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## Department of Growth Management

Lake County Board of County Commissioners

Summer 2005

# Department of Growth Management

The motto of the Department of Growth Management is "Anticipating the Challenge." Every day staff confronts the trials and tribulations of a growing community. The department is constantly seeking new and innovative means to improve and streamline operations. This newsletter features the regular changes instituted within the Department to better serve the citizens and customers of Lake County.

The department is comprised of six divisions; Building Services, Code Enforcement Services, Comprehensive Planning, Customer Services, Geographic Information Systems and Planning and Development Services.

The department as a whole is responsible for short and long-range planning; review, permitting, and inspection of land development; and monitoring of the environment in unincorporated Lake County under the County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

Growth Management assists and advises the County Manager and the Board of County Commissioners on policy development and implementation relative to growth management.

# A Letter from the Director

**To all Lake County Department of Growth Management customers:**

Thank you for picking up this issue of the Department of Growth Management newsletter. I hope your experience with us today was a fruitful one. Our ultimate goal is to provide you with the best possible service regardless of your needs.

This newsletter is intended to provide you with information on the latest changes to our service; hopefully, you will see improvements as we implement them.

This year, in particular, will be a challenge for the department as we examine and rewrite the Lake County Comprehensive Plan. This document, which is the "blueprint" for preservation and development, is in need of an update, and we have set our sights this year on accomplishing just that.

The process, which began last year, is now in full swing. We have, and will continue to meet with groups of the public, municipalities, and special-interest groups on both sides of the many issues related to growth as we gather input on our course for the future.

If you have specific suggestions, please address them with a member of our staff. Over the course of this year, we will draft a new plan which ultimately should be adopted in late 2005.

Our commitment to you is to constantly strive for improvement. If we fail to meet that goal, please tell us so that we may look at the operation and better serve your needs.

Sincerely,

Gregg Welstead,
*Lake County Deputy County Manager &*
*Director of the Department of Growth Management*

# Building Division

The Building Division administers and enforces all building and licensing related laws and regulations in order to protect public safety. Highly trained inspectors and plans examiners perform plan reviews and building inspections in an efficient and timely manner. Permits are processed as quickly as possible on a first come, first served basis.

A web based inspection process is being implemented that will enhance "real time" inspection results and field comments. Inspectors will be able to schedule and re-schedule inspections quicker and detail any site related comments more accurately. Additional permit information will be readily available at the touch of a button.

An enhancement available by the vendor means the contractor will no longer have to go to the job site or call to get the inspection result. The contractor will be given an alert with results/details as soon as the inspector records a pass or fail inspection.

We are accepting permit applications online at *www.lakegovernment.com/business/* for re-roofing, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and vinyl-siding permits on the Internet, which can save a customer trip to the division office. Future plans are for expanding the online permit types and an online credit card payment method.

## Web Resources:

Building Division
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/building_services/*

Florida Building Codes
*www.floridabuilding.org*

Online building permit application
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/building_services/apply_for_building_permits.aspx*

## Contact Info:

Name: Carmen Carroll, *Building Office Coordinator*
Phone: (352) 343-9653 ext. 5620
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays

# Code Enforcement Services

The Code Enforcement Services Division is responsible for working with the citizens of Lake County to ensure the enforcement of the Lake County Land Development Regulations.

Recently, amendments were made to the Lake County Code, regarding noise control. The changes include permitted hours for residential construction and demolition, which are now between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. *(concrete work is exempted)*; and permitted hours for vehicular refrigeration units in residential zoning districts are now between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Enforcement of the Noise Control Ordinance will be conducted through the division and the Lake County Sheriff's Office. The ordinance can be viewed online at *www.lakegovernment.com/business*.

A new noise control brochure is being created to reflect the amendments to Lake County Code. Upon completion, the brochures will be posted on the Lake County Web site. *www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/code_enforcement/brochures.aspx*

Other changes at the division include the transfer of environmental protection to the Lake County Department of Environmental Services. All complaints regarding stormwater, tree removal, wetland violations, hazardous waste, etc. should be referred to the Water Resources & Environmental Programs Division at (352) 728-2826.

## Web Resources:

Code Enforcement Services Division
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/code_enforcement/*

## Contact Info:

Name: Cindy Steele, *Code Enforcement Associate*
Phone: (352) 343-9639
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays

# Comprehensive Planning

Comprehensive Planning Division staff is currently tackling an important task for the County by drafting a new comprehensive plan.

Required by law, the comprehensive plan is the foundation for local planning as it acts as an outline of the community's vision and priorities.

The task of drafting the 2025 Lake County Comprehensive Plan will be a partnership between citizens, municipalities, county government and other local and regional entities. Upon completion, the new plan titled "Planning Horizon 2025" will provide flexible guidelines for policymakers, land managers, and land users about how to conserve, rehabilitate, or develop an area. Planning Horizon 2025 will spell out the goals for efficient transportation, adequate employment, affordable housing, needed capital improvements, and access to clean air, water, and open space for the next 20 years. Among the needed tools for drafting the comprehensive plan is the regular assistance of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division.

The second round of public meetings for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan has been tentatively set for July. Specific dates have yet to be determined, but information will be posted on the Planning Horizon 2025 website when it becomes available. The Comprehensive staff hopes to see you there!

## Web Resources:

Planning Horizon 2025
*www.lakegovernment.com/2025/*

Comprehensive Planning Division
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/comprehensive_planning/*

## Contact Info:

Name: Tom Wheeler, *Planning Office Associate*
Phone: (352) 343-9632 ext. 5585
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays

# Customer Services/Zoning

The Customer Services/Zoning Division is responsible for working with the citizens of Lake County to ensure the enforcement of the Lake County Land development regulations (LDRs).

Besides zoning clearances, the division processes lot splits, lot of record determinations, boat docks, tree removal permits, and much more. Additionally, the division is responsible for variances, which are presented by staff to the Board of Adjustment. Citizens may apply for a variance if they feel the application of the LDRs would create a substantial hardship or violate principle of fairness.

Customer Services will be working with citizens in an effort to find a solution to antiquated subdivisions that currently do not meet Lake County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. Staff is in the process of identifying the remaining antiquated subdivisions with vacant lots in order to best address the myriad of issues. Working with other divisions, staff will consider key factors unique to each area. Staff will meet with each group of property owners in an effort to come up with solutions that will work for all involved. Our hope is that these subdivisions can be developed in a manner more consistent with modern planning concepts that will enhance the quality of life in our communities.

## Web Resources:

Customer Services/Zoning Division

*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/zoning_and_customer_service/*

## Contact Info:

Name: Terrie Diesbourg, *Division Director*
Phone: (352) 343-9422
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays
8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesdays
due to staff cross training

# Geographic Information Systems

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is the library for all the geographic information that affects Lake County citizens, such as addresses for emergency responders, flood zones, endangered species habitats, parks, hospitals, and information relating to wetlands, taxparcels, and zoning.

The largest current project for GIS staff is to draw every parcel in Lake County into a digital database. The project is scheduled to be completed by fall 2005. By using legal descriptions of property boundaries and working with the Lake County Property Appraiser's Office, the parcel map will be highly accurate.

GIS is currently involved with the creation of new Map Books for the Public Safety Dept. *(Fire Rescue, Emergency Management Divisions)* and the Public Works Dept. These updated books will provide more data and allow better use of the mapping information available through the GIS coverages. Look for these map books this summer.

In addition to the other ongoing projects, GIS in concert with Emergency Operation Center for the County, is preparing for this year's hurricane season.

GIS has published a Governmental and Environmental Lands Atlas for Lake County to assist the PLACC in their endeavors. As of June 2005, frequently requested maps and the Atlas will be available on the County website in a pdf format for those wishing to download a map.

## Web Resources:

Geographic Information Systems Division
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/geographic_information_systems/*

## Contact Info:

Name: Larry Duke, *Project Manager*
Phone: (352) 343-9775
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays

# Planning and Development Services

The Planning and Development Division reviews and acts on specific proposals for development to ensure consistency of the County's land-use regulations, policy plans and the Lake County Comprehensive Plan. The division is also involved in a host of other current activities.

Efforts to improve service include updating and revising the division's informational brochures to better serve both internal and external customers. Upon completion, the new and improved brochures will be placed in Growth Management waiting areas as well as on our Lake County web site.

The division is also colaborating with several other divisions and entities to improve operations. This will allow for a savings in time, money and storage space for both the applicant, as well as the County.

This spring and summer Planning and Development along with the Customer Services/Zoning Division will be assisting the Comprehensive Planning Division in the preparation of the goals, objectives, and policies for the new Lake County Comprehensive Plan.

In June, the division will be partnering with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council to host a community design workshop for the Mt. Plymouth and Sorrento communities. Topics of discussion for the workshop will range from development type and scale to architectural style. The workshop is intended to expand on the Mt. Plymouth-Sorrento Small Area Framework Study.

## Web Resources:

Planning and Development Services Division
*www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/planning_and_development_services/index.aspx*

## Contact Info:

Name: Jeff Richardson, *AICP, Planning Manager*
Phone: (352) 343-9739
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday, except holidays

**Q:** Where is the Department of Growth Management located?

**A:** Five of the six divisions from the Department of Growth Management are located on the fifth floor of the Lake County Administration Building, 315 W. Main St., Tavares. The remaining division, Geographic Information Systems, is located on the fourth floor of the Lake County Historical Courthouse, 317 W. Main St., Tavares. Building and Customer Services also operate an additional satellite office in Clermont City Hall, 685 W. Montrose St., Clermont. To contact the Clermont offices, call (352) 394-6466 for Customer Service/Zoning Division and (352) 394-5962 for the Building Division.

**Q:** How can I learn about the zoning on a piece of property?

**A:** A frequent question, call the Customer Services Division at (352) 343-9641 or 9738 to obtain the zoning for a piece of property. Have the alternate key number, parcel ID number or the property owner's name ready for our Customer Services staff.

A representative will take your information and call you back with the zoning for the property. For other questions associated with zoning, consult the online FAQs at *www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/zoning_and_customer_service/zoning.aspx*.

**Q:** How do I obtain a permit for a new home, pool or garage?

**A:** The Building Division has created 20 handy pamphlets. Each addresses how to obtain a permit for a specific need. To view the list of online brochures, log on to *www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/building_services/brochures.aspx*.

**Q:** How can I get a map of flood zones in the County?

**A:** Log on to Geographic Information Systems Web page at *www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/geographic_information_systems* to view all types of maps to include a County base, zoning, wetlands, and flood zone maps. The Web site also provides a tutorial on how to best use our mapping software.

**Q:** Is an overgrown yard a violation of Lake County code?

**A:** It can be if it falls under the definition of Section 14-55 of the Lake County Code, which reads "No person within the County shall allow his or her property, of less than one acre, to become overgrown with weeds, vegetation or other plant matter." For an online list of other frequent code violations, log on to *www.lakegovernment.com/departments/growth_management/code_enforcement/frequent_code_violations.aspx.*

**Q:** Do I need a permit for a fence?

**A:** You need to be sure not to block the visibility of a corner and be certain as to the location of your property lines. You do need a permit for any size masonry wall and if your wooden or chain link fence is over six feet high. Customer Services/Zoning (352) 343-9641 or 9738

**Q:** Do I need a fence/barrier/enclosure around my swimming pool?

**A:** Yes, per State regulations for the protection of others.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA
SINCE 1887