

## CONCLUSION

The Comprehensive Plan more closely reflects the intensive vision planning that has occurred since Hurricane Charlie. The 2005 CRA Charrette, the 2005 Citizen's Master Plan and various other planning documents served a blueprint for the 2008 updates to the Comprehensive Plan. While the City has seen great success in implementing this plan more work needs to be done. Given the downturn in the economy and substantial legislative changes, substantive amendments to the current Plan are in order. However, far from changing the current course of the City, these changes will serve to the further the City of Punta Gorda's community vision as the economic, cultural, and historic hub of an economically vibrant Charlotte County. The implementation of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report amendments will further the pattern for continued growth and development in accordance with the State of Florida Comprehensive Plan.

The logical pattern of development for the City including the protection of important historical, environmental, and neighborhood resources, will continue to fulfill and promote the citizen's vision of the community. The development pattern, called for in the Plan will serve to minimize the cost of delivery of services and increases quality of life by maximizing the utilization of existing infrastructure while decreasing development pressure on environmentally sensitive and



rural lands. In order to effectively and efficiently achieve this vision higher densities and intensities of new development need to occur in close proximity to existing infrastructure. As the only City in Charlotte County, Punta Gorda is in the unique position to deliver the logical locations for these various types of development.

The Goals, Objectives, and Policies (GOPs) of the Future Land Use Element that guide growth must encourage a pattern of development supportive of all transportation modes. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan GOP's are an important component in preserving and reinforcing the City's urban form, pattern of development, prevention of urban sprawl, and preservation of historic and natural resources in order to create a more sustainable urban environment. Therefore, the proposed changes to the GOPs must be far-reaching enough to encompass the full range of community vision, while allowing the necessary flexibility required by the rapidly changing social, economic, and technological landscape. Balancing growth with economic sustainability will become paramount in a time of increasingly limited resources.

This logical development pattern serves as the primary inducement for developing supportive policies for a functional Transportation Concurrency Exemption Area and the future development of a Mobility Plan. These policies in concert with the Future Land Use policies will assist the City in developing strategies to increase pedestrian safety, improve pedestrian connections, promote traffic calming strategies, and create a transit supportive environment which will all serve to increase economic vitality of the City's core commercial areas.

In concert Future Land Use and Transportation policy changes will support greenhouse gas emission reductions as outlined in House Bill 697. The balance of residential units to retail/workplace will address a portion of the HB697 requirements as well as issues discussed in the climate adaptation and energy conservation of this document.

Along with the compact and contiguous development pattern of the City, comes the need to review strategies to assist the City in preparation for future climate changes. The goal is for the City to develop an action plan preparing the City for future

adaptation to such issues as sea level rise, drought and other extreme weather conditions. Potential adaptation strategies for City review will include those outlined in the Punta Gorda Adaptation Plan. The City will utilize a Vulnerability Assessment Report in establishing resiliency goals that integrate into existing hazard and comprehensive planning efforts.

An important component of ensuring a logical development pattern is the preservation and promotion of historic resources. These resources define the character of the community giving it a connection to the past and helping to define its unique sense of place. The City therefore seeks to document, protect, and enhance these resources through the development of a Historic Element.

The separation of the Conservation and Coastal Management Element will assist the City in continuing to protect important environmental resources. Protection of these resources is especially important given Punta Gorda's location on the beautiful and nearly pristine Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Preserve. The protection of salt marshes, mangrove forests and other wetlands serves not only the natural world, but also the built environment through the mitigation of risk from natural disasters.

In accordance with Section 163.3191(6), F.S. the City will be adopting The City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report – 2011 by Resolution by December 1, 2011. Following a Finding of Sufficiency by the FDCA, the City will have 18 months to amend its Comprehensive Plan. The City may request an extension of an additional six (6) months to make significant changes as recommended in this EAR should it be necessary.