

Hernando County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR>

Q. WHAT IS THE EAR AND WHY IS THE COUNTY COMPLETING IT?

A. The purpose of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) is to provide an evaluation of the performance of the Hernando County Comprehensive Plan over the last five years (2006 – 2010). The EAR is required by state law and is a good tool for updating the Plan. The EAR will be developed with input from Hernando County residents through public workshops and outreach. After two public hearings the Board of County Commissioners will transmit the final document to the State of Florida by August 1, 2011.

Q. WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A. The Comprehensive Plan provides the blueprint for growth and development in Hernando County including distribution of land use, provision of adequate infrastructure and protection of natural resources. It is required by state law and is important in guiding our land use decisions. Having an updated plan in place also helps the County obtain state and regional funding and other assistance. The EAR process ensures that the Comprehensive Plan will remain a “living” and relevant document.

Q. WHERE CAN I VIEW A COPY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP?

A. To download and read individual Comprehensive Plan Elements and Maps go to the Planning Department’s web site at www.hernandocounty.us/plan. From the blue sidebar choose “Publications”, “Comprehensive Plan”, and “Adopted Plan.” For an easy guide to what’s in the Plan, download the “Summary of Hernando’s Comprehensive Plan Elements” from any topic page on the EAR web site: www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER ADOPTION AND STATE ACCEPTANCE OF THE EAR?

A. The EAR document will consist of a narrative list of recommended revisions to the policies in the Comprehensive Plan. Once the state accepts the EAR document, Hernando County will begin the process of formulating and adopting those revisions. Final adoption of the updated policies should occur by early 2013.

Q. WHAT IS THE PROJECTED GROWTH IN HERNANDO COUNTY POPULATION AND HOW IS THAT DETERMINED?

A. The planning horizon for the EAR is the year 2035. The Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BEER) housed at the University of Florida periodically updates population projections and other demographic statistics for Florida counties. BEER currently projects a 50% increase in Hernando County’s population by 2035. The results of Census 2010 are also expected to be released sometime during 2011.

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Q. WHAT MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ISSUES ARE BEING DISCUSSED?

A. The Comprehensive Plan is a large document so it helps to identify major planning issues that we want to focus on during the EAR process. Our identified issues for the EAR 2011 process include:

- 1. INFRASTRUCTURE.** How will Hernando County fund, build and maintain infrastructure and meet level of service standards for current, vested and future development through 2035?
- 2. ECONOMY AND JOBS.** Does the current plan enable and encourage Hernando County to achieve a sustainable balance of residential versus business growth?
- 3. NATURAL RESOURCES.** How will Hernando County ensure and maintain the long-term functional integrity of its greenways, wild lands and open space landscape?
- 4. GROUNDWATER.** How effective is the current plan in ensuring protection of and provision for Hernando County's future potable water needs while protecting groundwater within both local and regional contexts?
- 5. FUTURE LAND USE.** What will the Hernando County development pattern look like in 2035 especially with respect to the potential for transitioning of mining, agricultural and rural lands to residential development?

A series of public workshops on these issues was held during Fall 2010. You can view workshop slide shows by exploring the EAR Topics pages on the web site: www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR. The Planning & Zoning Commission is formulating recommendations on these topics during Winter/Spring 2011.

Q. HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

A. The best way to get involved is to take the EAR survey on the EAR web site <http://www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR>. Select, "Take Our EAR Survey" from the sidebar. You are also encouraged to attend and provide input at the EAR meetings held by the Hernando County Planning & Zoning Commission. The Commission will formulate the draft EAR at monthly meetings from February through June 2011. Check the EAR web site for frequent schedule updates and meeting packets.

Q. WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

A. Visit the web site: www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR, OR, Contact Patricia McNeese, AICP at Hernando County Planning Department; 352-754-4057, ext 28016, pmcneese@hernandocounty.us