

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2007  
Agenda Item: *Future of Hillsborough Comprehensive Plan for  
Unincorporated Hillsborough County – **Future Land Use  
Element***

## SUMMARY

### **Future Land Use Element**

The Future Land Use Element outlines the distribution, density and intensity of land uses in unincorporated Hillsborough County. It provides for a choice of lifestyles – rural, suburban and urban. It defines the County’s growth management strategy of the Urban Service Area (USA).

### **Proposed Amendments to Update the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan**

The Evaluation and Appraisal Report was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on June 8, 2005 and found sufficient by the Department of Community Affairs on August 19, 2005. The Evaluation and Appraisal Report called for proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element that are intended to promote the efficient use of infrastructure and compact mixed use development patterns in the USA, and to enhance efforts to protect environmental resources, agricultural lands and rural character of the Rural Area. The following is a brief summary of the proposed amendments.

- URBAN SERVICE AREA TIERS – The timing and guiding of growth is a major issue identified in the Board of County Commissioner’s Strategic Plan and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The Strategic Plan called for “having timing of development addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.” Further the EAR called for the development strategies to promote a more focused, efficient, and balanced development pattern within the Urban Service Area (USA).

Currently, the Comprehensive Plan strategy to guide and time growth is by identifying Urban Development Area (UDA) and Urban Expansion Area (UEA) within the USA. These distinctions between the sub-areas have evolved and become obsolete as development has not focused in the UDA as intended. EAR assessment found that the use of the Urban Development Area and Urban Expansion Area to time and guide growth to appropriate locations within the Urban

Service Area was not effective. As a result, a new growth management tool, the Urban Service Area Tiers Map was developed; the tiers are illustrated in the series of maps at the back of the Future Land Use Section of the binder.

The intent of this growth management tool is to help direct growth to the areas within the Urban Service Area (USA) with adequate infrastructure using density increases and other incentives. There are three tiers proposed. Tier 1 would receive the greatest number of incentives as this is the area of highest density and intensity on the Future Land Use Map as well as the area closest to existing infrastructure. The number of incentives would decrease in Tier 2 (the more suburban areas) and Tier 3 (lower density areas and/or areas further from infrastructure). The Tiers also provide guidance as to what areas are appropriate for higher intensity growth at this time. The policies require updating of the Tier map annually to ensure the map reflects current conditions relating to infrastructure and plan densities/intensities. The Tier system is a growth management tool to increase the capacity of development within the USA and would not decrease the development potential of any portion of the USA. This replaces the Urban Development Areas and Urban Expansion Areas, which was required to be changed in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

At the March 14, 2007 workshop, the Board of County Commissioners gave direction that the USA Tier concept should be deleted. As such, revised language has been provided on the blue sheets attached to this packet which reflects the removal of the USA Tier policies.

- **MINIMUM DENSITIES** - Within the Urban Service Area Tiers, a minimum density has been established for each tier. The EAR called for the establishment of minimum densities to maximize to the extent possible the development capacity in the USA. A minimum of 75% of the Future Land Use category density would be required for Tier 1 and 2 and 65% of the category density in Tier 3. There is also policy language provided regarding circumstances when requiring the minimum density may not be appropriate such as for compatibility reasons, lack of infrastructure or adverse impacts on the environment. The intent is to require development at least at the minimum density where it is appropriate; by doing so, the County can more effectively utilize its existing infrastructure investments. It will also promote a more compact development form as land will be consumed at a much slower pace.
- **ACTIVITY CENTERS** - The Evaluation and Appraisal Report identified a need to make amendments to the plan that promoted mixed use development - places where people can live, work and

play in the same place. In addition, the Board of County Commissioner's strategic plan also stated the need to "develop policies in the plan by 2006 that will promote balanced and diversified land uses and protect agricultural land." To address these identified issues, appropriate locations for activity centers have been identified within the Urban Service Area to provide opportunities for mixed use, higher density and intensity development. Mixed-use activity centers will allow multiple uses in close proximity to minimize the need to drive from one place to another. Not only does this provide alternatives to driving, but it can create a sense of place in our communities. The boundaries for the Activity Centers are conceptual at this point, based on Transportation Analysis Zones with significant amounts of regional employment. A map of the proposed Primary and Secondary Activity Centers can be found in the series of maps at the back of the Future Land Use Section of the binder (Tab 1). The details of each activity center would be further developed through a special area plan analysis that would address the mix of uses, design of the activity center and compatibility with surrounding land uses. The special area plan analysis could be completed as part of the existing community planning process (by either Planning Commission staff or Planning and Growth Management Department) or could be completed by a developer wanting to develop within the activity center. The proposed amendments also include numerous incentives to encourage mixed-use activity centers; these include density and floor area ratio bonuses and creation of multi-modal districts to allow flexibility on transportation concurrency in these areas.

- **MIXED USE LAND USE CATEGORY STANDARDS** - The current Future Land Use Element and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report both include language requiring development of standards for the type of mixed use development desired in the mixed use land use categories (i.e. Suburban Mixed Use-6). Amendments are proposed to outline such standards for each of the mixed use land use categories. The requirement is essentially to establish a minimum percentage of a second use as well as for open space and/or civic space. This type of standard includes flexibility in the choice of mixed uses for a given parcel, but ensures that a balance of uses is promoted by discouraging single use projects.
- **REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** - One of the major issues identified in the EAR was the need for a refined redevelopment strategy for the unincorporated County. The BOCC strategic plan also identified the need "to promote redevelopment strategies." The amendments proposed provide a policy framework to target candidate Redevelopment and Revitalization areas in the USA. Certain areas of the county have gotten older and are in need of attention and improvement. These areas may be opportunities for increased

development or for revitalization incentives. The proposed Comprehensive Plan changes have identified locations in need of both neighborhood and commercial revitalization; a map of these candidate locations can be found in the series of maps at the back of the Future Land Use Section of the binder (Tab 1). It also outlines potential strategies to encourage redevelopment. By capitalizing on the opportunities to redevelop existing areas of the county, we can enhance the quality of life in those communities and maximize the efficiency of existing infrastructure investments.

- **DEFINE COMPATIBILITY** - Through the EAR process, we heard a variety of comments from the community about creating developments that are more compatible with the surrounding area. Within the Future Land Use Element, policy language regarding compatibility was enhanced to provide further guidance as to whether a project is compatible with the surrounding area or not. A parameter of looking at the development pattern within ½ mile of the development was established.
- **BONUSES FOR VERTICALLY INTEGRATED USES IN THE USA** - Density bonuses have been proposed to encourage infill development and vertically integrated mixed use development (two uses in one building on different floors) into areas that have existing infrastructure and can support greater intensity. The intent is to provide incentives and opportunities for more uses in closer proximity to each other to reduce the need for additional trips on our roadways. Additionally the encouragement of mixed use and higher density and intensity development makes better use of the county's infrastructure investments.
- **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)** - The EAR cited in a number of places the need to direct growth away from environmentally sensitive, flood prone and rural areas where growth is not desirable and to focus growth into identified areas within the USA. The EAR identified the use of Transfer of Development Rights to achieve this goal. TDRs is a technique that allows the property owners to voluntarily send density rights from one property and add it to another. The purpose is to provide an incentive to property owners of environmentally sensitive or rural land to preserve those resources by selling their development rights to an area where development is desired. This mechanism is intended to shift development pressures away from our rural areas and those resources our community wishes to preserve. The County has a current TDR program; the proposed amendments provide a framework for enhancing the existing program through the development of incentives as a means of stimulating interest and use in the program.

A map of the proposed “sending and receiving areas” can be found in the series of maps at the back of the Future Land Use Section of the binder.

- **ELIMINATING PROVISIONS THAT ALLOW DENSITY INCREASES IN THE RURAL AREA** - Rural Lands was a major issue in the Evaluation and Appraisal Reports; the desire to maintain a rural, very low density lifestyle was clear from the community. The BOCC strategic plan also called for policy language to “protect agricultural lands.” The proposed amendments include eliminating two tools in the Future Land Use Element from use in the Rural Area - the flex provision and the Wetland Density Credit. These tools are typically utilized to increase densities in the rural area, which impacts the compatibility with the surrounding lower density, rural communities.
- **REVISE RP-2 LAND USE CATEGORY** - The Residential-2 Planned (RP-2) land use category requires creation of a mixed use village in order to achieve the 2 unit per acre density of the land use category. The areas under this designation is predominantly in southeast Hillsborough County, just outside of the Urban Service Area. The village design concepts have not been implemented effectively to date due to the complexity of the current requirements. The EAR called for the revision of this land use category to make it more workable. Staff worked with a committee of developers, property owners and other interested parties within the area designated RP-2 on amendments to this land use category. The amendments include changes to the timing requirements for commercial development in relation to residential development, changes to the amount and type of commercial and employment uses required if those uses are present to serve the development in the surrounding area, and allowances for properties of less the required size for a village to be able to achieve the 2 unit per acre density. In addition, the RP-2 category has also been identified as a receiving area for Transfer of Development Rights; a density of 4 units per acre may be achieved in villages that transfer development rights. The intent of these modifications is to provide flexibility to allow the development of villages in the RP-2 category but to also continue to preserve open space and the rural and agricultural character of areas in the Rural Area.
- **ORGANIZATION OF THE ELEMENT** - Many of the changes seen in the Future Land Use Element are not substantive changes but rather the reorganization of the element. The element was previously broken into two components - the Goals, Objectives and Policies and the Implementation Section; both carried equal weight and were adopted. However, that was not always clear to the public or caused unnecessary repetition within the element. As such, staff has

incorporated the Implementation Section into the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Future Land Use Element.

In addition, the Future Land Use Element currently includes a section of Goals, Objectives and Policies relating to Community Design including roadway, residential and commercial design; it also includes all of the adopted Community Plans. Both of these currently adopted portions of the element are proposed to be moved to the new Livable Communities Element.

- **MAP AMENDMENTS** - Twelve amendments to the Future Land Use Map have been proposed as part of the EAR Based Amendments. The information and maps relating to these amendments can be found under Tabs 2-13 of the binder. Two of the amendments are to correct the Future Land Use Map; these relate to the Wilde Property and the areas designated Residential 2- Planned the Urban Service Area. Eight of the map amendments are areas identified as opportunities for infill development. These 8 amendments are proposed to change the land use to allow increased density and intensity and/or a mixed use development pattern to better take advantage of the existing infrastructure investments in those areas. Two of these amendments were found inconsistent by the Planning Commission due to community concerns that were raised during the public hearing process.

Two of the amendments - El Greco Neighborhood and Simmons Loop Road - were proposed to address an issue identified in the EAR relating to areas of land use conflicts. The El Greco Neighborhood had clear consensus on down planning their neighborhood to Residential-2. The Simmons Loop Road community did not have a consensus regarding their desired land use category; as a result, staff and the Planning Commission recommended no land use change.

### **Budgetary Implication**

The proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element provide a means to promote compact, mixed use development patterns. Compact development patterns capitalize and maximize the use of existing infrastructure investments made by Hillsborough County. These infrastructure investments include water and sewer lines, roads, transit service, police, fire and parks. Development outside of the Urban Service Area, where infrastructure does not exist and would be costly for the county to extend, would be discouraged. Focusing growth in the highest intensity Tier of the Urban Service Area and using incentives to encourage redevelopment and creation of higher density and intensity activity centers will maximize the investment the county has already made in infrastructure.

The policy changes to promote mixed use development in the mixed use land use categories and in the activity centers would provide for more opportunities for people to shop, recreate or work in close proximity to their homes. This will reduce the number of vehicular trips on our roadways by having a development pattern that encourages walking and driving. This better utilizes our transportation investments. Higher density and intensity of development in activity centers may also provide the county opportunities to enhance mobility through transit options and better utilize existing transit facilities.

There are a number of projects, implementation steps and studies called for in the Future Land Use Element. The majority of them can be accomplished through the existing community planning process utilized by the Planning Commission and Planning and Growth Management Staff or through the amendment of the Land Development Code. It is not anticipated that additional staff would be needed to accomplish these tasks as they can occur in our established planning processes. Some of the studies, such as the activity center special area planning analyses, may alternatively be initiated by a developer interested in taking advantage of some of the incentives available through these policy changes. All projects, studies and implementation steps will be prioritized with the county departments over the long range planning timeframe to utilize existing resources to accomplish the tasks. In addition, Planning Commission staff is reviewing the new studies called for in the Future Land Use Element with the staff of the Office and Management and Budget to provide the Board of County Commissioners with further budgetary analysis at the Public Hearing.