

APPLICATION NO.: Case CW 26-06

STAFF: Emma Wennick, Program Planner

APPLICANT: City of Largo

PROPERTY SIZE: 316 acres m.o.l.

**CURRENT COUNTYWIDE
PLAN MAP CATEGORY:** Activity Center

**PROPOSED COUNTYWIDE
PLAN MAP CATEGORY:** Activity Center

**CURRENT LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Largo – West Bay Drive Community
Redevelopment District (WBD-CRD)

**PROPOSED LOCAL
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
MAP CATEGORY:** City of Largo – West Bay Drive Community
Redevelopment District (WBD-CRD)

LOCATION / PARCEL ID: Generally located in the vicinity of West Bay Drive
and Alternate U.S. Highway 19

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The City of Largo is requesting a Countywide Plan Map amendment affecting approximately 316 acres within their existing West Bay Drive Activity Center. While the Countywide Plan Map category will remain Activity Center, the amendment constitutes a modification to the adopted Activity Center framework, requiring Countywide review in accordance with the tiered review process in Division 6.2 of the Countywide Rules.

The proposed amendment updates the City's local future land use structure governing the Activity Center to implement a revised redevelopment vision focused on increased mixed-use intensity, enhanced walkability, and improved multimodal connectivity, particularly along the Alternate U.S. Highway 19 corridor. The amendment reorganizes

land use patterns within the Activity Center and increases allowable residential density and nonresidential intensity in targeted areas.

The West Bay Drive Activity Center was originally established in 1997, and later updated through a replacement plan in 2010 as part of the West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment District (WBD-CRD) Plan. The Activity Center has since functioned as Largo’s primary downtown redevelopment area and is supported by a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district.

Because Activity Centers are planned comprehensively at a community scale, this amendment is reviewed at the full 316-acre Activity Center boundary, rather than any individual subarea, to ensure continued consistency with the purpose, structure, and density/intensity parameters established in the Countywide Rules.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendment to the Activity Center category, as it remains consistent with the Countywide Rules and maintains compliance with the Major Center subcategory standards.

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At the March 30th, 2026 meeting, the Planners Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed amendment.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/COMMISSION ACTION:

The City of Largo Planning Board reviewed the proposed Countywide Plan Map amendment on February 5, 2026, and approved it by a unanimous 6-0 vote. The City Commission considered the amendment on March 3, 2026, and approved it 6-0, with Commissioner Johnson absent, and one community member provided public comment at the meeting, expressing concerns about the community's ability to use personal automobiles to travel through the district.

CURRENT PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Property Use(s):	Mix of commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses, along with underutilized and redevelopment-ready parcels
Site Features:	Urbanized corridor environment with frontage along major roadways, including Alternate U.S. Highway 19; served by existing transit and multimodal infrastructure

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

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

1. The amendment represents a comprehensive restructuring of land use within an existing Activity Center, rather than a change to the Countywide Plan Map category itself.
2. The proposal is intended to facilitate redevelopment and reinvestment along the West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19 corridors by allowing greater flexibility for mixed-use development.
3. The amendment promotes increased residential density and nonresidential intensity in appropriate locations, supporting a more compact, walkable development pattern consistent with Activity Center objectives.
4. The Activity Center remains within the Major Center subcategory acreage range and continues to function as a community focal point with a mix of uses and multimodal access.

ACTIVITY CENTER FRAMEWORK CONTEXT

The subject area includes approximately 316 acres designated as an Activity Center on the Countywide Plan Map, located near West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19. The amendment does not change the Activity Center boundary or its Major Center subcategory. Instead, the City of Largo proposes to modify the local land use framework that governs development within the Activity Center. Because this change affects how density and intensity are distributed across the entire center, the amendment requires Countywide review under Section 6.2 of the Countywide Rules.

The Major Center subcategory allows a mix of residential, commercial, and office uses at intensities that support transit and multimodal activity. The Countywide Rules establish maximum thresholds of 150 units per acre and 5.0 floor area ratio (FAR), applied on an areawide average basis. This structure allows local governments to shift density and intensity within an Activity Center, as long as the overall development potential does not exceed these limits.

The City of Largo does not utilize traditional zoning districts. Instead, development is regulated through Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designations, referred to as “character districts,” which establish permitted uses, density/intensity standards, and design requirements through the Comprehensive Development Code.

The City of Largo proposes to reorganize its character districts to concentrate higher density and intensity along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19. These areas function as the primary corridors within the Activity Center and provide the highest level of multimodal accessibility. At the same time, the proposal maintains or reduces intensity in transition areas to ensure compatibility with surrounding development.

Overall, the amendment redistributes development potential rather than increasing it. The Activity Center will continue to operate within the Major Center thresholds on an

areawide basis. This approach aligns with the Countywide Rules and supports a more focused, corridor-oriented redevelopment pattern.

LOCAL CHARACTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The existing and proposed development potential within the West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment District (WBD-CRD) is summarized below. The table illustrates how the City of Largo increases base and bonus densities and intensities across character districts while maintaining consistency with Countywide Rules through areawide averaging.

Table 1: Existing vs. Proposed Development Rights by Character District

Character District	Acreage	Existing Max Density (du/ac)	Proposed Max Density (du/ac)	Existing Max FAR	Proposed Max FAR
Mixed Use Corridor – WBD (MUC-WBD)	76.93 ac	30 (50 bonus)	60 (120 bonus)	1.0 (3.0 bonus)	2.0 (4.0 bonus)
Mixed Use Corridor – Alt 19 (MUC-ALT 19)	23.60 ac	N/A	60 (120 bonus)	N/A	2.0 (4.0 bonus)
Medical Arts (MA)	33.51 ac	15 (30 bonus)	45 (90 bonus)	1.0 (2.0 bonus)	1.5 (4.0 bonus)
City Home (CH)	35.84 ac	15 (30 bonus)	30 (60 bonus)	0.0	0.5 (1.0 bonus)
Neighborhood Residential (NR)	45.55 ac	7.5	10 (30 bonus)	N/A	N/A
Other FLUM Categories (I, R/OS, T/U, R/OG)	~100 ac	No change	No change	No change	No change

At buildout, the existing framework allows approximately 4,642 residential units (up to 7,096 units with bonuses) and approximately 7.24 million square feet of nonresidential development (up to 15.99 million square feet with bonuses).

The proposed framework increases base residential capacity to approximately 9,313 units and up to 16,444 units with full bonus utilization. Nonresidential intensity increases to approximately 13.15 million square feet at base and up to 24.92 million square feet with bonuses.

The most significant increases occur within the Mixed Use Corridor (MUC-WBD) and the newly established Mixed Use Corridor – Alt 19 (MUC-ALT 19), where density and intensity double at the base level and expand further through bonus provisions. These corridors are located along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19, which provide the highest level of multimodal accessibility.

Moderate increases occur within the Medical Arts and City Home districts, while Neighborhood Residential areas maintain lower densities to support compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

Although the amendment substantially increases localized development potential, the Activity Center remains within Countywide Rules through areawide averaging and does not exceed the maximum thresholds of 150 units per acre and 5.0 FAR.

BONUS DENSITY AND INTENSITY STRUCTURE

The City of Largo uses a bonus density and intensity framework to incentivize development that advances public objectives and supports redevelopment within the Activity Center. Section 4.2.4 of the Countywide Rules authorizes local governments to grant density and intensity above base maximums as an incentive for achieving defined public purposes. Within the Activity Center category, the Countywide Plan establishes maximum thresholds of 150 dwelling units per acre and 5.0 FAR, applied on an areawide average basis. The City's proposed increases to base and bonus development rights operate within these limits and do not require additional Countywide Plan Map amendments, provided overall consistency is maintained.

The proposed amendment increases both base and potential bonus density and intensity allowances across the WBD-CRD character districts, particularly within the Mixed Use Corridor areas along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19. The City applies bonus density and intensity incrementally above base entitlements and calculates each bonus independently, consistent with Countywide Rules requirements. The Comprehensive Development Code establishes the methodology for applying these bonuses and requires City Commission approval to ensure that projects meet adopted standards.

The City ties bonus eligibility to the incorporation of public benefits and design features that support the redevelopment vision for the Activity Center. These include affordable and workforce housing, structured parking, public open space, streetscape improvements, multimodal infrastructure, and vertically integrated mixed-use development. Bonus density and intensity function as incentives rather than guaranteed entitlements, allowing the City to guide redevelopment outcomes while maintaining flexibility. This approach aligns with the intent of the Activity Center category by supporting compact, mixed-use, and transit-oriented development while remaining consistent with Countywide Rules.

POLICY AND PLAN CONSISTENCY

The proposed amendment directly implements and supports multiple adopted planning efforts at the local and regional level by translating policy direction into updated land use entitlements and development standards.

The West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment District (WBD-CRD) Plan (2009) establishes the long-term vision for downtown Largo as a mixed-use, walkable, and economically vibrant district. The proposed amendment implements this vision by

increasing allowable density and intensity within designated redevelopment areas, encouraging vertical mixed-use development, and reinforcing corridor-focused land use patterns along West Bay Drive.

The Advantage Alt 19 Corridor Plan identifies Alternate U.S. Highway 19 as a priority investment corridor and recommends transit-oriented development (TOD), higher intensity mixed-use development, and enhanced multimodal connectivity within identified station areas, including Downtown Largo/West Bay Drive. The creation of the Mixed Use Corridor – Alt 19 (MUC-ALT 19) character district directly implements these recommendations by enabling higher-density, transit-supportive development and encouraging active ground floor uses along the corridor.

The Largo Housing for All Plan supports increased residential density, housing diversity, and the integration of attainable housing within activity centers and along major corridors. The proposed increases in base and bonus residential density, along with the use of incentive-based bonus provisions tied to affordable housing and mixed-use development, directly respond to these recommendations.

The Forward Pinellas Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) promotes compact development patterns, multimodal connectivity, and transit-supportive land use within identified corridors and activity centers. By concentrating density and intensity along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19, both identified as priority transit corridors, the amendment supports increased transit ridership, shorter trip lengths, and improved multimodal access.

Additional planning efforts, including the Downtown Activation Plan and ongoing CRA planning initiatives, emphasize streetscape improvements, pedestrian-oriented design, and public realm enhancements. The proposed updates to development standards and bonus incentives support these objectives by encouraging investments in multimodal infrastructure, public space, and placemaking elements.

Overall, the amendment reflects a coordinated and policy-driven approach to redevelopment and demonstrates clear consistency with adopted local and regional planning documents by directly implementing their key recommendations.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The amendment does not expand the Activity Center or increase its overall development capacity. Instead, it shifts density and intensity to areas with better access to transportation infrastructure. Under the Countywide Rules, a Major Center is expected to generate an average of 542 daily trips per acre at buildout. This standard reflects the full development potential already allowed within the Activity Center.

The City directs higher-intensity development toward West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19, which are major corridors designed to accommodate higher traffic volumes and transit service. This pattern supports shorter trips, increases the potential for internal trip capture, and improves access to transit, biking, and walking.

The Activity Center is currently served by Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) routes operating along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19, with typical service frequencies ranging from approximately 15- to 30-minute headways on primary routes. These corridors are identified in the Forward Pinellas Long Range Transportation Plan as priority transit corridors, supporting higher-frequency service and enhanced transit infrastructure over time.

Planned multimodal improvements within the Activity Center include enhanced sidewalk networks, bicycle facilities, intersection improvements, and streetscape enhancements along West Bay Drive and Alternate U.S. Highway 19. These improvements are identified in the Advantage Alt. 19 Corridor Plan and the Largo CRA Plan and are intended to support increased multimodal activity and improve overall connectivity within the Activity Center.

At the countywide level, this redistribution does not create new impacts beyond what the Activity Center already allows. Instead, it improves how trips function within the network. By focusing growth in accessible areas, the amendment supports more efficient use of existing infrastructure and reduces reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

Overall, the proposal aligns with Countywide transportation objectives by supporting multimodal connectivity and encouraging a more balanced and efficient development pattern within the existing Activity Center.

ACTIVITY CENTER CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

(Countywide Rules Section 6.2.6 and Land Use Goal 16.0)

The amendment modifies the internal structure of an existing Activity Center and must demonstrate consistency with the Planning and Urban Design Principles in Section 6.2.6 and Land Use Goal 16.0. The City of Largo provides documentation showing how its updated framework, policies, and implementation tools address these principles.

The proposal meets the Location, Size, and Density/Intensity principle. The Activity Center remains within the required acreage range for a Major Center and continues to function as a mixed-use focal point. The City concentrates density and intensity near major corridors and transit-supportive areas, which supports ridership and ensures a critical mass of development.

The amendment also improves connectivity and site design. The updated framework promotes a more connected street network, enhances pedestrian and bicycle access, and encourages building placement that supports a walkable environment. The City emphasizes corridor-oriented development with active ground-floor uses and reduced setbacks, which strengthens the public realm and supports transit use.

The proposal addresses transitions and compatibility by maintaining lower intensity at the edges of the Activity Center. This approach creates a gradual shift from higher-intensity core areas to surrounding neighborhoods. Overall, the amendment

demonstrates consistency with the Planning and Urban Design Principles by supporting multimodal access, walkability, and coordinated redevelopment.

CONCLUSION

The proposed amendment updates the local land use framework within the West Bay Drive Activity Center while maintaining the existing Countywide Plan Map designation and Major Center subcategory. The City of Largo redistributes density and intensity to better align with corridor access and redevelopment goals. The amendment does not increase the maximum development potential allowed under the Countywide Rules. Instead, it uses areawide averaging to shift intensity to appropriate locations while maintaining overall consistency with established thresholds.

The amendment directly implements adopted local and regional planning initiatives, including the Largo CRA Plan, Advantage Alt. 19 Corridor Plan, Largo Housing for All Plan, and the Forward Pinellas LRTP, all of which support increased density, mixed-use development, and multimodal investment within this corridor.

The proposal supports a more efficient land use pattern by focusing growth along major corridors, improving connectivity, and enhancing the public realm. It reinforces the role of the Activity Center as a mixed-use, transit-supportive focal point. Overall, the amendment remains consistent with the purpose and standards of the Activity Center category and meets the applicable requirements of the Countywide Rules.

FINDINGS

- A. The amendment maintains the existing Activity Center boundary and Major Center subcategory and remains within the applicable Countywide standards.
- B. The proposal redistributes density and intensity within the Activity Center without exceeding the maximum areawide limits of 150 units per acre and 5.0 FAR.
- C. The amendment concentrates development in areas with higher multimodal accessibility, supporting efficient land use and transportation patterns.
- D. The proposal demonstrates consistency with the Planning and Urban Design Principles in Section 6.2.6 and Land Use Goal 16.0.
- E. The amendment does not increase countywide transportation impacts beyond what is already permitted and supports multimodal mobility.
- F. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Relevant Countywide Considerations in Section 6.5.3 of the Countywide Rules.

