



# Land Use Change Staff Report

Case No. LUC25-0005

Planning & Zoning Commission: October 13, 2025

City Council (1<sup>st</sup> Reading): November 18, 2025

City Council (Adoption): December 2, 2025

## Applicant:

Friends Recycling LLC

## Property Owner:

Friends Recycling LLC

## Project Planner:

Emily W. Johnson, AICP, Senior Planner

## Amendment Request:

Seeking approval to change the Future Land Use designation for the subject property from Medium Intensity/Special District to Employment Center

## Parcel Information

Acres: ±10.36 acres

Parcel(s)#: 21454-000-00

Location: 2500 NW 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue

Existing use: Vacant and undeveloped

Future Land Use Designation: Medium Intensity/Special District

Zoning Designation: R-1, Single-Family Residential, & R-2, Two-Family Residential

Special District(s)/Plan(s): West Ocala Community Plan – Main Street Mixed Use District

Approved Agreement(s): First Amendment to Chapter 163 Development Agreement (approved January 16, 2024)

Associated Application(s): Rezoning to M-1, Light Industrial (ZON25-0012)

**Figure 1. Aerial Location Map**



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## Section 1 - Applicant Request

The applicant is requesting to change the future land use designation from Medium Intensity/Special District to Employment Center on the 10.36-acre site for consistency with a concurrent request for rezoning to M-1, Light Industrial.

The agent, Austin Dailey, Klein & Klein PLLC, is representing the applicant in this request.

## Section 2 - Background Information

The subject property encompasses a total of approximately 10.36 acres. The current designations of the properties are:

### Zoning:

**R-1, Single-Family Residential** district is intended to preserve established single-family neighborhoods and to provide for new areas of low and moderate density single-family development.

**R-2, Two-Family Residential** district is intended to be of similar residential character to the single-family districts, but also permits two-family dwellings and two dwellings on one lot.

### Future Land Use:

**Medium Intensity/Special District**, a minimum of 5 and maximum of 30 dwelling units per acre, a minimum of 0.15 and maximum of 4.0 floor area ratio (FAR).

The subject property was acquired by the owner as part of a land swap with the city in 2024. Operation of the existing C&D landfill and MRF uses on the eastern adjacent properties date to the early 1990s. In 2009, efforts to change the future land use category from Low Density Residential to Medium Industrial and rezone to M-2, Medium Industrial, were denied by City Council. When the 2035 Vision Plan was adopted in 2011, the Friends Recycling facility was considered a nonconforming use in the M-1, Light Industrial, and M-2, Medium Industrial, zoning districts, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) permit for the landfill was expected to expire in 2023.

The landfill site was identified as part of a future redevelopment location in the Ocala 2035 Vision and West Ocala Vision with the anticipation that the use would cease upon expiration of the FDEP permit. Therefore, the surrounding area ultimately received a Medium Intensity/Special District future land use category to encourage redevelopment efforts consistent with the 2035 Vision Plan and associated comprehensive plan amendments. Subsequently, there have been additional agreements, property acquisitions, permit extensions, and amendments to the code which allow for the continued operation and increased expansion potential of the landfill facility including:

- A chapter 163 development agreement on the site limiting height while increasing buffering;
- Purchase of the subject property to allow for greater expansion of the use;
- Land development regulation amendments to establish regulations for a MRF and C&D landfill; and
- Extension of the FDEP permit to 2029 for the operation of a C&D Debris Disposal and Recycling Facility.

An application to amend the Future Land Use of the adjacent landfill site to Employment Center is being considered by city council for transmittal to state agencies on October 21, 2025.

**Table 1: Adjacent Property Information:**

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<b>Direction</b>	<b>Future Land Use</b>	<b>Zoning District</b>	<b>Current Use</b>
<b>North (County)</b>	Employment Center	A-1, General Agriculture R-E, Residential Estate R-1, Single-Family Dwelling	Existing enclave consisting of single-family residential and general agricultural uses
<b>East</b>	Medium Intensity/Special District	M-1, Light Industrial M-2, Medium Industrial	C&D Landfill and Materials Recovery Facility (Friends Recycling)
<b>South</b>	Medium Intensity/Special District	R-2, Two-Family Residential M-2, Medium Industrial	Single-family residence Vacant, undeveloped C&D Landfill and Materials Recovery Facility (Friends Recycling)
<b>West</b>	Medium Intensity/Special District	M-1, Light Industrial R-1, Single Family Residential	Vacant, undeveloped

The subject property is accessed by NW 28<sup>th</sup> Street, an unclassified roadway connecting to NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue. North of the subject properties, existing single-family and general agricultural uses are located within a county enclave. Other uses in the area include construction service establishments to the south, the industrially developed Ocala-Marion County Commerce Park to the northwest, and the mixed-use West Oak Planned Development (PD) to the east.

### **Section 3 – Staff Analysis**

This report reviews the proposed land use amendment for alignment with the city's comprehensive plan, including Ocala 2035 Vision, and relevant land development regulations.

The Ocala 2035 Vision established the basis for what would ultimately guide development and growth in the City of Ocala. Following the completion of the 2035 Vision, the comprehensive plan was amended creating six total Future Land Use (FLU) categories. In doing so, new land uses were designated in this area considering both existing and future development. The 2035 Vision map indicated the surrounding area as a transitional area located between a Medium Low Intensity and Low Intensity urban form area. Thus, the subject property was designated as Medium Intensity/Special District to encourage redevelopment efforts.

Additionally, the 2035 Vision led to the creation of focus area plans. In 2015, the West Ocala Vision & Community Plan (West Ocala Vision) was adopted to establish goals for revitalization in the West Ocala area by focusing on preservation, infill development, and density management. The subject property and surrounding area are identified as the North Gate Way - Main Street Mixed Use District

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in the West Ocala Vision & Community Plan.

Pursuant to Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element (FLUE) Policy 6.2, the Medium Intensity/Special District FLU is intended to identify neighborhood and community-serving activity centers for mixed-use commercial nodes and promote a walkable urban form. Following adoption of the community plan, the focus area for the intended redevelopment has shifted east. The city participated in the redevelopment of the former Pine Oaks Municipal Golf Course (n/k/a West Oak PD) and developed the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place redefining the envisioned mixed-use commercial node.

The applicant has submitted the requested amendment to unify the subject property with the adjacent landfill site. The intended use aligns with the Employment Center FLU category. The adjacent industrial development at Ocala-Marion County Commerce Park has an Employment Center FLU designation. According to Comprehensive Plan FLUE Policy 6.5, this designation is intended to develop a key regional hub for business, research, and employment.

## **Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:**

The requested land use change is consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the City of Ocala Future Land Use Element:

1. Future Land Use Element Policy 6.5: Employment Center. The intent of the Employment Center land use is to provide a regionally important hub for business, enterprise, research and development, and employment activities. Employment Centers are generally single use districts, but may include more than one (1) use if there are appropriate buffers and transitions between complementary uses. Permitted uses shall include a primary use and may include a secondary use. Primary uses are industrial, office and commercial. Secondary uses are public, recreation, institutional, and residential, as well as educational facilities. There are no form requirements in this land use category.

Access is primarily from major collectors, arterials, or limited-access highways. The primary modes of transportation include automobiles, trucks, freight rail, bus, and commuter rail transit. Provisions should be made for walking, bicycles, and transit.

There is no minimum density and intensity in this future land use category. The maximum density and intensity before any incentives is 24 dwelling units per gross acre or 2.00 FAR. The location and application of incentives shall be set forth in the Land Development Code.

## *Staff Comment:*

- *The Employment Center Future Land Use category allows for high-impact industrial uses. Additionally, Employment Center exists nearby, as properties to the west have been designated and developed as part of the Ocala-Marion County Commerce Park.*
- *The subject property is accessed via a local roadway, which connects to a collector roadway (NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue). This does not specifically align with the access as mentioned in Policy 6.5 for the subject property. However, the subject property is bounded by existing Employment Center land use, which fronts along NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue an urban collector roadway identified in the Transportation Element Map Series (Functional Classification of Roads map)*
- *The maximum density and intensity of the Employment Center FLU is 24 dwelling units per acre. Any residential development in this FLU requires a rezoning to a mixed-use*

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*Planned Development (PD) zoning district.*

2. Future Land Use Element Objective 14: The City shall continue existing regulations or adopt new regulations to ensure that development is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and are compatible with neighboring development, available services and facilities, and topography and soil conditions.

*Staff Comment:*

- *The requested land use amendment aligns with development in the surrounding and adjacent areas which currently have Employment Center FLU.*

**Table 2: Existing and Proposed Land Use Standards**

	Future Land Use Category	Permitted Land Uses	Allowable Density	Allowable FAR
Existing	Medium Intensity/ Special District	Residential, office, commercial, public, recreation, institutional, light industrial, educational facilities	5 to 30 units/acre	0.15 to 4.0 FAR
Proposed	Employment Center	Primary Uses: Industrial, office, commercial Secondary Uses: Public, recreation, institutional, residential, educational facilities	Up to 24 units/acre	Up to 2.0 FAR

## Section 5 - Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

The maximum allowable density for the subject properties with the Employment Center land use is 248 dwelling units, with a maximum FAR of 902,563.2 square feet. In staff's review of comprehensive plan future land use map amendments, conducting an analysis of LOS impact based upon maximum potential buildup (density/intensity) is not realistic. Additionally, further detailed LOS impact analysis will be required to address the specific proposed development as part of subsequent application review.

For this staff report, the following LOS analysis provides a review of the potential impact on public facilities based upon a typical light manufacturing/distribution type use that is consistent with the concurrent request of M-1, Light Industrial. Additional LOS analysis will be required at the time of expansion of the uses, or future redevelopment.

### A. Required Public Facilities (adopted LOS standards in the comprehensive plan):

**Transportation:** The subject property is accessed by NW 28<sup>th</sup> Street, an unclassified roadway which connects to NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The 2023 congestion management data from the Ocala-Marion TPO for the affected roadway(s) is provided below.

#### • Adopted LOS / Available Capacity:

Road/ Street Name	Lanes	Speed Limit	Functional Classification	Adopted LOS	LOS Capacity	2023 AADT	Existing LOS
NW 27 <sup>th</sup>	2	40	Collector	E	14,040	6,300	C

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Avenue							
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Developments proposing to generate 100 or more net new PM peak hour trips are required to submit a traffic study as part of the subdivision review.

*LOS Impact: Additional trips are not contemplated as a result of the proposed FLU change. Specific traffic analysis will be required through a traffic study prior to any expansion of existing uses or future redevelopment.*

**Potable Water:** Nearby uses are currently serviced by City of Ocala Utilities. City utilities are available at this location; connections will be determined during the site plan review process. A city water main runs along NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Potable Water:* 300 gallons per day (gpd) per equivalent residential unit (ERU), or the equivalent of 167 gallons per capita daily (gpcd).
- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The permitted capacity of the City's water system is 24.4 million gallons daily (mgd).

*LOS Impact: Additional demand is not contemplated as a result of the proposed FLU change. Water Resources staff has indicated the approximate daily flows are 17 mgd, leaving a remaining capacity of approximately 7.4 mgd; additional capacity analysis will be required at the time of site plan review for any expansion of existing uses or future redevelopment.*

**Sanitary Sewer:** Nearby uses are currently being serviced by City of Ocala Utilities. City utilities are available at this location; connections will be determined during the site plan review process. A city force main is available along NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Sanitary Sewer:* 250 gallons per day (gpd) per equivalent residential unit (ERU), or the equivalent of 80 gallons per capita daily (gpcd).
- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The permitted capacity of Water Reclamation Facility #2 is 6.5 million gallons daily (mgd) and the permitted capacity of Water Reclamation Facility #3 is 4.0 million gallons daily (mgd).

*LOS Impact: Additional demand is not contemplated as a result of the proposed FLU change. Water Resources staff has indicated the approximate daily flows are 6.5 mgd leaving a remaining capacity of approximately 4 mgd; additional capacity analysis will be required at the time of site plan review for any expansion of the existing uses or future redevelopment.*

**Solid Waste:** The subject property is located within the City's service area; refuse pickup will be determined during the site plan review process.

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Solid Waste:* 0.0112 pounds per square foot of occupied building space per day for nonresidential development.

*LOS Impact: Solid waste is transported to facilities outside of the city, the capacity of these facilities is under others jurisdiction.*

## **Parks and Recreation Facilities:**

- *Adopted Level of Service (LOS) Solid Waste:* 4.6 developed park acres per 1,000 population for each Regional Park Service Area (RPSA).

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- *Available Capacity:* Capacity is available. The City's population of 69,283 requires 318.70 developed park acres. The city currently owns and maintains 622.27 developed park acres, pursuant to the Fall 2024 Activity Guide released by the Recreation and Parks Department.

*LOS Impact: The anticipated industrial uses generally do not generate additional demand for parks. Additional capacity analysis will be required at the time of rezoning and site plan review, if a residential redevelopment is contemplated in the future.*

## B. Other Public Facilities:

The following public facilities do not have adopted Level of Service standards and are provided as additional information.

**Stormwater:** The subject property are partially located within FEMA Flood Zone "A". This is a Special Flood Hazard Area with a 1% annual chance of flooding (100-year floodplain). Portions of the subject properties were assessed during the Ocala Flood Study and determined to have a base flood elevation (BFE) of 64.00. Any future development must retain runoff on-site to match pre-development conditions. Facilities must be designed to provide flood protection for a 100 year, 24-hour storm event and subsequent 14-day recovery.

**Electric:** The subject properties are within the Ocala Electric Utility service territory.

**Fiber:** Service is not currently available at this location.

**Fire Service:** Ocala Fire Rescue Station #1 is located approximately 2.1 miles from the subject property. This distance exceeds the desired industry standard of 1.5 miles for fire service.

**Schools:** The proposed amendment is not anticipated to impact schools.

*Staff Comment: Preliminary review of the Required Public Facilities does not indicate any capacity issues. Further LOS analysis will be required prior to any expansion or future redevelopment as part of subsequent site plan reviews.*

**Summary Staff Comments:** For consideration of the future land use amendment, there are several key factors to consider:

- The proposed Employment Center future land use is consistent with nearby development filling in a gap between existing industrial uses to the east and to the west, such as the Ocala-Marion County Commerce Park.
- Nearby industrial uses are already serviced by city utilities.

## **Section 6 - Staff Findings and Recommendation**

- The requested Employment Center Future Land Use designation is more compatible with the high-impact industrial uses of the area to the east and the industrial park west of the subject property.
- The 2035 Vision and West Ocala Vision envisioned redevelopment within the area but recent development trends of the last 15 years have included predominantly light manufacturing and distribution, making a mixed-use commercial node at this location less feasible. The mixed-use node envisioned, is currently underway further east, with the redevelopment of the former Pine Oaks Golf Course.
- The requested future land use amendment is more consistent with nearby developments like the Ocala-Marion County Commerce Park and other neighboring uses.

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- City utilities are available at this location, and no level of service issues have been identified for public facilities.

<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approval of LUC25-0005</b>
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