

INTRODUCTION

Under State law, the local government comprehensive plan is the ultimate regulatory authority governing all land development activities. The City Fort Pierce adopted their first comprehensive plan in 1990. In 2006, the City undertook a full rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan to meet statutory requirements and develop consensus for the long range vision of the City. The City updated the plan again in 2010 and 2019. ~~The 2019 update was done to reflect changes in Florida statutes and to update time-specific goals and policies. The 2026 update is the result of the Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR) process undertaken by the City in 2025, and includes updates to the Goals, Objectives, and Policies (GOPs) as well as the Data and Analysis to provide consistency with Florida Statutes, planning timelines, and the community's vision.~~

The State of Florida regulates local government comprehensive planning through Chapter 163, Part II of Florida Statutes. Comprehensive planning in Florida began in the 1970s and was codified in the 1985 Growth Management Act. The Act substantially increased the requirements for comprehensive plans, and mandated that local governments adopt land development regulations to implement the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. In 2011 the Community Planning Act was adopted, which substantially changed the requirements for comprehensive planning in Florida.

Chapter 163 mandates that local governments maintain a long-range, comprehensive planning program that functions as a continuous and ongoing process, rather than a one-time report. Pursuant to Rule Chapter 73C-49, Florida Administrative Code, at least every seven years each local government is required to evaluate the need to amend its Comprehensive Plan to reflect changes in state requirements since the last comprehensive plan was updated. In ~~2025~~ 2019, the City performed such an evaluation which was followed by EAR-based amendments in 2026 to update the plan accordingly.

~~In response to several natural disasters that have affected Florida, the Florida Division of Emergency Management created the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) program. The St. Lucie County LMS, originally adopted in 2010, is a multi-jurisdictional all hazards mitigation plan that includes vulnerabilities and a risk assessment. The City of Fort Pierce adopted the St. Lucie County LMS in 2011. The LMS is reviewed annually and comprehensively updated every five years. The City continues to coordinate its comprehensive plan updates with the current St. Lucie County LMS.~~

The Comprehensive Plan contained herein is consistent with Chapter 163, F.S., as required by State law. The Comprehensive Plan is organized into 12 Elements (chapters). The Data, Inventory, and Analysis (DIA) section in each element provides the supporting data and information used as the foundation for the Goals, Objectives, and Policies GOPs. ~~The DIA for each Element of the Comprehensive Plan is not formally adopted by the City Commission.~~ Each Element addresses an important aspect of land development and growth in Fort Pierce including, but not limited to, future land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, parks and recreation, educational facilities, intergovernmental coordination, and capital improvements. The Future Land Use Element contains the official Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for the City, and specific definitions for the various future land use categories referenced in the FLUM. The City's official Zoning Map and Land Development Regulations must be consistent with the FLUM and accompanying land use category specifications contained in the Future Land Use Element.

The intent of the GOPs contained within this Comprehensive Plan is to provide the overall policy framework from which zoning and other land development regulations can be developed. The City's Land Development Regulations, which contains zoning, subdivision and other local development regulations, takes its purpose and direction from the goals, objectives, and policies adopted in this Comprehensive Plan. Together, these implementing tools ensure that the

development patterns for future land uses within Fort Pierce match the community vision and quality-of-life expectations of its residents.

STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE INTENT

This Statement expresses the legislative intent of the City Commission of the City of Fort Pierce with regard to the Comprehensive Plan. It is applicable to the City of Fort Pierce Comprehensive Plan in its entirety and is declared to be incorporated by reference in each element thereof.

1. Nothing in this Comprehensive Plan shall be construed or applied to constitute a temporary or permanent taking of private property or the abrogation of vested rights as determined to exist under applicable law.
2. Nothing in this Comprehensive Plan shall be construed or implied to constitute an abrogation or removal of any private, regulatory, or governmental covenant or special condition in effect on any private or public property located within the City of Fort Pierce.
3. This Comprehensive Plan is intended to set general guidelines and principles concerning its purposes and contents. The Plan provides overall guidance for the specific implementation mechanisms that are contained in the City of Fort Pierce's Land Development Code (LDC).
4. The primary intention of the Plan is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. In the event of a conflicting provision between the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code, the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan will prevail.
5. The terms "shall" and "will" are construed as mandatory in this Plan, subject, however, to this Statement of Legislative Intent. The term "should" is construed as directory and not mandatory. Wherever implementation responsibility is not explicitly stated within a particular objective or policy in this Plan, that responsibility lies with the City of Fort Pierce to the extent that the objective or policy specifies implementation.
6. Wherever the term "acres" is used in this Comprehensive Plan, it shall be taken to mean "gross acres", unless otherwise specified. In addition, standard practice rounding convention may be used in determining whether parcels meet the size or acreage standards contained in this Plan.