

CONSERVATION AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT

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CHARTING
PORT ST. LUCIE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

September 28, 2026

GOAL 5.1. COASTAL MANAGEMENT

The City shall maintain and enhance the social, natural, and economic resources of the Port St. Lucie Coastal Planning Area by regulating development activities that could degrade these resources, endanger human life, or lead to unnecessary public expenditures in areas vulnerable to natural disasters.
Continue to protect the natural resources of the coastal area through the implementation and strengthening of existing environmentally related laws, the assignment of appropriate future land use designations, and providing for mitigation of development impacts.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.1.	**COASTAL PLANNING AREA NATURAL RESOURCES** The City shall continue to protect the natural resources of the Coastal Planning Area through the implementation and strengthening of existing environmentally related laws, the assignment of appropriate Future Land Use designations and providing for mitigation of development impacts.

Policy 5.1.1.1. The City shall limit future development in the Coastal Planning Area to those land uses which are resource dependent or compatible with the physical and environmental characteristics of the Coastal Planning Area, or to those uses which can occur without degradation of important environmental values or interfere with legal public access to coastal shorelines.

Policy 5.1.1.2. In developing land use policies for shoreline uses, first priority should be directed toward:

a. Non-structural shoreline protection uses such as native shoreline re-vegetation programs;

b. Approved water-dependent shoreline uses such as: fish and wildlife production, recreation, pervious accessways, small dock facilities and residential multi-slip dock facilities without commercial fuel tanks or other commercial services;

c. Lowest priority should be directed to non-water dependent uses.

Policy 5.1.1.3. The City may continue to monitor all credible climate change data and what direct and potential effects this may have on the coastal planning area and natural resources. Based on this data the City may

evaluate and update the resource protection standards of the Land Development Code and this plan as necessary.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.2.	**PROTECT ESTUARINE BEACHES** The City shall continue to protect estuarine beaches and shoreline vegetation through the establishment and enforcement of existing land development regulations and construction standards that minimize the impacts of man-made structures on beach or shoreline vegetation, or coastal wetlands, and restore altered beaches or vegetation.

Policy 5.1.2.1. The City shall continue to enforce regulations which prohibit the alteration of estuarine beaches located within the City and require restoration of degraded beaches as part of the site plan approval process for all new development and redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.3.	**COASTAL HIGH HAZARD AREAS** The City shall direct population concentrations away from known or predicted coastal high hazard areas and limit public expenditures that subsidize development permitted in high-hazard areas except for restoration or enhancement of natural resources.

Policy 5.1.3.1. The coastal high hazard area shall be defined pursuant to Chapter 163.3178(2)(h), F.S., as the area below the elevation of the category 1 storm surge line as established by a Sea, Lakes, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) computerized storm surge model.

Policy 5.1.3.2. Within six months of the conclusion of each annual hurricane season, the City shall review the status of lands within its corporate limits and determine whether any areas of the City meet the criteria of a coastal high hazard area.

Policy 5.1.3.3. The City shall, through land use designation and development review, regulate and limit the type of uses in the designated coastal high hazard area. Protection of human life and protection of natural resource systems should be maximized.

Policy 5.1.3.4. The City shall consider relocation, mitigation, or replacement of infrastructure in the coastal high hazard area as appropriate and when funding becomes available.

Policy 5.1.3.5. The City shall continue to partner with St. Lucie County to implement the results of the Vulnerability Assessment to mitigate the potential impacts of sea level rise as possible.

Policy 5.1.3.6. The City may direct population concentrations away from known or predicted High Hazard Areas.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.4.	**HURRICANE CLEARANCE TIMES** The City shall coordinate with the County and neighboring communities to maintain or reduce hurricane clearance times identified for St. Lucie County in the 2021 Statewide Regional Evacuation Study for the Treasure Coast Region.

Policy 5.1.4.1. The City shall maintain, throughout the planning period, the high level, operational scenario estimated clearance time to shelter of 12 hours, and in-County clearance time of 25 hours as identified in the 2021 Statewide Regional Evacuation Study for the Treasure Coast Region for St. Lucie County.

Policy 5.1.4.2. The City shall continue to implement City local improvements identified in the St. Lucie County Local Mitigation Strategy Project Prioritization List to facilitate hurricane evacuation.

Policy 5.1.4.3. The City shall provide all hurricane evacuation studies and plans to the TCRPC, adjacent counties, St. Lucie County and all other municipalities within St. Lucie County for consistency with regional and local plans before their adoption and implementation.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.5.	**POST-DISASTER REDEVELOPMENT PLANS** The City shall participate in the preparation and update of post-disaster redevelopment plans that will reduce or eliminate the exposure of human life, public property, and private property to natural hazards.

Policy 5.1.5.1. The City shall maintain and update, as needed, the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Policy 5.1.5.2. After a hurricane, but before re-entry of the population into evacuated areas, the City Council should meet to hear preliminary damage assessments, appoint a Recovery Task Force and consider a temporary moratorium on building activities not necessary for the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Policy 5.1.5.3. The City's Office of Emergency Management shall coordinate disaster preparation and recovery measures.

Policy 5.1.5.4. The City shall maintain a Recovery Plan that addresses emergency building permits; coordinate with state and federal officials to prepare disaster assistance applications; analyze and recommend to the City Council hazard mitigation options including reconstruction or relocation of damaged public facilities; develop a redevelopment plan; and, recommend amendments to the comprehensive plan, Local Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, and other appropriate policies and procedures.

Policy 5.1.5.5. Immediate repair and cleanup actions needed to protect the public health and safety include repairs to potable water, wastewater, and power facilities; removal of debris; stabilization or removal of structures about to collapse; and minimal repairs to make dwellings habitable. These actions shall receive first

priority in permitting decisions. Long-term redevelopment activities shall be postponed until the Recovery Task Force has completed its tasks.

Policy 5.1.5.6. If rebuilt, structures that suffer damage more than fifty percent of their appraised value shall be rebuilt to meet all current requirements including those enacted since construction of the structure.

Policy 5.1.5.7. The Office of Emergency Management, in coordination with other departments, shall review all interagency hazard mitigation reports and make recommendations for amendments to the comprehensive plan accordingly.

Policy 5.1.5.8. The City may provide the basis for evaluating future options for damaged facilities following a hurricane or other disasters. Post disaster redevelopment plan options may include but are not limited to, abandonment, repair in place, relocation, and reconstruction with structural modifications. Future options should at a minimum consider the following:

a. History of and potential for future recurring damages;

b. Impacts on land use, the environment, and the public sector;

c. Consistency with federal, state and other applicable provisions; and

d. Consideration of structural integrity and safety.

Policy 5.1.5.9. The City shall consider hazard mitigation initiatives when determining capital improvement expenditures.

Policy 5.1.5.10. The City shall mitigate hazards through the regulation of building practices, floodplains, stormwater management and sanitary sewer facilities.

Policy 5.1.5.11. The City shall continue to identify areas in need of redevelopment including unsafe conditions to reduce exposure to risk to public and private property and human life.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.6.	**SHORELINE ACCESS** The City may continue to provide adequate access to shorelines, including parking facilities for shoreline access.

Policy 5.1.6.1. New development shall maintain existing public access to the lagoon or NFSLR. New shoreline development and redevelopment shall show existing access ways on their site plans and the proposed development shall continue that access way, relocate it on the site, or donate it to the City according to the 1985 Coastal Zone Protection Act.

Policy 5.1.6.2. The City, with the County, should prioritize new park purchases and park development, with emphasis on parks that would provide public access to coastal waters and include parking facilities and access to a state or county road where possible.

Policy 5.1.6.3. The City may increase shoreline access where possible and prevent the loss of existing public access to lagoon or river shorelines and coastal resources consistent with estimated public needs based on the most recent population estimate.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.7.	**HISTORIC RESOURCES** Provide for the protection, preservation and sensitive reuse of public and private historic resources to ensure that the City does not experience a loss of historic resources.

Policy 5.1.7.1. Review and revise, as needed, existing regulations that provide for identification of historic and archaeological resources, encourage historic preservation, provide for sensitive reuse, permit excavation by the Division of Historic resources as an alternative prior to development, and prevent vegetation removal to prevent a loss of historic resources within the City.

Policy 5.1.7.2. The City may consider accepting donations of historic or archaeological sites.

Policy 5.1.7.3. The City may, on an annual basis, determine and map any structures or sites that meet the criteria for historic resources as defined within the City's Land Development Regulations and provide a list to appropriate agencies.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.8.	**LEVELS OF SERVICE IN COASTAL AREAS** The level of service standards and phasing of infrastructure adopted for the entire City in the Capital Improvements Element and other elements of this Comprehensive Plan shall apply to the coastal planning area.

Policy 5.1.8.1. The level of service standards shall be applied whenever development orders or permits are requested for development in coastal planning areas.

GOAL 5.2. CONSERVATION

The City of Port St. Lucie shall conserve, protect, and manage the natural resources of the City in a manner which maximizes their functions and purposes.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.1.	AIR QUALITY Air quality within Port St. Lucie should meet or surpass National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for all pollutants measured by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

Policy 5.2.1.1. The City should obtain the DEP annual Air Quality Report and confer with the FDEP on the source(s) of air quality violations and the proper abatement methods. If needed, coordinate with the FDEP in their efforts to enforce clean air standards.

Policy 5.2.1.2. The City may develop, where possible, bicycle and pedestrian paths to reduce vehicle use and the associated pollutants.

Policy 5.2.1.3. The City may review implementable measures that would effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and as financially feasible, enact effective measures to reduce emissions generated by City government operations and by policies affecting community-wide functions.

Policy 5.2.1.4. The City may facilitate development that maximizes energy efficiency and sustainability. This may include implementing Land Development Code standards promoting land use patterns and development techniques that reduce the total fossil fuel energy required to build and maintain uses, including standards that promote mixed land use patterns, urban infill, public transit and provisions for non-motorized interconnections between uses to reduce auto dependence and vehicle miles traveled.

Policy 5.2.1.5. The City may provide public information on the reduction of heat island effects in urban areas and reduction of air conditioning needs in structures through appropriate placement of canopy shading.

Policy 5.2.1.6. The City may preserve and enhance the City's physical and aesthetic character and environment by:

a. Preventing untimely and indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees.

b. Providing recognition to single-family residential homeowners for tree retention.

c. Providing protection for large trees.

d. Restricting the removal of trees on undeveloped land prior to the review of a specific development proposal.

Policy 5.2.1.7. The City may implement the recommendations contained in the City of Port St. Lucie Tree Planting Plan for the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement to achieve a sustainable urban forest that contains a mix of tree species and ages in order to use the forest's ability to reduce storm water runoff and pollution, absorb air pollutants, provide wildlife habitat, absorb carbon dioxide, provide shade, stabilize soil, and increase property values.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.2.	**WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY** The City shall strive to conserve, appropriately use, and protect the quality and quantity of current and projected water sources and waters that flow into estuarine waters or oceanic waters to provide for the maintenance or improvement of water quality.

Policy 5.2.2.1. The City may ensure that surface water management systems be designed and operated consistent with and the City's adopted Level of Service Standard.

Policy 5.2.2.2. The City may include open space as a part of the requirements for all development and redevelopment to promote shallow water aquifer recharge and stormwater filtration.

Policy 5.2.2.3. The City may work towards further education of the public regarding various methods of water conservation at the household and small business level.

Policy 5.2.2.4. The City may, based on new technologies that become available, examine and revise, if needed, land development regulations that require water conserving landscape design, with minimum native vegetation requirements.

Policy 5.2.2.5. The City shall continue to enforce the adopted "Wellfield Protection Ordinance," and restrict activities that adversely affect water quality and quantity.

Policy 5.2.2.6. The City shall continue to implement Utility Service Areas (USAs) for water and sewer program development to protect the City's water resources.

Policy 5.2.2.7. The City may coordinate with the South Florida Water Management District in the development and updates of the District's Upper East Coast Water Supply Plan.

Policy 5.2.2.8. The City shall cooperate with the South Florida Water Management District to conserve water resources in emergencies and during declared water shortages.

Policy 5.2.2.9. The City may coordinate with the FDEP, the SFWMD, the County, other local municipalities and appropriate agencies in alternative water supply planning efforts.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.3.	**ESTUARINE WATERS** The City shall strive to conserve, appropriately use and protect the environmental quality and living marine resources of estuarine waters through the following policies and enforcement of the Land Development Code.

Policy 5.2.3.1. The City may continually evaluate the setback, landscape and buffer standards in the Land Development Code and update any portion of the standards that do not adequately protect the County's estuarine and marine resources.

Policy 5.2.3.2. The City shall continue to strictly enforce regulations that direct development away from floodplains and provide upland buffers along the floodplain.

Policy 5.2.3.3. all new marina projects should be compatible with the City's Natural Resource Protection Code.

Policy 5.2.3.4. Retain river islands in public ownership through designation in the Preservation/Open Space category to serve as green areas, bird roosting, nesting, and feeding areas and, when appropriate, water-oriented recreation areas.

Policy 5.2.3.5. The City shall review, revise, and continue to enforce land development regulations consistent with those of the SFWMD and the DEP without exemptions which prohibit new point sources of run-off from discharging into the Indian River Lagoon or the North Fork of the St. Lucie River (NFSLR) for less than the 25-year storm event, and prohibit structures which constrict water circulation.

Policy 5.2.3.6. The City may institute a public education program targeted at known problem areas regarding dumping of debris and maintenance of stormwater swales.

Policy 5.2.3.7. The City shall update master drainage plans and programs that examine quality and quantity of stormwater and prioritize improvements for the Capital Improvements Plan and Capital Improvements Element.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.4.	**SOILS AND MINERALS** The City shall conserve, appropriately use and protect the natural functions and purposes of soils and minerals through the following policies and enforcement of the Land Development Code.

Policy 5.2.4.1. The City shall consider topographic, hydrologic and vegetative cover factors, and appropriate excavation and filling techniques to reduce erosion in the site plan review process of proposed developments.

Policy 5.2.4.2. The City may review possible revisions to existing mining regulations to better address water use plan, appropriate buffering, and rededication requirements of new mining operations.

Policy 5.2.4.3. The City may enforce land development regulations requiring the establishment and maintenance of buffers between mining activities and adjacent existing and future uses.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.5.	**CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION** Conserve, appropriate use and protect fisheries, wildlife, wildlife habitat, marine habitat, and native vegetative communities, including forests and wetlands through the following policies and enforcement of the Land Development Code.

Policy 5.2.5.1. The City shall continue to enforce standards for open space, wildlife and habitat preservation in conjunction with residential and commercial development.

Policy 5.2.5.2. The City may implement guidelines and recommendations in the adopted City of Port St. Lucie Conservation Lands Management and Acquisition Plan to allow for the purchase and management of preservation areas in the City.

Policy 5.2.5.3. The City shall require listed species surveys prior to development and management plans for identified species per the City's adopted Natural Resource Protection Code.

Policy 5.2.5.4. The City may prohibit the development of marinas in designated manatee critical habitat.

Policy 5.2.5.5. The City may utilize the recommendations of the Boating Facility Siting Plan within the County's 2002 Manatee Protection Plan for the identification of those areas most appropriate for the location of additional boat ramps for access to coastal waters.

Policy 5.2.5.6. The City shall review, revise as needed, and continue to enforce land development regulations that protect native vegetative communities from destruction by development activities.

Policy 5.2.5.7. The City shall require all nuisance and invasive exotic vegetation (e.g. Brazilian pepper, Australian pine and Melaleuca) be removed and eradicated at the time of development or significant redevelopment of all site plan projects, for both nonresidential use and residential projects.

Policy 5.2.5.8. The City may consider clustering, micro-siting of structures or other protective mechanisms to preserve wetlands, wetland functions, and other native vegetative communities or protected species habitats.

Policy 5.2.5.9. The City shall review, revise, and continue to enforce land development regulations which at a minimum require a buffer zone of native upland (i.e., transitional) vegetation shall be provided and maintained around wetland and deepwater habitats.

Policy 5.2.5.10. RESERVED.

Policy 5.2.5.11. The City may continue to coordinate with adjacent local governments to conserve, appropriately use, or protect unique vegetative communities located in more than one local jurisdiction.

Policy 5.2.5.12. The City may coordinate with appropriate agencies to restore or enhance disturbed or degraded natural resources, and programs to mitigate future disruptions and degradation.

Policy 5.2.5.13. The City shall protect native upland vegetative communities and shall protect listed species and their habitat through the implementation of the City's adopted Natural Resource Protection Code.

Policy 5.2.5.14. The City shall require development applicants to comply with state and federal regulations when listed plant and animal populations are on a development site.

Policy 5.2.5.15. an Environmental Assessment Report should be submitted for all future land use map amendments. An Environmental Assessment Report may be required for all development or redevelopment plans that are greater than two acres.

Policy 5.2.5.16. Conservation Trust Funds may only be used for acquisition and management of upland preserves and development of passive recreation facilities, which shall be consistent with the permitted principal uses and structures of the Open Space Conservation Zoning District

Policy 5.2.5.17. The City shall conserve, appropriately use, and protect fisheries, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and marine habitat and restrict activities known to adversely affect the survival of endangered and threatened wildlife.

Policy 5.2.5.18. The City shall partner with St. Lucie County to enhance hazardous waste disposal capacity and service efficiency.

Policy 5.2.5.19. The City shall prioritize the conservation or low-impact development of areas with poorly drained soils, particularly those located in floodplains, wetlands, or near surface waters.

Policy 5.2.5.20. The City will make efforts to educate the public about the importance of conserving wildlife and preserving natural habitats.

Policy 5.2.5.21. The City shall continue to implement the Naturally PSL Green Spaces & Places Initiative to acquire, enhance, and restore city-owned areas for conservation and passive recreation, as possible.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.6.	**HAZARDOUS WASTE** The City may coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection to protect natural resources from hazardous waste.

Policy 5.2.6.1. The City may continue to offer hazardous waste drop-off events at no cost to residents.

Policy 5.2.6.2. The City may coordinate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for providing public information regarding the safe disposal of chemicals. Specifically, information on free disposal of household hazardous waste, information on disposal contractors available to small businesses, and the special waste programs available for landfill disposal of non-typical materials, such as spill clean-ups and contaminated soils may be made available.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.7.	**FLORA AND FAUNA** The City shall protect endangered, threatened, or listed species and their habitats consistent with state and federal regulations.

Policy 5.2.7.1. The City recognizes the existence and strategic value of habitat within the City for federal and state threatened, endangered, or listed species of flora and fauna. The City shall participate in and support the efforts on the part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, South Florida Water Management District, Army Corps of Engineers, Florida Department of

Environmental Protection, and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs to protect and conserve these resources.

Policy 5.2.7.2. Protection of listed species and their habitats shall be addressed during the Land Development code updates and development review process.

Policy 5.2.7.3. The City shall encourage the use of wildlife corridors and prevent habitat fragmentation.

Policy 5.2.7.4. The City may consider one or more of the following methods to protect endangered, threatened and listed species and their habitat:

a. Encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID), cluster development, vegetative buffers, and other flexible techniques to work with developers to protect endangered, threatened or listed species and conserve habitat.

b. Fee simple acquisition through dedication and the use of conservation easements.

GOAL 5.3. FLOOD RISK

New development, redevelopment and investment in public facilities, utilities and infrastructure shall be managed and regulated to reduce flood risk resulting from high-tide events, storm surge, flash floods, stormwater runoff, and the related impacts of sea level rise.

OBJECTIVE 5.3.1.	**REDUCE FLOOD RISK** Development and redevelopment in the City shall be planned and managed to reduce risk and losses due to flooding resulting from high-tide events, storm surge, flash floods, stormwater runoff, and the related impacts of sea level rise.

Policy 5.3.1.1. The City shall utilize best practices to minimize the disturbance of natural shorelines, which provide stabilization and protect landward areas from storm impacts, where feasible.

Policy 5.3.1.2. The City will maintain shoreline protection and erosion control by:

a. Facilitating the installation and maintenance of native shoreline vegetation along appropriate areas of beach and

b. Considering hard structures, such as seawalls, only when alternative options are unavailable.

Policy 5.3.1.3. The City shall review development and redevelopment plans and proposals in the coastal high hazard area for compliance with the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and other appropriate plans and references, including the City's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS) Program.

Policy 5.3.1.4. The City shall maintain and periodically update its Vulnerability Assessment, which provides mapping and other important data to develop a comprehensive hazard mitigation plan.

Policy 5.3.1.5. The City shall be consistent with, or more stringent than, the flood-resistant construction requirements in the Florida Building Code and applicable flood plain management regulations set forth in 44 C.F.R. part 60.

Policy 5.3.1.6. If the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) is ever within the city boundary, the City shall require that any construction activities seaward of the CCCL established pursuant to section 161.053, F.S., be consistent with chapter 161.

Policy 5.3.1.7. Policy 5.3.1.7: The City shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System administered by FEMA to achieve flood insurance premium discounts for their residents.

Policy 5.3.1.8. The City may develop policies to improve resilience to coastal and inland flooding, saltwater intrusion, and other related impacts of climate change and sea level rise in their City-wide plans.

Policy 5.3.1.9. RESERVED.

Policy 5.3.1.10. The City shall contribute to the updates of St. Lucie County's Vulnerability Assessment and the Regional Resiliency Plan by serving on the steering committees.

Policy 5.3.1.11. The City shall collaborate with neighboring municipalities to address shared coastal challenges in a cohesive manner.

Policy 5.3.1.12. The City shall continue to advance a coastal resilience strategy aimed at reducing vulnerability to sea level rise, storm surge, and flooding. The strategy may include updates to land use policies, enhancements to stormwater infrastructure, restoration of natural coastal buffers, and efforts to raise public awareness.