

***INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION  
ELEMENT***

of the

**PINELLAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



*Prepared By:*

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as staff to the

**LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY**

for

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**Adopted March 18, 2008 (Ordinance 08-19)  
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# *Preface*

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Pinellas County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan for managing growth in the County. In 1985, the Florida Legislature strengthened the growth management provisions of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, and Pinellas County began to develop its new Plan, with a greater emphasis on integrated planning and consistency with other State and Regional planning efforts. In 1989, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners was one of the first governments to meet the new growth management requirements with the adoption of its new Comprehensive Plan. This Plan placed new emphasis on financial feasibility, and the assurance that public services and facilities would be available concurrent with the impacts of development. Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, also includes specific requirements for regularly evaluating the continued effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan, and requires that local governments update their Plans to address significant issues identified through this evaluation and appraisal process. The first major update to the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1998. In 2008, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the next significant update to the Plan, following a multi-year evaluation process, which included extensive public and agency involvement to ensure that the Plan remained relevant, providing appropriate direction to decision-making and sound guidance for future planning.

Today, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners has a mature Comprehensive Plan and growth management program, based on over 30 years of comprehensive planning experience. The emphasis and theme of the Plan is the need to plan appropriately today in order to achieve a sustainable future, and a quality community where people will *Plan to Stay*.

The individual Elements and related components of the Plan provide an integrated long range planning program designed to address both existing and future needs. Where multi-jurisdictional responsibilities exist, the Elements may address the entire County; other Elements address just the unincorporated County. Following are the Elements and related components of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan:

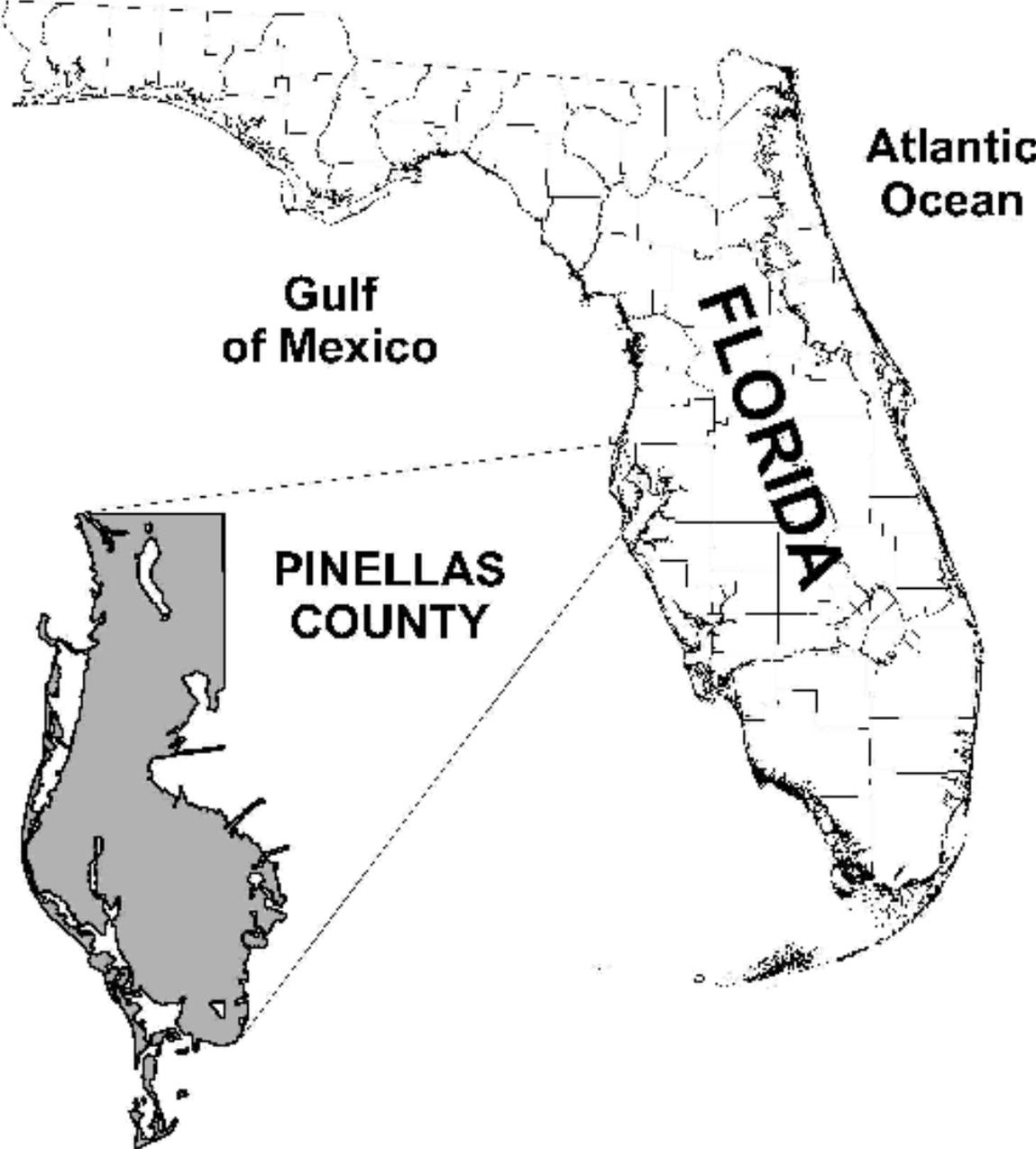
Planning to Stay, Future Land Use and Quality Communities; Transportation; Natural Resource Conservation and Management; Coastal Management; Housing; Intergovernmental Coordination; Recreation, Open Space and Culture; Potable Water, Wastewater and Reuse; Solid Waste and Resource Recovery; Surface Water Management; Capital Improvements; Public School Facilities, The Concurrency Management System; and The Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures.

Additional information on the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan may be obtained by contacting the Pinellas County Planning Department at:

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*State of Florida Map and Pinellas County Location*



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# *Introduction*

The purpose of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element (ICE) is to identify and respond to the need for enhancing existing coordination mechanisms or processes, and to identify additional areas where coordination may be needed, between and among Pinellas County and the different governments and agencies with which it coordinates.

Pinellas County actively coordinates with other jurisdictions and agencies, and the use of interlocal agreements and other coordinating mechanisms remain the primary tools of formal coordination between, and among other local governments. Regulatory relationships are also common between the County and various regional, State, and Federal permitting bodies such as the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, etc. On a day-to-day basis though, informal communications, meetings, workshops, etc., remain the most common - and often most successful - means of intergovernmental coordination.

Increasingly, partnerships are a successful means of reaching common goals. This approach to coordination is popular at all levels of government because of its ability to supplant one-dimensional regulatory relationships. Partnerships can avoid needless duplication of effort and to provide governments and agencies with flexibility in their approaches to attaining mutual goals. For example, this is the approach that was taken by the Tampa Bay National Estuary Program and its participating agencies and governments, including Pinellas County, in achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Tampa Bay. It is also the means of coordination and collaboration successfully used to develop the foundation for Tampa Bay Water, and foster new agreements and commitments to regional water supply planning.

In fact, the County is an active participant in many technical and administrative coordination committees and programs at the State, regional and local level, and is involved in a myriad of coordinating relationships daily which both challenge and stimulate cooperation and coordination at all levels.

## **Overview of Pinellas County**

Pinellas County is a mature urban county with over 952,655 permanent residents in 2008. The land area is small, about 280 square miles, but there are 25 local governments located within this small peninsular county. Importantly, the County is almost completely built-out. This set of circumstances is unique in Florida, and with the small land area of the County has led to the long and necessary history of coordination among governments and agencies in this County.

In addition to coordinating with one another, the County and the Municipalities also coordinate routinely with several Special Districts. There are 36 Special Districts recorded for Pinellas County; however, only those with a direct service delivery responsibility are addressed in this Element.

## **Development of the Intergovernmental Coordination (ICE) Element and Coordination Highlights**

Many of the goals, objectives and policies in the Intergovernmental Coordination (ICE) Element reflect ongoing County activities, responsibilities, relationships, collaborative programs and commitments to coordination. Essentially, in an urban county such as this, and particularly in a county with 25 local governments, intergovernmental coordination is both institutionalized and is a necessity. The ICE Element underwent a significant update in 1998. That update was not only required in order to make sure the Element adequately addressed Ch. 163, F.S., and 9J-5, F.A.C., components, but also to reflect the County's specific objectives and commitments related to collaboration and coordination in environmental management, transportation planning and water resources protection.

Since that time, subsequent revisions were made to the Element in 1999 in association with new legislative requirements, and included specific changes to address coordination with the Pinellas County School Board on school siting and co-location of uses. Most recently, new water supply facilities planning requirements and the requirement to coordinate with the Water Management District in regional water supply planning were addressed by amendment to the ICE Element in early 2005. Requirements to inventory interlocal service delivery agreements and evaluate coordination gaps resulted in an updated list of interlocal agreements and further confirmed the complexities, but also the successes, of day-to-day coordination throughout Pinellas County, among governments and agencies, to provide consistent and high quality urban services to residents and visitors alike. Finally, the collaborative process to develop and adopt a Public School Facilities Element resulted in supporting updates to the ICE Element.

### **Pinellas Assembly**

In May of 2002, representatives from area businesses, civic groups, neighborhoods, environmental groups, the cities and the county all came together to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing Pinellas County in regard to annexation, urban service delivery and financing, development and intergovernmental cooperation. The result of this landmark Pinellas Assembly event was agreement to move forward with a series of task forces comprised of citizens, with staff support from the County and the Municipalities, to undertake a more thorough evaluation of the selected issues with the hope of moving towards long term and mutually beneficial improvements and solutions to benefit the County as a whole.

The Task Forces convened throughout the summer and fall of 2003 to discuss: (1) Annexation Policy/Guidelines, (2) City/County MSTU/Division of Costs and Revenues, (3) Fire/Emergency Medical Services Structures and Financing, (4) Health Care Services, (5) Law Enforcement Structures and Financing, (6) Recreation Structures and Financing, and (7) Transportation Integration. In particular, the Task Forces addressing Fire/Emergency Medical Services Structures and Financing, Law Enforcement Structures and Financing, Recreation Structures and Financing, and Transportation Integration appeared to have a direct relationship to the ICE Element. The Task Force findings were completed in January 2004 and have been used in the comprehensive planning process to help identify opportunities for additional or better coordination.