



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

ARTICULATING THE VISION OF SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA

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QUICK FACTS

THE SARASOTA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WAS FIRST CALLED APOXEE, AND WAS WRITTEN IN 1975. APOXEE MEANS "TOMORROW" IN MICCOSUKKEE.

1975

THERE ARE 12 CHAPTERS IN THE 2004 VERSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

12

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AT LEAST TWO PLANNING PERIODS; A FIVE YEAR AND A TEN YEAR PERIOD.

LEGENDARY PLANNER JOHN NOLEN WAS INVOLVED IN EARLY COUNTY PLANNING, ESPECIALLY IN THE CITIES OF VENICE AND SARASOTA.

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN THE UNITED STATES WAS CREATED IN 1925 BY THE CITY OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

1925

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WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is a public policy document adopted by a local government to guide the community's goals and aspirations in terms of community development. Typically, the adopted Comprehensive Plan is the result of input and vision provided by the members of the community.

The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint, adopted by the Sarasota County Commission, to guide development of land, economic growth, resource protection, and the provision of public services and facilities in Sarasota County over time. The Comprehensive Plan implements the vision of the community through a series of "chapters" that provide a framework for development and related activities in order to maintain and achieve the quality of life desired by residents, business owners.

WHY IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEEDED?

Although comprehensive planning has been required in Florida since the 1970s, local government planning in Florida has been guided for more than 25 years by the 1985 Growth Management Act, and subsequent amendments, which can be found in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes.

The Growth Management Act required that every local government in Florida adopt a Comprehensive Plan to guide growth and development. Each Comprehensive Plan must have certain chapters or elements that address various concerns such as land use, transportation, recreation and open space, housing, conservation, and capital improvements. The Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for predictability and sets parameters for land use and zoning decisions that guide growth and development within Sarasota County. This predictability helps to ensure protection of environmental systems, provide for the efficient delivery of utilities and community services, and enhances the county's ability to budget and plan for capital improvements.

CHAPTERS OF THE SARASOTA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan currently consists of 12 chapters. Most of the Chapters are mandated by state statute and have been written to comply with guidelines that were contained within those statutes. Communities may include additional chapters that address specific community issues. Following is a list and brief description of each chapter found in the currently adopted [Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan](#):

1 HISTORIC PRESERVATION – Sets forth a program for the identification and protection of historic and archaeological resources located in unincorporated Sarasota County.

2 ENVIRONMENT – Provides the basis to maintain and improve environmental quality in Sarasota County, as the county seeks a sustainable balance between man-made and natural systems. The chapter also addresses the coastal management requirements of the Florida statutes with an emphasis on hazard mitigation; protection of life and property from tropical systems that may occasionally impact Sarasota County; and protection of the environmental ecosystems along the coastal area.

3 PARKS AND RECREATION – Identifies the current recreational sites within the county. It includes types of facilities, availability to the public and identification of future needs. The chapter also addresses coordination of sites with the municipalities in the county.

4 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT – Provides direction for the provision and management of sanitary sewer, stormwater management, and potable water facilities within the unincorporated area of the county. It is developed with the vision of an integrated, sustainable water resources management program.

5 PUBLIC BUILDINGS & RELATED FACILITIES – This chapter is based on the county's recognition of the importance of public buildings as an integral part of the community's infrastructure. It is viewed through the long-range perspective of the Comprehensive Plan. Items addressed include public libraries and government buildings, such as judicial centers, administrative offices, and emergency operations centers. The chapter also includes a section on solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling.

6 TRANSPORTATION – Sets forth a program of developing and maintaining a safe, convenient, efficient transportation system that includes public transit and public/private aviation facilities. The chapter also focuses on developing and maintaining an environmentally-sensitive transportation system through alternative modes of transportation, coordination with land uses, and coordination with adjacent communities.

7 HOUSING – Establishes the foundation for programs and actions which the County will undertake to meet the goal of providing housing for residents with varied needs, incomes, and ages.

8 ECONOMY – A chapter to address workforce training opportunities, retention of local talent and expertise; workforce housing; promotion of local businesses; tourism; and other strategies and incentives to diversify the local economy and provide a range of employment opportunities for current and future residents.



THE SARASOTA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS A **BLUEPRINT**, ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, TO **GUIDE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND, ECONOMIC GROWTH, RESOURCE PROTECTION, AND THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES** IN SARASOTA COUNTY OVER TIME.



FUTURE LAND USE – Provides direction for managing anticipated growth in the unincorporated County in an orderly and balanced manner. This chapter and the mandated Future Land Use Map are designed to work in concert with all other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the distribution of land uses will meet the future economic, social, physical, and environmental needs of Sarasota County.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS – Ties the implementing goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan to future infrastructure needs and identifies viable revenue sources to fund those needs.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION – Identifies intergovernmental relationships in the Comprehensive Plan, along with relevant federal, state, regional, and local agencies, including adjacent counties, cities in the county, and utility providers. The purpose of the chapter is to identify and improve processes and coordination between the county and these various authorities that support efficient and effective relationships.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES – Sets forth a program to serve the needs of residents, coordinates residential development with adequate school capacity, and encourages coordination and cooperation between the various agencies and elected bodies within Sarasota County.

HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?

The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan is the growth management guide for the unincorporated County only. The cities of Sarasota, North Port, Venice, and Longboat Key each have their own adopted comprehensive plans, as is required by Florida Statute.

City of Sarasota, City Plan 2030
<http://bit.ly/1AsQjLL>

City of Venice Comprehensive Plan
<http://bit.ly/1pWGP6M>

City of North Port Comprehensive Plan
<http://bit.ly/1AsQBIP>

Town of Longboat Key Comprehensive Plan
<http://bit.ly/1tbhzfs>

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The process of developing the Comprehensive Plan is a community-wide effort, and all interested individuals groups have a part in determining what this vision should be. The goals, objectives, and policies to guide this vision are then developed along with a realistic time frame for implementation.

The first phase of the process is to collect all available data that is pertinent to each chapter. The second phase is to solicit input from the community. This typically involves holding a series of public meetings, where citizens can provide input, but many communities are using a variety of methods and technologies to gain as much input as is possible, especially from groups that typically do not come to public meetings. After analyzing all existing data and input, the goals, objectives, and policies are developed and approved through a public process.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

There are several types of Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Text amendments add, delete, or modify the text within the Comprehensive Plan. A Map amendment changes a land use designation on the Future Land Use Map, the Future Thoroughfare Plan Map or maps that are part of the Future Land Use Map Series.

The amendment process is conducted at the local government level, so any amendment to the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan would be considered by the Planning Commission and acted upon by the Sarasota County Commissioners. Comprehensive Plan amendments must also be reviewed by a number of state agencies. This review process is coordinated by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. There are three types of state review processes that may be conducted depending upon the type of amendment and the size and characteristics of the land subject to the amendment.

HOW IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTED?

The Comprehensive Plan is the overall guide for the future of the community and is implemented through the County Land Development Regulations (LDRs), which must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This includes the zoning regulations. Florida law requires that LDRs address, at a minimum, the following: how land may be subdivided; zoning; compatibility; well fields; flooding; drainage and stormwater management; site plan approvals; environmentally sensitive lands; signage; and concurrency. Comprehensive Plans are also implemented through various capital improvement projects, master plans, and community initiatives.

“THE ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS THE RESULT OF **INPUT AND VISION** PROVIDED BY THE **MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.**”

