

Marion County is known as the Horse Capital of the World. During the 2025 EAR workshops with the Board of County Commissioners, a concern was discussed regarding an inability for residents to develop mini-farms or equestrian estate lots within the County. Staff was directed to research this issue and try to develop policies to address the issue. The result was numerous meetings with Growth Services and Utility staff and Commissioner Zalak and a plan of action. The plan includes adding a definition for Equestrian Estate Developments, adding policy to the Comprehensive Plan for the ability to create these types of developments within Low and Medium Residential land use designations, and create regulations within the LDC. The first step to this process is revising the Comprehensive Plan as follows:

#### DEFINITION: Equestrian Estate

It is the intent of Marion County to support the unique equestrian character residents, and the community, enjoy. Equestrian Estate development is intended to be large-lot subdivisions which reflect the rural equestrian and small farm characteristics historically found in the County. Uses may include personal horses, the boarding of horses, and limited/small-scale farm animals such as chickens and goats. This type of Equestrian Estate development is permissible within the Low Residential and Medium Residential land use categories consistent with the following requirements and as further defined in the Land Development Code:

1. Equestrian Estate developments must be a minimum of ten (10) acres.
2. Individual Equestrian Estate lots within each development shall be a minimum of two (2) acres.
3. An Equestrian Estate development may be established at a lower density below that of minimum density required in the Medium Residential land use designation.
4. An accessory family/guest cottage/apartment, as defined by the Land Development Code, may be established on each lot along with the lot's primary residence.

#### Policy 2.1.17: Low Residential (LR)

This land use designation is intended to recognize areas suited for primarily single-family residential units for existing and new development within the UGB, a PSA or the Urban Area. Parcels outside of, but contiguous to the UGB and outside of the FPA are eligible for conversion to the Low Residential designation through density bonus programs consistent with FLU Policy 2.1.3. The density range shall be up to one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) gross acre, as further defined in the LDC. This land use designation is ~~considered the~~ an Urban Area land use. Where the Low Residential designation abuts the ~~Farmland Preservation Area~~ (FPA) or other Rural Area, hamlet, clustered, or other development methods to preserve large tracts of open space ~~is~~ are encouraged. Equestrian Estate developments are permissible as further regulated in the Definitions Section of this Plan and the LDC.

#### Policy 2.1.18 Medium Residential (MR)

This land use designation is intended to recognize areas suited for primarily single-family residential units for existing and new development within the UGB, PSAs, or the ~~and~~ Urban Area. ~~However, the designation allows for multi-family residential units in certain existing development along the outer edges of the UGB or Urban Area.~~ The density range shall be from one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) gross acre to four (4) dwelling units per one (1) gross acre, as further defined in the LDC. This land use designation is an Urban Area land use. Equestrian Estate developments are permissible as further regulated in the Definitions Section of this Plan and the LDC.