



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH

AGENDA MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Town Commission

MEETING DATE October 7, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Ingrid Allen, Town Planner, Building Department

SUBJECT: Proposed amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan based on the Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR).

SUMMARY:

The proposed amendments are being processed as part of the EAR of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Pursuant to Section 163.3191, Florida Statutes (F.S.), at least once every 7 years, each local government in the state shall evaluate its Comprehensive Plan to determine if Plan amendments are necessary to reflect changes in state requirements. Local governments shall also evaluate and, as necessary, update the Comprehensive Plan to reflect changes in local conditions. Updating of the Comprehensive Plan based on the EAR requires compliance with the State Coordinated Review Process as provided in Section 163.3184(4), F.S.

On December 19, 2024, staff notified the State Land Planning Agency (FloridaCommerce) that amendments to the Town Comprehensive Plan were necessary since the Town's last update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2018. The Town is required to transmit such Comprehensive Plan amendments to FloridaCommerce and corresponding state reviewing agencies within one (1) year of this notification date.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan currently contains the following nine (9) Elements, over 200 Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOPs), and a map series:

- Future Land Use Element
- Transportation Element
- Housing Element
- Infrastructure Element
- Coastal Management/Conservation Element
- Recreation and Open Space Element
- Intergovernmental Coordination Element
- Capital Improvements Element
- Property Rights Element

The Town's Planning consultant, Inspire Placemaking Collective ("Inspire"), has prepared the EAR of the Town Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the requirements of Sections 163.3191 and 163.3177, F.S. The proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan include

a new Data and Analysis section along with corresponding maps, and changes to both the GOPs and Future Land Use Map Series. Note that Inspire's proposed changes to the GOPs are denoted by an underline for additional language and a ~~strike through~~ for deleted language.

TOWN COMMISSION INTRODUCTION MEETING:

On the June 17, 2025, the Town Commission considered an introduction/conceptual review of the amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Commission made a motion to move the amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Board for review (motion carried 5-0). The Planning Board which serves as the Local Planning Agency is required to make a recommendation on the amendments to the Town Commission.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

At the July 10, 2025 Planning Board meeting, the Board considered proposed amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan based on the EAR prepared by Inspire. The Planning Board made a motion to continue the public hearing until August 14th, 2025, and have staff bring the changed language back to the Planning Board for consideration (motion carried 7-0). Discussion by the Board included flexibility in the process of doing affordable housing, not encouraging assisted living or small market uses, and not encouraging buses on SRA1A.

At the August 14, 2025 Planning Board meeting, the Board made a motion to accept all the changes that Inspire provided with further changes to the following policies (motion carried 6-0):

- Policy 1.1.4 (Transportation and Mobility Element) change the words "bus stop" to "transit service stops"; and
- Policy 1.5.5 (Housing Element) change the word "framework" to "regulations".

The Board is recommending the following proposed revisions to the GOPs of the Comprehensive Plan which are based on the Board's discussion on July 10th and Board motion on August 14th (*the Board's proposed additions are denoted by a bolded double underline and proposed deletions are denoted by a bolded double ~~strike through~~*):

Future Land Use Element:

Objective FLU-1.1 Implement Appropriate Land Development Regulations

[LANGUAGE REVISED TO CLARIFY INTENT OF THE ORIGINAL TEXT AS REQUESTED BY THE PLANNING BOARD CHAIR.]

The Town shall implement residential density regulations, non-residential intensity standards, and land development regulations to achieve the following purposes:

1. ~~Adherence to a policy of encouraging development which enhances~~ Enhance the Town's living environment through prohibition of types of intensity of land development which lead to obstruction of views, overcrowding of land, and reduction in light and air.
2. Ensure energy-efficient land use patterns that are consistent with existing and future energy electric power generation and transmission systems.
3. Assure development which is compatible with topography and soil conditions.
4. Discourage and reduce urban sprawl.
5. Address greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

6. ~~Reduction in~~ Reduce the potential for loss of life, beach and dune erosion, and ~~loss of life and property damage~~ associated with landfall of tropical storms.
7. ~~Reduction in~~ the total future demand upon the potable water supply to be provided by the Town.
8. ~~Retention of~~ ain endangered and threatened plant and animal species.
9. ~~Promote Avoidance of a decline in~~ the maintenance of a safe and efficient level of traffic service on S.R. A1A to help reduce congestion-related impacts, such as with resulting increases in vehicular accidents, noise levels and air pollution and to preserve the overall which together cause a general decline in the quality of life in the Town's ~~living environment~~.

Policy FLU-1.1.4

[THIS POLICY IS PART OF A GREATER CONVERSATION FOR THE TOWN. IT WAS DISCUSSED BY THE PLANNING BOARD, BUT NO DIRECTION WAS PROVIDED.]

The Town may work towards allowing existing buildings to redevelop or substantially renovate at their original densities in order to: 1) maintain a stable population and tax base; and 2) to encourage its older building stock to rebuild or substantially renovate to meet current building code and safety standards. Additional standards such as maintaining existing heights or footprints may be considered in the land development code.

Policy FLU-1.1.7

[PLANNING BOARD CHAIR REQUESTED THIS POLICY TO BE REMOVED.]

~~The Town shall consider allowing additional Land Use Classifications which support the needs of its aging population demographic. Such uses may include: continuing care or assisted living, or a small market. These would help limit the necessity of seniors to drive out of Town frequently and are consistent with FLU Objectives 1.1.4, 1.1.5 and 1.1.9, and Housing Policy H-1.4.1.~~

Transportation and Mobility Element:

Policy TME-1.1.4

[REMOVED "ENCOURAGES" AND "SUPPORTS," AND CHANGED "BUS" TO "TRANSIT SERVICE" AS REQUESTED BY PLANNING BOARD.]

The Town may consider supports expansion of present area transit service to include service along S.R. A1A where consistent with community preferences and in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation and regional transit providers, and would encourage transit ~~usage~~ The Town may disseminate ~~ion~~ of schedule information, route maps, and transit service bus stop locations to residents if such service is implemented and by other means as may be appropriate.

Housing Element:

Policy H-1.5.5

[REVISED LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE "AS APPLICABLE," AND CHANGED "FRAMEWORK" TO "REGULATIONS" AS REQUESTED BY PLANNING BOARD.]

The Town shall coordinate, as applicable, with the US Department of Housing and Development, Florida State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP), and other

relevant agencies regarding the ~~facilitation development~~ of affordable and workforce housing within the context of the Town's land use regulations framework when necessary.

Policy H-1.5.6

[PLANNING BOARD REQUESTED MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THIS POLICY]

The Town may establish ~~shall implement specific criteria regarding~~ application and processing procedures for affordable housing development as ~~appropriate through its identified in the~~ land development regulations.

Policy H-1.5.7

[PLANNING BOARD REQUESTED MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THIS POLICY]

The Town recognizes the benefits of affordable workforce housing and may support the implementation of relevant ~~shall continue to implement its current~~ housing programs, including the Live Local Act, as applicable.

Given the Planning Board has provided their recommendation to the Commission, the amendments are back before the Commission for a transmittal hearing, and if approved, the amendments will be transmitted to FloridaCommerce and other state reviewing agencies. Note that Section 163.3184 F.S. states that the transmittal of amendments that update a Comprehensive Plan based on an evaluation and appraisal shall be by affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the members of the governing body present at the hearing.

FloridaCommerce will provide the Town with an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) report on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments within 60 days after receipt. Inspire along with Town staff will address any ORC accordingly and then the Town Commission will hold its second public hearing to determine whether to adopt the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan (hearing date TBD).

ATTACHMENTS:

Ordinance.

Town Ordinance Process Flowchart.

FloridaCommerce Notification Acknowledgement Letter (December 19, 2024).

Town Notification letter to FloridaCommerce (December 19, 2024).

Business Impact Estimate (BIE).

Public comment.

RECOMMENDATION:

At the discretion of the Town Commission.