

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Jason E. Brown; County Administrator

FROM: Phillip J. Matson, AICP
Community Development Director

DATE: October 10, 2022

SUBJECT: **Consideration of the Land Use Visioning Study and Follow-Up Action**

It is requested that the information presented herein be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting of October 18, 2022.

DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONS

In 2021, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approved a scope of services for a population, development, and rural lands visioning study to be performed by one of the MPO's general planning consultants, Kimley-Horn and Associates. The purpose of the study was to review rural land use and development policies, evaluate alternate future land use scenarios, and inform the MPO's next Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update.

Over the last year, the MPO and Kimley-Horn have conducted ten public workshops for the visioning study and have also made visioning presentations at many other public meetings. To reach a broad cross-section of the community, workshops have been scheduled at different times of day and different locations throughout the county, including Vero Beach, Sebastian, Fellsmere, Gifford, and the IG Center. In addition, the visioning team spent a day engaging with students at a local high school for their perspective on the community.

It is staff's view that the visioning study has featured robust public participation, as evidenced by the attendance at the numerous public workshops, meetings, and presentations (total attendance over 600 people). Based on the public feedback received throughout the visioning study, the consultant has prepared a final summary report which discusses emerging and future challenges; reviews urban service area and other rural land policies; presents potential rural land strategies; and offers recommendations for guiding future development within the community (see Attachment #1).

Visioning Principles

Based on all feedback received through the public workshops, the following six “*Visioning Principles*” have been identified and high levels of support:

1. Conservation of sensitive environmental lands.
2. Diversity of housing types that include affordable options.
3. Infrastructure improvements that provide mobility and multimodal transportation options.
4. Promote a healthy economy.
5. Maintain agriculture.
6. Maintain rural character.

These principles will be used to guide future planning efforts.

Adoption and Implementation

In addition to identifying guiding principles, the visioning study provides both short-term and long-term recommendations for guiding future development. The short-term recommendations are items that can be implemented through rather simple changes or are already underway. The short-term recommendations include:

- Expanding flexible uses in agricultural areas for uses which involve a simple process, such as solar farms.
- Modifying development regulations to increase opportunities for Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Updating parcel split ordinances.
- Encouraging infill/redevelopment within the Urban Service Area.
- Using annexation agreements to ensure compatibility between jurisdictions along the urban/rural edge.
- Coordinating on projects of mutual benefit, such as the widening of CR 510.

The study also identified long-term recommendations, which involve a greater degree of complexity and will require further analysis, possibly as part of a Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The long-term recommendations include:

- Expanding flexible uses in agricultural areas for uses needing more further study or the preparation of specific land development criteria.
- Updating the County’s New Town ordinance.
- Modifying the Urban Service Area boundary, where appropriate.

On September 14, 2022, the MPO unanimously voted to approve the MPO Visioning Study.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the BCC approve the land use visioning study final report, consider the staff presentation on the Visioning Implementation process, and provide staff with any feedback going forward.

ATTACHMENT

1. Draft Land Use Visioning Study Final Report