



# Strategic Planning Process (SPP): BOCC Workshop Review info-to-date and Next Steps

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ANGELA CRIST, USF FLORIDA  
INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

ANDREA HENNING,  
COLLABORATIVE LABS AT SPC

May 27, 2025

# PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY: THREE PHASES

## Phase One

1.1	Kick Off and Work Plan Refinement	October 28, 2024
1.2	Commission: Strategic Alignment Workshop & Setting Expectations	November 21, 2024
1.3	Communications Outreach	Ongoing
1.4	Community Forum I	December 18, 2024
1.5	Individual/Group Stakeholder Interviews	January 2025
1.6	Resident Feedback Survey	January 2025
1.7	Community Focus Group Forum II (3 hours)	February 4, 2025
1.8	Employee Survey	February 2025
1.9	Employee Focus Group Forum (3 hours)	March 27, 2025
1.10	Community Focus Group Forum III (3 hours)	April 4, 2025
1.11	Commission Presentation: Review info-to-date and Next Steps	May 27, 2025

## Phase Two

2.1	Commissioner Forum I (6 hours) off-site	June 18, 2025
2.2	County Administrator & Executive Leadership Planning Meeting	July 11, 2025
2.3	Leadership Forum II (3 hours) off-site	July 31, 2025
2.4	County Administrator & Executive Leadership Planning Meeting	August 8, 2025
2.5	Final Report Internal Review	September 23, 2025
2.6	Final Report to Commission Workshop	October 2025

## Phase Three:

3.1	Strategies for supporting the implementation plan	November 2025
3.2	Implementation plan facilitation	November 2026

# PHASE ONE: COMPLETED DELIVERABLES

## Phase One

1.1	Kick Off and Work Plan Refinement ✓	October 28, 2024
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# 1.1 Kick-Off and Work Plan Refinement – County Administrator and Department Leadership



## Senior Leadership's Role

- Effectively integrating employee input with leadership direction
- Coordinating between organizational and community wide process components
- Integrating the input received through different channels
- Transparency and responsiveness

## Leveraging County Strengths/Treasures **Greenspace/Natural Resources**

Location

**Rural nature**, open space

Historic downtown

Airport

Strategic location between Orlando and Tampa

Relatively low housing costs

**Natural lands, parks, preserves**

Employees

Great tasting water

Potential/possibility

Hometown feel



# 1.2 County Commission: Setting Expectations and Strategic Alignment

## Current Success

“I like the **history** of where we came from as one of the oldest counties out there, about when the state was created too. The **rural character** of the county”

“The best thing about HC is her **people**. We have something special in HC when it comes to community”

“The **people**, our **natural beauty** and low cost of living”

“The commitment to quality community progress and **resiliency of the people** of Hernando County”

## Future Success

- A safe, affordable community
- Top class education
- Low taxes, highly efficient government
- Economic development and industrial manufacturing growth
- Responsibly balanced and cost-efficient government



Integrity  
Safety  
Fiscal Responsibility  
Objective Decision-making



# 1.3 Communications Outreach

Hernando County Strategic Plan | Engage Hernando



Home / Hernando County Strategic Plan

## Hernando County Strategic Plan

<https://www.engagehernando.com/strategicplan>

<https://youtu.be/1Coj1HOBTZU>

### Timeline of Events



#### Phase One

- Senior Leadership Team Kick Off, October 28 2024
- BOCC Workshop, November 21 2024
- Community Engagement Session I, December 18 2024
- Stakeholder Interviews, January 2025
- Community Feedback Survey, February 2025
- Community Engagement Session II, February 4th 2025
- Employee Feedback Survey, February 2025
- Employee Focus Group Forum, March 2025
- Community Engagement Session III, April 4th 2025
- BOCC Draft Strategic Plan Presentation, May 27 2025



#### Phase Two

- Commissioner Forum I, June 18, 2025
- Senior Leadership Team Planning, June 2025
- Commissioner Forum II, July 31, 2025
- County Administrator & Executive Leadership Planning Meeting, August 2025
- Plan Refinement, September 2025
- BOCC Final Strategic Plan Presentation, October 2025



#### Phase Three

- Strategies for supporting Implementation, November 2025
- Strategic Plan Implementation, November 2025

### Meeting Minutes

- ☐ Leadership Team Kickoff Meeting\_Real-Time Record\_10-28-24.pdf (2.34 MB) (pdf)
- ☐ BOCC Workshop\_Real-Time Record\_11-21-24.pdf (1.35 MB) (pdf)
- ☐ BOCC Workshop Recording
- ☐ Hernando County Community Forum I\_Real-time Record\_12-18-24.pdf (2.01 MB) (pdf)
- ☐ Hernando County Community Forum II\_Real-time Record\_02-04-2025.pdf (2.1 MB) (pdf)
- ☐ Hernando County Community Forum III\_Real-time Record\_04-04-2025.pdf (2.13 MB) (pdf)

### County Contact Information

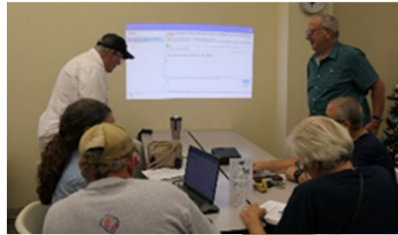
Carla Rossiter-Smith  
Chief Procurement Officer  
Hernando County Government  
Email [Crossiter-smith@co.hernando.fl.us](mailto:Crossiter-smith@co.hernando.fl.us)

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# 1.4 Community Forum I

## Strengths and Treasures

- Ability to enjoy the gulf waters in areas that aren't overdeveloped
- Hernando's **natural resources**, waterways, **parks**, hiking trails... Healthcare facilities and employment opportunities
- Our **rural character** and agricultural lifestyle
- Small town feel
- Bike and walking trails
- **Natural Resources**
- Not too overdeveloped, yet... We need a real defined land use strategy to ensure we don't look like every other community in Florida
- Small town feel, great water, **friendly people**
- Our springs and forests



## Top 10 Best Practices for Citizen Engagement

1. Come Together...
2. Be Respectful...
3. Seek to Understand...
4. Do your Research...
5. Get to know the Decision Makers...
6. Introduce Yourself...
7. Make the Ask...
8. Offer a Solution...
9. Build Connections &...
10. Take ACTION!

Community Outreach

Public Attendance

More user-friendly websites

Community Town Hall meetings by BOCC District

# 1.5 Individual/Group Stakeholder Interviews

## Assets

### Community and Leadership

- **Small Town Feel:** The county retains a hometown feel with a sense of safety and community.
- **Leadership:** Effective leadership and application of tax dollars to improve government areas.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaged community leaders and a vocal, kind, and loving community.

### Natural Environment

- **Nature Coast:** Offers a lot with its natural beauty and biodiversity.
- **Springs and Rivers:** Need protection and are valued by the community.
- **Agricultural Land:** Large amounts of conservation and agricultural land support biodiversity.

### Location and Accessibility

- **Proximity to Urban Areas:** Close to Orlando and Tampa, making it easier to attract new hires and businesses.
- **Access to the Gulf:** Coastal areas like Hernando Beach and natural springs are significant assets.
- **Transportation:** Good road network and airport facilities.

### Economic Opportunities

- **Tourism:** Tourism is a strong sector, with the county being safe from bad weather.
- **Business Development:** Opportunities for businesses to partner and work together.

### Affordable Living

- **Affordable Living:** Reasonable cost of living and availability of real estate.

### Education and Workforce Development

- **New College:** Helps retain people within the county.
- **Job Creation:** Industrial park and manufacturing opportunities provide jobs that do not require a college degree.

## Liabilities

- Infrastructure Issues
- Housing and Homelessness
- Mental Health Services
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Community Engagement and Leadership
- Environmental Concerns

"High praise for the county staff's availability, follow-up, and dedication to serving the community."





# 1.6 Resident Feedback Survey

A total of 959 completed responses were collected during the survey period

The results were organized around specific sections of the survey, including: (1) Quality of Life, (2) Community Amenities, (3) Public Service Delivery, (4) Communication and Citizen Participation in Government, and (5) Strategic Planning/Priorities.

- **General Satisfaction:** The majority of residents reported a generally positive view of their quality of life in Hernando County, with **53% rating it as "Good" and 9.4% rating it as "Excellent."** However, **nearly 30% of respondents rated the quality of life as "Fair" or "Poor,"** indicating opportunities to improve residents' experience and perceptions of their quality of life in Hernando County.
- **Traffic and Infrastructure:** A significant concern raised by respondents was **traffic congestion, with 46.2% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with traffic flow.** Many respondents indicated that the county's **infrastructure, particularly roadways, has not kept pace with growth.** The need for road improvements, public transportation, and better traffic management was consistently mentioned.
- **Public Safety:** While fire/EMS services received high ratings, **public safety remains a concern, with 29.2% of respondents indicating dissatisfaction with the overall safety of the community.** Issues related to crime, such as drug-related offenses and reckless driving, were frequently raised in the open-ended survey responses, alongside requests for increased law enforcement presence.

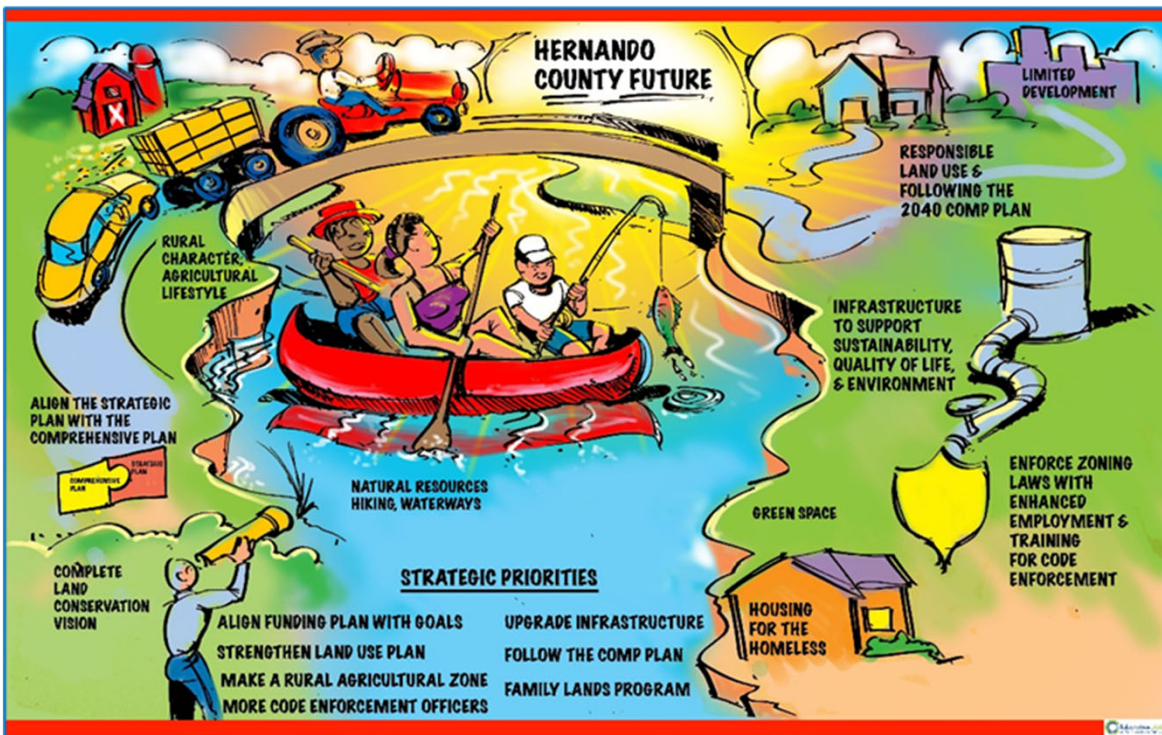
## 1.6 Resident Feedback Survey

- **Economic Development:** The survey highlighted concerns about economic opportunities in the county, with only **1.2% of respondents rating the county as an "excellent" place to earn a good wage**. Many respondents expressed **dissatisfaction with the lack of job opportunities and the county's approach to fostering business growth**, emphasizing a need for economic development strategies that prioritize job creation.
- **Growth Management:** Overdevelopment was one of the top concerns for residents, with **57.8% identifying unregulated growth and housing as a major challenge**. Many respondents expressed fear that the county's rapid development could lead to overcrowding and a loss of its rural charm. Preservation of green spaces and balancing growth with environmental conservation were also identified as critical priorities.
- **Community Services and Amenities:** Satisfaction with amenities such as parks, libraries, and nature preserves was relatively high, but there were **concerns about the availability of public services like healthcare, recreational facilities, and affordable housing**. Residents called for expanded services, particularly in response to the county's growing population.
- **Communication and Citizen Engagement:** Respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the county's communication and engagement efforts. While some respondents felt informed about county services, there was a **clear demand for improved transparency, better access to information, and more opportunities for citizen participation** in government.

# 1.7Community Forum II

## Top 2030 Visionary Goals & Strategic Priorities

- 1. Alignment of the strategic plan with the comprehensive plan (land use) and appropriate funding for infrastructure to support projected growth/Responsible Land use & following the 2040 Comp Plan/ Enforce and review the comprehensive plan according to existing county policy.
- 2. Infrastructure to support sustainability, quality of life, and environment.
- 3. Complete land conservation vision (Florida wildlife corridor)
- 4. Enforce current zoning laws with enhanced employment and training for code enforcement - use what we got!
- 5. Reduce homelessness within County urban areas



Hernando's Greatest Treasures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural Resources (i.e. waterways, springs, hiking trails, etc.)</li><li>• Rural Character and Agricultural Lifestyle</li><li>• Small-Town Feel</li><li>• Limited Development</li><li>• Public Safety</li><li>• Access to Gulf Waters for Recreation</li><li>• Undeveloped Beaches/Waterfront</li></ul>
Most Important Opportunities to Address in the Future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preserving the Nature Coast</li><li>• Protecting Greenspaces and the Tree Canopy</li><li>• Maintaining the Rural County Character</li><li>• Balancing Preservation of Natural Resources with Growth and Development</li><li>• Ensuring Adequate Water Quality and Supply</li></ul>

# 1.8 Employee Survey

The 2025 Hernando County Employee Engagement Survey was distributed to 861 employees, yielding 180 responses (20.9% response rate).

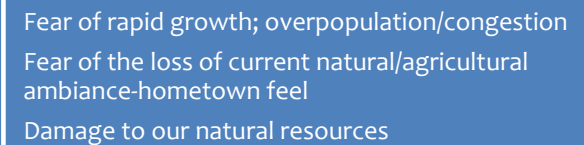
The largest proportion of respondents, 30.4%, had been with Hernando County for two years or less, while 19.6% reported tenure between eleven and twenty years.

- ✓ **Employee Morale is Relatively High, but the Data Show Some Opportunities for Improvement:** While most employees enjoy their jobs, some concerns emerged with regard to work-life balance and workplace culture.
  - 94.4% of employees reported liking their job, but only 60.5% look forward to going to work most days.
  - 19.4% strongly agreed that overall morale among employees is high, while 39.5% disagreed, including 18.9% who strongly disagreed.
  - 86.6% of employees reported having a good work-life balance, but 13.4% expressed dissatisfaction, citing workload and stress.
  - Nearly half of employees (45.5%) rated Hernando County as a “Fair” place to work, with only 27.5% rating it as Excellent.
  
- ✓ **Employees Understand Their Roles but Seek Greater Alignment with Organizational Values:** Employees have a clear understanding of job expectations, but some feel disconnected from the county’s overall mission and values.
  - 95.5% of employees agreed that they know what is expected of them in their roles.
  - 97.2% understand how their job contributes to the organization’s mission, suggesting strong role clarity.
  - However, only 48.9% “strongly” agreed that their personal values align with those of the county.

# 1.8 Employee Survey

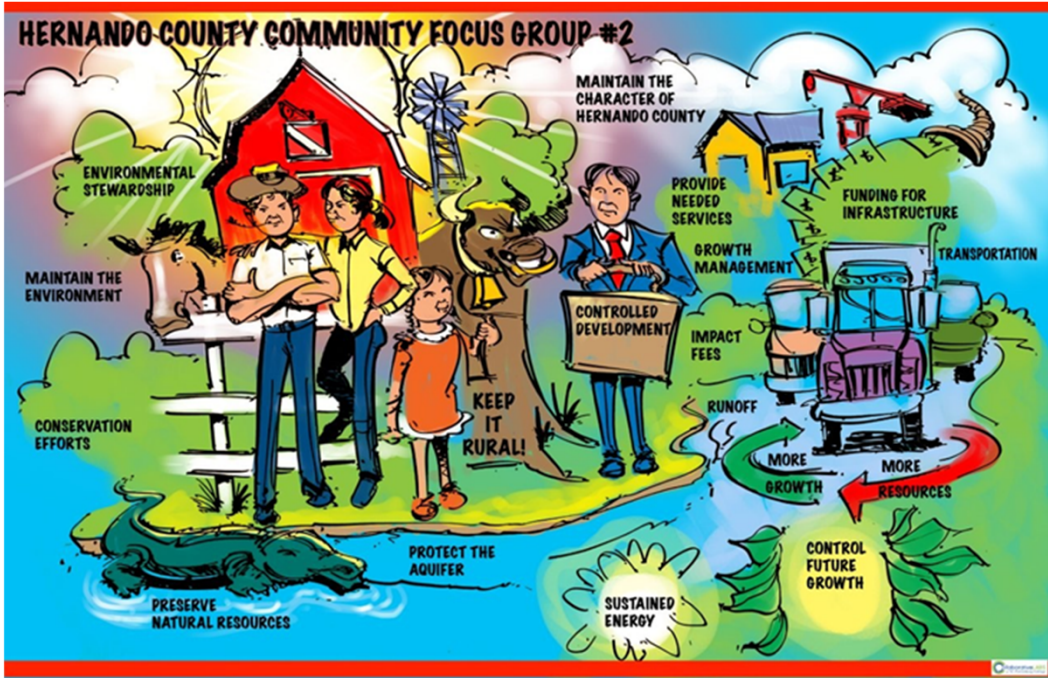
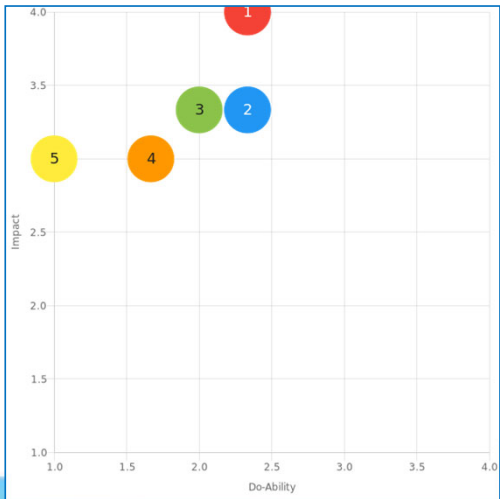
- ✓ **Compensation and Career Growth Opportunities Are Major Concerns:** Many employees feel undercompensated and believe career advancement opportunities within the county are limited.
  - **39.5% of employees disagreed that they are fairly compensated**, including 18.9% who strongly disagreed.
  - Only 35.7% strongly agreed that they see opportunities for promotion within the county, while 16.2% disagreed.
  - **28% of open-ended responses cited pay and compensation concerns**, including lower wages than neighboring counties.
  - 7% of responses specifically mentioned lack of career growth and advancement as a frustration.
- ✓ **Communication and Transparency Emerged as Opportunities for Improvement:** While employees have strong relationships with their direct supervisors, communication and transparency at higher leadership levels were sometimes cited as areas of concern.
  - **82.7% of employees agreed that they receive regular feedback from their supervisor, and 90.6% feel treated fairly by their supervisor.**
  - However, only 62.2% believe that senior leaders listen to employee opinions, and 37.2% disagreed, including 14.4% who strongly disagreed.
  - **Only 58.4% agreed that different departments communicate effectively with one another, while 41.7% disagreed.**
  - 31.3% of employees disagreed that county leaders act transparently, highlighting an opportunity for improved openness in decision-making.
- ✓ **Employees Value Public Service but Cite Retention, Growth Management, and Workplace Challenges:** Hernando County employees are committed to public service but feel that retention challenges, growth management, and workplace policies could improve.
  - 29% of open-ended responses cited community service and public engagement as a core strength of the county.
  - **33% of responses listed pay and benefits as a weakness, with 22% mentioning retention and turnover issues.**
  - 20% of employees stated that the county does not uphold the values it claims to prioritize, particularly in areas like fairness and transparency.
  - **Overdevelopment (20%) and bureaucratic inefficiencies (17%) were cited as concerns, with employees noting that growth is outpacing infrastructure and staffing capacity.**





# 1.10 Community Forum III

Teams Rate Top 5 Future Opportunities in terms of Impact (1=Low – 4=High) and Do-Ability (1=Difficult – 4=Easy). (Multi-criteria, cumulative table below):	
1	Environmental Stewardship - Preserve natural resources and habitats through conservation efforts
2	Growth Management - Keep the county's unique identity while continuing to offer much-needed community services and amenities during the rapid growth progression (i.e. parks, libraries, healthcare, recreational facilities)
3	Growth Management - Appropriate funding for infrastructure to support project growth, sustainability, quality of life, and the environment
4	Transportation/Transit - Determine needed road improvements, better traffic management, and public transportation options
5	Social/Wrap Around - Identify and address the social needs of the community through the affordable housing gaps, reduction of homelessness, workforce opportunities and mental health services



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# NEXT STEPS: ACTION ITEMS & TIMELINE

- ✓ Review all the Real Time Record Documents for Phase 1
- ✓ Come prepared for June 18<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 3 pm BOCC Leadership Forum

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