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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
03/03/2026	.	
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The Committee on Rules (McClain) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Section 163.3249, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

163.3249 Blue ribbon projects.—

(1) PURPOSE AND INTENT.—The purpose of this section is to
balance the protection of important state resources, such as the
natural environment and existing agricultural and silvicultural
uses, with the need to provide longer-term, well-planned



408320

12 communities and job opportunities for the state's future. It is
13 the intent of the Legislature to accomplish this goal by
14 incentivizing large landowners in this state to be good stewards
15 of the natural environment and existing agricultural and
16 silvicultural land while at the same time promoting a more
17 sustainable pattern of development. The Legislature intends to
18 create blue ribbon projects, and to provide a mechanism by which
19 local governments shall implement those projects within their
20 boundaries, in order to promote the goals of preserving natural
21 areas, encouraging agricultural land uses and rural land
22 stewardship, protecting critical ecological systems, expanding
23 wildlife corridors, and providing more compact mixed-use
24 developments designed for long-term viability.

25 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

26 (a) "Applicant" means the owner of land on which a blue
27 ribbon project is proposed.

28 (b) "Blue ribbon plan" or "plan" means the conceptual
29 master plan for the blue ribbon project that is required by
30 subsection (5).

31 (c) "Blue ribbon project" or "project" means a project that
32 meets the requirements of this section.

33 (d) "Blue ribbon project overlay" means an overlay district
34 approved by a local government in its comprehensive plan which
35 must adhere to the blue ribbon plan approved by the local
36 government.

37 (e) "Development area" means land that may be used for
38 residential, commercial, industrial, office, civic, and
39 institutional purposes and complies with the requirements of
40 paragraph (3) (c) and subsection (4).



408320

41 (f) "Missing middle housing" means a range of for-sale and
42 for-rent housing types, including, but not limited to, duplexes,
43 triplexes, townhomes, small multifamily buildings, and small
44 detached single-family homes, that fill the gap between larger
45 single-family homes and larger apartment buildings. Such housing
46 may be vertically and horizontally integrated.

47 (g) "Reserve area" means land that is set aside for
48 environmental conservation, wildlife corridors, wetland and
49 wildlife mitigation, lakes, passive recreation, productive
50 agriculture and silviculture, conservation agreements granted to
51 the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to
52 s. 570.71, activities permitted by conservation easements
53 entered into with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
54 Services pursuant to s. 570.71, and uses of public benefit and
55 that complies with the requirements of paragraph (3) (b). Reserve
56 areas may not contain golf courses, data centers, or solar
57 farms.

58 (h) "Uses of public benefit" means uses including parks,
59 active recreation, stormwater management facilities, flood
60 control facilities, utility facilities, and reservoirs.

61 (3) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.—A property must meet all of the
62 following requirements to qualify as a blue ribbon project:

63 (a) The property must contain a minimum of 15,000 acres of
64 land which are contiguous, as defined in s. 163.3163(3), which
65 are owned by the same person or by entities owned or controlled
66 by the same person, and a majority of which are not located
67 within a municipality.

68 (b) At least 60 percent of the land contained in the
69 project must be reserve area. Land contained in a conservation



70 easement before July 1, 2026, does not qualify as reserve area
71 for the purposes of meeting the 60 percent threshold. The
72 reserve area must meet all of the following requirements:

73 1. If any property boundary is contiguous to state-owned
74 environmental land or the Florida wildlife corridor, a portion
75 of the project's reserve area must be located adjacent to a
76 portion of the state-owned land or the Florida wildlife
77 corridor, as applicable.

78 2. At least 70 percent of the reserve area must be
79 contiguous, as defined in s. 163.3163(3).

80 3. Uses of public benefit may not exceed 15 percent of the
81 reserve area.

82 (c) Up to 40 percent of the land contained in the project
83 may be development area. The development area must meet all of
84 the following requirements:

85 1. Individual development areas within the project must be
86 designed to enhance walkability and mobility and must include a
87 mixture of land uses.

88 2. At least 10 percent of the development area must be
89 allocated to nonresidential land use.

90 3. A portion of the development area must be allocated to
91 uses intended to provide economic development within the area
92 where the property is located. The development area so allocated
93 must be in a location that is accessible to an interstate
94 interchange, a state road, an active rail line, or an airport or
95 other transportation facility.

96 4. The development area must have a dense, walkable, mixed-
97 use development pattern.

98 5. Types of residential units within the development area



99 must be varied and include single-family, multifamily, and
100 attached and detached residential units.

101 (4) DEVELOPMENT AREA DENSITIES AND INTENSITIES.—

102 (a) A maximum residential density of 12 units per gross
103 acre, and a maximum nonresidential intensity of 85 percent
104 impervious surface ratio per gross acre, are permitted within
105 the development area, as measured in combination throughout all
106 phases of the project. A building that contains residential
107 units and nonresidential uses shall be considered residential.

108 (b) At least 20 percent of residential units within the
109 development area in each phase of the project must be a
110 combination of the following:

111 1. Housing that is affordable, as defined in s. 420.0004,
112 for natural persons or families who meet the extremely-low-
113 income, very-low-income, or low-income limits specified in s.
114 420.0004.

115 2. Missing middle housing.

116 3. Housing that is affordable, as defined in s. 420.0004,
117 for persons eligible for the Florida Hometown Hero Program under
118 s. 420.5096.

119 (c) The development area must be developed in phases.
120 Development rights and mitigation of project impacts shall be
121 vested for 50 years. If the applicant achieves development, as
122 defined in s. 380.04, of at least 50 percent of the development
123 area within 50 years after the project's date of initial public
124 dedication of infrastructure, the vested period must be extended
125 for an additional 25 years.

126 (5) BLUE RIBBON PLANS.—

127 (a) A blue ribbon project must have a blue ribbon plan that



408320

128 complies with the requirements of subsections (3) and (4).

129 (b) A blue ribbon plan must contain the following
130 documents:

131 1. A long-term master development map that, at a minimum,
132 depicts the conceptual locations of:

133 a. Reserve area and development area throughout the
134 property.

135 b. Major planned transportation corridors, including roads,
136 multipurpose trails, and transit.

137 c. Proposed civic and school sites.

138 d. Proposed utility sites.

139 2. A conceptual phasing plan depicting land uses within
140 reserve areas and development areas, densities and intensities
141 of development within development areas, public facility
142 mitigation for such development within each phase, and
143 approximate acreage of reserve area in each phase.

144 3. A conceptual water supply plan and a conceptual
145 wastewater plan to show the project's compliance with s.
146 163.3180. The plans may allow water and wastewater supplies to
147 be provided in phases.

148 4. A conceptual transportation and mobility plan to show
149 the project's compliance with s. 163.3180. The plans may allow
150 transportation facilities to be provided in phases.

151 5. A conceptual parks and recreation plan to show the
152 project's compliance with s. 163.3180. The plans may allow parks
153 and recreational facilities to be provided in phases.

154 6. A conceptual resource protection plan to show the
155 conservation of, and, as appropriate, restoration and management
156 of, regionally significant natural resources within the reserve



408320

157 area. The protection of regionally significant natural resources
158 within the reserve area is determined to be a net ecosystem
159 benefit.

160 7. Development standards for each type of land use proposed
161 within the development area which is typically found in a
162 planned unit development as defined in s. 163.3202(5)(b).

163 (c) A blue ribbon plan must be based on a planning period
164 longer than the generally applicable planning period of the
165 local comprehensive plan and must specify the projected
166 population within the planning area during the chosen planning
167 period. A plan is not required to demonstrate need based on
168 projected population growth or any other basis. If, under the
169 plan, a project contributes land or funds or otherwise causes
170 the construction of public facilities pursuant to s. 163.3180,
171 the project must receive dollar-for-dollar credits against
172 impact, mobility, proportionate share, or other fee credits from
173 the local government for such facility improvements as required
174 by s. 163.3180.

175 (d) All park and recreational uses in the parks and
176 recreation plan required by subparagraph (b)5. must comply with
177 the achieved level of service based on the latest local
178 government impact fee study in place at the time of enactment of
179 this section.

180 (e) A blue ribbon plan must provide that any easement
181 granted to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
182 pursuant to s. 570.71 for portions of the reserve area that will
183 be reserved for uses consistent with that section must be
184 granted without charge. The granting of the easement shall occur
185 upon agreement between the Department of Agriculture and



186 Consumer Services and the landowner regarding allowable uses of
187 the easement interest. If an easement or property is granted to
188 any other state agency, water management district, or local
189 government, the easement or property shall be granted without
190 charge.

191 (f) A blue ribbon plan may not contemplate the use of a
192 stewardship district.

193 (6) LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF BLUE RIBBON PLANS.—

194 (a) A landowner must apply to the local government for
195 approval of a blue ribbon plan, including the proposed text
196 amendment to the comprehensive plan's future land use element
197 and a site-specific comprehensive plan future land use map
198 amendment to designate the property a blue ribbon project
199 overlay. A blue ribbon plan that meets the requirements of this
200 section is presumed, subject to rebuttal, to be consistent with
201 the local government's comprehensive plan and in compliance with
202 s. 163.3177(1)(f) and (6), as applicable. The presumption may be
203 overcome by the local governing authority upon a finding that
204 the blue ribbon plan is substantially inconsistent with the
205 provisions of the governing comprehensive plan. At any time
206 during the local government review of the plan application, the
207 applicant shall have the right to request that the application
208 be placed on the soonest-available agenda of the local
209 government for a public hearing. However, such a request may not
210 be made sooner than 60 days after public notice of the first
211 public hearing conducted pursuant to paragraph (b).

212 (b) The local government must conduct two public hearings
213 relating to the approval of a blue ribbon plan application,
214 including the proposed text amendment to the comprehensive



215 plan's future land use element and a site-specific comprehensive
216 plan future land use map amendment. The first public hearing
217 must be conducted by the local government's land planning
218 agency. The second public hearing must be conducted by the local
219 government's commission or council, at which time the
220 application must be approved or denied by the commission or
221 council. The local government shall give public notice of the
222 public hearings in the same manner as it provides notice for
223 comprehensive plan amendment applications.

224 (c) If the local government denies a blue ribbon plan
225 application, the local government must give written notice to
226 the applicant within 5 days after denial of the application,
227 stating the grounds for the denial, including any applicable
228 ordinances, rules, statutes, comprehensive plan provisions, or
229 other authority for the denial.

230 (d) Upon approval by the local government of a blue ribbon
231 plan, including the proposed text amendment to the comprehensive
232 plan's future land use element and a site-specific comprehensive
233 plan future land use map amendment, the plan shall govern use of
234 the property in lieu of applicable comprehensive plan future
235 land use requirements and applicable land development
236 regulations. The blue ribbon plan shall serve as the governing
237 document for the blue ribbon project overlay.

238 (e) A blue ribbon project may be located on land with any
239 future land use designation provided in the applicable local
240 government's comprehensive plan and with any zoning designation
241 listed in the applicable local government's land development
242 regulations.

243 (f) Following approval by the local government of a blue



408320

244 ribbon plan application, the local government must record the
245 plan in the public records of the county in which the property
246 is located, and the plan shall run with title to the land. The
247 local government must also insert the text amendment into the
248 comprehensive plan's future land use element and denote the
249 site-specific amendment on the comprehensive plan's future land
250 use map. The recorded plan or text amendment may not be amended
251 or revised without local government review in accordance with
252 paragraph (a), and such review is limited to the portions of the
253 plan or text amendment which are being amended or revised.

254 (g) An applicant may hire a private company to conduct plan
255 reviews and building inspections pursuant to s. 553.791.

256 (7) APPEAL PROCEDURE.—

257 (a) An applicant may appeal the local government's denial
258 of an application for a blue ribbon plan, including the proposed
259 text amendment to the comprehensive plan's future land use
260 element and the site-specific comprehensive plan future land use
261 map amendment, by filing a de novo action for declaratory,
262 injunctive, or other relief. The court may not use a deferential
263 standard for the benefit of the local government. Before
264 initiating such an action, the applicant may use the dispute
265 resolution procedures under s. 70.51.

266 (b) The approval of a blue ribbon plan application,
267 including the proposed text amendment to the comprehensive
268 plan's future land use element and the site-specific
269 comprehensive plan future land use map amendment, may be
270 appealed in the same manner as provided in s. 163.3184(5).

271 (8) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—A blue ribbon project must comply
272 with applicable provisions of chapters 373 and 403.



273 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

274

275 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

276 And the title is amended as follows:

277 Delete everything before the enacting clause

278 and insert:

279 A bill to be entitled
280 An act relating to blue ribbon projects; creating s.
281 163.3249, F.S.; providing a purpose and legislative
282 intent; defining terms; requiring that a development
283 project meet certain requirements to qualify as a blue
284 ribbon project; providing maximum residential density
285 and nonresidential intensity permitted within the
286 development area of a blue ribbon project; requiring
287 that a specified percentage of the project's
288 residential units meet certain requirements; requiring
289 the development area to be developed in phases;
290 requiring certain development rights and mitigation of
291 project impacts to be vested for a specified period;
292 requiring a blue ribbon project to have a blue ribbon
293 plan; requiring such plan to contain certain
294 documents; requiring such plan to be based on a
295 specified period and specify certain information
296 during such period; providing that a plan is not
297 required to demonstrate certain need; requiring a
298 project to receive dollar-for-dollar credits from a
299 local government under certain circumstances;
300 providing that certain easements or property must be
301 granted without charge; prohibiting a plan from



408320

302 contemplating the use of a certain district; requiring
303 a landowner to apply to the local government for
304 approval of a plan, including certain amendments;
305 providing that a plan that meets certain requirements
306 is presumed, subject to rebuttal, to be consistent
307 with the local government's comprehensive plan and in
308 compliance with specified provisions; specifying that
309 an applicant has a right to request that the
310 application be reviewed at any time; prohibiting such
311 a request from being made sooner than a specified time
312 period; providing local government review
313 requirements; providing notice requirements if the
314 local government denies an application; providing that
315 the blue ribbon plan governs the use of the property
316 upon approval of the plan application by the local
317 government; providing that a project may be located on
318 land with any future land use designation or zoning
319 designation; requiring the local government to record
320 the plan following approval in the public records of
321 the county in which the project property is located;
322 requiring the local government to insert the text
323 amendment into the comprehensive plan's future land
324 use element and denote the site-specific amendment on
325 the comprehensive plan's future land use map;
326 prohibiting an applicant from amending a recorded plan
327 or text amendment without undergoing a specified,
328 limited review; authorizing an applicant to hire a
329 private company to conduct plan reviews and building
330 inspections; providing appeal procedures for the



408320

331 denial and approval of a blue ribbon plan application,
332 including certain amendments; providing environmental
333 review requirements; providing an effective date.