

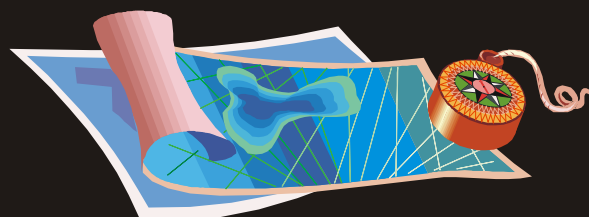
DESIGN

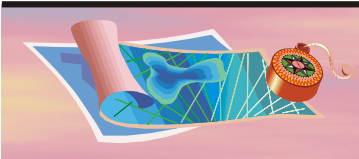
DESIGN ELEMENT

- Introduction
- Issues and Concerns
- Goals, Objectives and Policies
- Exhibits



VISION 2020





Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan Seminole County, Florida

DESIGN ELEMENT INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

Since its creation in 1913, Seminole County has evolved into a multi-faceted, highly successful community. Seminole County has regionally recognized natural resources, outstanding parks, excellent schools, quality housing, a sound economic base and above-average median family incomes. With its many community amenities, Seminole County remains a very desirable place for families to live, work, play and learn.

One reason Seminole County has been a successful, growing community for many decades is that quality of life issues have always been at the forefront of public policy. An important tool used to address quality of life issues since 1991 has been the Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Design Element of the Plan was first prepared in 1989 and adopted in the 1991 Plan. A fundamental premise of the 1991 Plan was that the County was continuing to grow rapidly. In fact, data and analysis developed for the Vision 2020 Plan Update which includes the period from 1999-2020 has identified residential build out to occur in approximately 2017 under current land use assumptions.

As the County becomes built-out in its current suburban form, the character of development will become more intense and more urban. Potential intrusions into neighborhoods and rural lands will increase. The land along the major roadways will become too valuable to be neglected.

More importantly, as the County urbanizes, natural settings will diminish. As the natural and vacant lands in the urban area disappear, the built environment will become a major source of community beauty. Therefore, the aesthetic quality of the built environment will become a dominant determinant of the visual character of the County; and a legitimate topic of public policy.

The aesthetic quality of the built environment must continue to be guided by standards and programs developed consistent with community values. The purpose of the Design Element is to continue the process of having established goals, objectives and policies that support programs and standards to protect and enhance the community's aesthetic quality as the County continues to grow.

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

When examined in a generalized context, Seminole County contains four general "community framework areas" that form the structure of the community. These areas include neighborhoods, development/transportation corridors, mixed-use centers, and rural lands (see *Exhibit DES: Urban Form*). While the many future land use categories and zoning districts provide detailed descriptions of specific areas, these four fundamental areas establish the framework of the County:

- **Neighborhoods** are places where families live and conduct the domestic business of their daily lives, including socializing, education, shopping, rest and recreation. Policies in the Design Element promote attractive, safe neighborhoods with the necessary community infrastructure that include the following components: interconnected sidewalks, bikeways, trails and greenways; neighborhood and community parks; adequate and attractive affordable housing; schools with safe, proximate pedestrian access; neighborhood centers that meet daily commerce needs; calm traffic on livable, interconnected, tree lined streets; and infill and redevelopment opportunities for mixed/alternative housing.



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- **Development corridors** are the places that provide community connections for people, commerce, infrastructure and natural systems. These corridors provide the visual and functional imagery of the community at large. The Design Element directs standards for mixed use corridors that are designed as shared public space for the purpose of connecting the community with the following components: framed streets with street trees and architecture; livable balance of pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and auto needs; quality setting for commerce; and consistent levels of design quality.
- **Mixed-use centers** are places that attract people from a wide area for specific purposes such as education, shopping, government, public gatherings, entertainment, employment and health care. They change and grow over time in response to the needs of the community. Mixed-use centers are the active, synergistic places where people come together. Provisions of the Design Element promote quality public and private gathering space; pedestrian oriented spaces that are well served by transit; vertical and horizontal integration; infill and redevelopment; and special standards of design.
- **Rural lands** are where man and nature recharge and restore themselves. The rural area provides imagery and function of agrarian and natural activities that supports a healthy urban environment. The Design Element provides protection of rural areas through the following provisions: required minimum residential lot sizes; limited commercial and non-agricultural uses; large buffers, setbacks, and conservation areas; viable agricultural industry; mitigation banking opportunities by basin; limits on infrastructure urbanization; opportunities to recreate and experience the natural environment; and protection of watersheds, drainage, and wetland systems.

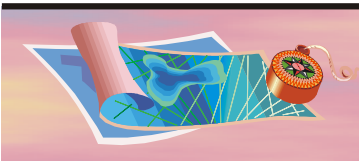
The design principles reflected in the goals, objectives and policies of this Design Element are based on an understanding of community values and focus on design-oriented programs and standards for the fundamental framework areas of Seminole County. The designation of principles and standards for each of these four areas will help to focus qualitative efforts on these fundamentally different venues.

DESIGN ELEMENT KEY OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are included in the Design Element to improve quality of life in Seminole County and establish a vision for future growth and development within the framework of the community:

- 1 Preserve and enhance the community tree canopy and natural vegetation;
- 2 Improve the visual quality of streets and highways;
- 3 Preserve and protect neighborhoods by strengthening their internal physical design features and their connection to neighboring activities;
- 4 Encourage mixed-use corridors and centers with stronger connectivity and more attractive physical design;
- 5 Design public buildings, facilities and spaces to promote a sense of community;
- 6 Protect and enhance the rural areas with standards for the design of physical features of the rural landscape;
and
- 7 Increase public appreciation and enjoyment of the County's historic, archeological, and natural resources.





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URBANIZATION: A PLAN FOR QUALITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The most likely development scenario as the County urbanizes is that development or redevelopment will take a different form, such as becoming more intense, more mixed use and more economically valuable. This is the most likely case because the following fundamental economic strengths of Seminole County support continuing development and intensification:

- Strategic location in the metropolitan area (see *Exhibit DES: Regional Area Map*);
- Advanced transportation network;
- Natural beauty and ambience;
- Quality residential, commercial and office developments; and
- Excellent schools, parks, libraries, and public amenities.

Urbanization in a "built-out" community offers new and different opportunities for development of some of the urban lands within the County. In Rural Areas, continued preservation, maintenance and enhancement of sensitive ecosystems and lands that surround them will insure the quality of these resources for future generations (see *Exhibit DES: Urban/Rural Areas*). In Urban Areas, if the fundamentals of the community remain intact, two forms of development occur:

- 1 **"First Generation" development enhancement** - First generation development is the first development placed on "raw" land and is a continuous process of enhancement of existing patterns.
 - The vast majority of "first generation" growth will remain in its current form. Most neighborhoods that protect and retain their fundamental value will be maintained and enhanced through time.
 - Nearly all neighborhoods will continue to look and feel as they do today, well into the future. There will be continuous renewal, rejuvenation and enhancement of existing homes, neighborhood centers, parks, schools and other neighborhood-supporting activities as property values increase. This has been the experience of countless other communities.
 - The natural lands in the designated Rural Area, and to some extent in the Urban Area, are the epitome of first generation growth. These lands have been identified for preservation and enhancement in every County Comprehensive Plan since 1974.
- 2 **"Second Generation" growth** - Second generation growth involves the re-use of already developed lands. Development corridors and centers of activities are the areas of high value land that will experience most of this re-use. Second generation growth includes three types of urban development just emerging in Seminole County.
 - *Infill* - The development of vacant lots and previously by-passed properties is already occurring. When infill development is proposed, the public hearings are usually intense because the idea of infill inherently involves existing adjacent development. The infill site is generally expensive as compared to property located in fringe areas of urban development and, therefore, the proposed development is usually more dense or intense than the existing development. Buffers between existing and proposed uses are becoming important both in practical terms and in the minds of residents of existing neighborhoods. Without proven standards for buffers and other protections, the adjacent neighborhoods may object.



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- *Redevelopment* - Redevelopment involves substantial renovation, re-construction or demolition of an existing building or buildings. As shopping centers, apartment buildings, and warehouses become old, economically obsolete or structurally substandard, the property they occupy becomes more valuable than the building. The buildings are usually removed and the newly vacant property is redeveloped for a contemporary use. Redevelopment is the economic response to this growing situation. The Renaissance Center in Altamonte Springs was previously the site of an apartment complex and an office building. More recently, the Winter Park Mall in Orange County was demolished and redeveloped as Winter Park Village. As development opportunities on vacant lands diminish, as viable commercial sites are re-discovered under marginal buildings, as land becomes more valuable, redevelopment opportunities will increase in Seminole County.
- *Intensification* - Intensification of sites is the addition of buildings or activities to already developed properties. As land becomes more valuable, parking lots and other underutilized lands will become too valuable to be non-revenue generating. As development opportunities on vacant lands diminish, as viable commercial sites are recognized in the inner areas even though they have marginal buildings on them, as land becomes more valuable, intensification will grow as a development type in Seminole County.

As "second generation" development emerges, public policy needs to adjust in three ways. First, infill, redevelopment and intensification should happen without impacting existing neighborhoods. Second, the investment power of this "second generation" development should be channeled in ways that add value to the overall community. Third, there should be support of second generation development through incentives that encourage the economic opportunities associated with redevelopment. Second generation growth is a new style of development for Seminole County and will require new and enhanced policies to effectively guide and manage growth and development.

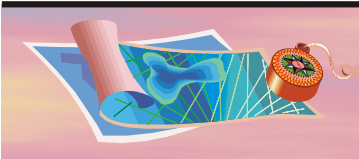
Reliable standards, provided through the Design Element, that are supported by residents, neighborhood associations and business groups are the basic tools needed to protect neighborhoods and rural lands while allowing and encouraging the development of mixed use corridors and centers. The net result will be improvements in community livability increasing property values and a continuation of Seminole County's desirability as a place to live, work and play.

Over time, enhanced first generation development, and new second generation development in the Urban Area will provide investment opportunities to continue to strengthen the community. Specific policies will continue to be developed in anticipation of this situation. The goals, objectives and policies in the Comprehensive Plan can then guide County investment strategies for public infrastructure, capital improvements, public policy decisions and Land Development Code requirements. The results will insure continued quality growth and development of Seminole County as a premier community in Florida.

DESIGN PRECEDENTS SHAPING FUTURE COMMUNITY DESIGN: APPEARANCES COUNT

Beauty adds value to a community. The appearance of a community is one of the foremost influences of value and one of its most valuable assets. Residents take pride in attractive, interesting, safe and functional places. Businesses take pride in attractive communities as they recruit employees, host investors and consider expansion.





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The appearance of a community is determined by many factors. Small, rural areas may have natural beauty to establish their image. Waterfront communities have rivers and lakes to build their image. The image of urbanized areas comes from the streets. The proper application of trees, curbs, lights, traffic control devices, utility placement, pavement treatments, signs and sidewalks all contribute to a pleasant street environment. Establishing design standards for private and public improvements adds value to the landscape and aesthetic elements of the community.

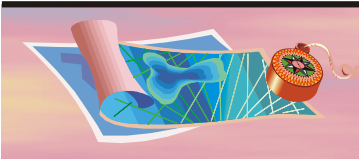
In the past, community design standards have been successfully implemented throughout Seminole County in several ways, such as roadway corridor overlays including the State Road 46 Corridor Overlay, Lake Mary Boulevard Corridor Overlay, and the Chuluota Nonresidential Design Standards Zoning Overlay along County Road 419. Areas in the County where future development and redevelopment are anticipated to enhance the urban quality and aesthetics through design standards include a designated redevelopment area known as the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) 17-92 Redevelopment Corridor and the City of Winter of Springs Town Center. Similarly, the West Town Center and Central Parkway in the City of Altamonte Springs has established design standards such as special provisions for lighting and materials that add value to the community and aesthetically improve the landscape. The Crane's Roost Park Development in the City of Altamonte Springs is also an example of successful design through its transformation from a retention pond to a community amenity. Since consistent enforcement of Land Development Code regulations including landscaping, building heights, and signage ensures quality community design, the Design Element will provide objectives and policies that instill community confidence with regard to the adherence of development standards.

If streets are well designed and maintained with pleasant buildings, the community shows well. If the buildings or the street are cluttered, unkempt or otherwise unattractive, this type of development becomes the image of the community in the minds of residents and visitors that travel the streets. Programs that concern themselves with the appearance of the streets and its frontage are necessary to create aesthetically pleasing results. Seminole County has implemented such programs in the past and will build upon these efforts through the Design Element to enhance growth and development in the future.



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DESIGN ELEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Issue DES 1

Protection of The Community Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation

The County has many heavily wooded areas consisting of large canopy trees, which have taken hundreds of years to mature. These trees cannot be replaced easily or quickly and once destroyed are lost for generations of future residents.

The first element of urban design is the community tree canopy. Programs and standards are important to preserve existing trees and sustainable vegetation in neighborhoods, along streets and highways and in mixed-use areas, to the maximum extent practical. Preservation and supplemental plantings, especially of canopy trees, enhance and preserve community aesthetics.

Although the County's recent arbor ordinance revision provided more stringent tree replacement standards and more flexibility in building location to help preserve large specimen trees, the County shall continue to look at ways to preserve canopy trees. More flexible code standards for building, parking configurations, building heights and landscape concepts can be used as a means of preserving large trees on development sites, especially in development corridors and mixed-use centers.

In cases where tree protection is inappropriate, impractical or ineffective, a tree replacement program will be promoted and enforced through the permitting process that ensures future generations will benefit from a substantial community tree canopy. Neighborhoods, development corridors and mixed-use centers will be the primary areas for tree canopy protection and enhancement.

Urban wetlands also play an important role in the community's aesthetic picture. Mitigation is an acceptable option, in some cases, for the preservation and enhancement of wetland systems in combination with stormwater areas and open spaces. This approach offers an interesting opportunity to establish significant urban open spaces.

Issue DES 2

Visual Integrity, Driving Enjoyment and High Quality Public Roadways

Roadways are the single most influential determinant of the County's appearance. Streets are the community's most prominent public open spaces; yet rarely are they designed to be significant public open spaces.

Cluttered signs, desolate landscapes, trash, ragged pavement edges, and poorly designed adjacent development all contribute to unsightly roads. Base-line standards for public roadway landscaping, lighting, pedestrian and bicycle systems, stormwater ponds and conveyance systems and canopy trees along scenic and other roadways represent design measures which can improve the visual quality of the County.





As the County approaches build-out and becomes more urbanized, the county's tree-lined streets become developed and expanded. There is a very real potential for a considerable loss of the natural vegetation that characterizes many areas of the County. Recognizing that development along roadways is the most visible change, the County has developed strict signage and landscaping standards for new development and has adopted overlay zoning and beautification standards for roadways undergoing expansion. The consolidation of these standards should be considered.

Programs to retrofit existing streets and highways with beautification improvements can also make a positive impression. While it is always less expensive to beautify a road while it is constructed or expanded, retrofitting is an option. A modest program applied over several years can efficiently improve existing roads that would not otherwise be touchable.

Streets and highways are the primary features that establish the character of the community in the minds of residents and visitors. A pleasant appearance can be combined with safety and mobility. Beautiful streets with trees and well-designed signs, lighting, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, bikeways and many other features leave a lasting impression.

Issue DES 3

Protection of Neighborhood Values Through Adequate Buffers, Enhanced Physical Features and Adequate Community Infrastructure

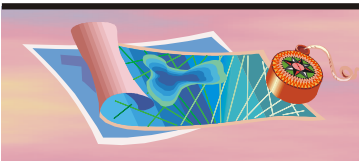
Neighborhoods are the most important parts of any community. A community with strong neighborhoods is a success.

The quality of the community's neighborhoods is a primary urban design element. Entries, tree canopies, quiet streets and well-maintained homes are the result of concerned residents actively involved in preservation and enhancement programs. County programs that educate homeowners and homeowner associations to encourage their participation in neighborhood activities are vital.

Consistently successful neighborhoods do not just happen. Community leaders understand the dynamics of neighborhood development and provide the essential ingredients. These include:

- A Public Safety, which means neighbors watching out for each other and enjoying a sense of security within their homes and neighborhoods.
- B Nearby Neighborhood Serving Businesses that offer safe and convenient access to local jobs and products and services for daily life.
- C Pride of Place and Property reflected by residents and property owners investing time and money to maintain and enhance their homes and neighborhoods.
- D Ample Parks and Open Spaces available to residents for recreation and public celebrations.





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- E Neighborhood Oriented Schools physically and socially connected to the neighborhood and nearby civic facilities.
- F Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections in a network of walkways and routes as safe alternatives to auto travel.
- G Safe Public Parking for cars and other resident vehicles.
- H Nearby Civic and Spiritual Institutions offer residents community services and worship opportunities.
- I New Infill Development and Redevelopment offers new commerce and housing options that enhance neighborhood character.
- J Accessible Mass Transit provides residents safe alternatives to auto travel.

Design standards that establish and reinforce the essential ingredients of neighborhoods have been incorporated in the County Land Development Code. A review and enhancement of these standards is periodically made.

Issue DES 4

Creation of Mixed-Use Corridors And Centers That Take Full Advantage of Adjacency And Mixed-Use Opportunities

Mixed-use development has many virtues. A mix of uses and activities makes a more interesting environment for shopping and entertainment as evidenced by the many places in the United States and the world that attract visitors. Mixed-use developments encourage people to walk from one activity to another rather than getting on the road with their cars just to make short trips. Mixed-use developments give people the opportunity to live close to shopping and entertainment, thus creating livable, synergistic places and also reducing automobile trips.

As individual properties are developed on major corridors and in activity centers, the integration of activities, horizontally and vertically, adds to the richness of the setting, increases the efficiency of the infrastructure and promotes overall livability. The impression of the buildings, the integration of uses, the attractiveness of the parking areas, the naturalness of the stormwater areas, the presence of public art, the distinction of the edges and the ease of the connections is quickly appreciated by residents, employees and visitors. Their impressions are lasting.

As communities urbanize, as they reach build-out in their developed areas, mixed-use developments make sense. They focus development in smaller areas, they increase property values, they enable continued economic development and they create places that offer alternative living environments to suburban neighborhoods.

Mixed-use corridors and centers will become more prevalent in Seminole County as urbanization continues. Processes and standards that anticipate this new style of development will be important.



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The design intent of the mixed-use areas is to encourage and strengthen the mixed-use corridors and centers of activity as important areas in the design of the community. The design intent relies on:

- The mixture of integrated, compatible uses that create a rich social environment
- Mixed-use centers enable people to make one-stop for multiple purposes such as visiting the post office, the drug store and the library that are all within walking distance of the parking area
- A mix of integrated uses better utilize infrastructure with shared and alternating uses, especially of parking and stormwater facilities which are large consumers of land
- A mix of uses promotes diverse housing types and prices
- Mixed use centers are the venues for high quality job growth and should be designed anticipating employers interested in the growth of high quality jobs
- A mix of uses aggregates buildings and activities into well-designed corridors and areas to help create places that reduce sprawl
- Mixed-use centers are places that invite joint-use facilities such as schools, parks and dry-retention areas that together create larger more useable spaces than each activity could do alone
- Mixed use centers are the logical location for public gathering places, plazas, public art and amphitheaters

Issue DES 5

Public Buildings and Spaces That Take Advantage of The Community Building Power Offered by Public Building and Space Locations and Connections

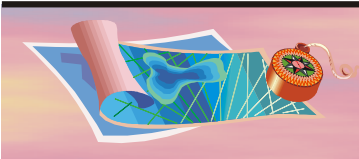
The demand in the County for cultural, recreational, medical and educational activities such as parks, libraries, historic sites, open space, hospitals, schools and public administration uses continues to increase. Due to the large area over which these public uses must be provided and the ever-increasing demand for these uses, the County shall promote the maximum use of facilities through functional design principles to provide services and build community.

The major factors to consider when the opportunity arises for a new public building is to consider its service impact, its aesthetic impact and its community building impact. These three impacts can each achieve positive results if anticipated.

Service - Two specific service-related design activities have been pursued to maximize the use of public facilities:

- Providing safe and convenient access to sites for vehicles, transit riders, pedestrians and bicyclists, and
- Promoting our cultural, historic and environmental resources through awareness programs.





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Aesthetics - The public sector can lead the movement to improve community appearance. Public buildings, including schools, can be designed and landscaped as community amenities that will last for decades. Public spaces such as parks and streets can also have a positive effect. The visual impact of public buildings and spaces can inspire or discourage citizens about the character of their community.

The design and location of public buildings as community strengthening assets has been recognized. The presence of a well-designed post office or library is a strong factor in promoting the essence of community. Over the next twenty years, many public buildings and spaces will be built. The service and aesthetic power of these buildings and spaces can be leveraged to improve the community's visual quality and livability.

Issue DES 6

Preservation and Enhancement of the Designated Rural Area

The preservation and enhancement of the designated Rural Area, with special emphasis of conservation lands, is critical to the success of the total community. The natural lands, the agricultural lands and the rural homesteads are important elements of Seminole County that continue to warrant public protection and enhancement.

The East Area Study for the rural area of east Seminole County was adopted by the County Commission in 1994. The principle idea is that the rural area is not a holding zone for future urban development. It is intended to be a long term rural area that has rural residential dwellings, villages at Geneva and Chuluota, agricultural lands and, most importantly, natural lands and systems that are the focus of extensive preservation efforts by County, regional and state agencies.

The encroachment of urban lands into the rural area is a situation that requires constant vigilance. The absence of any urban infrastructure, the presence of outstanding natural systems that need preservation, established, viable agricultural uses and the well established rural lifestyle of the area dictate the continued rural character of East Seminole County.

Issue DES 7

Increasing Need to Preserve and Appreciate Historic, Archeological and Natural Resources

Seminole County's history includes habitation by previous civilizations, as well as, modern history, which began when Florida became a state in 1845. The Seminole County Historic Commission has programs to preserve and present historic information and the State of Florida has programs that also contain historic and archeological information about Seminole County.

In places such as Seminole County that have experienced rapid urbanization over the past three decades, preservation and appreciation of the past is important. Local and state programs can increase public awareness of local history and participate in preservation of significant resources.



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Natural resources in urban and rural areas are also a fundamental part of Seminole County. Preservation and enhancement of natural resources through regulatory mechanisms and through purchase, including incentives to private owners, has been a part of Seminole County's overall program for many years. The Wekiva River Protection Area and the Econ River Protection Area are examples of this approach, as are programs that address smaller systems and resources. The details of these efforts are in the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code.

Issue DES 8

Increase Emphasis Of Programs To Enforce Codes And Maintain Public Infrastructure, Especially Streets And Highways

In most communities, codes are enforced by complaining neighbors. In many cases, this system has not proven to be effective.

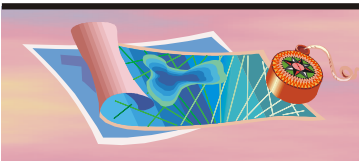
Having design standards is important. Reviewing development plans to ensure they comply with the standards is also important. A weak part of many systems is the enforcement of the standards for maintenance of lawns and homes in residential neighborhoods and in commercial areas as development is constructed and as it operates over time. Adequate enforcement, especially of sign ordinances and maintenance of required landscaping on non-residential streets, instills confidence in the community that codes will be followed.

Enforcement ensures equity for those who follow the code. Enforcement will become increasingly important as infill, redevelopment and intensification plans are proposed that depend on buffers and design codes to protect neighborhoods. Public confidence will be increasingly important to avoid confrontations that will retard development in the future.

Maintenance of streets and highways is also important to the long-term health of the community for several reasons. First, it affects community aesthetics. Roads with litter, sign clutter, ragged pavement edges and uncut grass is unsightly. Second, it affects private owners' motivation to keep their properties well maintained. Third, it creates a contrast when one level of maintenance stops and another begins as you enter a different jurisdiction. These factors affect residents' attitudes toward public agencies, business attitudes toward future investment and visitors' attitudes concerning return visits.

In a built-out community, maintenance and code enforcement becomes a larger part of the budget each year. Facilities get older and the use of facilities and lands intensify. Attention to these roles of county government is essential to ensure effective maintenance of public infrastructure.





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DESIGN ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL

The County shall preserve and enhance the beauty and livability of the county's neighborhoods, development corridors, mixed-use centers and rural lands and shall promote well-designed private and public development through effective community design standards, codes, programs and practices that foster livable places for people to live, work, play and learn.

OBJECTIVE DES 1 PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY TREE CANOPY AND NATURAL VEGETATION

The County shall encourage the preservation of natural vegetation during the development review and approval process by amending the Land Development Code, by 2002, to include provisions for each of the following policies:

Policy DES 1.1 Multiple Use

The County shall develop standards for the preservation of large canopy trees and natural vegetation through coordinated design and use of water bodies and wetlands for multiple uses such as stormwater management and development amenities.

Policy DES 1.2 Setback Flexibility

The County shall develop more flexible Land Development Code provisions and variances for the placement of buildings and setbacks to preserve and enhance large canopy trees and natural vegetation, and when practical, the County will:

- Adjust standards on a case-by-case basis to encourage the preservation of large canopy trees,
- Use existing vegetation for adequate buffers, and
- Preserve desirable existing vegetation during and after site development.

Policy DES 1.3 Parking Lot Flexibility

The County shall develop more flexible Land Development Code provisions for on-site landscaping and parking lot size requirements to encourage the preservation of large canopy trees.

Policy DES 1.4 Minimum Topographic Changes

The County shall evaluate the feasibility of requiring minimum site topographic changes to preserve existing large canopy trees and natural vegetation.

Policy DES 1.5 Redevelopment Requirements

The County shall require sites undergoing redevelopment to comply with current landscaping requirements set forth in the Land Development Code. Flexibility in setback requirements and parking lot design are intended to encourage infill, redevelopment and site intensification in development corridors and mixed-use centers, but not compromise the performance intent of these standards.

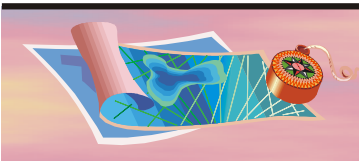


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- Policy DES 1.6 Incentives to Exceed Minimum Standards**
The County shall develop incentives for projects that exceed the minimum requirements of the Land Development Code for design, xeriscape provisions and planting and retention of native vegetation.
- Policy DES 1.7 Exotic/Nuisance Plants**
The County shall amend the Land Development Code, by 2002, to identify exotic or nuisance plants, which shall be prohibited.
- Policy DES 1.8 Enforcement**
The County shall amend the Land Development Code, by 2002, to strengthen enforcement provisions of the Arbor Ordinance and other related codes including fines for removal of natural vegetation without a permit and restrictions on unnecessary pruning.
- Policy DES 1.9 Design Principles**
The preservation of canopy trees and natural vegetation are important in the design of the community. The design principles related to tree canopy and natural vegetation are:
- Street trees should be an integral part of every street and highway.
 - Wetlands, stormwater areas, parks and required open space should be combined, wherever possible, to create attractive urban amenities based on existing trees and vegetation.
 - Existing vegetation should be preserved when it can serve as a site amenity, buffer or other community enhancement.
 - Large canopy trees are a significant community asset that should be preserved and minor, site specific adjustments should be made when necessary to other development standards to preserve these trees.





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OBJECTIVE DES 2 IMPROVE THE VISUAL QUALITY OF STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Policy DES 2.1 Landscaping and Maintenance of Public Roadways

The County shall amend the Land Development Code, by 2002, to include, at a minimum, provisions implementing each of the following policies:

- Require larger minimum tree size, larger tree spacing and buffer widths with better irrigation standards for buffers adjacent to roadways to ensure the viability of new landscaping.
- Enhance landscaping regulations to regulate the size of wells (planting area) where new trees are planted to ensure that the well is of adequate size to allow sufficient root growth and to ensure that wells are free of construction debris when trees are planted.
- Consider retention/detention facilities designed without fencing and proper landscaping as lands contributing to open space and landscape requirements.
- Require the use of hedges, walls and landscaping at intersections and development entryways along arterial and collector roadways, consistent with line-of-sight safety standards, to identify community areas to the traveling public.
- Include additional landscaping and design techniques between commercial areas and highway frontage in conjunction with sign controls to enhance community aesthetics and maintain neighborhood viability. Landscape and design techniques may vary in development corridors and mixed-use centers based on the specific site plan for the area.
- Evaluate and strengthen, if necessary, code enforcement requirements, procedures or staffing to ensure that property owners are meeting the requirements of adopted codes.
- Evaluate and strengthen, if necessary, county maintenance standards, procedures and staffing for county streets and highways to ensure that the desired aesthetic effect is being achieved.

Policy DES 2.2 Scenic and Canopy Roads

A The County shall monitor and revise as necessary the adopted scenic and canopy road program which protects roadways with existing, heavy vegetation and natural canopy trees on designated roads. The designation of sections or entire roadways as scenic roadways is based upon road characteristics such as, by way of example:

- Amount of existing vegetation cover, especially canopy trees along the roadway;
- Amount and character of development on the roadway;
- Number of curbcuts, traffic signals and other visual impacts; and,
- Future land use designations along the roadway.

B The County shall develop standards for future development along designated scenic roadways focusing on preserving existing canopy trees through design standards for:

- Building setbacks and heights;
- Signage, lighting and outdoor advertising;
- Curbcuts and utilities in the right-of-way;



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- Fences and walls and other structures within the setback area; and
 - Minimum tree size and supplemental arbor and landscaping requirements.
- C General Hutchison Parkway, between US 17-92 and County Road 427 (Ronald Reagan Boulevard) is designated as a canopy roadway. The roadway corridor extends 150 feet from the centerline of the roadway. To ensure the preservation of the natural canopy and scenic character of this roadway, the following standards shall only apply to vacant, undeveloped properties, rights-of-way and publicly owned properties within the 150 foot corridor:
- Clearing of canopy trees, native vegetation or construction activities within the corridor shall be prohibited, except when warranted in cases of eminent danger, selective clearing according to Best Management Practices for the purpose of stimulating canopy growth, and for routine maintenance, which shall be limited to mowing of grass and removal of underbrush and dead trees.
 - The Board of County Commissioners may grant approval, when warranted, to clear canopy trees, native vegetation or perform construction activities within the corridor.
 - Allowance shall be made for development of the County's recreational trail system.

(Added: Amendment 04S.TXT02.1; Ordinance 2004-25, 06/08/2004)

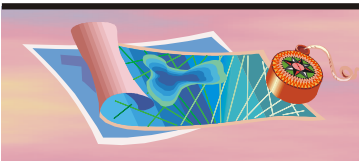
Policy DES 2.3

Gateway Roads

The County shall continue to adopt Collector and Arterial Road Gateway Overlay Zoning Ordinances for selected collector and arterial roadways. These selected roads must be programmed for expansion (according to the procedures and general criteria established through the Lake Mary Boulevard Overlay Ordinance) where public and private landscaping is provided and signage, parking and building placement and height are regulated according to the following guidelines:

- Landscaping shall be in large canopy trees where possible and natural drought resistant species; signs shall be low profile; building placement and site buffers shall be uniform; and parking lots shall be adequately landscaped and have low-level lighting fixtures.
- The County shall perform gateway studies, which are prioritized in conjunction with major roadway improvements wherever possible so they may be adopted prior to roadway construction.
- The County shall develop, by 2002, a set of base line public landscaping and buffer improvements to protect existing neighborhoods when existing collector or arterial roads are expanded.
- The County shall continue to use beautification committees to identify improvements and associated funding for landscaping and buffers above the County's base-line level.
- Community groups shall be encouraged to help fund beautification improvements above the County's base-line level.





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Policy DES 2.4

Coordination on Scenic, Canopy and Gateway Roads

The County shall continue, when appropriate, to pursue interlocal agreements and joint projects with municipalities and private agencies for the designation, implementation and funding of scenic and gateway roadway programs and identify and determine the feasibility of alternative revenue sources for the implementation of scenic corridor programs. A coordinated approach to the design of all roads in development corridors will be explored to seek establishment of a unified base-line for improvements on all highways in the development corridors and mixed-use centers in the urban area. As a condition of future joint planning agreements and other formal agreements, the County shall pursue provisions regarding the maintenance of County roadway overlay standards and other appropriate design standards.

Policy DES 2.5

Billboards and Signage

County policy is to regulate the height, size, spacing, placement construction and lighting of billboards and other signs in order to minimize their visual impacts, limit the number of billboards, and prohibit new billboards along the Central Florida GreeneWay and other designated roadways. Billboards may only be located in commercial and industrial future land use designations.

Policy DES 2.6

Major Roadway Beautification

The County is responsible for the attractiveness of county streets and highways. The county shall promote the aesthetic improvement, enhancement, scenic beauty and uniquely high quality of life available in the County through one or more of the following programs and techniques:

- Boulevard beautification and overlay zoning;
- Three Percent (3%) Solution providing minimum landscaping on roads under improvement/expansion through the One-Cent Sales Tax Program;
- Land Development Regulations addressing on-site signs, balloons, banners, etc., and an aggressive enforcement program;
- Adopt a Median Program to landscape roadways in older urban areas;
- Adopt a Road Program for volunteer litter control;
- Investigate a Wildflower program along State highways;
- Gateway landscaping for major interchanges;
- Coordination with FDOT interchange design, landscaping and maintenance;
- Beautification through elimination of nonconforming billboards.

Policy DES 2.7

Coordination with Other Organizations on Roadway Beautification

To ensure implementation of these techniques, the County will propose entering into an interlocal agreement with FDOT, including, but not limited to, provisions for providing FDOT with permit numbers, development agreements, on-site inspection capabilities, and other desirable provisions to enhance the aesthetics of roadways within the County.



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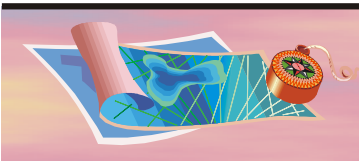
Policy DES 2.8

Design Principles

The visual and functional characteristics of streets are important in the design of the community. The design principles are:

- Streets should be designed as public open space.
- Streets should be designed to accommodate a mix of travel modes including vehicles, bikes, transit and pedestrians.
- Streets should be designed holistically considering the pavement, curbing, bikeways, pedestrian-ways, lighting, signs, front yard setback areas and building facades.
- Neighborhood streets should be designed to connect to adjacent activities and neighborhood-serving businesses with streets that do not encourage cut-through traffic.





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OBJECTIVE DES 3 PRESERVE AND PROTECT NEIGHBORHOODS BY STRENGTHENING THEIR INTERNAL PHYSICAL DESIGN FEATURES AND THEIR EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS TO NEIGHBORING ACTIVITIES

Policy DES 3.1 Preservation and Enhancement of Existing Neighborhoods

The County will continue to coordinate with the State of Florida to assist homeowners in the identification of homeowners associations to encourage design standards and programs to protect, preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods.

Policy DES 3.2 Design for New Neighborhoods

The County will continue to enact and enforce standards for new residential subdivisions to provide the essential ingredients for successful neighborhoods.

Policy DES 3.3 Design Principles

The preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods are based on each neighborhood's essential ingredients. These ingredients are important in the design of the neighborhood. The design principles for neighborhoods are:

A Neighborhoods should have effective organizations, including:

- 1 Strong Homeowner's Association
- 2 Mandatory funding source for common area maintenance, possibly a Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU)
- 3 Neighborhood organization for communication and conflict resolution
- 4 Training and technical assistance similar to "Neighborhoods in Action" programs for neighborhood based planning initiatives.

B Neighborhoods should be designed to establish an identity and value that motivates residents to protect them, including:

- 1 Neighborhood names and identities
- 2 Neighborhood Entrances
- 3 Lot and block designs that reinforce pedestrian use of the streets and a neighborly relationship of the homes
- 4 Compatible, not necessarily identical, residential densities and housing types, consistent with the future land use designation and zoning category
- 5 Economic and social diversity
- 6 Common open space for active/passive recreation
- 7 Natural lands with wetland/upland habitat and environmental resources in combination with stormwater and open space lands



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- C Neighborhood streets should be designed as open spaces for pedestrians that connect to adjacent uses and neighborhood supporting businesses without encouraging cut-through traffic, including:
 - 1 Calm streets with appropriate traffic calming applications
 - 2 Standard pavement widths
 - 3 Curbs, non-mountable
 - 4 Gentle curves to create variety of views, break up too long street views
 - 5 Room for on-street parking
 - 6 Street trees
 - 7 Sidewalks
 - 8 Standard street lighting
 - 9 Interconnected walkways, bikeways, trails and greenways
 - 10 Connections to adjacent neighborhoods that do not promote cut-through traffic
 - 11 Connections to other uses that reduce the need to travel major roads to get to neighborhood-serving businesses
- D Common open areas should be part of every neighborhood with easily and safely accessible neighborhood parks, including:
 - 1 Open spaces and usable land for casual recreation
 - 2 Arrangements for maintenance
 - 3 Cluster mail boxes
 - 4 Wetlands, retention areas and other unique site features designed as amenities
 - 5 Entrance sign(s) and landscaped areas
- E Landscaping, lighting and signs should be used to create community identity and pride, including:
 - 1 Street trees
 - 2 Entry sign(s) and landscaping
 - 3 Open spaces and usable land for casual recreation
 - 4 Enhanced natural areas and features



- F Garage door locations should be scrutinized during subdivision review, with alternatives to the two-car garage near the street, such as:
 - 1 Locating the garage door behind the front plane of the main house
 - 2 Side entry garages
 - 3 Rear access garages on alleyways
 - 4 Shared driveways with separate garages
 - 5 Other options to reduce the domineering street presence of garages
- G Exterior house design should be reviewed to promote:
 - 1 Variety of architecture
 - 2 Variety of color



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OBJECTIVE DES 4 ENCOURAGE MIXED-USE CORRIDORS AND CENTERS WITH STRONGER CONNECTIVITY AND MORE ATTRACTIVE PHYSICAL DESIGN

Policy DES 4.1 Encourage Infill, Redevelopment and Intensification of Existing Development Corridors and Centers

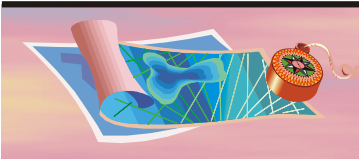
The County will continue to promote mixed-use developments in existing development corridors and mixed-use centers that are attractive, safe and functional through land development code requirements and design standards.

Policy DES 4.2 Design Principles

The county will encourage development in corridors and centers based on the following principles:

- Mixed-use centers should be designed with universal blocks, i.e., blocks with standard dimensions that accommodate several different types of uses, to enable re-use over time through infill, redevelopment and intensification.
- Mixed-use developments shall have integrated infrastructure, vertical and/or horizontal integration of different land uses and coordinated access.
- Mixed-use corridors and centers should promote development planning that encourage site plans to anticipate infill development with future building sites, structured parking and the flexibility to intensify the site later when the market grows.





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OBJECTIVE DES 5 DESIGN PUBLIC BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND SPACES TO PROMOTE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The County shall promote the enjoyment and use of public buildings, facilities and spaces by providing well-designed facilities with safe and convenient access to all residents.

Policy DES 5.1 Accessibility to Public Uses

The County shall ensure adequate and safe public access (pedestrian, bicycle, handicapped, etc.) to all existing, and future County facilities. The methods for implementing this policy including the following:

- The County shall adopt Land Development Code criteria, by 2002, which requires sidewalk connectors to public uses, such as parks, schools and libraries, and additional pavement width to be installed with new development and the expansion of public roadways.
- The County shall amend the Land Development Code, by 2002, to include standards relating to when and where pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular linkages between abutting residential areas are required to provide convenient access to recreational sites, schools, libraries and shopping locations. Vehicular connections between subdivisions shall be designed to serve local residents and preclude through traffic.
- The County shall coordinate with LYNX [Tri County Transit] and other appropriate transportation providers to evaluate and expand, if necessary, transportation routes to public facilities and to provide access for special groups including the handicapped, lower income residents, the elderly and the general public.

Policy DES 5.2 New and Relocated Public Buildings and Uses

The County will evaluate the proposed location of new and relocated public buildings, facilities and spaces to assess their accessibility and aesthetic impacts for the purpose of gaining multiple benefits from these buildings, facilities and spaces.

Policy DES 5.3 Design Principles

The accessibility and design of public buildings, facilities and spaces are important in the design of the community. The design principles are:

- Civic architecture is an important community building tool that should be used to help create places and build the sense of community.
- Landscaping, sign design, lighting, building orientation and tree preservation for public buildings, facilities and spaces create a strong positive impression of civic culture.
- Inviting and safe public access for vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclers to public buildings in development corridors and mixed-use centers increase public enjoyment and appreciation of civic activities.

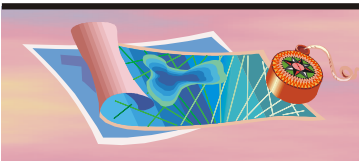


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- Efficient, coordinated and safe access enables people to make one stop for several purposes such as a government office, a grocery store and the post office all in a mixed-use setting close to a parking area.
- Public buildings, facilities and spaces should be designed to be inspiring, to be enduring, to be universal in their appeal and to present a high level of quality for civic architecture, landscaping, signs and public art for others to emulate





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OBJECTIVE DES 6 PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE RURAL AREAS WITH STANDARDS FOR THE DESIGN OF PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE RURAL LANDSCAPE

Policy DES 6.1 Preservation and Enhancement of Designated Rural Areas

The County will continue to enact and enforce design standards and programs intended to protect, preserve and enhance designated rural areas in East Seminole County as described elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy DES 6.2 Design Principles

The preservation and enhancement of the designated Rural Area is important in the design of the community. The design principles are:

- A Rural areas are important edges to urban areas to separate town and country and reduce sprawl
- B The designated Rural Area and the Wekiva River Protection Area are the areas containing significant natural resources; preservation should be emphasized in these areas. All development within the Wekiva River Protection Area shall be consistent with the Wekiva River Protection Act.
- C Rural areas should be managed for the perpetuation of natural and agrarian landscapes with:
 - 1 Minimum lots of 3 acres
 - 2 Limited commercial in village settings
 - 3 Limits on non-agricultural uses
 - 4 Rural streets and highways should be designed in the rural context and consistent with the Transportation Element and the rural area policies in the Future Land Use Element
 - 5 Large buffers with setbacks, use restrictions and tree preservation standards
 - 6 Mitigation opportunities by basin for wetlands disturbed in the urban areas
 - 7 Limits on the extension of urban infrastructure
 - 8 Opportunities for nature-based recreation
 - 9 Protection of watersheds, wetlands and sensitive uplands systems



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OBJECTIVE DES 7 INCREASE PUBLIC APPRECIATION AND ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTY'S HISTORIC, ARCHEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The County shall preserve and enhance significant historic and natural resources and promote public awareness of the County's heritage and historic resources.

Policy DES 7.1 Historic/Archeological Site Surveys

The County, by 2002, shall pursue programs to update the listing of county sites.

Policy DES 7.2 Historic Register

The County shall direct the Seminole County Historical Commission to continue to provide a historic register to identify significant architectural and historic resources including at a minimum:

- Historic buildings
- Historic logging operations
- Indian mounds and middens
- Unique botanical areas

Policy DES 7.3 Promoting Public Awareness

The County shall provide brochures and appropriate signage, landscaping and access to historic sites to promote public awareness and use.

Policy DES 7.4 Promoting Environmental Studies

The County shall continue to support the School Board Outdoor Recreation Program at the Spring Hammock Management Area to promote natural studies and environmental and historic awareness.

Policy DES 7.5 Conservation and Parkland Master Plans

The County shall ensure the preservation of, and where appropriate, provide accessibility to, significant historical sites on County owned and managed land through conservation and parkland master plans.

Policy DES 7.6 Design Principles

The preservation and enhancement of historic, archeological and natural resources are important in the design of the community. The design principles are:

- Historic, archeological and natural resources should be documented and preserved.
- Management plans should be completed for sites to facilitate their long-term viability and to determine the appropriate level of accessibility to the public.
- Urban wetlands and natural lands are important as visual amenities, compliments to stormwater and open space systems, habitats for urban wildlife, temperature mediators, nutrient and particulate filters and green space. Urban wetlands should be preserved where practical in combination with compatible and complimentary uses.



Policy DES 7.7

Design Standards for Designated Environmental Protection Areas

The County will continue to enact and enforce design standards intended to preserve and enhance the natural features of the Wekiva River Protection Area and the Econ Protection Area as described in the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code and other agreements with affected parties.

