Introduction

The Community Planning Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that the regional planning council review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. The regional planning council review and comments are limited to adverse effects on regional resources or facilities identified in the strategic regional policy plan (SRPP) and extrajurisdictional impacts that would be inconsistent with the comprehensive plan of any affected local government within the region. Council must provide any comments to the local government within 30 days of the receipt of the proposed amendments and must also send a copy of any comments to the state land planning agency.

The amendment package from the City of West Palm Beach contains text changes to the Introduction and Administration, Future Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Utilities, Coastal Management, Conservation, Recreation and Open Space, Intergovernmental Coordination, Historic Preservation, Public Schools Facilities, Capital Improvements, and Downtown Master Plan elements, as well as changes to the Map Series of the comprehensive plan. The proposed changes are based on the City’s Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR). This report includes a summary of the proposed amendment and Council comments.

Summary of Proposed Amendment

The proposed EAR-based amendments are intended to reflect changes in state requirements, clarify language, eliminate redundancies, reflect current practices, and update references. All of the elements include changes to accomplish this intent. In addition, some elements also include more substantive changes as described below. Because of the extensive volume of material in the amendment package, the revised elements have been provided as a supplement to this report on Council’s website.
In the Future Land Use Element, the City is proposing changes to clarify the development review process for projects in proximity to the Water Catchment Area (WCA) (including a 2:1 mitigation requirement for removed wetlands), revisions to the Downtown Traffic Concurrency Exception Area (TCEA) to be consistent with the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan, the addition of community health strategies, and changes to coordinate with the new approach to coordinated school planning (see Public School Facilities Element below).

In the Transportation Element, the proposed changes show new trolley routes, provide for coordination with Brightline (fka All Aboard Florida) and Tri-Rail Coastal Link regarding the new station on the FEC Railway, include car and bike sharing programs, allow for consideration of a transportation mobility plan and associated fee, add language concerning pursuit of a crossing of the South Florida Rail Corridor (fka CSX) at Fern Street and a crossing of the FEC Railway at 7th Street, provide consistency with Palm Beach County for the TCEA, implement recommendations from the 2014 Walkability Analysis, provide for more support of complete streets and potential lane elimination, and update the right-of-way list for thoroughfare roads.

Regarding the Housing Element, affordable housing strategy additions are proposed, along with targeting areas of the City with concentrated deterioration.

The significant change to the Utilities Element concerns the required update to the City’s 10 year water supply work plan.

In the Coastal Management Element, the City is proposing changes to address sea level rise and other flood risk factors, provide for new stormwater management design approaches, enhance estuary protection, and provide for ensuring the structural integrity of docks.

In the Conservation Element, the changes seek to enhance protection of the WCA by adding policies to guard its hydrologic integrity and project review and mitigation requirements, add emissions monitoring for co-generation electrical plants, and promote alternate forms of transportation to reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Regarding the Recreation and Open Space Element, the City’s 2015 Parks Master Plan will be incorporated into the element along with an enhancement to the level of service to require not just the current minimum acreage standard but also a maximum ½ mile walking distance from residential areas to parks. The changes will also reflect a desire for a bicycle master plan to link parks, civic destinations, and transit.

In the Intergovernmental Coordination Element, the City is proposing to eliminate language concerning the development review process because it is already covered in their zoning code and to add school planning goals and policies relocated from the Public Schools Facilities Element. Revisions will be included to account for the new Coordinated School Planning Interlocal Agreement.

The Historic Preservation Element is proposed to be revised to encourage coordination with the City’s Housing and Community Development Department and the continued evaluation of historic resources.
The Public Schools Facilities Element is proposed to be eliminated. Much of the current text concerns school concurrency, which was originally established through an interlocal agreement that has now expired. It was replaced with a new Coordinated School Planning Interlocal Agreement and the relevant goals, objectives, and policies are proposed to be relocated to the Intergovernmental Coordination Element and revised as necessary.

The proposed changes to the Capital Improvements Element concern eliminating policies related to school concurrency since it has been discontinued and revisions to listed level of service standards to match the Utilities and Recreation and Open Space elements.

In the Downtown Master Plan Element, the City is proposing a number of changes to promote greater connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders; highlight the importance of preserving historically significant waterfront structures; simplify affordable housing incentive language (the detailed requirements are in the zoning code); and encourage alternate modes of transportation such as bicycles, trains, and buses.

The comprehensive plan also contains a series of maps and, while all of the maps are being updated, some of the maps are also being substantively changed. The Coastal High Hazard and Evacuation Routes map is being revised to reflect Council’s 2014 Storm Surge Study, maps related to the former school concurrency program are being modified or eliminated, and the transportation maps are being revised to match current data and models as well as planned projects.

**Regional Impacts**

No adverse effects on regional resources or facilities have been identified.

**Extrajurisdictional Impacts**

The City circulated the amendments through the Intergovernmental Plan Amendment Review Committee process on September 6, 2016. No extrajurisdictional impacts have been identified.

**Conclusion**

No adverse effects on regional resources or facilities and no extrajurisdictional impacts have been identified.

**Recommendation**

Council should approve this report and authorize its transmittal to the City of West Palm Beach and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

**Attachment**
General Location Map

City of West Palm Beach

Palm Beach County