

# City of Coconut Creek InterOffice Memorandum

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**To:** Planning and Zoning Board

**Date:** February 12, 2025

**FROM:** Justin Proffitt, AICP, Director of  
Sustainable Development 

**Subject:** **Vinkemulder Equestrian  
Neighborhood Master Plan,  
Zoning Map Amendment, &  
Overlay Area Ordinance**

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## **Legislative Update**

At the December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Planning and Zoning Board meeting, the board continued the public hearing for this agenda item to the February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting. The continuation provided city staff time to address concerns raised by several of the plant and tree nursery business owners in the area as well as input from other property owners in the neighborhood, including residents of the San Mellina subdivision.

## **Summary of Revisions**

- **Definitions**

- **Plant and Tree Nursery, excluding sales operations**

The definition transfers from the overlay ordinance to Section 13-295 (“Definitions”) of the Land Development Code. The definition is modified to simplify the language and scope ensuring that all such operations fall under one comprehensive definition. This change ensures that plant and tree nurseries, excluding sales operations, remain listed as a permitted use under the existing A-1 Agriculture District.

- **Plant and Tree Wholesale Trade**

The definition is deleted from the overlay ordinance and combined in the new definition of Plant and Tree Nursery.

- **Prohibited Uses**

- **Landscape and Lawn Maintenance**

This use is deleted from the prohibited uses category in the overlay ordinance. This activity is not a permitted principal use under the current A-1 regulations. This change ensures that the current code under the A-1 district remains unchanged.

- **Plant and Tree Nurseries, including sales operations**

This use is deleted from the prohibited uses category in the overlay ordinance. As a result, the current code that permits Plant and Tree Nurseries, excluding sales operations, within the A-1 Agriculture District is maintained except for the new definition in Sec. 13-295 as outlined above.

- **Exemptions**

- The exemption subsection has been entirely eliminated, preserving the existing regulatory framework without the additional exemptions previously proposed.

City staff recommends the board approve the ordinance as revised.

## **Request**

Provide a recommendation to the City Commission regarding the following applications related to the Vinkemulder neighborhood:

1. Adoption of the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Master Plan;
2. Amendment to Section 13-319, "Zoning Overlay Areas," of the City's Land Development Code to create the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Overlay Area; and
3. Adoption of a zoning map amendment to delineate the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Overlay Area, adding a supplemental zoning overlay designation in addition to the existing underlying zoning designations.

## **Background**

In 2023, the City Commission directed city staff to initiate a study of the neighborhood to address the unique rural and equestrian character of the neighborhood amidst increasing development pressures. The City utilized the expertise and services of one of the City's architecture, landscape design, and urban planning consultants, Josh Rak, from Bermello and Ajamil.

The neighborhood master planning process, which included two community meetings, examined issues such as traffic management, equestrian amenities, neighborhood identity, infrastructure, and natural features. The master plan also involved a review of the zoning regulations for the neighborhood.

Observations indicated a need for improved safety and connectivity, particularly to safely accommodate a mix of equestrians, vehicles, and pedestrians. The master plan also identified opportunities for enhancing the neighborhood's character with a tailored zoning overlay area that reflects community values. The plan proposes actions like passive traffic calming, improved trail networks, zoning adjustments to maintain rural character, and infrastructure updates to support the unique equestrian identity of the Vinkemulder neighborhood.

## **Discussion**

### **Vinkemulder Neighborhood Master Plan**

The Vinkemulder Neighborhood Master Plan is a planning initiative by the City of Coconut Creek with input from the neighborhood stakeholders to preserve the area's unique equestrian and rural character while addressing modern development challenges. The plan incorporates community feedback to enhance safety, infrastructure, and neighborhood identity, ensuring a balanced approach to future growth.

#### Key Objectives:

- Preservation: Safeguard the neighborhood's equestrian and agricultural heritage.
- Enhancements: Improve traffic management, connectivity, and safety for pedestrians and horseback riders.
- Community Identity: Strengthen the neighborhood's distinct character through tailored zoning and infrastructure.

- Sustainability: Promote environmentally responsible practices and sustainable development.
- Community Engagement: Two workshops held in November 2023, and March 2024, gathered input from residents, stakeholders, and officials. Discussions emphasized traffic safety, equestrian amenities, and environmental preservation.

#### Recommendations:

1. Traffic Management: Implement passive and active traffic calming measures, including enhanced crosswalks, landscaping, and equestrian signage.
2. Equestrian Amenities: Upgrade trails with horse-friendly materials, add equestrian signage, and improve lighting for rider safety.
3. Zoning Overlay: Introduce an equestrian-focused zoning overlay to guide low-density, compatible development.
4. City-Owned Properties: Utilize central parcels for passive equestrian activities while maintaining their rural character.
5. Connectivity Improvements: Enhance trail networks linking the neighborhood with Tradewinds Park and other open spaces.
6. Environmental Focus: Address invasive species, prioritize native landscaping, and implement chemical-free maintenance practices.

#### Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Zoning Overlay Area

Pursuant to Sec. 13-319(b), Zoning Overlay Areas shall be designated on the zoning map through the rezoning process outlined in Sec. 13-36 of the Land Development Code. The intent of a zoning overlay area is to note a specific area of the city where circumstances or conditions of location, use or special interest require unique or enhanced land development standards to promote the orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area. Overlay areas may be used to implement goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan or studies. Overlay areas do not change the effective land use plan or map or the existing zoning district and may be shown on the official zoning map. However, land development regulations may be modified or special conditions of approval may be included within the area to further the special intent of the overlay area.

The proposed Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Zoning Overlay Area aims to preserve and enhance the unique rural and equestrian character of the Vinkemulder Neighborhood. As part of the city's ongoing efforts to balance development with community values, this overlay district was designed in response to the community's desire to maintain their neighborhood's equestrian amenities, natural environment, and low-density residential character.

The overlay introduces new regulations, development incentives, and exemptions that guide future development and preserve the area's distinct identity, ensuring that the neighborhood's equestrian focus remains intact while accommodating sustainable growth.

The Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Zoning Overlay Area serves several critical purposes:

- **Preservation of Character:** Ensures that new developments align with the community's vision of maintaining its agricultural, equestrian identity.
- **Equestrian Focus:** Emphasizes equestrian land uses and activities, ensuring that the community remains a vibrant, horse-friendly area.
- **Sustainable Development:** Balances growth while safeguarding the neighborhood's aesthetic, environmental, and recreational resources.

### **Applicability**

The overlay regulations apply to all properties within the boundaries of the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Overlay Area, as identified on the zoning map. It is important to note that this overlay does not change the underlying zoning district designations of A-1, Agricultural, RS-1, Residential Single-family Detached, P, Parks, or PUD, for the Banyan Trails Planned Unit Development. Where conflicts arise between this overlay and the existing Land Development Code or underlying district regulations, the overlay's regulations will prevail.

### **Key Provisions**

#### **1. Permitted and Prohibited Uses:**

- Permitted uses align with the existing A-1 Agricultural and RS-1 Residential, P, Parks, and Banyan Trails PUD zoning districts, but additional restrictions are placed to preserve the neighborhood's rural character.
- **Prohibited Uses:** Activities that could detract from the neighborhood's character, such as new commercial landscape nurseries, schools, golf courses, and hunt clubs, are prohibited.
- **Exemptions for Existing Businesses:** Businesses legally operating at the time of adoption can continue without expansion, ensuring a smooth transition while maintaining neighborhood integrity.

#### **2. Density and Development Regulations:**

- Minimum lot size for single-family homes is set at two acres, with no variance permitted. The minimum lot size is consistent with the current two (2) acre minimum requirement in the A-1, Agricultural zoning district.
- Development regulations for agricultural and residential zones are supplemented with additional landscaping requirements to maintain a naturalistic environment, especially along property frontages.

#### **3. Landscaping Standards:**

- A minimum 15-foot landscape frontage area is required along the right-of-way, focusing on shade and canopy tree planting that aligns with the neighborhood's rural character
  1. There are exceptions to the landscape requirements for certain equestrian activities placed along the frontage of a property.
- Trees and shrubs must follow native species and diversification guidelines, with a focus on sustainability and minimal irrigation.
- All parking and vehicle storage areas must be screened with landscape hedges, preserving the aesthetic of the neighborhood.

#### **4. Incentives for Equestrian Uses:**

- Equestrian-related structures, such as open-air stables and arenas, are exempt from certain landscaping requirements along the frontage of a property, promoting visibility and enhancing the community's equestrian focus.

- This incentive encourages the maintenance and growth of equestrian activities, which are central to the neighborhood's identity.

**5. Code Enforcement:**

- Active code enforcement is emphasized to maintain the neighborhood's high standards of safety, aesthetics, and functionality. Special attention will be given to maintaining the rights-of-way, open spaces, and community trails to ensure they reflect the neighborhood's unique identity.

The Vinkemulder Equestrian Overlay Area Ordinance establishes a framework to protect the neighborhood's rural and equestrian character while allowing for compatible development. The overlay addresses the community's goals of maintaining their unique identity and promoting sustainable, low-impact growth.

**Analysis and Findings for the Rezoning (Zoning Map Amendment) for the Overlay Area Ordinance:**

Pursuant to Sec.13-36(c) of the Land Development Code, the Planning and Zoning Board shall consider certain standards when reviewing the proposed rezoning. Listed below are the standards and the staff analysis as to the zoning map amendment's compliance with these standards:

**1. Is not contrary to the Comprehensive Plan.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area is not contrary to the Comprehensive Plan. For years, greenway trails have been planned throughout the City to connect neighborhoods to among other things, sidewalks, nature and equestrian paths. By creating an overlay zoning district, standards for development and redevelopment, landscaping and trails can be established that promote visual and physical continuity and creates a safe environment for pedestrians.

- **Objective II-4.2.0.** Encourage the creation of a system of private open space and conservation areas, including natural reservations, parks, scenic vistas, and waterways, which are compatible with the character of Coconut Creek and complement the public parks and open space system. (B.C.P.C. 5.04.00)
- **Policy II-4.2.1.** Maintain and implement Land Development Code requirements, which are designed to ensure provision of private open space and other passive recreation areas in association with both residential and non-residential development. (B.C.P.C. 5.04.02)
- **Policy II-4.5.3.** The City shall prepare and adopt a city-wide Greenways Master Plan, providing for a city wide greenway network of safe, clean, pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian paths and nature trails, with an emphasis placed on connectivity to City and County Parks, preservation areas, schools, and business areas. Proximity to Tradewinds Park, a Broward County park that includes equestrian trails, horse stables, greenways and trails, the Vinkemulder Overlay Area design standards as proposed supports equestrian activities provided in Policy II-4.5.3.
- **Policy II-5.1.5.** Retain and continue to implement Land Development Code provisions, which restrict development in those portions of Coconut Creek with inadequate potable water and wastewater treatment services and

facilities. (B.C.P.C. 8.01.04)

- **Objective II-5.4.0.** Maintain concurrency management systems within the Land Development Code to effectively monitor and manage new growth by ensuring that the issuance of a development order or permit is conditioned upon the availability of facilities and services, which meet the adopted level of service standards as identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan elements.
- **Section 2 Permitted Uses and Densities.** This section identifies those uses permitted in the Future Land Use categories established within the Coconut Creek Future Land Use Element. Permitted uses and densities are more specifically described in the City's Land Development Code. Zoning as to permitted uses and densities must be in compliance with or be more restrictive than the requirements of the Broward County and Coconut Creek Land Use Plans.

**2. Will not create an isolated zoning district, which would be unrelated and incompatible with adjacent districts.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not create an isolated zoning district, which would be unrelated and incompatible with adjacent districts. Per the City's Land Development Code Section 13-319, the intent of a zoning overlay area is to note a specific area of the city where circumstances or conditions of location, use or special interest require unique or enhanced land development standards to promote the orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area. Overlay areas may be used to implement goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan or studies. Overlay areas do not change the effective land use plan or map or the existing zoning district and may be shown on the official zoning map.

**3. Will not substantially impact public facilities such as schools, utilities and streets.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not substantially impact public facilities such as schools, utilities and streets. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to recognize the area for its rural and equestrian uses unique to Coconut Creek, which requires enhanced development standards to protect and promote orderly development and use of the area. The Vinkemulder Overlay Area standards restricts the list of permitted, prohibited and special land uses currently in the City's Land Development Code.

**4. Will be justified by external land use conditions.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will be justified by external land use conditions. Existing conditions such as fields for grazing animals, farms, arenas and stables are common throughout the area. The overlay area is adjacent to Tradewinds Park featuring connected equestrian trails and park access to and from the overlay area. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to establish development regulations that promotes these equestrian and rural uses by ensuring orderly development and redevelopment of the area.

**5. Will not create or excessively increase automobile and vehicular traffic congestion.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not create or excessively increase automobile and vehicular traffic congestion. The Vinkemulder Overlay District development standards recognizes the rural and equestrian uses unique to this area in Coconut Creek. Vinkemulder residents and patrons who board animals at local stables often ride horses along area roads and would be stressed when subjected to noise and movements associated with automobile activity. Standards in the Overlay District are geared towards protecting and promoting current equestrian uses, trails, and improved street safety within the Vinkemulder Area.

**6. Will not create a storm drainage problem for other properties.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not create a storm drainage problem for other properties. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to establish development regulations that recognize the area for its rural and equestrian nature and promote orderly development and use of the area. All development within the Vinkemulder Overlay Area requires compliance with minimum Level of Service Standards per the City's Comprehensive Plan which includes review and approval by the City's Engineering Department and other Broward County regulatory agencies that will ensure storm drainage design meets minimum standards.

**7. Will not adversely affect surrounding living conditions.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not adversely affect surrounding living conditions. On the contrary, the intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to establish development regulations that promote orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area, thereby protecting all residents and animals in the Vinkemulder Area.

**8. Will not adversely affect environmental quality.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not adversely affect environmental quality. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to establish development regulations that promote orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area. Development regulations will ensure that existing fields used for grazing, farms, open-air arenas, stables and other equestrian uses are not negatively impacted by uncontrolled development or the establishment of incompatible uses. The overlay and the City's Landscape Code require native landscape species.

**9. Will not adversely affect other property values.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not adversely affect other property values. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District is to establish

development regulations that promote orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area. Regulations are designed to maintain and support equestrian and agricultural uses of the Vinkemulder Area thereby protecting the unique character of the area.

#### **10. Will not be a deterrent to improvement or development of other property.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not be a deterrent to improvement or development of other property. The intent of the Vinkemulder Overlay District Area development regulations is to promote orderly development, redevelopment and use of the area. Development that supports a rural design including maintaining open areas, or development that promotes equestrian uses will ensure that the Vinkemulder Area maintains its unique character. Development or uses that negatively impact the area are not supported by the proposed Overlay Area regulations.

#### **11. Will not constitute a special privilege to an individual owner.**

**Staff analysis:** The Vinkemulder Overlay Area will not constitute a special privilege to an individual owner. The Vinkemulder Overlay Area applies to the entire community and is not an isolated zoning district. The Overlay Area will be shown on the City's official zoning map.

#### **Public Involvement:**

Two Public Stakeholder meetings were held in the City Hall, City Commission Chambers, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm as follows:

- 1) Workshop #1, Tuesday, November 14th, 2023.
- 2) Workshop #2, Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

Pursuant to Section 13-27, Application Notices, all property owners within the overlay area and within a distance of 700 feet surrounding the overlay area boundaries were notified by mail of the Planning and Zoning Board public hearing. Four (4) public hearing notice signs were also posted in the neighborhood 14 days prior to the Planning and Zoning Board meeting. From the date of preparing this staff memo, the city has received nine (9) public inquiries related to the project.

#### **Recommendation**

Recommend to the City Commission approval of the following requests:

1. Adoption of the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Master Plan;
2. Amendment of Section 13-295, "Definitions," and Section 13-319, Zoning Overlay Areas, of the City's Land Development Code to create the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Overlay Area and related definitions; and
3. Adoption of a zoning map amendment to delineate the Vinkemulder Equestrian Neighborhood Overlay Area, adding a supplemental zoning overlay designation in addition to the existing underlying zoning designations.