



Downtown Green Space Policies

Approved by City Commission February 7, 2011

I. Green Space in the Context of a Sustainable Environment

Downtown green space polices should reinforce actions that maintain and enhance the City's environmentally sustainable qualities including:

- A. A compact, mixed use, high-density core,
- B. Walkable streets,
- C. Parks and green spaces,
- D. A reconnection of the downtown to the bayfront,
- E. Use of Florida Friendly plant materials,
- F. Strategic use of plant materials that require high-level maintenance,
- G. Adherence to the Fertilizer Ordinance,
- H. Utilize re-use and/or stormwater detention facility (rather than potable) water for irrigation where feasible,
- I. Use of pervious paving where feasible, and
- J. Incentives for private sector actions that enhance environmental sustainability.

II. Protection of Existing Parks

- A. Protect and enhance existing parks in and adjacent to the downtown area as listed in the table below:

	Park	Area (in acres)	General Character
1	Bayfront	32.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
2	Bayfront & Marina Island	10.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
3	Causeway	12.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
4	Charles Ringling	0.22	Plaza & Planters
5	Cultural	16.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
6	Gillespie	10.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
7	Laurel	0.50	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
8	Lemon Avenue Mall	0.25	Plaza-Like
9	Links Plaza	0.25	Plaza & Planters
10	Little Five Points	0.25	Plaza & Planters
11	Lukewood	9.00	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
12	Payne	37.80	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
13	Pineapple	0.25	Plaza & Planters
14	Selby Five Points	0.61	Mixed Plaza & Pervious
15	Shenandoah	0.83	Primarily Pervious Vegetation
	Total	129.96	(128.13 Acres Primarily Pervious Vegetation)



- B. Facilities within Parks should be limited to those that complement park use such as those related to recreational, food service, and rest rooms.

III. Managing the Urban Forest

- A. Tree Inventory - Continue to monitor, update, and use the City's inventory of approximately 75,000 trees on public property to manage the urban forest. Continue to use best management principles including:
 - 1. Replenishing the City's urban forest by replacing declining, decayed, undesirable specimens with Florida Number One Grade stock as defined in the most current Florida Nurseryman Standards. Undesirable species are: Chinaberry, Chinese Tallow, Australian Pine, Carrot Wood Tree, Brazilian Pepper, and Punk Tree / Paper Tree.
 - 2. Building in storm resistant tree and palm species and varieties.
 - 3. Creating a diverse urban forest to minimize loss in the event of a species-specific disease.
 - 4. ***Canopy trees are preferred in the public right-of-way.***
- B. Street Tree Planting Plan (Right Tree / Right Place) - Utilizing best management practices related to urban forestry and urban design, develop a Street Tree Planting Plan for all streets in the Downtown Bayfront (DTB), Downtown Core (DTC), and Downtown Edge (DTE) zone districts.
 - 1. Select a single tree specie for each block (to create an ordered rhythm), but not for more than four blocks (to minimize the risk of loss from disease), selecting varieties of trees that minimize negative impacts on underground utilities.
 - 2. Utilize current code requirements as a guide for spacing between trees (generally 30 feet as recommended in the Downtown Master Plan 2020).
 - 3. Continue to encourage private property owners to plant trees within the public right-of-way in accordance with the tree planting plan.
- C. Tree Protection Ordinance (Trees on Private Property) - Continue to enforce and monitor the City's Tree Protection Ordinance to protect and enhance trees on private property.

IV. Streetscape Design

Downtown Green Space Plan:

- A. *A Downtown Green Space Plan shall be developed that provides recommendations related to increasing green space and pervious areas while also providing for active pedestrian, walking and seating areas.*
 - 1. *This Plan should be phased starting with the downtown DID area and then expanded as funding becomes available.*
 - 2. *The Plan should encourage protection, retention, expansion, and addition of in-ground planting beds.*



3. *The Plan should promote retention of existing trees and planting of new canopy trees.*
4. *The Plan should recommend removal of impervious surfaces in areas where the removal will not impact existing parking functions and where the removal will not impede future expansion of outdoor restaurant seating or other approved outdoor commercial functions.*
5. *The Plan should encourage the use of color through the use of seasonal high-impact flowers, a variety of colored foliage and ornamental trees.*
6. *In narrow and limited areas the Plan should allow for hanging plants and above ground planters and pots that are of an agreed upon standardized design.*
7. *All improved landscape areas should provide for irrigation and utilize reclaimed water when available.*

V. Conversion of existing Green Space Areas

Staff should consider the following requirements when reviewing a request to convert existing green space or pervious areas to hardscape:

1. *The request should be the minimum request to make reasonable commercial use of the public space or right-of-way.*
2. *The request should be consistent with the Downtown Green Space Plan.*
3. *All reasonable efforts should be made to retain and protect existing trees in the public space or right-of-way.*
4. *Staff shall require the applicant to improve the remaining pervious area by planting appropriate new landscaping that is consistent with the Downtown Green Space Plan and may require flowers, colored foliage and ornamental trees.*
5. *Staff should encourage retention of in-ground planting beds for the remaining pervious area and may require measures such as raised borders to minimize damage to the remaining pervious area.*
6. *Staff shall require the existing remaining pervious area be irrigated and re-use water utilized when possible.*
7. *Staff may request the applicant consider adding raised planters or above ground pots in the new hardscape area where it may be appropriate.*
8. *Staff should encourage the hardscape to include pervious pavers when possible.*

VI. Pervious Paving Materials

Right Paving in the Right Place – Explore the possibilities for the use of permeable paving where feasible, and continue to research new permeable paving technologies. The following table summarizes characteristics of two types of permeable paving.



Paving Type	Areas for Potential Application	Advantages	Limitations
Turf Block and Permeable Pavers Constructed of Concrete or Plastic	Light Vehicle Loading Areas, & Occasionally-Used Overflow Parking	Reduction of pollutants entering the stormwater system and water bodies and Reduction of thermal pollution	Higher initial costs of material and site preparation; Maintenance of plant material (if used); Reduction of permeability over time; Possible trip hazard & wheel chair maneuverability issue
Pervious Paving and Concrete	Pathways, Walkways, Light Vehicle Loading Areas, and Occasionally-Used Overflow Parking	Reduction of pollutants entering the stormwater system and water bodies	Additional cost of materials and site preparation, maintenance (suggested vacuuming of surface 2-3 times annually)

VII. “Green” Roofs

Explore amendments to the comprehensive plan and zoning code that provide incentives for “Green” roofs, to developments that provide and maintain Florida Friendly planted green roofs for a set percentage of the development’s roof area.