

POLK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

DRC Date:	February 26, 2026
Planning Commission Date:	May 6, 2026
BoCC Dates:	June 2, 2026 Transmittal, and July 21, 2026 Adoption
Applicant:	Polk County Land Development Division
Level of Review:	Level 4 Review, Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment
Case Number and Name:	LDCPAL-2026-2 Main Street Corridor Text CPA
Request:	This is a County-initiated request to amend the Comprehensive Plan to establish a new Section, to be called the Main Street Commercial (MSC) Corridor, in the Future Land Use Element.
Location:	N/A
Property Owner:	N/A
Parcel Size:	N/A
Development Area:	N/A
Future Land Use:	N/A
Nearest Municipality	N/A
DRC Recommendation:	Approval
Planning Commission Vote:	Approval (7:0)
Florida Commerce	Pending
Case Planner:	Mark J. Bennett, AICP, FRA-RA, CNU-A, Senior Planner

This is a County-initiated request to establish a new Future Land Use designation, the Main Street Commercial (MSC) Corridor, in the Future Land Use Element. The MSC is only for Redevelopment Districts pursuant to those listed in Section 2.124-F. The new section addresses characteristics, designations and mapping, location criteria, and development criteria.

Summary of Analysis

As a result of recent planning efforts in Wahneta and Eloise, a need has been identified to amend the Comprehensive Plan to account for development/redevelopment of existing corridors in developed areas and economically disadvantaged communities. The Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code contain provisions for, and is oriented towards, a suburban, auto-oriented form of development focused on greenfield/vacant properties. However, these regulations do not contain provisions for the redevelopment/revitalization of existing older corridors in developed areas. To address this need, this amendment is proposed.

If approved, this amendment will establish the Main Street Corridor (MSC) designation. It will only be permitted in Redevelopment Districts per Section 2.124-F. that have an approved

Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan or similar type of plan. This requirement is suggested to ensure that redevelopment in the corridor is consistent with the applicable plan and the vision of the community for which the redevelopment is intended.

The proposed MSC category policies include a requirement for new regulations to be included in the Land Development Code. The new regulations are to be context-sensitive to their location in existing developed areas and promote redevelopment and/or revitalization of these corridors through an urban-oriented design. They are also intended to encourage uses that meet the immediate needs of the surrounding residential areas.

The MSC category will remove barriers to redevelopment/revitalization of these corridors by allowing for more flexibility in site design, the use of frontage roads, shared ingress/egress and/or cross-access easements.

By creating the new land use category, it is hoped that areas in need of revitalization can be preserved, rehabilitated, and redeveloped as described in Section 2.124-F, Redevelopment Districts of the Plan.

Relevant Sections, Policies, and/or Regulations to Consider:

Policy 2.102-A1: Development Location

Policy 2.102-A2: Compatibility

Policy 2.109-A1: Land Use Categories Established

Policy 2.124-F3: Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans

Policy 2.124-F4: Redevelopment Activities

Findings of Fact

Request and Legal Status

- LDCPAL-2026-2 is a County-initiated request for a Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan text amendment to establish a new Section, to be called the Main Street Commercial (MSC) Corridor, in the Future Land Use Element.
- Main Street Commercial Corridors are characterized by linear concentrations of all types of commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses along a roadway that are located within a Redevelopment District.
- POLICY 2.102-A1: Development Location – Polk County shall promote contiguous and compact growth patterns through the development process to minimize energy costs, conserve land, water, and natural resources, minimize the cost of services, and prevent development patterns where tracts of land are by-passed in favor of development more distant from services and existing communities.

- POLICY 2.124-F4: Redevelopment Activities, includes a statement that “it is fundamental to all revitalization plans that commercial uses, if included in the land use design, shall be oriented toward the historically established town center, main street, or placed in isolated neighborhood market sites that are restricted to a very limited scale of commercial activity and located only at the intersection of major collector roads. Linear commercial development shall not be allowed, unless it is clearly evident that it is consistent with the traditional development pattern of the community.

Compatibility and Infrastructure

- The proposed MSC land use category includes a provision to require that new development or redevelopment of non-residential development shall be compatible with adjacent existing uses.
- The proposed MSC land use objective includes the statement “and shall promote the redevelopment and infilling of such areas,” which is consistent with the Policy 2.102-A1, Development Location.

Comprehensive Plan Policies and Land Development Code Regulations

- POLICY 2.102-A1 Development Location states that Polk County shall promote contiguous and compact growth patterns through the development process to minimize energy costs, conserve land, water, and natural resources, minimize the cost of services, and prevent development patterns where tracts of land are by-passed in favor of development more distant from services and existing communities.
- POLICY 2.102-A2 Compatibility states that land shall be developed so that adjacent uses are compatible with each other, pursuant to the requirements of other Policies in this Future Land Use Element, so that one or more of the following provisions are accomplished: a. there have been provisions made which buffer incompatible uses from dissimilar uses; b. incompatible uses are made to be more compatible to each other through limiting the intensity and scale of the more intense use; c. uses are transitioned through a gradual scaling of different land use activities through the use of innovative development techniques such as a Planned Unit Development.
- POLICY 2.109-A1 Land Use Categories Established, establishes land use categories in the Polk County Comprehensive Plan.
- POLICY 2.124-F3: Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans state that The County shall develop a "Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan" in accordance with the goals and objectives of the programs described the Polk County Consolidated Plan and Five Year Strategy Plan, for designated "Redevelopment District," to guide implementation of the Community Development Block grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program and the emergency Shelter Grant. The Redevelopment Plans will be prioritized based on a variety of factors that include but are not limited: funding availability, need, physical and economic conditions, level of neighborhood district revitalization plans will be coordinated with other planning initiatives.

The Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans shall contain strategies developed with public input from those areas affected to preserve, rehabilitate, revitalize, and/or redevelop those areas. These strategies shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. targeting housing rehabilitation and code enforcement activities within designated Redevelopment Districts;
- b. removing dilapidated structures to create space for infill development;
- c. coordinating infrastructure improvements with rehabilitation and redevelopment activities;
- d. providing economic opportunities and neighborhood support services to encourage economic independence and self-sufficiency of residents;
- e. implementing programs to facilitate the development of affordable housing;
- f. developing special incentives, provisions, restrictions, or requirements in order to ensure that redevelopment and revitalization activities occur in accordance with sound planning principles and local community objectives;
- g. encouraging design features which promote public safety, create inviting streetscapes along public roadways, and emphasize a pedestrian-oriented environment;
- h. developing or providing incentives for development of needed community facilities such as neighborhood centers, day care centers, churches, schools, and community-oriented policing substations; and
- i. most importantly, empowering residents so as to rekindle community pride and developing lasting partnerships between government and the community.

Recommendation

Development Review Committee Recommendation: Based on the information provided and the analysis conducted within this staff report, the Development Review Committee finds that with the proposed conditions the request **IS CONSISTENT** with the Polk County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. Therefore, the Development Review Committee (DRC) recommends **APPROVAL of LDCPAL-2026-2**.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

On May 6, 2026, in an advertised public hearing, the Planning Commission voted 7:0 to recommend **APPROVAL of LDCPAL-2026-2**.

GENERAL NOTES

NOTE: This staff report was prepared without the benefit of testimony and evidence submitted by the public and other parties at a public hearing.

Analysis:

As a result of recent planning efforts in Wahneta and Eloise, a need has been identified to amend the Comprehensive Plan to account for development/redevelopment of existing corridors in developed areas. The Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code contain provisions for, and is oriented towards, a suburban, auto-oriented form of development focused on greenfield/vacant properties. However, these regulations do not address, nor contain provisions for, the redevelopment/revitalization of existing corridors along collectors/arterial roads in existing developed areas.

To address this need, this amendment is proposed. Key components of this amendment include the following:

- Establishes the Main Street Corridor (MSC) Future Land Use designation.
- Only permits the establishment of new MSCs in Redevelopment Districts as listed in Section 2.124-F.
- MSCs are also only allowed if that Redevelopment District has an approved Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan or similar type of plan. This requirement is suggested to ensure that redevelopment in the corridor is consistent with the applicable plan.
- Allows for neighborhood commercial, office, and institutional uses typically located along a roadway.
- Promotes new residential development to consist of duplex, triplex, quadraplex, and multi-family units.
- Protects existing single-family residential development through the Vested Rights and Non-conformities provisions in Chapter 1 of the Land Development Code.
- Requires new regulations for the Land Development Code that promote redevelopment and/or revitalization of these corridors that are context-sensitive to their location in existing, developed areas, promote an urban-oriented design, encourage the safe bicycle and pedestrian movement and provide flexibility and creativity in site and building design, and encourage uses that meet the immediate needs of the surrounding residential areas.

By creating the new land use category, it is hoped that areas in need of revitalization can be preserved, rehabilitated, and redeveloped as described in Section 2.124-F, Redevelopment Districts.

Infrastructure Impacts - This new land use category will remove some barriers to development (or, more specifically, redevelopment/revitalization) by allowing for more flexibility in site design. The proposed text contains a provision that requires the use of frontage roads shared ingress/egress

easements, or cross-assessments. Any infrastructure impacts will be implemented and required per the concurrency standards listed in Chapter 7 of the LDC.

Comparisons To Other Jurisdictions:

Special policies and development code regulations are common in other jurisdictions throughout Florida. Specific topic research was not completed for this report. However, other jurisdictions commonly create different regulations to promote the redevelopment of existing corridors. Numerous Community Redevelopment Agencies throughout the state include corridor revitalization/redevelopment as a component of their redevelopment plans.

Limits of the Proposed Ordinances

The scope of the amendment will impact new development within existing corridors in Redevelopment Districts. The proposed policies are meant to allow for the redevelopment and infilling of such areas through the establishment of criteria for the development of lands within Main Street Commercial Corridors.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Many policies within the Comprehensive Plan are reviewed for consistency with an application. The most relevant policies for the proposed request are included in this section. The policy is first stated and then an analysis of how the request is provided to state that it may or may not be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. How the request is **consistent or inconsistent** with the Comprehensive Plan is listed below:

Table 1 Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Policy	Consistency
<p>POLICY 2.102-A1: Development Location – Polk County shall promote contiguous and compact growth patterns through the development process to minimize energy costs, conserve land, water, and natural resources, minimize the cost of services, and prevent development patterns where tracts of land are by-passed in favor of development more distant from services and existing communities.</p>	<p>The proposed text amendments to establish the “Main Street Commercial Corridors” will promote the redevelopment and infilling of such areas through the establishment of criteria for the development of lands within Main Street Commercial Corridors.</p>
<p>POLICY 2.102-A2: Compatibility - Land shall be developed so that adjacent uses are compatible with each other, pursuant to the requirements of other Policies in this Future Land Use Element, so that one or more of the following provisions are accomplished: a. there have been provisions made which buffer incompatible uses from dissimilar uses;</p>	<p>The proposed policy text changes include a provision to require that new development or redevelopment of non-residential development shall be compatible with adjacent existing uses.</p>

Policy	Consistency
<p>b. incompatible uses are made to be more compatible to each other through limiting the intensity and scale of the more intense use;</p> <p>c. uses are transitioned through a gradual scaling of different land use activities through the use of innovative development techniques such as a Planned Unit Development.</p>	
<p>POLICY 2.109-A1: LAND USE CATEGORIES ESTABLISHED - The following land use categories are hereby established for the Polk County Comprehensive Plan:</p>	<p>The proposed modification to this policy will establish the Main Street Commercial Land Use Category.</p>
<p>POLICY 2.124-F3: REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT REVITALIZATION PLANS - The County shall develop a "Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan" in accordance with the goals and objectives of the programs described the Polk County Consolidated Plan and Five Year Strategy Plan, for designated "Redevelopment District," to guide implementation of the Community Development Block grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program and the emergency Shelter Grant. The Redevelopment Plans will be prioritized based on a variety of factors that include but are not limited: funding availability, need, physical and economic conditions, level of neighborhood district revitalization plans will be coordinated with other planning initiatives.</p>	<p>The proposed Main Street Commercial (MSC) Future Land Use designation will only be allowed within a Redevelopment District, where the MSC is to be located has an approved Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan pursuant to Policy 2.124-F3 of the Future Land Use Element, an Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area Plan and/or a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Plan, per Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, and the expansion is consistent with the applicable plan.</p>
<p>POLICY 2.124-F4: REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES - Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans shall implement the purpose and intent of Policy 2.124-F1 and shall conform to the following requirements:</p> <p>a. PERMITTED USES: In keeping with the purpose and intent of this section, the following uses may be permitted within a Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residential (single-family and multi-family) 2. Commercial 3. Institutional 4. Recreation and Open Space 5. Preservation 6. Specialized Uses, subject to the provisions of Section 2.125 	<p>The proposed Main Street Corridor Land Use category implements this policy by allowing permitted uses listed in item a. This policy also contains a provision for promoting commercial uses to be located along a Main Street. This proposed text will implement this provision.</p>

Policy	Consistency
<p>7.Housing for workers (agricultural, industrial, construction and hospitality trades)</p> <p>b. DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA:</p> <p>1.Non-residential uses should be limited to a size, scale, and intensity necessary to provide the residents of the community and surrounding area with retail, personal, and community services. Where permitted by the Redevelopment District Revitalization Plan, non-residential uses may include, but are not limited to, grocery stores, personal service shops, gas stations, restaurants, specialized and general retail, medical and professional offices, and community facilities such as neighborhood centers, churches, schools, community-oriented policing substations, and day care centers.</p> <p>2.Non-residential uses should be centrally located within the community and within comfortable walking distance for a majority of the area's residents.</p> <p>3.Non-residential uses shall have direct access to a collector or arterial roadway.</p> <p>4.Appropriate mixes of housing types shall be permitted where such mixes will be compatible with immediate adjacent existing residential development. Development incentives shall be provided to encourage and stimulate workforce housing, affordable housing and housing for special needs groups. Such incentives shall include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>(a) Density and intensity increases up to 150% of the district standards,</p> <p>(b) Expedited permitting; and</p> <p>(c) Design flexibility, additionally</p> <p>(d) May include special impact fee consideration in such circumstances as adopted and codified by the BoCC. Such incentives shall be linked directly to the provision of affordable, workforce or special needs housing on a case-by-case basis, and require that the housing remain dedicated to the particular housing type for which the incentive was awarded for a minimum of twenty years through a deed restriction or similar measure.</p>	

Policy	Consistency
<p>Furthermore, no increase in density or intensity can occur unless adequate water, sewer, roadway and public school capacity exists or are planned to be available to meet the need of the additional development.</p> <p>5. Commercial and office uses shall be permitted in Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans. Redevelopment District Revitalization Plans may include up to 10% of the total area of redevelopment district for commercial and office uses. Designation of an area exceeding the additional 10% shall require a Comprehensive Plan amendment.</p> <p>6. It is fundamental to all revitalization plans that commercial uses, if included in the land use design, shall be oriented toward the historically established town center, main street, or placed in isolated neighborhood market sites that are restricted to a very limited scale of commercial activity and located only at the intersection of major collector roads. Linear commercial development shall not be allowed, unless it is clearly evident that it is consistent with the traditional development pattern of the community.</p> <p>7. Appropriate buffering shall be provided between non-residential uses and residential uses.</p>	

Comments from Other Agencies: None

Under separate attachment:

- Draft Ordinance with proposed text