



To: City Council

From: Lauren Matzke, Long Range Planning Manager

Date: August 25, 2014

RE: Comments Pertaining to the Pinellas Planning Council's Countywide Plan Map Update

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The new Countywide Plan was mandated by a revision of the Special Act governing the Pinellas Planning Council (Chapter 2012-245) adopted by the Florida Legislation in 2012. The Act provides for the replacement of the existing Countywide Plan and Rules with a new policy-based Countywide Plan.

The new Countywide Plan Map is intended to be integrated with countywide transportation planning. The new land use framework includes fewer land use categories and a more streamlined process that requires fewer public hearings.

Local governments were provided the following information as part of the Review Package:

1. The current and proposed Countywide Plan Maps at half-section scale to allow for a parcel level review;
2. The proposed Transit-Oriented Land Use Vision Map and new submaps; and
3. The document Countywide Plan Update – 2014 Local Government 60 Day Review Package.

Rules for implementation are currently under review, but were not provided within the Review Package.

Michael Crawford, PPC Interim Executive Director, has agreed to accept the City of Clearwater's comments on September 5, 2014 in order to allow staff the time to update City Council and receive formal approval of the substantive comments.

A summary of the substantive comments, including policy issues and Planning and Development Department Staff recommendations, is as follows:

### **1. Legacy Entitlements (Policy Issue)**

The first significant policy issue is the proposed process of Legacy Entitlements. It addresses parcels in the City which, as currently designated on the City's Future Land Use Map, would exceed the densities and/or intensities, or vary from the uses of the new categories as designated on the Countywide Plan Map. The approach proposed by the

PPC is that the current development rights of these properties would be allowed to continue subject to the Legacy Entitlements provisions.

The new Countywide Plan Map combines all nine residential categories into one category, Neighborhood, which permits up to 10 units per acre (upa), or 15 upa if a parcel is within a ¼-mile buffer of a designated corridor (Corridor Overlay). Approximately 1,272 parcels (1,039 acres) within the City would be subject to residential density Legacy Entitlements and approximately 169 Institutional parcels (888 acres) would be subject to intensity Legacy Entitlements based on proposed conversion to Neighborhood. The process of converting the 36 category Countywide Plan Map to 11 categories affected a variety of other parcels within the City; however, the majority of potential Legacy Entitlements resulted from the conversion to the Neighborhood category.

Staff has asked the Legal Department to review the proposed Legacy Entitlements process and to provide comments, if any, as part of City Council discussion.

**Recommendation:** There are several approaches which could be taken that would reduce the number of parcels affected by legacy entitlements. Staff recommends that the Countywide Plan Map include an additional residential category to accommodate the City's Residential Medium (812 parcels, 553 acres) and Residential High (346 parcels, 447 acres) designations. This new residential category could also be applied along the corridors instead of utilizing the Corridor Overlay to allow for higher residential densities in the Neighborhood category.

## **2. Transit-Oriented Land Use Vision Map & Countywide Plan Map Series (Policy Issue)**

The proposed Countywide Map series includes the following:

- Transit-Oriented Land Use Vision Map (Vision Map) – A non-regulatory map that is not part of the adopted Countywide Plan Map series. The Vision Map is a policy document that will be used in conjunction with the larger Countywide Plan Map amendment process. The vision Map conceptually depicts Activity Centers and Multimodal Corridors and Supporting Corridors.
- Countywide Plan Map – Replaces the current Countywide Future Land Use Plan Map. Shows Standard and Nonstandard Plan categories.
- Sub Map 1 – Adopted as part of the map series, Sub Map 1 shows Nonstandard categories in more detail and overlay categories of Target Employment Center and Corridor.
- Sub Map 2 – Depicts Scenic/Noncommercial Corridors and replaces the current Submap No. 1 in the adopted map series.

**Recommendation:** Staff proposes the following changes related to the Countywide Map Series:

1. Integrate the components of the Vision Map into the Countywide Plan Map through an overlay-type format since the Countywide Plan Map is supposed to be future-oriented; *or*

2. Adopt the Vision Map and eliminate Sub Map 1. All categories that are officially approved including the Overlay categories should be shown directly on the Countywide Plan Map. The Overlay categories allow for additional densities and/or intensities and should be depicted on the Countywide Plan Map to reduce confusion going forward. The proposed Countywide Plan Map already depicts the adopted Multimodal Corridors and Activity Centers, which is redundant with Sub Map 1.

### **3. Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) Residential Density Limits (Policy Issue)**

As written, the new Countywide Plan Map would limit residential density within all standard categories to 5 upa for parcels within the CHHA. This results in Legacy Entitlements for approximately 1,492 parcels (887.11 acres) within the City.

**Recommendation:** Staff does not support the CHHA residential density limitation as written. Although staff has discussed this directly with PPC staff who indicate this was not intended, Staff still wants to raise an objection to the current language.

### **4. Corridors Depicted on the Vision Map (Policy Issue)**

Supporting Corridors are shown on the Vision Map but are not an official “nonstandard category”. Staff has concerns that there is no recognition of regional connectivity with Hillsborough County shown on the Vision Map.

Within the City, the Vision Map designates US Highway 19, Gulf to Bay Boulevard, South Fort Harrison Avenue, and portions of South Missouri Avenue, Druid Road, South Myrtle Avenue and Garden Avenue as Primary Corridors, consistent with the PSTA Core Bus Network where premium service is planned. It depicts portions of South Myrtle Avenue, Palmetto Street, and North Betty Lane as Secondary Corridors consistent with those categories identified on the PSTA Community Bus Plan as “Frequent Local Routes.” A variety of roads are depicted as Supporting Corridors, including Belcher Road and portions of McMullen Booth Road, reflecting those corridors identified as “Supporting Local” and “Trolley Service” on the PSTA Community Bus Plan.

**Recommendation:** Staff proposes the following changes to the Vision Map:

1. Gulf to Bay Boulevard east to McMullen Booth Road should be designated Primary Corridor to ensure that the City could include parcels that it deems appropriate at the local level within its future US 19 Regional Center zoning district.
2. Staff asks that PPC reconsider how it determines what will be shown as a Supporting Corridor. The Vision Map should show regional connections with Hillsborough County beyond those routes included in PSTA’s Community Bus Plan. Special Centers should be connected within the Countywide corridor framework shown on the Vision Map by Supporting Corridors.

## 5. Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor Map

Sub Map 2 depicts those roadways designated with the Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor (SNCC) Overlay category, consistent with what is currently adopted. Portions of Belcher Road and McMullen Booth Road are designated SNCCs. Some of these same segments are also proposed as Supporting Corridors on the Vision Map and are within the Corridor Overlay (proposed Sub Map 1). As written, these two designations are potentially in conflict with each other, and also with the Neighborhood category. Residential SNCC segments are primarily low density residential uses of 7.5 upa or lower on the Countywide Future Land Use Plan Map, whereas the proposed Neighborhood category allows up to 10 upa generally, or up to 15 upa if within ¼-mile of a corridor.

**Recommendation:** The Countywide Rules need to clarify which standard would apply when a segment of roadway is shown as Supporting Corridor and Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor on the various maps.

## 6. South Myrtle Avenue, Palmetto Street, and North Betty Lane as Secondary Corridors

PSTA has identified this bus route as a “Frequent Local Route” and therefore the Vision Map depicts these roadways as Secondary Corridors. Thus, the Corridor Overlay would be applied to those parcels designated Neighborhood on the Countywide Plan Map, allowing up to 15 upa. There is currently a mix of residential classifications along these corridors, but the area is primarily designated Residential Urban (7.5 upa) on the City’s Future Land Use Map.

**Recommendation:** These corridors are not necessarily places where the City envisions additional densities in the future. The Review Package states that “if an adopted local density/intensity standard is lower than the corresponding Countywide Plan Map density/intensity standard, the lower standard shall apply.” Staff wants to ensure that this provision is clear within the Countywide Rules.

### Additional Comments:

The following comments are not directly related to a policy or decision that is part of the Countywide Plan Map or Review Package. However, Staff wants to ensure City Council is aware of these concerns.

### 1. Corridor Specific Comments

Staff has identified several segments of roadways within the City that should also be designated Supporting Corridor on the Vision Map and other maps as appropriate:

1. Chestnut Street between S. Fort Harrison Avenue and S. Myrtle Avenue: Should be designated as Supporting Corridor as it is part of the Court/Chestnut pair and Court Street is designated as such.

2. Court Street (westbound) extending from S. Fort Harrison Avenue to Memorial Causeway: Should be designated as a Supporting Corridor similar to the eastbound segment of Chestnut Street that is designated.
3. Drew Street between Garden Avenue and N. Fort Harrison Avenue: Supporting Corridor designation should be extended to connect to the N. Fort Harrison Avenue Supporting Corridor.

## **2. Acreage Thresholds for Certain Uses**

The Review Document includes acreage thresholds for various uses within the new categories and states that “any such use, alone or when added to existing contiguous like uses(s), exceeding the designated threshold, shall require a map amendment including such use and all contiguous uses.” This is very similar to language included in the current Countywide Rules now (ex: Office uses in the Neighborhood category limited to 3 acres maximum). Staff has several questions regarding how this provision has been and will be applied going forward. Staff would like the PPC to clarify how “like” uses will be aggregated; will this span rights-of-way or be limited to a single side of the street? Clarity is important so that property owners understand the implications to their parcels if a tipping point is reached and a map amendment request also requires a Countywide Plan Map amendment which adds time and expense to the process.