

**PALM BEACH COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**WORKSHOP SUMMARY**

**Meeting Date:** March 28, 2023

**Department:** **Planning, Zoning & Building (PZB)  
Environmental Resource Management (ERM)**

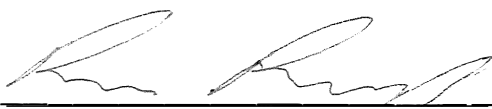

**I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

**Title:** Agricultural Reserve Tier & General Conservation Easements

**Summary:** The item before the Board is a workshop on the fundamentals of the Agricultural Reserve Tier as well as an overview of various methods the County uses to conserve land. PZB staff will provide the history and background of the Agricultural Reserve as well as recent changes. This workshop will discuss how preservation occurs in the Tier and provide a brief history of the bond referendum with a status of acquired lands. ERM staff will provide an overview of the protection of environmentally sensitive lands, including through the use of conservation easements. Following this overview, the workshop will transition into a more focused discussion on conservation easements and the Brookside property. Countywide (DL)

**Background and Policy Issues:** Since 1980, Palm Beach County has adopted and implemented Comprehensive Plan policies to promote the preservation of agriculture and environmentally sensitive lands within the 22,000 acre Agricultural Reserve Tier. Current policies reflect the Agricultural Reserve Master Plan completed approximately 20 years ago. In order to protect and preserve agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, development within the Tier is limited and requires preserve area for most development options.

Land uses today in the Agricultural Reserve largely reflect the desired pattern envisioned in the Master Plan. To date more than half of the land area of the Tier has been set aside for agricultural or environmentally sensitive preserves through various development options, and through government land purchases by state and federal agencies and by the County, including approximately 2,400 acres purchased through a \$100 million bond issue approved by voters in 1999. ERM will provide an overview of the various preservation methods utilized by the County, including the use of conservation easements. Currently, Residential development options include 1 dwelling unit (du) per 5 acre (ac) subdivisions, "80/20" and "60/40" planned developments where the 1 du/ac density is clustered on the smaller portion of the project (20% or 40% depending on the type of planned development) and the balance is preserved (80% or 60% respectively), and the recently adopted Essential Housing option, which allows for up to 8 du/ac, with a minimum of 25% of the units required as workforce housing, clustered onto the 40% development area, with the balance area of 60% preserved. Non-residential development, including the newly adopted Commerce FLU, is limited to specified locations. In addition, there is a cap on commercial square footage.

<b>Recommended by:</b>	 <hr/> <b>Department Director</b>	<u>3/13/2023</u> <hr/> <b>Date</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	 <hr/> <b>Assistant County Administrator</b>	<u>3/15/23</u> <hr/> <b>Date</b>

