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County Administrator

Joseph Abruzzo

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MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Honorable Sara Baxter, Mayor, and the members of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC)

**FROM:** Thuy Shutt, Planning Director  
Planning, Zoning and Building Department

**DATE:** March 12, 2026

**RE:** **Mixed Use Development Options and Commercial Cap Policies within Agricultural Reserve (AGR) Tier**

Thuy Shutt

Digitally signed by Thuy Shutt  
DN: cn=Thuy Shutt, o=Palm Beach County, ou=Planning, Zoning and Building Department, email=thuy.shutt@pbcc.org, c=US  
Reason: I am the author of this document  
Date: 2026.03.13 09:05:11 -0400  
Full PDF Editor Version: 12.1.0

**Item:** The item before the Board is a follow-up to Board direction to bring back the commercial cap and mixed use Future Land Use (FLU) designations in the Agricultural Reserve (AGR) Tier for a workshop discussion.

**Summary:** On December 10, 2025, the Board directed staff to provide information on the commercial cap and mixed use options within the Agricultural Reserve (AGR) Tier. Staff will be presenting an overview of the AGR and history of non-residential uses in the Ag Reserve, current mixed-use options available within the AGR, and Comprehensive Plan policies governing how a mixed-use project is developed. To determine if the current Comprehensive Plan policies guiding mixed use developments in the AGR are still meeting the needs of the residents and the agricultural industry, four (4) factors will be presented for discussion by the Board:

- 1. Commercial Cap
- 2. Locational Criteria
- 3. Uses Permitted in the Preservation Area
- 4. Traffic

Applicable policies and updated data for the factors above will be included in the presentation and staff from the Planning and Traffic Divisions will be available to answer questions.

**Background:** In the past five (5) years, several AGR workshops have been provided at the request of the BCC on October 26, 2021, March 28, 2023, and May 13, 2025. The first two workshops were held to evaluate the need for light industrial, higher density for workforce housing and residential development options. At the May 13, 2025 workshop, the Board directed staff to provide an update of the AGR to the Board which included a Snapshot of the uses and other remaining lands and develop a scope of work with preliminary cost estimates for an AGR Study. The Study would include an analysis of infrastructure deficiencies/needs, delivery of services, and identification of potential Comprehensive Plan policies and ULDC changes. The Board decided not to proceed with the Study since there are only 489 remaining acres left in the AGR and asked staff to continue the research on the commercial cap.



AGR MU Discussion  
March 12, 2026  
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On September 25, 2025, the BCC directed staff to review the current WSP USA Inc's (WSP) Countywide Transportation Master Plan (CTMP) contract to see if it could be expanded to include zoning and land use recommendations that would support internal trip capture and reduce trip miles and optimize and incentivize multimodal transportation options, where appropriate within unincorporated Palm Beach County. Staff presented the feasibility of the contract amendment, the estimated costs, and potential impacts on the timeline of the CTMP project for the Board's consideration at the November 5, 2025 BCC Hearing. The Board did not want to impede the progress of the CTMP project and decided not to expand WSP's contract for the additional services.

Staff will be seeking Board directions on the policies affecting the factors previously mentioned.

**MOTION:** No motion required

If you have any questions, please contact me at (561) 233-5467.

|     |                                                   |                                     |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| cc: | Joe Abruzzo, County Administrator                 | Wendy Hernandez, Zoning Director    |
|     | Patrick W. Rutter, Assistant County Administrator | Ron Rice, CES Director              |
|     | Whitney Carroll, Executive Director, PZB          | Lisa Amara, CES Ag Dev. Coordinator |
|     | Cindy Hoskin, Deputy Executive Director, PZB      |                                     |
|     | Ramon Trias, Assistant Development Director, PZB  |                                     |
|     | Darren Leiser, Assistant County Attorney          |                                     |
|     | Scott Stone, Assistant County Attorney            |                                     |



Palm Beach County  
Cooperative Extension Dept.  
559 N. Military Trail  
West Palm Beach, FL 33415  
561-233-1700

**DATE:** March 17, 2026  
**TO:** The Honorable Mayor Sara Baxter, and Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Mike Atchinson, Agricultural Enhancement Council  
**RE:** Agricultural Reserve Mixed-Use Development Policies

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The Agricultural Enhancement Council (AEC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the discussion regarding potential mixed-use development policies within the Agricultural Reserve. This letter is provided following AEC discussion at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Agricultural Reserve was created with a very specific purpose: to protect farmland and ensure agriculture remains a long-term part of Palm Beach County. The policies that established the Reserve, including limits on commercial uses and requirements for meaningful preservation, were intentionally designed to maintain that balance.

During the recent discussions about mixed-use policies, several concepts were raised that would expand commercial activity within the Agricultural Reserve while reducing or changing the preservation requirements that have traditionally accompanied development in the Tier. The Council has concerns about this direction.

The commercial cap and preservation requirements were put in place for a reason. They were designed to allow limited supporting uses while still protecting agricultural land. Weakening those policies risks gradually shifting the Agricultural Reserve away from the framework that was originally created to protect it.

The Council is particularly concerned with proposals that would allow stormwater management areas or other development infrastructure to count toward preservation requirements. Preserve areas were intended to maintain land that could remain in agriculture, open space, or other uses compatible with the agricultural landscape. Allowing infrastructure that primarily serves development to satisfy preservation requirements would fundamentally change how preservation functions within the Reserve.

For these reasons, the Agricultural Enhancement Council recommends that the existing Agricultural Reserve policies remain unchanged and that mixed-use development policies not be expanded within the Agricultural Reserve Tier.

From the perspective of those working and farming in the Reserve, preserving farmland has always been the foundation of the policy. The Council believes the current framework has served the Agricultural Reserve well and remains essential to protecting the long-term viability of agriculture in the area.

Cc: Todd Bonlarron, Deputy Chief County Administrator  
Ron Rice, Director, Cooperative Extension Dept., UF/IFAS  
Lisa Amara, Agricultural Development Coordinator

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# Agricultural Reserve Tier Mixed Use

Board of County Commissioners

March 26, 2026

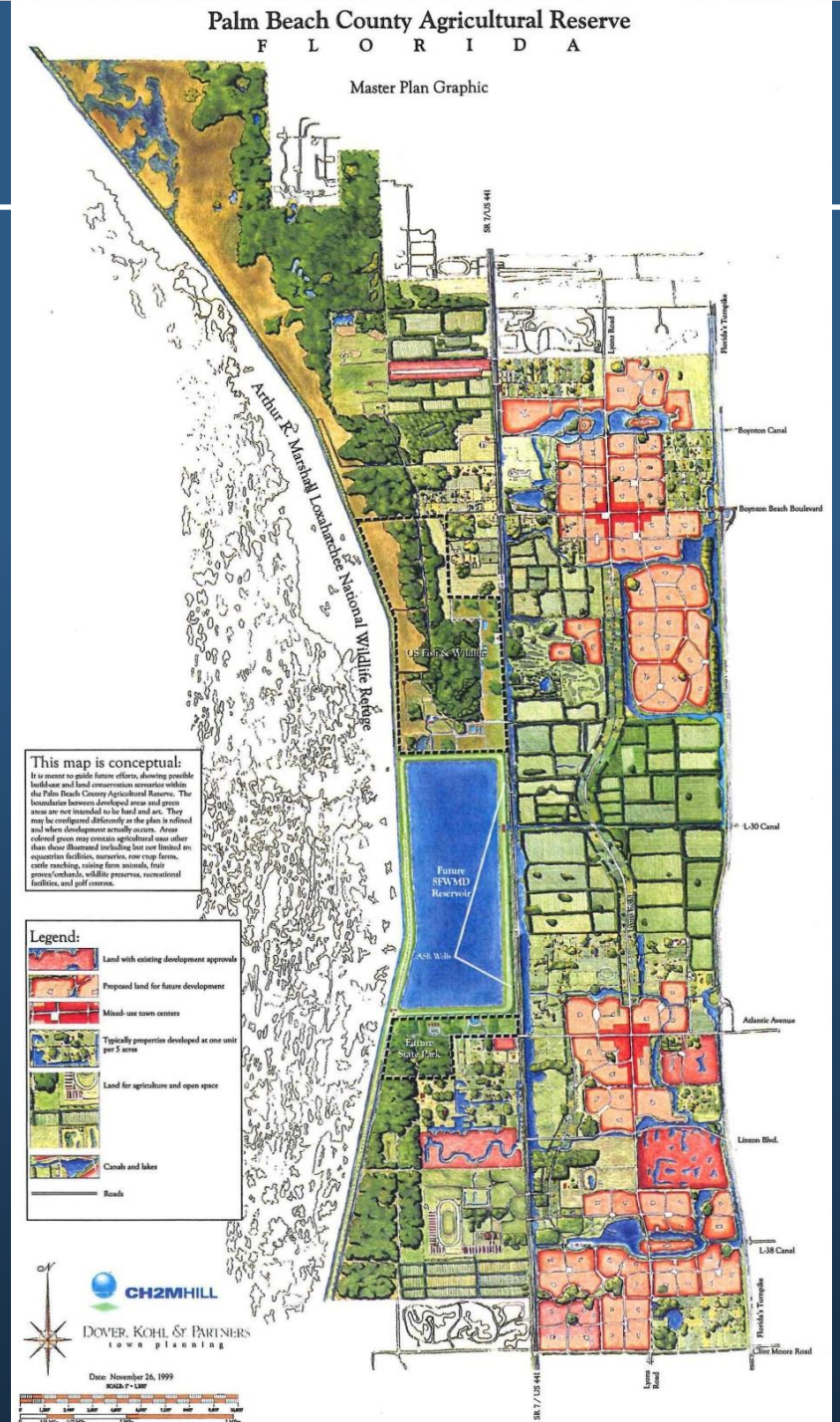


Agenda Item D.10  
PZB – Planning Division



# Presentation Purpose

- Board Direction on December 10, 2025:
  - Commercial Cap and Mixed-use Category
- Staff Presentation:
  - Provide overview of AGR and current conditions
  - Summary of key constraints affecting mixed use developments
    1. Commercial square footage cap
    2. Locational criteria
    3. Requiring Preserves
    4. Traffic (Policy 3.5-d)
  - Provide available options for Board Direction

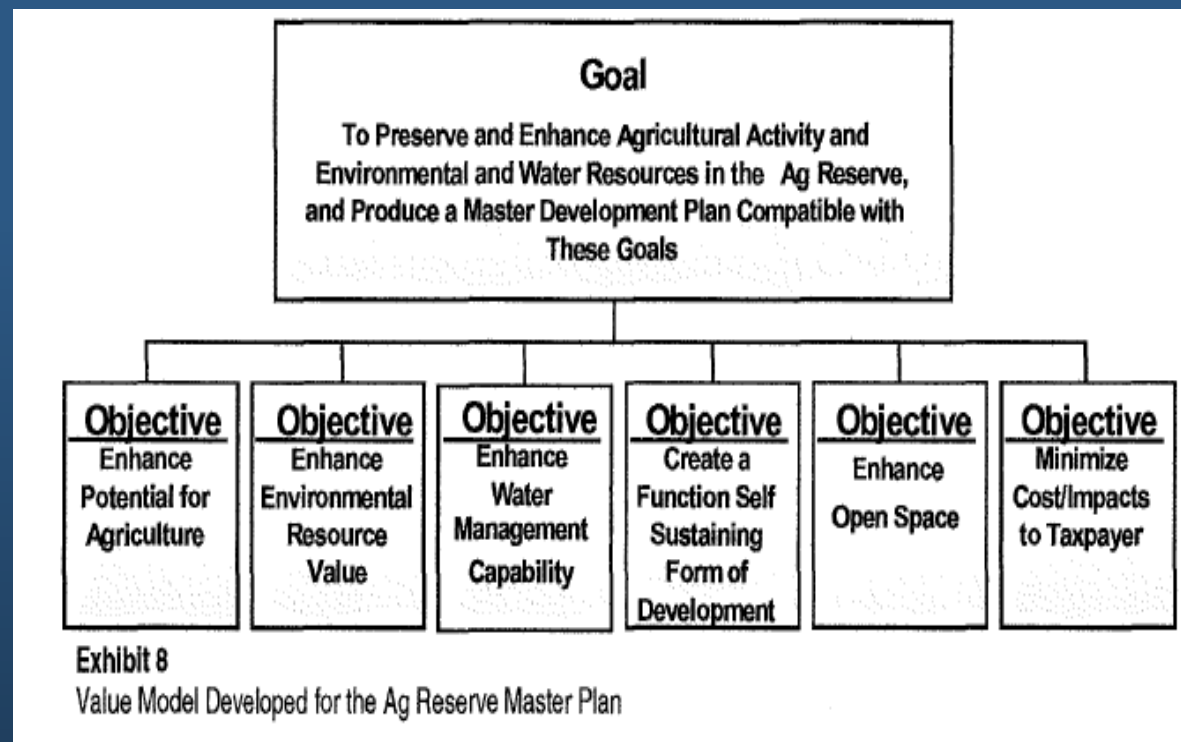




# Agricultural Reserve (AGR) Tier Overview

- AGR Tier Goals and Objectives:

- Preserve and enhance agriculture
- Enhance environmental resource value
- Enhance water management capability
- Enhance open space
- Create a functional, sustainable development pattern
- Minimize costs/impacts to County taxpayers



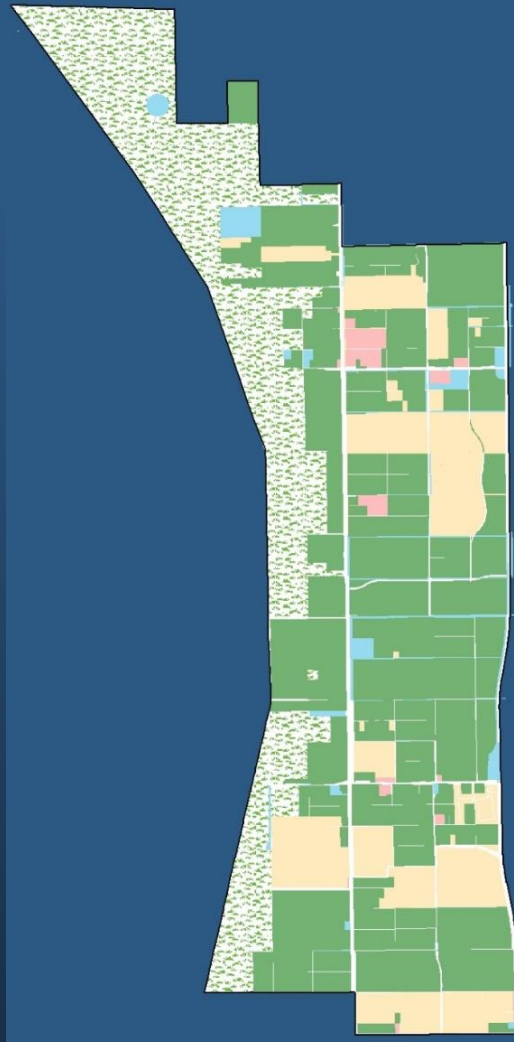


# Agricultural Reserve (AGR) Tier Over Time

1995



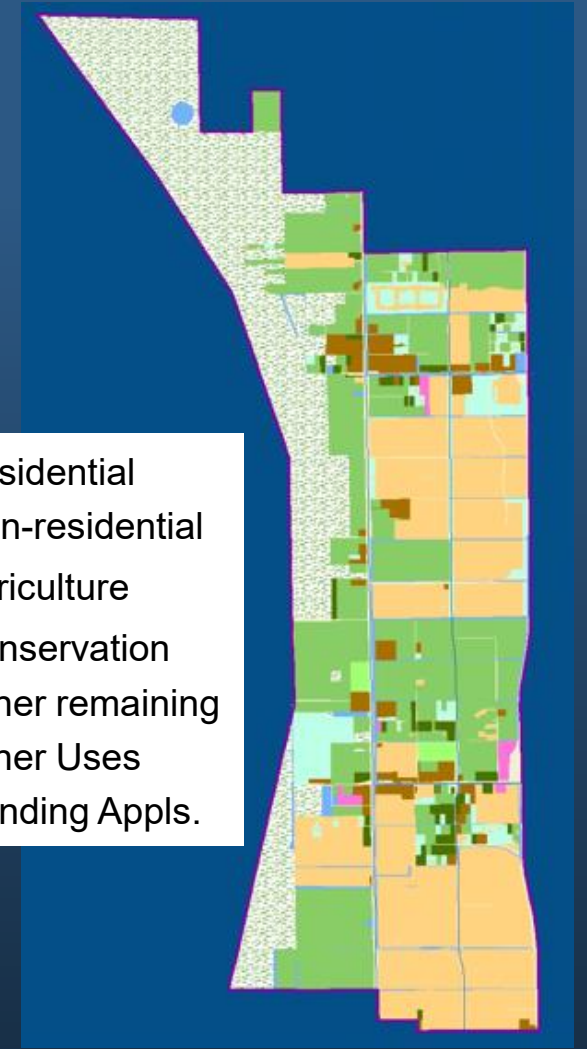
2011



2014



2026



- Residential
- Non-residential
- Agriculture
- Conservation
- Other remaining
- Other Uses
- Pending Appls.



# 2026 Snapshot

|   | Approval Status                                                     | Acres         | %           |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| → | <b>Residential</b>                                                  | <b>6,622</b>  | <b>30%</b>  |
| → | <b>Non-Residential</b><br><i>(10,227 s.f. commercial remaining)</i> | <b>836</b>    | <b>4%</b>   |
| → | <b>Lands Preserved</b>                                              | <b>13,378</b> | <b>61%</b>  |
|   | <i>Natural/Conservation</i>                                         | <i>5,859</i>  | <i>27%</i>  |
|   | <i>Agriculture</i>                                                  | <i>6,406</i>  | <i>29%</i>  |
|   | <i>Other preserve uses</i>                                          | <i>1,113</i>  | <i>5%</i>   |
| → | <b>Other Remaining Lands</b>                                        | <b>427</b>    | <b>2%</b>   |
| → | <b>Pending Applications</b>                                         | <b>126</b>    | <b>0.6%</b> |
|   | <i>Other Uses</i><br><i>(Right-of-way, canals, etc.)</i>            | <i>670</i>    | <i>3%</i>   |
| → | <b>Total Land Area</b>                                              | <b>22,059</b> | <b>100%</b> |





# Existing AGR Mixed Use Categories

- Introduction & Administration Element- Mixed Use Definition:

*“A variety of innovative types of development patterns co-located to invigorate neighborhoods through a **mixture of land uses and densities/intensities**, including residential, retail, office and recreation. A variety of housing types, civic services, cultural/recreational activities, shopping and employment opportunities are located **within walking distance** and share common area accessible and used as an amenity by all users within the mixed-use development.”*

- AGR Mixed Use Categories

- Traditional Marketplace (TMD) and TMD with Essential Housing (TMD-EH)
- Multiple Use Planned Development (AGR MUPD) and AGR MUPD with EH (AGR-EH)
- Multiple Land Use with Essential Housing (MLU-EH)



# Current Barriers to Mixed Use Projects in the AGR

1. Commercial square footage cap
2. Locational criteria
3. Requiring Preserves
4. Traffic (Policy 3.5-d)





# 1. Commercial Cap

- Policy 1.5-n states:

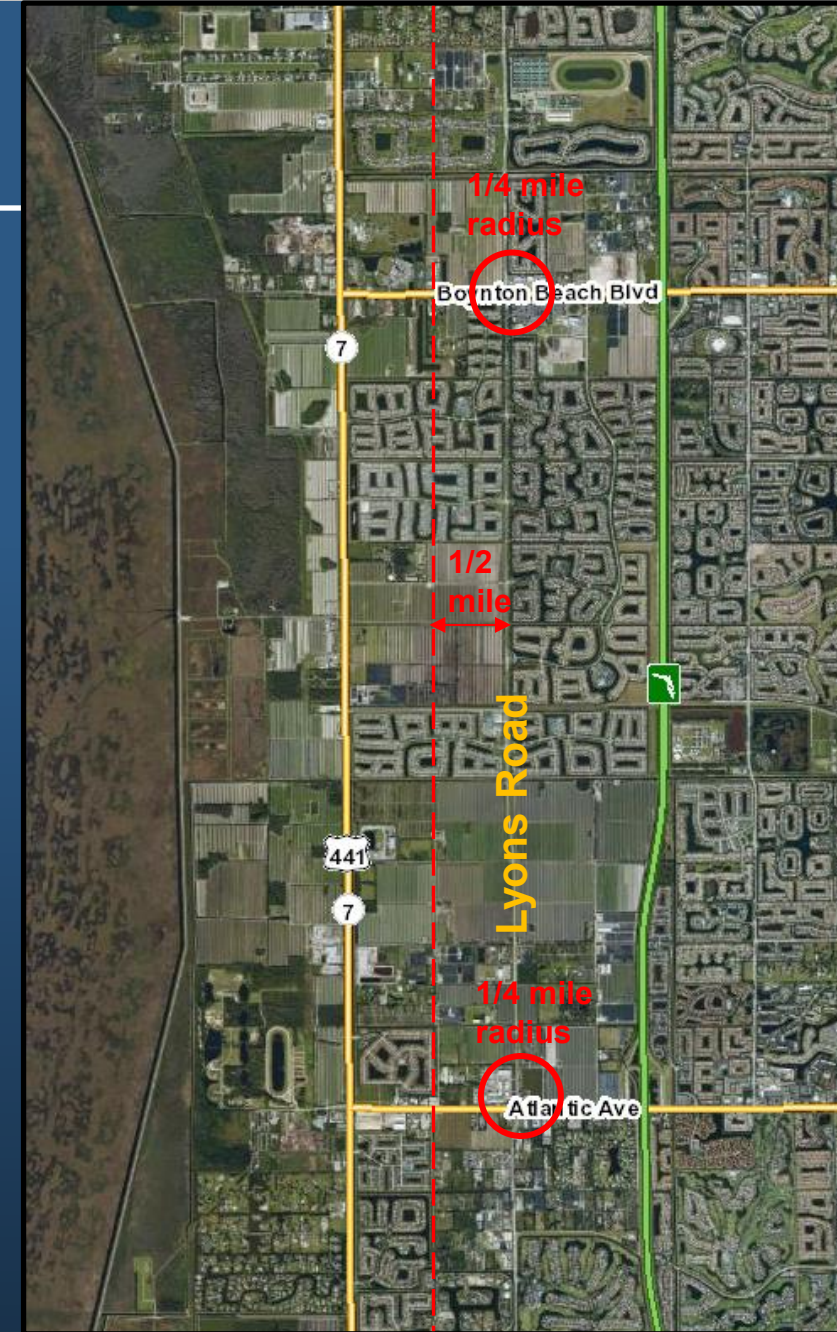
*“The County shall ensure a sustainable development pattern...by ensuring that the supply of commercial square footage does not exceed the demand of the farm workers and residents of the Tier. The County may approve a maximum of **1,015,000 square feet** of commercial uses (retail, service and office) within the Tier...”*

– 10,227 square feet remaining



## 2. Location Criteria

- **TMD locational requirements**
  - Interior to the AGR
  - Development area within 1/4 mile from the intersections of Boynton Beach Blvd. and Atlantic Ave. with Lyons Rd.
- **AGR MUPD locational requirements (with EH)**
  - East of SR 7
  - Frontage on Boynton Beach Blvd. or Atlantic Ave.
  - Within a 1/2 mile west of Lyons Rd. to FL Turnpike
- **MLU-EH locational requirements**
  - East of SR 7
  - Frontage on Atlantic Ave.
  - Within a 1/4 mile of an AGR TMD or IND future land use.



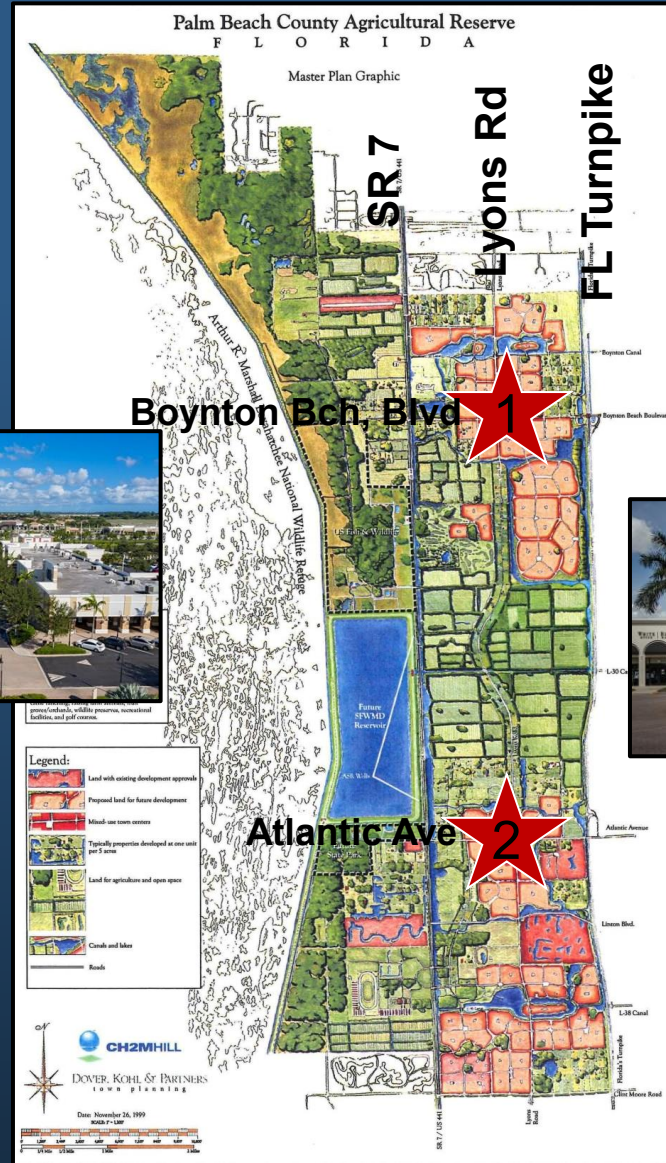
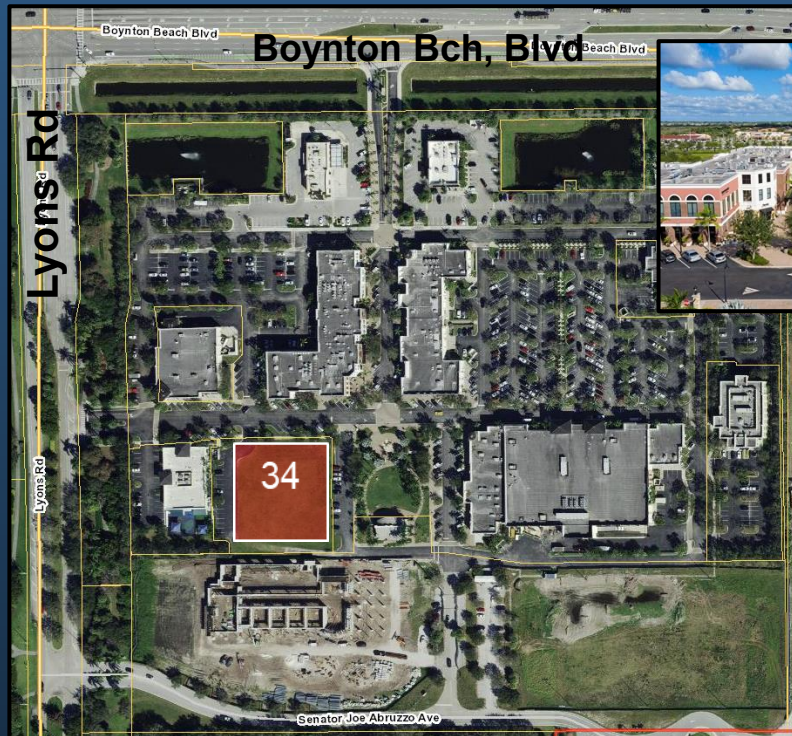


# Existing Traditional Market Place (TMD)

## 1. Canyons Town Center

93 units

275,00 square feet  
(max by Ordinance)



## 2. Delray Marketplace

96 units

320,000 square feet  
(max by Ordinance)





# 3. Preservation Requirements

- Quantity of preservation (60%):
  - TMD
  - AGR-MUPD (over 16 acres)
  - MLU-EH (minimum preserve area of 21 acres)
  - EH within a TMD or MUPD (minimum preserve area of 18 acres)
- Uses allowed in the preservation area:
  - TMD and AGR-MUPD
    - Civic and government services if adjacent to the development area
    - 10% preserve area allowed in development area (if used for space/public greenspace)
    - Agricultural marketplace
  - TMD and AGR MLU
    - With EH allows 10% of the preserve area to be used for stormwater management with an enhanced water feature *(in 2025 - BCC allowed underground easements associated with stormwater management features to be excluded from the 10% calculations for EH projects)*



\*Not the actual Preserve area for this PUD



## 4. Traffic (Policy 3.5-d)

- Specific to *unincorporated* land use amendments only
- Long-range planning tool, identifying the network of roadways required to meet future traffic demands
- Ensures that land use applications, at the time of submittal, address traffic implications and capacity for the adjacent rights-of-way.
- The County *shall not* approve a change to the Future Land Use Atlas which:
  - Results in an increase in density or intensity of development generating additional traffic that significantly impacts any roadway segment projected to fail to operate at adopted level of service standard “D”, or
  - Results in a project that fails Test 2 regulations (concurrency)





# Options and Discussion

| Criteria                            | Current Standards                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Options                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Commercial Cap</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Limited to 1,015,000 sf total</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increase</li><li>Eliminate</li><li>Keep as is</li></ul> |
| <b>2. Locational Criteria</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Limited to 1/4 mile of intersections of Boynton Beach Blvd. and Atlantic Ave. with Lyons Rd.</li><li>Limited to frontage on Atlantic Ave. and Boynton Beach Blvd.</li><li>Limited to East of SR 7 (EH FLUs)</li><li>MLU-EH limited to frontage on Atlantic Ave. and 1/4 mile from AGR, TMD, or IND FLUs</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expand</li><li>Eliminate</li><li>Keep as is</li></ul>   |
| <b>3. Preservation Requirements</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minimum of 60% to be preserved</li><li>Limited uses</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expand</li><li>eliminate</li><li>Keep as is</li></ul>   |
| <b>4. Traffic</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Limited by Policy. 3.5-d</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exempt specific categories</li><li>Keep as is</li></ul> |



# Questions and Board Discussion