



## STAFF REPORT

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**HEARINGS:** Planning & Zoning Commission: March 9, 2026  
Board of County Commissioners: May 5, 2026

**APPLICANT:** 15464 Cortez Blvd, LLC

**FILE NUMBER:** H-25-41

**REQUEST:** Master Plan revision on PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) to incorporate a Rezoning from C-2/ Commercial to PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial)

**GENERAL LOCATION:** Southeast side of Cortez Boulevard approximately 1,505 feet to Winter Street

**PARCEL KEY NUMBER(S):** 1215483, 1001720

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### APPLICANT'S REQUEST

The petitioner is requesting a rezoning from PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) and C-2 (General Commercial) to PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) to allow the redevelopment of the site with an upscale restaurant and the potential development of a future secondary commercial building. The proposed construction of the property will not exceed 30,000 square feet with a maximum building height of 45 feet. The subject property currently contains a 1,998-square-foot professional office building and a 1,680-square-foot warehouse, formerly occupied by the Salvation Army. The proposed restaurant will be located towards Cortez Boulevard (SR 50) to maximize visibility and will utilize the existing access point along Cortez Boulevard for ingress and egress.

A second commercial building is proposed on the southern portion of the site, where the current Salvation Army buildings and parking area is located. Parking for the restaurant will be situated between the two proposed building areas, and stormwater retention is planned for the northeastern corner of the property.

The petitioner has indicated that existing vegetation along the northern, southern, and eastern property lines will be retained to serve as natural buffers. Although the site borders Arizona Street, no access to this roadway is proposed. A deviation is requested to allow this, supporting the preservation of a continuous buffer between the development and adjacent rural residential lots. Majority of the site was previously cleared for the Salvation Army development. Existing structures are proposed to be removed during redevelopment but may be used temporarily during the transition.

**Requested Deviations:**

1. Front Setback (Cortez Boulevard) – 75 feet (requested deviation from the required 125 feet)
2. Reverse Frontage Road Connection – Deviation to eliminate the required connection to Arizona Street

**SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>Site Size</b>	6.5 Acres
<b>Surrounding Zoning; Land Uses</b>	North: Cortez Blvd & C2; Developed South: R1A/C2: Undeveloped/ Developed East: AR-2; Developed West: Cortez Blvd & C-2; Undeveloped
<b>Current Zoning:</b>	C-2 & PDP(GC)
<b>Future Land Use Map Designation:</b>	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.

**UTILITIES REVIEW**

Hernando County Utilities Department (HCUD) does not currently supply water or wastewater service to this parcel. There is a 12” water main, 6” Force main, and an 8” gravity main on the west side of Cortez Boulevard. HCUD has no objection to the master plan revision and rezoning subject to a utility capacity analysis and connection to the utility system(s), as required by ordinance, at time of site development.

**ENGINEERING REVIEW**

The subject site is located on the Southeast side of Cortez Boulevard approximately 1,505 feet to Winter Street. The Hernando County Engineer has reviewed the petitioner’s request and provided the following comments:

- A Traffic Access Analysis is required. Any improvements identified by the Traffic Access Analysis will be the responsibility of the developer to install.
- Provide for a future connection via a driveway apron to Arizona Street, as Arizona Street functions as a reverse Frontage Road.
- The Driveway Connection, Parking Space, Drive Aisle and Parking Lot Layout will need to comply with Hernando County standards.



**Building Setbacks:**

The petitioner has proposed the following setbacks for the subject site:

- Front (Cortez Blvd): 75' (Deviation from 125')
- Sides: 20'
- Rear (Arizona St): 35'

**Comments:** For any adjacent properties zoned Agriculture or Residential, staff recommends a building setback of one hundred (100) feet if the proposed commercial building exceeds twenty (20) feet in height, to maintain compatibility with surrounding residential standards.

**Buffers:**

The petitioner has proposed the following perimeter buffers for the subject site:

- Front (Cortez Blvd): 20' Landscape Buffer
- Sides: 10' Vegetative Buffer
- Rear (Arizona St): 20' Vegetative Buffer

**Comments:** For any adjacent properties zoned Agriculture or Residential, staff recommends a 20-foot landscape buffer to maintain compatibility with residential standards. If the master plan is approved, the petitioner shall be required to provide the following buffers:

- Front (Cortez Blvd): 20' Landscape Buffer
- Side (North): 10' Natural Vegetative Buffer
- Side (Southwest): 20' Natural Vegetative Buffer
- Side (Southeast): 10' Natural Vegetative Buffer
- Rear (Arizona St): 20' Natural Vegetative Buffer

**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 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 the Hernando County Land Development Regulations, restaurant uses are required to provide parking at a rate of 0.5 spaces per seat. The applicant will be required to demonstrate compliance with all applicable parking requirements at the time of site plan review for the proposed commercial building.

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**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW**

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 request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, compatible with surrounding uses, and provides adequate residential protection for existing surrounding residential developments.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

A Master Plan revision on PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) to incorporate a Rezoning from C-2/ Commercial to PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) is appropriate due to the following findings of fact:

1. The request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Strategies for the location of commercial development and the surrounding commercial uses.

**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 Master Plan revision on PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) to incorporate a Rezoning from C-2/ Commercial to PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General 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 to comply with all applicable Southwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection permitting requirements.
3. The petitioner must 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.
4. The petitioner shall provide a utility capacity analysis and connection to the utility system(s), as required by ordinance, at time of site development.
5. A Traffic Access Analysis is required. Any improvements identified by the Traffic Access Analysis will be the responsibility of the developer to install.
6. Provide for a future connection to Arizona Street via a driveway apron, as Arizona Street functions as a reverse Frontage Road. The petitioner shall be required to modify

the master plan to provide this connection in accordance with the requirements of the County Engineer.

7. The Driveway Connection, Parking Space, Drive Aisle and Parking Lot Layout will need to comply with Hernando County standards.
8. The subject site shall be subject to the following Residential Protection Standards, in accordance with Appendix A, Article VIII, Section 6.
  - There shall be no speakers or other sound equipment located within 100 feet of any single-family residential district property line.
  - There shall be no buildings containing alcoholic beverage dispensation establishments, convenience stores, or automotive and truck repair establishments located within 100 feet of any single-family residential district property line.
  - No commercial activities which include customer entrances, drive-up windows, ordering boxes, or loading/unloading areas shall be allowed to operate between the hours of 12 midnight and 7:00 a.m. within 100 feet of any single-family residential district property line.
  - No building within 100 feet of any single-family residential district property line shall be more than 20 feet in height.
  - All loading bays and loading docks must be a minimum of 100' from any single-family residential district property line. Additionally, all loading bays and loading docks must be screened from view from the public right-of-way or single-family residential district property line. Screening may include landscape plantings, berms, fences or walls.
  - Air conditioning and/or other operational equipment must be oriented away from single family residentially zoned property or screened to minimize noise impacts and reduce visual incompatibility to the single family residentially zoned property. Screening may include landscape plantings, berms, fences or walls.

9. Maximum Building Height                      45'

10. Building Setbacks:

- Front (Cortez Blvd):                      75' (Deviation from 125')
- Sides:    20'
- Rear (Arizona St):                          35'

Along any adjacent properties zoned Agriculture or Residential; to maintain compatibility with residential standards, the petitioner shall have no building exceeding a maximum building height of 20- feet. In the case where the building exceeds 20 feet in height the building setback shall be 100 feet.

**11. Minimum Buffers:**

- Front (Cortez Blvd): 20' Landscape Buffer
- Side (North): 10' Natural Vegetative Buffer
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12. The petitioner shall be required to provide full cutoff fixtures and retain all light on-site and prevent any light spillage onto neighboring properties.
13. In accordance with the Hernando County Land Development Regulations, restaurant uses are required to provide parking at a rate of 0.5 spaces per seat. The applicant will be required to demonstrate compliance with all applicable parking requirements at the time of site plan review for the proposed commercial development.
14. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate compliance with all applicable parking requirements at the time of site plan review for the proposed commercial development.
15. The petitioner shall provide a Master Plan in compliance with all the performance conditions within 30 calendar days of receipt of Board of County Commissioners action from Development Services Staff. Failure to submit the revised plan will result in no further development permits being issued.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

On March 9, 2026, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted 4-1 to recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt a resolution approving the petitioner's request for a Master Plan revision on PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General Commercial) to incorporate a Rezoning from C-2/ Commercial to PDP(GC)/ Planned Development Project (General 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.
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