

Project Narrative & Comprehensive Plan Consistency – Pool Corp LDR Text Amendment

The subject property is located along the south side of the Laurel Road E. frontage road (a/k/a Linda Lane) in the southeast quadrant of the Laurel Road and Interstate 75 interchange. The property is located in the Laurel Road Neighborhood and has a Future Land Use Designation of Mixed Use Corridor. The property was previously zoned Planned Industrial Development (PID) and Commercial Intensive (CI) but was recently rezoned by the City at the time of the City's update to the Land Development Regulations to Laurel East Mixed Use zoning.

Concurrent with a proposed Conditional Use and Site & Development plan for the "Flex" use for Pool Corp, a Fortune 500 Corporation, the applicant has proposed a LDR Text Amendment to *Section 2.7.4 Flex* to modify the standards for "Flex" to reduce the minimum building area developed as office, or retail store front from 15% to 10%, and to allow for outdoor storage as an accessory use. The current requirement for 15% of retail and office space is overly restrictive and does not recognize uses which have a significant retail and office component but necessitate a larger percentage of non-retail/office space due to the types of products and the amount of inventory required to be on hand to support the retail/office use. Further, "Flex" is a conditional use in all zoning districts other than those that also permit warehouse/storage uses by right. Therefore, the appropriate percentage of non-retail/office (warehouse/storage) space can be evaluated through the conditional use review and approval process. Lastly, a review of code requirements in Sarasota County reveals "Flex" is a special exception use in their Commercial General (CG) zoning district and has no minimum retail/office percentage because the percentage is evaluated through the special exception review process.

The firm's inventory includes a diverse range of products from pool creation materials, replacement parts, pumps, heaters, filters, spas, lanai furniture, and other pool care products. The proposed regional wholesale Sales and Distribution Center will occur in a single-story building of 40,800 sq. ft. with planned future expansion to 60,000 sq. ft. centered in the northern portion of the tract located off Laurel Road on Linda Lane.

Access to the site is from Linda Lane, an existing frontage road off Laurel Road E. The site will have adequate on-site storm water and parking facilities and will meet all the required setbacks and landscape buffers, including required site screens to hide exterior inventory storage areas. Pool Corp's business model requires both interior and exterior storage of bulk building supplies such as plastic pipe, steel reinforcing bars, pavers, and similar building materials. The project is anticipated to employ between 20 to 30 regular employees with a salary range between \$40,000 - \$50,000 annually and approximately five management employees with a salary range between \$80,000 and \$125,000.

Fencing, landscaping plantings and fabric site screening will be used as site barriers to protect yard inventory from public view. Storage areas will be located in the south yard near delivery areas and the triangular west yard along I-75 to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood.

The proposed Text Amendment will allow for reasonable use of the subject property which is well suited for such use due to its size and location and the proposed Text Amendment is consistent with all applicable elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including Strategy LU-LR 1.1.1.B regarding development in the Laurel Road Mixed Use Corridor, and is compliant with all applicable elements of the City's Land Development Regulations and, therefore, approval is hereby requested.