



## Agenda Item Summary

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**File #:** 25-00781

**Agenda Date:** [Publish Date]

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**Agenda Item Name:**

**Melrose Special Area Plan Discussion**

**Presenter:**

Jeffrey Hays, AICP

**Description:**

At its August 12, 2025 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to bring back information about a potential Special Area Plan for the Melrose area. Staff will provide a presentation on the Special Area Planning process and considerations that need to be taken into account for potentially initiating a Special Area Plan for Melrose. These considerations include identifying the purposes for conducting the Plan, boundaries of the study area, issue focus areas, desired outcomes of the planning process, process timeline, staff resources, and costs.

**Recommended Action:**

Hear the Presentation

**Prior Board Motions:**

August 12, 2025: The Board directed Staff to consider a Special Area Plan for the Melrose Area and bring back information.

**Fiscal Note:**

Depending on the ultimate scope of work, a Special Area Study/Plan would likely require consultant assistance and cost approximately \$200,000. There is not budget established for this currently.

**Strategic Guide:**

All Other Mandatory and Discretionary Services

**Background:**

Special Area Plans are contemplated under the County's Comprehensive Plan as a way to broadly address unique issues and planning considerations for a sub-area of the County. It can be appropriate for areas where the generally-applicable policies in the Comprehensive Plan do not adequately address the particular conditions in that area, and where a more detailed or nuanced planning approach is needed. A Special Area Plan would involve broad input from the community and would address overall quality of life issues such as land use, provision of public infrastructure and services, natural resources protection, economic development, and intergovernmental coordination matters.

The requirements and procedures for Special Area Plans are addressed in the Unified Land Development Code Chapter 402 Article 16. It is a 3-step process that includes a Scope of Work, a Special Area Study, and a Special Area Plan. Each step in the process requires public engagement and various approvals by the Board of County Commissioners. The end result of this process is a Special Area Plan which may include a variety of action items such as Comprehensive Plan amendments to establish specific policies for the study area, capital improvement project plans, interlocal agreements, or other ordinances dealing with specific topics. It is estimated that this process would take at least 2 years to complete, and could be longer depending on the complexity of the issues that need to be addressed.

In 2015, the BoCC considered initiating a Special Area Plan for the Melrose Rural Cluster in response to resident interest and concerns about potential development along Lake Santa Fe. The BoCC decided at that time to not move forward with the process due to staffing and cost considerations. As an alternative to the Special Area Plan, the Melrose Rural Cluster boundary map was formally adopted and the minimum lot size for new development in Rural Clusters was increased from ½ acre to 1 acre through a Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

It is noted that the potential Wildflower Music Park site is located approximately a mile outside of the Rural Cluster boundary; it is designated “Rural/Agriculture” and is subject to the Comprehensive Plan policies for that land use category.

Currently, County Staff is working on the Pine Hill Strategic Ecosystem Special Area Study and the Evaluation and Appraisal of the Comprehensive Plan. Any Melrose Special Area Plan undertaken in the near term will likely need consultant assistance.