

December 14, 2023

Response to Review Comments: CP23-00020; Palm Bay Development Group, LLC

Please find revised comments to the entire Future Land Use Map Amendment Factors of Analysis, in response to the comments sent 11/30/23 by Lisa Frazier.

(a) Whether the proposed amendment will have favorable or unfavorable effect on city's budget, or the economy of the city?

Neighborhood Center provides for a mix of uses, and in this case, it is intended to provide hotel rooms and apartments. Based on a \$100 million total development, an annual contribution in tax revenue to the City of Palm Bay (based on current millage of 7.9255 per \$1,000 of assessed value), will be recurring at \$792,500 annually. In addition, impact fees will be paid based on current rates adopted by the City as well as a proportionate fair share. This certainly will have positive budget impacts as the valuation rates of multi-family/hotel are consistent with commercial valuation numbers.

(b) Whether the proposed amendment will adversely affect the level of service of public facilities.

Neighborhood Center proposes a variety of uses and is consistent with the current commercial designation. Multi-family and hotel use could actually decrease the total number of trips based on what could be placed on the site. In addition, this does not promote sprawl, but rather the location represents an infill project. Comprehensive Plan FLU policy 1.5 D (h) states "permitting the clustering of uses to preserve wetlands, open space, and other natural amenities". Commercial is also identified to be nodal, not along corridors as this Property is situated. Location is such that it is an ideal use for a property that is adjacent to the Bayfront Redevelopment Area, which promotes mixed use. Ultimately, whether Commercial or Neighborhood Center, the impact on public facilities will be equivalent.

(c) Whether the proposed amendment will adversely affect the environment or the natural or historical resources of the city or the region as a result of the proposed amendment.

As previously noted, (FLU Policy 1.5 D (h)). This project will protect existing wetlands and provide appropriate buffers. There are no known historical resources on the site. This type of mixed use provides greater flexibility to protect these wetland resources.

(d) Whether the amendment will have a favorable or adverse effect on the ability of people to find adequate housing reasonably accessible to their places of employment.

The current multi-family vacancy rate is 5.4%, which is below both the national suburban rate (5.9%) and the national metropolitan rate (6.4%). The location of light industrial and commercial in the area provides a base of job opportunity that includes companies such as L3 Harris, multiple Air Conditioning/Heating Service Companies, a Truck parts/service facility, and numerous commercial outlets including two supermarkets on Palm Bay Road. Being on the

north end of Palm Bay, it also offers reasonable access to the business community in the City of Melbourne. It should also be noted that the current interest rate environment makes home ownership out of reach for many, increasing the need for rental options.

(e) Whether the proposed amendment will promote or adversely impact public health, safety, welfare, or aesthetics of the region of the city.

Neighborhood Center is a new concept added to the FLUE uses, and provides mixed use while reflecting community character as identified in FLU policy 1.4. It also will address multi-family options that are missing that promote a safe environment, and a design that is reflective of aesthetically pleasing site while protecting natural resources (wetlands). The site has generally been neglected and this project will clean the property and provide a transitional buffer between Robert J. Conlan Blvd. and Palm Bay Colony Mobile Home Park. The step down in density/intensity is positive for the area.

(f) Whether the requested amendment is consistent with all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and established levels of service.

Neighborhood Center provides the potential for a lower level of service than the existing commercial designation with the introduction of the multi-family option. Neighborhood Center provides an opportunity to create new housing options with amenities in reasonable proximity to employment and services (FLU-1.3); In addition, the mixed-use component supports creation of harmonious uses co-located and integrated into a sustainable development pattern (FLU-1.5). FLU-1.8 states an objective to be compatible with established neighborhoods and strive to enhance the character of the community, which Neighborhood Center is designed to accomplish. The Housing Element (HSG-1.1) seeks to diversify housing options including types, price points and location. Specifically, Policies HSG-1.1A and HSG-1.1F are relative to the overall objective of the Housing Element. Service levels will be improved with Neighborhood Commercial as opposed to the Commercial.

(g) Whether the request maximizes compatibility (consistent with the definition found in Florida Statutes 163.31699) between uses.

The Neighborhood Center option provides better compatibility options by introducing the residential opportunity to provide a transitional buffer for the property to the west (mobile home community). The feedback from that neighborhood reflected their desire for commercial not to abut their property, protection of wetlands, and appropriate buffering which will be provided through development of the site. Florida Statute 163.31649 states “the condition which land uses can coexist in relative proximity to each other”. This is certainly the case with the transition to the west and since Neighborhood Center included commercial, it can be concluded that commercial/light industrial are compatible with the overall plan for this property.

(h) Whether the request provides for a transition between areas of different character, density, or intensity.

While there does appear to be an appropriate transition of uses with abutting properties being a mobile home park, two roadways, and an undeveloped wetland; steps will be taken to locate buildings with increased setbacks. The designation of Neighborhood Center is the best designation to provide the transitions in an area where currently there does not exist different character. As a transitory buffer and consistent with Florida Statute 163.31649, Neighborhood Center provides the best land use designation for the property.

(i) Whether the request locates higher density and intensity uses in areas which already feature adequate vehicular access and access to public facilities.

Neighborhood Center does not anticipate an increase in trip generation as compared to Commercial land use. The most recent traffic counts indicate that the roadway (RJ Conlon) is between 25% and 33% of maximum capacity with an acceptable service level shown as “D”. Potential intensity can be brought down with the requested FLU designation when considered against the current Commercial designation. Conclusion is traffic impact can be lessened with this proposal when measured against other potential uses.

(j) Whether the request has potential for creating land use inequities per Policy FLU-1.12A of the Comprehensive Plan

- Environmental Justice (EJ) will be enhanced through preservation of wetlands that add to the overall aesthetics and conservation for the area. There is no component that will lead to water pollution or other impairments that will create higher rates of disease or health problems. There is no heavy industry located near this property that impacts the US EPA definition adopted in 2019.
- Affordable housing is a significant need in Palm Bay and new housing options (particularly multi-family) offer opportunities to the populations currently underserved. This project will actually enhance housing availability.
- Food Deserts are apparent when affordable or good quality fresh food is not available. From this site, two supermarkets that provide fresh food include Bravo and Thrifty Produce. Walmart is also in relative proximity to the property. Healthy options do exist.
- This project will provide internal and external pedestrian paths and will be integrated into the city network. Transit options are available through SCAT that have routes in this area of Palm Bay.

This project will actually provide more equity as it relates to Policy FLU 1-12A.

As to the actual three comments:

1. Please provide a detailed analysis on how the tax base and overall economy of the City would benefit from this change of land use and the cost of services comparison.

See (a), (b), and (i), above.

2. Please provide further explanation regarding the value of additional housing along an established commercial corridor, across and surrounded by Industrial Land Use and how this aligns with the City's stated goals.

See (c) through (j), above. This Property is not surrounded by Industrial Land Use FLU or actual use. Palm Bay Colony Mobile Home Subdivision abuts the entirety of the western boundary of this Property subject to the CPA. To the east, across Robert Conlan Boulevard are individual residences, warehouses, used auto sales, light manufacturing, parts sales, and mini warehouses. To the north across Commerce Park Drive NE, a new high-density apartment complex is planned, Eastshore Apartments, under site plan review for Northshore Developments, LLC.

The 2023 Economic Development Strategic Planning Report ("Strategic Planning Report") does not identify this Property as being in any of the eight business corridors discussed. This Property is to the west of and north of the Renesas Business Corridor. Because of its proximity to Palm Bay Colony Mobil Home Subdivision, industrial use would not be appropriate for this Property. Similarly, with 224 apartment units in Eastshore Apartments, industrial use on this Property would not be compatible.

3. Please provide specific Element Objectives/Policies that support the requested land use amendment. Specifically related to conflicting compatible land uses along this corridor, transportation, etc.

See above Factors Analysis and responses to specific comments.