



Tree Preservation in Developments BoCC Workshop

Jeff Hays, AICP
Growth Management Director
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Board Direction

- **6/11/2024:** Ask that staff work with the applicant to identify ways in which we could have protected more trees and provide input and feedback to the board with regard to ways we could change code to increase tree protections within the urban services boundary. (Parker Road Cottages Preliminary Development Plan)
- **6/25/2024:** Requested a workshop to be scheduled 8/6/24



Current Natural Resource Protections

- Strategic Ecosystem – up to 50% of upland portion may be preserved
- Surface Waters and Wetlands –entire wetland and wetland buffer
- Significant Habitat- no more than 25% of upland portion of a parcel
- Significant Geologic Features – requires buffer; typically 75 feet
- Open Space – Conservation Management Area if applicable; then 10% for residential developments with locational criteria
- Tree Preservation



Current Comp Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element

Objective 5.2 – Open Space

- Open Space provided on at least 10 percent of every development (with exceptions)
- Open Space fulfilled first with conservation areas
- Additional Open Space shall be one piece of contiguous land at the periphery of the development to allow for connection to adjacent open space (with exceptions)



Current Comp Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element

Objective 5.4 Vegetation Management

- **Policy 5.4.1** Landscaping shall be compatible with the natural environment. Existing on-site vegetation shall be incorporated into landscape plans to the maximum extent practicable, according to the following priorities:...
- **Policy 5.4.2** New development shall conserve existing trees and native vegetation by use of sound arboricultural and horticultural practices that provide for the protection and long-term survival of the vegetation, as part of an overall strategy to achieve landscape, habitat preservation, and open space requirements. Conservation may entail grading restrictions, vegetation clustering, protective buffers, and density and intensity limitations, consideration of alternative layouts of permitted uses, and similar techniques that provide for the long-term survival of vegetation.

Current Comp Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element

Objective 5.4 Vegetation Management

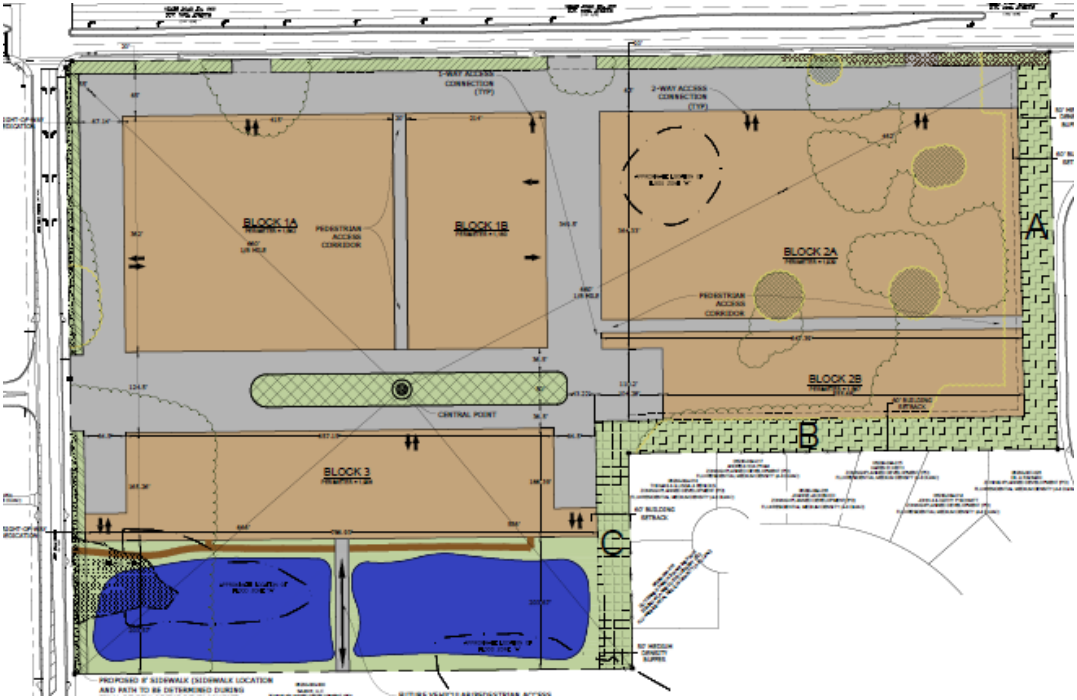
- **Policy 5.4.3** The County shall protect trees according to a species-specific hierarchy. Trees shall receive priority for protection based on species, in conjunction with other features including size, age, condition, historic association, and uniqueness. Removal or damage of champion trees shall be prohibited, and removal or damage of designated specimen trees shall be avoided, or mitigated if removal or damage cannot be avoided. Specific protections shall be provided in the land development regulations.
- **Policy 5.4.4** The County shall incorporate native vegetation into the landscaping and provide for continued maintenance of County-owned buildings and grounds.
- **Policy 5.4.5** The County shall promote the conservation of native vegetation removed during land-clearing and use of this resource for transplanting and revegetation.

Current Tree Code – Retention Requirements

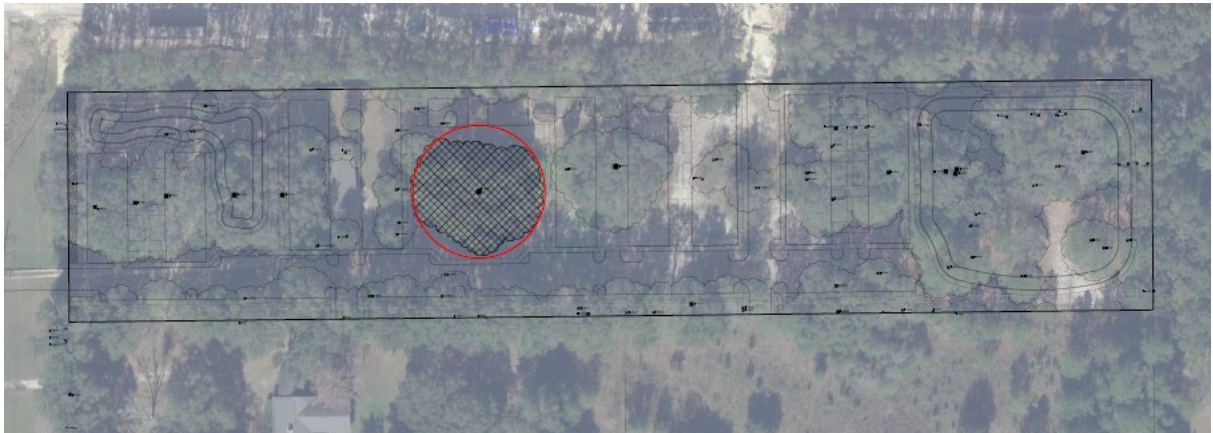
- 20% retention of existing tree canopy for all developments
- 10% retention if 90% of gross density is achieved
- 5% retention
 - TNDs/TODs
 - Cottage Neighborhoods
 - Affordable Housing
- 60-inch trees retained unless development cannot occur anywhere else on site or removal is unavoidable



Current Tree Code – Retention Requirements



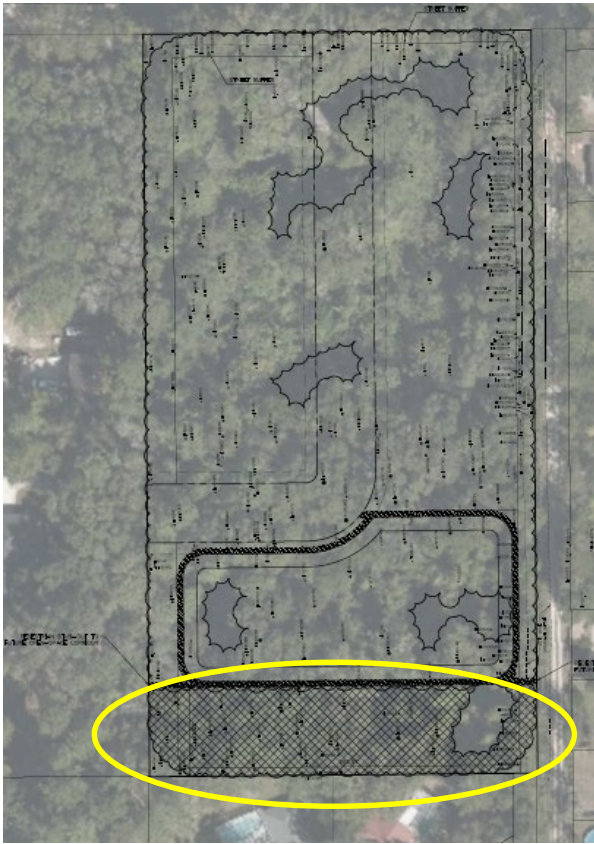
TND = 6%



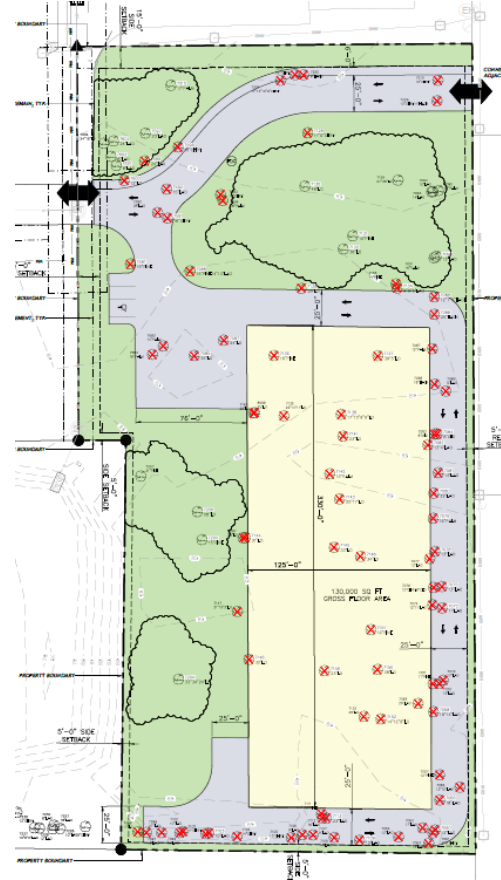
Cottage Neighborhood = 7%



Current Tree Code – Retention Requirements



90 percent density = 11.7%



Standard Development = 22%



Current Tree Code – Hierarchy of Preservation

Priority given to preserving native trees that exhibit a **combination** of the following characteristics **in the following order**:

- a. Location within a CMA required for preservation
- b. Are high quality champion, heritage, and specimen trees.
- c. Help to create, provide or extend connectivity or linkages to other natural areas in the form of tree and vegetation corridors.
- d. Exist in natural groupings.
- e. Complement the project design including enhancement of the architecture, landscape architecture, streetscape appearance.
- f. Are located in required buffer areas.
- g. Screen unpleasant views or augment desirable views.
- h. Provide shade to structures, areas, or activities within...the development



Current Tree Code – Protected Area

Sec. 406.12.5 (c):

- Protected area equal to drip line of the tree unless larger area is more appropriate
- May be up to two (2) feet diameter of protection for every inch of tree trunk diameter

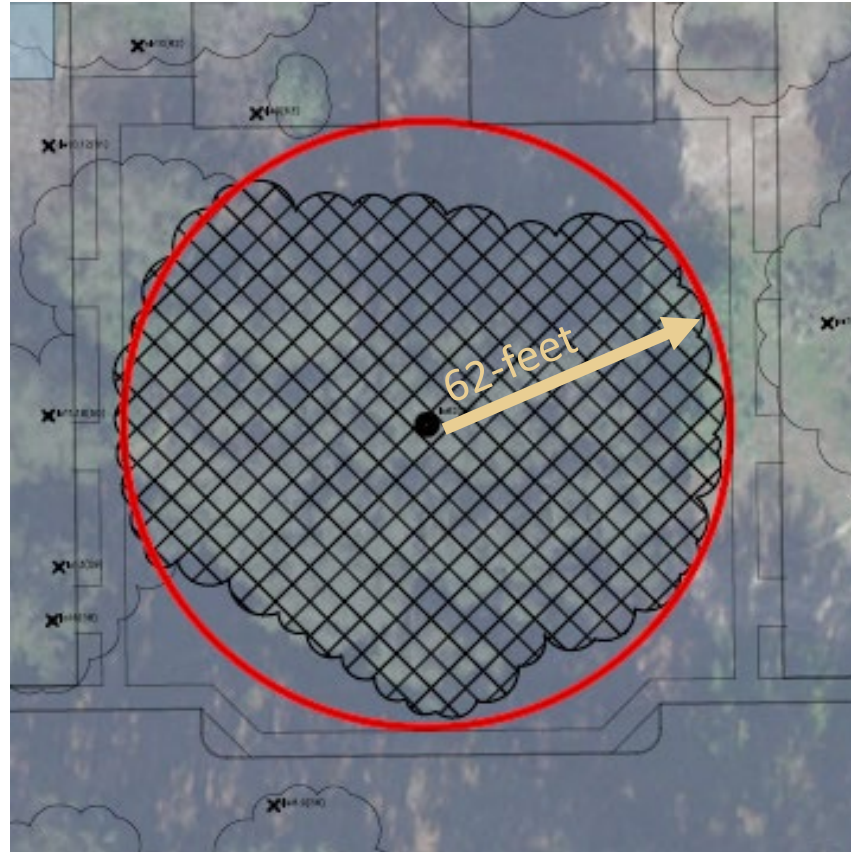


Image Source: Penn State Extension *Guide To Preserving Trees in Development Projects*



Current Tree Code – Protected Area

Example: A 62-inch tree could require up to 124 feet protected area (62 ft. radius from the tree)



Current Tree Code – Protected Area

406.12 (a)(4)

- Retaining more than the minimum is encouraged
- The undisturbed area may be reduced with County approval (50% max)
- No development activity within the root plate

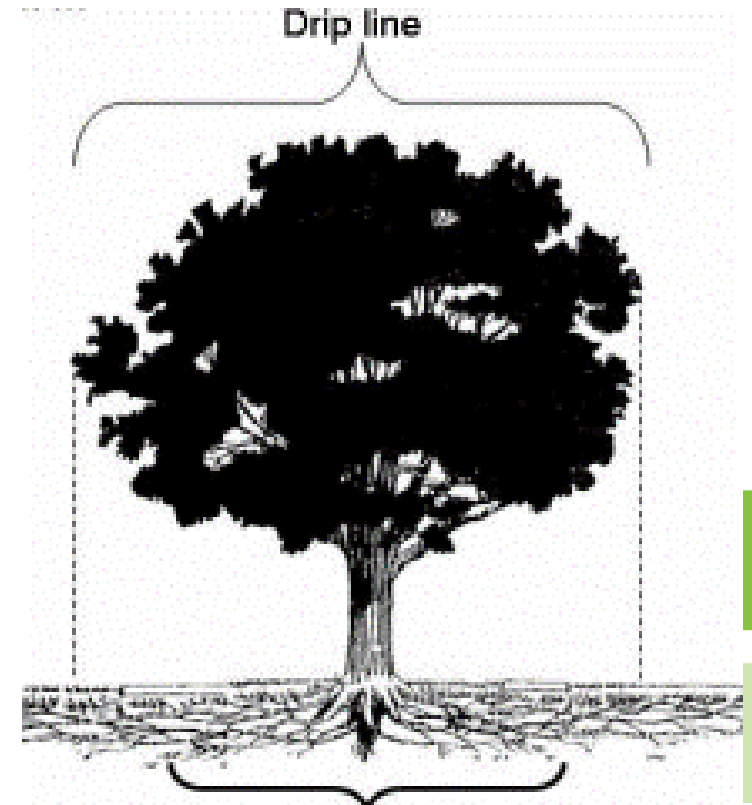
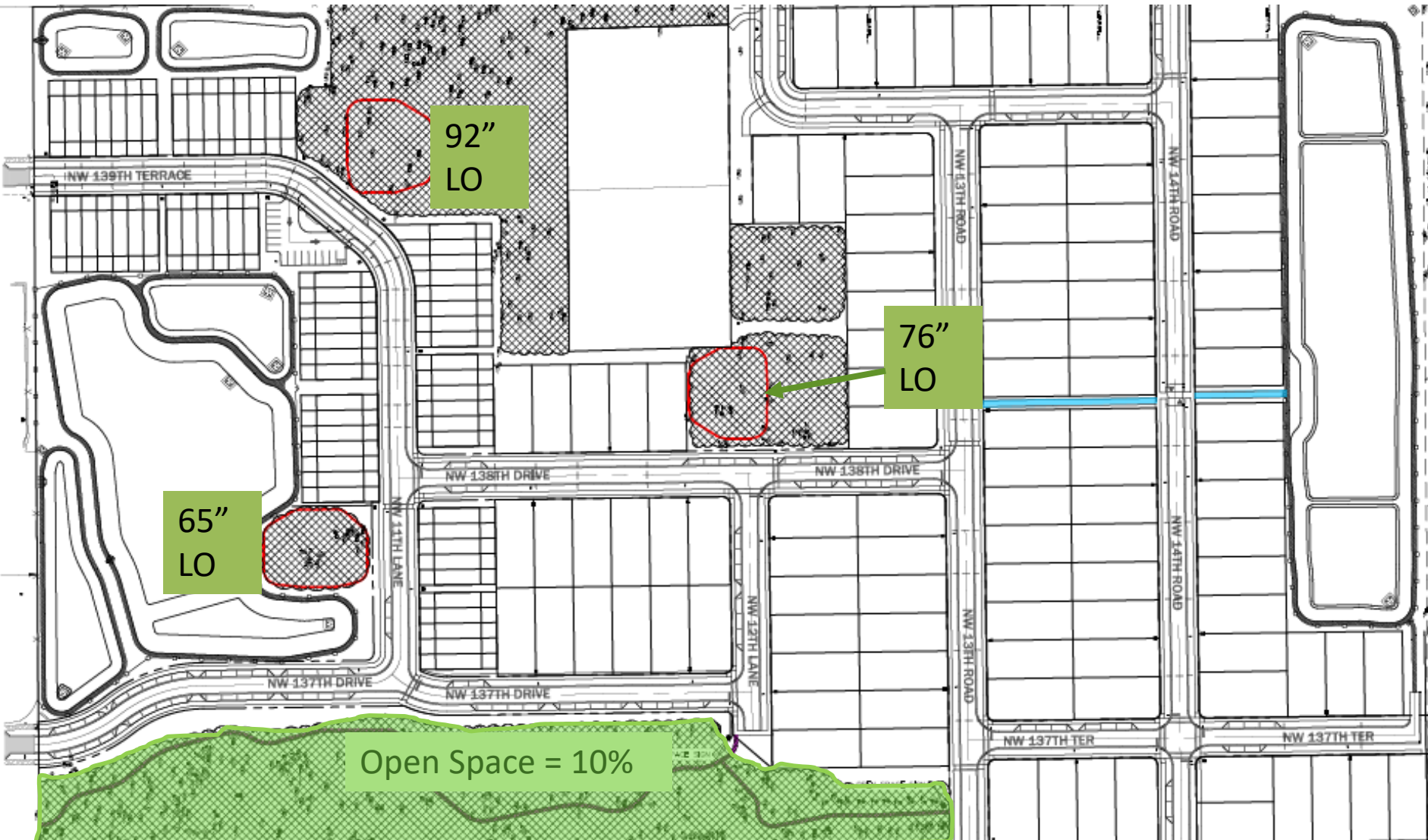


Image Source: Georgia Forestry Comm.

Examples – Tara Verde



29.7% Tree Preservation

Maximum density achieved
(4 du/ac) = 177



Examples – Tara Verde

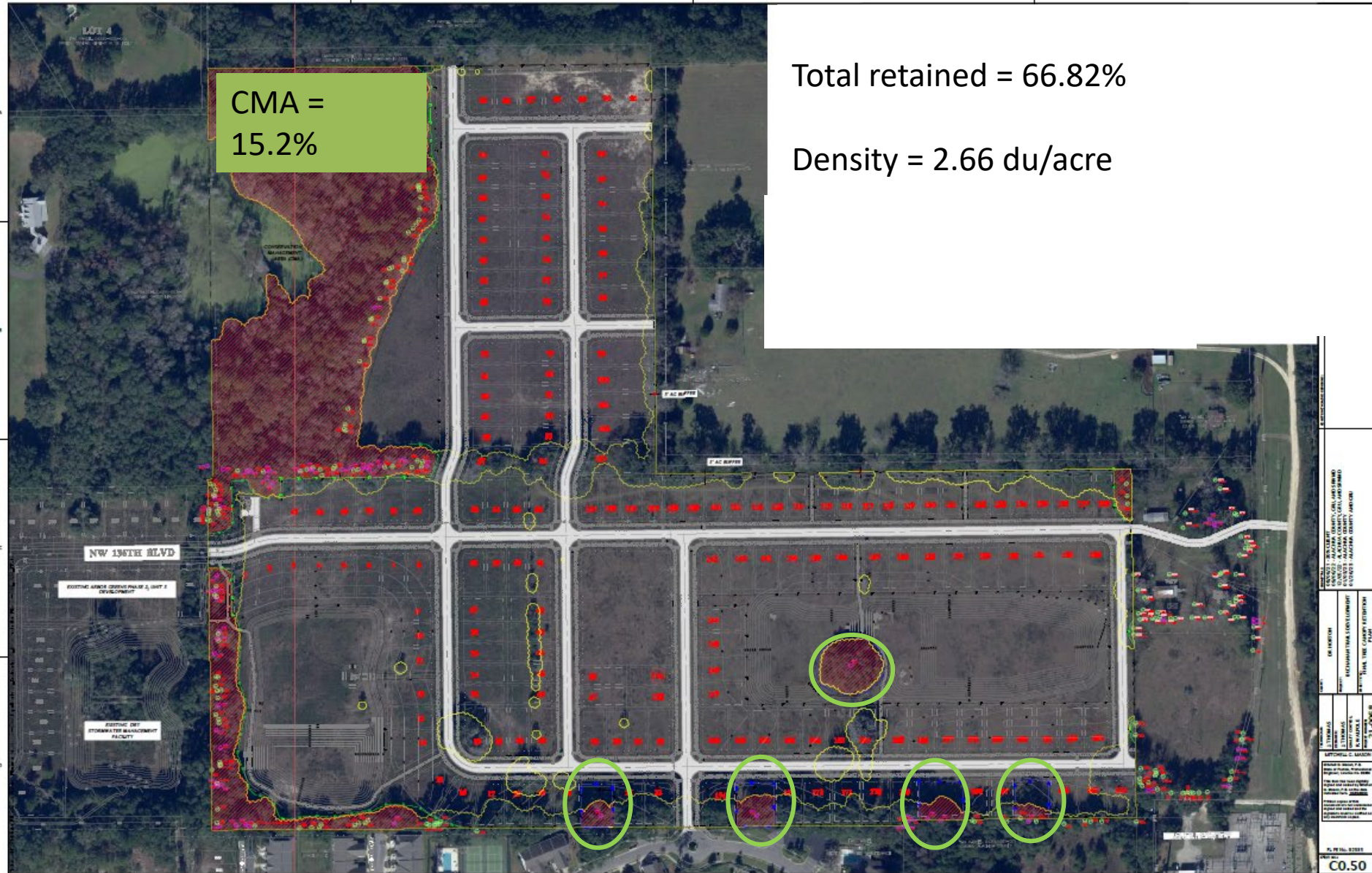


Trees removed include:

- 9 Live Oaks 40-59 inches
- 19 Live Oaks 30-39 inches



Examples – Buchanan Trails



CMA =
15.2%

Total retained = 66.82%

Density = 2.66 du/acre



Examples – Buchanan Trails

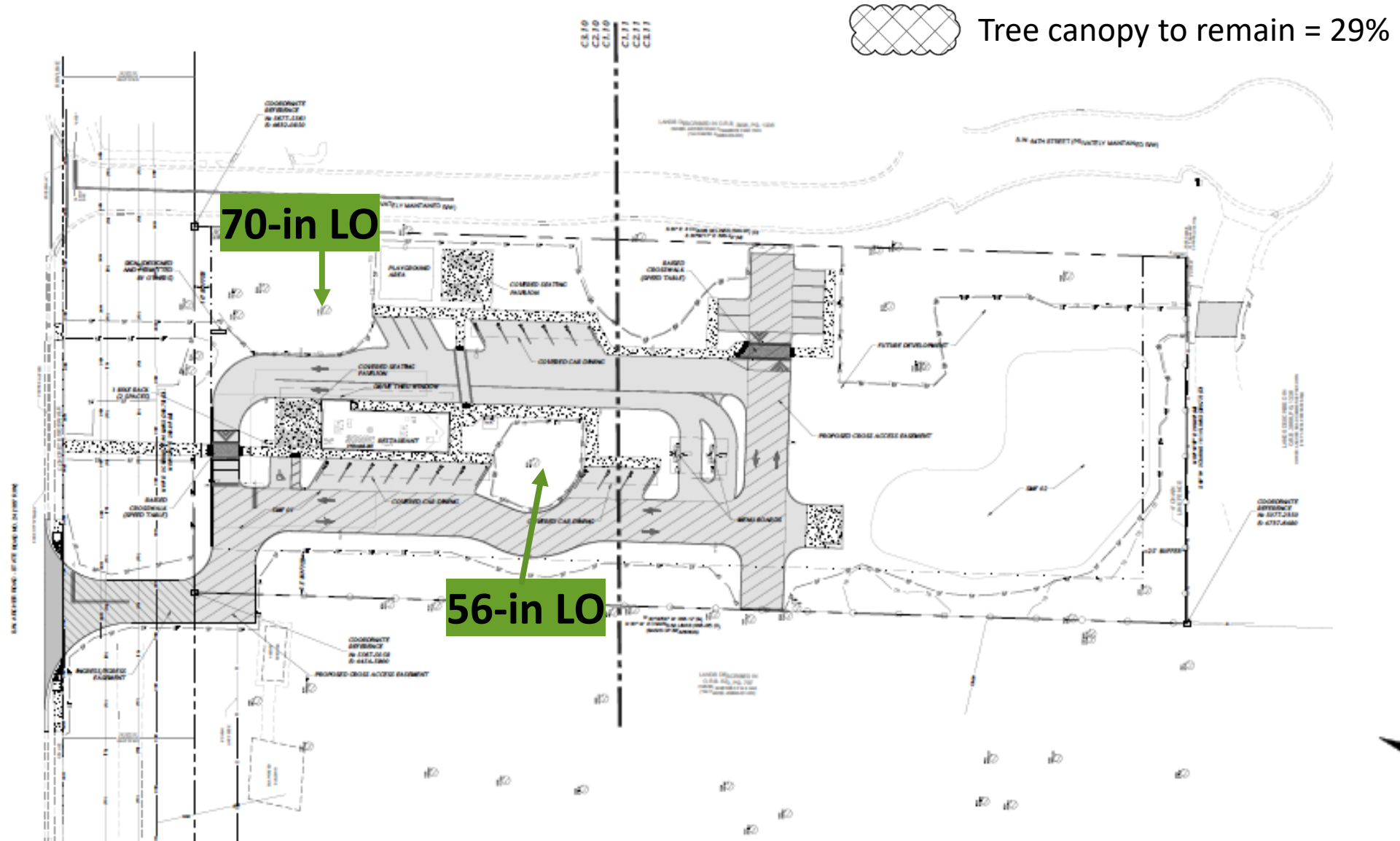


Trees removed include:

- 6 Live Oaks – 30-39 inches
- 9 Live Oaks – 40-49 inches
- 2 Live Oaks – 50-59 inches



Examples – Sonic on Archer Road



Current Tree Code – Mitigation

Table 406.13.1 Heritage Tree Replacement Rate	
DBH of tree to be replaced	Replacement Rate
20"-29"	Replacement 1" for 1"
30"-39"	Replacement above plus 1.5" for every inch between 30"-39"
40"-59"	Replacement above plus 3" for every inch between 40"-59"
60" +	Replacement above plus 4" for every inch 60" and above

406.13 (b)(5) - Impacts to any amount of dripline requires 50 percent mitigation.



City of Tallahassee (Sec. 5-83 Tree Protection):

Critical protection zone (CPZ): That area surrounding a tree within a circle described by a radius of one foot for each inch of the tree's diameter at breast height.

- Allow some impacts during construction per Director, with construction specifications in the LDR's
- No credit will be given and no debits will be charged for successfully mitigated trees
- Tree mitigation techniques listed in LDR's



City of Tallahassee (Sec. 5-85 Landscaping & Urban Forest)

Tree preservation is referred to as Urban Forest with credits and debits used through preservation (credits) and replanting (debits)

- Based on matrices of tree species, and sizes
- Different standards for different development types
 - Min. 10% urban forest, 5% replanting
 - No less than 30% of site containing both Urban Forest and Landscaping



Recapture Clause and Ag Exemption

Sec. 406.07 Recapture prior to submitting application

If site cleared within five years, development plan or zoning application required to restore or mitigate portion of parcel that would have required protection.



Source: Getty Images

Considerations

Longer Term

Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) – 2025

- Stormwater
- Open Space

Climate Action Plan – Fall 2024

- Urban Forest Management Plan
- Significant Tree Habitat



Considerations

Short Term

- Size of trees to be retained
- Minimum percentage
- Hierarchy of trees
- Dripline impacts and mitigation (proportional mitigation?)/max protected areas



Discussion and Questions?



Figure 28. Properly preserved trees will provide benefits for a lifetime.

Image Source: Penn State Extension *Guide To Preserving Trees in Development Projects*

