



August 28, 2026

Lee County Local Planning Agency
Lee County, Florida

Re: August 31, 2026 LPA Agenda
CPA 2026-00005 — Future Land Use Element Update and Related Land Development
Code Amendments

Via-Email

Dear Members of the Local Planning Agency:

As President of the Captiva Civic Association ("CCA"), a 400+ member organization located on Captiva Island, I respectfully submit the following comments regarding the August 31, 2026, agenda items concerning CPA 2026-00005, the Future Land Use Element Update, and related amendments to the Lee County Land Development Code.

CCA is a 90-year-old Captiva organization whose mission includes "the preservation of the quality of life, ambiance and environmental integrity of this unique barrier island." For many decades, CCA has also maintained a Land Use Committee whose responsibilities include advancing and protecting these principles. Consistent with that mission, CCA has been deeply involved over the years in proposed land-use and development changes that could have a significant impact on Captiva and its unique character.

CCA only very recently became aware of the County's proposal to delete existing language in the Lee Plan and Land Development Code specifically relating to Captiva. Changes of this magnitude and significance should not be considered without meaningful input and consultation with the community that will be directly affected by them.

It is particularly concerning that the County has proceeded to public hearings on a proposal involving more than 300 pages of changes without providing the Captiva community adequate advance notice or a meaningful opportunity to review, understand, and comment on the proposed amendments.

The timing of the August 31 hearing is also problematic. Holding a public meeting on the last day of August—when many Captiva and Lee County residents are seasonal residents

who have not yet returned, are traveling, or are occupied with family and college-related commitments—further limits the ability of affected residents to participate meaningfully in the process.

For changes with potentially far-reaching consequences, public participation should not be treated as a procedural formality. It should be an integral part of the planning process.

Lee County is a large and geographically diverse county. It encompasses urban and suburban communities, rural and agricultural areas, wetlands, open spaces, coastal communities, and fragile barrier islands such as Captiva. These areas have fundamentally different characteristics, development patterns, environmental constraints, and community needs.

The County's existing community-focused planning framework recognizes and responds to these differences. Moving away from regulations tailored to the particular characteristics of individual communities toward a more uniform, countywide regulatory approach is not sound planning for a county as diverse as Lee County.

Captiva is not interchangeable with other areas of Lee County. Its unique geography, limited infrastructure, environmental sensitivity, historic development pattern, and status as a fragile barrier island warrant careful, community-specific planning and protections.

CCA is also concerned that the County staff materials indicate, in part, that the proposed amendments will result in no change to allowable densities and intensities within the County. That statement does not appear to accurately reflect the proposed changes affecting Captiva.

In particular, the proposal would affect Captiva's existing three-unit-per-acre limitation for hotels and would allow increased building heights on Captiva. These are substantive changes to the development framework governing the island.

Such changes have the potential to increase the intensity of development currently permitted on Captiva and could have significant consequences for the island's character, infrastructure, environment, and quality of life.

The apparent inconsistency between the staff characterization of the amendments and the actual proposed changes affecting Captiva is particularly concerning. The LPA should have a clear and accurate understanding of the consequences of the amendments before taking any action. The impacts of the proposed changes to Captiva's hotel density and building heights must be specifically identified, disclosed, and fully evaluated.

CCA recognizes that there may be additional issues within the proposed amendments that warrant further review and comment. However, the community received notice of

these proposed changes only recently, and the complexity and magnitude of the amendments—spanning more than 300 pages—make it impossible for CCA and other affected members of the community to conduct the careful review necessary to provide comprehensive comments within the time available.

It is neither reasonable nor consistent with meaningful public participation to expect an affected community to analyze changes of this magnitude on such short notice.

For all of these reasons, CCA respectfully asks the Local Planning Agency to reject the proposed amendments at this time.

At a minimum, the proposed amendments should not move forward until Lee County staff has had an opportunity to meet directly with the affected communities—including the Captiva community—to explain the proposed changes, receive meaningful public input, and address the specific impacts on communities whose existing land-use protections may be altered.

Captiva's unique character and environmental sensitivity deserve thoughtful, community specific planning rather than sweeping changes adopted without adequate notice, review, and public participation.

We respectfully urge the LPA to reject CPA 2026-00005 and the related Land Development Code amendments as presently proposed and direct County staff to undertake a meaningful community engagement process before bringing these changes forward again.

Thank you for your consideration of CCA's concerns and for ensuring that the residents and property owners who will be most directly affected have a meaningful opportunity to participate in this important planning process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Riordan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Riordan, President
Captiva Civic Association Board of Governors
Captiva, Florida