storm surge reduction projects, as feasible.

2.1.4 Coordinate beach stabilization techniques with state agencies.

2.1.5 Require public access at any private beach that is renourished at public expense.

2.1.6 Preserve and restore, as feasible, coastal ecosystems to maintain and enhance natural coastal barriers to natural hazards.

2.1.7 Collaborate with regulatory agencies to prohibit the destruction or degradation of natural inter-tidal and sub-tidal vegetative communities for the purpose of developing new man-made beaches.

2.1.8 Expand the use of living shorelines and living breakwater systems as the preferred method of shoreline stabilization and storm surge reduction.

2.1.9 Evaluate shoreline setbacks and identify the potential for updates to protect vulnerable structures from the effects of long-term sea-level rise.
2.1.10 Where the maintenance and/or alteration of existing hardened shoreline is allowed, the County may require mitigation of environmental impacts. Such mitigation may include but is not restricted to the installation of appropriate living shorelines.

2.1.11 Encourage the enhancement of existing hardened shorelines by installing oyster reefs or other vegetation where appropriate and feasible.

**Objective 2.2**

Manage historic and archaeological resources to protect and preserve their historical value in the Coastal Planning Area.

**Policies**

2.2.1 Continue to collaborate with the Florida Division of Historical Resources to maintain a registry of historical and archaeological assets.

2.2.2 Maintain criteria, standards, and procedures to protect historical and archaeological assets and sites from natural hazards.

2.2.3 Collaborate with public, private, local, state, and/or federal historical conservation entities to restore or maintain structures of historical value.
Objective 3.1

Ensure development and redevelopment has the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to natural hazards.

Policies

3.1.1 Support local and regional mapping, modeling and monitoring programs to assure the most current and locally specific data on climate change vulnerability and sea-level rise is available.

3.1.2 Continue to make flood elevation certificates available to the public and digitally enter them into a geographic database to aid with assessment and other resiliency efforts.

3.1.3 Continue to implement the “Coastal High Hazard Area” (CHHA) policies and regulations and delineate on zoning maps. Where the definition found in the definition’s section of the Comprehensive Plan and any graphic representation of this area is not consistent, the definition shall govern.

3.1.4 The Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Report is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by reference.

3.1.5 Develop strategies to identify and incorporate climate adaptation strategies in cooperation with the EPC, the Planning Commission and other agencies into program areas.

3.1.6 Educate and inform the public regarding the impacts of natural hazards, including hurricanes, storm surge and flooding within the CHHA and 100-year floodplain.

3.1.7 Uphold the flood-resistant construction requirements in the Florida Building Code and applicable floodplain management regulations outlined in 44 C.F.R. part 60.
3.1.8 Meet or exceed building codes and development regulations, such as risk-based setback provisions, structural connections, and other site control and overlay zones, to reduce future property damages and losses.

3.1.9 Encourage the use of stilted structures rather than fill to meet flood elevation construction requirements within flood-prone areas.

3.1.10 Promote programs for sellers of real property within the CHHA to notify buyers of structures and properties of the hazards associated with the CHHA designation.

3.1.11 New hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the Coastal High Hazard Area are prohibited. Siting or expansion of hospitals or care facilities in Evacuation Level B zones is discouraged.

3.1.12 Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to maintain a CRS score of 5 or better.

3.1.13 Proactively seek assistance in public acquisition of abandoned properties and undeveloped land in the Coastal Planning Area.

3.1.14 Consider measures to mitigate flood and storm surge risk to new structures and provide incentives to move development out of high-risk areas such as the existing/pre-development 25-year floodplain, such as but not limited to transfer of development rights or clustering. This does not preclude the development of water-dependent uses, water-related and water-enhanced uses, stormwater management structures, non-habitable structures, and passive recreational uses where appropriate.

3.1.15 Consider the implementation of Adaptation Action Areas for low-lying zones that experience coastal flooding due to extreme high-tide or king tides, storm surge and are vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise.

3.1.16 Review, update and maintain the Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) to reduce the impacts and eliminate the exposure of human life, public and private property; and facilitate rapid recovery from natural hazards.
3.2.1 Utilize the Florida Statewide Regional Evacuation Study For Tampa Bay when determining if proposed developments or redevelopments will cause roadways to fall below acceptable level-of-service standards for hurricane evacuation and if sheltering needs are met.

3.2.2 Review, update and maintain the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

3.2.3 Facilitate public knowledge of the need to evacuate at various threat levels.
3.2.4 Maintain evacuation clearance time standards on and protect from flooding, all identified major evacuation routes maintained by the County.

3.2.5 The Level of Service for out-of-county hurricane evacuation (Intra-State Movements) for a category 5 storm is 28 hours.

3.2.6 No plan amendment within the Coastal High Hazard Area that increases density will be approved that would exceed a 16-hour evacuation Level of Service for a category 5 storm unless the increase in density is mitigated pursuant to accepted techniques; whereby, the mitigation technique accepted will maintain the evacuation clearance time at, or less than, the 16-hour limit.

3.2.7 Meet the public’s shelter space needs based on a standard of 20 square feet per person.

3.2.8 Require new development and redevelopment to demonstrate adequate shelter space is available or fully mitigate its impacts.

3.2.9 Whenever possible, new or expanded County buildings shall be located, designed, and constructed so they may be utilized as shelter space.
GOAL 4

Water-dependent and water-related uses are directed to suitable areas of the County that meet or exceed applicable criteria.

Objective 4.1

Existing ports and marinas will be targeted for concentrations of marine-related land uses.

Policies

4.1.1 Encourage existing public and private marina sites to expand prior to siting new marina facilities.

4.1.2 The following criteria shall serve as the County’s marina siting guidelines

A. Support Services (Utilities/Public Facilities)

1. Adequate Uplands/Access: Marinas shall demonstrate that they have sufficient upland area to accommodate all needed utilities and marina support facilities with minimal environmental impacts. Only facilities providing parking areas that minimize stormwater runoff and mitigate pollution shall be permitted.

2. Wastewater Capacity: All new marinas shall provide adequate capacity to handle wastewater in accordance with state standards, either by means of on-site pump-out and treatment facilities or connection to a treatment plant. All marinas with fueling facilities should provide pump-out facilities at each fuel dock. Marinas that serve liveaboards or overnight transient traffic shall provide shower, restroom and wastewater treatment facilities at the dock. Facilities of 50 slips or more shall provide permanent pump-out facilities.

3. Spill Containment: All applicants shall provide documentation of their capability to respond rapidly and effectively to contain any spills of petroleum or other hazardous materials within the leased area boundaries.
B. Resource Constraints (Environmental Considerations)

1. Sensitive Areas: In the following sensitive areas, the applicant shall be required to demonstrate that a marina is clearly in the public interest and in accordance with all pertinent rules of appropriate regulatory agencies before approval to build is granted.
   - Aquatic Preserves
   - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Critical Wildlife Areas
   - Outstanding Florida Waters
   - Class I Waters
   - Class II Waters
   - Marine or Estuarine Sanctuaries
   - Manatee Sanctuaries or Critical Manatee Habitats
   - Areas approved or conditionally approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for shellfish
   - Other highly productive or unique habitats as determined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, based on vegetation or wildlife species
   - Areas designated as particularly sensitive to oil spills

2. Water Depth: Only those docking facilities in locations having adequate water depths to accommodate the proposed boat use shall be permitted. A minimum water depth of 4-feet mean low water shall be required. Greater depths shall be required for those facilities designed for or capable of accommodating boats having greater than a 3-foot draft. These depth requirements shall also apply to the area between the proposed facility and any natural or other navigation channels, inlet or deep water. Where necessary, marking of navigational channels may be required.
3. Access/Dredging: Preference shall be given to docking facilities that require minimal or no dredging or filling to provide access by canal, channel or road. This restriction applies to widening or deepening any existing canal or channel, but not to regular maintenance dredging and filling to meet depth standards of existing canals or channels. Preference shall be given to marina sites adjacent to naturally maintained channels.

4. Environmental Restoration: In reviewing applications for new docking facilities or renewal of existing leased facilities, an effort shall be made to identify ways to improve, mitigate or restore adverse environmental impacts caused by previous activities. This may include shallowing dredged areas, restoring wetlands or submerged vegetation or making navigable channels. Such mitigation or restoration could be required as a condition of approval for new, renewed or expanded facilities.

5. Cultural Resource Protection: Facilities must demonstrate no adverse impact on archaeological or historic properties.

6. Access Markers: Immediate access (ingress and egress) points shall be delineated by channel markers, indicating speed limits and any other applicable regulations.

7. Erosion Prevention: On sites with historically erosion-prone shorelines, applicants shall ensure that appropriate shoreline protection measures (as determined by Port Tampa Bay and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection) will be taken.
Objective 4.2

Policies

4.2.1 Except as provided herein, filling of surface waters of Tampa Bay and its rivers and tributaries up to the distance of navigability as defined by Port Tampa Bay jurisdiction for development purposes is prohibited. This policy shall not apply to

1. Incidental Fill; or

2. Governmental projects that are necessary to promote public health, safety or general welfare, including activities that facilitate the continued use of existing channels, activities associated with appropriate water-dependent uses, water-related uses, and uses pursuant to the Port Master Plan, and activities that correct environmental problems.

4.2.2 Work with Port Tampa Bay to maximize the use of existing deep water access to avoid impact to shallow water bay bottom and undeveloped shoreline.

4.2.3 Encourage environmentally sound development and redevelopment of Port Tampa Bay along with infrastructure to serve the Port and related maritime industries.

4.2.4 Support Port Tampa Bay's efforts to:

A. Seeking the acquisition of other appropriate lands for future port expansion and diversification in accordance with Port Tampa Bay's Master Plan.

B. Continue to assure coordination of its submerged land management and permitting programs with County land use regulations.
C. Participate in efforts to establish regional wetland and bay bottom management strategies by maintaining active membership in the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council’s, Agency on Bay Management and cooperating with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to implement the Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan for Tampa Bay.

D. Continue the support and implementation of estuarine resource restoration research and management programs.

E. Continue mitigation projects to offset ecological impacts of future port development projects on Hookers Point.

F. Continue to implement an efficient consolidated berth maintenance dredging program under requisite authorizations (permits) of the FDEP and the Army Corps of Engineers, including a long-term Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP).

G. Continue to develop methods for the management and maintenance of bird nesting and feeding habitats on diked disposal islands while maintaining the utility of those areas for dredged material disposal operations.

H. Monitor and mitigate adverse impacts on water quality during harbor deepening and maintenance dredging projects according to issued permits.

I. Incorporate cost-effective and innovative stormwater treatment capability into Port Tampa Bay’s projects; to the extent that such systems do not compromise port safety, displace critical shoreside properties, and are practicable from an engineering standpoint.
Environmental & Sustainability

By virtue of its subtropical climate and variable hydrology and geology, Hillsborough County supports a rich and diverse complement of natural resources. The County borders the largest estuary in the State, Tampa Bay, and three major rivers (Hillsborough, Alafia and Little Manatee) flow through the County. The County includes various solution sinks and depressions containing a wide variety of wetland flora and fauna. Simultaneously, the higher well-drained elevations support rare evergreen forests on well-drained sandy soils and scrub habitats. The County and its citizens have made it a priority to acquire, preserve, restore, and maintain the function of important habitats. By preserving a variety of habitats, the County ensures there will be natural spaces for native wildlife to thrive, ecosystems to maintain, and improved quality of life for County residents.

The County’s economy and quality of life are intricately linked to a healthy environment. The correlation between the built and natural environments are also crucial, as the quality of our natural environment has a direct impact on the health of the human community. By recognizing the value natural systems have in sustaining life and prosperity, it is important that growth and development use sustainable practices. This ensures we meet the community’s present needs without compromising future generations’ ability to meet theirs. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan’s Environmental and Sustainability Element is to provide a framework for conserving, maintaining, and restoring the natural environment and factors that affect energy conservation. Handling of hazardous waste materials is addressed in this section; however, please refer to the Solid Waste Management Section for additional policies regarding recycling and solid waste management. Policies related to water resources and aquifer recharge can be found in the One Water Chapter.
Ensure sufficient, reliable, and clean energy is available to meet the future needs of Hillsborough County residents, businesses, and government.

Objective 1.1

Actively participate in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)’s Energy Star for Buildings program, which promotes energy conservation in major public and private structures and facilities.

Policies

1.1.1 Engage in and promote practices that result in energy conservation and efficiency.

1.1.2 Continue to offer energy conservation and efficiency information to enable residents, businesses, and County employees to reduce electrical loads and demands on the electrical utility system.

1.1.3 Conserve energy and become more energy efficient within operations by developing and adopting a comprehensive energy management plan.

1.1.4 Promote energy efficient and sustainable development practices.

1.1.5 Encourage builders and developers to exceed the minimum requirements for energy efficiency of the Florida Building Code by sharing information on available training, tools, or literature on resource efficient development.

1.1.6 Continue cross jurisdictional and departmental collaboration to create and implement mutually supporting sustainable and/or resilience programs and initiatives.

Objective 1.2

Support the development, and consider use, of alternative energy/fuel.

Policies

1.2.1 Support domestic production of environmentally safe energy sources.

1.2.2 Promote the use of alternative energy technology for existing, new, and renovated County facilities and vehicles.
OBJECTIVE 2.1

Ensure the dependable, environmentally safe means to dispose of industrial hazardous waste.

POLICIES

2.1.1 The County and the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) will ensure existing hazardous waste generators, as well as hazardous waste transporters and treatment/storage/disposal facilities, are identified and to the extent authorized by Chapter 1-7, Rules of the EPC. Ensure that very small quantities of hazardous waste generators (VSQG) and small quantities of hazardous waste generators (SQG) are regulated.

2.1.2 The EPC will continue the regulation of and revise, to the extent authorized by Chapter 1-7, Rules of the EPC or through any delegation of authority from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), all Class I and Class III landfill operating plans to ensure adequate safeguards exist to prevent the disposal of hazardous waste.

2.1.3 Continue to assist the EPC in providing technical assistance to the EPA and the FDEP to rank clean-up priorities. The County shall continue to assist said agencies in their efforts to direct federal and state funds to the implementation of investigations, and clean-up actions for currently identified potential chemical contamination sites.

2.1.4 The County and the EPC will continue to assist the FDEP, EPA or other federal agencies, to direct federal and state funds to the implementation of cleanup actions for all currently identified Superfund sites within County boundaries.

2.1.5 In cooperation with EPC, continue to provide information needed by hazardous waste generators to comply with federal and state regulations.
GOAL 3

Support the preservation, conservation, restoration, and management of natural resources while maintaining or enhancing environmental quality.

Objective 3.1

Comply with all national and state ambient air quality standards.

Policies

3.1.1 Collaborate with the EPC to promote energy conservation measures and alternative energy sources to reduce the demand for electricity and to minimize power plant emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.

3.1.2 Support public and alternative transportation programs and actions intended to reduce motor vehicle emissions.

3.1.3 Support environmental programs and policies designed to improve air quality and protect the public.

3.1.4 Continue to support EPC’s efforts to inventory and regulate stationary sources and facilities which generate regulated and/or hazardous air pollutants (HAPs).

3.1.5 Support the local hazardous and toxic air pollutants program as implemented by the EPC.

3.1.6 Continue to provide a public outreach campaign in coordination with the EPC to educate residents of air quality issues.

3.1.7 Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies and governments in pursuing regional compliance with ambient air quality standards.
3.1.8 Cooperate with the EPC to ensure fugitive dust control measures are used during nonagricultural land clearing and development.

3.1.9 Cooperate with EPC to encourage techniques and ways to minimize noise pollution to protect, promote and preserve the health, safety and welfare of Hillsborough County residents and ensure compliance with EPC Chapter 1-10, Rules of the EPC (Noise Pollution Rule) sound level limits.

3.1.10 Collaborate with the EPC and FDEP to institute the most effective procedure to alert the public of an Air Pollution episode.

3.1.11 Continue to work with the EPC and FDEP to ensure that an air quality monitoring program to monitor compliance with all ambient air quality standards is maintained.

3.1.12 Continue to coordinate with the State to update building code requirements in order to minimize the risk of radon gas emissions and accumulation in residential developments.

**Objective 3.2**

**Manage mining and reclamation lands to ensure a healthy environment, economy, and quality of life.**

**Policies**

3.2.1 The prudent operation of mining activities and timely reclamation of mined areas is required.

3.2.2 The phasing of mining to ensure that limited land areas are affected by excavation and settling ponds at one time and that reclamation occurs in the most effective manner is required.

3.2.3 Implement the Phosphate Mining Regulations to require prudent operation of mining activities.

3.2.4 Require appropriate setbacks between mining activities and adjacent existing and future land uses.
3.2.5 Regulate the location and operation of land excavations to minimize negative impacts on surrounding properties, ensure that land excavations are appropriately reclaimed, and encourage the productive reuse of such areas.

3.2.6 Prohibit mining and land excavation activities in documented habitats of Listed Species except as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required.

3.2.7 Land excavation activities that adversely impact surface or groundwater levels or wetlands and/or other surface waters on surrounding property are prohibited.

3.2.8 Setbacks between land excavations and adjacent land uses to protect public health, safety, and welfare are required.

3.2.9 Reclamation plans to ensure environmentally and economically viable reuses of excavated lands are required.

3.2.10 Mining reclamation plans are required to comply with, or exceed, state and local regulations related to land reclamation.

3.2.11 The preparation of wetland/lake management plans for the reclamation of land excavation projects to be reclaimed as lakes to ensure that such areas become viable and productive aquatic systems are required.

3.2.12 Demonstration of the capability of restoring Essential Wildlife Habitat prior to permitting mining in areas that support Listed Species is required.

3.2.13 Mining activities shall comply with County criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to regulate mining within floodplains of rivers and streams and provide for streamside buffers for mining and mining related activities to protect perennial streams.

3.2.14 Require proof of long-term financial responsibility for the reclamation of mined lands.

3.2.15 Provide the public with information regarding health hazards associated with reclaimed lands and radon gas emissions.
Objective 3.3

Conserve soils, discourage erosion, and maintain water quality through consideration of topographic conditions and natural soil characteristics.

Policies

3.3.1 Soil conservation and protection measures, consistent with best management practices, will continue to be reviewed and required during land alteration or development activities.

3.3.2 The use of soils in accordance with the soil suitabilities identified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service is encouraged.

3.3.3 Site-specific analysis of proposed incompatible land use and identified soil suitability is required prior to the commitment of resources.

3.3.4 In cooperation with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, topsoil best management practices are required during all land alteration activities.

3.3.5 Evaluate the threat of sinkholes through the County's planning and land development process based on adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures including those of the Department of Environmental Protection.

3.3.6 Cooperate with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to provide technical expertise to the public regarding sinkhole risk.

Objective 3.4

Protect and conserve Surface Waters for the environmental, recreational, economic, and quality of life benefits these areas provide.

Policies

3.4.1 Support the EPC's scientifically defensible Surface Water quality monitoring program in order to monitor compliance with State Water Quality Standards.
3.4.2 Work to improve surface water quality as measured by data collected by the EPC. Water quality of natural surface water bodies that do not meet state and water management district water quality standards for their designated use shall be improved or restored to the applicable water quality standard.

3.4.3 Support a public education program aimed at residential homeowners that addresses the impacts of improperly managed lawn litter and fertilizer/herbicide/pesticide applications on Surface Water quality, wetlands, and/or other surface waters.

3.4.4 The County shall conserve, appropriately use, and protect the quality and quantity of current and projected water sources, as well as protect from activities and land uses known to affect adversely the quality and quantity of identified water sources, including natural groundwater recharge areas, wellhead protection areas, and surface water sources used as a source of public water supply. Further details, including principles, guidelines and standards, can be found in this Element as well as the One Water Chapter.

Objective 3.5

Apply adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to manage and maintain wetlands and/or other surface waters for optimum fisheries and other environmental values in consultation with EPC.

Policies

3.5.1 Collaborate with the EPC to conserve and protect wetlands and/or other surface waters from detrimental physical and hydrological alteration. Apply a comprehensive planning-based approach to the protection of wetland ecosystems assuring no net loss of ecological values provided by the functions performed by wetlands and/or other surface waters authorized for projects in Hillsborough County.

3.5.2 Collaborate with the EPC through the land planning and development review processes to prohibit unmitigated encroachment into wetlands and/or other surface waters and maintain equivalent functions.
3.5.3 Channelization or hardening (e.g., paving, piping) of natural Shorelines and natural waterways to include tidal creeks is prohibited, except in cases of overriding public interest as established by the County or where necessary for reasonable use of a property as determined by the EPC. Encourage Shoreline stabilization with native plant communities and living Shorelines.

3.5.4 Regulate and conserve wetlands and/or other surface waters through the application of local rules and regulations including mitigation during the development review process.

3.5.5 In cooperation with the EPC and the Southwest Florida Water Management District, promote the use of Florida native wetland plant species for the creation of wetland habitat and for biologically enhancing filtration and treatment of pollutants in newly constructed stormwater Retention and Detention ponds.

3.5.6 All wetland and/or other surface water mitigation projects must comply with the State Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM). Mitigation projects must demonstrate the restoration of the ecological values provided by the functions performed by impacted wetlands and/or other surface waters unless a previous evaluation method was authorized by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

3.5.7 Wetlands and/or other surface waters shall be designated as conservation or preservation on all development plans and plats.

3.5.8 Establish setbacks and buffers based on current science for protecting the hydrologic and biologic integrity of wetlands/other surface waters, including the Hillsborough County Wetland Ecological Buffers study published in February 2012.
Objective 3.6

The ecological integrity of natural lakes and ponds shall be maintained or improved.

Policies

3.6.1 Ensure surface water bodies meet or exceed state water quality standards for their use.

3.6.2 Maintain adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to retain existing natural areas on aquatic Shorelines in as natural a state as feasible.

3.6.3 A development project’s potential impact on a lake’s existing environmental quality shall be assessed during the planning and development review process. Development shall be compatible with maintaining or improving a lake’s environmental quality.

3.6.4 Collaborate with the EPC and the SWFWMD to provide information and technical assistance regarding the management, hydrology, and ecology of lakes.

Objective 3.7

Promote projects and innovations that integrate the pillars of Sustainability: natural resource protection, community health and wellbeing, and economic prosperity.

Policies

3.7.1 Regulations and performance standards shall ensure that water quality and quantity, environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife habitats, lakes, rivers, and creeks are protected from degradation by development.

3.7.2 Regulate development in areas that possess the following characteristics: wetlands, 100-year floodplain, and/or habitats for Listed Species as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required.

3.7.3 Coordinate with existing natural resources action plans of other agencies through participation in the development and review process.
3.7.4 Consult with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in determining the issuance of, and conditions to be placed on, land development approvals that would impact Listed Species as appropriate.

3.7.5 Minimize impacts on open space, environmental resources, and floodplains, through adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures including, but not limited to, clustering and the transfer of development rights to increase contiguous pervious surface.

3.7.6 Development shall comply with adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to prevent adverse effects on Essential Wildlife Habitat.

3.7.7 Discourage and minimize the removal of natural upland vegetation caused by site filling and clearing.

3.7.8 Manage and maintain a healthy urban tree canopy for its benefits, including the mitigation of the heat island effect and expanded ecosystem services it provides.

3.7.9 Continue to require the conservation of trees including those achieving Grand Oak status and existing native vegetation during the land development process.

3.7.10 Encourage Florida-Friendly Landscaping principles and continue to distribute Florida-Friendly Landscaping public education materials.

3.7.11 Utilize Florida-Friendly Landscape principles in conjunction with native plants and trees in public rights-of-way and other public lands to conserve water, improve habitat for urban wildlife, conserve Central Florida flora, and improve the County's aesthetic appeal and environmental quality when feasible.

3.7.12 Foster projects and initiatives that value natural resource protection, conservation and improve environmental quality of our air, water, land, and natural habitat.
Objective 3.8

Manage flora, fauna, and uplands to ensure a healthy, functioning environment, economy, and quality of life.

Policies

3.8.1 Protect and conserve Significant Wildlife Habitat and ensure a no net loss of Essential Wildlife Habitat.

3.8.2 Continue to prohibit unmitigated encroachment into the 100-year floodplain to protect and conserve the functions and natural wildlife habitat attributes where they exist within the 100-year floodplains of rivers and streams as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required.

3.8.3 Maintain local wildlife and wildlife habitat protection and management programs to protect native plants and wildlife.

3.8.4 Continue to apply adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures that require the development and implementation of management plans for Significant or Essential Wildlife Habitat determined to provide particularly valuable and manageable habitat qualities.

3.8.5 Offsite preservation will not be permitted for field verified Significant Wildlife Habitat which is capable of being managed or restored onsite as a high-quality native plant community or communities, except in cases of overriding public interest (Per Governor and Cabinet Final Order AC-93-087).

3.8.6 The abundance and distribution of Listed Species shall be maintained and/or increased.

3.8.7 Coordinate with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in the management of natural preserve lands owned or managed by the County when appropriate.

3.8.8 Collaborate with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the FDEP in the implementation of protection and recovery programs for Listed Species.
3.8.9 Control the spread of exotic and nuisance species on County managed land by at least 90% from previously uncontrolled levels.

3.8.10 Collaborate with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, FWC, SWFWMD, and the FDEP to control and/or eliminate exotic and nuisance species on County owned or management land and incorporate these efforts into the management plans of natural preserve lands.

Objective 3.9

Manage natural preserves to ensure a healthy, functioning environment, economy, and quality of life.

Policies

3.9.1 Consider residents and visitors in the governance of natural resources to ensure equitable access and distribution.

3.9.2 Increase the acreage of natural preserve lands, ensure their protection, proper use, and implementation of appropriate management activities.

3.9.3 Continue to implement the Jan K. Platt Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP), at funding levels equal to or greater than the current funding.

3.9.4 Seek assistance in public acquisition of natural preserves under federal, state, and regional programs.

3.9.5 Provide multiple use opportunities on County-owned natural preserve lands consistent and compatible with natural resource protection and conservation.

3.9.6 Promote public land acquisition projects and public land dedications that remove land in the River Corridor Overlay District from development, particularly lands vegetated by natural plant communities, containing or buffering environmentally sensitive areas, contributing to aquifer recharge, or those providing wildlife habitat.
3.9.7 Enhance the ability to qualify for matching funds from state and regional land acquisition programs, such as Florida Communities Trust, Florida Forever, and Save Our Rivers.

3.9.8 Continue to fund land management, research, fieldwork, and qualified staff to maintain, restore and enhance upland, freshwater, and marine natural habitats and ecosystems, including Beaches and Shorelines.

3.9.9 Protect natural resources, coastal resources, publicly owned, or managed natural preserves from adverse impacts attributable to adjacent land uses. Continue to require development activities on adjacent properties to comply with adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to prevent adverse impacts.

3.9.10 Preserve rare and threatened native vegetative communities and protect Listed Species from development and associated impacts of development, such as habitat fragmentation, noise, light, and domestic animals as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required.

3.9.11 Restore and enhance degraded natural areas on lands acquired for preservation, including removal of noxious exotics, reforestation, aquatic grass bed restoration, reintroduction of fire through prescribed burns, and restoration of Shorelines and natural hydrology, as needed.

3.9.12 Encourage private landowners to utilize multiple-use management techniques to provide both economic (e.g., cattle grazing, silviculture) and ecological (e.g., provision of Wildlife habitat) benefits.

**Objective 3.10**

**Policies**

3.10.1 Require consideration, and where appropriate, incorporation of County approved conceptual Greenway System and Wildlife Corridor plans into reclamation plans.

3.10.2 Land alteration activities adjacent to viable public Wildlife Corridors shall be regulated in a manner consistent with the continued function of the corridor, in accordance with adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures.
3.10.3 Wildlife Corridors within development projects shall be preserved, as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required and extension/ expansion of corridors is encouraged.

3.10.4 Establish and maintain desirable native vegetative buffers on public lands along Wildlife Corridors.

3.10.5 Continue to acquire and physically link existing public preservation areas with Wildlife Corridors into a contiguous system.

3.10.6 Encourage appropriate agencies and private organizations to assist the County in conserving and preserving public natural area linkages which may function as Wildlife Corridors.

3.10.7 Collaborate with private landowners to limit the fragmentation of wildlife movement areas. Analyze the cumulative impacts of development, steps to mitigate, and steps to maintain and enhance native ecosystems.

3.10.8 Coordinate with surrounding county governments and private landowners to increase regional wildlife corridors and wildlife distribution to link other public and private lands.

3.10.9 Coordinate with neighboring counties and jurisdictions to identify those lands for public acquisition necessary to preserve vital portions of Wildlife Corridors.

3.10.10 Promote Wildlife Corridor linkages to lands in adjacent counties to develop a system of interconnected public Greenways and Blueways.

3.10.11 Protect or enhance Wildlife Corridors by minimizing road crossings over wetlands and floodplains and designing crossings to allow for unimpeded passage of wildlife as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation as required.

3.10.12 Review, update, and maintain regulatory adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to protect the integrity of Shoreline Wildlife Corridors.

3.10.13 Continue to identify, adopt, and preserve Wildlife Corridors/Greenway System, generally north of the City of Tampa's northern boundary to the Pasco County line, connecting Cypress Creek and the Hillsborough River (Per Governor and Cabinet Final Order AC-93-087).
GOAL 4

Protect the natural resources of the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve from environmental degradation and manage the Preserve’s resources for the benefit and enjoyment of all residents.

Objective 4.1

Continue to implement the “Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve Management Plan.”

Policies

4.1.1 Appropriate provisions from the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve Management Plan shall continue to be considered as appropriate tools to help implement this Plan or other applicable plans endorsed by the Board of County Commissioners.

4.1.2 Take all practical action to revive the shellfish habitat of the Cockroach Bay Area.

4.1.3 New permitted discharges likely to impact the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve will meet or exceed applicable water quality standards.

4.1.4 Review, and mitigate or restrict as appropriate, all proposed development likely to impact the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve to ensure that water quality or habitat degradation does not occur.

4.1.5 Seek to establish a scientifically defensible protective buffer zone between the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve and adjacent upland land uses to prevent degradation of water quality and aquatic vegetative habitats.

4.1.6 Continue to support preservation, restoration, and monitoring goals in the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve.

4.1.7 Work with the appropriate authorities, including the EPC and the FDEP, to implement means of protecting seagrasses from propeller dredging throughout the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve.
GOAL 5

Ensure rivers are cleaner, safer, and more attractive; protect their natural ecological functions which support plant and animal Wildlife; and promote the enhancement of the rivers as recreational and aesthetic assets to the surrounding community. This goal and its associated objectives and policies shall be known as the River Corridor Policy Overlay.

Objective 5.1

Maintain and improve, water quality in rivers and primary tributaries and meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards.

Policies

5.1.1 In conjunction with the EPC and other appropriate agencies, identify pollution sources that adversely affect rivers and develop strategies by which to mitigate or eliminate such sources and their effects.

5.1.2 Solid waste landfills and hazardous material facilities in Unincorporated Hillsborough County shall be sited and managed such that they will not adversely affect the rivers, tributaries, and associated floodplains and wetlands.

Objective 5.2

Preserve and restore natural vegetative and wildlife habitats and preserve archaeological resources along rivers and primary tributaries.

Policies

5.2.1 Natural riverbanks, levees and vegetative buffers along river and tributaries shall be conserved, preserved, and restored unless authorized by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

5.2.2 Restrict clearing or filling of natural plant communities within 50 feet of wetlands and/or other surface waters, rivers, creeks, and designated River Corridor Overlay Districts or within 100 feet of the mean and ordinary high-water line of such rivers and creeks, whichever is greater. If no beneficial use of the property is possible without clearing or filling within this area, impose conditions which will mitigate the adverse impact of these activities on wildlife habitat, native vegetation, and natural stormwater filtration systems.
5.2.3 Draining, clearing, or filling wetlands hydrologically connected to rivers in Hillsborough County shall be prohibited, except as provided under local rules and regulations including mitigation and where authorized by appropriate regulatory agencies.

5.2.4 The removal of healthy native trees, with a diameter at breast height of five inches or greater, is prohibited within 100 feet of wetlands and/or other surface waters; except when reasonable property utilization is not possible without tree removal or in cases of overriding public interest or as part of standard, accepted habitat management, and/or restoration practices.

5.2.5 Continue to preserve natural shorelines and reverse the trend toward hardened shores and channelization along rivers and primary tributaries. Continue the restoration of vegetated shorelines, including the replacement of deteriorated seawalls and rip-rap with native vegetation and hybrid shoreline improvement strategies which support aquatic/wildlife and provide resiliency benefits to the community and property.

5.2.6 Prohibit backfilling of waterfront properties or extension of waterfront lots through artificial means, unless authorized by appropriate regulatory agencies.

5.2.7 Increase public awareness of the ecological and economic implications resulting from hardening of Shorelines and the removal of native vegetation and wildlife habitats along the river.

**Objective 5.3**

Manage rivers as important community assets and provide appropriate public access to these valuable natural amenities.

**Policies**

5.3.1 To enhance public safety and natural resources, continue to establish and post marine regulatory speed zones, where appropriate, including in the vicinity of marinas, bridges, marine structures, navigably constricted areas, and in areas of rivers where manatees are known to inhabit.

5.3.2 Hillsborough County recognizes the special character of its rivers and shall not take any action which will impair the use or enjoyment of state designated canoe trails in Hillsborough County. These areas include but not limited to the Hillsborough River Canoe Trail, the Alafia River Canoe Trail, and the Little Manatee River Canoe Trail.
5.3.3 Minimize river use conflict and mitigate public nuisances.

5.3.4 Water dependent uses such as docks, boat slips, and boardwalks shall constitute the only private over-the-water structures allowed on rivers. Structures that are clearly in the public interest, such as bridges, shall also be allowed.

5.3.5 Seek state funding through the Marine Patrol Derelict Vessel Removal Program to remove all abandoned craft recommended for removal by the Marine Patrol or Port Tampa Bay.

5.3.6 Upon advisement of Port Tampa Bay, all abandoned/deteriorated docks and seawalls shall be removed at the expense of the owner. Removal shall occur within an amortization period set forth by the Port Authority. Any replacement structures shall be constructed according to adopted Port Tampa Bay and County rules and regulations.

Implement standards for development addressing the unique qualities, visual intrusion, protection, and use in the river corridors.

5.4.1 In keeping with the natural character of the Rivers, parking lots and service roads are prohibited within 500 feet wetlands and/or other surface waters of the river and its tributaries, unless there is an overriding public interest such as, but not limited to public facilities (parks, boat ramps, etc.), or reasonable use of the property would otherwise not be possible.

5.4.2 Encourage the reclamation of lands along rivers with native vegetation and encourage public acquisition, where appropriate.

5.4.3 Widen and soften altered creek or river corridors to restore hydrologic eco-hydric function where appropriate and feasible.
6.1.1 No person shall control or attempt to control aquatic plants by chemical or biological means in the Hillsborough River except as provided in permits issued by the EPC and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Alternative methods to chemical control, and side effects of current methods, shall be evaluated on a regular basis and reported to the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board in an effort to identify and promote less harmful methods of weed control.

6.1.2 Prevent further destruction of desirable natural vegetative buffers along the Hillsborough River and its tributaries.

6.1.3 Wastewater treatment facilities within the drainage basin will meet or exceed regulatory standards.

Objective 6.2

Reverse the trend toward hardened shores and channelization on the Hillsborough River.

Policies

6.2.1 To preserve natural wildlife habitat, the construction of vertical seawalls in the Upper Hillsborough River, north of Fletcher Avenue, will be prohibited, unless in cases of overriding public interest or where authorized by the appropriate regulatory agencies.
6.2.2 Support the elimination of hardened Shoreline and replacement with natural slopes and wetland vegetation along the riverbanks as existing bulkheads are repaired or replaced.

**Objective 6.3**

Continue to cooperate with state and federal programs to provide for improved boat traffic control in the Hillsborough River and minimize public use conflicts and nuisances by promoting the enforcement of water safety laws.

**Policies**

6.3.1 New marinas shall be prohibited on the Upper Hillsborough River.

6.3.2 The construction of new boat ramps is restricted along the Hillsborough River.

6.3.3 Water skiing on the Hillsborough River is allowed only between the dam (Tippin Water Treatment facility) and the 56th Street bridge.

6.3.4 To prevent riverbank erosion, protect wildlife habitat, and ensure public safety, especially during low water periods, that portion of the river north of 56th Street shall be posted with "Idle Speed, No Wake" signs.

6.3.5 In recognition of the Florida Designated Paddling Trail on the Hillsborough River, from Fletcher Avenue, southerly and downstream to River Hills Park, the County will not take any action which will impair its use as designated by the state within or along its jurisdictional limits.

**Objective 6.4**

Implement standards for development in the Hillsborough River corridor.

**Policies**

6.4.1 Within 100 feet of the river’s wetlands, existing publicly owned parking lots, loading docks, and service areas (containing such items as trash receptacles and machinery) are required to be screened from the river by dense planting using Florida Friendly Landscaping principles and native vegetation when appropriate.
6.4.2 Support the guidelines and standards for riverfront development as recommended in the Hillsborough River Corridor Overlay Study.

6.4.3 Pursuant to Chapter 86-335, Laws of Florida, cooperate with the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board and Technical Advisory Council in the performance of its mission by providing information, staff coordination, and participation.

**Objective 6.5**

Continue to cooperate with state and federal programs to provide for improved boat traffic control in the Hillsborough River and minimize public use conflicts and nuisances by promoting the enforcement of water safety laws.

**Policies**

6.5.1 The number of docks in single family zoning districts is limited to one per zoning lot. Shared ownership of docks is encouraged in all new subdivisions adjacent to the river. Shared ownership may be accomplished by construction on the property line or by establishing the dock(s) as common property.

6.5.2 Multifamily zoning districts are permitted one dock per zoning lot and one additional dock for every 100 feet of linear river frontage in excess of 100 feet. Where multiple docks are permitted, they must be clustered with a maximum separation of 30 feet between docks. Each dock is limited to no more than two berths.

6.5.3 Continue to support the multijurisdictional distribution of a pamphlet detailing proper marine construction by Port Tampa Bay, EPC, FDEP, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, local building departments, and other appropriate entities that can effectively provide the pamphlet to contractors and the public.

6.5.4 Maintain the requirement of a local specialty license for contractors involved in marine construction projects to assure the proper placement, methods, and materials are used in the construction of seawall, docks, ramps, and other marine related structures.
Objective 6.6

Continue to manage the Hillsborough River as an important community asset and provide appropriate public access to this valuable natural amenity.

Policies

6.6.1 Private landowners are encouraged to provide public vistas, dedications of land interests, and pedestrian/bike paths which link public and private property within the river corridor into a linear greenbelt system.

6.6.2 At public access points, provide information on laws created to minimize use conflicts and mitigate public nuisances along the Hillsborough River, where feasible.

6.6.3 Acquire vacant waterfront parcels as they are available and restrict the sale of County owned riverfront property.

6.6.4 Dead-end roads on the riverfront will not be vacated and will be utilized for passive open space and stormwater retention, where environmentally feasible.

Objective 6.7

Continue to preserve and enhance wildlife habitats and preserve archaeological resources on the Hillsborough River.

Policies

6.7.1 The removal of exotic nuisance species from riverbanks shall be encouraged and may be required as a permitting condition.
Preserve the rural character of the Upper Hillsborough River by discouraging additional development within the river corridor except for those sites improved or developed that are dedicated to passive recreational pursuits.

6.8.1 The Upper Hillsborough River shall be managed as a Wildlife Habitat Corridor to provide an area for wildlife passage.

6.8.2 Recreation facilities in the Upper Hillsborough River Corridor shall be designed to minimize impacts upon wildlife habitat by encouraging less disruptive passive pursuits such as hiking, nature study, photography, picnicking, fishing, and canoeing. No buildings shall be constructed within 500 feet of the river’s wetlands.

6.8.3 To preserve the quiet pristine character of the upper Hillsborough River, additional boat docks and ramps in this section of the river are prohibited, unless authorized by appropriate regulatory agencies. This provision shall not apply to canoe launches.
One Water

Protect and Preserve

Water Conservation

Integrated Water Resource Management

Encourage Efficient Use of Land and Redevelopment

Sustainable Infrastructure and Programs

Low Impact Development
One Water

General Drainage, Potable Water, Sanitary Sewer, and Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element per Chapter 163

Introduction

One Water represents a holistic and integrated approach to planning for potable water, wastewater, stormwater, and the natural environment within Hillsborough County. The concept rests on the knowledge that all water is interrelated, and all water has value. Matching the right water resource to the right use can be used as an innovative solution to meet growing population demands. Viewing water holistically enables the County to be more flexible and quick to address threats like storm surge, changing rainfall patterns, and the increased need for resiliency.

The One Water Chapter synthesizes and modernizes the water resources-related language that previously lived in siloed Elements. The Chapter combines the Potable Water, Sanitary Sewerage, and Stormwater Elements as well as water resource related language from the Conservation and Aquifer Recharge, Future Land Use, Coastal Management, and Capital Improvements Elements. In addition, the Chapter contains new language that is on the forefront of water resources management, such as green infrastructure, multi-use projects, and coordinated water infrastructure planning.

The Chapter is a collaboration between stakeholders from the One Water Working Group, which represent staff from across the County: the Water Resources Department, Environmental Management Division, Development Services Department and Engineering and Operations Department. Via this integrated approach to Comprehensive Planning, the One Water Chapter sets the stage for implementation of creative programming by the County. The Chapter ensures projects consider the impact of one resource on another and take a holistic view to optimize resources and maximize benefits across the County.
No matter who we are, where we live, or what we do, water connects all of us. When we embrace the belief that water in all its forms has value—water in our lakes, seas, rivers, streams, drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater—the full water life cycle can be optimized to build strong economies, vibrant communities, and healthy environments.

– US Water Alliance

**Goals**

1. Protect and preserve water resources.

2. Increase water conservation.

3. Pursue opportunities for integrated water resource management.

4. The planning and construction of water resources infrastructure should encourage fiscal sustainability and the efficient use and redevelopment of land.

5. Water resource infrastructure and programs will be constructed and managed in a fiscally and environmentally sustainable manner.

6. Expand the use of Low Impact Development (LID) principles in the built environment.
1.1.1 Meet or exceed regulatory standards for all water systems.

1.1.2 Maintain technical design standards for water resources infrastructure that protect human health, safety and the environment.

1.1.3 Stormwater technical design standards will address the cumulative impacts on flooding and water quality.

1.1.4 For new development, there shall be no direct discharge into riverine systems, lakes, streams or creeks from adjacent development without first providing adequate water quality treatment.

1.1.5 Encourage and support Low Impact Development (LID) or green infrastructure type treatment systems, and work with other agencies and stakeholders to address further implementation measures as appropriate.

1.1.6 Prevent the introduction of harmful materials and/or chemicals into the County wastewater and stormwater system.

1.1.7 New development and nonresidential and nonagricultural redeveloment/expansions shall meet water quality standards and shall have a runoff rate and duration that is substantially similar to that for predevelopment conditions.
1.2.1 Coordinate with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to ensure minimum freshwater flows and levels are scientifically determined and maintained to support natural optimal diversity and productivity in estuarine areas; that new and existing water supply development projects are permitted at quantities that will not violate established permit limits. Implement recovery strategies where applicable; and assist with the Quality Water Improvement Program (QWIP) through the identification of abandoned wells.

1.2.2 Collaborate with the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) and SWFWMD to ensure that consumptive use of groundwater or drainage does not adversely lower water tables or surface water levels, reduce base flows, adversely affect lakes or wetlands, or increase current levels of saltwater intrusion by including these agencies in the appropriate development approval processes.

1.2.3 Coordinate with appropriate regulatory agencies to require municipal and industrial point sources of water pollution or sources of significant loadings to establish and implement water quality management plans. These plans shall include nutrient monitoring and control programs that eliminate or improve discharges or significant nutrient loadings into Tampa Bay and its tributaries.

1.2.4 Collaborate with state, local and regional agencies to ensure compliance with the Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program, especially in areas of demonstrated high aquifer recharge/contamination potential, by including these agencies in the appropriate development approval processes.

Objective 1.2

Continue to collaborate with state, regional and local agencies to ensure the provision and protection of water resources.
1.2.5 Address agricultural activities' water quality impacts through coordination with SWFWMD, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the EPC of Hillsborough County. Water quality impacts may also be subject to the County's Stormwater Quality Management Ordinance as applicable and consistent with state law.

1.2.6 Evaluate options for joint stormwater planning with adjacent jurisdictions to coordinate cross-jurisdictional drainage issues.

1.2.7 Evaluate and implement projects which contribute to the goals and priorities of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP), National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program of SWFWMD, as developed in Basin Management Action Plans for the implementation of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and as otherwise needed to meet TMDL requirements.

Objective 1.3

Protect surface water and groundwater quantity and quality for current and future use.

Policies

1.3.1 Manage land and water resources in a manner that protects, enhances, conserves, improves and restores terrestrial and aquatic ecological systems; while ensuring surface and groundwater resources functions of potable water supplies are maintained for future use.

1.3.2 All stormwater management projects will seek to maximize, to the greatest extent practicable, improvements to wetland habitat and water quality and groundwater recharge functions.

1.3.3 Support public education and effective Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address water quality issues resulting from urban and agricultural runoff, including but not limited to impacts from fertilizer and sediment. Urban BMPs shall be evaluated for effectiveness; continue to evaluate non-structural BMPs as an option for WMMP implementation.
1.3.4 Review, update, and maintain regulatory criteria, standards, methodologies and procedures that consider land use types and densities, impervious surface limitations, stormwater management plans, and innovative site planning and engineering techniques to protect and conserve surface water, groundwater, aquifer recharge areas, and public water supply wellfields.

1.3.5 Protect water quality and quantity by restricting activities and land uses which would adversely affect the quality and quantity of sources of public water supply through the land development review process. Continue to prohibit excavations that would breach the confining layers of the Floridan aquifer.

1.3.6 Review, update, and maintain criteria, regulations, standards, methodologies, and procedures to maximize recharge to aquifers. Such regulations and performance standards may include, but are not limited to: control of land use types and densities, impervious surface limitations, additional requirements for onsite retention of stormwater, and groundwater discharge controls.

1.3.7 Information on high aquifer recharge/contamination potential will be considered in planning and regulation; areas with a high potential for groundwater contamination and/or aquifer recharge will be protected from adverse impacts of development through land use categories and performance standards.

1.3.8 Continue a comprehensive wellhead and surface water protection program to protect public potable water supplies, as depicted on adopted maps within the Comprehensive Plan:

   a. Wellhead Resource Protection Areas (WRPAs) surrounding public potable water supply wells with a daily permitted amount of 100,000 gallons per day or greater.

   b. Surface Water Resource Protection Areas (SWRPAs) surrounding surface waters used for public potable supply based on the 100-year floodplain, and any buffers as may be required to protect the surface water resource.
1.3.9 Review, update, and maintain regulations, criteria, standards, methodologies and procedures for new development and redevelopment within WRPAs and SWRPAs. Such regulations, etc. shall be designed to prevent potential degradation of public potable water supplies.

1.3.10 Protect existing and planned future sources of public potable supply through the identification of prohibited activities in WRPAs and SWRPAs, as established in the Land Development Code (LDC) or other regulatory documents.

1.3.11 Review, update, and maintain a permitting, inspection and enforcement program for the County’s policies and regulations to protect public potable water supplies in WRPAs and SWRPAs.

1.3.12 No additional areas shall be designated with industrial land use plan categories within the SWRPAs and WRPAs.

1.3.13 Protect Potable Water Wellheads with a 500 foot radial setback, as outlined and implemented in the Land Development Code (LDC).
GOAL 2

Continue and enhance a comprehensive water conservation program.

Objective 2.1

Policies

2.1.1 Encourage water conservation in new and existing development via regulatory modifications or incentives.

2.1.2 Focus water conservation education and information to those users with the greatest water savings potential.

2.1.3 Continue an inverted block rate structure or other water conservation inclined user fees. Routinely evaluate the effectiveness of the rate structure and opportunities to enhance conservation practices.

2.1.4 Support and contribute to public education initiatives regarding water conservation.

2.1.5 Implement a code enforcement strategy to ensure compliance with watering restrictions, landscape standards and building code requirements; assist the Southwest Florida Water Management District in enforcing water conservation measures.

2.1.6 Require low flow plumbing fixtures for all new development and continue to fund retrofits of older fixtures and devices in existing development.
Maximize water conservation opportunities for irrigation and other non-potable uses.

2.2.1 Development shall utilize the lowest quality water reasonably, safely and feasibly available for irrigation and industrial uses.

2.2.2 New development shall prioritize meeting irrigation needs through demand management strategies, water reuse (if available), rainwater or stormwater and potentially community ground water wells. Incentives shall be developed to provide irrigation from non-potable sources.

2.2.3 Continue to implement and refine land development regulations that require incorporating Florida-Friendly LandscapingTM principles, proper plant selection and siting, limitations on shallow-rooted turfgrass, preservation of existing vegetation and use of native plants, rain sensors, efficient irrigation systems and appropriate maintenance procedures to prevent wasteful practices.

2.2.4 A low volume irrigation system shall be used whenever feasible.

2.2.5 Promote rainwater harvesting and rain barrels/cisterns for irrigation.

2.2.6 Evaluate incentives for development to provide irrigation from non-potable sources.
GOAL 3

Pursue opportunities for integrated water resource management.

Objective 3.1

Develop and implement coordinated water resource management programs across departments.

Policies

3.1.1 Work across traditional organizational boundaries to foster a collaborative water resources approach to planning, design, operations and construction of County infrastructure and programs.

3.1.2 Explore private, local, state and federal funding for integration and multi-benefit projects.

3.1.3 Maintain and update Watershed Management Master Plans, Potable Water Services, Water Reuse, Stormwater and Wastewater Master Plans to address the infrastructure needs and capital projects generated by the corresponding levels of existing development and planned growth within the County.

3.1.4 Planning approaches, programs and regulatory frameworks shall be routinely reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect and utilize best practices, emerging technologies and best available data for water resources.
Objective 3.2

Utilize a multifaceted approach to match the right resource to the right use.

3.2.1 Consider a full range of water uses in the development and implementation of public facilities and services.

3.2.2 Support the development of new and alternative water sources, in cooperation with Tampa Bay Water where appropriate, while protecting natural resources.

3.2.3 Maximize all efficient uses of water; utilize non-potable sources where economically feasible and appropriate as determined by the County.

3.2.4 Support and plan for innovative and flexible potable, wastewater, stormwater, and alternative water supply programs.

3.2.5 Meet potable water demand under all future scenarios through water reuse, conservation and appropriate use of groundwater, surface water, desalination and other alternative sources.

3.2.6 Stormwater management facilities will seek to maximize aquifer recharge functions to the greatest extent practicable.
**GOAL 4**

The planning and construction of water resources infrastructure should encourage fiscal sustainability and the efficient use and redevelopment of land.

**Objective 4.1**

Ensure that land use and area-based planning initiatives are closely coordinated with water resources planning.

**Policies**

4.1.1 Direct water resources infrastructure investment to encourage redevelopment/infill of existing vacant or underutilized property.

4.1.2 Evaluate regional or areawide stormwater infrastructure as an option for redevelopment areas, or other areas where increases in density and intensity would be desirable.

4.1.3 Explore place or impact-based incentives for potable water, wastewater or stormwater to help achieve growth management, redevelopment and fiscal goals.

4.1.4 Development in both floodways and the 100-year floodplain shall continue to be regulated in order to protect floodplain functions; continue to prevent net loss of 100-year floodplain storage volume in Hillsborough County.

4.1.5 Maintain higher performance standards that mitigate stormwater runoff in areas defined by Hillsborough County as “volume or peak sensitive.”

4.1.6 New County, community and franchise wastewater treatment facilities are prohibited in the Coastal High Hazard Area.

4.1.7 All Watershed Management Master Plans shall include evaluations of flood conditions within sub-basins or watersheds; expand the scope to include the water quality and environmental conditions within these areas.
Objective 4.2

Within the Urban Service Area, connect existing and future development to public potable water and wastewater systems.

Policies

4.2.1 New development within the Urban Service Area shall connect to public potable water and wastewater systems. Private well and septic shall continue to be prohibited except in very limited cases as determined by the LDC. Any subdivision of land is required to connect to a public wastewater system where technically feasible as determined by the County’s utility staff.

4.2.2 Continue to convert existing low-pressure sewer systems, private/franchise water and wastewater systems and individual wells to County utilities where operationally and financially feasible within the Urban Service Area.

4.2.3 Develop regulations, incentives or programmatic enhancements to increase connections to existing potable water and wastewater lines within the Urban Service Area.

4.2.4 New potable and wastewater treatment infrastructure and facilities shall be publicly owned and operated. Exceptions will be limited and evaluated and determined on a case by case basis by the Board of County Commissioners. Any exceptions will be subject to the following limitations:

   a. Any private, franchise or interim infrastructure and facilities developed under this policy shall be built to County standards.

   b. Ensure adequate maintenance programs, as reviewed and approved by Hillsborough County Public Utilities, shall be part of the conditions of approval for any private, franchise or interim infrastructure and facilities.
Objective 4.3

Limit public potable water and wastewater lines from being extended into the Rural Area, except under specified conditions.

4.3.1 Public potable water and wastewater lines shall not be permitted to be extended into the Rural Area unless this extension occurs to:

a. Serve a planned village (RP-2 or WVR-2), or Planned Environmental Community ½ as described in this Plan;

b. Serve a project that has established vested rights for the use of these facilities;

c. Address a public health hazard documented by the Health Department or other regulatory agency;

d. Provide for the extension of centralized potable water or wastewater infrastructure to serve Hillsborough County Public Schools operated by the Hillsborough County School Board, so long as the service lines are designed to accommodate solely the service demands of the school, consistent with the Interlocal Agreement for School Facilities Planning and Siting and School Concurrency;

e. Allow properties located within the Wellhead Resource Protection Areas or Tampa Bay Water Wellfield Mitigation Areas to be served by public utilities if adequate capacity is available and when public water or sewer service provides an additional level of protection to potable water resources. All such properties shall conform to the following criteria:

(1) New Development:

a) Be the subject of an approved Planned Development Zoning;
b) Contain building lots of not less than one-half (1/2) acre each;

c) Located within 1,000 feet of the Urban Service Area boundary (inclusive of road rights-of-way and riverine systems);

d) Maximum residential density cannot exceed 80% of the maximum density permitted under the Comprehensive Plan for properties where wetlands comprise less than 25% of the property; and

e) Maximum residential density cannot exceed 90% of the maximum density permitted under the Comprehensive Plan for properties with at least 25% wetlands onsite (using wetland density calculations).

(2) Existing Development:

a) Located within 1,000 feet of the Urban Service Area boundary, (inclusive of road rights-of-way and riverine systems).

(3) Provisions 4.3.1.e(1) & (2) shall not be available for use within the boundaries of the Keystone-Odessa Community Plan.

(4) Utilization of this provision could result in clustered development, achieving a greater amount of common open space in a project than projects using wells/septic systems. Such open space shall be identified on the zoning site plan as permanent conservation either through platting or other mechanism approved by Hillsborough County.
4.3.2 Connections to existing water/wastewater systems in the Rural Area may be considered on a very limited basis, so long as such connections do not foster a development pattern that is in conflict with other Plan policies. The intent of this policy is to allow some utilization of existing infrastructure for those properties located along existing lines, not to allow extensions to those systems. Details of implementation shall be outlined in the LDC. Connections to the Limited Access Transmission Main are prohibited.

4.3.3 Any extension or utilization of existing potable water/wastewater lines under the previous Policies outlined in this Objective are subject to the following criteria:

a. New development shall be responsible for infrastructure and services outside the current Urban Service Area. Any such connection and extension of lines shall be at the expense of the party requesting such service and permitted at the discretion of Hillsborough County.

b. The only jurisdiction permitted to extend lines into the Rural Area shall be Hillsborough County, unless provided for in a pre-existing service area agreement or a public health issues as identified in Policy 4.3.1(c) above.

c. Any extension or connection shall not be considered a justification for increases in densities or intensities through the Future Land Use Map amendment process, nor shall these provisions be used as a basis for a rezoning to allow uses that require public utility connections but would be incompatible with the surrounding development pattern or inconsistent with other Rural Area policies.

4.3.4 The policies in this section do not prohibit the placement of transmission infrastructure through the Rural Area to serve development within the Urban Service Area. Nor shall these policies prohibit any maintenance of existing infrastructure systems within the Rural Area and/or other improvements intended to improve operational efficiency of those systems.
5.1.1 Develop, support, maintain, and implement capital projects that address the provision of water resource services and infrastructure; remedy any potable water, water reuse, wastewater or stormwater facility deficiencies, and coordinate the acquisition, expansion, and construction of infrastructure to meet future needs. This shall be accomplished in cooperation with Tampa Bay Water, where appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to:

a. A managed system of stormwater infrastructure which will minimize the occurrences of damage due to flooding, improve the quality of surface waters, reestablish and create wetland habitat, enhance aquifer recharge, and provide opportunities for water reuse and recreational benefits. Maintenance and asset protection shall occur on a regular, routine basis to ensure flood protection and water quality functions.

b. A potable and wastewater collection, transmission, water reuse and treatment system within designated service areas; existing and programmed infrastructure shall be utilized before extending the service area.

5.1.2 Meet or exceed the adopted Levels of Service for potable water, wastewater and stormwater as outlined in the Capital Improvements Element.
5.1.3 Implement programs and projects serving a public purpose that reduce or mitigate flooding and improve water quality as determined by the Watershed Management Master Plans. Stormwater detention and retention infrastructure will continue to serve as the preferred alternatives to alleviate flooding issues.

5.1.4 Promote the co-location of water resources infrastructure and other County facilities to enhance the efficient use of land, reduce public costs, and minimize impact on the community.

5.1.5 Incorporate adaptation and mitigation measures into planning decisions for water resources infrastructure.

5.1.6 Continue coordination with FEMA as a cooperative technical partner to update Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

**Objective 5.2**

Minimize adverse impacts of septic tanks.

**Policies**

5.2.1 If wastewater service is not available or feasible, properly sited, permitted, and maintained septic tanks are a suitable alternative. Septic tanks are permitted for use in accordance with all adopted regulations and the other Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Plan.

5.2.2 Maintain siting criteria, performance standards, density limitations, separation distances and other development regulations for septic systems to ensure the protection of surface and groundwater water quality; special criteria and standards shall be maintained for those septic systems located in areas adjacent to Class I Waters, Class I Treated Waters, Class II Waters and Outstanding Florida Waters.

5.2.3 Septic tank and drain field installation shall be prohibited within 200 feet of the jurisdictional wetland lines of rivers and their tributaries, except in such cases where the 200-foot criterion cannot be met due to vested lot size or configuration.
5.2.4 Septic tanks are prohibited for new development in the Coastal High Hazard Area. Exceptions may be granted for development that is vested under criteria, standards and procedures established by the LDC.

5.2.5 Where current or future connection to wastewater infrastructure is not feasible, as determined by the County, encourage the use of Distributed Wastewater Treatment Systems in lieu of septic tanks, and as a replacement for existing septic tanks.

5.2.6 Implement a comprehensive program to convert existing septic to County wastewater within the Urban Service Area.

5.2.7 Coordinate with the Hillsborough County Health Department and/or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to ensure that non-compliant septic systems connect to County wastewater facilities and conveyance systems where feasible.

5.2.8 In conjunction with the appropriate regulatory agencies, explore potential updates to septic siting and wastewater connection policy, the technical and financial feasibility of updating criteria for limited wastewater extension, or other solutions to address potential environmental impacts of septic.

**Objective 5.3**

Coordinate with local, state and regional agency partners on water resources infrastructure planning and projects.

**Policies**

5.3.1 Coordinate with SWFWMD to ensure consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and SWFWMD’s Regional Water Supply Plan via the 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (WSFWP). The WSFWP shall be updated every five years and within 18 months of the update of SWFWMD’s Regional Water Supply Plan.

5.3.2 The annual update to the Capital Improvement Program shall be coordinated with the WSFWP, Tampa Bay Water’s Master Water Plan and Capital Improvements Program, and SWFWMD’s Regional Water Supply Plan.
5.3.3 Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure any adverse impacts from major stormwater conveyance systems are minimized or addressed.

5.3.4 Collaborate with the SWFWMD, Tampa Bay Water, the Cities of Tampa, Plant City and Temple Terrace and the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission to ensure coordination, and where appropriate, consistency of water supply and demand projections and population data.

5.3.5 Any area in the unincorporated County which by interlocal agreement is part of the area for which a city has the responsibility for providing potable water or wastewater service, but, in which the city does not provide that service to retail customers, shall be periodically reviewed by County staff for recommendation to the BOCC regarding the most cost effective and efficient provision of potable water or wastewater service.

5.3.6 Coordinate with SWFWMD, FDEP, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the EPC of Hillsborough County, and the Agriculture Economic Development Council where water resources infrastructure planning may have an effect on agriculture.
GOAL 6

Expand the use of Low Impact Development (LID) principles in the built environment.

Objective 6.1

Explore opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure or other LID principles in public projects and on publicly owned land.

Policies

6.1.1 Create demonstration projects to illustrate the value and effectiveness of green infrastructure and/or LID.

6.1.2 Where feasible, design County green infrastructure projects so that they serve multiple functions. Examples include stormwater infrastructure that also serve as public natural spaces, or linear parks along roadways that serve as pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as stormwater management.

6.1.3 Determine opportunities during the planning and development phase of Capital Improvement Program projects for LID and green infrastructure in Hillsborough County, such as alternative roadway designs, swales, bioretention, curb extensions, and innovative/permeable pavement solutions.

6.1.4 Ensure that publicly-owned land and right-of-way landscaping is designed to serve multiple functions, utilizing Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ whenever practicable. This landscaping should be designed to allow for the capture, treatment and utilization of stormwater runoff and incorporate a treatment train approach where feasible.
Evaluate incentives and regulatory modifications to enhance the use of green infrastructure and/or LID principles in private development.

**Policies**

6.2.1 Coordinate with private sector stakeholders to identify opportunities and obstacles for utilization of green infrastructure/LID in new development and redevelopment.

6.2.2 Develop manuals, guidance and technical specifications for utilization of green infrastructure/LID in new development, redevelopment and capital projects by 2024.

6.2.3 Explore incentives for development projects utilizing green infrastructure and/or LID.

6.2.4 Stormwater management infrastructure should utilize the existing topography of the site and minimize disturbance of existing natural features and hydrology to the greatest extent feasible.

6.2.5 When effective pretreatment measures can be provided, and treatment enhances the wetland system, wetlands may be used for stormwater treatment when appropriate.
# 2021 Hillsborough County 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan

## POTABLE WATER PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>FY 22</th>
<th>FY 23</th>
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<th>FY 25</th>
<th>FY 26</th>
<th>FY 27-32</th>
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**TOTAL POTABLE WATER** | **$120,320** | **$27,600** | **$75,500** | **$98,475** | **$48,100** | **$90,700** | **$460,695**
## 2021 Hillsborough County 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan

### Reclaimed Water/Conservation and Alternative Water Supply Projects (in thousands)

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<tr>
<th>Planned - NHARP Expansion</th>
<th>FY 22</th>
<th>FY 23</th>
<th>FY 24</th>
<th>FY 25</th>
<th>FY 26</th>
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<td>TOTAL RECLAIMED WATER</td>
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<td>$35,250</td>
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Legend: Funding Sources

A. Water Enterprise Fees – charges for services imposed on users of facilities of the two programs funded through enterprise funds – Solid Waste and Water/Wastewater/Reclaimed Water. Use of these revenues is restricted to operating, maintaining or building new infrastructure for the respective service for which the fee is being collected.

B. Financing – includes long and short term borrowing

Source: Hillsborough County, Water Resources Department, November 2021. This WSFWP table includes significant potable and reclaimed water capital projects at the time of plan preparation, and reflects information from the adopted Hillsborough County CIP. Project funding listed beyond the FY 26 horizon is not confirmed and is subject to approval by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners. Please note that the projects and funding in this table may be modified over time. The funding source for all the projects in this table are Enterprise funds.

### Tampa Bay Water Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potable Water Projects (in thousands)</th>
<th>FY 22</th>
<th>FY 23</th>
<th>FY 24</th>
<th>FY 25</th>
<th>FY 26</th>
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<td>$208,461</td>
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Legend: Funding Sources

B. Financing – includes long and short term borrowing

Source: Tampa Bay Water Agency Comment Email, 3 December 2021, Danielle Keirsey, PMP, Planning Project Manager III.
Governance

Capital Improvements

Intergovernmental Coordination

Solid Waste

Public Schools
Capital Improvements

Introduction

The current Capital Improvements Section can be viewed here. This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.
Intergovernmental Coordination

Introduction

The current Intergovernmental Coordination Section can be viewed here.
This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.
Solid Waste

Introduction

Solid waste management is integral to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of citizens as well as the natural environment. From curbside collection to recycling, it is essential to a functioning, clean and vibrant community. Hillsborough County's solid waste system is composed of a 3,300 acre Class 1 landfill, a Resource Recovery Facility, two transfer facilities, three yard waste facilities, three household hazardous waste collection sites, and five community collection centers which handle bulky waste, paint and electronic waste. The annual system tons managed are roughly 1.1 million.

Given the County's robust population growth, there are challenges with the long-term sustainability of the solid waste management system. The Resource Recovery Facility is at capacity, the landfill has somewhat limited capacity, and all additional waste generated by additional growth is being landfilled. At the same time, approximately 70% of the County's solid waste stream is recyclable or compostable, providing a profound opportunity for an impactful shift to sustainable solid waste management.

In conjunction with other planning efforts, updated solid waste language in the Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a policy outline for this shift.

The Solid Waste Section serves to update the Solid Waste Element of the Unincorporated Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan. Incorporating the integrated hierarchy of waste management, the Solid Waste Section update is designed to support Hillsborough County in sustainable solid waste management leadership. Employing best practices and solid waste innovations, the Section provides a framework for reducing waste generation, increasing recycling and reuse, maximizing waste diversion from County operations/processes, exploring new opportunities for beneficial uses of waste, direct needed updates to other County documents and providing policy direction to guide programmatic enhancements and capital projects.

The language was developed via a collaborative approach with staff from Hillsborough County's Solid Waste Management Division and the Environmental Management Division's Innovation and Resiliency Section. It is coordinated with other County sustainability and solid waste planning efforts.
Solid Waste

**Waste Reduction**

- **Reduce**: minimize the amount of waste produced by not generating it in the first place.
- **Reuse**: reuse, repair, and repurpose items over and over again to avoid disposal.
- **Recycle/Compost**: transform waste into new beneficial products to avoid disposal and environmental extraction.
- **Energy Recovery**: convert non-recyclable waste into usable energy.
- **Disposal**: safely dispose of waste in landfills.

“Integrated Hierarchy of Waste Management” graphic courtesy of Hillsborough County (non-adopted, for illustrative purposes only)
GOAL 1

Lead in waste reduction, reuse and recycling in a cost-efficient manner to provide for sustainable solid waste management.

Objective 1.1

Adopt an integrated hierarchy of solid waste management using source reduction as the primary approach, followed in order by reuse, recycling/composting and energy recovery. Landfill disposal shall be considered the last resort.

Policies

1.1.1 Regularly review and update codes and ordinances to implement the integrated hierarchy of waste management.

1.1.2 Support state and federal efforts to establish producer responsibility systems (e.g. product redesigns) in reducing waste generation at the source and end of life management of materials; explore methods to enhance local producer responsibility.

1.1.3 Expand partnerships with the public, private and nonprofit sector to enhance community reuse opportunities and increase organics recovery and composting infrastructure.

1.1.4 Pursuant to state statutes, require new commercial and multi-family developments to provide adequate space and receptacles for recycling infrastructure.

1.1.5 Explore a phased approach to universal recycling to expand recycling to all commercial and multi-family properties.

1.1.6 Explore and support approaches to increase waste diversion from construction-related activities.

1.1.7 Continue methods to recover energy from waste that is not recyclable.
1.1.8 Ensure that hurricane and storm debris disposal is factored into future landfill planning.

1.1.9 Continue to meet the adopted LOS as outlined in the Capital Improvements Element using the integrated hierarchy as a primary strategy.

**Objective 1.2**

**Leverage waste as a resource; evaluate and implement beneficial uses for waste.**

1.2.1 Foster in-state market development for reusable, recyclable and compostable materials.

1.2.2 Implement policies and programs to recover organics from the waste stream for beneficial use.

1.2.3 Research alternatives for beneficial reuse of materials and gas generated by waste to energy, landflling and the recovery processes.

1.2.4 Continue to monitor emerging technologies and beneficial uses for waste, as well as applicability to overall solid waste management.

**Objective 1.3**

**Ensure the County leads by example through its own facilities, education and outreach.**

1.3.1 Continue education and outreach to support citizen awareness regarding waste reduction strategies such as composting, reducing contamination in recycling and utilizing reusable materials.

1.3.2 Expand recycling to all County facilities and special events on County property; track and enhance County recycling rate.

1.3.3 Investigate the feasibility of requiring County construction projects to recycle construction and demolition (C&D) waste; explore requiring County-subsidized projects to employ reduction and diversion practices.
1.3.4 Explore cross-departmental mechanisms to enhance the internal reuse of materials or supplies.

1.3.5 Co-locate solid waste capital facilities to enhance the efficient use of land and energy and reduce costs.

1.3.6 Continue to partner across County departments on innovative and multi-benefit solid waste management projects.

1.3.7 Continue collaboration with regional partners on solid waste projects and programs.

**Objective 1.4**

Continue resilient and sustainable solid waste management siting and practices that protect citizens and the environment.

**Policies**

1.4.1 New Solid Waste Disposal Sites shall be located outside of the Coastal Planning Area.

1.4.2 Solid Waste Management Facilities located in the Coastal Planning Area shall have an operations plan for effective management of waste prior to storm surge events.

1.4.3 Updates to the Solid Waste Master Plan shall consider the relocation of existing Solid Waste Management Facilities and Solid Waste Disposal Sites to areas outside of the Coastal Planning Area in lieu of replacement or renovation.

1.4.4 Explore options to allocate actual cost of service for collection and disposal of solid waste.

1.4.5 Utilize collections contracts or other mechanisms to ensure new residential development does not adversely affect existing or new solid waste collection services.

1.4.6 Continue to operate facilities that enable proper residential disposal of household hazardous waste and electronic waste.
1.4.7 Identify businesses generating hazardous or non-processible waste to ensure prohibited materials do not enter the solid waste stream.

1.4.8 Meet, and where feasible, exceed all regulatory and environmental standards for operation of solid waste facilities.
Public Schools

Introduction

The current Public Schools Section can be viewed here.
This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.
Definitions

The current Definitions Section can be viewed here.
This Section will be updated to the 2045 horizon in 2022.