

City of Inverness

Comprehensive Plan



GOALS OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Adopted June 7, 2016

CITY OF INVERNESS LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES
FOR THE CITY OF INVERNESS
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of these procedures is to encourage public participation in the City of Inverness planning process and to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 9J-5.004 and 9J-5.005, Florida Administrative Code. These procedures will be followed during the comprehensive plan adoption revision process, per Section 163.3181, Florida Statutes, and Chapters 9J-5 and 9J-12 , Florida Administrative Code, amendments of the Comprehensive Plan and evaluation and appraisal reports .

II. NOTICE TO REAL PROPERTY OWNERS AND GENERAL PUBLIC

The Local Planning Agency shall notify real property owners, and the general public, of all workshops, and general and special meetings concerning the Comprehensive Plan, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Notification shall be provided in a newspaper of general circulation announcing, at a minimum, the meeting date, time, place, subject of the meeting, and places where proposals may be inspected. The advertisements shall not be placed in a portion of the paper where legal notices and classified advertisements appear. The advertisements shall be placed in a newspaper at least seven days prior to regularly scheduled meetings, unless otherwise provided by Chapter 163, Florida Statutes. Advertisements shall also advise that interested parties may appear at the meeting and be heard regarding the transmittal or adoption of the Comprehensive Plan or Plan Amendment.

III. OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENTS

The Local Planning Agency shall announce at all meetings that written comments will be accepted throughout the planning process.

IV. ASSURANCE THAT REQUIRED PUBLIC HEARINGS ARE CONDUCTED

In accordance with Section 163.3174, Florida Statutes, the Local Planning Agency shall conduct public hearings to consider the required and optional elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the purpose of making a recommendation to the Inverness City Council. The Local Planning Agency shall conduct at least one public hearing prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Inverness City Council.

V. CONSIDERATION AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Throughout the process many citizens, groups, and/or organizations will be offering comments to the Local Planning Agency concerning the Comprehensive Plan. These comments, be it oral and/or written, will be considered in several ways. First, testimony at meetings is considered when given. The meetings provide a forum for dialogue among the citizenry, the Local Planning Agency and staff.

Also the Local Planning Agency will monitor all written and verbal comments via the professional staff and consultants. Staff and consultants will keep the Local Planning Agency apprised of the comments at regularly scheduled and special meetings. The Local Planning Agency will encourage input at all meetings.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures

- A. Citizen Participation:** Each year, both the Local Planning Agency and the City Council shall conduct one or more joint public meetings regarding the comprehensive plan.
- B. Updating Baseline Data and Measurable Objectives:** The Local Planning Agency shall, with assistance from City Staff, prepare updated baseline data and measurable objectives as needed. The data will then be reviewed by the Local Planning Agency which shall provide recommendations to the City Council where appropriate.
- C. Accomplishments in the Initial Planning Period:** The Local Planning Agency will, with the assistance from the City Staff develop a Comprehensive Plan Assessment Report (draft), which at a minimum will assess the degree to which selected goals, objectives and policies from each element have been reached.
- D. Obstacles or Problems:** As a part of the above referenced report, the Community Development Director will identify obstacles or problems [including changed conditions] which resulted in underachievement.
- E. New or Modified Goals, Objectives or Policies:** The Local Planning Agency will, with the assistance of the City Staff and with referral to the Assessment Report or subsequent Evaluation and Appraisal Report, recommend new or revised goals, objectives or policies needed in response to discovered problems.
- F. Assured, Continued Monitoring and Evaluation:** The yearly joint meetings, the annual updating of the Capital Improvements Element, and the involvement of the City Staff are some methods by which the City has assured that monitoring and evaluation will be continuous. In addition, it is the adopted policy of the City of Inverness to assign to the Local Planning Agency the responsibility for ongoing and future monitoring and evaluation of this comprehensive plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In response to the problems associated with Florida's rapid growth, the 1985 Florida Legislature adopted the "Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act." This legislation and subsequent amendments, required that all local governments adopt a comprehensive plan, establish level of service standards, and develop other criteria to guide orderly growth and development. This planning process requires the management of land and its natural resources while also recognizing the importance of long range planning for the maintenance of the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the community. The planning endeavors involved in this process while being extensive and comprehensive are oriented toward answering the basic questions of:

- what are the characteristics of the community?
- in what direction does the community desire to go in the future?
- how will the City achieve its desired direction?

The initial phase of this process requires extensive research and analysis to determine the characteristics of the community and provides the supporting data for the second phase of the process which is determining the desired direction of the community. The second phase encompasses the preparation of goals, objectives, and policies for the purposes of guiding the community toward its desired direction. The final phase addresses the issues of how to achieve the stated goals, objectives, and policies and involves development of a capital improvements program and land development regulations oriented toward implementing the community's stated goals, objectives, and policies.

The City of Inverness is a pleasant, stable, small town in central Florida which is primarily a low density, single family residential community with a retirement and service-based economy. Inverness is the County Seat for Citrus County. According to the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida, the City's 2006 estimated population was 7,240 persons. Which represents a 499 person increase from the 1996 estimate of 6,741 persons. The City is bordered on the north, south, and west by unincorporated Citrus County and on the east by Lake Tsala Apopka chain of lakes. Inverness is 70 miles northwest of Orlando and 65 miles north of Tampa.

The City of Inverness enjoys a positive quality of life and desires to maintain its small town atmosphere. A visioning exercise was conducted to serve as a foundation to this comprehensive plan. The following comprises the vision statement for the City of Inverness approved by the INVision 2005 participants on May 19, 1995: The vision statement below remains relevant and is preserved in the 2020 comprehensive plan out of respect for the citizen effort from which it emerged.

Inverness will continue to be a safe and friendly community, and its citizens expect their government to be progressive, dynamic, and responsive to their needs. Retention of family values and affordable lifestyles are cornerstones of Inverness' future. The citizens will seek new ways for the community to grow, while refusing to let the city lose its small town flavor, country charm, and rural atmosphere. Community pride will increase because of what Inverness has already accomplished and its citizens' commitment to do even more in the next ten years.

Inverness' chain of lakes and natural environment form a vivid backdrop, which will be compatible with economic

vitality and cultural opportunities in the new “old” Inverness of 2005. A delicate balance between man and nature will be achieved in a way that is beneficial to both. The Rails-to-Trails of the Withlacoochee, and expansion of connecting walkways and paths and other recreational opportunities (especially near downtown), will be actively pursued for people of all ages. Inverness’ lakes are a natural freshwater wonderland within Citrus County and the “Nature Coast.” Over the next ten years, cleaner lakes and waters will be the goal of the city. Inverness will lend its support to protect our water resources, especially our drinking water supplies, recognizing that this will require action by others outside the city to succeed. Inverness will seek the cooperation and joint venture action from those who can help the city accomplish its goal. These actions are considered fundamental to maintaining and improving our quality of life.

Public and private partnerships will be encouraged to improve, expand, enhance, and diversify the economy and the tax base citywide. Leadership will seek to attract new business which will complement existing developed areas. The important contributions and service provided by our public school facilities, hospital (Citrus Memorial), and churches were also identified. The schools and hospitals contribute significantly to our local economy and employment. These among other new ventures will open new opportunities for our youth who want to stay here to work and raise their families. Strategic expansion of the city to provide needed services will be explored where it can further stabilize the tax structure to achieve greater efficiencies and address environmental concerns.

The downtown is recognized as the heartbeat of the city. Through the combined efforts of individuals, businesses, government, civic clubs, and groups like the Olde Town Association, Inverness Community Redevelopment Agency (ICRA), and Chamber of Commerce efforts to attract more people and investments downtown will be expanded. Through increased coordination with the county, completion of the restoration of the historic courthouse underway, and other improvements in the courthouse square area, the downtown revitalization of Inverness will enjoy an unparalleled renaissance in the next century. Growth that retains historic character will be encouraged to provide positive first impressions to both visitors and newcomers as well as serving a source of pride for Inverness’ citizens.

As a result of these desires and expressed direction, the goals, objectives and policies of this comprehensive plan support the residential character of the community, downtown revitalization, economic development, and environmental protection in the community. Although the preceding vision statement was created in 1995, it will remain as a valuable statement by the citizens of the City of Inverness. The statement continues to provide a clear and desirable vision for 2020.

The following paragraphs represent a generalized summary of the Inverness 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The plan has been designed to answer the foregoing questions of what, where, and how.

CHAPTER 1 FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Future Land Use Element establishes the City’s statement of intent relative to growth management; traffic circulation and parking; intergovernmental coordination; zoning consistency; historical and natural resource protection; residential, commercial, office, industrial, public/semi-public, and recreation land uses; redevelopment; and the economy. Significant changes include the addition of policy language for intensity of development, redevelopment and a transportation concurrency exception area.

CHAPTER 2 HOUSING ELEMENT

The goal of the Housing Element is to ensure a sufficient supply and variety of sound, safe, sanitary, and affordable dwellings in appropriate locations. There are no significant changes to the goals, objectives and policies section of the element. However, numerous changes were made to the data and analysis supporting those policies.

CHAPTER 3 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The Recreation and Open Space Element contains goals, objectives and policies for parkland and facilities levels of service, intergovernmental coordination, maintenance, access, public information, and open space. Inverness enjoys park and recreation facilities equal to those of larger cities. There were no major changes to this element.

CHAPTER 4 CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The purpose of the Conservation Element is to provide a guide for the conservation, use, and protection of the City's natural resources which are integral to public health, safety, welfare, and quality of life. In Inverness, highly drained soils and proximity to the Floridan aquifer make suitable conditions for aquifer recharge. In areas where stormwater infiltration is impeded by urban development (e.g., roads and rooftops), stormwater runoff flows into surface water bodies. Although, surface water quality within the City's lakes is good to fair depending on water levels and time of year, lake management plans are necessary to understand and protect each system in relation to potential impacts. Stormwater runoff, nutrients in the system, septic tank leaching, and other influences from urban use and development can have adverse impacts on water quality of both surface and groundwater resources. Other features discussed in the Conservation Element are floodplains, flora and fauna, air quality, uses of natural resources, hazardous waste, pollution, radon gas, development pressure, and water use and conservation.

CHAPTER 5 INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

With regard to existing conditions, the City provides potable water, sanitary sewer, and solid waste collection to its residents. Stormwater drainage facilities are required of new development and also occur in conjunction with road improvements and City projects. Groundwater recharge is also addressed in the Infrastructure Element. Inverness is located in an area with high to medium recharge rates. The majority of the City has characteristics which are conducive to high aquifer recharge.

CHAPTER 6 TRAFFIC CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The goals, objectives and policies of the transportation element guide the City's intentions for not only the roadway system but also for multi-modal transportation including bicycles, pedestrians and transit. New policies point toward opportunities to improve the multi-modal transportation system. At the present time, roadway improvements have just been completed for US 41 South but are needed for US 41 North which is expected exceed the City's adopted level of service standard. Improvements to US 41 North have been previously listed in the FDOT five year plan. However funding remains uncertain at this time. Where US 41 and SR 44 run together through the center of the City will also soon show traffic congestion beyond the adopted level of service. New policies in the Transportation element establish a transportation concurrency exception area that recognizes the downtown area is congested at peak hour traffic as is typical in many economic hubs.

The Transportation Concurrency Exception Area approach is a flexible transportation concurrency option designed to reduce the adverse impact transportation concurrency may have on urban infill

development and redevelopment and the achievement of other goals and policies of the state comprehensive plan, such as promoting the development of public transportation.

CHAPTER 7 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element serves to insure that the comprehensive plan is internally consistent and, via the establishment of certain goals, objectives and policies, responds to the need for the coordination with adjacent local governments and regional and state agencies. There were no significant changes to the Intergovernmental Coordination Element.

CHAPTER 8 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT

The City presently has in place a formal capital budget and capital improvements program. Information provided indicates there will be adequate revenues to fund necessary capital improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan. There were significant changes to the Capital Improvements Element needed to comply with new growth management legislation.