



**CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA**  
**Planning Staff Report**  
**For**  
**Old Groves PUD Amendment**

**TYPE OF CASE:** PUD Amendment

**STAFF REVIEWER:** Alexis Crespo, AICP

**DATE:** October 10, 2024

**APPLICANT:** Hendry County School District c/o Michael Swindle

**AGENT:** Same as Applicant

**REQUEST:** Amend PUD Ordinance 2022-03 to update the allowable uses and conditions of approval to permit a public school in the Residential tracts.

**LOCATION:** South of Cowboy Way, north of Helms Road, and west of SR 29

**PROPERTY SIZE:** 332+/-acres

**FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION, CURRENT ZONING AND LAND USE:**

Existing Future Land Use Designation: Employment Village  
Existing Zoning: Planned Unit Development (Expired)  
Land Use: Undeveloped Vacant Land/Agriculture

**SURROUNDING LAND USE:**

**North:** FLU – Commercial and Outlying Mixed Use  
Zoning – Commercial (B-3)  
Land Use – Right-of-Way (Cowboy Way), Vacant, Light Industrial

**South:** FLU – South LaBelle Village  
Zoning – Agriculture (A), Planned Unit Development (PUD)  
Land Use – Right-of-Way (Helms Road)/Vacant Agricultural Land

**East:** FLU – Multi-Use, Residential Low Density, Residential High-Density  
Recreation (Hendry County)

Zoning – Agricultural (A-2) Hendry County  
Land Use – Agriculture, Recreation, Single-Family Residential

**West:** FLU – Residential, Multi-Use & Commercial (Hendry County)  
Zoning – Agricultural (A-2) Hendry County  
Land Use – Agriculture, Vacant Residential

**STAFF NARRATIVE:**

The Hendry County School District (“Applicant”) is requesting approval to amend the Old Groves Planned Unit Development (PUD), approved in 2022 per Ordinance 2022-03. The PUD was approved for 1,249 dwelling units and 80,000 SF of commercial uses. The Applicant is also seeking to add “schools, public” as an allowable use in the southwestern Residential Tract, to be developed as a high school serving the LaBelle area.

**BACKGROUND**

The Property consists of four (4) abutting parcels located north of Helms Road, east of State Road 29, and south of Cowboy Way. The subject property consists of undeveloped agricultural land.

The Property was annexed into the City to allow for annexation of the South LaBelle Village property to the south of Helms Road (as South LaBelle Village was not contiguous to the municipal boundary). Upon annexation, the Property was designated in the Old Groves Mixed Use Subdistrict future land use category and rezoned Planned Unit Development per Ordinance 2007-18. The PUD permitted the development of a maximum of 1,249 dwelling units and 80,000 SF of commercial uses subject to conditions.

In 2011, the City adopted amendments to the Comprehensive Plan following their Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process. The EAR-Based amendments eliminated the Old Groves Mixed Use Subdistrict and re-designated the Property as Employment Village. While Employment Village allows a mix of uses, the category does not permit single-family residential uses and limits density to 3 du/acre. Thus, the City-initiated EAR-Based amendments created an inconsistency between the PUD approval the underlying future land use category.

In 2022, the Applicant filed to redesignate the site in a newly created Old Groves Mixed Use Subdistrict to correct the issues associated with the EAR-based amendments, as well as reinstate the PUD and MCP approvals along with an interim horticultural use on the northern portion of the site.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The School District provided a preliminary layout of the school campus attached hereto as Exhibit F. The site is 40+/- acres in size and is generally located in the far southeastern corner of the PUD, fronting on Helms Road. The site plan depicts two (2) points of ingress/egress from Helms Road, along with surface parking, school buildings, accessory buildings, sports courts and recreational fields.

Building height is limited to 35'. Setbacks and landscape buffers must comply with the PUD conditions as well as the Helms Road Overlay established by Ordinance 2023-21.

Conditions are proposed to ensure interconnection when adjacent residential tracts in the PUD are developed in the future to facilitate access by students of the development.

Additionally, the owner of the PUD intends to maintain the interim agricultural use upon commencement of the school construction. Thus, the condition that requires the horticultural recycling use to cease upon commencement of development of the first phase has been modified to allow continuation of the horticultural recycling use so long as development is not closer than 1,500 feet to the facility.

A minor change to the landscaping condition is proposed to address adoption of the Helms Road Overlay standards that requires a 20-foot-wide enhanced right-of-way buffer. Additionally, a minor change is proposed to address the School District's independent maintenance of their school site.

### **FUTURE LAND USE/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE**

The proposed PUD is consistent with the following Goals, Objectives and Policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Future Land Use Objective 1.2 (Balanced Urban Growth)**

*The PUD will facilitate a compact development pattern that provides opportunities to more efficiently use and develop infrastructure, land and other resources and services by concentrating a well-planned, amenitized mixed-use project in the Employment Village future land use category, Old Groves Mixed Use Subdistrict, with access to utilities, services, and major public roadways.*

#### **Future Land Use Policy 1.3.2 (Employment Village Land Use Category – Old Grove Mixed Use Subdistrict)**

*The PUD is consistent with the allowable uses, density, intensity and intent of the Employment Village future land use category, Old Groves Mixed Use Subdistrict.*

#### **Transportation Element Objective 2.4 (Provision of Multi-modal Transportation)**

*As conditioned, the PUD will ensure that sidewalks are constructed along street frontages to connect to the internal sidewalk system to provide a variety of transportation opportunities for residents and future students. The site has excellent access to the public roadway network and will provide a publicly accessible spine road to increase the City's network.*

#### **Housing Element Policies 3.11.2 & 3.11.3 (New Housing Developments)**

*The PUD will allow for development of a public school to support future growth in the City as well as western Hendry County, in an appropriate location proximate to planned residential areas and where adequate and necessary public facilities and services are available.*

**Infrastructure Element Policy 4.3.2 (Surface Water & Groundwater Quality)**

*The PUD will connect to potable water and sanitary sewer services, eliminating the potential for well and septic tanks on the property, and thereby supporting the City's policy to uphold the quality of public surface and groundwater supply sources.*

**Recreation and Open Space Element Policy 6.7.1 & 6.7.3 (Private Parks)**

*As conditioned, the PUD will provide for private, on-site recreation space and landscaping for aesthetic and energy conservation purposes. Of note, the PUD provides a nature trail, community facility with pool, park, and greenbelt. The school site also provides recreational space for school-age children.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff finds that the PUD is consistent with the Land Development Code and the Comprehensive Plan and recommends **APPROVAL** with the following conditions:

1. The Rezone request applied to the property is described in Exhibit 'A'.
2. The PUD is limited to a maximum of 1,249 dwelling units and 80,000 SF of commercial uses.
3. A minimum of 10% of the land area shall be used for multi-family residential development.
4. Commercial development shall not exceed 10 acres with a maximum of 8,000 square feet per acre up to a maximum of 80,000 gross square feet of commercial uses. A maximum FAR of 0.35 is allowed for commercial development. No single commercial use shall exceed 10,000 square feet of gross floor area, except that a grocery store or supermarket may not exceed 45,000 gross square feet.
5. Residential density within the commercial component of the project is limited to multi-family and will not exceed 336 units.
6. Allowable uses shall be limited to those listed in the Schedule of Uses, attached as Exhibit 'B'.
7. Development Standards will conform to the Development Standards Table, attached as Exhibit 'C'.
8. All development must conform to the general design of the Master Concept Plan contained in Exhibit 'D' and the requirements of the Land Development Code.
9. Design elements of the PUD will be based on a common architectural theme with emphasis on a pedestrian friendly development. The unified theme shall be reflected through colors, materials, details, signage, lighting and any other elements or materials that visibly impact the unity of the development. The project development will include sidewalks, bicycles lanes, and other types of pedestrian connectivity between the commercial and residential components of the project and where possible, will connect or provide for future connection to pedestrian linkages off-site. All common areas and structures shall be complimentary to the architectural theme of the overall development. Site construction plans must demonstrate an internal sidewalk system to connect the residential buildings to on-site amenities and recreational areas, parking, and to the external sidewalk network.
10. Development must connect to the City's potable water and sanitary sewer system. A demonstration of capacity will be required at the time of development,

in addition to sufficient water pressure for a hydrant system and sprinklers within the building, if required by the Florida Building Code and NFPA Fire Prevention Code.

11. The developer/owner or their designee, which may include a property owners association (POA) or homeowner's association (HOA) must maintain common areas, parking areas, and infrastructure within the community, except for the Hendry County school site which will be independently owned and maintained by the School District. If a POA/HOA is established, documents must be provided to the City at the time of site construction plan permitting.
12. A minimum of 35% of the development of open space shall be provided within the PUD. At minimum of 10% of the site must be in the form of useable open space as defined in the Land Development Code, and which may include both passive and active recreational uses.
13. Residential front yards shall maintain an average five-foot wide landscape area.
14. The Developer may construct a minimum 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk within the rights-of-way or, at the Developer's discretion, the sidewalk may meander onto the Developer's property. The Developer shall provide the City with an easement for placement of any portion of the sidewalk placed on private property. The easement shall be recorded prior to issuance of Certificate of Completion. At the time of site construction permitting, future sidewalk connections must be provided from the school site to the future development tracts in the PUD.
15. Lake maintenance easements with a minimum width of 20 feet shall be provided.
16. The developer shall make every attempt to preserve the existing native trees on site. Construction plans shall include a tree preservation plan and a tree protection detail indicating how trees will be preserved during construction. This approval does not authorize the removal of any significant oak trees.
17. A minimum of 5.47 acres of preserve area shall be provided on site.
18. Minimum width of preserve areas shall be an average of 25 feet.
19. Landscaping and buffering shall be in compliance with LDC Section 4-80 and 4-~~8590~~, except that streetscape buffers must be provided along Cowboy Way and Helms Road, consisting of a 15-foot-wide buffer with a double hedgerow planted at 24 inches and maintained at 48 inches, two (2) large trees, and two (2) medium trees per 100 linear feet.
20. Primary entrances to all retail and commercial uses shall be designed for access from the interior of the site. Pedestrian and bicycle access shall be provided to Cowboy Way and the proposed Helms Road.
21. All buildings shall be interconnected with ground level pedestrian walkways.
22. Parking areas shall be screened from Cowboy Way and proposed Helms Road and from any properties adjacent to this development.
23. All necessary easements, dedications or other instruments shall be granted to the City of LaBelle as necessary to insure continued operation and maintenance of all service utilities.
24. All private roadways and common areas shall be continually maintained, at the Developer's or private entity's expense. The City of LaBelle shall have not responsibility for maintenance of privately owned facilities.
25. The horticultural waste recycling facility is permitted as an interim use until such time as the first certificate of occupancy is issued for the first phase of development within 1,500 feet of the limits of the facility, at which time the operation must cease, or upon approval of a PUD amendment to allow the use on permanent basis.

26. Hours of operation for the horticultural waste recycling facility are limited to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays.
27. The operations will consist of horticultural debris piles no greater than 25 feet in height and approximately 200' x 150' in size. Piles must be separated by a minimum of 30 feet.
28. Debris will be processed by an on-site emission free incinerator to be operated a minimum of 700 feet from the PUD boundaries. The burning of debris with emissions or grinding of materials on site is prohibited.
29. On-site retail sales of horticultural materials is prohibited. A maximum of 40 truck trips per day are allowed and must be documented by the Applicant and/or operator via a daily log.
30. The Applicant must provide the City with copies of all required state and federal agency permits, including a Florida Department of Environmental Protection permit prior to commencement of any interim horticultural waste recycling facility activities.
31. Approval of this PUD 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 City for issuance of the permit if the Applicant fails to obtain the requisite approvals or fulfill obligations imposed by a state or federal agency or undertakes actions that result in a violation of state or federal law. All other applicable state or federal permits must be obtained before commencement of the development.
32. All development and activities within the PUD must comply with all applicable NFPA standards, including but not limited to NFPA 1, Chapter 31, as may be amended, and the Operating Plan and Fire Protection, Control & Mitigation Plan.
33. Internal roadways and all access roads to the site from Cowboy Way and Helms Road to serve the interim horticultural waste recycling facility must be stabilized to accommodate emergency vehicles and be a minimum of 20 feet in width. No staging of trucks outside the PUD boundaries is permitted at any time.
34. Prior to issuance of a site construction permit for residential or commercial uses, a detailed site plan demonstrating the proposed residential and commercial development areas, including building footprints, must be scheduled for one (1) public meeting before the City Commission.
35. The PUD Master Concept Plan will remain valid for not more than five (5) years from the date of City Commission approval. Horizontal construction must commence within five (5) years or the MCP will be deemed vacated. Upon such time a new PUD zoning approval must be filed and approved by the City Commission.

**SUGGESTED MOTION(S):**

**APPROVAL:**

I make a motion to **APPROVE** the Old Groves PUD amendment.

**APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS:**

I make a motion to **APPROVE** the Old Groves PUD amendment. the following condition(s):

- 1) as outlined in the staff report;

**OR**

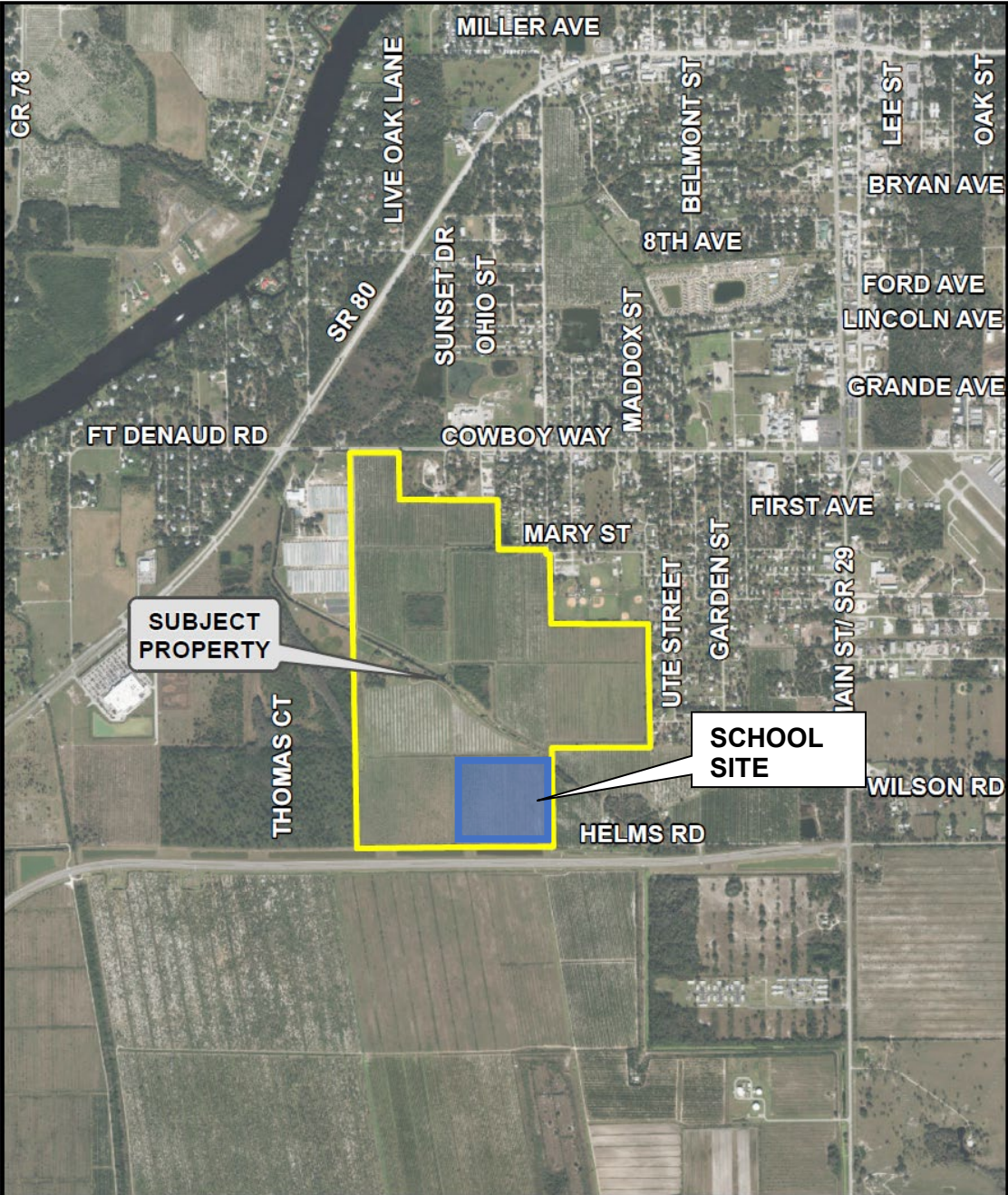
- 2) as outlined in the staff report and amended as follows;
- OR**
- 3) with the following conditions:

**DENIAL:**

I make a motion to **DENY** the Old Groves PUD amendment. The request does not meet the rezoning/PUD criteria:

- 1) .... Why?

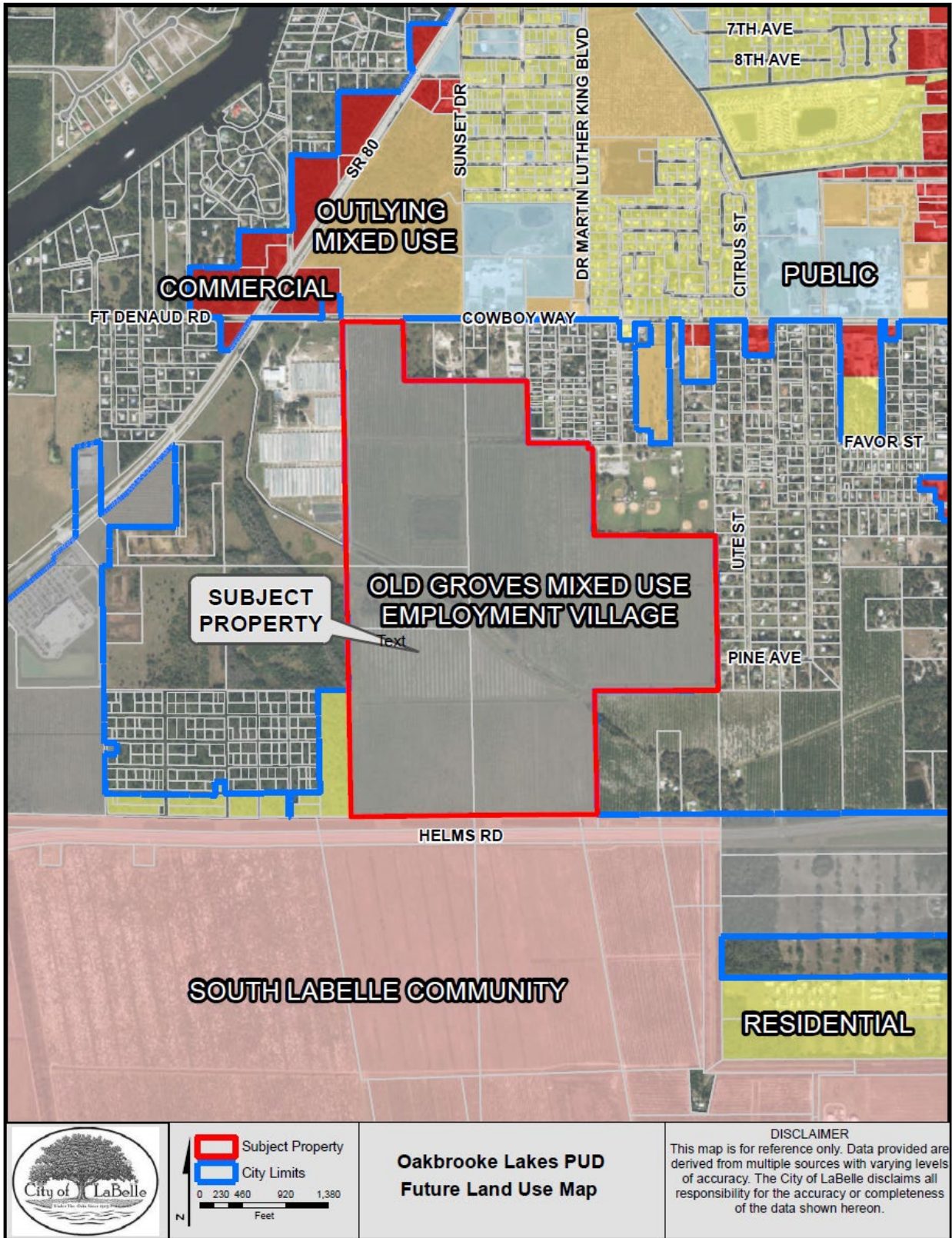
**LOCATION MAP**



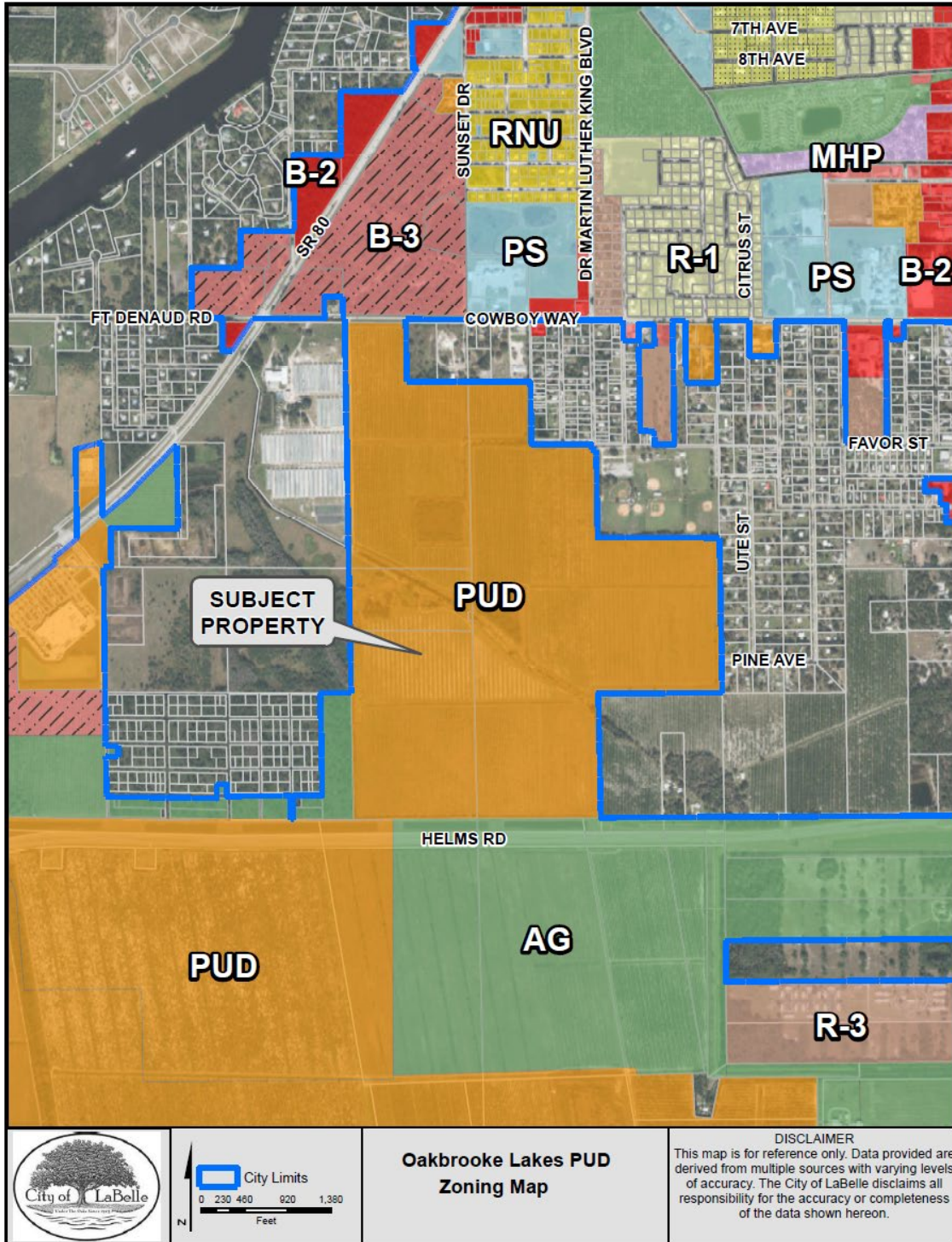
	<p>0 310 620 1,240 1,880 Feet</p>	<p><b>Oakbrooke Lakes PUD Location Map</b></p>	<p><b>DISCLAIMER</b> This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiple sources with varying levels of accuracy. The City of LaBelle disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.</p>
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# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# ZONING MAP



**Oakbrooke Lakes PUD  
Zoning Map**

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**EXHIBIT A  
LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**PARCEL 1**

THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 42 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

**PARCEL 2**

THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 AND THE NORTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 43 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

**PARCEL 3,**

THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 43 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA. A/K/A/ LOT 16, W.T. WILLIAMS UNRECORDED SUBDIVISION.

**PARCEL 4,**

THE EAST 1/2 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4; EXCEPT THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4; EXCEPT ROAD RIGHT OF WAY, AS DESCRIBED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 513, PAGE 313; EXCEPT THE NORTH 7.00 FEET THEREOF AND THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 AND THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4; EXCEPT LOTS 1 AND 2, BLOCK 1, BELLE LA CASA SUBDIVISION; EXCEPT LOT 1, BLOCK B, BELLE LA CASA SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 26, ALL LYING IN SECTION 18, TOWNSHIP 43 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

**PARCEL 5,**

THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 AND THE NORTH 3/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 ; EXCEPT THE NORTH 60 FEET OF THE EAST 30 FEET THEREOF; AND THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4; AND THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4; AND THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4; AND THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4; AND THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4, ALL LYING IN SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 43 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

**PARCEL 6**

LOTS 1 AND 2, BLOCK 1, BELLE LA CASA SUBDIVISION. ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 26, PUBLIC RECORDS OF HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

## EXHIBIT B SCHEDULE OF USES

### *General:*

- Essential Services
- Water management facilities and features, such as lakes or fountains
- Temporary construction, sales and administrative offices
- Model homes (limited to 8)
- Kiosks
- Ornamental towers such as clock towers, flagpoles, etc., limited to a height of 30 feet
- Temporary uses as defined in LDC Section 4-70

### *Residential:*

- Single –family dwellings
- Two-family dwellings
- Multi-family dwellings, including condominiums, lofts, apartments
- Townhouses
- Community and recreational facilities
- Accessory uses
- Manager’s office (limit 1)
- Gatehouse
- Signs per LDC Chapter 4-81
- Schools, public

### *Recreational:*

- Food and confectionary kiosks
- Band shell/stage, gazebo and other similar structures
- Recreational facilities such as bocce ball, shuffleboard, lawn bowling courts, swimming pools
- Parking lots and parking structures that service the recreational amenities
- Community buildings
- Pumping stations, emergency generators – must be screened from public view
- Outdoor dining areas
- Sidewalk sales areas – require Special Exception approval
- Parks, passive areas, trails, etc.
- Accessory uses

### *Commercial:*

- Multi-family dwellings, above commercial uses or as stand-alone buildings, not to exceed 336 units
- Uses allowed in the B-1 zoning district, with or without Special Exception as described in the Use Table, LDC Section 4-70.9[5]
- Restaurants– no drive-throughs
- Personal services
- Museums, art galleries
- Photographic studios
- Gyms
- Supermarkets and pharmacies

Communication facilities – require Special Exception approval  
Clubs, lodges  
Congregate living facilities  
Animal sales and services  
Convenience stores with gas pumps – limited to 8 two-sided pumps  
Day Care  
Drinking establishments as per LDC Chapter 3  
Alcoholic beverage establishments, bars (neighborhood only, limited to max. 5,000 gross square feet)  
Outdoor sales, service or storage areas – only as accessory uses, must be screened from public areas  
Temporary Uses, as per LDC Section 4-70.9[5]  
Accessory Uses  
Outdoor restaurant seating  
Signs per LDC Chapter 4-81

*Interim Agricultural:*

Agricultural uses  
Horticultural Waste Recycling, limited to the location shown on Exhibit E

**EXHIBIT C  
SITE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS**

*Commercial/School Tracts:*

Site development regulations must comply with the B-2 zoning district standards set forth in the LDC

*Residential:*

<b>Residential Development Standards</b>							
Allowable Use	Max. Bldg. Lot Coverage	Min. Living Area (sq. ft. per unit)	Min. Lot Width (feet)	Minimum Setbacks (feet)			Max. Height
				Front	Side	Rear	
Single Family up to 2 Bedrooms	45%	700	60	15	7.5	20	35
Single Family, 3 bedrooms	45%	900	60	15	7.5	20	35
Two-Family, up to 2 Bedrooms	45%	900	70	15	7.5	20	35
Two-Family, max. 3 Bedrooms	45%	1,020	70	15	7.5	20	35
Multi-family Studio*	70%	500	N/A	20	25	20	35
Multi-family, One Bedroom	70%	750	N/A	20	25	20	35
Multi-family, Two Bedroom	70%	900	N/A	20	25	20	35
Multi-Family, Three Bedroom	70%	1,100	N/A	20	25	20	35
Townhouse, Two Bedroom	70%	900	15	20	0/25**	20	35
Accessory Structures				Same as above	Same as above	5	35

\*Living area with kitchenette, minimum of stove and refrigerator, sink in kitchen area, separate full bath, no separate bedroom.

\*\*Requires a minimum 25-foot setback between structures, 0 feet between attached units.

*Interim Agricultural:*

Minimum 100 foot setback from all property lines for structures and material piles. The fully-enclosed incinerator must be a minimum of 700 feet from all property lines.

EXHIBIT D - MASTER CONCEPT PLAN

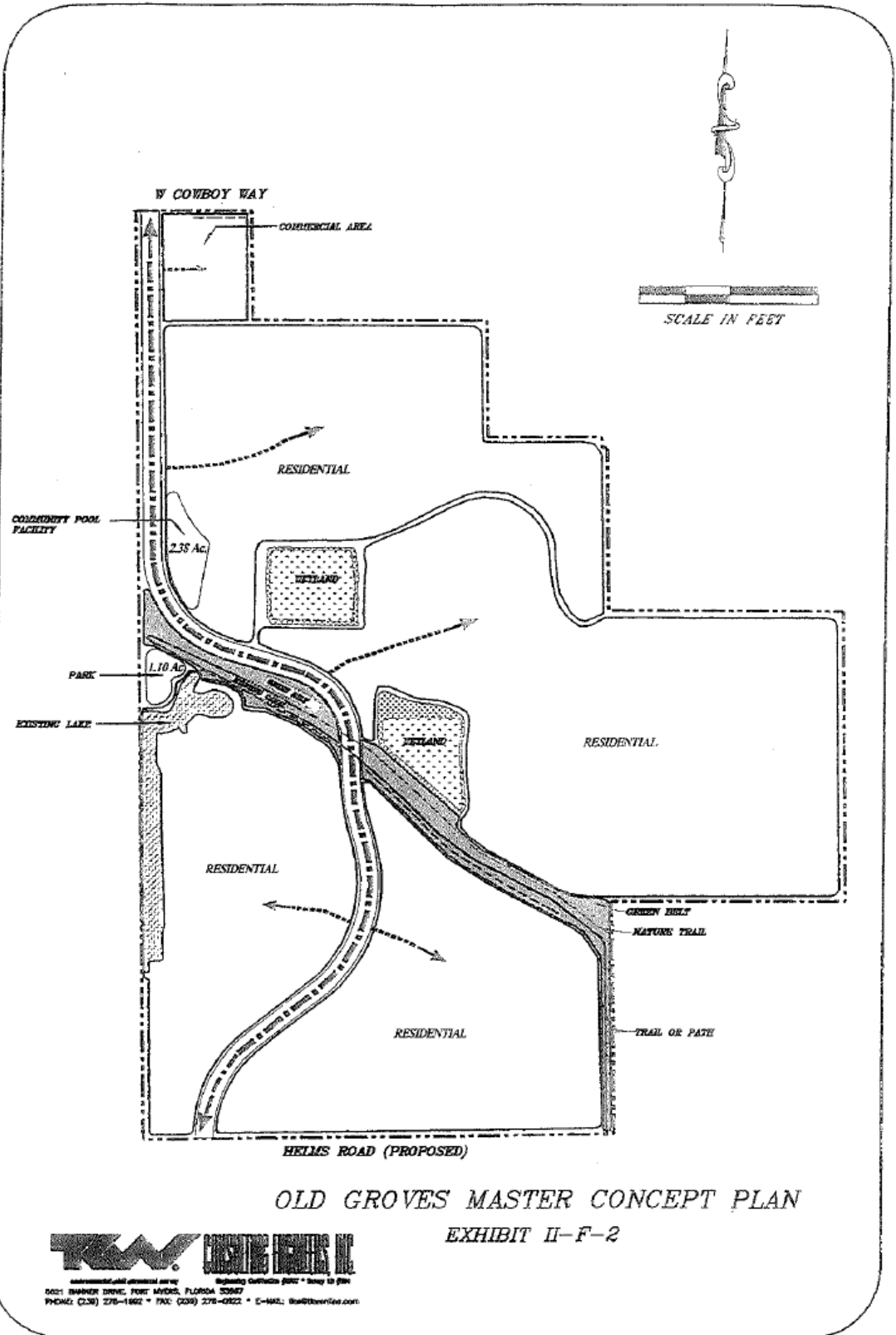


EXHIBIT E - INTERIM HORTICULTURAL RECYCLING SITE PLAN





# EXHIBIT F – SCHOOL SITE PLAN

