

PAT Meeting #3 Summary

August 8, 2023

The third in-person Project Advisory Team meeting began at 5:00pm. The presenter began with important information about the update process including areas of the County's Comprehensive Plan that have already been updated, the difference between Future Land Use and Zoning, and the tentative timeline for approval.

Specific policies were discussed next. In the area of agricultural policies, no major changes are proposed, but minor revisions are being made to reflect current programs. Utility extension policies are being updated to prevent septic tank clustering and expand utility service to areas that meet specific criteria.

The next topic was Community Plans. There are currently 22 Community Plans in the Livable Communities Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of these plans is to provide individual visions for community character and development patterns, with many specifically aiming to preserve a rural development style. This Future Land Use Section update will not change any of the adopted Community Plan language.

Next, the presentation gave information about developable and redevelopable land. There are currently a total of 51,077 total acres available for development or redevelopment within the current Urban Service Area (USA). Most of this acreage exists as individual parcels or small tracts of land. As requested, staff is working on additional statistics on developable and redevelopable land.

The results of the public survey were discussed, which indicated that preservation of natural, rural and agricultural areas, using existing infrastructure, and having a variety of mobility choices were high priorities for residents. The survey also asked respondents about strategies for inward and outward growth. Three policy changes that have been proposed to address the inward growth priorities are updates to Transit Oriented Development Incentives, new Centers and Connections Incentives, and an update to the Commercial Locational Criteria. These inward growth policies were discussed during the May community meetings. Policy changes that have been proposed to address the outward growth priorities are updates to Transfer of Development Rights, new strategic expansion policies, updates to rural policies and utility connections and maintaining agricultural policies.

Lastly, the presentation discussed outward strategic growth policies. In the past, the USA has been expanded when an application is submitted and accepted for its expansion. This leads to reactive expansion rather than strategic and intentional expansion. Policies that address when to expand include identifying the following:

- When will we run out of developable/redevelopable land?
- When will public services be at capacity?
- When will housing/jobs be at capacity?

Policies that address how to expand include the following:

- Develop master plan that guides expansion through multiple project phases addressing land use, suburban to rural transition and mixed uses
- Ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan and Community Plans
- Review impact/mobility fees
- Review transportation, utility, and county service needs and funding sources

- Provide positive economic impact
- Coordinate with external agencies (i.e., school district, HART, etc.)

Policies that address what an expansion should look like include:

- Being adjacent and contiguous of the existing Urban Service Area
- Having a minimum of 50 acres
- Having sufficient access to infrastructure that has capacity and can be extended
- Preserving natural resources and rural/agricultural areas
- Enhancing Community Plan vision, goals, and objectives
- Proximity/accessibility to employment, commercial, cultural, community centers OR have land to create a center
- Encouraging economic growth and employment opportunities
- Providing access to daily goods, services, and public amenities

Following the presentation, attendees shared their comments with Planning Commission staff. A summary of these comments and the responses of Planning Commission (PC) staff is as follows.

- When you say, “when will we run out of land”, does that mean we have to use up all available land within the Urban Service Area (USA) before we expand it?
 - PC Staff: We are reaching the point where we are talking about expanding the USA. The intention of this discussion is to make sure that, if we need to build outside the USA, we can focus that growth to maintain some open space and rural living options.
- Will there be any penalties for development outside the USA?
 - PC Staff: Our goal is to incentivize (re)development within the USA. There are rural areas where development has occurred, and we can’t “penalize” them for what is already there.
- Be cautious when considering the expansion of the USA. We want to make sure we don’t build on every square inch of Hillsborough County. We also want to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.
- What does redevelopable mean, and can the commission refine this term?
 - PC Staff: Redevelopable relates to age of structure, Floor-Area Ratio, and value of land compared to building.
- Can we create incentives that encourage people to make their land be considered redevelopable?
 - We are discussing adding incentives through Centers and Connections to encourage non-residential activity centers to consider redevelopment. Transit-oriented development is also another policy we’re looking at to incentivize redevelopment.
- How will community plans be considered regarding new development?
 - PC Staff: We will work with communities that have community plans before we begin looking into increasing development in these areas.
- Low density development is difficult and expensive to service and leads to more traffic and a greater demand for services and infrastructure.
- We have an affordability crisis. Higher density housing is an important tool for addressing this. Disallowing the expansion of the USA will likely reduce affordability.

- Redevelopment is often expensive and not affordable for developers. Focusing too much on redevelopment could worsen the affordability issues.
- Continue finding resources that will increase attendance at these community meetings.
- Are there any hard limits on development, like water supply?
 - PC Staff: This is part of the “what” that we are considering when we look to expand USA. As part of new development, we look at Capital Improvement Plan to determine if new development can receive adequate services.
- If we expand the USA, it should have specific affordability and green space goals in mind. USA expansion should be very intentional.
- Sustainability should be a top consideration. Density bonuses are good ideas for including green features.
- Live Local Act is taking our voice away and allowing developers to build as dense as they want without consulting the voice of the citizens.
 - PC Staff: There are a lot of things that are required for developers to take advantage of this law. We need to wait to see how this law ends up affecting new development. This law will change how we plan, but it is still important to have a plan.
- Some developers are not taking advantage of the Live Local Law because of the uncertainty and the fact that the law expires. The county has a narrow interpretation of the law, and it is reducing the attractiveness of this law.
- LDC and Comprehensive Plan should have a list of questions that ask if city infrastructure and services are ready to accommodate new development.
- The Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan should have a list of questions that ask if infrastructure and services are ready to accommodate new development.
- Questions about open space, energy conservation and environmental presentation; staff answered and shared the policy updates made with the Environmental and Sustainability Chapter of the Plan.