



# **Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City Florida**

## **Recreation and Open Space**

As amended by the City of Plant City City Commission  
October 13, 1997 (Ordinance 23-1997)

Department of Community Affairs Notice of Intent to Find  
Comprehensive Plan Amendments in Compliance published  
December 10, 1997 [DCA Docket No. 97-IER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I)]

**Effective Date: December 10, 1997**  
**AMENDED**



# Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City

## RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

### LIST OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

ADOPTED AFTER DECEMBER 10, 1997 (EFFECTIVE DATE)

Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. and Element Amendment Description	PCCC Ordinance No., Adoption Date, DCA Notice of Intent No. and Publication Date (if applicable), & Effective Date
<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001</b> (<i>Ref: DCA's Case # 01-1ER</i>)  <b>(ref: 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR based Amendments)</b></p> <p>Map and Text Amendments affecting the Future Land Use Map and all Elements of the Plan (<i>except Transportation</i>). Summary of amendments addresses issues relative to: Updating the Background Data and Analysis to the year 2015, Wellhead Protection, Agricultural Mixed-Use Overlay District, Intensity Standards for Recreation and Open Space and Major Public/Semi-Public, Affordable Housing, LOS standard for Potable Water, and Concurrency Management System.</p>	<p><b>Ordinance No. 26-2001 adopted by PCCC December 26, 2001.</b>  <b>DCA's NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I)</b>  <b>EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2, 2002.</b></p>
<p><b>CPA-2007-T4, T5 and T6 (Public School Facilities Element):</b> Text amendments to ensure consistency with the newly adopted Public Schools Facilities Element.</p>	<p><b>Ordinance No. 12-2008 adopted May 27, 2008</b></p> <p><b>DCA's NOI #08-PEFE1-NOI-2902-(A)-(I)</b>  <b>EFFECTIVE DATE: August 8, 2008</b></p>

# City of Plant City Recreation and Open Space

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY<sup>4</sup>**

The purpose of the Recreation and Open Space Element is to provide Plant City with opportunities to enhance recreation and open space areas, while designating adequate and appropriately located land for recreational facilities to meet the needs of the anticipated population. Through its goals, objectives and policies, this Element establishes criteria for recreation and open spaces, provided by both the public and private sector, to meet the needs of the growing community. Plant City needs to plan for the development of additional recreation facilities to provide the necessary recreational opportunities to keep pace with the demands generated by growth.

This Element has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes (FS). The act requires a Comprehensive Plan for recreation and open space to assess current needs and opportunities, analyze future needs and provide goals, objectives and policy statements which will be used by the City to enhance the public and private recreation and open space opportunities available to the public. The Recreation and Open Space Element has also been prepared in accordance with Chapter 9J-5, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), “Minimum Criteria for Review of Local Comprehensive Plans and Determination of Compliance”. Definitions of the terms mentioned in this element can be found within the “Definition’s” section of the *Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City*.

The Recreation and Open Space Element assesses the current deficiencies and future needs based upon updated parks facilities and acreage data. Park acreage is correlated to population and used as a means of evaluating recreational levels of service. An analysis of projected recreation needs is for the planning horizon 1995-2015.

With the exception of Special Parks, all recreation parks within the City serve a dual function as a community/neighborhood park. Therefore, all parks (other than Special Parks) are classified under “City Recreation Parks”.

Alternatives to correct existing deficiencies and address future needs are proposed through the Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Element. Furthermore, the Objectives and Policies prescribe eventual implementation activities by providing ways in which the programs and activities shall be conducted to achieve the identified Goal. The goals, objectives and policies of this Element are divided into four sections: The Land, Open Space and Aesthetics, Facilities and Programming, and Funding.

In addition to being consistent with the Tampa Bay Regional Policy Plan and the State Comprehensive Plan, this Element is internally consistent with other

Elements of the Plan, such as Land Use, Conservation and Capital Improvement Elements. In general, the Recreation and Open Space Element provides guidance in supplying recreational opportunities while protecting natural resources for the residents and visitors of Plant City.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT FOR SERVICE PROVISION**

### **INTRODUCTION<sup>5</sup>**

Plant City is a rapidly growing city on the western coast of Florida. From 1995 to 2015 the population of Plant City is expected to increase from 25,670 to 36,300. This population increase can be attributed to the City's geographic location, climate, business, and excellent recreational sites. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the recreation parks. As the City's population grows, the demand for recreational resources increases and the City's financial ability to supply recreation and open space facilities becomes more strained.

The demands for sufficient active and passive recreational opportunities, and the need to protect valuable open space are major issues, which in part will be addressed upon the completion of the adopted "Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study", as required within the Goals, Objective and Policies of this Element. The City, other local jurisdictions and the private sector, must share the responsibility of meeting current and future demands for recreational facilities and open space.

The Recreation and Open Space Element meets the requirements of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, FS. The act requires the comprehensive plan for recreation and open space to assess current needs and opportunities, analyze future needs and provide goals, objectives and policy statements which will be used by the City to enhance the public and private recreation and open space opportunities available to the public. The Element also conforms with Chapter 9J-5, FAC, "Minimum Criteria for Review of Local Comprehensive Plans and Determination of Compliance".

The purpose of the Recreation and Open Space Element is to provide Plant City with opportunities to enhance recreation and open spaces, while designating adequate and appropriately located land for recreation facilities to meet the needs of the anticipated population. The Recreation and Open Space Element develops criteria, through its goals, objectives and policies, for recreation and open spaces to be provided by both the public and private sector to meet the needs of the growing community. Plant City needs to plan for the development of new recreational facilities to provide the necessary recreational opportunities to meet the demands of the increasing population.

Plant City's recreation and open space plan must insure the protection and proper future use of the natural environment. Since open space lands may be either privately or publicly owned and range in character from vacant urban lands to wide open spaces and forestlands, methods of protecting these lands

are often varied and complex. The Element guides the improvement and development of recreational facilities while protecting natural resources for the residents of Plant City.

The Recreation and Open Space Element, of the Future of Hillsborough, a Comprehensive Plan for Plant City is the official policy statement of the Plant City Commission on the desired future recreational and open space environment of the community.

### **Discussion and Identification of Recreation Facilities Available to the Citizen's of Plant City which are not part of the "City Recreation Park" Inventory.<sup>6</sup>**

As in the past and present, cooperation between private enterprise and residential developments, Hillsborough County (*i.e. Parks and Recreation Department and Hillsborough County School Board*) and the City's Parks and Recreation Department continue to provide a service to the community by enhancing and extending the supply of recreation facilities.

The following discussion and pertinent information of these facilities are listed on Table's 1 through 4. To view the location of each facility being discussed, please refer to Map 1.

#### **Recreation Facilities Provided by Schools: (Ref: Table 1, Map 1)<sup>7</sup>**

Recreational facilities provided by schools that are available to the public play an important part in adding to the current inventory. Most schools allow the public to use recreational facilities after school hours and on weekends. As a result, an array of different types of recreation facilities are available to the public such as: softball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, and racquetball courts. Facilities such as a gymnasium and multipurpose building can be available upon special request.

Table 1, "School Parks and Recreational Complexes within Plant City", describes the existing facilities which are accessible to the public.

**TABLE 1 - SCHOOL PARKS AND RECREATIONAL COMPLEXES WITHIN PLANT CITY<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Open to the Public, after hours and/or weekends</b>
Bryan Elementary	1 basketball court 1 equipped play area	Not Officially Not Officially
Burney Simmons (6th grade center)	1 baseball field 1 basketball court	Only to little leagues No
Jackson Elementary	2 softball fields	1 field for public use No
Lincoln Magnet	2 basketball courts 1 softball field 1 basketball court	Yes Yes
Marshall Jr. High School	4 basketball courts (2 pads) 2 softball fields 1 gymnasium	Yes Yes Yes (special request)
Plant City High School	1 varsity baseball field 1 varsity softball field 2 p. e. softball fields 1 track 10 tennis/basketball courts 1 gymnasium	No No Only to little leagues No Yes No
Tomlin Jr. High School	1 gymnasium	Summer/Winter recreation programs. for directed
	4 tennis (no lights) 4 basketball courts (no lights) 4 racquetball courts (no lights)	Yes Yes Yes
Walden Lake Elementary	1 open field 2 basketball court (no lights) 2 softball fields (no lights) Multipurpose Bldg. with stage	Yes Yes Jointly shared with the Walden Lake Community per an agreement.
Wilson Elementary	1 baseball field 1 basketball court	Yes Yes

Source: Planning Commission, 1995

**Recreation Facilities provided by Private Parks** (Reference: Table 2, Map 1)<sup>9</sup>

Table 2, "Private Parks and Recreational Complexes within the Plant City Area" describes recreational facilities which are available to the public but are not free services.

The Walden Lake Mixed Use Community Unit District, located east and west of Alexander Street and south of Grant Street consists of approximately 2,000 acres providing homes for over 1,800 families (*population is estimated to be <sup>(1)</sup>5,000*).

*<sup>(1)</sup>Note: The 1990 Census average persons per household rate for Census Tracts 125 and 126 (2.77) was applied to the estimated number of households (1,800) to calculate total population in Walden Lakes. In May, 1998, Florida Design Communities estimated total households in Walden Lake to be 1,800.*

The Walden Lakes community has a 5 mile bike and pedestrian system available to all residents. This community provides a considerable amount of neighborhood parks (*approximately <sup>(2)</sup>144 acres*), accessible to adjacent homeowners by their membership in homeowner associations through deed restrictions. A special fee or membership is not charged and membership to an association is mandatory for all residents. Therefore, all property owners automatically have access to some of these facilities.

*<sup>(2)</sup>Note: Park acreage and breakdown of parks were provided by Florida Design Communities, June 3, 1996.*

When calculating Walden Lakes estimated 1998 population of 5,000 by the level-of-service standard (*5 acres per 1,000 population for City Recreation Parks*) would require a minimum of 25 acres. Walden Lakes provides approximately 144 acres which is 119 acres over the minimum level-of-service (LOS) requirement of 25 acres.

Since Walden Lakes mandates that each resident belong to a homeowners association, park facilities automatically become available to every homeowner. It only stands to reason that when calculating the recreation and open space LOS for the city, Walden Lake's population could be subtracted out of the city's total population.

**TABLE 2: PRIVATE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL COMPLEXES WITHIN THE PLANT CITY AREA<sup>10</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Open to the Public?</b>
Plant City Golf Club	18-hole golf course	yes
YMCA	1 swimming pool	Yes
Walden Lake Country Club	9-hole golf course	yes
	18-hole golf course	yes
	horse stable	yes
	polo field	yes
	1 boat ramp	yes
	racquetball courts	yes
	1 catwalk 20 ft.	yes
	6 tennis courts	yes
	1 equipped play area	yes
	bicycle trail	yes
	swimming pool	no

Source: The Planning Commission, 1995

**Hillsborough County Parks Servicing the Plant City Area:** *(Ref: Table 3, Map 1)*

Table 3, “Hillsborough County Parks and Recreational Complexes within the Plant City Area”, and Table 4, “Hillsborough County Regional and District Parks and Recreational Complexes serving the Plant City Area” describe park facilities available to the citizens of Plant City through Hillsborough County. The total number of acres provided by these parks is approximately 28 acres of County parks and 1,310 acres of regional and district parks, yielding an estimated total of 1,338 acres.

**TABLE 3: HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATIONAL COMPLEXES WITHIN THE PLANT CITY AREA**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Dover Park	4 picnic tables.	7.50
Knights-Griffen Park	1 multi-purpose playing field.	2.18
Springhead Park	6 tables, 1 tennis court, 2 baseball /softball fields, 1 equipped play area, 1 recreation center.	8.00
Turkey Creek Park	6 tables, 1 baseball /softball field, 2 football/soccer fields.	10.00

**TABLE 4: HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY REGIONAL AND DISTRICT PARKS AND RECREATIONAL COMPLEXES SERVING THE PLANT CITY AREA (OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS)<sup>11</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Bealsville District Park	Access Road and Parking, Open Play Area, Landscaping, Recreation Center Bldg, 1 Softball Field, Site Security Residence, Multipurpose Court, Playground	20
Dover District Park	Access Road and Parking, Open Play Area, Landscaping, Recreation Center Bldg, 5 Baseball Fields, 4 Soccer Fields, Site Security Residence	9.74
Medard Regional Park	Access Road and Parking Camping Site, Fishing Docks, Boat Ramp, Shelter/Picnic Areas, Grills, Swimming Area, Trails Restroom Bldg, Playground	1,280

Source: Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation Department, 1995

**TABLE 5: INVENTORY OF CITY RECREATION PARKS WITHIN PLANT CITY  
[9J-5.014(1)]<sup>12</sup> (REF: MAP 2)**

Name	Existing Facilities	Proposed Improvements	Acres
Andrews Sports Complex	4 (lighted) softball fields, softball recreation and concession bldg, 4 (lighted) football fields, 1 (lighted) football practice field with concession & restroom facility, 2 equipped play areas and picnic shelter	None	37.0
Boy Scout Pk.	(undeveloped)	Develop as a potential rustic park.	20.0
Burchwood	Lake, 1 shelter, tot lot, 6 picnic tables, 2 play areas	Develop lake for fishing.	6.3
Courier Field	2 basketball courts	(owned by School Board)	2.0
Dort Street	Multipurpose Recreation Building: Kitchen, Stage, Ceramics room, 2 multipurpose rooms, Playground and Picnic area (attached)	None	1.0
Marie B. Ellis	1 picnic shelter	None	2.3

**TABLE 5: (CONTINUED)  
INVENTORY OF CITY RECREATION PARKS  
WITHIN PLANT CITY [9J-5.014(1)] (REF: MAP 2)**

Name	Existing Facilities	Proposed Improvements	Acres
Gilchrist	2 picnic shelters, Tot lot, Storage room, 24 picnic tables, Heavy duty play ground equipment	Drinking fountains, recreation building	2.1
Haines Street	Multipurpose recreation bldg with kitchen and stage, 3 baseball fields, 1 shelter, 2 picnic tables, 2 basketball courts, Landscaping, Drinking fountains, Large playground equipment and building addition	Concession stand, volleyball courts	17.2
Larrick Lane Park	1 shelter, 4 picnic tables, Tot lot, Heavy duty playground equipment	Water and sewer service, drinking fountains, storage facility and landscaping	1.3
T.J. McCall	Shelter	None	.3
*Reds Sports Complex	4 baseball fields, stadium	None	76.0
Roseland Park	Landscaping and open space	None	2.8
Rowena Park	4 tennis courts, 6 picnic tables, 1 handball/racquetball ct. Restrooms	Tot lot, drinking fountains, restore bridge	2.8

**TABLE 5: (CONTINUED)  
INVENTORY OF CITY RECREATION PARKS  
WITHIN PLANT CITY [9J-5.014(1)] (REF: MAP 2)**

Name	Existing Facilities	Proposed Improvements	Acres
Marshall Terrace	Play equipment	None	.3
Mike Sansone	7 baseball fields, 11 picnic tables, 3 picnic shelters, *2 basketball courts, 1 softball fields, .4 linear mile bicycle trail, 2 Soccer fields, 3 Sand volleyball ct(lighted) Playground equip, Moody Club House, Girlscout hut ~~~ <i>*In process of adding 3            basketball courts.</i>	Drinking fountains, large pavilion or 2 to 3 small pavilions	73.6
Snowden	2 lighted baseball fields with dugouts, 1 basketball court, 1 shelter, 6 tables/benches, Storage area, Bleachers, Volleyball court, Heavy duty playground equipment	Picnic shelter	6.8
Winter Visitors Center	Multipurpose recreation bldg: meeting rm & kitchen, 9 shuffleboard courts	Picnic shelter	3.0

Source: City of Plant City, Parks and Recreation Department, 1998

**LEVEL-OF-SERVICE STANDARDS<sup>13</sup>**

To determine an appropriate level-of-service standard for City Recreation Park, the City referred to Florida’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, “Outdoor Recreation in Florida, 1994” as a guide. Within this Plan, the level-of-service standard for community and neighborhood parks is 2 acres per 1,000 population. Because City Recreation Park’s are serving a dual function (community park/neighborhood park), the level-of-service standard should exceed the State requirement of 2 acres per 1,000 population. Therefore, the level-of-service standard for City Recreation Parks is 5 acres per 1,000 population and the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) shall not exceed .25 FAR (reference Policy’s 1.A.1 and 1.A.2).

According to the 1995 population estimates (as provided by the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission), the current population for the City is 25,670. Utilizing the formulae for City Recreation Parks (5 acres per 1,000 population), park acreage should be no less than 129 acres. The existing inventory of park acreage is 179 acres, exceeding the level-of-service standard by 50 acres.

**TABLE 6 EXISTING FACILITIES**

<b>EXISTING FACILITIES</b>		
City Recreation Parks = 110 acres 179		
<b>TOTAL DEMAND PROJECTIONS</b>		
City Recreation Parks		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>(Acres)</u>
1995	25,670	129
2000	28,300	142
2010	33,600	168
2015	36,300	182

*Source: The Planning Commission, 1995*

**FACILITY STANDARDS<sup>14</sup>**

Plant City will encourage the improvement of existing and future park facilities to meet the proposed quality standards of this plan.

**TABLE 7: FACILITY GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES - PROJECTED TOTAL NEEDS<sup>15</sup>**

Facility	Existing Facility	1995 (25,670 pop.)	2000 (28,300 pop)	2010 (33,600 pop)	2015 (36,300 pop)
<b>Bicycling Trail</b> <i>(One linear mile per 10,000 pop.)</i>	0.4	1.6	0	1	0
<b>Hiking/Nature Study Trail</b> <i>(One linear mile per 10,000 pop.)</i>	0	2	0	1	0
<b>Golf (9-hole course)</b> <i>(One per 32,500 population)</i>	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Golf (18-hole course)</b> <i>(One per 65,000 population)</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tennis Court</b> <i>(One per 7,500 population)</i>	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Baseball/Softball Field</b> <i>(One per 6,000 population)</i>	18	0	0	0	0
<b>Football/Soccer Field</b> <i>(One per 15,000 population)</i>	6	0	0	0	0
<b>Handball/Racquetball Ct.</b> <i>(One per 10,000 population)</i>	1	1	0	1	0
<b>Basketball Court</b> <i>(One per 5,000 population)</i>	7	0	0	0	0
<b>Swimming Pool</b> <i>(One per 35,000 population)</i>	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Shuffleboard Court</b> <i>(One per 10,000 population)</i>	9	0	0	0	0

Source: The Planning Commission, 1995

**TABLE 8: FACILITY GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES - PROJECTED TOTAL DEMANDS<sup>16</sup>**

Facility	Existing Facility	1995 (25,670 pop.)	2000 (28,300 pop)	2010 (33,600 pop)	2015 (36,300 pop)
<b>Bicycling Trail</b> <i>(One linear mile per 10,000 pop.)</i>	.4	2	2	3	3
<b>Hiking/Nature Study Trail</b> <i>(One linear mile per 10,000 pop.)</i>	0	2	2	3	3
<b>Golf (9-hole course)</b> <i>(One per 32,500 population)</i>	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Golf (18-hole course)</b> <i>(One per 65,000 population)</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tennis Court</b> <i>(One per 7,500 population)</i>	4	3	3	4	4
<b>Baseball/Softball Field</b> <i>(One per 6,000 population)</i>	18	4	4	5	6
<b>Football/Soccer Field</b> <i>(One per 15,000 population)</i>	6	1	1	2	2
<b>Handball/Racquetball Ct.</b> <i>(One per 10,000 population)</i>	1	2	2	3	3
<b>Basketball Court</b> <i>(One per 5,000 population)</i>	7	5	5	6	7
<b>Swimming Pool</b> <i>(One per 35,000 population)</i>	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Shuffleboard Court</b> <i>(One per 10,000 population)</i>	9	2	2	3	3

*The Planning Commission, 1995*



## **EXISTING AND FUTURE NEEDS**

### **RATIONAL AND METHODOLOGY<sup>17</sup>**

The methodology used to identify and analyze the existing and future needs in this Element is based on the proposed level of service standards for Parks and Recreation facilities in Plant City. The proposed standards use two variables: acreage and population. The existing park acreages were supplied by the Parks and Recreation Department. Two types of parks - neighborhood and community - were analyzed based on the proposed standards.

To identify existing park deficiencies, 1985 population estimates were applied to the standards by using the following formulae:

$(1995 \text{ Plant City population estimate}/1,000) \times 5.0 = \text{acres needed to meet the standard for City Recreation Parks in 1995}.$

The result was an acreage figure that was compared with the existing parkland for each park category to identify existing acreage deficiencies or surplus. Population figures for 1995 were calculated by The Planning Commission.

The projection of future needs was also based on the proposed Plant City park standards. Park and recreation needs were projected for two planning horizons: 1995 - 2015.

$(1995 \text{ Plant City population projection}/1,000) \times 5.0 = \text{acres needed to meet the standard for neighborhood parks in 1995}$

$(2015 \text{ Plant City population projection}/1,000) \times 5.0 = \text{acres needed to meet the standard for neighborhood parks in 2015}$

These two formulae were also applied to analyze the future needs for community parks. By applying population projections to the standards, projected acreage needed for each park category, and for the two planning horizons, were calculated. The same methodology was used in estimating the existing and future needs for the separate recreational facilities.

### **EXISTING NEEDS<sup>18</sup>**

Plant City's meets all existing (1995) Level-of- Service needs for recreational parks and facilities.

The Recreation Department's existing (1995) Quality Standard needs for parks and recreational facilities are as follows:

- 1.6 miles of bicycle trail

- 1.6 miles of hiking/nature trail
- 1 handball court

## **FUTURE NEEDS AND ISSUES<sup>19</sup>**

Between 1995 and 2015, the level of service is projected to be a total of 182 acres. Three additional acres of City Recreation Parks will be needed by the year 2015 (bringing the existing acreage from 179 to 182 acres).

Between 1995 and 2015, it is projected that Plant City's additional Facility Guidelines show the needs for recreational facilities will include:

- 1 handball/racquetball court
- 1 mile of bicycle trail
- 1 mile of hiking/nature trail
- 1 mile of equestrian trail
- 9-hole golf course
- swimming pool

## ISSUES<sup>20</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce established “The Beautification Committee to improve community image so that Plant City would become a desirable place for business and individuals to relocate.

On December 9, 1993, a task force of The Beautification Committee and City Staff submitted a report “Plant City’s Park and Recreation Facilities” to the Chamber of Commerce. Some of the highlights of that report are listed below:

- According to statistics from Plant City’s Recreation Department, 42% of all program participants reside in unincorporated areas and is the basis for current recreational facilities to be near capacity. The Beautification Committee’s task force recommended that both the City and Hillsborough County should jointly explore methods to expand park and recreation facilities.
- Because Plant City is the hub of activity for all residents of eastern Hillsborough County, planning any improvement in the existing inventory of parks and recreational amenities should consider utilization by the total population, not just City residents.
- In the 1990 Hillsborough County Needs Assessment, respondents to the Key Citizen’s Survey identified the shortage of recreational facilities and programs as a major problem in their neighborhoods and ranked second only to neighborhood crime prevention.
- Funding and maintenance of existing facilities is lower than comparable cities.
- Parks and recreation programs exceed capabilities of the Recreation Department. They are substantially enhanced by volunteers.

To address these issues new policies were created that require the adoption of a comprehensive “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study” as supported by the Recreation and Open Space Element’s, Objective 1.D, Policy: 1.D.1 through Policy: 1.D.6.

Upon completion of the Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study, it will give the City direction in park and recreation facility funding according to the priorities established through the Study’s recommendations and findings.



## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

The Recreation and Open Space Element is the means for providing adequate and appropriately located land for recreational facilities and open spaces for the anticipated population.

### THE LAND

**GOAL 1:** Provide adequate and appropriately located recreational facilities and open spaces to all Plant City residents, concurrent with demand.

**Objective 1.A:** The City, in cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions and the private sector, will assure appropriate amount of accessible parkland and open space will be acquired to meet and maintain the adopted level-of-service standards of this Plan, concurrent with the impacts of development.

#### **Policy 1.A.1:**

The City shall provide and maintain an adopted level-of-service standard of five (5) acres of City Recreation Parks for each 1,000 residents, concurrent with the impacts of development.

**Policy 1.A.2:** All future development shall not exceed .25 FAR on lands designated under the Recreation and Open Space land use plan category.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Policy 1.A.3:<sup>22</sup>**

Prior to selling any property designated as a City Recreation Park (CRP), the City shall:

1. ensure the level-of-service standard for CRP's will be maintained.
2. require written comments from the City's Parks and Recreation Department stating the benefits and potential impacts on the service area in the event that the affected CRP will be sold and removed from the parks and recreation inventory. Such comments will assist the City in determining whether to "sell" or "not to sell".
3. schedule a meeting for public input and provide written notification to residents who live within a minimum 10 block radius of the affected CRP, if the City decides to "sell" the affected CRP.

#### **Policy 1.A.4:**

The City shall investigate an open space trust to facilitate property contributions to the City for open space, recreation or similar uses to coincide with current and projected population estimates.

**Objective 1.B:** The City shall make recreation sites as accessible as possible (i.e. bicycle paths, handicap provisions, nature trails, proximity to residential areas, etc.) to coincide with current and projected population estimates.

**Policy 1.B.1:**

The City shall actively pursue the acquisition of City Recreation Parks in accordance to the priorities and design standards established within the adopted “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study” (ref: Policy 1.D.3) to efficiently serve and be conveniently located to all existing or developing residential areas whenever possible.

**Policy 1.B.2:**

The City shall develop parks and open spaces in accordance to the priorities and design standards established within the adopted “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study” (ref: Policy 1.D.3) to efficiently serve annexation areas.

**Policy 1.B.3: (RESERVED)**

**Policy 1.B.4:**

The City shall coordinate the development of present and future recreation sites with existing and planned transportations systems, by reviewing State and County road improvement programs and requesting the provision of bike paths, sidewalks, and such facilities, as part of the improvement programs, to assure public access to parkland.

**Policy 1.B.5:**

The City shall provide for bicycle and pedestrian access to parks and recreation facilities, especially in the case of neighborhood serving sites.

**Policy 1.B.6:**

The City shall include accessibility for all (elderly, handicapped, and others with special mobility needs) as a design criteria for new facilities and shall “retrofit” all existing sites.

**Policy 1.B.7:**

Open spaces demonstrating unique natural features, scenic vistas, and/or cultural, historic and archaeological resources shall be publicly accessible where such access does not detract from or diminish the resource.

**Objective 1.C:** Improve coordination efforts with all levels of government, non-profit providers and private sector landholders so as to increase public available recreational lands.

**Policy 1.C.1:**

The City shall continue to maintain the adopted “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study” (ref: Policy 1.D.4.) inventory of public, non-profit and private recreational lands and open spaces and update when changes occur.

**Policy 1.C.2: (RESERVED)**

**Policy 1.C.3:**

The City shall provide recreation space through subdivision reviews, planned unit developments, development of regional impacts (DRI's), impact fees and other mechanisms.

**Objective 1.D:** Evaluate and recommend solutions for effective and efficient service delivery concerning the City's existing and future recreation and open space sites and facilities.

**Policy 1.D.1:**

The City shall conduct and adopt a comprehensive "Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study".

**Policy 1.D.2:**

The City shall implement the adopted "Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study" recommendations, design standards, or any other suggested method providing effective and efficient service delivery of the City's existing and future recreation and open space sites and facilities.

**Policy 1.D.3:**

The City shall ensure the adopted "Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study" will:

- a. Identify any residential neighborhood that does not have adequate provisions of recreation sites and/or facilities within walking distance.
- b. Prioritized all identified residential neighborhoods not having adequate provisions of recreation sites and/or facilities within walking distance
- c. Prepare a comprehensive questionnaire to be mailed to all residents regarding recreation needs for their neighborhood and/or the City.
- d. Enter all responses from the questionnaire into a database for further analysis.
- e. Establish Design Standards, through coordination with the City's Parks and Recreation Department and by utilizing the citizen comments provided in the Survey which define the desired urban form for recreation and open space.
- f. Complete an inventory of public, private, and non-profit existing recreation sites and facilities. (*The inventory to include: name, address, acreage, facilities, hours of operation, and whether it is available to the public.*)
- g. Revise the Recreation and Open Space Element's inventory list to be consistent with the inventory described Policy 1.D.3.f., above.
- h. Provide solutions of all problems identified, particularly in the older established neighborhoods.

**Policy 1.D.4:**

The City shall ensure the inventory (described in Policy 1.D.3.f., above) will be updated as changes occur.

**Policy 1.D.5:**

The City shall ensure the design standards (described in Policy 1.D.3.e., above) will be included as part of the land development regulations.

**Policy 1.D.6:**

The City shall ensure all identified residential neighborhoods (described in Policy 1.D.3.b., above) not having adequate provisions of recreation sites and/or facilities within walking distance will be included as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program and in the given priority,

**OPEN SPACE AND AESTHETICS**

**GOAL 2:** Establish and preserve an appropriate open space system to protect public health, safety and welfare, and assure retention of aesthetic and environmental amenities.

**Objective 2.A:** The City will continue and enhance activities intended to preserve the community's natural amenities.

**Policy 2.A.1:**

The City shall discourage development within or adjacent to unique natural areas where such activity will have significant detrimental effects, through subdivision reviews, rezonings and other development review and permit processes.

**Policy 2.A.2:**

Public/private beautification efforts on public property shall continue, but only when the City's resources are adequate to maintain the additional inventory.

**Policy 2.A.3:**

The City shall utilize native plants and other plant materials, which provide for lower maintenance costs, habitat provision and freeze and drought tolerance, in development of new parks, redevelopment of existing sites, and at other public locations to achieve the benefits associated with such materials.

**Objective 2.B:** The City shall develop appropriate measures to assure public and private open spaces contribute to the desired urban form as defined within the "Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study" (*reference: Objective 1.D., Policy's: 1.D.1 through 1.D.6.*), .

**Policy 2.B.1:**

The City will amend its land development regulations to include the design standards established within the adopted “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study”.

**Policy 2.B.2:**

The City shall require provision of open space in the private development process through various incentives, which may include but not limited to cluster zoning, planned unit development review, dedication of easements for public access, and on-site transfer of development rights.

**Objective 2.C:** The City shall pursue multiple use of open spaces.

**Policy 2.C.1:**

Suitable open space shall be developed and supplied with facilities (benches, picnic tables, shaded areas, etc.) as defined within the “Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study” (*reference: Objective 1.D., Policy’s: 1.D.1 through 1.D.6.*), to allow public use and enjoyment.

**FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING**

**GOAL 3:** Provide and maintain diverse parks, recreation facilities and activities of high quality for all residents.

**Objective 3.A:** The City, in cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions and the private sector, shall utilize the “Facility Guideline’s” set in this Element to assist in the provisions of adequate park and recreational facilities, equitably and geographically distributed for the present and projected population.

**Policy 3.A.1: Reserved<sup>23</sup>**

**Objective 3.B:** The City shall optimize the usefulness of all existing recreation sites and facilities to assure efficient and effective service to coincide with current and projected population estimates.

**Policy 3.B.1:**

The City shall use the “Facility Guideline’s” to correct in an equitable manner existing facility deficiencies.

**Policy 3.B.2:**

The City shall conduct an annual review of existing recreation and open space facilities, in order to assess current deficiencies and future needs.

**Policy 3.B.3:**

The City shall offer activities such as athletic and aquatic programs, special interest classes, and special events to the general public.

**Policy 3.B.4:**

The City shall adequately supervise and maintain existing parks and recreational facilities in order to protect the public investment.

**Policy 3.B.5:**

The City shall assess the ability of existing sites and facilities to meet the changing needs of the population to be served, at least every five years.

**Objective 3.C:** The City shall continue and expand efforts to assure public awareness of park and recreational programs and facilities.

**Policy 3.C.1:**

The City shall continue to inform the public about recreation facilities, scheduled activities and special events through such items as newspaper articles, signs, seasonal printed programs, and flyers.

**Policy 3.C.2:**

The City shall develop an annual events calendar, with the dual aim of enhancing citizen awareness of planned events and identifying sponsorship opportunities.

**Policy 3.C.3:**

The City shall annually assess the effectiveness of programs offered and identify unmet resident and visitor demand.

**FUNDING**

**GOAL 4:** Develop new funding sources for expansion of parks and recreation facilities and make use of all available funding sources in the provision of quality recreation and open space opportunities.

**Objective 4.A:** The City shall actively seek outside funding sources to augment existing general fund sources.

**Policy 4.A.1:**

The City shall investigate the use of the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), Hillsborough County's Endangered Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and all potential sources of grant funding.

**Objective 4.B:** The City, shall require all new development to “pay its way” in the acquisition and implementation of park and recreation facilities made necessary by the impact of such new development.

**Policy 4.B.1: (RESERVED)**

**Objective 4.C:** The City shall have a system for the rational allocation of funds to be implemented by a maintained and coordinated Capital Improvement Program for the acquisition of recreational facilities.

**Policy 4.C.1:**

The Capital Improvement Program shall be consistent with the Capital Improvement Element of the *Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City*.

**Policy 4.C.2:**

All acquisitions of and physical improvements to park and recreational facilities expected to cost more than \$10,000 shall be included in the Capital Improvement Element.

**Policy 4.C.3:**

Projects included in the Capital Improvement Program shall be arrayed in rank order, with relative priority being determined by a multifaceted set of criteria, including but not limited to:

- a. quantity and quality of existing recreation facilities and open space in the area to be served (e.g., safety concerns, maintaining existing resources and investments, etc.)
- b. population density
- c. key socio-economic indicators
- d. access to private recreational lands and facilities
- e. natural, historic and cultural resource opportunities
- f. citizen input
- g. needs of special populations

**Policy 4.C.4:**

The Capital Improvement Program will be updated annually.

**Policy 4.C.5:**

A separate list of unranked leisure project needs shall be maintained by the City of Plant City to supplement the Capital Improvement Program, and to take advantage of unexpected or specialized funding opportunities.

**Objective 4.D:** The City shall recognize the significant role leisure provision plays in economic prosperity of the community.

**Policy 4.D.1:**

The City shall promote recreation opportunities for tourists in the City of Plant City.

## **STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation means carrying a plan through to action by means of the programs, activities, incentives and regulations stated in the goals, objectives and policies section.

In addition, the Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment Study as (*supported through Objective 1.D, Policy: 1.D.1 through Policy 1.D.6*), will be conducted and implemented through the adoption of the Study. Prioritizing potential park and recreation facility needs will direct the City on the most cost effective and appropriate methods to resolve these issues.

The strategy to implement the Recreation and Open Space Element focuses on four main areas. First, the land; second, open space and aesthetics; third, facilities and programing; and fourth, funding.

The first area, The Land, provides for adequate and appropriately located recreational facilities and open spaces. This will be partly achieved by developing and supporting methods such as tax incentives, density transfers, land dedication and rational allocation of funds to assist in the acquisition of land to be used for open space, park and recreation facilities.

The second area, Open Space and Aesthetics, establishes and preserves an appropriate open space system to protect public health, safety and welfare, and assure retention of aesthetic and environmental amenities. This will be partly achieved by initiating studies and implementing policy for the protection of the natural environment.

The third area, Facilities and Programing, calls for an assessment of existing park and recreation conditions. The most important aspect of this area is the development of guidelines to improve park management and information practices.

The fourth area, Funding, developing financing techniques, is based on the fact that in order to meet existing and future deficiencies, additional and innovative financing methods are needed. Although extensive research is still needed for the development of such methods, alternative financing sources such as but not limited to the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Save Our Lands, and Save Our Rivers, can be used to address park and recreation deficiencies.

It can be noted from the above mentioned areas, that there will be a variety of products produced in the implementation period. While some of them will be

in a form of a study, others will be in the form of financing techniques, or an educational program.

Research will be undertaken to determine financing mechanisms and revenue sources to be used for the implementation of programs and projects of this plan.

The City will appoint the most appropriate agencies to undertake the different tasks of the plan implementation. Although the Parks and Recreation Department is the action agency most directly related to this Element, other agencies can be actively involved and responsible in the implementation of the plan, for example The Planning Commission can also assist in specific projects, such as the update of the inventory acreage.

The measurability of objectives will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation process for the first five years of the plan and for the long term period. This process will show accomplishments in the first five year period, describing the degree to which goals, objectives and policies have been successfully reached. In the same way, this process will show obstacles or problems which resulted in the underachievement of goals, objectives or policies as well as required additions or modifications to correct discovered problems. Additionally, the monitoring process will provide means of ensuring continuous monitoring and evaluation of the plan during the five year period.



## **SUMMARY<sup>24</sup>**

The role of the Recreation and Open Space Element in the comprehensive planning and growth management process is to ensure adequate and appropriately located land to meet the needs of the anticipated population. Within Plant City, the influx of new residents over the next twenty years, putting a tremendous burden on the financial implications of supplying adequate recreation and open space facilities for public use. This Element serves the interest of the public by implementing procedures that will protect, preserve and acquire additional lands for recreation and open space uses in Plant City.



## **CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL POLICY PLANS<sup>25</sup>**

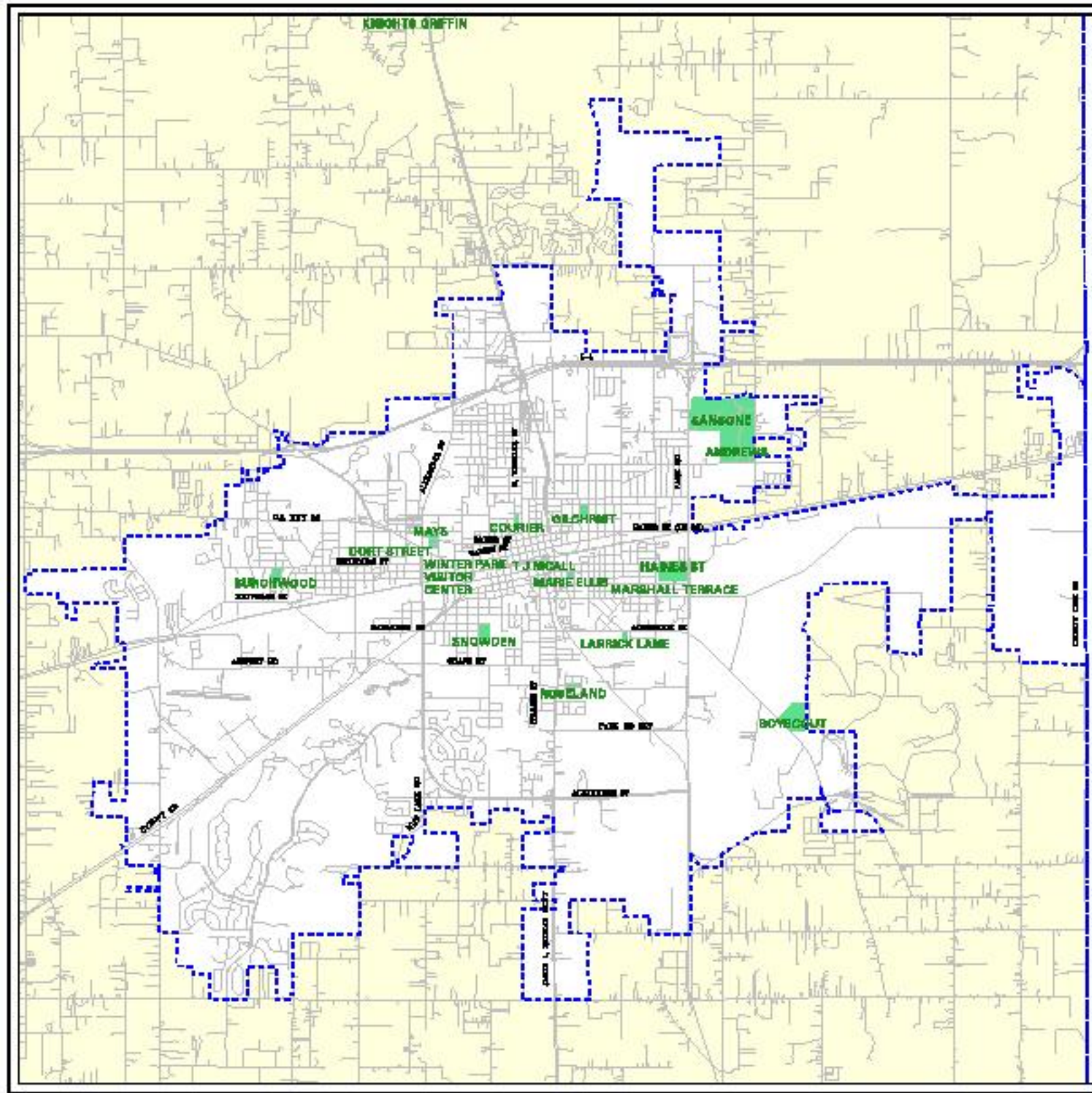
The Recreation and Open Space Element is one of eight (8) Elements comprising the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City. This Element corresponds with the Future Land Use, Conservation and Aquifer Recharge, and the Public Facilities Elements. Each Element is internally consistent in that a set format was used for all Elements, the same population projections were used for all Elements and the same planning timeframes were utilized in projecting future needs for all Elements. It is important to coordinate the Recreation and Open Space Element with the adjacent jurisdiction of unincorporated Hillsborough County because County-wide efforts can be undertaken jointly to address existing and future recreational needs.



## **SUPPORT DOCUMENTS SUMMARY<sup>26</sup>**

1. Inventory and analysis of the City of of Plant City's recreation and open space facilities, including the City's current and projected future recreational needs.
2. Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission. *Hillsborough County Recreation and Open Space Element*, 1995.
3. Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission. *Population Projections: By Jurisdiction Planning Area and Census Tract*, 1995.
4. Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, "*Outdoor Recreation in Florida, 1994*".
5. The Beautification Committee (prepared by: A Task Force of the Beautification Committee and City Staff), "*Plant City's Park and Recreation Facilities, December 3, 1993*".

FIGURE 1. CITY RECREATION PARKS.



MAP 1  
PLANT CITY  
CITY RECREATION PARKS

PLANT CITY RECREATION PARKS: This map shows the location of the City of Plant City Recreation Parks. The City of Plant City is located in Hillsborough County, Florida. The City of Plant City is a part of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Area. The City of Plant City is a part of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Area. The City of Plant City is a part of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Area.

ACCURACY: It is intended that the accuracy of the data shown on this map is as accurate as possible. The City of Plant City is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The City of Plant City is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The City of Plant City is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map.

SCALE: 1 inch = 100 feet

Map data provided by GIS  
and other sources. Data source  
not shown.









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DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>19</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>20</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>21</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>22</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>23</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 2007-PSFE (*Ref: DCA #07PEFE-1*). Text amendments to ensure consistency with the newly adopted Public Schools Facilities Element. Ord. 12-2008, 5-27-08.  
DCA NOI #08-PEFE1-NOI-2902-(A)-(I) **EFFECTIVE: August 8, 2008.**

<sup>24</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

<sup>25</sup> **ENDNOTE:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle 2001 (*Ref: DCA #01-1ER*) 4<sup>th</sup> Round EAR-Based Amendments affecting all Elements of the Plan (except Transportation). Ord. 26-2001, 12-26-01.  
DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**

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DCA NOI # 01-1ER-NOI-2902-(A)-(I), **EFFECTIVE: 5-2-02.**