

## TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

### MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 5H

From: Staff

Date: September 17, 2010 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review  
Draft Amendments to the City of Fort Pierce Comprehensive Plan  
DCA Reference No. 10-2ER

#### Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) 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 the TCRPC 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

The City of Fort Pierce has proposed text and map series amendments to all elements of the City Comprehensive Plan. The amendments are based on an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) adopted by the City on April 5, 2010 and found sufficient by the DCA on July 16, 2010. The City has requested that the DCA prepare a formal review of the amendments.

#### Evaluation

##### A. Community Profile (*taken from the City Comprehensive Plan*)

The City of Fort Pierce, “The Sunrise City”, is located in the heart of Florida’s Treasure Coast. Fort Pierce serves as a major economic, transportation, and social center in St. Lucie County. The entire City has an area of approximately 18.5 square miles.

The City of Fort Pierce is similar to several other Florida coastal cities as it is divided into two geographical areas: the mainland and the barrier island (Hutchinson Island). These two areas contain land uses which are distinctive in function, demographic characteristics and land use. While the mainland portion of the City contains urban land uses (including commercial and varying residential types), the barrier island primarily contains land uses that are tourist and residential-oriented.

The City is 77 percent built-out with 23 percent of its total land area vacant and potentially developable. Since 2007, the City has annexed approximately 696 acres of unincorporated St. Lucie County. This land was predominately undeveloped increasing the City's inventory of vacant, developable land.

## B. Evaluation and Appraisal Report

In the EAR, the City identified the following four major issues to be evaluated:

1. Infill and Redevelopment
2. Concurrency
3. Development Review Process
4. Intergovernmental Coordination

## C. Highlights of Proposed Amendments

### 1. Future Land Use Element

- a. Table 1-1 is revised to include Floor Area Ratio for all non-residential Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designations.
- b. Policy 1.1.4 is revised to include a general description of each FLUM category including uses, densities and intensities. The City consolidated the number of residential designations from ten to four (Low Density, Medium Density, High Density and Hutchinson Island Residential). A Hutchinson Island Mixed Use designation has been established, and a new designation called Urban Neighborhood is now available for pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods that also allow low intensity commercial uses.
- c. Revised Policy 1.1.12 commits the City to coordinate with St. Lucie County to implement the Port of Fort Pierce Master Plan.
- d. Revised Policy 1.1.16 supports a reduction in vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions by measures such as a mix of land uses.
- e. New Policy 1.1.18 is to encourage the utilization of green building techniques, designs, and materials that meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.
- f. New Objective 1.2 indicates the City shall use innovative Land Development Regulations to encourage flexibility in development to support compact, mixed-uses compatible with the local context and character.
- g. New Policy 1.8.6 indicates the City shall develop administrative procedures that modify development requirements and streamline development approval procedures

- h. Revised Policy 1.9.4 indicates the City will undertake the development of special area plans for several neighborhoods.
- i. Revised Policy 1.12.2 is for the City to develop a phased annexation program.
- j. New Objective 1.22 indicates the City shall adopt and maintain Land Development Regulations which incorporate concepts for managing land, water and energy resources in a sustainable and energy efficient manner that is responsive to innovative development and conservation techniques.
- k. New Objective 1.23 indicates the City will coordinate land use and transportation to reduce vehicle miles traveled and the number of automobile trips required for daily needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## 2. Transportation Element

- a. New Objective 2.1 designates the entire City as a Transportation Concurrency Exception Area, while developing a program which incorporates multi-modal transportation projects, programs or operational contribution as viable mitigation options for development impacts.
- b. New Policy 2.1.2. addresses the adoption of land use and transportation strategies to support and fund mobility.
- c. New Objective 2.3 indicates the City shall integrate the FLUM with the City's existing, programmed, and planned transportation system to maintain the adopted LOS standards and support multimodal transportation and mobility strategies to service existing and projected population and development.
- d. Policies under Objective 2.3 address reduction in peak hour demand by large employers, the development of a Transportation Demand Management Program, the implementation of a "complete streets" policy designed to address the need of all modes of transportation, and increasing the modal split for non-single occupancy automobile modes.
- e. Revised Policy 2.4.2 is to coordinate with St. Lucie County to enhance transit services along U.S. 1.
- f. New Objective 2.5 is to maintain the existing roadway network and multi-modal transportation system to enhance efficiency, convenience, safety, and energy efficiency.
- g. New Objective 2.6 is to coordinate the City's transportation system with the plans and programs of St. Lucie County, St. Lucie County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to maintain and enhance regional mobility.
- h. New Policy 2.6.2 indicates new roadways shall be designed to enhance connectivity to existing roadways and improve mobility of the City's transportation system.
- i. New Policy 2.9.3 indicates the City may also include multimodal transportation projects and related programs in the Capital Improvements Plan for traffic impact mitigation for LOS issues. The City may also consider implementation of the City's mobility strategies as a means to address the impacts of development as appropriate and available.

- j. New Policy 2.10.5 indicates the City shall participate in the regional public transportation planning initiatives including the St. Lucie County transit service and the proposed Amtrak service along the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway.
- k. Revised Objective 2.11 indicates the City shall coordinate with the Port, St. Lucie County, the St. Lucie County TPO, and the FDOT to maintain a safe and effective transportation system serving the Port and integrate with all modes of surface or water transportation. The City shall also coordinate with the Army Corp of Engineers and Department of Environmental Protection regarding the Port facilities plans regarding new or expanded facilities.
- l. Revised Objective 2.12 indicates the City shall coordinate with regional agencies and transit providers to support and enhance the transit service to increase transit use, increase the transit mode split, reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote a multimodal transportation system.
- m. New Policy 2.1.2.4 commits the City to partner with the FDOT, the TCRPC, and the other regional agencies planning for the provision of passenger rail service along the FEC Corridor and extend commitment to implementation of transit service within the City.
- n. New Policy 2.1.2.5 indicates the City shall provide incentives, such as increased allowable densities and reduced parking requirements, to promote mixed-use development within the City, and especially within the downtown and around the future passenger rail station.
- o. New Objective 2.13 indicates the City shall support bicycling and walking as integral parts of the City's multi-modal transportation system by providing connected, convenient, and user-friendly facilities along with requiring development to be designed incorporating bicycle and pedestrian-friendly principles.
- p. New policies under Objective 2.13 addresses:
  - preparation of a Citywide Sidewalk Facilities Report;
  - requiring sidewalks on both sides of all City streets;
  - targeted pedestrian improvements for intersections along U.S. 1;
  - traffic control and design features to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort;
  - prioritized sidewalk improvements around schools;
  - preparation of a Citywide Bicycle Facilities Report; and
  - safe and convenient bicycle facilities along roadways within the City.

### 3. Infrastructure Element

- a. New Policy 3.3.3 commits the City to coordinate with the Fort Pierce Utility Authority (FPUA) to reduce wastewater effluent discharges to surface and ground waters.
- b. New Policy 3.3.4 indicates the City shall coordinate with FPUA to protect ground and surface waters from pollution through permitting of domestic collection and transmission systems.
- c. Revised Objective 3.5 is to coordinate with St. Lucie County to reduce demand on solid waste disposal facilities through recycling.

- d. New Policy 3.11.2 indicates the City shall work with FPUA to give priority to providing water service to infill, enclave, or redevelopment areas.
- e. New Policy 3.12.3 indicates the City shall utilize the development review process of the Land Development Code to require applicants for development permits to prepare landscaping plans that incorporate xeriscape principles, encourage native plant communities, and meet the Florida Irrigation Society's standards and specifications for turf and landscape irrigation systems.
- f. New Policy 3.13.1 regarding potable water indicates if increased capacity is required in the future, the City shall coordinate with FPUA and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of new or expanded potable water facilities that will focus on the use of an alternative water source as defined in the Upper East Coast Water Supply Plan.
- g. New Policy 3.15.2 indicates the City will promote the use of reclaimed water through city-wide efforts to educate residents and business community on the merits of using reclaimed water to diminish groundwater withdrawals.

#### 4. Conservation Element

- a. New Policy 4.1.4 lists several ways the City will seek to reduce the potential for automobile emissions including the promotion of alternative modes of transportation.
- b. New Policy 4.2.9 indicates that by 2013, the City shall develop non-potable sources for irrigation in coordination with FPUA.

#### 5. Coastal Management Element

- a. New Policy 5.11.4 indicates the City shall develop an area plan for the Coastal Planning Area by December 2012. The area plan should define development limitations in the coastal area and establish LOS standards specific to the coastal area.

#### 6. Housing Element

- a. New Policy 6.1.6 indicates the City shall promote a variety of housing sizes, types, and price points through its future land use classifications and zoning districts to meet the needs of all population groups including school-age groups, working-age groups, and retirement-age groups.
- b. New Policy 6.1.10 indicates the City shall develop an incentive program by 2012 to encourage the development of various types of rental housing for family households.
- c. New Policy 6.1.11 indicates the City shall amend the Land Development Code to allow rentals by right in all residential zoning districts.
- d. New Policy 6.1.12 indicates the City shall conduct an affordable housing need study by 2013 to distinguish the areas of greatest need for affordable housing in the City. The study should include a farmworker housing analysis, a method of prioritizing area need, and funding strategies.

- e. New Policy 6.1.13 indicates the City shall amend the Land Development Code to require all development to contribute to meeting the affordable housing needs of the City. Strategies could include financial contributions, land dedication, or enhancements to public transit.
- f. New Policy 6.3.3 commits the City to incorporate density bonuses for the provision of affordable housing within the Land Development Code by December 2011.
- g. New Policy 6.3.6 indicates the City shall consider the development of a Downtown Master Plan that focuses on increasing residential development in the downtown for residents of all income levels.
- h. New Policy 6.4.5 indicates the City shall amend the Land Development Regulations to allow the development of accessory dwelling units in all low and medium density zoning districts to increase availability of affordable elderly housing within existing residential neighborhoods.
- i. New Objective 6.7 is to promote design and construction techniques and building materials capable of significantly reducing the cost of construction, maintenance, and energy consumption of housing.
- j. New Policy 6.7.5 indicates the City will encourage and support the provision of smaller, energy efficient dwelling units that make homes more affordable by being less expensive to heat and cool.

#### 7. Recreation and Open Space Element

- a. New Policy 7.2.7 indicates the City shall establish and implement a regular evaluation of community park and recreation needs during the annual Capital Improvements Element update process, especially the needs of youth and seniors.
- b. New Policy 7.4.4 commits the City to develop a Greenways and Trailways Program as part of the City's Park and Recreation Master Plan to ensure connectivity between existing and future recreation and open space areas in the City.
- c. Objective 7.7 is to establish parks and recreation facilities that are equally distributed throughout the City and accessible to residents of all neighborhoods.

#### 8. Intergovernmental Coordination Element

- a. New Policy 8.1.11 indicates the City will maintain a water supply facilities work plan that is coordinated with the SFWMD Upper East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan and St. Lucie County by updating the City work plan within 18 months of an update to the regional water supply plan.
- b. New Policy 8.1.16 is to continue to coordinate with the TCPRC and FDOT to develop the potential rail passenger station within the City which is capable of serving as a regional hub for the potential Amtrak/Sun Rail expansion.

#### 9. Public Facilities Management Element

- a. New Policy 10.5.4 regarding Public Schools indicates that prior to the issuance of any development order/approval for a site plan, subdivision plan, preliminary plat or functional equivalent for new residential development or redevelopment,

### Extrajurisdictional Impacts

Under the informal agreement facilitated by the TCRPC, local governments in the northern three counties of the region are to provide copies of amendment materials to other local governments that have expressed an interest in receiving such materials. The City provided copies of the amendment materials to St. Lucie County, the Town of St. Lucie Village, the City of Port St. Lucie, Martin County and the City of Stuart. A memo to these local governments was sent from Council on August 26, 2010 seeking comments regarding conflicts with the proposed amendments. As of the date of the preparation of this report, Council has received no responses to the memo. Council is not aware of any detrimental extrajurisdictional impacts that would result from the adoption of the proposed amendments.

### 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

The City had done a good job of updating and revising the comprehensive plan; especially to promote redevelopment and to encourage increased mobility. The amendments are considered to be consistent with a number of regional goals and strategies, including:

- Regional Goal 3.1 Revitalization and maintenance of complete cities, towns and villages.
- Regional Goal 5.1 Redevelopment, revitalization and infill of existing neighborhoods and districts.
- Regional Goal 10.1 Neighborhoods and communities which are served by a variety of transportation nodes.
  
- Strategy 7.1.2 Develop a complete and coordinated transportation planning process.
- Strategy 7.1.3 Promote improved community planning and urban design.
- Strategy 7.1.4 Encourage public transportation alternatives.

### Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement with the DCA requires the TCRPC to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. The TCRPC finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

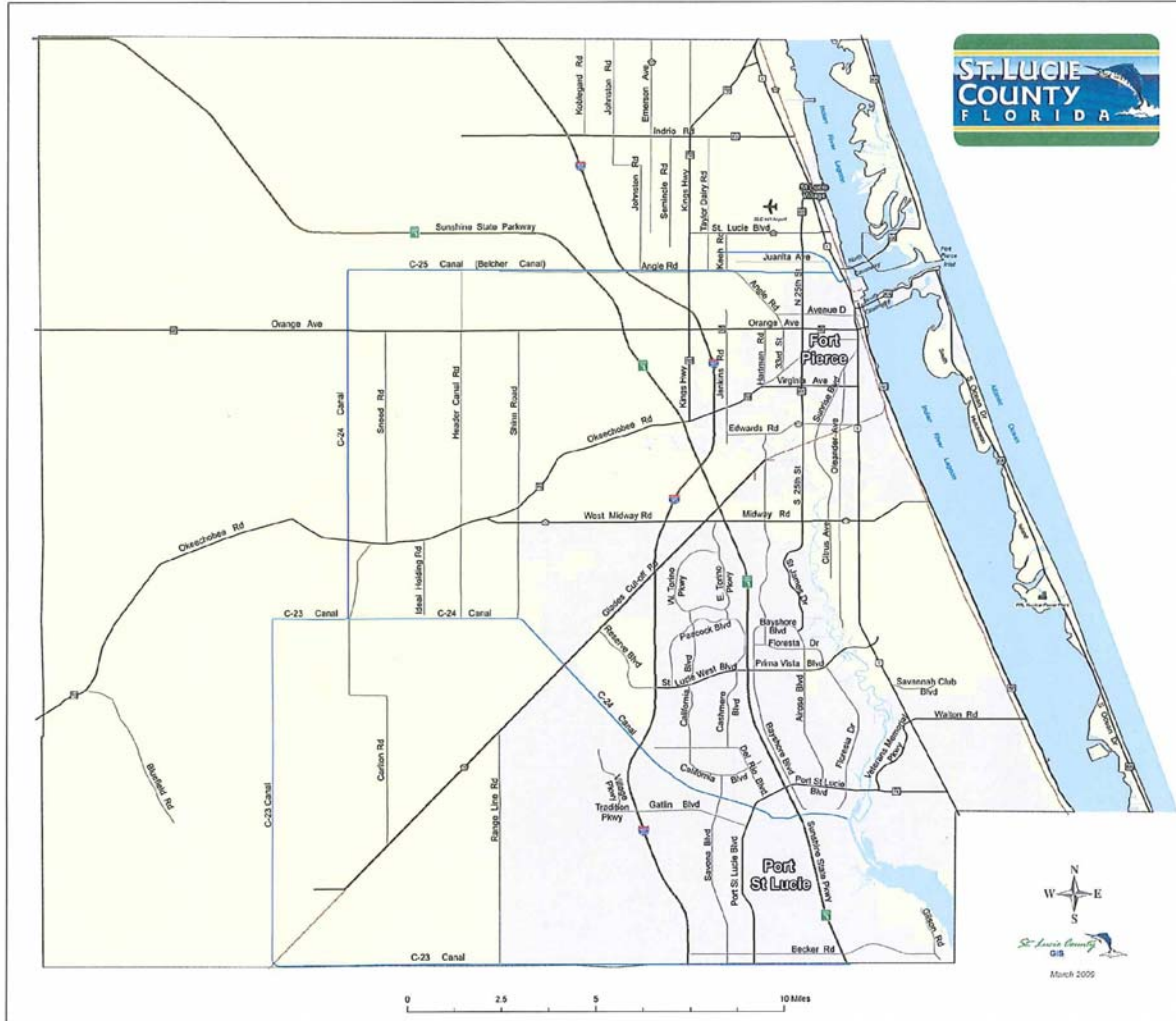
Attachments

## **List of Exhibits**

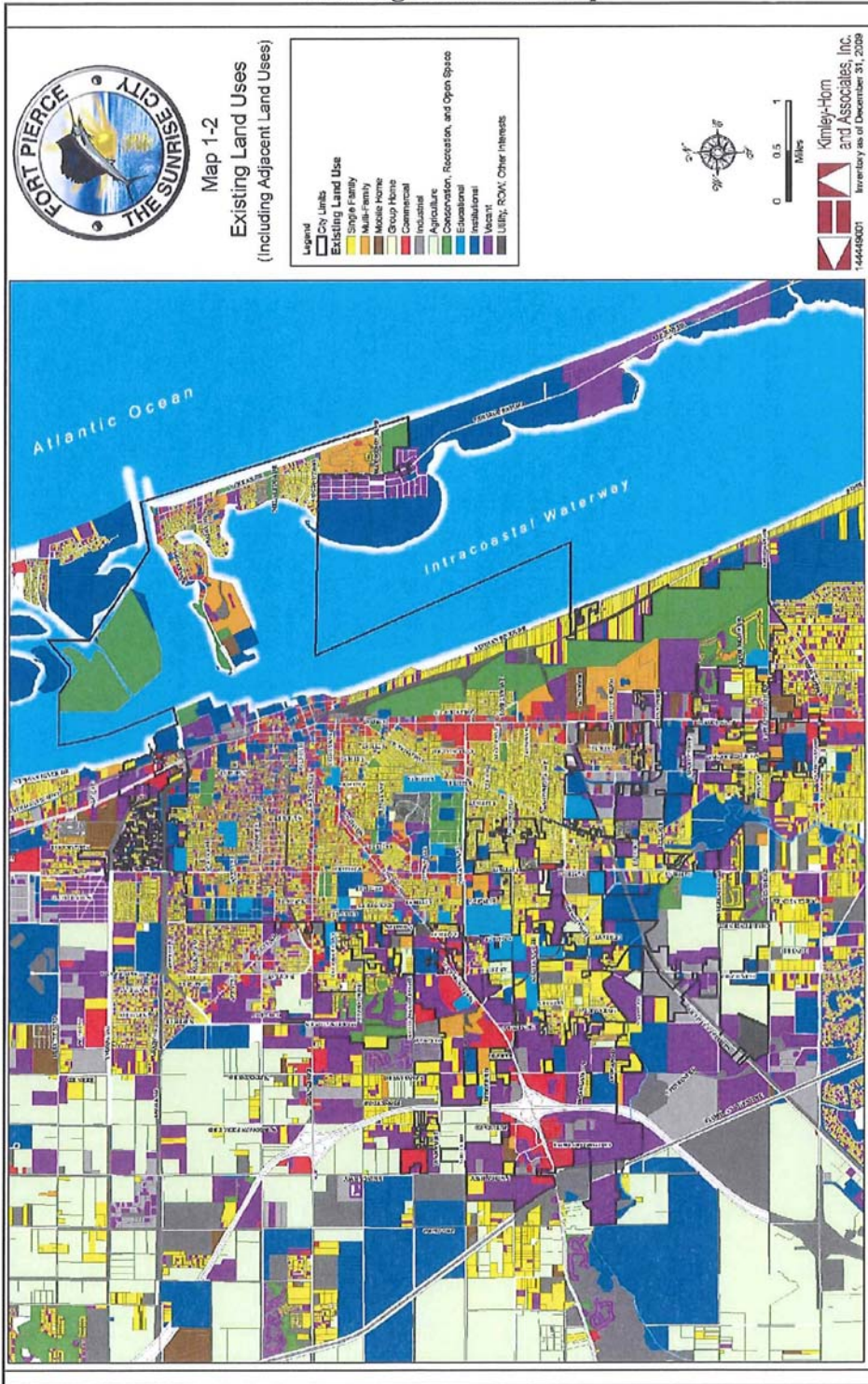
### **Exhibit**

- 1 General Location Map
- 2 Existing Land Uses Map
- 3 2030 Future Land Use Map
- 4 Historic Districts in the City
- 5 Existing Functional Classification Map
- 6 Community Redevelopment Area

**Exhibit 1  
General Location Map  
City of Fort Pierce**



## Exhibit 2 Existing Land Uses Map





# Exhibit 4 Historic Districts in the City

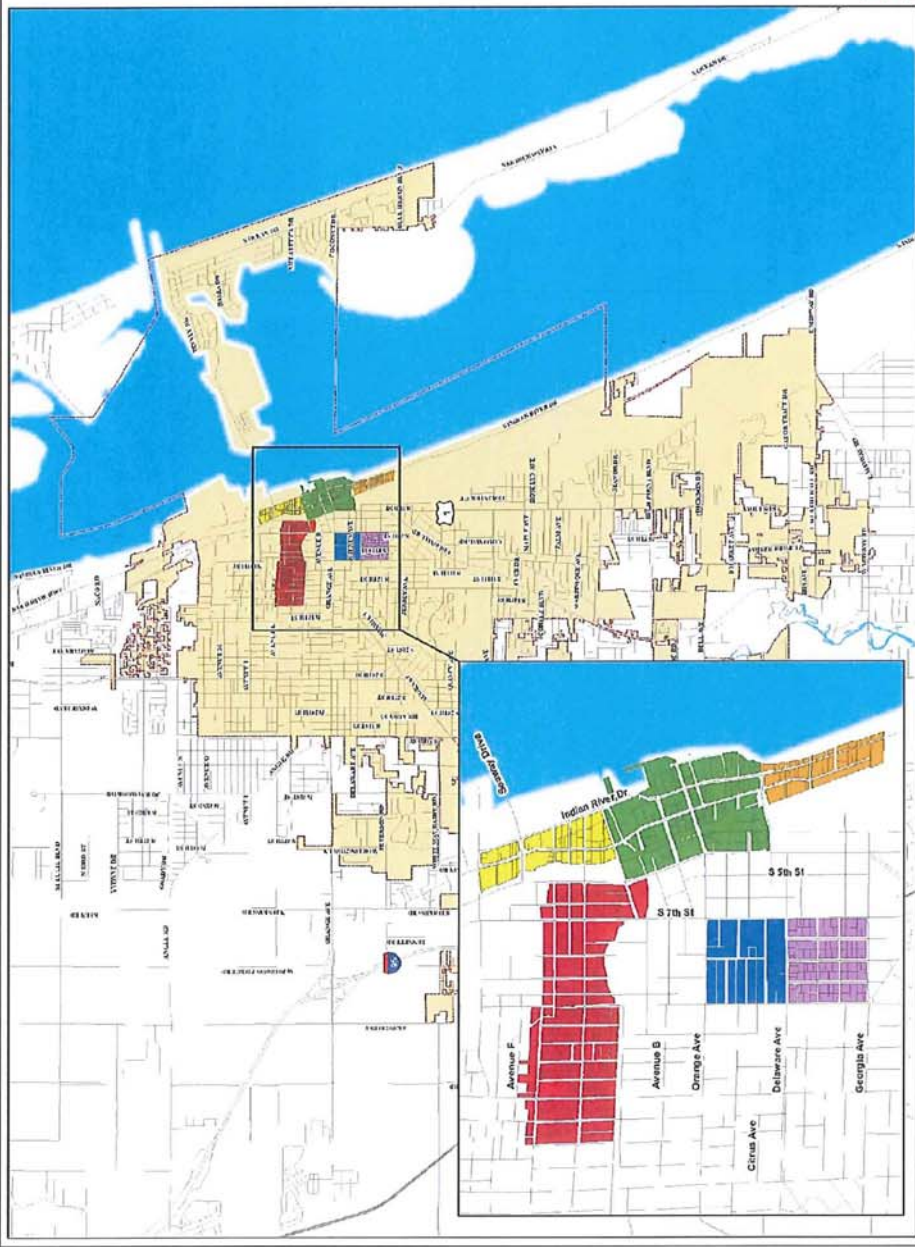


Map 1-7  
Historic Districts  
in the City

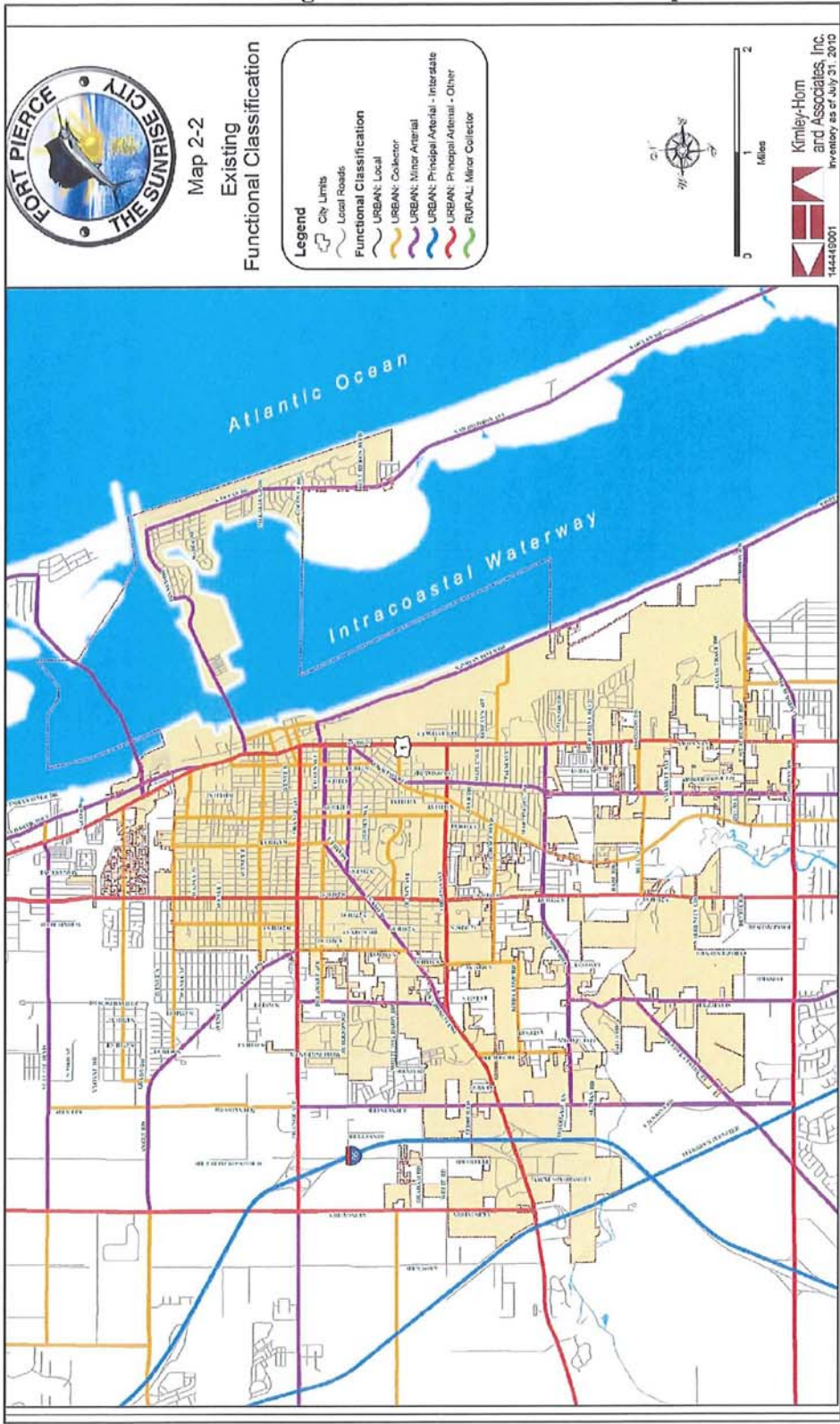
- Legend**
- City Limits
  - Local Roads
  - Avenue D Historic District
  - Downtown Historic District
  - Edgar Town Historic District
  - Oakland Park Historic District
  - River's Edge Historic District
  - Sample Oaks Historic District



Kimley-Horn  
and Associates, Inc.  
Inventory as of July 31, 2010  
14449001



# Exhibit 5 Existing Functional Classification Map



# Exhibit 6 Community Redevelopment Area

