

OVIEDO'S PLAN:

A VARIETY OF RULES
ON EVERYTHING FROM
ROADS TO RECREATION

By RANDY NOLES

The Oviedo Comprehensive Plan, the culmination of two years work by the Local Planning Agency (LPA) is complete, pending approval by the City Council and two public hearings.

It offers a wide range of suggestions for improvements and future growth in everything from roadways to recreation, with implementation of the proposed new sets of regulations and controls left to the council, in association with the LPA. Although portions of the plan are certain to spark controversy, planners point out that the document will be continually altered and updated if circumstances dictate, and that is by no means the final word on Oviedo's future.

Nonetheless, the LPA hopes the document will stir public discussion, because revision, or lack of revisions, will be decided in large part on how the public responds to the document.

The plan was drawn up to comply with both state and county laws requiring comprehensive plans by Bernard

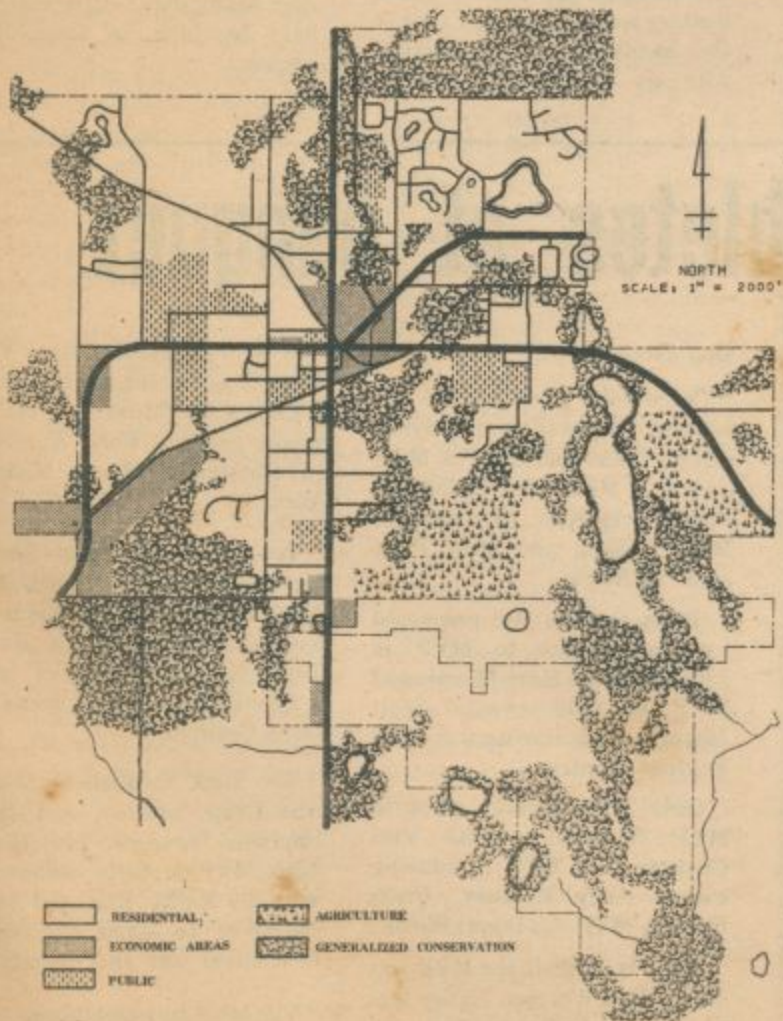
Blackwood, LPA chairman; and Agency board members Louise Martin, Walter Teague, Oviedo Mayor Leon Olliff, Oviedo Council Chairman R.W. Whittier, and Oviedo City Planner Joe Nesbit.

It's main areas of concern are land use, natural resources, housing, and community services and facilities.

Outlook is summarizing each section of the plan for its readers to examine. Questions and comments can be directed to Nesbit, whose office is in the Oviedo City Hall. Other comments may be made at the first public hearing on the plan, slated for Tuesday, May 31, at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall.

In the population analysis portion of the plan, the LPA estimated that Oviedo's population by the year 2000 would be 10,151, assuming a 5.4 per cent annual growth rate, and adds that the rate of Oviedo's growth will depend in part on whether or not a sewer system is developed. The planners admit, however, that "the possibility of a sewer

[Cont. on page 4]



GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP

system in Oviedo is very remote because of the high cost involved."

LAND USE

In the summary of findings in the land use portion of the plan, the LPA reports that there is approximately 3,954 acres in the city limits of Oviedo, only 20 per cent of which is currently developed. The planners report several problems with existing land usage in the city. Among them: Scattered residential development which makes extension of city services "very difficult;" the existence of residential development in "environmentally sensitive areas;" dilapidated dwellings that cause a blight on the city's appearance and bring down property values; industrial activities located in the downtown business district "that tend to distract from the commercial area;" the existence of 157 vacant commercially-zoned acres "that indicates an overabundance of land zoned for commercial development;" and narrow streets and railroad crossings downtown that create a hazard.

It also reports that residential development, not surprisingly, takes up the greatest amount of acreage used in the city...some 37 per cent of the developed land and 7 per cent of the total land. It is 95 per cent single-family, detached dwellings.

To prevent future problems and control growth, the LPA suggests that scattered and disorderly development be discouraged and should be contingent on the availability of community services and facilities, and charges the city council with developing and implementing a city wide land use plan.

It further states that a general land use map establishing zoning districts should be created, and that the council should adopt a "site plan review ordinance," establishing procedures for reviewing all new development. A "community impact statement" on the physical effects of all new developments should be adopted, the plan states, along with establishing firmer guidelines for adequate landscaping and buffering between "incompatible land use."

All future residential development would fall into three categories: rural, with a maximum of one dwelling unit per acre; low density, with a maximum of 5 dwelling units per acre; and medium density, with a maximum of 12 units per acre. The plan calls for an average of 5 units per acre in the city, with exceptions granted "only in accordance with special adopted guidelines."

The plan encourages light industrial development and commercial growth, but with controls on pollution and other potentially undesirable side effects. It also states that commercial development should be encouraged to locate on parcels in existing commercial areas. Currently, 44 per cent of the vacant land in Oviedo is considered developable.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources element "is the single most important element in the overall city-wide planning effort," according to the planners, because it protects the air, water, and wildlife resources.

The plan notes that natural features of Oviedo have not yet

been affected by urbanization, but adds that the city has not adopted a site review plan or environmental guidelines to guide future development.

The planners call for adoption of an official natural resources map identifying areas for preservation and conservation and areas for development, and the adoption of "development constraint" for each environmental category. Subdivisions would be prohibited on soils with very low potential, according to the Seminole County Soil Survey and Soil Supplement, and new road construction in such areas would be prohibited without a complete engineering analysis.

It also says the city should require all building's elevations to be at or above the 100 year flood level. To help implement this, the plan calls for a map to be adopted showing areas prone to flood over the next 100 years. The plan also calls for strict drainage requirements for future developers, and for pollution control methods to be used by builders while constructing new developments.

The plan encourages the seeking of state and federal funds for drainage improvements.

HOUSING

The planners say Oviedo should try to preserve the residential nature of the community, with the goal of providing a wide range of housing types and densities "within the price range of all those wishing to reside in Oviedo."

The LPA found that 10 per cent of the dwelling units in Oviedo are dilapidated, and that no effective programs exist to deal with improvement of what they see as an overall "substandard housing situation."

A new twist in the plan is that it calls for city residents to be required to utilize all city services as they become available, such as garbage pickup. The plan also calls for reviewing existing codes and eliminating the ones that add undue cost to housing, and says the city should participate in state and federal programs designed to provide housing for low income people.

Adoption of fire codes, electrical codes, housing codes, mechanical codes, plumbing codes, and building codes would also be required, along with the adoption of guidelines for review of all proposed subdivisions, and their environmental impact on the surrounding area.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Transportation: The LPA discovered several "major deficiencies" in background studies of Oviedo's future transportation needs. The downtown streets are too narrow, the rights of way between city streets and sidewalks are not being adequately maintained, no capital improvement fund has been started for street improvement and construction, the city's dirt streets require continuous maintenance, and existing rights of way throughout the city are inadequate in width, the planners say.

Three major roads serving Oviedo; SR 419, SR 426, and SR 520, are currently adequate, the report states, noting that the Department of Transportation plans to purchase a four-lane right of way along the western boundary of Oviedo. The new facility is to be two lanes connecting into SR 426, with work slated to begin in 1981.

The plan calls for the continued construction of sidewalks to shopping areas, and establishment of a program to provide regular maintenance for existing paved streets. A long range transportation plan would be adopted by the city, including criteria for assessing impact of future developments on Oviedo's transportation network.

Parks and recreation: The LPA urges that the city develop a program for the acquisition of park land, noting that of the 11 acres in Oviedo set aside for recreational purposes, only 4 acres, in Sweetwater Park, have been developed. The plan calls for citizens' committees and community service to clubs to help in the acquisition, maintenance, and landscaping of the parks.

Parks and recreational areas should be planned in conjunction with school facilities, the plan states, adding that a local agreement between the Seminole County School Board and the city should be reached concerning a program of joint use and management of recreational facilities.

Potable water: The LPA found that the water supply in Oviedo is adequate, but said the water distribution system needs to be spread to all portions of the city to provide better fire protection because some fire hydrants are too far apart.

The planners say a 900 foot section of waterline along South Lake Jessup Dr. is undersized, and that a capital improvement program for the purchase of new equipment has not been developed. An additional main service line from the water plant should be installed, the LPA says, adding that all property owners be required to be on the public potable water system, when accessible.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The LPA says septic tanks "should be considered a temporary measure even under the best of circumstances," and calls for efforts to establish a central sewer system. The planners admit, however, that the possibility of such a system is, at the present time, "very remote." They urge participation in the proposed Iron Bridge Road regional sewage facility.

Solid waste disposal in the city is also adequate, the planners say, although they advocate requiring city residents to be on the city garbage service.

POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION

Both are adequate, according to the plan, which suggests that the proposed 911 emergency number be established and a fire code be adopted. Some fire hydrants are also too far apart, the plan states.