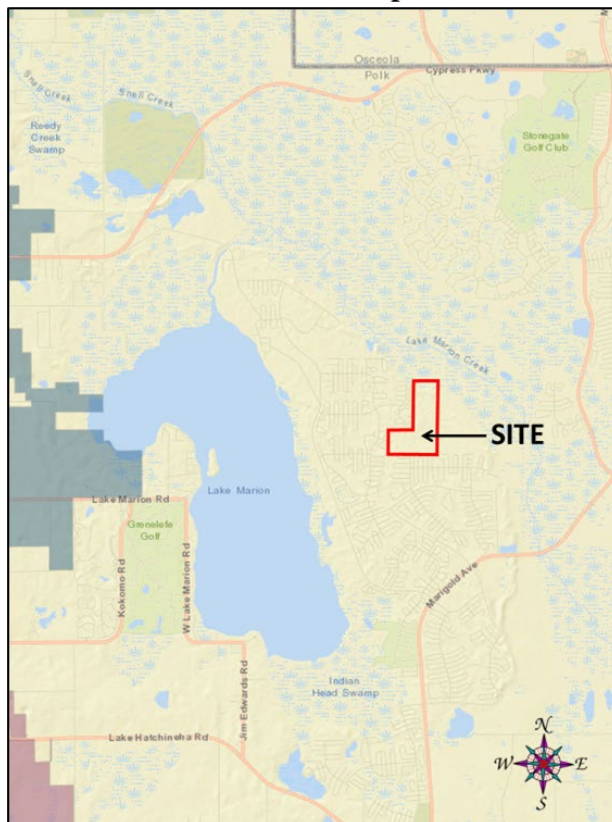


# POLK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

<b>DRC Date:</b>	n/a	<b>Level of Review:</b>	4 (Board Only)
<b>PC Date:</b>	n/a	<b>Type:</b>	Community Development District
<b>BoCC Date:</b>	January 20, 2026	<b>Case Numbers:</b>	LDCDD-2025-2
<b>Applicant:</b>	Jennifer Kilinski, Esq. Kilinski   Van Wyk PLLC	<b>Case Name:</b>	Gardener Trails CDD
		<b>Case Planner:</b>	Erik Peterson, AICP

<b>Request:</b>	The request is to adopt an ordinance establishing a Community Development District (CDD) for 430 single-family detached residential lots; describing the external boundaries of the district; describing the functions and powers of the district; designating the initial members of the district's Board of Supervisors; providing a severability clause; and providing an effective date.
<b>Location:</b>	Next to Poinciana, south of Chinook Road, north of Halibut Road, east of Caspian Road, and east of the city of Haines City, in Section 34, Township 27, Range 28.
<b>Property Owner:</b>	Peter George II Kalogridis
<b>Parcel Size:</b>	±160.28 acres
<b>Development Area:</b>	Utility Enclave Area (UEA)
<b>Land Use Designation:</b>	Residential Low-1 (RL-1) LDPD-2025-1
<b>Nearest Municipality:</b>	Haines City ±2.63 miles
<b>DRC Recommendation:</b>	Approval

**Location Map**



**Future Land Use Map**



## Summary:

The applicant is proposing the establishment of a Community Development District (CDD) that is to be comprised of 430 single-family detached residential lots of varying sizes on ±160.28 acres of which at least 127 acres of it is uplands for a net density of roughly 3.4 dwelling units per acre. The Planning Commission approved the Planned Development (LDPD 2025-01) on August 6, 2025. This CDD, if approved, will supplement the development's infrastructure cost and set up a mechanism for maintaining its local roadways and amenities.

Polk County staff have analyzed this request for consistency with policies and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code (LDC). The results of this analysis are included in this report. The County Engineer's Office has reviewed the applicants' cost estimates for the infrastructure but cannot confirm their complete accuracy. The estimates are based on typical development costs but do not address detailed specifics necessary to fully confirm them. Furthermore, there are several unknown costs for this development that will be further solidified through the engineering design and construction of the project. For the current cost estimates provided in the petition, see Exhibit 6. The County Surveyor has confirmed that the legal description submitted for inclusion into the ordinance is true and accurate.

The Board of County Commissioners is required, pursuant to Section 190.005, F.S., to consider each of the following items below when approving or expanding a CDD. To grant approval of the request, the Board must find in the **affirmative for items (1), (3), (4), and (6)**, and must find in the negative for items **(2), and (5) for the CDD**.

### Statutory Requirements for Board Findings of Fact

#### **1. Whether all statements contained within the petition have been found to be true and correct.**

*Yes, staff finds that all statements made by the applicant within the submitted petition are correct given the information known at this time. Staff have reviewed the cost estimate to the extent that can be verified. They are typical for most developments that have access to urban services in close proximity. The County will except the collector road that bifurcates the development and connects existing development on the south and north after construction is completed by the project developer. The CDD will maintain the local roads within the project.*

*The applicant's estimates are based on 430 total dwelling units within the project. The total estimated cost that the CDD may fund is \$26,221,995. This equates to roughly \$60,982 per unit and includes onsite roadways, stormwater management, hardscape, landscape, and irrigation, streetlighting, recreation amenities, underground power, professional services, and accounts for contingencies. Past CDD estimates have been between \$7,350 and \$68,625 per unit (see page 16). This proposed CDD is in the higher quartile in the range of per unit cost estimates in CDDs to date.*

#### **2. Whether the establishment of the district is inconsistent with any applicable element or portion of the state comprehensive plan or of the effective local government comprehensive plan.**

*No, the establishment of a CDD on the subject property is consistent with the State and Polk County Comprehensive Plans. An analysis in accordance with Section 2.102 of the Polk County Comprehensive Plan is included in this report. The proposed CDD is for an approved Planned*

*Development (LDPD-2025-1) that is consistent with POLICY 2.102-A3 regarding the timing of development along with POLICY 2.107-A1 regarding the Utility Enclave Areas (UEA).*

**3. Whether the area of land within the proposed district is of sufficient size, is sufficiently compact, and is sufficiently contiguous to be developable as one functional interrelated community.**

*Yes, staff finds that the proposed CDD is of sufficient size ( $\pm 160.28$  acres), is sufficiently compact, and is sufficiently contiguous to be developed as one functional interrelated community. A thorough analysis of the area and its proposed development plans are included in this report. For a visual representation see Exhibits 3 and 4.*

**4. Whether the district is the best alternative available for delivering community development services and facilities to the area that will be served by the district.**

*Yes, the proposed CDD is one alternative available for delivering its needed community development services and facilities without the additional burden to taxpayers outside of the CDD. Another alternative available is for the developer to pay for all infrastructure improvements up front. However, the CDD has one advantage that the alternatives do not; the CDD is like a municipality that can issue tax free municipal bonds to be funded by future revenue collections included with individual property tax bills. The debt of the CDD runs with the properties created within the CDD, which lessens the chance that it will fall upon public responsibility. The CDD is also used to fund maintenance of certain infrastructure within the development which further reduces taxpayer burden and provides the future residents in the CDD with control over their infrastructure levels of service.*

**5. Whether the community development services and facilities of the district will be incompatible with the capacity and uses of existing local and regional community development services and facilities.**

*No, the proposed CDD will fund infrastructure improvements that ensure compatibility with capacity and uses of existing local and regional community development services and facilities in the area. This CDD will be a perpetual entity and funding source for operation and maintenance of the CDD infrastructure. Staff has given a preliminary review for concurrency with existing infrastructure and has found adequate capacities available to serve the proposed development within the CDD for public safety, water, wastewater, transportation, drainage, educational facilities, and recreational facilities. The details of this analysis are provided in this report on pages 5-14. The development will meet a higher standard for drainage design than past developments have in the area.*

**6. Whether the area that will be served by the district is amenable to separate special-district government.**

*Yes, owner's authorization has been provided for each property included in the proposed district. A private CDD Board will be responsible for managing the financial and infrastructure needs of the district. The Board members will be established through the adoption of the CDD Ordinance. The initial members of the proposed CDD board are listed in Exhibit 7.*

The Land Development Division, based on the staff report and the information provided in the petition, finds that the proposed **petition for the Gardener Trails Community Development District IS consistent with Section 190.005, F.S.**

*The analysis to follow has been developed to address the Policies 2.102-A1 through 2.102-A15 of the Comprehensive Plan.*

## **Surrounding Land Use Designations and Current Land Use Activity**

The following table provides a reference point for notable and pertinent Future Land Use Map districts and existing land uses upon them. All references are from the proposed CDD boundary.

**Table 1**

<b>Northwest:</b> DRI & A/RR Single-family residential dwellings and some vacant lots Chinook Road stub-out	<b>North:</b> A/RR Vacant, 100-year flood hazard area Inaccessible land sale lots	<b>Northeast:</b> A/RR Vacant, pasture 100-year flood hazard area Inaccessible land sale lots
<b>West:</b> DRI & INST-1 Single-family residential dwellings and some vacant lots	<b>Subject Property:</b> RL-1 Vacant ±160.27 acres ±127.05 upland acres	<b>East:</b> A/RR Vacant, pasture, one single-family residence on ±83 acres
<b>Southwest:</b> DRI Platted Greenway Single-family residential	<b>South:</b> DRI Partially platted Greenway Single-family residential Halibut Road stub-out	<b>Southeast:</b> DRI Platted Greenway Single-family residential

*Source: Polk County Geographical Information System and site visit by County staff*

The project area is approximately ±160.27 acres. The applicant has indicated ± 33.22 acres of wetlands, leaving ±127.05 acres of uplands. The property was omitted from the bordering Poinciana Development of Regional Impact (DRI) (PUD 71-10) and was previously under the Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) land use designation. LDCPAL-2024-14 was approved on July 1, 2025, by the Board (5-0) to adopt an ordinance enabling the subject site to change its Development Area from Rural Development Area (RDA) to Urban Enclave Area (UEA), given the availability of centralized potable water and wastewater. The Future Land Use Map was also changed from A/RR to Residential Low (RL). Since no subsequent sub-district changes were filed, the property defaulted to Residential Low-1 (RL-1). The Planning Commission approved a Planned Development approval for 430 single-family detached lots under case LDPD-2025-1 on August 6, 2025 by a vote of 7-0.

To the north and east are floodplains, wetlands, vacant lands, inaccessible tracts, and one large ranching property with a single residential dwelling on it, but the primary surrounding uses are single-family detached lots platted between 1970 and 1971 under various phases of Poinciana. In some places the lots are separated by a platted “Greenway” in the Poinciana development which mainly serves drainage purposes. Single-family residences on suburban sized lots is the established residential pattern of development in the area that enables this application. Lot sizes range from approximately 0.21 to 0.62 acres and within a range of densities typically found in RL-2 and RL-3 sub-districts (2 & 3 DU/AC, respectively). Though these lots have been entitled for over 50 years, development of them – and Poinciana at large – has experienced stops and starts in accordance to market fluctuations and availability of utilities.

## **Compatibility with the Surrounding Land Uses, Infrastructure, and Environment:**

The Comprehensive Plan defines Compatibility in Section 4.400 as “A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion.” The LDC defines compatibility as “A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.”

### **A. Land Uses:**

The dominant surrounding uses are single-family homes, the same as proposed here. Typical lot widths in the adjacent Poinciana subdivisions range from 70 to 75 feet, which was standard for that time (1970s). Since the conception of Poinciana, there has been a decrease in lot sizes to account for market demand as well as increased development standards, such as the open space, stormwater management, etc. It has been generally accepted that when this ratio exceeds two new lots abutting one old lot, additional buffering and landscaping are required to mitigate the intensities, and below that no further transition strategy is needed. With this site plan, the applicant has placed 50-foot-wide lots along the southern property line adjacent to typical lot widths of 70-foot-wide existing lots. Similarly, 60-foot-wide lots are proposed along the western property line adjacent to 75-foot-wide lots. In both cases, the lot width ratio is under 2:1. Additionally, the site plan calls out enhanced buffering by placing ponds and landscaping between existing and proposed lots. It is worth mentioning that the ongoing development in Poinciana is not held to these standards. Therefore, staff find no reasonable incompatibilities between the proposed site plan and surrounding uses. Larger lots are located around the periphery of the site with smaller 45-foot-wide lots located towards the interior.

### **B. Infrastructure:**

Polk County Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.102-A3 states, “Development shall be distributed throughout the County consistently with this Future Land Use Element so that the public utility, other community services, and public transit and transportation systems can be efficiently utilized; and compact, high-density and intensity development is located where urban services can be made available.”

LDC Section 303 states that the intensity and timeliness of a PD shall be determined by the surrounding infrastructure needed to support the residents within that development. The minimum qualifications for residential density shall be based on achieving a locational score for the Future Land Use Map district and the proximity to existing or programed infrastructure and services (the "Locational Eligibility Score").

To achieve the requested 3.38 DU/AC required a locational eligibility score of 16, based on LDC Tables 3.3 and 3.4, and was easily achieved (< 22 pts.) and approved by the Planning Commission. The site benefits from its proximity to utilities, collector roadways, emergency services, schools, and parks, as will be further detailed below. The applicant is proposing a through-road with sidewalks that will connect Chinook Road to the north to Halibut Road to the south, helping to complete the roadway grid. This will be a collector road maintained by the County. The rest of the internal local roads within the development will be maintained by this proposed CDD. The site plan represents a natural expansion of the Poinciana development and meets the goals established by the Comprehensive Plan for development in the UEA.

### C. Environmental:

The Polk County Comprehensive Plan has a Conservation Element. Division 2.300 of the Comprehensive Plan mentions, “The goal, objectives, and policies of the Conservation Element are designed to protect the natural resources which make Polk County a special place while preventing degradation of the environment and allowing development and economic expansion to occur.” There should be no serious environmental conditions that need to be addressed with this subject site. There are a few environmental limitations with the development of this property that will require further study prior to development. These include a flood study, an endangered species study, and a wetland delineation. The 430 units will be located on an upland area containing mostly good soil with few limitations to development. Wetlands and the more flood-prone areas are set aside and protected (see Exhibit 4).

### Nearest and Zoned Elementary, Middle, and High School

The zoned schools for this development are Laurel Elementary; Lake Marion Creek Middle; and Haines City Senior High. However, a new high school is planned for Bayberry Street just east of Marigold Drive. It will be within three miles of this site. Table 2, to follow, provides a breakdown of the estimated demand for student seats for each level of schooling at the requested number of lots, in addition to the current school capacity. For this table, staff utilized rates for single-family detached units.

**Table 2**

School	Annual Estimated Demand	Distance from Subject Site	School Capacity (including portables)
Laurel Elementary	63	1.2 miles	78%
Lake Marion Creek Middle	37	1.4 miles	85%
Haines City Senior High	51	6.4 miles	95%

*Source: Polk County School Board, GIS, Google Maps*

A non-binding letter of concurrency was submitted by the applicant dated March 12, 2025, showing capacity in the elementary school but not the middle or high school levels; however, there was adequate capacity in the adjacent zoned schools. No seats are being reserved for the proposed project now, however. The development will need to apply for a binding letter later in the development process to receive school concurrency.

This development will not be built overnight and could span as much as 10 years, based on historical growth in the area. Families will not be occupying the units until later than the 2026-27 school year, at the earliest.

On Sept. 17, 2024, the Board of County Commissioners adopted a new Impact Fee Ordinance (Ord 2024-62). The new rates went into effect on Jan. 1, 2025. Depending on when build-out begins, this project could generate between \$4,783,320 and \$5,240,410 in educational impact fees.

### Nearest Sheriff, Fire, and EMS Station

Polk County Fire Rescue provides Advanced Life Support transport to all residents and visitors of Polk County. It also provides fire suppression, rescue services, and fire prevention services to all unincorporated Polk County and the municipalities of Eagle Lake, Polk City, Mulberry, Lake Hamilton, and Hillcrest Heights. Emergency response is considered effective if response times are

within eight (8) minutes in rural and suburban areas and 13 minutes in urban areas. The County provides ambulance service to all municipalities as well as the unincorporated areas. This site will be served by Polk County Fire Rescue Station 46, located at 9500 Marigold Avenue, Poinciana. It has both fire and ambulance crews 24/7. It is backed up by stations on Watkins Road and Cypress Parkway. Table 3, below, provides locations and response times from May 2025.

**Table 3**

	Name of Station	Distance	Response Time*
Sheriff	Ridge District Command located at 9630 Marigold Avenue, Poinciana	±3.8 miles	P1: 12:25 minutes P2: 30:00 minutes
Fire	Polk County Fire Rescue Station 46, located at 9500 Marigold Avenue, Poinciana	±3.8 miles	10-12 minutes
EMS	Polk County Fire Rescue Station 46, located at 9500 Marigold Avenue, Poinciana	±3.8 miles	10-12 minutes

Source: Polk County Sheriff's Office and Public Safety

\*Response times are based from when the station receives the call, not from when the call is made to 911.

On December 30, 2025, a new District Command office opened next to Fire Rescue Station 46 on Marigold Road. The areas of responsibility within this district are the unincorporated areas of Poinciana, Haines City, Davenport, and Lake Hamilton.

Typically, Sheriff response times are not as much a function of the distance to the nearest sheriff's substation, but more a function of the overall number of patrol officers within an area of the County. **Priority 1 Calls (P1)** are true emergencies such as in-progress burglary, robbery, injuries, etc. **Priority 2 Calls (P2)** refer to events that have already occurred, such as a burglary that occurred while the homeowner was on vacation and had just been discovered.

### Water and Wastewater Demand and Capacity:

This proposed CDD will be connected to the Toho Water Authority for water and wastewater treatment systems. Development in the UEA is required to connect to public water and sewer facilities, and the proposed densities physically require this connection.

#### A. Estimated Demand and Service Provider:

The proposed development is for 430 single-family detached units. Single-family detached units are estimated to generate 360 gallons per day (GPD) of demand for water and 270 GPD for wastewater.

Table 4, to follow, provides generalized comparison estimates of the anticipated water and wastewater demands between a development at the base density for RL-1; the highest that could be accomplished through a PD; and the application.

**Table 4**

Subject Property ±127.05 ac. RL-1	RL-1 (1 DU/AC)	Max. Density 5 DU/AC	Proposed Plan
Permitted Intensity	127 SF Units	635 SF Units	430 Units
Potable Water Consumption (GPD)	45,720 GPD	228,600 GPD	154,800 GPD

**Table 4**

<b>Subject Property</b> ±127.05 ac. RL-1	<b>RL-1</b> <b>(1 DU/AC)</b>	<b>Max. Density</b> <b>5 DU/AC</b>	<b>Proposed Plan</b>
Wastewater Generation (GPD)	34,290 GPD	171,450 GPD	116,100 GPD

It is important to note that this is a preliminary review. Further analysis and binding capacity determinations for potable water and wastewater will be required during the Level 2 Review process.

#### **B. Available Capacity:**

The Toho Water Authority is the public water or wastewater service provider in this area, Listed below are the Permitted, Maximum Treatment, and Excess Capacity data from the applicant:

Water Treatment Plant: – Toho Water Authority – Poinciana Water System PWS 349-4429

Permitted Capacity: 4,810,000 GPD

Max Treated: 3,236,800 GPD

Excess Capacity: 1,573,200 GPD

Wastewater Treatment Plant: TWA – Lake Marion – WRF A010979

Permitted Capacity: 3,000,000 GPD

Average Treated: 2,220,000 GPD

Excess Capacity: 780,000 GPD

According to documentation submitted with the application, Toho staff has determined that it has potable water, reuse and sewer capacity with existing facilities and expansions as part of planned improvements contained in its Capital Improvement Plan to serve the project. A 10" potable water main is located south of property and will require a tap. Another 8" water main is approximately 145' north of property and will require extension. A 10" wastewater gravity main is approximately 135' south of property and will also require an extension. A reuse main is found approximately 13,000 feet from the site. Fire hydrants are located north and south of the property, but new ones will need to be installed within the development.

#### **C. Planned Improvements:**

TOHO has multiple plans for short-term system improvements underway, including additional raw water wells and expansion of their wastewater plants, according to information found on their website. The Poinciana system has three water production facilities and three wastewater treatment plants. One water production facility and two water treatment plants have expansion capabilities. Their long-term water supply plan is the Cypress Lake project. Water generated through that facility will be mixed into the Poinciana water system and connected to the Polk County Utilities network in the future.

### **Roadways/ Transportation Network**

The Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) monitors traffic congestion on over 425 roadway segments (950 directional links). The Roadway Network Database contains current traffic data for all arterial and collector roads and includes information on the current traffic volume and level-of-service for these major roads. The RND contains over 26 fields of transportation data for over 1,300 miles of state, County, and city roads in Polk County – one of the largest road networks in the State of Florida.



Much of the transportation data contained in the updated RND is based on traffic counts taken recently by the TPO and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and is used to calculate the level of service and how much capacity is available on a given road based on the road's level of service (LOS) standard. Also included are several safety and multi-modal indicators that help us track some of the TPO's performance measures and targets. This includes a calculation of crash rates, as well as if there is a presence of transit services, sidewalks and bicycle facilities for each road segment.

The report identifies both daily and peak hour traffic volumes. Daily traffic volumes are reported in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) – the typical traffic volume on a weekday over a 24-hour period. Peak hour traffic represents the highest hourly traffic volume for period between 4 – 7 p.m. It is reported as both a two-way volume and as directional volumes (east and west or north and south).

The peak hour traffic volumes are used to estimate the level-of-service for each roadway, in each direction. Level-of-service refers to the quality of traffic flow. It is the primary measure of traffic congestion. Level-of-service (LOS) is measured on a scale of 'A' to 'F' with LOS 'A' being the best (free-flow traffic) and LOS 'F' being the worst (severe traffic congestion).

#### A. Estimated Demand:

It is estimated that there will be 7.81 vehicle trips per unit each day on average and approximately one (1.0) vehicle trip per unit either coming or going during the peak hour for the 430 single-family detached dwellings proposed.

Table 5, to follow, provides generalized comparison estimates of the traffic demands between a development at the base density for RL-1; the highest that could be accomplished through a PD; and the application.

**Table 5**

<b>Subject Property</b>	<b>RL-1 1 DU/AC</b>	<b>Max. Density 5 DU/AC</b>	<b>Proposed Plan</b>
±127.05 ac. RL-1			
Permitted Intensity	127 SF Units	635 SF Units	430 SF
Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT)	992 AADT	4,960 AADT	3,358 AADT
Peak PM Hour Trips	127 Peak PM	635 Peak PM	430 Peak PM

With 430 units, a Major Traffic Study is required during the Level 2 Review process because the average annual daily trip rate (AADT) exceeds 750.

The most crucial time to judge a project's traffic influence is during the PM peak hour because that is the "worst case scenario." The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) has conducted numerous studies on how much traffic residential developments place on the roadway system at all times of the day. The highest impact to the roadway system's capacity are traffic leaving the development and entering the system. ITE estimates that approximately 37% (159 vehicles) will be leaving the development during this three-hour period.

The primary access to the site will be from a connection with Halibut Road to the south and Chinook Road to the north. A cross-connection between the two will be constructed. Halibut intersects with Pine Street to the south, which leads to Lake Marion Creek Drive, Hemlock Avenue, and Marigold Avenue, all Urban Collector roadways.

B. Available Capacity:

The roads surrounding the subject site should have sufficient capacity available, depending on the eventual use and full build out of the site. The Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) monitors certain roadways based on maximum approved traffic in comparison to current vehicle trips to determine what capacity is available.

Table 6, below, provided a generalized estimate of the available capacity on nearby roadway links. It appears that the second phase of the widening of Marigold will be needed before the first phase is completed.

**Table 6**

<b>Link #</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Current Level of Service (LOS)</b>	<b>Available PM Peak Hour Capacity</b>	<b>Minimum LOS Standard</b>
8214N	Lake Marion Creek Drive From: Marigold Avenue to CR 580 (Cypress Parkway)	C	469	D
8214S	Lake Marion Creek Drive From: CR 580 (Cypress Parkway) to Marigold Avenue	C	458	D
8100 N	Marigold Avenue South From: Lake Hatchineha Road To: Lake Marion Creek Drive	C	452	D
8100 S	Marigold Avenue South From: Lake Marion Creek To: Lake Hatchineha Road	C	437	D
8431 N	Marigold Avenue Central From: Lake Marion Creek Drive To: Palmetto Street	F	-37	D
8431 S	Marigold Avenue Central From: Palmetto Street To: Lake Marion Creek Drive	F	-75	D
8101 N	Marigold Avenue North From: Palmetto St. To: S. Cypress Parkway	C	897*	D
8101 S	Marigold Avenue North From: Cypress Parkway To: Palmetto St.	C	852*	D
4202E	Cypress Parkway (CR 580) From: Rhododendron Ave. To: Osceola County Line	C	1,333*	E
4202W	Cypress Parkway (CR 580) From: Osceola County Line To: Rhododendron Ave.	C	1,306*	E
8337E	SR 538 Poinciana Parkway (Toll Road) From: Cypress Parkway To: U.S. 17/92	C	278	D
8337W	SR 538 Poinciana Parkway (Toll Road) From: U.S. 17/92 To: Cypress Parkway	C	258	D

*Source: Polk County Transportation Planning Organization, Concurrency Roadway Network Database January 17, 2025.*

*\*Indicates capacity after programmed improvements*

As identified above, Lake Marion Creek Drive has sufficient PM peak hour capacity to support future development activity. Much of the traffic from this development will travel north on Lake Marion Creek to reach Cypress Parkway according to modeling. However, a large amount will be going south for convenience commercial goods, school pick-up/drop-off, and recreation events. It is speculated that weekly commercial and grocery needs will develop to the south in the future.

C. Roadway Conditions:

Lake Marion Creek Drive is a County-maintained Urban Collector roadway with a surface width of 20 feet and a Pavement Condition Index of “Fair.”

The two closest roads to the site are Chinook Road and Halibut Road. They are both Local Residential roads that are 20 feet wide. The Pavement Condition Index for Chinook Road is “Very Good.” For Halibut Road, while the immediate link next to the subject property is rated as “Good,” subsequent portions of this road are also classified as “Fair.”

#### D. Sidewalk Network

There is a sidewalk along the east side of Halibut Road next to the site's southern boundary and connection with internal sidewalks is anticipated. This sidewalk connects with sidewalks along Pine Street.

#### E. Planned Improvements

Intersection improvements and signalization at Marigold Avenue at Hemlock Drive and Marigold Avenue at Lake Marion Creek Road were recently completed along with sidewalk improvements along Pine Street. Table 7, to follow, shows planned improvements to the surrounding roadway network in the County's 5-year Community Investment Program (CIP).

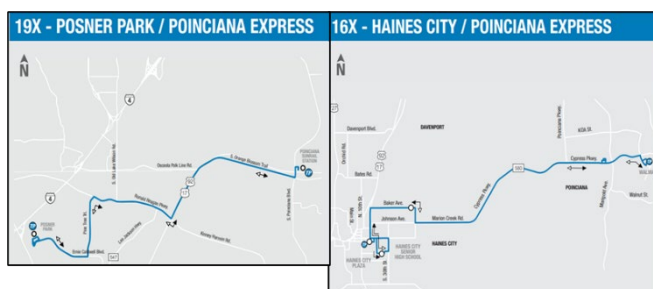
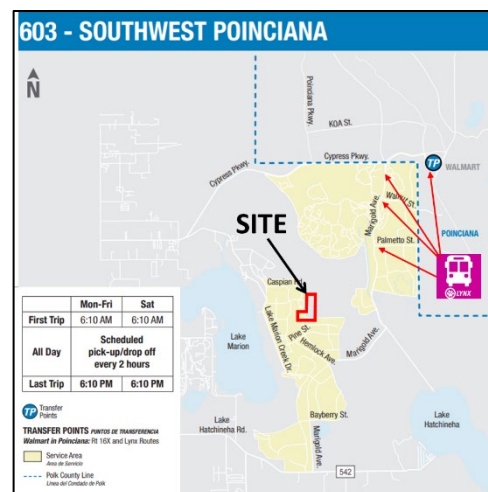
**Table 7**

Road	Fiscal Year CIP (estimated cost)	Project Description
Marigold Avenue Widening	\$59,000,000	Widen Marigold Avenue from CR 580/Cypress Parkway to Palmetto Street from two-lanes to four-lanes (about 2.2 miles). Marigold Avenue widening is a priority due to population and employment growth in the Poinciana area. SWFWMD permitting complete. Right-of-way acquisition underway. In re-design to minimize impacts to existing transmission lines. <b>Construction is TBD.</b>
Intersection improvements at Marion Creek Road and Cypress Parkway	\$2,600,000	Finalizing construction cost estimates for signalization.
Caspian Road Sidewalks	Pending construction bids	Study Phase

The subject site is west of the approved widening of Marigold Avenue. It is located along a separate phase of this roadway project that is anticipated to be widened in the future. The timing and funding of these improvements have not yet been approved.

#### F. Mass Transit

Citrus Connection offer a call-for-ride service to the entire Poinciana area that takes passengers to transfer points to other routes and services such as the Orlando Metro Area Lynx system. It operates Monday through Saturday. Riders call at least two hours in advance and up to one day in advance. Available times vary based on available seating and existing trips booked at the time of the call. From these points connections can be made to cities within Polk County as well as Suntrax light rail stations.



#### Park Facilities and Environmental Lands:

The County's residential development standards require functional open space to be designed within a development that includes recreational amenities for the residents.

Sidewalks are required on both sides of all residential streets connecting the residents to the open space and recreational amenities.

A. Location:

The Lil Halibut Park is located one mile southeast of the site, and the Poinciana Community Park is four miles south. The proposed use could impact these facilities, due to greater usage because of more residential development in proximity to these facilities. The Lil Halibut Park is located at 1681 Halibut Road, Poinciana. The Poinciana Community Park is at 5109 Allegheny Road, Poinciana 34759.

B. Services:

The Poinciana Community Park has a 0.75-mile paved walking path, a playground, baseball fields, a cricket pitch and basketball parks. There are also multipurpose fields, a pavilion that can be rented and league play. Additionally, a dog park features separate areas for large and small dogs, agility equipment, water fountains and shaded areas for humans. The Lil Halibut Park is a small neighborhood playground. It features an accessible, gated playground for children ages 4 through 12.

C. Environmental Lands:

The subject site is south of the Lake Marion Creek Wildlife Management Area, which is owned by the South Florida Water Management District. There are also lands +/- 0.75 mile northeast of the site that have conservation easements. The Bellini Preserve, which was recently acquired by Polk County, is located between Lake Marion Creek Road and Lake Marion. This property is approximately 0.8 miles west of the site.

D. Planned Improvements:

The County purchased Bellini Preserve, 600± acres of land on the eastern coast of Lake Marion for preservation, education, and recreation. Future development includes a 16,000 sq. ft. building, a boat ramp, and a parking lot for up to 40 vehicles.

## **Environmental Conditions**

The Polk County Comprehensive Plan has a Conservation Element. Division 2.300 of the Comprehensive Plan mentions, “The goal, objectives, and policies of the Conservation Element are designed to protect the natural resources which make Polk County a special place while preventing degradation of the environment and allowing development and economic expansion to occur.” There should be no serious environmental conditions that need to be addressed with this subject site.

A. Surface Water:

No surface water features are located on this site. Lake Marion is approximately one mile to the west. It is a 3,021-acre public lake. This waterbody is impaired due to mercury and heightened levels of nutrients, including nitrogen and phosphorus, according to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) implementation of the Impaired Waters Rule (IWR). According to the Polk County Water Atlas, the FDEP evaluates whether waters meet their designated uses, which include aquatic life use support, primary contact and recreation use support, fish and shellfish consumption use support, and drinking water use support.

Still, the lake is considered healthy through the Lake Vegetation Index (LVI) report on August 11, 2023. The LVI is a bioassessment tool created by the FDEP and monitored by the Polk County Water Atlas to assess the biological condition of aquatic plant communities in Florida lakes. According to the Polk County Water Atlas, “It utilizes a multi-metric index that evaluates how closely a lake's plant community compares to a lake containing minimal human disturbance (known as a reference lake) and is based on a field assessment of aquatic and wetland plants. Plants respond to disturbances such as the introduction of invasive exotic species (hydrilla as an example), lakeshore alterations such as creating beaches, and introduction of excess nutrients received by the surrounding watershed (use of fertilizers).”

No impacts from the proposed development are anticipated, however. The elevation of the site is varied but generally slopes to the north. Elevations range from a high of 109 feet in the southwest corner of the site, and 77 feet at the northern property line. The site plan shows dry stormwater ponds onsite to account for the increase of impervious surface on the subject property. These will be designed in accordance with water management district and County standards and reviewed during the engineered site plan review process.

#### B. Wetlands/Floodplains:

The site plan accounts for approximately 33.22 acres of wetlands on the northern end of the property. The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) lists these as Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands. LDC Section 620 provides standards for development around wetlands, prohibiting lots in these areas. As such, no development is proposed in this area, and a 25-foot-wide upland buffer will be provided around the wetland boundaries.

Flood hazard areas are also described in the same general areas as the wetlands. These do not have a determined base flood elevation at this time, but a flood study will be required in accordance with LDC Section 630. Any impacts to flood zones requires "cup for cup" compensation to account for the lost flood storage.

#### C. Soils:

The site is comprised of soils within varying limitations for development, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Polk County Survey.

Table 8, below, lists the soils associated with the subject site.

**Table 8**

<b>Soil Name</b>	<b>Septic Tank Absorption Field Limitations</b>	<b>Limitations to Dwellings without Basements</b>	<b>% of Site (approximate)</b>
Adamsville fine sand	Severe: wetness, poor filter	Moderate: wetness	10%
Astatula sand,	Slight	Slight	43%
Basinger fine sand	Severe: ponding, poor filter	Severe: ponding	4%
Hontoon Muck	Severe: subsides, ponding, low strength	Severe: subsides, ponding, low strength	8%
Narcoossee sand	Severe: wetness, poor filter	Moderate: wetness	3%
Satellite sand	Severe: wetness, poor filter	Severe: wetness	2%
Tavares fine sand	Moderate: wetness	Slight	30%

*Source: Soil Survey of Polk County, Florida, USDA, Soil Conservation Service*

Future development of the site will be subject to Section 2.303: “Soils” of the County’s Comprehensive Plan (in conjunction with the LDC) which requires all development to implement

Best Management Practices based on the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Florida Development Manual. All future development is required by the LDC to implement best management practices for erosion-control, and the soils are not of such that would limit compliance with applicable regulations for the proposed use. This project will utilize centralized wastewater. Without these services, it would not be possible to develop this site at the intensity proposed.

#### D. Protected Species & Habitats

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Biodiversity Matrix, the site is located within a mile of an eagle's nest. Prior to site clearing or grubbing, the applicant shall hire a qualified professional to conduct a site survey/walkover to ensure that no threatened or endangered plant or animal species exist on the site. If any are discovered, the applicant shall properly protect the specie(s) or mitigate any impacts consistent with federal, state, and local law.

This site is listed as a potential connection area with preserved properties within the Polk Green District Map. No conservation easements are located adjacent to the subject site, according to the Polk County Property Appraiser.

The Polk Green District overlay was established to guide planning for, and the acquisition or conservation of, an interconnected network of open spaces, natural areas and agricultural lands. The overlay will provide a framework for land use policies and community investments that provide:

- a. protection of natural resources and wildlife habitat;
- b. habitat corridors through linked open spaces;
- c. protection of historic and cultural resources;
- d. recreational opportunities;
- e. community health benefits;
- f. economic development opportunities; and
- g. multi-use trails connecting population centers to natural areas.

This site is located within what is termed an Opportunity Area of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, a statewide network of approximately 18 million acres of connected lands and waters supporting wildlife. In 2021, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act formally recognized the geography of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, and the legislature has budgeted nearly \$2 billion for protecting these lands since that time. Corridor Opportunity Areas are identified lands within the Florida Wildlife Corridor that have not been designated for environmental protection and conservation.

#### E. Archeological Resources:

According to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, there are no archeological sites listed in the Florida Master Site File for the property.

#### F. Wells (Public/Private)

The site is not within a Wellfield Protection District. No private wells are indicated onsite.

#### G. Airports:

This property is not within an Airport Impact District.

## **Economic Factors:**

This site is in an area that has been growing due to the demand for housing brought on by improvements to utilities and the transportation network and the market desire for affordable suburban living. The site lies between several large state and federal preservation lands, which gives it an element of exclusivity and separation from urban areas. The area has an improved amount of accessibility while at the same time a bit of seclusion.

While the County has invested in the development of infrastructure to support urban levels of residential development, such as recreation facilities and public safety services, there has been little private investment into supporting commerce. The surrounding residents have a high-quality recreation facility nearby at the 28-acre regional park and improved EMS and fire rescue services; however, there are few nearby retail options and fewer employment opportunities resulting in longer travel time for residents and greater traffic impacts. More residential growth without these private supports leads to costly transportation system improvements.

One reason that the commercial real estate market has not recognized the economic potential for the area is because the growth has come so fast that the data has not reached the attention of investors. The other is that so much land has been dedicated to housing, and there is very little space remaining for other land use activities. Too much residential development and not enough commerce may drive away home buyers or cause existing dwellers to move out of the area. In the long run, this will reduce the demand for housing development and could adversely affect existing housing values.

For this particular property, though, commercial development is not ideal. It is situated at the ends of local residential roadways on the outskirts of Poinciana. It would not meet the Comprehensive Plan policies for changing it to a commercial land use district and would not appeal to commercial investors as it lacks access along a major thoroughfare.

Community Development Districts (CDDs) have become popular methods to fund development infrastructure in high growth housing markets. Upfront infrastructure costs can be financed through bonds (long term and tax exempt) that will receive payments from additional assessments levied on the future properties by the district through the County's property tax collection process. The applicant for the district is required to gain the authorization of all the owners of property to be included in the district and a good faith estimate of the costs that will be incurred by individuals and entities required to comply with the special district. Without a CDD, a developer would need to find other sources to fund the development infrastructure and amenities such as an organized group of investors or a lending institution. These other funding alternatives require higher costs.

Based on the number of residential lots proposed within the district (430) and the Engineer's Cost Estimate (\$26,221,995) provided (See Exhibit 6), the per unit cost will potentially be \$60,982 per unit. Table 9 below provides an estimated per unit cost of other CDDs approved by the Board. When spread over a 20-year bonding period, the CDD debt will be in the range of \$3,260 per unit. There will also be an additional cost for CDD maintenance. The CDD fees could be range in the \$4,000s, which is higher than most other CDDs in the County. The table to follow provides an estimated per unit cost of other CDDs approved by the Board.

The per unit costs will be amortized and assessed on each property over a period adequate to pay off the debt and provide maintenance and administrative costs in the future. There are currently 69 CDDs approved in the County and over half of them are actively assessing properties. There are

26 CDDs in effect in the unincorporated County. There are currently 1,999 CDDs in Florida, according to Florida Commerce as of December 14, 2024.

**Table 9**

Case#	District Name	units	Total Cost	per unit cost
CDD 06-01	Poinciana West	1,650	\$31,907,200	\$19,338
CDD 15-01	Champions Reserve	221	\$7,350,000	\$33,258
CDD 16-03	Highland Meadows II	415	\$8,200,000	\$19,760
CDD 18-03 LDCDD-2020-2 LDCDD-2020-3 LDCDD-2021-8	North Powerline Road	1,868	\$56,851,293	\$29,954
LDCDD-2018-1	Highland Meadows West CDD	395	\$8,242,498	\$22,583
LDCDD-2019-2	Forest Lake CDD	571	\$12,290,000	\$21,524
LDCDD-2019-3	Saddle Creek Preserve CDD	425	\$12,825,000	\$30,177
LDCDD-2019-4	Astonia CDD original	687	\$12,764,000	\$18,580
LDCDD-2020-1	Sand Mine Road original	615	\$17,971,119	\$29,221
LDCDD-2021-1	Westside Haines City	2,745	\$68,625,000	\$25,000
LDCDD-2021-2	Astonia Expansion	1,013	\$25,920,000	\$25,587
LDCDD-2021-4	Hammock Reserve	1,029	\$23,868,500	\$25,196
LDCDD-2021-6	Lake Deer	597	\$17,324,082	\$29,019
LDCDD-2021-7	Fox Branch Ranch	641	\$18,478,762	\$28,828
LDCDD-2021-9	Belle Haven	353	\$13,145,000	\$37,238
LDCDD-2022-1	Yarborough Lane	562	\$22,825,000	\$40,614
LDCDD-2022-3	Schaller Preserve	415	\$16,058,446	\$38,695
LDCDD-2022-4	Hartford Terrace	517	\$24,420,000	\$47,234
LDCDD-2022-5	Sand Mine Road expansion	789	\$21,663,830	\$27,457
LDCDD-2022-6	Astonia CDD 2 <sup>nd</sup> expansion	1,413	\$36,920,000	\$26,129
LDCDD-2024-2	Groves at Lake Marion	423	\$16,420,222	\$38,819
LDCDD-2024-3	Cypress Creek Reserve	885	\$22,972,400	\$25,958
LDCDD-2024-6	Grenelefe CDD	1,946	\$38,775,000	\$19,926
LDCDD-2025-1	Winslow's Pointe CDD	533	\$26,620,000	\$49,944

### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and LDC:

The CDD property was approved under LDCPAL-2024-14 on July 1, 2025, by the Board of County Commissioners (5-0) to adopt an ordinance enabling the subject site to change its Development Area from Rural Development Area (RDA) to Urban Enclave Area (UEA). The Future Land Use Map was changed from Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) to Residential Low (RL). Per Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.107-A1, “*UEAs shall be those areas within the County which have developed at urban or suburban densities with County-owned, municipal or County-franchised potable-water systems, and centralized public sewer facilities, or private sewer system in excess of 400,000 GPD. UEAs are typically lacking the full complement of other urban services typically found in the Transit Supportive Development, Urban Growth, or Suburban Areas.*” Per Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.120-C4, “*Outside the TSDA, RL may contain single-family dwelling units, duplex units, small-scale multi-family units, and family-care homes, and shall be permitted, with County approval, at a density of up to, and including, 5 DU/AC.*”

On August 6, 2025, the Planning Commission approved LDPD-2025-1 a Planned Development for 430 single-family detached lots within a Residential Low-1 (RL-1) future land use designation and the Urban Enclave Area. The project area was approximately 160.27 acres with ±33.22 acres of wetlands. The gross density increased from one (1) dwelling unit per acre (DU/AC) to 3.38 DU/AC. Minimum lot sizes were reduced from 40,000 sq. ft. to 5,400 sq. ft. with a minimum lot width of 45 feet.



Table 10, to follow, provides an analysis of the proposed request when compared to typical policies of the Comprehensive Plan selected by staff for evaluation of development proposals. Based upon this analysis, the proposed request is consistent with relevant policies of the Polk County Comprehensive Plan.

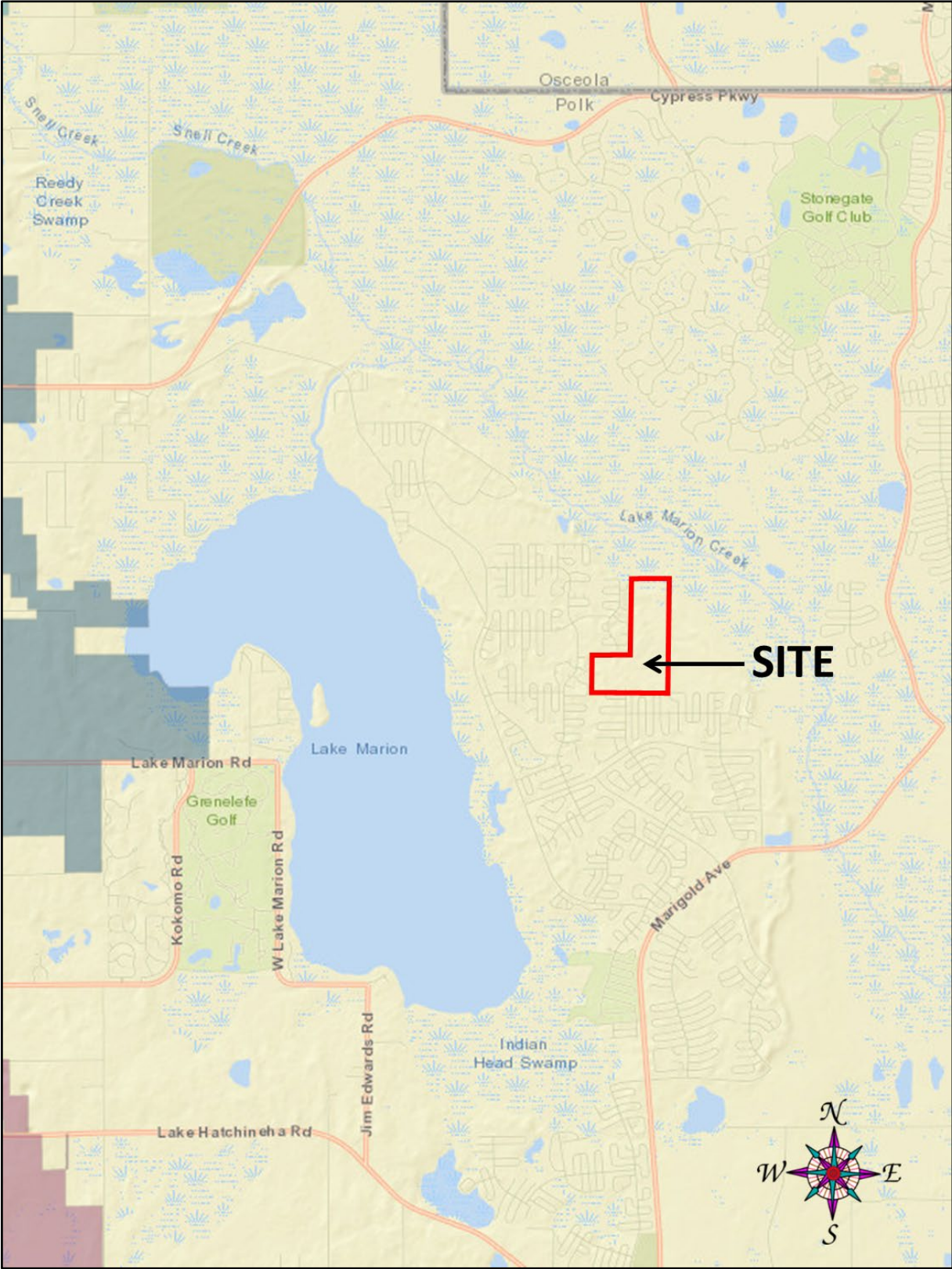
**Table 10**

<b>Comprehensive Plan Policy</b>	<b>Consistency Analysis</b>
POLICY 2.102-A2: COMPATIBILITY - Land shall be developed so that adjacent uses are compatible with each other, pursuant to the requirements of other Policies in this Future Land Use Element, so that one or more of the following provisions are accomplished: a. there have been provisions made which buffer incompatible uses from dissimilar uses; b. incompatible uses are made to be more compatible to each other through limiting the intensity and scale of the more intense use; c. uses are transitioned through a gradual scaling of different land use activities through the use of innovative development techniques such as a Planned Unit Development.	The proposed 430 single-family attached and detached unit development is compatible with neighboring properties and there is adequate infrastructure to support it as well. The connection to public wastewater enables higher density and smaller lot sizes. There are public safety facilities, school facilities, and employment opportunities within close proximity to the site.
POLICY 2.102-A1: DEVELOPMENT LOCATION – Polk County shall promote contiguous and compact growth patterns through the development process to minimize energy costs, conserve land, water, and natural resources, minimize the cost of services, and prevent development patterns where tracts of land are by-passed in favor of development more distant from services and existing Communities.	The site forms a contiguous and compact growth pattern of development between built phases of Poinciana. The planned development approval of LDPD-2025-1 demonstrated that this development is not premature. The project will connect to available centralized potable water and wastewater. Cluster design promotes compact growth and contiguous growth.
POLICY 2.102-A3: DISTRIBUTION - Development shall be distributed throughout the County consistently with this Future Land Use Element so that the public utility, other community services, and public transit and transportation systems can be efficiently utilized; and compact, high-density and intensity development is located where urban services can be made available.	The CDD is proposed in an area of the County that contains public utilities and community services in the Utility Enclave Area (UEA).
POLICY 2.102-A4: TIMING - The development of land shall be timed and staged in conjunction with the cost-effective and efficient provision of supporting community services which, at a minimum, shall require compliance with the Plan's Level of Service requirements and the County's concurrency management system.	There are existing services and physical infrastructure in place to accommodate such development. The development is in a location where adequate services are available.
POLICY 2.102-A15: ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES - The County will direct new growth to areas where adequate public facilities exist or are planned; and ensure that essential services are in place to provide for efficient, cost-effective response times from the Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, and Emergency Management Service (EMS).	The subject property is located within an area of the County that has adequate public safety services as identified in the staff report. There is a Fire Rescue station and a Sheriff's District Command Center within less than 4 miles of the site.

**Comments from other Agencies:** The Polk County Land Development Engineering and the County Surveyor contributed to the drafting of this report.

**Exhibits:**

- Exhibit – 1      Location Map
- Exhibit – 2      Future Land Use Map
- Exhibit – 3      2025 Satellite Photo (Context)
- Exhibit – 4      2025 Satellite Photo with Lot Layout (Close-up)
- Exhibit – 5      Proposed Potable Water and Wastewater Network
- Exhibit – 6      Proposed Facilities, Cost Estimate, with Operation and Maintenance Entity
- Exhibit – 7      CDD Board of Supervisors



Location Map





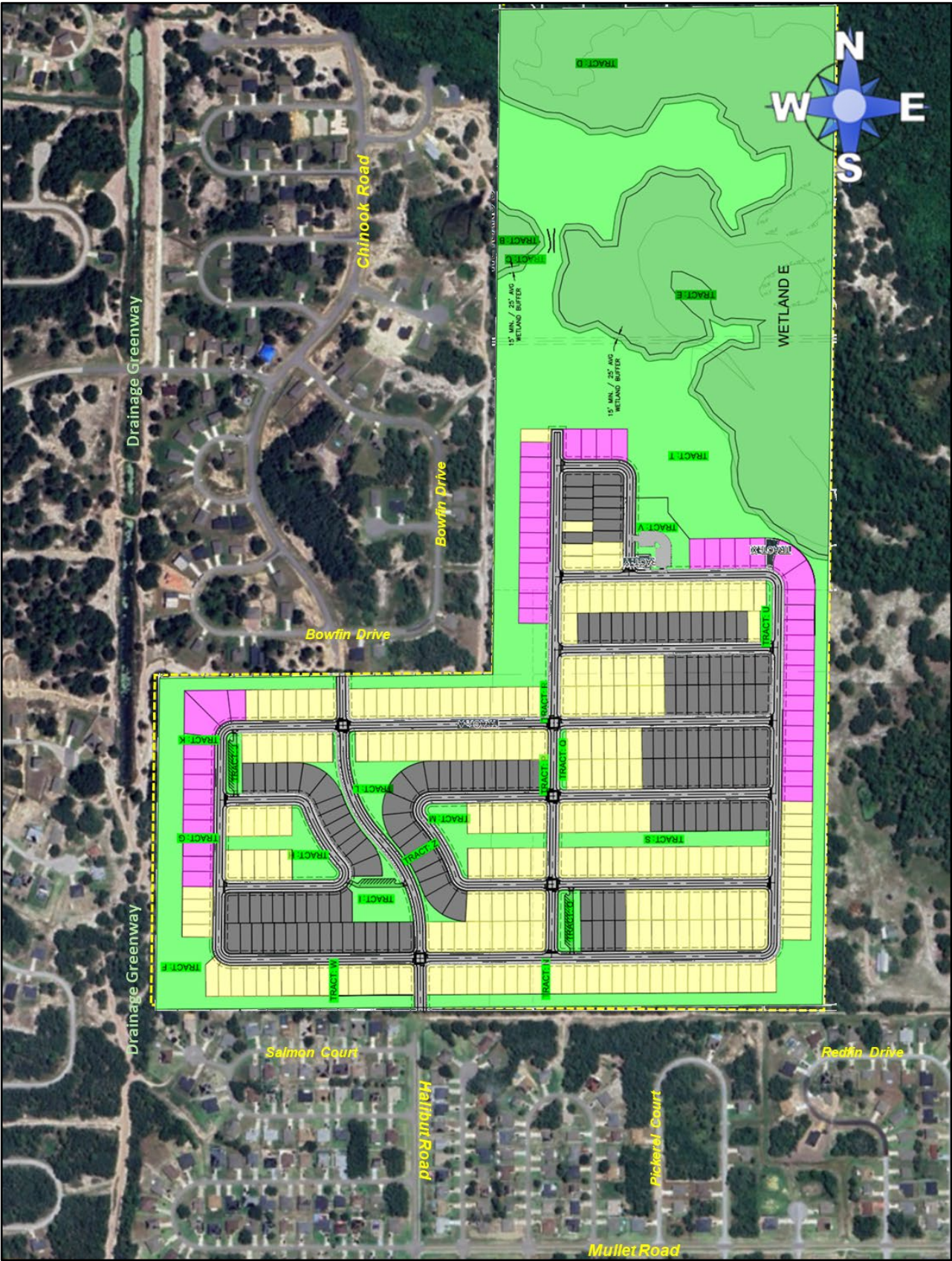
Future Land Use Map





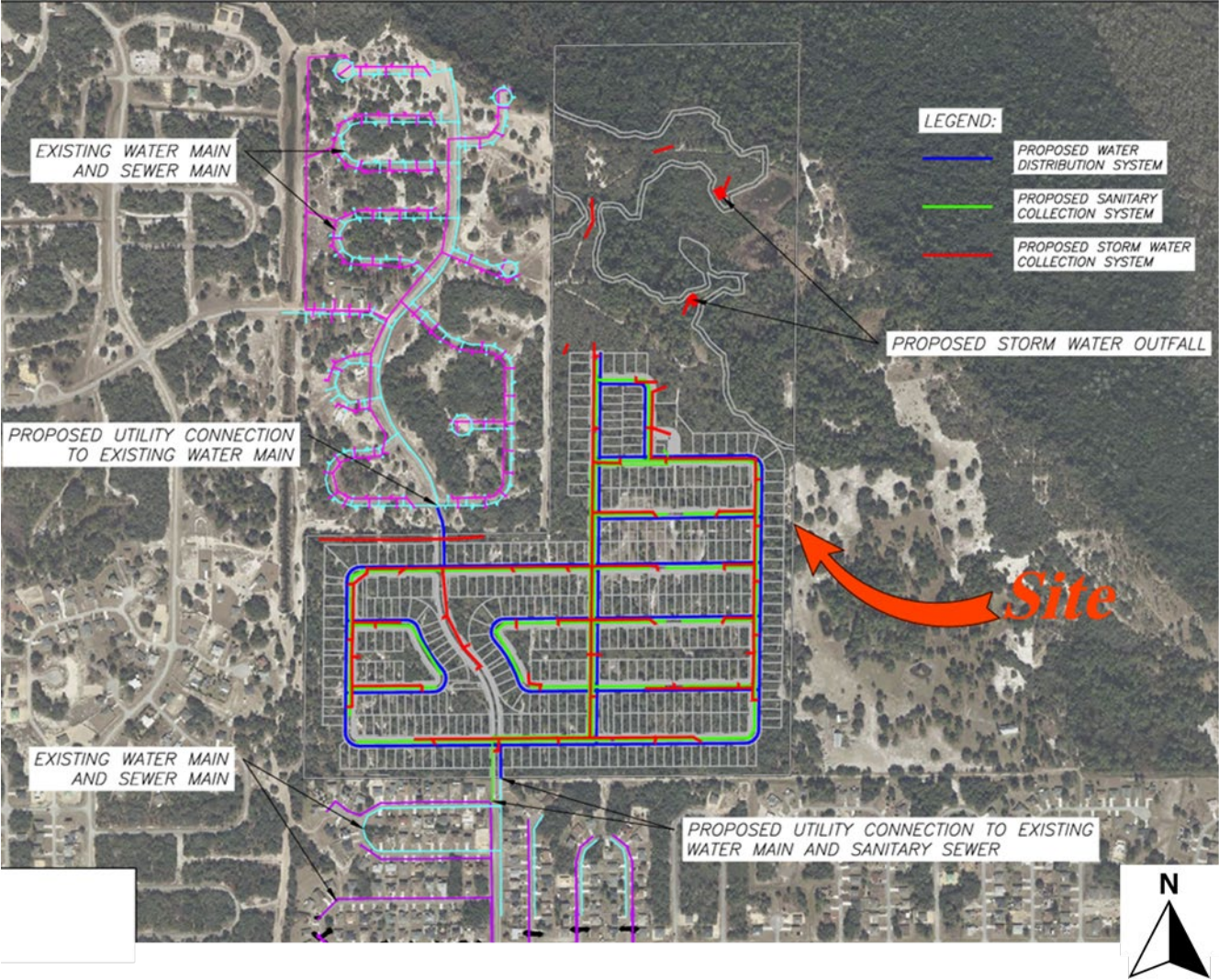
2025 Satellite Photo (Context)





2025 Satellite Photo (Close-up) with Lot Layout





# Water and Wastewater Plan

Facility	Construction Entity	Ownership Entity	Estimated CDD Cost	Estimated Completion Date
PROFESSIONAL FEES, PERMITTING FEES, ETC.	CDD	N/A	\$ 1,818,955.43	Jun-27
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	CDD	CDD	\$ 6,797,003.36	Jun-27
ONSITE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS	CDD	SEE NOTE 1	\$ 3,182,407.43	Jun-27
WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM	CDD	TOHO	\$ 3,211,911.86	Jun-27
SANITARY COLLECTION AND CONVEYANCE SYSTEM	CDD	TOHO	\$ 2,763,104.68	Jun-27
LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE AND RECREATION	CDD	CDD	\$ 2,000,000.00	Jan-28
CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY (15%)	CDD	N/A	\$ 2,772,594.59	Jan-28
UNDERGROUNDING DIFFERENCE FOR ELECTRIC UTILITIES	CDD	Duke	\$ 649,247.41	Jan-28
WATER/WASTEWATER IMPACT FEES	N/A	N/A	\$ 3,026,770.00	N/A
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</b>			<b>\$ 26,221,994.76</b>	

\* CDD = The Gardner Trails Community Development District

\*TOHO = Tohopekaliga Water Authority

\* Polk County = Polk County Public Works

NOTE 1 = POLK COUNTY SHALL BE THE OWNERSHIP ENTITY FOR THE COLLECTOR ROADWAY.  
THE CDD SHALL BE THE OWNERSHIP ENTITY OF OTHER ONSITE LOCAL ROADWAYS.

## Proposed Facilities, Cost Estimate, with Operations & Maintenance Entity



## **Gardner Trails Community Development District Board of Supervisors**

### **Seat 1**

Ian Prince  
250 Magnolia Ave #102  
Winter Haven, Florida 33880

### **Seat 2**

Meghan Mackie  
250 Magnolia Ave #102  
Winter Haven, Florida 33880

### **Seat 3**

Stephen Kalogridis  
250 Magnolia Ave #102  
Winter Haven, Florida 33880

### **Seat 4**

John McKay  
18416 Canary Lane  
Lutz, Florida 33558

### **Seat 5**

Ashley Prince  
250 Magnolia Ave #102  
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