City of Gainesville

Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency
Cornerstone Eastside Development

Countywide Wetland Protection Code Application

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

July 11, 2023

Environmental Protection Department

Cornerstone Eastside

Project Purpose

Partnership project between Alachua County, City of Gainesville; RTS & CRA, and UF Health to create an East Gainesville campus that includes:

- *UF Health Medical Clinic*
- *RTS Transit Hub*
- *Ambulance / Fire Rescue Services - Public Safety Facility*
- *Future Medical Offices*
- *Retail/Grocery*
- *Workforce Housing*
- *Interlink with GTEC*

Site proposal – Hawthorne Road

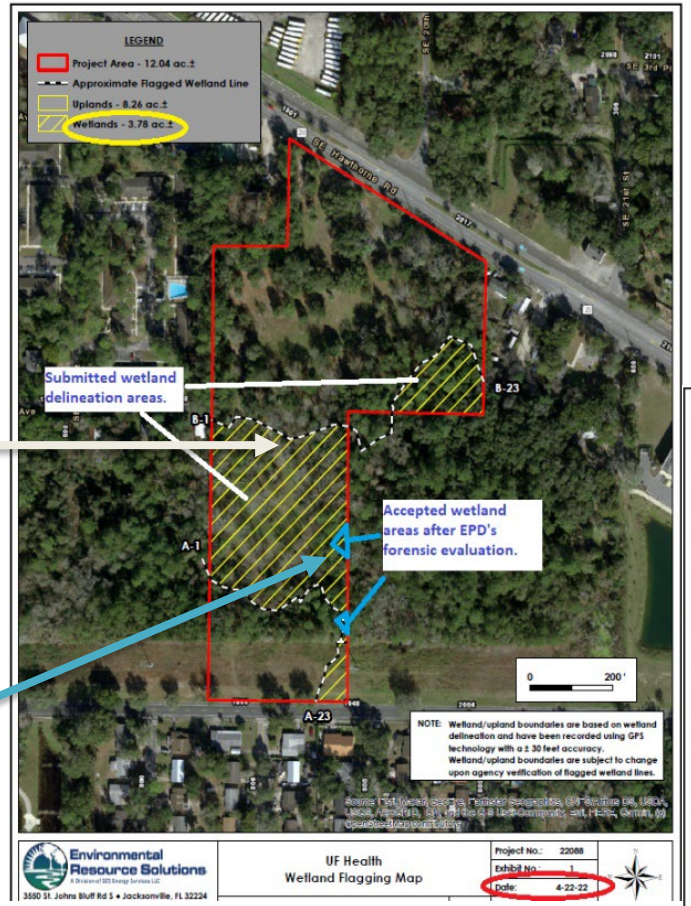
- Population density, ED use and traffic drive by data suggest that optimal location is North or East of the Waldo/ Hawthorne Roads interchange
- Additional advantages to site location on 13 acres on Hawthorne Road East of Waldo Road just West of GTECH incubator
- Includes Hawthorne Road frontage with room for future expansion
- Available for immediate development

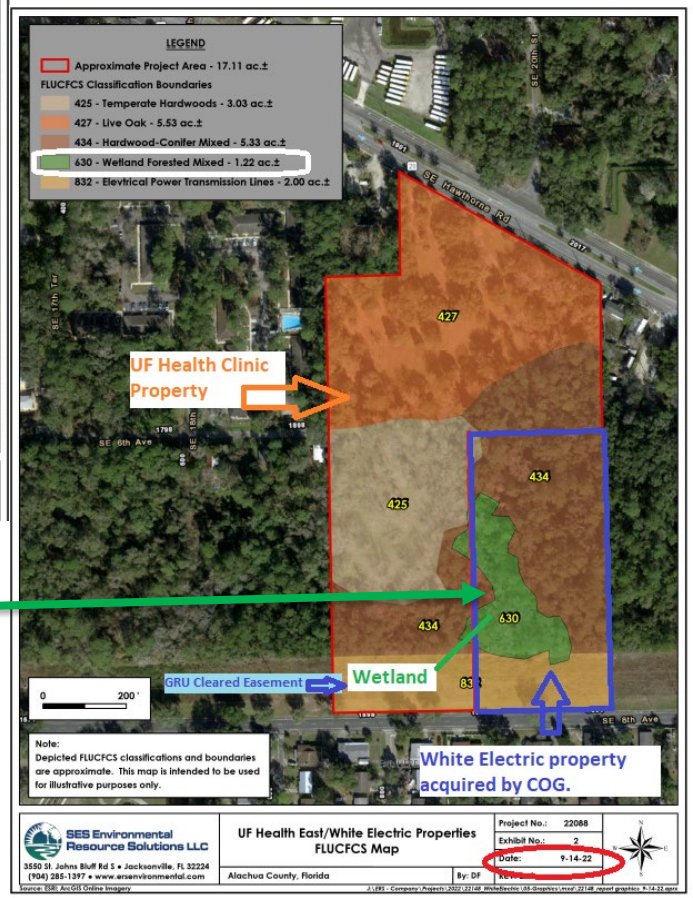
UF HEALTH - HAWTHORNE ROAD | CONCEPT PLAN | 6-23-2021

Cornerstone Eastside

Wetland Evaluation - 2022

- *May – UF Health Parcel, CHW request EPD review wetland boundary delineation.*
- *June – EPD staff conduct forensic evaluation to verify historic & current wetland conditions and boundaries.*
- *July – Concurrence on revised wetland boundary, decrease from 3.8 acres to 0.2 acre.*
- *August – White Electric Parcel, extend wetland delineation, total isolated wetland coverage of +/-1.2 acres.*





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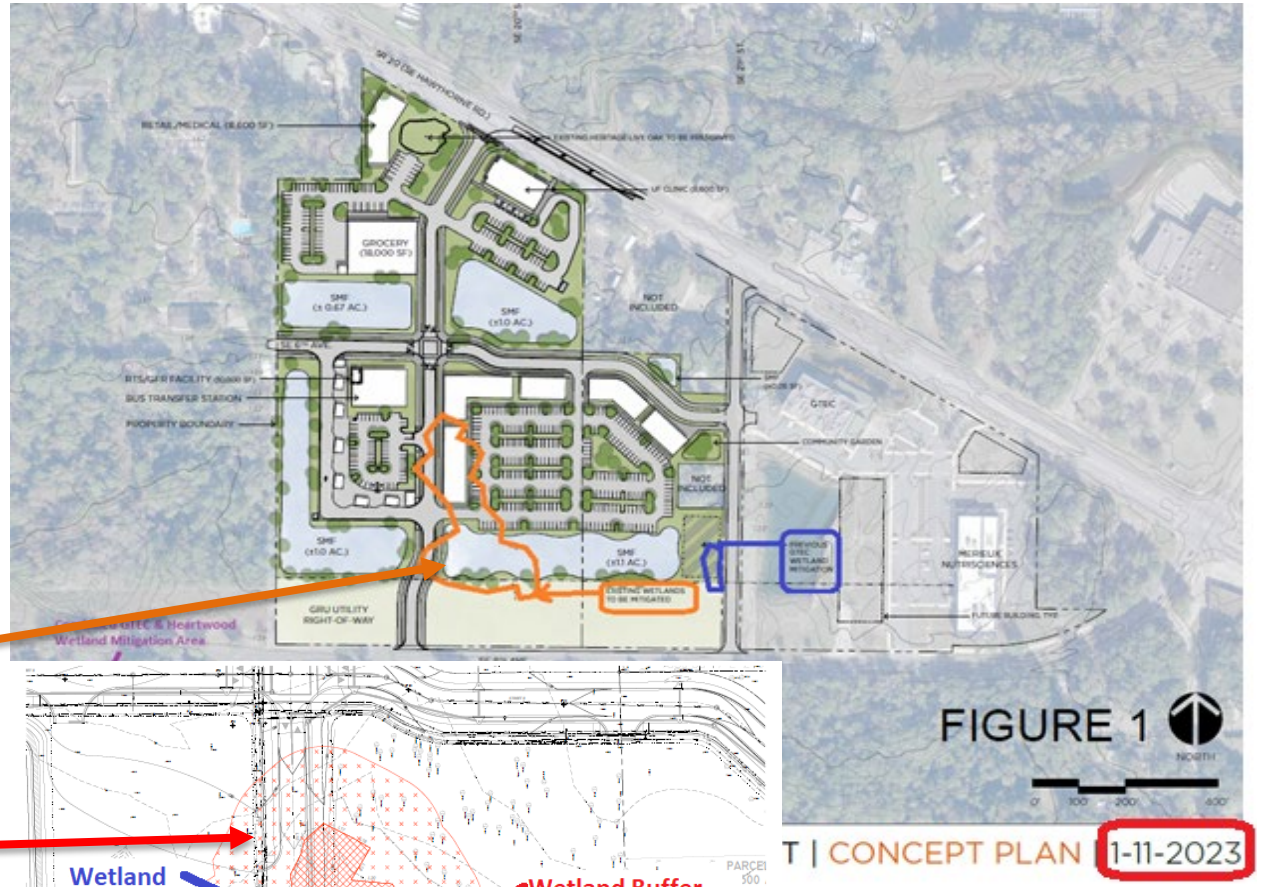
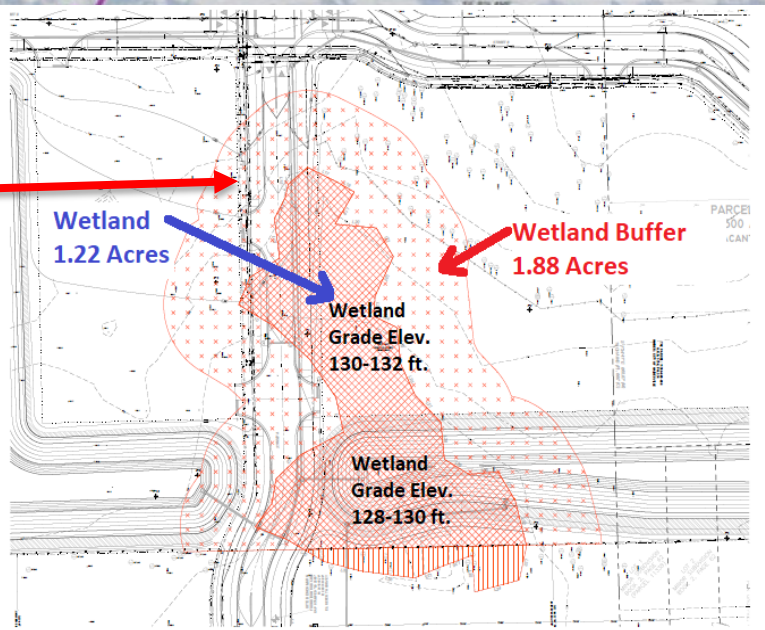
Proposed Wetland & Wetland Buffer Impacts

January, 2023 – Proposed concept plan includes impacts to 1.22 acres of forested wetland habitat and adjacent 1.88 acres of forested wetland buffer (buffer width75 ft.).





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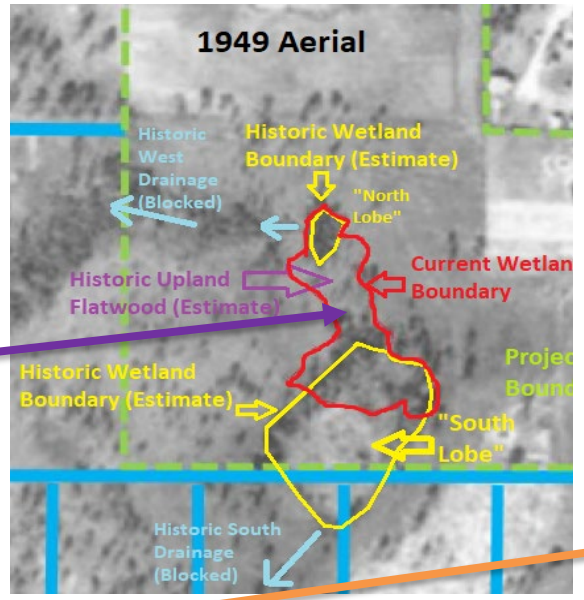
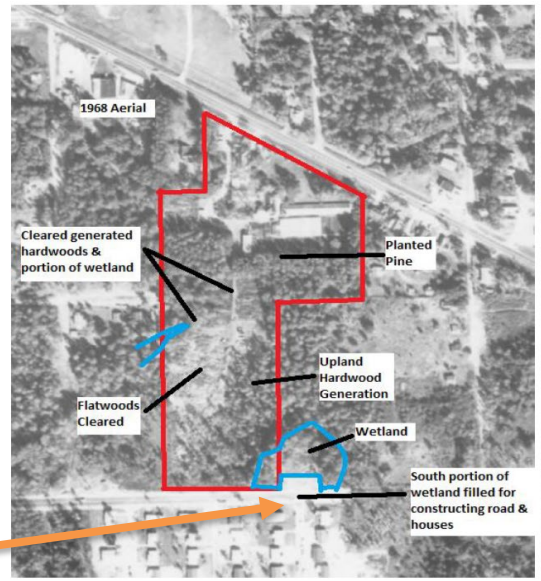
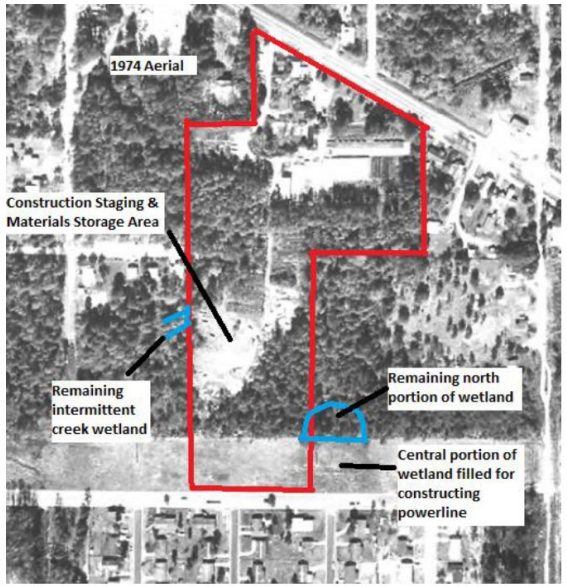
Wetland Forensic Assessment

- *Historically upland flatwood habitat separated two isolated wetlands.*
- *By mid-1970's, majority of southern wetland filled by construction activities.*
- *Fill material blocked wetland from draining, converting flatwood to wetland.*







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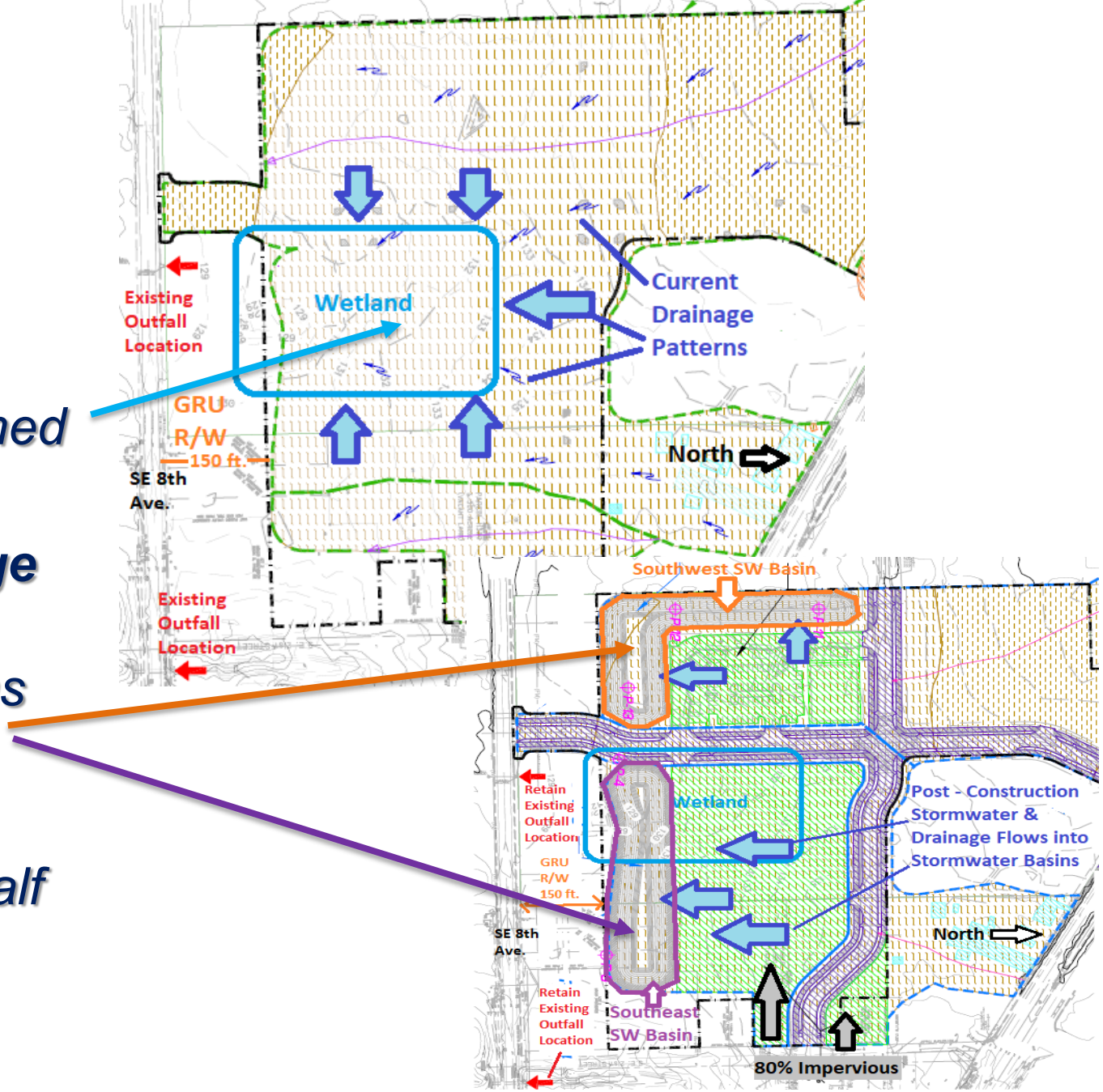
Current & Future Drainage

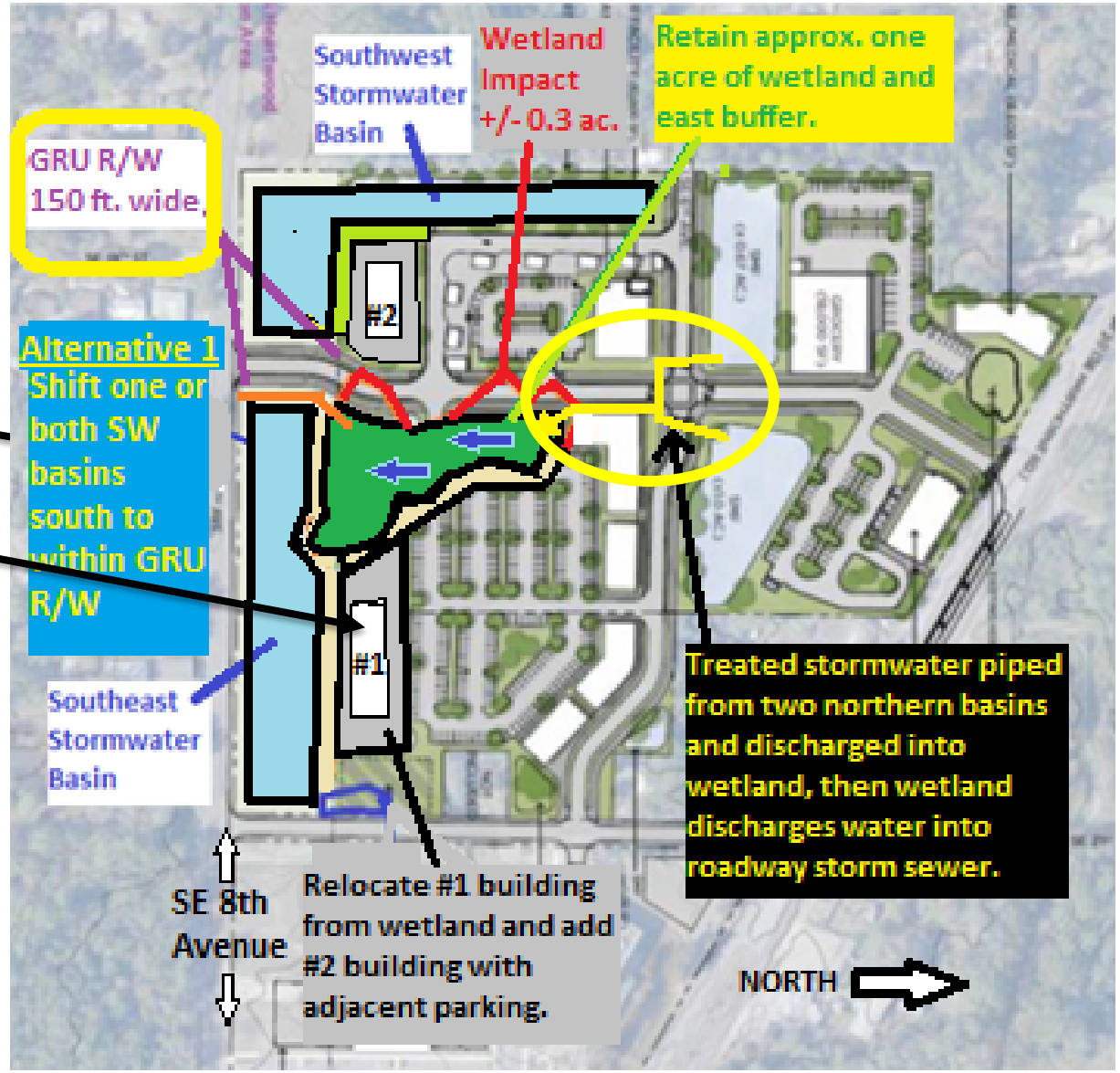
- ***Current Drainage***
  Majority contributing watershed flows toward wetland.
- ***Post-Construction Drainage***
  Contributing watershed diverted to stormwater basins for water quality treatment.
- *Proposed **80% impervious** conditions within southern half of the project site.*



Cornerstone Eastside

Wetland / Buffer Preservation - Technical Assessment Alternative #1

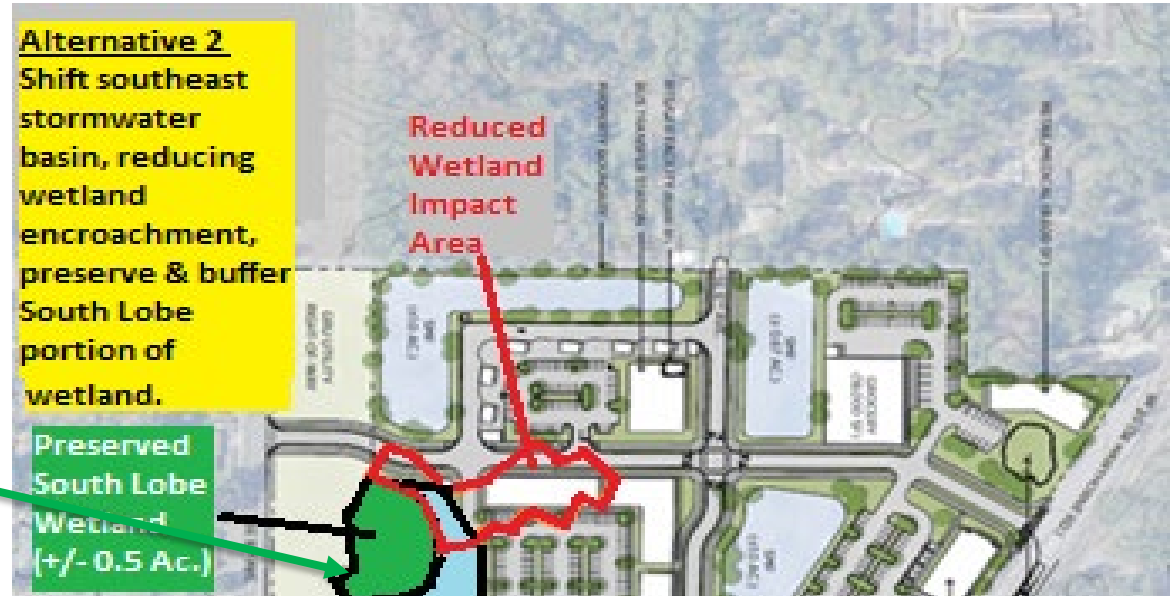
- *Shift southeastern stormwater basin to within GRU R/W.*
- *Relocate building to current proposed stormwater basin location (#1 on figure).*
- *Discharge treated stormwater from two northern basins through wetland to retain seepage hydrology.*
- *Restriction – other than proposed access road, GRU not supportive of additional facilities within the R/W.*

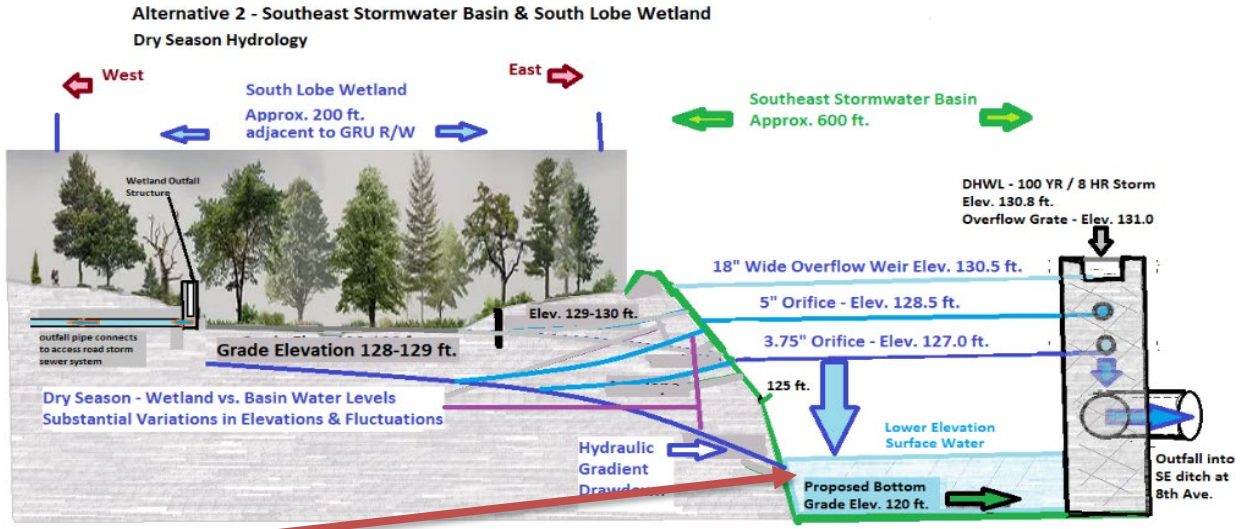


Cornerstone Eastside

Wetland / Buffer Preservation - Technical Assessment Alternative #2

- *Reconfigure southeastern stormwater basin to preserve higher quality South Lobe portion of the wetland.*
- *Stormwater basin's wet detention design retains appropriate seepage hydrology of the South Lobe during rain seasons.*
- *Restriction – wet detention requires excavation of deep basin, hydraulic gradient drawdown in the dry season limits capability to retain seepage hydrology.*





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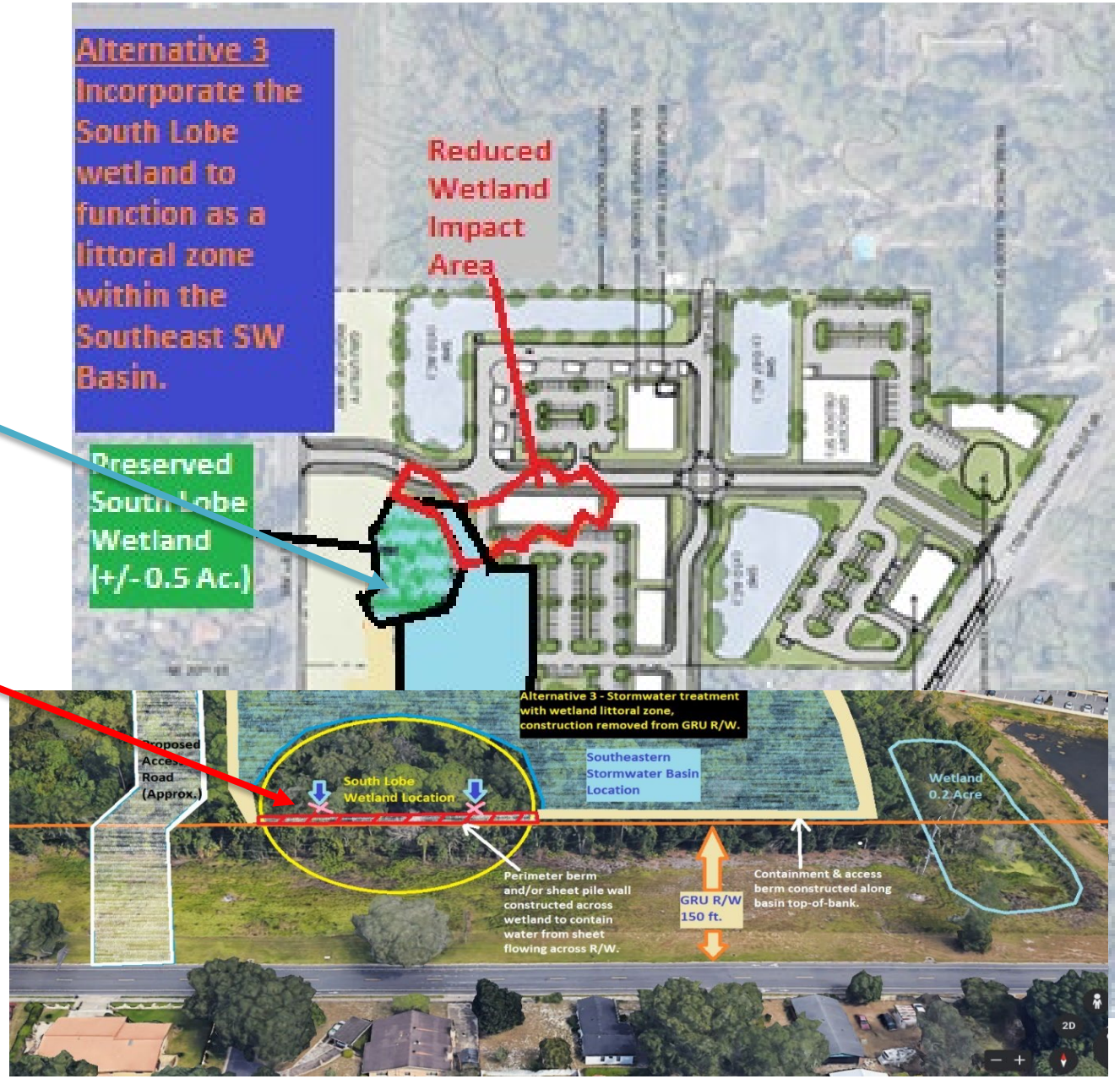
Wetland / Buffer Preservation - Technical Assessment Alternative #3

- *Incorporate South Lobe into southeast basin to function as littoral zone for stormwater treatment.*
- *Extend containment berm and/or install sheet pile wall across South Lobe wetland to contain surface water from sheet flow south over GRU R/W.*
- *Limitation – Smaller wetlands incorporated into treatment basins experience longer durations of surface water; difficult for seepage wetland to sustain habitat.*



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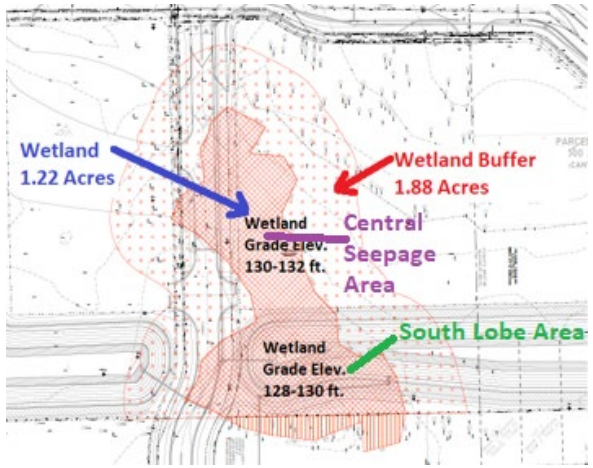
Wetland / Buffer Preservation - Technical Assessment Summary

- *The seepage hydrologic features of this wetland will be difficult to sustain due to major changes of the drainage patterns and high percentage of impervious conditions.*
- *Too many factors will result in the wetland suffering through cycles of receiving too much and/or too little contributing water to sustain appropriate habitat conditions.*


Eastside Wetland - Central Seepage Area

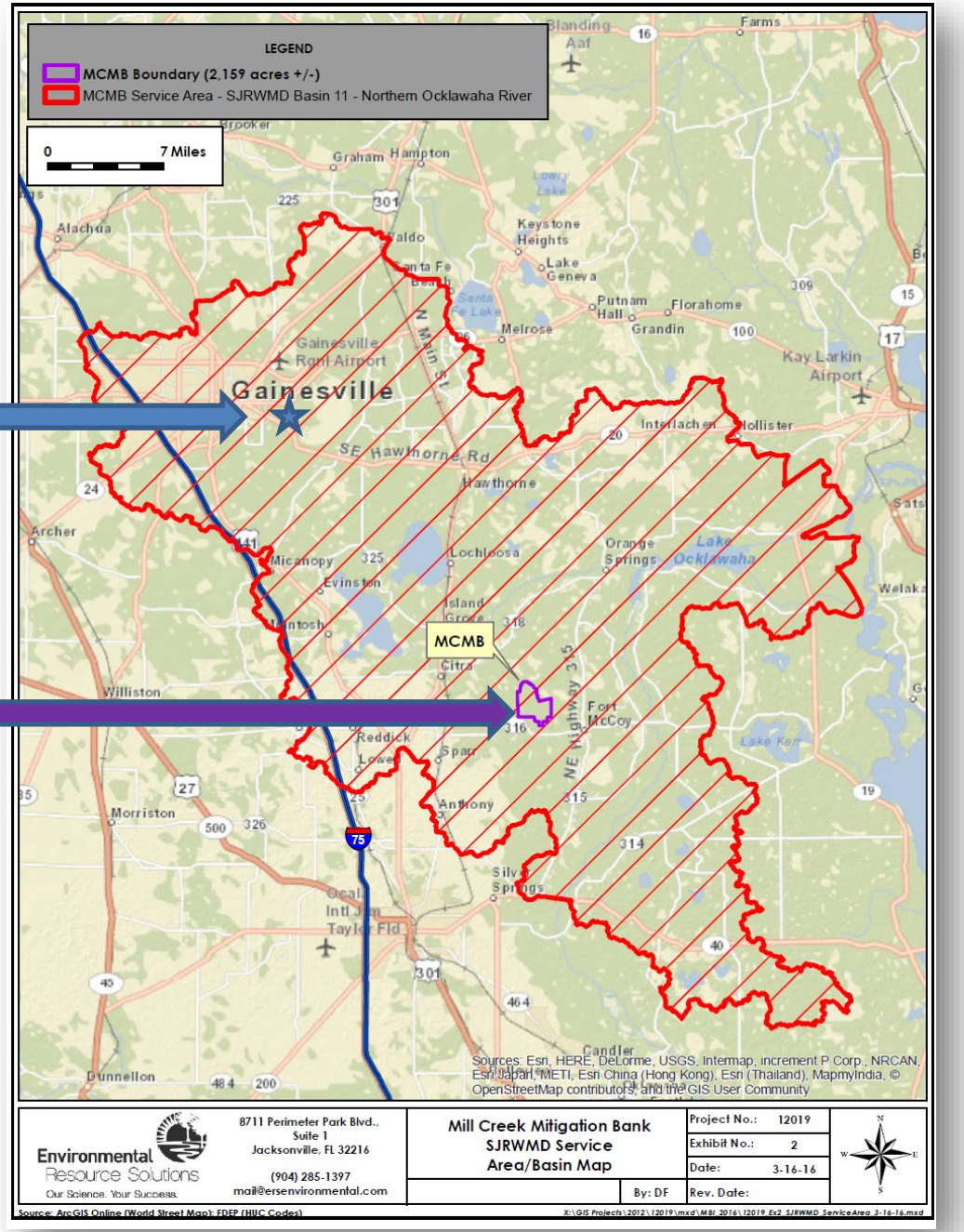



Eastside Wetland - South Lobe

Cornerstone Eastside Proposed Wetland Mitigation

Mill Creek Mitigation Bank (MCMB)

- Eastside project within the same North Ocklawaha River Basin as the MCMB.
- MCMB location three miles southeast of Alachua County boundary.
- In 2021, BoCC approved selection of the MCMB to provide mitigation for the wetland impacts associated with COG-PWD's SW 62nd Blvd. project.



CWPC Analysis

Countywide Wetland Protection Code - Analysis Summary

The following summarizes EPD staff's evaluation of the proposed Cornerstone Eastside project:

- Staff has found the project demonstrates the "overriding public interest" requirement of the CWPC [Section 77.20(a)(4)ii.]
- Staff has found the proposed wetland and buffer impacts are necessary for construction of the proposed design and demonstrates achieving the avoidance and minimization criteria requirements of the CWPC [Section 77.20(a)(1) & (2)].
- Staff has found proposed purchase of credits from the Mill Creek Mitigation Bank will provide appropriate mitigation for the proposed wetland impacts; achieving the permitting requirements of the SJRWMD as well as CWPC [Section 77.20(a)(3)].
- Staff has found the proposed allocation of $108,852 to City of Gainesville Parks Dept. to conduct habitat improvements to environmentally sensitive lands owned by the City to provide appropriate mitigation for the proposed wetland buffer impacts.

Staff Recommendation

Staff has found the proposed Cornerstone Eastside project is consistent with Section 77.20 requirements of the CWPC; and recommends the BoCC approval of the City's Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Plan for the Cornerstone Eastside Development, and authorize the Chair to sign the Interlocal Agreement that will document the designated allocation of the mitigation funds.