

POLK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

DRC Date:	September 25, 2025	Level of Review:	Level 3 Review
PC Date:	December 3, 2025	Type:	Conditional Use
BoCC	N/A	Case Numbers:	LDCU-2025-30
Date:		Case Name:	Hardin Combee Church
Applicant:	Tom Wodrich	Case Planner:	Kyle Rogus, Planner II

Request:	The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use (CU) approval for a Religious Institution to be located in the Residential Low-3 land use district and a reduction in primary structure right-of-way setbacks from 35 feet to 15 feet on approximately 1.00 acre.
Location:	The subject site is located at 2729 Hardin Combee Road, north of the Polk Parkway, south of US Highway 92, east of Lake Parker Avenue, west of Combee Road, east of the city of Lakeland in Section 15, Township 28, Range 24.
Property Owners:	Iglesia Oasis Casa De Adoracion INC
Parcel Size (Number):	±1.00 acres Parcel IDs (#242815-000000-033110 & 242815000000033160)
Future Land Use:	Residential Low-3 (RL-3)
Development Area:	Transit Supportive Development Area (TSDA)
Nearest Municipality:	N/A
DRC Recommendation:	Conditional Approval
Planning Commission Vote:	Pending Hearing

Location Map



2023 Aerial Image



Summary:

The applicant, on behalf of the property owner, is requesting Conditional Use approval for a Religious Institution in the Residential Low-3 (RL-3) future land use district on approximately 1.0 acres at the intersection of Hardin Combee Road and Woodland Avenue, east of the city of Lakeland. This property has been used as a single-family residence with one (1) building (1,716 sq. ft.). since 1945. The applicant intends to revitalize the site by providing religious services to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The proposed Religious Institution will operate out of the existing 1,716 sq. ft. building along with the development of two additional structures totaling 4,550 sq. ft. Religious Institutions are conditionally permitted in the RL-3 Future Land Use district following a Level 3 Review by County Staff and a public hearing before the Planning Commission.

The subject property is located within a Transit Supportive Development Area (TSDA). This property is already being serviced by the city of Lakeland for potable water with no wastewater services available. The site will utilize an existing septic and drain field on site.

According to Section 303 of the Land Development Code (LDC) the Religious Institutions need 50 feet of frontage. The site has approximately 256 feet of direct frontage along Hardin Combee Road, which is a County-maintained urban collector road and is tracked for concurrency by Polk County's Transportation Planning Organization (Link 8087 E/W), according to the Polk County Road Inventory database. The site also has 122 feet of direct frontage along Woodland Avenue, which is a County-maintained urban collector road. Per Section 708, Table 7.10, the Religious Institution will require 28 parking spaces that are exempt from paved parking, aside from ADA spots. This request will not generate an increase in demand on the County's school system. The site is located within acceptable distances of fire, EMS, and police services. This area is supported by a public mass transportation system with the nearest Citrus Connection Transit Route stop approximately 0.2 miles from the subject site directly west. There are sidewalks that allow for safe pedestrian access.

Staff recommends approval of this request. The request is consistent with the LDC and Comprehensive Plan. This request is also compatible with the surrounding land uses. Parking will be setback 25 feet from adjacent residential property, all newly proposed buildings and lighting will be located outside the 50-foot compatibility area, and additional landscaping is required. The location of the subject site is ideal for the applicants request to revitalize the site as a religious institution as the surrounding area is majority residential in nature aside from properties accessing Combee Road North (SR 659). This provides direct access to the intended clientele. There is an existing religious institution (Christ Memorial Baptist Church) approximately 172 feet to the east from the subject site allowing an expansion of services.

Findings of Fact

- *This is a request for Conditional Use approval of a Religious Institution. This property is located at 2729 Hardin Combee Road, Lakeland, FL. The subject site is approximately ±1.0 acres in the Residential Low-3 (RL-3) land use district in the Transit Supportive Development Area (TSDA).*
- *According to Table 2.1 of the Land Development Code (LDC), a “Religious Institution” is a “C3” Conditional Use in the RL-3 district. As such, this Conditional Use request requires a Level 3 Review with a public hearing before the Planning Commission in accordance with Chapter 3, Section 303 of the LDC.*
- *According to POLICY 2.104-A5: DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA FOR TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT AREAS – “Development within the Transit Supportive Development Areas shall conform to the following criteria consistently with the requirements of the Land Development Code:*
 - a. provide access to transit facilities;*
 - b. connect to centralized potable water and sanitary sewer systems;*
 - c. incorporate design features that promote healthy communities and green building practices, as established in Section 2.1251, Community Design, of this element;*
 - d. implementation of “Complete Street’ and ‘Conservation Development’ principles as established under Section 2.1251, Community Design, of this element;*
 - e. integrate pedestrian-oriented features, including sidewalks, trails or walkways into every development including appropriate pedestrian shelters or awnings;*
 - f. provide access to civic space, parks, green areas, and open space and other amenities;*
 - g. be supported by public safety (i.e., fire, EMS and law enforcement);*
 - h. have access to public schools;*
 - i. provide connectivity with adjacent uses within the TSDA, and facilitate connectivity between the TSDA and other urban centers and the rural development areas.*
 - j. encourage the inclusion of a variety of housing choices, other than single family detached homes, townhomes, condominiums, and residential units in mixed use buildings by establishing minimum densities that preclude the exclusive use of single family detached units within designated areas as established in Policy 2.104-A7.*
- *According to POLICY 2.120-C4: Development Criteria of the Comprehensive Plan, “Residential development may contain a variety of housing types as defined by the Land Development Code within the TSDA. 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. Additionally, community facilities may be allowed in accordance with policies of this Plan.”*

- *Chapter 3, Section 303 of the LDC states, “In addition to the applicable district regulations Religious Institutions in Residential Districts shall meet the following requirements:*
 1. *There shall be at a minimum 50 feet of road frontage, and all access points shall be on a collector road or better if any of the following conditions exist:*
 - a. *The use (including accessory uses) generates 50 or more Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT).*
 - b. *The overall Gross Floor Area (GFA) exceeds 5,400 square feet.*
 2. *The proposed parking facilities shall be setback at least 25 feet from adjacent residential property.*
 3. *Off-street parking areas shall be surfaced and maintained to provide a durable, dust free surface and shall provide adequate drainage facilities for disposal of all collected surface water. Surfacing materials may include pavement, gravel, wood chips, pervious paving materials, or grass.*
 4. *Any proposal for a religious institution in a location that will render a legal use nonconforming shall require a Level 3 Review.*
 5. *Up to five percent (5%) of the parking area may contain RV connections for visiting associates of the institution that are not to exceed stays of longer than 30 days and limited to no more than three times per year. The Land Development Director may grant an extension to the institution not to exceed a total of 90 days for up to one time per year.”*
- *According to Section 204 Standard Land Use District of the LDC, “The purpose of the RL-3 district is to provide areas for the low density residential needs of residents in urban areas who desire areas with smaller lots, a minimum of 10,000 square feet.”*
- *On August 1, 2025, “Inglesia Oasis Casa De Adoracion INC” purchased the property through Warranty Deed with “English Family Residential Properties LLC,” according to O.R. Book 13651, Pages 0716-0717.*
- *The subject property is at the intersection of Hardin Combee Road and Woodland Avenue with approximately 256 feet of frontage off Hardin Combee Road and approximately 122 feet of frontage off Woodland Avenue respectively. Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Roadway with a paved surface width of 20 feet and posted speed limit of 30 MPH. Woodland Avenue (Road No. 841505) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Roadway with a paved surface width of 20 feet and posted speed limit of 35 MPH, according to the Polk County Roads Inventory.*
- *The site will utilize ingress and egress access off Hardin Combee Road tracked for concurrency by Polk County’s Transportation Planning Organization (Link #8087). The roadway link has a Level of Service (LOS) standard of “C” in eastern and western directions. According to the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization, Link 8087 is currently operating at about 10% of its capacity with sufficient trips available for the Religious Institution. There are 711 trips available eastbound and 707 trips available westbound.*

- *The proposed use is estimated to generate 28 Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT). According to Section 709.A of the LDC, the applicant will not be required to provide a minor traffic study and paved parking.*
- *According to Table 7.10 of the LDC, Religious Institutions require one (1) space per three (3) seats in the principal room of worship. According to the applicant, the request anticipates not more than 100 seats. At least twenty-eight (28) parking spaces are required given this request.*
- *According to Section 709.A, Religious Institutions are exempt from paved parking.*
- *The surrounding land use districts are comprised of RL-1 to the north across Hardin Combee Road and Residential Low-3 to the south, east, and west.*
- *The adjacent properties consist of residential development to the south and west.*
- *The subject property is zoned for Philip O'Brien Elementary School, Crystal Lake Middle School, and Tenoroc Senior High School. This requested use will not generate any additional demand on school capacity.*
- *This property is served by the Polk County Sheriff's Office's Southwest District substation located at 4120 US 98 South, Lakeland, FL 33801. The response times for the SW District were: Priority 1 – 8:30 & Priority 2 – 25:05.*
- *Both Fire and Ambulance response are from Polk County Fire Rescue Station 39, located at 3325 East Main Street, Lakeland. The travel distance is about 1.4 miles and travel time is estimated to be between five to seven minutes.*
- *There is a fire hydrant directly west of the subject property within the right-of-way of Hardin Combee Road approximately 236 feet from the subject property's northwest corner.*
- *The site lies within the City of Lakeland Utilities Service Area. Per discussions with City Utilities, wastewater services are not available to the site. The use will utilize an existing septic and drain field on the property.*
- *On the northern portion of the property, there is a sidewalk located within the right-of-way off of Hardin Combee Road.*
- *The closest park to the subject property is Aldine Combee Park, which is approximately ± 0.7 miles directly east which consists of several baseball fields, as well as a picnic area and a large screened-in pavilion that can be rented.*
- *According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Polk County Survey, the property is comprised 100% of Smyrna and Myakka fine sands. The soil has severe limitations for septic tank absorption fields and for small buildings.*

- *According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Biodiversity Matrix, the site is not located within a one-mile radius of a protected animal and plant species sighting along with natural communities.*
- *The general topography of the subject is relatively flat with elevations varying from 130 feet to 129 feet according to the Polk County GIS data viewer.*
- *There are no known historical or archeological resources onsite according to the Secretary of State's Department of Historical Resources Florida Master Site File.*
- *There are no wetlands or flood hazard areas on the property. The property is not located in a Wellfield Protection District.*
- *The site is not located within any airport flight path or height notification zones.*

Development Review Committee Recommendation: Based on the information provided by the applicant, the findings of fact, a recent site visit, and the staff report, the Development Review Committee (DRC) finds that the proposed request **IS COMPATIBLE** with the surrounding land uses and general character of the area, **IS CONSISTENT** with the Polk County Comprehensive Plan; therefore, the DRC recommends **APPROVAL of LDCU-2025-30**.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Based upon the findings of fact the Development Review Committee recommends **APPROVAL** of **LDCU-2025-30** with the following Conditions:

1. This Conditional Use (CU) approval shall be for a Religious Institution on ± 1.0 acres located within a Residential Low-3 (RL-3) land use district. [PLG]
2. The site plan included herein together with the conditions of approval shall be considered the "Binding Site Plan." Any modifications to LDCU-2025-30, except for those listed in Section 906.E of the LDC, shall constitute a Major Modification to this approval and require a Level 3 Review before the Planning Commission. [PLG]
3. The approval of this variance is to reduce the primary structure right-of-way setback from 35 feet to 15 feet. Further additions or structures placed on the property shall be required to meet the setback requirements of Section 205, Table 2.2 of the Polk County Land Development Code or re-apply for another variance approval from the Land Use Hearing Officer. [PLG]

GENERAL NOTES

NOTE: This staff report was prepared without the benefit of testimony and evidence submitted by the public and other parties at a public hearing.

NOTE: Approval of this request shall not constitute a waiver or variance from any applicable development requirement unless specifically noted in the conditions of approval and consistent with the LDC.

NOTE: All written comments made in the application and subsequent submissions of information made during the application review process, which are on file with the Land Development Division, shall be considered to be

binding upon the applicant, provided such comments are not at variance with the Comprehensive Plan, LDC or other development regulations in effect at the time of development.

NOTE: Approval of this request is only for Level 3 Review and only for those development decisions within the Planning Commission's jurisdiction. A Level 2 Review (engineered plans) will be required reflecting the standard conditions listed in Section 303 of the Land Development Code and the development standards listed in Chapter 7 of the Land Development Code. Upon completion of the Level 2 Process, building permits will be required for all structures in accordance with Chapter 553 of the Florida Statutes.

NOTE: Issuance of a development permit by the county does not in any way create any rights on the part of the applicant to obtain a permit from a state or federal agency and does not create any liability on the part of the county for issuance of the permit if the applicant fails to obtain requisite approvals or fulfill the obligations imposed by a state or federal agency or undertakes actions that result in a violation of state or federal law.

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.

Table 1

Northwest: Residential Low-1 (RL-1) Single-family residence Rawls Park Subdivision ± 0.15 acres	North: Residential Low-1 (RL-1) Single-family residence Rawls Park Subdivision ± 0.15 acres	North: Residential Low-1 (RL-1) Single-family residence Rawls Park Subdivision ± 0.20 acres
West: Residential Low-4 (RL-3) Single-family residence ± 1.00 acres	Subject Property: Residential Low-3 (RL-3) Single-family residence ± 1.00 acres	East: Residential Low-3 (RL-3) Single-family residence ± 0.88 acres
Southwest: Residential Low-3 (RL-3) Single-family residence ± 1.00 acres	South: Residential Low-3 (RL-3) Vacant County land ± 4.30 acres	Southeast: Residential Low-3 (RL-3) Single-family residence ± 0.22 acres

The site is situated in a predominantly residential area along Hardin Combee Road which is conducive with the applicant's intent to provide services to local and adjacent communities. The adjacent area is comprised of single-family residences with similar lot sizes. Smaller residential lots located within the Rawls Park Subdivision located to the north of the site is bifurcated by Hardin Combee Road. Not abutting the property, but across Woodland Drive approximately 172 feet to the east is an existing Religious Institution. The site can be accessed via Hardin Combee Road and Woodland Avenue allowing for circulation with church service schedules.

Compatibility with the Surrounding Land Uses and Infrastructure:

The request is compatible with the surrounding area. Approximately 172 feet to the east, measured property line to property line, is an existing Religious Institution. The existing Christ Memorial Baptist Church, located at 2929 Hardin Combee Road on approximately 1.82 acres, has provided services to the surrounding community since the early 1970's. According to Property Appraiser website the site was developed in 1970 for a 6,080 square feet church and Sunday school identified as building one (1) located internally to the site and an additional 5,625 square feet

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."

classroom identified as building two (2) located to the rear of the site. The site obtains ingress and egress off Hardin Combee Road utilizing internal circulation to avoid traffic backing up on Hardin Combee Road. The subject site filed in this staff report will also obtain ingress and egress off Hardin Combee Road utilizing similar internal circulation with a secondary access point off Woodland Avenue to avoid traffic buildup onto the surrounding roadways. Both Religious Institutions look to provide services to local and adjacent communities. Like Christ Memorial Baptist Church, this request operates as a similar intensity and functional use. The site will not require paved parking as Religious Institutions are exempt from parking area design standard in Section 709.A of the Land Development Code (LDC). The property is currently being served by the City of Lakeland's Utility services for potable water. An existing connection to onsite septic is proposed as no wastewater services are available.

A. Land Uses:

The property has a Future Land Use designation of RL-3. The requested CU is conditionally permitted following a Level 3 review by County staff and approval by the Planning Commission in a public hearing. Per Section 708, Table 7.10 of the LDC, Religious Institutions require one (1) space per three (3) seats in principal room of worship. At least 28 parking spaces that are exempt from paving, except for ADA spots, are required given this request. Parking will be setback 25 feet from adjacent residential properties pursuant to Section 303 of the LDC. Given the preliminary traffic analysis, a minor traffic study will not be required as the anticipated Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) is not expected to exceed 50. Parking waivers may be requested under different circumstances with Administrator Approval. The property has a 1,716 square feet single-family residence located on site. The existing structure has been in place since 1945 granting the setbacks to be grandfathered in. The structure will remain residential with some anticipated office use while future development is underway. In addition, the applicant is proposing the construction of two buildings, fully enclosed, totaling 4,550 square feet. The smaller building will be used to generate funds for the development of the larger worship building. The proposed buildings will be over 50 feet away from neighboring residential lines meeting Section 220 of the LDC. The surrounding Future Land Use designations consist of varying degrees of residential and non-residential uses along Combee Road North (SR 659), as noted in Table 1. Landscaping requirements consistent with a Type "A" Landscape buffer is required along public rights-of-ways. Landscaping consistent with a Type "B" Landscape buffer is required when single-family abuts Religious Institutions. Overall, this is a fairly low intense use for most of the week. It is sited well to serve as a complement to surrounding residential uses.

B. Infrastructure:

The proposed Conditional Use is located in the Transit Support Development Area. This area has services which one would expect to find in a developed urban area. The surrounding area is serviced by the City of Lakeland Utilities for potable water. This Conditional Use will not generate any students. There is an adequate sidewalk network which runs along the south side of Hardin Combee Road. Aldine Combee Park is located within a mile of the subject property. There is mass transit available, with a Citrus Connection stop approximately 0.2 miles west of the subject site.

Nearest and Zoned Elementary, Middle, and High School

The subject property is zoned for Philip O'Brien Elementary School, Crystal Lake Middle School, and Tenoroc Senior High School. The closest school is Crystal Lake Middle School (± 2.3 miles). This is a non-residential use and will not have an impact on school capacity. The project is located an adequate distance away from surrounding schools so as not to impact the zoned Polk County schools or the bussing of students to and from school.

Table 2

Name of School	Annual Estimated Demand	% Capacity (inc. port) 2024-2025 School Year	Average driving distance from subject site
Philip O'Brien Elementary School	0 Students	79%	± 2.8 mile driving distance
Crystal Lake Middle School	0 Students	57%	± 2.3 miles driving distance
Tenoroc High School	0 Students	62%	± 4.8 miles driving distance

Source: Polk County School Board, Tischler & Associates Study, GIS

Nearest Sheriff, Fire, and EMS Station

Both Fire and Ambulance response will be from Polk County Fire Rescue Station 39, located at 3325 East Main Street, Lakeland. The travel distance is 1.4 miles with an average response time of 5-7 minutes. There is a fire hydrant directly west of the subject property within the right-of-way of Hardin Combee Road, approximately ± 236 feet from the subject property's northwest corner.

Sheriff's response to the site is served by the Southwest (SW) District, located at 4120 US 98 South, in Lakeland. The response times for the SW District were: P1 – 8:30 minutes; P2 – 25:05 minutes. Priority 1 Calls are considered to be true emergencies, in-progress burglary, robbery, injuries, etc. Priority 2 Calls refer to events that have already occurred, such as a burglary that occurred while the homeowner was on vacation and had just been discovered. Sheriff's 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 the County.

Table 3

	Name of Station	Distance	Response Time*
Sheriff	Southwest District Command (4120 US 98 South, Lakeland)	± 5.7 miles	P1: 8:30 P2: 25:05
Fire	Station #39 (3325 East Main Street, Lakeland)	± 1.4 miles	5-7 minutes
EMS	Station #39 (3325 East Main Street, Lakeland)	± 1.4 miles	5-7 minutes

Source: Polk County Sheriff's Office Response Times for July 2025 Polk County Fire Rescue Response Times for August 2025

Water and Wastewater Demand and Capacity:

A. Estimated Demand and Service Provider:

The property is currently being served with potable water by the City of Lakeland with a 6" pipe diameter. The City has no wastewater service available to the site. The request will rely on a private on-site septic tank & drain field.

Table 4

Subject Property	Estimated Impact Analysis		
	Demand as Currently Permitted RL-3	Maximum Permitted in the District RL-3	Proposed Plan
0.44 ± acres RL-3			
Permitted Intensity	One (1) single-family dwelling	10 single-family dwelling units	Religious Institution
Potable Water Consumption (GPD)	360 GPD	3,600 GPD	720 GPD
Wastewater Generation (GPD)	270 GPD	2,700 GPD	410 GPD

Source: Polk County Concurrency Manual & Polk County Utilities

B. Available Capacity:

The property is currently on a septic system and does not anticipate any changes to the system. The development of the site may require relocation of the septic system, at which time it may be necessary to permit a new septic system.

C. Planned Improvements:

There are currently no planned improvements to this area.

Roadways/ Transportation Network

The surrounding roadway network is comprised of Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) and North Combee Road (SR 659). North Combee Road (SR 659) is a State maintained Minor Arterial roadway (Link # 7301). Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Roadway. The traffic in and out of the requested CU is not likely to cause any disruption. Due to the estimated Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT), the proposed Religious Institution will not require a minor traffic study as well as paved parking alongside Level 2 submittal.

A. Estimated Demand:

Based on the ITE Trip Generation Manual, Day Care Center (ITE Code 560) generate 6.78 Annual Average Daily Trips (AADT) and 0.43 Peak PM Trips per 1,000 square-foot of floor area. The proposed use will operate out of two structures totaling 4,550 square feet and an existing 1,716 square feet residence. Table 5, to follow, shows the traffic that is projected for the Conditional Use development versus, what would be permitted by right and what the maximum could be with a planned development, according to Section 303 of the LDC.

Table 5

Subject Property	Estimated Impact Analysis		
	Demand as Currently Permitted RL-3	Maximum Permitted in the District RL-3	Proposed Plan
0.44 ± acres RL-3			
Permitted Intensity	1 single-family dwelling units	10 single-family attached dwelling units	Religious Institution
Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT)	8	78	38
PM Peak Hour Trips	1	10	3

Source: Polk County Concurrency Manual

The proposed plan is to have one access point onto Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) and one access point off Woodland Avenue (Road No. 841505). Appendix C of the LDC requires all developments generating more than 50 average daily trips to conduct a minor traffic study. This Conditional Use is projected to produce, on average, 38 trips a day and 3 trips during peak hours. A minor traffic study will not be required as a result of the anticipated trips to identify if any offsite improvements are required. A key fact is that the majority of vehicular traffic associated with Religious Institutions will be concentrated on Sunday, one day out of the week.

B. Available Capacity:

SR 659 (Combee Road North)

SR 659 (Combee Road North), between US 92 to CR 546 (Saddle Creek Road), has a capacity of 880 PM Peak hour vehicle trips in two separate links in each direction. According to TPO approximately 15,700 vehicles travel that portion of the roadway each day on average, with approximately 721 northbound vehicles and 692 southbound vehicles passing through the segment each day. This road link is currently operating with about 21.4% capacity left. The current Level of Service (LOS) is operating above the minimum County standard.

Hardin Combee Road

Hardin Combee Road, between SR 659 (Combee Road North) to Fish Hatchery Road, has a capacity of 790 PM Peak hour vehicle trips in two separate links in each direction. According to TPO approximately 1,800 vehicles travel that portion of the roadway each day on average, with approximately 79 eastbound vehicles and 83 westbound vehicles passing through the segment each day. This road link is currently operating with about 90% capacity left. According to Polk County's Road Inventory, Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Road. The current LOS is operating 10% as an Urban Collector Roadway and operating 90% as a Local Roadway, therefore the 35-foot right-of-way setback for Collector Roadways creates an undue hardship for future development of the site. To be more in line with the conditions as they exist on the ground and with the intent of the LDC, a right-of-way setback reduction from 35' to 15' as required along Local roadways is proposed.

Woodland Avenue

According to Polk County's Road Inventory, Woodland Avenue (Road No. 841505) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Road approximately 1.04 miles in length and a paved surface width of 20' and ROW width of 50'. Woodland Avenue functions more as a local roadway than its

classification as an Urban Collector Road. The TPO 2025 Roadwork Database, does not list Woodland Avenue as a measured road segment as it does not experience enough vehicular traffic to warrant measuring, further supporting the argument that Woodland Avenue functions more as a local roadway and is subject to 15-foot right-of-way setbacks off local roadways pursuant to Section 205, Table 2.2 of the LDC.

Table 6

Link #	Road Name	Current Level of Service (LOS)	Available PM Peak Hour Capacity	Minimum LOS Standard
7301N	SR 659 (Combee Road North) From: US 92 To: CR 546 (Saddle Creek Road)	C	159	D
7301S	SR 659 (Combee Road North) From: US 92 To: CR 546 (Saddle Creek Road)	C	188	D
8087E	Hardin Combee Road From: SR 659 (Combee Road North) To: Fish Hatchery Road	C	711	C
8087W	Hardin Combee Road From: SR 659 (Combee Road North) To: Fish Hatchery Road	C	707	C

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

Based on the estimated demand and the estimated capacity shown in Table 4, the expansion is not expected to have a significant influence on the capacity on the immediate roadway network.

C. Roadway Conditions:

According to Polk County's Road Inventory, Hardin Combee Road (Road No. 841508) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Road approximately 0.75 miles in length and a paved surface width of 20' and ROW width of 50'. Woodland Avenue (Road No. 841505) is a County-maintained Urban Collector Road approximately 1.04 miles in length and a paved surface width of 20' and ROW width of 50'.

D. Sidewalk Network

There are sidewalks along the north frontage of the subject site on the south side of Hardin Combee Road which allows pedestrian traffic to reach N. Combee Road (SR 659) for further connections.

E. Planned Improvements

There are currently no planned County improvements along SR 659, Hardin Combee Road, or Woodland Avenue.

F. Mass Transit

The nearest Citrus Connection Transit Route stop (Orange Line Idlewild Street and N Combee Road) is approximately 0.2 miles from the subject site directly west at the intersection of Hardin Combee Road and N. Combee Road (SR 659). There are sidewalks that allow for safe pedestrian access on the south side of Hardin Combee Road. The Orange Line provides access with multiple stops between Lakeland's downtown terminal and Southeastern University at N. Crystal Lake Drive.



Park Facilities and Environmental Lands:

The closest park to the subject property is Aldine Combee Park which is approximately \pm 0.7 miles directly east. Aldine Combee Park is an expansive, multi-use facility that sits on 19.5 acres of land. It features baseball fields, as well as a picnic area and a large screened-in pavilion that can be rented. Its most distinctive feature is a horse arena that hosts rodeo competitions for children and adults. There are no environmental lands abutting the site. The closest environmental site is Saddle Creek County Park.

A. Location:

The closest park to the subject property is Aldine Combee Park at 1140 Fish Hatchery Road, which is approximately \pm 0.7 miles directly east.

B. Services:

Aldine Combee Park is an expansive, multi-use facility that sits on 19.5 acres of land. It features baseball fields, as well as a picnic area and a large screened-in pavilion that can be rented. Its most distinctive feature is a horse arena that hosts rodeo competitions for children and adults.

C. Multi-use Trails:

The East Lake Parker is designated as a multi-use trail under the TPO 2035 Multimodal Plan. The route is shown from the Lake Mirror Promenade, south along Lake Parker and eventually connects into the Tenoroc Trail.

D. Environmental Lands:

Saddle Creek County Park is the closest environmental land to the property and is 0.7 miles east. This land is owned and maintained by Polk County. Saddle Creek Park is located on reclaimed Phosphate lands, most of this park consists of lakes and surrounding uplands vegetated by natural communities such as oak hammock. Cypress strand occurs along Saddle Creek which runs through the uplands. Approximately 20% of the park is devoted to a maintenance facility, gun range, and baseball field.

E. Planned Improvements:

There are no further recreational improvements scheduled for this area by the County.

Environmental Conditions

There are no environmental limitations on this property that will likely impede the Conditional Use as requested. The site is designated as residential and is developed as such. Residential uses are not subject to Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR) or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirements. However, the Conditional Use is a request for the development of a Religious Institution site. Religious Institution are a non-residential use, therefore is it subject to ISR and FAR requirements. The site plan provides the existing and proposed ISR and FAR calculations. The site once fully developed as a Religious Institution will not exceed the maximum FAR (0.25) and ISR (0.70) requirements in the Residential Low-3 (RL-3) land use as Religious Institutions are exempt from the paved parking requirements in Section 709.A of the LDC. There are no wetlands or floodplains on or near the property according to County viewers. The entire site is comprised of Smyrna and Myakka fine sands (100%) according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Matrix (FNAI), the CU is not located within one (1) mile of any document endangered flora or fauna. The site is not within any public airport flight paths or buffer zones. The closest aviation facility is Lakeland Linder International Airport \pm 10.9 miles to the southwest.

A. Surface Water:

There is no natural surface water feature on the subject parcel. The closest natural body of water is Lake Parker which is \pm 3,993 feet or 0.76 miles to the west. The site is relatively flat and the topography of the subject property slopes from the northwest to the southeast. Elevations vary from 130 feet to 129 feet.

B. Wetlands/Floodplains:

There are no wetlands or floodplain areas on the subject site.

C. Soils:

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Polk County Survey, the subject site is comprised of Smyrna and Myakka fine sands (100%). Smyrna and Myakka fine sands have a poorly drained drainage classification providing negligible runoff. It is also important to note that Smyrna and Myakka fine sands do not experience frequency of flooding or ponding as it pertains to this site with no wetlands or floodplain areas.

Table 8

Soil Name	Septic Tank Absorption Field Limitations	Limitations to Dwellings w/o Basements	% of Site (approximate)
Smyrna and Myakka fine sands	Severe: Wetness, poor filter	Severe: Wetness	100%

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

D. Protected Species:

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Biodiversity Matrix, the site is not located within a one-mile radius of a protected animal and plant species sighting along with natural communities.

E. Archeological Resources:

There are no known archaeological or historical sites on the proposed development according to the Secretary of State's Department of Historical Resources Florida Master Site File.

F. Wells (Public/Private):

The subject site is not located within a wellhead protection area.

G. Airports:

According to the Polk County Airport Impact Districts Map, the subject property is not located within any Airport Buffer Zones for flight path and height restriction. The closest aviation facility is Lakeland Linder International Airport ± 10.9 miles to the southwest

Economic Factors:

The location of the subject site is ideal for the applicant's request to revitalize the site as a Religious Institution as the surrounding area is majority residential in nature aside from properties accessing Combee Road North (SR 659). This provides direct access to the intended clientele. There is an existing religious institution approximately 172 feet away from the subject site allowing an expansion of service.

The proposed Conditional Use will be similar in use to that of the Christ Memorial Baptist Church located at 2929 Hardin Combee Road providing services for the local and adjacent communities and will be an adaptive reuse of an existing structure. Churches provide a sense of place within the community, providing charitable services, childcare, and schooling. Whenever possible, the reuse of existing structures is more financially advantageous compared to having to construct new facilities. The property is located in an area that has mass transportation service stops and is located near commercial retail businesses along Combee Road North (SR 659).

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code:

The site is located in a Transit Supportive Development Area (TSDA), which is an area "where the availability of infrastructure and other community facilities and services, including, but not limited to, mass transit and other transportation alternatives, utilities, public safety, recreational and educational services, promotes and supports the location of higher density and intensity compact, mixed use development," according to POLICY 2.104-A of the Comprehensive Plan.

There is centralized water that will service the proposed development. There are mass transit services available in the area as well as sidewalks that connect the residents to both shopping and Downtown Lakeland within a comfortable walking distance.

The site is located in the East Lake Parker/North Combee Redevelopment District, according to the County viewers. According to Section 2.101A, the long-term goal of for land use programs and activities are “To achieve an economically viable, efficient, safe, and quality-living environment through balanced and compact growth, while encouraging the efficient use of land, community infrastructure and protecting and managing the community’s natural resources by showing the proposed distribution, location, and extent of future land uses by type, density, and intensity; while providing essential services in a cost effective manner.”

Table 9, to follow, provides an analysis of the proposed request when compared to typical policies of the Comprehensive Plan for evaluation of development proposals. Based upon this analysis, the proposed request is consistent with relevant policies of the Polk County Comprehensive Plan. Staff finds this proposed CU accomplishes all of these requirements and recommends approval.

Table 9: Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plan Policy	Consistency Analysis
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 Conditional Use is compatible with neighboring properties and there is adequate infrastructure to support it as well. The existing land uses abutting are Residential Low-1 and Residential Low-3.
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 will be reusing an existing structure and two (2) additional structures which will not create an increase in public services.
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 proposed Conditional Use is consistent with services available in the Transit Supportive Area (TSDA). The design of the project is in an area that contains adequate community and public safety services.
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.	The site is located within an area that has a significant amount of urban infrastructure and services with ample capacity to serve it.

Comprehensive Plan Policy	Consistency Analysis
<p>POLICY 2.102-A15: ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES</p> <p>- 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).</p>	<p>The subject property is located within an area of the County that has adequate public safety services as identified in the staff report.</p>

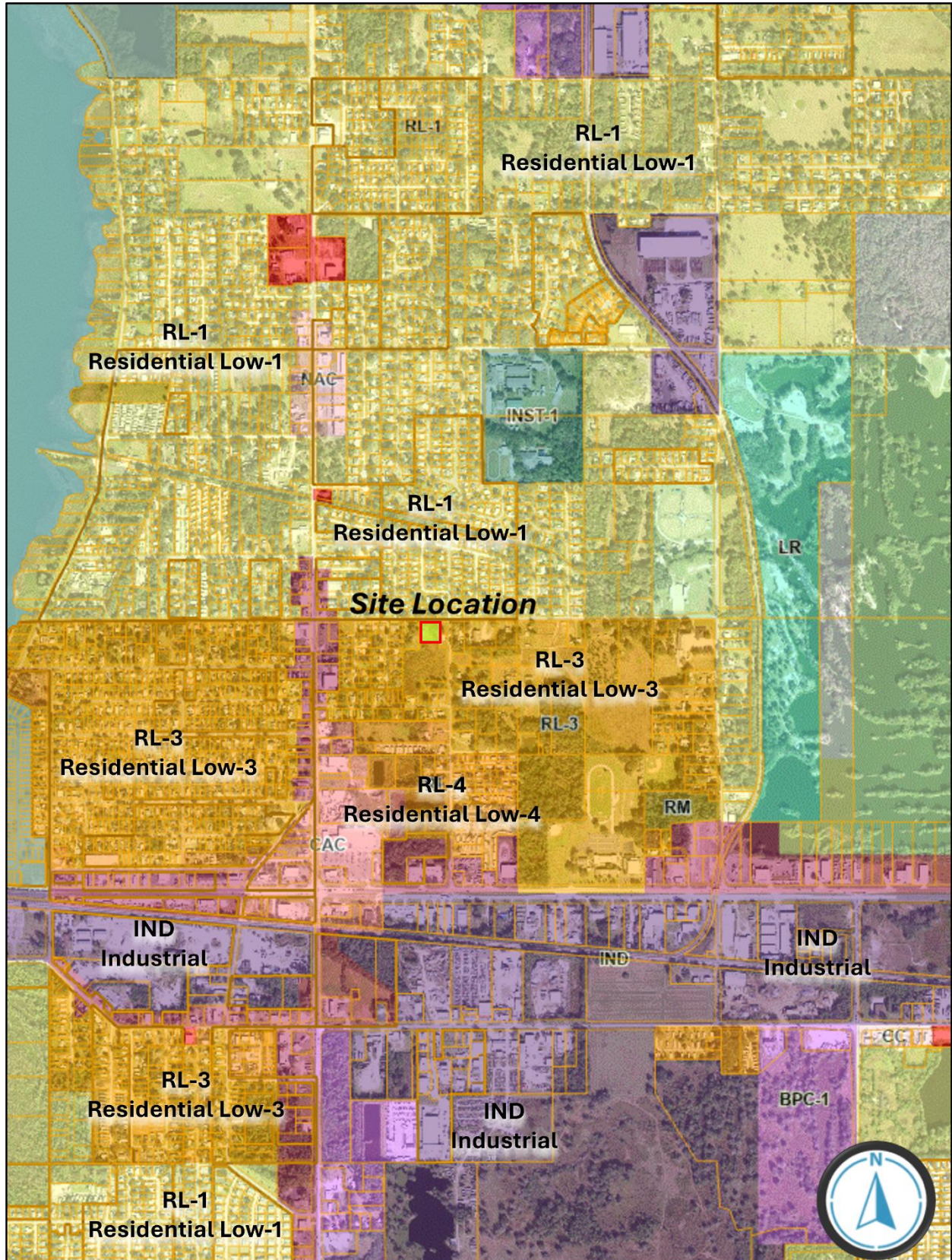
Comments from other Agencies:

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Location Map
- Exhibit 2 – Future Land Use Map
- Exhibit 3 – 2023 Aerial Photo (Context)
- Exhibit 4 – 2023 Aerial (Close-up)
- Exhibit 5 – Site Plan
- Exhibit 6 – Site Plan Details



Location Map



Future Land Use Map



2023 Aerial Photo (Context)



2023 Aerial Photo (Close-up)

DRC Findings/Recommendation	Level 3/KSR

PARCEL ID NUMBER:	24-28-15-000000-033110 24-28-15-000000-033160
PARCEL AREA:	1.01 AC. (43,944.00 SF)
ZONING:	RL-3
CURRENT USE:	RESIDENCE
PROPOSED USE:	RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION
FLOOD ZONE:	'X' PER FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP NO. 12105C0320G, COMMUNITY PANEL NO. 120261, EFFECTIVE 12/22/2016.
GROSS FLOOR AREA:	2774 SF (EXIST.) + 2,380 SF (PROP.) + 800 SF (PROP.)
EXISTING IMPERVIOUS	3,335 SF
EXISTING PERVIOUS	40,609 SF
EXISTING F.A.R.:	0.06
EXISTING I.S.R.:	0.09
PROPOSED F.A.R.	0.14
PROPOSED I.S.R.:	0.41
PARKING REQUIRED:	1 PER 3 SEATS IN PRINCIPAL ROOM OF WORSHIP
PARKING PROVIDED: GRASS PARKING	28 PARKING SPACES (INCLUDING 2 CONCRETE H/C)
BUILDING HEIGHT:	35' (1 STORY)

Site Plan Details