



**Marion County
Board of County Commissioners**

Growth Services

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**PLANNING & ZONING SECTION
STAFF REPORT**

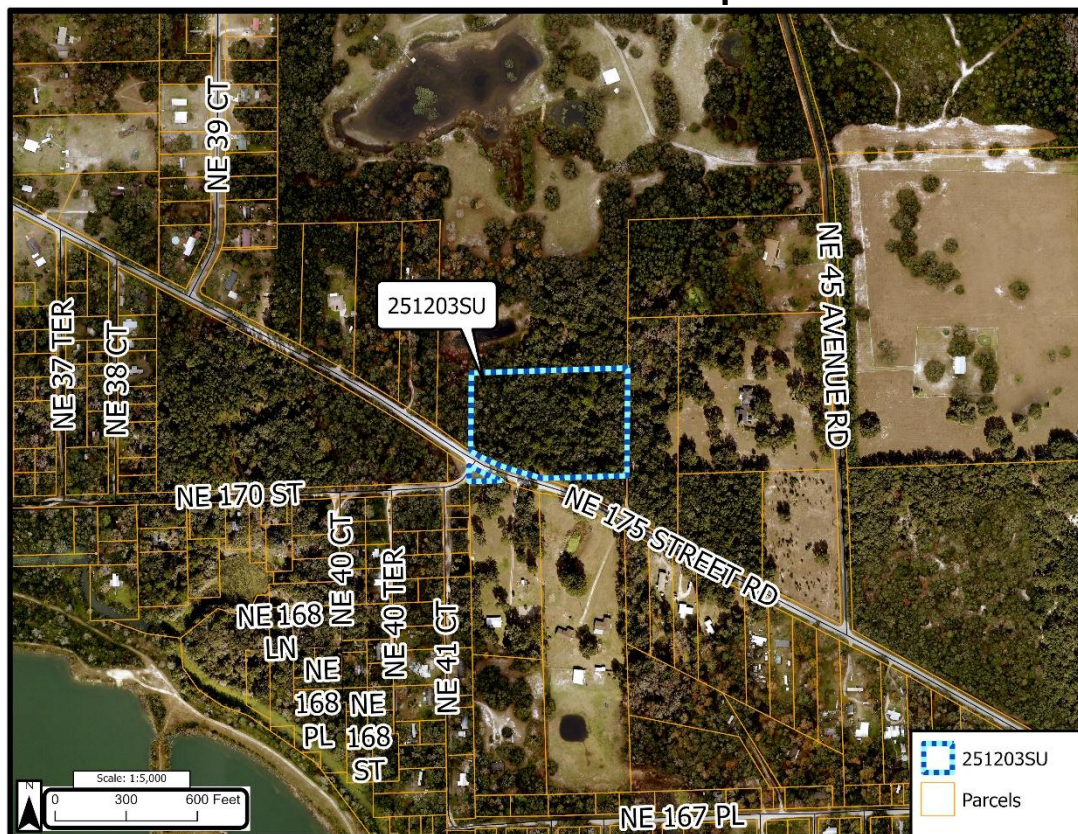
P&Z Date: 11/24/2025	BCC Date: 12/15/2025
Case Number	251203SU
CDP-AR	33443
Type of Case	Special Use Permit for indoor simunition training within an enclosed metal structure
Owner	Scott Adams & Dianne Lapum
Applicant	N/A
Street Address/Site Location	4243 NE 175 th Street Road, Citra, FL 32113
Parcel Number(s)	03823-000-00
Property Size	±6.51 AC
Future Land Use	Rural Land (RL)
Existing Zoning Classification	General Agriculture (A-1)
Overlays Zones/Special Areas	Secondary Springs Protection Zone (SSPZ), FEMA Flood Zone X/A
Staff Recommendation	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS
P&Z Recommendation	TBD
Project Planner	Jared Rivera-Cayetano
Related Cases	N/A

I. ITEM SUMMARY

Scott J. Adams and Dianne R. Lapum filed a Special Use Permit (SUP) application for a ± 6.51 -acre property with a zoning classification of General Agriculture (A-1). The subject property is located at 4243 NE 175th Street Road, Citra, FL. The Parcel Identification Number for the subject property is 03823-000-00. The legal descriptions are provided within the Special Use Permit application (see Attachment A); the subject property is not located within an existing subdivision. The site is located outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and within the Secondary Springs Protection Zone (SSPZ).

The intention of this Special Use Permit request is to allow indoor simunition training within an enclosed metal structure. Simunition refers to a type of low-impact ammunition, akin to high-speed paintball for short-range training. The applicant proposes the use of low-impact simunition weapons to train members of the public, including law enforcement. Training sessions will involve classroom education and close-range combat or self-defense scenarios. Staff finds that the proposed use is best-suited for low-density areas, as encouraged by the site's Rural Land (RL) Future Land Use (FLU) designation.

Figure 1
General Location Map



II. STAFF SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**. Staff finds that the proposed use—to be within an enclosed metal structure—is best-suited for low-density areas, as encouraged by the site's Rural Land (RL) Future Land Use (FLU) designation. Staff finds the proposed use is thus consistent with the Marion County Comprehensive Plan, compatible with the surrounding area, and will not adversely affect the public interest. The conditions in Section VII of this report are recommended to address compliance with the requirements in the Marion County Land Development Code (LDC) Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B.

III. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Growth Services Director has interpreted the requirements of Land Development Code (LDC) Sections 2.7.3.C, 2.7.3.B, and 2.7.3.E to apply to SUP applications. Consistent with LDC Section 2.7.3.B., notice of public hearing was mailed to all property owners (16 owners) within 300 feet of the subject property on November 7, 2025. Consistent with LDC Section 2.7.3.B., public notice was posted on the subject property on November 7, 2025, and consistent with LDC Section 2.7.3.E., due public notice was published in the Ocala Star-Banner on November 10, 2025. Evidence of the above-described public notices is on file with the Growth Services Department and is incorporated herein by reference. As of the date of the initial distribution of this staff report, no letter of opposition or support has been received.

IV. BACKGROUND/CHARACTER OF AREA

A. *Existing Site Conditions.*

Figure 1, above, is a general location aerial displaying existing and surrounding site conditions. Figure 2, below, displays the subject and surrounding properties' existing uses as established by the Marion County Property Appraiser Office's Property Code (PC).

According to the Marion County Property Appraiser, several properties to the West, South, and East of the subject property are used for residential purposes, primarily mobile home residential and vacant residential. Several parcels, especially to the North of the subject property, are characterized by agricultural production.

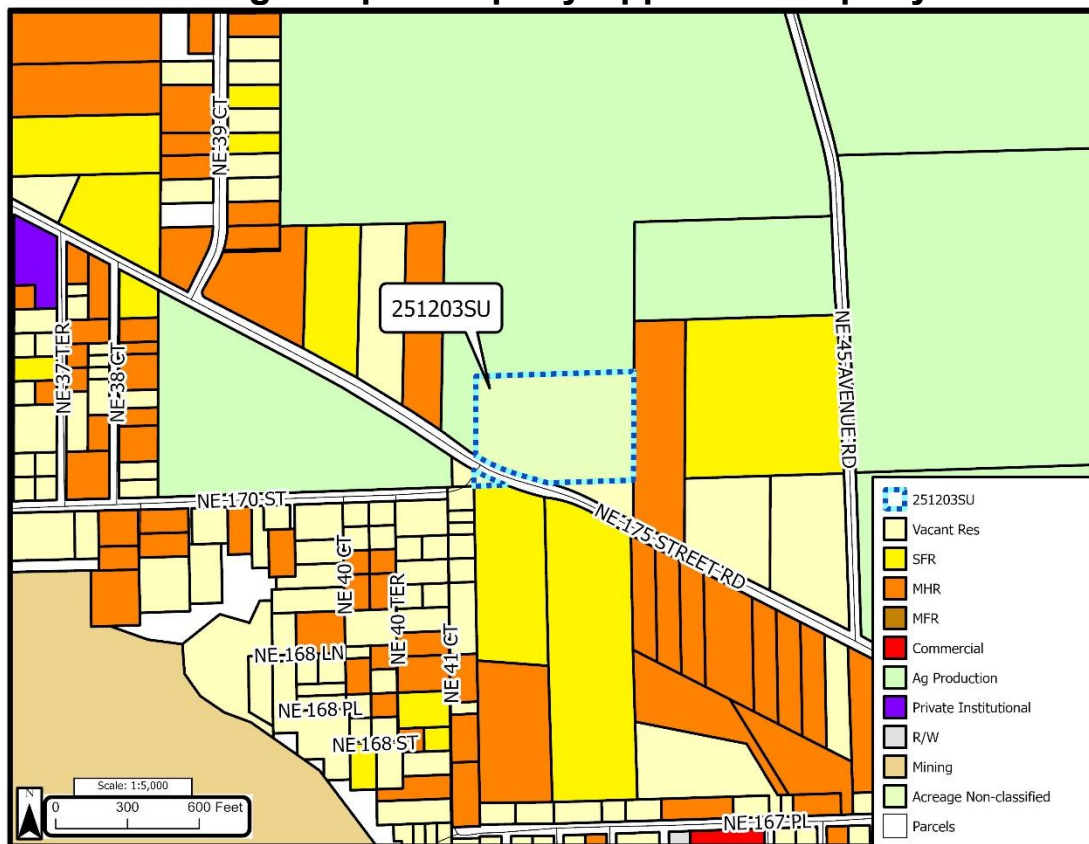
Indeed, the area surrounding the subject property is generally low-density. Within a half-mile distance from the subject property, there is an existing density of 0.28 residential *properties* per acre. Including vacant residentially-zoned properties, there is a density of 0.59 properties per acre. Staff notes that the majority of such properties contain, or are zoned for, a single dwelling unit.

Staff conducted an initial site visit on October 24, 2025. An additional site visit was conducted on November 7, 2025. Staff found that the subject property is heavily forested along NE 175th Street Road. Portions of the property, approximately two

(2) acres in size, have been cleared for a single-family residence and a driveway—both under construction at this time; however, Staff notes that significant vegetation has been preserved along the subject property boundaries. The proposed simunition facility has not been constructed at this time. A gravel driveway has been provided at this time. Site photos are attached to this report (see Attachment C).

Figure 3 provides zoning classification information, while Figure 4 provides Future Lane Use (FLU) designation information for the area.

Figure 2
Existing Use per Property Appraiser Property Code



B. Zoning Classification.

Figure 2, below, displays the existing zoning classifications for the subject property in relation to the existing zoning classifications of the surrounding properties. In general, most nearby properties are zoned for agricultural uses.

Several subdivisions nearby—including the Meadows and Deer Meadow subdivision—are zoned Mixed Residential (R-4); the subject property is not located within an existing subdivision.

Figure 3
Zoning Classification



C. FLUM Designation.

Figure 4, below, displays the existing Future Land Use (FLU) designation for the subject property in relation to the existing FLU designation of the surrounding properties. Almost all nearby properties are designated as Rural Lands (RL), which is intended for a density of up to one (1) dwelling unit per ten (10) acres.

The subject property is within the Secondary Springs Protection Overlay Zone (SSPOZ) and outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as established by the Marion County Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 4
FLUMS Designation

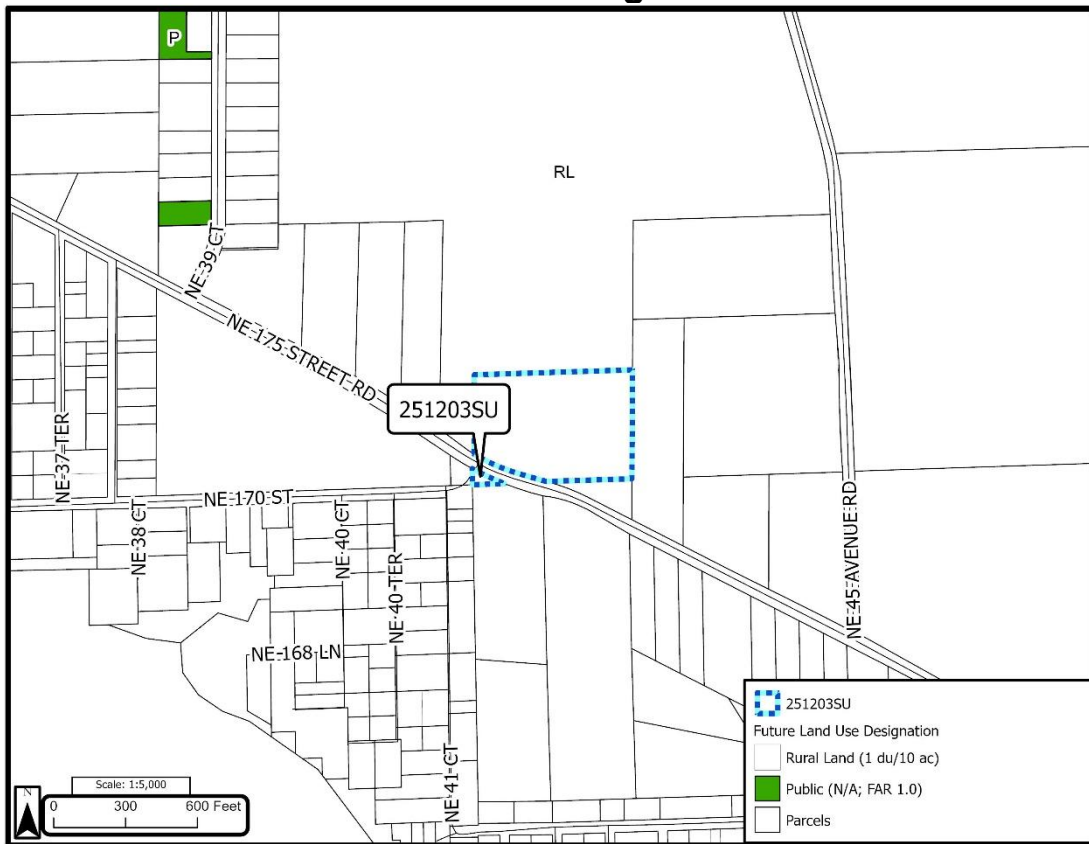
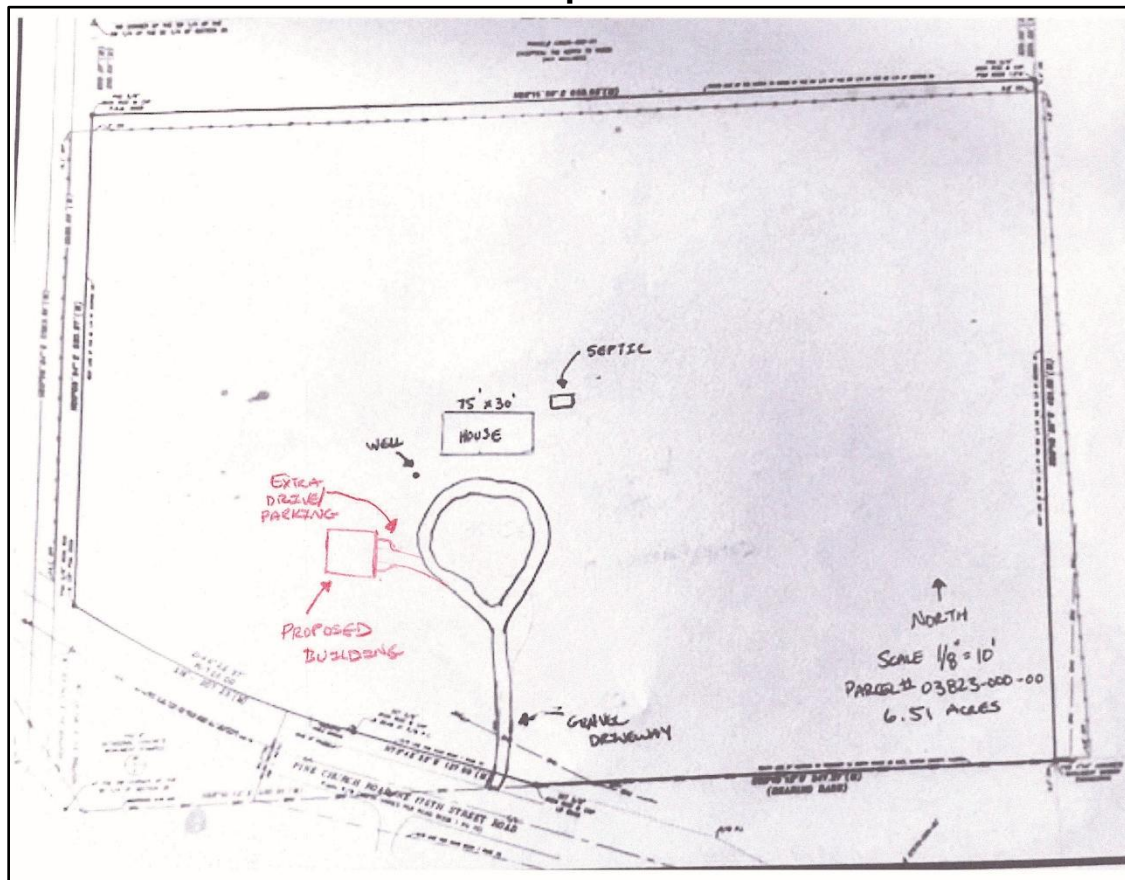


Table A, below, assembles the information in Figures 2, 3, and 4 in tabular form. Figure 5 provides a concept plan for the requested special use, including the location of the enclosed metal structure and business parking in relation to a single-family residence and driveway—both currently under construction. An example of the proposed enclosed metal structure is attached to this report (see Attachment A).

Simunition refers to a type of low-impact ammunition, similar to high-speed paintball. The applicant proposes on-site simunition training within an enclosed metal structure. The applicant proposes the use of low-impact simunition weapons to train members of the public, including law enforcement. Training sessions will involve classroom education and close-range scenarios. An instructor will be on-site to help groups of, on average, four (4) to five (5) people use simunition weapons. Sessions will be approximately four (4) hours in length. The applicant has requested two (2) sessions per day. Training dummies will occasionally be used.

TABLE 1. ADJACENT PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
Direction	FLUM Designation	Zoning Classification	MCPA Existing Use
Subject Property	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Acreage Non- Classified
North	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production
South	Right-of-Way & Rural Land (RL)	Right-of-Way & General Agriculture (A-1)	Right-of-Way, Vacant Residential Single Family Residential
East	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Mobile Home Residential
West	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production

**Figure 5
Concept Plan**



V. ANALYSIS

LDC Section 2.8.2.D provides that in making a recommendation to the Board, the Commission shall make a written finding that granting the SUP will address nine specific requirements. LDC Section 2.8.3.B requires consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff's analysis of compliance with these ten (10) requirements is addressed below. The applicant is amenable to Staff conditions.

- A. *Provision for **ingress and egress** to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and access in case of fire or catastrophe.*

Analysis: Staff notes the proposed use is not identified within the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual; therefore, the exact traffic impact of the proposed special use may not be accurately determined. Staff therefore recognizes the need to minimize the number of trips generated by the proposed commercial use, and its impact on both the existing gravel driveway(s) and NE 175th Street Road. The applicant proposes, at most, two (2) training sessions with groups of four (4) to five (5) people.

The subject property currently has one (1) access point along NE 175th Street Road. NE 175th Street Road currently meets County Level of Service (LOS) standards for rural collector roadways.

Therefore, Staff finds that the application **may be consistent** with LDC provisions for ingress and egress. To ensure minimal traffic impacts, Staff recommends the following condition(s) to mitigate ingress and egress concerns:

- *Up to two (2) simunition training sessions shall be permitted per day.*
 - *Simunition training sessions shall not exceed ten (10) people in size or County buildings occupancy standards, whichever is less.*
- *A site plan shall be submitted for approval through the development review process.*
- *An apron along NE 175th Street Road shall be constructed to commercial driveway standards, unless otherwise approved by the Office of the County Engineer.*
 - *Within subject property boundaries, gravel shall be allowed for the driveway and parking area.*

- B. *Provision for **off-street parking and loading areas**, where required, with particular attention to the items in (1) above and the economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the SUP on adjoining properties and properties generally in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: Staff notes that the proposed use is not identified within the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation Manual. The applicant has proposed a gravel parking area that can accommodate between four (4) and five (5) vehicles. Staff conditions related to occupancy have been proposed to limit parking demand.

Therefore, Staff finds that the application **is consistent** with LDC provisions for off-street parking and loading, provided that the following condition(s) are met:

- *At least five (5) parking spaces, including one (1) accessible parking space, shall be provided, consistent with LDC Section 6.11.8.C.*

*C. Provisions for **refuse and service area**, with particular reference to the items in (1) and (2) above.*

Analysis: The applicant indicates that all waste shall be handled from a single container shared with the primary residence. Waste removal will be provided by the applicant. Staff therefore concludes that the application is **consistent** with LDC provisions for refuse and service areas.

*D. Provision for **utilities**, with reference to locations, availability, and compatibility.*

Analysis: The subject property is currently served by Clay Electric Cooperative for electricity. The subject property is outside the connection distance for central potable water and wastewater service. The applicant indicates the property will be served by a well and septic system. Staff notes that any wells and septic systems would be required to meet County, Department of Health (DOH), and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) standards at the time of permit review.

Staff therefore concludes that the application **is consistent** with LDC provisions for utilities.

*E. Provision for **screening and buffering** of dissimilar uses and of adjacent properties where necessary.*

Analysis: The Marion County Land Development Code (LDC) includes several provisions to ensure compatibility between different land uses. Although Section 6.8.6 of the Marion County LDC indicates that agricultural uses—as allowed in General Agriculture (A-1) zoning by right—are not required to provide buffers, Staff notes that the proposed special use is commercial in nature. As a commercial use, Section 6.8.6 of the Marion County LDC would require a Type B buffer—composed of a 20-foot landscape strip with a buffer wall—on all property boundaries abutting properties with an existing single-family residence. A Type D buffer—composed of a 15-foot landscape strip with a buffer wall—would be required along all other agriculturally zoned properties. A Type C buffer—composed of a 15-foot landscape strip without a buffer wall—would be required adjacent to NE 175th Street Road.

The applicant has proposed to preserve existing vegetation in lieu of landscaping, including buffer walls, as required by the LDC. Staff notes that the subject property is heavily forested. Existing vegetation along NE 175th Street Road provides adequate screening surpassing fifteen (15) feet in width, except along the subject property entrance (see Attachment C). Moreover, along all other subject property boundaries, the applicant intends to preserve approximately four (4) acres. The applicant specifically proposes a 75-foot “natural” buffer, which exceeds required buffer widths.

Staff therefore concludes that the application **is consistent** with LDC provisions for buffering and screening, provided that the following condition(s) are met:

- *To the greatest extent possible, existing vegetation within seventy-five (75) feet of the subject property boundary shall be preserved to provide a “no-touch” buffer between the subject property and adjacent properties.*
 - *Along NE 175th Street Road, existing vegetation within fifteen (15) feet of the subject property boundary shall be preserved.*

- F. *Provision for **signs**, if any, and **exterior lighting** with consideration given to glare, traffic safety, economic effects, and compatibility and harmony with properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: No signage currently exists within the subject property. At most, the applicant proposes small directional signs within the subject property; such signs are not expected to be visible from SE 175th Street Road. Pursuant to Section 4.4.2(1), signs located in such a way as to be invisible from any street or adjoining property are exempt from County requirements. Additional lighting is not proposed, but if it is found that lighting needs to be added, a photometric plan will be provided in accordance with the Marion County LDC. Staff therefore concludes that the application **is consistent** with LDC provisions for signs and exterior lighting.

- G. *Provision for **required yards and other green space**.*

Analysis: Staff conditions related to Buffers have been proposed. If necessary, open space as required by the Marion County Land Development Code would be determined during the development review process. Staff therefore concludes that the application **is consistent** with LDC provisions for green space.

- H. *Provision for general **compatibility** with adjacent properties and other properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: “Compatibility” is defined in Chapter 163.3164(9) of the Florida Statutes, under the Community Planning Act, as “a condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.” Figure 1 is a general location aerial displaying existing and surrounding site conditions. Figure 2 displays the subject

and surrounding properties' existing uses as established by the Marion County Property Appraiser Office's Property Code (PC).

The area surrounding the subject property is low-density. According to the Marion County Property Appraiser, several properties to the West, South, and East of the subject property are used for residential purposes. Several parcels, especially to the North of the subject property, are characterized by agricultural production.

The applicant proposes a structure with a maximum building height of forty (40) feet, consistent with zoning standards for the nearby residential and agricultural properties. Staff conditions related to Buffers have also been proposed.

The following condition(s) are recommended to further mitigate compatibility concerns:

- *The site shall be developed and operated consistent with the concept plan.*
- *The Special Use Permit shall run with the property owner, Scott Adams, and Dianne Lapum.*
- *The Special Use Permit shall expire on December 15, 2028; however, it may be renewed administratively three times for three years each by written instrument signed and issued by the Growth Services Director (or designee), unless:*
 - *There have been unresolved violations of the County Land Development Code, the County Code of Ordinances, and/or the conditions of the Permit;*
 - *Neighboring property owners within 300 feet of the subject property have complained to the County Code Enforcement, Zoning, or equivalent/similar Departments/Divisions about the uses of the subject property by this Permit; and/or*
 - *The Growth Services Director determines that renewal should be considered directly by the Board of County Commissioners through the Special Use Permit review process (or equivalent review process at the time).*

- I. Provision for meeting any **special requirements** required by the site analysis for the particular use involved.*

Analysis: LDC Section 4.2 explicitly includes shooting ranges as a special use for General Agriculture (A-1) zoning.

Although the subject property is not within an existing subdivision, Staff notes several properties to the West, South, and East of the subject property are used for residential purposes. Staff recognizes that the use of firearms, including simunition weapons, could result in significant noise that adversely affects nearby residential properties.

That said, Staff notes the area surrounding the subject property is generally low-density. The applicant has proposed simunition training sessions will occur within an enclosed metal structure, while Staff conditions related to Buffers have also been proposed.

Furthermore, Staff notes Chapter 13 of the Marion County Code of Ordinances regulates noise levels in select areas. The ordinance generally limits noise levels during nighttime. Staff therefore recommends the following condition(s):

- *Use of simunition weapons shall be conducted entirely within an enclosed metal structure. The structure shall be at least 300 feet from any existing residence.*
- *No simunition training session shall occur prior to 7:00 AM or after 7:00 PM.*

J. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

1. **FLUE Policy 2.1.5** on Permitted and Special Use provides, “The County shall identify permitted and special uses for each land use designation and zoning classification, as further defined in the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and LDC.”

Analysis: LDC Section 4.2 explicitly includes shooting ranges as a special use for General Agriculture (A-1) zoning. The applicant proposes on-site simunition training within an enclosed metal structure. The applicant proposes the use of low-impact simunition weapons to train members of the public, including law enforcement officials. Training sessions will involve close-range scenarios in a classroom-like setting. Staff finds the use qualifies as a shooting range.

This application is thus **consistent** with FLUE Policy 2.1.5, provided that all previously-listed conditions are met.

2. **Policy 2.1.16** on Rural Land (RL) provides, “This land use designation is intended to be used primarily for agricultural uses, associated housing related to farms and agricultural-related commercial and industrial uses. The base density shall be (1) dwelling unit per ten (10) gross acres, and the designation is a Rural Area land use.”

Analysis: The subject site is designated as Rural Land (RL) and the applicant proposes indoor simunition training with an enclosed metal structure. LDC Section 4.2 explicitly includes shooting ranges as a special use for General Agriculture (A-1) zoning. The zoning is consistent with the Rural Land designation.

Similar to State regulations related to firearm discharge on private property, Staff believes firearm use is generally best-suited in low-density areas. Staff notes that the area surrounding the subject property is low-density, as encouraged by the Rural Land (RL) designation. The subject property itself is approximately 6.51 acres in size.

Staff thus finds the proposed special use aligns with the intent of the Rural Land Use and **is consistent** with Policy 2.1.16.

3. **FLUE 3.1.4** on Rural Area outside the UGB provides, "The lands outside of the UGB shall generally be referred to as the Rural Area and development in this area shall be guided by the following principles and as further defined in the LDC:

- (1) Protect the existing rural and equestrian character of the area and acknowledge that a certain portion of the County's population will desire to live in a rural setting.
- (2) Promote and foster the continued operation of agricultural activities, farms, and other related uses that generate employment opportunities in the Rural Area.
- (3) Establish a framework for appropriate future opportunities and development options, including standards that address the timing of future development.
- (4) Create a focused strategy for the regulation of mining and resource extraction activity.
- (5) Allow for new Rural Land and Rural Activity Center Future Land Use designations with a Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA), as further allowed in this Plan and as further defined in the LDC."

Analysis: The applicant is requesting to allow indoor simunition training with an enclosed metal structure. LDC Section 4.2 explicitly includes shooting ranges as a special use for General Agriculture (A-1) zoning. The zoning is consistent with the Rural Land designation. Therefore, the proposed special use meets the criteria above and **is consistent** with FLUE Policy 3.1.4.

Based on the above findings, staff concludes the SUP is **consistent** with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B. The conditions in Section VII of this report are recommended to further address compliance.

VI. ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

- A. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, adopt the findings and conclusions contained herein, and make a recommendation to **DENY** the Special Use Permit.

- B. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, adopt the findings and conclusions contained herein so as to support the approval of the Ordinance with amended conditions, and make a recommendation to the Commission to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **APPROVE WITH AMENDED CONDITIONS** the Special Use Permit.
- C. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, identify any additional data and analysis needed to support a recommendation on the proposed Ordinance, and make a recommendation to **TABLE** the application for up to two months in order to provide the identified data and analysis needed to make an informed recommendation on the proposed Ordinance.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission enter into the record the Staff Report, and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, adopt the findings and conclusions contained herein, and make a recommendation to **APPROVE AS CONDITIONED** the Special Use Permit based on compatibility in the area, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and a lack of adverse impacts to the surrounding area.

To address compliance with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B, the following conditions are recommended in the event that the Board chooses to agree with staff recommendation and approve the requested special use with the conditions that:

1. *The site shall be developed and operated consistent with the concept plan.*
2. *A site plan shall be submitted for approval through the development review process.*
3. *The Special Use Permit shall run with the property owner, Scott Adams, and Dianne Lapum.*
4. *Up to two (2) simunition training sessions shall be permitted per day.*
 - a. *Simunition training sessions shall not exceed ten (10) people in size or County building occupancy standards, whichever is less.*
5. *Use of simunition weapons shall be conducted entirely within an enclosed metal structure. The structure shall be at least 300 feet from any existing residence.*
6. *No simunition training session shall occur prior to 7:00 AM or after 7:00 PM.*
7. *To the greatest extent possible, existing vegetation within seventy-five (75) feet of the subject property boundary shall be preserved to provide a "no-touch" buffer between the subject property and adjacent properties.*
 - a. *Along NE 175th Street Road, existing vegetation within fifteen (15) feet of the subject property boundary shall be preserved.*

8. *An apron along NE 175th Street Road shall be constructed to commercial driveway standards, unless otherwise approved by the Office of the County Engineer.*
 - a. *Within subject property boundaries, gravel shall be allowed for the driveway and parking area*
9. *At least five (5) parking spaces, including one (1) accessible parking space, shall be provided, consistent with LDC Section 6.11.8.C.*
10. *The Special Use Permit shall expire on December 15, 2028; however, it may be renewed administratively three times for three years each by written instrument signed and issued by the Growth Services Director (or designee), unless:*
 - a. *There have been unresolved violations of the County Land Development Code, the County Code of Ordinances, and/or the conditions of the Permit;*
 - b. *Neighboring property owners within 300 feet of the subject property have complained to the County Code Enforcement, Zoning, or equivalent/similar Departments/Divisions about the uses of the subject property by this Permit; and/or*
 - c. *The Growth Services Director determines that renewal should be considered directly by the Board of County Commissioners through the Special Use Permit review process (or equivalent review process at the time).*

VIII. PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

To be determined. Scheduled for November 24, 2025, at 5:30 PM.

IX. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ACTION

To be determined. Scheduled for December 15, 2025, at 1:30 PM.

X. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- A. Application
- B. DRC Comments Letter
- C. Site Photos