



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 20-700A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

Ordinances adopting the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan, amending the Comprehensive Plan to expand the Activity Center Future Land Use Map designation, and amending the Future Land Use Categories and Rules.

### **Recommended Action:**

Based upon evidence and findings contained in the staff report and attachments, County staff recommends the Board of County Commissioners conduct a public hearing and give approval to County staff to transmit the two Ordinances to the State Department of Economic Opportunity for review, per Florida Statute. The two Ordinances are included in Case Numbers CP-29-11-19 and Z/LU-28-11-19, respectively:

- 1.) An Ordinance amending the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Categories and Rules to be consistent with the Countywide Plan Map and Rules amendments. (Case Number CP 29-11-19; see attachment 1.) The amendments will accomplish the following:
  - Establish the required consistency among the rules and standards between the Countywide Plan Map and Rules and the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan.
  - Increase the potential maximum residential densities and nonresidential intensities within Activity Centers and Mixed-Use Corridors to align with recent amendments to the Countywide Rules.
  - Add the new Mixed-Use Corridor - Supporting (MUC-Su) land use category to the list of potential land use categories for designation on the Future Land Use Map.
  
- 2.) An Ordinance amending the Pinellas County Future Land Use Map and land use designation of approximately 64 acres in Downtown Palm Harbor; and amending the supporting Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan. (as part of Case Number Z/LU 28-11-19; see attachment 2) The amendments will accomplish the following:
  - Reconfigure the Activity Center land use boundary to be one contiguous area covering greater Downtown Palm Harbor and including the entire Historic District.
  - Connect the east and west sides of U.S. Alternate 19.
  - Expand the Activity Center to include areas transitioning from the downtown core into established residential areas.
  - Update the recommendations in the Master Plan to improve the physical, social and economic landscape of Downtown Palm Harbor.
  - Allow for the establishment of a form based code to more clearly and effectively guide development within the greater Downtown Palm Harbor area.

The Local Planning Agency recommended approval of these requests (Vote 5-0). Two citizens provided comment during the LPA Public Hearing. Staff has taken these comments into consideration through revisions to the Downtown Palm Harbor Form-Based Code District (to be recommended for adoption at a future date as a separate, but related agenda item).

**Strategic Plan:**

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.3 Catalyze redevelopment through planning and regulatory programs

**Summary:**

The update to the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan includes a series of recommendations that address the connectivity, character and identity, and branding and marketing of the community. Also provided are general tools for implementation of the Plan, including the expansion of the current Activity Center-Neighborhood boundary on the Future Land Use Map to allow a more holistic approach to planning for the greater downtown area, rather than the current condition that includes multiple land use categories. Therefore, in addition to updating the Master Plan, a Future Land Use Map amendment is included with this request. An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Categories and Rules is also necessary to facilitate implementation of the Master Plan and, thus, it is included in this request as well.

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP BOUNDARY EXPANSION**

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) boundary expansion allows for a more holistic approach to planning for the greater downtown area, rather than the current condition that includes multiple land use categories. This approach plans for transition between the downtown core that centers along Florida Avenue and the primarily residential neighborhoods that are adjacent to the Activity Center-Neighborhood boundary. (See attachments 3 and 4, Current and Proposed Future Land Use Maps, respectively.)

**MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

Through an extensive public engagement process that involved a focus group, community-wide open houses, and online surveys, the Downtown Palm Harbor community identified key recommendations that address the area’s character and identity (i.e., enhancing the pedestrian experience and opportunities for additional open space; streamlining the historic guidelines and review process while protecting the historic character; and improving the opportunity for additional retail), connectivity (i.e., addressing gaps in the sidewalk network and the safe crossing of Alt 19; exploring solutions to parking challenges and the opportunity to become a golf cart community), and branding and marketing of the community. The Master Plan also outlines potential tools for implementation of the Plan, including the expansion of the existing Activity Center land use designation. (See attachment 5, Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan (DPH MP).)

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP CATEGORIES AND RULES AMENDMENTS**

Amendments are proposed to the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Categories and Rules to be consistent with the recently adopted Countywide Plan Map and Rules amendments and facilitate implementation of the Master Plan. (See attachment 1, Case Number CP-

29-11-19.)

**Background Information:**

In 2001, a Master Plan was adopted for Historic Downtown Palm Harbor. Beginning in late 2016, the Planning Department began meeting with the Palm Harbor community to address their identified current needs, resulting in the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan Update (2019/2020). This update includes a series of recommendations that address the connectivity, character and identity, and branding and marketing of the community. Also provided are general tools for implementation of the Plan, including the expansion of the existing Activity Center land use designation.

The Planning Department worked extensively with the community to identify current issues and concerns within the greater Downtown Palm Harbor area through a series of focus group meetings and open houses. The information gathered during this time provided valuable insight that aided the update of the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan.

The LPA recommended approval of each of these requests during its November 14, 2019 public hearing (Vote 5-0). (See attachments 6 and 7, LPA Reports.)

**FOCUS GROUP**

A focus group was formed to initiate discussions regarding current needs of the downtown community. The 15-member committee represented local community organizations and residents; as well as downtown property and business owners. While members were quick to point out what was great about their community, they did not hesitate to share their ideas about what could make the downtown better.

**PROJECT EMAIL ADDRESS**

A project email address was setup to take comments and questions from residents and stakeholders. The email address was advertised on the County's webpage and included in public engagement materials. The inbox was monitored by Planning staff.

**COMMUNITY WEBPAGE**

A community webpage was established to share information and documents with the public pertaining to the Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan. This webpage was continually updated with new materials, drafts of the Master Plan, and advertisement of upcoming engagement opportunities.

**SURVEYS AND OPEN HOUSES**

In December 2016, an online survey was launched to define the existing community identity, as well as target community needs. The community was asked to define Downtown Palm Harbor's identity. What are the area's unique features and which of these assets should be the area's primary identity?

A community-wide open house was held in early 2017 to bring the comments and ideas shared in initial conversations with the Focus Group with broader Downtown Palm Harbor community input. A second set of survey questions were launched at the event, with the opportunity for attendees to respond at the open house or at a later time. These questions were more specific than the initial open-ended questions, asking respondents to address priority issues.

A second community open house was held a few months later to share the revised recommendations and to further identify any additional issues. A brief presentation was given to the attendees to review

some of the background and findings to-date, followed by a group question and answer session before the meeting moved into the open house format. Specific exercises were designed to gather additional feedback to better understand details about some of the concerns raised during the public input process to-date.

The results of the open houses and surveys were shared with the community in a summary report, as well as with the Board of County Commissioners, as were the final recommendations for follow-up and issues to address in this revised Master Plan. County staff spent several months following up on the many issues, working with consultants, and determining options for addressing these concerns.

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Brian Lowack, Interim Director, Planning

**Partners:**

N/A

**Attachments:**

1. Ordinance (CP-29-11-19)
2. Ordinance (as part of Case Number ZLU-28-11-19) - strikethrough/underline
3. Current Future Land Use Map
4. Proposed Future Land Use Map
5. Downtown Palm Harbor Master Plan Update (2019/2020)
6. CP-29-11-19\_LPA Report (final)
7. ZLU-28-11-19\_LPA Report (final)
8. DPH Boundary Description
9. Impact Summary (Utilities and Transportation)
10. Presentation
11. Ordinance (as part of Case Number ZLU-28-11-19) - clean copy