

# **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE MARTIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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**REQUEST NUMBER:** CPA 24-22, Hobe Sound Train Station

Report Issuance Date: June 12, 2024

**PROPERTY OWNERS:** Martin County

**APPLICANT:** Martin County Board of County Commissioners  
2401 S.E. Monterey Ave.  
Stuart, FL 34996

**REPRESENTED BY:** Susan Kores, Manager  
Office of Community Development

**PLANNER-IN-CHARGE:** Clyde Dulin, Comprehensive Planning Administrator  
Growth Management Department

<b><u>PUBLIC HEARINGS:</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>
Local Planning Agency:	June 20, 2024	Voted 4-0 to approve
Board of County Commission Adoption:	July 9, 2024	

**SITE LOCATION:** The proposed application is regarding a recently abandoned Right-of-Way (ROW) at the corner of SE Vulcan Avenue and SE Athena Street in the Hobe Sound Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). The parcel is located and accessed on the south end of SE Vulcan Avenue.

**APPLICANT REQUEST:** The request was initiated by the Board of County Commissioners with the June 4, 2024 adoption of Resolution 24-6.2 for a small-scale comprehensive plan amendment to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to assign 5,465 square feet (0.13 acre) of abandoned ROW to CRA Center (15 units per acre), concurrently with an amendment to the Land Development Regulations. A separate staff report will review the amendment to the Land Development Regulations to allow for relocation of the Hobe Sound Train Station to better facilitate redevelopment at the Hobe Sound CRA.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed FLUM assignment of CRA Center to the recently abandoned ROW.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

On April 30, 2024, the Board of County Commissioners voted to abandon the ROW shown in Figure 1. Upon abandonment the land reverted to the adjoining landowners. The land adjacent to the east

side of the abandoned ROW depicted in Figure 1 is owned by Martin County. The land to the west side is owned by private property owners. The westerly property owners granted this portion to the County by Quit Claim Deed on May 21, 2024.

This staff report will consider the CRA Center future land use designation for the land depicted in Figure 1 and will analyze whether it is consistent with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (CGMP) and compatible with the surrounding properties. An application to assign a subdistrict (found in the Hobe Sound CRA regulations) to this parcel is being reviewed in a separate staff report.

Figure 1 – Location of the ROW abandonment bordered in blue.

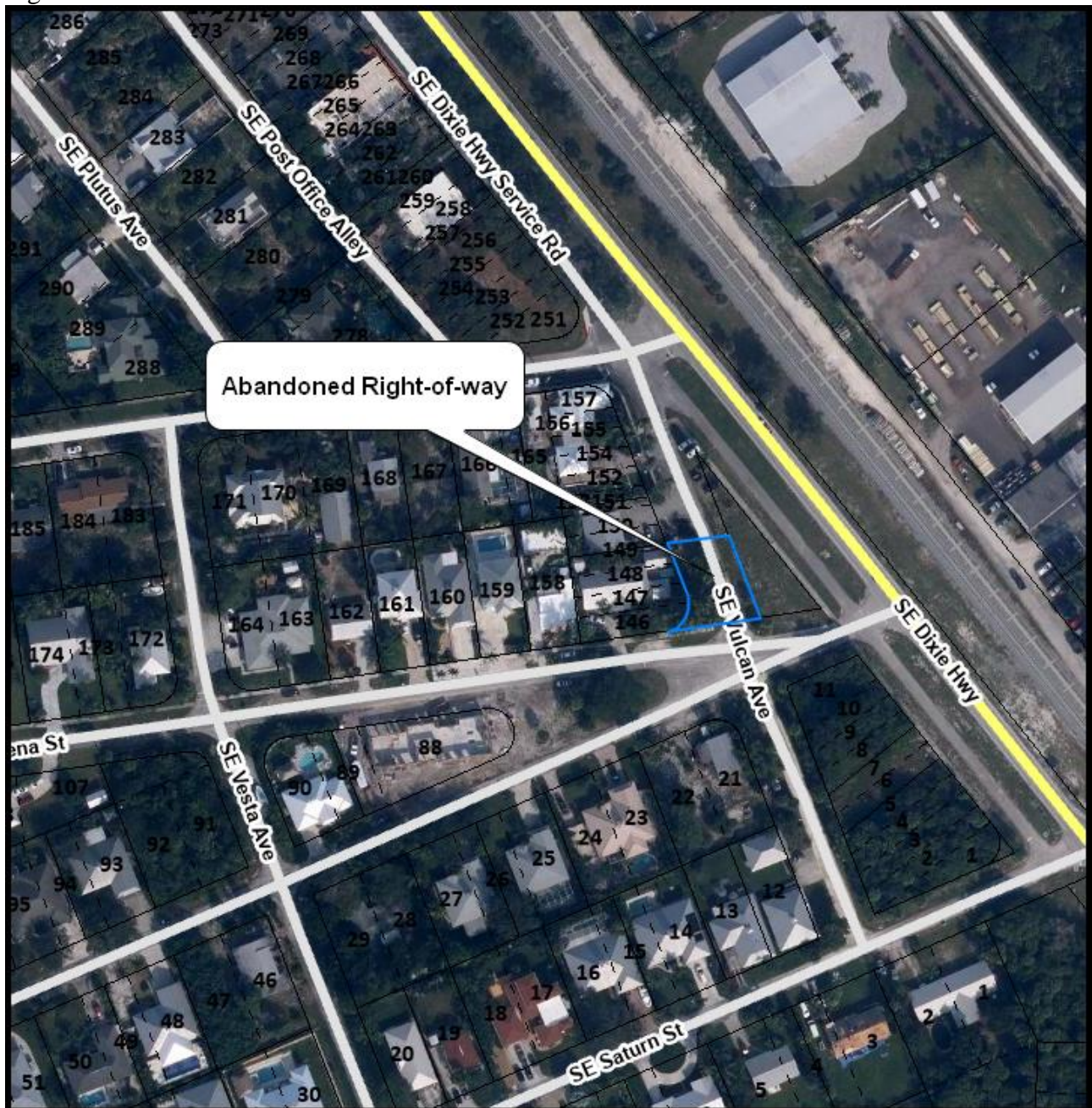




Figure 2 - The Future Land Use Map showing subject site bordered in blue adjacent to the triangular parcel owned by Martin County.



## 1. PROJECT/SITE SUMMARY

### 1.1. Physical/Site Summary

This parcel is within the following:

Planning District:	South County
Adjacent Planning District:	Mid County
Commission District:	District 3
Taxing District:	District 3 Municipal Service Taxing Unit
Urban Service District:	Primary Use Service District (PUSD)

## **1.2 Major Roadways**

The major roadways closest to the subject parcel are S.E. Dixie Highway, a minor arterial road, and S.E. Bridge Road, also a minor arterial road. SE Fulcan Ave. and SE Athena St. are classified as local roads.

## **1.3 Current Amendment Requests**

- A. CPA 23-02, Hobe Sound Storage: A FLUM amendment for 4 acres located east of S.E. Federal Highway between S.E. Heritage Boulevard and S.E. Poinciana Lane, changing the parcel from Medium Density Residential to General Commercial future land use designation.

## **1.4 Past Changes in Future Land Use Designations**

- A. CPA 19-25, Hobe Sound Future Land Use Map: The amendment repealed the Hobe Sound Mixed-Use Future Land Use Overlay and changed many parcels within the CRA from residential and commercial future land use designations to CRA Center, CRA Neighborhood. This parcel is located within the Hobe Sound Community Redevelopment Area. The Hobe Sound CRA was created in 2000.

## **1.5 Adjacent Future Land Use:**

North: CRA Center

South: CRA Center

East: CRA Center

West: CRA Neighborhood

## **1.6 Environmental Considerations**

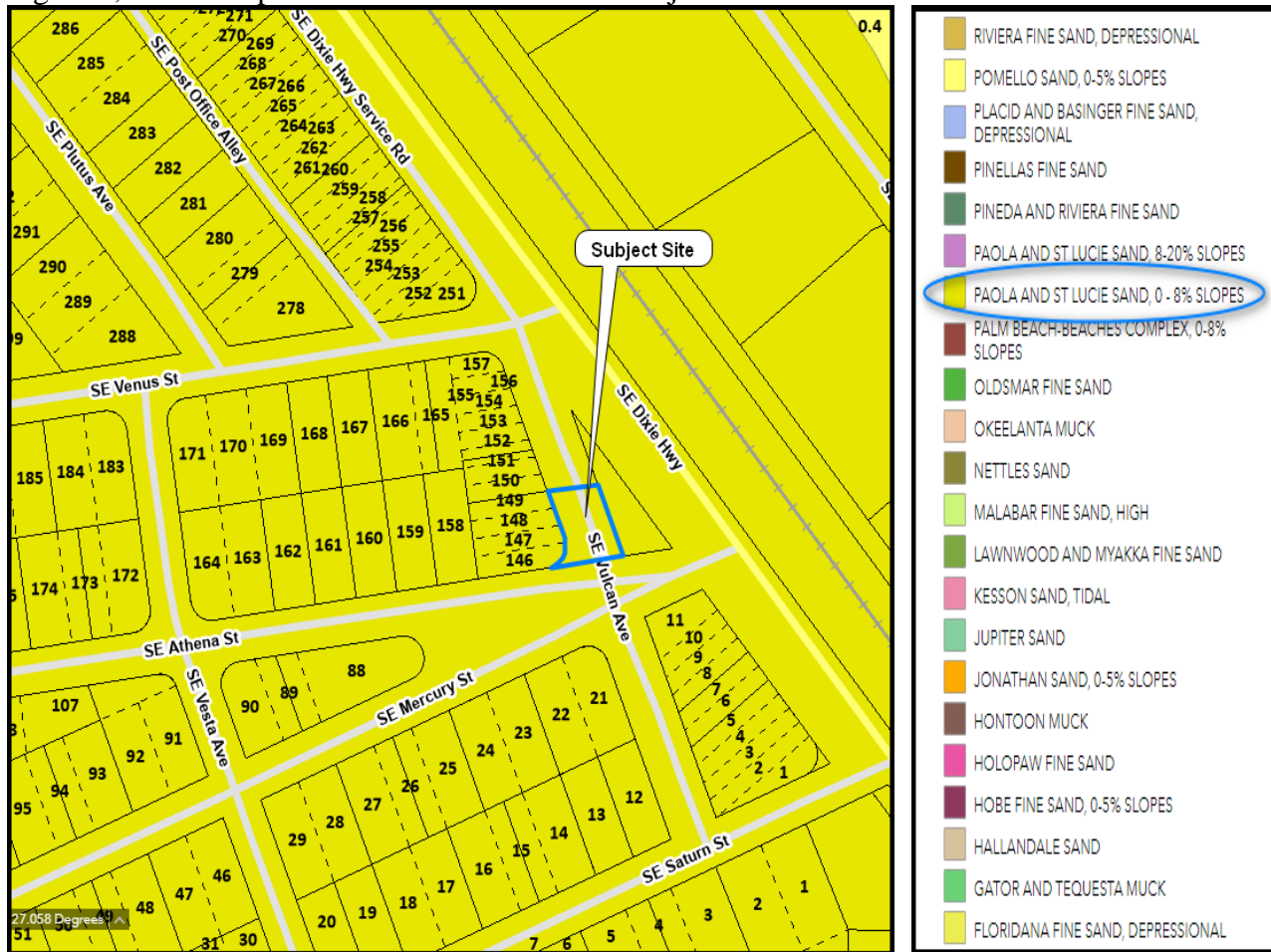
### **1.6.1 Wetlands, soils and hydrology**

The soil on the subject site is primarily Paola and St. Lucie Sand, 0-8% Slopes. The Paola series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy marine sediments. Paola soils are on hills, ridges and flats on marine terraces. Slopes are linear to convex and range from 0 to 20 percent.

The St. Lucie series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy marine and/or eolian deposits. St. Lucie soils are on dunes, ridges and knolls on marine terraces. Slopes range from linear to convex and range from 0 to 20 percent.

The Composite Wetlands Map does not indicate likelihood of wetlands being located on the parcel.

Figure 3, a soils map that shows the soils on the subject site outlined in blue.



### 1.6.2. Wellfield protection

Staff does not have data on all wellfields in the area served by South Martin Regional Utility.

### 1.7. Adjacent Existing Uses

Below is a summary of the existing adjacent land uses in the general vicinity of the subject property:

The recently abandoned ROW is near existing ROW and the CRA Center future land use designation, along with single family residential homes and medical/professional offices, commercial and industrial uses. The following describes the uses adjacent to the subject property.

North – Right-of-Way

South – Undeveloped Land

East – Right-of-Way, SE Dixie Highway, and Florida East Coast Railroad

West – Single Family Home and Medical/Professional Offices

## 2. ANALYSIS

### 2.1. Criteria for a Future Land Use Amendment (Section 1-11 CGMP)

In evaluating each Future Land Use Map amendment request, staff begins with the assumption that the Future Land Use Map, as amended, is generally an accurate representation of the intent of the Board of County Commissioners, and thus the community, for the future of Martin County. Based

on this assumption, staff can recommend approval of a requested change provided that consistency is maintained with all other elements of this Plan and at least one of the following four items is found to apply. If staff cannot make a positive finding regarding at least one of the items in (a) through (d), staff shall recommend denial. Criterion (a), (b) and (d) have been met, while Criterion (c) has not been met.

- (a) Past changes in land use designations in the general area make the proposed use logical and consistent with these uses and adequate public services are available; or*

The past land use changes described in Section 1.4 of this report show that there have been land use designations in the general area which have changed significantly since the Hobe Sound CRA was adopted in 2000. Adequate public services are available. Criterion met.

- (b) Growth in the area, in terms of development of vacant land, redevelopment and availability of public services, has altered the character of the area such that the proposed request is now reasonable and consistent with area land use characteristics; or*

The transition of this area of Martin County from rural to urban development began well before 1982 when the County adopted the CGMP, and this area was included within the Primary Urban Service District (PUSD). Though the Olympia Plat was recorded in 1924, much of the Plat was vacant until the 1990s. Numerous homes have been constructed over the past 20 years. The request does promote an efficient use of public infrastructure including the proposed Hobe Sound Train Station. Criterion met.

- (c) The proposed change would correct what would otherwise appear to be an inappropriately assigned land use designation; or*

The abandoned ROW has no future land use designation. A future land use designation must be assigned to develop the recently abandoned ROW. Criterion not met.

- (d) The proposed change would fulfill a public service need that enhances the health, safety or general welfare of County residents.*

The future land use change on the subject site will allow for preservation of the historic Hope Sound Train Station which will benefit the community, County and visitors. Criterion met.

Three of the four criterion have been met, and staff can make a positive recommendation.

## **2.2. Urban Sprawl**

Urban sprawl is defined as a development pattern characterized by low density, automobile-dependent development with either a single use or multiple uses that are not functionally related, requiring the extension of public facilities and services in an inefficient manner, and failing to provide a clear separation between urban and rural uses.

Florida Statute 163.3177(3)(a)9. states that any amendment to the future land use element shall discourage the proliferation of urban sprawl and provides thirteen indicators to judge whether a future land use amendment discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl. This proposed amendment complies with 13 out of 13 sprawl criteria that discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

Florida Statute provides an additional eight criteria, of which four must be met, in order to judge whether an amendment can be determined to discourage the proliferation of urban sprawl. This proposed amendment meets 8 out of 8 criteria that determine the application discourages urban sprawl.



An evaluation of the thirteen indicators for urban sprawl and a determination on the eight criteria for this future land use request follows:

*(I) Promotes, allows, or designates for development substantial areas of the jurisdiction to develop as low-intensity, low-density, or single-use development or uses.*

No, this amendment is to assign 0.13-acres of a recently abandoned ROW with a future land use to allow for the relocation of the historic Hobe Sound Train Station. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(II) Promotes, allows, or designates significant amounts of urban development to occur in rural areas at substantial distances from existing urban areas while not using undeveloped lands that are available and suitable for development.*

No. The subject land area is not rural. Much of the subject area was platted into residential lots in the 1920s. It is an area identified by the County twenty years ago as suitable for infill development and redevelopment. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(III) Promotes, allows, or designates urban development in radial, strip, isolated, or ribbon patterns generally emanating from existing urban developments.*

This site is within a Community Redevelopment Area that is deep within the PUSD and one of the earliest areas to develop. The amendment will permit the relocation of the historic Hobe Sound Train Station to maintain its original character. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(IV) Fails to adequately protect and conserve natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, native vegetation, environmentally sensitive areas, natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas, lakes, rivers, shorelines, beaches, bays, estuarine systems, and other significant natural systems.*

The subject site is an abandoned ROW known as SE Vulcan Avenue. There are no wetlands, floodplains, native vegetation, environmentally sensitive areas natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas, lakes rivers, shorelines, beaches, bays, estuarine systems, and other significant natural systems. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(V) Fails to adequately protect adjacent agricultural areas and activities, including silviculture, active agricultural and silvicultural activities, passive agricultural activities, and dormant, unique, and prime farmlands and soils.*

No, the subject site is within the PUSD and surrounded by residential and commercial uses. The proposed future land use designation does not diminish agricultural areas or agricultural activities. The subject site is not near or adjacent to active farmlands or agricultural areas. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VI) Fails to maximize use of existing public facilities and services.*

When this site is developed, it will be infill development. The proposed amendment will more fully utilize the available public facilities and services in the PUSD. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VII) Fails to maximize use of future public facilities and services.*

The proposed change will further maximize the use of future public facilities and services. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VIII) Allows for land use patterns or timing which disproportionately increase the cost in time, money, and energy of providing and maintaining facilities and services, including roads, potable water, sanitary sewer, stormwater management, law enforcement, education, health care, fire and emergency response, and general government.*

The subject parcel is located within the PUSD where public services, including roads, potable water, sanitary sewer, storm water management, law enforcement, education, healthcare, fire and emergency response, and general services are already provided. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(IX) Fails to provide a clear separation between rural and urban uses.*

The site is located within the PUSD close to established suburban and urban uses and not adjacent to rural uses. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(X) Discourages or inhibits infill development or the redevelopment of existing neighborhoods and communities.*

This proposed amendment encourages infill development. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(XI) Fails to encourage a functional mix of uses.*

The amendment encourages a functional mix of uses in a highly urbanized area with access to major roadways. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(XII) Results in poor accessibility among linked or related land uses.*

This parcel is located on the corner of SE Vulcan Avenue and SE Athena Street where mixed uses are located in Hobe Sound. The proposed change will provide further institutional uses within Martin County. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(XIII) Results in the loss of significant amounts of functional open space.*

The abandoned ROW is not considered open space. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

The site complies with all 13 sprawl criteria listed above.



### 2.2.1. Proliferation of Urban Sprawl

In order for the application to be determined to discourage the proliferation of urban sprawl, the amendment must incorporate development patterns or urban forms that achieve four or more of the following:

*(I) Directs or locates economic growth and associated land development to geographic areas of the community in a manner that does not have an adverse impact on and protects natural resources and ecosystems.*

Economic growth in this area has been realized and related commercial, residential and institutional development are in the area. The site's development will not have any adverse impacts on natural resources or ecosystems. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(II) Promotes the efficient and cost-effective provision or extension of public infrastructure and services.*

Public infrastructure and services are available to the site with no extension required. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(III) Promotes walkable and connected communities and provides for compact development and a mix of uses at densities and intensities that will support a range of housing choices and a multimodal transportation system, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit, if available.*

The proposed amendment promotes a walkable community redevelopment area where it will be connected to a mix of uses. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(IV) Promotes conservation of water and energy.*

The site is only 0.13-acres and is located in an urban area where facilities and services are in place. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(V) Preserves agricultural areas and activities, including silviculture, and dormant, unique, and prime farmlands and soils.*

The proposed change will have no impact on agricultural areas and activities. The subject site is located in the PUSD. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VI) Preserves open space and natural lands and provides for public open space and recreation needs.*

There will be no loss of public open space and the abandoned ROW is not considered open space. The 0.13-acres is in an urban area and does not contain natural lands. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VII) Creates a balance of land uses based upon demands of residential population for the nonresidential needs of an area.*

The amendment to assign a future land use designation to the 0.13-acre property will have no impact on the balance of land uses. The proposed CRA Center future land use permits a mixture of residential, commercial and institutional uses. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

*(VIII) Provides uses, densities, and intensities of use and urban form that would remediate an existing or planned development pattern in the vicinity that constitutes sprawl or if it provides for an innovative development pattern such as transit-oriented developments or new towns as defined in s. 163.3164.*

The 0.13-acre amendment will provide uses, densities and intensities of use consistent with the well-established CRA Center future land uses within the Hobe Sound CRA. Discourages the proliferation of urban sprawl.

The eight criteria listed above have been met to determine the application discourages urban sprawl.

### **2.3 Land Use Compatibility**

The proposed CRA Center future land use is compatible with the same future land use that exists on the parcels to the north, south and east. The CRA Neighborhood future land use designation located on the west side of SE Vulcan Avenue is compatible because it also permits a mixture of residential housing and commercial uses. See the following text from Policy 4.13A.17. Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, “The primacy of residential uses shall be maintained, while allowing limited commercial activity, primarily on collector or arterial roadways or where commercial activity historically has been located.”

Below are the existing adjacent land uses in the general vicinity of the subject property:

North – CRA Center

South – CRA Center

East – SE Dixie Highway, Florida East Coast Railroad, CRA Center

West –CRA Neighborhood

Figure 4, Excerpt from the current FLUM, with the subject site highlighted in blue.





Figure 5, Proposed FLUM, with the subject site highlighted in blue.



## 2.4 Consistency with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan

The CGMP provides the following development standards for the CRA Center future land use proposed for the 0.13-acre site.

**Policy 18.2A.1. Quality of life.** Development in the CRA Center future land use designation (CRA Center) shall be designed to improve residents' quality of life by:

- (1) Encouraging compatibility and pedestrian and bicycle links between commercial development and surrounding residential areas;
- (2) Accommodating small businesses and home-based businesses;
- (3) Increasing economic and social integration by providing opportunities for diverse housing types;
- (4) Encouraging vibrant, compact development;



- (5) Providing for local, small-scale employment, shopping and civic opportunities; and
- (6) Maintaining or attaining a small-town urban form, with well-connected, walkable streets, on-street parking, small parking lots, public open spaces, community facilities, and high quality buildings of similar scale related to each other in form and proportion.

***Policy 18.2A.2. Mixed-use development.*** Opportunities for mixed-use development in the CRA Center shall be provided by allowing both mixed-use projects and mixed-use patterns. A mixed-use project is one or more buildings containing a residential use and one or more complementary commercial, institutional or limited impact industrial uses, in close proximity, and planned and approved as a single, unified project. A mixed-use pattern is a dynamic mix of residential, commercial, institutional, and/or limited impact industrial uses located within walking distance that develops incrementally over time. A mixed-use pattern may, but need not, involve more than one type of land use on any individual lot.

***Policy 18.2A.3. Land Development Regulations.*** The Land Development Regulations (LDR) shall establish a redevelopment zoning district and subdistricts for each CRA to implement the CRA Center future land use designation. The LDR shall detail permitted uses, building size and height, intensities of non-residential uses, densities of residential uses, open space, landscaping and parking requirements, and roadway design, as appropriate and consistent with this Chapter.

#### **Staff Analysis:**

The CRA Center future land use designation applies to the urbanized core of the CRAs and along certain corridors where mixed-use development patterns exist or are allowed. This area of Hobe Sound has been comprised of mixed uses since before the creation of Martin County in 1925. The 0.13-acre CRA Center land use assignment on this abandoned right-of-way will be combined with an adjacent County owned +/-0.12-acre parcel between SE Vulcan Avenue and the SE Dixie Highway right -of-way making a total combined acreage of +/-0.25. See Figures 4 and 5. As the policies quoted above describe, the future land use designation will be implemented by Land Development Regulations designed to work with the larger Community Redevelopment Area.

This site is appropriately located in the PUSD and has access to all the public facilities and services and permits in-fill development located near major arterial and collector roads.

## **2.5. Capital Facilities Impact (i.e. Concurrency Management)**

Policy 4.1B.2. of the Future Land Use Element states: “All requests for amendments to the FLUMs shall include a general analysis of (1) the availability and adequacy of public facilities and (2) the level of services required for public facilities in the proposed land uses. This analysis shall address, at a minimum, the availability of category A and category C service facilities as defined in the Capital Improvements Element. No amendment shall be approved unless present or planned public facilities and services will be capable of meeting the adopted LOS standards of this Plan for the proposed land uses. The Capital Improvements Element, or other relevant plan provisions, and the FLUMs may be amended concurrently to satisfy this criterion. The intent of this provision is to ensure that the elements of the CGMP remain internally consistent.”

### **2.5.1. Mandatory Facilities**

#### **2.5.1.1. Water/Sewer Facilities**

The parcel is located in the South Martin Regional Utility service area. There will be no impacts to the Martin County Utility system.

#### **2.5.1.2. Drainage Facilities**

Level of Service for drainage facilities is listed below. Compliance with the following levels of service requirements must be evaluated with the submittal of a site plan. The developed site must comply with the following policies.

Policy 14.1A.2.(2) County water management systems:

Level of Service

Major Drainage Ways (over one square mile) - 8.5" in a 24-hour period (25 year/24-hour design storm)

Underground Facilities Utilizing Storm Sewers - 6" in a 24-hour period (5 year/24-hour design storm)

All Other Facilities - 7" in a 24-hour period (10-year/24-hour design storm)

Finished Floor Elevation - 100-year/3-day storm

(a) Building floors shall be at or above the 100-year flood elevations, as determined from the most appropriate information, including Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Both tidal flooding and the 100-year, 3-day storm event shall be considered in determining elevations. Lower floor elevations will be considered for agricultural buildings and boat storage facilities that are nonresidential and not routinely accessed by the public.

(b) All project sites shall control the timing of discharges to preclude any off-site impact for any storm event. The peak discharge rate shall not exceed the predevelopment discharge rate for the 25-year frequency, 3-day duration storm event.

The minimum roadway flood protection design storm shall be the 10-year frequency, 24-hour duration storm event unless the roadway is classified as a scenic corridor, in which case the flood protection design storm will consider maintaining the character of the roadway.

#### **2.5.1.3. Transportation**

Policy 18.4D.1., states: "*Transportation Concurrency Exception Area*: An urban area where infill and redevelopment are encouraged and exceptions to the transportation concurrency requirement are allowed, provided that alternative modes of transportation, land use mixes, urban design, connectivity and funding are addressed. It is meant to encourage development where infrastructure already exists, thereby reducing urban sprawl. The concurrency exception applies to all land uses, development and types of facilities within the Area." Transportation impacts will be de minimis.

#### **2.5.1.4 Solid Waste Facilities**

The proposed Future Land Use designation does not exceed the LOS criteria for solid waste facilities. The required LOS in Martin County is 1.06 tons of capacity per weighted population. The weighted average population (the average of seasonal and full-time residents) countywide in Fiscal year 2024 is 178,927 persons. In fiscal year 2024, there are 263,031 tons of available capacity or 1.47 tons per weighted person. The proposed change will not reduce the LOS below capacity.

#### **2.5.1.5. Parks/Recreation Facilities**

Parks and recreation facilities are calculated on a countywide basis. The county has a total population in Fiscal Year 2024 of 163,560 persons. There are currently 1730 acres of active

parkland available in the County. The 2024 Capital Improvements Plan provides the following LOS analysis for services.

	REQUIRED LOS	PROVIDED	CURRENT LOS
ACTIVE PARKLAND	3 acres per 1,000 residents	1730 acres	10.58 acres per 1,000 residents
BEACH FACILITIES	9 parking spaces per 1,000 residents	1,398 spaces	8.5 spaces per 1,000 residents

The proposed change will not have an impact on the active parks and recreation LOS.

#### **2.5.1.6. Fire/Public Safety/EMS**

The following table shows the levels of service adopted in Chapter 14, Capital Improvements. Level of Service Area: Unincorporated Martin County. The analysis is based upon a 2024 (weighted average) population in unincorporated Martin County of 149,109 persons.

	Travel time	Areas of Martin County	Required LOS Percent of time	Current LOS Percent of time
Advanced life support	8 minutes	Urban	90	97
Advanced life support	20 minutes	Rural	90	97
Basic life support	6 minutes	Urban	90	97
Basic life support	15 minutes	Rural	90	97
Fire response	6 minutes	Urban	90	97
Fire response	15 minutes	Rural	90	97

The proposed future land use change will not diminish the LOS below capacity.

#### **2.5.1.7. Schools**

The LOS for public school facilities is established by CGMP Policy 17.1A.1. Pursuant to CGMP Policy 17.1B.1, final site plans that include residential units can be approved by the County “only after receipt of a School Concurrency Report from the School District stating that adequate capacity exists for the anticipated students.”

The proposed amendment will not have an impact on the LOS for public school facilities.

### **2.5.2. Non-Mandatory Facilities**

#### **2.5.2.1. Libraries**

Library level of service is calculated on a countywide basis and has a goal of 0.60 gross square feet of library space for each resident. Two volumes of reading material are also planned for each weighted resident. The Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Improvement Plan shows the current LOS is 0.65 square feet per resident and 2.04 volumes per weighted resident. The proposed future land use change will not impact the Library LOS.

### **3. FIGURES/ATTACHMENTS**

Figure 1, Location Map

Figure 2, Future Land Use Map

Figure 3, Soils Map

Figure 4, Excerpt Existing FLUM

Figure 5, Proposed FLUM

Application

Newspaper notice  
Certification of letters sent  
Ordinance