

**CITY OF PALM BEACH GARDENS
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

SUPPORT DOCUMENT

Prepared by:

**The City of Palm Beach Gardens
June 2008**

I. INTRODUCTION

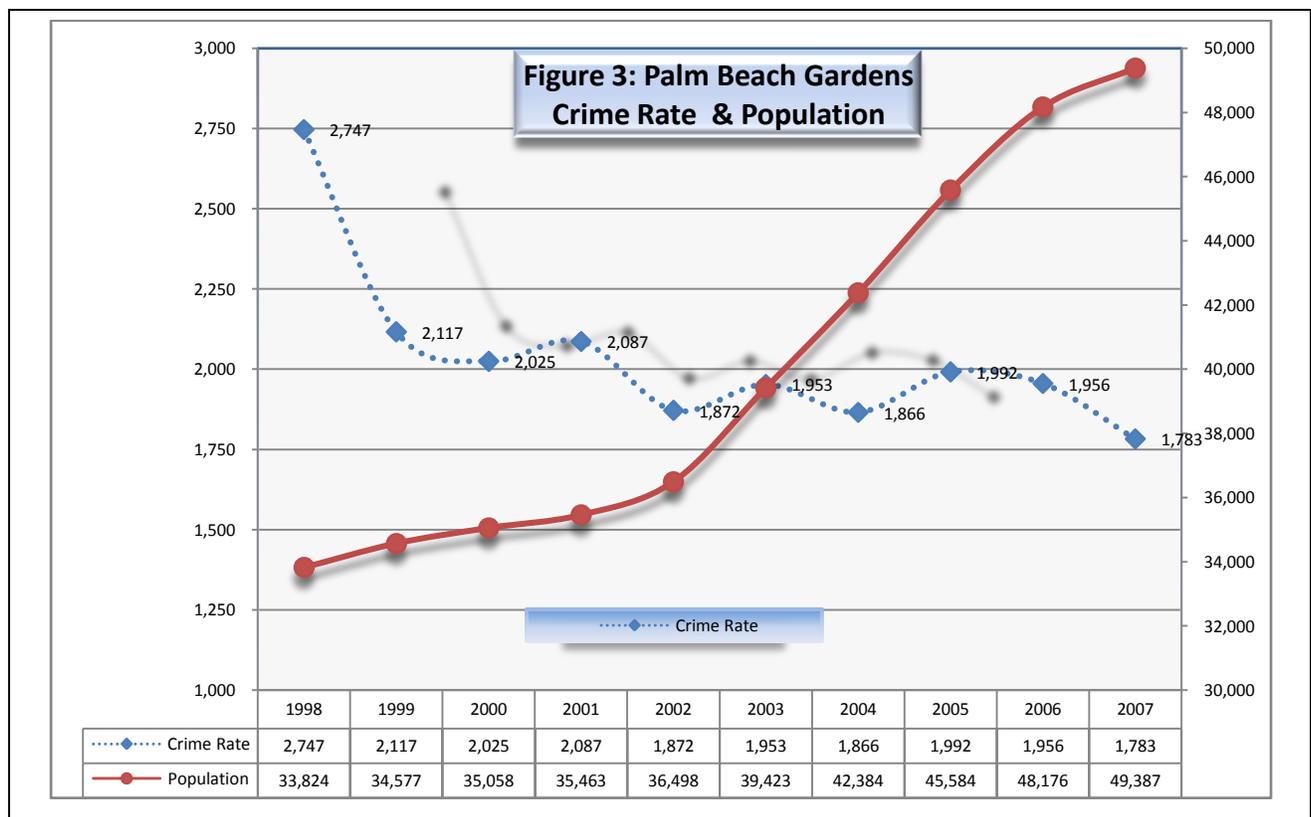
Per State Statutes, the Public Safety Element is not a required element of the Comprehensive Plan. As part of its growth management efforts, the City has chosen to include the Public Safety element in its Comprehensive Plan. The existing element has one Goal that refers to providing adequate facilities to ensure the provision of an effective and sustainable public safety program. Fire and police safety standards were reviewed, and new standards are proposed.



The proposed EAR-based amendments include clarification and adjustments on the existing Level of Service Standards. Minor modifications have been included as part of this EAR-based amendment to “clean-up” certain language in the Objectives and Policies.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Palm Beach Gardens has experienced significant growth in the past 10 years; however, it has been able to maintain low crime rates despite the increase in population. Figure 3 illustrates that although population has grown in the City of Palm Beach Gardens, the rate of crime has consistently declined (*Source: City of Palm Beach Gardens Police Department 2008*).

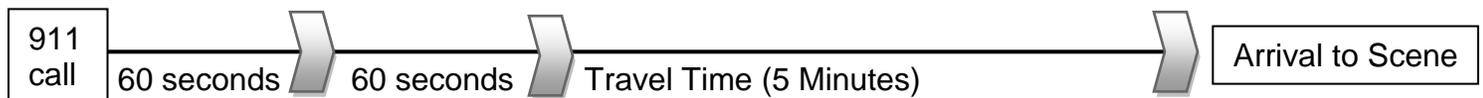


Low crime rates not only provide a safe environment for the residents and business within the City, but are also a crucial factor when marketing a City's economic development opportunities. The City is committed to providing the highest levels of police and fire rescued services for the public, health safety and welfare of the residents and businesses.

Level of Service Fire Rescue

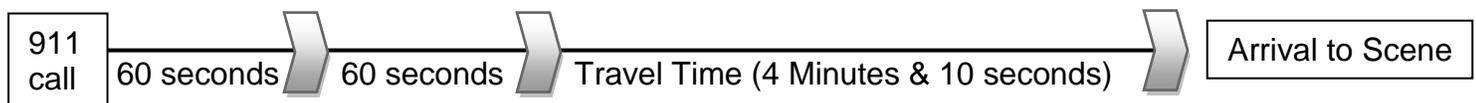
The City has included revisions to the Level of Service Standards to emergency fire rescue responses. Currently the Comprehensive Plan only considers the travel time to be 5 minutes or less. The total process time from the 911 call to the arrival at the scene typically takes 7 minutes. The proposed amendment has reduced the amount of travel time listed to a total of 4 minutes and 10 second for a total 6 minutes and 30 seconds from the initial 911 call to the arrival to scene. See Figures 1 and 2 listed below:

Figure 1: Fire Rescue level of service in the Current Comprehensive Plan.



*** Response time only considers Travel Time. The average time is 5 minutes or less. Total process: 7 minutes.*

Figure 2: Fire Rescue level of service in the Proposed Comprehensive Plan.



*** Response time considers the entire time in the response process. The average time is 6 minutes and 10 seconds.*

Level of Service Police

The City has included revisions to adjust the number of calls per patrol per year to serve the urban area. The modification ensures that a balance is supported between the number of responses and the number of incidents and proactive patrols. The modification will improve the quality of Police service the in the City.



The total number of calls per patrol office per year is currently 1,150 calls. The modification will reduce the number of calls permitted per officer each year to 1,000 calls. This proposed change is a direct result from the Police Department taking proactive measures to ensure that the highest level of service is achieved. The measure of the service is not necessarily by the total number of officers on staff but is rather between the relationship between the number of responses and incidents. For additional information, see Appendix Section).

III. TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Annexations of developed and developing lands contributed to the increase of population between 1990 and 1996. By focusing on economic development and continuing its policy of providing attractive living places, Palm Beach Gardens anticipates attracting a substantial percentage of the people moving to the County. A majority of growth experienced between 2000 and 2007 has been through rapid development of vacant land.

A majority of future growth may be also attributed to infill and redevelopment. Infill and redevelopment is going to be one of the key trends in growth as the City continues to expand and diversify. Infill and redevelopment is currently strongly encouraged in the City's Comprehensive Plan, and is being further promoted as part of this EAR-based amendment.

Future growth in the western development areas is also another key area to consider when examining future growth. Vacant lands including those next to the new North Palm Beach County General Aviation Airport and all of the land close to the CSX railroad in sector 2 and in sector 1 are some specific areas that will be part of the discussions of western development areas as the City reviews its vision and goals for western growth.

Annexations, infill and redevelopment, and future growth in western areas must consider public safety services. Since the City will be addressing this during a separate study, a policy has been included to address the potential impacts of this future growth:

Policy 10.1.2.3.: *By 2011, the City shall assess the impact of the western development area, redevelopment in the eastern area, and future annexation enclaves in terms of strategies, response time, and facilities for Fire and Police Department.*

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

The following initiatives are part of the proposed Public Safety Element:

- Promote alternative funding methods to ensure that new development and redevelopment pay its proportionate share of the cost of providing public safety

facilities, equipment and land necessitated by the development. (*Objective 10.1.1., Page 10-1, Existing*)

- Provide public safety facilities in a timely manner to comply with the level of service standards set forth by this element and to maintain such compliance in subsequent years. (*Objective 10.1.2., Page 10-1, Existing*)
- Assess the impact of the western development area, redevelopment, and future annexation enclaves in terms of strategies, response time, and facilities for the Fire and Police Department. (*Policy 10.1.2.3., Page 10-1, Proposed*)
- Ensure that FLUE amendments, new developments, and redevelopment meet established LOS standards or mitigate the identified impacts. (*Policy 10.1.2.5., Page 10-2, Proposed*)

The following studies or actions are recommended as part of the EAR-based comprehensive plan amendments:

COMPLETION YEAR	STUDY/PLAN/ACTION
2011	Assess the impact of the western development area, redevelopment, and future annexation enclaves in terms of strategies, response time, and facilities for the Fire and Police Department. (<i>Policy 10.1.2.3., Page 10-1</i>)