



DeSoto
COUNTY FL

DESOTO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CASE#: COMP-0015-2025

REQUEST: County-Initiated Text Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element

APPLICANT: DeSoto County Government

PROPERTY ID: NA

PROPERTY ADDRESS: NA

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW REPORT

The following are proposed amendments to the DeSoto County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element related to the existing Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use and Urban Center Mixed Use categories. The proposed amendment to both land use designations increases the maximum residential density to encourage more affordable housing in these designated areas of the county that are in proximity to infrastructure and services.

Specifically, in the Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use designation, the amendment is to allow a base density maximum of up to 5 dwelling units per acre (instead of 3.5 du/ac) and the bonus density of up to 12 du/ac (instead of 5 du/ac maximum). Also, in the Urban Center Mixed Use Future Land Use designation, the amendment is to allow a bonus density of up to 16 du/acre (instead of 8 du/ac maximum).

Other changes provide additional policy clarification and include other supporting amendments that address potential compatibility issues with allowing greater density.

I. BACKGROUND

DeSoto County's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element has a variety of Future Land Use Map designations, providing for residential and non-residential development. The designations also allow a variety of residential densities (dwelling units per acre) and non-residential intensities (floor-area-ratio of land area to building area). The Future Land Use Element also allows for the approval of Bonus Density, as contained in Policy 1.1.4. The higher densities can be found to be appropriate when developing in proximity to public infrastructure, proposing designs that protect environmentally sensitive areas,

providing increased open and public recreational spaces, and other exceptional design components, that help to balance the higher densities with designs that are determined to be more community oriented and efficient to serve.

Maximum residential densities vary in the County from the Rural / Agricultural designation at 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, to more suburban-type densities with Low and Medium Density Residential up to 2 and 3.5 dwelling units per acre respectively (up to 3.5 and 5 dwelling units per acre respectively if they meet Bonus Density criteria). Neighborhood Mixed Use and Urban Center Mixed Use designations allow up to 3.5 and 5 dwelling units per acre respectively (up to 5 and 8 dwelling units per acre respectively if they meet Bonus Density criteria). Despite having a process for the Board to authorize a bonus density, the density allowances have not been high enough to attract affordable housing to the areas that are most efficient to serve. Proposed are changes to increase the density of the Neighborhood Mixed Use and Urban Center Mixed Use future land use categories.

The Urban Center Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use categories appear to be the best areas to offer higher bonus densities, as development in these areas are primarily residential uses in progressive degrees of urban intensity with higher density in areas adjacent to or within the Urban Center and less density/intensity in areas adjacent to the Low and Medium Density Residential and Rural/Agricultural categories. These areas generally have adequate central water and sewer systems, stormwater management facilities, and public paved roadways. The location of the Urban Center Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use areas are normally at major collector and arterial road intersections, where such crossroads act as village and hamlet town centers. See the following map graphic, DeSoto County FLUM with Subject Areas and Communities.

DeSoto County FLUM with Subject Areas and Communities



Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Designation

The proposed change to the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation is to allow a base density maximum of up to 5 dwelling units per acre (instead of 3.5 du/ac) and a bonus density of up to 12 du/ac (instead of 5 du/ac maximum).

The Neighborhood Mixed Use future land use category is concentrated in several locations throughout the unincorporated areas in the County, as shown on the map graphic, DeSoto County FLUM with Subject Areas and Communities.

- Area A is in N Central County, on the north side of SR 70 and east of the City of Arcadia. This is also known as the City of Arcadia Urban Expansion Area.
- Area B is in south central county on US 17 at all quadrants of the intersection with CR 760 / Wells Road. This is also known as the Nocatee Community.
- Area C is in southeast county along Gilchrist / Hull Avenue and US 17 intersection, and extending south along US 17, in the vicinity of the CR 761 intersection. This area is known as the Ft Ogden Community.
- Area D is the smallest concentration of this designation and is in southwest county on Kings Highway, just north of the CR 761 intersection.

Areas A, B, and C are represented on Map FLUEMS-7 (see exhibits), Existing Community Overlap Map (see Exhibit C). Area D has no specific community associated with it.

There are 969 parcels within the Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Designation, with a total of +/- 5,062 acres. Out of the 969 parcels, roughly half, or 531 parcels, are utilized per the Property Appraiser with various types of development. The other parcels are either vacant, in some type of agricultural use, or do not have an assigned use per the Property Appraiser. Most uses are residential with a wide range of uses existing in smaller numbers, including churches, County properties, office, public schools, repair services, stores, utilities, warehouse, etc., in this Future Land Use Map category which allows mixed uses.

Urban Center Mixed Use Future Land Use Designation

The proposed change to the Urban Center Mixed Use designations is to maintain maximum base density of 5 dwelling units per acre but allow a maximum bonus density of up to 16 du/ac (instead of 8 du/ac maximum). The Urban Center Mixed Use land use category is concentrated in several locations throughout the unincorporated areas in the county, as shown on the DeSoto County FLUM with Subject Areas and Communities map graphic:

- Area E is in the west-northwest area of the county around the convergence of SR 70, SR 72, and CR 661.
- Area F is adjacent to Area A in N Central County, on the north side of SR 70 and east of the City of Arcadia. This is also known as the City of Arcadia Urban Expansion Area.
- Area G is in southwest county along US 17 and is known as New Community 2 on the FLUEMS-8 Map (see exhibits).
- Area H is in south central county along SR 31. It is known as New Community 1 on the FLUEMS-8 Map (see exhibits).

There are 386 parcels within the Urban Center Mixed Use Future Land Use Designation, with a total of +/- 7,293 acres. The parcels are made up of a variety of land uses.

Issue

Most new single-family residential subdivisions in the county are developed with relatively low densities (dwelling units per acre). The most common are the minor subdivisions (6 lots or less) and larger scale PUD zoned developments by major developers.

For minor subdivisions, the lots can be larger (e.g., 5, 10 acres or greater) and can be as small as ½ acre if they meet the zoning requirements and any utility requirements by the State for well and septic.

Most larger scale tract single-family residential home builders prefer major subdivisions of 200 + units with 1.5 to 2 dwelling units per gross acre in private, gated communities and have PUD zoning. This low density is typically due to the likely presence of wetlands, typical sizing of infrastructure (e.g., roadway widths, etc.), providing amenities, the requirements of open space, buffers, setbacks, and stormwater ponds.

While both subdivision types are common, both types of lower density development can be financially challenging for the local government to serve in terms of revenue earned versus the cost of providing services and infrastructure. As an example, this is especially true when it comes to transportation capacities and the amount of driving (commute times, lane miles utilized per capita, etc.) that future residents and service providers will use in daily life. Development that is not in proximity to employment and services can create a need for more road improvements for the County and State.

Location and density are critical components to the efficiency of services that are mentioned in the Bonus Density criteria (Policy 1.1.4). Here, there are some guidelines that help prevent greater densities and intensities in less efficient locations. These guidelines include proximity of utilities, public safety, schools, and if the development provides some design features that increase not only the aesthetics and opportunities for its residents but improve the efficiency of services to the community.

Like many communities in the region and throughout the State of Florida, housing is often developed in areas that are not near infrastructure and services, making housing less affordable, which is an issue for the County and its workforce. According to United Way of Florida's 2024 ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Report, which examined data in 2022, DeSoto households that met the ALICE criteria were 41% (state avg. 33%) of the 12,340 households. Meaning, these households are living "paycheck to paycheck" and any unexpected expenses can be traumatic. In DeSoto, twenty-one (21%) percent of households (state avg. 13%) meet the standards for poverty. In the year 2022, a "survival" budget for a single person would mean a budget for rent of a maximum of \$490 and survival budget for rent for a family of 2 adults, one infant, and one preschooler of \$447. This relates to a minimum household income of \$26,544 and \$72,504 respectively. Given the cost increases of housing since 2022 and wage stagnation, these numbers are even more critical to meet.

For 2025, the Area Median Income (AMI) for DeSoto County, FL, is \$64,400 and the following illustrates what thresholds households based upon their income, could qualify for housing programs. Developers that provide housing at these levels and higher levels (e.g., 80-120% AMI) may also be able to qualify for various incentives and financing with various state and federal programs. Most incentive programs are for rental housing.

- Extremely Low-Income (30% AMI):
 - 1 Person: \$15,650
 - 4 Persons: \$32,150
- Very Low-Income (50% AMI):
 - 1 Person: \$24,950

- 4 Persons: \$47,000
- Low-Income (80% AMI):
 - 1 Person: \$39,900
 - 4 Persons: \$56,950

Housing density is a critical component of providing affordable housing. Land values remain and continue to increase in cost. Recent trends show a slight decline in housing and land prices, but overall prices are still high versus wages and make home ownership and rent challenging for the community's workforce. The ability for a developer to provide more dwelling units per acre of property is critical to the ability to provide a greater quantity of housing to the area and potentially some affordable units.

Multi-family developments can provide a greater quantity of affordable housing more efficiently than single-family attached and detached housing due to the limited amount of infrastructure that must be constructed per household (e.g., water lines, sewer lines, new streets, stormwater infrastructure, etc.). Multi-family design concentrates the dwelling units with a minimal amount of infrastructure. Typically, the multi-family buildings are constructed on existing public streets and connect/extend existing utilities to their site. Residents park their vehicles at on-site parking lots and utilize any on-site amenities for recreation. These savings are passed on in the business plan of the development translating to the ability to charge reduced rents. Multi-family rental developments also have more programs available to them in terms of developing affordable housing versus single-family and ownership programs.

Greater density in these specific locations, also provides incentives for developers of market rate ownership-based (non-rental) housing to build in areas that are in closer proximity to services. It also provides the ability for the developer to integrate some affordable units at the desired income levels into their market rate project. In many other jurisdictions, they provide incentives for a minimum percentage of dwelling units (e.g., 25% of units designated as affordable) to be designated affordable and provide the developer a range of incentives to include quicker / priority development review.

As mentioned in the Bonus Density Criteria in Policy 1.1.4, location is not only critical to achieve the bonus density, but it is also critical to the residents. For affordable housing developers, the lower costs to develop (locate on existing roads, utilizes, etc.) are extended to the price of the rent that can be charged to future residents. The location of affordable housing in proximity to services, employment, schools, etc., also adds to the affordability of maintaining a household budget, especially if one fewer automobile per household can be achieved.

The current maximum densities provided for in the DeSoto County Comprehensive Plan are relatively low and more rural or suburban oriented. When property is located near services and infrastructure, higher densities should be considered and may help to encourage housing that is more attainable for residents and the workforce. According to the National Association of Home Builders, [How Zoning Regulations Affect Affordable Housing](#), Nov. 11, 2024, "... implementing zoning reforms that encourage higher-

density developments and reduce bureaucratic barriers will create a more accessible housing landscape.”

The Bonus Density Criteria covers factors of location, proximity of services, design, efficiency to serve, etc. Future land development applications proposing to utilize the bonus density must submit a design and analysis stating how their project meets these criteria. The applications, site plan, and analysis will be reviewed by the County staff and the Board of County Commissioners can approve or deny these projects as these developments will require a public hearing.

II. RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS APPROVING FOR TRANSMITTAL TO ALL REQUIRED ENTITIES A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT TO AMEND POLICY 1.1.2, THE LAND USE SUMMARY TABLE, POLICY 1.1.3 AND POLICY 1.1.4, RELATED TO DENSITY AND INTENSITY BONUS CRITERIA; POLICIES 1.6.3, 1.6.5, AND 1.6.9 IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY TO INCREASE THE BASE AND BONUS DENSITY MAXIMUMS; TO OBJECTIVE 1.9, POLICY 1.9.1, 1.9.2, AND 1.9.8 CORRECTING THE NAME OF THE URBAN CENTER MIXED USE LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR CONSISTENCY; POLICY 1.9.1 RELATED TO DENSITY AND INTENSITY, POLICY 1.9.2 ADDING MANUFACTURED HOMES AS AN ALLOWABLE USE, POLICY 1.9.4 RELATED TO UTILITY CONNECTION REQUIREMENTS, POLICY 1.9.9 IN THE URBAN CENTER MIXED USE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY TO INCREASE THE BONUS DENSITY MAXIMUM, AND ADD NEW POLICIES 1.14.9 AND 1.14.10 TO PROVIDE CLARIFICATION OF COMPATIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

III. PROPOSED CHANGES

The following updates are proposed and highlighted in yellow below for the Land Use Summary Table and related policies, which serves as a quick reference guide for staff and the public to understand the minimum and maximum densities (dwelling units per acre – abbreviated as du/acre) and intensities (Floor to Area Ratio – abbreviated as FAR) by land use category.

Policy 1.1.2: Land Use Categories Summary. The County shall implement the following land use categories as shown on the Future Land Use Map:

Land Use	Base Density/Intensity	Bonus* (Policy 1.1.3)
<i>Rural/Agriculture</i>	<i>Residential – Up to 1 du/10 acres Non-residential – Up to 0.4 FAR maximum</i>	No bonus
<i>Low-Density Residential</i>	<i>Residential – Up to 2 du/acre Non-residential – Up to 0.4 FAR</i>	<i>3.5 du/ac maximum* 1.0 FAR maximum</i>

Land Use	Base Density/Intensity	Bonus* (Policy 1.1.3)
Medium-Density Residential	Residential – Up to 3.5 du/acre	5 du/ac maximum *
Neighborhood (Live/Work) Mixed Use	Residential – Up to 3.5 5 du/acre Non-residential – Up to 0.4 FAR	5 <u>12</u> du/ac maximum* 0.6 FAR maximum*
Employment Center	Non-residential – Up to 0.5 FAR	Non-residential – Up to 0.7 FAR 0.7 FAR maximum*
Urban Central Center Mixed Use	Residential – Up to 5 du/acre Non-residential – Up to 0.6 FAR	8 <u>16</u> du/acre maximum 2.0 FAR maximum
Commercial	Non-residential- Up to 0.25 FAR	Non-residential – Up to 0.35 FAR maximum*
Public Land and Institutions	Publicly and semi-publicly owned lands that are effectively controlled from developing into a typical residential density or private non-residential land use not involved in service to the public. Examples include park, correctional facilities, sewer plants, etc.	
Electrical Generating Facility	This land use category is intended for electrical power generating facilities, w h i c h includes electric power plants and related facilities. This public service use includes directly related facilities for the production of electricity.	
Preservation	Dedicated by plat, site plan, easement or similar designation; permanently protected environmentally sensitive lands that may only be utilized for limited passive recreation.	
Overlays	Conservation: Limited development subject to environmental analysis and protection of natural resources. Reverts to underlying future land use category if not in conservation area.	
	Generalized Phosphate Mining: Areas identified as having the highest potential for phosphate mining based on soil types and recognized mineral deposits.	
Master Planned Area	Identified and planned larger projects that must be developed as a whole. They are identified to ensure overall community/county integration and vision is achieved, versus isolated islands of development.	

Note: This is a summary table, please check associated policies for specific regulations as some land use categories have additional requirements.

The following policies summarize the criteria for awarding density bonuses.

Policy 1.1.3 has been updated for consistency with the proposed changes to the specific land use policies and the title and policy has been amended clarifying that the policy covers the density *and* intensity.

Policy 1.1.3: Density Unit and Intensity Bonus Limits. *The Land Development Regulations shall require that Planned Developments developments seeking bonus density and/or intensity meet the and include performance criteria for density bonuses within the various future land use categories, up to the following levels:*

- (1) Low-Density Residential Use - Up to 3.5 dwelling units per acre and up to a 1.0 FAR.*
- (2) Medium-Density Residential Use - Up to 5 dwelling units per acre*
- (3) Neighborhood Mixed Use – Up to ~~5~~ 12 dwelling units per acre and up to 0.6 FAR*
- (4) Employment Center- up to 1.2 FAR*
- (5) Urban Center Mixed Use – Up to ~~8~~ 16 dwelling units per acre; up to 1.6 FAR*

Policy 1.1.4 contains language requiring the establishment of a bonus point schedule for the Land Development Regulations (LDR) but was never created. The staff currently provides an analysis of the application versus the bonus density criteria and determines if the proposed application meets the criteria and to what extent. Therefore, the bonus point language is proposed to be removed from policy 1.1.4 in reflection of the current application of the criteria. The County has never incorporated a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) ordinance into its Land Development Regulations, therefore this reference has been removed. Requiring donation of private land to the public / County is inconsistent with case law related to planning. This has also been removed.

Policy 1.1.4: Density and Intensity Bonus Criteria. *~~A bonus point schedule shall be established within the Land Development Regulations.~~ The Land Development Regulations shall provide criteria for the award of bonus density and intensity which ~~schedule~~ shall give consideration to the performance criteria listed below as a minimum:*

- (1) Provisions and proximity to public infrastructure (water, sewer, urban roads)*
- (2) Proximity to public safety (Fire/EMS)*
- (3) Proximity to schools*
- (4) Use of clustering and protection of environmentally sensitive areas*
- (5) Increased urban design and landscaping*
- (6) Increased public recreation and open space*
- (7) Affordable Housing*
- (8) Mixed use developments and mixed use buildings*
- (9) Adjacent to lands developed with similar densities*

- (10) Connectivity between developments*
- ~~(11) Donation of usable public land~~*
- (11) Use of multiple performance criteria to achieve higher densities*
- (12) Use of compatibility techniques in Policies 1.14.9 and 1.14.10*
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's)*

The following changes clarify industrial uses are *light* industrial only. It also clarified the applicability of bonus intensity at a level more consistent with economic development needs.

Policy 1.6.3: Neighborhood Mixed Use Category Uses. *A sustainable mix of community serving general commercial uses, recreation, and public uses will be encouraged within the Neighborhood Mixed Use village. Light Industrial uses will also be allowed in this category when they can be of a large enough size and scope to be properly buffered and designed to minimize impacts and maximize compatibility. Light industrial Industrial uses shall be reviewed only as part of the PUD or Special Exception process when consistent with zoning requirements.*

Policy 1.6.5(6) has been added to clarify the maximum base density and additional density if a proposal is consistent with the Bonus Density criteria. The changes also make Subsection (5), the minimum density requirement, easier to understand as there was a requirement to have a minimum density of 3.5 du/ac and a maximum base density of 3.5 du/ac, which could be challenging to achieve for any development. It is now proposed to have a maximum base density of 5 dwelling units per acre and maximum bonus density of 12 dwelling units per acre.

Policy 1.6.5: Areas designated but not located within one of the existing Community overlays shall comply with the following standards:

- (1) A minimum of 30% of a neighborhood mixed use village area shall be for non-residential uses (Industrial, Commercial, Public, and Institutional);*
- (2) The Floor Area Ratio within designated areas shall be limited to a floor area ratio of 0.4.*
- (3) A minimum of 30% of a Neighborhood Mixed Use village area shall be for residential uses;*
- (4) In order to achieve a mixture of housing products, all projects within the village shall include a minimum of ten (10) percent multifamily dwelling units.*
- (5) A minimum density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre is required within a Neighborhood Mixed Use village.*
- (6) A maximum base density of 5 dwelling units per acre is permitted and up to 12 dwelling units per acre if Bonus Density Criteria are met per Policy 1.1.4.*

Policy 1.6.9 has been amended to clarify the maximum base density and additional density if a proposal is consistent with the Bonus Density criteria. However, staff reports include an analysis for consistency with these standards but there is no points system in the Land Development Regulations.

Policy 1.6.9: *Each village shall have a village center. The village center shall be designed as a shopping center to include uses such as grocery anchor, restaurants, office and general retail. Vertical mixed-use buildings are encouraged. ~~Bonus points for intensity shall be determined within the Land Development Regulations.~~*

The complete name of the land use category, Urban Center Mixed Use, has not been used consistently creating confusion. The following changes make the name consistent in the plan. Urban Center Mixed Use is a more intense land use district that allows mixed uses, as described in the introduction. The following changes clarify utilities connections, densities, and intensities (FAR). A proposed increase in bonus density is recommended.

Objective 1.9: *Urban Center Mixed Use Land Use Category Defined. The Urban Center Mixed Use land use category promotes multiple types of land uses in a pattern of transitioning intensities around historic commerce centers and for future mixed-use Communities.*

MEASUREABLE TARGET: *Measurements analogous to those described for Objective 1.8 with the exception of residential density considerations in mixed use.*

Policy 1.9.1: *Urban Center Mixed Use Land Use Category Location. The following criteria shall be used for assigning new areas for the Urban Center Mixed Use Land Use Category.*

- (1) The Urban Center Mixed Use land use category is expected to capture the most intensive uses and shall therefore be served by high-capacity transportation systems.*
- (2) The character of the Urban Center Mixed Use land use category is a mixture of non-residential uses providing retail and service support to the community as a whole, interspersed with higher intensity residential uses to create a vibrant and diverse urban atmosphere.*
- (3) Because this category is served by high-capacity transportation systems, development in this category can support a substantial regional commercial center, forming the basis of a “Town Center” type of community.*
- (4) The intensive Urban Center Mixed Use land use category areas shall be located where infrastructure includes central water and sewer systems, stormwater management systems, and major paved public streets or highways.*

- (5) *Expansion of the Urban Center Mixed Use land use category area shall only be adjacent to other Urban Center Mixed Use categories, unless justification for relocation of Urban Center Mixed Use uses or an entire new Urban Center Mixed Use area, at an appropriate scale to serve the surrounding area, can be demonstrated with a market study.*
- (6) *Direct access to collector or arterial roads shall be required for ~~high-density~~ residential development greater than 5 dwelling units per acre (~~5-8 dwelling units per acre~~), unless located within a mixed-use planned unit development.*

Policy 1.9.2: Urban Center Mixed Use Land Use Category Uses. *Multiple types of land uses, such as commercial, office, institutional, manufactured homes, multi-family, duplexes, attached single family, and single-family, in a pattern of transitioning intensities around historic commerce centers and within other existing or proposed activity nodes. Light Industrial uses, such as enclosed manufacturing and warehousing, office and other workforce uses, will also be allowed in this category when they can be of a large enough size and scope to be properly buffered and designed to minimize impacts and maximize compatibility.*

The Urban Center Mixed Use land use designation is concentrated in several locations throughout the unincorporated areas in the county, as shown on the previous graphic as areas E through H. Area E is *not part* of the City of Arcadia Urban Expansion Area, New Community 1, or New Community 2. Policy 1.9.3 covers the City of Arcadia Urban Expansion Area, New Community 1, and New Community 2. The policy has specific regulations related to mix of uses, density, and intensity as illustrated in the tables. These amendments do not change those portions of the policy. Future amendments may be required to develop these New Community areas greater than indicated in the tables.

Area F is part of the City of Arcadia Urban Expansion Area. As a comparison of the proposed increases in density and intensity, the City of Arcadia has the following land use categories and maximum densities/intensities that are adjacent to Area F.

- Low Density Residential – 6 du/ac max
- Medium Density Residential – 14 du/ac max
- High Density Residential – 30 du/ac max
- Mixed Use Business – 14 du/ac max
- Business – 3.0 FAR max
- Public Building and Grounds – 3.0 FAR Max

According to Map FLUEMS-7 (see exhibits), the areas adjacent (north and east) of the City are designated Urban Center Mixed Use which has a base maximum density of 5 du/ac and a bonus density maximum of 12 (proposed to be increased to 16 du/ac). Comparing the City's Future Land Use Map and the County's in the Urban Expansion Area, west of US 17 is designated Rural / Agricultural on County's land use map.

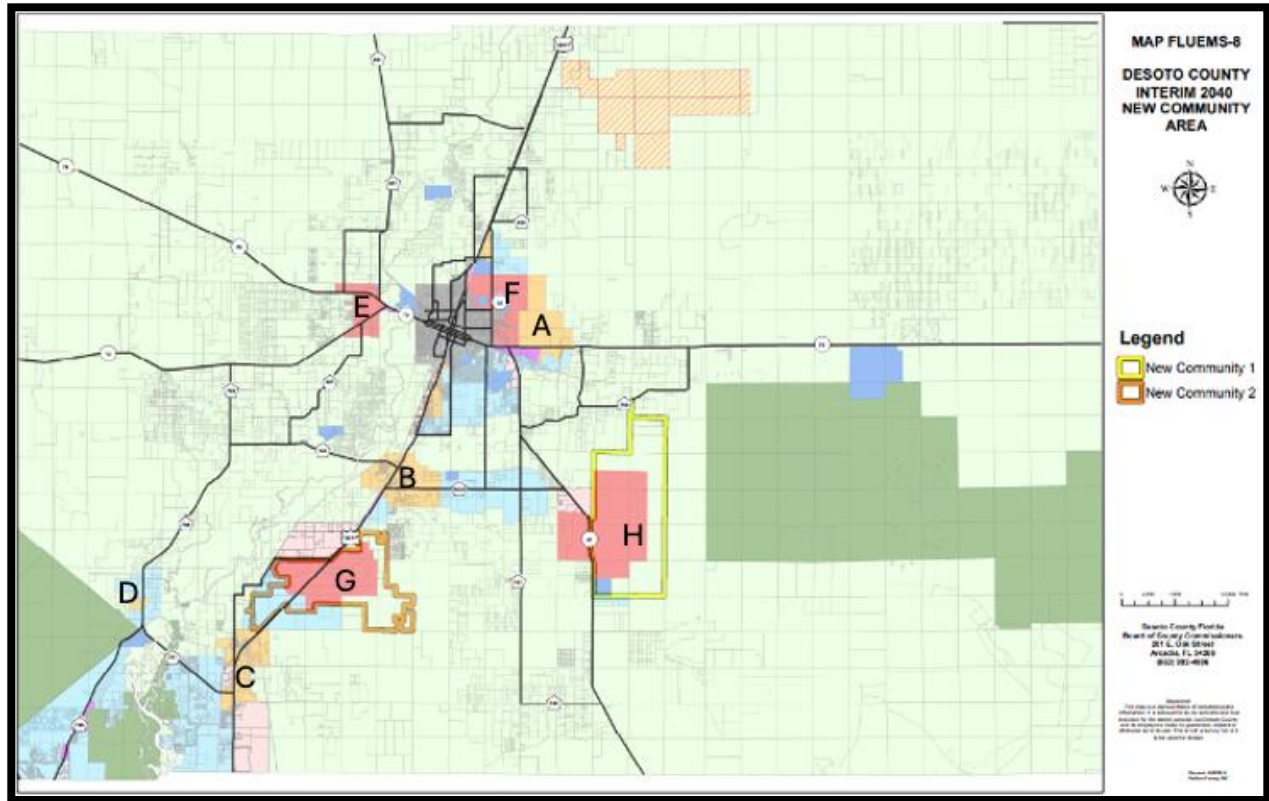
The area along the south side of the City's golf course to NE Roan Street is designated by the City as Rec and Open Space (golf course), Industrial, Business, and Medium Density Residential, with appropriate buffering by new development in the county, could be generally compatible with adjacent development (subject to County staff review of specific development applications).

Policy 1.9.3: *A mixture of uses shall be provided within the Urban Center Mixed Use category. The mix shall be regulated by each Special Community as depicted in **Maps FLUEMS-7 and FLUEMS-8** that include the Urban Center Mixed Use future land use designation as follows:*

Arcadia Urban Expansion Area:

<i>General Use</i>	<i>Density/ Intensity</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Non-Residential Uses</i>	<i>0.6 FAR</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Residential Uses</i>	<i>8 du/ac</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Light Industrial</i>	<i>0.6 FAR</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>

According to Map FLUEMS-8 New Community Area (see following graphic), there is an overlap between the Urban Center Mixed Use Areas G and H and the new communities. There are other Future Land Use Classifications within these areas as well. Area G is within New Community 2 and Area H is within New Community 1.



New Community 1 & New Community 2

General Use	Density/ Intensity	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Non-Residential Uses (General)</i>	<i>0.6 FAR</i>		
<i>1-Regional Scale Commercial Centers/Village Center (Limit 1 Regional Scale Center per New Community)</i>		<i>250,000 gross leasable sq. ft.</i>	<i>750,000 gross leasable sq. ft.</i>
<i>Community Scale Commercial Centers (Limit 1-Community Scale Center per Village)</i>			<i>250,000 gross leasable sq. ft.</i>

General Use	Density/ Intensity	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Neighborhood Scale Commercial Centers (Limit 2-Neighborhood Scale Centers per Village)</i>			<i>20,000 gross leasable sq. ft.</i>
<i>Residential Uses Each Village (minimum size for each Village)</i>	<i>8 du/ac</i>	<i>3,000 dwelling units</i>	<i>5,000 dwelling units</i>

Specific standards and principles to guide the development and mix of uses within each of these New Communities are provided in Goal 4, Future Land Use Element.

Policy 1.9.4: *All development within the Urban Center Mixed Use category shall connect to ~~existing~~ centralized public water and wastewater facilities consistent with the County's Utility Ordinance (Ord. 2021-14), as amended.*

Policy 1.9.8: *The Urban Center Mixed Use land use designation west of the Peace River shall be limited to a total of 600 dwelling units within the designated boundary.*

Policy 1.9.9: *The maximum density permitted for new projects within the Urban Center Mixed Use category shall be 5 dwelling units per acre and maximum intensity of 0.6 FAR. Subject to approval by the Board of County Commissioners, projects meeting the criteria in Policy 1.1.4 and the applicable Land Development Regulations related to bonuses may receive bonus density up to a maximum of 16 dwelling units per acre and bonus intensity up to a maximum of 2.0 FAR.*

According to DeSoto County online GIS mapping, Area G is also within a Development of Regional Impact. This is indicated in the outlined area in yellow on the following map graphic, which is an attempt to overlay the critical elements found the FLUM, FLUEMS-7 and FLUEMS-8 maps (also in exhibits). This is an approved Development of Regional Impact (DRI). Amending the FLUM does not change the overall entitlements granted to the DRI. However, if the property owner wanted to amend the DRI or seek an alternative development approval, they could apply and be considered for additional density subject to Board approval.

The County does not have any policies or restricts (outside of FAA requirements) for building heights. The following new policies are proposed to provide some direction and improve chances for findings of compatibility to include the relationship of adjacent uses and building height. Policy 1.14.9 provides some techniques to improve compatibility between adjacent uses. Policy 1.14.10 reflects buffer and screening requirements but also suggests use of the Planned Unit Development zoning and application review

process which may provide some additional flexibility in meeting compatibility standards.

Policy 1.14.9. A land development application that proposes a use, intensity, height greater than 3 stories, and/or density that could be found incompatible with the use on the adjacent site shall utilize techniques to mitigate potential incompatible characteristics of the proposed use. Such techniques shall include but not be limited to:

- Use of undisturbed or undeveloped and landscaped buffers;
- Use of increased size and opacity of screening, which may include a combination of walls, fences, and landscaping
- Building setbacks and orientation;
- Innovative site design (which may include planned unit development);
- Appropriate building design and varying heights;
- Operational restrictions on the proposed use;
- Site and building noise attenuation techniques; and
- A density and/or intensity below the maximum allowed.

Policy 1.14.10 Developments that propose a use, intensity, height greater than 3 stories, and/or density that could be found incompatible with the use on an adjacent site shall meet, at minimum, the buffer and screening standards requirements of the Land Development Regulations. Projects reviewed through the Planned Unit Development processes may result in additional mitigation requirements to achieve compatibility between typically incompatible land uses.

IV. DATA & ANALYSIS

Section 163.3177(1)(f), Florida Statutes, provides that all mandatory and optional elements of the comprehensive plan and plan amendments shall be based upon 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 comprehensive plan or 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.

The following is a review for consistency with the DeSoto County Comprehensive Plan. Staff has also provided a more detailed *Supportive Data and Analysis Report for County-Initiated Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment COMP-0015-2025*, see Exhibit E, referenced in this report.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed amendment application has been reviewed for consistency with the

following Comprehensive Plan provisions.

Future Land Use Element (FLUE) Provisions

GOAL 1: FUTURE GROWTH. Through 2040, future growth in DeSoto County will be managed using sustainability and smart growth principles to accommodate new growth without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The Future Land Use Element shall be used as a tool to direct the most intensive growth into the urban center and surrounding areas, optimizing services and infrastructure, protecting the rural character of the County, and protecting the environment.

*Consistency analysis: The proposed amendment increasing the density of the Urban Center Mixed Use and the Neighborhood Mixed-Use categories is consistent with this goal. Both categories are located near existing utilities in developing areas served by DeSoto County. Increasing density and concentrating development in these areas is consistent with this goal. Based on the above, it is concluded the amendment can be found **consistent** with this goal.*

Policy 1.1.13: BEBR. The County will ensure that the Future Land Use Map includes adequate amounts of lands to accommodate the medium projected housing growth by the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research for a 10-year and 15-year planning period.

*Consistency analysis: According to UF BEBR, using a Medium population growth, the county's population is expected to grow by approximately 1,000 persons in 25 years (40 persons or 7 dwelling units per year). Using UF BEBR's High projections, the county's population is expected to grow by approximately 6,500 persons in 25 years (260 persons or 102 dwelling units per year). Given the amount of growth and development in the county, the High projection at this point in 2025, is a more reasonable projection. This slower rate of growth provides the County with decades to meet adopted level of service standards. It is also important to acknowledge that Future Land Use designations and their maximum density have little to no impact on the rate or amount of population growth in this case. Most developments do not utilize the maximum development density or intensity available. Based on the above, it is concluded the amendment can be found **consistent** with this policy*

Objective 1.16: Sprawl and Redevelopment. The County shall maintain regulations and procedures to limit the proliferation of urban sprawl and encourage redevelopment and revitalization of blighted areas.

Policy 1.16.1: The County shall encourage infill development within the Urban Center Mixed Use, Employment Center and Neighborhood Mixed Use Areas of the County by:

(1) Increases in densities or intensities of use for infill parcels served by

- adequate public facilities and services.
- (2) Expedition of the permitting process for infill development proposals.
 - (3) Consideration of exceptions to requirements such as minimum lot sizes, minimum setbacks, or minimum parking requirements to provide for residential, affordable residential and economically viable commercial opportunities that are compatible with the adjacent uses.
 - (4) Prioritize public expenditures to areas of higher intensities and densities of use to encourage development to locate where public facilities are more readily and more economically available.
 - (5) Coordination with municipal, county and state transportation facilities to provide adequate levels of service that support higher densities and intensities of development within or adjacent to currently developed areas.

*Consistency analysis: Urban Center Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use Areas are recognized as being in developing and redevelopment areas of the county in proximity to infrastructure and services. Encouragement and incentives are provided via this policy where appropriately located. Concentrating development within these areas potentially increases the efficiency of County services and infrastructure. Based on the above, it is concluded that the amendment can be found **consistent** with this policy and the Supportive Data and Analysis Report.*

FLUE Policy 1.16.2: The County shall direct development to areas where services and facilities are available to accommodate additional growth.

Consistency analysis: Urban Center Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use Areas are in developing areas of the county in proximity to infrastructure and services.

Neighborhood Mixed Use Areas A through C are located directly on roads with County utility lines. Area D is in proximity (approximately 1,300 feet) from the County's Utility Service Area (maximum of 200 feet from existing lines). All development in this category is required to connect to County utilities, per Policy 1.6.7. These areas are in proximity to the County's fire stations, library, and schools. There are parks available to serve these existing and future residents. The proposed amendment to increase the density of the Neighborhood Mixed-Use category is consistent with this policy and the Supportive Data and Analysis Report.

Urban Center Mixed Use Areas F and G are located directly on roads with City (Area F) and County (Area G) utility lines. All development in this category is required to connect to County utilities, per Policy 1.6.7. Area E would be required to extend utilities for development from the City to the east. These areas are in proximity to the City and County's fire stations, library, and schools. There are parks available to serve these existing and future residents.

The proposed amendment to increase the density of the Urban Center Mixed Use and the Neighborhood Mixed-Use category is consistent with this policy and the Supportive Data and Analysis Report.

*Based on the higher BEBR population projections, it is concluded that DeSoto County will have decades to accommodate any impacts generated from the proposed amendment. Based on the above, it is concluded the amendment can be found **consistent** with this policy and the Supportive Data and Analysis Report.*

Objective 1.22: Concurrency Management. DeSoto County shall implement a development review process to ensure that development occurs where public facilities have sufficient capacity to serve the existing population, reservations of approved development orders, and for the needs of the development proposed, based on level-of-service standards as established by the Comprehensive Plan, adopted in accordance with Section 163.3202(1), FS. and implemented through the procedures within the Land Development Regulations.

Consistency analysis: DeSoto County's Comprehensive Plan enforces concurrency management consistent with State requirements (Chapter 163.3180) and those outlined in the LDRs and Comprehensive Plan. All new development will be required to meet these requirements.

*According to UF BEBR, using a Medium population growth, the county's population is expected to grow by approximately 1,000 persons in 25 years (40 persons or 7 dwelling units per year). Using UF BEBR's High projections, the county's population is expected to grow by approximately 6,500 persons in 25 years (260 persons or 102 dwelling units per year). Given the amount of growth and development in the county, the High projection at this point in 2025, is a more reasonable projection. This slower rate of growth provides the County with decades to meet adopted level of service standards. Based on the above, it is concluded the amendment can be found **consistent** with this objective, supporting policies, and the Supportive Data and Analysis Report.*

Objective 3.1: Fort Ogden Community: Vision Statement. The County recognizes the Fort Ogden Community (as designated in the Interim 2040 Existing Community Overlay Map FLUEMS-7 and shall preserve the character of this community as a Rural Settlement.

Consistency analysis: The proposed text amendment increases the maximum base and bonus density in the Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category, which includes the Fort Ogden community. Any proposed development within the Fort Ogden community will be required to be consistent with the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation, this objective and its supporting policies

*addressing planning principles, design standards, and protection of adjacent rural areas. Based on the above, it is concluded that the amendment can be found **consistent** with this objective.*

Objective 3.2: Nocatee Community: Vision Statement. The County recognizes the Nocatee Community (as designated in the Interim 2040 Existing Community Overlay Map FLUEMS-7) and shall preserve the character of this community as a contemporary, mixed use community.

*Consistency analysis: The proposed text amendment increases the maximum base and bonus density in the Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category, which includes Area B - the Nocatee community. Any proposed development within the Nocatee community will be required to be consistent with the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation, this objective and its supporting policies addressing planning principles, design standards, and protection of adjacent rural areas. Based on the above, it is concluded that the amendment can be found **consistent** with this objective.*

Objective 3.3: Arcadia Urban Expansion Area: Vision Statement. The County recognizes the Arcadia Urban Expansion Area (as designated in the Interim 2040 Existing Community Areas Overlay Map FLUEMS-7) and shall guide the development of these lands into compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly neighborhoods connected by areas of permanent open space. The form of new development within the expansion area is intended to extend the historic development patterns of the existing “central city” and to reinforce the vision of Arcadia as a City and not as a central city surrounded by suburban sprawl development.

*Consistency analysis: The proposed text amendment increases the maximum base and bonus density in the Urban Center Mixed Use (Area F) and Neighborhood Mixed Use (Area A) Future Land Use Categories, which includes the Arcadia Urban Expansion Area. Any proposed development within the Arcadia Urban Expansion Area will be required to be consistent with the designations, objectives and supporting policies addressing the area’s philosophy, guiding principles, standards for review, design, TND principles, and street network. Based on the above, it is concluded that the amendment can be found **consistent** with this objective.*

Supportive Data and Analysis Report

Exhibit E is the Supportive Data and Analysis Report, which analyzes the impact of the proposed amendment on the County’s infrastructure and services. The report analyzes the proposed increase in density for this existing land use category versus growth trends, infrastructure, and services provided by the County. In general, the report concludes that this type of mixed-use development, concentrated where utilities and other services exist or are in proximity, is a more efficient option for the County to serve and can help offset

the costs of serving other low-density developments which make up a much larger portion of the county. It helps to discourage urban sprawl and improve opportunities for the development of affordable housing.

IV. PUBLIC NOTICE

Section 163.3184(11)(b), Florida Statutes, establishes the public hearing requirements for local Comprehensive Plan amendments. It provides the local governing body shall hold at least two advertised public hearings on the proposed plan amendment. The first public hearing is held at the transmittal stage. The public hearing must be held on a weekday at least 7 days after the day that the first advertisement is published pursuant to the requirements of chapter 125 or chapter 166. The second public hearing must be held at the adoption stage. That hearing must be held on a weekday at least 5 days after the day that the second advertisement is published pursuant to the requirements of chapter 125 or chapter 166.

Public notice includes advertising the amendment in a newspaper of general circulation in DeSoto County at least 10 days prior to each public hearing for the text amendment. The County has provided evidence that the amendment was noticed at least 10 days before the Planning Commission public hearing. Such notice is filed with the Division and incorporated herein by reference.

Florida Statutes Chapter 163.3184(3) Expedited State Review Process, which outlines the specific process for text amendments to Comprehensive Plans. These proposed amendments will have the following schedule:

- October 07, 2025 – Legislative public hearing by the Planning Commission sitting as the Local Planning Agency
- October 28, 2025– Legislative public hearing with the Board of County Commissioners to consider transmittal of amendment to State.
- To Be Determined - Legislative public hearing with the Board of County Commissioners to consider adoption of the amendment.

Required Notifications

The public hearing on this item was advertised in the newspaper indicating the time, date, and location of the hearing as required by the State Statute and the DeSoto County Land Development Regulations.

V. ATTACHMENTS

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Exhibit A: | Expedited State Review Flow Chart |
| Exhibit B: | Interim 2040 Future Land Use Map, Maps 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 of 13 |
| Exhibit C: | Map FLUEMS-7, Existing Community Overlay Map |
| Exhibit D | Map FLUEMS-8, New Community Area Map |

Exhibit E: Proposed Resolution

Exhibit F: Supportive Data and Analysis Report

VI. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the information contained in this Development Review Report, the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are offered:

1. An application to amend the Comprehensive Plan's Interim 2040 Future Land Use Element by changing the base and bonus residential density maximums in the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation was filed with the Development Department. The Development Department has reviewed the application and determined the application is complete.
2. The Planning Director has reviewed the text amendment application for consistency with Section 163.3184(3), Florida Statutes, and concludes the application can be found to be **consistent** with those requirements.
3. The Planning Director has reviewed the proposed amendment against the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and policies and concludes it can be found to be **consistent**.
4. The due public notice requirements have been satisfied.

VII. ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

The Planning Commission / LPA has one of the following alternative actions at its disposal:

- A. Enter into the record the Development Review Report and all other record evidence presented at the hearing and forward the record to the Board of County Commissioners with a recommendation of approval and that the proposed Resolution be transmitted to the State Department of Commerce.
- B. Enter into the record the Development Review Report and all record evidence presented at the hearing, amend the findings and conclusions contained herein to support the Planning Commission's recommendation, and forward the record to the Board of County Commissioners with the recommendation of denial and that the proposed Resolution is not transmitted to the State Department of Commerce.

VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- A. Planning Commission recommendation. Scheduled for the October 7, 2025, meeting.
- B. Board of County Commission action. The first reading is scheduled for October 28, 2025 meeting for transmittal.

Attachments

Exhibit A – Expedited State Review Flow Chart

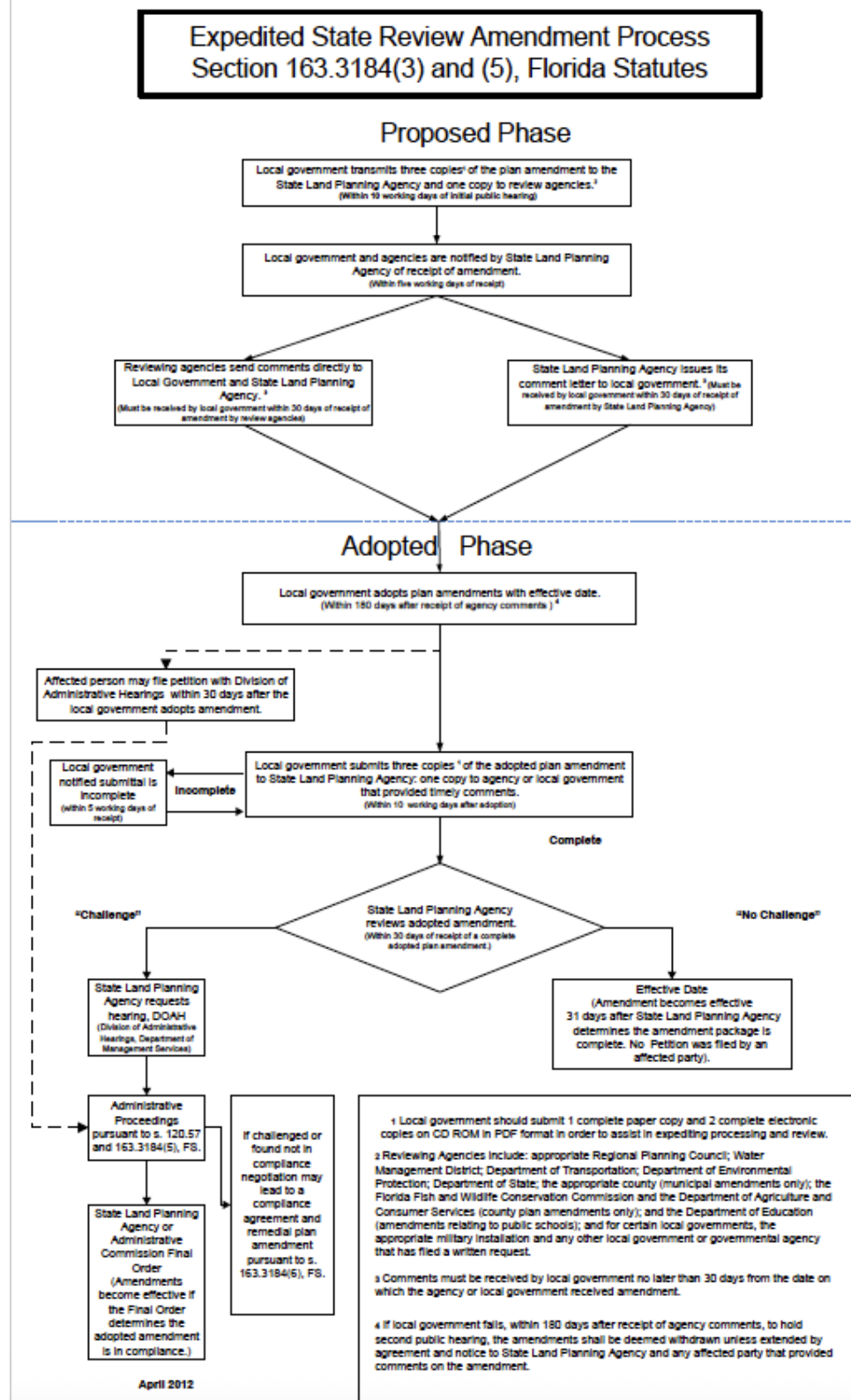
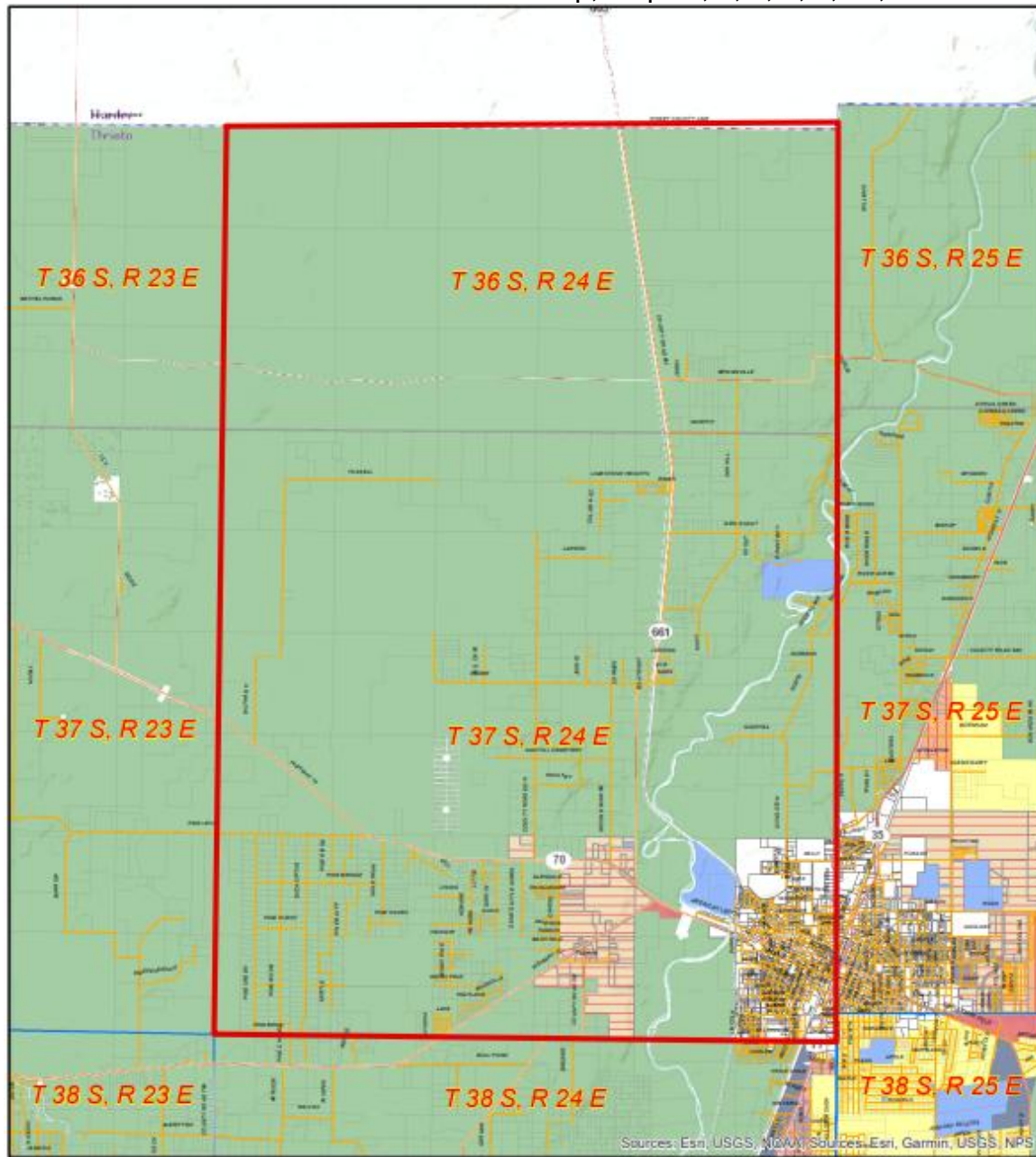


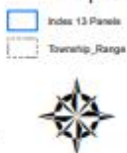
Exhibit B - Interim 2040 Future Land Use Map, Maps 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 of 13



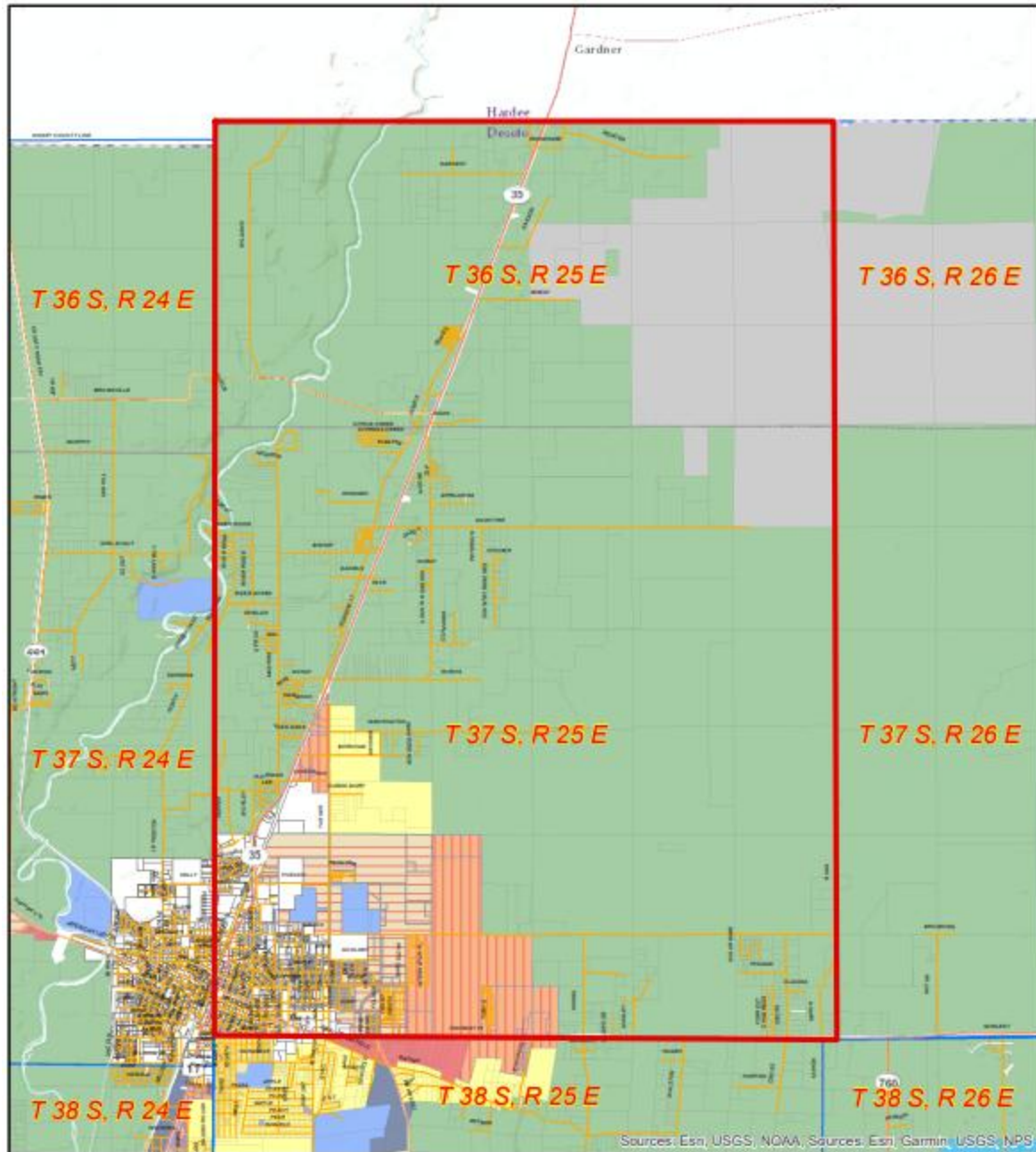
FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 2 OF 13

Adopted May 24, 2022

- CITY OF ARCADIA
- Preservation
- Rural/Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Employment Center
- Commercial
- Urban Center Mixed Use
- Public Land/Institutional
- Electrical Generating Facility
- Streets



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13		



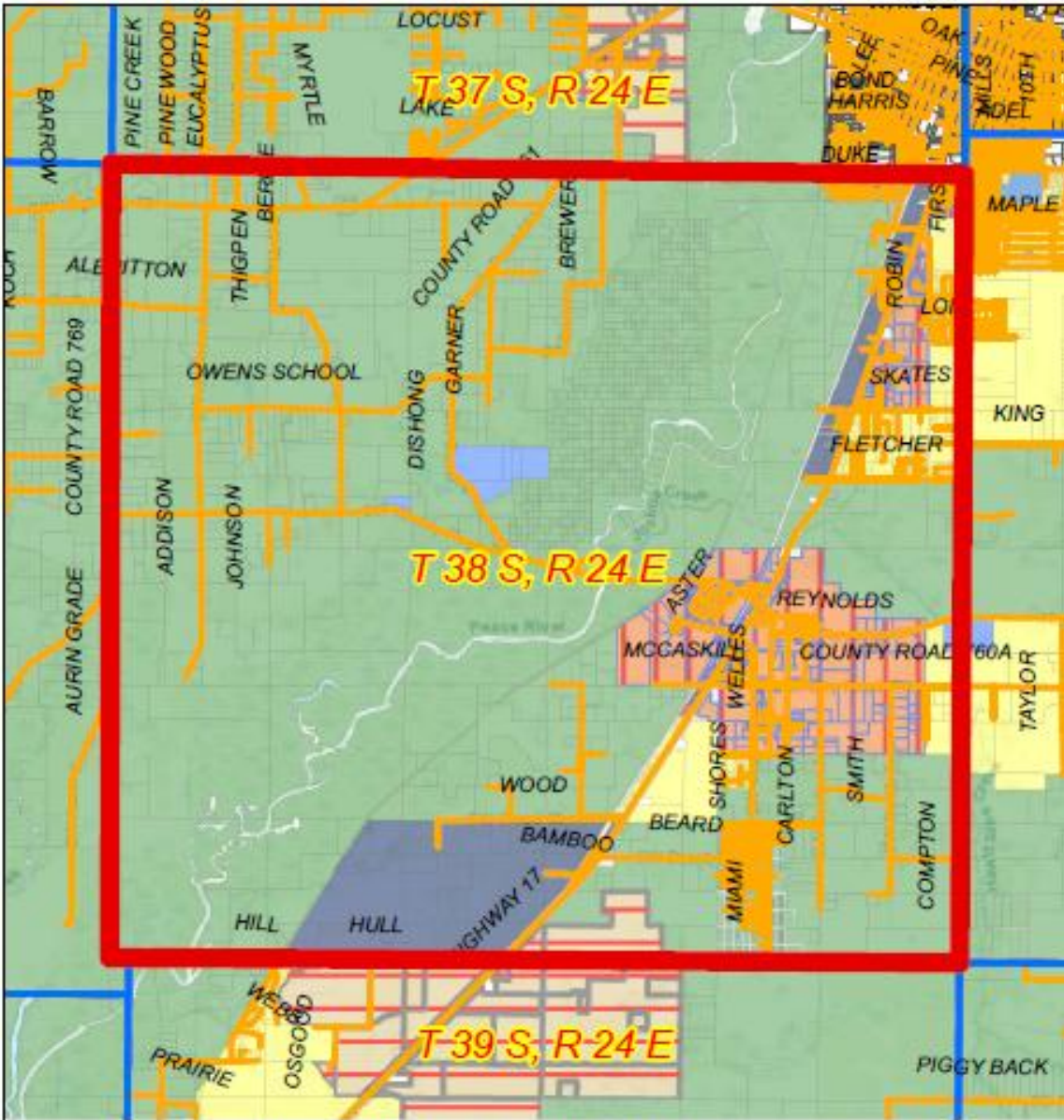
FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 3 OF 13

Adopted May 24, 2022

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| CITY OF ARCADIA | Employment Center | Index 13 Panels |
| Preservation | Commercial | Township Range |
| Rural Agriculture | Urban Center Mixed Use | |
| Low Density Residential | Public Land Institutional | |
| Medium Density Residential | Electrical Generating Facility | |
| Neighborhood Mixed Use | Streets | |



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13		



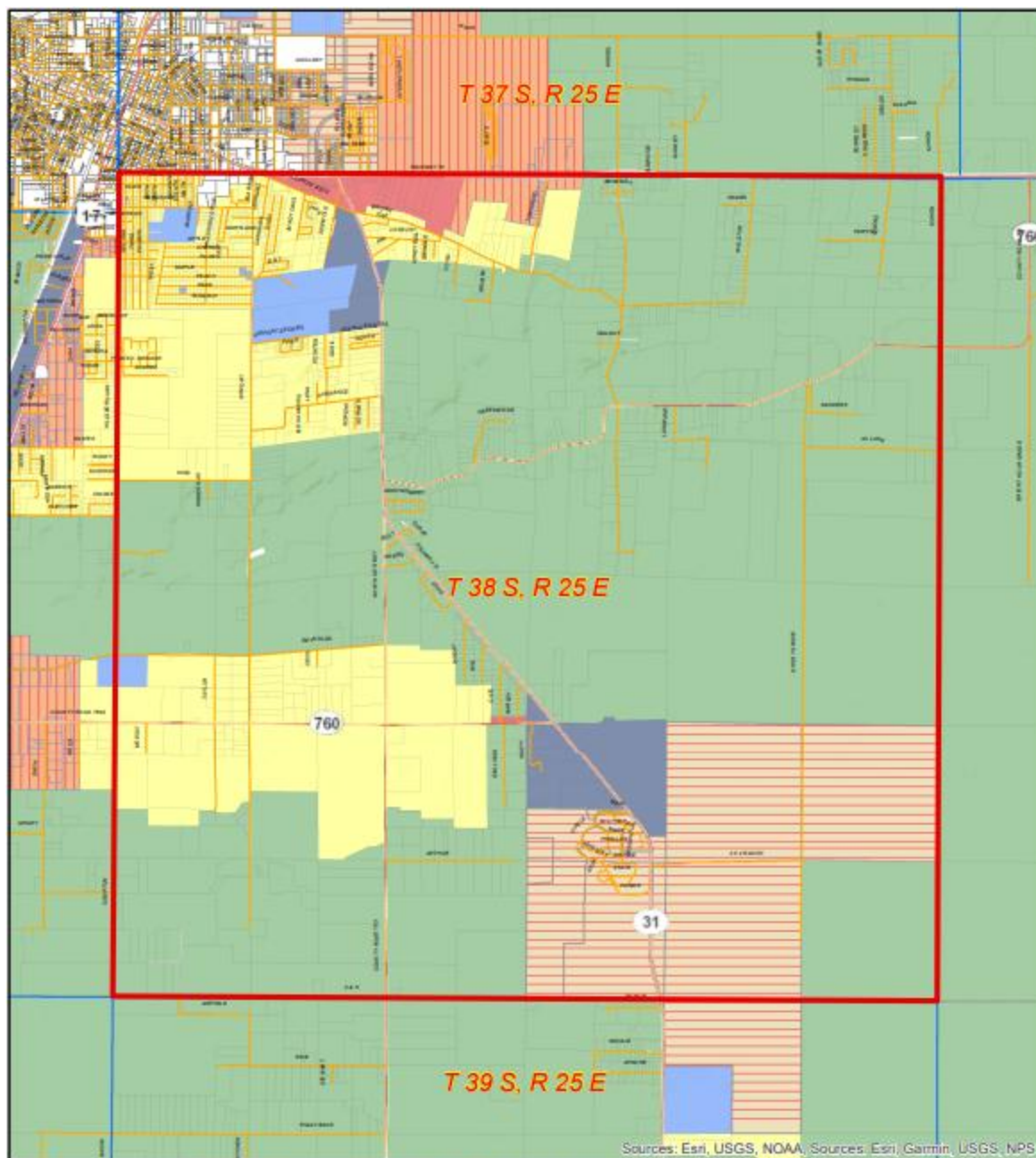
FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 7 OF 13

Adopted May 24, 2022

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| CITY OF ARCADIA | Employment Center | Index 13, Parcel |
| Preservation | Commercial | Transferity Range |
| Rural/Agriculture | Urban Center Mixed Use | |
| Low Density Residential | Public Land/Institutional | |
| Medium Density Residential | Electrical Generating Facility | |
| Neighborhood Mixed Use | Streets | |



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13	9 of 13	10 of 13
11 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13	14 of 13	15 of 13



FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 8 OF 13

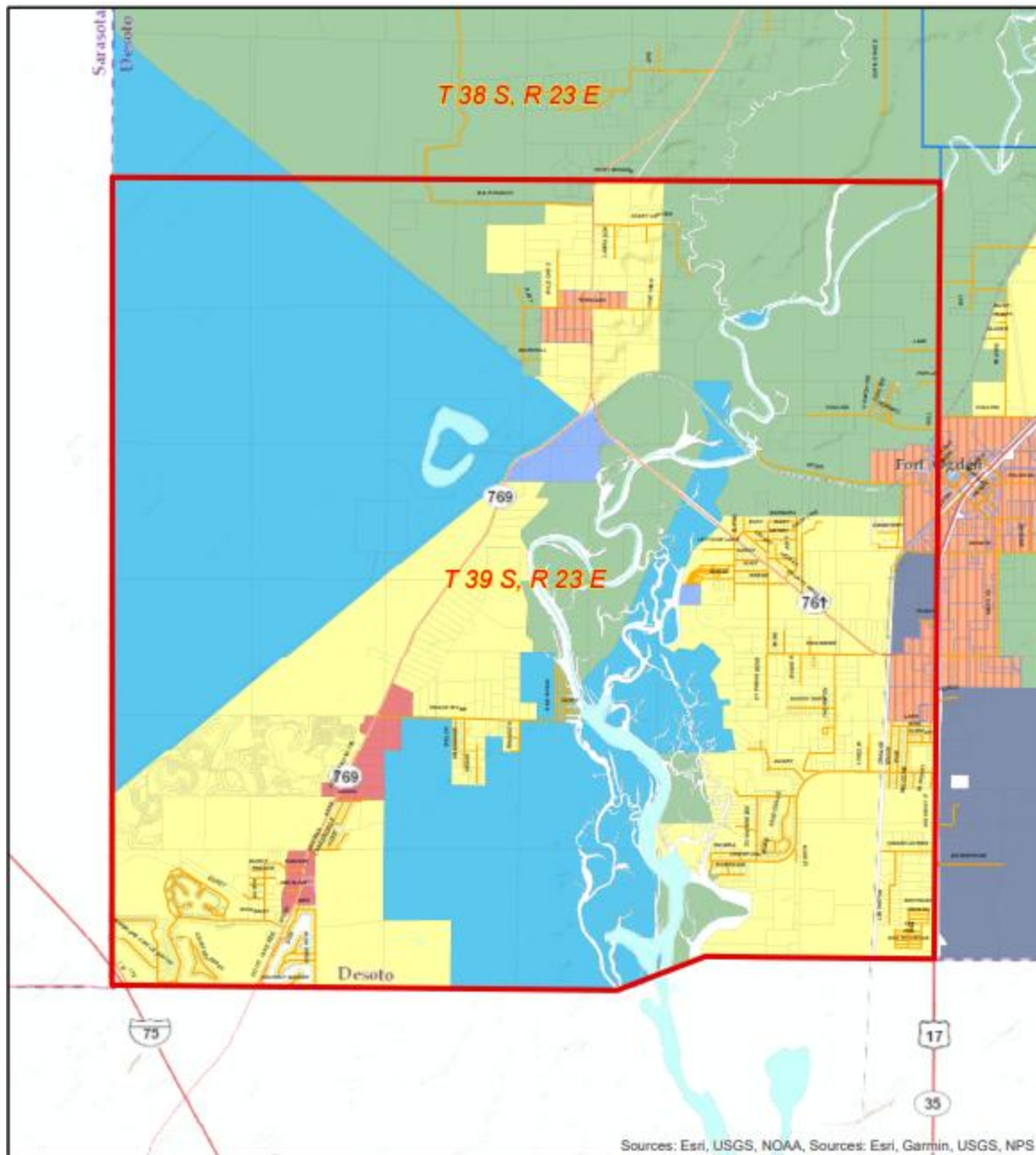
Adopted May 24, 2022

- CITY OF ARCADIA
- Preservation
- Rural/Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Employment Center
- Commercial
- Urban Center Mixed Use
- Public Land/Institutional
- Electrical Generating Facility
- Streets

Index 13 Panels
Township Range



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13		



FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 9 OF 13

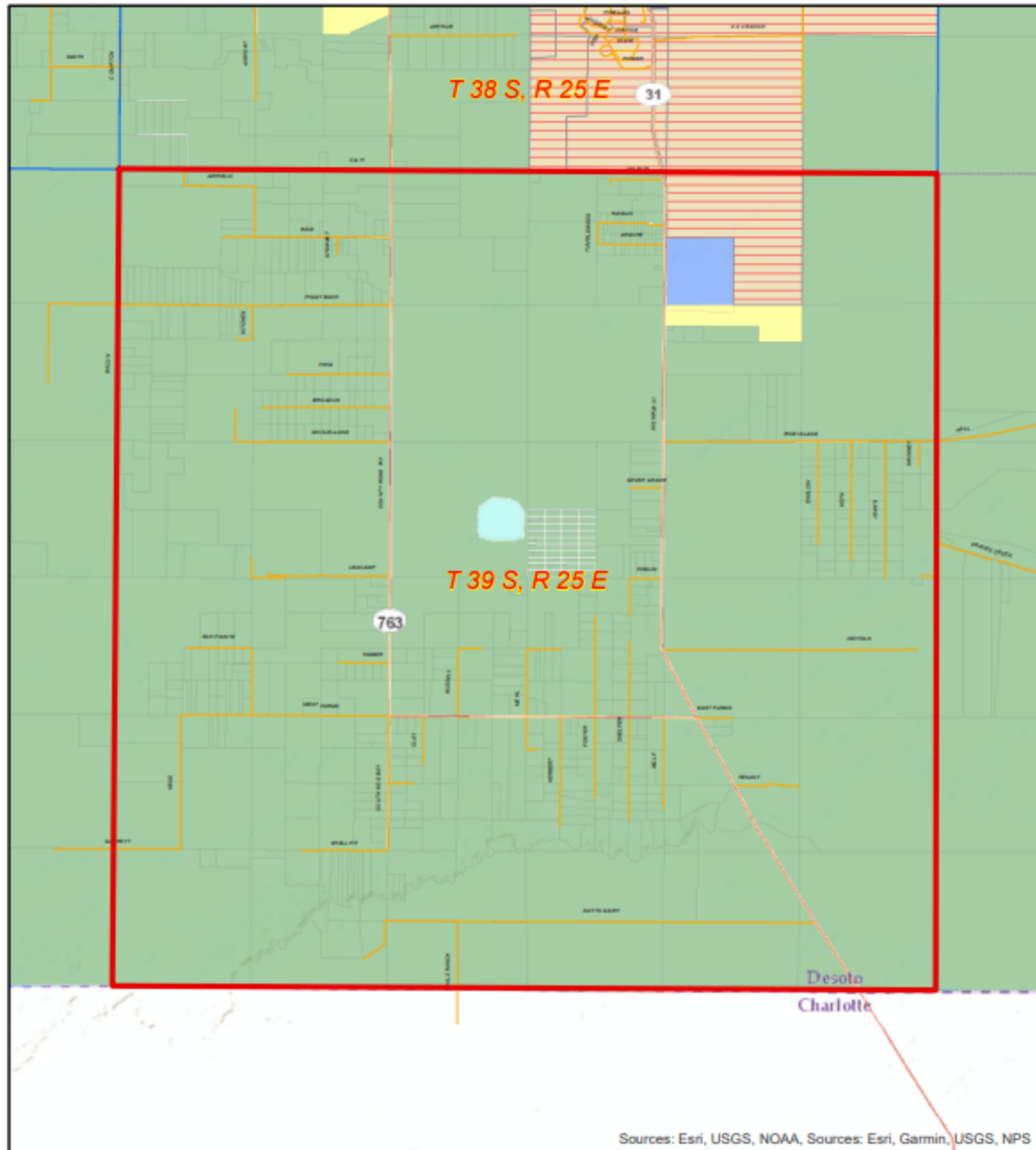
Adopted May 24, 2022

- CITY OF ARCADIA
- Preservation
- Rural/Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Employment Center
- Commercial
- Urban Center Mixed Use
- Public Land/Institutional
- Electrical Generating Facility
- Streets

- Index 13 Panels
- Township Range



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13		
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13



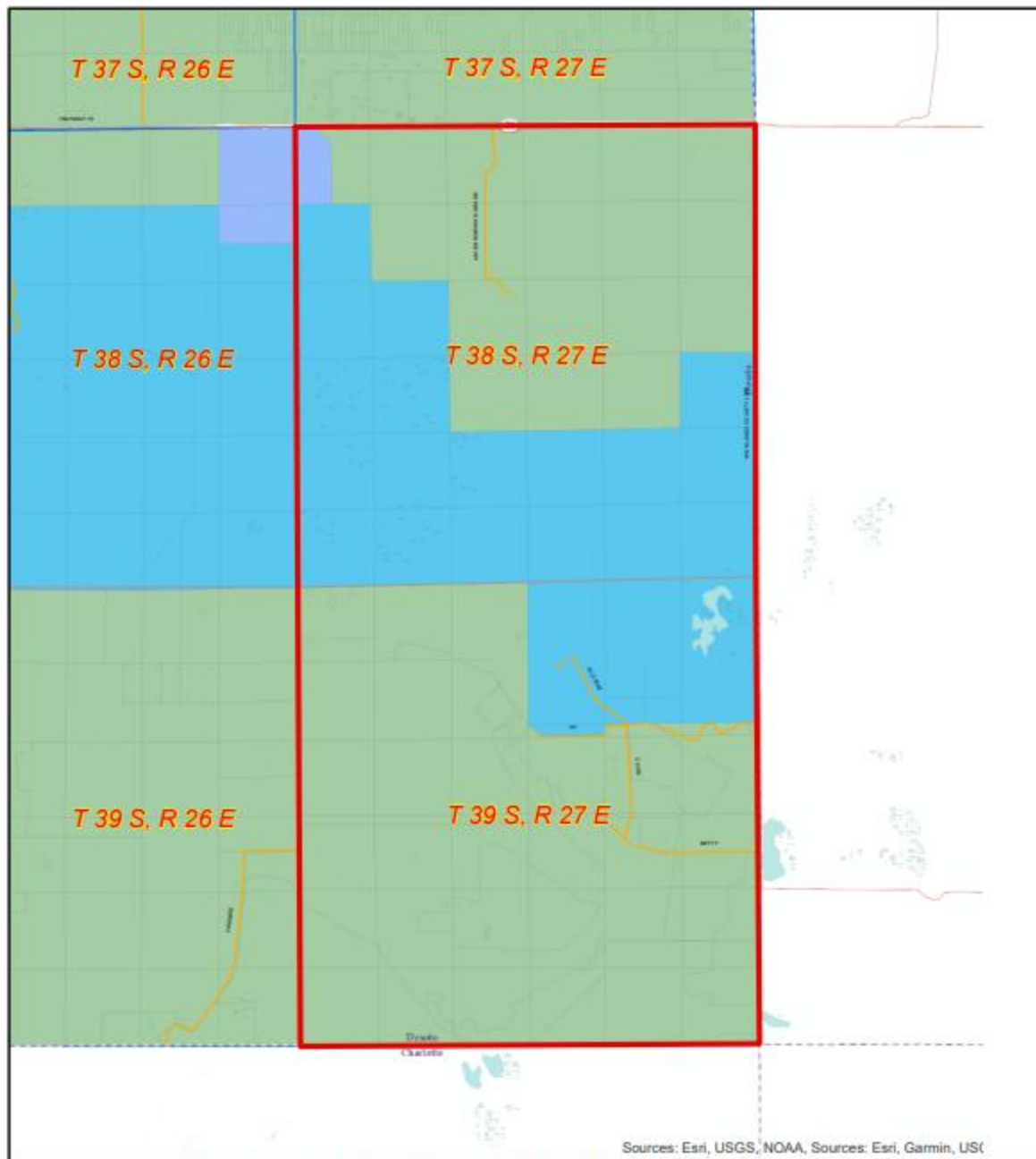
FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 11 OF 13

Adopted May 24, 2022

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| CITY OF ARCADIA | Employment Center | Index 13 Panels |
| Preservation | Commercial | Township Range |
| Rural/Agriculture | Urban Center Mixed Use | |
| Low Density Residential | Public Land/Institutional | |
| Medium Density Residential | Electrical Generating Facility | |
| Neighborhood Mixed Use | Streets | |



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13		
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13	12 of 13	13 of 13



FUTURE LAND USE SERIES MAP 13 OF 13

Adopted May 24, 2022

- CITY OF ARCADIA
- Preservation
- Rural/Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Employment Center
- Commercial
- Urban Center Mixed Use
- Public Land/Institutional
- Electrical Generating Facility
- Streets

- Index 13 Panels
- Township Range



1 of 13	2 of 13	3 of 13	4 of 13	5 of 13
6 of 13	7 of 13	8 of 13	12 of 13	15 of 13
9 of 13	10 of 13	11 of 13		

Exhibit C: Map FLUEMS-7, Existing Community Overlay Map

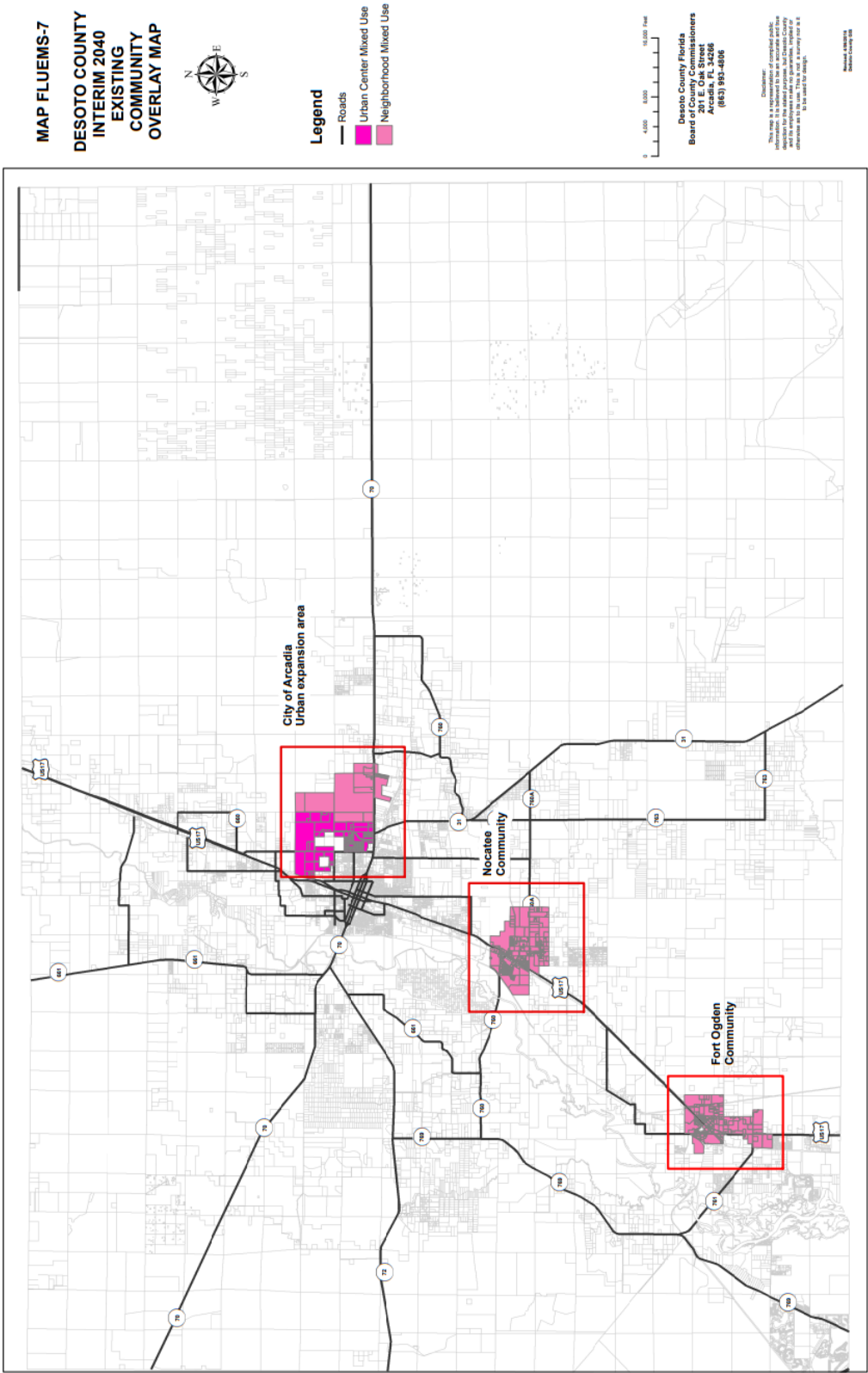


Exhibit D Map FLUEMS-8, New Community Area Map

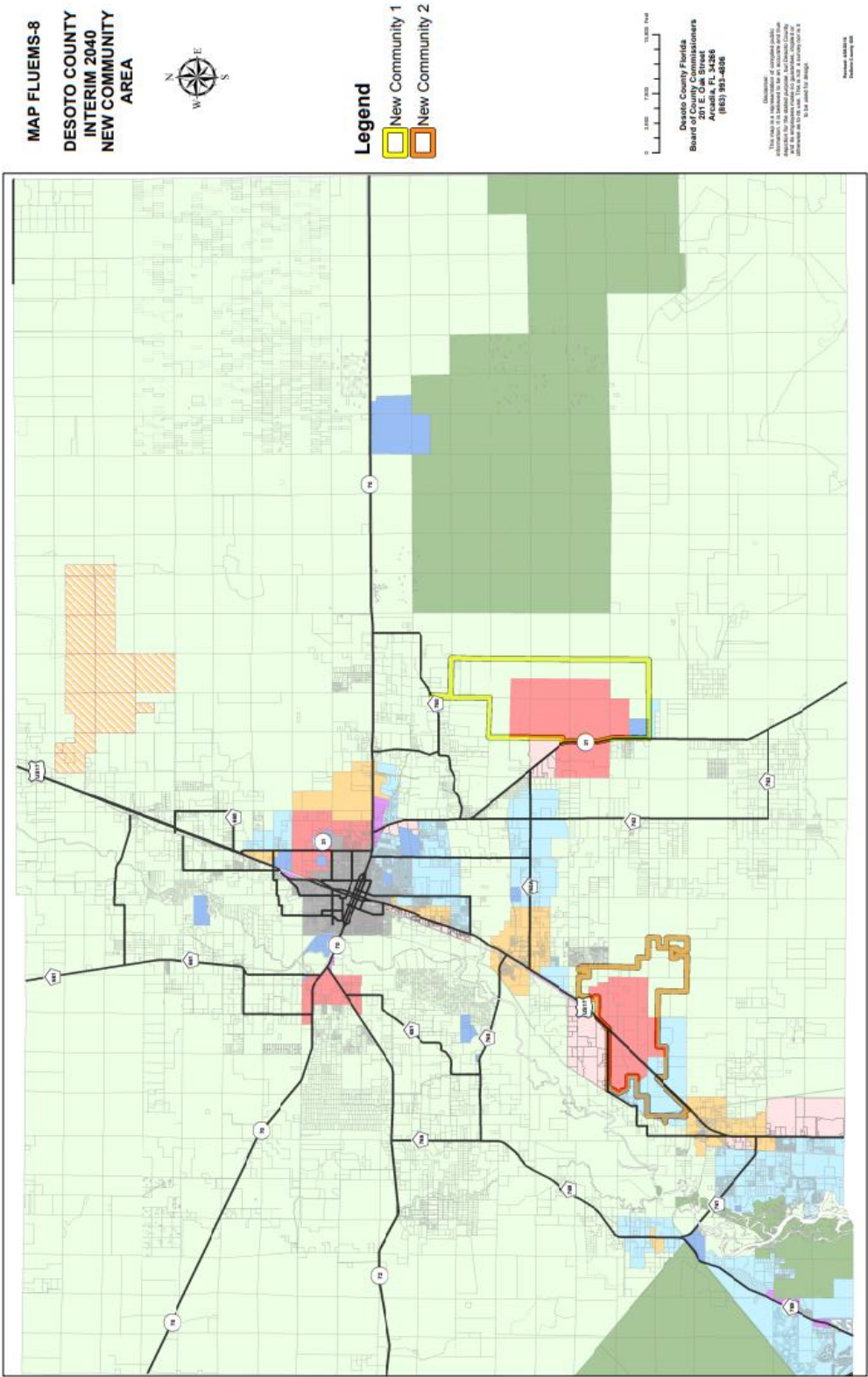


Exhibit E: Proposed Resolution

Exhibit F: Supportive Data and Analysis Report