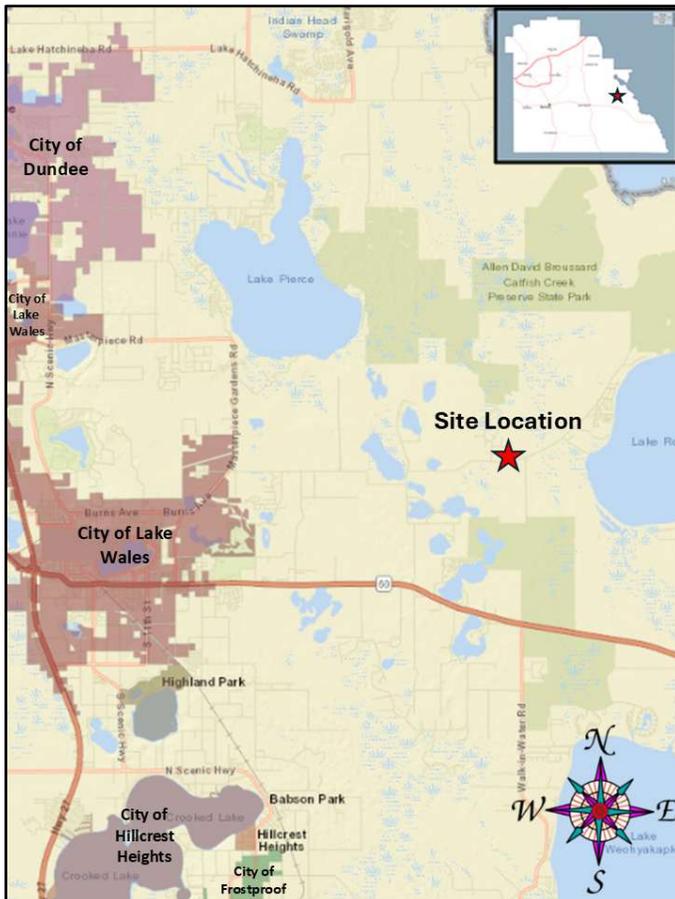


# POLK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

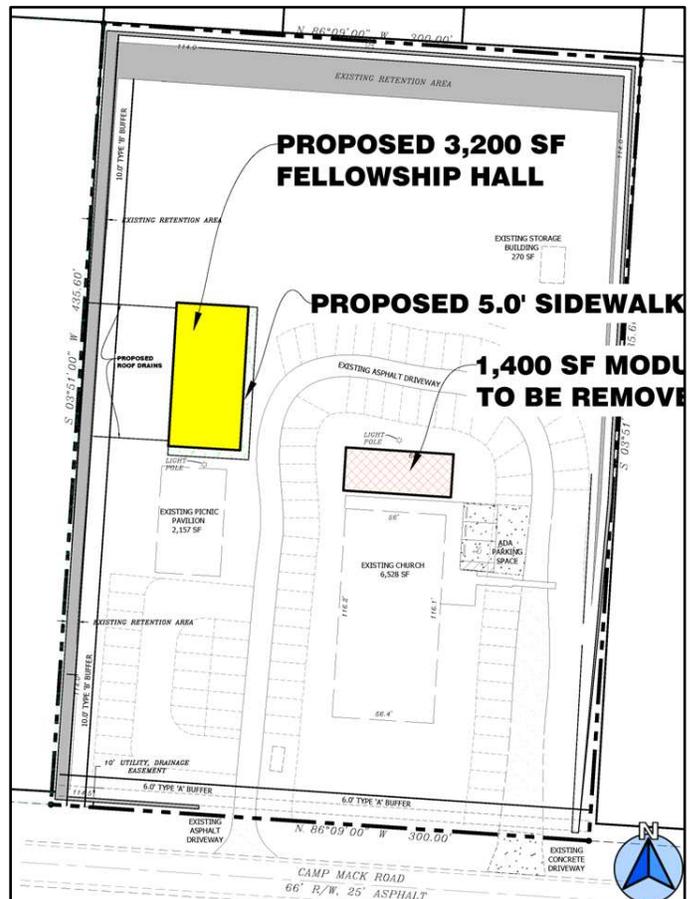
<b>DRC Date:</b> April 24, 2025	<b>Level of Review:</b> Level 3 Review
<b>PC Date:</b> July 9, 2025	<b>Type:</b> Conditional Use
<b>BoCC Date:</b> N/A	<b>Case Numbers:</b> LDCU-2025-6
<b>Applicant:</b> Tom Wodrich, TDW Land Planning	<b>Case Name:</b> Wayside Baptist Church CU
	<b>Case Planner:</b> Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

<b>Request:</b>	The applicant is requesting an expansion of a non-conforming use for a Religious Institution in an Agriculture/Residential Rural future land use district.
<b>Location:</b>	7831 Camp Mack Road, north of State Road 60 East, east of Mammoth Grove Road, south of Jean Chase Road, west of Barney Keen Road in Section 30, Township, 29, Range 29.
<b>Property Owner:</b>	Wayside Baptist Church Inc.
<b>Parcel Size (Number):</b>	± 2.95 acres (292930-991750-002090)
<b>Future Land Use:</b>	Agriculture/Residential Rural (A/RR)
<b>Development Area:</b>	Rural Development Area (RDA)
<b>Nearest Municipality:</b>	City of Lake Wales
<b>DRC Recommendation:</b>	Conditional Approval
<b>Planning Commission Vote:</b>	Pending Hearing

**Site Location**



**Site Plan**



## Summary of Analysis:

The applicant is requesting an expansion to an existing religious institution by adding a 3,200 square foot multipurpose building on the site of a 6,440 square foot existing sanctuary space. According to the application, the expansion will be used for administration, special activities, and additional restrooms to accommodate their existing congregation. The church plans to remove a 1,400 square foot modular building in the process. The nearly 3-acre property is located in the Agriculture/Residential Rural land use district and has been operating as a religious institution since 1987.

The site has existing access off Camp Mack Road, a County-maintained Rural Minor Collector roadway and will connect to onsite septic system and utilize an existing well system. Fire and EMS public safety services are available, and there are two above ground fire protection tanks provided for immediate coverage. A new fire station is proposed at Boy Scout Road which will improve response times. In accordance with Section 303 of the Land Development Code (LDC), the proposed expansion will be adequately buffered and have all parking spaces located more than 25 feet from adjacent residential land uses. The site is located within a one-mile radius of two endangered animal species sightings. While the site was previously developed so no impacts are anticipated, the applicant will have to demonstrate at Level 2 Review how any impacts have been minimized or mitigated. Staff recommends approval.

### Findings of Fact

- *This conditional use request is an expansion of a non-conforming use for a Religious Institution located in the Agriculture/Residential Rural (A/RR) land use district on 2.95 acres (Parcel No. 292930-991750-002090). The owner wishes to construct a 3,200 sq. ft. multipurpose building with associated grass parking.*
- *According to Section 120.J.1.b of the Land Development Code (LDC), “The total or cumulative addition or expansion of structures, impervious surface, or outdoor storage or display areas of more than 20% of the total amount existing onsite since the September 1, 2000 effective date of the Land Development Code may be approved by the Planning Commission through a Level 3 Review as a conditional use. The Planning Commission shall consider the evaluation criteria listed in Section 120.J.1.c to follow.”*
- *The site is located in the Rural Development Area (RDA), which is all unincorporated areas within the County that are not located within a Transit Supportive Development Area, Urban Growth Area, Suburban Development Area, or Utility Enclave Area. Development in these areas is characterized by large open areas, agricultural uses, with scattered development and rural centers. Services are limited and mostly found in the rural centers and clustered developments, according to Policy 2.108-A1 in the Comprehensive Plan.*
- *The subject site was first recorded on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1971, through a plat known as “MONEYTREE RANCHETTES SUBDIVISION PHASE ONE,” according to P.B. 72, Page 35.*

- *On July 31, 1986, First Baptist Church of Frostproof, Inc. purchased Lots 9, 10, and 11 through a Warranty Deed with Progress Homes, Inc. according to O.R. Book 2445, Pages 1219 and 1220.*
- *According to the Zoning Ordinance at the time, “Section 3.4: Exceptions” stated, “Nothing in this Ordinance is intended, nor shall be construed, to limit the freedom of location or development of Religious Institutions” (Ord. 83-2).*
- *The Polk County Property Appraiser indicates First Baptist Church of Frostproof, Inc. constructed a 6,440 sq. ft. church as well as a 1,464 sq. ft. modular building in 1987.*
- *On September 30, 1989, First Baptist Church of Frostproof, Inc. sold the subject property through a Warranty Deed to Wayside Chapel, Inc. according to O.R. Book 2795, Pages 0512 and 0513.*
- *Wayside Chapel, Inc. changed their organization name to “Wayside Baptist Church, Inc.” effective on July 1, 1992, and has remained unchanged since then.*
- *The 1991 Comprehensive Plan did not require conditional approval for Religious Institutions until April 12, 1994 when an Administrative Determination required a Conditional Use Permit for the following:*
  1. *Any addition that increases the size of the church by greater than 25%.*
  2. *Establishment of a new church.*
  3. *Establishment of a school or day care center in an existing church.*
  4. *Additions to an existing church on parcels which were not part of a commercial site plan for existing church buildings.*
- *Section 303, Religious Institutions, of the LDC requires the following criteria to be met:*
  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.*

- *The subject property has approximately 300 feet of frontage along Camp Mack Road. Camp Mack Road (Road No. 983501) is a County-maintained Rural Minor Collector Roadway with a paved surface width of 24 feet, according to the Polk County Roads Inventory.*
- *The site will utilize existing ingress and egress access off Camp Mack Road (Link #4118) which has a Level of Service (LOS) standard of “B” in eastern and western directions. According to the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization, Link 5416 is currently operating at 15 % of its capacity with sufficient trips available for the religious institution. There are 762 trips available eastbound and 757 trips available westbound.*
- *Table 7.10 of the LDC requires religious institutions to provide one (1) parking space per three (3) seats in the principal room of worship. While the expansion is considered a multipurpose space, the church is providing updated parking space requirements. The expansion will meet the minimum parking space requirements.*
- *The site is zoned for Spook Hill Elementary, McLaughlin Academy of Excellence, and Bartow Senior High School.*
- *Fire and EMS response to this project is from Polk County Fire Rescue Station #14, located at 69101 Nalcrest Road, with ambulance response handled from a separate location at 10399 Leisure Lane. Fire and EMS are located approximately 8.2 miles and 7.5 miles respectively from the site, both with an estimated response time of eleven (11) minutes. A new Fire/EMS station is planned at 630 Boy Scout Road in Lake Wales.*
- *The site is served by the Polk County Sheriff’s Southeast (SE) District located at 4011 Sgt Mary Campbell Way in Lake Wales. The response times for SE in May 2025 were: Priority 1 Calls – 11:09 and Priority 2 Calls – 35:23.*
- *According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Polk County Survey, the subject site contains Adamsville Fine Sand. The soil has severe limitations for septic tank absorption fields and moderate limitations for small commercial buildings.*
- *There are no wetlands or flood hazard areas on the property. The property is not located in a Wellfield Protection District.*
- *According to a preliminary report from the Secretary of State’s Department of Historical Resources Florida Master Site File, no archaeological sites are found within the parcel boundaries.*
- *According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Biodiversity Matrix, the site is located within an identified one-mile radius for two endangered animal species. One species was sighted over two decades ago. The applicant will be required to demonstrate at Level 2 Review how any impacts have been minimized or mitigated. Site was previously developed so no impacts are anticipated.*

- *The site is not within any Airport Height Notification Zone.*

### **Development Review Committee Recommendation:**

Based upon the information provided by the applicant and a recent site visit, the Development Review Committee finds that with the recommended conditions the request **IS COMPATIBLE** with the surrounding land uses and general character of the area, **IS CONSISTENT** with the Comprehensive Plan, and is consistent with the Land Development Code. Based upon the findings of fact the Development Review Committee recommends **APPROVAL** of **LDCU-2025-6**.

### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

1. The Conditional Use Approval shall be for the expansion of a non-conforming use to allow for the construction of a  $\pm$  3,200 square foot addition, as detailed in the site plan.
2. The site plan included herein together with the conditions of approval shall be considered the “Binding Site Plan.” Any modifications to LDCU-2025-6, 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.

### **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 LDC Section 930 D.*

*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

**Table 1**

<p><b>Northwest:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Lot 6; Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision Phase 02 Unit 02</p>	<p><b>North:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Lots 7-10; Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision Phase 02 Unit 02</p>	<p><b>Northeast:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Lot 11; Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision Phase 02 Unit 02</p>
<p><b>West:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Single-family residence</p>	<p><b>Subject Property:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Religious Institution</p>	<p><b>East:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Owned by the Religious Institution; Vacant</p>
<p><b>Southwest:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Single-family residence</p>	<p><b>South:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Vacant</p>	<p><b>Southeast:</b> Agricultural/Residential Rural (A/RR) Vacant</p>

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

The subject site is located in the plat, “Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision Phase 01” on Lots 9, 10, and 11, as recorded in PB 72, PG 35. The site has frontage along Camp Mack Road with the Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision located directly to the north. Areas immediately to the south and east are vacant land and an empty ±1-acre parcel owned by the same religious institution. A warranty deed dated September 30, 1989 indicates the subject property was purchased by the current owner (OR Book 2795 Page 512). The religious institution is a legal non-conforming use under the current Comprehensive Plan and LDC. The zoning ordinance at the time (Ord 83-2) exempted religious institutions from locational criteria and were permitted on any land use district.

### Compatibility with the Surrounding Uses and Infrastructure:

Staff finds this request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is sparse. This is an expansion of an existing religious institution that has existed in the area for more than thirty-five years. The analysis to follow provides a detailed review of the request as it relates to current development regulations, neighboring properties, infrastructure, and public services.

#### A. Land Uses:

The surrounding areas are residential and vacant land. Abutting the site is the Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision, with homes flanking the northern portion. The rest of the units are accessed from Reagan Boulevard. Outside of the Moneytree Ranchettes Subdivision, the area is surrounded by orange groves and vacant wooded land. The site is sandwiched between two large bodies of water, Lake Rosalie and Lake Pierce. A few small neighborhoods surround the smaller lakes in the general area.

**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.”**

The adjacent residences and subject site have coexisted for more than thirty-five years, which addresses the co-location factor. Besides this, the church is deficient in stormwater management and landscaping requirements which will be addressed and outlined during the Level 2 Review process. A Type “B” landscape buffer is required on the western whenever a religious institution abuts a single-family residential district to soften any potential impacts. A Type “A” buffer along

the frontage of Camp Mack Road will be required in accordance with Section 720 of the LDC. The applicant will also designate about 80 grass parking spots, including 3 paved ADA spots, pursuant to Section 708 of the LDC. These spaces will be over 25 feet from the adjacent residential property to the west.

**Table 2**

<b>The Planning Commission, in the review of development plans, shall consider the following factors in accordance with Section 120.J.1.c of the LDC:</b>	
i. The degree to which the non-conformity can become more conforming	As previously mentioned, the Religious Institution will implement current landscape and buffer requirements in accordance with Section 720 of the LDC along the western and southern boundaries. Stormwater management and retention will be addressed in detail at the Level 2 Review.
ii. The extent of a government’s obligation or liabilities including, but not limited to, infrastructure improvement, infrastructure maintenance, and public safety	The proposed building will connect to existing septic and well onsite. The building serves as an extension to the main building for existing congregation members and is not anticipated to generate new traffic.
iii. The potential impact that the expansion may pose to neighboring properties	Based on the preliminary site plan (Exhibit 5), the building will be setback substantially to negate any impacts. Should there be any concerns, a Type B landscape buffer will be installed along the western property line.
iv. The extent of the use’s longevity (i.e. how long has it been there and how long is it to continue at its location)	The property has been in existence as a Religious Institution since 1987. Since then, the use has remained unchanged and continues to coexist with surrounding properties.
v. The applicant’s future plans for the property relative to the County’s plans; and,	The Religious Institution continues to thrive at this location with a pavilion constructed in 2014. Future plans, if any, are intended for the existing facility – a use that has been in existence at this site for almost forty years.
vi. The improved development standards or infrastructure that may result from expansion of the use	The expansion will be required to adhere to current landscaping and drainage requirements outlined in the LDC. These items include Type A and B landscape buffers and a stormwater retention facility which will be addressed at the Level 2 Review.

**B. Infrastructure:**

The proposed church expansion is located in the Rural Development Area (RDA) where urban services are limited and mostly found in the rural centers and clustered developments. According to the Impact Assessment Statement, the applicant will connect to onsite septic system and utilize an existing well system. There is available capacity on adjacent roadways to the subject property. While the site is served by County Fire Station #14 (± 8 miles) the site has two above ground fire protection tanks for immediate fire connection. Given the rural nature of this location, there are no mass transit stops nor sidewalks within a reasonable distance. The request is not anticipated to require the extension or improvements to existing roadways or utilities.

**Nearest Elementary, Middle, and High School**

The site is zoned for Spook Hill Elementary, McLaughlin Academy of Excellence for Middle/High School, and Bartow Senior High School. The closest schools are Spook Hill Elementary (± 8 miles) and McLaughlin Academy of Excellence for Middle School (± 8 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.

**Nearest Sherriff, Fire, and EMS Station**

Fire responses are from Polk County Fire Rescue Station #14, located at 69101 Nalcrest Road with ambulance response handled separately at 10399 Leisure Lane. Fire and EMS are located approximately 8.2 miles and 7.5 miles respectively from the site, both with an estimated response time of eleven (11) minutes. A new Fire/EMS station is planned to combine both stations at 630 Boy Scout Road in Lake Wales (LDNON-2021-175). Located just over 2 miles away, this new station will provide closer coverage and improved response times. The site is served by the Polk County Sheriff’s Southeast (SE) District located at 4011 Sgt Mary Campbell Way in Lake Wales, approximately ten and a half miles from the site. The response times for SE in May 2025 were: Priority 1 Calls – 11:09 and Priority 2 Calls – 35:23. While the church will be in close proximity to existing public safety services, there should be no future increase in the demand for public safety services from this request.

**Table 3**

	<b>Name of Station</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Response Time*</b>
Sheriff	Southeast District Command (4011 Sgt Mary Campbell Way)	±10.5 miles	Priority 1 – 11:09 Priority 2 – 35:23
Fire	Station #14 (69101 Nalcrest Road)	±8.2 miles	11 minutes
EMS	Station #14 (10399 Leisure Lane)	±7.5 miles	11 minutes

*Source: Polk County Sheriff’s Office & Polk County Fire Rescue. Response times for May 2025*

**Water and Wastewater Demand and Capacity:**

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

Development on the property will not impact the minimum LOS for the existing facilities. This site is located in a Rural Development Area (RDA) which does not require new development to connect to centralized water and wastewater. The church will utilize a septic system and a well with associated pump house.

**B. Available Capacity:**

The addition of the proposed building will not result in a significant increase in water usage or wastewater generation.

**C. Planned Improvements:**

The general area is not served by an existing utility provider. Staff is unaware of any improvements that will provide services to this site.

## Roadways/Transportation Network

There are no anticipated adverse impacts to the transportation systems in the area

### A. Estimated Demand:

Based on the ITE Trip Generation Manual, religious institutions (ITE Code 560) generate 7.60 Annual Average Daily Trips (AADT) and 0.49 Peak PM Trips per 1,000 square-foot of floor area. According to the Property Appraiser's website, the total floor area of the building used for the church is listed at 6,440 sq. ft. The proposed addition is approximately 3,200 sq. ft. The additional square footage will not increase the church sanctuary or number of sanctuary seats. Hypothetically speaking, should the new building be considered a new religious institution, including sanctuary seating arrangements, it could generate approximately 73 AADT and 5 Peak PM Trips.

It is important to note that religious institutions are used only at certain times during the week and do not have a steady week-long draw of traffic like other types of commercial uses nor typically generate trips during peak afternoon travel hours. Since this expansion will be used for existing members, no new traffic will be generated.

### B. Available Capacity:

The subject site is addressed at Camp Mack Road, a two-lane local roadway. According to the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) approximately 2,900 vehicles travel that portion of the roadway each day on average, with approximately 128 eastbound vehicles and 133 westbound vehicles passing through the segment each day. This road link is currently operating with 85% capacity left. The current level of service (LOS) is operating above the minimum County standard.

**Table 4**

Link #	Road Name	Current Level of Service (LOS)	Available PM Peak Hour Capacity	Minimum LOS Standard
4118E	Mammoth Grove Rd/Camp Mack Road From: CR17A (Masterpiece Gardens Road) To: Kissimmee River	B	762	C
4118W	Mammoth Grove Rd/Camp Mack Road From: CR17A (Masterpiece Gardens Road) To: Kissimmee River	B	757	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:

The project will utilize an existing connection for direct ingress/egress onto Camp Mack Road, an Urban Collector roadway (Road No. 983501). Camp Mack Road is listed as a paved two-lane County-maintained with a pavement width of 24' and a ROW width of 75'. No road improvements will be required with this application.

D. Sidewalk Network:

There is no sidewalk network in the area and it is not required within the RDA, per Section 707 of the LDC. The residential developments to the west are without sidewalks, too, built prior to such regulations.

E. Planned Improvements:

There are no planned improvements within the immediate area of the site. The proposed Central Polk Parkway East corridor is about 10 miles away and at early planning stages. However, once constructed, this infrastructure is expected to greatly transform the area in the long term.

F. Mass Transit:

The population concentration is relatively low in the area and will likely remain so with the lack of services present. This is not an area of the County that is planned for transit services. The nature of this request does not demand the need for mass transit, either.

**Park Facilities and Environmental Lands:**

No County parks are located within close proximity to this site, though the request for a non-residential conditional use would not necessarily create regular demand for recreational facilities. A 35-acre County park with a boat ramp, Lake Rosalie Park and Campground, is almost 4 miles southeast. Two state parks, Lake Kissimmee State Park and Allen David Broussard Catfish Creek Preserve, are about 5 and 9 miles from the site respectively.

A. Location:

At the southern end of Lake Rosalie lies Lake Rosalie Park and Campground. This is located at 2925 Rosalie Lake Road in Lake Wales approximately 4 miles to the southeast. The nearest County Regional Park is East Central Park, located at 5555 Lake Trask Road in Dundee, approximately 10 miles to the north.

B. Services:

Lake Rosalie Park and Campground consists of camping sites for tents and RVs, restrooms, picnic tables and a boat launch ramp. The East Central Park carries multiple courts for racquetball, volleyball and tennis activities. The 45-acre regional park also consists of four baseball fields, three large multipurpose fields and two playgrounds.

C. Multi-use Trails:

Multi-use trails are found within the East Central Park to the north of the site.

D. Environmental Lands:

Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Area Wildlife area is located to the northeast of the subject site and managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in cooperation with SFWMD. The site contains shallow lakes and associated marshes, wet prairies and pine flatwood

within the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes watershed with most of the protected land outside of County jurisdiction.

E. Planned Improvements:

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

**Environmental Conditions**

A. Surface Water:

No surface water is located on the subject property. The site will likely need to create a retention pond during the Level 2 Staff Review to address stormwater runoff. The nearest natural waterbody is Lake Rosalie about 1 ½ miles to the east. The site is relatively flat and gradually slopes from 116’ at the center where the existing church stands to 114’ in all directions.

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 Adamsville Fine Sand. This soil type has some moderate limitations for wetness affecting building sites. Severe limitations are associated with septic tank absorption fields due to wetness and poor filtration. The limitation on septic tank absorption fields is in regard to a potential ground water contamination hazard in areas that have a concentration of homes with septic tanks due to poor filtration. While the soil type is listed as presenting severe challenges to septic systems, it should be noted the system has been onsite for an ample period of time.

**Table 5**

<b>Soil Name</b>	<b>Septic Tank Absorption Field Limitations</b>	<b>Limitations to Small Commercial Buildings</b>	<b>% of Site (approximate)</b>
Adamsville Fine Sand	Severe: wetness, poor filter	Moderate	100%

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

D. Protected Species:

There have been two documented occurrences of endangered species within a one-mile radius of the site. While the Gopher Tortoise has not been observed or reported within the last twenty years, the Florida Scrub-Jay has been documented more recently. Proper avoidance and mitigation measures must be taken. The applicant will be required to demonstrate at Level 2 Review how any impacts have been minimized or mitigated. The site is already developed with a Religious Institution, so impacts are not likely.

E. Archeological Resources:

There are no known historical or archeological resources onsite or listed in the Florida Master Site File for Section 30, Township 29, Range 29 according to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources.

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.

**Economic Factors:**

While the construction of the church will provide short-term benefit to Polk County's construction industry, in general, religious institutions meet the criteria for having 501(c)(3) status, and are thus exempt from ad valorem taxes. Any impacts to infrastructure and services from this development will not be recouped through tax revenue. From a socio-economic perspective, churches offer a sense of community engagement through Sunday schooling, cultural events, charitable drives, weddings, and funeral services.

**Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code:**

The request is located in the Rural Development Area (RDA) which "*is characterized by large open areas, agricultural use, with scattered development and rural centers. Services are limited and mostly found in the rural centers and clustered developments,*" according to POLICY 2.108-A1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Tables 6 and 7, to follow, provide an analysis of the proposed request when compared to typical policies of the Comprehensive Plan and factors in the LDC 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 6**

<b>Comprehensive Plan Policy</b>	<b>Consistency Analysis</b>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The proposed conditional use is not expected to create incompatibility with the surrounding uses since the Religious Institution has been in existence for almost forty years. In fact, this expansion will adhere to current development standards and include landscape buffering and screening provided around the perimeter (see typical site plan in Exhibit 5) to assure that they are protected from the perception of incompatibility in the future.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The Religious Institution has been established since 1987. The proposed expansion use does not need many sources of infrastructure as the infrastructure it requires is already in place. Expansion allows the congregation to remain onsite rather than finding accommodating property elsewhere.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The CU is being proposed within the RDA. There are no municipality water or wastewater lines directly available to the site. The applicant will use a septic tank and if necessary, a potable well. Public safety services are somewhat nearby, and two above ground fire protection tanks are provided for immediate fire coverage.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>There is existing social and physical infrastructure in place to accommodate such development; therefore, reducing the financial burden of the county and this reduces the impact on the environment as no new services and infrastructure has to be built.</p>

**Table 7**

<b>The Planning Commission, in the review of development plans, shall consider the following factors in accordance with Section 906.D.7 of the LDC:</b>	
<b>Whether the proposed development is consistent with all relevant requirements of this Code;</b>	<i>Yes, this request is consistent with the LDC as the Religious Institution specifically Section 120.J which permits this expansion upon completion of a Level 3 Review. Many of the conditions required in Section 303 will be enforced after a Level 3 Review. These can be found in the Findings of Fact on Pages 2-5</i>
<b>Whether the proposed development is consistent with all applicable policies of the Comprehensive Plan;</b>	<i>Yes, this expansion is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan because POLICY 2.125-E2 states “Type B facilities [churches] may be permitted in all areas of Polk County in accordance with the policies of this Plan and in accordance with the Land Development Code adopted by the County in accordance with Section 163.3201(1), F.S.”</i>
<b>Whether the proposed use is compatible with surrounding uses and the general character of the area, including such factors as density, height, bulk, scale, intensity, traffic, noise, and appearance; and</b>	<i>Yes, the request is compatible with surrounding uses and the general character of the area. See Page 7 of the staff report for data and analysis on surrounding uses and compatibility.</i>
<b>How the concurrency requirements will be met, if the development were built.</b>	<i>This request will not require concurrency determinations from utilities, the School Board, or TPO. The impact on public services can be found in the analysis found on Pages 7-10 of the staff report.</i>

**Comments from other Agencies:** None

**Exhibits:**

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



Location Map



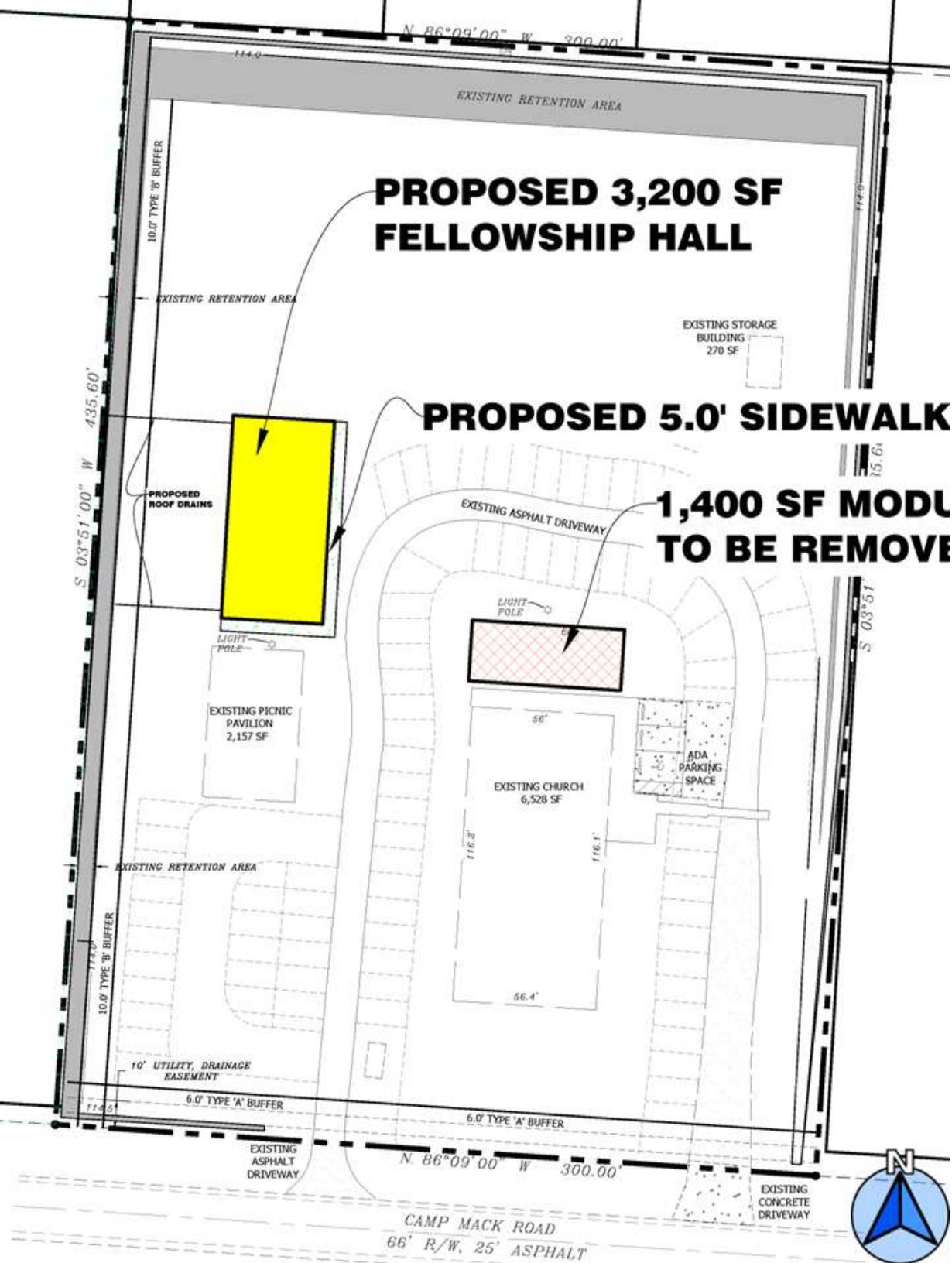
Future Land Use Map



2023 Aerial Image (Context)



2023 Aerial Image (Close-up)



Site Plan