

FORWARD PINELLAS STAFF ANALYSIS



APPLICATION NO.: Case CW 24-05

STAFF: Emma Wennick, Program Planner

APPLICANT: City of Tarpon Springs

PROPERTY SIZE: 0.88 acres m.o.l.

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

**PROPOSED COUNTYWIDE
PLAN MAP CATEGORY:** Public/Semi-Public

**CURRENT LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Tarpon Springs – Commercial Neighborhood

**PROPOSED LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Tarpon Springs – Institutional

LOCATION / PARCEL ID: 1201 Gulf Road / 14-27-15-89226-000-0175

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the Countywide Plan Map from Retail & Services to Public/Semi-Public. The property is currently vacant and is the location of the future Tarpon Springs Fire Station 70.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of an amendment to the Countywide Plan Map from Retail & Services to Public/Semi-Public.

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At its March 4, 2024 meeting, the Planners Advisory Committee voted 12-0 to recommend approval of this amendment.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/COMMISSION ACTION:

The Tarpon Springs Planning and Zoning Board held a public hearing at their regular meeting on December 18, 2023. The Board of Commissioners voted to approve first reading of the ordinance at the January 9, 2024 meeting.

CURRENT PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Property Use(s):	Vacant
Site Features:	Ground cover and a few trees. The property is on the corner of Gulf Road and Tarpon Drive and may be accessed from either of these roadways.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

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

1. This property is under city ownership and is planned for a new fire station (Fire Station 70) which is currently in the design phase.
2. The property is located in the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA). The requested amendment would lower the maximum permitted residential density on the Countywide Plan Map.
3. The MAX Index score for the subject property's grid cell is 2.5, which is below the countywide average score of 9.7. The city has cited the Sunset Connector Trail project as mitigation.

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: Retail & Services	Proposed Countywide Plan Map Category: Public/Semi-Public
Purpose:	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 accommodate target employment uses, and may include residential uses as part of the mix of uses.	Intended to recognize institutional, and transportation/utility uses that serve the community or region, especially larger facilities having acreage exceeding the thresholds established in other plan categories, which are consistent with the need, character, and scale of such uses relative to the surrounding uses, transportation facilities, and natural resource features, and may include residential as part of the mix of uses.

Permitted Uses:	<p>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.</p> <p>Manufacturing-Medium is subject to a three-acre maximum.</p> <p>Institutional; Transportation/Utility; Agricultural; Ancillary Nonresidential are subject to a five-acre maximum.</p>	<p>Institutional; Transportation/Utility; Residential; Residential Equivalent; Vacation Rental pursuant to the provisions of Section 509.242(1)(c), Florida Statutes; Storage/Warehouse/Distribution-Light; Storage/Warehouse/Distribution-Heavy; Recreation/Open Space; Community Garden; Agricultural-Light; Ancillary Nonresidential.</p>
Max. Density:	24 units per acre	12.5 units per acre
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR):	0.55	Institutional uses shall not exceed 0.65 (except for hospital uses which shall not exceed an FAR of 1.0 within any single jurisdiction) / Transportation/utility uses shall not exceed an FAR of 0.70
Max. Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR):	0.90	Institutional uses shall not exceed 0.85 / Transportation/utility uses shall not exceed 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 Countywide Rules state that the Public/Semi-Public category is “intended to recognize institutional, and transportation/utility uses that serve the community or region, especially larger facilities having acreage exceeding the thresholds established in other plan categories, which are consistent with the need, character, and scale of such uses relative to the surrounding uses, transportation facilities, and natural resource features, and may include residential as part of the mix of uses.”

The locational characteristics of the Public/Semi-Public category are “generally appropriate to those locations where institutional uses (such as educational, health, public safety, civic, religious and like uses) and transportation/utility uses (such as air and sea transport terminals, utility installations, major transmission lines, refuse disposal, and public works facilities) are required to serve the community; and to recognize the special needs of these uses relative to their relationship with surrounding uses and transportation access.”

The city proposes to amend their future land use map for this site as part of an effort to bring city-owned public facilities into the appropriate future land use map designation. This action results in a Countywide Plan Map amendment to the Public/Semi-Public category. The proposed Countywide Plan Map category of Public/Semi-Public is appropriate for the proposed use of the site.

- 2. Forward Pinellas has developed the Multimodal Accessibility (MAX) index. Proposed amendments 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: The MAX Index score for the subject property's grid cell is 2.5, which is below the countywide average score of 9.7. However, the Countywide Rules allow for the consideration of other factors when determining if the requested amendment meets the relevant Countywide Considerations.

The subject property is located in a Multimodal Accessibility Index (MAX) grid cell that has a score below the countywide average. In order to meet the balancing criteria requirements, the City of Tarpon Springs has cited the Sunset Connector Transportation Alternatives (TA) project as a mitigating improvement. This TA application is the #4 project on the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2023 Unfunded Transportation Alternatives Program Priority List. This is the first step in the project development process and design and construction funding will be programmed as funds become available from the Florida Department of Transportation. Once completed, this 4.4-mile trail will provide continuous bicycle and pedestrian facilities separated from general travel lanes from the existing Pinellas Trail at East Klosterman Road to the communities, parks, and schools to the west in the City of Tarpon Springs. The completion of this project will result in a MAX Index score increase for the proposed amendment area grid cell. For this reason, as well as taking into consideration the scale of the proposed amendment and planned development of the site, Forward Pinellas has determined that this proposed mitigating project satisfies this consideration.

- 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 amendment area is not located on a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor.

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 property is located in the Coastal High Hazard Area. The Coastal Management Element provisions of the Tarpon Springs Comprehensive Plan restrict expansion of public facilities investment that would subsidize new private development (Policy 3.1.2). The current proposal is to correct an existing emergency services deficiency that primarily serves the surrounding residential area. The proposed Public/Semi-Public designation would substantially lower the allowable density on the Countywide Plan Map Category from 24 units per acre to 12.5 units per acre.

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 proposed amendment is not adjacent to a public educational facility or adjoining jurisdiction; therefore, those policies are not applicable.

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 6.5.4.4.

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

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.

