

**Hernando County Comprehensive Plan**  
**2040 PLAN**  
**Section A. Chapter 11.**  
**COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

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**GOAL 11.01 – Coastal Resource Preservation**

**Hernando County values the rich biodiversity and scenic resources of its coastal area. The County seeks to manage growth, development and natural resources to preserve the functional integrity of the coastal ecosystem and to ensure a safe, quality environment for citizens living on and visiting the coast.**

**Development in Coastal Zone Habitat  
[F.S. 163.3177(6)(g)]**

**Objective 11.01A: Hernando County shall preserve and protect habitat in the Coastal Zone by limiting the impacts of development on marine and freshwater wetlands, springs, rivers, estuaries, beaches, bays and channels, islands and isolated uplands.**

**Strategy 11.01A(1):** The Coastal Zone is established as all areas west of U.S. Highway 19.

**Strategy 11.01A(2):** Wetlands in the Coastal Zone shall be protected in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Any assigned density shall be conferred to and built within the upland portion of the property.

**Strategy 11.01A(3):** Pervious surfaces should be minimized in the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.01A(4):** Hernando County prohibits major withdrawals of water for consumptive use from springs and rivers in the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.01A(5):** Hernando County requires the identification and protection of important coastal vegetation and wildlife communities for all new development in the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.01A(6):** Mining and new excavation that creates, deepens, or widens lakes, canals, channels or ditches beyond maintenance dimensions are prohibited in the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.01A(7):** The County shall continue to identify, remediate and eliminate pollution in the Coastal Zone through programs such as, but not limited to, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), and, the Florida Friendly Landscaping program.

**Strategy 11.01A(8):** Septic tanks will be eliminated in the Coastal Zone consistent with state regulations, and at the time central wastewater disposal facilities and infrastructure are made available.

**Coastal Habitat and Saltwater Intrusion**  
**[F.S. 163.3177(6)(g) and 163.3178(7)]**

**Objective 11.01B:** **Hernando County shall conduct and support actions to manage, restore and preserve the functional integrity of coastal natural resources.**

**Strategy 11.01B(1):** The County shall continue to partner with state and federal agencies in the study, review, implementation and monitoring of natural lands and wildlife management programs in the Coastal Zone, on state, federal and County lands.

**Strategy 11.01B(2):** The Weeki Wachee springs and riverine system are a highly valued resource important to the ecosystem and culture of Hernando County and the State of Florida. The County will continue to focus on protection of coastal springs through management of springsheds for each springs group, including:

- a. continue to coordinate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in development review of land uses and actions that could potentially affect Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) of the Weeki Wachee system;
- b. continue to coordinate with the Southwest Florida Water Management District in establishing and maintaining minimum flows and levels (MFLs) whose primary purpose is to protect the integrity of the Weeki Wachee system and other coastal springs;
- c. coordinate with the appropriate state agencies to identify and implement actions to abate nutrient pollution in impaired waters of the Weeki Wachee including restriction of fertilizer application, use of Low Impact Development (LID) design, and Florida Friendly Landscaping programs in the springshed areas.

**Strategy 11.01B(3):** Hernando County will evaluate and consider partnerships with state and federal agencies to acquire, protect and restore natural lands and wildlife habitat in the Coastal Zone consistent with the provisions of this Plan to protect private property rights. The County shall establish a process for identifying and prioritizing coastal properties for the purpose of willing-seller state acquisition. The prioritization shall consider environmental sensitivity, hazard mitigation, beach access, beach management, urban recreation and other coastal management considerations.

**Strategy 11.01B(4):** Hernando County will partner and coordinate with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to identify and implement

actions that prevent manmade exacerbation of saltwater intrusion into fresh groundwater.

**GOAL 11.02 – Coastal Zone Development**

**Hernando County shall direct new and expanded population concentrations, vulnerable land uses and new infrastructure away from the Coastal Zone as indicated in this Element. [F.S. 163.3177(6)(g), 163.3178(2), 163.3178(8)]**

**Development in the Coastal High Hazard Area**

**Objective 11.02A: Hernando County has established a Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) where development is limited and regulated consistent with the provisions of this plan to protect private property rights in order to mitigate exposures to hazards and losses related to coastal storms and sea level rise and to responsibly manage the potential fiscal impacts and fiscal responses to the damage from such hazards.**

**Strategy 11.02A(1):** Hernando County designates the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) as the area below the elevation of the Category 1 storm surge line as established by the Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) storm surge model, as updated from time to time by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and as generally depicted on the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) Map.

**Strategy 11.02A(2):** Hernando County floodplain protection regulations shall take into account the minimum requirements of the Florida Building Code and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

**Strategy 11.02A(3):** Infill residential development in existing communities with existing infrastructure are permitted in the Coastal Zone, consistent with present densities, provided that all applicable federal, state and county zoning, construction and environmental regulations are met. All newly proposed residential development in the Coastal Zone is regulated as follows notwithstanding the underlying Future Land Use Map category:

- a. Density in the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) is restricted to one unit per gross acre, and, all allowable density must be sited within the upland portion of the property;
- b. Density within the V-Zone Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) category as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and adopted Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) is restricted to 1 unit per upland acre and no density shall be transferred from or built within V-Zone wetlands;
- c. Privately-owned uplands within the Coastal Zone that are designated as Conservation on the Future Land Use Map having direct access to the County roadway network may be considered to have a Residential Future Land Use Category

designation for purposes of allowable uses, and, may be assigned an appropriate density consistent with the Residential Category, CHHA, or V-Zone designation as applicable.

### **Hurricane Evacuation Level of Service**

**Strategy 11.02A(4):** The following hurricane evacuation clearance time levels of service (LOS) are hereby adopted:

- a. 12 hours for evacuation to shelter for a category 5 storm; and,
- b. 16 hours for out-of-county evacuation for a category 5 storm.

Proposed development within the Coastal Zone shall meet and maintain the adopted Level of Service and shall be supported by adequate and relevant data and analysis demonstrating that the adopted hurricane evacuation Level of Service for the Category 5 storm is maintained. Level of Service evaluation for development proposals and for Comprehensive Plan Amendments seeking to increase residential densities within the Coastal Zone shall include data and analysis of the impacts of the proposed development or amendment on the Category 5 hurricane evacuation clearance time Levels of Service.

**Strategy 11.02A(5):** If review of data and analysis for proposed new developments or Comprehensive Plan Amendments indicates that the hurricane evacuation clearance time Levels of Service will not be achieved, then mitigation may be approved to the extent that it is intended to maintain the adopted Levels of Service. Appropriate mitigation includes, but is not limited to contribution of funding, land or construction services for hurricane shelters and transportation facilities. The data and analysis demonstrating adequate mitigation shall include identification of the type, cost, and timing of the improvement and these shall be made part of a binding agreement between the County and the applicant or developer. Mitigation measures in the agreement that would require capital improvements to construct facilities shall be incorporated into the County's Five-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements with an indication as to the funding source whether funded publicly or otherwise.

**Strategy 11.02A(6):** The County shall identify and implement ways to reduce and/or mitigate the estimated evacuation clearance times identified in studies promulgated by the State of Florida and/or the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

## Repetitive Loss Properties

**Strategy 11.02A(7):** The County shall identify and implement efforts and standards that seek to minimize repetitive loss properties in the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) and other flood prone areas including the prohibition of new mobile homes, and the potential for acquisition, with federal assistance, of individual properties with three or more significant repetitive loss incidents.

## Infrastructure in the CHHA

[F.S. 163.3177(6)(g)]

**Objective 11.02B:** **Hernando County shall limit public investment in infrastructure in the CHHA and particularly in the V-Zone Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) category as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Public investment shall generally be limited to recreational and public access improvements, maintenance of existing infrastructure or upgrading of infrastructure where an environmental or service benefit exists.**

**Strategy 11.02B(1):** Hernando County shall maintain an inventory of existing public infrastructure within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) and develop a program to relocate or retrofit such facilities where necessary.

**Strategy 11.02B(2):** New infrastructure shall not be constructed to support new development in floodplains, flood prone areas and coastal high hazard areas, except as specifically provided for in this Plan.

**Strategy 11.02B(3):** New County-funded public recreational facilities built in the V-Zone shall be restricted to recreational uses with minimal potential for structural loss or damage, such as, but not limited to open space parks and boardwalks, picnic areas, athletic fields, swimming areas, and boat ramps.

**Strategy 11.02B(4):** New and replacement water and sewer facilities will be planned and implemented with the goals of centralization in order to retire wells and septic tanks, and to locate treatment facilities outside the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.02B(5):** Public and private landfills of any kind are prohibited within the Coastal Zone.



**Transportation Corridors in the CHHA**  
**[F.S. 163.3177(6)(g) and 163.3178(8)]**

**Objective 11.02C:** Existing transportation corridors and those roadways accessing development in the CHHA shall be built and maintained to County standards to ensure that hurricane evacuation clearance times are not reduced.

**Strategy 11.02C(1):** The County shall not install new roadway lane miles on the functionally-classified network within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) unless required for evacuation purposes. Upgrades to existing roadways is limited to intersection improvements for safety reasons, accommodation of cyclists and pedestrians or to technological improvements that facilitate evacuation and maintain or improve evacuation clearance times.

**Strategy 11.02C(2):** Levels of service for hurricane evacuation clearance times as outlined in this Chapter, and, for roadways as outlined in the Transportation Element of this Plan, shall be achieved by limiting coastal populations and by adoption of evacuation procedures in the official county evacuation plan.

**Hazard Mitigation**  
**[F.S. 163.3178(2)]**

**Objective 11.02D:** Hernando County shall reduce the exposure of development to natural coastal hazard impacts from high tide events, storm surge, flash floods, stormwater runoff and sea level rise through regulatory standards, hazard mitigation and post-disaster redevelopment planning.

**Strategy 11.02D(1):** Update the hazard and vulnerability data in the County's geographic information system (GIS) to facilitate the identification of mitigation opportunities and to facilitate smooth and accurate operation of recovery efforts following a hazard incident.

**Strategy 11.02D(2):** Hernando County shall use a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) to identify and guide hazard mitigation activities including site development best practices that may reduce losses due to flooding and claims made under National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies. The LMS should pursue grants and other funding to implement identified activities.

**Strategy 11.02D(3):** Hernando County shall adhere to the minimum requirements of the Florida Building Code and the County's Flood Damage Prevention

Ordinance as they relate to reducing flood risk and mitigating damage from natural hazards.

**Strategy 11.02D(4):** Hernando County shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) to lower the risk of community flood damage.

**Strategy 11.02D(5):** Hernando County recognizes the implications of sea level rise to private property, groundwater and natural resources, and public infrastructure. In reviewing proposals for public or private projects, consideration shall be given to:

- a. project design in light of the expected life and function of the project;
- b. protection of natural topographic and geologic integrity to ensure maximum adaptation to sea level rise;
- c. analysis of projected public and private expenditures as a part of evaluation of project scope and of engineering solutions designed to remove or reduce the risk of coastal flooding to real property or infrastructure.

### **Post-Disaster Redevelopment**

**Strategy 11.02D(6):** Hernando County's Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP), as updated from time to time shall be the guiding document for actions and policies to be carried out in response to damage from natural or manmade disasters. The PDRP addresses short and long-term responses to damage incidents throughout the County.

**Strategy 11.02D(7):** The Plan and the land development regulations shall be updated as appropriate and as needed to address action items outlined in the PDRP including:

- a. review of building codes, development codes and permitting procedures to identify the potential for implementation of specific post-disaster procedures;
- b. review of policies and codes for non-conforming structures and uses to ensure clear guidance for permitting during rebuilding after a disaster;
- c. evaluate the potential for a pre-disaster structural inventory in the Coastal Zone to identify issues and opportunities for post-disaster redevelopment;
- d. identify restoration standards and procedures for damaged infrastructure that includes flood-proofing;
- e. other identified action items in the PDRP, as updated from time to time, especially in the areas of business restoration, health and social services, government operations and environmental restoration.

**GOAL 11.03 – Coastal Community Character**

**Coastal planning shall focus on the preservation of community character through prioritization of land uses, protection of traditional and historical uses, preservation of scenic views and enhancement of public access to the shoreline.**

**[F.S. 163.3177(6)(g) and 163.3178(2)]**

**Water-Dependent Uses**

**Objective 11.03A: Prioritize and protect water-dependent shoreline uses in the Coastal Zone by encouraging retention and enhancement of traditional and working waterfront uses at appropriate locations, and uses that support the working and recreational waterfront community.**

**Strategy 11.03A(1):** The County shall provide for a Specialty Commercial zoning designation for Commercial Marine uses as outlined in the Future Land Use Element of this Plan. The designation shall prioritize water-dependent and water-related waterfront uses that support working waterfronts.

**Strategy 11.03A(2):** The County should pursue the concepts of a working waterfronts program and implement best practices management appropriate for the Coastal Zone.

**Strategy 11.03A(3):** Review of new and redeveloped marinas in the Coastal Zone will include assurance that they:

- a. are compatible with surrounding land uses;
- b. have a hurricane preparedness plan as part of their development approval;
- c. are located so as to provide continuous deep water access such that natural bottom damage is not caused by the proposed boat sizes and types;
- d. meet Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Clean Marina standards especially for water quality and spill response plans.

**Public Shoreline Access**

**Objective 11.03B: Hernando County should acquire, protect and enhance viable areas for public access to coastal shorelines, beaches and waters.**

**Strategy 11.03B(1):** Existing County-owned public access points at Hernando Beach, Bayport, Jenkins Creek, Pine Island and other locations shall be maintained and enhanced to the extent possible without compromising environmental quality.

**Strategy 11.03B(2):** Properties that may be acquired after a disaster or as repetitive loss properties should be considered for providing public water access.

**Strategy 11.03B(3):** Ensure that any public access-way established through private lands to seaward of the mean high water line by prescription, prescriptive easement, or other legal means is preserved, or a comparable access provided by any proposed development. Comparable access shall be of substantially similar or greater quality and convenience to the public as the original access.

### **Preserve Scenic Views and Historic Resources**

**Objective 11.03C:** **Hernando County should ensure that Coastal Zone development is designed to preserve the rich scenic vistas and views of waterways, marshes and open waters and shall ensure protection of coastal archaeological and historic resources.**

**Strategy 11.03C(1):** Review of development proposals in the Coastal Zone shall include review of the Florida Master Site File for potential impacts to archaeological and historical resources including submerged resources. Development approvals shall address appropriate protection of these sites through site layouts, site protection and appropriate handling of site resources pursuant to recommendations from the Florida Department of State.

**Strategy 11.03C(2):** Development proposals in the Coastal Zone should be reviewed for impact to scenic vistas through regulation of signs, fences and walls, and placement of structures. This includes public or private structures and uses that are meant to provide access to scenic views or natural lands.

**Strategy 11.03C(3):** Hernando County should limit building heights in the coastal area to preserve community scale and character consistent with the natural and built landscape environment.

**GOAL 11.04 – Protection of Marine Resources**

**Hernando County’s marine area, which exhibits unique biophysical and ecological characteristics, supports a rich assemblage of marine biota that drive the marine resource-based economy. The County commits to planning for marine resources that conserves natural resources, supports recreation, promotes strategic land conservation, protects water quality, and promotes coastal resiliency through shoreline stabilization, oyster reef restoration, and artificial reefs; recreational and commercial fisheries; vessel navigation and water access; and protects hardbottom and seagrass.**

**Strategic Marine Area Plan**

**Objective 11.04A: The County will prepare, implement, and periodically update a Strategic Marine Area Plan (S MAP) to maintain, restore, or create stabilized shorelines, nearshore oyster reefs, and artificial reefs; to sustain economic and ecologic recreational and commercial fisheries; to develop, maintain, and enhance a resilient program of infrastructure to support the sustainable commercial and recreational use of the marine and estuarine waters; and to ensure the ecological integrity of Hernando County’s unique assemblage of seagrass bed habitats and interspersed hardbottom.**

**Shoreline Stabilization, Oyster Reef Restoration, and Artificial Reefs**

**Strategy 11.04A(1):** As set forth in the S MAP, adopt programs that promote estuarine shoreline interfaces that contribute to the ecological health and resiliency of the County’s coastal and estuarine ecosystems.

**Strategy 11.04A(2):** As set forth in the S MAP, implement a program to restore nearshore oyster reefs that contribute to estuarine health, productive fisheries, and coastal resiliency.

**Strategy 11.04A(3):** As set forth in the S MAP, implement a program to enhance Hernando County's fisheries by maximizing available structure for recreationally important fish species at all life history stages through artificial reef deployment.

**Recreational and Commercial Fisheries**

**Strategy 11.04A(4):** Determine the relative health and economic value of both fisheries in Hernando County and their relationship to the marine resources they depend on.

**Strategy 11.04A(5):** Develop and implement a holistic approach to recreational and commercial fisheries management.

### **Vessel Navigation and Water Access**

**Strategy 11.04A(6):** Adopt strategies that improve motorized, non-motorized, and motor-assisted vessel navigation in and through the waters of Hernando County.

**Strategy 11.04 A(7):** Implement robust education, compliance and funding programs to ensure the sustainable use of waterways in Hernando County.

**Strategy 11.04A(8):** Maintain and improve land-based motorized and non-motorized boating access infrastructure based upon expected growth.

### **Hardbottom and Seagrass**

**Strategy 11.04 A(9):** As set forth in the S MAP, protect and enhance the quality and quantity of seagrass and hardbottom habitat within Hernando County.

**Strategy 11.04 A(10):** Protect and enhance water quality to protect marine resources through programs that protect wetlands, reduce erosion through stormwater management controls and protect native vegetation and preserve upland habitat.

**Strategy 11.04 A(11):** Conduct surveys to document the biodiversity of the seagrass and hardbottom habitats and implement monitoring as set forth in the S MAP.