

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO NORTH RIDGE  
SELECTED AREA PLAN AND POLK COUNTY LAND  
DEVELOPMENT CODE

Prepared For:

INTRAM INVESTMENTS, INC.

Prepared By:

KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.  
109 SOUTH KENTUCKY AVENUE  
LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33801

June 2025

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO NORTH RIDGE SELECTED AREA PLAN  
AND POLK COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

**I. SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION**

The applicant, Intram Investments, Inc., seeks the approval of a text amendment to the Polk County Comprehensive Plan. The text amendment is to Policy 2.131-Q4L.c (g) in the North Ridge Selected Area Plan (the “Policy”). This policy addresses retail and commercial uses for parcels designated Professional Institutional (PIX) future land use designation only. The relevant portion of the existing policy is included below with the key language in **BOLD** text:

c) DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA - Development within a PIX shall conform to the following criteria:

g. Retail and commercial uses are limited to **25 percent** of the PIX district. Future expansions shall require review by the County to meet the then needed infrastructure improvements. At no time may the commercial uses exceed the maximum floor area ratio of 0.70.

The applicant seeks the approval of a text amendment to the Polk County Land Development Code (“LDC”). The text amendment is to sections 401.06.E.3.i and 401.06.E.3.r of the Polk County LDC. These sections address retail and commercial uses for parcels designated Professional Institutional (PIX) future land use designation, and would be modified for consistency with the proposed text change to the Comprehensive Plan. The relevant portion of the existing policy is included below with the key language in **BOLD** text:

Section 401.06.E.3.i

ii. The following conditions shall apply to gas stations within the PIX:

(1) Gas Stations are considered to be retail/commercial uses and shall not exceed the **20% limit** of such retail/commercial uses allowed throughout the PIX district.

(2) Must have **direct frontage** at a signalized intersection of a principal arterial roadway.

Section 401.06.E.3.r

r. Retail - The following standards shall apply:

i. Retail uses are limited to 15 percent of the total developable area **PIX**, BPCX and INDX;

The applicant is seeking to increase the allowable percentage of retail and commercial uses within the PIX district to 30 percent. The proposed text amendments would permit for a consistent percentage of allowable commercial/retail use within the PIX district in both the Comprehensive Plan and the Polk County LDC.

## II. PROPOSED REVISIONS

The applicant is seeking the following revisions to Policy 2.131-Q4L.c (g) in the North Ridge Selected Area Plan:

c) DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA - Development within a PIX shall conform to the following criteria:

g. Retail and commercial uses are limited to ~~25~~ **30 percent** of the PIX district. Future expansions shall require review by the County to meet the then needed infrastructure improvements. At no time may the commercial uses exceed the maximum floor area ratio of 0.70.

The applicant seeks the following revisions to sections 401.06.E.3.i and 401.06.E.3.r of the Polk County Land Development Code:

Section 401.06.E.3.i

ii. The following conditions shall apply to gas stations within the PIX:

(1) Gas Stations are considered to be retail/commercial uses and shall not exceed the ~~20%~~ **30%** limit of such retail/commercial uses allowed throughout the PIX district. **A higher percentage of the limited 30 percent of retail and commercial uses shall only be permitted through a Conditional Use.**

(2) Must have ~~direct frontage at~~ **interconnective access to** a signalized intersection of a principal arterial roadway.

Section 401.06.E.3.r

r. Retail - The following standards shall apply:

i. Retail uses are limited to 15 percent of the total developable area ~~PIX~~, BPCX and INDX;

The proposed text amendments would result in consistent requirements and language for the PIX land use designation within both the Comprehensive Plan and the Polk County LDC. These amendments would allow for an increase in retail and commercial development within the PIX district, which will help to support shopping and employment opportunities for the surrounding residential areas.

### III. IMPACT OF TEXT AMENDMENT

If the text amendment is adopted, then additional commercial and retail development would be permitted for the eight existing PIX districts along the US 27 corridor. **Table 1** below identifies all of the areas that are designated PIX. These areas are also shown in **Exhibit 1** attached at the end of this report.

**Table 1: Existing PIX Land Use Districts**

| <b>PIX District</b> | <b>Acreage</b>      |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| PIX Area 1          | 18.89               |
| PIX Area 2          | 2.91                |
| PIX Area 3          | 4.78                |
| PIX Area 4          | 107.19              |
| PIX Area 5          | 29.08               |
| PIX Area 6          | 3.70                |
| PIX Area 7          | 11.19               |
| PIX Area 8          | 2.05                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>179.79 Acres</b> |

As shown above, if this text amendment is approved then there are eight PIX Districts that would benefit from the increase in permitted commercial and retail use. These areas consist of a total of 179.79 acres. If the proposed plan amendment is approved, the amount of permitted commercial/retail across these districts would increase from 44.94 acres to 53.94 acres. This would encourage commercial development to help support the needs of the surrounding residential areas, without drastically changing the intent of the land use district.

### IV. CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

The following is an analysis of the consistency of the proposed text amendments with the North Ridge Selected Area Plan policies:

#### SECTION 2.131-Q NORTH RIDGE SELECTED AREA PLAN.

This Selected-Area Plan is adopted in recognition that this area of Polk County; bounded on the east by the Providence Development and land to the south, on the north by the CR 54/Loughman SAP, on the west by the Core area of the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern and on the south by the City of Haines City; is expected to experience a high degree of development over the next twenty years. This urbanization will be caused by numerous external factors, most of which are occurring in adjacent Osceola and Orange Counties. This Selected Area Plan is a proactive response to these forces. It represents an initiative to shape this development into an organized and well-planned urban area.

## VISION BASIC PRINCIPLES

The "Basic Principles" section has been included to serve as guiding principles to convey the concept and intent of the objectives and policies of the North Ridge Selected Area Plan. It contains fifteen fundamental principles as follows:

1. An efficient and highly desirable urban growth pattern requires a balance of residential and nonresidential uses, a range of housing opportunities, and short trips between housing, employment, and shopping.

**This text amendment is intended to provide needed commercial development in this portion of the county. Significant residential development has been approved in the surrounding area, and this amendment will help to provide commercial and retail establishments to support this growing residential population. These developments can help reduce trip lengths and provide employment for nearby residents.**

2. The best way to achieve an efficient and highly desirable urban growth pattern in this area is through the interconnection of urban nodes, tourist activities, and medical and commercial centers.

**The proposed text amendment furthers this goal by balancing residential and commercial uses. The county has already approved significant residential development in the surrounding area. This amendment removes a barrier to commercial and retail development within the PIX district, and helps to promote additional development to support the residential population.**

3. The existing cities serve as the social, commercial, cultural, educational, and civic centers of the entire area. Their urban services and location are responsive to the needs of the neighborhoods.

**The proposed text amendment furthers this goal by ensuring the full range of needed land uses are provided. The proposed text amendment will encourage additional retail and commercial development to help support the needs of the neighborhoods along the US 27 corridor and surrounding area.**

4. The I-4 US 27 intersection, as a major access to the area, will allow regional-type activities to develop in the adjacent area.
5. The existing medical facilities will serve as attractors for other medical services and office centers.

6. Tourist commercial uses, mixed with regional-type activities are better served in the vicinity of the intersection of I-4 and US 27 and at the terminus of the Ernie Caldwell Boulevard.

7. Neighborhood and community activity centers are needed to help serve not only the visitors but also the permanent residents to the area.

8. Environmentally sensitive development is an enhancement to the quality of life. Provisions for Green Swamp protection, aquifer protection, and reforestation are important components to this plan.

**This text amendment furthers this goal by encouraging development on suitable land for development. The text amendment does not encourage development in unsuitable areas.**

9. Transportation efficiency is a desirable goal. This plan recognizes US 27 as the primary transportation corridor and the need for alternative North/South and East/West facilities to support urban growth.

**The proposed text amendment will help to provide commercial and retail establishments to support the growing residential population. This increase in development can help reduce trip lengths and provide employment for nearby residents. Major roadways will see less traffic and congestion as a result of these shorter trip lengths, helping contribute to transportation efficiency. The proposed amendment would also remove the requirement for direct frontage to a principal arterial roadway and instead allow for interconnective access, which will also help to reduce traffic on major roadways.**

10. Multi-use transportation corridors and access management are key implementation tools to providing a safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic.

**The text amendment will permit an increase in commercial and retail development which will reduce trip lengths. The text amendment will also require interconnective access, which will help provide safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic.**

11. This SAP has an important rural and agricultural component that needs to encourage agricultural activities and protection of these elements.

12. Mixing residential and non-residential uses along with interconnectivity between neighborhoods and commercial districts will support a more efficient transportation pattern in the area as well as help maintain the level of service on US 27.

**The proposed text amendment will result in more commercial and retail development in close proximity to residential developments. This will encourage a more mixed use development pattern for this portion of the county. The text amendment will require these developments to have interconnective access to principal arterial roadways, helping to support efficient transportation patterns.**

13. Mixed use developments that can provide a diverse mix of residential and non-residential uses are preferred within the SAP.

14. Provide a linked system of recreation by the establishment of an area-wide pedestrian and bikeway trail within rights-of-way and on sidewalks of collector and arterial roads with links to the Green Swamp.

15. This SAP area contains regionally important commercial sand resources. These raw materials are essential for future development in several central Florida Counties. Development standards must maximize long-term extraction of sand resources, and promote compatibility with adjoining uses, and promote and guide future conversion to developable land.

GOAL 2.131-Q: To develop an environmentally sensitive plan which encourages a high quality living environment through an efficient urban-growth pattern based on a balance of employment activities, residential and nonresidential uses, a range of housing opportunities, and short vehicle trips between housing, employment, and shopping in harmony with the special factors of the Green Swamp.

**The proposed text amendment seeks to provide a balance of residential and non-residential uses. The amendment removes barriers to having needed commercial development in this portion of the county.**

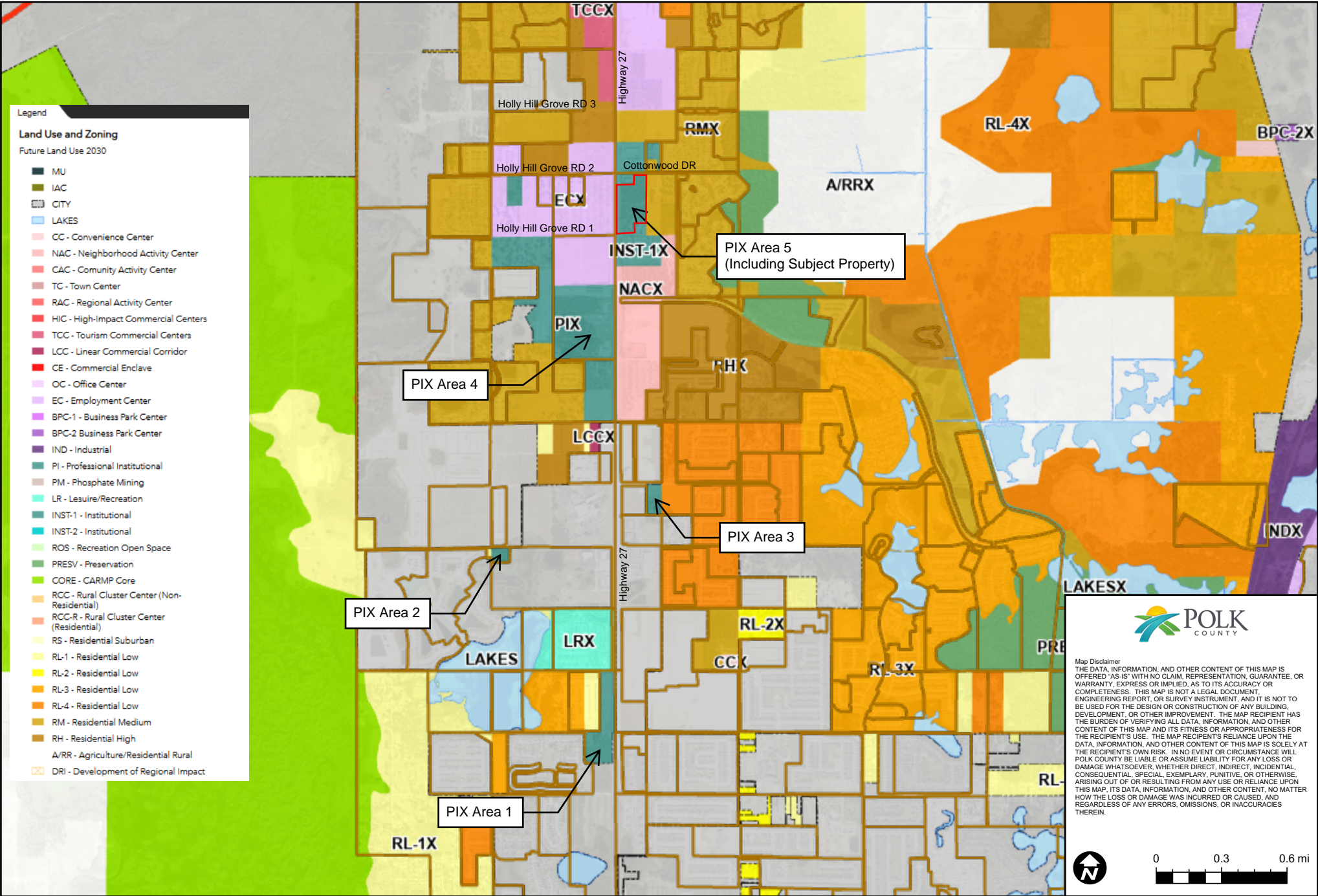
---

## EXHIBIT 1: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

---



Polk County - GIS Viewer v.1





Polk County - GIS Viewer v.1

