

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 5F

From: Staff

Date: October 17, 2008 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review  
Draft Amendments to the Martin County Comprehensive Plan  
DCA Reference No. 08-2

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that Council review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. Under the provisions of this law, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) prepares an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report on a proposed amendment only if requested to do so by the local government, the regional planning council, an affected person, or if an ORC Report is otherwise deemed necessary by the DCA. If an ORC Report is to be prepared, then Council must provide DCA with its findings of consistency or inconsistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), and provide any comments and recommendations for modification on the proposed amendments within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

Martin County is proposing text amendments to the Transportation Element of the County Comprehensive Plan. The County has requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

The purpose of the amendments is to:

- Prohibit commercial air transport services from Martin County Airport/Witham Field (MCA/WF).
- Define airport runway lengths.
- Define airport boundaries so as to limit expansion.
- Update aviation components of the Transportation Element as necessary.

The use of MCA/WF, including size and type of aircraft, runway length and configuration, and the need to acquire additional property has been very controversial in Martin County. These amendments have been initiated by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Upon consideration of the proposed amendments, the County Local Planning Agency (LPA) was deadlocked. Discussion at the LPA included consideration of making no changes to runway length until the 2009 Airport Master Plan update and requiring a super-majority vote for any change allowing commercial airline service on existing runway length. The BCC transmitted the proposed amendments, after adding a new policy (see below) regarding funding of improvements that would expand service capacity.

Changes are proposed to four sections of the Transportation Element. The highlights of the proposed amendments include the following:

A. Section 5.3 Other existing transportation systems

1. Text is revised to indicate that MCA/WF shall continue its role as a General Aviation Airport and shall not become certified under Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 139. As a result, it will not be eligible to accept scheduled commercial airline service operating under FAR Part 121.

B. Section 5.4 Future Martin County transportation needs

1. Text is revised to indicate future aviation needs for Martin County are summarized in the Airport Master Plan update of August, 2001.
2. Text similar to that in Section 5.3 is included regarding no scheduled commercial airline service.

C. Section 5.5 Goals, Objectives, and Policies

1. New Policy 5.5.F.1.a indicates that all development and redevelopment on the airport property shall be consistent with the County Land Development Regulations. No expansion of MCA/WF shall occur outside the boundaries of Figure 5-7 (see Exhibit 3) without amendments to the comprehensive plan.
2. Goal 5.5.H is revised to indicate the County shall limit expansion of existing aviation facilities and the development of new facilities.
3. Revised Objective 5.5.H.1 indicates the County will update the Airport Master Plan as necessary to meet the Federal Aviation Administration National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.
4. Policy 5.5.H.1.a indicates the Martin County Airport shall continue its role as a General Aviation Airport and shall not allow scheduled commercial airline service.
5. Revised Policy 5.5.h.1.b allows extension or expansion of runway length only with an amendment to the comprehensive plan.

6. New Policy 5.5.H.1.c indicates the BCC shall not approve a Capital Improvements Element amendment that would expand the MCA/WF annual service capacity beyond 270,000 operations per year.

D. Section 5.6 Implementation

1. The table showing Capital improvements for aviation is deleted and reference is made to the Capital Improvements Element for planned improvements.

Extrajurisdictional Impacts

According to the transmittal letter dated September 10, 2008, Martin County provided copies of the amendment materials to all surrounding local governments. Council sent a memo to surrounding local governments on September 18, 2008 seeking comments on the proposed amendments. As of the date of this report, no comments have been received.

Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities

Analysis of the proposed amendments indicates that they would not have adverse effects on significant regional resources or facilities.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Council has no comments/recommendations for modification to the proposed amendments. The amendments are considered to be consistent with the SRPP.

Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement between the DCA and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council requires Council to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. Council finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

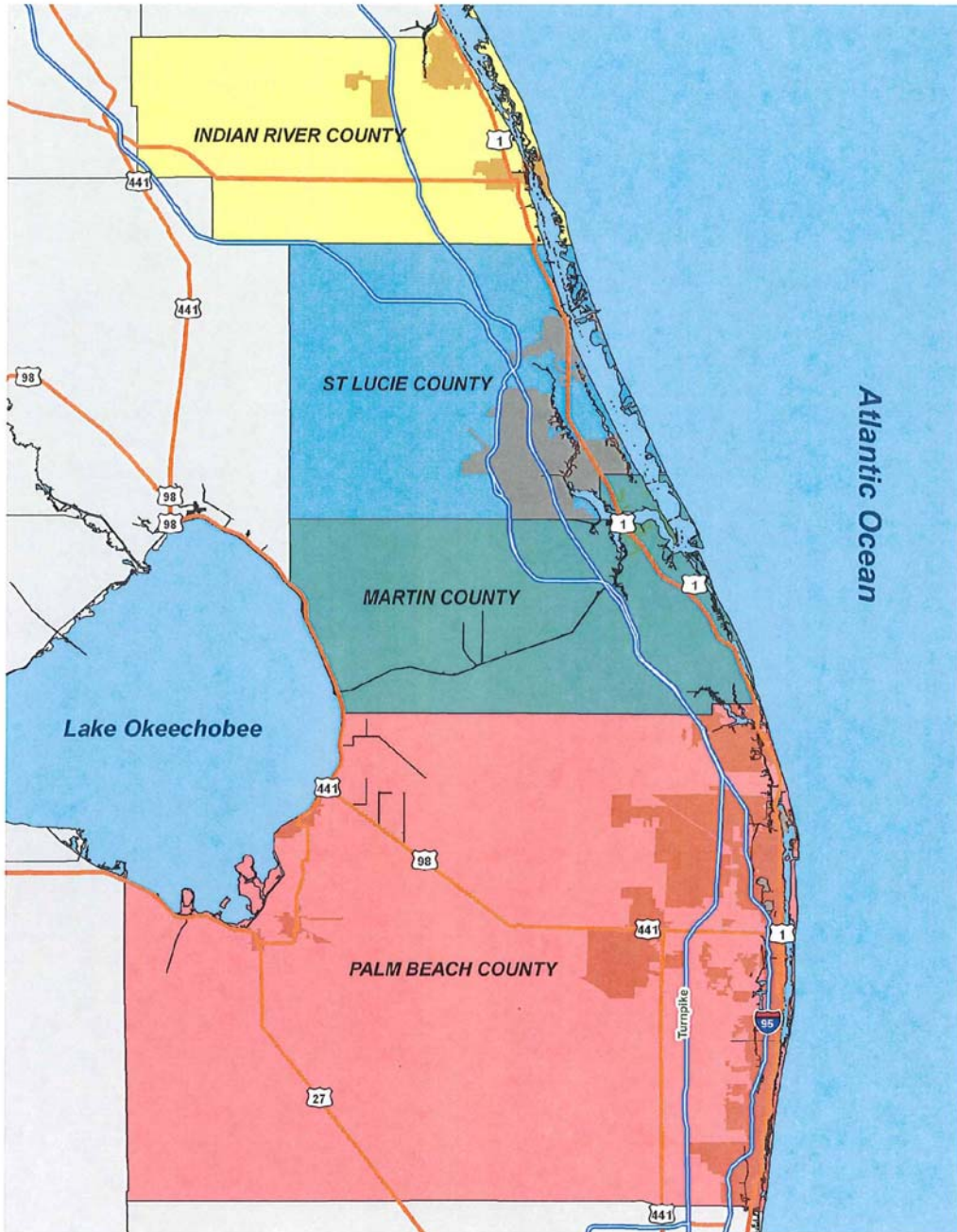
Attachments

## **List of Exhibits**

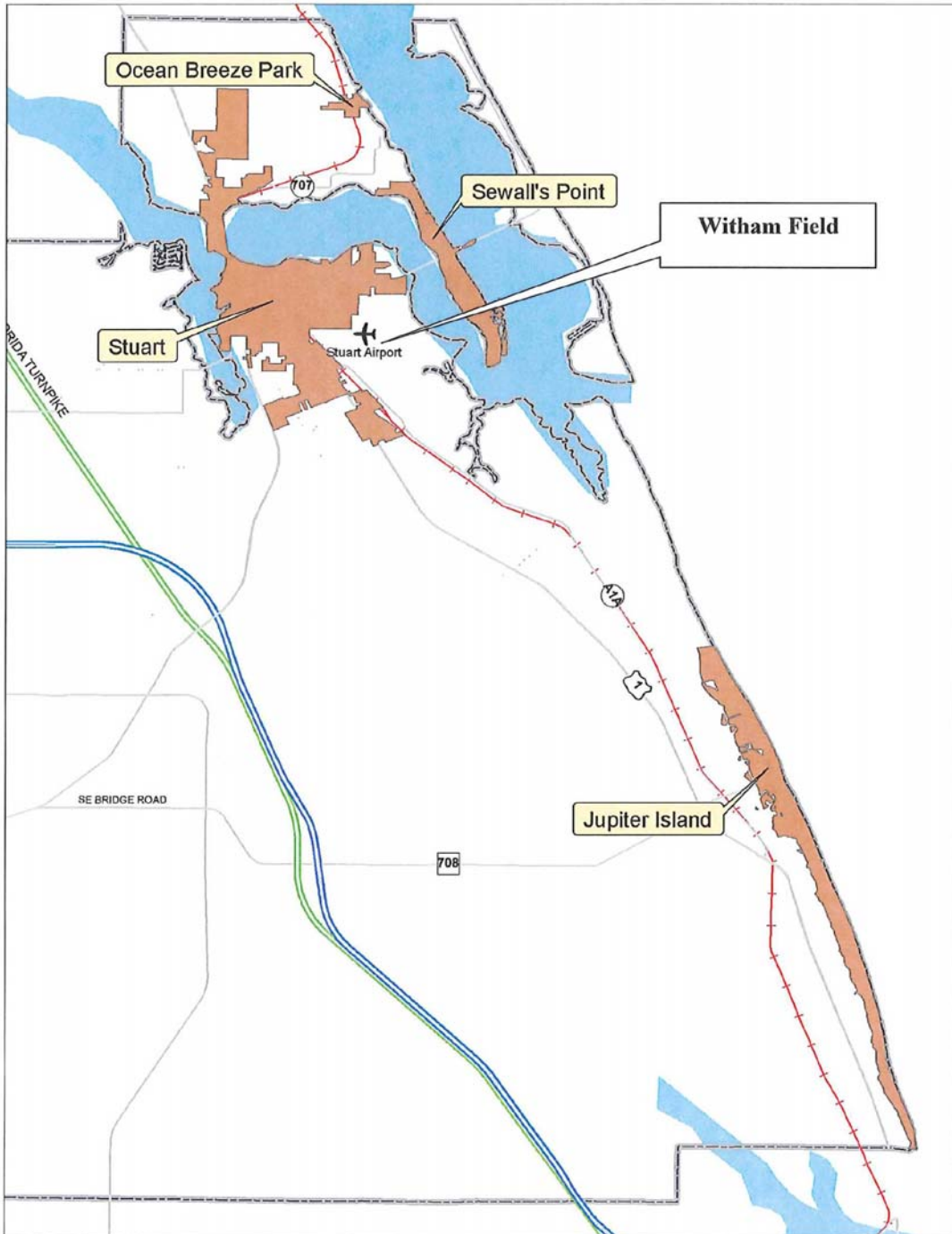
### **Exhibit**

- 1 General Location Map
- 2 Amendment Location Map
- 3 Witham Field

**Exhibit 1  
General Location Map**



**Exhibit 2  
Amendment Location Map**



**Exhibit 3  
Witham Field**

