

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

## Element Overview

The City of Boca Raton provides a viable quality of life for the residents through the protection and conservation of its resources. Boca Raton's extensive natural habitats, ecological systems, wildlife habitats and numerous preserves are an essential part of the City's valued assets.

Essentially, the Conservation Element addresses the supply and demand for resources in the City of Boca Raton. The Element consists of three goals:

- To conserve, protect, and appropriately use and/or acquire unique natural habitats and ecological systems.
- To restore degraded natural systems to a functional condition.
- To protect fisheries, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and marine habitat.

## Element Goals, Objectives and Policies

### GOAL CON.1.0.0

Boca Raton shall protect and/or acquire unique natural habitats and ecological systems such as wetlands, tropical hardwood hammocks, oak/palm hammocks, sand pine forests, and pine flatwoods, and restore degraded natural systems to a functional condition.

#### OBJECTIVE CON.1.1.0

Privately Owned Property. Protect, preserve or acquire and manage a minimum of 25% of the significant upland habitats within privately owned properties in the City.

(SRPP 6.7.1, SRPP 6.7.1.2; SCP 10(b)1)

#### POLICY CON.1.1.1

The City will continue to enforce Chapter 20, Article II, Code of Ordinances, entitled "Environmentally Sensitive Lands" to require that at least 25% of each native plant community which occurs on site in a parcel for which private development approval is sought (excluding wetlands, lakes, canals, or other unusable portions of the property) shall be established as a platted preserve with a conservation land use category (N). In the case of parcels that are less than five acres, the Planning and Zoning Board shall review the requirement for the platting of preservation land with a conservation land use category (N) on site on a case-by-case basis. The Environmental Advisory Board shall also review development proposed for these parcels and shall make recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Board regarding the requirement for the platting of preservation areas. Chapter 20 of the City Code of Ordinances provides for a payment in lieu of an environmental set aside option that may be considered and approved by the City Council, if, among other criteria, the amount of land to be set aside as a preserve is less than one acre.

(3SRPP 6.3.1.7, SRPP 6.7.1, SRPP 6.7.1.2, SRPP 6.7.1.3, SRPP 6.7.1.5; SCP 10(b)2)

**POLICY CON.1.1.2.**

Emphasis will be placed on establishing platted upland preserve areas in new developments.

(SRPP 6.7.1, SRPP 6.7.1.2, SRPP 6.7.1.6, SRPP 6.7.1.9; SCP 10(b)1)

**POLICY CON.1.1.3**

Environmentally sensitive areas within the City are identified on maps entitled "Recreation & Open Space" and "Natural Areas". The site selection was based upon the following criteria: 1) quality of the existing ecosystem; 2) uniqueness or rarity of the ecosystem type; and 3) size of the native ecosystem. All parcels of land containing environmentally sensitive areas will follow the development procedures outlined in the Future Land Use Element. The City will continue to protect environmentally sensitive areas consistent with the policies contained within this Element.

(SRPP 6.1.3.2, SRPP 6.3.1.7, SRPP 6.7.1.8)

**POLICY CON.1.1.4**

The City will continue to work with adjacent local governments to conserve, appropriately use, and protect unique vegetative communities located within more than one jurisdiction.

(SRPP 6.7.1.8; SCP 10(b)4)

**POLICY CON.1.1.5**

The City will maintain an Environmentally Sensitive Land Acquisition Trust Fund to be used for the acquisition and management of environmentally sensitive lands and open space.

(SRPP 6.3.1.7, SRPP 6.7.1.8)

**OBJECTIVE CON.1.2.0**

Publicly-owned Property. Protect, preserve, and manage those Natural Areas within the City.

(SRPP 6.1.1, SRPP 6.1.1.2; SCP 10(b)2)

**POLICY CON.1.2.1**

The City will continue to maintain an inventory of all non-City-owned public land (Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Palm Beach County (PBC), Florida Atlantic University (FAU), etc.) for the ongoing preservation of environmentally valuable lands.

(SRPP 6.1.1.1, SRPP 6.1.1.2; SCP 10(b)2)

**POLICY CON.1.2.2**

The City will continue to maintain the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program (ESL) to protect and preserve all City-owned Natural Areas which are located within existing or proposed park and recreation areas. This program will be reviewed regularly to determine its effectiveness.

(SRPP 6.1.1.1; SCP 10(b)2), (SCP 10(b)6)

**OBJECTIVE CON.1.3.0**

Protect trees and native vegetative cover within the City.

**POLICY CON.1.3.1**

The City will continue to implement Chapter 27, Article II, entitled “Trees,” the Exotic Plant Removal Program, and the Vine Removal Program to ensure that it adequately provides for the control and eventual elimination of exotic and invasive vegetation, particularly Brazilian pepper, Australian pine, poison wood and Melaleuca.

(SRPP 6.4.1.6, SRPP 6.6.1.10, SRPP 6.7.1.4, SRPP 6.9.1.5)

**POLICY CON.1.3.2**

The City will continue to implement the Beach Renourishment and Dune Stability Project to ensure that the natural vegetative cover on dune beaches shall be preserved in an undisturbed state of growth as a fragile ecosystem, except that appropriate management of dune vegetation may be authorized as specifically provided in the Code of Ordinances.

(SRPP 6.4.1.6, SRPP 6.6.1.10)

**OBJECTIVE CON.1.4.0**

Protect species which are listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Endangered Plant Advisory Council (EPAC), and Florida Committee on Rare and Endangered Plants and Animals (FCREPA). Protect rare, unique, or significant natural habitats within the City.

(SRPP 6.8.1, SRPP 6.8.1.2, SRPP 6.8.1.3, SRPP Appendix G; SCP 10(b)3)

**POLICY CON.1.4.1**

Consult with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) for data regarding listed species located within the City of Boca Raton, and in the near-shore oceanic environment, for potential impacts to listed species, as part of development reviews.

(SRPP Appendix G; SCP 10(b)3)

**OBJECTIVE CON.1.5.0**

Prevent further loss of wetlands within the City.

(SRPP 6.6.1, SRPP 6.6.1.6; SCP 10(b)7)

**POLICY CON.1.5.1**

Wetland Development Restrictions. City will continue to prohibit the alteration, degradation, or destruction of all wetlands and deep-water habitats without mitigation to prevent a net loss consistent with Federal and state regulations. Wetland mitigation shall be at a ratio as determined by appropriate permitting agencies having jurisdiction.

(SRPP 6.6.1.1; SCP 10(b)7)

**OBJECTIVE CON.1.6.0**

Protect Living Marine Resources and Habitats. The City of Boca Raton shall continue to work with Federal, State, County and local agencies to ensure the protection of living marine resources and habitats.

(SRPP 6.4.2)

**POLICY CON.1.6.1**

The City will not issue development orders that will result in a net loss of marine resources and habitats without mitigation.

(SRPP 6.4.2, SRPP 6.5.1, SRPP 6.5.1.1, SRPP 6.5.1.2, SRPP 6.6.1, SRPP 6.6.1.1)

**POLICY CON.1.6.2**

The City will continue to support and provide adequate funding for the Boca Raton Sea Turtle Conservation and Research Program, the Manatee Protection Program, and the Beach Lighting Program.

(SRPP 6.4.1.4, SRPP 6.4.1.5, SRPP 6.4.2.3, SRPP 6.5.1.9; SCP 10(b)3)

**POLICY CON.1.6.3**

The City shall continue to protect living marine resources and habitats.

(SRPP 6.4.2, SRPP 6.6.1, SRPP 6.6.1.1)

**GOAL CON.2.0.0**

Boca Raton shall protect the quality of freshwater and saltwater within the City by restriction of activities known to adversely affect water quality and shall conserve and preserve the water resources that are relied on by the City.

(SRPP 6.3.1)

**OBJECTIVE CON.2.1.0**

Prevent further degradation and improve the quality of water sources and waters that flow into surface water resources.

(SRPP 6.3.1.3; SCP 8(b)10)

**POLICY CON.2.1.1**

Continue improvements to the stormwater management system to maintain adopted level of service standards, and improve the quality of stormwater discharge for areas known to have facility deficiencies.

(SRPP 6.3.1.1, SRPP 6.3.1.4, SRPP 6.3.1.5, SRPP 6.3.1.6)

**POLICY CON.2.1.2**

New development or redevelopment shall include stormwater systems consistent with the water quality level of service set forth in the Stormwater Sub-Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

**POLICY CON.2.1.3**

The City will continue to implement its Water Quality Monitoring Program of existing development stormwater discharge, the Drainage and Stormwater Program, and initiate programs to correct identified facility deficiencies consistent with the City's NPDES MS4 permit for monitoring stormwater quality.

**POLICY CON.2.1.4**

The City shall maintain interlocal agreements with the appropriate agencies (South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Lake Worth Drainage District (LWDD), PBC, FDOT) to ensure the correction of localized stormwater drainage system deficiencies.

**POLICY CON.2.1.5**

The City will continue to regulate marina and boating activities, such as back-pumping, trash and sewage disposal, and boat speed to protect and conserve water quality and living marine resources and habitats.

(SRPP 6.3.2, SRPP 6.3.3, SRPP 6.4.2, SRPP 6.4.2.2; SCP 8(b)10)

**OBJECTIVE CON.2.2.0**

Provide adequate potable water quality and quantity for the City's present and projected needs, including for groundwater sources and recharge areas.

(SRPP 6.3.2)

**POLICY CON.2.2.1**

Protect existing wellfield sites through compliance with the Palm Beach County Wellfield Protection Ordinance.

(SRPP 6.3.2, SRPP 6.3.2.1; SCP 8(b)9)

**POLICY CON.2.2.2**

Identify and protect future wellfield sites through compliance with the Palm Beach County Wellfield Protection Ordinance.

(SRPP 6.3.2, SRPP 6.3.2.1, SRPP 6.3.2.2)

**POLICY CON.2.2.3**

The City shall continue its Reclaimed Water Program to minimize saltwater intrusion into City wells.

(SRPP 6.3.2.3, SRPP 6.3.2.4; SCP 8(b)9)

**POLICY CON.2.2.4**

The City shall continue to cooperate with the LWDD and the SFWMD to maintain canal levels and potentiometric pressure in surrounding wellfields.

(SRPP 6.6.1.4, SRPP 6.6.1.5, SRPP 6.6.1.10; SCP 8(b)14)

**OBJECTIVE CON.2.3.0.**

Conserve potable water resources.

(SRPP 6.2.1, SRPP 6.2.1.4(3), SRPP 6.2.2.1, 6.2.3, SRPP 6.2.3.5, SRPP 6.2.3.6, SRPP 6.3.2.1, SRPP 6.3.2.2)

**POLICY CON.2.3.1.**

The City shall continue to cooperate with SFWMD to conserve potable water resources through programs discussed in the Potable Water Sub-Element.

(SRPP 6.2.1; SCP 8(b)11)

**POLICY CON.2.3.2**

The City will continue to conserve potable water resources by enforcing regulations, such as connection to the City's reclaimed water system (IRIS) facilities, the use of native landscaping installation, timed and rain-sensing irrigation systems, and weekly irrigation schedules, and by expanding IRIS.

(SRPP 6.2.1; SCP 8(b)11)

**POLICY CON.2.3.3**

The City shall review and update its adopted 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan, as contained within the City's *Infrastructure Element Potable-Water Sub-Element*, at a minimum every five years and within 18 months after the SFWMD approves an updated Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan.

**GOAL CON.3.0.0**

Boca Raton shall conserve, appropriately use, and protect minerals and soils within the City.

**OBJECTIVE CON.3.1.0**

Prevent deterioration of Natural Areas due to soil erosion.

(SRPP 6.4.1)

**POLICY CON.3.1.1**

The City shall continue to enforce City Code Section 16-5 that prohibits the use of off-road vehicles within the City, except for beach patrol activities, or other activities specifically authorized by the City Manager or designee. The use of off-road vehicles shall be permitted only in specially designated areas.

(SRPP 6.6.1.9)

**POLICY CON.3.1.2**

The City shall provide periodic inspection of non-irrigated road rights-of-way for erosion, particularly in xeric areas. Areas where significant erosion is found shall be re-planted with xeric grasses as necessary.

(SRPP 6.2.1.2, SRPP 6.2.1.3, SRPP 6.2.1.4, SRPP 6.4.1, SRPP 6.4.1.3, SRPP 6.4.1.5, SRPP 6.5.1.2)

**OBJECTIVE CON.3.2.0**

Control beach erosion through Best Management Practices or other appropriate practices.

(SRPP 6.4.1)

**POLICY CON.3.2.1**

The City shall continue to support and obtain funding for a beach renourishment and dune stability program, dune creation and vegetation for dune restoration, and beach and mangrove clean-ups.

(SRPP 6.4.1, SRPP 6.4.1.2, SRPP 6.4.1.3, SRPP 6.4.1.4, SRPP 6.4.1.5, SRPP 6.4.1.6; SCP 9(b)5)

**GOAL CON.4.0.0**

Protect all natural resources, including soils, vegetation, wildlife, surface water, and groundwater, from hazardous waste impacts.

(SRPP 6.3.1, SRPP 6.4.2, SRPP 6.5.1.6)

**OBJECTIVE CON.4.1.0**

Monitor the use and storage of hazardous material within the City.

(SCP 13(b)4)

**POLICY CON.4.1.1**

The City shall provide adequate funding to the Hazardous Material Team to enable them to comply with the provisions of the Florida Right-to-Know Law, as well as other state and federal regulations.

(SCP 13(b)4)

**OBJECTIVE CON.4.2.0**

Continue to assist Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resource Management (ERM) in the regulation of underground storage tanks.

(SRPP 6.3.2)

**POLICY CON.4.2.1**

The City of Boca Raton will continue to be guided by FDEP and ERM on regulations regarding underground storage tanks, and be of assistance where possible, such as continuing to forward copies of permits of aboveground or underground storage tanks.

(SCP 13(b)4)

**POLICY CON.4.2.2**

The City staff will review site development plans of underground storage tanks for compliance with the Palm Beach County Wellfield Protection Ordinance.

(SCP 3(b)4)

**OBJECTIVE CON.4.3.0**

Prevent hazardous substances from being improperly disposed of within the City.

(SRPP 6.3.1.8, SRPP 6.3.3, SRPP 6.3.3.1, SRPP 6.4.2.2, SRPP 6.5.1.6)

**POLICY CON.4.3.1**

The City, through the yearly sanitation brochure and the City cable access channel, will inform City residents of the Palm Beach County Solid Waste Authority facility which is available for the disposal of household and small quantity generator hazardous materials.

(SCP 13(b)10)

**POLICY CON.4.3.2**

All City employees shall be instructed to be on the alert for illegal trash dumping, and to report such incidents to the City Manager or his/her designee.

**POLICY CON.4.3.3**

Concurrent with the revisions to the City's land development regulations, the City will enact an Ordinance requiring that hazardous waste cleanup costs incurred by the City shall be reimbursed to the City by the source or spill generator.

(SCP 13(b)3, 4)

**GOAL CON.5.0.0**

Boca Raton shall protect air quality within the City.

**OBJECTIVE CON.5.1.0**

Comply with State and Federal standards for air quality.

**POLICY CON.5.1.1**

The City shall continue to support the Air Pollution guidelines and Florida's Ozone and Particulate Matter Air Quality Trends of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Air Resource Management, Office of Permitting and Compliance and the Palm Beach County Health Department associated with the permitting of new stationary sources, and the effective controls for mobile sources within the City.

(SCP 11(b)1, 3)

**POLICY CON.5.1.2**

The City's Downtown Redevelopment Plan will emphasize pedestrian traffic as a principal source of mobility within the Downtown, so as to reduce the mobile source pollution from motorized vehicular traffic.

(SCP 11(b)2)

**POLICY CON.5.1.3**

Concurrent with the revision of the City's Land Development Regulations, the City shall implement a citywide Total Suspended Particulates (TSP)/Dust Control Ordinance to reduce particulate air pollution.



(SCP 11(b)1, 3)

**GOAL CON.6.0.0**

The City shall work towards compliance with the Florida Green Building Coalition's Local Government Standard that designates Green Cities for outstanding environmental stewardship.

**OBJECTIVE CON.6.1.0**

Monitor and control point-source and non-point source emission of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.

**POLICY CON.6.1.1**

To help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the City shall support multiple modes of transportation through the implementation of the City of Boca Raton's mobility strategies and the resulting planning area plans and policies encouraging mixed-use land use patterns, pedestrian-oriented development, and appropriate densities and intensities toward locations served by transit.

**POLICY CON.6.1.2**

The City shall incorporate greenhouse gas reduction strategies and energy conservation into the land development regulations.

**POLICY CON.6.1.3**

The City shall monitor and track local government water and energy use and solid waste generation/recycling rates.

**POLICY CON.6.1.4**

The City shall consider developing a local government energy reduction plan.

**POLICY CON.6.1.5**

The City shall consider monitoring greenhouse gas emissions, both from City operations and community-wide and set science based and achievable targets for greenhouse gas reduction.

**POLICY CON.6.1.6**

To help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the City should consider supporting solar adoption by residents and businesses through permitting, planning, and zoning processes.

**OBJECTIVE CON.6.2.0**

Develop a community education outreach program to educate the public about green building benefits.

**POLICY CON.6.2.1**

The City shall consider participating in regional, national, or international campaigns to promote biodiversity, resource conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, or climate change action.

**POLICY CON.6.2.2**

The City shall consider adopting a green standard as official minimum criteria for new government buildings.

**POLICY CON.6.2.3**

The City shall consider creating a public education program to support the City's commitment to green building practices.

**POLICY CON.6.2.4**

The City shall organize green building education for local government staff.

**POLICY CON.6.2.5**

The City shall consider adopting FGBC or LEED green standards as official green standards of the City.

**POLICY CON.6.2.6**

The City shall consider offering an incentive(s) for FGBC or LEED certified commercial and institutional buildings, Energy Star certified green homes and/or FGBC certified green developments.

**OBJECTIVE CON.6.3.0**

The City should consider dedicating staff and resources to coordinate a City Sustainability program.

**POLICY CON.6.3.1**

The City should consider adopting a Sustainability Action Plan and track progress towards the goals and actions outlined within the plan.

**POLICY CON.6.3.2**

The City shall continue to engage and collaborate with regional organizations, such as the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, and incorporate actions from the Regional Climate Action Plan into the City's Sustainability Action Plan.