

## **CONNECTED CITY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1) What is the Connected City project?**

The Connected City Corridor is a State-initiated pilot program that is unique to Pasco County, and will be the first planned community to be built from the ground-up with a fiber network that will provide the fastest Gigabit internet service in the country. The Gigabit internet service will be made available to all residents, businesses, and institutional users in the Connected City, and become a catalyst to attract start-up technologies and other businesses to locate here, thus generating high-paying jobs to Pasco County residents, while also providing a unique, contemporary lifestyle for those who choose to reside in this master-planned mixed-use suburban and urban design setting.

As per Florida Statute 163.3246(14), it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage the creation of connected-city corridors that facilitate the growth of high-technology industry and innovation through partnerships that support research, marketing, workforce, and entrepreneurship. It is the intent of the Legislature to provide for a locally controlled, comprehensive plan amendment process for such projects that are designed to achieve a cleaner, healthier environment; limit urban sprawl by promoting diverse but interconnected communities; provide a range of intergenerational housing types; protect wildlife and natural areas; assure the efficient use of land and other resources; create quality communities of a design that promotes alternative transportation networks and travel by multiple transportation modes; and enhance the prospects for the creation of jobs. The Legislature finds and declares that this state's connected-city corridors require a reduced level of state and regional oversight because of their high degree of urbanization and the planning capabilities and resources of the local government.

### **2) What is Senate Bill 1216 and the "Pilot Program?"**

SB 1216 was a State law adopted in May 2015, which specifically selected this Pasco County area as a "pilot program" to implement this special land use plan. It is the only such pilot program in the State of Florida, and it provides Pasco County with an exclusive opportunity for 10 years to establish this important economic engine to drive high-technology business generation and high-paying jobs. The State authorized Pasco County to undertake an expedited planning and approval process, which the County accepted by designation of the Connected City Corridor area as requested by the state legislature. Once successful at this location, this economic planning strategy and implementation model can then be replicated in other Counties for future communities that want to attract high tech employers.

### **3) Where is the Connected Cities Corridor or Special Planning Area (CC SPA) located and how were the borders determined?**

The new community will be situated in a special planning area generally located between Wesley Chapel and San Antonio, bordered by SR 52 on the north, Overpass Road on the south, I-75 on the west, and Curley Road on the east.

Pasco County was approached by Metro Development Group in 2014 with the idea of creating the Connected City and the discussions of the boundary focused around the vicinity bounded by Interstate 75, State Road 52, Curley Road (as the Western boundary of the

Villages of Pasadena Hills) and Overpass Road. These basic boundaries severed a couple of existing entitled properties (Epperson Ranch and Meadow Ridge) that spanned both sides of Curley Road and Overpass Road. For more efficient planning purposes and to ensure compatibility, the Connected City boundary was expanded to incorporate the full extent of these two developments. As plans for economic development through high technology within the Connected City became more feasible, the undeveloped portions of the existing industrial park located north of State Road 52 were also included into the boundary. The current boundary was certified on July 15, 2015 by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

#### **4) What is the Pasco County's Role in the project?**

Metro Development Group, a private development company, desired to partner with Pasco County to establish the Connected City Special Planning Area. The Board of County Commissioners adopted Resolution 15-140 on May 5, 2015 defining the intent and scope of the County's support for the Connected City project.

The County was specifically selected by the State legislature to implement this Pilot Program, which is being pursued as a public-private partnership with Metro Development Group. The private partner is funding the third-party planning consultant expenses for the Pilot Program implementation phase, and the County as public partner has committed substantial staff time and resources to the regulatory approval process. The County will ensure that the Connected City Pilot Program is implemented as authorized and directed by SB 1216 in a manner that is consistent with the County's long-term growth strategy, and the Board of County Commissioners will make the final decision as to the provisions for the Special Planning Area. The BCC also will make all future land use and zoning decisions within the Connected City Corridor, just as for any other Comprehensive Plan or Rezoning request. The Pasco County Economic Development Council will also play a critical role in the business and employment generation aspects of the Pilot Program.

#### **5) Why is a private partner necessary?**

In all other U.S. cities or communities where Gigabit fiber network technology has been offered, the local government was required to invest millions of dollars in the infrastructure requirements to obtain such technological access, and also was required to expend all of the planning costs for implementation of the community plans to accommodate it. In this case, the private partner itself has made the investment arrangements to bring the Gigabit technology to the Connected City Corridor, at an expense of several million dollars, and also has agreed to fund the third-party planning, feasibility, marketing, and other expenses required to implement the Pilot Program. Without the private partner's investment in this partnership, the County would not be able to allocate the above resources and funds to implement the Pilot Program.

#### **6) What is the anticipated timeframe for adoption?**

SB 1216 was enacted in May 2015, and economic feasibility, community meetings, and conceptual planning work have been undertaken for several months. The specific regulatory structure to implement the general conceptual framework of SB 1216 is expected to be implemented through a series of public hearings over the next several months.

The current target date for Phase 1 (Stewardship Ordinance, Financial Plan, Connected Cities Master Roadway Plan, with cross sections, and Conceptual Utility Plan) public hearing

before the Local Planning Agency is on July 25, 2016. The first Board of County Commissioners public hearing date is proposed for August 9, 2016 and the final public hearing is scheduled for September 13, 2016. All hearings are scheduled to be held in Dade City.

The current target date for Phase 2 (Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Connected City Land Development Code, and Land Use Overlay ) Final adoption is proposed for October 11, 2016 (The Local Planning Agency Hearing date is scheduled for August 11th and the first Board Hearing is scheduled for September 13th.)

Any updates to the specific public meeting and hearing dates can be found at the Pasco County Connected City Webpage, which will also reflect any potential schedule changes.

### **7) What are the benefits of the Connected City Corridor to the citizens of Pasco County?**

Development within the Connected City will provide community benefits such as job creation, multiple housing choices, a cleaner, healthier environment, natural resource protection, limited sprawl, multiple transportation networks, and connections to Gigabit internet services. The Pilot Program offers Pasco County the unique opportunity to continue and expedite its transition from a “bedroom community” for Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, toward a more healthy and balanced community that offers advanced technologies and higher quality employment opportunities for its current and future residents. Because the Pilot Program is limited to the I-75 Corridor, the County can cluster quality community development in an appropriate geographic area which already has substantial Comprehensive Plan density allocated; therefore new development under the Connected Cities land development code will not constitute “sprawl” or require unreasonable expansion of public utilities and other infrastructure to support the proposed development area.

Pasco residents will find attractive live, work, play opportunities, including meaningful employment opportunities without the need to commute to other counties, and be able to reside in one of the few advanced high-tech communities in the US. The combination of available gigabit fiber optic lines with allowable home occupation uses provides a tremendous opportunity for residents that want to start their own businesses.

### **8) What is so unique about these planning concepts?**

This is not the first time any of these concepts have been offered; however, the Connected City Corridor is the first to do so in a “greenfield” setting where the community can literally be planned from the ground-up. All of the prior technology-driven planning efforts have been urban renewal or redevelopment projects where there was no opportunity to plan the long-term infrastructure necessary to support those projects, and insufficient land area to integrate the business uses into an attractive residential environment. This Pilot Program therefore provides the first opportunity to apply a long-range vision and to integrate the use of technology for not only the business sector but also within the varied, master-planned residential communities. The unique blending of the business and residential technology features, with an alternative pedestrian/vehicular transportation network and unique amenities such as Crystal Lagoons, all in an attractive community which offers intergenerational housing products, already has been recognized as the first “Smart Gigabit Community” in the country by US Ignite.

**9) Is the County increasing the overall development density/intensity for the Connected City Corridor?**

No. A major reason for the selection of the I-75 Corridor for the Pilot Program is that this area already has substantial, pre-existing density/intensity entitlements under the Future Land Use Map pursuant to the County's existing Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, there is no need to add "additional density" or "additional intensity" under the Comprehensive Plan in order to support the level of development that will be necessary to implement the Pilot Program and to justify the economic costs of the technology and other capital infrastructure that is necessary to support the project. In short, the "planning overlay" is not an introduction of additional density/intensity, but instead is about the "form of development," the introduction of technology, creative and more flexible planning concepts for future technological advancement, the introduction of new, alternative transportation concepts, contemporary live/work/play planning concepts that will attract high-technology businesses and their employees to the project, and expedited planning and permitting processes that are essential to procuring those employers and their high-paying jobs. It also is important to note that the private partner in the Connected City Corridor already has preexisting, vested zoning entitlements for its properties and therefore is not relying upon the Connected City Pilot Program to procure zoning entitlements.

**10) What if I own property in the Connected City area, but do not wish to participate can I still develop my property?**

Yes. The Pilot Program will not require any property owner to participate if they do not themselves elect to do so. The election to participate in the Connected City project will occur by a voluntary rezoning initiated by each property owner, to a new "Connected City MPUD" zoning category which then provides the Connected City benefits to that property, while at the same time imposing the Connected City obligations upon that property.

Each property owner has the right to keep their pre-existing Comprehensive Plan and Zoning designations for their property, and to use their property under those pre-existing entitlements. Each property owner continues to have the right to ask the Board of County Commissioners to consider a development application, including a zoning designation other than CC-MPUD for their property if they do not wish to take advantage of the benefits of the Connected City Special Planning Area Overlay.

The Connected City Master Roadway Plan and Conceptual Utility Plan for Connected City, once adopted, will be binding on all property owners within the Connected City boundaries in the same manner that the County's Highway Vision Map is binding on all property owners. There will not be a process to opt out of the Connected City Master Roadway Plan or Conceptual Utility Plan other than the normal County variance or alternative standard process already in place.

**11) What are the benefits for landowners situated in Connected Cities who choose to opt in and rezone to the CC-MPUD?**

Benefits for landowners who desire to opt in and rezone their land to CC MPUD will receive the following benefits:

- An expedited review process

- Special credits for putting in sustainable high tech products
- Access to receiving grants from the start-up funds
- Marketing their project as part of the Connected City brand
- Exempt from Timing and Phasing studies
- Receive mobility fee credits if certain road improvements and Service-Ready Site Acreage are in place

**12) What are the impacts to land owners who do not want to opt in to the CC MPUD rezoning in terms of required rights of way and roadway improvements?**

Regardless of the property owner's choice to "opt in" to the Connected City overlay, all owners wishing to develop property within the CC boundaries will follow the Pasco County Highway Vision Plan as well as the Connected City Master Roadway Plan indicating future arterial and collector roads needed to allow an adequate level of service to be maintained through year 2065. For parcels less than 20 acres whose land owners wish to deviate from the Pasco County Highway Vision Plan and the Connected City Master Roadway Plan, the same procedures are to be followed in Section 901.1 and Section 407.5 in the Land Development Code. The County Engineer may approve refinements to the Connected City Master Roadway Plan for those parcels greater than 20 acres when the alternative alignment is within the interior of the property seeking an alternative alignment as long as exit and entry locations to the property are maintained.

**13) Will the County be taking land for proposed public parks, public schools, infrastructure, and streets through the Eminent Domain process?**

Where schools and parks are needed, the County will not be forcing the sale, nor taking private land via Eminent Domain. The County will follow the same process currently being utilized to obtain required land from land owners so just compensation is given to those who want to sell their land for new schools and parks. For necessary road improvements and utility infrastructure the acquisition process remains the same as before under current Eminent Domain (if necessary).

The initial Concept plans prepared during the public involvement meetings reflected the aggregation of parcels within the central portion of the Connected City to create synergy with the parks, schools, and large environmental preservation areas. However, the concept received mixed reviews from the public as well as Pasco County staff. Consequently, the more conventional approach currently utilized by Pasco County for the selection and acquisition of both park land and school land parcels will continue to be implemented within the Connected City.

**14) What is the purpose of the Connected City Stewardship District (CCSD)?**

The Connected City Stewardship District is a specialized limited single purpose dependent district established to meet the intent of 2015 Senate Bill 1216 by 1) ensuring advanced technology is in place for future development, 2) creating an expedited regulatory review process that will motivate high tech employers to locate in Pasco County, 3) ensuring alternative transportation modes are in close proximity to employment centers, 4) ensuring that advanced technology in educational, health care, public safety, recreational and public services are utilized, and 5) ensuring local financial self-sufficiency and sustainability are in place for infrastructure.

**15) What is the role of the Connected City Management Committee (CCMC)?**

The Connected City Management Committee (CCMC) will manage the Connected City District on behalf of the Stewardship District including the review of all site plans, day to day district management, property management and operations and collection of impact, mobility, and surcharge fees and tax increment revenues according to the Financial Plan. The CCMC shall select the District Manager, and be responsible for directing expenses and revenues approved in the CC Financial Plan and future budgets in order to implement community planning and design features, setting development policies, regulations, services, and development approvals within the District. The District has the power to provide, plan, implement, construct, operate, maintain, repair, improve, replace, manage and finance as a local government management entity its own systems, facilities, services, improvements, infrastructure, and projects and possessing financing powers to fund the District in order to provide high quality services.

The CCMC reviews and makes recommendations to the BCC (in place of the Development Review Committee (DRC) and Planning Commission (PC)) for proposed Comprehensive Plan land use changes as well as proposed rezoning areas only within the CC District. The CC MPUD zoning category shall be the regulatory mechanism to govern entitled properties for those land owners that choose to “opt in” to the Connected City land use overlay. The BCC reserves its jurisdiction to grant or deny any zoning entitlements to properties anywhere in unincorporated Pasco County, including those applications within the Connected City boundary.

A list of specific powers granted to the CCMC related to the provision of infrastructure and services and issuance of bonds are found in Section 602-23 of the Land Development Code.

**16) What is the Connected City Management Committee (CCMC) not allowed to do?**

The CCMC cannot approve Comprehensive Plan Amendments or Rezoning, matters of taxation and assessments, mobility and development fees, nor approve financial plans, nor any other matters of fiscal responsibility. These responsibilities and authority continue to reside solely with the Pasco County BCC. The BCC shall serve as the Board of Supervisors of the District.

**Summary of Approval Authorities for Applications within Connected Cities**

<b>Function/Responsibilities</b>	<b>BCC</b>	<b>CCMC</b>	<b>DRC/LPA</b>	<b>Planning/Development Department</b>
Rezoning to CC MPUD	Approval	Replace DRC/LPA	Replaced by CCMC	Review/recommendations to CCMC
Development of Non CCMPUD applications	Approval	N/A	Approval	Review/recommendations

**17) Who are the members of the CCMC?**

The CCMC is comprised of seven members appointed by the BCC. For the first 15 years, the CCMC members will include the resident County Commissioner from District 1 (all of the land area of CC is within District 1), 3 members nominated by private Connected City Entitled Stakeholders and approved by the BCC, 1 private stakeholder member at large representing the non-entitled properties, the County Administrator or its representative within the Planning

and Development Department, and 1 member nominated by the School Superintendent. All members must be approved by the BCC.

For the first ten years, the 3 members of the private Entitled stakeholders will be nominated by the County's private partner in the public-private partnership. Thereafter, nominations for these three members may be made by any owner of the Entitled Properties.

After the initial 15-year period, each Supervisor (County Commissioner) appoints one member for the CCMC, and the remaining two members are appointed by the majority vote of a quorum of the BCC. After an initial 15 years the BCC may choose to terminate the District by code amendment by the BCC after retirement of bonds and obligations.

### **18) How will the construction of the project be funded?**

The introduction of the Gigabit fiber network infrastructure is being funded by the private partner. A Connected City long-range financial plan that details the projected capital infrastructure requirements over the 50-year planning horizon has been developed, and includes the traditional, primary roadway network, an alternative roadway network (other current and future modes of transportation), and primary utilities requirements. All of these capital costs will be funded from the development of the Connected City properties themselves, from the traditional mobility fees and a development fee surcharge will apply as required to provide the projected capital funding necessary to construct the planned infrastructure. No ad valorem taxes or other general County funds, nor any funding from properties outside the Connected City Corridor, are planned to be committed to the Connected City Corridor. Private development of course will fund its own development costs including the internal community streets, utilities, and other infrastructure requirements for each specific project.

### **19) What is the Connected City Financial Plan?**

The Financial Plan is a long term strategy (2016-2065) that indicates how infrastructure improvements will be funded over time as development occurs (including overall improvements needed by 2065 at full development of the site). The Plan demonstrates that private development funding covers substantially all of the master infrastructure requirements needed within the Connected City boundaries and contributes a fair share of costs for funding of surrounding external improvements needed as result of development of Connected City.

The funding sources are received incrementally, dependent upon when development occurs over a 50-year horizon. The Financial Plan lists all the roadway segments that are planned for improvements by roadway type, and details the number of lanes needed, the actual improvements to be funded, the length, construction costs, and right of way width needed for full build out by 2065. The plan also documents the sources of funding and the specific purposes funds will be used for including how an entire network of alternative transportation lanes (golf carts, bikes and paths) are expected to be funded. Incentives that offer credits to developers for contributing technological improvements are also offered.

### **20) Will the current impact fees be charged within the Connected City boundaries?**

The Financial Plan does not change the following (12) Impact Fees:

School Facilities Impact Fee, Park Land Impact Fee, Park Facilities Impact Fee, Library Land Impact Fee, Library Facilities Impact Fee, Fire Land Impact Fee, Fire Facilities Impact Fee,

Rescue Land Impact Fee, Rescue Facilities Impact Fee, Hurricane Mitigation Impact Fee and Utility (Water and Sewer) Impact Fees. These fees will still be required to be paid by all developers for their development projects approved in the Connected Cities following the same procedures in use by the County.

The Financial Plan creates new fees:

Smart Gigabit Community Infrastructure Impact Fee, Innovation Enterprise Fund Impact Fee, and Connected City Development Review (Administration) Fee.

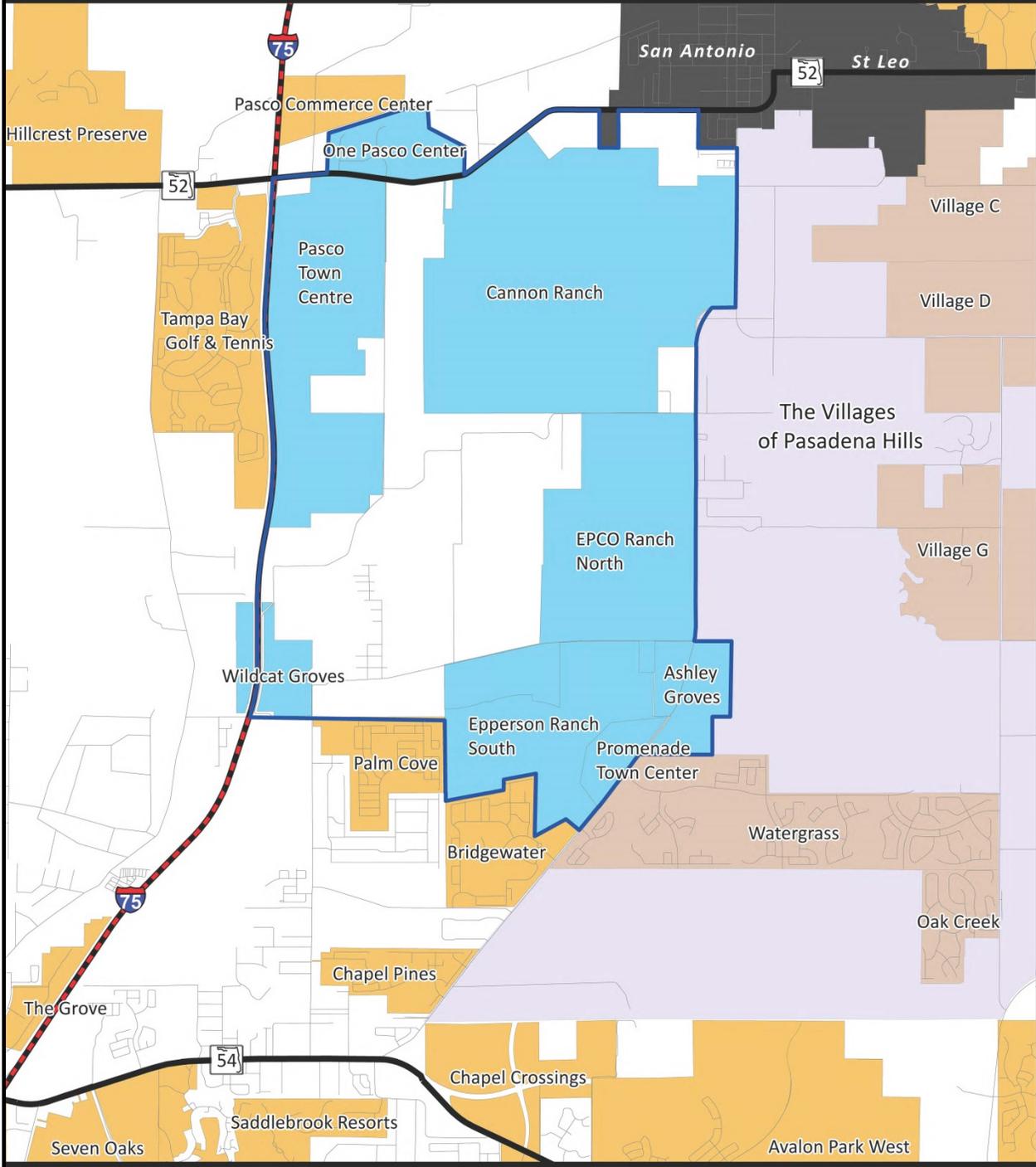
The Financial Plan creates revised fees:

Transportation Development Fees enhance and supplement the current Mobility Fees. The Transportation Development Fees are based on the Suburban Mobility Fees plus the addition of a “surcharge” required to cover the transportation costs selected to be funded for the Connected City Capital Plan.

School Development Fees enhance and supplement the current School Land and Facilities Impact Fees. The School Development Fees are based on the School Land and Facilities Impact Fees plus the addition of a “surcharge” required to enhance the school land acquisition costs, school facilities costs, school technology and equipment costs to be funded within the Connected City.

## **21) Where can I get additional information?**

Information regarding the Connected City project can be found on the Pasco County [Connected City Webpage](#), or by contacting the Pasco County Planning and Development Department at (727) 847-8193.



■ Projects of Interest  
■ Villages of Pasadena Hills  
■ Other Projects  
  City Limits

0 1000 2000  
 Feet  
 Scale in Feet