

**PASCO COUNTY**  
**CHAPTER 4 - COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

**OCTOBER 2000**

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## **SUMMARY OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

Coastal marine and estuarine areas are among the most productive ecosystems by providing food, shelter, spawning, and nursery functions to shellfish and the commercial and sport fisheries. Also, public recreational activities are dependent upon maintenance of these areas. However, increasing land development within the coastal area has led to loss of coastal vegetation which provides water quality treatment for stormwater run-off into coastal waters and serves as a natural protective barrier from storm events. Protection of the coastal vegetation and improvement in urban stormwater treatment methods will aid in the maintenance and improvement in coastal water quality.

The unique coastal habitat harbors a majority of the endangered and threatened species found in Pasco County. Consequently, protection of their habitats will help ensure their continued viability and contribute toward an increase in their respective populations.

### **Shoreline Development**

Due to the unique aesthetic qualities of the Pasco County Coastal Area, land development has increased along the shoreline areas. Individually, a single shoreline development may not adversely affect the coastal environment; however, the cumulative effects of many shoreline developments have the potential to degrade natural coastal resources. Also, public access to the shoreline should be enhanced to allow public use and enjoyment of Pasco County's coastal lands. Continuance of quality recreational opportunities is essential for the Pasco County tourist industry. In order to adequately plan for the protection and public access of the shoreline, land development will be prioritized according to its dependency upon water access and adherence to development criteria.

### **Hurricane Emergency Preparedness**

Pasco County is subject to coastal storms and hurricanes and must make provisions for the safety of residents within the Coastal Area. While not a frequent target of hurricanes, the Pasco County Coastal Area would be greatly affected by a hurricane less than 60 miles offshore. Due to the uncertainty about the exact location and force of future hurricanes, emergency preparedness plans must be implemented which address the mitigation of associated hazards prior to and after the storm. Evacuation of affected residents, provision of adequate shelter capacity and postdisaster redevelopment are necessary to protect County residents' lives and property.

### **Coastal High Hazard Area**

The State requirement for designation of a Coastal High Hazard Area is based upon the premise that some locations are more prone to storm-related events and can have a greater developmental impact upon coastal resources than other portions of the coastal area. The infrastructure facilities within a Coastal High Hazard Area are more likely to be damaged and its residents are more likely to be evacuated during any severe storm event. Given these potential hazards within a Coastal High Hazard Area, a management strategy will be formulated to limit public expenditures, redirect population, and use planned development techniques. Additionally, the lands within a Coastal High Hazard Area are the most critical natural protective resource against a hurricane and maintenance of their buffering characteristics will help minimize loss of property and maximize public safety.

# COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL 1. Protect, preserve, and enhance the natural resources of the coastal area to provide the highest environmental quality possible.

## Vegetative Communities

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Ensure the protection and enhancement of significant vegetative communities which support wildlife through increasing the amount, diversity, and viability of habitats within the coastal planning area.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 1.1.1 Prohibit nonwater-dependent development activities which affect submerged areas containing significant sea grass habitats, except in cases of overriding public interest as determined by the Board of County Commissioners.
- 1.1.2 Prohibit the alteration of coastal planning area, wetland habitat except as permitted in Chapters 62-4, 62-12, 62-27, and 40D-4, Florida Administrative Code; Section 404, Clean Water Act; and monitored by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Furthermore, Pasco County shall periodically review the adequacy of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the Army Corps of Engineers monitoring and compliance procedures to ensure that there will be no unwarranted or unmitigated net loss of wetland acreage within the coastal planning area, and if necessary, formulate an appropriate alternative management strategy.
- 1.1.3 Require mandatory setbacks around the Anclote, Hillsborough, Pithlachascotee, and Withlacoochee Rivers; Outstanding Florida Waters; Classified Shellfish Harvesting Areas (Class II water); and postdevelopment wetlands (i.e., wetland mitigation and natural wetlands). The mandatory setbacks, as defined below, shall generally remain in native vegetation and prohibit the location of impervious surfaces, except to permit consideration of, where appropriate, bona fide agricultural activities, water-dependent uses, storm-management facilities, seawalls and docks, or other activities which do not require the usage of impervious surfaces unless compatible with the Recreation and Open Space or Transportation Elements. The mandatory setbacks are as follows:
  - a. A 50-foot setback from the mean annual flood line, as established by the Southwest Florida Water Management District, of the Anclote, Hillsborough, Pithlachascotee, and Withlacoochee Rivers.
  - b. A 50-foot setback from the landward most wetland jurisdictional line or the ordinary high water, or mean high water of all areas identified in Section 62, Florida Administrative Code (Outstanding Florida Waters),

and Classified Shellfish Harvesting Areas as determined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

- c. Setbacks from the landward most postdevelopment-wetland jurisdictional line associated with any natural water body or wetland not cited in a. or b. above which are required by appropriate State regulatory agencies.
- 1.1.4 Encourage preservation, restoration, and/or enhancement of altered natural communities through site development order conditions and the County landscape requirements as set forth in the Land Development Code.
  - 1.1.5 Coordinate with all applicable resource protection agencies through participation in the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Surface Water Improvement Program, and other appropriate resource programs.
  - 1.1.6 Apply the policies of the Conservation Element, Land Use Element, and Stormwater Subelement to the coastal planning area with regard to wetlands and wildlife habitat.

## Water Quality

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Meet or exceed, by January 1, 1999, State estuarine water quality standards for designated classification and uses of coastal water bodies.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 1.2.1 Encourage the use of altered, isolated wetlands within the coastal planning area in conjunction with stormwater management plans as a means to limit off-site, stormwater discharge into coastal waters through the development review process as set forth in the Pasco County Land Development Code.
- 1.2.2 Prohibit dredge and fill activities within submerged lands adjacent to the shoreline except as permitted in Chapters 62 and 40D-4, Florida Administrative Code; Section 404, Clean Water Act; and monitored by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Furthermore, Pasco County shall periodically review the adequacy of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the Army Corps of Engineers' monitoring and compliance procedures and, if necessary, formulate an appropriate alternative management strategy.
- 1.2.3 Limit construction of artificial waterways, except for water-dependent uses, to drainage improvements necessary to implement the goals of the Public Facilities Element.
- 1.2.4 Limit the construction of wastewater treatment plant facilities within the Coastal High Hazard Area to expansion of existing plants as permitted and monitored by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in Chapter 62-6, Florida Administrative Code. Furthermore, Pasco County shall periodically review the adequacy of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection monitoring and compliance procedures and, if necessary, formulate an appropriate alternative management strategy.
- 1.2.5 Require all activities permitted and monitored by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Southwest Florida Water Management District as a source of water pollution within the coastal planning area to establish and implement a stormwater management system that complies with Chapters 62 and 40D-4, Florida Administrative Code. Furthermore, Pasco County shall periodically review the adequacy of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Southwest Florida Water Management District monitoring and compliance procedures and, if necessary, formulate an appropriate alternative management strategy.

## Beaches

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Protect, enhance, and restore beach and dune areas through implementation of policies within a comprehensive management plan by 1999 and through the continued adherence to the construction standards established in the Pasco County Coastal Construction Code.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 1.3.1 Limit impacts upon established beach and dune areas when constructing new or expanded recreational facilities.
- 1.3.2 Limit vehicular activity in beach and dune areas to designated parking facilities except for maintenance, natural resource enhancement, and restoration activities.
- 1.3.3 Pursue acquisition, improvement, or provision of public access to beach areas which are not currently accessible.
- 1.3.4 Prohibit vehicular access to Anclote Key State Preserve and other uninhabited, offshore islands to protect the environmentally sensitive nature of the dune and beach system.
- 1.3.5 Require the maintenance and preservation of beach dune systems where they exist for any proposed land development within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
- 1.3.6 Promote the restoration of adversely altered beach and dune systems through use, where appropriate, of beach stabilization techniques recommended by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

## Estuaries

OBJECTIVE 1.4 By 1999, the County shall seek to establish coordination mechanisms with the adjacent local governments to protect estuaries which extend beyond the County's jurisdiction.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 1.4.1 Initiate the development of interlocal agreements with Tarpon Springs, Pinellas County, Hernando County, Port Richey, and New Port Richey to provide coordinated and cooperative planning, management, and funding programs for limiting specific and cumulative impacts on the Bear Creek, Hammock Creek, Pithlachascotee, and Anclote estuaries. At a minimum, these agreements should provide for the local governments to adopt coordinated land development regulations, mitigative actions, and compatible land uses which:
  - a. Ensure adequate sites for water-dependent and water-related uses.
  - b. Limit estuarine pollution due to run-off, erosion, and application of insecticides and fertilizer.
  - c. Prevent run-off of untreated and inadequately treated stormwater.
  - d. Protect marine habitats and living marine resources.
  - e. Reduce exposure of public and private property and human lives to natural hazards.
  - f. Ensure public access.
  - g. Provide for a routine monitoring program for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the management programs upon the maintenance or improvement of water quality and the need for additional protective measures.

GOAL 2. Land development shall be complementary to the natural character and existing public-facility capacity of the coastal planning area.

### **Shoreline Uses**

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Implement land use criteria for the coastal planning area which prioritizes the siting and development of water-dependent and other shoreline uses.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 2.1.1 Identify shoreline uses as either water-dependent, water-related, water-enhanced, or nonwater-oriented for land development applications.
- 2.1.2 Prioritize, consistent with adopted level of service standards, proposed shoreline uses according to the following order:
  - a. Water-dependent uses, such as fish, shellfish, and wildlife production, recreation, ports, water-dependent industry and utilities, marinas, and navigation.
  - b. Water-related uses, such as certain utilities, commercial, and industrial uses.
  - c. Water-enhanced uses, such as certain recreational and commercial uses.
  - d. Nonwater-oriented activities, e.g., residential uses, with no alteration of coastal resources.
  - e. Nonwater-oriented activities, e.g., residential uses, whose impact upon coastal resources can be mitigated.
  - f. Nonwater-oriented uses which result in an irretrievable alteration of coastal resources.
- 2.1.3 Base the siting of marinas upon criteria which shall include:
  - a. Compliance with PUD Planned Unit Development District requirements of the Pasco County Land Development Code.
  - b. Preparation of a hurricane preparedness plan subject to review by the Office of Emergency Management.
  - c. Preparation, if appropriate, of a fuel management and spill contingency plan. This plan shall describe methods used in dispensing and storing fuel and all procedures, methods, and materials to be used in the event of a fuel spill.
  - d. Location within one statute mile of passes or inlets regulated for boat speeds.
  - e. Location in areas which require minimal submerged land alteration.

- f. Designation of marina basins as idle speed zones and access channels as slow speed zones.
  - g. Location outside of areas determined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be critical to the survival of the West Indian Manatee.
  - h. Demonstration of an adequate sufficient upland area to accommodate all necessary support facilities.
  - i. Location outside of areas designated as Outstanding Florida Waters or areas approved as shellfish harvesting waters.
- 2.1.4 Require adherence to the location and building construction standards specified in the Pasco County Coastal Code (Ordinance No. 86-35) for proposed development within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
- 2.1.5 Base development approval for marinas adjacent to identified conservation areas, preservation areas, or environmentally sensitive areas upon criteria which shall include:
- a. Preparation prior to development construction of an appropriate environmental impact statement identifying potential adverse impacts upon and mitigative measures for water quality, natural vegetation, wildlife and wildlife habitat, soils and shorelines, and air quality.
  - b. Identification of adequate mitigation measures to be implemented to eliminate or significantly reduce potential adverse environmental impacts of marina development incorporated as conditions of development approval.
  - c. Preparation prior to development of an appropriate monitoring plan to be implemented during and after development for the purpose of monitoring adverse impacts upon water quality, natural vegetation, wildlife and wildlife habitat, soils and shorelines, and air quality.
  - d. Adoption of an appropriate phasing schedule in the event it is determined necessary by the County in order to evaluate potential adverse environmental impacts prior to commencement and completion of the entire marina.
  - e. Limitation of certain marina uses which 1) might pose a significant adverse impact to the conservation area, preservation area, or environmentally sensitive area adjacent to the proposed project; or 2) create a nuisance to residential areas adjacent to such conservation areas, preservation areas, or environmentally sensitive areas.
  - f. Preparation of appropriate boating management plan demonstrating adequate access and protection of public safety, including existing boat traffic.

## **Development Density and Intensity**

OBJECTIVE 2.2 Limit density within the Coastal High Hazard Area through limitations on density for property in the Future Land Use Plan, restrictions on extensions of public infrastructure, and implementation of flood damage prevention regulations.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 2.2.1 Continue to require that land development applications for proposed development within the Coastal High Hazard Area address density limitations established for the purposes of limiting growth in such areas.
- 2.2.2 Require those land development applications for development within the Coastal High Hazard Area, except for a single dwelling unit, be planned in a specific manner that is compatible with site characteristics through use of the Planned Unit Development requirements of the Pasco County Land Development Code.
- 2.2.3 Promote the clustering of uses for land development projects located within the Coastal High Hazard Area through implementation of the PUD Planned Unit Development requirements of the Pasco County Land Development Code.
- 2.2.4 Prohibit the siting of new or the expansion of existing mobile home parks and/or recreational vehicle subdivisions within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
- 2.2.5 Except for expansions and renovations of existing hospitals, prohibit the siting of acute care medical facilities or any other facilities which house nonambulatory persons within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
- 2.2.6 Prohibit the generation, storage, or disposal of hazardous waste materials as defined and listed in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 261, and as adopted in Chapter 62-30, Florida Administrative Code, in excess of 100 kilograms per month, within the coastal velocity zone and discourage the same within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

## **Public Access**

OBJECTIVE 2.3 Increase public access to the coastal planning area shoreline through expansion or refurbishing of existing facilities or acquisition of new property which will be consistent with the public's needs and the natural resource capacity of the selected area.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 2.3.1 Acquire lands adjacent to the coastal shoreline through a system of incentives such as dedication of conservation areas in exchange for density credit.
- 2.3.2 Acquire, whenever feasible, shoreline areas for public access through Federal, State, regional, and/or locally funded land acquisition programs and as part of the development review process.
- 2.3.3 Manage all public access facilities in a manner consistent with Federal, State, regional, and local environmental regulations.
- 2.3.4 Limit vehicular access for publicly owned shoreline areas to designated parking areas except for maintenance and natural resource enhancement/restoration activities.
- 2.3.5 Expand public access facilities at Green Key and Hudson Beach parks.

## **Public Infrastructure**

OBJECTIVE 2.4 Limit public infrastructure expenditures for land development within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 2.4.1 Prohibit the expenditure of County funds for the construction of facilities within the Coastal High Hazard Area which would open up new areas for development. This does not include public recreation, natural and historic resource restoration or enhancement, or other facilities deemed necessary to serve existing development or which are needed due to overriding public interest as determined by the Board of County Commissioners.
- 2.4.2 Construct, improve, or maintain only those local transportation roadways which are existing or are shown on the Future Transportation Map in the Transportation Element, or those roads that are needed to maintain an adequate level of service for evacuation efforts in the event of a natural disaster within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
- 2.4.3 Prohibit publicly funded construction of new bridges linking the mainland to any island or key.

## **Service Standards**

OBJECTIVE 2.5 Maintain established levels of service, redevelopment areas, and phasing of improvements identical with the Recreation and Open Space, Public Facilities, and Transportation Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and implemented through the Capital Improvements Plan.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 2.5.1 By 1999, an evaluation will be conducted to identify areas which are considered blighted and propose programs which will eliminate unsafe conditions and encourage economic development.
- 2.5.2 By 1998, require that repair and replacement of infrastructure in the coastal area coincide with the demands generated by development activities as reviewed through the concurrency management system (see the Coastal Zone Section of the Future Land Use Element).

GOAL 3. Ensure the public's safety, health, and welfare by providing adequate warning from natural disasters.

### **Hurricane Evacuation**

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Maintain or reduce hurricane evacuation clearance times of 18 hours for an average response scenario within the hurricane vulnerability area.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 3.1.1 Develop and implement provisions which will increase the rate of evacuee mobilization, such as clear and readily apparent signage indicating emergency evacuation routes.
- 3.1.2 Maintain adequate vehicle capacity on all identified major evacuation routes and consider additional routes necessary to implement this objective.
- 3.1.3 Encourage capital improvement expenditures for critical evacuation routes lacking adequate capacity to clear the hurricane vulnerability area through coordination between Pasco County Development Services Branch, Office of Emergency Management, and the Board of County Commissioners. Also, the Florida Department of Transportation and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council shall be consulted with regard to provision of adequate capacity for critical evacuation routes.
- 3.1.4 Develop and maintain adequate shelter capacity for the population at risk within the Hurricane Vulnerability Zone under a Category 3 hurricane.
- 3.1.5 Participate and sponsor annual hurricane preparedness simulations and to provide general information to the public on evacuation procedures.
- 3.1.6 Coordinate all emergency management activities including evacuation orders with State, regional, and local emergency response agencies to affect a safe and efficient evacuation and sheltering of County residents.

## Hazard Mitigation

OBJECTIVE 3.2 Reduce the risks to human life and public and private property from natural disasters through implementation of hazard mitigation measures and postdisaster redevelopment planning within the hurricane vulnerability area as described in the Pasco County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 3.2.1 Inform County residents of areas which have sustained recurring hurricane-related damage.
- 3.2.2 Require removal, relocation, or structural modification of damaged structures and infrastructure which have incurred damage from a natural disaster event as determined by the local government but consistent with Federal funding provisions.
- 3.2.3 Prioritize immediate repair cleanup actions and permitting activities following a natural disaster.
- 3.2.4 Implement a postdisaster management plan which includes temporary measures to reduce impacts upon hazard-prone areas.
- 3.2.5 Require that land development applications be reviewed for implementation, if appropriate, of provisions contained in the Hazard Mitigation Section (Annex XIX) of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- 3.2.6 Annually update and incorporate applicable provisions of the Comprehensive Plan as amended into the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- 3.2.7 Minimize the disturbance of natural resources which provide shoreline stabilization and protect landward areas from natural hazards.
- 3.2.8 Discourage the repair or reconstruction of seawalls unless no other alternative shore stabilization techniques are available which afford reasonable property protection.
- 3.2.9 Require that the deeds for the sale of land and/or structures in hurricane-vulnerable zones (Evacuation Levels A, B, and C) contain a hurricane hazard disclosure statement.
- 3.2.10 Consider relocation, mitigation, or replacement, as deemed appropriate by local government, of infrastructures presently within the Coastal High Hazard Area when State funding is anticipated to be needed.
- 3.2.11 Incorporate recommendations from existing and future interagency hazard mitigation reports into the Comprehensive Plan during the Evaluation and Appraisal Report process as determined to be feasible and appropriate by the Board of County Commissioners.

GOAL 4. Preserve and protect historic resources within the coastal planning area of Pasco County.

**Historic Resources**

OBJECTIVE 4.1 Implement and enforce procedures for the preservation of historic resources within the coastal planning area of Pasco County.

It shall be the policy of Pasco County to:

- 4.1.1 Cooperate with State, regional, and local agency programs to locate historical resources through updates of the historical resource inventory developed for the Comprehensive Plan support document and participation in ongoing and future inventories produced by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.
- 4.1.2 Implement the County Land Development Code to require that land development applications address the occurrence or potential occurrence of historical resources in areas of known significance as determined by the Pasco County Development Services Branch.
- 4.1.3 Prohibit the destruction or disturbance of any known historical resource site without the consent of Pasco County and the State of Florida Division of Historic Resources.
- 4.1.4 Encourage the reuse of historic resources within the coastal planning area which are deemed appropriate for public viewing through specific site planning mechanisms such as density transfer bonuses and variances from setbacks and open space.
- 4.1.5 Require that known historic resources shall be designated on site plans submitted as part of the development review process.
- 4.1.6 Implement and enforce site planning requirements to identify historic resources or sites within a proposed development (see Goal 1, Objective 1.6, Policy 1.6.4, of the Future Land Use Element).

# IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

## **Vegetative Communities**

1. Revision of the land development regulations to address the location of sea grass habitats and implementation of buffer zones for projects within the coastal planning area.
2. Submittal of applicable Federal, State, and regional agency land development permits.

## **Water Quality**

1. Maintain or enhance the coastal area's water quality through adherence to established and innovative stormwater management techniques.
2. Review the adequacy and conditions of land development activities permitted by applicable Federal, State, and regional agencies.

## **Public Beach Access**

1. Revision of the land development regulations to encourage the donation of shoreline property and to restrict vehicular use along the shoreline area.
2. Development of a local land acquisition program in conjunction with Federal, State, and regional conservation land acquisition programs.

## **Shoreline Uses/Coastal High Hazard Area**

1. Revision of the land development regulations to require prioritization of land development applications within the coastal planning area and planned unit development within the Coastal High Hazard Area.
2. Implementation of building standards for the coastal building zone.
3. Review all public infrastructure expenditures and land development applications for adherence to the Comprehensive Plan policies.

## **Service Standards**

1. Review the land development applications for the coastal planning area regarding infrastructure needs and specified level of service standards.
2. Formulation of development plans for identified blighted areas.

## **Hurricane Preparedness**

1. Annual update of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
2. Review of major evacuation routes for adequacy of evacuation mobilization.

3. Annual update of hurricane shelter capacities.
4. Annual hurricane preparedness simulations.

### **Hazard Mitigation**

1. Development of postdisaster management plan within the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
2. Review of the land development applications for adherence to the hazard mitigation provisions within the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and for development/redevelopment conditions.

### **Historic Resources**

1. Revision of the land development regulations to require consideration of known, suspected historical resources.