

INTRODUCTION

BROOKSVILLE 2050

Welcome to the City of Brooksville Comprehensive Plan. While this document is intended, in the short term, to address the years from 2017 to 2027, the Plan establishes Goals, Objectives and Policies designed to shape the City through and beyond the year 2050. The Plan represents the collective ideas and dreams of Brooksville stakeholders who participated in the Brooksville Vision Foundation’s meetings from 2011 through 2015. This document describes the preferred future of Brooksville expressed by stakeholders. These stakeholders spoke with a strong voice about what they value in their community and what they want for its future – safe, walkable neighborhoods and parks, a thriving downtown district that maintains the historic charm that has existed for decades, a strong educational foundation for Brooksville’s youth, vibrant local business districts, and excellent housing and employment opportunities throughout the City.

A Vision for the Future

Creating a vision means not being limited to what is, but to opening up new horizons to what could be. This guiding Vision for the City of Brooksville represents an important step forward in building a brighter, more livable future for its citizens.

The City of Brooksville’s Mission

The City of Brooksville’s Mission is to be a viable, self-reliant and safe community. In order to achieve this mission, the City’s key goals are to:

- Beautify the city and enhance its infrastructure.
- Enhance and sustain a vibrant economy.
- Provide effective and efficient public safety services.
- Stimulate public awareness and social empowerment for citizens of all ages, races, and culture.
- Establish and maintain organizational integrity and operational efficiency utilizing proven management principles.

The Comprehensive Plan includes policies and implementation tools that the City can use to achieve its mission and can be used by the City as a guide for the future physical development of Brooksville. The Comprehensive Plan projects future land development patterns based on past trends and future goals. The community vision includes broad goals and preferred land development patterns expressed by the community. These goals are represented as Guiding Principles - statements that describe the collective values and ideals of stakeholders. These Guiding Principles represent a “checklist” of community values that can be used to guide public decision-making. In addition to Guiding Principles, a Vision Illustration was also created with

public input. This Vision Illustration outlines the preferred form of growth and development as expressed by participants in the visioning process.

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles provided below are the foundation of Brooksville's Vision. They represent the collective values and ideals of a diverse mix of people.

Land Use

- Pursue development and revitalization that efficiently use land by providing for a mix of uses and ample open space.
- Maintain the City's historic character and ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent with that historic character.
- Facilitate a fair, predictable, and inclusive planning process.

Transportation

- Encourage multiple transportation options by investing in roads, transit, sidewalks and bikeways.
- Promote the development of a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Central Business District.
- Take advantage of the existing rail line by promoting Transit Oriented Development in close proximity to the line, allowing for the establishment of a transit station and increasing public investment toward housing, employment, and entertainment.

Housing and Community

- Provide high quality, accessible housing which gives people choices.
- Maintain Brooksville's housing affordability.
- Sponsor and promote cultural activities that celebrate the history and cultural and ethnic diversity of Brooksville and Hernando County and work towards inclusiveness for all community members.
- Ensure that all Brooksville residents have access to public amenities, quality schools, parks and open space.
- Strengthen K-12 education in Brooksville and create more opportunities for extra-curricular activities geared toward youth.

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- Ensure open lines of communication between citizens and public agencies in planning and decision-making processes.

Conservation and Open Space

- Preserve and enhance Brooksville's unique urban environmental setting.
- Create an interconnected network of sidewalks, trails and parks that provide access to all areas of the City.

Public Safety

- Create attractive neighborhood and commercial areas that are safe, pedestrian-friendly places to live and visit.
- Ensure that community services and public safety officers are responsive to Brooksville residents, businesses and visitors.

Economic Development

- Capitalize on Brooksville's strategic location within the region to attract and retain businesses.
- Create incentives for local entrepreneurs and provide resources to enhance local business opportunities.
- Strengthen Brooksville's role in providing adult education and vocational training.
- Build Brooksville's image as a "hub city," a center for many different regional activities.
- Enhance community pride through a strategic marketing program that highlights economic and community development opportunities.

Urban Design

- Invest in streetscape improvements that enhance Brooksville's street-level appearance.
- Provide signage that promotes local events and businesses and directs visitors to areas and amenities.
- Promote the use of urban design standards that guide high-quality design that is reflective of the character of the community.

Public Facilities

- Ensure that adequate infrastructure for existing development is maintained and serviced.

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- Create and maintain infrastructure capable of accommodating new development as a strategy for encouraging economic growth.
- Consistently maintain transportation and public facilities over the long term.

Vision Illustration

In addition to Guiding Principles, a Vision Illustration for the City was created. A Vision Illustration visually represents the future development patterns and the collective desires and goals of the participants. The Brooksville Vision Illustration shows the general location of where new development patterns are desired at a city-wide level.

The Brooksville Vision Illustration is intended for use as a guiding source for applying broad planning efforts throughout the City. It also illustrates “big picture” ideas and concepts for the entire city and shows the location of preferred development patterns based on public input. This map reflects existing areas of development and other development constraints. It illustrates what citizens could expect to see across the City if the objectives set forth in the Vision are achieved.

The Brooksville Vision Illustration is integrated into this Plan as a Future Land Use Map Overlay for use in future development proposals. The major theme that emerged from the visioning process was that most participants desired to have cleaner, safer streets and neighborhoods, with a lively mix of retail, commercial and entertainment uses throughout Brooksville. Common themes also included more open space and parks and more opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Participants also wanted to ensure that the existing employment base was maintained, with a focus on fostering economic development from industry to local entrepreneurship throughout the City. The Vision Illustration is presented at the conclusion of this Introduction.

The Vision

The City of Brooksville offers a unique environment that no other jurisdiction within the Tampa Bay region can offer. Historically, Brooksville has been the main focal point for Hernando County. Among other things, the City is the center of government for Hernando County, is a major center in the County for employment and specialized services and provides a unique environment of historic culture. Brooksville’s history has helped to create a fabric that permits its residents opportunities for enlightening interactions and life experiences. The concentration of the City population in a relatively small area makes it feasible to provide very specialized public and private services that cannot and will not be found elsewhere in Hernando County. Intensification and concentration of different types of land uses in the City encourages the development of specialized retail, commercial and office uses, and the centralized nature and population of the City are conducive to the development of diverse attractions. Overall, these characteristics will positively affect the local economy, and permit expanded opportunities for tourism and specialized land uses. The City’s existing, emerging and potential activity areas will become intense mixed-use centers where different modes of transportation merge, resulting in further enhancement of their centralized character. The Historic Central Business and Residential District, the area surrounding the existing rail line through the City’s core, the areas

surrounding the intersections of South Broad Street (U.S. Highway 41) and Cortez Boulevard (State Road 50), South Broad Street and Ponce DeLeon Boulevard (U.S. Highway 98), Cortez Boulevard, West Jefferson Street and Cobb Road, North Broad Street and Yontz Road, and Cortez Boulevard and East Jefferson Street are the existing, emerging and future locations of these intensive types of activity centers. The City's landscape will not be homogeneous, but rather will be an interconnected series of activity centers of varying sizes and intensities. Less intensive land uses will locate between and around the periphery of the different activity centers. These land uses will complement the mixed-use activity centers and provide less intensive living and working environments.

Brooksville's location in the northern portion of the Tampa Bay area also provides a unique opportunity for development of a more mixed use and transit oriented community. Recently, developers, land use and transportation planners and policy makers in the Tampa Bay region have embarked on an effort in concert to shape our cityscapes, natural and physical environments. Ultimately, their collective decisions impact the quality of our lives by defining the places where we live, work, shop, and recreate, and through building the transportation systems needed to navigate to and from each place. With Tampa Bay's recent regional transportation initiatives, transit investment and transit oriented development (TOD) have been identified as one of the most important variables to our community's economic sustainability. As stewards of our vibrant communities, these groups have been evaluating our current conditions, seeking comparable examples of success from around the country, and considering the critical elements needed for a stronger future community.

Despite the economic slowdown at the beginning of this century, US trends point to the importance of transit-oriented planning and development nationally and worldwide. The changing demographics of the typical homeowner from primarily suburban families to increases in single, married without children, and retired homebuyers are redefining the housing development market. Builders and planners are already reacting to these changes with a focus on development patterns known to provide more walking and transit use, while generating less traffic. Developers and home buyers across the U.S. are increasingly investing in traditional neighborhoods, urban living, and transit oriented development projects. The City of Brooksville, through this Vision, is incorporating transit-oriented planning into the development of the City's future.

The City of Brooksville contains a number of development activity centers and corridors. An activity center is a focal point within the context of a larger, contiguous area surrounding it, containing concentrated activity that attracts people from outside its boundaries for purposes of interaction within that area. Activity centers can be different sizes depending upon the amount and type of interaction for each and the size of the market it draws. A hierarchy with six types of activity centers has been identified in the City of Brooksville:

- Transit Oriented Development Activity Center

The City's Transit Oriented Development Activity Center is located in close proximity to the existing rail line that runs through the core of Brooksville. It is adjacent to and integrated with the Historic Central Business and Residential Activity Center and be of a

walkable design with the highest priority given to pedestrian activity. The area will contain support transit systems including but not limited to light rail and buses, and will be designed to include the easy use of bicycles, scooters, and rollerblades as daily support transportation systems. The Transit Oriented Development Activity Center will ultimately be a regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity including office, residential, retail, and civic uses, with high density, high-quality development surrounding the rail line.

- Historic Central Business and Residential Activity Center

This designation refers to the City's historic downtown business and residential development. It contains a high concentration of government uses, commercial uses, historic residential low density development and potential higher density residential development. The Historic Central Business and Residential District is the primary focus for preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings, business retention, recruitment, and cultural activities.

- Regional Mixed-Use Activity Centers

These activity centers designate locations for existing and future regional shopping centers as well as major office and employment areas. Higher residential densities can also be considered in and around these areas as services and facilities become available to provide the necessary infrastructure. Existing viable low density residential uses found within or adjacent to the Mixed-Use Regional Activity centers should be protected through policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

- Industrial and Manufacturing Activity Center

The City's Industrial and Manufacturing Activity Center is located along Cobb Road in the northwest portion of Brooksville. With immediate access to State Road 50 and the Suncoast Parkway, the Industrial and Manufacturing Activity Center is intended to provide an appropriately-located area for various manufacturing enterprises, industrial establishments, research developments and compatible office and commercial services that enhance the City's economic base and provide well-paying jobs for residents of the area, while at the same time ensuring a high quality of life free from excessive noise, odors, dust, smoke, heavy traffic congestion and air and water pollution.

- Mixed-Use Activity Centers

The Mixed-Use Activity Centers are points of concentration that provide focal points for surrounding neighborhoods. These typically include a variety of public facilities and services including commercial and office development through integration of viable residential neighborhoods and the redevelopment of appropriate areas for higher intensity uses. These activity centers will be encouraged to develop as activity centers surrounding residential areas.

- Residential Activity Centers

Residential Activity Centers serve as smaller scale community centers. They can include limited commercial and office uses to serve the surrounding residential development at the neighborhood scale. Neighborhood activity centers reflect the character of their location.

By encouraging development into points of concentration it is possible to achieve population thresholds (whether through residents and/or employees) and/or agglomeration economies that will provide a wider array of goods and services. This is one of the attractions of an urban environment.

The corridor network is the road network. Distinctions between different scales of the corridors are made by using the functional classification of the roads (e.g., arterial, collectors, local streets). There is a direct relationship between the growth of activity centers and the expansion of corridors. The amount, type and frequency of interaction between activity centers affects corridor development, and the amount, type and frequency within corridors affects nodal development. Presently, the road network is the only component of the corridor system linking the activity centers. The possibility of enhanced bus service and rail mass transit in the future will provide another component to the corridor system.

The corridors have a three-fold purpose in the City of Brooksville. One, they link and make the activity centers accessible. Two, they act as edges or boundaries that define geographical areas within the City. Three, the corridors themselves are linear areas of interaction. Businesses located along the corridor attract customers traveling through the corridor. Although certain links may be appropriate for higher intensities and development, not all corridors are appropriate for this type of interaction.

As a result of the development of the City's activity centers, Brooksville in the year 2050 continues to be a neighborly place where we seek to preserve and enrich our community's distinctive small town character, historic downtown, and unique setting in Hernando County. We continue to welcome development that practices sound environmental stewardship and creates good jobs and good neighborhoods. As we grow, we will develop a safe and expanded transportation network while promoting active living through walking, biking, and other cultural and recreational opportunities.

As stated previously, the Guiding Principles are the foundation of Brooksville's Vision, representing the collective values and ideals of a diverse mix of people. Adherence to these Guiding Principles will result in the City of Brooksville not only being characterized as simply a small town, but instead as a vibrant, well-balanced and friendly city where we all *really* live!

Making the Vision a Reality

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The Brooksville Vision brings to life the concepts and ideas contributed by area residents and stakeholders through a public involvement process. This Vision reflects what the future residents want for their community. This future reflects an understanding that new development patterns will be necessary to promote a vibrant and active local economy, provide more housing choices for all income levels and create cleaner and safer neighborhoods that are easily accessible using a variety of transportation options.