

PALM BAY 2045

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



01



FUTURE LAND USE

Objective FLU-1.3

Promote the development of sustainable neighborhoods that provide a diverse range of housing options, are supported by public facilities, and maintain access to commercial areas for goods, services, and employment.

Policy FLU-1.3A. Maintain regulations in the LDC to accommodate a wide range of housing types and varying densities in conformance with this Plan.

Policy FLU-1.3B. High density residential development shall be directed to areas of the City which possess:

- (a) Alternative transportation infrastructure such as bike lanes, trails, transit, and sidewalks;
- (b) Nonresidential uses which meet the daily needs of residents for goods, services, and employment; and
- (c) public facilities, such as centralized water and sewer systems, available for connection.

Policy FLU-1.3C. Reevaluate the City's Subdivision Regulations to promote walkability, internal and external connectivity, and alternative modes of travel.

Policy FLU-1.3D. All new development shall connect to the City's central water and sewer system, unless exempted within the provisions of the Infrastructure Element.

Policy FLU-1.3E. Requests to change the FLUM determined to negatively impact hurricane evacuation plans, routes, or shelter facilities as determined by the review criteria contained in the Coastal Management Element (CME) shall be denied.

Policy FLU-1.3F. New development projects must mitigate hurricane sheltering and evacuation impacts in accordance with the CME and the LDC.

Objective FLU-1.4

Provide and maintain FLUCs and zoning districts that would accommodate a diverse range of nonresidential activities of varying types and sizes.

Policy FLU-1.4A. The LDC shall direct commercial activities to develop at nodes, rather than along roadway corridors. Where appropriate, developments within these nodes shall provide:

- (a) Shared access, parking, and loading facilities;
- (b) Context-sensitive connections to nearby or adjacent residential neighborhoods;
- (c) Transitions in density, intensity, and uses between nearby or adjacent uses;
- (d) A branded wayfinding and signage program;
- (e) Coordinated, quality architecture; and
- (f) Buffering tools such as landscaping, open space, berms, walls, and/or other suitable

screening mechanisms to protect adjacent established single-family neighborhoods.

Policy FLU-1.4B. Amend the LDC to allow professional offices when utilized as:

- (a) a transition between commercial and residential uses; or
- (b) infill on properties within developed portions of the community infeasible for residential, commercial, or mixed-use development.

Policy FLU-1.4C. Amend the LDC to encourage the development of neighborhood-scale commercial uses within, or within close proximity to, residential areas.

Objective FLU-1.5

Support the creation of harmonious mixed-use communities with residential and nonresidential uses collocated and integrated into a sustainable development pattern.

Policy FLU-1.5A. Support the creation and growth of community activity centers, which include a mix of residential and nonresidential uses within a compact, walkable setting, by:

- (a) Developing a master plan for the potential community activity center along Tukey Creek;
- (b) Directing developers to locate higher density and intensity activities within activity centers; and
- (c) Establishing branded wayfinding and signage programs for new and existing community activity centers.

Policy FLU-1.5B. Establish development incentives for developers to redevelop properties which provide waterfront access and viewsheds to Turkey Creek, Palm Bay, and the Indian River Lagoon.

Policy FLU-1.5C. Work with the community to establish a long-term vision and strategic plan for Port Malabar Units 51, 52, and 53 (also known as The Compound).

Policy FLU-1.5D. Continue to explore opportunities to incorporate more innovative planning principles into the LDC which may help cultivate a more sustainable land use pattern, such as:

- (a) Adopting form-based code regulations for community activity centers;
- (b) Requiring buildings to be placed closer to the street;
- (c) Permitting smaller lot sizes;
- (d) Incentivizing construction that utilizes low impact development (LID) techniques;
- (e) Reducing minimum parking requirements and requiring parking facilities to be located to the rear or side of buildings;
- (f) Promoting shared driveway, parking, loading, stormwater, and other similar facilities between uses of similar use and scale;
- (g) Establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program; and
- (h) Permitting the clustering of uses to preserve wetlands, open space, and other valuable natural amenities.

Policy FLU-1.5E. Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the LDC in promoting efficient land use patterns.

Policy FLU-1.5F. Discourage the proliferation of strip and automobile-oriented development.

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FUTURE LAND USE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Element (FLUE) is intended to determine the distribution, location, and intensity of uses necessary for accommodating the City's projected population growth, advance its economic interests, minimize impacts to the natural environment, and deliver high-quality public facilities and services. The Data & Analysis portion of this Element provides the basis for future land use decisions and policy changes made by the City. Topics related to land use explored as part of this analysis include demographics and socioeconomic conditions, community character, existing land use, natural resources, historic and cultural preservation, public facilities and services, population growth, future land use, urban sprawl, and considerations for equity.

1.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

At the mouth of Turkey Creek where it meets the Indian River, a small but charming settlement known as Tillman slowly began to take shape during the nineteenth century. However, the pace of growth quickly escalated by the arrival of the railroad in the late 1800s, which allowed local farming operations to export their goods to markets throughout the region. Tillman's growing agricultural economy attracted a wealth of new workers and their families to the area, resulting in a sharp rise in the community's population. Yet, this growth would soon slow once again as poor drainage practices at the time hurt the viability of the soil, which caused many local farms to shutter their operations—sharply diminishing the area's population by the early 1920's.

Nevertheless, those who remained in Tillman organized and sought to rebrand their community by renaming the town to Palm Bay, which more aptly reflected the area's local ecosystem and proximity to the water. By the time the City was officially incorporated in 1960, Palm Bay's population stood at approximately 2,800 residents. Around this time, exciting new commercial and industrial projects began to arise within and around Palm Bay—the most prolific of which was the John F. Kennedy Space Center (located in Merritt Island) which helped earn the region its nickname as Florida's Space Coast.

During this time, large-scale residential investments were being made in the area as well. In 1959, the area's leading developer, the General Development Corporation (GDC), purchased large tracts of land and quickly began developing single-family neighborhoods and homes throughout Palm Bay, which allowed the City's population to surge exponentially to 62,632 by 1990—rendering Palm Bay as Brevard County's most populous city. Over thirty years later, this distinction remains, as the City's population was estimated to be 127,256 in 2022—the overwhelming majority of which live in single-family neighborhoods.

Many challenges stemming from the City's quick rise in population continue to persist: the City lacks a defined downtown, the transportation network remains oriented overwhelmingly to the automobile, commercial and industrial development has not kept pace with residential growth, and the housing stock is predominately limited to single-family products. Yet, opportunities for bringing positive changes to Palm Bay have been identified as well, including the completion of the St. Johns Heritage Parkway interchange, the continued progress of several large-scale development projects, and the creation of a new community-driven vision plan for the City. This 2045 Comprehensive Plan addresses the ongoing and emerging topics by establishing a renewed set of Goals, Objectives, and Policies backed by well-informed data and analyses.

1.2 GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Located in Central Florida and spanning a total of 86 square miles, the City of Palm Bay can be found in the southeastern quadrant of Brevard County. The City is surrounded by the Three Forks Conservation Area to the west, Melbourne & West Melbourne to the north, the Indian River Lagoon to the east, and the Indian River County boundary to the south. The community is intersected by two of Florida's most heavily-traveled roadways—I-95

(which splits the City vertically) and US Highway 1, which is located along Palm Bay’s eastern boundary. **Map FLUE-1** provides a regional snapshot of the City of Palm Bay, while **Map FLUE-2** provides a more detailed look at the current City limits.

1.3 DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT

According to the latest decennial Census, the City of Palm Bay possessed a permanent population of 119,760 in 2020 and is estimated to have grown to 127,256 residents as of June 2022. One method of understanding the lifestyles and rich character of Palm Bay’s population is to conduct a profile and analysis of its current demographic (age, sex, and race/ethnicity) and socioeconomic (income, occupation, and education) composition. These findings can then be compared to Brevard County and the State of Florida as a whole to better understand the challenges and opportunities which may be unique to Palm Bay. This comparison is shown in **Tables FLUE-1 & FLUE-2**.

Table FLU - 1: Demographic Comparison – City, County, & State

	City of Palm Bay	Brevard County	State of Florida
Total Population	127,256 ¹	619,038	22,114,754
Total Households ²	40,918	262,376	8,760,977
Average Household Size ³	3.11	2.36	2.52
Median Age	41	48	43
Female Population (%)	52	51	51
Male Population (%)	48	49	49
Senior Population (%)	20	26	22
Race/Ethnicity			
White Alone (%)	60.2	73.1	56.7
Black Alone (%)	17.8	9.7	14.9
American Indian Alone (%)	0.4	0.4	0.4
Asian Alone (%)	2.0	2.7	3.0
Pacific Islander Alone (%)	0.1	0.1	0.1
Some Other Race Alone (%)	6.0	3.5	7.5
Two or More Races (%)	13.5	10.6	17.4
Hispanic Origin (%)	18.2	11.6	27.1
Diversity Index	71	56	77
¹ According to June 2022 electric water meter counts for residential developments within the City. ² Determine by dividing Total Population (Row 2) by Average Household Size (Row 4) ³ Determined by dividing the City’s 2020 Census population (119,760) by Palm Bay’s estimated number of occupied housing units in 2020 (38,486) according to the Shimberg Center’s Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse (FHDC) at the University of Florida			

Sources: City of Palm Bay, ESRI Business Analyst Online, 2022.

Table FLU - 2: Socioeconomic Comparison – City, County, & State

	City of Palm Bay	Brevard County	State of Florida
Median Household Income	\$55,542	\$64,216	\$65,438
Persons in Poverty (%)	13.4	9.9	13.1
Median Home Value	\$214,832	\$272,299	\$285,477
Owner Occupied Housing Units (%)	76.8	76.7	66.1
Renter Occupied Housing Units (%)	23.2	23.3	33.9
Employed Population (%)	95.8	95.9	96.1

	City of Palm Bay	Brevard County	State of Florida
Unemployed Population (%)	4.2	4.1	3.9
High School Graduate or Higher (%)	88.4	93.4	88.5
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (%)	19.6	30.9	20.5

Sources: American Community Survey, 2020; City of Palm Bay, ESRI Business Analyst Online, 2022.

Highlights from the demographic and socioeconomic data available for the City of Palm Bay reveal several important characteristics about the community, particularly when compared at the County and State level. In terms of demographic makeup, Palm Bay residents generally live in larger households and are younger than their comparatives. Socioeconomically, households in Palm Bay generally make less money and are likelier to own less expensive homes than those living in other portions of the County and State. When taken as whole, this information indicates that Palm Bay is a family-oriented community rich with growing, working-class households.

1.4 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Much of Palm Bay's character today can be traced back to the rapid development led by the GDC in the latter half of the 20th century. Like many other GDC-developed communities, including Port Charlotte, North Port, and Port St. Lucie, extremely large tracts of agricultural and natural lands were purchased and divided into thousands of single-family lots that were often sold to northern retirees with disposable income. As a result, many of these developments eventually grew into sprawling bedroom communities—often lacking the critical components of typical cities, including downtowns, commercial and industrial employment centers, and multifamily housing options. However, the City of Palm Bay remains steadfast in its attempts to correct planning mistakes of the past. Although this section attempts to describe Palm Bay's community character today, it is highly likely these descriptors will no longer be appropriate as the City continues to evolve in the decades ahead.

1.4.1 Suburban Living

Residential neighborhoods in Palm Bay consist primarily of single-family residences built between 1950 and 2009. These neighborhoods are scattered throughout the City, accounting for the primary use of land within the jurisdiction. The vast majority of these neighborhoods feature suburban roadway networks with poor internal and external connectivity. This type of roadway network often isolates residents in their neighborhoods and creates barriers to simplified, connected, and streamlined travel—particularly to pedestrians and cyclists. Additionally, many neighborhoods within the City are currently not served by the City's centralized water and sewer system and thus rely on private wells and septic tanks.

Although single-family homeownership continues to be aspiration for many American families, national changes in lifestyle preferences and economic circumstances have created a significant market for more urbanized living, where residents can live, work, play, and grow all within a walkable setting. Higher-density housing products, particularly those within a walkable distance to public and private goods and services are nearly nonexistent within Palm Bay. By diversifying the local housing stock, the City will be more likely to attract families from a wider range of backgrounds, income levels, and lifestyles.

1.4.2 Commuting Culture

One of the consequences of the General Development Corporation's influence on the City's rapid population growth was its lack of vision for establishing strong commercial and industrial centers. As detailed later in the Existing Land Use section of this report, less than 15% of the City's total land area is currently utilized for commercial and industrial development. Their absence from the community often forces its large residential population to travel to other communities (such as the neighboring Cities of Melbourne and Titusville) to meet

their needs for goods, services, and employment. This phenomenon is further evidenced by the employment figures in **Table FLUE-3**.

Table FLU - 3: Business & Employment Indicators Comparison – City, County, & State

	City of Palm Bay	City of Melbourne	City of Titusville
Total Population	127,256	85,993	48,685
Employed Civilian Population – Age 16+ ¹	61,865 (48.6%)	42,507 (49.4%)	22,114 (45.4%)
Total Daytime Population ²	92,451 (–34,805) ³	109,405 (+23,412) ³	52,168 (+3,483) ³
Total Number of Businesses	2,912	5,717	2,616
Total Number of Employees	20,952	56,329	21,274
Average Number of Employees Per Business ⁴	7.2	9.9	8.1
Jobs/Employed Population Ratio ⁵	0.34	1.33	0.96
¹ Includes those who are non-military employees or are self-employed, including those who work 15 hours or more for a family business (paid or unpaid) or those who are temporarily absent from work due to illness, vacation, or other personal reasons. ² Includes workers (civilian, non-military employed at work, and armed forces personnel ages 16+) and residents (population age 0-15, unemployed adults, those not in the labor force, and employed civilians who are not working temporarily due to illness, vacation, etc.). ³ Total Daytime Population minus Total Population ⁴ Total Number of Businesses divided by the Total Number of Employees ⁵ Total Number of Employees divided by the Employed Civilian Population – Age 16+			

Sources: City of Palm Bay, ESRI Business Analyst Online, 2022.

Despite sharing a similar proportion of employed working age residents between the three cities, Palm Bay has a significantly lower proportion of businesses and jobs compared to the City's total population. This relative lack of employment opportunities often results in a commuting culture, where residents typically spend their days [and often their money] in communities other than their own. This appears to be the case for the City of Palm Bay which, unlike the Cities of Melbourne and Titusville, has a significant reduction in its total daytime population. Considering that many Americans desire to have shorter commutes to work, the relative lack of jobs in the city limits may result in many prospective residents choosing to move to neighboring communities rather than Palm Bay.

Although the volume of businesses and jobs is important to the economic viability of a community, identifying the types of industries found within each City is critical to understanding where Palm Bay may be struggling to compete with its largest neighbors. An industry breakdown (organized into the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system) for Palm Bay, Melbourne, and Titusville is shown in the following tables. **Table FLUE-4** shows the total number of businesses comprising each industry, while **Table FLUE-5** identifies the total number of persons employed by industry.

Table FLU - 4: Number of Businesses per Industry Comparison – City, County, & State

Industry (by SIC Code)	City of Palm Bay		City of Melbourne		City of Titusville	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture & Mining	98	3.4	113	2.0	39	1.8
Construction	316	10.9	420	7.3	132	6.1
Manufacturing	66	2.3	145	2.5	58	2.7
Transportation	73	2.5	115	2.0	57	2.6
Communication	23	0.8	57	1.0	17	0.8

	City of Palm Bay		City of Melbourne		City of Titusville	
Utility	7	0.2	17	0.3	2	0.1
Wholesale Trade	71	2.4	139	2.4	44	2.0
Retail Trade	568	19.5	1,100	19.2	486	22.4
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	226	7.8	559	9.8	193	8.9
Services ¹	1,031	35.4	2,289	40.0	883	40.8
Government	67	2.3	94	1.6	69	3.2
Unclassified ²	367	12.6	669	11.7	186	8.6
Total	2,913	100.0	5,717	100.0	2,166	100.0

¹Services includes the following SIC Code categories: Hotels & Lodging, Automotive Services, Motion Pictures & Amusements, Health Services, Legal Services, Education Institutions & Libraries, & Other Services.

²Unclassified refer to businesses which did not report an SIC code.

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, 2022.

Table FLU - 5: Number of Employees per Industry Comparison – City, County, & State

	City of Palm Bay		City of Melbourne		City of Titusville	
Industry (by SIC Code)	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture & Mining	306	1.5	531	0.9	226	1.1
Construction	1,455	6.9	2,311	4.1	818	3.8
Manufacturing	770	3.7	2,085	3.7	532	2.5
Transportation	371	1.8	1,467	2.6	370	1.7
Communication	95	0.5	497	0.9	211	1.0
Utility	24	0.1	83	0.1	3	0.0
Wholesale Trade	468	2.2	2,634	4.7	361	1.7
Retail Trade	6,360	30.4	12,259	21.8	5,079	23.9
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,110	5.3	3,515	6.2	969	4.6
Services ¹	7,767	37.1	28,348	50.3	8,639	40.6
Government	2,131	10.2	1,765	3.1	3,927	18.5
Unclassified ²	95	0.5	834	1.5	139	0.7
Total	20,952	100.0	56,329	100.0	21,274	100.0

¹Services includes the following SIC Code categories: Hotels & Lodging, Automotive Services, Motion Pictures & Amusements, Health Services, Legal Services, Education Institutions & Libraries, & Other Services.

²Unclassified refer to businesses which did not report an SIC code.

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, 2022.

Despite its larger population, the City of Palm Bay has a lower volume of businesses than both Melbourne and Titusville. Yet, as shown in **Table FLUE-4**, the composition of each city's industry share is relatively similar. Services comprises the largest percentage of each city's total volume of businesses, with retail trade coming in second.

Table FLUE-5 reveals starker contrasts between the three local economies. Unlike business volume, where the City of Palm Bay possesses more total private enterprises than Titusville, Palm Bay currently maintains less employment opportunities than both Melbourne and Titusville. In fact, Melbourne (which possesses 32% less population than Palm Bay), more than doubles the job opportunities found in Palm Bay. Additionally, Palm Bay's proportion of Service jobs (much of which is comprised of highly skilled and well-paid sectors like health and legal services) is lower than both of its neighbors. Alternatively, Palm Bay has a larger proportion of Retail Trade jobs than its comparatives, which often relies on unskilled labor and offers lower wages.

To continue to attract new residential and nonresidential investment into the City, Palm Bay must seek to render itself more competitive with its neighboring cities by seeking to increase the total number of businesses and jobs available within its community. As explored throughout this Element, a critical step in achieving this goal necessitates a frequent evaluation, monitoring, and revising (as necessary) of its land use policies regarding new commercial and industrial development opportunities.

2.0 LAND USE INVENTORY

2.1 EXISTING LAND USE

Using Department of Revenue (DOR) use codes included in the Brevard County Property Appraiser tax parcel shapefile, **Map FLUE-3** summarizes the existing land uses and development pattern found within the City, while **Table FLUE-6** reveals the acreage comprised by each land use category.

Table FLU - 6: Existing Land Use Composition

Existing Land Use	Acres	Percentage of Total
Low Density Residential	13,158	28.1%
Agricultural	5,475	11.7%
Public/Institutional	2,056	4.4%
Industrial	1,141	2.4%
Commercial	942	2.0%
Recreational	893	1.9%
Moderate Density Residential	568	1.2%
High Density Residential	301	0.6%
Office/Professional	221	0.5%
Right-of-Way/Utilities	123	0.3%
<i>Total Developed Area</i>	<i>24,878</i>	<i>53.1%</i>
<i>Total Undeveloped Area (Vacant)</i>	<i>22,001</i>	<i>46.9%</i>
Total Area	46,879	100%

Sources: Brevard County Property Appraiser, S&ME, 2022.

Of the nearly 47,000 acres of land included within Palm Bay's current municipal limits, only 53.1% (24,878.1 acres) is considered to be developed. By a significant margin, the largest existing land use within the City is *low density residential*, which occupies more than 28% of the City's total land area at 13,158 acres. The only remaining land use category comprising more than five percent of Palm Bay's total acreage is *agricultural* at 11.7% (5,475.4 acres). A brief description of each existing land use category (along with their typical uses and general location) within the City is provided as follows.

Low Density Residential

The low-density residential land use category includes low density housing accommodations such as single-family detached dwellings and mobile home units. This type of residential development comprises the vast majority of the City's housing stock and can be found throughout the City.

Agricultural

This designation represents areas used for agricultural activities and rural residential development located on the fringes of the urban areas. Uses found in the agriculture areas may include vegetable farms, livestock ranches, fruit groves, plant nurseries and silviculture activities, as well as kennels, farm equipment storage and sales, and other

more intensive uses. As shown on the Existing Land Use Map, agricultural land uses are primarily located within the southern area of the City.

Public/Institutional

Public/Institutional uses consist of public, semi-public and private not-for-profit uses, such as civic and community centers, hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, and government administration buildings. This category also includes churches, social service facilities, cemeteries, nursing homes, emergency shelters, and other similar uses. Educational facilities, such as public or private schools (primary or secondary), vocational and technical schools, and colleges and universities, are also included in this category. This land use is located throughout the City.

Industrial

Industrial uses typically include warehousing, wholesaling/distribution, heavy equipment repair, assembly, processing, motor vehicle impoundment facilities, construction offices, and outdoor storage. This use is located primarily in the northeastern area of the City (near the Indian River) and in the southwestern area of the community.

Commercial

The commercial land use category consists of a variety of restaurant and retail uses including, but not limited to, fast-food establishments, clothing stores, automobile service facilities, and more. The Existing Land Use Map shows that commercial land is primarily located along the City's major corridors, such as I-95, Palm Bay Road, US Highway 1, and Malabar Road.

Recreation

Lands designated as Recreational on the Existing Land Use Map include parks, open spaces, and public or private golf courses. Recreational uses are located throughout Palm Bay, with the largest being Fred Poppe Regional Park, Turkey Creek Sanctuary Park, and The Majors Golf Course.

Moderate Density Residential

The medium density residential land use category includes attached medium density housing accommodations such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadruplexes. This land use category is predominately located in the northeastern area of the City.

High Density Residential

This land use category describes residential structures within the City capable of accommodating a large number of dwellings and frequently takes the form of multi-story apartments or condominiums. This use can be found in the northeastern portion of the City along San Filippo Drive, Malabar Road, Port Malabar Boulevard, Palm Bay Road, and US Highway 1.

Office/Professional

This land use category describes lands within the City that contain professional offices, such as medical complexes, office buildings, executive suites, and some condominiums which are used for office space. This category is similar to Commercial in that it is often near major roadway corridors and is generally separated from low density residential areas.

Right-of-Way/Utilities

This land use category contains infrastructure designed to accommodate the City's inventory of residential and nonresidential uses, including utility boxes, railroads, stormwater retention facilities, and some roadway corridors.

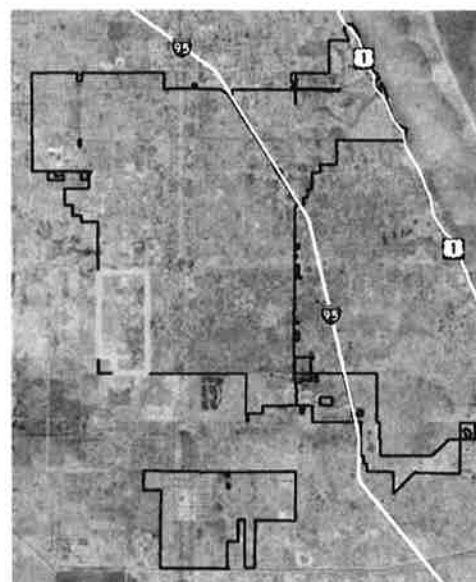
The designation is scattered throughout the City with heavier concentrations in the northeast and along Malabar Road.

Undeveloped Lands (Vacant)

Over 22,000 acres within Palm Bay remains vacant, which includes parcels that are either currently undeveloped or unimproved. This may include lots in subdivisions that have already been platted, but are not developed, as well as lands that currently have no active buildings. As shown in **Map FLUE-3**, vacant lands are found throughout Palm Bay, but are primarily located in the western areas of the City, as well as recently annexed areas in the southern portion of the community.

Nearly 3,000 acres of the Palm Bay's inventory of vacant lands are located within the southwest portion of the City in an area known as The Compound (pictured to the right in **Figure FLUE-1**). Like much of Palm Bay, this area was originally purchased and subdivided by the GDC. However, shortly after constructing much of the area's internal road network, the Corporation went bankrupt and failed to develop the area's remaining infrastructure system, including water, sewer, and electricity. Today, the majority of The Compound remains vacant and unkempt. Additionally, near-term development of the area isn't likely, as a significant portion of the area's subdivided lots are owned by different individuals and organizations who do not currently reside in Palm Bay.

Figure FLU - 1: The Compound



2.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

The City of Palm Bay is rich with a wide variety of natural resources. The protection and maintenance of these natural amenities not only serve to elevate the quality of life for Palm Bay's residents and visitors alike, but also help preserve and enhance Florida's native ecosystem as whole. An inventory and analysis of these resources are presented below.

2.2.1 Waterbodies, Wetlands, & Floodplains

The largest body of water within the City of Palm Bay is the Indian River, which is located in the northeastern portion of the City. The Indian River is a brackish lagoon that runs for 121 miles along the coast of Florida and makes up part of the intracoastal waterway. This lagoon also feeds into Turkey Creek, which is one of the City's most prominent bodies of water and is located northeast of Port Malabar Boulevard. As demonstrated in **Maps FLUE-4** and **FLUE-5**, wetlands and floodplains are also present within the City. Wetland features can be found within 4,809 acres of the City (excluding lakes, ponds, rivers, and lagoons) and are primarily found along the banks of the Indian River, lining the City's western boundary, and north of Centerlane Road. Alternatively, floodplains cover a much larger portions of the City at 16,741 acres and are located primarily in the western- and southern-most portions of Palm Bay. These important environmental features will need protection, preservation, and/or mitigation if these areas develop in the future, which can increase the cost and timeline of development considerably.

2.2.2 Soil Permeability

The development potential of land can be affected by the types of soils present. Soils that have poor load bearing features or drain poorly will be more difficult and costly to develop. Other soils may not be suitable for certain types of development and septic tanks. The soil types best suited to support development in the City are those that are well to excessively drained and occurring in large areas on uplands, such as the Norfolk, Arredondo, and Candler soils. As demonstrated in **Map FLUE-6**, most of the soil in Palm Bay is labeled as poorly drained, speckled with locations that are very poorly drained. The soils labeled as excessively well drained and well drained are concentrated in the northeastern corner of the City, along the Indian River, US Highway 1, and Port Malabar Boulevard.

2.2.3 Aquifer Recharge

As shown in **Map FLUE-7**, all land within the city limits of Palm Bay are located within an aquifer discharge area, which are areas where groundwater seeps up to the soil surface or into streams. While recharge involves the downward movement and influx of groundwater to an aquifer, discharge involves the upward movement and outflux of groundwater from an aquifer. Waterlogging and salinity are most likely to occur in these areas and are generally found in lower elevations.

2.3 HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The City of Palm Bay currently does not maintain a local registry of historically significant resources or a historic preservation ordinance. Instead, the City relies on the listing maintained by the Florida Division of Historical Resources (FDHR) in their Florida Master Site File (FMSF), which is the State of Florida's official inventory of historical and/or cultural resources. Categories of resources recorded within the FMSF include archeological sites and historical structures, cemeteries, bridges, districts, and landscapes.

Figure FLU - 2: St. Joseph's Catholic Church



According to the FMSF, past surveys have recorded 23 structures, one cemetery, two bridges, and 16 resource groups found within the City. As shown on **Map FLUE-8**, only one resource is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places—the St. Joseph's Catholic Church (photographed in **Figure FLUE-2**), a historic structure which was registered in 1987. Additionally, there is currently one resource group which has been determined to be eligible for potential listing on the national registry (Florida East Coast Railroad), as well as one bridge (US Highway 1 overpassing Turkey Creek).

Continuing to identify, recognize, and celebrate Palm Bay's historic and cultural resources will be critical to the future

success of the community in establishing a sense of place, cultivating civic pride, and supporting economic development within the City for centuries to come.

2.4 PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

2.4.1 Water & Sewer

The presence and availability of centralized potable water and sanitary sewer systems are critical to supporting future residential and nonresidential development within a community. Fortunately, the City of Palm Bay currently owns, operates, and maintains its own water and sewer systems; however, significant developed and undeveloped

portions of the City remain disconnected from these networks. For instance, approximately 14% of all households within the City are currently not connected to the centralized water system and thus rely on private wells to meet their water needs. **Map FLUE-9** illustrates the extent of the Water Service Area within Palm Bay. The City is hopeful to serve residents and businesses alike which are currently not connected to the potable water system in the near future. However, there are no immediate plans to expand the water system into underserved areas, as the Utilities Department's primary focus is on rehabilitating the existing system and accommodating developer-driven expansion.

Existing and potential connections to the City's sanitary sewer system are even more sporadic, as approximately 60% of Palm Bay households remain disconnected from centralized sewer services. Similar to water services, a majority of households served by the City's sanitary sewer system are located in northeast Palm Bay, within the Sanitary Sewer Service Area (**Map FLUE-10**). As such, many of the City residents continue to rely on personal septic tanks to meet their wastewater needs. The City desires to connect residential and nonresidential developments which currently utilize septic tanks; however, the Utilities Department focus remains primarily on rehabbing the existing sewer system and accommodating the expansion needs of developers.

2.4.2 Airports

There are no airports within the borders of Palm Bay, but the Melbourne Orlando International Airport is located just north of the City in the neighboring community of Melbourne. Similarly, there is a small public airport south of the City in the Town of Grant-Valkaria called Valkaria Airport.

2.4.3 Railways

There is currently one railway which passes through the City, running parallel to US Highway 1 in the northeastern portion of the City. The railway is owned by the Florida East Coast Railway and runs between the cities of Jacksonville and Miami.

2.4.4 Prisons & Detention Centers

There are currently no prisons or detention centers within or near Palm Bay's City Limits.

2.4.5 Military Installations

Sec. 3175(4), Florida Statutes, details additional comprehensive planning requirements for municipalities which possess a qualified military installation within their jurisdiction. Although the U.S. Air Force Malabar Transmitter Annex (5600 Minton Road) is located within Palm Bay, it is not identified by the State of Florida as military installation warranting additional protections within the City's Plan. The facility is currently used as an auxiliary communications annex in support of space activities for NASA and the U.S. Space Force.

2.5 COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Six years after completing an extensive Findings of Necessity study in 1994, the City of Palm Bay adopted Ordinance 2000-39 which officially established the *Bayfront Community Redevelopment District and Bayfront Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)*. The District, which comprises approximately 1,070 acres, is located in the northeastern-most portion of the City and shares a boundary with the Palm Bay City Limits to the north, east, and south, while the District's western boundary is formed by Lipscomb Street and the Florida East Coast Railway corridor. This boundary can be seen in the FLUM (**Map FLUE-11**) at the end of this document.

The Bayfront Community Redevelopment District is a vital tool which assists the City with its land use planning efforts—particularly when addressing conditions of slum and blight through targeted investments, programming, and development incentives. These efforts are made possible through the District’s Tax Increment Financing (TIF) fund which is managed by the Bayfront CRA. These funds can only be spent on the projects, programs, and incentives specifically identified in the Bayfront Community Redevelopment Plan, which was last updated in 2009. Goals, Objectives, and Policies have been included within the Comprehensive Plan to ensure the provisions of the Redevelopment Plan are successfully implemented. The operational timeframe for the Bayfront Community Redevelopment Area is scheduled to sunset in May 2024.

3.0 LAND USE ANALYSIS

According to the 2020 decennial census, the City of Palm Bay’s permanent population in 2020 was 119,760. Two years later, the total number of residents is estimated to be 127,256 according to June 2022 electric water meter counts for residential developments within the City. As supported by historical population data, development trends, and new applications for residential projects, the City is expecting further population growth within the 2045 planning horizon. The following section provides population projections at five-year increments through the 2045 planning horizon and identifies how the City’s Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is capable of accommodating this growth without further contributing to the localized urban sprawl.

3.1 PROJECTED POPULATION

For comprehensive planning purposes, Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes requires local governments to develop permanent and seasonal population projections to anticipate the land, housing, and services necessary to accommodate current and new residents. The most widely used source for determining future population projections within the state is the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida. However, BEBR only provides population projections at the County level and does not include any data on seasonal residents.

Therefore, the population projections for the City of Palm Bay were derived by performing a step-down analysis utilizing the latest Brevard County population projections provided by BEBR. In this popular form of population analysis, the City’s historic and current share of the County’s population is used to predict the City’s population in the future. This information is supplemented by seasonal population data derived from housing data provided by the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies’ Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse (FHDC). The result of this analysis is shown in **Table FLUE-7**.

Table FLU - 7: City of Palm Bay Population Projections

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Brevard County (BEBR Med/High Avg.) ¹	606,612	664,200	707,150	743,250	775,250	803,750
Permanent Palm Bay Population	119,760	131,129	139,609	146,736	153,053	158,680
Seasonal Palm Bay Population	6,164	6,750	7,186	7,553	7,878	8,168
Cumulative Palm Bay Population	125,924	137,879	146,795	154,289	160,931	166,848
¹ Performing a step-down analysis using BEBR's Medium Population Estimates for Brevard County resulted in projections that were determined to be too low when considering historical population data, development trends, and new applications for residential projects within the City. Alternatively, projections resulting from BEBR High Population Estimates were estimated to be too excessive for the same reason. As a result, this analysis utilizes an average of BEBR Medium and High Population Estimates for Brevard County.						

Source: BEBR, City of Palm Bay, FHDC, S&ME, 2022.

3.2 FUTURE LAND USE

The City's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) has designated lands throughout the City which can accommodate Palm Bay's projected population growth through the 2045 planning horizon. The range of uses, densities, and intensities permitted on each property is determined by the site's future land use designation. As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process, the City has amended its future land use categories (FLUC). Some FLUCs have received name changes, several categories have been consolidated into a new designation, and two FLUCs have been established but are not yet implemented on the FLUM. These changes are highlighted in **Table FLUE-8**.

