

NARRATIVE SUPPORTING REQUEST FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT

The Applicants are requesting a Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Amendment for their respective seven (7) contiguous parcels of land consisting of a combined ± 47.2 acres situated along and in close proximity to U.S. Hwy 17 as illustrated below. The request represents the entirety of 6 of the subject parcels and a portion of the 7th parcel:



The subject properties are all currently designated Low-Density Residential under the Future Land Use Map. The Applicants are requesting that their subject properties be designated Regional Mixed Use, which the Applicants respectfully contend is a more appropriate Future Land Use Map designation for these particular properties.

The subject properties are all currently zoned Planned Development (PD), which is defined as a mixed-use district under the Pender County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Pender County UDO Section 4.5.3 states: "Where the phrases 'mix of uses' or 'mixed-use district' is used in the UDO, the phrases shall be construed to include the Planned Development (PD) District". A wide variety of office, retail and services are permitted within PD development as listed in the Table of Permitted Uses (UDO § 5.2.3).

The current Low Density Residential designation is not consistent with the purpose of and uses allowed within the PD Zoning District. As seen below the Low Density Residential designation calls for only single-family homes, some duplexes or townhomes and recreation parks and open space. Additionally, the transportation infrastructure for the Low Density Residential designation is minor collector and local roads. The Future Land Use Plan provides:

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Low Density Residential future land category is located on the fringe of medium density residential uses and within existing single-family neighborhoods. These areas are typically established single-family neighborhoods with a low density residential development pattern. Appropriate uses include single-family dwellings and neighborhood-scale institutional facilities. Commercial and industrial uses are inappropriate in these areas, as are large institutions and other significant traffic generators. Duplexes and townhomes may be suitable when proposed as part of a master planned community whereby the dimensional requirements and uses forming the outer boundary of the community are compatible with the adjacent properties or permissible uses. Clustering of new communities is encouraged.

Development density within this category is two dwelling units an acre or less. Water and sewer service may not be available in these areas.

Desired Uses:

- Single-family residential uses – detached
- Duplexes and townhomes may be suitable when included as part of a master planned community
- Recreation, parks, and open space

Inappropriate Uses:

- Non-residential development
- Single-family dwellings – attached
- Multi-family residential uses

Transportation Infrastructure:

- Automobile: Collector (local, minor), and local roads
- Pedestrian: 5 foot sidewalks on one side
- Cyclist: bicycle lanes and multi-use paths

Low Density Residential

Not consistent with permitted uses in the PD zoning District



The PD Zoning District, on the other hand, is intended to provide for progressive planning and design principles with a mixture of uses. The first purpose of the PD Zoning District as stated in Section 4.8.1(A)(1) of the UDO is “[t]o allow for greater freedom in providing a mix of uses within one development, including a mix of housing types, housing prices, lot sizes, densities, and non-residential uses”. The purpose of the PD Zoning District is to create mixed-use centers that allow for a range of housing options and commercial goods and services in close proximity using an efficient use of space. The PD Zoning District is inconsistent with the limited appropriate uses listed in the Low Density Residential designation and instead, is more consistent with the Regional Mixed Use designation. As illustrated below, the Regional Mixed Use designation includes a variety of residential uses, as well as commercial, office and institutional uses:

Desired Uses:

- Most commercial, retail, office, & institutional uses
- Employment centers
- Artisan manufacturing
- Multi-family residential
- High density single-family residential uses
- Upper story residential

Inappropriate Uses:

- Medium and low density single-family residential uses
- Storage facilities
- Industrial uses

Transportation Infrastructure:

- Automobile: arterial, collector (major, local, minor), and local roads
- Pedestrian: 5 – 10 foot sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals
- Cyclist: bicycle lanes, multi-use paths, and bicycle parking
- Transit: Park and ride facilities and limited fixed-route service (including bus shelters)

Regional Mixed Use

Consistent with permitted uses in the PD zoning District



Additionally, the subject properties are situated along US Highway 17, which is not a local, minor collector road, but a major highway corridor better suited for Regional Mixed Use than Low Density Residential.

The Comprehensive Plan states in Section 5-16 Regional Mixed Use that “[g]rowth is focused in locations that are served by water/sewer infrastructure and are located along planned major collector roadways and existing primary roadway corridors . . .”, including specifically US 17. Due to the current limits of existing water/sewer infrastructure in the County, it is important to efficiently utilize and develop land along major corridors where infrastructure exists, and provide a mixture of uses to area residents, which is one of the main planning goals of the both the PD Zoning District in the UDO and the Mixed Use land classifications under the Future Land Use Plan. The PD Zoning District, as the *only* mixed-use zoning district in the UDO, is far more consistent with a more dynamic Mixed Use Future Land Use Plan designation than the Low Density Residential designation—and particularly in this location.

The PD Zoning District and the Regional Mixed Use Future Land Use designation assist in development of alternate types of housing to accommodate the current and future growth of population in the Topsail Planning Area, as well as provide a more appropriate framework to develop a mixture of compatible and complementary commercial and office uses that can provide goods and services in close proximity to nearby residents, diversify the County’s tax base, and create jobs for area residents. Mixed use districts allow a combination of these uses in a more efficient, compact node. With the anticipated growth that will continue along this major transportation corridor, the efficient use of land and well-planned development that allows for a mixture of uses and locates goods, services and jobs nearer to residents will be very important for the future planning in this area of the County. By supporting the existing PD district of the parcels and giving them the consistent and appropriate Future Land Use designation, the County will be establishing the groundwork for future plans and growth in the Topsail Planning Area.

It is also important to note the distinction between the proposed request for a Future Land Use Map amendment and a rezoning or special use permit request. The Applicants are not requesting any change to the existing zoning of their properties or to the uses currently permitted under the UDO in the PD District. Further, this proposed Future Land Use Map amendment would not allow any development on the subject properties that is not currently allowed under the UDO, and it would not alter any procedures required for developing the subject properties under the County’s current zoning and land use regulations. Rather, approving this request will allow the Applicants to make the designation of their properties on the Future Land Use Map more consistent with their current zoning designation in order to plan for anticipated growth and future development in this area.

In addition to bringing the Future Land Use Map category into consistency with the zoning district for these properties, the proposed amendment is supported by the following Comprehensive Plan policies:

- **Policy 5.1.D: Focused Growth and Development:** The County supports a growth pattern that includes low density single-family residential communities, but also allows for the strategic placement of higher density residential, mixed uses, and commercial development to accommodate and support future population growth, where necessary infrastructure exists or is planned.
- **Policy 5.1.H: Mixed Use Development:** The County supports a wide range of commercial and residential development at varying intensities, when appropriately located, and provided that impacts to adjacent property owners and traffic congestion is mitigated.
 - **Recommend Action 5.1.H.1:** Consider establishing Mixed Use zoning districts consistent with the County's future land use map – Regional and Neighborhood – which allow for development of multi-family, commercial, office, and vertical mixed use development.
- **Policy 5.1.C: Coordination with Infrastructure/Services:** The County shall encourage development in areas where the necessary infrastructure – roads, water, sewer, broadband, and schools – is available, planned or can be most cost effectively provided and extended to serve existing and future development. Natural resource conservation should be considered.
 - **Recommended Action 5.1.C.1:** Annually review the future land use map in concert with new or proposed infrastructure to ensure the desired growth pattern reflects the expansion of new roads, water, sewer, broadband, or schools. Identify geographic areas that may be suitable for an increase or decrease in the relative density associated with infrastructure plans. This review should include an inventory and analysis of completed or planned collector streets.
- **Policy 5.1.V: Residential Development:** The County supports a range of housing types and development at appropriate densities and locations that are compatible with their surroundings and are in accordance with the future land use map.
 - **Recommended Action 5.1.V.1:** Consider establishing tiered residential zoning districts based upon the future land use map and/or existing lot sizes.
- **Goal 5.8: Topsail Planning Area:** Protect existing single-family neighborhoods and coastal habitats from the expansion of incompatible land uses, while focusing more intensive growth and development in key locations along the US 17 corridor and in accordance with the US 17 Bypass and Collector Street Plan.

- **Objective 5.8: Topsail Planning Area:** Manage traffic congestion, preserve coastal lifestyles, and enhance job opportunities through focused growth and development that will attract employers and support the continued expansion of residential development at varying densities.