

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

GOAL 5

The City of Green Cove Springs shall conserve, utilize, and protect its natural resources to ensure that adequate resources are available for future generations.

Objective 5.1

The City shall protect unique natural habitats and ecological systems and wetlands, based on state, regional or local fish and wildlife inventories and other available data.

Policies

5.1.1 Environmentally sensitive lands shall be defined to include FEMA designated 100-year Floodplains, location of habitats for listed plant and animal species, and wetlands as defined by the SJRWMD.

5.1.2 The City shall regulate development activities by limiting impacts to environmentally sensitive land.

5.1.3 The City shall regulate development activities necessary to protect wetlands.

- 1) A permit from the St. Johns Water Management District shall also be first obtained before any construction commences.
- 2) The development must be served by central water and sewer;
- 3) The dwelling will be constructed so that the lowest floor elevation is at least one foot above the base flood elevation as established by the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps; and,
- 4) No dredging and filling shall be allowed in the wetlands unless permitted by the appropriate agencies.

~~**5.1.4** The City shall require all future development to hook into the City's sanitary sewer system. Future development in the City shall not be allowed to use septic tanks or small private treatment plants.~~

~~5.1.55.1.4~~ Developers shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits from the appropriate state and federal agencies ~~when a proposed development would affect or alter the water quality, shoreline or submerged lands along Governor Creek or the St. Johns River and discuss potential projects with the City during the permitting process.~~ The City shall not issue a development order until all required permits are obtained.

Objective 5.2

Land Development Regulations shall protect ecological systems which are sensitive to development impacts and provide important natural functions for maintenance of environmental quality. Soil conditions, native vegetative communities (including forests), natural drainage areas, and wetlands shall be evaluated to ensure development impacts are minimized.

Policies

5.2.1 The City shall ensure the preservation of native and significant vegetative communities through implementation of its Landscape and Tree Protection Ordinance.

5.2.2 The City shall continue to implement the Drainage Master Plan and include the drainage development standards for all development within the city limits.

5.2.3 The City shall ensure all proposed development activities and uses are consistent with the type and nature of the soils and require Best Management Practices of the Soil Conservation Service are utilized before and after construction activities.

5.2.4 Soil suitability, wetland, and floodplain areas shall be considered as development constraints and development of land shall be restricted depending on the severity of those constraints and consistent Best Management Practices of the Soil Conservation Service and the City's Drainage and Flood Control Ordinance.

~~5.2.5~~ ~~The Land Development Regulations will include regulations restricting development in flood prone areas that shall require development in the FEMA 100 year flood hazard zone to be constructed so that the lowest floor elevation is at least one foot above the base flood elevation as established by the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps.~~

~~5.2.6~~ ~~Development within the 100-year floodplain shall be regulated by the City to minimize flood storage capacity reductions. The storage of hazardous materials shall not be permitted within the 100-year floodplain. Dredging and filling of lands within flood plains shall be subject to permitting so as to preserve the natural functions of the 100-year floodplain.~~

~~5.2.7~~ ~~No hazardous materials or waste shall be stored within the 100-year floodplain.~~

~~5.2.8~~ 5.2.5 The City shall review the hurricane storm surge maps and determine if more stringent requirements are for development in areas designated in the Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane storm surge zones and amend applicable portions of the Land Development Regulations.

~~5.2.9~~ ~~The City shall seek grant funds to implement the Drainage Master Plan.~~

Objective 5.3

The City will develop and adopt a water conservation plan to ensure that it has adequate water supplies, of a quality and quantity sufficient, for its intended use to meet existing and projected future demands.

Policies

5.3.1 The City shall, in cooperation with the St. Johns River Water Management District, maintain a water shortage contingency plan for dealing with temporary severe water shortages, which includes provisions for cooperative agreement with CCUA on back-up water supplies, and shortage facilities, and organized procedures for emergency response.

5.3.2 The City shall insure that future public potable water wellfields will be located in areas where they will be least impacted by development and contamination. Existing and future public potable water well fields shall be protected from possible contamination by limiting the type of development or uses within 500 feet of the wellheads. Only those uses identified in the “Wellfield Protection Plan for the City of Green Cove Springs” shall be permitted within 500 feet of existing and future public potable water wellfields. No development shall be permitted within 50 feet of the wellheads, except for structures that are required for water supply.

Within 500’ feet of the wellhead the following are prohibited and not allowed:

- 1) Landfills;
- 2) Facilities for the bulk storage, handling or processing of materials on the Florida Substance list;
- 3) Activities that require the storage, use or transportation of restricted substances, agricultural chemicals, hazardous toxic waste, medical waste, and petroleum products.
- 4) Feedlots or other commercial animal facilities;
- 5) Mines; and,
- 6) Acid manufacture, cement, lime manufacturing, distillation of bones, manufacture of explosives; fat, tallow, or lard rendering; garbage or dead animal reduction, automobile wrecking or junkyards; and, paper and pulp manufacturing,
- 7) Wastewater Treatment Plants, and
- 8) Excavation of waterways or drainage facilities which intersect the water table.

5.3.3 No development order shall be approved which will reduce the quality of existing or future water supplies below standards set by the DEP.

5.3.4 The City shall ensure that all future development and redevelopment activities obtain all necessary stormwater permits from the appropriate federal and state agencies prior to the issuance of building permits. Further, all development and redevelopment activities shall be required to meet or exceed the levels of service standards set forth in the Drainage Element.

5.3.5 The City shall review and approve all drainage plans for projects that are exempted from the stormwater permit requirements of the DEP, SJRWMD and Army Corps of Engineers to assure the development is in compliance with all City regulations and requirements.

Objective 5.4

Land Development Regulations shall ensure the impacts of point and non-point pollution sources meet the minimum standards of state agencies to surface waters within the City are minimized.

Policies

5.4.1 Stormwater management systems in new developments shall be designed and constructed in accordance with all standards and criteria in the Drainage Sub-element and all adopted regulations related to stormwater management.

~~**5.4.2** Stormwater management systems shall be properly permitted by all applicable agencies, including the SJRWMD, DEP and COE prior to being issued development permits to maintain minimum state surface water quality standards.~~

~~**5.4.3.4.2**~~ In conformance with state and federal regulations, commercial establishments which use, treat, store, generate, or transport toxic or hazardous substances shall prepare a plan which identifies the materials and how these materials will be handled and disposed of to preclude invasion of stormwater systems.

~~**5.4.4.4.3**~~ Prohibit development activities that would potentially endanger lives, and/or harm property, water quality and quantity, or any other valued environmental system resulting from an alteration to existing drainage structures and natural drainage patterns. Prior to issuing a development activity to ensure the development meets the following criteria:

- a. Level of Service standards established in the ~~Drainage Sub-element~~Capital Improvements Element for water quality and quantity are met;
- b. All applicable stormwater permits are obtained from the appropriate reviewing agency(ies);
- c. Activities in or adjacent to designated Conservation areas meet the criteria established in Conservation objectives and policies.

~~**5.4.5.4.4**~~ The City shall continue to review all developments to assure compliance with the Federal requirements of the NPDES permit for Green Cove Springs.

~~5.4.5~~ The City shall promote the health of the St. Johns River and comply with the long term goals of the 2017 SJRWMD Regional Water Supply Plan and the 2018 City of Green Cove Springs Water Master Plan by reducing the e-nutrient pollutant load reductions, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), as well as the reduction of reducing the nutrients from non-point loadings by promoting water reuse and enhancing nutrient removal capabilities.

5.4.6

Objective 5.5

The City shall assist in the identification, acquisition, and protection of unique natural habitats and ecological systems (as identified by the Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, or any other relevant agency) by implementing programs in conjunction with other governmental and non-governmental entities toward this effort.

Policies

5.5.1 The City should cooperate with the state and county in efforts to acquire and/or preserve environmentally sensitive land as identified by DEP or other state or federal environmental agencies, through grant programs such as FCT, to assure their conservation and protect their availability for future generations.

5.5.2 The City will coordinate with Clay County in preserving areas of continuous and contiguous vegetative communities to ensure natural open space and wildlife corridors are protected from encroachment.

5.5.3 The City shall actively participate in the acquisition of unique natural habitats and ecological systems using grant funds and/or City funding sources.

~~5.5.4 The City shall work towards the establishment of a greenway and blueway in Green Cove Spring and coordinate with Clay County for the establishment of a greenway and blueway throughout the County.~~

5.5.6 The Clay County Manatee Protection Plan is hereby adopted by reference and all development within the city limits of Green Cove Springs shall comply with all the policies and standards included in the Clay County Manatee Protection and all updates to the Protection Plan.

Objective 5.6

Consistent with Objectives and Policies of the Conservation Element, the City will protect significant habitats of viable populations of threatened or endangered species.

Policies

5.6.1 The City shall coordinate with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in their effort to identify and map the presence of threatened, endangered, or significant wildlife species located in Green Cove Springs.

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~~5.6.2 All development over 10 acres shall provide documentation of the location of threatened, endangered or species of special concern. This documentation shall be utilized during the~~

~~review process of development orders or permits to ensure the necessary protection of endangered or threatened species. Habitats identified as necessary for the support of an existing threatened or endangered species shall be preserved consistent with all relevant federal and state requirements.~~

5.6.35.6.2 Lands acquired by the City that include unique natural habitat and ecological systems shall be placed in the Conservation Land Use category. The Conservation Land Use category shall limit the use of the land to recreation or conservation uses that are compatible with the environmental character of the land; no residential use is permitted.

Objective 5.7

The City will strive to maintain and improve air quality throughout the City.

Policies

- 5.7.1 New point-source and renewal permits shall be required to meet or exceed all EPA and State permit requirements for air quality.
- 5.7.2 The City will coordinate with DEP and the EPA to ensure enforcement of air quality regulations.

Objective 5.8

The City will set standards to reduce energy consumption both for the public and private sectors.

Policies

- 5.8.1 The City shall promote energy conservation and develop educational programs to inform the public on means of energy conservation in public and private buildings.
- 5.8.2 Construction standards, particularly for public buildings, shall be reviewed in an effort to encourage more energy-efficient buildings.

Objective 5.9

To conserve and protect the natural functions of groundwater resources, the City shall coordinate with the SJRWMD to identify all natural groundwater recharge areas within the City.

Policies

- 5.9.1 Green Cove Springs shall seek assistance from the SJRWMD and coordinate with Clay County to protect identified natural groundwater recharge areas in the City limits.