



CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA
Planning Staff Report
For
Annexation, Comprehensive Plan Amendment,
and Planned Unit Development PUD Rezone

TYPE OF CASE: Annexation, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, & PUD Rezone

STAFF REVIEWER: Patty Kulak

DATE: June 12, 2025

APPLICANT: Dan-Nico Properties

AGENT: Justyna Gale, Forward Planning & Design

REQUEST: Annex a 26.12± acre property from unincorporated Hendry County into the City of LaBelle municipal boundary; amend the City of LaBelle Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designation from Hendry County "High Density Residential" to the City of LaBelle "Outlying Mixed Use"; and rezone the subject property from Hendry County General Agriculture (A-2) to the City of LaBelle Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district, to facilitate development of a mixed-use community known as The Residences at Grand Oaks.

LOCATION: 2250 State Road 29

PROPERTY SIZE: 26.26+/-acres

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION, CURRENT ZONING AND LAND USE:

Existing Future Land Use Designation: High Density Residential (*Hendry County*)

Existing Zoning: A-2 (*Hendry County*)

Land Use: Vacant / Agricultural

SURROUNDING LAND USE:

North: FLU – Employment Village
Zoning – Agriculture (Ag)
Land Use – Vacant / Agricultural

South:	FLU –	Residential
	Zoning –	Residential (R-3)
	Land Use –	Multifamily Residence
East:	FLU –	Employment Village
	Zoning –	DG Lender Planned Unit Development (PUD)
	Land Use –	Undeveloped
West:	FLU –	South LaBelle Community
	Zoning –	Agriculture
	Land Use –	Undeveloped

STAFF NARRATIVE:

Dan-Nico Properties (“Applicant”) is requesting approval to:

1. Annex 26.26+/- acres from unincorporated Hendry County into the City of LaBelle municipal boundary;
2. Amend the City of LaBelle Future Land Use Map to designate the subject property to the City’s Outlying Mixed-Use future land use category;
3. Rezone the subject property to the City’s Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district. The PUD will consist of a phased development including a total of 408 affordable, multi-family dwelling units, 10,000 square feet of commercial uses, and 5,000 square feet of on-site amenities.

BACKGROUND

The subject property consists of approximately 26.26 acres of vacant land located within unincorporated Hendry County and is contiguous to the City of LaBelle municipal boundaries on all sides (north, east, south, and west). The property includes approximately 0.63 acres of wetlands, which will remain undisturbed as part of the proposed development. Additionally, the site hosts a small population of protected gopher tortoises. A formal wildlife survey will be required prior to site development to determine the number of tortoises and to secure appropriate relocation permits from regulatory agencies.

According to the Hendry County Future Land Use Map, the property is designated as High Density Residential. The current zoning classification for the property under Hendry County’s zoning regulations is General Agricultural (A-2).

ANNEXATION REQUEST

The Applicant’s Voluntary Annexation Petition meets the stated annexation rules outline in Chapter 171, Part II, Florida Statutes as follows:

- The Property boundary is contiguous to the City of LaBelle municipal boundary, which runs along the eastern, western, northern, and southern property boundaries.
- The Property is intended for development of urban land uses (multifamily with 10,000 SF of commercial), as demonstrated through the concurrent Comprehensive Future Land Use Map Amendment and PUD rezoning request.

The Property will not create an enclave, or isolated area of unincorporated lands surround by City lands, per Section 171.031(13), Florida Statutes. In fact, the annexation will resolve the site's current status as an enclave.

Based on the above analysis the application meets the criteria for annexation into the City of LaBelle municipal boundary.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT REQUEST

The subject property currently has a Hendry County Future Land Use designation of High Density Residential, permitting residential development at a maximum density of 15 dwelling units per acre. The applicant has filed for annexation into the City of LaBelle, accompanied by a request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to designate the property within the City's Outlying Mixed Use future land use category. This category provides for residential development at a base density of six (6) dwelling units per acre, with provisions available for bonus density upon meeting specific criteria outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, the applicant has submitted a rezoning request to establish a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district. The proposed PUD, named Residences at Grand Oaks, encompasses a mixed-use project consisting of 408 affordable multi-family residential units, approximately 10,000 square feet of neighborhood-oriented commercial space, and approximately 5,000 square feet of on-site amenities such as a clubhouse, community park, and recreational facilities. The project is proposed to be completed in two development phases.

The proposed residential density for the project, approximately 16 dwelling units per acre, requires approval of bonus density. The applicant's justification for bonus density includes providing affordable housing units, site design considerations that promote pedestrian access and connectivity, preservation of approximately 0.63 acres of wetlands, and the establishment of publicly accessible civic and open space areas. Additionally, the applicant plans for the preservation of existing significant oak trees and environmentally sensitive areas identified on-site.

The affordable housing commitment includes renting 100% of the proposed dwelling units to households earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This would result in a maximum monthly rental rate of \$ 1,282 for a 2-bedroom unit based upon the 2025 Hendry County approved "Income Limits and Rent Limits" published by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

The property has direct frontage and access onto State Road 29, classified as an arterial roadway with capacity anticipated to support the proposed development. Utility services, including potable water and future sanitary sewer, are available or planned to be provided to meet required level-of-service standards for the proposed uses.

Environmental assessments conducted for the property indicate the presence of protected gopher tortoises. Prior to any site development activities, a formal wildlife survey and appropriate relocation permits will be required in accordance with applicable regulatory guidelines.

Adjacent existing and future land uses include the Employment Village category to the north and east, and the South LaBelle Community future land use category to the west. The proposed Outlying Mixed Use category serves as a transitional land use category between these areas, providing for compatible residential and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses along the SR 29 corridor.

PUD REZONING REQUEST

The subject property, approximately 26.26 acres in size, is currently zoned General Agricultural (A-2) under Hendry County regulations. Agricultural zoning is primarily suited for agricultural activities and does not align with the proposed mixed-use residential and neighborhood commercial development along State Road 29. The applicant is requesting rezoning to the City of LaBelle's Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district, consistent with the proposed Outlying Mixed Use future land use category.

The proposed PUD will enable development of a mixed-use project known as The Residences at Grand Oaks, featuring a phased development approach:

- Phase 1 & 2: Includes 288 multi-family dwelling units and 10,000 square feet of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses.
- Phase 3: Proposes an additional 120 multi-family dwelling units.

Total residential units will be 408 dwelling units, complemented by 5,000 square feet of community amenities including a clubhouse and recreational facilities, and 10,000 square feet of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses. As noted above, all units must meet conditions relating to affordability to meet the Outlying Mixed Use bonus density criteria.

Access

Primary access to the property will be provided via State Road 29, an arterial roadway, with driveway connections subject to review and approval by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). A submitted Traffic Impact Study confirms adequate capacity and infrastructure to support proposed access points along SR 29. All ingress/egress points will adhere to applicable FDOT and City requirements to maintain traffic safety and operational efficiency.

Landscape Buffers

The development will incorporate landscape buffers to enhance compatibility and visual aesthetics:

- External roadway frontage buffers: A minimum buffer width of 30 feet along State Road 29 will be provided, featuring enhanced landscaping consistent with the City's regulations for gateway corridors.
- Internal buffers: A minimum of 20-foot-wide landscaped buffers and setbacks will be provided between residential and commercial uses, ensuring internal compatibility.
- Preservation of significant oak trees, including multiple large oaks identified onsite (ranging from 14 inches to 48 inches DBH), is proposed to be incorporated into buffer areas and open spaces to maintain existing natural aesthetics.

Compatibility

The proposed development includes specific development regulations to ensure compatibility internally and with surrounding uses. The submitted Schedule of Uses limits commercial activities to neighborhood-oriented and compatible uses, such as business and medical offices, personal services, pharmacies, retail sales, and restaurants (subject to additional review for alcohol service). Residential

uses are limited to multi-family dwellings, designed with Old Florida Vernacular architectural elements to blend into the local character.

Enhanced setbacks, landscape treatments, and building separation standards outlined in the applicant's development regulations (Exhibit C) are proposed to address compatibility with adjacent residential developments and potential future employment-oriented uses nearby. The development's internal design incorporates pedestrian walkways, parks, and civic spaces, promoting connectivity and a cohesive community environment.

Service availability letters from Hendry County School District and Hendry County Sheriff's Office confirm adequate capacity for educational services and public safety.

Overall, the proposed Residences at Grand Oaks PUD will provide a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented affordable residential community compatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses, supported by suitable infrastructure, landscape buffering, and carefully defined development regulations.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency:

The request is consistent with the following objectives and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan as follows:

Future Land Use Policy 1.2.1

The PUD will provide opportunities for planned growth and support the expansion of the local economy and anticipated population growth in the South LaBelle Village area, which is targeted for long-term growth.

Policy 1.3.2 Outlying Mixed Use Land Use Category

The proposed Outlying Mixed Use Future Land Use Category is appropriate for the subject property, given its proximity and transitional role between the Employment Village designation to the north and east and the South LaBelle Community category to the west. This category supports a balanced mix of residential and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses suitable along the SR 29 corridor, contributing positively to the economic and land use continuity of the City.

The Outlying Mixed-Use Category provides opportunities for integrated, planned developments featuring a combination of land uses. Predominantly residential, the category also allows for neighborhood commercial uses, provided they comply with the applicable development standards. The City's Comprehensive Plan states that no more than 30% of this category may be single-use commercial development, and no more than 70% single-use residential, calculated on a city-wide basis. The proposed mixed-use project at Grand Oaks, with 408 residential units and 10,000 square feet of neighborhood-oriented commercial space, complies with these standards.

Staff finds that the proposed mix of residential units, commercial uses, and community amenities aligns consistently with the intent of the City's Outlying Mixed-Use category and contributes to balanced and compatible growth along the SR 29 corridor.

Based on the criteria set forth in the City of LaBelle's Comprehensive Plan for granting bonus density within the Outlying Mixed Use future land use category, the applicant is requesting to increase the allowable residential density from the base of 6 units per acre to a maximum of 16 units per acre. The

project site totals approximately 26.26 acres, which would allow for a base density of 157 dwelling units. The applicant is requesting a total of 408 dwelling units, which equates to approximately 15.54 dwelling units per acre.

The justification for bonus density is summarized below:

Direct Access to Arterial Roadway: The project fronts directly onto SR 29, a designated arterial roadway, satisfying the access requirement.

Mixed-Use Development: The proposed project includes a combination of uses, 408 residential units, 10,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial, and 5,000 square feet of civic/amenity space, qualifying as a horizontally integrated mixed-use development.

Minimization of Impacts to Significant Oaks: The site plan preserves a heavily wooded area on the western portion of the site containing mature oak trees, as well as existing trees surrounding the on-site pond.

Publicly Accessible Civic Space: A civic space is proposed near the entrance, featuring benches, flagpoles, and a nature trail intended for public use.

Enhanced Architectural Design: Buildings will incorporate Old Florida vernacular elements, such as pitched roofs, covered walkways, and decorative architectural features.

Enhanced Landscape Design: The applicant proposes landscaping that exceeds minimum code requirements, particularly in pedestrian areas and buffer zones.

Compatibility Measures: The project incorporates buffers and setbacks that exceed minimum requirements, especially where adjacent to existing single-story residential development. Building height is limited to three-story structures (maximum 36 feet).

Based on the information provided and the project's response to the bonus density criteria, the application meets the conditions necessary to request bonus density up to the maximum of 16 units per acre as permitted under the Comprehensive Plan.

Traffic Circulation Element Policy 2.5.2 & 2.5.3

The applicant has submitted a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed project, demonstrating that adjacent roadway segments along State Road 29 will continue to operate at an acceptable Level of Service with the proposed project impacts. Specific requirements for driveway access and potential turn-lane improvements will be evaluated in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) during the permitting phase. At this time, the analysis provided does not indicate the need for significant off-site roadway capacity improvements.

Infrastructure Element Policy 4.1

Currently, utilities are available near the property; however, extension of utility lines will be required to serve the proposed residential and commercial development. The applicant is responsible for the cost of extending the potable water and sanitary sewer infrastructure to serve the property per Staff conditions of approval. Prior to construction, the applicant will be required to demonstrate adequate infrastructure capacity and confirm service availability from the City of LaBelle through the site construction permitting process.

Infrastructure Element Policy 4.3.2 (Surface Water & Groundwater Quality)

The Master Concept Plan provided by the applicant indicates stormwater management facilities will be located on-site to provide water quality treatment and attenuation. These facilities include water management lakes, which will serve dual purposes of stormwater management and on-site fill. Stormwater discharge from the project site is planned to be directed toward the existing conveyance ditch along the eastern boundary of the property, following appropriate permitting and water quality standards.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed annexation; Comprehensive Plan Amendment to designate the property within the City's Outlying Mixed Use future land use category; and rezoning to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district is consistent with the City of LaBelle's Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan, and recommends APPROVAL, subject to the following conditions:

1. The PUD zoning approval applies specifically to the subject property as described in Exhibit 'A'.
2. Allowable uses shall be limited to those specified in the approved Schedule of Uses (Exhibit 'B').
3. Development shall conform to standards identified in the Development Regulations Table (Exhibit 'C').
4. All development must adhere to the design and phasing detailed in the approved Master Concept Plan (MCP), identified as Exhibit 'D', and comply with applicable City Land Development Code regulations.
5. The maximum permitted number of residential dwelling units shall not exceed 408 units. Commercial development shall be limited to a maximum of 10,000 square feet. Residential amenities shall not exceed 5,000 square feet.
6. 100% of the dwelling units will be rent restricted for households earning up to and including 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for Hendry County.
7. Any time that a unit becomes vacant, the next available unit will be offered to a qualifying household subject to the specified thresholds. This restriction shall remain in place for no less than thirty (30) years from the date of the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy. AMI income limits and rent limit adjustments will be made on an annual basis according to the most recent Hendry County approved "Income Limits and Rent Limits" published by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. See table below depicting the current 2025 limits:

County (Metro)	Percentage Category	Income Limit by Number of Persons in Household										Rent Limit by Number of Bedrooms in Unit					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0	1	2	3	4	5
Hendry County	30%	15,650	21,150	26,650	32,150	37,650	41,300	44,150	47,000	Refer to HUD		391	460	666	872	1,032	1,139
	50%	24,950	28,500	32,050	35,600	38,450	41,300	44,150	47,000	49,840	52,688	623	668	801	925	1,032	1,139
	80%	39,900	45,600	51,300	56,950	61,550	66,100	70,650	75,200	79,744	84,301	997	1,068	1,282	1,481	1,652	1,823
	120%	59,880	68,400	76,920	85,440	92,280	99,120	105,960	112,800	119,616	126,451	1,497	1,603	1,923	2,221	2,478	2,734
Median: 62,400	140%	69,860	79,800	89,740	99,680	107,660	115,640	123,620	131,600	139,552	147,526	1,746	1,870	2,243	2,591	2,891	3,190

8. The owner will include an annual report that provides the progress and monitoring of occupancy of the income-restricted units, including rent data for rented units, or homestead data for owner-occupied units, in a format approved by the City of LaBelle. The Owner agrees to annual on-site monitoring by the City, or its designee.
9. Development must connect to the City's potable water and sanitary sewer system. The developer shall be responsible for the extension of utilities to serve the subject property. Proof of adequate service capacity shall be required prior to issuance of site construction permits, including a hydrant system demonstrating adequate and continuous water flow for firefighting purposes.

10. Site construction plans must demonstrate the provision of an internal sidewalk and pedestrian network connecting residential units, amenities, commercial spaces, parking areas, and perimeter sidewalks.
11. Parking shall be provided on-site in accordance with the City's Land Development Code requirements for all residential and commercial uses.
12. Access to the property shall be from State Road 29, subject to approval by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). This approval does not guarantee, or grant access as depicted on the MCP without FDOT approval.
13. A unified Master Signage Plan consistent with the City's Land Development Code shall be required at the time of site construction permitting to ensure cohesive signage design throughout the residential and commercial areas.
14. Consistent with LDC Sec. 4-93, the architectural theme for all non-residential buildings shall reflect an Old Florida vernacular style with inclusion of roof overhangs, porches, covered corridors, covered walkways, and pitched roofs
15. Residential structures shall also adhere to an Old Florida vernacular architectural style, incorporating at least three (3) of the following features: front porches, pitched and/or metal roofs, shutters, gabled rooflines, and paneled siding.
16. The developer/owner or established Property Owners Association (POA) shall maintain all common areas, infrastructure, amenities, parking facilities, and landscaped buffers. POA documentation, if applicable, must be provided at the site construction permitting phase.
17. Consistent with LDC 4-88 a minimum of 30% usable open space must be dedicated exclusively to passive and active recreation areas. This area shall exclude perimeter buffers, stormwater management areas, and other non-usable lands. The usable open space must include a clubhouse with swimming pool as shown on the MCP.
18. Dumpsters, recycling containers, and service areas must be set back a minimum of 25 feet from the PUD boundaries and appropriately screened with opaque walls or fencing.
19. Landscaping buffers shall be provided as follows, consistent with the approved Master Concept Plan:
 - A 20-foot-wide landscape buffer along the State Road 29 frontage with enhanced plantings per City requirements.
 - A Type B Option 2 Landscape buffer as outlines in LCD 4-80 Table L6 along the north and south properties lines.
 - Preservation of identified significant oak trees within open space areas and buffers.
20. Prior to site construction permitting, the developer shall complete required wildlife surveys, including gopher tortoise surveys, and obtain any necessary relocation permits from applicable regulatory agencies.
21. The City is conducting a risk assessment and capital planning for adequate fire protection. The project may be subject in the future to impact fees or capital assessments to address the project impact.
22. The approved PUD Master Concept Plan shall remain valid for five (5) years from the date of City Commission approval. Horizontal site construction must commence within this period, or the MCP shall expire. Extensions may be administratively approved once for an additional two (2) years; further extensions require City Commission approval.

SUGGESTED MOTION(S):

APPROVAL:

I make a motion to **APPROVE** annexation of the 26.26+/- acres from unincorporated Hendry County into the City of LaBelle municipal boundary; amend the City of LaBelle Future Land Use Map to

designate the subject property within the Outlying Mixed Use future land use category; and rezone the subject property to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district.

DENIAL:

I make a motion to **DENY** annexation of the 26.26+/- acres from unincorporated Hendry County into the City of LaBelle municipal boundary; amend the City of LaBelle Future Land Use Map to designate the subject property within the Outlying Mixed Use future land use category; and rezone the subject property to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district.

The request does not meet the annexation & rezoning criteria:

1)

APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS:

I make a motion to approve Residences at Grande Oak Comprehensive Plan Amendment & PUD Rezone Amendment, with the following condition(s):

1) as outlined in the staff report;

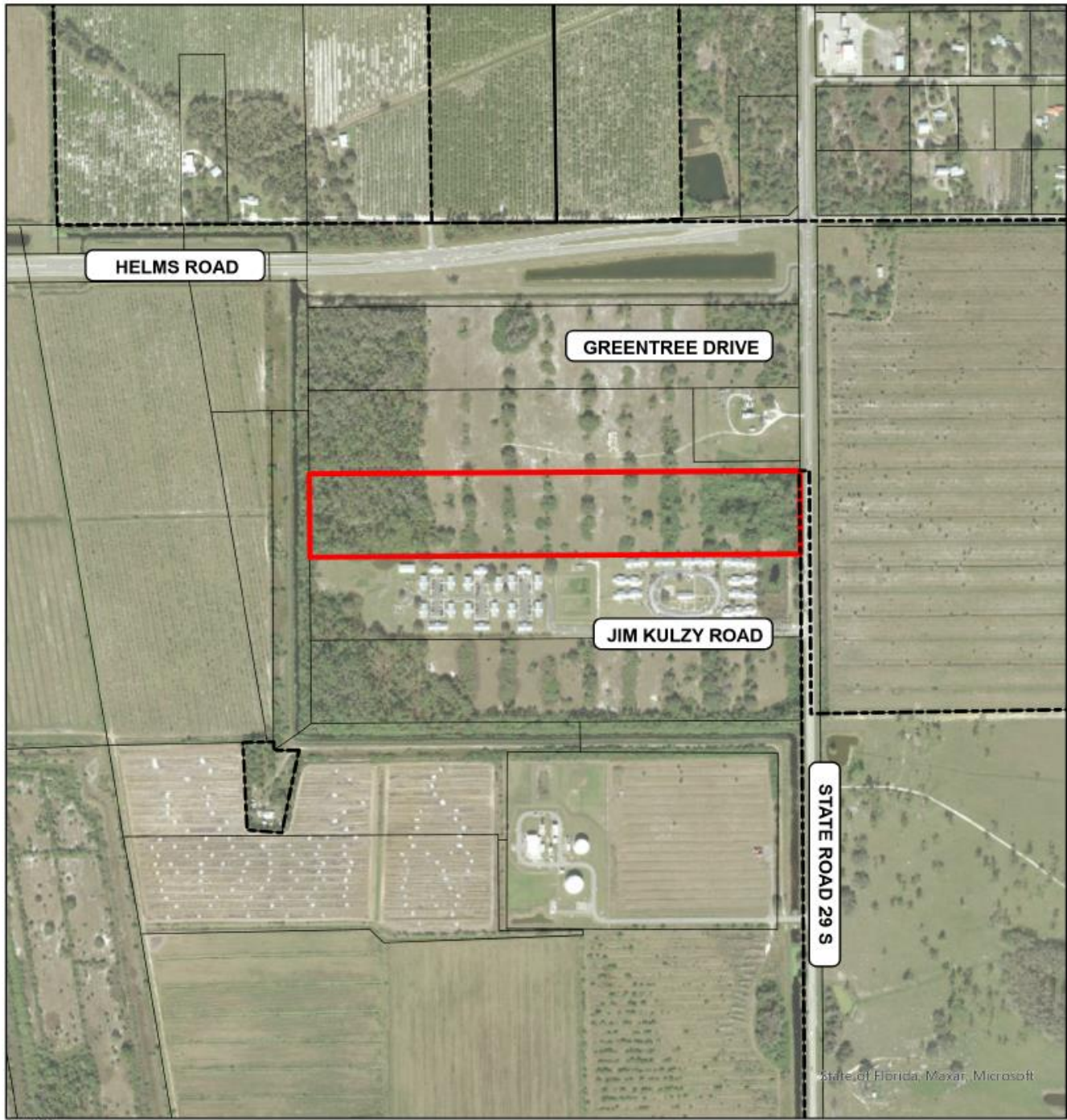
OR

2) as outlined in the staff report and amended as follows;

OR

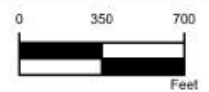
3) with the following conditions:

LOCATION MAP / EXISTING CITY LIMITS

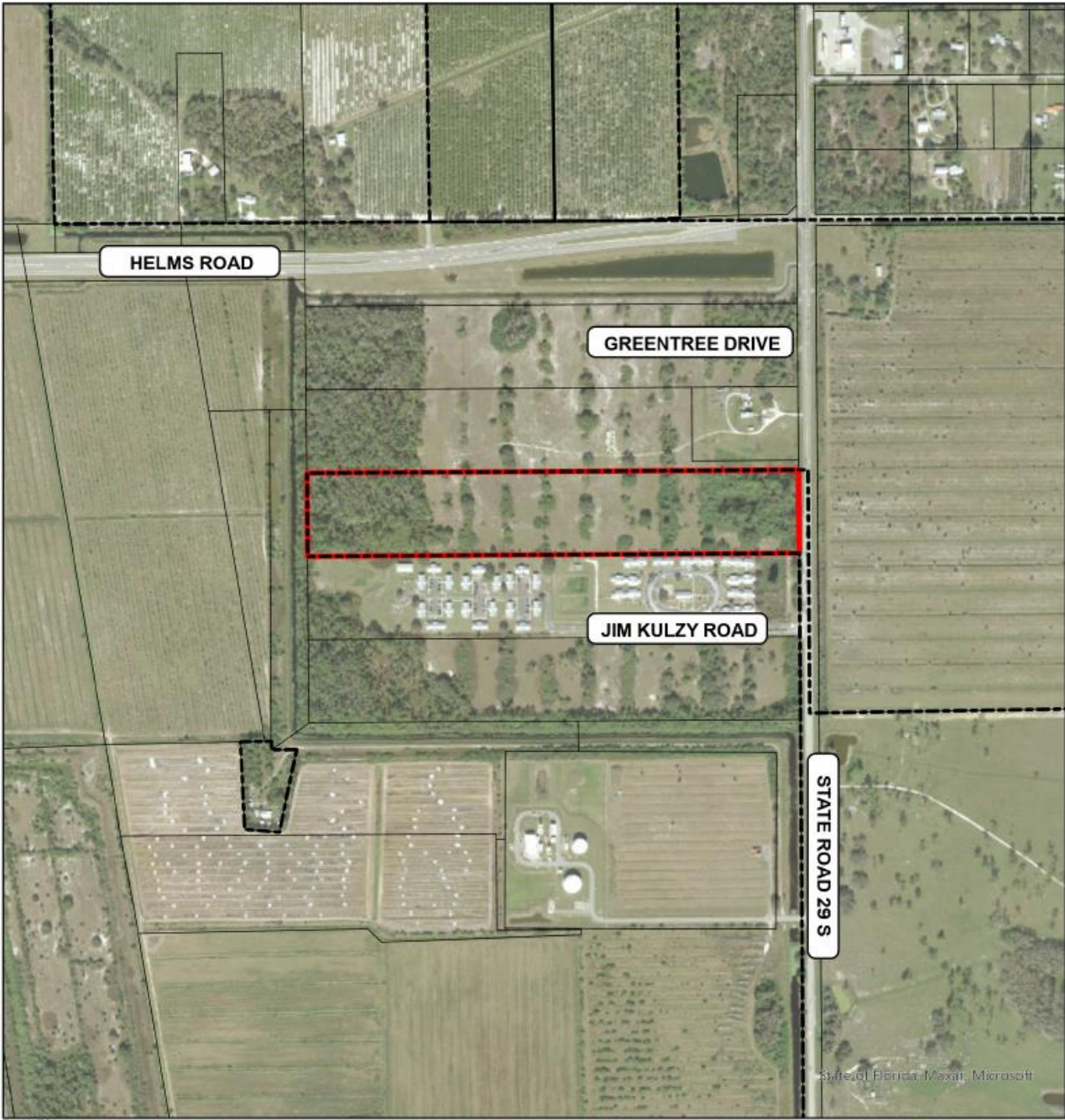


Legend




-  Subject Property
-  LaBelle City Limits
-  Parcels



PROPOSED CITY LIMITS

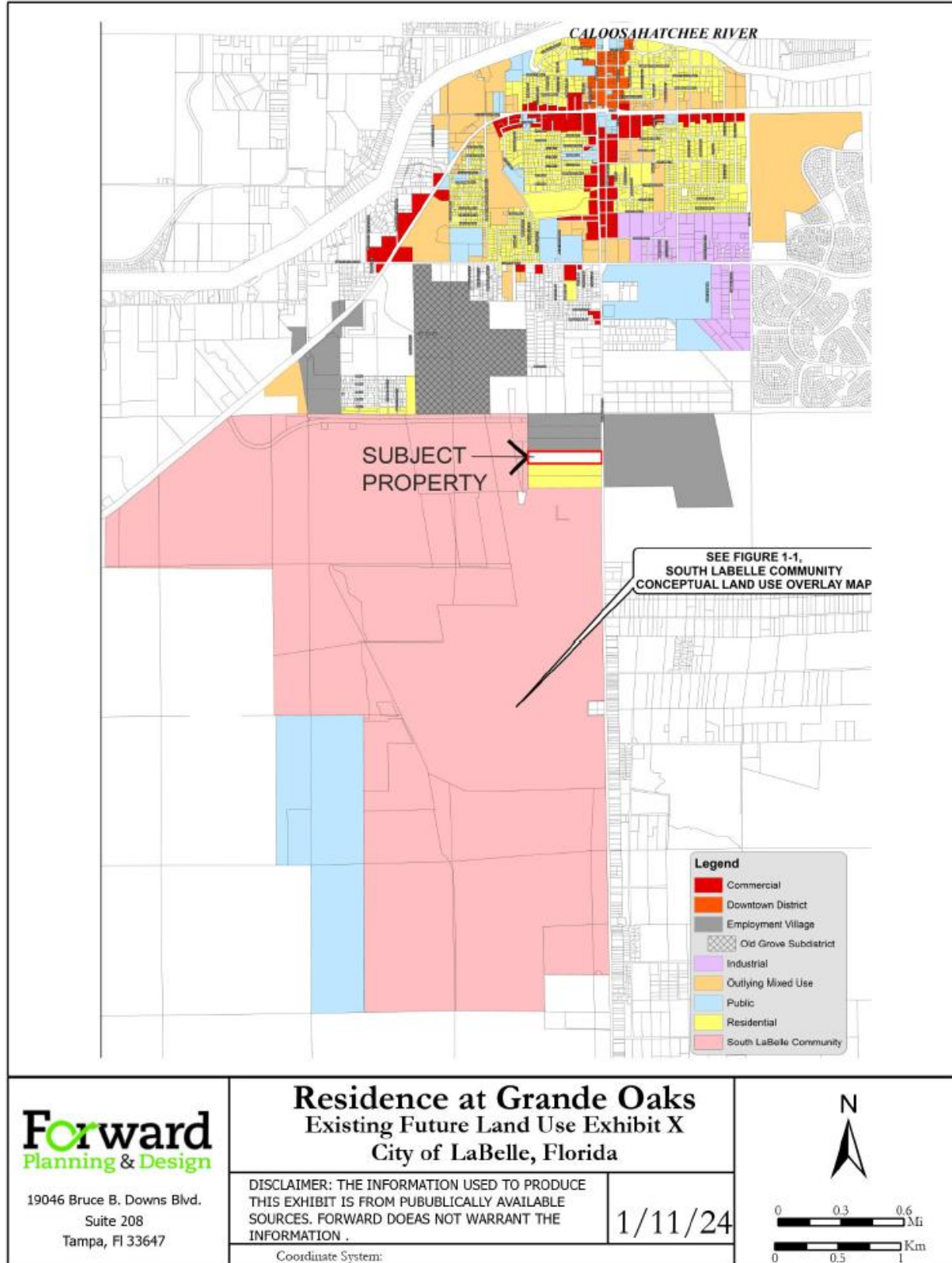


Legend

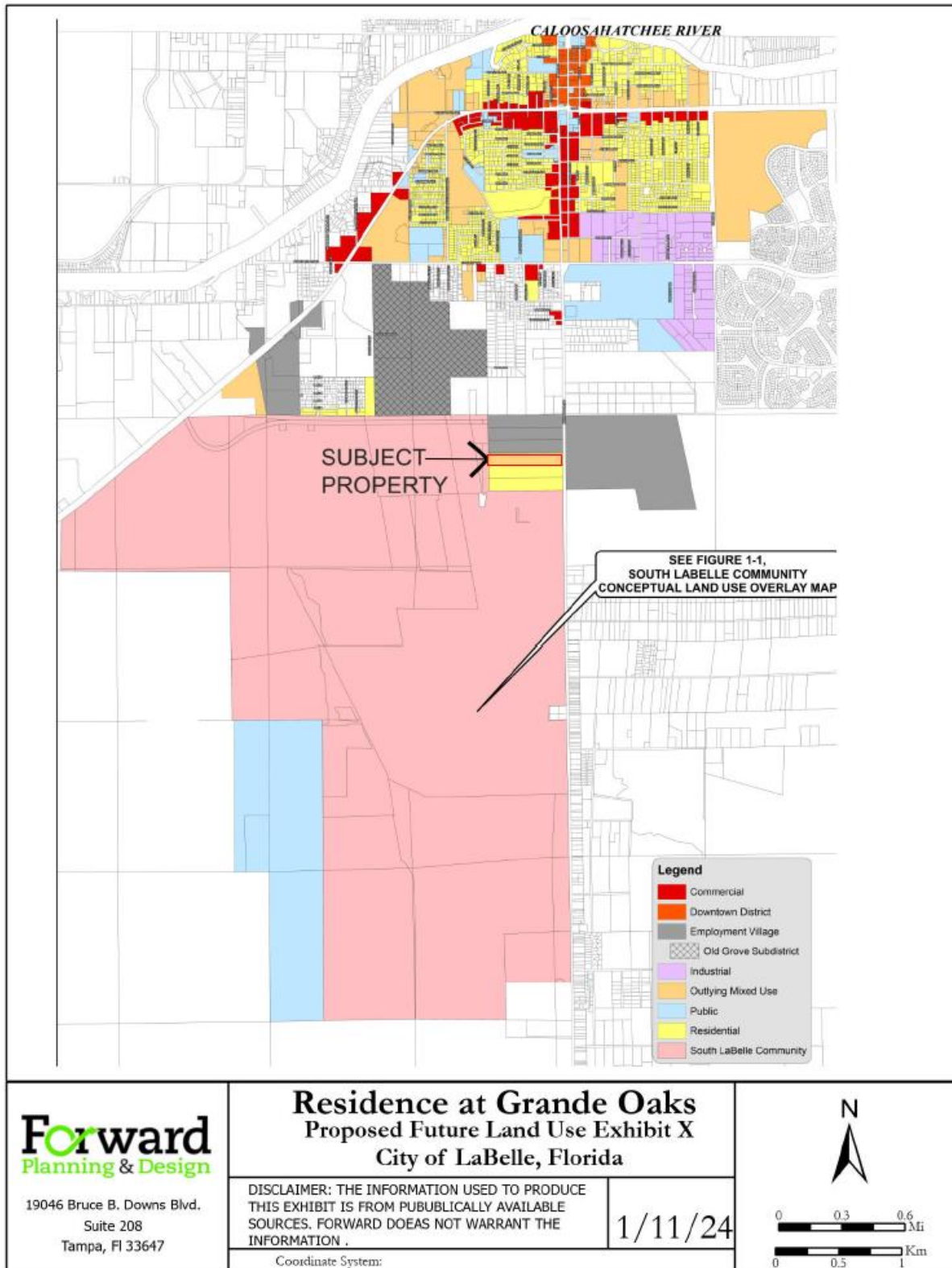
-  Subject Property
-  LaBelle City Limits
-  Parcels



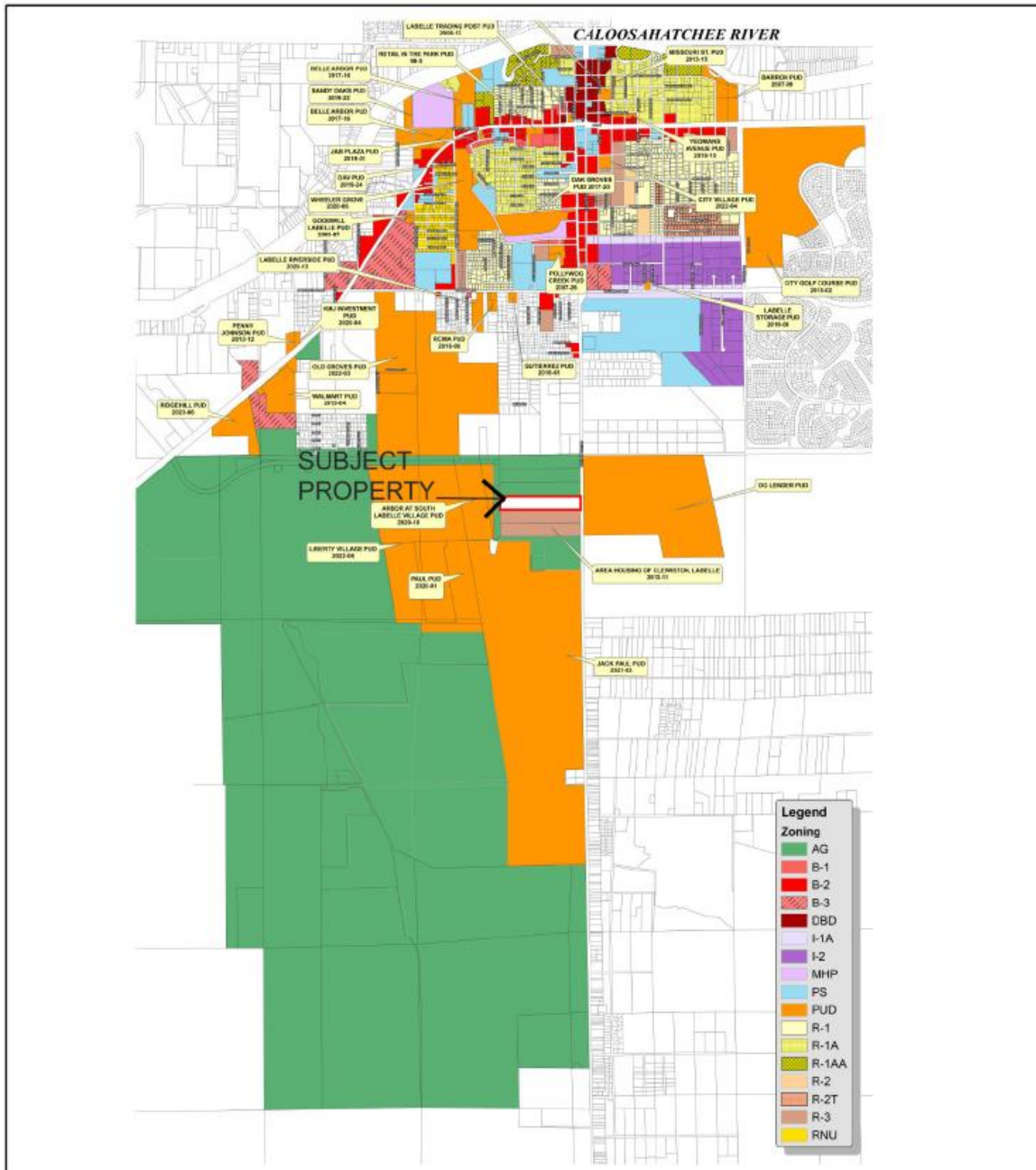
CURRENT FUTURE LAND USE MAP



PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



CURRENT ZONING MAP



Forward
Planning & Design

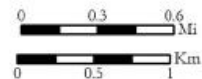
19046 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Suite 208
Tampa, FL 33647

Residence at Grande Oaks Existing Zoning Exhibit X City of LaBelle, Florida

DISCLAIMER: THE INFORMATION USED TO PRODUCE THIS EXHIBIT IS FROM PUBUBLICALLY AVAILABLE SOURCES. FORWARD DOES NOT WARRANT THE INFORMATION .

Coordinate System:

1/11/24



[illegible]

EXHIBIT A
LEGAL DESCRIPTION

(O.R.B. 628, PG. 884)

THAT PART OF THE NORTH 1/3, OF THE SOUTH 1/2, OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4,
OF SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 43 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, HENDRY COUNTY,
FLORIDA, LYING WEST OF STATE ROAD

EXHIBIT B SCHEDULE OF USES

Residential

Accessory Uses and Structures
Administrative Offices
City of LaBelle Essential Public Utility Stations
Excavation, Water Retention
Fences, Walls
Dwellings, Multi-Family
Parking Lot, Accessory
Recreational Facilities (private)
Signs (in accordance with Appendix B, Section 4-81)

Commercial

Accessory Uses and Structures
Business Services
Clubs/Lodges
Cultural institutions
Financial Institutions
Health Care Facilities
Government Offices
Medical Offices
Professional Offices
Personal Services
Pharmacies
Retail Sales
Food and Beverage Sales/Establishments, Restaurants Only (no outdoor seating, on-site or off-site consumption of alcohol)

EXHIBIT C
SITE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

SITE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS TABLE		
Site Acres	26.26 ac	
Wetland Area	± 0.63 ac	
Upland Acreage	± 25.63 ac	
	Commercial	Multi-family
Proposed Units		
Phase 1 & 2	10,000 sf	288 du
Phase 3		120 du
Clubhouse and Site Amenities		5,000 sf
Parking	As per LDC	As per LDC
Min. Lot Area	22,000	N/A
Min. Lot Width	75 ft	100 ft
Min. Lot Depth	100 ft	100 ft
Max. Lot Coverage	70%	50%
Max. Height	35 ft*	35 ft*
Min. Setbacks		
Front (External ROW)	30 ft	20 ft
Front (Internal ROW)	15 ft	15 ft
Side	20 ft	15 ft
Rear	15 ft	20 ft
Minimum Building Separation:	20 ft	20 ft

*Measured from the average finish grade at the base of the structure to the midpoint of the roof

EXHIBIT D MASTER CONCEPT PLAN

