

# Suggested Policy Additions to Protect Rural Character

Village of Indiantown – 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update

May 2026

## Purpose

The following policy additions are proposed to strengthen protection of the Village’s rural character and small-town lifestyle during the current Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR) process. These additions are designed to be consistent with the existing framework of the draft plan and Florida Statutes.

## Summary of Recommendations

#	Policy Title	Recommended Element	Priority	Expected Impact
1	Protection of Rural Character	Future Land Use	<b>Highest</b>	High
2	Rural Character Compatibility	Future Land Use	High	High
3	Limit Extension of Central Utilities into Rural Areas	Infrastructure & Water Resources	High	High
4	Preservation of Rural Character (Economic Development)	Economic Development	High	High
5	Strengthen Vision Language	Introduction	Medium	Moderate

## 1. Protection of Rural Land Use Categories

### Recommended Location

### Future Land Use Element – Goals, Objectives and Policies

Under GOAL L2 Planning for Growth (insert as new Objective L2.2 or new Policy under existing Objective L2.1)

### Suggested Policy Language

#### ***POLICY L2.2.1 Protection of Rural Character***

The Village of Indiantown shall protect and maintain the rural character of areas designated as Rural Community and Small Farm Residential on the Future Land Use Map. Development within these areas shall be limited to low-density residential uses and limited agricultural, equestrian, or hobby farm uses consistent with the established rural lifestyle. The Village shall discourage the introduction of urban-level infrastructure, commercial uses, or higher-density development patterns that would erode the rural visual character or lifestyle of these areas.

### Rationale

This policy creates a clear, enforceable statement that rural-designated areas should remain rural in character. It provides staff and the Village Council with stronger policy support when reviewing development proposals in or near these areas.

## 2. Rural Character Compatibility Standards

### Recommended Location

#### Future Land Use Element – Objective L5.1 Future Land Use Compatibility

### Suggested Policy Language

#### ***POLICY L5.1.14 Rural Character Compatibility***

All development proposals located adjacent to or within areas designated as Rural Community or Small Farm Residential on the Future Land Use Map shall demonstrate compatibility with the rural character of the surrounding area. Compatibility shall be evaluated based on density, intensity, building scale and massing, landscaping, lighting, signage, traffic generation, and preservation of open space and natural features. Development that would significantly alter the rural visual character or established lifestyle of adjacent properties shall not be approved.

### Rationale

This policy requires developers to affirmatively show that their project respects rural character. It shifts the burden onto the applicant and gives the Village clearer grounds for denial when a project would harm rural areas.

## 3. Limit Urban Infrastructure Extension into Rural Areas

### Recommended Location

#### Infrastructure and Water Resources Element – Goals, Objectives and Policies

(Under Potable Water or Sanitary Sewer section)

### Suggested Policy Language

#### ***POLICY IWR-X.X.X Extension of Central Utilities into Rural Areas***

The Village shall limit the extension of central water and wastewater service into areas designated as Rural Community or Small Farm Residential on the Future Land Use Map, except where necessary to address documented public health or environmental concerns. Extension of urban-level infrastructure shall not be used to justify or enable increased density or intensity beyond what is permitted by the underlying Future Land Use designation.

### Rationale

Extending water and sewer lines is one of the fastest ways rural areas lose their character. This policy helps prevent infrastructure from becoming a tool for unwanted urbanization of rural zones.

## 4. Balance Economic Development with Rural Character Protection

### Recommended Location

#### Economic Development Element – Goals, Objectives and Policies

### Suggested Policy Language

#### ***POLICY ED1.X.X Preservation of Rural Character***

Economic development strategies, incentives, and initiatives shall be designed and implemented in a manner that respects and preserves the Village's rural character and small-town lifestyle. The Village shall prioritize economic development that is compatible with existing rural and low-density residential

areas and shall avoid economic development patterns that would fundamentally alter the visual character, traffic patterns, or community feel of rural neighborhoods and agricultural areas.

### **Rationale**

The new Economic Development Element represents a significant shift toward growth. This policy ensures that economic development efforts remain balanced with the Village's desire to protect its rural identity.

## **5. Strengthen Vision Language**

### **Recommended Location**

#### **Introduction – Village Mission Statement section**

#### **Suggested Revised Language**

*The Village of Indiantown is dedicated to creating a sustainable community with friendly neighborhoods, civic engagement, and economic prosperity while proudly maintaining our rural heritage, small-town feel, and sense of community. The Village recognizes that its rural character and low-density residential areas are defining features of the community and shall be protected as the Village grows and develops.*

### **Rationale**

This is a relatively simple strengthening of existing language that reinforces rural character as a core value at the very beginning of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Next Steps**

These policies can be submitted in writing at or before the May 16, 2026 Joint Workshop. It is recommended to prioritize Policies #1, #2, and #4 as they have the greatest potential impact on protecting rural character.

*Document prepared for public comment during the Village of Indiantown 2050 Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Review process.*