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Growth vision approved for Fruitville Initiative

A build-out vision for the 420 acres adjacent to Interstate 75 and north and south of Fruitville Road is now an adopted policy with Sarasota County's comprehensive plan.

Sarasota County commissioners approved the changes to the comprehensive plan Wednesday, Oct. 27, after years of discussions about what was appropriate development for the area, described by many as a gateway to Sarasota. The land currently carries designations as a major employment center and moderate density residential on the future land use map.

Concerned about the possibility of sprawling big-box development typical at many interstate exchanges, the county and property owners sought a different vision for the area. The amendment approved by commissioners designates the 420 acres, which includes lands owned by the county and five property owners, as a special planning area utilizing smart growth principles and form-based codes to achieve pedestrian-oriented development. The amendment also contains provisions to ensure compatibility between the homes, businesses, stores and industry that will come in the future besides ensuring adequate space for parks remains.

Through a series of six meetings over the summer, the county and property owners met with existing neighborhoods and other stakeholders to ensure that their concerns and comments about the plan were heard and taken into consideration as the details were ironed out.

For more information, visit the county's website at www.scgov.net and click the button for Comprehensive Plan Amendment Updates.

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