

FORWARD PINELLAS STAFF ANALYSIS



APPLICATION NO.:	Case CW 24-17
STAFF:	Emma Wennick, Program Planner
APPLICANT:	City of Clearwater
PROPERTY SIZE:	2.28 acres m.o.l.
CURRENT COUNTYWIDE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Public/Semi-Public
PROPOSED COUNTYWIDE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Retail & Services
CURRENT LOCAL FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	City of Clearwater– Institutional
PROPOSED LOCAL FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	City of Clearwater – Commercial General
LOCATION / PARCEL ID:	407 South Saturn Avenue / 16-29-16-00000-240-0200

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The property at 407 South Saturn Avenue, totaling 2.28 acres, currently supports a place of worship and associated parking, with buildings dating from 1957 to 1970. The proposed amendment seeks to reclassify the Countywide Plan Map designation from Public/Semi-Public to Retail & Services, aligning the site with surrounding commercial uses. This change will necessitate reclassifying the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor designation from Residential to Mixed Use, aligning with the proposed commercial use and ensuring consistency with the Countywide Rules.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed map amendment to change the Countywide Plan Map classification from Public/Semi-Public to Retail & Services for the property at 407 South Saturn Avenue. This approval should be subject to an amendment of the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor Submap, updating the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use along the portion adjacent to the site. This update will align the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor designation with the proposed commercial land use, ensuring consistency with the Countywide Plan and the corridor's intended character.

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/COMMISSION ACTION:

The Clearwater City Council held a public hearing on the local future land use map amendment on June 20, 2024, and again on July 15, 2024. The Council approved the amendment unanimously at both hearings, with no public comments, written objections, or letters of support received.

CURRENT PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Property Use(s):	Place of worship
Site Features:	The site features existing buildings totaling over 25,000 square feet, with structures dating back to 1957, and ample space for potential commercial redevelopment.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

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

1. The property at 407 South Saturn Avenue is currently used by a place of worship. The proposed change from Public/Semi-Public to Retail & Services will transition the site to commercial use, affecting the existing institutional function.
2. The site is located along Gulf to Bay Boulevard, a major thoroughfare, making it suitable for commercial development due to its accessibility and proximity to existing nonresidential uses.
3. Updating the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use aligns the property with surrounding commercial areas and supports the corridor's development goals.
4. The existing place of worship will become a nonconforming use under the new Retail & Services classification. This change prevents expansion of the current use while allowing the site to transition to commercial use.

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 Public/Semi-Public	Proposed Countywide Plan Map Category: Retail & Services
Purpose:	Intended to recognize institutional, and transportation/utility uses that	Intended to depict areas developed with, or appropriate to be

	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
Permitted Uses:	<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>	<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>
Max. Density:	12.5 units per acre	24 units per acre
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR):	<p>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</p>	0.55
Max. Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR):	<p>Institutional uses shall not exceed 0.85 / Transportation/utility uses shall not exceed 0.90</p>	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 Public/Semi-Public to Retail & Services for the 2.284-acre property located at the northeast corner of Gulf to Bay Boulevard and South Saturn Avenue. The current use of the property includes a place of worship and associated parking. The proposed use is commercial, consistent with the Retail & Services category, which supports areas suitable for development with a mix of businesses, catering to community shopping and personal service needs, providing employment opportunities, and allowing for potential residential uses.

The property's location along Gulf to Bay Boulevard makes it appropriate for the Retail & Services category due to its accessibility and compatibility with commercial use. This amendment will address existing inconsistencies and ensure that the property aligns with the intended characteristics of the Retail & Services category. The area is well-suited for commercial development, supported by its proximity to major transportation routes and existing nonresidential uses.

The property also partially falls within a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor with a Residential Classification. The Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor designation requires that changes to land use categories consider the subclassification. The amendment to Retail & Services necessitates updating the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use to maintain consistency with the Countywide Plan's regulations for such corridors.

The proposed change will address inconsistencies between the City of Clearwater Future Land Use Map and the Countywide Plan Map. It will facilitate compliance with current regulations, enhance the property's usability, and ensure that the amendment supports the commercial objectives of the Countywide Plan while respecting the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor requirements.

2. Forward Pinellas has developed a multimodal accessibility index (MAX index). Proposed amendments will need to maintain a MAX score equal to or better than the Countywide Average MAX score. The Current Countywide Average MAX score: 7.5; 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 30.75, 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 property at 407 South Saturn Avenue falls within a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor. According to Section 6.5.4.1 of the Countywide Rules, amendments within such corridors must meet specific criteria to preserve the corridor's character.

The proposed amendment changes the Countywide Plan Map classification from Public/Semi-Public to Retail & Services. This change aligns with the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor criteria by addressing the logical infill and extension of existing nonresidential categories. The Retail & Services category fits with surrounding commercial uses and supports the corridor's role as a major thoroughfare. The amendment ensures that the new use is compatible with existing land use patterns, minimizing impacts on the corridor's character.

Updating the subclassification from Residential to Mixed Use also conforms to the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor standards. This adjustment addresses the need for consistency with the corridor's overall plan, ensuring that the proposed commercial use integrates seamlessly with adjacent properties and meets the corridor's guidelines. The amendment maintains the corridor's integrity while accommodating necessary commercial development.

- 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 proposed amendment does not significantly impact any public educational facility. The property is not located near a public school, and the proposed commercial use aligns with surrounding land uses. Additionally, the amendment does not affect any adjoining jurisdiction, as it is consistent with the land use patterns and policies of the City of Clearwater.

- 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 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.