EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendation to approve proposed amendments to the Immokalee Area Master Plan (IAMP) for transmittal to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and other agencies for review and objections, recommendations and comments (ORC) response. [Transmittal Hearing]

OBJECTIVE: For the Board of County Commissioners (Board) to review and approve the proposed amendments to the IAMP for transmittal to DEO and other applicable agencies for review.

CONSIDERATIONS: On February 10, 2015, the Board directed staff to initiate GMP “restudies” of four GMP master plans in eastern Collier County: Rural Fringe Mixed Use District, Golden Gate Area Master Plan, Rural Lands Stewardship Area, and Immokalee Area Master Plan (IAMP). The IAMP restudy formally began in January 2018. As with all restudies, through a public outreach effort, staff focused on complementary land uses, economic vitality, mobility and environmental sustainability.

The Board appointed an ad hoc advisory committee, the Growth Management Oversight Committee (GMOC), which first convened in December 2015. The GMOC has directed the public engagement process of the restudies since inception. The GMOC reviews the restudy recommendations, emphasizing consistency among the restudies, sustainability and economic vitality. Unlike prior area restudies, however, the Board directed that staff, rather than appointed committees, provide recommendations to the Board covering each of the four areas.

The White Paper, Attachment B, provides the summary of findings underlying the revisions to Goals, Objectives, Policies and Land Use Designation Descriptions within the IAMP. The White Paper (Attachment A) was presented to the Board on June 26, 2018. At that time, the Board directed staff to initiate the GMP Amendment process for the proposed changes to the IAMP.

The Immokalee Urban area, surrounded by the rural agricultural area designated as the Rural Lands Stewardship Area, is a community of about 30 square miles containing ±17,116 acres of land. More than half of the land use within the Immokalee Urban area is presently agricultural (approximately 10,000 acres). The remainder is a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, and airport uses.

During 2003, the Board authorized Comprehensive Planning staff to prepare recommendations for revising the 1997 IAMP. Subsequently, the Board established the Immokalee Area Master Plan and Visioning Committee to work with staff in making proposed revisions to the IAMP. The Committee worked for over a four-year period conducting public meetings, collecting and analyzing data, and drafting revisions to the IAMP. Hearings on the proposed amendments commenced in January 2010 with transmittal to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (predecessor to DEO) occurring in September 2010. Adoption hearings followed, beginning in January 2011. Through the adoption phase, the Board directed the Collier County Supervisor of Elections to place a straw ballot referendum on the August 2012 ballot for the purpose of measuring the Immokalee community support for the proposed amendments. The referendum resulted in the majority of voters (67%) in favor of the amendments. At the Board's final adoption hearing on the proposed amendments, one Commissioner abstained, and the final vote was 3-1 for approval (adoption). Because a minimum of four affirmative votes was required, the proposed IAMP amendments failed to be adopted.

With the current IAMP restudy process, staff began with the review of the extensive community work and resulting proposed amendments from a previous restudy effort. That draft IAMP document was used as a starting point for further community consideration. The community’s recommendations and continued
refinement of the IAMP is reflected in Attachment B, showing additions as underlines and deletions as strikethroughs. Also included in Attachment B is the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) that shows the changes between the adopted and proposed FLUM.

**Immokalee’s Vision:**

Through the IAMP restudy process, the residents of Immokalee saw new possibilities for their community. With this new Master Plan, Immokalee has chosen to focus on opportunities rather than challenges. Immokalee is committed to redefining its future, revitalizing its community, and developing a new vision and mission that focuses on strengthening and diversifying its economy, embracing cultural diversity, and welcoming visitors to “this place we call home.”

During the 2018 public workshop process, residents and business owners created a guiding community vision. It is the intent to implement this vision through the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the proposed IAMP. The community defined its vision as:

“**Immokalee** is a family-oriented community that supports a healthy lifestyle. It is attractive, environmentally sustainable and offers a full range of housing, recreation and education opportunities to meet all residents’ needs. Immokalee has a safe, well-connected network to walk and bicycle about town, as well as a roadway network needed to support the transport of goods and services. Business and job opportunities flourish in trade and distribution, agri-business, and ecotourism.”

The proposed Immokalee Area Master Plan (IAMP) policy amendments, and changes associated with land use designations, implement the community’s established vision and the smart growth principles to:

- Provide Mixed Land Uses
- Promote Compact Building Design
- Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
- Create Walkable Neighborhoods
- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place
- Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
- Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
- Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices
- Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective
- Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions

Mixed land uses are a critical component of achieving more livable places and transportation choices. The proposed IAMP provides a mix of land uses arranged in a coherent order of an urban to rural transect. Modifications to residential land use designations encourage compact building design, directed towards the developed area, and provide land owners opportunities to create more housing choices, such as the multi-family units. Proposed IAMP policies are intended to strengthen the quality of existing neighborhoods and create a process for making improvements more cost effective.

Transportation needs in Immokalee are strikingly different than coastal Collier County. Approximately 50% of Immokalee residents walk, bicycle and use transit. To support Immokalee residents’ housing and transportation needs, the IAMP must guide and support the smart growth principles of creating a range of housing opportunities in compact, walkable neighborhoods in close proximity to established commercial areas.
In general, the amendments to the IAMP propose seven new goals, each with respective objectives and policies, followed by the revised Land Use Designation Description Section. The revised goals simplify but maintain the original intent of the existing adopted goals. During each public workshop, staff reviewed with the public the adopted and proposed goals to measure the continued support for the proposed goals and land use designations. There was overwhelming consensus and a preference to move forward with the proposed IAMP.

Consistent with the Board’s direction to evaluate and consider land use, economic vitality, transportation and natural resources, following are some of the more substantial changes proposed:

**Land Use and Economic Vitality**

The land use designations and policy amendments are intended to support the community’s number one goal of economic development, and

- The re-designation of the lands within the boundary of the Immokalee Regional Airport from Industrial (I) to Immokalee Regional Airport Subdistrict (IRA);
- A re-designation of approximately 684 acres of residential lands proposed to support commercial or industrial development;
  - ±122 acres to allow commercial development. Intensity of development is proposed to remain as allowed in the existing IAMP: C-1 through C-4 uses,
  - ±362 acres to allow industrial mixed-use development, and
  - ±200 acres to allow Recreational Tourist development
- A re-designation of some low density residential lands to medium density residential lands to support and encourage multi-family development in the right location;
- No changes in base density except for an increase in the Commercial Mixed-Use District (12 to 16 units per acre), and affordable housing bonus previously approved by the BCC (bonus increased from 8 to 12 units per acre maximum); and
- On outlying properties zoned (A) Rural Agricultural, within the Low Residential Subdistrict, diversify economic opportunities by including agriculture research and development facilities, agribusiness offices and headquarters, and facilities, offices, headquarters and apparatuses associated with renewable energy. These new uses will be subject to Land Development Code Amendments to establish compatibility criteria and development standards.

Table 1 below illustrates the proposed changes to FLUM designations.
Table 1: FLUM designation changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopted Future Land Use Designations</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Proposed Future Land Use Designations</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN-MIXED USE DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR Low Residential</td>
<td>10,405.6</td>
<td>LR Low Residential</td>
<td>9,161.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR Mixed Residential</td>
<td>463.9</td>
<td>MR Medium Residential</td>
<td>1,109.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR High Residential</td>
<td>1,603.1</td>
<td>HR High Residential</td>
<td>1,567.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Neighborhood Center</td>
<td>466.8</td>
<td>CMU Commercial-Mixed Use (new)</td>
<td>1,104.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-MU Mixed-Use</td>
<td>395.0</td>
<td>RT Recreational/Tourist</td>
<td>451.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUD Commercial</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT Recreational Tourist</td>
<td>251.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN-COMMERCIAL DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Commercial – SR 29 and Jefferson Ave.</td>
<td>162.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN -INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID Industrial</td>
<td>2,053.8</td>
<td>IN Industrial</td>
<td>739.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC-I Commerce Center—Industrial</td>
<td>589.7</td>
<td>IMU Industrial Mixed Use (new)</td>
<td>870.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>BP Business Park</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>IRA Immokalee Regional Airport (new)</td>
<td>1,393.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES Seminole Reservation</td>
<td>597.3</td>
<td>SR Seminole Reservation</td>
<td>591.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>16,989.0</td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>16,989.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Arrowhead and Heritage PUDs used this text-based provision but have yet to develop commercial uses.
2. For ease of comparison to the new CMU total acreage, the NC + CC-MU + C total acreage is 1,024.
3. The existing Industrial District (ID) includes the Immokalee Regional Airport (IRA).
4. For ease of comparison of the industrial designation acreage, the adopted IAMP total Industrial is 2,644 acres, and the proposed IAMP is 3,002 acres.

The location of changes in land use designations are reflected in Attachment B, IAMP FLUM – Existing vs Proposed.

In addition to the noted substantive land use changes, two specific opportunities were identified through this restudy effort as important to the community: 1) explore opportunities for an Immokalee civic center, and 2) coordinate with the community to further improve emergency preparedness.

Transportation
In large part, transportation choice is dependent on land use. If land use policy favors low density, auto-oriented development, all other modes of transportation suffer and are less desirable. In Immokalee, walking, cycling and using transit is a necessity for many. The IAMP must guide and support the smart growth principles of creating a range of housing opportunities in compact, walkable neighborhoods near established commercial areas. In addition to the land use policies supporting transportation needs, the IAMP include several policies to:

- support the MPO’s Long Range Transportation improvements and the Walkability Plan;
- continue coordination with FDOT projects;
- identify incentives to bring private roads up to County standards; and
- initiate a transportation planning study to identify potential new routes that will improve connectivity of the collector and local street grid, to expand public transit service, and improve bicycle and pedestrian access.

**Natural Resources**

The boundary of the Lake Trafford/Camp Keais Strand System Overlay (LT/CKSSO) was adopted as part of the 2007 GMP amendments. Subsequent analysis by staff during the previous restudy yielded a different, more accurate boundary of this wetland. The revised boundary is part of this IAMP amendment.

**Advisory Committee Review**

The proposed IAMP has been reviewed by the Growth Management Oversight Committee (GMOC), the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Advisory (CRA) Board and the Collier County Planning Commission.

At its meeting on September 6, 2018, the GMOC found the IAMP recommendations consistent with public participation direction, supportive of sustainability and economic vitality and, so far as known, consistent with other restudy planning efforts.

At its meeting on November 28, 2018, the Immokalee CRA Advisory Board agreed unanimously to recommend approval to transmit the proposed amendments, with two suggested changes. The suggested changes have been incorporated into the proposed IAMP.

**COLLIER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION (CCPC) RECOMMENDATION:** The CCPC reviewed and discussed the proposed IAMP during three meetings, January 31, 2019, February 21, 2019, and March 7, 2019. By vote of 5-1, the CCPC recommended approval for transmittal of the GMP amendments subject to certain changes. In all cases, staff had no objection to the recommended changes, which are incorporated into the strikethrough/underline documents at hand. The specific CCPC recommended changes can be viewed in Attachment A, as revisions with double underline and double strikethrough.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The fiscal impact of the proposed GMPA process has been accounted for within the approved budget for the Zoning Division. The initiation of IAMP proposed studies or LDC amendments are anticipated to fall within current County staffing capacities and are expressed with flexibility to allow prioritization and coordination with other entities.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN (GMP) IMPACT:** Approval of the proposed amendment by the Board for transmittal and its submission to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and other statutorily required review agencies will commence the Department’s thirty (30) day review process and ultimately return the amendment to the CCPC and the Board for Adoption hearings tentatively to be held in Fall of 2019.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS: This Growth Management Plan amendment is authorized by, and subject to the procedures established in, Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes, The Community Planning Act, and by Collier County Resolution No. 12-234, as amended. The Board should consider the following criteria in making its decision: “plan amendments shall be based on relevant and appropriate data and an analysis by the local government that may include but not be limited to, surveys, studies, community goals and vision, and other data available at the time of adoption of the plan amendment. To be based on data means to react to it in an appropriate way and to the extent necessary indicated by the data available on that particular subject at the time of adoption of the plan or plan amendment at issue.” 163.3177(1)(f), FS. This item is approved as to form and legality. It requires a majority vote for approval because this is a transmittal hearing of the GMP amendment. [HFAC]

RECOMMENDATION: To approve the proposed amendments to the IAMP for transmittal to DEO and other agencies for review.

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