

Background

The barrier island of Sanibel comprises a wide variety of natural and altered environments. The community of Sanibel strives to sustain ecological balance and preserve and restore natural settings for residents, visitors, and wildlife. The people of Sanibel are sustained by the beauty and health of the island's natural and restored habitats, and they rely on the coordinated vigilance of residents, government, and private enterprise to protect and enhance these habitats. Over the first two decades of the community's existence as a city, a tenuous balance has been maintained between development and preservation; and between regulatory control and the rights and privileges of individuals. Government and not-for-profit institutions have helped sustain the balance by purchasing and restoring to natural conditions substantial areas of open space and threatened habitats.

Limited new development and redevelopment will occur over the next twenty years. However, growth limits and locations are well established, as are regulations to minimize harm to the natural environment and to the community's character.

The specter of rampant development has diminished as the community has matured. Nevertheless, unwanted changes are occurring; visitation increases as new "attractions" are developed; beaches and refuge areas are becoming stressed by overuse; traffic congestion is turning to gridlock; and formerly "green" scenic corridors are becoming urbanized and commercialized. These and other conditions and trends cause residents to realize that, unless protected, their island's historic and cherished way of life is in jeopardy.

To provide a sense of direction for the future, this Vision Statement is a confirmation of the community's shared values and goals to guide future decisions.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

To review the complete Sanibel Plan (the Comprehensive Land Use plan of the City of Sanibel, pursuant to Section 163, Florida Statutes), visit the City of Sanibel's website at www.mysanibel.com, City Hall, or the Sanibel Library

Please contact the City of Sanibel for additional information

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The Sanibel Vision Statement



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The Sanibel Vision Statement

(Ordinance #96-06, as adopted by the Sanibel City Council on September 3, 1986 amending the Sanibel Plan to include the Vision Statement)

SANCTUARY

Sanibel is and shall remain a barrier island sanctuary, one in which a diverse population lives in harmony with the island's wildlife and natural habitats. The Sanibel community must be vigilant in the protection and enhancement of its sanctuary characteristics.

The City of Sanibel will resist pressures to accommodate increased development and redevelopment that is inconsistent with the Sanibel Plan, including this Vision Statement. The City of Sanibel will guard against and, where advisable, oppose human activities in other jurisdictions that might harm the island's sensitive habitats, including the island's surrounding aquatic ecosystems.

COMMUNITY

Sanibel is and shall remain a small town community whose members choose to live in harmony with one another and with nature; creating a human settlement distinguished by its diversity, beauty, uniqueness, character and stewardship.

Diversity: The City of Sanibel cherishes its cultural, social, ecological, and economic diversity, and will endeavor to maintain it.

Beauty: The City of Sanibel will foster quality, harmony and beauty in all forms of human alteration of the environment. The community aesthetic is defined as a casual style; one which is adapted to a relaxed island quality of life and respectful of local history, weather, culture and natural systems.

Uniqueness: The City of Sanibel chooses to remain unique through a development pattern which reflects the predominance of natural conditions and characteristics over human intrusions. All forms of development and redevelopment will preserve the community's unique small town identity.

Character: The City of Sanibel chooses to preserve its rural character in its setting within an urbanizing country. "Auto-urban" development influences will be avoided. The commercialization of natural resources will be limited and strictly controlled.

This three-part statement of the community's vision of its future is hierarchy; one in which the dominant principle is Sanibel's sanctuary quality. Sanibel shall be developed as a community only to the extent to which it retains and embraces this quality of sanctuary. Sanibel will serve as attraction only to the extent to which it retains its desired qualities as sanctuary and community.

HIERARCHY OF VALUES

The Sanibel community recognizes that its attractiveness to visitors is due to the island's quality as sanctuary and as a community. The City of Sanibel will welcome visitors who are drawn by, and are respectful of, these qualities; it will resist pressures to accommodate visitor attractions and activities that compromise these qualities.

ATTRACTION

Stewardship: In keeping with the foregoing principles, the City of Sanibel affirms a land ethic that recognizes landholding—both public and private—as a form of stewardship, involving responsibilities to the human and natural communities of the island and its surroundings, and to future generations.