

DIVISION 4.100 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element establishes guidelines for collaboration between Polk County and other governmental agencies, including municipalities, the school board, state agencies, and special districts. Its purpose is to ensure seamless government operations, minimize service overlaps, and facilitate coordinated decision-making. While primarily focused on external coordination, its policies also influence intra-governmental operations. This element addresses general coordination, coordination of planning issues, coordination of sustainable development, and dispute resolution.

Developed in collaboration with Polk County planning staff and the original efforts of the Intergovernmental Coordination Subcommittee, this element is informed by the community visioning process conducted in 2024, interviews with local officials, reviews of interlocal agreements, and analysis of regional and state plans. It is designed to align the Polk County Comprehensive Plan with the Central Florida Regional Policy Plan, the regional water supply plan, and the State Comprehensive Plan. This element serves as a foundation for advancing regional planning efforts, strengthening Polk County's commitment to efficient, collaborative, and strategic governance.

The purpose of every element within the Comprehensive Plan is identified by the goal statement. The Intergovernmental Coordination Element's goal is:

Goal ICE 1. COOPERATION, COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION: Improve governmental efficiency and effectiveness and resolve conflicts and incompatibilities through cooperation, communication, and responsive collaborations between Polk County and all other agencies which have issues that affect Polk County.

Objective ICE 1.1. COORDINATION: Polk County shall coordinate with appropriate government agencies including, all municipalities within the county, adjacent counties, and adjacent municipalities to maintain and improve intergovernmental coordination and collaborative planning.

Policy ICE 1.1.1. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT DATABASE: Polk County shall continue to maintain and update a database of interlocal agreements, all formal agreements completed as part of the Interlocal Service Delivery Agreements Report and those completed as part of Joint Planning Area Agreements. The inventory will provide a listing of active formal agreements and their expiration dates, so those formal agreements may be renewed on a timely basis.

[COMBINED WITH PREVIOUS]

Policy ICE 1.1.2. LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY: Polk County will coordinate with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council and municipalities within the County's jurisdiction to draft a Local Mitigation Strategy and will review all final recommendations for incorporation into the County's plans.

Policy ICE 1.1.3. DATA SHARING FOR POPULATION PROJECTIONS: Polk County will coordinate with municipalities within the County and the School Board to develop county-wide demographics including population projections and expected growth for incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Policy ICE 1.1.4. INFORMATION SHARING: Polk County shall continue to share information between the County and other governmental agencies. The types of information to be considered include, but are not limited to, building permits, zoning cases, engineering plans, planned annexation, comprehensive plan amendments, Geographic Information Systems, demographics, socio-economic information, and utility service areas and capacity, and other concurrency related data.

Policy ICE 1.1.5. COORDINATION WORKSHOPS: The Polk County Board of County Commissioners shall find opportunities for intergovernmental coordination workshops to to meet with Polk County city commissioners, city

managers, School Board members and constitutional officers. The workshops will be designed to enhance intergovernmental coordination among all agencies in Polk County.

Policy ICE 1.1.6. INTERLOCAL SERVICE AREA BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS AND JOINT PLANNING AREAS: The County will continue to work with municipalities within the County and other local governmental agencies to identify appropriate interlocal service boundary agreements (ISBAs) or joint planning areas (JPAs), and to enter into and implement agreements dealing with issues of mutual concern. The following items shall be discussed with each jurisdiction to determine their relevance for incorporating into a ISBA or JPA:

- a. future annexations and municipal incorporation;
- b. land uses;
- c. establishing infrastructure service areas for all franchised, municipal, and County-owned and/or maintained potable water treatment systems and sanitary sewer treatment systems;
- d. collection and reduction of hazardous and solid waste;
- e. development within, and maintenance of, stormwater drainage systems;
- f. water quality and quantity studies;
- g. conservation uses as defined by Section 163.3177 F.S.;
- h. recreational and open space efforts including:
 1. location of new facilities,
 2. maintenance of facilities,
 3. provision of services, and
 4. establishing greenway systems.
- i. coordination for the provision of establishing and maintaining transportation systems, including aviation, mass transit, and traffic circulation.
- j. coordination for the provision of group homes and adequate and affordable very low-, low- and median-income housing;
- k. identification, appropriate use, and protection of unique vegetative communities;
- l. prevention of the loss of endangered or threatened species populations;
- m. coordination for the provision of the following services:
 1. fire protection,
 2. law enforcement,
 3. emergency medical,
 4. animal control,
 5. emergency management, and
 6. libraries.

The Intergovernmental Coordination Map Series herein shall contain a map depicting the boundaries of all such current Joint Planning Areas, entitled "Joint Planning Area Agreement Map," which shall be updated as necessary to ensure its accuracy.

Policy ICE 1.1.7. INCORPORATION AND ANNEXATION: The County shall request that the municipalities and areas considering municipal incorporation within its boundaries coordinate with County officials prior to annexation or incorporation to discuss joint planning issues regarding:

- a. land-uses;
- b. impacts on utilities;
- c. impacts on the transportation network;
- d. impacts on established level-of-service standards; and
- e. impacts on other urban services as appropriate.

Policy ICE 1.1.8. COORDINATION WITH SCHOOL BOARD: Polk County shall coordinate the adopted County Comprehensive Plan with the plans of the Polk County School Board to address issues pertaining to the siting and development of schools and school facilities.

Policy ICE 1.1.9. CITY OF LAKELAND SECTOR PLANNING PROGRAM: Polk County shall consider the City of Lakeland's Sector Plans in its land use and facility planning for the subject areas. The sector plans shall serve as a shared resource and guide for planning efforts and shall not be binding in any manner upon the County. Sector Plans that include unincorporated areas are:

- a. Southwest, Sector 8 (complete);
- b. Northwest, Sector 7 (complete);
- c. East, Sector 4 (complete);
- d. Southeast, Sector 9 (future);
- e. North, Sector 6 (future);
- f. Northeast, Sector 5 (future);
- g. South Central, Sector 3 (future).

Once drafted, proposed Sector Plans that include unincorporated areas as per above will be shared with the Polk County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners for their information and input prior to the City of Lakeland's adoption of same.

Policy ICE 1.1.10. SECTOR PLAN REVIEW: Polk County shall review each proposed sector plan and determine if additional joint planning efforts are necessary, including establishment of ISBA or JPA agreements to ensure the plans are effectively implemented.

Objective ICE 1.2. COORDINATION OF PLANNING ISSUES: Polk County shall establish and implement mechanisms to ensure uniform and timely coordination of planning and development issues with municipalities within the County, adjacent counties, the School Board, and other governmental entities.

Policy ICE 1.2.1. NOTIFYING AFFECTED MUNICIPALITIES: Polk County shall forward copies of applications for Comprehensive Plan Amendments or major development orders that fall within a municipality's planning area to the affected community to allow the municipality time to review these proposed changes with regards to consistency with their comprehensive plan.

Policy ICE 1.2.2. COMMENT FROM OTHER ENTITIES: The staff report for land development requests and other development orders shall include a section for other agencies' comments. These other agencies may include, but not be limited to: Polk County School Board, municipalities located within Polk County, and other agencies which provide services but do not have regulatory authority of the use of the land.

Policy ICE 1.2.3. POLK COUNTY PLANNERS' FORUM: Polk County shall reinstate the Polk County Planners' Forum which shall meet on a regular basis to coordinate planning efforts throughout the County. Polk County shall, invite and encourage participation from the Polk County School Board, Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Transportation Planning Organization, and municipalities on the Planners' Forum. (combined with Policy 4.103-B4)

Policy ICE 1.2.4. JOINT PLANNING PROCESSES: Polk County will identify and describe joint processes for collaborative planning on population projections, school siting, facilities subject to concurrency, facilities with countywide significance, the potential for sharing facilities, the 10-year water supply plan, unwanted land uses, and other issues of mutual concern.

Policy ICE 1.2.5. PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY PLANNING: Polk County shall maintain and implement an Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning with the School Board and municipal jurisdictions to ensure appropriate coordination on the following issues:

- a. coordinated land use and school facility planning;
- b. coordination and sharing of information related to the need for additional school capacity;
- c. the siting of new schools;
- d. infrastructure needed to support new schools;
- e. the co-location and shared use of schools and other public facilities; and
- f. the implementation of school concurrency.

Policy ICE 1.2.6. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING: Polk County will continue to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee, Land Use and Transportation Forum, Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordination Board (TD LCB), and Joint Airport Zoning Board (JAZB) for the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), as well as on the TPO Board, to ensure coordination regarding transportation issues.

Policy ICE 1.2.7. PASSENGER RAIL PLANNING: Polk County shall coordinate with the Polk County TPO and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regarding future passenger rail service within the County.

Policy ICE 1.2.8. JOINT REVIEW FOR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL IMPACTS: Polk County shall coordinate with municipalities within the County, adjacent counties, adjacent municipalities, and other concerned public agencies to establish a joint review committee(s) for the siting of facilities with multi-jurisdictional impacts including locally unwanted land uses.

Policy ICE 1.2.9. MILITARY OPERATIONS: Polk County shall coordinate with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council and the Avon Park Air Force Range to ensure that when feasible, military operations have a minimal impact on the residents and businesses in the adjacent areas.

Policy ICE 1.2.10. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: Polk County shall coordinate with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, the Department of Environmental Protection, the corresponding water management districts, and other public or private agencies dedicated to the protection of the environment and the Avon Park Air Force Range to ensure the protection of natural environments while at the same time preserving the military operations.

Policy ICE 1.2.11. 10 YEAR WATER SUPPLY PLAN COORDINATION: Polk County will coordinate its 10-Year Water Supply Plan with those of other service providers in the unincorporated area to ensure the availability of water within those areas.

Policy ICE 1.2.12. HEALTHCARE COORDINATION: Polk County shall coordinate with the Florida Department of Health, local healthcare providers, and other associated entities and agencies to ensure the adequate provision of healthcare infrastructure and services within the County.

Objective ICE 1.3. CONSISTENCY OF PLANS: Polk County shall cooperate in efforts to obtain consistency between the Polk County Comprehensive Plan and the plans of the Polk County School Board, campus master

plans, other units of municipal, county, regional, and state governments providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land, and with comprehensive plans of adjacent municipalities and counties.

Policy ICE 1.3.1. DATA SHARING WITH SCHOOL BOARD: Polk County shall forward population projections and other pertinent information used in its comprehensive plan to the School Board so they can consider projected growth and development as it relates to the future need for schools in the School Board's facility plans.

Policy ICE 1.3.2. REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND AMENDMENTS: Polk County shall continue to implement procedures for the review of comprehensive plans and comprehensive plan amendments. These reviews shall include:

- a. identifying intergovernmental issues and conflicts;
- b. identifying the impacts on capital projects listed in the Capital Improvements Element of the Polk County Comprehensive Plan upon the provision of basic services within Polk County's Area of Concern; and
- c. determining the relationship of development proposed within the Polk County Comprehensive Plan to the development proposed in the comprehensive plans and/or comprehensive plan amendments of the following agencies:
 1. municipalities within Polk County,
 2. adjacent counties, and
 3. adjacent municipalities,
 4. Polk County School Board, and
 5. campus master plans, and
 5. special districts.

Policy ICE 1.3.3. SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT FACILITIES WORK PLAN: Polk County shall continue to participate in the development of the Polk County School Board's Five-Year District Facilities Work Plan.

Objective ICE 1.4. CHANGE IN LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS: Polk County shall continue to coordinate any change in established level of service standards for public facilities with service providers, municipalities and other government agencies.

Policy ICE 1.4.1. NOTIFYING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: Polk County shall inform all governmental agencies within Polk County's Area of Concern of proposed changes in its Level of Service standards and solicit feedback.

Policy ICE 1.4.2. PROVIDING REVIEW AND COMMENT: Polk County shall, when notified by other governmental agencies of changes in their level of service standards, review and comment on these changes.

Policy ICE 1.4.3. ROADWAY LEVEL OF SERVICE: The County shall coordinate with municipalities within the County and the Polk County TPO to establish uniform levels of service for the County's roadway network wherever practical.

Policy ICE 1.4.4. CONCURRENCY REVIEW FOR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL IMPACTS: The County shall coordinate with municipalities within the County and Polk County TPO, utility companies and other service providers to establish joint concurrency review processes for those projects with multi-jurisdictional impacts.

Policy ICE 1.4.5. UNIFORM STANDARDS AND REVIEW PROCESS: Consistent with policies of this element, Polk County shall coordinate with municipalities within the County for the establishment of uniform level of service standards and concurrency review processes for those areas that have been identified as joint planning and infrastructure service areas.

Objective ICE 1.5. COORDINATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Polk County shall coordinate with the Polk County Builders Association, the County's Parks and Natural Resources Division, and other related agencies to ensure that all new development and redevelopment includes features that further resiliency, sustainability, and increase energy conservation in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 163, F.S.

Policy ICE 1.5.1. COMMUNITY INPUT: Polk County shall continue to implement development review procedures that provide information about the ongoing projects to members of the community and community groups in order to obtain their input and oversight.

Objective ICE 1.6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION: Polk County shall implement a mediation process to resolve, in a timely manner, any conflicts or disputes which arise between itself and other governmental agencies with which it interacts as set forth by Section 163.3185(5) – (7), F.S.

Policy ICE 1.6.1. RESOLUTION PROCESS: For those governmental agencies that have agreements with Polk County that address settling conflicts, the County shall use the procedures set forth in that agreement. For those governmental agencies that do not have an agreement with Polk County addressing settling conflicts, the County Manager, or designee, shall initially attempt to resolve any conflicts.

Policy ICE 1.6.2. RESOLUTION TIMELINE: The Polk County Board of County Commissioners, or their designee shall, upon receipt of a written request from either an aggrieved governmental entity, or from the County Manager, attempt to settle any disputes within 60 days.

Policy ICE 1.6.3. SECONDARY MEDIATION: If an agreement cannot be reached then the County shall, with the consent of the other party, utilize the Central Florida Regional Planning Council's informal, non-binding dispute resolution process per Section 189.509, F.S. However, the Board of County Commissioners may immediately pursue judicial or administrative remedies if deemed necessary and appropriate.