

27 APRIL 2018

HENDRY COUNTY LAND USE STUDY

FOR LANDS SURROUNDING AIRGLADES AIRPORT

DELIVERABLE #3

ALTERNATIVE LAND USE SCENARIOS

prepared for:

Hendry County Planning &
Community Development

640 S. Main Street
LaBelle, Florida 33935

prepared by:

Waldrop Engineering, P.A.

28100 Bonita Grande Dr., Suite 305
Bonita Springs, FL 34135



I. BACKGROUND

Hendry County has employed Waldrop Engineering, P.A. (Consultant) to assist the Planning & Zoning Department in the preparation of a Land Use Study for lands surrounding the Airglades Airport (“Study”). This Study is one component of the County’s Community-Driven Economic Development Strategy, and is intended to direct future planning efforts identified in the 2017 Hendry County Competitive Florida Asset Mapping Report, relating to the Airglades Airport expansion.

The Project is funded by the Competitive Florida Partnership Technical Assistance Grant (“Grant”) administered through the Department of Economic Opportunity (“DEO”), and subject to the provisions of Section 163.3168, F.S., and Specific Appropriation 2224R, Chapter 2017-70, Laws of Florida.

II. STUDY AREA

The proposed Study Area encompasses 34,400 acres, or 54 +/-square miles, surrounding the Airglades Airport (“Airport”). The Study Area extends north to the Hendry/Glades county line, south to the Seven K Estates Subdivision (also known as “Flaghole”), west to CR 833 (including the western quadrants of the SR 80/CR 833 intersection), and east to the Clewiston city limits. An aerial map demonstrating the Study Area is attached.

III. STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the Study is to review and evaluate the framework guiding development of lands surrounding the Airport, and formulate recommendations to establish compatible surrounding land uses that support the airport’s long-term expansion, in relation to the County’s economic development goals.

The Study examines future land use, zoning, and existing land uses, in addition to environmental features and infrastructure, in the context of the County’s LDC and Comprehensive Plan. The Study also incorporates public input obtained from landowners within the Study Area, and the community in general. Based on these priorities, the main objectives of the Study include:

- Examine land uses surrounding the Airport in light of its expansion;
- Support the County’s economic development goals by ensuring sufficient lands are available to support the Airglades Airport long-term growth; identifying appropriate land uses to support this growth; and preventing incompatible land uses from developing in close proximity to the Airport;
- Understand existing infrastructure and future needs; and
- Improve the public’s understanding of the relationship between land use, the Airport, and economic and community development initiatives.

IV. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The following preliminary findings were derived from data and analysis contained in the Preliminary Assessment Report submitted to DEO on March 31, 2018:

- There are sufficient undeveloped and agricultural lands available within the Study Area to support long-term growth of the Airport and off-airport industries.
- There is limited residential development within or near the Study Area that presents existing compatibility concerns.
- Existing Future Land Use Categories & Zoning Districts within the Study Area allow for the conversion of undeveloped and agricultural lands to residential land uses (i.e. Agriculture and Multi-Use) immediately adjacent to the Airport, and within the 65 DNL Noise Contour.
- The Future Land Use Map & Zoning Map do not direct the development of lands surrounding the Airport in a manner that ensures these areas are reserved for “airport support land uses”.

V. LAND USE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Based upon the preliminary assessment of existing conditions and extensive public input, the Consultant has prepared (2) Alternative Land Use Plan scenarios. The following planning principles guided the development of the Alternative Land Use Plan scenarios:

- **Land Use Compatibility**
 - Provide land use scenarios that address safety hazards and noise in relation to the Airport expansion plans;
 - Prevent encroachment of incompatible land uses around the Airglades Airport; and
 - Protect existing neighborhoods through an appropriate transition of land uses.
- **Economic Development**
 - Ensure the long-term growth of aviation compatible economic development opportunities and “airport support” on lands surrounding the Airglades Airport;
 - Maintain a sufficient supply of developable land for industrial and commercial land uses;
 - Discourage “strip” commercial development along major roadways; and
 - Address need for workforce housing through the provision of a mix of housing types and densities.
- **Infrastructure**
 - Focus development in areas with existing or planned infrastructure; and
 - Avoid urban development in areas that cannot be easily or economically served with centralized utilities or arterial roadway accessibility.

- **Environment**
 - Mitigate wildlife hazards through responsible land use planning and regulatory controls;
 - Allow for the retention of viable agricultural land uses;
 - Uphold the County’s goals, objectives and policies to coordinate development relative to environmental features and constraints.

VI. LAND USE SCENARIO FRAMEWORK

Both scenarios apply a common set of land use descriptions, which identify the intended range of permitted uses, intensities, and densities. These land use descriptions are not intended to serve as, or create, new future land use categories within the Comprehensive Plan. Rather, these are generalized descriptions to guide the County and private landowners in the process of accommodating long-term economic development opportunities. As noted below, future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code will be required to implement the findings of this Study.

- **AIRPORT ENTERPRISE:** Airport Enterprise lands are intended for high intensity, non-residential land uses, with the primary focus on heavy and light industrial activities to support the airport growth and expansion. The secondary emphasis of these lands will include supportive commercial development. These areas are not appropriate for residential development based upon proximity to airport operations.
 - **RANGE OF LAND USES:** Warehousing, Distribution Centers, Manufacturing, Assembling, Processing, Indoor & Outdoor Storage, Flex Space, Office, Ancillary Commercial Retail, Existing Active and Passive Agriculture. Mining, Recycling Facilities, and Residential Uses are not permitted.
 - **DENSITY/INTENSITY:** Density NOT Permitted; 1.0 FAR
 - **POLICY FRAMEWORK:** New future land use category and implementing zoning district required.

- **AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE:** Agricultural Enterprise lands are intended for continued, long-term passive and agricultural activities and moderate-intensity, agriculturally-related businesses, such as the processing and distribution of farm products. These lands promote the expansion of the agricultural economy within the County, in direct relation to the cargo processing facilities and related businesses that will be directed around the Airport. Residential uses in these areas should be limited to rural agricultural estates and existing homesteads. These areas are not intended for the proliferation of platted, large-lot residential subdivisions, or “ranchettes”.

- **RANGE OF LAND USES:** Existing Active & Passive Agriculture, Agriculture-Based Research & Development, Agricultural Processing & Warehousing. Mining, Recycling Facilities, and Residential Uses are not permitted.
 - **DENSITY/INTENSITY:** 1 DU/Acre; 0.5 FAR
 - **POLICY FRAMEWORK:** Existing Agriculture future land use category meets the intent of this land use, as supplemented by Land Development Code regulations restricting incompatible land uses within designated noise contours, such as residential uses.
- **MIXED-USE URBAN:** Mixed-Use Urban lands are focused around key nodes and high activity intersections to provide a variety of employment-based uses, commercial retail, office, light industrial, and higher density residential land uses. Lands are intended for well-connected, integrated, and innovative community design, and will serve as future regional centers. The mix of land uses are compatible with, and supportive of, airport operations and the long-term demand for supportive non-residential uses and workforce housing in the study area.
 - **RANGE OF LAND USES:** Commercial Retail, Office, Higher Density/Workforce Residential, and Limited Light Industrial.
 - **DENSITY/INTENSITY:** 5-15 DU/ Acre; 0.5 FAR
 - **POLICY FRAMEWORK:** New future land use category and implementing zoning district required; or adjustments to Multi-Use category to allow for higher range of residential via bonus density provisions; OR adjustments to High Density Residential category to allow for higher range of non-residential.
 - **MIXED-USE SUBURBAN:** Mixed-Use Suburban lands will serve as a transitional district between higher-intensity, non-residential, and mixed-use lands surrounding the Airport, and the established communities within the County and the City of Clewiston. These lands will support the development of self-contained, master-planned communities that will provide for a range of housing types, neighborhood commercial retail, and office-based employment uses.
 - **RANGE OF LAND USES:** Medium- to Low-Density Residential, Neighborhood Commercial Retail, and Office.
 - **DENSITY/INTENSITY:** 2-5 DU/ Acre; 0.25 FAR
 - **POLICY FRAMEWORK:** Existing Multi-Use future land use category can be utilized.

In addition to the above general land use descriptions, both scenarios include a potential corridor south of US Hwy 27 to provide additional network and enhanced connectivity to the City of Clewiston. The intent of this corridor to relieve local traffic pressures on US Hwy 27, as this route will be heavily travelled by trucks associated with Airport operations and commerce.

Both scenarios also provide locations for mixed-use nodes, including “activity center” nodes at arterial intersections of SR 80/CR 833 and SR 80/US Hwy 27, and “neighborhood center” nodes at collector intersections and future intersections along CR 833, Flaghole Road, CR 720 and along future potential corridors. These nodes will serve as mixed-use centers to provide good and services for local residents, as well as pass-through travelers, office space/employment centers, and higher density/workforce housing.

In terms of utilities and other supportive infrastructure, it is understood that further capital improvements planning is required to support the levels of development anticipated within the long-range planning horizon presented through these scenarios.

VII. LAND USE SCENARIOS DESCRIPTIONS

- **Land Use Scenario One**

Land Use Scenario One places the highest emphasis on Airport Enterprise lands, with approximately 11,696 acres dedicated to airport-support land uses to the north and south of US Hwy 27, extending south to the existing rail line, and encompassing several sections to the east and west of the Airport. This scenario assumes significant economic development activities resulting from the runway expansion, and provides extensive land area reserved for light and heavy industrial uses.

The US 27/SR 80 intersection, and immediate areas to the east and west of this node, are also reserved for Airport Enterprise land uses in this scenario. The arterial corridor is anchored by mixed-use nodes at the far eastern and western edges of the Study Area, that mark the “gateway” to the Airport. Additional corridor-specific design standards are recommended to support aesthetically-pleasing development along the roadway frontages, and ensure the intensive industrial development is appropriately sited and buffered from the travelling public. The proposed Agricultural Enterprise area provides transition between the intensive Airport Enterprise lands around the Airport, and the Flaghole community and agricultural uses to the south. Similarly, Suburban Mixed-Use lands provide transition between Airport Enterprise areas and Harlem community immediately to the east.

- **Land Use Scenario Two**

Land Use Scenario Two provides slightly lesser emphasis on Airport Enterprise lands, with additional areas reserved for Urban and Suburban Mixed-Use land use patterns. This Scenario acknowledges the Airport and associate supportive businesses will serve as a catalyst for residential and commercial development through the creation of enhanced employment opportunities, and provides broader areas for the development of self-contained, master-planned communities for housing, commercial retail, employment, and institutional uses.

Airport Enterprise lands are still significant in this scenario, totaling 9,966 acres, and provide ample growth opportunities.

This scenario also provides significant Agricultural Enterprise areas to buffer the Airport Enterprise lands from existing and future residential communities in and around the Study Area. The majority of the SR 80 and US Hwy 27 corridor is designated for Urban Mixed-Use development patterns, with frontages reserved for Airport Enterprise only where adjacent to the Airport boundary. This scenario also anchors the eastern and western entries with mixed-use nodes.

VIII. SUMMARY & INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Both land use scenarios recommend significant changes to the long-range land use pattern around the Airport. These scenarios are not intended to dictate or direct immediate future land use map changes, as further planning for infrastructure needs is required to support wholesale changes of this magnitude.

In order to direct appropriate land uses in the Study Area, and mitigate conversion of these lands to inappropriate uses that are incompatible with the County's economic development goals, it is recommended that the selected land use scenario is memorialized in the Comprehensive Plan as an overlay map, similar to the overlays for the Rodina Sector Plan, West Hendry Planning Overlay, and Southwest Hendry County Sector Plan. This approach will provide a general framework for long-range planning activities and set forth the County's intent for this area through both map and text amendments, while allowing private landowners to propose more finite amendments based upon supportive data and analysis, and changes in market demand as the Airport expansion is implemented.

In addition to the overlay approach, amendments to the Land Development Code should also be prepared to support the recommendations of this Study and the land use scenarios. Finalized recommendations of the Study and land use scenarios will be further outlined in the Final Report to DEO no later than June 1, 2018.