

**POLK COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

DRC Date: June 27, 2024	Level of Review: Level 4 Review
PC Date: September 4, 2024	Type: Conditional Use
BoCC Date: September 17, 2024 October 1, 2024	Case Numbers: LDCT-2024-14
Applicant: Savi Tri County LLC	Case Name: US 27 SAP Town Center-X (TCX) Full-Service Car Wash
	Case Planner: Malissa Celestine, Planner II

Request:	This is an applicant-initiated request for a Land Development Code (LDC) text amendment to add the use “Car Wash, Full Service” as a “C2” Conditional Use in the Town Center-X (TCX) land use district within Chapter 4, Table 4.8 Use Table of the North US 27 Selected Area Plan (SAP).
Future Land Use:	Town Center-X (TCX) US 27 Selected Area Plan (SAP)
DRC Recommendation:	Approval
Planning Commission Vote:	7-0

Among the changes to Section 401.03 US 27 Selected Area Plan:

- Adding “Car Wash, Full-Service” to Table 4.8, Use Table for US 27 Selected Area Plan, as a “C2” conditional use in Town Center-X (TCX) land use district outside the Ridge Special Protection Area (SPA).

Summary:

LDCT-2024-14 is an applicant-initiated request to add “Car Wash, Full Service” to Use Table 4.8 within the US 27 Selected Area Plan (SAP) in Town Center-X (TCX) land use districts. Currently, “Car Wash, Incidental” is a C2, Conditional Use (CU) in the TCX district of this SAP. These car washes differ from full-service car washes in that they are typically built in conjunction with gas stations and serve as an accessory use.

Full-Service Car Washes in the Town Center-X (TCX) land use district within the US 27 SAP is consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically POLICY 2.131-C6.a.2. This policy establishes that the Town Centers designations are intended to serve as a commercial node of concentrated uses, central to residents and tourists. The signature trait of this SAP is high-density residential development. The potable water usage that is derived from individuals washing their own vehicles is significantly more than the usage generated by commercial car washes, which utilize reclaimed water and Car Wash Recycling Systems. Staff recommends approval.

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

Comprehensive Plan Section 2.131-C: North US 27 Selected Area Plan
 Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.131-C6: Special Provision Areas
 LDC Section 401.03: North US 27 Selected Area Plan
 LDC Section 303: Criteria for Conditional Uses

Findings of Fact

- *LDCT-2024-14 is an applicant-initiated request for a Land Development Code (LDC) text amendment to add the use “Car Wash, Full Service” as a “C2” conditional use in Town Center-X (TCX) land use districts within Table 4.8, Use Table for the North US 27 Selected Area Plan (SAP).*
- *Per Chapter 4, Table 4.8 of the Land Development Code (LDC), Car Wash, Incidental is permitted as a “C2” Conditional Use (CU) in the Town Center-X (TCX) land use districts and shall comply with applicable Criteria for Conditional Uses in Chapter 3, Section 303.*
- *Per Chapter 10 of the LDC, “Car wash, Full Service” is defined as “any facility providing complete car washing and cleaning services. Car washing is generally automatic, with the driver leaving the car during the washing procedure. Waxing and detailing may also be provided.”*
- *Per Chapter 3, Section 303, “Car Wash, Full Service” conditional use criteria:*

“In addition to the applicable district regulations in Table 2.2, the following standards shall apply:

 - 1. The minimum distance from a full-service car wash facility to any residentially designated property shall be 50 feet measured at the narrowest point between the property line of the residential property and either the stacking lane, car washing enclosure, or detailing area, whichever is closer. All car wash activities shall be screened from off-site residential view.*
 - 2. Land use activities, containing a full-service car wash, located adjacent to residentially designated properties shall, at a minimum, provide a landscaped buffer equal to a Type C buffer (see Section 720) between the entire property and adjacent residential areas.*
 - 3. All car wash operations shall be required to connect to public or community sanitary sewer, a Car Wash Recycle System, or similar wastewater treatment system approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or other applicable regulatory agency.*
 - 4. All car wash operations shall be required to connect re-use water where and when it is available.*
- *Per Chapter 4, Table 4.8 of the Land Development Code (LDC), “Car Wash, Incidental” is permitted as a “C2” Conditional Use (CU) in the Town Center-X (TCX) land use districts and shall comply with applicable Criteria for Conditional Uses in Chapter 3, Section 303.*
- *Per Chapter 10 of the LDC, “Car Wash, Incidental” is defined as “any automated car wash which is incidental to the sale of fuel, and characterized by an automatic wash which requires the driver to remain in the vehicle during operation. The facility may be an attached or a free-standing structure.”*
- *Per Chapter 3, Section 303, “Car Wash, Incidental” conditional use criteria:*

In addition to the applicable district regulations in Table 2.2, the following standards shall apply:

 - 1. The minimum distance from an incidental car wash facility to any residentially designated property shall be 50 feet measured at the narrowest point between the property line of the*

residential property and either the stacking lane, car washing enclosure, or detailing area, whichever is closer. All car wash activities shall be screened from off-site residential view.

2. *Land use activities, containing an incidental car wash, located adjacent to residentially designated properties shall, at a minimum, provide a landscaped buffer equal to a Type C buffer (see Section 720) between the entire property and adjacent residential areas.*
 3. *All car wash operations shall be required to connect to public or community sanitary sewer, a Car Wash Recycle System, or similar wastewater treatment system approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or other applicable regulatory agency.*
 4. *All car wash operations shall be required to connect re-use water where and when it is available.*
- *Comprehensive Plan SECTION 2.131-C NORTH US 27 SELECTED-AREA PLAN VISION - BASIC PRINCIPLES - A "Basic Principles" section has been included to serve as guiding principles to convey the concept and intent of the objective and policies of the North US 27 Selected-Area Plan. It contains fundamental principles as follows:*
...
*c. **The town center** and activity centers **serve as** the social, **commercial**, cultural, educational, and civic center of the entire area. Its location is central to the neighborhoods.*
...
 - *Comprehensive Plan POLICY 2.131-C3.e. **SPECIAL-PROVISION AREA** - Due to the specific characteristics of this selected area, the uses permitted in land-use classifications shall be more specifically defined and may vary from those allowed under the general provisions of a land use classification, and/or basic overlay district, as defined within the following special categories:*
 1. **Town Center (TC).**
 2. **Green Swamp Protection Area (GSPA).**
 3. **Greenway Corridor.**
 - *Per Comprehensive Plan POLICY 2.131-C6.a.2:*
TOWN CENTER (TC) - In addition to the other applicable provisions, the TC shall be governed by the following provisions:
 2. **PURPOSE - It is the specific intent of this TC to cluster commercial, other non-residential, and multi-family uses as appropriate to create "Town Centers" for the entire SAP area. These areas are intended to serve as a commercial node of concentrated uses, central to residents and tourists, and provide short- and long-term accommodation of, and encouragement to, development related to Walt Disney World.**

*The primary purpose for the TC is to serve as the focal point for the area encompassing multiple uses and activities. **The TC will serve as the primary core and will compliment the activities and uses proposed for the SAP. The TC will be an employment center and a location for major retail, commercial, and hotel opportunities. The TC will be the hub for cultural, educational, and civic activities. The TC should be unique in its diversity of uses set in an environment designed around the pedestrian, as opposed to the automobile. Greater attention will be given to providing an environment where it is more convenient and pleasant to walk or bicycle, than drive, between activities.***

The TC future land use designation is a mixed-use district that carries with it development rights of both ten dwelling units per acre (10 du/ac) and a commercial floor-area-ratio of 30% (0.35 FAR).

- *Per Comprehensive Plan POLICY 2.131-C6.5: **PERMITTED USES** - Uses permitted include:*
 - (a) *All uses permitted within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) as specified in Policy 2.110-D1; and*
 - (b) *All commercial uses permitted within the Tourist Commercial Center (TCC) as specified in Objective 2.110-I.*
 - (c) *Special Residential in accordance with Section 2.125-F of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with the TC Guidelines.*

- *POLICY 2.110-D1: CHARACTERISTICS - Neighborhood Activity Centers are intended to accommodate the shopping needs of residents living within the immediate surrounding neighborhood(s). General (approximate) characteristics of Neighborhood Activity Centers are:*
 - Usable Area: Over 5 acres to 20 acres*
 - Gross Leasable Area (GLA): 20,000 to 150,000 square feet*
 - Minimum Population Support: 5,000 to 10,000 people*
 - Market-Area Radius: 1½ miles*
 - Typical Leading Tenant: Supermarket*
 - Other Typical Leading Tenants: Drug Store, Restaurant, Bakery, Office, Convenience Store*

- *Per LDC Chapter 4, Table 4.8 “Carwash, Full Service” is a “C2” Conditional Use in the Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACX) designation.*

- *POLICY 2.110-I1: CHARACTERISTICS - Tourism Commercial Centers are “intended to provide for the tourist, recreational needs, and entertainment activities primarily for the short-term visitor to Polk County, and also the residents of Polk County that accommodate large crowds and daily events. **These include, but are not limited to:** theme parks, resorts, hotels, motels, cultural centers, museums, and conference centers. Ancillary commercial uses necessary to support the activities within the center, such as restaurants, **service stations**, and convenience stores may also be permitted.”*

- *Per LDC Chapter 2, Table 2.1 “Carwash, Full Service” is a “P” Permitted Use in the Tourism Commercial Centers (TCC) designation.*

- *The US 27 SAP is approximately 4,904 acres. The TCX is approximately 211.38 acres. Approximately 1.52-acre within the TCX is undeveloped.*

- *This request has been reviewed for consistency with Chapter 4, Table 4.8, and Sections 303, and 907 of the LDC; POLICY 2.131-C of the Comprehensive Plan.*

Based on the information provided by the applicant, recent site visits, and the analysis conducted within this staff report, the Development Review Committee (DRC) finds that the proposed request **IS COMPATIBLE** with the surrounding land uses and general character of the area and **IS CONSISTENT** with the Polk County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code, and therefore, the DRC recommends **APPROVAL of LDCT-2024-14**.

Planning Commission Recommendation: On September 4th, 2024, in an advertised public hearing, the Planning Commission voted (7:0) to recommend Approval of **LDCT-2024-14**.

Analysis:

US 27 SAP & TCX

Currently, “Car Wash, Full Service” is not permitted within TCX land use districts. The applicant is seeking to change this, making them “C2” conditional uses in the TCX designation of the North US 27 Selected Area Plan. At present, “Car Wash, Incidental” is a “C2” in the TCX of this SAP. Where permissible, both uses require a “C2” and must adhere to the requirements outlined in LDC Section 303. See table below for reference.

Table 4.8 Use Table for U.S 27 Selected Area Plan

Green Swamp ACSC Districts is Bold	TCX	RACX	NACX	TCX	RACX	NACX
Car Wash, Incidental	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2
Car Wash, Full Service			C2		C2	C2

The US 27 SAP is in what is often referred to as the “Four Corners” where Polk County meets Lake, Osceola, and Orange County. According to Section 401.03 of the LDC, the North US 27 SAP was adopted to recognize a high level of urbanization. It is comprised of approximately 4,904 acres, defined mostly by high-density residential development approved and constructed in the late 1990’s and early 2000’s as the citrus industry abandoned the area. To maintain an efficient and highly desirable urban growth pattern, a balance of residential and non-residential uses is required.

The North US 27 SAP is unique because it encompasses land use designations inside and outside the Green Swamp Area of Critical State of Concern (ACSC), including TCX. Bifurcated by US Highway 27, the west side of the throughfare is identified as the Ridge Special Protection Area (SPA). The TCX within the entire North US 27 SAP is approximately 211.38 acres created with the specific intent to cluster commercial, other non-residential, and multi-family uses as appropriate to create "Town Centers" for the entire SAP area. Of the overall acreage in the TCX, there is only one ±1.52-acre undeveloped parcel south of Bella Citta Blvd in the Champions Crossings development.

Full-Service Car Washes

Constructing a full-service car wash is an extensive project requiring ample room for the automated washing facility, drive-thru and bypass lanes, as well as accessory parking for vacuuming and hand-detailing of vehicles. This use is generally more intense than an incidental car wash built in conjunction with a gas station, which captures internal traffic and serves as an ancillary economic benefit to the sale of fuel. There is also concern about the economic viability of these facilities and what to do with the structures if a business leaves the site. These structures are not easily repurposed into other uses, which is a strong consideration when planning on where they should be sited.

Still, the US 27 corridor is a prime location for a full-service car wash, attracting customers from

surrounding subdivisions and multi-family developments. Car washes are also better for water conservation than when residents wash their vehicles at home. According to the University of Florida, most commercial car washes use 60% less water than washing at home. This is because many of them use two types of recycling systems - 100% closed-loop systems and partial recycle systems. Closed-loop systems recycle 100% of the water used to wash and rinse, and partial systems recycle only the wash water. According to UF, besides recycling the water, commercial car washes also have absorption systems that prevent the chemical-filled water from traveling into storm drains. Polk County allows the use of Car Wash Recycle systems and require the use of reclaimed water, which is available in the TCX.

Limits of the Proposed Ordinance

The scope of the amendment is limited to TCX land use districts within the US 27 SAP, its use table, and the site requirements for the proposed use. TCX properties on the west side of US 27 are in the Green Swamp Ridge Special Protection Area (SPA); however, these properties have been developed or are currently undergoing Level 2 reviews. Therefore, the proposed use will only be added to the TCX outside of the Ridge SPA.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan & Land Development Code

The Special Provision Area for the North US 27 SAP within Comprehensive Plan allows all uses permitted within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC). As noted above, “Car Wash, Full Service” is a “C2” in the NACX district. Thus, the applicant’s request is consistent with the LDC and Comprehensive Plan.

Compatibility with the Surrounding Land Uses and Infrastructure:

Comments from other Agencies: None

Draft Ordinance: Under separate attachment