



COORDINATION

Intergovernmental Coordination

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Introduction

Effective coordination between Citrus County and other governmental entities is essential to implementing the Comprehensive Plan and addressing the evolving needs of residents. The Intergovernmental Coordination Element establishes a framework for collaboration with regional, state, and federal agencies, municipalities, special districts, and neighboring jurisdictions to advance shared goals, coordinate services and infrastructure, and address issues that extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Through strong intergovernmental partnerships, Citrus County can more effectively plan for growth, protect natural resources, and deliver public facilities and services in a coordinated and efficient manner.

Current Partnerships and Agreements

The following is an analysis of existing intergovernmental partnerships and agreements between Citrus County and other agencies. Each agreement serves a different purpose in advancing the goals of the County, with some coordination efforts having multiple agreements among multiple governmental entities. A full list of all Citrus County formal agreements and their expiration date (if applicable) is included in **Table COO – 1**.

Coastal Management

Citrus County coordinates with multiple local, state, and federal agencies to protect and enhance coastal areas. Agencies like the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) assist in the maintenance of existing natural coastal areas while agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) assist in the protection of existing and future coastal development. Together these agencies collaborate with the County to minimize the effects of storm surge, sea level rise, and other coastal impacts on the County's coastal areas.

Emergency Services

Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of Citrus County residents is a fundamental priority of the County. To strengthen emergency response and public safety services, Citrus County has established a series of interlocal and mutual-aid agreements with the Cities of Crystal River and Inverness. In 2018 and 2019, the County approved automatic

and mutual-aid agreements with each municipality for fire and emergency services, allowing emergency responders to operate across jurisdictional boundaries when necessary to improve response times and maintain service levels. In 2025, the County also entered into an interlocal agreement with the Citrus County Sheriff's Office to provide enhanced law enforcement and school crossing guard services within both municipalities. This agreement supplements, rather than replaces, existing municipal law enforcement services and promotes a coordinated countywide approach to public safety. Collectively, these agreements improve operational efficiency, expand service capacity, and ensure residents throughout Citrus County receive timely and effective emergency and law enforcement services regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

Natural Resource Protection

The County has over 140,000 acres of conservation land managed by over 10 different agencies and organizations. While natural areas may be managed by different entities, the habitats protected in each overlap throughout the County. As such, it is important for conservation land managers to coordinate with each other and the County to ensure habitats are properly protected. Notable natural resource areas and their respective agencies include the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge and USFWS, Withlacoochee State Forest and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Crystal River Preserve State Park and FDEP.

Manatee Protection

The Citrus County Manatee Protection Plan (MPP) is a management plan developed, approved and used by federal, state, and local governments to ensure the long-term protection of manatees and their habitat within Citrus County. The MPP was originally adopted in 1991 as an element of the Comprehensive Plan and contains objectives and criteria for effective protection, marina/boat facility siting, law enforcement, shoreline/submerged land development, educational programs, habitat protection, manatee-human interactions, and governmental coordination. Due to the nature of Manatee habitats, governmental coordination is identified as an implementation strategy for the policies set by the MPP. Collaborators identified in the MPP include the City of Crystal River, FDEP, FWC, USFWS, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), Citrus County Sheriff Department, Save the Manatee Club, and other organizations.

Affordable Housing

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) has served as a standing advisory body to Citrus County since 1993 and operates within the established structure of County government. Among its responsibilities, AHAC reviews housing-related policies and regulations and provides recommendations regarding affordable housing incentives. AHAC and the County jointly developed the County's initial Affordable Housing Incentive Plan and continue to collaborate on modification to existing policies, procedures, ordinance, regulations, and comprehensive plan provisions to support the production and preservation of affordable housing. Additional agencies identified as previous and potential collaborators for affordable housing in the County are the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Florida Housing Corporation.

Public School Facilities

In 2019, the County updated its formal interlocal agreement with the Citrus County School Board for facility siting, population growth, and school enrollment. Pursuant to Florida Statutes, the interlocal agreement outlines the responsibilities of both the County and the School Board to ensure adequate educational facilities are available to the residents of Citrus County. To ensure proper coordination is achieved a nonvoting representative appointed by the School Board is included on the County Planning and Development Commission and the County is invited to participate in the School Boards Long Range Planning Committee. The Director of the Citrus County Schools Planning and Growth Management Department currently serves as the School Board Representative on the County Planning and Development Commission and assists in the coordination between the County and the School Board on future school facility upgrades and facilities directly supporting countywide smart growth efforts. Benefits of the interlocal agreement include more efficient placement of school facilities to coincide with County planned roads, utilities, parks, and areas of projected growth.

Adjacent Jurisdictions

Citrus County borders Levy, Marion, Hernando, and Sumter Counties as well as the municipalities of Yankeetown, Inglis, and Dunnellon. Citrus County has agreements with Hernando County for shared land use data and information as well as a mutual aid agreement for fire services. Citrus County has no other formal agreements with adjacent jurisdictions. Despite not being explicitly outlined, the County coordinates with

all adjacent jurisdictions for shared protection and maintenance of border areas such as the Withlacoochee River, SR-200, US-19, and US-41 corridors. Regional authorities may also coordinate among the different jurisdictions for shared planning and maintenance.

Regional Coordination

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

In 2015, the Florida legislature eliminated the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council (WRPC) and moved Citrus County to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC). The TBRPC membership consists of Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas counties and their respective municipalities. The TBRPC maintains strategic regional policy plans, reviews local government plans for consistency with regional initiatives, provides planning guidance and services to member jurisdictions, and leads the regional resiliency, evacuation, and disaster recovery planning efforts. The council is governed by a Board of Directors which includes a member of the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners.

Southwest Florida Water Management District

Established in 1972 by the Water Resources Act, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) covers all or part of 16 counties on the west-central coast of Florida, from Charlotte County to the south, to Levy County to the north. The mission of the Water Management District is to manage and protect water and related natural resources throughout its jurisdiction. The district's responsibilities include adequate water supply, flood protection, water quality management, and natural systems management. Among its responsibilities, SWFWMD develops and maintains the Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP). SWFWMD prepares four distinct RWSPs based on administrative planning regions, Citrus County is in the Northern Planning Region. The most recent RWSP for the Northern Planning Region was published in 2025, which provides a framework for future water management decisions in a six-county (portion thereof) region.

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority

The Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority is a multi-county special district responsible for planning, coordinating, and developing reliable, cost-effective regional water supplies for its member governments. Created in 1977 and reaffirmed through an updated interlocal agreement in 2014, the Authority promotes regional collaboration on

water supply planning, infrastructure investment, and funding strategies to meet long-term water demands. In 1992, the Authority opened its first major water supply facility, which is jointly operated with Citrus County and serves as a bulk wholesale water source for participating jurisdictions. Membership in the Authority includes Citrus, Hernando, Marion, and Sumter Counties, along with the cities of Crystal River, Inverness, Belleview, Brooksville, and Bushnell, reflecting a coordinated regional approach to ensuring sustainable water resources for the future.

Transportation Planning and Maintenance

While there are currently no formal interlocal agreements between Citrus County and the cities of Crystal River and Inverness related to transportation planning or roadway maintenance, the County maintains active coordination with both municipalities to support adequate transportation infrastructure in and around municipal areas. Citrus County also works closely with the Florida Department of Transportation and the regional Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to coordinate long-range transportation planning, prioritize infrastructure improvements, and ensure the continued maintenance and enhancement of the County's transportation network.

Utility Provisions

There are seven regional potable water and wastewater providers in Citrus County including Citrus County Water Resources Department, Homosassa Special Water District, Floral City Water Association, Ozello Water Association, Central States Water Resources, and the cities of Crystal River and Inverness. Cooperation among regional providers is essential for limiting over withdrawal of the aquifer and ensuring that all residents of Citrus County have adequate access to clean potable water. To ensure coordination, the County has a series of interlocal agreements with service providers throughout the County. The interlocal agreements vary from water system interconnects to bulk water sales. A list of all utility interlocal agreements can be found in **Table COO – 1**.

Solid Waste

The County has interlocal agreements with the cities of Crystal River and Inverness for the use of the Citrus County Central Landfill in Lecanto. The cities are permitted to dispose of municipally collected solid waste at a flat rate at the Central Landfill. The interlocal agreements expire on September 30, 2026, and may be extended for

subsequent one-year periods by mutual written consent of the parties. As the landfill reaches capacity the County may need to coordinate with the municipalities on expansion of facilities or alternatives for solid waste disposal.

Inventory of Formal Agreements

Table COO – 1 includes a list of the formal agreements the County has entered, the party involved in the agreement, and the expiration date of the agreement. Formal agreements are one type of mechanism for cooperation among governments and agencies.

Table COO - 1: Formal Agreements

Type & Purpose of Agreement	Parties Involved in Agreement	Expiration Date (if provided)
Interlocal Agreement for Emergency Mutual Aid Assistance	City of Crystal River	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Emergency Mutual Aid Assistance	City of Inverness	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Enhanced Law Enforcement Services	City of Crystal River	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Enhanced Law Enforcement Services	City of Inverness	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning	Citrus County School Board	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Emergency Backup Water Interconnection	Homosassa Special Water District	April 9, 2039
Interlocal Agreement for Emergency Backup Water Interconnection	City of Inverness	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for Purchase of Bulk Water	Ozello Water Association	Ongoing ¹

Type & Purpose of Agreement	Parties Involved in Agreement	Expiration Date (if provided)
Interlocal Agreement for Wholesale Wastewater Treatment	City of Crystal River	Ongoing ¹
Interlocal Agreement for the Disposal of Solid Waste	City of Crystal River	September 30, 2026 - May be extended for subsequent one-year periods by mutual written consent of the parties
Interlocal Agreement for the Disposal of Solid Waste	City of Inverness	September 30, 2026 - May be extended for subsequent one-year periods by mutual written consent of the parties

¹Ongoing agreements automatically renew yearly unless either party sends a written notice of termination.

Source: Citrus County, 2026

Future Considerations

Through the Citrus 2050 community engagement and visioning process, residents, stakeholders, and County leadership identified several opportunities to strengthen coordination and expand partnerships with governmental agencies, regional organizations, and institutional partners. As Citrus County continues to grow and address increasingly complex issues related to infrastructure, environmental stewardship, resiliency, public services, and economic development, strategic intergovernmental collaboration will remain essential to effective implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The following future considerations highlight potential partnerships, coordination efforts, and interlocal initiatives for the County to explore in support of shared goals and long-term community success.

- 1. Coordinate with Florida Wildlife Corridor.** The Florida Wildlife Corridor and its Foundation were identified as potential collaborators for conservation goals in the County. Due to its large portions of conservation land, natural areas across the County have been identified as Corridor Opportunity Areas. The Florida Wildlife Corridor and Foundation may help with the acquisition and maintenance of these corridors by increasing the conserved natural areas throughout the County.
- 2. Develop Economic Development Partnerships.** Developing partnerships with local colleges, universities, technical schools, and workforce organizations will be essential to strengthening Citrus County's economic competitiveness and preparing residents for emerging employment opportunities. By coordinating with educational institutions, training providers, and business organizations, the County can help equip residents with the skills, certifications, and resources needed to succeed in the local and regional workforce. Potential partnerships may include workforce training programs, trade and technical education, small business incubators, entrepreneurship support services, shared workspaces, and other initiatives that foster innovation, talent development, and long-term economic resilience.
- 3. Continue Coordination with MPO and FDOT for Transportation.** Continued coordination with the Hernando/Citrus MPO and FDOT is important for the implementation of transportation projects identified in both the engagement process and throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Objectives including enhanced connectivity, expanded trail networks, new transit options, and roadway

maintenance are more likely to be implemented in a timely fashion through consistent collaboration between all transportation entities in the County.

- 4. Coordination of Public Infrastructure and Utilities.** Coordinated planning for public infrastructure, particularly potable water and sanitary sewer service, is essential to protecting public health, supporting growth, and maintaining quality of life for Citrus County residents. As more households transition from private wells and septic systems to centralized utility service, and as new development continues throughout the County, close coordination among utility providers becomes increasingly important to avoid duplication of infrastructure, maximize system efficiency, and ensure adopted level of service standards are maintained. Existing interlocal utility agreements provide an important foundation for service delivery, but additional coordination and expanded partnerships may be needed to address future demand, infrastructure investment, and long-term service planning on a countywide and regional basis.
- 5. Coordination of Broadband Expansion.** Expanding access to reliable, high-speed broadband internet emerged as a recurring priority during the Citrus 2050 visioning process. Since 2023, several private broadband providers, including fiber optic and high-speed internet services, have expanded their service areas within Citrus County. As digital connectivity becomes increasingly important for education, business development, healthcare access, remote work, and overall quality of life, the County should explore opportunities to coordinate with private providers to expand broadband availability countywide, improve service in underserved areas, and reduce duplicative infrastructure investments through strategic planning and partnerships.
- 6. Coordination of Roadway Improvements.** The County is continuing to implement the Pavement Management Program for the maintenance and repair of its paved roadway system. While the program only includes County maintained roadways, coordination with other roadway authorities, such as FDOT and the municipalities, is necessary to minimize duplication and extend roadway life cycles. Other coordination efforts mentioned above may be combined with roadway improvements to minimize construction costs and traffic disruptions.