

FORWARD PINELLAS STAFF ANALYSIS



APPLICATION NO.: Case CW 24-16

STAFF: Emma Wennick, Program Planner

APPLICANT: Largo

PROPERTY SIZE: 1.46 acres m.o.l.

**CURRENT COUNTYWIDE
PLAN MAP CATEGORY:** Office and Retail & Services

**PROPOSED COUNTYWIDE
PLAN MAP CATEGORY:** Retail & Services

**CURRENT LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Largo – Residential/Office General and Commercial General

**PROPOSED LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Largo – Commercial General

LOCATION / PARCEL ID: 3950 East Bay Drive / 36-29-15-94575-000-0010

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The applicant requests an amendment to the Countywide Plan Map to change the land use classification from Office and Retail & Services to Retail & Services for the 1.46-acre property located at 3950 East Bay Drive. This change aims to unify the land use designation across the entire site, currently split between two classifications.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the proposed map amendment to change the Countywide Plan Map classification from Office and Retail & Services to Retail & Services be approved. This approval should be subject to an amendment of the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor Submap to update the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use along the segment adjacent to the site at 3950 East Bay Drive. This update will ensure consistency with the Retail & Services category and address the alignment of the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor classification with the proposed land use change.

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Planners Advisory Committee met on August 26, 2024 and voted unanimously to recommend approval.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/COMMISSION ACTION:

The City of Largo Planning Board held a public hearing on the local future land use map amendment on June 6, 2024. The Council unanimously approved the second reading of the ordinance and there were no public comments.

CURRENT PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Property Use(s):	Verizon Cellular Retail Store
Site Features:	The site at 3950 East Bay Drive spans 1.46 acres and features frontage along South Belcher Road. It is currently developed with a retail establishment. The property is situated in an area with good visibility and access from major roadways.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

When considering this application, the following general site conditions, planning concepts, and other facts should be noted:

1. The property’s current split land use classification—Office and Retail & Services—limits redevelopment potential and creates inconsistencies between the City of Largo Future Land Use Map and the Countywide Plan Map.
2. The proposed amendment to unify the land use designation to Retail & Services aims to correct these inconsistencies and ensure that the property’s use aligns with its current retail function.
3. South Belcher Road, adjacent to the site, is classified as a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor with a Residential subclassification for the portion adjacent to the Office designation. The amendment will require updating this subclassification to Mixed Use to reflect the proposed land use change.

RELEVANT COUNTYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed amendment to the Countywide Plan Map is a legislative decision. The standards for the current and proposed Countywide Plan Map categories are summarized below:

	Current Countywide Plan Map Category: Office	Current and Proposed Countywide Plan Categories: Retail & Services
Purpose:	Intended accommodate areas developed, or appropriate to be developed, with office uses, low-impact employment uses, and residential uses (subject to an acreage threshold), in areas characterized by a transition between residential and commercial uses and in areas well-suited for community-scale	Intended to depict areas developed with, or appropriate to be developed with, a mix of businesses that provide for the shopping and personal service needs of the community or region, provide for employment opportunities and

	residential/office mixed-use development.	accommodate target employment uses, and may include residential uses as part of the mix of uses.
Permitted Uses:	Office; Personal Service/Office Support;	Office; Personal Service/Office Support; Retail Commercial; Commercial/Business Service; Commercial Recreation, Residential; Residential Equivalent; Vacation Rental pursuant to the provisions of Section 509.242(1)(c), Florida Statutes; Recreational Vehicle Park; Temporary Lodging; Research/Development- Light; Storage/Warehouse/Distribution-Light; Manufacturing-Light; Recreation/Open Space; Community Garden; Agricultural-Light. Manufacturing-Medium is subject to a three-acre maximum. Institutional; Transportation/Utility; Agricultural; Ancillary Nonresidential are subject to a five-acre maximum.
Max. Density:	Residential and Vacation Rental uses shall not exceed 15 units per acre	24 units per acre
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR):	Nonresidential Use - 0.50	0.55
Max. Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR):	Nonresidential Use – 0.75	0.90

Section 6.5.3. of the Countywide Rules provides the review criteria for amendments to the Countywide Plan Map. An analysis of these criteria are provided below:

- 1. The manner in, and extent to, which the amendment is consistent with the Countywide Rules and with the Countywide Plan Strategies as implemented through the Countywide Rules.**

Staff Analysis: The proposed amendment seeks to change the Countywide Plan Map classification from Office and Retail & Services to Retail & Services for the 1.46-acre site at 3950 East Bay Drive. This amendment aligns with the Retail & Services category, which supports areas developed or suitable for development with a mix of businesses that meet community shopping and personal service needs, provide employment opportunities, and may include residential uses.

The site's location along South Belcher Road is suitable for the Retail & Services category, as it is near major transportation routes and activity centers. The Retail & Services category is appropriate for sites that are accessible and compatible with intensive commercial use. The proposed amendment will unify the land use classification, addressing existing inconsistencies and ensuring that the site conforms to the intended use characteristics of the Retail & Services category, including its integration with surrounding uses and access to major transportation facilities.

The site's location along South Belcher Road, classified as a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor, requires special consideration. The Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor classification mandates that any changes to adjacent land uses also address the subclassification. The amendment to unify the site's land use to Retail & Services necessitates updating the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use to ensure consistency with the Countywide Plan's requirements for such corridors.

The proposed change addresses existing inconsistencies between the City of Largo Future Land Use Map and the Countywide Plan Map, facilitating compliance with current regulations and enhancing the property's usability and value. Approving this amendment aligns with the Countywide Plan's strategy to support commercial uses while maintaining the integrity of Scenic/Noncommercial Corridors.

2. **Forward Pinellas has developed the Multimodal Accessibility (MAX) index. Proposed amendments increasing density and/or intensity must maintain a MAX score equal to or better than the Countywide Average MAX score. The current Countywide Average MAX score is 9.7; if that score is not reached, balancing criteria will be required. An amendment adopting or amending the Activity Center (AC), Multimodal Corridor (MMC) and Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) categories and affecting fewer than 10 acres shall be subject to the Multimodal Accessibility Index (MAX Index).**

Staff Analysis: Forward Pinellas assigns MAX scores to individual quarter-mile grid cells to define their walkability and accessibility. The MAX score reflects factors such as bicycle facilities, premium transit services, walkability, roadway level of service, scooter/bike-share locations, transit access, and planned transportation projects. The subject property is located within a grid cell that has a MAX score of 25, which exceeds the countywide average of 9.7.

- 3. If located within a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the criteria and standards contained in Section 6.5.4.1 of these Countywide Rules.**

Staff Analysis: The subject property at 3950 East Bay Drive is adjacent to South Belcher Road, classified as a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor. Section 6.5.4.1 of the Countywide Rules requires that any land use amendment within such a corridor must adhere to specific criteria and standards to maintain the corridor's intended character.

The proposed amendment changes the Countywide Plan Map classification from Office and Retail & Services to Retail & Services. This change aligns with the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor criteria by supporting commercial activities that fit the corridor's character and minimizing impacts on surrounding areas. The amendment also updates the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use, meeting the requirement to adjust the corridor subclassification in line with the land use change. This approach preserves the corridor's integrity while facilitating a land use that supports its commercial and mixed-use goals.

- 4. If located within a Coastal High Hazard Area, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the terms set forth in Section 4.2.7.**

Staff Analysis: The amendment area is not located within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

- 5. If the amendment involves the creation, expansion, contraction of, or substantive change to the Activity Center, Multimodal Corridor, or Planned Redevelopment District category, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the purpose and requirements of the applicable category, and addresses the relevant Planning and Urban Design Principles described in Section 6.2.6 and Land Use Goal 16.0 of the Countywide Plan Strategies.**

Staff Analysis: The amendment area does not involve the creation, expansion, contraction of, or substantive change to the Activity Center, Multimodal Corridor, or Planned Redevelopment District category.

- 6. The manner in, and extent to, which the amendment significantly impacts a public educational facility or an adjoining jurisdiction.**

Staff Analysis: The amendment has no significant impact on public educational facilities or adjoining jurisdictions, as it is entirely within Largo's jurisdiction.

- 7. If the amendment involves the conversion from the Employment (E), Industrial (I), or Target Employment Center (TEC) category, the extent to which the amendment area can continue to provide for target employment opportunities as evaluated and set forth in Section 6.5.4.5.**

Staff Analysis: The amendment does not involve the conversion of land from the Employment, Industrial, or Target Employment Center categories.

PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The proposed Countywide Plan Map amendment was publicly advertised as required by Section 7.8.4. of the Countywide Rules. No public correspondence has been received to date.

CONCLUSION

Staff finds the proposed amendment is consistent with the Relevant Countywide Considerations found in Section 6.5.3.1 of the Countywide Rules.