

River Ranch Multifamily Redevelopment

River Ranch DRI - Notice of Proposed Change
Polk County, Florida

GAI Project Number: R220884.03.

January 22, 2024

*This report was prepared to assist Polk County
in understanding the NOPC request in relation to the existing River Ranch DRI
under the most recent restated and amended development order, Resolution No. 21-183.*

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1.0 Introduction

Westgate River Ranch, originating in the 1970s, is a dude ranch resort and rodeo in southeast unincorporated Polk County on the west side of the Kissimmee River and three miles south of FL SR-60. The site has various activities such as bungee jumping, golfing, and fishing, among others.

The River Ranch DRI (#8) was approved in 1989 prior to the adoption of Polk County’s Comprehensive Plan. Since its establishment, the DRI has undergone a handful of amendments and extensions, including but not limited to, a wildlife preservation area addition, cabin to RV conversions, and future land use designations (since were not previously assigned). The latest amendment was Resolution No. 21-183 which updated the River Ranch DRI Land Use Master Plan (“Map H”) and includes Resort Residential, Wetlands, Retail, Office/Retail/Amenities/Ancillary, Religious Institution, and Wildlife Preservation/Safari land uses.

The proposed plan (“project site”) is to develop mixed-use buildings, retail on the first story with multifamily on the upper stories, to replace the existing marina building. The purpose of the NOPC is to add a mixed-use land use at the project site to Map H to permit this development.

Westgate River Ranch is also a part of PD 81-24, which was also approved prior to the Polk County Comprehensive Plan’s establishment.

2.0 Site Information

The following analysis describes the current conditions of the project site including location, wetlands, soils, and flood zone hazards.

Table 1: Site Information

Site Identification	Entitlements At-A-Glance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parcel Number: 31312300000012010 ▪ Address: 3200 River Ranch Blvd, #32 River Ranch, FL 33867 ▪ Jurisdiction: Polk County ▪ Parcel Acreage: 187.04 ▪ Approximate Site Acreage: ±4.4 Acres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Future Land Use: L/R - Leisure/Recreation (Polk County) ▪ PD: 81-24 (County) ▪ DRI: #8 / River Ranch, Resolution No. 21-183 ▪ Pre-App: LDDRC-2023-86
Owner/Developer Information	Authorized Agent Information
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2.1 Location

Westgate River Ranch is adjacent to River Ranch's marina along Kissimmee River and at the eastern end of River Ranch Blvd. The property is within a Rural Development area (RDA) and its closest municipality is City of Lake Wales. The project site is a subset of the larger property and encompasses the existing marina's café and parking. It is an approximately 4.4-acre subarea of the larger 187.04-acre parcel (#31312300000012010) in Section 23, Township 31, Range 31.

See Figure A and Figure B for a site location and aerial.



Image A: Existing café at the River Ranch Marina (Source: WestgateResorts.com)

2.2 Wetlands

According to the National Wetland Inventory database, there are 0.45 acres of wetlands on the project site, but it is believed that this boundary may be outdated. The site is adjacent to riverine wetlands consistent with the marina's area and freshwater forested/shrub wetlands to the north and east.

See Figure C for the NWI Wetlands Map.

2.3 Soils

According to the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey, the site consists of four soil types and water, as described below:

Table 2: Soils Breakdown

Map Unit	Soil Name	Drainage Class	Approx. Acreage	Percent of Site
10	Malabar fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Poorly drained	<0.1	1.0%
13	Samsula muck, frequently ponded, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Very poorly drained	0.9	20%
23	Ona-Ona, wet, fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Poorly drained	2.47	56%
25	Placid and Myakka fine sands, depressional	Very poorly drained	1.0	22.8%
Total Project Site			4.4	100%

See Figure D for the Web Soil Survey Map.

2.4 Flood Hazard Zones

According to FEMA’s National Flood Hazard Layer, the project site is within Flood Zone A (Area ID 12105C), which is considered a Special Flood Hazard Area with high chance of flood. This area has a 1% annual chance flood, also known as the 100-year flood.

See Figure E for the Flood Hazard Zone Map.

3.0 Application Supporting Information

The following information is in support of the Level IV application requirements and the information requested in the NOPC form.

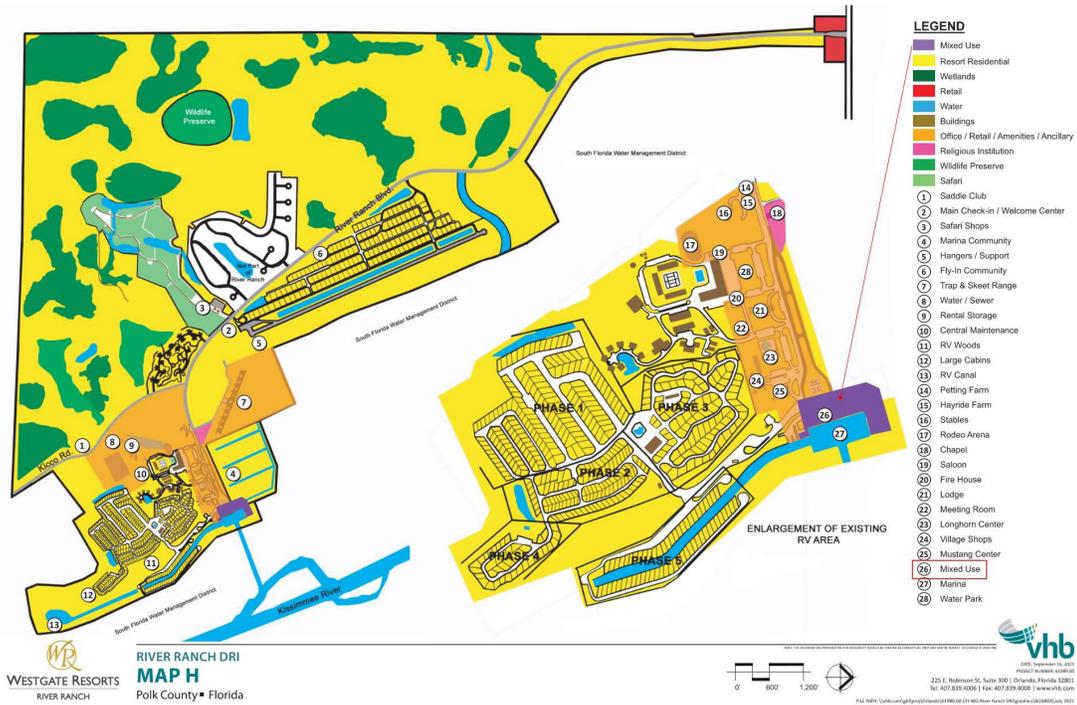
3.1 Description of the proposed change

The proposed change relates to the River Ranch DRI Land Use Master Plan ("Map H") to add a mixed-use land use category and amend the project site to allow for mixed-use development. The project site is located adjacent to the marina; it is currently a restaurant (6,230 square feet) and retail (1,328 square feet) offering swamp buggy rides, with a designated land use Retail/Office/ Amenities/Ancillary. The project intends to develop mixed-use buildings with first floor retail/flex space, office space, and a food and beverage operations. The second to fourth floors will include one- and two-bedroom multifamily units (short term rentals). The site may also incorporate a boat ramp to the south and boat docks to the north. This proposed mixed-use development requires a Mixed-Use Land Use category to be added to the River Ranch DRI and an amendment of the DRI Map H from the Office/Retail/ Amenities/Ancillary to Mixed-Use.

The Mixed-Use Land Use District would permit integrated development that has two or more of the approved land uses (Resort Residential and Retail/Office/Amenities/Ancillary). The existing "Resort Residential" land allows single family or estate, multifamily, or RV sites that can be short-term, seasonal, or time-share in nature. There is no language in the D.O. that permits other land uses to be integrated with the residential use; therefore, it is understood that a land use change from Office/Retail/

Amenities/Ancillary to Resort Residential would not suffice. See Figure J for the proposed change to Map H.

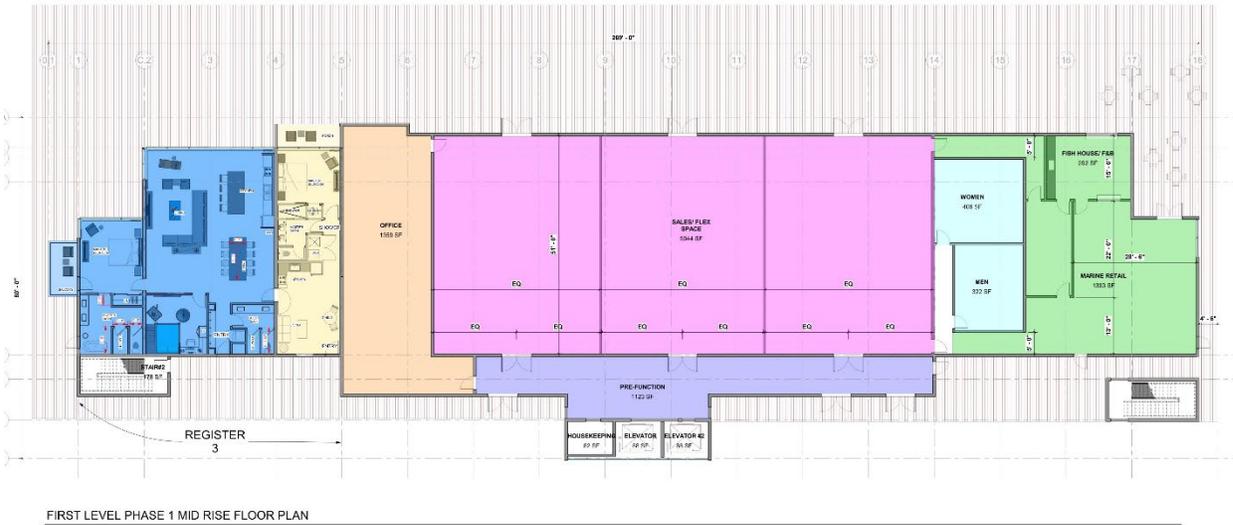
There is currently no commencement or build-out date related to the specific project site. The DRI D.O. expiration date is January 16, 2027.



*Image B: River Ranch DRI, Map H.
 Indication to (1) add mixed-use land use and (2) amend land use at project site*



Image C: Conceptual Project Site Plan



FIRST LEVEL PHASE 1 MID RISE FLOOR PLAN

Image D: Preliminary Conceptual Building Program – 1st Floor Mixed-Use

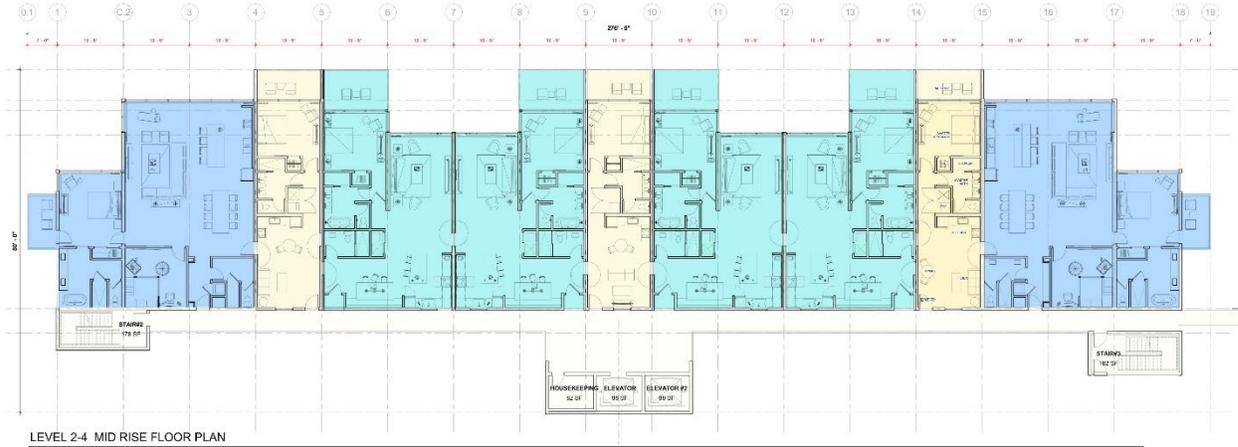


Image E: Preliminary Conceptual Building Program – 2nd through 4th Floor Multifamily



Image F: Preliminary Conceptual Renderings

3.1.1 Location and linear dimensions and size of parcel

The project site is a 4.4.-acre subsection of a larger 187.05-acre parcel within the River Ranch development. The site aligns with the eastern border of the greater parcel (Parcel ID 31312300000012010). Based on the preliminary site plan, Building A is estimated to be 600' x 280.' Building B and the boat ramp will take additional space to the south. The building dimensions are subject to change.

See Figure A: Location Map for more information.

3.1.2 Legal description of property involved

See pages 11-16 of Figure I: Resolution No 21-183 for legal description of the River Ranch DRI.

3.1.3 Access

The project site is part of the larger River Ranch DRI that can be accessed from River Ranch Blvd. The marina connects to the Kissimmee River.

3.1.4 Boundary survey or scaled drawing as required by this Code

See Figure M for the project boundary and preliminary site plan.

3.1.5 Tax parcel sheets and aerial photos.

See Figure K: Tax Sheet & Figure B: Aerial Map.

3.2 DRI Program Analysis

Table 3: River Ranch DRI Program

	Approved Program ¹	Existing Program	Remaining Program	Proposed Program
Resort Residential²	2,898 units	784 units	2,114 units	120 units
Office/Retail	7.57 acres	7.57 acres	0 acres	-0.17 acres ³
Mixed Use	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	1.0 acres ⁴

1 – Per the latest resolution, D.O. 2021-183.

2 – Per the latest resolution, D.O. 2021-183, Resort Residential units include short-term, seasonal, or timeshare residential; previously built or approved RVs; Single Family or Estate; Multifamily; Cabins; Wilderness Campsites; and like residential occupancy units.

3 – This accounts for the existing marina building at 7,558 square feet which is being demolished.

4 – This accounts for the proposed non-residential portion of the mixed-use buildings at 11,007 square feet per building.

3.3 Level of Service Analysis

Westgate River Ranch is served by its own private water and sewer facilities. The following table demonstrates the permitted capacity for Westgate River Ranch from Polk County DOH / DEP:

Utility	Permitted Capacity	Current Use	Anticipated Use ¹	Remaining Capacity
Potable (Drinking) Water	720,000 GPD	176,000 GPD	360 gal/EPD x 120 units = 43,200 GPD	500,800 GPD
Wastewater	95,000 GPD (actual) + 140,000 GPD (planned expansion)	73,000 GPD	270 gal/EPD x 120 units = 32,400 GPD	-10,400 GPD (current) 129,600 GPD (future)

1 – Per Chapter 7 of the LDC, “The adopted minimum Level-of-Service standard for potable water and sanitary sewer is 360 gallons per Equivalent Residential Connection and 270 gallons per Equivalent Residential Connection, respectively, as identified in the Infrastructure Element.”

3.4 Consistency with the L/R Future Land Use

The mixed-use land use to be added to the River Ranch DRI Land Use Master Plan will be consistent with the site’s Leisure / Recreation (L/R) FLU. According to Policy 2.115-A4, L/R uses include: “retirement communities, marinas, fish camps, lodges and retreats, recreational-vehicle (RV) parks, golf courses, and accessory minor retail commercial uses necessary to support these facilities, such as bait shops and convenience stores.” Westgate River Ranch bases its resort theme on these outdoor leisure and recreation uses. The proposed building will comply with the permitted and conditional uses within Table 2.1, Use Table for Standard Land Use Districts, such as multifamily (C2), short-term rental (P), Planned Development (C3), and Retail (C2; up to 35K SF), among others.

According to Table 2.2, the L/R FLU permits a density of up to 10 dwelling units per acre and a maximum FAR of 0.25, which the proposed development will be consistent with.

3.5 Consistency with the Airport Impact District Overlay

The proposed change is within the River Ranch Airport’s Height Notification Zone and In-Flight Visual Interference Zone. Per Section 641 of the LDC, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will be given notice of the proposed development and will obtain the necessary airport obstruction permit(s) from the AZA.

3.6 Consistency with the Military Compatibility Zone Overlay

The proposed change is within the Military Compatibility Zone 1 (MCZ-1). Per Section 642 of the LDC, the Military Compatibility Zone overlay requires a variance of any proposed structure taller than 50 feet. As such, the existing height variance request (LDLVAR-2023-43) requesting a maximum height of 64’-6” to be permitted in PD 81-24 will be extended to be permitted for this project in the MCZ-1.

Additionally, the proposed development will comply with the outdoor lighting requirements.

4.0 D.O. Conditions of Approval

4.1 Proposed Changes to the D.O.

Resolution No. 21-183 is updated via redline to respond to this proposed change:

4.1.1 Item G

River Ranch, as herein amended on ~~December 14, 2021~~[DATE], is a mixed-use recreation and residential resort which consists of 1,836 recreational vehicle spaces, 300 wilderness camping spaces, 587 site-built residential units, 7.57 acres of office/retail space, and other related ancillary recreational and community facilities. The general location of these land units is depicted on the revised Map H ~~prepared by VHB~~ with a date of ~~September 9, 2021~~ July 19, 2023.

...

~~This~~A prior amendment add~~ed~~ the use for a safari community that is designed for general recreational and amusement purposes and is located generally in the area depicted as Safari on Map H.

4.1.2 Item H

TABLE 1
 RESORT RESIDENTIAL UNIT BREAKDOWN

Category	PHASE A	PHASE B	
RESORT RESIDENTIAL ¹			
Single Family or Estate	90	²	90 ¹
Multifamily	192	²	192 ²
RV Units	486	²	486 ²
All Other Resort Residential Units	0	2,130	2,130
Total Resort Residential	786	2,130	2,898
Office/Retail Space ^{3 4}	7.57 acres	n/a	7.57 acres

1 Resort Residential Units include previously built or approved RVs, Single Family or Estate, Multifamily, Cabins, Wilderness Campsites and like residential occupancy units.

2 Some or all of the Resort Residential Units may be of this dwelling type in Phase B.

3 Includes office, retail, and other ancillary recreational and community facilities.

4 Stand-alone single use or vertical mixed use with residential above.

4.2 Compliance

The proposed amendment to Map H is compliant with the D.O. Conditions of Approval listed in Resolution No. 21-183, as follows:

4.2.1 Environmental and Natural Resources (Item A)

1. The post-development runoff rates will not exceed pre-development runoff rates. The project will follow the Water Management District Policies and Guidelines.
2. The project will utilize water conserving landscaping techniques and will not include any exotic or invasive species.
3. The project will utilize water conserving potable water devices, such as low volume plumbing fixtures and reclaimed water for irrigation.
4. There are no wetlands on the project site to be impacted. Any wetlands within 25 feet of the project area will maintain a native vegetative buffer.

See Figures C-E for additional environmental information.

4.2.2 Transportation (Item B)

The proposed change to "Map H" does not impact this section. Per D.O. 2021-183 (page 4, item 22), the owner has completed the improvements that are specified in the Conditions of Approval.

4.2.3 Annual Report (Item C)

The proposed change to "Map H" does not impact this section.

4.2.4 Termination Date/Downsizing (Item D)

The proposed change to "Map H" does not impact this section.

4.2.5 Recording Notice of Adoption (Item E)

The proposed change to "Map H" does not impact this section.

4.2.6 Substantial Deviation

The proposed change will comply with the Conditions of Approval Items A-E. See Figure L, NOPC Form, for the Substantial Deviation Determination Chart.

END NARRATIVE