

Environmental and Sustainability Section

Tampa has a diverse natural environment that encompasses a range of ecosystems, from its shimmering wetlands and lush urban forest to the meandering Hillsborough River. The City's wetlands are crucial in maintaining the region's ecological balance. They provide a habitat for a diverse range of plant and animal species, acting as natural filters and supporting a delicate ecosystem that is vital to the health of Tampa's surrounding waters.

Tampa also offers an impressive urban forest. Towering trees, including majestic live oaks, towering pines, and graceful palms, line the City's streets and parks, imparting shade, beauty, and tranquility. This urban forest not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of Tampa but also improves air quality, mitigates the urban heat island effect, and provides a habitat for various birds and wildlife.

The Hillsborough River, a centerpiece of Tampa's natural environment, weaves through the City, offering a serene escape and a thriving habitat for diverse flora and fauna. It provides a picturesque backdrop for recreational activities such as kayaking, fishing, and riverside picnics. The preservation and protection of the Hillsborough River demonstrate the City's commitment to maintaining its natural heritage and promoting responsible stewardship of this invaluable waterway.

Tampa's natural preserves, such as Lettuce Lake Conservation Park, serve as living showcases. With its diverse ecosystem encompassing wetlands, forests, and the meandering Hillsborough River, this protected area offers outdoor recreation, environmental education, and wildlife observation opportunities. Through careful management and conservation efforts, Tampa ensures the long-term sustainability of its natural resources.

The City actively promotes environmentally friendly initiatives, encouraging residents and businesses to embrace sustainable practices. Tampa recognizes the importance of energy conservation and employs innovative measures to minimize its environmental footprint. The City promotes energy-efficient building designs and invests in renewable energy sources.

By recognizing natural systems' value in sustaining life and prosperity, it is essential for growth and development to utilize sustainable practices to ensure we meet the community's present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs. The Comprehensive Plan's Environmental and Sustainability Section provides a framework for conserving, maintaining, and restoring the natural environment and factors that affect energy conservation.

Goal 3 of this Section serves as the City's Portion of the Hillsborough River Master Plan, pursuant to Chapter 86-335, Laws of Florida. The One Water Chapter now houses water resources and aquifer recharge policies. The Environmental & Sustainability Section serves as the Conservation Element per Chapter 163.3177(6)(d), F.S.

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Goal 1:

Ensure sufficient, reliable, and clean energy is available to meet the current and future needs of the City's 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 City employees to reduce electrical loads and demands on the electrical utility system.

1.1.3: Conserve energy and become more energy efficient within City operations by continuing to update and implement the City's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan.

1.1.4: Promote energy-efficient and sustainable development practices.

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

Objective 1.2:

Support a transition to 100% clean, renewable energy.

Policies:

1.2.1: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the city's operations and facilities' current energy consumption.

1.2.2: Develop a roadmap with targets and timelines to transition municipal facilities and operations to 100% clean, renewable energy sources.

1.2.3: Support the production of clean, renewable energy sources.

1.2.4: Transition to alternative energy technology for existing, new, and renovated municipal facilities.

1.2.5: Track and monitor greenhouse gas emissions and celebrate strides made in reducing emissions.

Objective 1.3:

Meet and comply with all national and state ambient air quality standards.

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Policies:

- 1.3.1: Cooperate with the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) to encourage techniques and ways to minimize noise pollution to protect, promote and preserve the health, safety, and welfare of City residents and ensure compliance with Chapter 1-10, Rules of the EPC (Noise Pollution Rule) sound level limits.
- 1.3.2: Promote energy conservation measures and alternative energy sources to reduce electricity demand and minimize emissions from burning fossil fuels through City initiatives and collaboration with partner agencies, such as EPC.
- 1.3.3: Cooperate with EPC and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) in assessing and monitoring any negative air quality impacts associated with waste to energy facilities (e.g., ash and dioxin impacts), as well as hazardous waste transfer, storage, treatment, and disposal facilities.
- 1.3.4: Continue to support EPC's efforts to inventory and regulate stationary sources and facilities which generate regulated air pollutants, including hazardous air pollutants (HAPs).
- 1.3.5: Promote public education efforts dealing with air quality issues.
- 1.3.6: Continue collaborating with EPC and FDEP to institute the most effective procedure to alert the public of an Air Pollution episode.

Goal 2:

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

Objective 2.1:

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

Policies:

- 2.1.1: Protect and conserve Significant Wildlife Habitat and ensure no net loss of Essential Wildlife Habitat occurs.
- 2.1.2: The Development Review Committee shall consider the presence of Environmentally Sensitive Areas in formulating their recommendations for development.
- 2.1.3: Continue to apply adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures that require the development and implementation of management plans for Significant or Essential Wildlife Habitats determined to provide particularly valuable and manageable habitat qualities.
- 2.1.4: 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

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100-year floodplains of rivers and streams as provided under local rules and regulations, including mitigation as required.

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

2.1.6: Collaborate with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), FWC, and FDEP to implement protection and recovery programs for Listed Species.

2.1.7: Collaborate with the FDACS, FWC, SWFWMD, and the FDEP to control and/or eliminate exotic and nuisance species on City-owned or management land and incorporate these efforts into the management plans of natural preserve lands.

Objective 2.2:

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

Policies:

2.2.1: Support the Jan K. Platt Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP) and seek to acquire ecologically valuable land to ensure maximum diversity of wildlife species.

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

2.2.3: Provide multiple use opportunities within natural preserve lands consistent and compatible with natural resource protection and conservation.

2.2.4: Promote, through appropriate signs and information, public education on the benefits of natural preserves, to eliminate the problems of human intrusion into preserves designated for limited public access.

2.2.5: Lands dedicated to preserving natural resources shall be preserved and maintained in perpetuity.

2.2.6: Cooperate in managing natural resources on publicly owned City lands, as appropriate, with the USFWS, FWC, FDEP, SWFWMD, EPC, and the University of Florida.

Objective 2.3:

Identify, enhance, and protect corridors or linkages that maintain a contiguous network of wildlife habitat between public and private lands per local rules and regulations.

Policies:

2.3.1: Protect the County's east/west wildlife corridor greenway, connecting Cypress Creek and the Hillsborough River.

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- 2.3.2: Wildlife Corridors within development projects shall be preserved, and fragmentation of natural plant communities shall be restricted, as provided under local rules and regulations, including mitigation as required, and extension/expansion of corridors is encouraged.
- 2.3.3: Collaborate with private landowners to limit the fragmentation of wildlife movement areas. Analyze the cumulative impacts of development, steps to mitigate, and measures to maintain and enhance native ecosystems.
- 2.3.4: Protect or enhance Wildlife Corridors by minimizing road crossings over wetlands and/or other surface waters and floodplains and designing crossings for unimpeded wildlife passage provided under local rules and regulations, including mitigation as required.
- 2.3.5: 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.
- 2.3.6: Encourage appropriate agencies and private organizations to assist in conserving and preserving public natural area linkages that may function as Wildlife Corridors.
- 2.3.7: Coordinate with neighboring local governments to identify those lands for public acquisition necessary to preserve vital portions of Wildlife Corridors.
- 2.3.8: Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions and private landowners to increase regional Wildlife Corridors and wildlife distribution to link other public and private lands.
- 2.3.9: Promote Wildlife Corridor linkages to lands in adjacent counties to develop a system of interconnected public Greenways and Blue ways.
- 2.3.10: Review, update, and maintain regulatory adopted criteria, standards, methodologies, and procedures to protect the integrity of Shoreline Wildlife Corridors.

Objective 2.4:

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

Policies:

- 2.4.1: Collaborate with the EPC and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to conserve and protect wetlands and/or other surface waters from detrimental physical and hydrological alteration. Apply a comprehensive planning-based approach to protecting 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.
- 2.4.2: Collaborate with EPC and continue to protect wetlands and/or other surface waters per EPC Wetlands Rule, Chapter 1-11, Rules of the EPC.

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2.4.3: Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies to implement wetland compensatory mitigation and restoration programs.

2.4.4: All wetland and/or other surface water mitigation projects must comply with the State Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM), as applicable. Mitigation projects must demonstrate the restoration of the ecological values provided by the functions performed by impacted wetlands and/or other surface waters.

2.4.5: Minimize the disturbance of wetlands and/or other surface waters and allow their use only as a last resort and for purposes compatible with long-term maintenance of their natural functions and environmental benefits. As feasible, activities that eliminate wetlands shall provide mitigation within the City of Tampa Limits.

2.4.6: Continue to protect and preserve hydrologically connected wetlands and/or other surface waters within Environmentally Sensitive Areas designated on the Future Land Use map.

2.4.7: Coordinate with EPC for evaluation of sites containing wetlands.

2.4.8: Development is prohibited within designated wetlands and/or other surface waters as delineated by the EPC or SWFWMD, except for the following:

1. Construction of environmentally friendly boardwalks for direct access to water bodies, wildlife management structures, footbridges, observation decks, and similar structures requiring only minimal dredging or filling; shoreline stabilization with rip rap where ongoing erosion is documented or;
2. Activities approved by EPC pursuant to an approved mitigation plan.

2.4.9: Except as provided herein, the filling of wetlands and/or other surface waters for the purposes of development is prohibited. This policy shall not apply to:

1. Man-made Waters Bodies created after July 1, 1994;
2. Projects that have an Overriding Public Interest;
3. Incidental Fill; or
4. Wetland and/or other surface water impacts consistent with the comprehensive plan.

2.4.10: Establish setbacks and buffers based on current science to protect the hydrologic and biologic integrity of wetlands/other surface waters, including the Hillsborough County Wetland Ecological Buffers study published in February 2012.

2.4.11: In cooperation with the EPC and SWFWMD, promote using Florida native wetland plant species to create wetland habitat and biologically enhance filtration and treatment of pollutants in newly constructed stormwater retention and detention ponds.

2.4.12: Regulate and conserve wetlands and/or other surface waters by applying local rules and regulations, including mitigation during the development review process.

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2.4.13: 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 City or where necessary for reasonable use of a property as determined by the EPC or Port Tampa Bay. Encourage Shoreline stabilization with native plant communities, Living Shorelines, or nature-based solutions.

Objective 2.5:

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

Policies:

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

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

2.5.3: A development project's potential impact on a lake's existing environmental quality shall be assessed during the planning and development review process. The development shall be compatible with maintaining or improving a lake's environmental quality.

Objective 2.6:

Conserve soils, discourage erosion to mitigate flooding, and maintain water quality by considering topographic conditions and natural soil characteristics.

Policies:

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

2.6.2: Require site-specific analysis of proposed incompatible land use and identified soil suitability before the commitment of resources.

2.6.3: The Land Development Review process shall consider soil capability analyses for flood hazards, stability, permeability, and other relevant soil characteristics.

2.6.4: Require topsoil best management practices during all land alteration activities in cooperation with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Objective 2.7:

Manage the City's urban forest as an environmental, economic, and aesthetic resource to improve Tampa residents' quality of life.

Policies:

2.7.1: Enhance the City's tree canopy consistent with the most recent Urban Forest Management Plan for its benefits, including mitigating the heat island effect, expanding its ecosystem services, and serving as carbon storage.

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- 2.7.2: Implement the recommendations of the Preferred Alternatives for Action derived from the Urban Forest Management Plan every five years.
- 2.7.3: Implement the recommendations from the Tree Canopy Analysis to serve as a valuable management tool in retaining an optimum tree canopy.
- 2.7.4: Continue to promote the Tree and Landscape Ordinance as a critical element in retaining and providing private plant materials to support sustainable development principles of tree preservation and minimal impact to the existing site resources.
- 2.7.5: Consider the community's street trees as infrastructure. All efforts will be made to preserve, protect, and maintain these trees as a community and private property asset per the Urban Forest Management Plan.
- 2.7.6: Continue to plant new trees, manage, and care for all publicly owned trees, and work to retain healthy trees.
- 2.7.7: Continue to provide trees to City residents to preserve and augment the community's canopy and sustainability.
- 2.7.8: Promote the importance and benefits of trees and the urban forest through awareness, partnerships, and efforts that educate residents on the best planting and maintenance methods.
- 2.7.9: Conserve, protect, and maintain the City's mature trees, including those achieving "Grand" status that are of preservation quality or have historical significance; those achieving "Champion" status; and existing native vegetation.
- 2.7.10: Invest in tree planting and maintenance, especially in low-canopy areas and neighborhoods with under-served or under-represented communities.
- 2.7.11: Encourage Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles and continue distributing Florida-Friendly Landscaping public education materials.
- 2.7.12: Utilize Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles in conjunction with the use of native and non-native adaptive 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 City's aesthetic appeal and environmental quality when feasible.
- 2.7.13: Coordinate efforts to improve tree species diversity and age diversity.
- 2.7.14: Promote institutional collaboration and evaluate options for joint urban forest management programs across departments.
- 2.7.15: Assess the viability of integrating and implementing a comprehensive urban forest and tree canopy monitoring system.
- 2.7.16: Control the spread of exotic and nuisance species on City managed land by at least 90% from previously uncontrolled levels.

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Objective 2.8:

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

Policies:

2.8.1: Monitor and mitigate the cumulative impact of future developments.

2.8.2: Where appropriate, require development petitioners to develop and implement habitat management plans as part of their development approval.

2.8.3: Protect natural resources, coastal resources, and 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.

2.8.4: Collaborate with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in determining the issuance of and conditions to be placed on land development approvals that would impact Listed Species as appropriate.

2.8.5: 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 surfaces.

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

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

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

2.8.9: Encourage and incentivize the utilization of green spaces beyond the minimum requirement and discourage the consideration of non-natural surfaces as permeable solutions.

Goal 3:

Recognize its status as both a Class I and Class III water body; make the Hillsborough River cleaner, safer, and more attractive; protect its natural ecological functions, which support plant and animal wildlife and promote the enhancement of the River as a recreational and aesthetic asset to the surrounding community. This section shall serve as the Hillsborough River Master Plan, pursuant to Chapter 86-335, Laws of Florida.

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Objective 3.1:

Improve and maintain the character, retain the natural functions, and maximize the public benefits of the river corridor. Apply the following principles to all development/ redevelopment projects proximate to the Hillsborough River during the land development review process.

Policies:

3.1.1: All proposed development and redevelopment projects with Hillsborough River frontage will follow the following principles:

1. Development must be sensitive to and consistent with the unique character of the urban core, lower, middle, and upper River, as defined in the River Corridor Overlay Study.
2. Strict environmental performance standards will be applied to:
 - a. Eliminate activities that will pollute the River or require mitigation thereof in accordance with applicable stormwater and environmental regulation;
 - b. Reduce or eliminate the need for a seawall or other hardened shoreline (except within the urban core) by providing alternative erosion control designs or making the control structure environmentally friendly;
 - c. Promote visual access to scenic aspects of the corridor;
 - d. Promote Florida-Friendly Landscape™ principles, the use of native and non-native adaptive, prohibit noxious invasive species in landscaping;
 - e. Require site plan approval;
 - f. Minimize adverse environmental and/or aesthetic impacts, provide technical standards and guidelines consistent with the unique character of the urban core, lower, middle, and upper River for, or otherwise restrict, certain uses, i.e., parking lots, parking structures, truck service roads, loading docks, warehouses, manufacturing plants, shipbuilding and repair, dredging equipment operators, and heavy uses.

3.1.2: Maintain the requirement of a local specialty license for contractors involved in marine construction projects to ensure the proper placement, methods, and materials are used in the construction of seawalls, docks, ramps, and other marine-related structures.

3.1.3: Continue to support the multi-jurisdictional 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.

3.1.4: Coordinate with Port Tampa Bay, EPC, and the Hillsborough River Board to ensure new construction does not adversely impact the River or its use and enjoyment.

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- 3.1.5: Support concentrating future public and commercial marinas in the urban core downstream of Columbus Drive to enhance river traffic control, reduce the effects of boat traffic to the River, and provide nearby access to the bay.
- 3.1.6: 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 establishing the dock(s) as common property.
- 3.1.7: Multifamily zoning districts are permitted one dock per zoning lot and one additional dock for every 100 feet of linear river frontage over 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.
- 3.1.8: Continue to recognize the Alan Wright Hillsborough River Blueway and the State designated Hillsborough River Canoe Trail and ensure no action is taken that would impair its use.
- 3.1.9: Pursuant to Chapter 86-335, Laws of Florida, cooperate with the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board and Technical Advisory Council to perform its mission by providing information and staff coordination and participation.

Objective 3.2:

Continue to protect this significant source of drinking water and promote the improvement of water quality in the Hillsborough River, where it does not meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards for its designated use.

Policies:

- 3.2.1: Regularly inspect surface water management systems to ensure permit conditions are met.
- 3.2.2: Continue to retrofit stormwater outfalls to the River to replace concrete conduits with vegetated detention facilities.
- 3.2.3: The City will not allow new urban stormwater management systems that discharge into the Hillsborough River to violate state-mandated water quality treatment standards.
- 3.2.4: Prevent further destruction of desirable natural vegetative buffers along the Hillsborough River and its tributaries.
- 3.2.5: Develop a contingency plan to eliminate or mitigate the adverse impacts of any wastewater discharge to the Hillsborough River. The plan shall include a public notification system for public health and welfare threats.
- 3.2.6: Assist in preventing potential contamination by wastewater disposal systems within the Hillsborough River's drainage basin, prevent incidental discharges by maintaining redundancy systems where appropriate, and prioritize maintaining wastewater lines that would directly impact the River.

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3.2.7: In conjunction with the EPC and other appropriate agencies, identify pollution sources that adversely affect the River and develop strategies to mitigate or eliminate such sources and their effects.

3.2.8: Continue to prohibit solid waste landfills, hazardous waste facilities, and other potentially hazardous uses that may adversely affect the River and its tributaries.

3.2.9: The City will continue to prevent pollution of the receiving waters by:

1. Restrict the introduction of any foreign matter (including, but not limited to, trash, debris, garbage, fill, construction materials, organic or inorganic pollutants, pesticides, fertilizers, acids, medical wastes, and petroleum products), whether by action or inaction, to any public drainage system;
2. Certify that damaging, obstructing, or interfering with the operation of any public drainage system qualifies as a "public nuisance"; and
3. Lead by example and prevent pollution from City-owned land.

3.2.10: Continue to provide trash receptacles and restrooms at public boat launching facilities to minimize floating debris and water quality problems.

3.2.11: Coordinate with local environmental organizations to hold periodic river clean-ups.

3.2.12: Continue to pursue technologies that limit the influx of debris, oil, and other runoff from storm drainage and increase dissolved oxygen.

3.2.13: Promote environmental sustainability within neighborhoods by educating and encouraging residents to adopt environmentally friendly ways of living, such as recycling, water conservation, use of renewable resources, and low-impact transportation methods.

Objective 3.3:

Control erosion and the propagation of nuisance vegetation in and along the Hillsborough River to maintain and restore natural shorelines.

Policies:

3.3.1: Continue to implement a program of shoreline improvement and restoration on publicly owned or controlled riverfront lands, including:

1. The creation or restoration of vegetated shorelines on public lands;
2. Removal of exotic nuisance plant species from natural and filled shorelines; and
3. The replacement of existing seawalls and riprap with naturally sloped and vegetated shorelines.

3.3.2: Continue to update and distribute a homeowner's guide to shoreline management to instruct property owners in properly maintaining riverfront property.

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3.3.3: Prohibit the construction of new vertical seawalls along the upper Hillsborough River, upstream from Fletcher Avenue, and shall promote the replacement of vertical seawalls with naturally sloped and vegetated shorelines in the middle and lower River unless found to be in the overriding public interest. The overriding public interest test, located in the Definitions Section of this plan, provides criteria to guide City Council in the decision-making process.

3.3.4: Cutting trees and significant natural vegetation along the shoreline shall be discouraged except for non-native invasive species.

Objective 3.4:

Continue to preserve and enhance wildlife habitats and preserve archaeological resources within the river corridor.

Policies:

3.4.1: Wetlands and/or other surface waters and uplands with Significant Wildlife Habitat or unique environmental features such as springs or sinkholes shall be preserved through permitting processes and public education programs and balanced with other areas of overriding public interest.

3.4.2: Coordinate with FWS, FWC, & EPC to prevent or mitigate potential development impacts on fish and wildlife resources.

3.4.3: To obtain permits for development on the river corridor, specific site reviews must be conducted to identify essential and significant habitats and plans to preserve habitat. Encourage Hillsborough County, the City of Temple Terrace, and other permitting agencies to coordinate such activities in the permitting process.

3.4.4: Prohibit future development and activities that destroy or endanger fish, wildlife, or game populations or affect their ability to thrive unless other objectives override public interest exist. In cooperation with other local governments and agencies, participate in a coordinated effort to educate the public concerning wildlife protection.

3.4.5: Continue to pursue federal and state funds and permits to improve water quality conditions in the lower River. Ensure dredge spoil is disposed of in an environmentally safe manner and that natural resources in Tampa Bay are not adversely impacted.

3.4.6: Continue establishing and implementing local ordinances to prevent or control public disturbances and destruction of fish and wildlife populations related to recreational activities in the river corridor.

3.4.7: Preserve and conserve archaeological sites.

3.4.8: Continue cooperating with SWFWMD and FDEP to meet or exceed the minimum flows established for the lower Hillsborough River.

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Objective 3.5:

Continue to develop a "green" river corridor, as identified in the Hillsborough River Master Plan and Hillsborough River Study, by implementing the following policies.

Policies:

3.5.1: Give priority to acquiring vacant riverfront parcels through fee simple purchase or other alternatives including, but not limited to, conservation easements, transfer of developments rights, and post-acquisition disposition mechanisms.

3.5.2: Carefully consider vacating petitions involving dead-end riverfront or waterfront roads. Evaluate all vacating petitions on a case-by-case basis for passive, open space, stormwater retention, and controlled access for specific development types.

3.5.3: Continue to implement the plan to link all publicly owned or controlled land within the river corridor into a linear greenbelt system to include limited pedestrian ways and bicycle paths, where appropriate.

Objective 3.6:

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

Policies:

3.6.1: Ensure that an equitable share of the Boating Improvement Trust Fund is available to fund the repair and improvement of existing public boat ramps.

3.6.2: Require any new riverfront development or redevelopment in the urban core to incorporate public riverfront access in the site plan design.

Objective 3.7:

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:

3.7.1: Cooperate with the U.S. Coast Guard, FWC, and Hillsborough County to establish, post, and enforce proper boating safety and marine speed zones, where appropriate. Establish and enforce appropriate speed limits to promote public safety and protect the Hillsborough River's ecological characteristics, including areas where West Indian Manatees are known to inhabit.

3.7.2: Due to shallow water, blind curves, and hardened shores, water skiing and related activities are prohibited between the Hillsborough Avenue Bridge and the City dam (Tippin Water Treatment facility).

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3.7.3: Provide information on river conditions and regulations at public access points.

3.7.4: Take actions necessary to protect conditions essential to the survival of the vulnerable West Indian Manatee.

Land Use Section

LU Policy 1.2.29: Require provision of open space in the private development process through various performance incentives and tools, including but not limited to cluster zoning, planned development review, the dedication of easements for public access, and on-site transfer of development rights.

LU Objective 1.3: Encourage resilient and sustainable development practices.

LU Policy 1.3.1: Continue encouraging and promoting developments and redevelopments exceeding the Florida Building Code's minimum energy efficiency requirements.

LU Policy 1.3.2: Explore creating incentives for Green Developments, new homes, and commercial buildings which follow criteria and become certified under the U.S. Green Building Council's "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) program, the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC), or meet similar standards of development.

LU Policy 1.3.3: Encourage new and renovated City-owned facilities, at a minimum, will meet the most current United States Green Building Council (USGBC) "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) Silver Standard program or meet similar standards.

LU Policy 4.2.4: Continue implementing land development regulations to protect the natural environment's attributes, functions, and amenities under all projected growth scenarios.

LU Policy 4.2.5: Open space shall include all, or as much as possible, of the most significant, productive, or sensitive natural resource areas on the site. The development siting shall be controlled to minimize impacts on the functions of the open space and the natural resources therein.

LU Policy 4.2.6: Wherever feasible and functionally possible, required open spaces for individual projects shall be integrated into a green way system, particularly when contiguous parcels have already been identified or reserved for such purposes, such as but not limited to a wildlife corridor, bicycling, hiking, inline skating, and horseback riding.

Policy 4.2.10: The landholder shall provide a maintenance plan for the open space at the time of final development plan certification. The lands may be privately maintained by another entity capable and committed to its management.

LU Objective 8.13: Lands subject to Florida Administration Commission Final Order No. AC-93-087 annexed into the City of Tampa – Development must be clustered to increase the amount of open space acreage to preserve natural resources (including significant wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge, floodplains, and other resources).

LU Policy 8.13.1: Clustering will be identified on detailed site plans compactly and contiguously. Types of uses allowed in the open space areas must be consistent with preserving significant wildlife habitat and biologically functioning and integrated with the habitat. Permitted uses include conservation, mitigation areas, nature observation, hiking, stormwater systems, landscaping, and pedestrian and bike trails.

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LU Policy 8.13.2: A minimum of 25% of a parcel shall be set aside as open space. If more than 25% of a project or parcel is classified as one or more of the natural resources listed above. In that case, additional lands, i.e., those more than 25%, must also be preserved to a maximum of 50% of the entire site. There is one exception. All wetlands must be preserved even if the wetland acreage exceeds 50% of the total site acreage unless otherwise approved for impact and mitigation by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

LU Objective 8.~~13~~14: The Transitional Use-24 allows a wide range of uses which has the potential of creating a development pattern that does not adequately mitigate for intense uses allowed under this category. The long-term strategy of the City is to reduce the number of parcels designated as Transitional Use-24 with the goal, if possible, to eliminate the category from the Future Land Use Map.

LU Policy 8.~~13~~14.1: The Planning Commission staff will periodically review the locations of parcels designated as Transitional Use-24 and their appropriateness, given existing and approved development patterns and when warranted, recommend plan amendments to a more appropriate Future Land Use category.

LU Policy 8.~~13~~14.2: The surrounding, adopted zoning pattern will be recognized during any requested rezoning within parcels designated as Transitional Use-24 with the goal of ensuring that any proposed uses will not create negative impacts on adjacent uses.

LU Policy 8.~~13~~14.3: Due to the unique nature of the Transitional Use-24 Future Land Use category, no new map amendments to this category will be permitted.

LU Objective 8.~~14~~15: All existing and future land development regulations shall be made consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and all development approvals shall be consistent with those development regulations as per the timeframe provided for within Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.

LU Policy 8.~~14~~15.1: Development shall not exceed the densities and intensities as defined by the land use plan categories and incorporated herein as reference.

LU Policy 8.~~14~~15.2: Each land use plan category shall have a unique set of zoning districts that may be permitted within the land use plan category, as adopted in the Zoning Code. Zoning districts which are not included in the table/ matrix shall neither be applied for, nor approved.

LU Policy 8.~~14~~15.3: Existing regulations governing Planned Development zoning districts may be modified to include recognition of development criteria differing from criteria of comparable Euclidean districts. The regulations shall reflect that the application of the criteria during the rezoning process is negotiable, and that it will be applied on an individual case-by-case basis to ensure the balanced of reasonable development standards. Planning Development rezoning process is not to be used for the sole purpose of waiving established land Development Regulations.

Land Use Section

LU Policy 8.~~14~~15.4: Except as provided herein, new land use category designations, and changes to existing future land use category designations, on surface waters are limited to the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Land Use Category. This policy shall not apply to:

1. Man-made Water Bodies created after July 1, 1994;
2. projects that have an Overriding Public Interest;
3. Incidental Fill; or
4. wetland or other surface water impacts consistent with the comprehensive plan.

LU Policy 8.14.5: Development and redevelopment proposals may be considered for density/intensity credits to protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas on-site as defined in the Definitions Section.

LU Objective 8.~~15~~16: Implement planning process improvements to reduce undue project delays and provide certainty in the development entitlement process through consistent application of development regulations.

LU Policy 8.~~15~~16.1: Continue to streamline development regulations to remove unnecessary requirements or delays in approving and permitting residential development.

LU Policy 8.~~15~~16.2: Conserve existing housing stock by restoring, rehabilitating, and maintaining housing as one method of conserving physical assets that contribute to a neighborhood's desired character.

LU Policy 8.~~15~~16.3: Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for residential use.

One Water Chapter

Policy 1.3.8: Provide improved domestic wastewater treatment service to coastal areas where persistent water quality problems are attributable to poorly functioning septic treatment systems.

Coastal Management Section

CM Objective 1.8: Maintain and enhance the abundance and diversity of living marine resources in Tampa Bay.

CM Policy 1.8.1: Coordinate with the Marine Fisheries Commission and the Florida Marine Patrol, as appropriate, to restrict fishing activities in areas where marine fishery stocks or habitats have been, or are expected to be, excessively depleted.

CM Policy 1.8.2: Recommend disapproval to appropriate entities for dredging and filling, or other development activities, on submerged lands containing significant seagrass habitat, except in cases of overriding public interest, and seek to restore seagrass coverage.

CM Policy 1.8.3: Assist the FDEP and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in implementing protective and recovery programs for Listed Species or Species of Special Concern.

CM Policy 1.8.4: Support the protection of natural coastal shorelines as a means of providing habitat, reducing erosion, and maintaining water quality and prohibit the unmitigated hardening and bulk-heading of natural coastal shorelines except in cases of overriding public interest or ongoing demonstrated loss of property due to erosion.

CM Objective 1.9: Maintain or improve the estuarine environmental quality of Tampa Bay and control the adverse impacts of development and redevelopment on water quantity by:

1. Continued implementation of the Stormwater Management Element, which meets or exceeds, state requirements

2. Continued compliance with all applicable requirements for discharge standards for the City's sewer treatment plant;

3. Continued membership, support, and participation on inter-jurisdiction boards, such as the Agency on Bay Management, which are created to address the estuarine environmental quality of Tampa Bay.

CM Policy 1.9.1: Dredge and fill operations within the Coastal Planning Area may be considered for activities, such as but not limited to, those which facilitate the continued use of existing channels, activities associated with appropriate water-dependent uses, activities that are consistent with the Tampa Port Authority Master Plan but are not inconsistent with the Tampa Comprehensive Plan, and activities which correct environmental problems, or other appropriate activities. Through the Planning Commission's review of Tampa Port Authority permits and other forums, the City shall coordinate, as appropriate, with the Port Authority in actions consistent with the items below.

1. Coordination of the long-term plans of ports, governmental agencies, and private interest for the disposal of dredged material to minimize adverse environmental and social impacts while maintaining a viable maritime industry in the region. This plan should encompass a period of not less than 25 years, giving equal consideration to all disposal alternatives.

Coastal Management Section

2. Maximize the useful life of existing dredged material disposal areas through improvements to and protection of containment structures and by developing a state-of-the-art dewatering program.
3. Maximization of the beneficial use of appropriate dredged material for beach nourishment and identified habitat needs in a manner that balances the impacts to affected natural and human communities with compensatory mitigation.
4. Protection of unique and irreplaceable natural resources from the adverse effects of soil dispersal.
5. Facilitation of the development and use of innovative and more efficient spoil disposal methods which reduce environmental impacts and financial costs of spoil disposal.
6. An environmentally acceptable system for deep water offshore disposal of non-toxic dredge spoil material, even where costs of doing so exceed direct costs of in-bay disposal, to relieve pressures for inshore filling for reasons other than habitat creation, and to minimize the economic burden of purchasing upland disposal sites.
7. Maximization of the multiple uses of dredged material disposal areas for recreation and wildlife habitat while maintaining their utility as disposal areas.
8. Reduction of the need for maintenance dredging through proper placement and maintenance of disposal areas.
9. Minimization of the economic burden on the region's maritime industry while pursuing environmental and social objectives.

CM Policy 1.9.2: Continue maintaining membership in the Agency on Bay Management, an advisory committee to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and SWFWMD.

CM Policy 1.9.3: With the appropriate regulatory and management agencies, support the implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated management plan for Tampa Bay.

CM Objective 1.10: Protect, conserve, enhance, and restore remaining coastal wetlands, living marine resources, and wildlife habitat in the Tampa Bay estuary.

CM Policy 1.10.1: In cooperation with EPC, SWFWMD, the Agency on Bay Management, and the FDEP, seek funds to restore and recreate natural inter-tidal areas (e.g., salt marshes, mangrove forests, and mud flats).

CM Policy 1.10.2: Allow in its land development regulation and promote through counseling the development of passive recreational facilities (e.g., boardwalks) in coastal wetlands and flood plains where it can be demonstrated that such facilities will not have adverse impacts on water quality and/or fish and wildlife attributes.

Coastal Management Section

CM Policy 1.10.3: Require land developments within the Coastal Planning Area to preserve tracts of native upland plant communities, including those that provide habitat, as a means of buffering tidal wetlands from the adverse impacts of development, such as noise, increased stormwater runoff, and visual intrusion.

CM Policy 1.10.4: Continue implementing the natural resource management plan for McKay Bay and its adjacent natural tidal wetlands.

CM Policy 1.10.5: Cooperate with the regulatory agencies responsible for developing a nutrient monitoring and control program for those land uses located adjacent to Tampa Bay and its tributaries that are likely to contribute significant nutrient loadings. At a minimum, the program shall require the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for controlling nutrient loadings, including retrofitting if needed, to meet specific alternative criteria as established by the Surface Water Improvement Management (SWIM) Program.

CM Policy 1.10.6: Where consistent with the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan for Tampa Bay, consider the dredging and removal of polluted estuarine sediments, clean filling deep-dredged areas, and other means of improving adjacent estuarine water quality.

CM Policy 1.10.7: Develop, update, and implement its approved Action Plans, and any amendments thereof, pursuant to the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) interlocal agreement dated February 1998 and consistent with the applicable goals of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for Tampa Bay. This includes the goal of reducing the cumulative nitrogen loads in Tampa Bay.

CM Objective 1.11: To protect the beaches in the City, establish construction standards that will minimize further impacts of man-made structures on those beaches, and restore altered beaches.

CM Policy 1.11.1: Maintain or improve the existing natural condition of the three public beaches in the City.

CM Policy 1.11.2: Coordinate with the State to implement state-of-the-art beach and dune stabilization techniques where appropriate.

CM Policy 1.11.3: The specific and cumulative impacts of development and redevelopment upon wetlands, water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitat, and beach and dune systems shall be limited by: strict maintenance of existing setback requirements, adherence to stormwater detention requirements, retaining all publicly owned natural habitats in their undeveloped state and transfer of development rights.

CM Policy 1.11.4: Prohibit the destruction or degradation of natural inter-tidal and sub-tidal plant communities in developing new man-made estuarine beaches except in the case of overriding public interest.

Definitions Section

100-Year Flood Plain: Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding. Flood zones included in the 1-year floodplain include A, AE, AH, AO, V, VE

Conservation Areas: See Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Lands that, by virtue of some qualifying environmental characteristic (e.g., wildlife habitat), are regulated by either the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, or any other governmental agency empowered by law for such regulation. Environmentally sensitive areas include Conservation Areas and Preservation Areas. Conservation Areas include the following types of wetlands (w), natural water bodies (nwb), and uplands (u); freshwater marshes (w), wet prairies (w), hardwood swamps (w), cypress swamps (w), natural shorelines other than natural beaches and dunes (w), Class III Waters (w, nwb), and significant wildlife (w, nwb, u). Preservation Areas include the following types of wetlands, natural water bodies, and uplands; coastal marshes (w), mangrove swamps (w), marine grassbeds (w, nwb), natural beaches and dunes (w, u), Class I and II Waters (w, nwb), aquatic preserves (w, nwb), essential wildlife habitat (w, nwb, u), and natural preserves (w, nwb, u).

Essential Wildlife Habitat: Land or water bodies that, through the provision of breeding or feeding habitat, are necessary to the survival of endangered or threatened ~~species, or species of special concern~~ plant and animal species, or species of special concern, as determined by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Floodplain: Any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™: Landscapes that incorporate the Best Management Practices and philosophies described in "Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Handbook for Home Landscapes", as may subsequently be amended, and conserves water and protects the environment and are adaptable to local conditions and which are drought tolerant. Florida-friendly landscape principles include planning and design, appropriate choice of plants, soil analysis, which may consist of solid waste compost, efficient irrigation, practical use of turf, appropriate use of mulches, and proper maintenance."

Nature-Based Solutions: Actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

Natural Preserve or Natural Reservation: Publicly or privately owned lands or waters set aside for preservation in their natural state.

Preservation Areas: See Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Preserve (natural): Publicly or privately owned lands or waters set aside for preservation in their natural state.

Definitions Section

Resource Protection Areas: Land or water bodies that are ecologically or economically significant natural resources for which special protective measures have been or need to be established. The City's Resource Protection areas include the following:

- The Hillsborough River 100-year floodplain,
- Tampa Bay tidal creeks and associated tidal wetlands,
- Significant and essential wildlife habitat,
- Areas of high aquifer recharge/contamination potential,
- McKay Bay and Sulphur Springs.

Restoration (natural resource): The Process of reestablishing natural plant communities and moisture conditions which are at least the ecologically functional equivalent of the pre-disturbed land.

Significant Wildlife Habitat: Contiguous stands of natural plant communities which have the potential to support healthy and diverse populations of wildlife of native plants and animals and which have been identified on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's strategic habitat conservation area map, biodiversity hot spot map or Hillsborough County's significant wildlife habitat map, incidentally, include wetlands as delineated by the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission ("EPC")

Definitions Section