



TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES THE VISION

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Southwest Ranches was incorporated in June, 2000 with an estimated Census 2000 population of 7,100 residents and a density of 473 persons per square mile. The Town is about 15 square miles in size. It is located in the southwestern corner of Broward County, north of Pembroke Pines, south of Weston and Davie, west of Hollywood, and east of Water Conservation Area #3 of the Florida Everglades. The Town is broken into a western and eastern section by a portion of the Town of Davie traversing Southwest Ranches between Griffin Road on the north and Sheridan Street on the south. The western portion of the Town extends from Interstate Highway I-75 on the east to the Everglades' Water Conservation Area #3 on the west and the eastern portion is bounded by Griffin Road on the north, Sheridan Street on the south, South West 148th Avenue on the west, and Flamingo Road on the east. The Town's odd shape is due to the fact that portions of Pembroke Pines extend deep into the Town's southwestern section while a portion of Cooper City extends into the Town along its easterly section.

Southwest Ranches is predominantly residential and development consists primarily of single-family homes spread-out in rural ranches and rural estates covering close to 6,600 acres of land, equivalent to two thirds of the Town's land area. Smaller portions of the land are dedicated to other residential uses as well as agriculture, water bodies, and utilities. Very little land is dedicated to industrial and commercial activities (~ 82 acres). The Town maintains a semi-rural character by the inclusion of equestrian trails and centers, and agricultural activities such as nurseries. A number of faith based organizations, one public elementary school and a couple of small private schools are also located within the Town.

According to the 2000 Census, 71 percent of the Towns' population is 18 years of age or older while the remaining 29 percent is younger than 18 years of age. The median age is about 39 years old with an almost evenly divided population of

male and female residents. The majority of the population (91%) can be classified as white, while the remaining nine percent of the residents are of other races. Almost 20 percent of the population indicated Hispanic or Latino origin in the 2000 Census. Southwest Ranches is a stable and family oriented Town with 97 percent of its almost 2,200 housing units owner occupied and an average household size of a little over three persons.

OVERALL VISION

The Vision of the Town of Southwest Ranches is to enhance and preserve the unique rural character of its community. The Town shall promote, maintain, and protect the its agricultural, residential, and equestrian lifestyles, sensitive to the natural environment.

The Town's Vision is dedicated to the values of:



Rural Lifestyle



Preservation



Equestrian Interests



Freedom



Independence



Open Space



Nurturing Nature and Wildlife



Safe Family Environment

HOUSING

The nature of land use and zoning within the Town of Southwest Ranches will continue to promote the development of estate homes, ranchettes, and agricultural uses often providing, within those homes, accommodations for staff and other workers. Residents continue to open their homes as half-way houses and group homes for those in need.

The requirement of affordable housing will be met by promoting laws and policies which enable the residents to use their homes, farms and ranchettes to accommodate the needs of farm and agricultural workers, individuals from foster and broken homes as well as abused youth. The rural character of the Town and its welcoming attitude toward the larger surrounding community will continue to promote it as a haven for those in need of these services.

To the extent that residences within the Town cannot satisfy the need for all who seek moderate or low income housing, the Town will work in concert with neighboring communities to share resources. The Town invites others to use and enjoy its open spaces, equestrian or farming activities in exchange for Town residents in need having access to low income housing within the surrounding communities.

CONSERVATION/RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The Town of Southwest Ranches is committed to the conservation and preservation of its natural lands. Recreation and open space is focused on passive and active recreational activities. Partnerships with civic, and governmental groups as well as houses of worship are formed to satisfy the active recreational needs of the community. Open space land banking is provided and balanced in a financially responsible manner while assuring that the Town does not become the region's land bank.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The Town of Southwest Ranches recognizes the need to coordinate with surrounding communities with regard to schools and roads in particular. Coordination and cooperation on these and other issues shall be continue to be accomplished in a variety of ways: effective publication of meetings, assistance from Homeowners Associations; the Town Administrator promoting and ensuring open and frequent communication with local and surrounding communities' Homeowners Association liaisons, district representatives, Town Administrators, Council members and County Commissioners. Public input shall be solicited in a meaningful manner.

TRANSPORTATION

The Town of Southwest Ranches recognizes the need of the community to be provided with a non-intrusive and efficient transportation system. The Town shall seek to maintain all dedicated transportation easements and rights of way to remain dedicated and utilized for multi-purpose trails, where appropriate. Coordination and cooperation between the county, surrounding municipalities and the community will expand bus routes to designated major arteries as needed, providing airport shuttle services and coordination of carpooling alternatives. The Town shall continue to create, link and maintain a strong multi-purpose trail system that serves both the Town and the surrounding communities.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Town of Southwest Ranches is committed to providing for a full range of land use categories that support and encourage the rural life-style. Non-residential rural services and rural oriented mixed uses on Town owned land are supported and encouraged. The Town recognizes and accommodates its residents' long-term affordability and intergenerational needs. Town leaders will continue to pursue a partnership approach with its neighbors, citizens and outside agencies to maintain, enhance and build a rural life-styled community.

INFRASTRUCTURE/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Town of Southwest Ranches is committed to providing its residents with efficient, economic and safe provision of public services. The Town shall keep and maintain its septic tank infrastructure and discourage the construction of a sewer system. It shall improve solid waste pick up, create a drainage system plan, and develop an enforcement strategy to maintain and protect the Town's stormwater management system. The Town shall safeguard its ground water supply and aquifer recharge. It will provide for safe and clean potable water while implementing periodic cross sectional sampling of the drinking water supply. The Town shall not apply surcharges to the potable water provided from other local jurisdictions. Its residents shall be charged the same rates as residents in the surrounding jurisdictions.

EQUESTRIAN

The Town of Southwest Ranches is dedicated to the enhancement, maintenance and continued safety of its equestrian trails and lifestyle. The Town shall create a strong system of trails around and within the Town that connects to outside communities and trail systems. Town leaders will support and encourage cooperation with surrounding communities to ensure the completion of the trails within the next 5-10 years. Equestrian trails will be restricted to unmotorized

use and kept separate from vehicular traffic. Town leaders and developers will anticipate and provide for the cost of maintenance and the acquisition of rights of way to expand and maintain the trails. All facets of safety will be ensured through regular maintenance of the trails and a safety patrol.