

CW 21-06
Forward Pinellas Staff Analysis

RELEVANT COUNTYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1) **Consistency with the Countywide Rules** – The proposed amendment is submitted by the City of St. Petersburg and seeks to amend the designation of approximately 29.11 acres of property from Employment & Target Employment Center (TEC) to Multimodal Corridor & Target Employment Center (TEC).

The Countywide Rules state that the Multimodal Corridor category is “intended to recognize those corridors of critical importance to the movement of people and goods throughout the county, and that are served by a combination of automobile, bus, bicycle, rail, and/or pedestrian transportation. This category is characterized by mixed-use development, supported by and designed to facilitate transit, and is particularly appropriate for creating transit connections between Activity Centers” and the Target Employment Center (TEC) category is intended to “depict, utilizing an overlay, those areas of the county that are now developed, or appropriate to be developed, in a concentrated and cohesive pattern to facilitate employment uses of countywide significance.”

The locational characteristics of the Multimodal Corridor are identified by the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map through one of four categories. The proposed amendment directly abuts 22nd Avenue North, which is identified as a Supporting Corridor.

The locational characteristics of the Target Employment Center (TEC) category are “generally appropriate to those areas based on their size, concentration, and potential for, target employment opportunities, i.e., those employers and industries paying above-average wages and producing goods and services for sale and consumption that import revenue to the community. Staff does not find this proposed amendment consistent with the locational characteristics of the TEC category, and this is further discussed both in this and the seventh Countywide Consideration concerning the reservation of Industrial land.

The subject property is located on 72nd Street North, directly abutting 22nd Avenue North to its north, the Pinellas Trail to the east, and a water treatment facility to the south. It is also surrounded by commercial, multi-family uses, and a public park. The property is the site of a former office, research, and laboratory facility for a defense electronics company, E-Systems Inc. After soil and groundwater contamination was discovered on the property in 1991, the Raytheon Company acquired the property in 1995 and installed testing wells in 1996. After the installation of the wells on the site, the company found that the polluted groundwater had migrated into areas outside of the subject property, thus the

water treatment facility to the south was constructed. It should be noted that the water treatment facility is not part of the amendment area. The subject property has now been vacant for 20 years.

The applicant is proposing a regional sports tourism facility, a public lagoon with a beach area, and an apartment complex. The proposed amendment includes a development agreement between the applicant and the City, which particularly addresses specific future development plans on the subject property and seeks to mitigate concerns relating to the loss of industrial zoned land and affordable housing needs. The applicant proposes to develop a multi-family residential building, with a minimum of 30 percent of the units designated as workforce housing in accordance with the City's definition of such, as outlined by the development agreement.

The proposed amendment falls under the definition of a Commercial Recreation use as outlined by both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the Countywide Rules. Commercial Recreation uses are limited to a maximum of 5 acres under the Employment category. As the subject property surpasses this acreage threshold, the applicant is requesting an amendment to the Multimodal Corridor category, while maintaining the Target Employment Center overlay category.

While the proposed amendment may be consistent with the proposed Multimodal Corridor, it is not found to be consistent with the characteristics of the TEC category as the primary proposed use of sports tourism does not meet the definition of target employment outlined in the Countywide Rules.

- 2) **Adopted Roadway Level of Service (LOS) Standard** – The amendment area is located near a roadway segment where the existing Level of Service is operating at a LOS “D” or better; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 3) **Location on a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor (SNCC)** – The amendment area is not located within a SNCC; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 4) **Coastal High Hazard Areas (CHHA)** – The amendment area is not located on a CHHA; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 5) **Designated Development/Redevelopment Areas** – The amendment area involves the creation of a new Multimodal Corridor designation. The amendment area conforms to the purpose and requirements of the category, as it is located on an identified Future Transit Corridor designated with the Supporting Corridor subcategory.
- 6) **Adjacent to or Impacting an Adjoining Jurisdiction or Public Educational Facility** – The amendment area is not adjacent to an adjoining jurisdiction or a public educational facility; therefore, those policies are not applicable.

- 7) **Reservation of Industrial Land** – The proposed amendment involves the reduction of Employment designated land. Amendments that convert land now designated Employment, Industrial, or Target Employment Center to another Countywide Plan Map category are governed by the standards of Countywide Rules Section 6.5.4.4.

One such standard is the extent to which the uses within the proposed category can potentially provide target employment opportunities, as compared to those that can potentially be available within the current Employment, Industrial, or Target Employment Center category. As mentioned previously, sports tourism, which falls under the definition of Commercial Recreation, does not meet the definition of target employment outlined in the Countywide Rules. Furthermore, based on materials presented by the applicant, it is indicated that the sports tourism facility is forecasted to provide 81.5 full-time equivalent jobs annually at maturity, which is approximately 5 years after its opening.

In order to quantify the preferable employment opportunities for the preservation of Industrial land, staff have conducted a GIS and economic data analysis of employment and industrial sites around the county and analyzed data such as lot size, square footage, floor area ratio, and the number of employees to determine a statistically-derived estimate for a mid-range number of employees preferable for a site of this size. Based on these calculations, it is estimated that a subject property of this size should provide for a mid-range of 463 employees for industrial uses and 214 employees for storage/warehouse/distribution uses in order to meet target employment opportunities.

Furthermore, a key component of target employment opportunities, as defined in the Countywide Rules, are employers and industries which provide high-wage salaries, and the Target Employment Center category also specifies these opportunities as employers and industries paying above-average wages. Per Pinellas County Economic Development, the average annual salary in Pinellas County is \$48,901. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the aggregate payroll estimate of the proposed use is expected to be \$2.3 million. When dividing this by the aforementioned 81.5 full-time equivalent jobs to be provided, this results in an average wage of \$28,220. As such, the proposed sports tourism use can not be qualified as a high-wage employer.

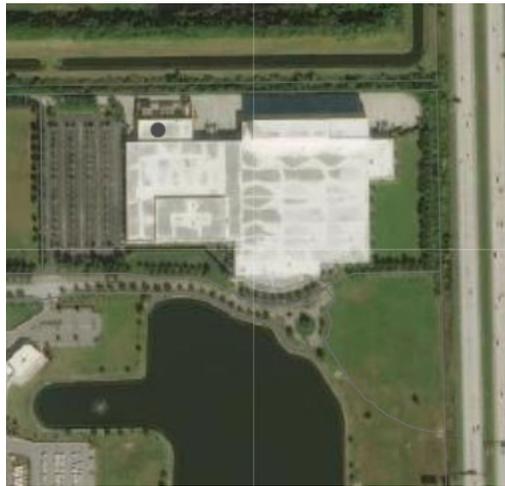
Based on the aforementioned estimate of the number of employees, staff does not find the proposed amendment to provide the desired number of target employment opportunities, especially when compared to those that could potentially be available. Below are examples of comparable existing Employment or Industrial designated sites in the county, and some in the City of St. Petersburg, which have similarities in acreage or locational characteristics, but show significantly higher employment opportunities than the proposed amendment.

**Example A: Valpak Manufacturing Center
1 Valpak Ave. N.**

Jurisdiction: St. Petersburg

Lot Size: 20.9 acres m.o.l.

Employment Estimate: 531 employees



**Example B: Halkey Roberts Corporation,
2700 Halkey Roberts Pl. N.**

Jurisdiction: St. Petersburg

Lot Size: 11.0 acres m.o.l.

Employment Estimate: 362 employees



**Example C: Johnson Controls Incorporated
8575 Largo Lakes Dr.**

Jurisdiction: Largo

Lot Size: 15.6 acres m.o.l.

Employment Estimate: 500 employees



**Example D: UPS Distribution Center
5700 126th Ave. N.**

Jurisdiction: Pinellas Park

Lot Size: 19.5 acres m.o.l.

Employment Estimate: 602 employees



It should be noted that the public record includes correspondence regarding a potential warehouse distribution site, similar to the UPS Distribution Center in Example C above, as an alternative use for the subject property. Staff finds that this information confirms the viability of the site for target employment and such a use would be more economically beneficial, and moreover, is a permitted use under the Employment

category. Such a use is an example of a better-suited use of the property, which could potentially better meet the requirements of the reservation of Industrial land, were it to also fulfill the remaining requirements of the Countywide Considerations.

Based on the above comparisons of other Employment/Industrial sites in the county, the proposed amendment, despite being on a subject property of a larger lot size, does not provide a comparable number of employment opportunities, in addition to lacking target employment opportunities. As a result, staff finds that this proposed amendment is not consistent with this Countywide Consideration, and furthermore, does not provide sufficient balancing criteria required of amendments converting away from Employment/Industrial lands, as outlined in Countywide Rules section 6.5.4.4.

Conclusion:

On balance, it can be concluded that the proposed amendment will significantly impact the Countywide Consideration concerning the reservation of Employment/Industrial land. As such, staff recommends denial of the proposed amendment.