Collier County
Community Planning
& Resiliency

Memorandum

To: Collier County Planning Commission

From: Michele Mosca, AICP, Planner III
Staff Liaison to the Rural Golden Gate Estates Restudy Advisory Committee

Date: November 18, 2026

Subject: Rural Golden Gate Estates Restudy Advisory Committee
Summary of Home-Based Business Discussions and Recommendation

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The Rural Golden Gate Estates Restudy Advisory Committee was established by the Board of County Commissioners in December 2025 through Ordinance No. 2025-70. The Committee consists of five members and two alternates and serves as the primary source of community input for the review of the Rural Golden Gate Estate Sub-Element of the Golden Gate Area Master Plan, and other topics identified by the Board.

Relevant to this Land Development Code (LDC) amendment, the Committee was tasked with reviewing the proposed Home-based Business amendment. In 2026, the Committee held three public meetings to discuss home-based businesses, applicable statutory and regulatory regulations, and the potential impacts of these businesses on the rural character and quality of life in the Rural Golden Gate Estates community.

The initial public meeting was held on March 25, 2026, and was attended by more than 113 members of the public who signed in, and others who attended but did not sign in. During the meeting, the LDC team presented the statutory requirements for home-based businesses and explained the exemption added by the Board of County Commissioners. This exemption allows businesses that can demonstrate at least five years of continuous operation to continue operating without being subject to the standards established by statute.

Public comments focused on concerns regarding the impacts of commercial operations in residential neighborhoods, including heavy vehicles and commercial traffic on local roads, road and property damage, noise and vibration, early-morning business activity, outdoor storage of trucks and equipment, lighting, visibility, and fencing. Residents raised concerns about traffic safety, children's safety, illegal dumping, code compliance, and inconsistent enforcement. Many emphasized that residential roads were not designed to accommodate substantial commercial traffic and expressed a desire to preserve the quiet, rural character of the Estates while allowing

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compatible home-based businesses. Concerns were also raised about businesses operating with numerous trucks, trailers, heavy equipment, and employees on residential properties.

On May 18, 2026, the Committee held a public workshop to further discuss home-based businesses and the statutory regulations governing them. Discussion topics included the parking and storage of commercial vehicles on residential properties, including properties where no home-based business is operated, and how other Florida communities address residential property use, neighborhood compatibility and other aspects of home-based business operations.

The Committee met again on June 24, 2026, to continue its discussion of home-based businesses. Twenty-seven (27) members of the public signed in, with additional attendees present who did not sign in. County staff provided an overview of the applicable regulations, and the County's consultant conducted a survey during the meeting, offering attendees the option to participate either electronically in real time or by completing a paper version. Following the meeting, the survey was posted on the Committee's webpage and remained available for an additional 30 days to provide for further public input.

During the June meeting, a Committee member and an alternate member expressed concerns about the survey, while other Committee members emphasized the importance of gathering public input. Discussion included the requirement for a site improvement plan (SIP) when establishing home-based businesses, the possibility of removing the exemption language to ensure equal treatment of businesses, and the need for an industrial park or other appropriate locations for commercial businesses.

Public comments at the meeting reiterated concerns about the compatibility of commercial businesses operating in residential areas, including commercial traffic and safety, environmental compliance, enforcement of regulations, and potential limits on the number of people residing at a property. Several participants emphasized that commercial businesses should be located in appropriately designated areas, while others noted the limited availability and affordability of commercial space and encouraged the County to identify potential solutions that would allow local business owners to operate their businesses while minimizing impacts on neighboring properties and preserving the character and quality of the community.

Survey Responses:
The June and online survey responses reflected a strong interest in preserving the rural character, environmental resources, open space, and quality of life in Rural Golden Gate Estates. Respondents generally supported the ability to operate home-based businesses when impacts on neighboring properties are limited. The most frequently identified concerns involved noise, traffic, heavy commercial vehicles, outdoor storage, signage, visual impacts, and inadequate enforcement of existing regulations.

Many respondents supported establishing standards to address commercial vehicle parking, outdoor storage, screening, signage, noise, and traffic. Some recommended more stringent requirements for smaller lots and site plan review for businesses with greater potential impacts. Fencing and vegetative buffers were identified as potential measures to minimize visual

impacts. Respondents also expressed particular concern about semi-trucks, dump trucks, and other heavy commercial vehicles traveling on residential roads and being stored on residential properties.

Survey feedback also highlighted broader community planning priorities, including transportation and road safety, protection of native vegetation and wildlife, preservation of dark skies and open space, and responsible management of future growth and development. Concerns included land clearing, tree removal, environmental degradation, and the potential effects of warehouses and other commercial development on the community's rural character.

While many respondents supported reasonable regulations to minimize conflicts between businesses and neighboring residents, others emphasized property rights, the ability to peacefully use their homes, and the importance of avoiding excessive restrictions on small business owners. Overall, the feedback reflected a desire to balance property rights and economic opportunities with the protection of rural character, environmental resources, neighborhood compatibility, and public safety.

Overall Summary:
Based on input received during the three meetings and through the surveys, the primary issue was how to accommodate home-based businesses while preserving the rural residential character of Golden Gate Estates. Residents and Committee members discussed the need for clear and consistently enforced regulations addressing commercial vehicle parking, outdoor storage, noise, traffic, screening, safety, the intensity of business operations, and the availability of appropriately located commercial or industrial space.

The discussions identified competing interests between residents seeking to protect their community and business owners seeking opportunities to operate from their homes. The public input and Committee discussions provide a basis for further evaluating potential LDC amendments that balance business operations and property rights with neighborhood compatibility, road safety, environmental protection, and the long-term preservation of the rural character of Golden Gate Estates. [Staff informed the Committee and public that the County cannot adopt more restrictive regulations until October 1, 2027, pursuant to Ch. 252, Section 252-422, F.S. (a/k/a SB 180).]

Following these discussions and consideration of the public input received, the Committee took action on the proposed amendment. At its September 23, 2026 meeting, the RGGE Restudy Advisory Committee voted 4–1 to advance the proposed Home-Based Business LDCA to the Collier County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners, as prepared by the County's LDC staff. The recommendation included the exemption provision previously discussed by the Committee and the public. The Committee indicated that enforcement of the exemption provision should be the responsibility of the County.

c: Rural Golden Gate Estates Restudy Advisory Committee Members

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