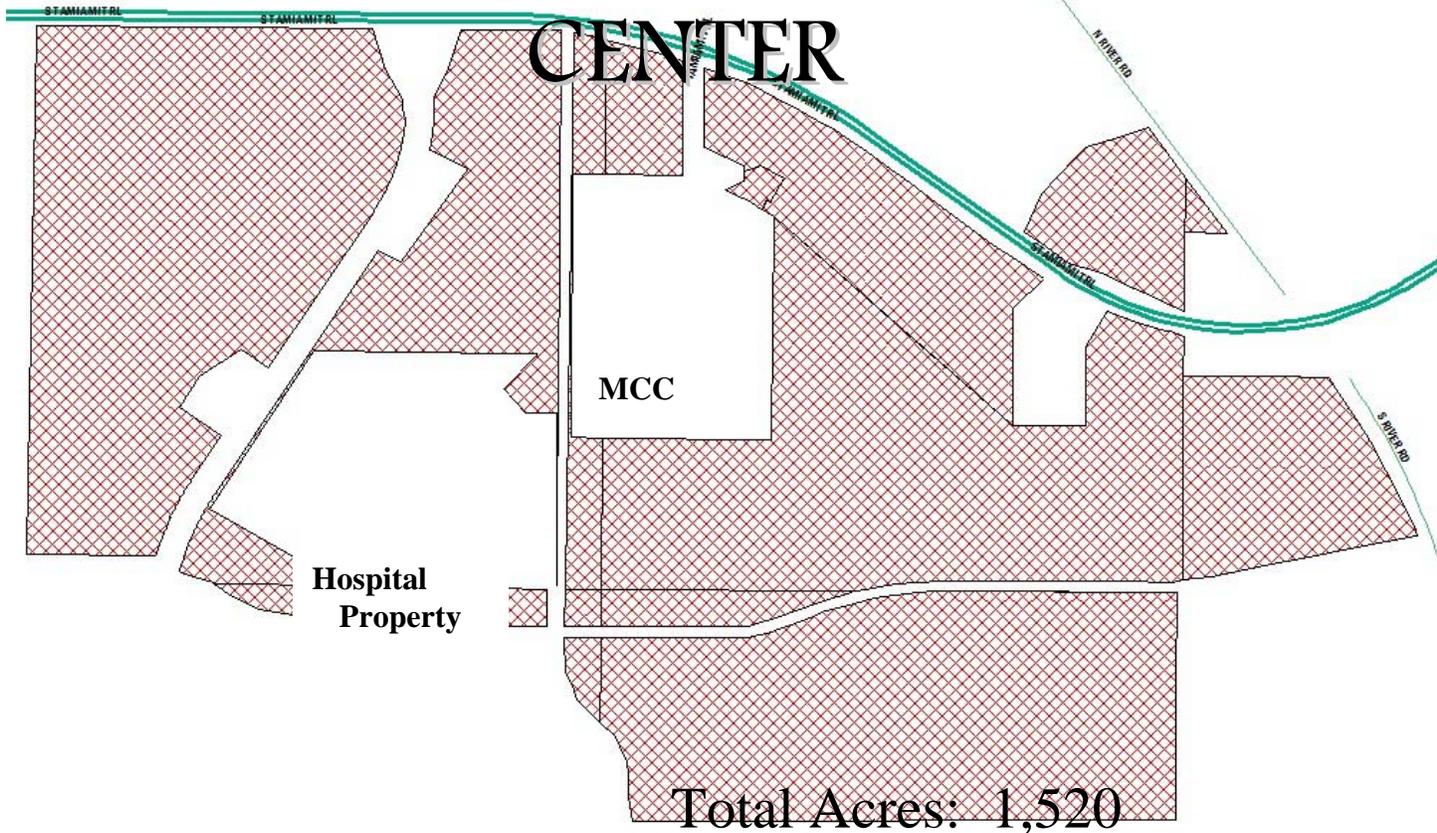


WEST VILLAGES TOWN CENTER



The size of the Town Center has changed periodically but the general location is shown on the map above. However, the Town Center development must adhere to the following standards outlined in the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan:

- Size: 300-1,000 acres
- Minimum Density: 4.0 DU/Adjusted Gross Acre
- Maximum F.A.R.: 1.0
- Density Incentives: Up to 24 DU/Adjusted Gross Acre with Transfer of Development Rights.

<i>Land Use Mix</i>	<i>Minimum Acreage</i>	<i>Maximum Land Area allowed</i>
1. Residential*	45%	30%
2. Commercial Retail & Services	60%	60%
3. Office & Light Industrial	30%	50%
4. Overall Commercial/Office/ Industrial (2&3)	90%	70%
5. Civic	15%	No Max
6. Parks & Open Space	30%	No Max

* Minimum acreage based upon a 300 acre Town Center/*20,874 sf Manatee Community College & Hospital

Because of the platted lands origins of the City of North Port, most of the land area in the City has been designated for residential uses. Data from the 1997 Comprehensive Plan indicated that only 5% of the City's total land area was designated for non-residential uses such as commercial, office and industrial uses. The non-residential uses are necessary for a community to maintain a semblance of sustainability. Therefore, the 1997 Comprehensive Plan identified specific areas for potential annexation that would allow for this necessary tax base diversification, along with some housing stock diversification. One of those areas was the area west of the Myakka River in the vicinity of the Thomas Ranch (Taylor Ranch in 1997).

In the year 2000, the City acted on a submittal from the Ranch for a voluntary annexation. As permitted by the Florida Statutes, the City then formally annexed the over 8,000 acres of ranchland. A unique "Village" land use category was developed by North Port Planning staff to guide future development on the ranch. The village land use allows for a mix of development in the village with requirements for neighborhood centers, village centers, and town centers to serve the village residents and to make it so residents can carry out most of their daily activities without having to venture too far from the Ranch itself.

The Town Center component of the Thomas Ranch development is of particular importance to the City as it designates 1,520 acres of property for mixed uses, including retail, office, civic, light industrial and some residential uses (such as apartments above retail establishments) as shown in Exhibits A and B. This acreage does not include the Manatee Community College (MCC) campus nor the Sarasota Memorial Hospital property and facilities which are surrounded by the villages and town center. However, these two properties are key components the Town Center concept whether they annex into the City or not as they will serve to further the sustainability of the Thomas Ranch villages through educational and health care facilities for residents. This is especially true as the University of South Florida increases their partnership with MCC, which will give students the opportunity to continue their degrees locally. The uses within the Town Center would serve a more regional market base, the scale of which would not be appropriate in the individual villages. Development of the town center will be required to follow the same review process that is required for each individual village, which means that it will require a Village District Pattern Plan (VDPP) to be approved by the City of North Port.

It is important to note that one of the requirements for Town Centers is that they must be developed so that there is easy access to a major intersections or interchanges to ensure easy movements of goods, materials, and people. In the case of the Thomas Ranch, the Town Center will be located near the major intersection of River Road and US 41, and is near the I-75 interchanges at River Road and Jacaranda Boulevard. As the Thomas Ranch develops, a major central parkway will bisect the Town Center, and it is anticipated that connections to existing County roads like Keyway will complete a grid that will better link the area with Englewood and the Cape Haze peninsula. The Town Center standards also require development to be integrated with the regional transit system.

Findings: *With 1,520 acres, the development of the Town Center should be monitored to ensure that development follows the vision of the Town Center and the comprehensive Plan. Because the Town Center will not just serve North Port but will serve as a regional commercial center, the reduction of acres is not recommended. The incorporation of Manatee Community College and the Hospital into the City of North Port would further aid in the sustainability of not only the villages but the City as well.*