



STAFF REPORT

HEARINGS:	Planning & Zoning Commission:	October 13, 2025
	Board of County Commissioners:	December 2, 2025
APPLICANT:	EFE, Inc	
FILE NUMBER:	H-25-32	
REQUEST:	Rezoning from C-2 (Highway Commercial) and AG (Agricultural) to PDP(HC)/ Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial)	
GENERAL LOCATION:	North Side of Cortez Boulevard and approximately 527 feet from the Intersection of Cortez Boulevard, East Jefferson Street and Jamine Drive.	
PARCEL KEY NUMBER(S):	828466	

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

The petitioner is requesting a rezoning from C2 (Highway Commercial) and AG (Agricultural) to PDP(HC) Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial) to expand Everglades Equipment Group, a business specializing in equipment sales and service. The site includes two buildings totaling 10,482 square feet, parking areas, and paved/gravel spaces for inventory storage.

The proposed development includes the construction of a single-story, 7,000-square-foot equipment service building and an expansion of the existing paved and storage areas. The rezoning will allow business operations within the rear portion of the property, which is currently zoned Agricultural.

Deviations Requested:

The petitioner requests a deviation from the frontage road requirement due to the existing building's location, which makes construction unfeasible. Cross access already exists to the east, and the western parcel is currently vacant.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Site Size	4.20 acres
Surrounding Zoning; Land Uses	North: AG; Undeveloped South: Cortez Blvd: C2- Undeveloped East: C2; Developed West: AG & C2; Undeveloped
Current Zoning:	C2/ Commercial & AG/ Agriculture
Future Land Use Map Designation:	Commercial

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The petitioner shall be required to comply with all applicable Southwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection permitting requirements at the time of commercial remodel permit application.

UTILITIES REVIEW

Hernando County Utilities Department (HCUD) does not currently supply water or wastewater service to this parcel. Water and wastewater services are not available to this parcel. This parcel is located within the City of Brooksville Utility Department's (CBUD) first right to serve district; Contact City of Brooksville Utilities Department (CBUD) for any utility related comments. Parcel Key# 828466.

ENGINEERING REVIEW

The subject site is located on the North Side of Cortez Boulevard and approximately 527 feet from the Intersection of Cortez Boulevard, East Jefferson Street and Jasmine Drive. The Hernando County Engineer has reviewed the petitioner's request and provided the following comments:

- This project requires a Frontage Road or Reverse Frontage Road due to the property abutting Cortez Boulevard/SR 50. A reverse frontage road is preferred due to surrounding parcels. Site constraints make the installation of a frontage road challenging to install, will require setback variations and other development deviations
 - The applicant shall work with the County Engineer at the time of site development to provide cross connectivity to neighboring parcels.
- A Traffic Access Analysis may be required.
- Florida Department of Transportation access permit required. Florida Department of Transportation Drainage permit may be required.

LAND USE REVIEW

The petitioner is requesting a rezoning from C2 (Highway Commercial) and AG (Agricultural) to PDP(HC) Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial) to allow for the expansion of an existing business, Everglades Equipment Group, which specializes in equipment sales and service.

Setbacks:

- Cortez Boulevard (Front): 125'
- Side: 20'
- Rear: 35'
- Building height shall be limited to 20 feet. If the building height exceeds 20 feet, the petitioner shall be required to provide a minimum rear setback of 100 feet.

Buffers:

A thirty-five (35) foot wide buffer screened at 80% opacity at a height of six (6) feet above finished grade shall run along each rear and/or side property line which abuts any residential or agricultural zoned property. This buffer shall be screened by landscape planting and landscape berms and may be augmented through the use of fences or walls, existing natural vegetation, and/or a combination thereof. The County may require the use of absorptive noise barrier walls for commercial noise reduction.

Lighting:

County Land Development Regulations (LDRs) require lighting that enhances the visual impact of the project on the community and to specifically address lighting intensity levels and glare accordingly. Commercial buildings and projects shall be designed to provide safe, convenient and efficient lighting for pedestrians and vehicles.

Comments: If the master plan is approved, the petitioner should be required to provide full cutoff fixtures and retain all light on-site and prevent any light spillage onto neighboring properties.

Parking:

In accordance with County Land Development Regulations (LDRs), automotive and farm equipment sales, rentals, and leasing uses require 2.0 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, Requiring a total of 16 parking spaces.

Landscaping:

The petitioner shall meet the minimum requirements of Florida Friendly Landscaping™ publications and the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program for design techniques, principles, materials and plantings for required landscaping.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW**Future Land Use Map, Commercial Category**

The subject site is located within the Commercial Land use designation on the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Strategy 1.04A(6): The Commercial Category provides for commercial uses including products and services along major corridors and at roadway intersections to serve residents and visitors on both a localized and regionalized basis. The Commercial Category recognizes existing commercial use corridors along U.S. Highway 19 and State Route 50 and existing and planned commercial nodes at intersections of arterial and/or collector roads. The Commercial Category includes small unmapped existing commercial properties. The Commercial Category also recognizes the ability to designate infill parcels for commercial use lying in proximity to and between, but not necessarily contiguous to, other existing commercially designated properties. Publicly owned lands along the commercial use corridors that are made available for surplus may be considered to have a Commercial designation, if the agency proceeds through the

- Comprehensive Plan Amendment process to amend the future land use map, in accordance with Section 163.3184, F.S.
- Objective 1.04G:** The Commercial Category allows primarily retail, office, and commercial service uses with an overall average gross floor area ratio of 0.35 but also includes limited industrial, recreational, and institutional uses. Residential and mixed uses may be allowed subject to locational criteria and performance standards.
- Strategy 1.04G(1):** Commercial development as envisioned on the Future Land Use Map is intended primarily for locations at major intersections and along major corridors where service to local and regional markets are enhanced by transportation patterns. New commercial zoning is directed to these mapped areas. Commercial areas that are not mapped but are allowed under this Future Land Use Category include neighborhood commercial and specialty commercial uses as described in this Plan, commercial approved as part of mixed-use developments, commercial designated by planned development districts, the infill development of existing commercial areas, commercial areas extending from designated commercial nodes, and pre-existing commercially developed and designated areas. Frontage roads and cross-access between commercial uses is required where needed in accordance with the provisions of this Plan and adopted land development regulations.

Comments: The subject site has an existing building and is surrounded by commercial and Agricultural uses. The proposed use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with the surrounding uses.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The request for a Rezoning from C-2 Highway Commercial and AG Agricultural to PDP(HC) Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial) is appropriate as the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, compatible with surrounding uses, and provides adequate residential protection for existing surrounding residential developments.

NOTICE OF APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY

The rezoning process is a land use determination and does not constitute a permit for either construction on, or use of, the property, or a Certificate of Concurrence. Prior to use of, or construction on, the property, the petitioner must receive approval from the appropriate County department(s) for the proposed use.

The granting of this land use determination does not protect the owner from civil liability for recorded deed restrictions which may exceed any county land use ordinances. Homeowner associations or architectural review committees require submission of plans for review and approval. The applicant for this land use request should contact the local association or the Public Records for all restrictions applicable to this property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt a resolution approving the petitioner's request for a Rezoning from C-2 Highway Commercial and AG Agricultural to PDP(HC) Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial) with the following performance conditions:

1. The petitioner must obtain all permits from Hernando County and other applicable agencies and meet all applicable land development regulations, for either construction or use of the property, and complete all applicable development review processes.
2. The petitioner shall be required with all appropriate Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission permitting requirements.
3. Water and wastewater services are in the City of Brooksville Utility Department's (CBUD) first right to serve district. The petitioner shall contact City of Brooksville Utilities Department (CBUD) for any utility-related concerns.
4. A Frontage Road or Reverse Frontage Road shall be installed due to the property abutting Cortez Boulevard/SR 50. The petitioner shall coordinate with the Department of Public Works at the time of site development to ensure cross-connectivity with adjacent parcels.
5. A Traffic Access Analysis could be required depending on the size of the structure. The petitioner shall be required to coordinate with the Department of Public Works prior to site plan submission and determine if a traffic Access Analysis is required.
6. The petitioner shall provide a Florida Department of Transportation access permit.
7. A Florida Department of Transportation Drainage permit could be required. The petitioner shall be required to coordinate with the Department of Public Works prior to site plan submission and determine if a traffic Access Analysis is required.
8. Minimum Building Setbacks:
Cortez Boulevard (Front): 125'
Side: 20'
Rear: 35'
9. Building height shall be limited to 20 feet. If the building height exceeds 20 feet, the petitioner shall be required to provide a minimum rear setback of 100 feet.
10. The petitioner shall be required to provide the following minimum buffers for the site:
11. A thirty-five (35) foot wide buffer screened at 80% opacity at a height of six (6) feet above finished grade shall run along each rear and/or side property line which abuts any residential or agricultural zoned property.
12. A Five (5) foot landscape buffer shall run along the commercially zoned property lines.
13. The petitioner should be required to provide full cutoff fixtures and retain all light on-site and prevent any light spillage onto neighboring properties.

14. In accordance with County Land Development Regulations (LDRs), automotive and farm equipment sales, rentals, and leasing uses require 2.0 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, Requiring a total of 16 parking spaces.
15. The petitioner shall meet the minimum requirements of Florida Friendly Landscaping™ publications and the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program for design techniques, principles, materials and plantings for required landscaping.
16. The petitioner shall provide a revised plan in compliance with all the performance conditions within thirty (30) calendar days of Board of County Commissioners approval. Failure to submit the revised plan will result in no further development permits being issued.

PLANNING AND ZONING RECOMMENDATION

On October 13, 2025, Planning and Zoning Commission voted 5-0 to recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt a resolution approving the petitioner's request for a Rezoning from C-2 Highway Commercial and AG Agricultural to PDP(HC) Planned Development Project (Highway Commercial) with the following unmodified performance conditions:

1. The petitioner must obtain all permits from Hernando County and other applicable agencies and meet all applicable land development regulations, for either construction or use of the property, and complete all applicable development review processes.
2. The petitioner shall be required with all appropriate Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission permitting requirements.
3. Water and wastewater services are in the City of Brooksville Utility Department's (CBUD) first right to serve district. The petitioner shall contact City of Brooksville Utilities Department (CBUD) for any utility-related concerns.
4. A Frontage Road or Reverse Frontage Road shall be installed due to the property abutting Cortez Boulevard/SR 50. The petitioner shall coordinate with the Department of Public Works at the time of site development to ensure cross-connectivity with adjacent parcels.
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