

PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ELEMENT

Chapter 1: Purpose

The 2005 Florida Legislature adopted requirements that strengthen the relationship between land use planning and development, and planning for public schools and availability of school capacity. Under the statewide schedule the Sarasota County School District, Sarasota County, the Town of Longboat Key, City of Sarasota, City of Venice and City of North Port must work together to adopt the necessary comprehensive plan amendments to establish school concurrency by October 1, 2008.

In order to accelerate progress the Florida Department of Community Affairs has contracted with six school districts / county governments from around the state to serve as school concurrency "pilot communities." During 2006, these pilot communities have worked to prepare draft interlocal agreements, a public school facilities element, and amendments to intergovernmental coordination and capital improvement elements. These draft documents are intended to assist the host communities as well as serve as examples for other areas of Florida.

The Sarasota County School District and Sarasota County were selected for this pilot project and through the efforts of a staff work group representing the School District, the County and the municipalities, and consulting assistance, draft revisions to the existing Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning have been prepared as have amendments that build upon existing school related policies in the County comprehensive plan. As a part of the process elected officials from each of the governing bodies have participated in three convocations in order to provide direction and reach consensus on the draft documents.

The County and School Board will coordinate the adoption of the Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) and amendments to the Intergovernmental Coordination and Capital Improvements Elements to ensure all local government comprehensive plan elements within the County are consistent with each other.

The following sections present the standards with which the School Board evaluates school facilities; an inventory of existing facilities and planned future facilities; an evaluation of the school system based on these standards and determination of need; an analysis of funding; an analysis of coordination between school planning and local land use planning; and Objectives and Policies for such coordination.

In addition, the data and analysis supports the PSFE for Sarasota County required to implement school concurrency. The study evaluates the school system and its relationship to development and growth from both a countywide perspective and a finer grain look at schools within sectors and communities. The findings and conclusions support the goals, objectives and policies of the element including the establishment of levels of service standards and the delineation of concurrency service areas.

Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) Requirements

Over the past decade the Florida Legislature has progressively strengthened the ties between school planning and general land use and comprehensive planning through amendments to Chapters 163 and 1013, Florida Statutes.

The 2005 Legislature mandated that the availability of public schools be made a prerequisite for the approval of residential construction and directed a closer integration of planning for school capacity with comprehensive planning. Senate Bill 360:

- *requires that existing Interlocal Agreements between school boards and local governments be updated and expanded to comply with the legislation;*
- *requires each local government¹ to adopt a PSFE as part of its comprehensive plan;*
- *mandates school concurrency;*
- *requires that local governments update their Intergovernmental Coordination Elements to coordinate public school planning;*
- *requires that procedures for comprehensive plan amendments related to Capital Improvement Element updates; and,*
- *requires the establishment of a process and uniform methodology for proportionate share mitigation.*

The law requires that local governments adopt a public school facilities element as a part of their comprehensive plans to establish a framework for the planning of public schools (Section 163.3177(12), Florida Statutes). Local governments were granted approximately three years to adopt a public school facilities element. As directed by the legislation, the Florida Department of Community Affairs has established a phased schedule for adoption of the elements with each local government adopting no later than December 1, 2008². This schedule established due dates which are staggered throughout the course of the 2008 calendar year. In addition, the Legislature established enforcement mechanisms should a local government and school district fail to adopt a public school concurrency program.³

The data and analysis portion of the PSFE must address⁴:

- *how level-of-service (LOS) standards will be achieved and maintained;*
- *the interlocal agreement adopted pursuant to Section 163.31777, Florida Statutes, and the five-year school district facilities work program adopted pursuant to s. 1013.35;*

¹ Some local governments may qualify for exemption under s. 163.3177(12)(a) and (b), F.S.

² s. 163.3177(12)(i), F.S.

³ s. 163.3177(12)(j & k), F.S.

⁴ s. 163.3177(12)(c), F.S.

- *the educational plant survey prepared pursuant to Section 1013.31, Florida Statutes, and an existing educational and ancillary plant map or map series;*
- *information on existing development and development anticipated for the next five years and the long-term planning period;*
- *an analysis of problems and opportunities for existing schools and schools anticipated in the future;*
- *an analysis of opportunities to co-locate future schools with other public facilities such as parks, libraries, and community centers;*
- *an analysis of the need for supporting public facilities for existing and future schools;*
- *an analysis of opportunities to locate schools to serve as community focal points;*
- *projected future population and associated demographics, including development patterns year by year for the upcoming five-year and long-term planning periods; and,*
- *anticipated educational and ancillary plants with land area requirements.*

The legislation prescribed the following minimum content requirements for goals, objectives, and policies⁵:

- *procedure of annual update process;*
- *procedure for school site selection;*
- *procedure for school permitting;*
- *provision of infrastructure necessary to support proposed schools; and,*
- *provision for co-location of other public facilities in proximity to public schools; provision for location of schools proximate to residential areas and to complement patterns of development; measures to ensure compatibility of school sites and surrounding land uses; and coordination with adjacent local governments and the school district on emergency preparedness issues.*

In addition, the element is to include one or more future conditions maps which generally depict the anticipated location of educational and ancillary plants anticipated over the five-year and long-term planning period.

- *depict the anticipated location of educational and ancillary plants, including the general location of improvements to existing schools or new schools anticipated over the five-year or long-term planning period; and*

⁵ s. 163.3177(12)(g), F.S.

of necessity, the maps will be general for the long-term planning period and more specific for the five-year period. Maps indicating general locations of future schools or school improvements may not prescribe a land use on a particular parcel of land.

Overview

Schools can act as an anchor in the community. They are a symbol of a neighborhood's stability and attract families to the community. They transmit knowledge to new generations, advance knowledge, display the achievements of society, plus bring neighbors together for Parent Teacher Association meetings, school plays, and sporting events. They offer their classrooms and media centers to residents for adult education classes, and community and club meetings. They are key determinants of the quality of life and are valued symbols of community identity and achievement. The entire community benefits from schools. Moreover, the community is often evaluated on the basis of the quality of its schools. The planning process that guides decision-making on school size, location, and programs should therefore be coordinated with the process that guides all community development.

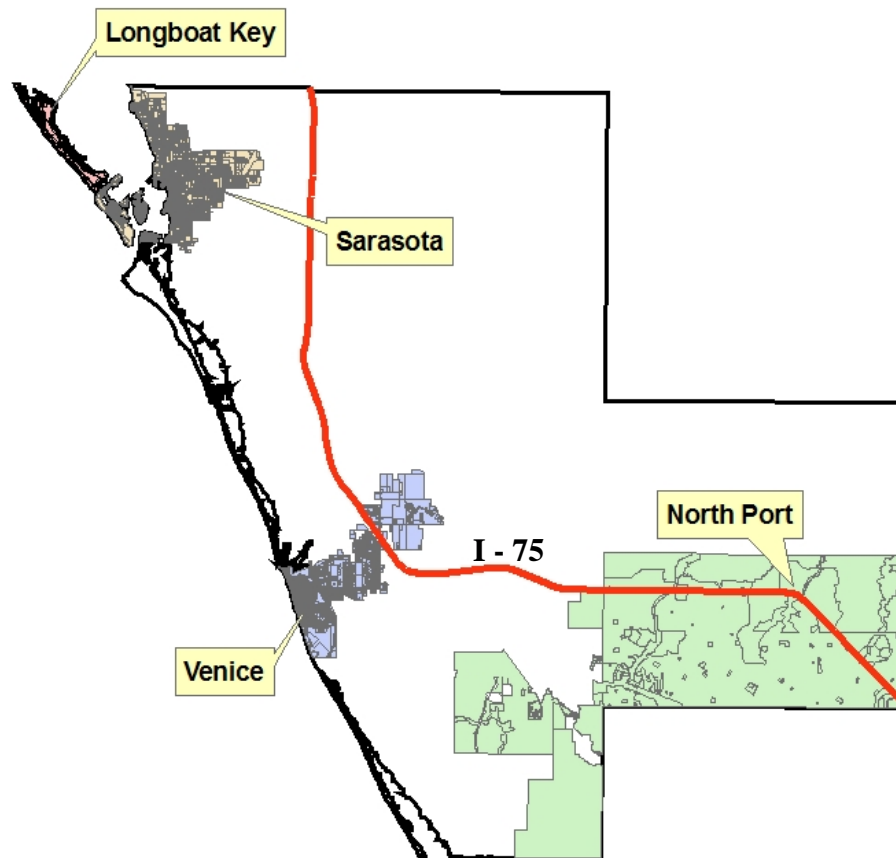
Planning for school facilities is one of the responsibilities of the local School Board. In the past, it was often a separate process from local government planning. The proper functioning and the best distribution of schools is possible only when school planning is coordinated with the larger process of community planning for growth and change. Recognizing this fact, Sarasota County Government, in cooperation and coordination with the School Board of Sarasota County (School Board), has sought to incorporate public schools in the framework of the Comprehensive Plan by including schools in the Public Buildings and Related Facilities Chapter. Currently there is no specific regulatory mandate that all public school levels of service (LOS) standards be met prior to the issuance of a development order and permit, pursuant to the provisions of Rule 9J-5.0055(1)(a). Unlike other public facilities and services, the recent legislation requires LOS standards be met prior to the issuance of a final subdivision, site plan or plat for residential development. Based on this legislation, school concurrency requirements will be established and phased in by December 2008. The deadline for Sarasota County to establish its school concurrency program is October 1, 2008. Sarasota County will establish a school concurrency structure through partnership with the School Board and local municipalities. The State has recognized Sarasota County's ability to pilot such a regulatory structure during this interim period.

Sarasota County has grown rapidly since 1950. This growth is expected to continue into the foreseeable future and the expansion of public school capacity will be required to keep pace.

Coordinated school facility planning requires a partnership between the school district and local governments. Consequently, this data and analysis recognizes the role of Sarasota County, the cities of Sarasota, Longboat Key, Venice and North Port, and the Sarasota County School District. **Map PSFE 1** shows the geographic relationships of these participants.

Map PSFE 2 defines planning sector boundaries selected for smaller area analysis. The boundaries depicted represent aggregations of Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) and are intended to link population and housing projections with school enrollment. The sectors shown generally align with school attendance zones although this alignment is not precise especially in less populated areas of the County covered by large TAZs.

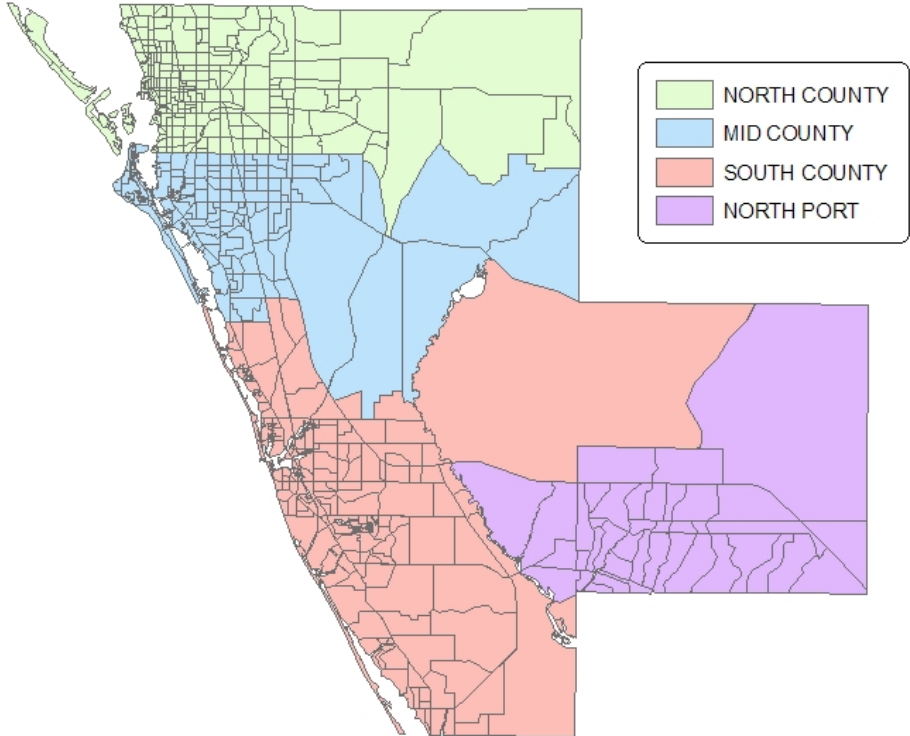
SARASOTA COUNTY



Map PSFE - 1: Municipalities & Key Features

Public School Facilities Element

SARASOTA COUNTY



Map PSFE - 2: Planning Sector Boundaries

Public School Facilities Element