

Visions for the Future

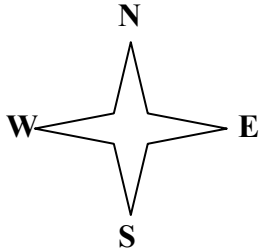
The direction the City of Zephyrhills will take in the future depends on whether we can maintain a balance between our downtown / existing developed areas and the peripheral rural areas. We must find a way to meet the needs of our present and future population without compromising the qualities that make Zephyrhills a unique and special place to live.

City-Wide Vision

Imagine ... it's the year 2010 and Zephyrhills has become a thriving, economically diverse and well-balanced community that has created a high quality of life for all its residents and seasonal visitors. Our city is well-planned, varied, healthy and a safe community in which to raise a family, work and enjoy recreational pursuits. Urban and suburban sprawl has been contained in the city and along municipal borders through effective intergovernmental coordination and cooperative planning efforts with Dade City and Pasco County. The downtown and other designated city village centers have been revitalized and thrive with variety of mixed use activities. Home ownership is at an all-time high while crime and violence is at an all-time low. Our history and sense of "small community" are valued and preserved. New subdivisions and mixed use developments are designed and constructed to reflect the character and traditions of the past. Our air and water are clean and our native vegetation, wildlife and wetlands are protected. People walk, ride bikes and jog along a city-wide network of trails. The para-transit bus service is expanded and accessible to all. Roads are safe and congestion free. Light manufacturing, medical industry, services and sustainable agriculture remain the foundations of our strong and diverse region. Problems, both old and new, are addressed effectively through citizen involvement and collaborative efforts.

A conscientious undertaking will be taken by the City's Planning Department in the upcoming years to aggressively pursue citizen involvement and participation in our planning process. It is through this process will we be able to appropriately plan for future goals and needs with the assistance and knowledge of our citizenry. Public comment will be solicited in a variety of different strategies including: 1.) citizen questionnaires, 2.) community and regional meetings and 3.) staff workshops held at various public places. The results of the public involvement process will provide sound information for the review and update of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The Goals & How We Get There



Having a vision for the future is wonderful...but alone, it isn't enough. If we believe in a future for Zephyrhills which includes everything in the vision, then we must also believe in our ability to get there. That's why we've created specific goals that address these issues and a plan of action to accompany them.

As Zephyrhills continues to grow and change, we need to recognize the relationships among economic growth, environmental protection and historic preservation, solid land use planning and quality of life issues. Zephyrhills is a unique community in which we would like and will attempt to avoid mistakes that others have made through various haphazard growth management practices.

The following section presents **Goals** for Zephyrhills, **goals** that are the foundation for achieving the vision for the future that we have set for ourselves. Following the goals are six major **Key Focus Areas** and accompanying **Actions** that will be the focus of our community over the upcoming years which will ultimately lead to a Zephyrhills which we can be proud to pass on to future generations.



The Goals

- ***Economy***
Enhance and diversify the economy and ensure economic self-sufficiency.
- ***Arts, Culture and Recreation***
Provide a diversity of arts, cultural, and recreational opportunities.
- ***Planning and Coordination***
Cooperate and coordinate “Smart Growth” planning principles regionally.
- ***Natural Resources***
Protect, conserve, preserve and restore natural resources, hills and open spaces.
- ***Housing***
Ensure that the diverse housing needs of all residents are met.
- ***Growth Management***
Encourage growth into the Downtown area and designated Village Centers with existing infrastructure while discouraging development patterns that will result in urban sprawl to the north and west.
- ***Community Character***
Preserve and enhance the characteristics that make Zephyrhills a distinctive place.
- ***Development Integrity***
Improve and enhance the visual appearance of neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- ***Transportation***
Provide for the safe, efficient, and convenient movement of people and goods.
- ***Facilities and Services***
Provide a full range of facilities and services, and coordinate their expansion with new growth.
- ***Safe Communities***
Ensure a safe and violence-free community.
- ***Potable Water***
Maintain the high quality of natural ground water and recharge areas.

Key Focus Areas For the Future

The following section examines the **Key Focus Areas** which, based on the updates to the City's Comprehensive Plan, are of interest to the community and which can guide Zephyrhills towards the goals listed on the previous page. Accompanying each **Key Focus Area** are **Actions** that must be implemented in order for us to achieve the **Key Focus Area** listed. This structure allows us to focus on pressing issues and also illustrates the relationship between the **Goals** and the **Actions**. The result is a more user-friendly plan that pinpoints our tasks over the next ten-year period (2010).

- 1. Creating a diverse and sustainable economy.**
- 2. Protecting and preserving our natural and historical resources.**
- 3. Revitalization of our urban communities.**
- 4. Developing livable communities.**

Key Focus Area No. 1

Creating a Diverse and Sustainable Economy

Goals Related to this Key Focus Area:

- ❑ Agriculture
- ❑ Community Character
- ❑ Economy
- ❑ Facilities and Services
- ❑ Growth Management
- ❑ Housing
- ❑ Natural resources
- ❑ Transportation



A sustainable economy is one that is diverse, grows smart and sufficiently to create meaningful jobs and increase the opportunity for a high quality of life for all ... without degrading the natural environmental and cultural heritage of the community. It is also capable of meeting the needs of its present population without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In order to accomplish this, an economic climate that attracts and retains vital and diverse businesses that provide quality jobs must be created. Zephyrhills must continue that which has been successful for the past decades and then also look into the future to identify areas to branch out that will help serve our community in the future as we become more of a “bedroom community” of Tampa. It is important to continue to expand the economy from one catering to retirees to a multi-faceted and diverse economic base.

Reinvesting in our Downtown / Community Redevelopment Area and our existing commercial and residential areas will help revitalize, improve the tax base and aesthetically repair areas that have become substandard and unappealing for those wishing to invest in established areas with existing infrastructure.

Actions needed to create a sustainable economy:

- Develop incentives to encourage “smart growth and redevelopment” in areas with services and facilities that create more to the City in revenue than it consumes in services.
- Maintain the integrity and quality of existing and future development.
- Explore master planning opportunities for the Downtown CRA and other village centers.
- Discourage growth and development patterns that result in urban sprawl.
- Develop traditional neighborhood development techniques and alternative transportation design requirements.
- Identify and protect locations within growth areas that are appropriate for industrial, commercial, professional and residential uses.

Key Focus Area No. 2

Protecting and Preserving our Natural & Historical Resources

Goals Related to this Focus Area:

- Historic Resources
- Natural Resources
- Community Character
- Growth Management
- Transportation



East Pasco’s heritage is a distinctive blend of natural and historical resources that are shared with permanent and seasonal visitors. From the rolling hills on the north side of the city, west to Lake Zephyr, east to the Green Swamp and south to the Hillsborough County State Forest, the City is virtually surrounded by natural resources that make Zephyrhills a unique and quality place in which to live.

If we are to maintain the quality of life that we enjoy today, then we must identify and preserve the resources, characteristics and amenities that make Zephyrhills distinct from other communities.

Actions needed to protect and preserve our resources:

- Protect and/or improve the quality of surface waters, wetlands, natural vegetative communities for endangered species.
- Maintain the natural groundwater and recharge areas.
- Identify and permanently preserve agricultural, hills and open space properties.

Key Focus Area No. 3

Revitalization of our Downtown, Village Centers & Existing Development

Goals Related to this Focus Area:

- Community Character
- Housing
- Facilities and Services
- Transportation
- Economy
- Recreation



Healthy, liveable urban communities and villages are wonderful places to live, visit and do business. They are full of energy and thrive with a diversity of activities and events. Healthy communities are like magnets that draw people and attract new business to locate within the community.

The City of Zephyrhills recognizes the importance of a vibrant downtown, active village centers and quality neighborhoods. Revitalizing the City's downtown and providing incentives for development and redevelopment are essential to the growth management strategy for Zephyrhills. In 1999/2000, the City completed a five block downtown streetscape project and will continue additional streetscaping activities in the future. The City will continue to pursue other opportunities in which to improve and provide incentives to continue the revitalization that has begun.

Actions needed to encourage revitalization:

- Maintain a compact community by growing gradually outward from the CRA and Village Centers.
- Maintain a distinct edge between urban and rural areas by directing new growth to development areas within the CRA, Village Centers and the Utility Service Area.
- Locate government-related buildings and facilities within the City's Community Redevelopment Area when possible.
- Accommodate growth by in-filling development, redeveloping existing sites, re-using vacant buildings, and using underutilized buildings more efficiently, before developing vacant land without services.
- Adapt and re-use historic buildings and design new buildings to compliment the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Stimulate private sector investment in the CRA, Village Centers and existing developed areas through incentives and streamlining regulations to reduce the cost of redevelopment.

Key Focus Area No. 4

Developing Liveable Communities

Goals Related to this Focus Area:

- ❑ Natural Resources
- ❑ Growth Management
- ❑ Community Character
- ❑ Housing
- ❑ Facilities and Services
- ❑ Transportation
- ❑ Recreation



Liveable communities are people-oriented places in which to live, work, shop and recreate. They can be created in existing urban neighborhoods, or in undeveloped suburban and rural growth areas. They have compact neighborhoods with a blend of different housing that varies in size and type, and a mix of shops, residences, civic buildings and open spaces. This is the intent of the new future land use category Mixed Use. Sidewalks and bike paths are encouraged and streets are interconnected. This pattern of development enables people to interact which helps create strong, safe neighborhoods and community pride.

Actions needed to develop liveable communities:

- Design new residential communities to reflect the pattern, character, and scale of the City's traditional neighborhoods.
- Develop new regulations that encourages the mix of housing, shops, work places, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily life of residents.
- Develop aesthetically pleasing, interconnected transportation systems that encourage walking, biking and public transit, and discourage high speed traffic.
- Develop a permanently preserved open space network that provides a diversity of publicly accessible open space resources in the form of town squares, greenways, parks and natural areas.
- Minimize the impact that large scale development has on the environment and the character of the city.
- Adopt mixed-use zoning regulations that encourage new development to be compact, traditional, diverse and efficient.
- Adopt zoning regulations that permit a wide range of housing types and densities in each residential district.
- Improve coordination with Pasco County to discuss opportunities to share and implement the ideas that have been presented in this summary to discourage impacts that cross over our municipal boundaries.
- Maintain the aesthetic "small town" feel of the community and promote that approach to its future growth and planning.

In hoping that we achieve great planning for
the future of Zephyrhills,

Todd VandeBerg
Director of Development
City of Zephyrhills