

Brandon Community Meeting Summary
Brandon Parks and Recreation Center, 6 pm
May 16, 2023

This meeting began with a whole-group presentation which started with an introduction to the comprehensive plan, key terminology, and the comprehensive plan update process. The presenter then reviewed the following results of the online survey:

- 1,800+ participants
- 32,000+ data points collected
- 1,600+ comments submitted
- 5,600+ map data points

Survey respondents indicated the following as their top 4 out of 9 priorities:

- Preserve natural areas
- Maximize existing infrastructure
- Maintain agricultural/rural lands
- Variety of mobility choices, including walking and biking

The presenter discussed three specific policies. The first, called Centers and Connections, is a proposed policy intended to encourage growth where communities desire it by allowing density and intensity bonuses in specific activity centers and along specific corridors.

Next, the presenter discussed Transit-Oriented Development. This policy language in the comprehensive plan would focus growth on major transit corridors and stations to allow for more mobility options for residents and workers in these areas.

Finally, the presenter talked about modifications to the existing Commercial Locational Criteria policy. The proposed changes are based on a 2021 study, public engagement, and comments from the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning Commission. The updated language in the Comprehensive Plan would enable communities to have goods and services near their homes while keeping those uses compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

To conclude the presentation, the presenter told participants about upcoming public engagement opportunities, including an in-person meeting on Thursday, June 22 in Tampa, and a virtual meeting on June 26, both at 6:30 pm. A virtual presentation of this open house is also available on May 23rd at 6:00 pm. Further information on continuing public engagement opportunities can be found [here](#) on the Planning Commission website.

After finishing the presentation, the presenter introduced Plan Hillsborough staff who were at 3 information booths (Centers and Connections, Transit-Oriented Development, and Commercial Locational Criteria) and had them each summarize the information available at their station.

Before breaking out into small groups, time was allotted for whole-group comments and questions. The following themes were brought up in the whole-group discussion:

- Many attendees expressed concerns over new development and infrastructure not keeping pace with development.
- Plan Hillsborough staff clarified the role of the Planning Commission, stating that it is a recommending body and that final decisions are made by an elected Board of County Commissioners
- Staff also explained the difference between Planning Commission and Hillsborough County Development Services Department.
 - The Planning Commission reviews rezonings and plan amendments for consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan, which includes the Future Land Use Section.
 - The Hillsborough County Development Services Departments reviews rezoning cases for consistency with the Land Development Code, which includes detailed zoning regulations.
- Plan Hillsborough staff received recommendations that more should be done to encourage public participation. Specifically, radio advertisements and community newspapers were mentioned as a way to reach more community members.
- Attendees requested clarification of density/intensity bonuses and increases mentioned in the presentation.
 - Staff clarified that density would only be increased where appropriate, not countywide.
- There was interest in learning more about Community Plans, especially for Brandon and Valrico.
- Attendees expressed concerns about specific construction projects or developments - these comments were directed to the correct agency.

The following is a summary of discussion and comments from the Centers and Connections small group:

- Staff emphasized that the current proposed map is subject to change based on continuing public feedback.
- It should be reinforced that Centers and Connections is incentive based and will not force higher density development where it is not wanted or appropriate.
- Staff observed a need to reinforce that Centers and Connections visual preferences only apply to identified centers and connections, not to the whole county.
- Staff received positive feedback on more requirements for design of new developments.
- Attendees expressed support for nodes in the Brandon area.
- There was some public disapproval of midrise or townhome development near substandard roads, specifically in Brandon/Valrico area.
- Attendees indicated significant support for public greenspace and connected sidewalks.

- Some participants expressed interest in design standards to give Brandon a unique identity and sense of place.
- There was a common sentiment that infrastructure cannot keep up with the growth coming to South County.
- The Visual Preference exercise yielded the following votes:
 - Transit service-2
 - Commercial development-3
 - Public greenspace-18
 - Connected sidewalks-10
 - Crosswalks-2
 - Protected bike lanes-4
 - Reduced speed limits-2
 - Duplexes-4
 - Townhomes-1
 - Midrise development-2
 - Mixed use development-4

The following is a summary of discussion and comments from the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) small group:

- Some thought the TOD policy was proposing specific location for stations. Staff clarified that the TOD policy language in the Comprehensive Plan was only setting up the process for possible TOD, not proposing specific developments.
- Staff explained that fixed guideway means a type of transit that operates in its own right of way (e.g., separate bus lane, train/tram track) separate from travel lanes used for general traffic.
- Staff clarified how TOD would affect transit throughout the county. It will not serve rural areas, where infrastructure would not support it, and will stay in the Urban Service Area.
- Staff noted that we may need to include definitions of key terms in the presentation. Also, we may need to include more information on where TOD is applicable.

The following is a summary of discussion and comments from the Commercial Locational Criteria (CLC) small group:

- Several attendees liked the draft CLC map as it showed the community plan boundaries.
- The public responded well to the overall concept of the CLC.
 - No changes were proposed.
 - Discussion mostly centered on questions related to short-term transportation
 - One attendee indicated a preference for a 1-story height limit because they felt it was more appropriate when considering the surrounding development.
- Attendees requested draft copies of the CLC map and were directed [here](#) to the Plan Hillsborough website.
- One attendee expressed interest in getting traffic lights installed along 19th Avenue in Apollo Beach.

- Staff clarified some confusion over the adopted Context Classification map, which is also available [here](#) on the Plan Hillsborough website.
- One attendee indicated concern over the location of the existing and proposed Brandon Library and said that she preferred that it remain some kind of greenspace, which is lacking in the Brandon area.