



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

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| TO: | Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council |
| FROM: | Suzanne Sherman, City Manager |
| THRU: | Ibis Berardi, Community & Economic Development Acting Director |
| DATE: | April 4, 2024 |
| RE: | Consideration of the final draft of the City's existing Land Use Analysis Report for an area of Palm Bay known as 'the Compound', as prepared by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council. |

SUMMARY:

On April 15, 2021, City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC) to prepare an Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Plan evaluated the City's existing conditions to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and to further set the foundation for the future economic growth and prosperity of the City, over the next five years. On February 2, 2023, Palm Bay City Council adopted the City of Palm Bay's Economic Development Strategic Plan. The goals outlined in the Plan set a roadmap for an economically viable community. City Council directed staff to prepare a study focused solely on the Compound, Port Malabar Units 51, 52, and 53. On April 12, 2023, staff initiated an addendum to the MOU for ECFRPC to complete an analysis of an area of the city known as 'the Compound'. The scope of work included three deliverables:

- 1. Existing Land Use Analysis:** Analysis of land use characteristics of all properties located within the study area. These include acreage, property ownership and contiguity, wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas, and property entitlements, among others.
- 2. Case Study Analysis:** Perform a comprehensive literature review to identify similar redevelopment case studies across that nation. The ECFRPC will also do an in-depth review of prospective uses for the area including ecotourism, recreation, and manufacturing, among others.
- 3. Final Recommendations and Report:** Development of final report that includes the two previous analyses and a set of recommendations for the City of Palm Bay and present to City Council.

The Study acknowledges the area is comprised of 2,321 acres, divided into 5,023 parcels and almost entirely vacant residential single-family lots having 2,755 unique owners. The Study identifies limited infrastructure including deteriorating public roads, outfalls, and ditches as well as limited water and sewer access, and no electricity. The Study further identifies limited access to the Compound through three main entry points along J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW, Osmosis Drive SW, and St. Andre Blvd. SW.

The Study notes challenges to improving existing infrastructure and expanding water and sewer due to costs and further notes the need for an electrical substation to be located in the Compound to service the area. Additional challenges noted include public safety and undesirable and unauthorized activity occurring within the Compound.

The Study identifies opportunities for developing an industrial park leveraging City-owned property within the northeast segment of the Compound at the main access point at J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW where BRP US Inc. has an existing presence. It is also suggested that the City acquire the single-family lots along J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW to accomplish this.

The Study also identifies an opportunity to leverage existing recreational activity by preserving the west portion of the Compound as conservation, preserving natural areas and promoting ecotourism and low impact development.

Finally, the Study identifies the future St. Johns Heritage Parkway (SJHP) alternative corridor as an opportunity to provide additional access to the Compound, fostering favorable development of the area.

The Study provides several case studies from other jurisdictions, notably Lee County, Port St. Lucie, and Charlotte County, which have implemented various planning techniques to develop areas within their communities that face similar challenges. These techniques include establishing tax increment financing districts, land acquisition, capital improvement projects to jumpstart development, city-initiated land entitlement changes, transfer of development rights, targeted infrastructure improvements, and establishment of special districts and use of special assessments.

ECFRPC proposes a redevelopment concept plan, which identifies targeted areas for development and activity that leverages the existing conditions (wetlands and conservation), existing industry, and the proposed SJHP. The concept plan proposes an establishing an employment center at J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW, preserving the existing wetlands, conservation, and natural areas to foster passive recreation such as walking trails, biking, camping – and allowing the existing property owners to assign their entitlements to other parts of the Compound more suitable for development. ECFRPC proposes the City acquire strategic parcels for the future right-of-way of SJHP and

leverage existing larger City-owned parcels adjacent to the future Parkway corridor and establish this area as a development district for which property owners might agree to a special assessment of Community Development District to fund necessary infrastructure for a future hub for industry, employment, and other mixed-use activities.

- Final recommendations include coordination with the area's largest landowners to discuss:
- Land entitlement changes
- City-initiated administrative rezoning of parcels
- Land acquisition along J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW for future right-of-way and adoption of an overlay district
- Targeted investment in infrastructure along J.A. Bombardier Blvd. SW
- Adoption of a Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance
- Dedication of land for a future FPL substation
- Establish a Special Assessment or Community Development District
- Incorporate the western most segments of the Compound in the Parks Master Plan for meeting recreation and open space requirement of the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Coordinate with the ECFRPC on a brownfields grant to assess site for possible contamination (grant application support already underway)
- Continue/fast-track coordination with Florida Department of Transportation and Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization for the future SJHP
- Leverage City land to recruit a development firm to create and operate an industrial park
- Explore eminent domain

REQUESTING DEPARTMENTS:

Community & Economic Development

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funds were budgeted in Fiscal Year 2023-2024 in the amount of \$23,000 for this study.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to adopt the Existing Land Use Analysis Report for 'the Compound' as prepared by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. The Compound Analysis Study