

Memorandum

To: Sarah Blanchard, SCAT
From: Alan Hoffman
Date: 15 July 2010

Re: City of Sarasota BRT-Supportive Land Use Plans and Policies

In the SCAT BRT Project Alternatives Analysis (AA), Appendix D refers to a number of City initiatives in support of Land Uses. The following is a status update of these initiatives.

1. *TOD Overlay District.*

The City of Sarasota does not have, and does not anticipate at this point having, any specific TOD Overlay Districts, in great part because it has created a broader set of TOD-supportive land use zoning designations. These zones include:

- a. Downtown Core (DTC), Downtown Edge (DTE), and Downtown Bayfront (DTB), which require only 1 parking space per dwelling unit as well as options for reducing parking through shared uses. These designations also permit high density residential (up to 50 du/acre in DTC and DTB, and 25 du/acre in DTE).
- b. Various Office Zoned Districts (such as OND and OCD) that allow:
 - Mixed-use residential
 - Front-facing buildings (no set-backs); and
 - Parking in the rear.
- c. Various neighborhood mixed-use designations (such as CND, CSD, CRD, and CBN) that permit transit-supportive mixed-use development. For example, much of the MLK corridor is in the process of being redesignated CBN, which requires no parking for residential and no parking for the first 10,000 square feet of retail space in a project.

2. *Transit Incentives.* Mention was made in the Appendix of a set of Transit Incentives linked to “Level of Service Credits” for roadways with heavy or extraordinary transit service. The City has since engaged in a more comprehensive City-wide Mobility Plan, due out for public engagement on 1 October 2010. This Plan is expected to lead to a set of amendments to the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

3. *Walkability.* While no specific projects can be cited, the City has continued to develop Downtown and the Rosemary District as walking-friendly locations. At the planning level, the stretch of MLK between Janie’s Garden and the Ringling College

of Art and Design is identified as an area where pedestrian improvements are anticipated, though no specific plans or projects have been advanced.

4. *Newtown*. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor was identified by the City for rezone to mixed-use development at up to 25 dwelling units/acre. This rezone, to the CBN designation, has been delayed (according to City staff) by approximately six months due to neighborhood issues with the administrative process. While the current state of the economy has reduced developer interest across the City, at least one developer has expressed interest in developing rental units on the south side of MLK between Orange and Osprey.

The City's Storefront Program, which provides support to business owners interested in improving their facades, is also seen as a tool which can help with the redevelopment of this corridor.

5. *Rosemary District*. This district has been rezoned as DTE "Downtown Edge Zone District." This designation permits mixed use developments with up to 25 du/acre. City Staff consider this district as a big success, held back currently only by the current state of the economy.
6. *Orange Avenue: Burns Square/Burns Court/Laurel Park*. The area surrounding the proposed BRT station area is zoned as Downtown Core, with up to 50 dwelling units/acre permissible under zoning. No further incentives have been identified for development in this area.
7. *South Trail*. Much of the South Trail has limited redevelopment potential, given the narrow depth of transit-friendly zoning and the presence of single-family neighborhoods immediately adjacent to commercial businesses fronting on the South Trail. An exception to this is the Mid-Town Shopping Center, which City staff consider a relatively obsolete design and which could get rezoned for up to six stories of mixed-use development if the property owner requests it. The redevelopment of this site would certainly be an argument in favor of locating an adjacent BRT station.
8. *Downtown Circulator*. The proposal for a system of downtown circulators is moving ahead, with the City searching for funding for the planning studies in support of the project. Preliminary plans for the Circulator have its two proposed routes running virtually entirely within the two Downtown (Core and Edge) zoning districts, meaning that TOD-supportive zoning is already in place.
9. *Downtown Parking*. Previous studies by the City, including the Downtown Parking Master Plan of October, 2003, identified proposed changes in the supply and location of parking downtown. As a further step in the implementation of this plan, a parking garage is currently under construction on Palm Avenue. This garage is located within a very short distance (perhaps 100') of a proposed Circulator line. It

will contain 743 automobile spaces as well as 20 motorcycle and 80 bicycle spaces. It is expected to open in early 2011.

10. *Downtown Improvement District.* The Downtown Improvement District (DID) has limited funds for major projects. Of its current annual budget of approximately \$400 thousand, half is devoted to advertising. While the DID will be an important stakeholder for the BRT project, its role in station issues remains up in the air.
11. *Downtown Mobility Study.* The Downtown Mobility Study is expected to lead to amendments to the transportation chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which should include funding needs for transit and possibly the identification of a new Mobility Fee.
12. *Mound Street.* The City is currently planning major changes to Mound Street. At the same time, these plans are considered very long-range and will only follow changes planned on the North Trail (a series of new traffic roundabouts). There should be plenty of opportunity for SCAT/the County to propose changes to Mound Street consistent with the City's longer-term goals.
13. *Setbacks.* Best practices in BRT station design call for some form of separation between the roadway and the passenger waiting areas. This can greatly enhance pedestrian safety, especially for passengers traveling with small children. There should be the opportunity to formally request a setback variance for BRT stations with the City.



Station-by-Station Land Use Review

With these updates in mind, the following recaps the current land use situation surrounding each of the proposed BRT stations within or adjacent to the City of Sarasota.

- a. **Innovation Green.** The Innovation Green station may or may not be located by the intersection of University Parkway and Old Bradenton Road. North of University Parkway, the land is controlled by the Airport Authority and is zoned by the City as G

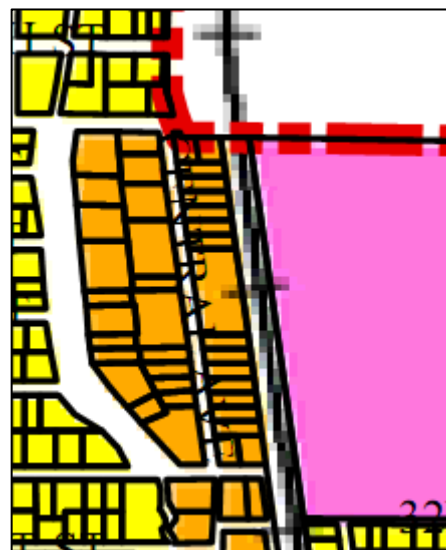
(Government), with an area (toward Royal Palm Avenue) as ICD (Intensive Commercial Development). On the south side, the dog track to the southeast is zoned CI (Commercial Intensive), and most of the parcels to the southwest are zoned RMF-2 (Residential Multifamily 2) with some CP (Commercial Park). Long-term, development opportunities will likely be concentrated on the north side or on the dog track property.

b. **DeSoto.** The DeSoto station is expected to be located on the CSX right-of-way to the south of DeSoto Road. Land within the City of Sarasota is found to the west of the proposed station (the dog track) and a large parcel (just under 16.6 acres) immediately to the east (the former Habitat for Humanity site, known as “Puppy Park”). Both sites are zoned CI (Commercial Intensive), which does not allow for most residential uses, though the Puppy Park is designated as Multiple Family (Medium Density) in the City’s Future Land Use 2030 map.

With regard to Puppy Park, Habitat for Humanity never followed through on the rezoning for the site. Hence, the City has kept the County’s zoning designation. At issue is building height; the two implementing zones that could be applied to the site, RMF-4 and RMF-5, allow for building heights of 70’ and 90’ respectively, yet the City would like to keep building heights under 35’. In particular, the northeastern corner of the property falls within the Runway Protection Zone of the SRQ Airport, which under a soon-to-be-adopted City measure will limit building heights to 35’; the City has expressed its interest in keeping the entire property within that same height limit (though taller buildings *may* be considered if the overall benefit is demonstrated). Both RMF designations would permit up to 25 d.u.s/acre.

c. **Myrtle.** The Myrtle station will likely be located north of Myrtle Street. The redevelopable lands to the east of the station are in the County and, while currently zoned for ILW (Industrial, Light and Warehousing), is designated as MEC (Major Employment Center) on the County’s Future Land Use map. While the County encourages “limited” residential development within MECs, it particularly encourages workforce and affordable housing.

Otherwise, there is little redevelopable land within the City that is immediately accessible to the Myrtle Station. To the south, the Sarasota School Board is proceeding with plans to rebuild and reorient Booker High School, potentially with a gate fronting on the CSX right of way (to access a pedestrian/bike path that is anticipated along with the BRT facility). To the west, most areas are designated for single family housing, with parcels to the southwest designated as lower-density (6-9 dus/acre) multifamily. At the same time, many of the lots to the southwest of the likely station are designated in the Future Land Use Map as Multiple Family (Medium Density), which in the attached map is depicted in orange.



d. **MLK.** Dr. M L King Jr. Way is in the process of being rezoned to CBN, which is the most transit-friendly designation possible outside of the Downtown Core; it permits densities up to 25 d.u.s/acre with no minimum parking requirements for residential and small-scale (under 10,000 sf) commercial. This rezoning is anticipated to be completed within six months.

Lots fronting the CSX right of way immediately to the west north and south of the MLK CBN district are currently zoned for single-family residential, though some non-conforming multifamily housing is grandfathered in to the south. The City does not currently have plans to rezone this district, though the Future Land Use map depicts these lots as Multiple Family (Medium Density).

e. **19th/22nd.** Land uses in this area are currently zoned for single-family or low-density multi-family housing. The Future Land Use map shows these areas as primarily single-family housing. The “BRT Project Northern Section Station Analysis” document recommends that this station be pushed to the south side of 19th Street to improve access to institutional uses to the southeast as well as more significant concentrations of high-density, lower-income housing.

f. **12th/15th.** The City’s Future Land Use Map shows the lots between 12th and 14th Street west of the CSX right of way as Multifamily (Moderate Density), though under current zoning the lots between the CSX corridor and Central Avenue are designated I (Industrial). The “BRT Project Northern Section Station Analysis” recommends that consideration be given to an alternative station location closer to Orange Avenue. The lots surrounding this alternative site are also zoned today for Industrial use. The City’s Future Land Use Map shows these lots (along with non-Multifamily lots by the proposed 12th/15th Street Station) as being designated Community Office/Institutional.

g. **Lemon Avenue.** South of 10th Street, Lemon Avenue and its immediate surroundings has already been zoned as Downtown Edge (DTE), with transit-supportive elements in place (up to 25 dus/acre and reduced parking requirements). One or two stations had been proposed for this zone. In addition, there are a number of developable lots within walking distance of any proposed station.

h. **Downtown Transfer Center.** All land surrounding this station is zoned for Downtown Core (DTC), which permits up to 50 dus/acre.

i. **Main and Orange.** All land surrounding this station is zoned for Downtown Core (DTC), which permits up to 50 dus/acre.

j. **Burns Court/Laurel Park.** All land immediately surrounding this station is zoned for Downtown Core (DTC), which permits up to 50 dus/acre. Lots south of the intersection of Orange and Pineapple are zoned as Downtown Edge, and lots to the east of lots bordering on Orange Avenue in the vicinity of the station are within Laurel Park and are not anticipated for intensive development.

k. **Mound and Osprey.** The proposed station location is immediately surrounded by park land. To the west of Osprey, lots are designated OPB (Office Professional Business), CRT (Commercial Residential Transition, a non-implementing zone), and CND (Commercial Neighborhood District). The City's Future Land Use Map designates this zone as Urban Edge.

l. **Mid-Town.** A potential Mid-Town station would sit adjacent to lots zoned Community Office / Institutional and Community Commercial. The Mid-Town Shopping Center is currently zoned as CSC-C (Community Shopping Center-Community), though City planning staff have indicated a willingness to rezone to permit the redevelopment of that site up to six stories.

m. **Hospital/Hillview.** Little change to zoning or land uses is anticipated for this station site, though Hospital is in a major construction project at present.

n. **Webber.** Current and future land uses surrounding this location do not seem to warrant a station.

o. **Siesta.** While no major changes to land use patterns are anticipated for this station, the Westfield South Gate mall is planned for expansion.