



Reedy Creek Improvement District
Comprehensive Plan

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INTRODUCTION

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PURPOSE OF THE 2008 PLAN

The Reedy Creek Improvement District 2008 Plan is intended to provide the basis for future decisions regarding land use, development, conservation and infrastructure. It serves as the District's official policy for the use of both private and public lands, as well as the Comprehensive Plan for the Cities of Bay Lake and Lake Buena Vista. The Plan provides a framework for expansion of the unique uses in the District, while managing growth, protecting the environment, ensuring health and safety, and enhancing the quality of development. It continues the high standard of planning already undertaken and extends its purview ten years into the future.

The Plan's three overall functions are: 1) to govern the location and intensity of land use and development by providing the foundation for regulating proposed new projects; 2) to convey advance direction to the private sector by stating clearly the District's expectations for growth and conservation; and 3) to guide public investment in new facilities, such as roads, water systems, and water quality facilities.

The Plan is formulated to meet requirements of the Florida Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Development Regulation Act, found in Section 163 of Florida statutes and their administrative regulations. When it is adopted by the District and approved by the state, it will supersede the prior plan adopted in 1991.

BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

Prior Planning Efforts

The Reedy Creek Improvement District was created by the Florida Legislature in 1967. It is coterminous with, and is intended to provide a full range of governmental and proprietary services for, Walt Disney World Resort. The District has been successful in anticipating, providing, and monitoring the adequacy of public facilities and roads, as well as in planning and regulating land use, development and environmental quality within its boundaries. Many of its efforts in this regard have been guided by Florida's Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Development Regulation Act.

This Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of several prior plans and programs. Its precursors include the original private plan for the resort, prepared in 1965 prior to applicability of public planning requirements. This early plan was the basis for the first increment of development, completed in 1971, including the Magic Kingdom theme park, several hotels and two golf courses. At the time, the District was more than 16 miles from the nearest urban development.

The first plan adopted by the District, however, was completed in 1974. It stipulated new environmental guidelines and included land use regulations. Like many of RCID's programs, this early plan could be considered state-of-the-art since it preceded the state's local planning legislation, enacted in 1975. The District modified the 1974 Plan to adhere to these state requirements in a 1979 revision. A shopping village, an additional hotel complex and EPCOT Center were opened by 1982. Even when completed, these complexes still stood in relative isolation on the Interstate 4 Corridor. In 1988, the District, with still another

theme park (Disney-MGM Studios) under construction, embarked on its most comprehensive effort, and adopted the resulting plan in 1991 and land development regulations in 1993.

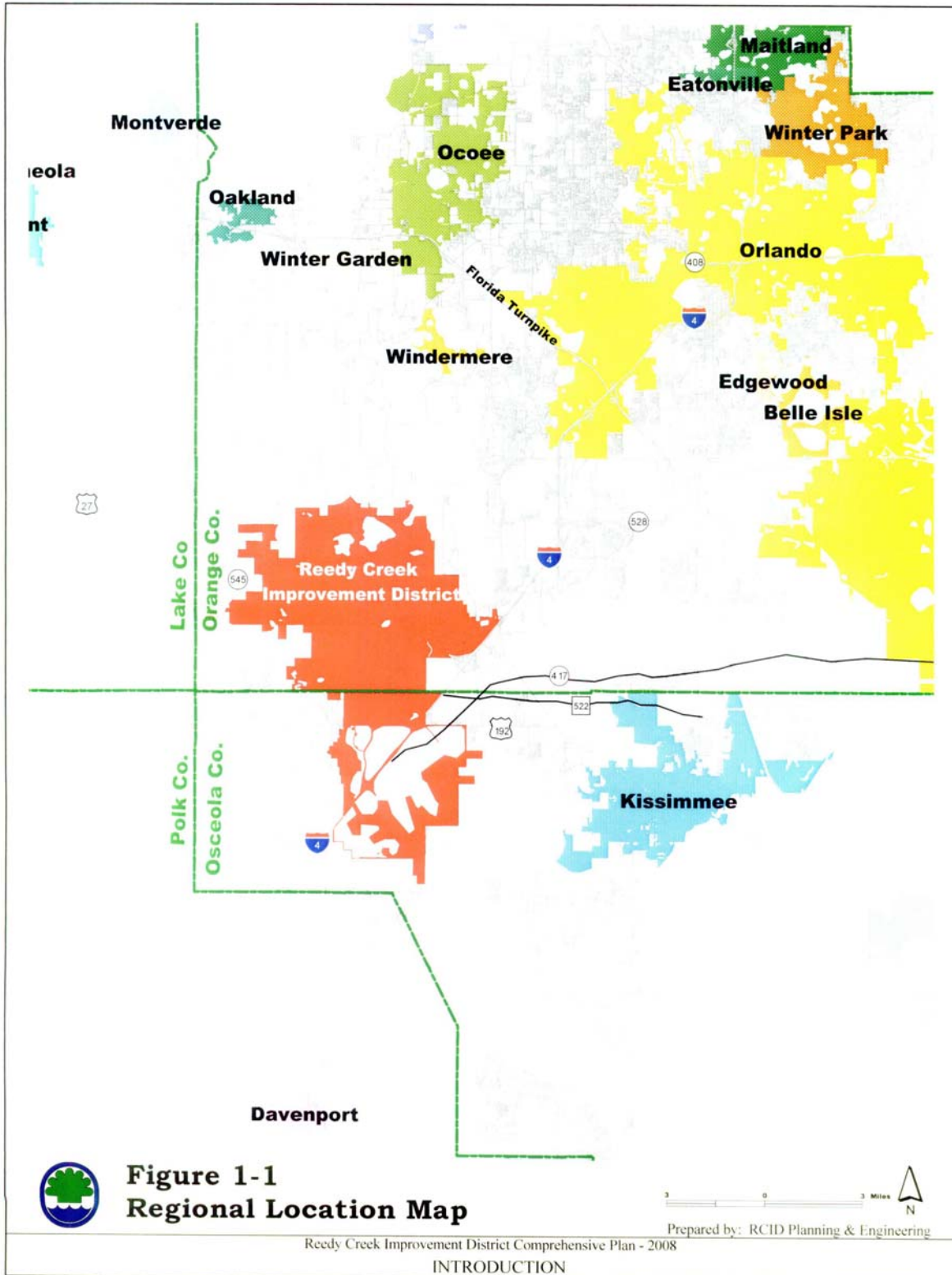
In 1999, the resort contained four major theme parks (now including the new Disney Animal Kingdom) and four minor theme parks, 26 hotels with over 25,000 rooms, and an abundance of related entertainment, retail and recreational facilities. Its developed area still covers only about a third of the overall site. As indicated in Figure 1-1, the edge of the Orlando urban area is now adjacent to the hotel and shopping complex on the District's eastern boundary. Just as the resort's development and its surroundings have become more extensive and complicated, so too has the planning program which underpins it. In contrast to the original single-map plan, this Plan contains over 300 pages, with over 40 maps.

Planning Methodology and Process

Both the 1988-93 and 1996-present efforts in assessment, planning and regulation were pursued under the mandates of Florida's Local Government Planning and Development Regulation Act. The Florida law not only requires that a local comprehensive plan be prepared every five years but also that it be: 1) preceded by an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), which systematically documents issues to be addressed, the manner in which the prior plan addresses them, and how the anticipated plan should do so; 2) accompanied by a Concurrency Report which conveys the extent to which there is in place or committed the facilities needed to accommodate proposed development; and 3) followed by land development regulations which implement the plan. These requirements, coupled with the mandated review and approval of the Plan by the Florida Department of Community Affairs, account for the extended period of time it takes to complete all RCID planning products.

This Plan has thus been developed to respond to the Reedy Creek Improvement District Evaluation and Appraisal Report, adopted in 1998 by the District and the Cities of Bay Lake and Lake Buena Vista. Pursuant to state law and consistent with sound planning practice, the EAR first evaluated the 1991 Plan, as mandated by Florida Statutes, Section 163.3191(2). This provided an opportunity to assess the 1991 Plan's success in meeting its objectives, examined how well the Plan reflected current trends and conditions, and generally allowed the District to take a fresh look at local issues and determine the need for redirection. Although this effort showed that the comprehensive plan of 1991 was working very well and that original projections were highly accurate, it did suggest a number of important needed revisions, which have been included in this document.

Prior to the 1991 Plan, the RCID was faced with potentially conflicting goals: to allow flexibility for development to respond to rapidly changing market demands, to maintain high environmental standards, to coordinate capital improvements with approved projects, and to work with adjacent jurisdictions to provide for traffic and other impacts. A conventional planning process could not easily respond to all these goals or comply with the basic intent of the Florida planning law - to identify and mitigate adverse externalities of growth. A new and nontraditional planning approach was needed.



The 1991 Plan was based on the specification and continuous measurement of performance thresholds rather than rigidly-defined land use categories and map boundaries. The latter approach is more appropriate in conventional planning settings to protect neighboring lots and blocks. After environmentally sensitive areas had been designated for conservation or resource management, most of the developable land was designated for mixed use development. Instead of specifying locations of land uses and development forms, such as density, floor-area ratio, and height - more suitable for urban settings in diverse ownership - the Plan was based on impacts on the environment, internal infrastructure, and effects on surrounding jurisdictions.

In addition to environmental performance standards, infrastructure standards and development thresholds were formulated. Maximum levels were established for each five-year period for five types of impacts: traffic, in terms of trips per average day; water use, in terms of millions of gallons per average day (mgd); wastewater generation, in terms of mgd; solid waste generation, in terms of tons per average day; and parks, in terms of acres per 1,000 residents. This approach proved to be successful and continues to be the cornerstone of the updated (2008) Plan.

The new approach better meets the needs of all involved parties, considering the predominantly single ownership and collaborative government relationship that are present. It better meets the intent of state law. It better meets the needs of adjacent jurisdictions which are able to plan more accurately because they know exactly what impacts Walt Disney World will have on them. It better meets the needs of RCID which can more precisely project infrastructure requirements. And it better meets the needs of the Disney Corporation, which is given flexibility as to the location, phasing and type of its development.

A major thrust of the plan is encouragement of intergovernmental coordination. Given the growing interface with urban development in nearby jurisdictions, this is critical. The plan places great emphasis on coordination with Orange and Osceola Counties, hopefully resulting in continuing liaison and mutually beneficial projects and programs.

Plan adoption has involved and will continue to require public participation. However, given the absence of a sizable resident population and the unique nature of land ownership, this calls for a different approach than is used by a conventional city or county. The approach includes ongoing meetings with District landowners, interviews and information-gathering meetings with surrounding agencies and jurisdictions, and noticed public hearings. Frequent communication with the private landowners is an essential part of the planning process. Prior to transmittal of this document to the state and its subsequent revision and adoption, public hearings before the City Councils of Bay Lake and Lake Buena Vista and the RCID Board of Supervisors were conducted to receive public comment on the document. These hearings were advertised in the Orlando Sentinel and were open to all interested parties. Report copies have been made available to the general public for review and comment.

Following Plan adoption and state approval, the RCID Land Development Regulations will be revised to be consistent with the plan. These will contain updated standards for development and infrastructure. The Plan will be maintained and monitored via annual review and evaluation. In addition, the Plan will be monitored by a Concurrency Management System that will provide "real-time" feedback on how well it is functioning in terms of the critical relationships between land use, development and infrastructure.

PLAN ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF PLAN GOALS

The plan contains eight elements integrated to form an internally consistent policy framework for the future: land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, conservation, recreation and open space, intergovernmental coordination and capital improvements. Each of these elements includes two components: 1) policies; and 2) supporting data and analysis. Purely technical information is presented in appendix form in a separate report.

The policy component of each element includes a major goal or goals, several objectives, sometimes arrayed under plan subelements, and numerous policies numbered individually. For ease of reference and revision, page numbers are preceded by an element number. Policy pages are noted with the letter "A" following the element number; supporting data and analysis pages are noted with the letter "B".

Nine goals provide the foundation for the plan. These include the following:

- To preserve the integrity of the natural environment; maintain convenient, efficient public services; minimize threats to health and safety; and control and direct future development through policies, principles and standards that support the potential for economic benefit.
- To continue to maintain a safe, convenient efficient, and balanced transportation system to meet the multi-modal capacity requirements of existing and future development.
- To facilitate the provision of an adequate and affordable supply of housing that accommodates all current and future permanent residents of the district.
- To facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing for any unmet affordable housing need generated by employment growth within the district, to the extent required by Chapter 163.
- To provide water, sewer, solid waste, and stormwater management services to existing and future development within its boundaries in the most efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sound manner possible.
- To protect and conserve the natural resources of the District.
- To promote the creation of state-of-the-art vacation and recreational facilities; to maintain and expand access to these facilities; and to retain the visual, environmental, and psychological benefits provided by open space in the District.
- To promote intergovernmental coordination with the two cities within its boundaries; the two counties in which it is located; other local governments in the immediate vicinity; and regional, state and federal governmental entities for the mutual benefit of all involved parties.

- To provide adequate public facilities to existing and planned development areas in a manner that is concurrent with the impacts of such development and efficient and consistent with available financial resources.

Taken together, these goals, when achieved, will allow RCID to greet the new millennium carefully prepared to preserve and enhance its unique setting.