

V. RELEVANT COUNTYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS

A. CONSISTENCY WITH THE COUNTYWIDE RULES

The Special Area Plan proposed Community Redevelopment District (CRD) Future Land Use designation including the ten Character Districts can be considered consistent with the Countywide Plan Rules and the conditions of approval for submission of a Special Area Plan.

This plan seeks to comply with the purpose of the CRD category by:

- Designating an area of the county for redevelopment in accord with a special area plan
- Encouraging redevelopment with a combination of uses identified by the CRD plan category within specified target neighborhoods (i.e. Character Districts)
- Setting residential density and non-residential intensity standards consistent with the redevelopment strategy for this category

In addition, this plan seeks to comply generally with the Countywide Rules by:

- Promoting redevelopment of older properties in a manner that contributes to the quality of urban design found in most of the Character Districts
- Promoting a wide variety of uses for both residents and visitors
- Creating a unique as well as distinct sense of place in the plan area with urban oriented mixed use development standards (and urban form-based guidelines through the City's land development regulations) that give physical distinction and an enhanced sense of arrival to the area.
- Improving multimodal access throughout the plan area by encouraging mixed-use neighborhoods.

All of the uses as shown within the proposed Character Districts in the Special Area Plan comply with primary and secondary uses allowed as well as the use characteristics allowed within the CRD category.

B. ROADWAY LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) AND MASS TRANSIT

The area included within the Special Area Plan is part of the City's recently established Multimodal Transportation District (MMTD). In fact, much of the genesis for drafting this Special Area Plan was to further implement the MMTD by redeveloping and enhancing the City's core as a mixed use, diverse, pedestrian friendly area that encourages and supports walking, bicycling and transit use, and thus helps to alleviate vehicular travel demand on primary City roadways.

Due to the establishment of the MMTD, most roadways in the area are not subject to typical vehicular Level of Service (LOS) impacts analyses. The MMTD focuses heavily on making on-site and off-site improvements that will raise the LOS for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. Developments are evaluated on a case-by-case basis for their level of impact to the system and what potential improvements might be deemed necessary to improve system function. The MMTD serves to assure that enhancements are made to the transportation network that will improve the system's commitment to multimodal diversity.

The MMTD also aims to strike a balanced ratio of population to jobs as a means to further alleviate vehicular transportation impacts to the system. In 2007, the MMTD as a whole had a population to jobs ratio of 0.6 persons per jobs. The area within the CRA and Sponges Docks obviously has an even lower ratio, 0.4 persons per job, as this is the commercial/business/tourist center of the City. The FDOT multimodal handbook recommends a range of 1 to 3 persons per job. Therefore, an increase in population (i.e. dwelling units) within the Special Area Plan study area could lower the need for non-vehicular trips between work and home as well as further implement the MMTD by helping to increase the balance between population and jobs.

To date, much progress has been made with the implementation of the MMTD. Notable improvements currently underway include the extension of Meres Boulevard from Pinellas Avenue to U.S. Highway 19. This was recommended by the City's multimodal plan as a key street connection to provide local alternative routes through the City. Lemon Street is being reconstructed as a primary east-west multimodal facility from Banana Street to Levis Avenue, and will include wider sidewalks and bicycle sharrows. Also, the City's sidewalk program continues to fill sidewalk gaps throughout the MMTD.

As a result of the proposed standards of the Special Area Plan, typical vehicular transportation impacts due to the potential for additional non-residential square footage will be mitigated greatly by the implementation of an urban form that will result in more pedestrian-friendly, highly sustainable mixed-use environments. As indicated above, and per the MMTD, developments will be evaluated for their transportation impacts and enhancements on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the appropriate improvements are being made at the appropriate time.

Additional information concerning roadway LOS and mass transit can be found in the *City of Tarpon Springs Multimodal Quality of Service Analysis* (May 2008).

C. SCENIC/NON-COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

There are no Scenic/Non-Commercial Corridors in the subject area of the Special Area Plan.

D. COASTAL HIGH HAZARD AREAS (CHHA)

The area subject to the Special Area Plan is located mostly within a Community Redevelopment Area. Certain portions of the Special Area Plan fall within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA), as indicated on the map on the following page. The CHHA map will be updated every year to reflect the most recent conditions.

The maximum build-out potential of the plan area as a whole amounts to an overall increase in the total number of potential residential dwelling units by 1,974, from 739 to 2,713. The vast majority of these units will be built outside of the CHHA.

Implementation of the Special Area Plan will include provisions limiting residential development within the CHHA to maximum densities as permitted under the property's former Future Land Use Map category. The issue of maintaining current maximum densities will be further minimized because properties will be permitted to transfer their density to other properties within the same Character District and, in limited circumstances, to some adjacent character districts. Also, the extension of Meres Boulevard from Pinellas Avenue to U.S. Highway 19 will act as an additional hurricane evacuation route, especially for persons located in the South Pinellas Avenue and South Gateway Character Districts.



CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS - SPONGE DOCKS and CRA SPECIAL AREA PLAN
Environmental

LEGEND			
SAPs	Evacuation Zone Category	Water	Major Arterial
Sponge Docks	A	Wetlands	Evacuation Route
CRA	B	Parks	Pinellas Trail
	C	Coastal High Hazard Area	
	D		
	E		

Map: Coastal High Hazard Area and Evacuation

E. DESIGNATED DEVELOPMENT / REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)

The majority of the Special Area Plan is located mostly within the CRA as adopted under the provisions found in Florida Statutes. The vast majority of the Special Area Plan coincides with the CRA boundaries; however, a small portion of the plan area includes the Sponge Docks, west of the CRA. The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners has delegated authority to the Tarpon Springs Community Redevelopment Agency to plan for the CRA.

The Historic District

A portion of the Special Area Plan covers a portion of the City of Tarpon Springs Historic District. In 1990 the city adopted the Historic Resources Ordinance and established the local Historic District which incorporated the National Register Historic District and created the Heritage Preservation Board (HPB) to maintain the historic charm and character of Tarpon Springs. The HPB reviews proposed improvements and modifications to structures located in the historic district through the Certificate of Approval process. The board uses design guidelines and adopted standards in the city's land development regulations to review any construction, alteration, restoration or rehabilitation that requires a building permit and affects the exterior appearance of buildings in the district.

The adoption of the Special Area Plan will not affect the integrity or current procedures in place within the Historic District. The guidelines and standards of the district will supersede those of the Special Area Plan and any subsequent changes to the City's land development regulations.

G. PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITY AND ADJOINING JURISDICTIONS

The Public School System

The Special Area Plan is not anticipated to have a substantial impact on the public school system. The number of school age children in the subject area is not expected to increase significantly in the coming years. Also, the majority of the type of residential development encouraged by the plan (i.e. mixed-use buildings, multiple family residential, live-work housing, garden apartments and townhomes) typically carries a lower school age child per household rate, thus decreasing the potential for impacts.

Adjoining Jurisdictions

The Special Area Plan is not adjacent to an adjoining jurisdiction.