

I. Introduction

Requirements

The original City of Clewiston Plan was adopted in 1991. Prior to its adoption, the State of Florida amended Chapter 163 F.S., creating the 1985 “Growth Management Act”.

The purpose of the 1991 Comprehensive Plan was to analyze the City’s developments and provide guidelines for its future growth. The 1991 Comprehensive Plan included guidelines for Plan implementation. The 2006 Comprehensive Plan revision analyzed the City’s development to provide implementable and financially feasible goals, objectives, and policies for meeting the City of Clewiston’s existing infrastructure deficiencies and future infrastructure needs for the City’s projected growth. The difference in purposes is significant. The requirements for the 1991 Comprehensive Plan did not explicitly specify the implementation means; the requirements for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan revision mandated implementation.

The 2011 Comprehensive Plan revision requirements are presented in the Community Planning Act. The regulations specify that a plan revision is to be carried out, when it is to be completed, how it is to be completed, what it is minimally to contain, and what it is ultimately to achieve.

According to Chapter 163 (F.S.) specific plans are to be made to ensure that future growth will not deteriorate the level of service of existing facilities, and that improvements to facilities will be met to keep pace with growth. The Comprehensive Plan must provide that infrastructure, facilities and services will be in place at the time that impacts from growth and development occurs in Clewiston.

The specified elements required for the City of Clewiston to include in the Comprehensive Plan revision are:

1. Future Land Use;
2. Traffic Circulation;
3. Housing;
4. A combined Element including Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste, Drainage, Potable Water, and Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge;
5. Conservation;
6. Recreation and Open Space;
7. Intergovernmental Coordination;
8. Capital Improvements; and
9. Public School Facilities.

This Comprehensive Plan includes a chapter for each of these Elements plus a chapter for an optional Economic Element.

Context of Planning

The 2011 Community Planning Act essentially views planning and the Comprehensive Plan as a process, an orderly and incremental one. The revised Comprehensive Plan is to be fully evaluated by the local government in seven years, and its contents revisited as necessary. Annually, the Capital Improvements Element is to be revisited. The Goals, Objectives and Policies are to include the mechanisms and the timing for the means to plan implementation.

The revised Comprehensive Plan is required to be followed by changes in land development regulations, and by a system to ensure that facilities are in place concurrent with development impacts. Clearly the Comprehensive Plan is to be a process requiring constant monitoring and incremental evaluation.

Because the revised Comprehensive Plan is to be viewed as a process, it is important that the City of Clewiston attempt to analyze existing development conditions and project future growth to the extent possible given existing data and information. In analyzing such data and information, the best effort is put forth to understand existing and probable future conditions. During the analysis, it becomes apparent that some needed data and information is just not available for varying reasons. If the unavailable data and information is important or vital to a proper analysis, then it is necessary as a part of the planning process to include seeking the data and information in the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives, and/or policies.

It is not to be considered alarming that certain data and information are not available at any given phase in the Comprehensive Plan's process; it is only necessary that a planned attempt be made to obtain it, so that it may be used in future analyses. The unavailability of some data and information was encountered in the development of this revision of the City of Clewiston Comprehensive Plan.

Data Analysis and Support Documentation

As part of the preparation of this 2015 City of Clewiston Comprehensive Plan, Data Analysis was prepared as support documentation for the revised Plan. The Data Analysis is not adopted as a part of this Comprehensive Plan, but is adopted as the primary analytical basis for the revised Plan in compliance with the Community Planning Act, and the Goals, Objectives, and Policies, are based upon the Data Analysis findings.

As mentioned in the section above, and as described in the Data Analysis and further within this Comprehensive Plan, certain data and information have simply not been available to facilitate adequate planning in some parts of the Comprehensive Plan Elements. For most of these deficiencies it has been possible to identify the means for obtaining the currently unavailable data and information. For these, the means and timing for obtaining them are included in this Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Policies. As the necessary analyses are made from the data and information obtained in the future, the Comprehensive Plan will be amended as relevant to the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

County Location and Setting

Clewiston is situated in Hendry County is a part of what is referred to as Southwest Florida. Hendry County shares land boundaries with the counties of Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Lee and Palm Beach. Hendry County also contacts Martin and Okeechobee Counties at a point in Lake Okeechobee. Only Lee County lies between Hendry County and the Gulf of Mexico, and only Palm Beach County lies between Hendry County and the Atlantic Ocean.

The nearest major metropolitan area lies nearly fifty miles east and west of Clewiston and the production of sugar cane is still a major source of employment in the Clewiston area.

The climate of Clewiston is subtropical with warm average temperatures year round. As with most of Southwest Florida, Hendry County is a rather level, low area that has poor natural drainage, and contains many man-made canals, levees, and related surface water management features. However, land elevations are considerably higher than in the coastal counties, with some points rising over 40 feet. Without exception, the Data Analysis prepared for this Comprehensive Plan reflects this general description of all areas of Hendry County. But, the Data Analysis does so in much greater detail.

New Planning Timeframes:

The City of Clewiston, in the Comprehensive Plan Revision, will establish new planning periods of 2015-2020 (short range) and 2015-2025 (long range).