



Staff Report on Lakeshore Drive Potential County Scenic Road Designation

Alachua County Commission October 7, 2025

Ken McMurry, Senior Planner
Alachua County Growth Management Department

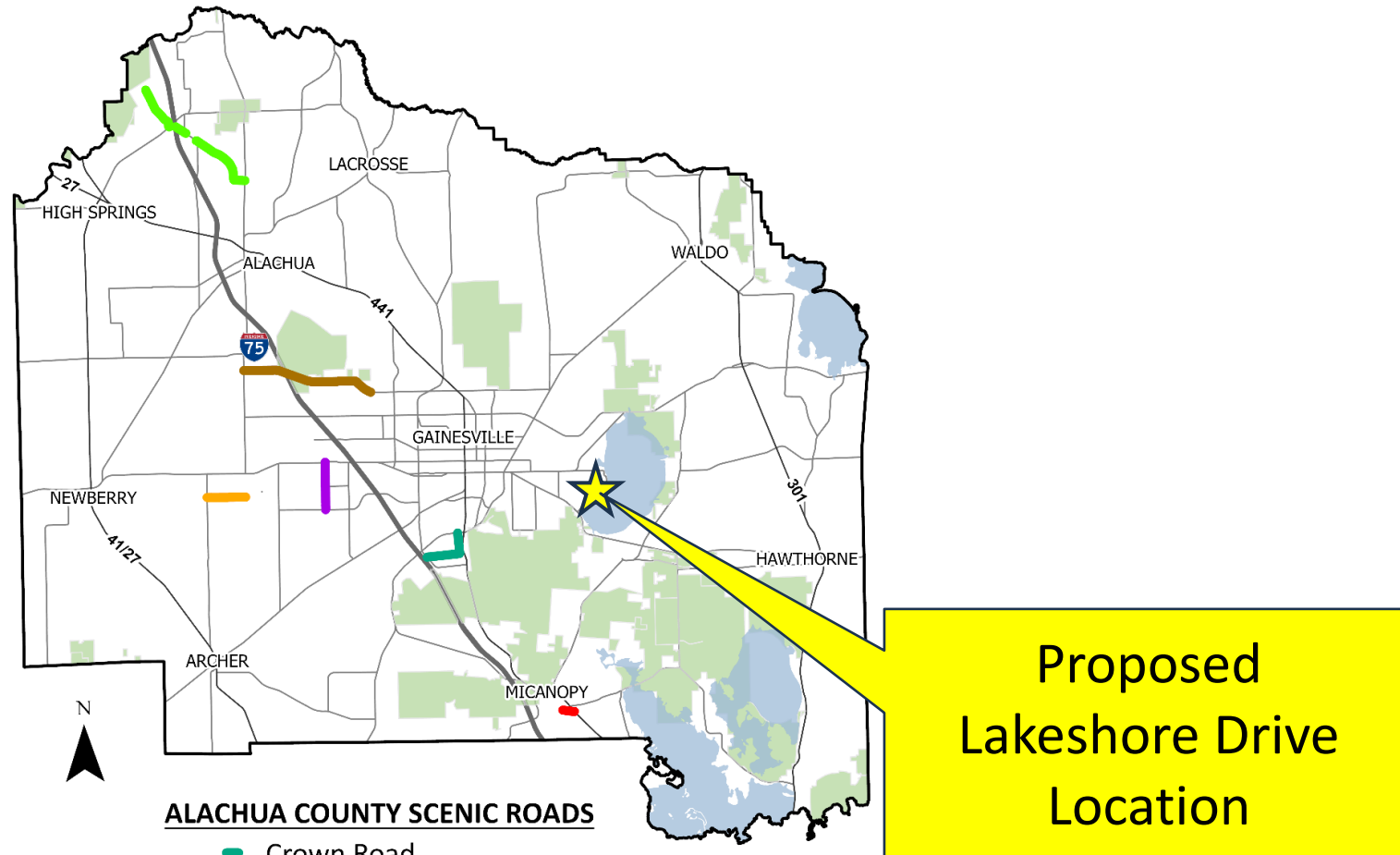
Previous Board Motion

- June 3, 2025 – Board directed staff to investigate Lakeshore Drive as a candidate for County Scenic Road designation

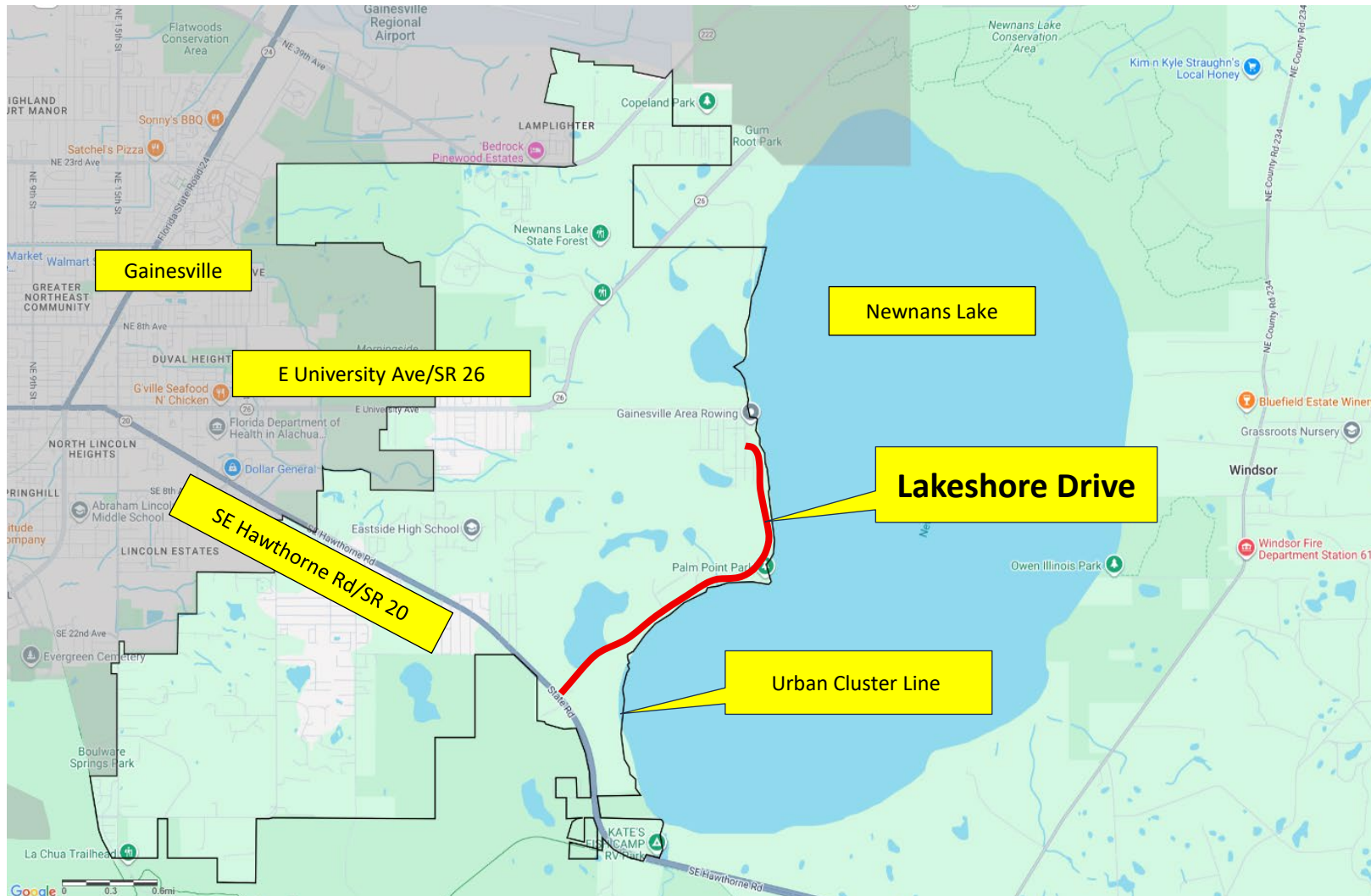
Purpose of Presentation

- Present staff analysis and recommendation on Lakeshore Drive per ULDC Art. IX. Scenic Road Corridors Overlay (“County Scenic Road Ordinance”)
- Receive Board direction on advertising a public hearing to consider designation as a County Scenic Road

Lakeshore Drive Potential County Scenic Road Designation



Lakeshore Drive Potential County Scenic Road Designation



County Scenic Road Ordinance Objectives

- Promote convenience and enjoyment of public travel on roadways of the County.
- Protect natural and cultural heritage scenic road corridors of the County and enhance their resource values for enjoyment of future generations.
- Protect public investment in scenic road corridors from activities, land uses, signs, etc., which impair the integrity, capacity for traffic, and visual qualities of the corridor
- Provide safe facilities for leisure driving, hiking, and biking.

County Scenic Road Ordinance Objectives

- Provide access and protect outstanding visual experiences representative of the County's variety of landscape resources and cultural attractions.
- Contribute to environmental and historical appreciation of the County and education of residents and visitors.
- Attract visitors to the County by preserving natural beauty along the scenic road corridors.
- Expose scenic views and vistas along the travel corridor.

County Scenic Road Protected Area

- The area within 100 feet of the right-of-way lines or the limits of the County's prescriptive use
- BOCC “has power to impose restrictions along the corridor”, such as:
 - Setting speed limits, vehicular weight limits and classes
 - Prohibiting commercial activity
 - Prohibiting outdoor advertising signs, tree removal, structures, overhead utilities (with certain exceptions)
 - Providing for preservative maintenance of scenic qualities

County Scenic Road Guidelines for Designation

- Quality of scenic, historic, or cultural resources
- Variety and diversity of visual experience
- Access between or to recreation areas or points of interest
- Relatively free of commercial or other development restrictive of scenic quality
- Natural, scenic, and cultural resources are not damaged beyond recognition and relatively easy to restore

Specific Criteria for Designation

Scenic resource significance

- Views and nearness to Newnans Lake
- Cypress swamp forest, mesic forest, Eastside Greenway Strategic Ecosystem
- Overall tranquil lakefront landscape



Specific Criteria for Designation

Archaeological resource significance

- Lake Pithlachocco Canoe Site
 - National Register of Historic Places
- Single largest accumulation of prehistoric watercraft ever discovered
- Over 100 ancient Native American dugout canoes
- Created 500 – 5,000 years ago



Gainesville Sun

Specific Criteria for Designation

Historical resource significance

- Lakeshore Drive (since at least 1949) predates interstate development in Alachua County (1961-1964)
- Lake Pithlachocco renamed after Daniel Newnan, led battle against Alachua Seminoles in 1812



Ken Hughes

Specific Criteria for Designation

Cultural resource significance

- Approximately 70% of Lakeshore Drive corridor undeveloped
- Current recreational uses include bicycling, roadside bank fishing, nature-based recreation in Palm Point Nature Park
- Dedicated bike/ped facility (e.g., Multi-Use Path) may better support recreational users



Guidelines & Specific Criteria for Designation

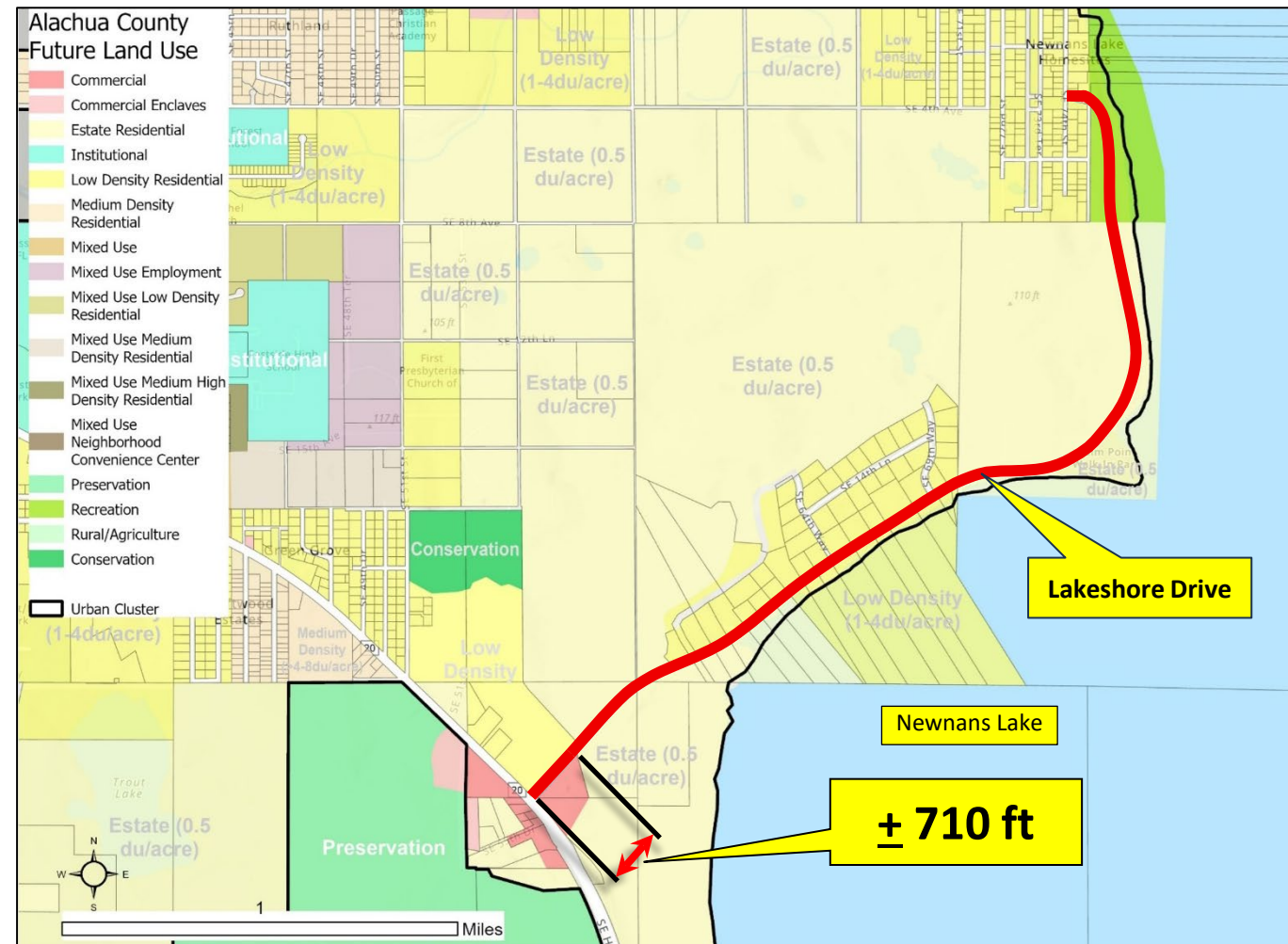
- Relatively free of commercial or other development restrictive of scenic quality
- Unspoiled character of resource (no adverse land uses and structures)
- Harmony with other land use



Existing commercial use frontage near SE Hawthorne Rd

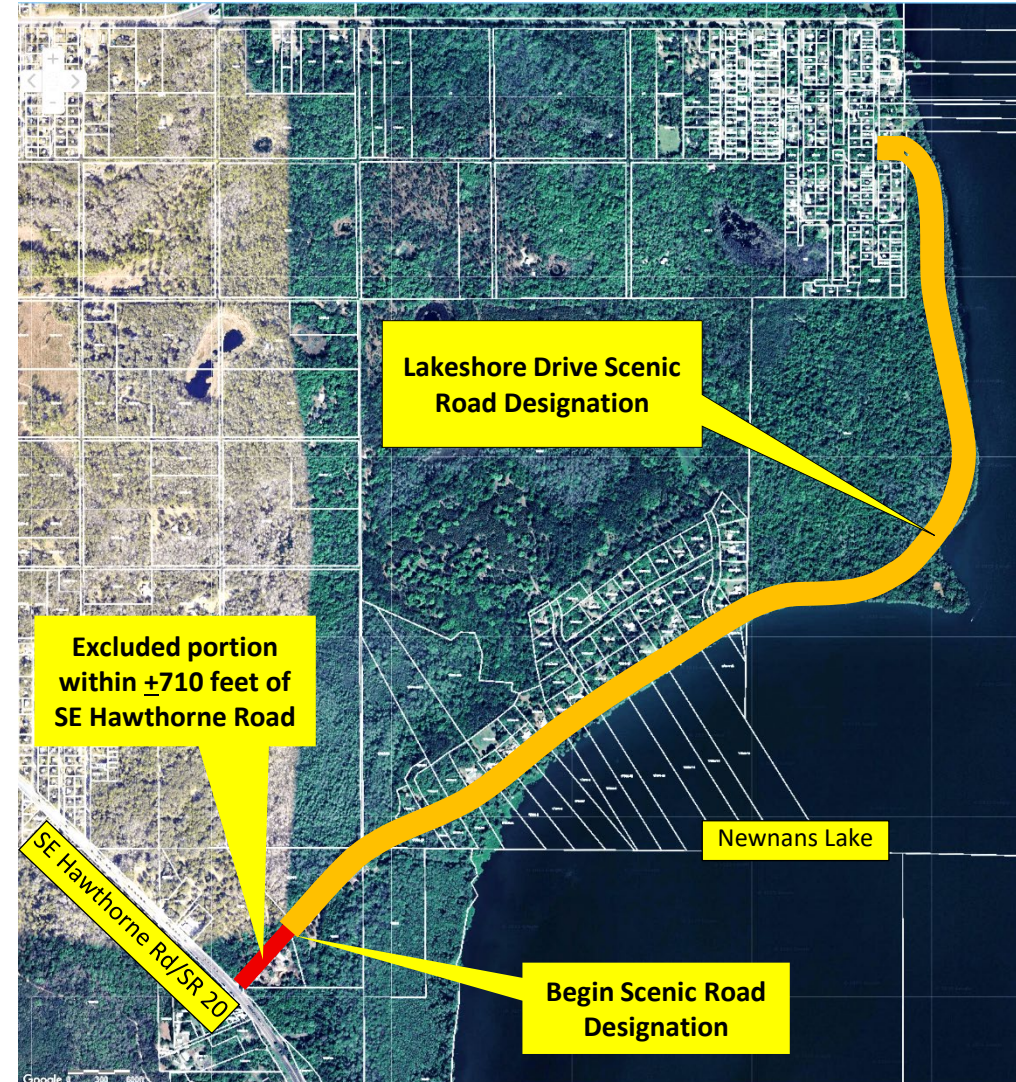
Guidelines & Specific Criteria for Designation

- Existing commercial use frontage near SE Hawthorne Rd
 - Restrictive of scenic quality
 - Adverse land use and structures
 - Inharmonious with scenic road corridor



Staff Recommendation

- Staff finds that there is a reasonable basis for designation of Lakeshore Drive, excluding the portion within ± 710 feet of SE Hawthorne Road, as a County Scenic Road.
- If the Board wishes to proceed with the designation of Lakeshore Drive as a County Scenic Road, then direct staff to advertise a public hearing to consider a resolution for that designation.



ULDC Section 405.41. Procedure for designation

- Public hearing notice shall include the following:
 - Maximum weight limit or class of vehicle to be set, if any
 - Speed limit to be set, if any
 - Any other special limitation, restriction, or use which may be imposed along the scenic road corridor, including but not limited to:
 - Prohibiting commercial activity
 - Prohibiting outdoor advertising signs, tree removal, structures, and overhead utilities (with certain exceptions)
 - Providing for preservative maintenance of scenic qualities