



# MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #6b

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DATE: SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

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## Introduction

On August 11, 2009, Council staff received proposed amendment #09-1ER to the Town of Southwest Ranches Comprehensive Plan for review of consistency with the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida (SRPP)*. Staff review is undertaken pursuant to the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and Rules 9J-5 and 9J-11, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

## Community Profile

The Town of Southwest Ranches was incorporated in June 2000. It is located in the southwestern part of the developed portion of Broward County, roughly west of Flamingo Road, north of Sheridan Street, east of Water Conservation Area 3B, and south of the C-11 canal along Griffin Road. The Town is bisected by part of the Town of Davie on either side of Interstate Highway 75. Other municipalities neighboring Southwest Ranches include the Cities of Weston to the north, Cooper City to the east and Pembroke Pines to the south. The western boundary of the Town is adjacent to unincorporated Broward County. The combined land area of the Town is approximately 13 square miles. The Year 2008 population is estimated as 8,489. This results in a population density of 650 people per square mile, the lowest of any municipality in Broward County. Proud of, and determined to retain, its low-density, equestrian-oriented rural lifestyle, Southwest Ranches has an average density of one dwelling unit per three acres. The Town expects its ultimate density will be 2.5 acres for each dwelling unit in approximately 10 years. A map depicting the general location of the Town is included in Attachment 1.

## Summary of Staff Analysis

Proposed Amendment #09-1ER contains the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)-based text amendments and six (6) Future Land Use Map amendments to the Town of Southwest Ranches Comprehensive Plan. The Town's EAR was found sufficient on April 11, 2008, by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

## **EAR-Based Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

In 1998, the State of Florida revised the statutory requirements for EARs to allow local governments to base their analysis on the key local issues they are facing to further the community's goals consistent with statewide, minimum standards. The Report is not intended to require a comprehensive rewrite of the Elements within the local plan, unless a local government chooses to do so. The Town of Southwest Ranches 2007 EAR identified the following specific issues to be addressed through EAR-based amendments:

1. Multi-jurisdictional Coordination of Town's Proposed 25 Mile Pedestrian / Bikeway / Greenway System with Regional Transportation and Recreational Networks;
2. Coordinating Pre-Disaster Tertiary and Secondary Drainage Augmentation Program in Flood Zone (AH) With Multiple Agencies;
3. Public School Capacity and Location;
4. Advisory Boards;
5. Water Supply Planning and a 10-Year Work Plan;
6. Coordinating the Development of a Public Safety, Sub-Regional Emergency Response - Relief Distribution Center and a Disaster Animal Rescue Center; and
7. Affordable Housing.

Nine (9) Elements of the Town of Southwest Ranches Comprehensive Plan would be amended and updated in accordance with the amendments identified in the EAR, including a response to changes to State Statutes, the Florida Administrative Code, and the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida (SRPP)*. In addition, the proposed EAR-Based Comprehensive Plan amendments include an extensive reorganization of the Plan to make it more logical and user-friendly.

The Town of Southwest Ranches Council approved the proposed amendment at its August 4, 2009 meeting, for transmittal.

Staff analysis confirms the proposed EAR-based amendments are compatible with the Goals and Policies of the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*.

### **Summary of EAR-Based Text Changes**

#### Future Land Use Element

Key changes to this Element include the establishment of a Rural Mixed-Use land use category that would provide a civic focus for the Town and allow for the development of affordable housing. New Policy 1.14-a would commit the Town to initiate a land use amendment to re-designate the Coquina Plaza property (northeast corner of Dykes Road and Sheridan Street) to the Rural Mixed-Use land use category, by 2011. In addition, the proposed changes would:

- Encourage greenway trails along Rural Roadways in lieu of paved local sidewalks;
- Commit to construct an independent Public Safety Sub-Regional Emergency Response and Relief Distribution Center;
- Amend the Land Development Regulations to ensure efficient access by emergency services;
- Provide protection to residents and the environment by establishing standards for the filling and excavation of property, and regulations to protect the nighttime environment;
- Coordinate with Broward County to identify and protect archeological resources;
- Develop strategies to better facilitate post-disaster redevelopment and hazard mitigation;

- Coordinate with the County and other nearby jurisdictions to provide adequate shelter in the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster; and
- Establish appropriate standards for industrial uses.

### Housing Element

New Policies would direct the Town to update the Housing Element to incorporate data from the 2010 Census and the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment by Shimberg Center at the University of Florida. New strategies to address affordable housing would include:

- Changing the Future Land Use Map designation of the Coquina Plaza property to the Rural Mixed-Use land use category;
- Coordinating with Broward County, the South Florida Regional Planning Council, municipalities, and appropriate partners to develop a regional solution;
- Working with the banking industry to provide financial assistance to homeowners;
- Encouraging home business, which could eliminate transportation cost;
- Conducting an inventory of grooms' and maids' quarters that might contribute to the Town's need for affordable housing;
- Partnering with non-profit or governmental agencies to provide job trainings for living wage jobs; and
- Developing affordable housing to meet projected demand over the long term.

### *Comment*

During the Town's 2007 EAR sufficiency review, Council staff suggested the Town retain the land use designation of Medium Density Residential (16 units/acre) on a site located at the northeast corner of Sheridan Street and 190<sup>th</sup> Avenue, because it was the only site in Town with the potential to develop affordable housing. The Town wanted to change the designation to Rural Ranch (1 unit/2.5 acres). Council staff urged the Town that if they were to move forward with the amendment, an alternative land use plan amendment to address the provision of affordable housing should accompany it.

Within this amendment package, the Town proposes to designate the site (discussed above) to Rural Ranch, but has not proposed an alternative map amendment for affordable housing. However, the Town has identified, in new proposed Policies, an alternative site (the Coquina Plaza) for development of affordable housing and a new land use designation, Rural Mixed-Use. It is estimated that this site could have the potential to develop up to 306 units of affordable housing.

According to a conversation with the Town's Community Service Director, the Town is planning to initiate the map amendment in 2010. Money (\$20,000) has been set aside in the Town's proposed budget to do so, which is expected to be reviewed and approved by the Town Council by September 30, 2009. In addition, the Town is tackling the affordable housing issue in a number of other ways, as detailed above in the summary of proposed changes in the Housing Element. All of these facts indicate that the Town is working toward resolving the affordable housing issue that staff raised during the EAR review.

### Transportation Element

Revised and new Objectives and Policies would direct the Town to implement a proportionate fair-share mitigation system and foster a roadway system that is consistent with and complements the Town's semi-rural character. The Town proposes to add new Policies that would:

- Adopt the Level of Service (LOS) Standard of "D" for US Highway 27 and I-75, as well as roadways functionally classified as a collector road or higher except for Dykes Road;

- Establish a mechanism to balance the potential future development pressure of expanding Dykes Road while keeping the Town’s rural character (as a two-lane roadway); and
- Maintain and construct all existing and future Trafficways and local streets within the Town as two lane facilities except for Griffin Road, Sheridan Street, US-27, Flamingo Road, and Stirling Road.

Recreation and Open Space Element

New Policies would direct the Town to adopt specific trail alignments for the Recreation and Equestrian Trails Map and include the updated map, as appropriate, in future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Measurement of Objective 1.5, Public Access to Parks, would be revised as the extent to which Town parks are accessible to different segments of the Town’s population.

Conservation Element

A new Objective and related Policies would increase the Town’s environmental sustainability. Specifically, the new Policies would direct the Town to advocate for the development of renewable energy resources; consider energy efficiency and resource conservation in the construction, renovation, and operation of Town facilities; increase recycling rates; and meet or exceed the standards of being designated as “Tree City USA”.

Utilities Element

Revised Policies would amend and simplify the LOS Standards for potable water and wastewater facilities. New Policies would:

- Regulate new septic tank systems to be consistent with Broward County’s Water and Septic Tank Ordinance and State requirement;
- Ensure an adequate amount of pervious area on all sites for appropriate aquifer recharge; and
- Commit the Town to work towards the implementation of the Tertiary Drainage Master Plan.

Public School Facilities Element

All Objectives and Policies would be renumbered due to reorganization of the Comprehensive Plan; however, content would remain the same as the Element was recently adopted, on June 5, 2008, to meet public school concurrency requirements.

Intergovernmental Coordination Element

New Policies would direct the Town to continue a dialogue with neighboring jurisdictions and entities providing services in the Region to discuss major issues and compatibility, specifically to coordinate with Broward Sheriffs Office and the Broward County legislative delegation on building a sub-regional service center. Additional Objectives and Policies would provide for coordination with other local governments, and federal and state agencies on infrastructure and disaster mitigation.

Capital Improvement Element

All Objectives and Policies would be renumbered due to reorganization of the Comprehensive Plan. A new Policy would direct the Town to implement a proportionate fair-share mitigation system for transportation.

Staff analysis confirms the proposed EAR-based text amendments are compatible with the Goals and Policies of the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*.

### Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendments

The Town proposes six (6) amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). One would designate a site at the northeast corner of Sheridan Street and 190<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Medium Residential (16 units/acre) to the Rural Ranch (1 unit/2.5 acre) land use designation. The remaining five (5) amendments would change from various future land use designations to Recreation and Open Space.

The table below summarizes the proposed changes and existing uses for each parcel [See Attachment 2].

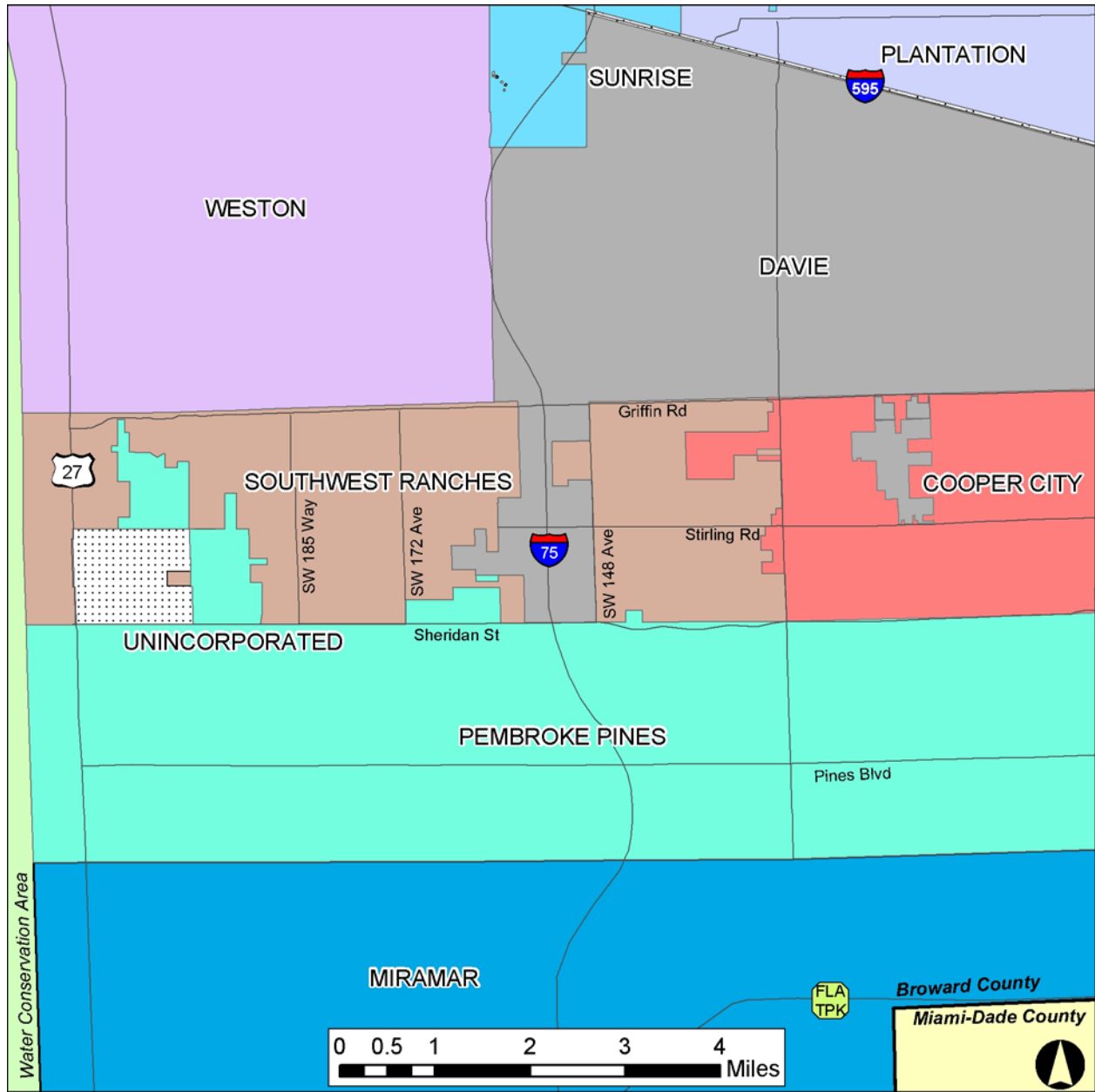
<b>Proposed Future Land Use Map Changes</b>				
Site	Acres	Current Designation	Proposed Designation	Existing Uses
1	28.84	Medium Density Residential (16 units/acre)	Rural Ranch (1 unit/2.5 acres)	Vacant
2	1.16	Rural Ranch	Recreation and Open Space	Church
3	5.00	Estate Residential	Recreation and Open Space	Vacant
4	29.67	Rural Estates	Recreation and Open Space	Public park
5	16.01	Rural Ranch	Recreation and Open Space	Public park
6	11.78	Commercial	Recreation and Open Space	Public park

Staff analysis confirms that the proposed map amendments are compatible with and supportive of the Goals and Policies of the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*.

#### Recommendation

Find Town of Southwest Ranches proposed amendment package #09-1ER generally consistent with the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*. Approve this staff report for transmittal to the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

# Attachment 1



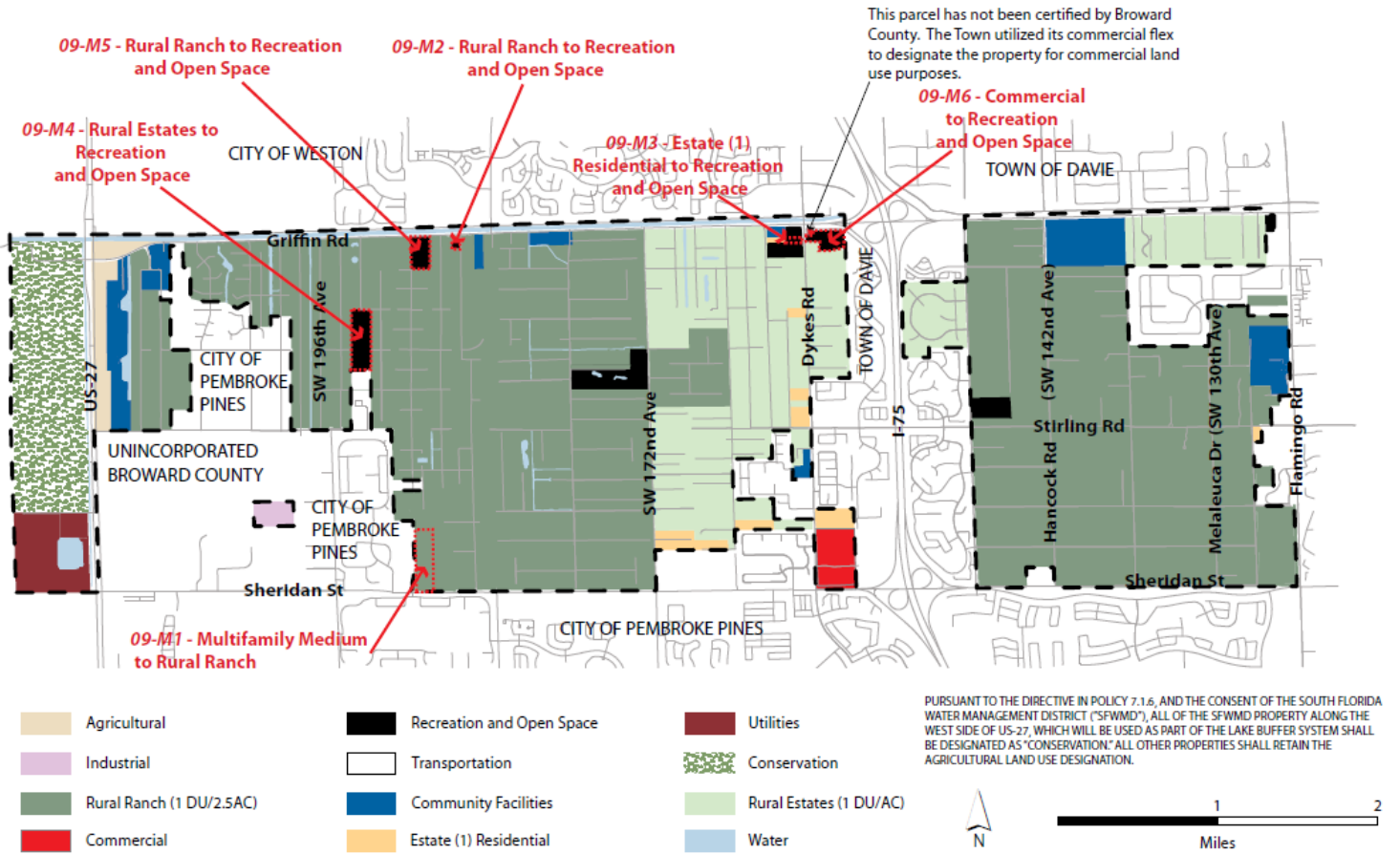
## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

### Location Map

Town of Southwest Ranches  
Proposed Amendment #09-1ER

Sources: FDEP, SFWMD, Broward County, SFRPC.  
Note: For planning purposes only. All distances are approximate.

## Attachment 2



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

Future Land Use Map Amendments

Town of Southwest Ranches  
Proposed Amendment #09-1ER  
*(for summary, see staff memo, page 5)*

Sources: Town of Southwest Ranches, Transmittal Package for DCA #09-1ER  
Note: For planning purposes only. All distances are approximate.