



**CITY OF CLERMONT  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**CHAPTER IX  
CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

Adopted June 23, 2009

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## CHAPTER IX CONSERVATION

**GOAL:** To protect, maintain and conserve the natural resources of Clermont for continued environmental quality and the well being of all citizens.

**Objective 1.1: Air Quality.** The City shall maintain and enhance air quality.

**Policy 1.1.1:** On an annual basis, the City shall obtain a revised list of any identified air pollution generators in and surrounding Clermont from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

**Policy 1.1.2:** The City of Clermont shall protect air quality by coordinating with the adjacent municipalities and Lake County to comply with or exceed air standards established by the FDEP.

**Policy 1.1.3:** Clermont shall coordinate with Lake County, the Town of Montverde, and the cities of Groveland and Minneola to prevent land uses adjacent to the City that would adversely impact air quality within Clermont.

**Policy 1.1.4:** The City of Clermont shall require that industrial and commercial businesses in the City meet or exceed applicable federal and state air quality standards.

**Policy 1.1.5:** The City shall participate in air quality public information programs and shall encourage transportation alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle.

**Policy 1.1.6:** The City shall encourage alternative forms of travel such as bicycle ways/paths and pedestrian sidewalks as long-term strategies to protect air quality.

**Policy 1.1.7:** The City shall coordinate with the FDEP, FDOT and the Lake-Sumter MPO in the implementation of a system to monitor the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled on an ongoing basis. As a part of the data and analysis for the next required Evaluation and Appraisal Report, the City will provide an analysis of existing citywide air quality improvement measures and any associated reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

**Objective 1.2: Groundwater Resources.** The City shall conserve, use best management techniques, and protect future and existing groundwater resources for potable water usage.

**Policy 1.2.1:** The City shall continue to ensure the protection and enhancement of groundwater quality.

**Policy 1.2.2:** The City's building code shall require the installation of water conserving devices in all new construction, such as water conserving toilets, showerheads and faucets, and shall promote and encourage the use of low-impact, water-efficient development through the provision of incentives.

**Policy 1.2.3:** To reduce groundwater consumption and runoff related to landscape irrigation, the City shall require new development to use and/or preserve native drought-resistant vegetation.

**Policy 1.2.4:** The City shall promote the upgrade of existing commercial and residential landscaping to native drought-resistant species through education.

**Policy 1.2.5:** The City shall support, assist and otherwise cooperate with the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) in the implementation of the district's water shortage plan.

**Policy 1.2.6:** The City shall notify the SJRWMD of the presence of any abandoned free-flowing artesian wells identified within its jurisdiction and record their existence.

**Policy 1.2.7:** The City shall continue construction of its reclaimed water system for non-potable water used for irrigation.

**Policy 1.2.8:** The City shall not allow sink formations be to filled or excavated, and no debris placed adjacent to the sink, until the Florida Sinkhole Research Institute or a surrogate state agency has completed a site investigation to determine appropriate actions to protect property and groundwater quality.

**Policy 1.2.9:** The City shall prevent the storage of chemicals in the 100-year floodplain and in areas of high aquifer recharge.

**Policy 1.2.10:** The City shall participate in water conservation public information programs.

**Policy 1.2.11:** High recharge areas are those areas identified on **Map VIII-3** in the **Aquifer Element** as having a value of 12 or more inches of recharge per year.

**Policy 1.2.12:** Open space is defined as land that is usable and accessible to the public, utilized for conservation and/or recreation uses.

**Policy 1.2.13:** Pervious surface is defined as land that is not built upon with any structure or pavement or that has any feature that prevents surface water from percolating into the ground, thereby recharging the aquifer. Any land that has wet stormwater ponds, wetlands and lakes shall be excluded from meeting the pervious surface requirement.

**Objective 1.3: Wellfield Protection.** The City shall ensure long-range protection of its wellfields and water quality.

**Policy 1.3.1:** The City shall protect wellfields by establishing a "primary protection zone" which shall include all land within a 500-foot radius of any existing wellhead and a "secondary protection zone" which includes all land within a 1,000-foot radius of any public wellhead. The City will adopt land development regulations that identify land uses and activities allowed within the primary or secondary protection zones.

**Objective 1.4: Wetlands.** The City shall maintain and enforce land development regulations that include performance criteria designed to protect and conserve wetlands from physical and hydrologic alterations and direct incompatible land uses away from wetlands.

**Policy 1.4.1:** The City shall include in its Land Development Code a requirement that any development that contains land meeting the definition of a wetland, as defined in Florida Statutes, Section 373.019(25), shall conduct wetland delineation. A delineation of the upland wetland boundary shall be established based upon an onsite field survey by a professional biologist or registered engineer that, through a comprehensive planning process, identifies the types, values, functions, size, conditions and specific locations of the wetlands on the site.

**Policy 1.4.2:** The City shall require that all new development obtain a stormwater management permit and, as necessary, other required permits from the SJRWMD, FDEP and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE).

**Policy 1.4.3:** The City shall require and enforce an undisturbed buffer width of a minimum 25 feet adjacent to all wetlands and lakes. The width of the wetland buffer shall be measured parallel to the edge of the approved wetland delineation. Buffers without native vegetation shall be revegetated with indigenous habitat to protect the quality of the adjacent isolated wetland, wetland system, lake, river or stream.

**Policy 1.4.4:** Wetlands shall be protected from physical or hydrologic alterations in order to maintain their natural functions. No development shall be permitted in wetlands other than approved passive recreation, open space, restricted access to the property (where unavoidable and kept to minimum width), bird sanctuary, natural preserve or other similar land uses regulated by the Land Development Code.

**Policy 1.4.5:** The City shall continue to enforce existing regulations and/or establish new regulations or performance criteria that protect and preserve wetlands and wetland transition areas. These shall include requirements to retain natural drainage characteristics and minimize alteration or modification of the wetlands and wetland buffers.

**Policy 1.4.6:** Transition areas shall be defined as the area separating wetland areas and their minimum 25-foot undisturbed buffers from upland areas, in which development activities may be regulated to protect wetlands. The City shall retain the right to prohibit development within the wetland transition area. The boundary of a wetland transition area shall be established by field investigation. At a minimum, the following uses shall be prohibited within the wetland transition areas:

- All industrial uses;
- Sanitary landfills;
- Wastewater treatment facilities;
- Incinerators;
- Animal feedlots;
- Petroleum or pesticide storage facilities;
- Above-ground or below-ground pipes (such as gas or petroleum lines) for pollutants or contaminants;
- Any land use that stores, handles or generates hazardous material or waste.

**Policy 1.4.7:** The City may require the dedication of conservation easements or reservations where the City finds that the dedication is reasonable to protect the value and function of a wetland.

**Objective 1.5: Surface Water.** The City shall protect surface water from all known and identifiable pollution sources.

**Policy 1.5.1:** The City shall continue to ensure the protection and enhancement of surface water quality.

**Policy 1.5.2:** The City shall continue to support research activities by public agencies managing the Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW), both within and adjacent to the City, and their associated flood plains, shorelines, drainage ways and wetlands.

**Policy 1.5.3:** The City shall require new development to use best stormwater management practices to control sediments, silt and pollution carried by urban runoff before discharging into open waters.

**Policy 1.5.4:** The design of stormwater management systems shall meet the rules and criteria established by the City of Clermont, the SJRWMD, the Florida Department of Transportation (if applicable), and the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council.

**Policy 1.5.5:** On an annual basis, the City shall identify those components of the Clermont stormwater management system that may be contributing to degradation of surface water quality, and develop a priority listing for the mitigation of components.

**Policy 1.5.6:** The City shall not allow on-site sanitary sewer systems to directly discharge into any lake, nor shall any system use surface waters for back-up or overflow discharge.

**Policy 1.5.7:** The City shall pursue funding sources to acquire land along lakefront areas for recreation or conservation purposes.

**Policy 1.5.8:** The City shall facilitate enhanced public access to designated conservation areas, the Clermont chain of lakes and other water bodies.

**Policy 1.5.9:** The City shall continue to support the appropriate agencies in programs for monitoring the quality of lakes within and adjacent to the City.

**Policy 1.5.10:** The City shall manage development along lake shorelines and lakefront littoral regions through the establishment of both a shoreline protection and a lakefront littoral zone. The Land Development Code shall provide appropriate development setbacks to preclude encroachment into these zones.

**Objective 1.6: Floodplains.** The City shall ensure long-range protection of the functionality of the City's floodplains.

**Policy 1.6.1:** Regulations for development within the floodplains and floodways will be established in the Land Development Code.

**Policy 1.6.2:** The City shall prohibit on-site waste disposal systems (septic tanks), wastewater treatment plants and spray fields within the 100-year flood zone.

**Policy 1.6.3:** Where feasible, the floodplain shall be reserved, undisturbed, for conservation, open space and passive recreational uses to preserve the natural flow of runoff.

**Policy 1.6.4:** When development is proposed within a floodplain, to maintain reasonable use of and value of property, compensatory mitigation shall be required to maintain its natural flow regime.

**Policy 1.6.5:** The 100-year flood zone shall be delineated within the Future Land Use Map series, and its demarcations shall be determined by the most recent flood insurance maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Policy 1.6.6:** The City shall cooperate with the designated programs of Lake County, SJRWMD and other such applicable agencies in the identification and protection of water recharge areas to ensure aquifer depletion and contamination does not occur.

**Objective 1.7: Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** The City shall conserve, protect and appropriately use and protect wildlife, native wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Policy 1.7.1:** The City, through land acquisition, shall seek to increase its conservation areas acreage to ensure the preservation of natural communities and listed animal species habitat.

**Policy 1.7.2:** The City shall work closely with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) and private landowners to increase the public's knowledge of habitat protection and best management practices to protect endangered and threatened species, as well as species of special concern.

**Policy 1.7.3:** The City shall notify the FFWCC of the presence of any roosting, nesting or frequented habitat areas for endangered or threatened wildlife occurring within its jurisdiction.

**Policy 1.7.4:** The City's Land Development Code shall establish regulations to ensure the protection of areas of native vegetation, wildlife habitat and endangered and threatened species, including the following:

- Developers shall be required to identify wildlife habitat and endangered and threatened species as part of the development review process, and they shall be required to submit mitigation measures for review as part of the City's development review process.
- The City shall require proposed development to utilize and preserve existing topographic contours to the maximum extent feasible in project design.

**Policy 1.7.5:** The City shall regulate the following activities in areas identified as being environmentally sensitive and in areas containing endangered and/or threatened wildlife:

- The removal, excavation or dredging of soil, sand, gravel, minerals, organic matter or materials of any kind;
- The changing of existing drainage characteristics, sedimentation patterns, flow patterns or flood retention characteristics;
- The disturbance of the environmentally sensitive area's water level or water table by drainage, impoundment or other means;
- The dumping or discharging of material, or the filling of an environmentally sensitive area with material;
- The placing of fill or the grading or removal of material that would alter topography;
- The destruction or removal of plant life that would alter the character of an environmentally sensitive area or wildlife habitat; and
- The undertaking of an activity that results in a significant change of water temperature, a significant change of physical or chemical characteristics of environmentally sensitive area water sources, or the introduction of pollutants.

**Policy 1.7.6:** Native vegetation protection regulations shall mandate fair and equitable restoration and/or compensatory mitigation measures to compensate for loss of vegetation and to enhance stabilization of fragile slopes and/or lake shorelines.

**Policy 1.7.7:** The City shall encourage new developments to protect existing native vegetation in common areas and buffer zones and shall encourage additional planting of native plant species to enhance sparse vegetation in common areas and buffer zones.

**Policy 1.7.8:** The City shall cooperate with federal and state environmental and wildlife preservation agencies in their efforts to protect fish populations within the City's lakes and to promote environmental management activities that enhance fish propagation through natural processes or by managed fish restocking.

**Policy 1.7.9:** The City shall coordinate with the Lake County Water Authority to control any aquatic weed, algae blooms or other aquatic plant proliferation occurring within the City's lakes.

**Policy 1.7.10:** Annually, the City shall maintain updated maps from FFWCC showing the locations of unique natural areas and of habitat for endangered and threatened species and species of special concern.

**Policy 1.7.11:** The City shall coordinate with Lake County to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive areas that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

**Policy 1.7.12:** The City will encourage the restoration of degraded natural areas through the restoration of natural communities, restoration of natural hydrology and removal of non-native vegetation.



**Objective 1.8: Soils and Minerals.** The City shall appropriately manage soils data and protect against soils erosion and uses inconsistent with soils.

**Policy 1.8.1:** The City shall require that an erosion and sediment control plan be submitted prior to commencement of any development activities; that erosion and sedimentation control devices shall be properly installed and maintained throughout all development activities; and that all disturbed soil areas shall be permanently stabilized upon completion of development activities to reduce soil erosion.

**Policy 1.8.2:** Whenever possible, native trees, shrubs and ground cover will be maintained on development sites to prevent soil erosion.

**Policy 1.8.3:** The City shall notify the local office of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service of any major soil erosion problems that may occur within the City's jurisdiction.

**Policy 1.8.4:** The City shall prohibit mining operations.

**Objective 1.9: Hazardous Waste.** The City shall coordinate with the appropriate agencies to ensure that sources of hazardous waste are identified and monitored.

**Policy 1.9.1:** The City shall continue to utilize the Lake County fire and emergency management services and the state emergency response commission for hazardous materials for its monitoring of hazardous waste generators within the City.

**Policy 1.9.2:** The City shall coordinate with Lake County to provide and promote citizen education programs and materials regarding hazardous waste and the proper method of disposal of common household hazardous waste materials.

**Policy 1.9.3:** The City shall continue training its employees to identify and inspect wastes before they are taken to waste disposal facility sites.

**Objective 1.10: Historical, Archeological and Cultural.** The City shall conserve significant sites and protect existing historical structures.

**Policy 1.10.1:** The City shall encourage the continued identification, analysis and preservation of the City's historical, archaeological and cultural resources. Such efforts shall include determination of their significance and vulnerability, as well as implementation of preservation management policies.

**Policy 1.10.2:** The City shall require the developer of land located in or adjacent to a known archaeological site to submit a Florida Master Site File archaeological short form to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources, during the development review process.

**Policy 1.10.3:** The City shall promote and support local efforts, including those fostered by the Lake County Historical Society, to effectively pursue registration of historically significant sites under federal and state certified historical master files.

**Objective 1.11: Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern (GSACSC).** The City shall establish regulations to protect the Green Swamp from the negative impacts of development.

**Policy 1.11.1:** The City shall recognize the GSACSC boundary as legally described within Rule Chapter 28-28, FAC.

**Policy 1.11.2:** Should the opportunity arise to annex lands located within the GSACSC, prior to the annexation taking effect, the City shall adopt policies and regulations to ensure protection of this area of critical state concern consistent with current statutory and rule requirements.

**Objective 1.12: Sustainable Development and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases (GHG).** The City shall increase its efforts toward sustainable development by developing strategies to reduce greenhouse GHGs emissions and to implement energy-efficiency measures in public and commercial buildings, where feasible.

**Policy 1.12.1:** The City shall promote awareness of environmental issues related to the built environment by developing environmental education content for the City's website, including making available environmental GIS data and other data such as aerial photography, air quality index and water quality testing results from natural water bodies. The website shall also include "Green Building" benefits and highlight sustainable initiatives of the local government.

**Policy 1.12.2:** The City shall encourage the development community to obtain green certifications under the United States Green Building Council, Florida Green Building Coalition, Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program, Energy Star and Florida Water Star™ programs by providing incentives that make these certifications advantageous.

**Policy 1.12.3:** The City shall consider developing a "Green Building" program to promote the use of sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in design and construction.

**Policy 1.12.4:** The City shall consider obtaining the Green Local Government certification under the Florida Green Building Coalition.

**Policy 1.12.5:** All new facilities constructed by the City shall be designed and built according to the principles promoted by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Energy Star and Florida Water Star™ programs, as appropriate and financially feasible.

**Policy 1.12.6:** The City shall conduct audits of every City facility at least once every five years to determine electric power usage and the potential for energy and cost savings in lighting, heating and cooling of air and water, equipment power usage, and potential alternative/renewable electric power generation sources. The City may create a central database, or other appropriate system, to track electric and other utility costs.