



Alachua County – Growth Management Staff Report

Application ZOS-01-21

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Planning Commission Hearing Date: September 15, 2021

Board of County Commissioners Hearing Date: October 12, 2021

Project Timeline

- Submitted: June 28, 2021
- Staff Report Distributed: August 12, 2021
- Planning Commission Hearing: September 15, 2021

Requested Action

A request by Craig Brashier of CHW, Inc., agent, for Alachua County, owners, for a special use permit for a government building (fire/rescue station) on approximately 2.88 acres on tax parcel number 06666-000-000 located at 10404 SW 24th Ave.

Property Owner: Alachua County

Applicant/Agent: CHW, Inc.

Property Description

Address: 10404 SW 24th Ave.

Parcel Numbers: 06666-000-000

Section/Township/Range: 07/10/19

Land Use: Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre)

Zoning: A (Agriculture)

Acreage: +/- 2.88 acres

Previous Requests

None.

Zoning Violation History

None.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners **approve** the proposed special use permit for a government building (fire/rescue station), ZOS-01-21, with the conditions and bases as noted in the staff report.

Planning Commission Recommendation: Approve (5-0)

Background and Analysis

The applicant is requesting a special use permit for a government building or facility. The intent of this application is to construct a fire/rescue station that will primarily serve an area within the southwestern part of the Urban Cluster. The need for a station here has been documented in the 2004 and 2012 Fire Service Master Plans. Currently, the nearest stations to the site are Alachua County Fire Rescue (ACFR) station #16 (about 4 miles driving distance), ACFR station # 15 (about 4.4 miles driving distance), and ACFR station # 19 (about 4.5 miles driving distance). Within the Urban Cluster, the level of service for fire response is within 6 minutes for 80% of calls (tracked over a 12 month period).

Figure 1: General Service Area

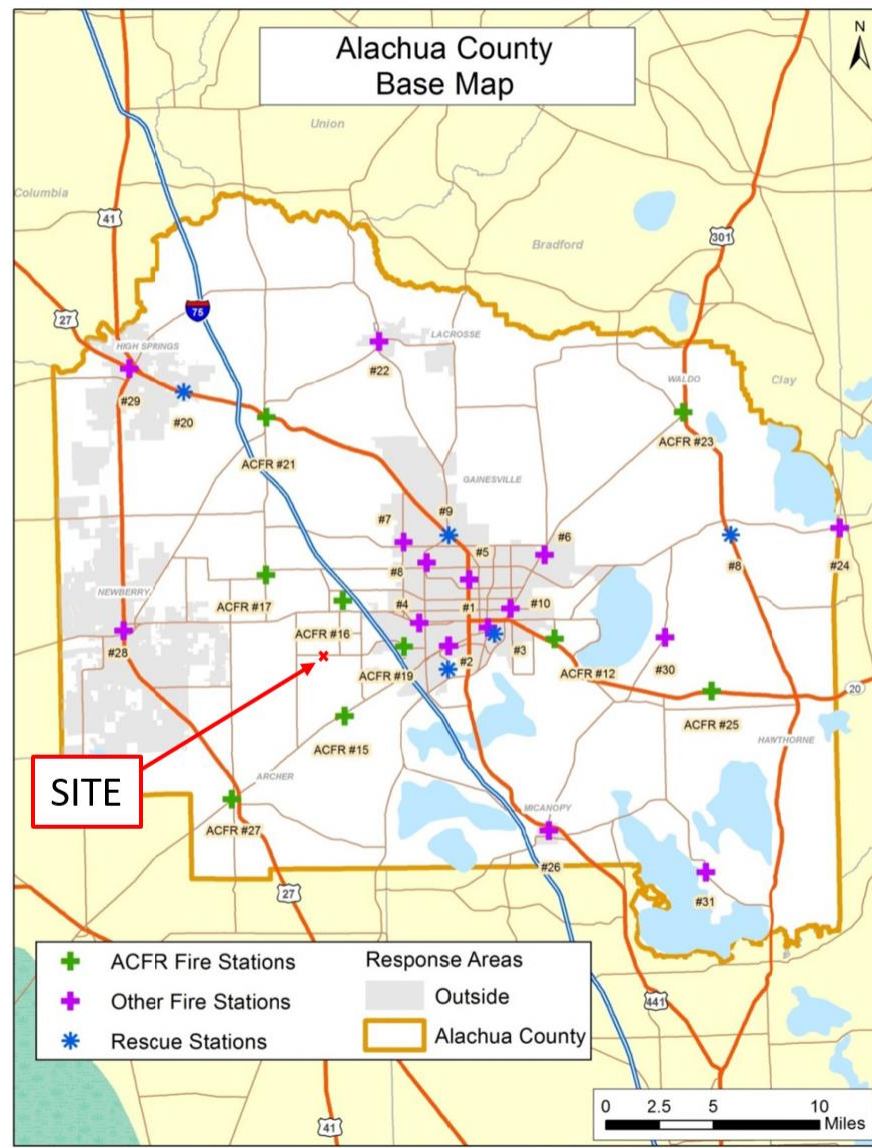


Figure 1: Propose station in relation to existing stations

Description of Site and Surrounding Properties

The site is approximately 2.88 acres and is located on SW 24th Ave. within the western part of the Urban Cluster. The site has a future land use designation of Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre)

and Agriculture zoning. A single-family residence is currently on the site and was purchased by Alachua County in February 2019 as a potential location for a new fire station. The Cambridge Forest subdivision is adjacent to the site to the north, east and west. This subdivision has Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre) future land use designation and residential Planned Development (PD) zoning. To the south of the site are two other subdivisions: Wilds Plantation with R-1aa zoning (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre) Windward Meadows with RE-1 zoning (0.5 to 2 dwelling units/acre). Both of these subdivisions have Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre) future land use designations.

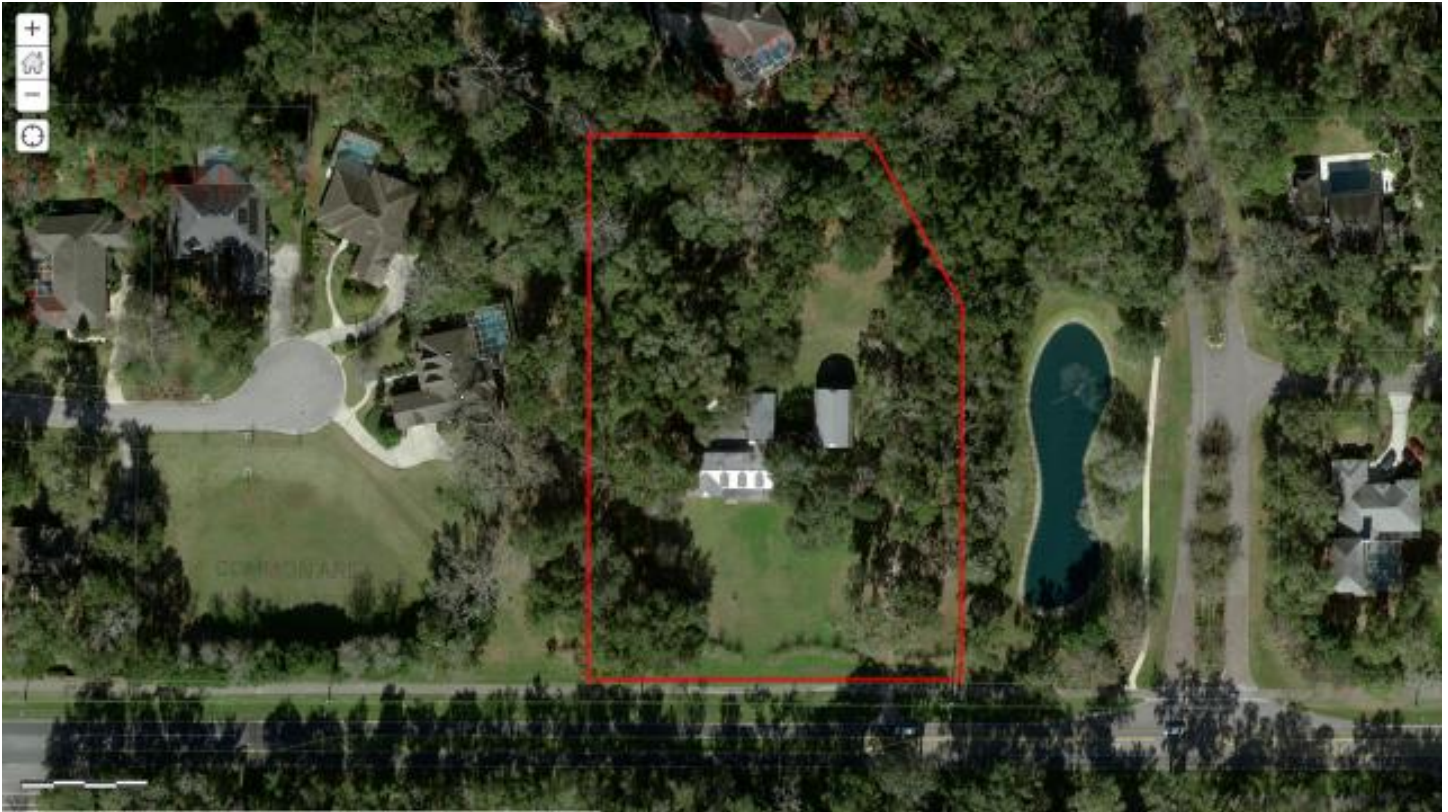


Figure 2: Aerial View of the Site

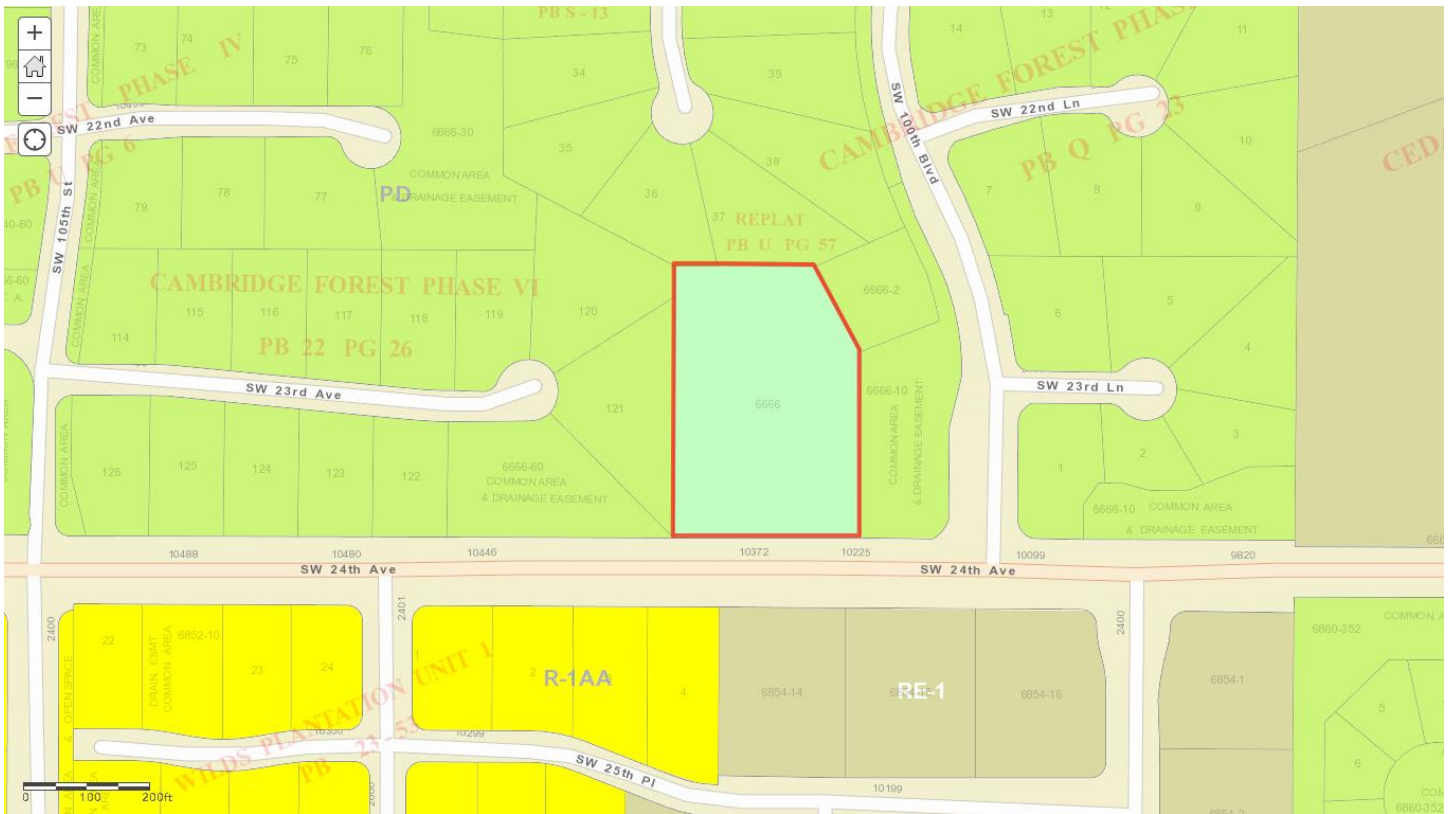


Figure 3: Zoning Map

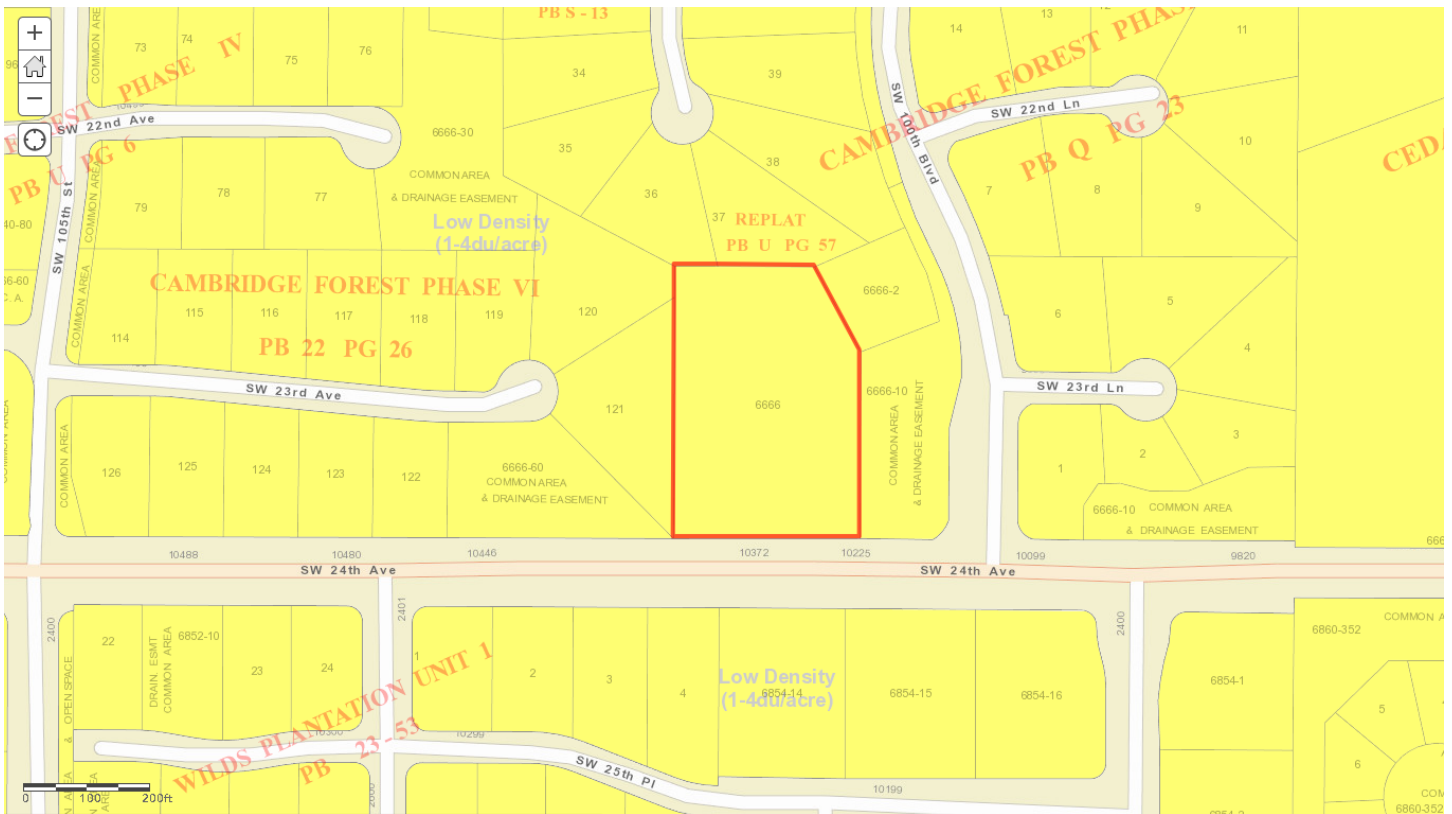


Figure 4: Future Land Use Map

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The following is a staff analysis of the consistency of this application with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.

Levels of Service

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Capital Improvement Element requires that the public facilities and services needed to support development be available concurrent with the impacts of development and that issuance of a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance (CLSC) be a condition of all final development orders. 'Concurrent' shall mean that all adopted levels of service (LOS) standards shall be maintained or achieved within a specified timeframe. Per **Policy 1.2.4 and Policy 1.2.5 of the Capital Improvements Element** of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, LOS standards have been adopted for various types of public facilities.

Traffic

This special use permit is for a government building (fire/rescue station). Any development on the site will require mitigation through the MMTM fee program.

Water and Sewer

Policy 1.2.4 (d) of the Capital Improvements Element describes the minimum Level of Service standards for potable water and sewer. These are summarized in the following table:

	Peak Residential & Non Residential	Pressure	Storage Capacity
Potable Water	200 gallons/day/du	40 p.s.i.	½ peak day volume
Sanitary Sewer	106 gallons/day/du	N/A	N/A

There will be no impacts to water and sewer levels of service resulting from this request. Staff from GRU have indicated that they do not expect the change of use from a single family dwelling unit to a fire/rescue station to cause a degradation of service; however, actual usage will be evaluated at the development plan review stage. The site will be served by municipal water and sewer service.

Drainage

Policy 1.2.4 (c) of the Capital Improvements Element states that the minimum drainage LOS standard for nonresidential development requires a floor elevation of one (1) foot above the 100-year/critical duration storm elevation or flood resistant construction. Any future development on this site will be required to meet this standard.

Emergency Services

Policy 1.2.5 (a) of the Capital Improvements Element states that the LOS standard for fire services in the area inside the urban cluster is as follows:

- Initial unit response within 6 minutes for 80% of all responses within 12 months.
- The Land Development Regulations shall require that 100% of all development shall provide water supply served by hydrants.

The proposed use is for a fire/rescue station. The site will be able to meet this standard as well as provide this level of service to surrounding development. All development will be required to meet these standards at the time of development plan approval.

Solid Waste

The level of service (LOS) standard for solid waste disposal, used as the basis for determining availability of disposal capacity to accommodate the demand generated by existing and new development in Alachua County, is at a minimum, at 0.8 inbound tons per person per year at the Leveda Brown Environmental Park in 2018 and thereafter. The proposed change of use from a single family residence to a fire/rescue station should not degrade the level of service below adopted standards.

Schools

The proposed special use permit does not authorize residential units and will not have an impact on the school system.

Recreation

The proposed special use permit does not authorize residential units and will not have an impact on the recreational LOS in the County.

Future Land Use

Policy 5.2.1 of the Future Land Use Element states that the following criteria shall determine the appropriateness of potential institutional locations and uses requiring special use permits shall be demonstrated prior to establishing the institutional use:

(a) Optimum service area.

The site provides an optimum service area for emergency response. The proposed station will fill a gap between existing ACFR stations in order to ensure that the level of service will continue to be met with the expanding population growth and density in this part of the county.

(b) Optimum operating size.

The proposed station is approximately 10,250 sq. ft. and is expected to have four ACFR staff on site at any given time (3 crew and 1 chief). This staffing level and building size are optimal to serve the intended population.

(c) Access to clientele.

Access to clientele will be from SW 24th Ave. with a dedicated egress point for emergency vehicles responding to calls. The proposed station will help reduce response times for citizens in this part of the county.

(d) Compatibility of the scale and intensity of the use in relationship to surrounding uses, taking into account impacts such as, noise, lighting, visual effect, traffic generation, odors.

The proposed station is approximately 10,250 sq. ft. ACFR has indicated that a station of this size will be able to provide adequate service to the intended population. The proposed location of the station is as close to SW 24th Ave. as possible to increase distance from surrounding residential uses. Staff has proposed a condition that would require High, 40-foot wide buffers, to offer the greatest amount of visual and noise buffering between this institutional use and surrounding, existing single family residential properties. Traffic generation is not expected to have a net increase from potential residential development that could occur on this site. Further, the emergency vehicles that are already traversing SW 24th Ave. to respond to calls would now respond to the same calls, only with shorter distances to travel. Staff does not expect any odors to impact surrounding parcels.

(e) Nature of service provision.

The proposed fire/rescue station will provide a fire engine and a rescue apparatus to respond to emergency calls. Fire stations are considered institutional uses (government building or facility). The proposed site has been identified in prior (2004, 2012) Fire Service Master Plans as a location that would help accommodate future needs as the population continues to grow in the vicinity.

(f) Needs of the clientele.

The proposed fire/rescue station serves emergency needs for the population in this area of the County. Locating a fire/rescue station in this area will help to ensure that the 6-minute response time level of service (Urban Cluster) will be met.

(g) Availability and adequacy of public infrastructure to serve the particular use.

The site is located within the Urban Cluster on a major collector road (SW 24th Ave.). Adequate public infrastructure is in place to serve the fire/rescue station.

(h) Preservation and strengthening of community and neighborhood character through design.

As shown on the special use permit master plan, the proposed location of the station is as close to SW 24th Ave. as possible in order to maximize the distance from adjacent residences. Staff has also proposed a High, 40-foot wide buffer along the western and northern site boundaries to lessen visual impacts and ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. A 10-foot collector road buffer is also required per the code, along SW 24th Ave.

(i) Consistency with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

The proposed fire/rescue station is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE). The applicant submitted an environmental resource

assessment as part of the special use permit application that was evaluated by the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department. The proposed request is consistent with the protection of natural resources.

Policy 5.4.2 FIRE PROTECTION: Fire stations shall be located so as to provide the most cost effective, efficient protection of life and property.

As indicated by Alachua County Fire Rescue Department in the *2012 Fire and Emergency Medical Services Performance Update*, the proposed location of the station will provide more effective service for this part of the County.

Policy 5.4.2.1 Fire stations may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

The proposed site of the fire station is designated as Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre) future land use. Staff has proposed conditions in order to ensure compatibility with surrounding residences and other off-site impacts.

Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) Consistency

Sec. 402.124. of the ULDC lists criteria for approval for special use permits:

(a)The proposed use is consistent with the comprehensive plan and ULDC;

The proposed use is consistent with the comprehensive plan and ULDC. Government buildings and facilities are allowed within the Agriculture zoning district by means of a special use permit. Institutional uses are allowed in a range of land use categories, including Low Density Residential.

(b)The proposed use is compatible with the existing land use pattern and future uses designated by the comprehensive plan;

As conditioned by staff, the proposed use is consistent with the existing land use pattern. Surrounding the site are low density residential subdivisions and institutional uses (church, school). Fire stations benefit from having close proximity to the intended population served.

(c)The proposed use shall not adversely affect the health, safety, and welfare of the public; and

The proposed use bolsters public health, safety and welfare by providing a fire/rescue station that can respond to emergency calls within a 6-minute response time.

(d)Satisfactory provisions and arrangements have been made concerning the following matters, where applicable:

(1)Ingress and egress to the property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive, bicycle, and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control and access in case of fire or catastrophe;

As shown on the proposed special use permit master plan, general ingress and egress are located at one access point on SW 24th Ave. and another emergency vehicle egress point is located at a second access point. The emergency only egress point assists in rapid deployment of emergency vehicles.

(2) Off-street parking and loading areas where required, with particular attention to item (1) above;

Off street parking and loading areas for staff and the general public are proposed at a separate access point as shown on the special use permit master plan so as not to interfere with the deployment of emergency vehicles.

(3) The noise, glare or odor effects of the special use permit on surrounding properties;

The proposed location of the station (as shown on the Special Use Permit master plan) is as close to SW 24th Ave. as possible in order to maximize the distance from adjacent residences and to diminish noise impacts. Staff does not expect glare or odor effects to impact surrounding properties.

(4) Refuse and service areas, with particular reference to location, screening and items (1) and (2) above;

Staff has proposed a condition that refuse and service areas be located behind the station to ensure safety and traffic flow.

(5) Utilities, with reference to location and availability;

The site is located within the Urban Cluster and utilities are available to serve the intended use.

(6) Screening and buffering with reference to type, dimensions and character;

As the site is located within close proximity to existing residences, staff has proposed a High buffer type along the north and west site boundaries.

(7) Signs, if any, and proposed exterior lighting with reference to glare, traffic safety and compatibility with surrounding properties;

The applicant has proposed a single sign to identify the site, which will be in compliance with ULDC requirements.

(8) Required yards and other greenspace;

The proposed fire/rescue station is an institutional use. As institutional uses have a wide variety of possible uses, there is no single standard for buffers. Given the nature of this use in the context of the neighborhood, staff has proposed a High, 40-foot wide buffer along the western and northern site boundaries. The station is non-residential and will not require open space; however, as indicated on the special use permit master plan, the areas have been designated for naturally vegetated areas to remain undeveloped.

(9)General compatibility with surrounding properties; and

Staff has proposed conditions to help ensure that the proposed fire/rescue station will be compatible with surrounding properties. The proposed location of the station is toward the front of the parcel in order to increase distance from adjacent residences. Staff has proposed a High density, 40-foot buffer along the western and northern site boundaries, where residences are located.

(10)Any special requirements set forth in this ULDC for the particular use involved.

The ULDC does not provide special requirements for fire/rescue stations.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners **approve** ZOM-02-21 with the following conditions and bases:

Conditions

1. This special use permit shall allow a fire/rescue station consistent with the associated special use permit master plan.
2. A 40-foot wide, "High" type buffer shall be located along the western and northern site boundaries.
3. Refuse and service areas shall be located to the rear of the building.

Bases

1. **Policy 5.2.1 of the Future Land Use Element** provides criteria for locating potential institutional uses. Staff has found that the proposed fire/rescue station meets these criteria. The proposed station serves an optimum area within the southwest portion of the Urban Cluster where emergency service calls and population growth have been increasing. The proposed size of the station is intended to meet these future service needs. The need for a fire/rescue station in this area of the County has been identified previously in the 2004 and 2012 Fire Service Master Plans. The station will help to ensure that the 6-minute response time standard for 80% of calls will be met. The proposed location on the site and High, 40' wide buffers along the western and northern site boundaries are intended to provide the most visual and noise buffering as possible for compatibility with surrounding residences. The site is located within the Urban Cluster on a major collector road (SW 24th Ave.). Adequate public infrastructure is in place to serve the fire/rescue station. The design of the station, with the proposed buffering and location as well as locating refuse/service areas to the rear of the building act to preserve and strengthen the residential, neighborhood character. County staff have reviewed the environmental resources checklist submitted as part of this special use permit application and have determined that the proposed request is consistent with the protection of natural resources.
2. **Policy 5.4.2.1 of the Future Land Use Element** states that *Fire stations may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.*

The proposed fire/rescue station is located on a parcel with a Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units/acre) future land use designation and the applicant has submitted a special use permit application. Staff has proposed conditions to address possible impacts from this use on surrounding parcels.

3. The proposed fire/rescue station will help to ensure that the level of service standard for emergency services response time (6-minute response time for 80% of calls within a 12-month period) will be met, as mentioned in **Policy 1.2.5 (a) of the Capital Improvements Element**.

Staff and Agency Comments

Department of Public Works: No comments.

Department of Environmental Protection: No comments.

Transportation Planning: No comments.