



City of Auburndale
Auburndale, Florida 33823

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Community Development

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October 16, 2025

Mr. Robert Bolton
Planner III, Land Development
Polk County Board of County Commissioners
330 W Church St, Bartow, FL 33830

SUBJECT: LETTER OF OPPOSITION FOR LDCT-2025-19 and LDCPAS-2025-17

Dear Mr. Bolton,

The City of Auburndale would like to express concern regarding LDCT-2025-19 Text Amendment and LDCPAS-2025-17 Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The location of the subject site is a gateway of the Central Florida Innovation District, within the Auburndale Joint Planning Area (JPA) and serviced by the City of Auburndale utilities. The property is contiguous to city limits to the east and could annex into the City of Auburndale.

The property has Single Family Residential-1 (RS-1) zoning and Low-Density Future Land Use within the City of Auburndale to the east. Unincorporated Polk County Residential Future Land Use also surrounds this property to the north, south and west as seen on exhibit maps. North and south of the subject site is Residential Low Future Land Use which is comparable to the City of Auburndale's Low-Density Future Land Use. While some of the subject site does have Polk County Residential Low-4 Future Land Use, the properties have developed with one dwelling unit per half acre to one acre and would not be considered compatible to the intensities allowed within the requested Neighborhood Activity Center Future Land Use. The Polk County Comprehensive Plan lists the following policies on compatibility that should be taken into consideration with the requested amendments.

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;
- 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.

The intensity of a Neighborhood Activity Center Future Land Use would not be considered compatible with the current established residential development surrounding the property. If commercial is considered for the subject site, it should mirror the same conditions for the entire subject site for Block A, B and C listed in the staff report "conditions." The closest Neighborhood Activity Center is approximately two miles to the south. However, within the City of Auburndale a commercial Village Center is approximately 0.39 miles to the northeast. Village Center Zoning allows for

mixed use commercial such as retail, restaurants, personal services, and office space. Polk County Comprehensive Plan POLICY 2.110-D3, states that there should be a minimum travel distance of two miles from one Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) and the center of any other Neighborhood Activity Center. While the subject site meets the distance criteria for Polk County Future Land Use, it is less than 1.71 +/- miles north of Neighborhood Activity Center Future Land Use within the City of Auburndale which is comparable in permitted uses.

In 2019, Polk County with the City of Lakeland, City of Auburndale and Central Florida Development Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Central Florida Innovation District. The City of Auburndale adopted Land Development Regulations in May of 2024 (Ordinance #1770) creating a special overlay district. The subject site is noted in Section 15.608 as a "Gateway" for the Innovation District. Within this special overlay district is sign standards, per Sec. 15. 606.11, stating monument signs shall be consistent with the design, character, materials, and finishes used on the Florida Polytechnic University and SunTrax monument signs. Regulations, per Sec. 15. 606.6, a, b, also outline Type C landscaping and solid walls to minimize the impact of nonresidential development on any abutting residential district.

Should Polk County adopt LDCT-2025-19 and LDCPAS-2025-17, the City would ask that the following conditions be placed on the subject site:

1. Type C landscaping, sign standards to imitate Florida Polytechnic University and SunTrax monument signs.
2. a solid 6-foot masonry wall required on the northern and west property lines.
3. outdoor storage be prohibited to help the impact of nonresidential development abutting the established residential district.
4. require the same prohibited uses for Block A as listed in the staff report for Block B and C.

Due to the concern with compatibility and location, consideration should be given to accommodate compatible uses and transitional zoning to the surrounding residential. The City has provided Polk County staff with current City Zoning and Future Land Use Maps and City of Auburndale Ordinance #1770.

Please accept our objection to LDCT-2025-19 and LDCPAS-2025-17, based on the above information and enter it into the record with staff reporting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Womble", with a stylized, flowing script.

Julie Womble, M.A.
Community Development Director
City of Auburndale