



**STAFF REPORT
COLLIER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

FROM: GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, ZONING DIVISION,
COMMUNITY PLANNING SECTION

HEARING DATE: January 31, 2019

RE: PETITION PL20180002258/CPSP-2018-5, STAFF-PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO THE IMMOKALEE AREA MASTER PLAN OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN [*TRANSMITTAL HEARING*]

INTRODUCTION

The proposed Growth Management Plan (GMP) amendments found in Attachment A to this report (and Resolution, Exhibit A) are derived from years of public input and Plan refinements. These are presented to the Collier County Planning Commission (CCPC), in its capacity as the County's Land Planning Agency under Florida Statutes and as the County's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), for consideration at Transmittal stage public hearings. Staff requests the CCPC and EAC forward these amendments to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) with a recommendation to transmit to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO).

BACKGROUND

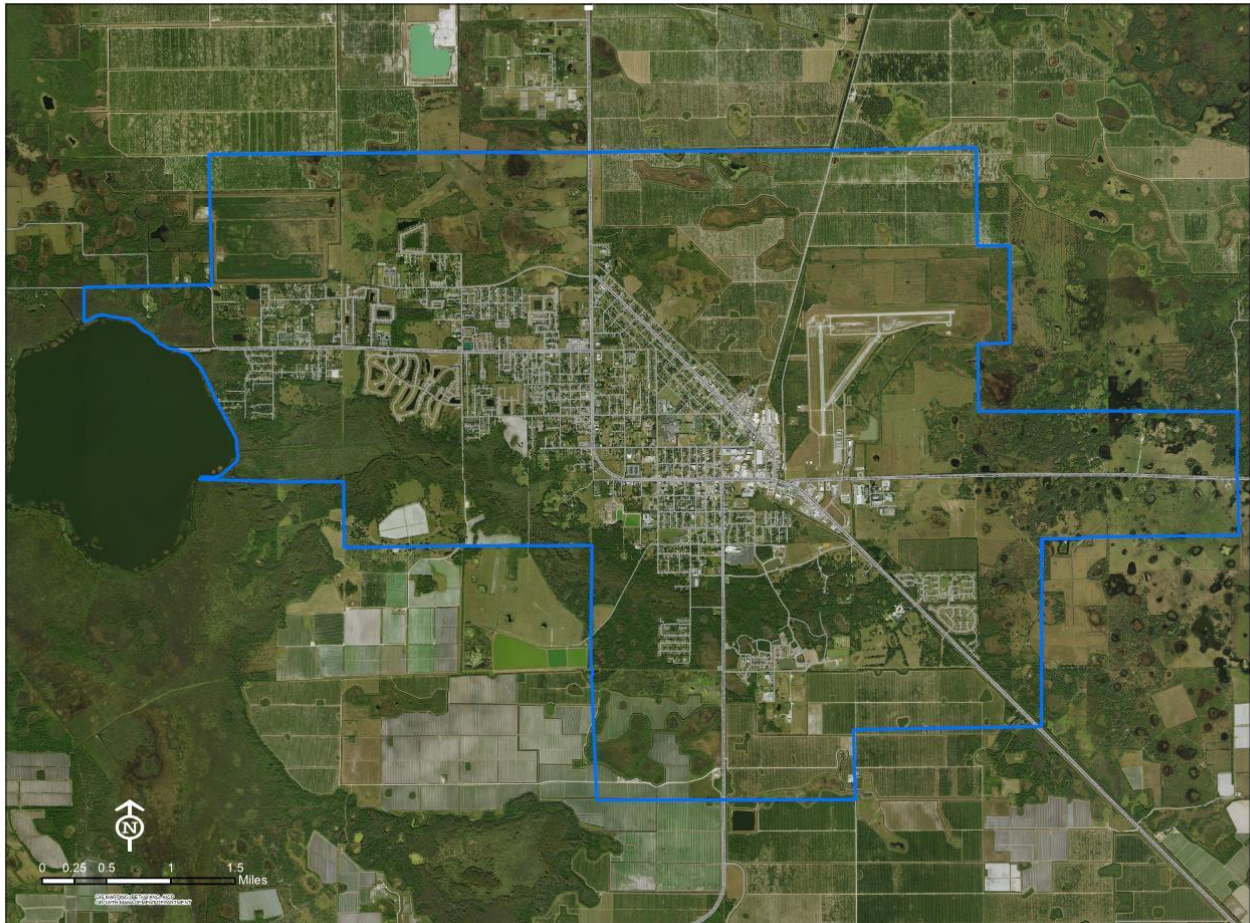
On February 10, 2015, the Board directed staff to initiate GMP "restudies" of four GMP master plans in eastern Collier County: Rural Fringe Mixed Use District (RFMUD), Golden Gate Area Master Plan (GGAMP), Rural Lands Stewardship Area (RLSA), and Immokalee Area Master Plan (IAMP). The IAMP restudy formally began in January 2018. As with all restudies, through a public outreach effort, staff focused on complementary land uses, economic vitality, mobility and environmental sustainability.

The Board appointed an ad hoc advisory committee, the Growth Management Oversight Committee (GMOC), which first convened in December 2015. The GMOC has directed the public engagement process of the restudies since inception. The GMOC reviews the restudy recommendations from a high level, non-granular perspective, emphasizing consistency among the restudies, sustainability and economic vitality. Unlike prior area restudies, however, the Board directed that staff, rather than appointed committees, provide recommendations to the Board covering each of the four areas.

The White Paper, Attachment B, provides the summary of findings underlying the revisions to Goals, Objectives, Policies and Land Use Designation Descriptions within the IAMP. The White Paper was presented to the Board on June 26, 2018. At that time, the Board directed staff to initiate the GMP Amendment process for the proposed changes to the IAMP.

The Immokalee Urban area, surrounded by the rural agricultural area designated as the Rural Lands Stewardship Area, is a region of about 30 square miles containing ±17,116 acres of land; it is located in northeast Collier County, approximately 30 miles from the coastal urban area.

More than half of the land use type within the Immokalee Urban area is presently agricultural. The remainder is a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial uses. Immokalee is accessed from the south and east by its major roadway, Immokalee Road (CR 846). State Road 29 provides access into the community from the northern counties of Lee and Hendry and to the southeast areas of Collier County (see below aerial map depicting the Immokalee Urban boundary).



A Brief History:

The Collier County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted the Immokalee Area Master Plan (IAMP) in 1991. The Master Plan, with the accompanying Immokalee Area Future Land Use Map, provides a framework for development of the Immokalee Community. The Board of County Commissioners adopted a revised IAMP in 1997, based upon the 1996 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (a State-mandated thorough review of the entire GMP). During 2003, the BCC authorized Comprehensive Planning staff to prepare recommendations for revising the 1997 IAMP. Subsequently, the Board authorized creation of an advisory committee, the Immokalee Area Master Plan Restudy Committee (Restudy Committee), to work with staff in making proposed revisions to the IAMP.

The Restudy Committee, assisted by Comprehensive Planning staff, submitted recommendations to amend the IAMP in November 2003. However, during the performance of its tasks, the Committee determined that a longer, more intense restudy of the IAMP was necessary. Therefore, the IAMP Restudy Committee expressed a desire to extend the life of the Committee so that it could continue to assist the Board with the implementation the IAMP. The re-established Committee was renamed as the Immokalee Area Master Plan and Visioning Committee (IMPVC).

The Committee worked for over a four-year period conducting public meetings, collecting and analyzing data, and drafting revisions to the IAMP. Hearings on the proposed amendments commenced in January 2010 with transmittal to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (predecessor to DEO) occurring in September 2010. Adoption hearings followed, beginning in January 2011. Through the adoption phase, the BCC directed the Collier County Supervisor of Elections to place a straw ballot referendum on the August 2012 ballot for the purpose of measuring the Immokalee community support for the proposed amendments. The referendum resulted in the majority of voters (67%) in favor of the amendments. At the BCC's final adoption hearing on the proposed amendments, one Commissioner abstained, and the final vote was 3-1 for approval (adoption). Because a minimum of four affirmative votes was required, the proposed IAMP amendments failed to be adopted.

Through the current IAMP restudy process, staff and the Immokalee community honored the extensive work that had taken place in the previous amendment effort. The final IAMP document presented to the BCC was used as a starting point for further consideration. The community's work and additional refinement of their plan is reflected in Attachment A (and Resolution Exhibit A).

Immokalee's Vision:

Through the County's public outreach during the Immokalee Area Master Plan restudy process, it is clear that the residents of Immokalee see new possibilities for their community with the development of this Master Plan. With this new Master Plan, Immokalee has chosen to focus on opportunities rather than challenges. Immokalee is committed to redefining its future, revitalizing its community, and developing a new mission that focuses on strengthening and diversifying its economy, embracing cultural diversity, and welcoming visitors to "this place we call home."

During the 2018 public workshop process, residents and business owners established a guiding community vision. It is the intent to implement this vision through the Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Master Plan. The community defined their vision as:

"Immokalee is a family-oriented community that supports a healthy lifestyle. It is attractive, environmentally sustainable and offers a full range of housing, recreation and education opportunities to meet all residents' needs. Immokalee has a safe, well-connected network to walk and bicycle about town, as well as a roadway network needed to support the transport of goods and services. Business and job opportunities flourish in trade and distribution, agribusiness, and ecotourism."

Major Changes:

In general, the amendments to the IAMP propose seven new goals, each with respective objectives and policies; followed by the revised Land Use Designation Description Section. The revised goals simplify but maintain the original intent of the existing adopted goals. During each public workshop, staff reviewed with the public the adopted and proposed goals to measure the continued support for the proposed goals. There was overwhelming consensus and a preference to move forward with the proposed goals. The Immokalee Area Master Plan has been developed to emphasize identified opportunities and strengths. The first goal specifically makes economic development a priority, and the

objectives and policies set forth specific ways to promote the local economy and create a positive business climate.

The second goal focuses on quality neighborhoods for Immokalee. The objectives and policies set forth a process for the community to evaluate the needs and opportunities of each neighborhood. Future neighborhood improvements such as housing conditions, water management, transportation, lighting and play areas, are possibilities to elevate the quality of life for Immokalee residents.

The third goal addresses infrastructure and public services. Partnering with the Immokalee CRA, a list of capital improvement projects will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners at their annual CRA workshop.

The fourth goal addresses the significant natural resources within the Immokalee Urban Area and the desire to support and promote ecotourism opportunities.

Land use is an integral component of any master plan. The fifth goal defines the land use designations applicable to Immokalee, as illustrated on the Immokalee Future Land Use Map. Mixed-use, pedestrian-scaled development is important, as is allowing development in appropriate locations, at densities and intensities that will attract new development.

Urban form and design are addressed in the sixth goal. The objectives and policies are generally concerned with how to create a theme or brand for Immokalee, provide safe multi-modal transportation, and develop site design and development standards appropriate for Immokalee, rather than continuing to apply standards developed for coastal Collier.

The seventh and last goal, is concerned with interlocal and intergovernmental coordination, to address current service issues and to continue collaboration with appropriate organizations in the future.

Consistent with the Board's direction to evaluate and consider land use, economic vitality, transportation and natural resources, the following are some of the major changes proposed:

Land Use and Economic Vitality

- The re-designation of the lands within the boundary of the Immokalee Regional Airport from Industrial (ID) to Immokalee Regional Airport Subdistrict (APO).
- A re-designation of approximately 684 acres of residential lands proposed to support commercial or industrial development:
 - ±122 acres to allow commercial development. Intensity of development is proposed to remain as allowed in the existing IAMP: C-1 through C-4 uses,
 - ±362 acres to allow industrial mixed-use development, and
 - ±200 acres to allow Recreational Tourist development.
- No changes in base density except for an increase in the Commercial Mixed-Use District (12 to 16 units per acre), and affordable housing bonus previously approved by the BCC (bonus increased from 8 to 12 units per acre maximum).
- Allow new uses on properties zoned (A) Rural Agricultural, within the Low Residential Subdistrict, including agriculture research and development facilities, agribusiness offices and headquarters, and facilities, offices, headquarters and apparatuses associated with alternative energy uses. These new uses will be subject to Land Development Code Amendments to define compatibility criteria and development standards.

Table 1 below illustrates the proposed changes to FLUM designations.

Table 1: FLUM designation changes.

Existing FLUM Designations		Proposed FLUM Designations	
URBAN-MIXED USE DISTRICT		URBAN-MIXED USE DISTRICT	
LR	Low Residential	LR	Low Residential
MR	Mixed Residential	MR	<i>Medium Residential</i>
HR	High Residential	HR	High Residential
NC	Neighborhood Center		<i>Eliminated</i>
CC-MU	Commerce Center-Mixed-Use		<i>Eliminated</i>
PUD	Planned Unit Development Commercial		<i>Eliminated</i>
RT	Recreational Tourist	RT	Recreational/Tourist
		CMU	Commercial-Mixed Use (<i>new</i>)
URBAN-COMMERCIAL DISTRICT		<i>Eliminated</i>	
C Commercial – SR 29 and Jefferson Ave.		<i>Eliminated</i>	
URBAN - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT		URBAN - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT	
ID	Industrial	IN	Industrial
CC-I	Commerce Center - Industrial	I-MU	<i>Industrial-Mixed Use (new)</i>
BP	Business Park		<i>Eliminated</i>
		APO	Immokalee Regional Airport (<i>new</i>)

The changes in land use designations are reflected on the attached Map 1, IAMP FLUM – Existing vs Proposed.

In addition to these substantive land use changes, two specific opportunities were identified as important to the community to explore: 1) an Immokalee civic center, and 2) a satellite Emergency Operations Center to activate in the event of an emergency.

Transportation

- Collier County will initiate a transportation planning study with recommendations to identify potential routes to improve connectivity of the collector and local street grid, to expand public transit service, and bicycle and pedestrian access.

In addition to the IAMP supporting the MPO’s Long Range Transportation improvements for Immokalee, the IAMP also recognizes the need for local street improvements, and incentives to bring private roads up to County standards.

Natural Resources

- Re-configuration of the boundary of the Wetlands Connected To Lake Trafford/Camp Keais Strand System Overlay (see attached Map 1).

The boundary of the Wetlands Connected To Lake Trafford/Camp Keais Strand System Overlay (LT/CKSSO) was adopted as part of the 2007 GMP amendments. As part of this change, policies were added to the Conservation and Coastal Management Element (CCME) to increase the native vegetation retention requirements. Subsequent analysis by staff yielded a different, more accurate boundary of this wetland. The revised boundary is part of this amendment petition.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (GMOC) RECOMMENDATION

At its meeting on September 6, 2018, the GMOC found the IAMP recommendations consistent with public participation direction, supportive of sustainability and economic vitality and, so far as known, consistent with other restudy planning efforts.

IMMOKALEE CRA ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

At its meeting on November 28, 2018, the Immokalee CRA Advisory Board agreed unanimously to recommend approval to transmit the proposed amendments, with two suggested changes as underlined below:

- 1) Policy 2.1.1 – Within two (2) years...to identify opportunities, including but not limited to, to improve neighborhood recreation...
- 2) Policy 3.3.4 – Recognizing that a significant segment...improve connectivity of collector and local street grid to public transit service, evacuation, and bicycle and pedestrian access.

Staff agrees with the intent of the language additions; however, after discussing Policy 3.3.4 with Emergency Management staff, it was determined that the word “evacuation” has potential legal implications associated with hurricane evacuation that were not specifically intended. CRA Advisory Board members’ discussion of the policy was more focused on the need for alternative routes in case of a car crash, fire, or other emergency in an area with limited access. Staff recommends replacing the word “evacuation” with “public safety.”

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Board should consider the following criteria in making its decision: “plan amendments shall be based on relevant and appropriate data and an analysis by the local government that may include but not be limited to, surveys, studies, community goals and vision, and other data available at the time of adoption of the plan amendment. To be based on data means to react to it in an appropriate way and to the extent necessary indicated by the data available on that particular subject at the time of adoption of the plan or plan amendment at issue.” 163.3177(1)(f), FS The County Attorney’s office reviewed the staff report on . [SAS]

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Collier County Planning Commission, acting as the Land Planning Agency and the Environmental Advisory Council, forward the proposed IAMP amendments to the Board of County Commissioners with a recommendation to Transmit to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, subject to revising Policy 3.3.4 to replace the word “evacuation” with “public safety.” [see above comment]

Attachments:

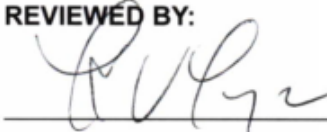
- Attachment A: Substantive text changes to the previously proposed (2011) amendments
- Map 1: IAMP FLUM – Existing vs. Proposed
- Attachment B: IAMP Restudy White Paper
- Resolution with Exhibit A: Text and map changes

PREPARED BY:


ANITA JENKINS, AICP, PRINCIPAL PLANNER
COMMUNITY PLANNING SECTION, ZONING DIVISION

DATE: 1/10/19

REVIEWED BY:


KRIS VAN LENGEN, AICP, COMMUNITY PLANNING MANAGER
COMMUNITY PLANNING SECTION, ZONING DIVISION

DATE: 1/10/19

REVIEWED BY:


DAVID WEEKS, AICP, GROWTH MANAGEMENT MANAGER
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SECTION, ZONING DIVISION


DATE: 1/10/19

REVIEWED BY:


MIKE BOSI, AICP, DIRECTOR, ZONING DIVISION

DATE: 1-10-19

APPROVED BY:


JAMES FRENCH, DEPUTY DEPARTMENT HEAD
GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

DATE: 1-11-19

PETITION NO. PL20180002258/CPSP-2018-5
Staff Report for the January 31, 2019, CCPC Meeting.