



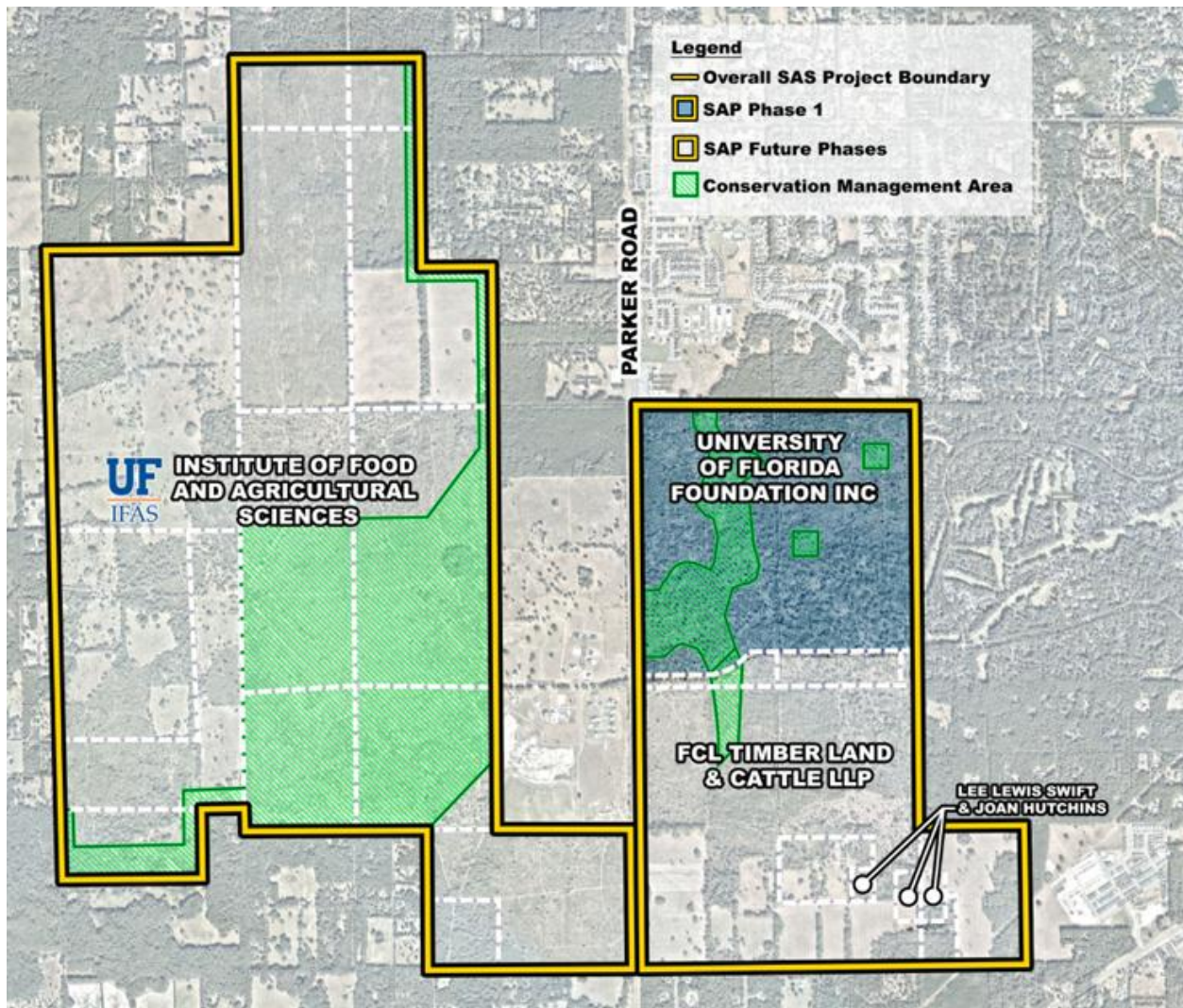
Department of Growth Management Staff Report

Application Z26-000004

Staff Contact:	Gerald Brewington, Senior Planner
Staff Phone Number:	352-374-5249 ext. 2220
PC Hearing Date:	April 15, 2026
BoCC Hearing Date:	TBD
Requested Action	A request by England-Thims and Miller, Inc. (Lindsay Haga, agent) for the University of Florida Foundation, Inc. (owner) to rezone from 'A' (Agriculture - 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres) district to PD (Planned Development) district on approximately 580 acres located on Parcel #04492-001-001 on the east side of SW 122nd Street (Parker Road) south of Myra Terwilliger Elementary School.
Property Owner:	University of Florida Foundation, Inc.
Applicant/Agent:	England-Thims and Miller (Lindsay Haga, Agent)
Property Description	Parcel Numbers: 04492-001-001 Section/Township/Range: 24/10/18 Existing Land Use: Rural Agriculture Existing Zoning: Agriculture Acreage: +/- 580.0
Previous Requests:	Hickory Sink Special Area Study (December 2024)
Violation History:	None
Staff Recommendation:	Staff recommends that the Planning Commission find the proposed rezoning consistent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code and that they approve the request for the PD zoning district.

Background

The parcel that is the subject of this application, 04492-001-001, is approximately 580 acres in size and owned by the applicant, University of Florida (UF) Foundation, Inc. It is one component of a larger approximately 4,000 acre section of land known as the Hickory Sink Special Area Study (SAS) accepted by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners in December 2024. As accepted by the Board, this large area (see map below) is composed of two 'phases' or sections: Phase 1 is owned by the UF Foundation and the subject of this land use amendment, Phase 2 is the remainder of the area and includes properties that have since been acquired by the University of Florida, and properties that have been retained by the Lee family.



Map 1 – Hickory Sink Special Area Study Map

The land use designation for this parcel was adopted as part of a separate application (Z26-000002) that amended the future land use from Rural/Agriculture to UF Golf Institutional (see map below). This application, submitted by the owner for Phase 1 (UF Foundation), is

an application to rezone the parcel from 'A' (Agriculture) district to a 'PD' (Planned Development) district to implement this new future land use designation. The intent is to allow development as a golf course along with ancillary uses connected to the course such as a club facility, collegiate team facilities, residential cottages and teaching areas, consistent with the policies adopted in the Comprehensive Plan to implement this phase of the Hickory Sink Special Area Plan. The PD will provide conditions under which this parcel can develop as well as a zoning master plan with development areas, phases and proposed entitlements.



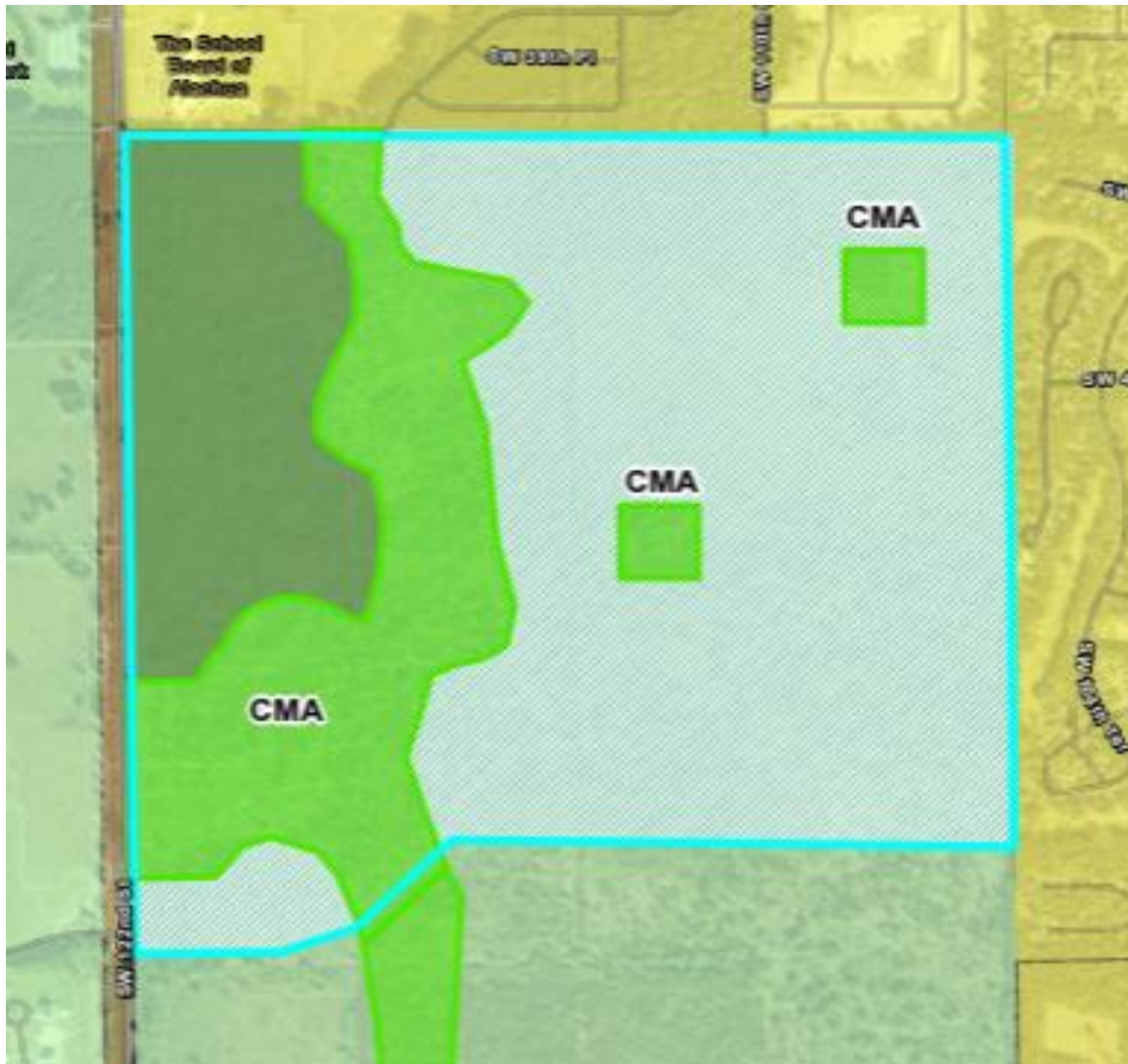
Map 2 – Future Land Use Map

Site description

The parcel that is the subject of this request is approximately 580 acres in size and is located on the east side of SW 122nd Street (Parker Road) south of Myra Terwilliger Elementary School. It is bordered to the north by the Oakmont PD (single-family

development), to the east by the Haile Plantation PD (mixed-use development), to the south by land proposed for Phase 2 of the Hickory Sink SAS and to the west by both Phase 2 (IFAS) land of the SAS as well as the Flintrock single-family subdivision.

The parcel is presently undeveloped and contains environmental resources that have been previously mapped a part of the SAS adoption in 2024 (see map below).



Map 3 – UF Golf Resource Map



Map 4 - Existing Zoning District



Map 5 - Proposed Zoning District

Consistency with Policies, Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan

Future Land Use Element

Policy 7.1.2 of the Future Land Use Element states that *Proposed changes in the zoning map shall consider:*

- a. *consistency with the goals, objectives, policies and adopted maps of the Comprehensive Plan*

The proposed zoning change is consistent with the land use map adopted as part of application Z26-000002 from Agriculture to UF Golf Institutional. The rezoning, if approved, will be consistent with the objectives and policies approved for the Hickory Sink Special Area Study (SAS) s part of that request.

- b. *the availability and capacity of public facilities required to serve the development. When considering a rezoning, this includes availability and capacity of existing public facilities and timing of future facilities based on capital plans. Specific determinations for any exceptions to the requirement to connect to a centralized potable water and sanitary sewer system will be made at the stage of development plan review, as detailed in Policy 2.1 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element.*

LOS standards, as detailed in the concurrency review for the application, will not be exceeded by this request. As provided in the policies approved as part of the land use amendment associated with this application, centralized water and sewer service will be extended past the urban cluster line to serve this development.

- c. *the relationship of the proposed development to existing development in the vicinity and considerations relating to environmental justice and redevelopment opportunities.*

The proposed PD is to enable the construction of a golf course along with ancillary facilities including transient residential cottages and support facilities for the golf course itself. The character of the surrounding area is varied, ranging from single family residential development (e.g. Haile Plantation) to undeveloped farmland (Hickory Sink SAS Phase 2, owned by UF IFAS). The golf course represents a transition from residential uses to the east (Haile Plantation, which also contains a golf course) to more rural uses across Parker Road (SW 122nd Street). A larger Conservation Management Area (CMA) on the western portion of the UF Golf site also acts as a buffer between the golf course and less intense development to the west.

The presence of the proposed PD does not impose undue burden on disadvantaged communities on any particular socioeconomic segment of the population.

- d. *those factors identified by law, including that as a general matter an applicant is not entitled to a particular density or intensity within the range of densities and intensities permitted by the Comprehensive Plan, given due consideration of legitimate public purposes relating to health, safety, and welfare.*

The proposed development is not seeking residential density. The proposed use as a golf course is a recreational opportunity permitted within the Institutional land use designation for the parcel. It will be developed consistent with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC.

Capital Improvement Element

In considering the rezoning, staff has analyzed consistency with existing policies, goals and objectives within the Plan that may apply to this request. One of these is the Level of Service (LOS) standards adopted in Capital Improvements Element (CIE) of the Plan that identifies public facilities needed to support development and establishes minimum thresholds that must be maintained as part of any development approval. Per Policy 1.2.4 and Policy 1.2.5 of the Capital Improvements Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, LOS standards have been adopted for various types of public facilities.

Traffic

The site is located in the SW Urban Transportation Mobility District. All new development in Alachua County mitigates its impact on the County’s transportation network through payment of the Mobility Fee.

Water and Sewer

Policy 1.2.4 (d) of the Capital Improvements Element describes the minimum Level of Service standards for potable water and sewer. These are summarized in the following table:

	Peak Residential & Non Residential	Pressure	Storage Capacity
Potable Water	200 gallons/day/du	40 p.s.i.	½ peak day volume
Sanitary Sewer	106 gallons/day/du	N/A	N/A

There will be no impacts to water and sewer levels of service resulting from this request. Any development on the site will be required to connect to municipal water and sewer services. As the project lies outside the urban cluster boundary, any adopted policies must include provision for extension of water and sewer services outside the cluster.

Drainage

Policy 1.2.4 of the Capital Improvements Element states that the minimum drainage LOS standard for residential development requires a floor elevation of one (1) foot above the 100-year/critical duration storm elevation. Any future development on this site would be required to meet this standard.

Emergency Services

Policy 1.2.5 (a) of the Capital Improvements Element states that the LOS guideline for fire services in the urban service area is as follows:

- Initial unit response within 6 minutes for 80% of all responses within 12 months.
- Development shall provide 100% of water supply from hydrants.

All development will be required to meet these guidelines at the time of development plan approval.

Solid Waste

Policy 1.2.4 (b) of the Capital Improvements Element states that the minimum level of service standard for solid waste disposal used for determining the availability of disposal capacity to accommodate demand generated by existing and new development, at a minimum, shall be 0.8 tons per person per year. LOS standards for solid waste will not be exceeded by this request.

Schools

The proposed rezoning does not carry with it residential density and no additional permanent residential units will be constructed. There will be no impact to public schools or Level of Service standards as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Recreation

The proposed rezoning does not carry with it residential density and no additional permanent residential units will be constructed. There will be no impact to Recreation Level of Service standards as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) Consistency

Sec. 402.77. - Review criteria and standards for rezoning applications.

When considering any application for rezoning, the standards and criteria listed below shall apply:

(a) *Consistency.*

The proposed rezoning to the PD district is consistent with and fully implements the underlying land use category of UF Golf Institutional approved as part of application Z26-000002 submitted concurrently with this rezoning request.

(b) *Compatibility.*

The zoning pattern of the surrounding area is marked by either Rural/Agriculture land use to the west or by Low Density residential land use (1-4 du/acre) to the east. The proposed PD zoning will implement the Institutional land use on the parcel and thus allow a golf course and associated facilities to be developed on the parcel.

(c) *Development patterns.*

The proposed PD is to enable the construction of a golf course along with ancillary facilities including transient residential cottages and support facilities for the golf course itself. The character of the surrounding area is varied, ranging from single family residential development (e.g. Haile Plantation) to undeveloped farmland (Hickory Sink SAS Phase II, owned by UF IFAS). The golf course represents a transition from residential uses to the east (Haile Plantation, which also contains a golf course) to more rural uses across Parker Road (SW 122nd Street). A larger Conservation Management Area (CMA) on the western portion of the UF Golf site also acts as a buffer between the golf course and less intense development to the west.

(d) *Suitability.*

This vacant parcel is approximately 580 acres. It is located along a major collector road (SW 122nd Street/Parker Road) that provides ready access for the intended recreational use (golf course). The use as a recreational facility is such that impacts to surrounding uses from development (traffic, noise, visual impacts) will be minimized. Best Management Practices will help ensure environmental resources located on the property will be protected.

(e) *Adequate public services.*

LOS standards, as detailed in the concurrency review for the application, will not be exceeded by this request. As provided in the policies approved as part of the land use amendment associated with this application, centralized water and sewer service will be extended past the urban cluster line to serve this development.

(f) *Access.*

Primary access to the site is via Parker Road.

(g) *Public health, safety, and welfare.*

Staff has not identified any public health, safety or welfare issues that would result from the approval of this rezoning request.

Consistency with Special Area Plan

This application for Planned Development (PD) zoning is intended to implement Phase 1 of the Hickory Sink Special Area Plan (Objective 8.6 of the Future Land Use Element), adopted by separate application. Those policies include the need to demonstrate compliance with specific best practices (BMP) documents. The application for the PD included several BMP documents in order to demonstrate compliance with these policies. Following is a review of the included BMPs and their relevance to implementation of Special Area Plan. Each of the BMPs will be included as attachments to the adopting resolution.

Stormwater Management Best Management Plan

The Stormwater Management BMP implements relevant sections of the Alachua County Unified Land Development Code and Chapter 77, Article 3 of the County Code. Additionally, the BMP implements Condition 13 of the SAS and Policy 8.6.5.f of the Future Land Use Element. The BMP identifies how the development limits disturbance to existing vegetation and identifies specific Low Impact Development techniques to implement within the development.

Nutrient Management and Water Quality Best Management Plan

This nutrient management plan addresses Conditions #11 and #12 of the Special Area Study Resolution. The BMP outlines how turf will be maintained to support a championship level golf course while still protecting water quality. The plan sets limits on nitrogen, including those contained in reclaimed water. Additionally, the BMP includes specific actions that can minimize nutrient flow to subsurface water systems such as avoiding fertilizer application prior to rainfall events and ensuring that fertilizer application is consistent with the Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time and Right Place principle.

The plan requires groundwater and surface water monitoring for a suite of analytes (including nutrients and pesticides) to identify baseline conditions prior to construction. Monitoring will continue after construction with a goal of meeting the springs protection standard of 0.35 mg/L for nitrate. The plan allows for adaptation of nutrient management plans in the future if techniques are not achieving necessary water quality targets.

Landscape Best Management Plan

The proposed Landscape BMP implements Condition 10 of the Special Area Study Resolution and supports Conditions 11 and 12. The BMP includes limits on the amount of supplemental irrigation water that can be applied on different landscape types (Table XX). It requires native and Florida-friendly plants be selected as part of the landscape palette and sets limits and hand watering only of limited annual beds to be utilized during special events only. Additionally, the BMP supports implementation of Conditions 11 and 12 of the

Special Area Study Resolution by prohibiting mineral fertilizer application on non-golf course landscaped areas after establishment.

Natural Resources Best Management Plan

The purpose of this Best Management Practices (BMP) Plan is to establish required natural resource protection and karst management practices consistent with the Special Area Study Resolution. These practices apply to all development, land alteration, stormwater construction, and golf course-related improvements within the Phase 1 SAP Institutional Use UF Property. Areas identified as Conservation Management Areas (CMAs) shall be preserved in accordance with the Special Area Study (SAS) and the CMA Management Plan established for this development. Habitat connectivity between CMAs and adjacent natural areas shall be maintained by avoiding fragmentation, and while pedestrian trails, roadway crossings, and wildlife fencing may occur within CMAs, such improvements shall be designed and located in a manner that protects habitat and wildlife to the extent feasible.

Conservation Management Area Best Management Plan

The purpose of this Conservation Management Areas (CMA) Best Management Plan is to establish standards for vegetation, fuels, and wildlife management consistent with SAS Resolution within the defined CMAs in Phase 1 SAP Institutional Use UF Property. These standards ensure CMAs will be protected using the management practices congruent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and the conditions specified in the Special Area Study Resolution. As required of Alachua County's Unified Land Development Code (ULDC, Chapter XVII), a thorough Conservation Management Area (CMA) Management Plan will be prepared and submitted as a component of the application for the Preliminary Design Phase (PDP). Requirements of the CMA Management Plan will include purpose, plan components, and protection measures. CMAs shall receive permanent protection and a management plan limiting impacts, uses and the number of crossings to ensure ecological integrity. CMA management activities shall be designed to maintain native vegetation communities by emphasizing practices and measures that conserve the existing natural communities of plants and wildlife.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Alachua County Planning Commission find the proposed rezoning consistent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code and recommend to the Alachua County BoCC that they **adopt** application Z26-000004 with the following conditions and bases:

Conditions

1. The Planned Development (PD) zoning district shall permit the following uses on Parcel 04492-001-001:
 - a. Golf course;
 - b. Ancillary golf facilities such as a clubhouse and maintenance buildings;
 - c. UF golf team facilities;
 - d. A maximum of 30 transient residential cottages;
 - e. Teaching facilities.
2. The Best Management Practices included in Appendix's A-E of this Resolution shall be applicable to all development plans with the boundaries of the Planned Development.
3. The applicant shall perform geophysical testing prior to stormwater system design. Testing shall be done in such a way to identify preferential flow paths and areas susceptible to sinkhole formation in order to avoid and account for those conditions when placing stormwater treatment areas.
4. Proposed driveway and golf cart crossings of the identified Conservation Management Areas shall be located so as to minimize impact to existing vegetation or topographic features. Crossings will be designed to the minimum possible width to accommodate the function of the crossing. Cross-sections shall include appropriate design techniques to ensure that wildlife is able to easily move across paved surfaces.
5. Buffer areas within Development Edges shall include a minimum of three canopy trees, four understory trees and 40 shrubs per 100 ft. of buffer length and shall include screening or more intense plantings. Plantings may be located on either side of the provide multi-use path.
6. The first Preliminary Development Plan shall include a full operational and safety analysis for all driveway connections to SW 122nd Street and shall include all proposed development from the Planned Development. The southern driveway connection shall be designed to accommodate potential development to the south.

Bases

1.Policy 7.1.2 of the Future Land Use Element states that *Proposed changes in the zoning map shall consider:*

- a. *consistency with the goals, objectives, policies and adopted maps of the Comprehensive Plan*

The proposed zoning change is consistent with the land use map adopted as part of application Z26-000002 from Agriculture to UF Golf Institutional. The rezoning, if approved, will be consistent with the objectives and policies approved for the Hickory Sink Special Area Study (SAS) s part of that request.

- b. *the availability and capacity of public facilities required to serve the development. When considering a rezoning, this includes availability and capacity of existing public facilities and timing of future facilities based on capital plans. Specific determinations for any exceptions to the requirement to connect to a centralized potable water and sanitary sewer system will be made at the stage of development plan review, as detailed in Policy 2.1 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element.*

LOS standards, as detailed in the concurrency review for the application, will not be exceeded by this request. As provided in the policies approved as part of the land use amendment associated with this application, centralized water and sewer service will be extended past the urban cluster line to serve this development.

- c. *the relationship of the proposed development to existing development in the vicinity and considerations relating to environmental justice and redevelopment opportunities.*

The proposed PD is to enable the construction of a golf course along with ancillary facilities including transient residential cottages and support facilities for the golf course itself. The character of the surrounding area is varied, ranging from single family residential development (e.g. Haile Plantation) to undeveloped farmland (Hickory Sink SAS Phase II, owned by UF IFAS). The golf course represents a transition from residential uses to the east (Haile Plantation, which also contains a golf course) to more rural uses across Parker Road (SW 122nd Street). A larger Conservation Management Area (CMA) on the western portion of the UF Golf site also acts as a buffer between the golf course and less intense development to the west.

The presence of the proposed PD does not impose undue burden on disadvantaged communities on any particular socioeconomic segment of the population.

- d. *those factors identified by law, including that as a general matter an applicant is not entitled to a particular density or intensity within the range of densities and intensities permitted by the Comprehensive Plan, given due consideration of legitimate public purposes relating to health, safety, and welfare.*

The proposed development is not seeking residential density. The proposed use as a golf course is a recreational opportunity permitted within the Institutional land use designation for the parcel. It will be developed consistent with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC.

2. Sec. 402.77. - Review criteria and standards for rezoning applications in the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) states that *When considering any application for rezoning, the standards and criteria listed below shall apply:*

(a)Consistency.

The proposed rezoning to the PD district is consistent with and fully implements the underlying land use category of UF Golf Institutional approved as part of application Z26-000002 submitted concurrently with this rezoning request.

(b)Compatibility.

The zoning pattern of the surrounding area is marked by either Rural/Agriculture land use to the west or by Low Density residential land use (1-4 du/acre) to the east. The proposed PD zoning will implement the Institutional land use on the parcel and thus allow a golf course and associated facilities to be developed on the parcel.

(c)Development patterns.

The proposed PD is to enable the construction of a golf course along with ancillary facilities including transient residential cottages and support facilities for the golf course itself. The character of the surrounding area is varied, ranging from single family residential development (e.g. Haile Plantation) to undeveloped farmland (Hickory Sink SAS Phase II, owned by UF IFAS). The golf course represents a transition from residential uses to the east (Haile Plantation, which also contains a golf course) to more rural uses across Parker Road (SW 122nd Street). A larger Conservation Management Area (CMA) on the western portion of the UF Golf site also acts as a buffer between the golf course and less intense development to the west.

(d)Suitability.

This vacant parcel is approximately 580 acres. It is located along a major collector road (SW 122nd Street/Parker Road) that provides ready access for the intended recreational use (golf course). The use as a recreational facility is such that impacts to surrounding uses from development (traffic, noise, visual impacts) will be minimized. Best Management Practices will help ensure environmental resources located on the property will be protected.

(e) Adequate public services.

LOS standards, as detailed in the concurrency review for the application, will not be exceeded by this request. As provided in the policies approved as part of the land use amendment associated with this application, centralized water and sewer service will be extended past the urban cluster line to serve this development.

(f) Access.

Primary access to the site is via Parker Road.

(g) Public health, safety, and welfare.

Staff has not identified any public health, safety or welfare issues that would result from the approval of this rezoning request.

Department of Environmental Protection

Background – Hickory Sink Special Area Study & Special Area Plan

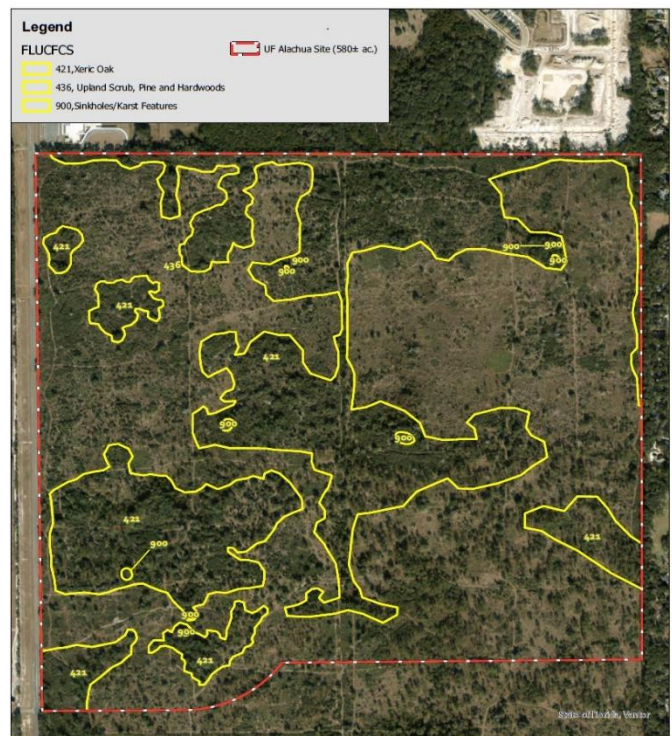
In 2020, engineering and environmental consultants representing FCL Timber, Land & Cattle LLLP commenced evaluation of the 4,068-acres associated with the Hickory Sink Special Area Study (SAS) (right figure). Site reviews by EPD and consultant staff were conducted in 2021, and the SAS was approved by the Board in 2023. After SAS approval, the 2,266-acre portion of the FCL property west of Parker Road was acquired by UF/IFAS. In addition, the northeastern 580-acres was acquired by UF Foundation to establish a golf course and associated facilities (SAP Phase 1 depicted on right figure, blue highlight). Since 2024, consultants have conducted additional site evaluations and preliminary design for the proposed Phase 1 area as necessary for the Special Area Plan (SAP) process. The following information summarizes natural and historic resource features associated with the 580-acres (referred to as “Phase 1 site”) and incorporates documentation prepared during the SAS phase.



Vegetative/Land Use (FLUCFCS)

As depicted on the right figure, the Phase 1 site is comprised of two dominant vegetative communities. The following information summarize these two habitat classifications:

“Upland Scrub, Pine and Hardwoods” (436). In these communities, tree canopy coverage is categorized as absent to sparse in comparison to moderate-dense coverage of subcanopy



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UF Alachua Site
Alachua County, Florida
Figure 5
FLUCFCS Map



780 Feet
Project #:1659-02
Produced By: HHF
Date: 12/30/2025

vegetation dominated by scrub oak species.

Canopy species observed in these communities include cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), and turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*). Subcanopy species observed in these communities included the same canopy tree species as well as Chapman's oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), bluejack oak (*Quercus incana*), saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*), myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*), and saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*). Groundcover species include diverse and dense coverage of dogfennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), bushy bluestem (*Andropogon virginicus*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), camphorweed (*Heterotheca subaxillaris*), St. Andrew's cross (*Hypericum hypercoides*), rosette grass (*Dicanthelium* sp.), deer lichen (*Cladina* sp.), purple lovegrass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), runner oak (*Quercus pumila*), gopher apple (*Geobalanus oblongifolius*), and ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*). Dense vine coverage in these communities include greenbrier vine (*Smilax* sp.) and muscadine grape vine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

“Xeric Oak” (421). The forested uplands within the Phase 1 site are appropriately classified as “Xeric Oak.” Canopy species in these communities include southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*), longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), with live oaks being the dominant canopy species. Subcanopy species observed in these communities include the same canopy species, as well as Chapman's oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), bluejack oak (*Quercus incana*), saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*), dwarf chestnut (*Castanea pumila*), pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*), myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*), gum bumelia (*Sideroxylon lanuginosum*), blackjack oak (*Quercus marilandica*), and saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*). Groundcover and vine species in these communities are comprised of the same extensive diversity and coverage located in the delineated “Upland Scrub, Pine and Hardwoods” communities. As depicted in the above photograph, mechanical roller chop methods have been periodically conducted as



a management tool to reduce the density of xeric oak habitat and improve site conditions to appropriately apply prescribed fire management.

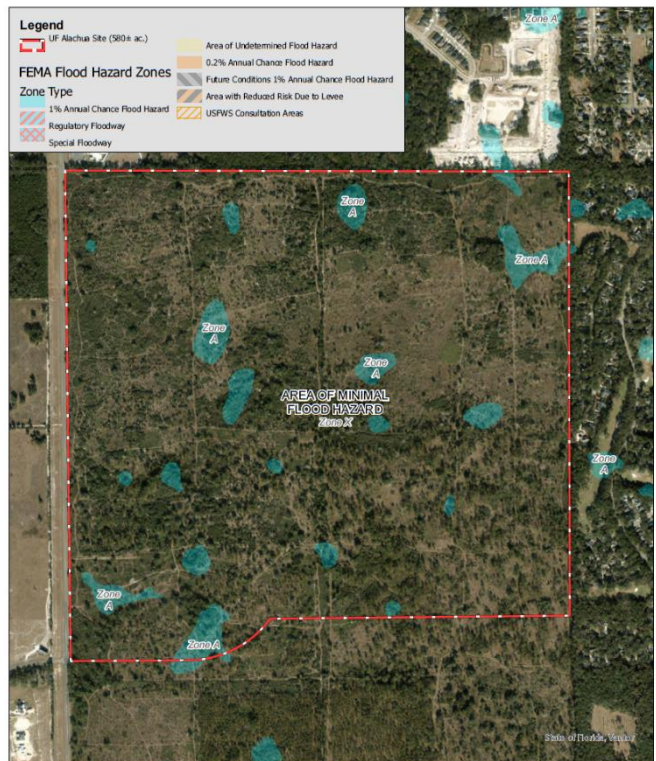
“Special Classifications” (900).

Scattered throughout Site 1 are several sinkhole features classified on the aerial figure as “Special Classifications” (900). These features contain unique vegetative communities that include various combinations of species within the other two reference habitats as well as other upland species.



Canopy species found in these habitats include cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*). Subcanopy species in these communities include those trees found in the canopy as well as saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), Darlington oak (*Quercus hemisphaerica*), bluejack oak (*Quercus incana*), eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), viburnum (*Viburnum* sp.), Chapman’s oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), red bay (*Persea borbonia*), saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), and Carolina buckthorn (*Frangula caroliniana*).

Groundcover species are also diverse however low in percent coverage due to steeper slope and canopy shade conditions (photo above). Ground species in these communities include bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), beauty berry (*Callicarpa americana*), giant sword fern (*Nephrolepis biserrate*), widespread maiden fern (*Pelazoneuron kunthii*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*), dwarf huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*), deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum*), bushy bluestem (*Andropogon glomeratus*), beggarsticks (*Bidens frondosa*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), gallium (*Galium* sp.), and rosette grass (*Dichanthelium* sp.). Vines found in these communities include



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UF Alachua Site
 Alachua County, Florida
 Figure 10
 FEMA Flood Hazard Zones

920 Feet
 Project #:1659-02
 Produced By: HHF
 Date: 12/29/2025

greenbrier vine (*Smilax* sp.) and muscadine grape vine (*Vitis rotundifolia*). Surface exposed limestone boulders and rock walls are located in portions of the larger sinks as well as documented cave features. Additional information on these features are within the text referenced as **“Significant Geologic Features.”**

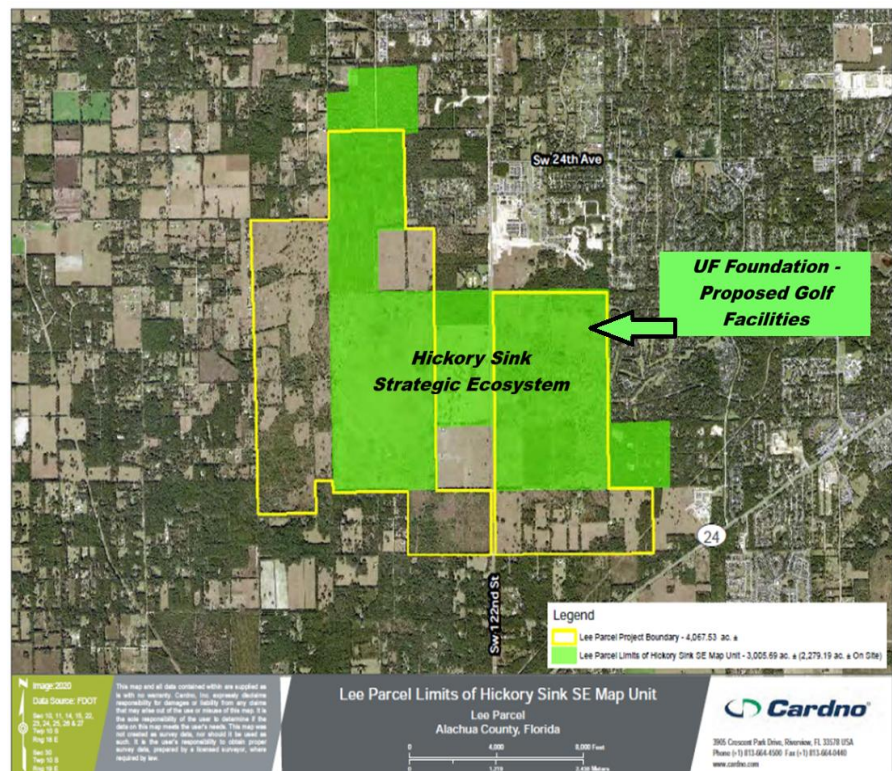
Wetlands, Surface Waters, 100-Year Flood Zone (ULDC – Articles VI, VII)

Alachua County’s ULDC wetland evaluation and delineation criteria and requirements follow the same uniform statewide methodology adopted by the FDEP and the WMD’s to delineate wetlands (FAC Rule 62-340.300) and surface waters (FAC Rule 62-340.600). EPD staff concur with the consultants’ natural resource evaluations and determination that there are not any wetlands or surface water features within the Phase 1 site. Minimal surface waters that periodically pool within some lower elevations of the sinkhole and cave features rapidly percolate due to underlying karst conditions. As depicted on the previous page aerial figure, the 100-Year Flood Zone “A” represents a minor percentage of the Phase 1 site primarily associated with the sinkhole features.

Strategic Ecosystem (SE) (ULDC – Article V)

As indicated on the right figure, the Phase 1 site is within the mapped overlay boundaries of the designated 3,000-acre *Hickory Sink Strategic Ecosystem (SE)*. As referenced in the ULDC, the purpose of SE designations is *“to protect, conserve, enhance, and manage the ecological integrity of natural systems in Alachua County that have aesthetic, ecological, economic, educational, historical, recreational, or scientific value due to the interrelationship of one or more landscape, natural community, or species scale characteristics. It is also the purpose of this Article to*

promote connectivity and minimize fragmentation of natural systems, and to protect wetlands, floodplains, and associated uplands in a broad systems context through resource-based planning, including inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency coordination, across multiple parcels rather than individual parcel planning.” In addition to various regulated



natural resources referenced in Chapter 406 of the ULDC, there are other features and factors that are evaluated in determining the presence and extent of SE resources including but not limited to:

- *Vegetation value and species diversity, including exotic species presence.*
- *Habitat potential for endangered species and other wildlife.*
- *Hydrological characteristics, including connectivity to the Floridan Aquifer.*
- *Surface water and flood protection functions.*
- *Community diversity, rarity, and ecological quality.*
- *Landscape connectivity and overall management potential*

Ground truth verification is required within the strategic ecosystem map overlay to verify the potential presence and extent of various natural habitats, community diversity and landscape connectivity. **Field evaluations and documentation prepared by consultants and EPD staff verified the entire Phase 1 site has appropriate features and factors to classify as *Strategic Ecosystem*.**

Significant Habitat (SH) (ULDC – Article III)

As referenced in the ULDC, the purpose of a “*Significant Habitat*” classification is “*to protect the natural upland plant communities which have the potential to maintain healthy and diverse populations of plants or wildlife, to preserve the ecological values and functions of significant plant and wildlife habitats, to provide for habitat corridors and minimize habitat fragmentation, in order to maintain and enhance the diversity and distribution of plant and animal species which are of aesthetic, ecological, economic, educational, historical, recreational, or scientific value to the County and its citizens.*” *Significant Habitat*” areas are designated based on consideration and assessment of factors referenced in the ULDC:

- * *Quality of native ecosystem.*
- * *Overall quality of biological diversity.*
- * *Wildlife habitat value.*
- * *Presence of listed or uncommon species.*
- * *Grouping, contiguity, compactness of native vegetation.*
- * *Proximity to other natural preserve areas and corridors.*
- * *Impact by prohibited and invasive non-native vegetation.*

Field evaluations and documentation prepared by consultants and EPD staff verified the entire Phase 1 site has appropriate features and factors to classify as *Significant Habitat*.

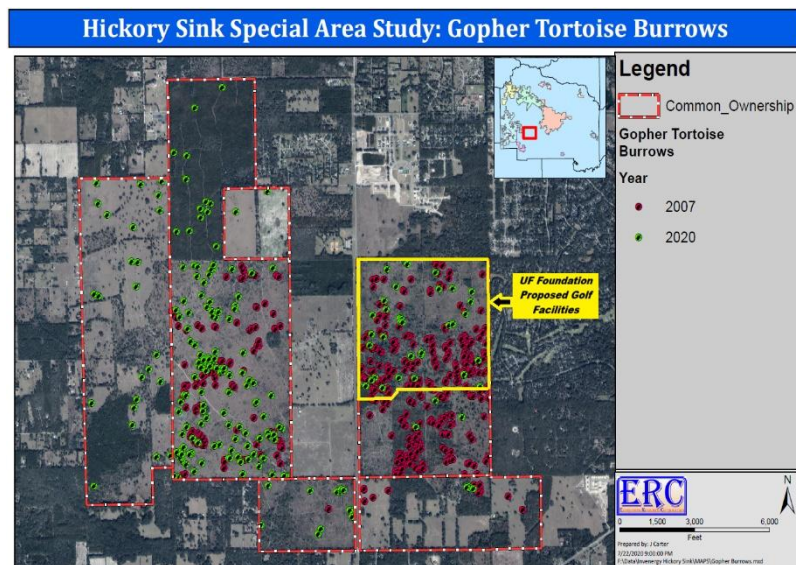
Listed Species Habitat (LSH) (ULDC – Article IV)

Evaluation, designation and delineation of “Listed Species Habitat” incorporate similar evaluation methods to designate “Significant Habitat.” However, evaluations for listed species can also require species-specific surveys. The dominant listed species present within the entire SAS area are gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*). Gopher tortoises (GT’s) are classified as a “Category 2 Candidate Species” by the USFWS, and as of September 2007 classified as “Threatened” by FWC, and as “Threatened” by Florida Committee on Rare and Endangered Plants and Animals (FCREPA). Other protected species known to occur in Alachua County have a possibility of occurrence since they are “commensal species” who often utilize abandoned, unoccupied and occupied burrows constructed by GT’s. The most common listed commensal species include the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), Florida mouse (*Podomys floridanus*) and the gopher frog (*Rana capito*). However, none of these listed species were documented during site evaluations and specific listed species surveys conducted in 2007, 2020, 2022 and 2025 within the boundaries of the Phase 1 site.



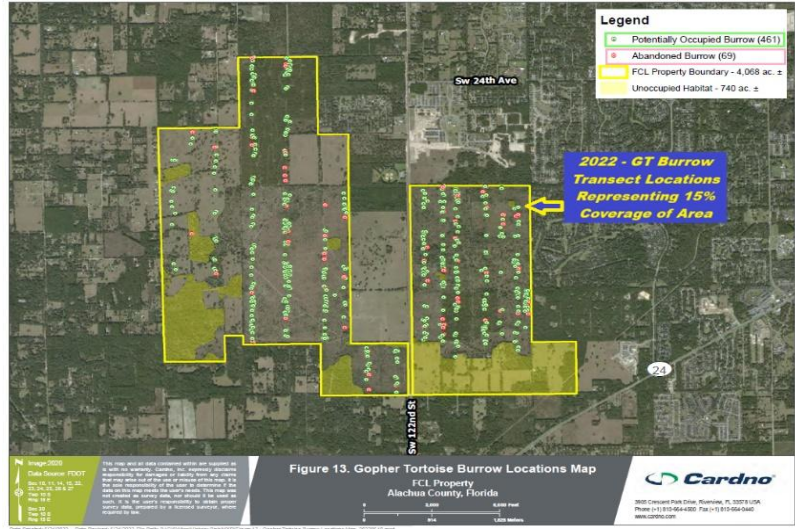
GT Burrow Surveys – 2007 & 2020

The GPS locations of active burrows in 2007 and 2020 were conducted by Ecosystem Research Corporation (ERC, Pete Wallace). As indicated on the right figure, there was a decrease in observed burrows during 13 years between the two evaluations. There were rotational planted pine silviculture operations and native vegetative management activities to improve habitat for bobwhite quail during this period. With the proposed land use changes associated with the SAS, vegetative management activities decreased during recent years. As depicted in the previous vegetation photographs, these activities have resulted in an increase coverage of vegetation that reduces the visual observation surveys for burrows.

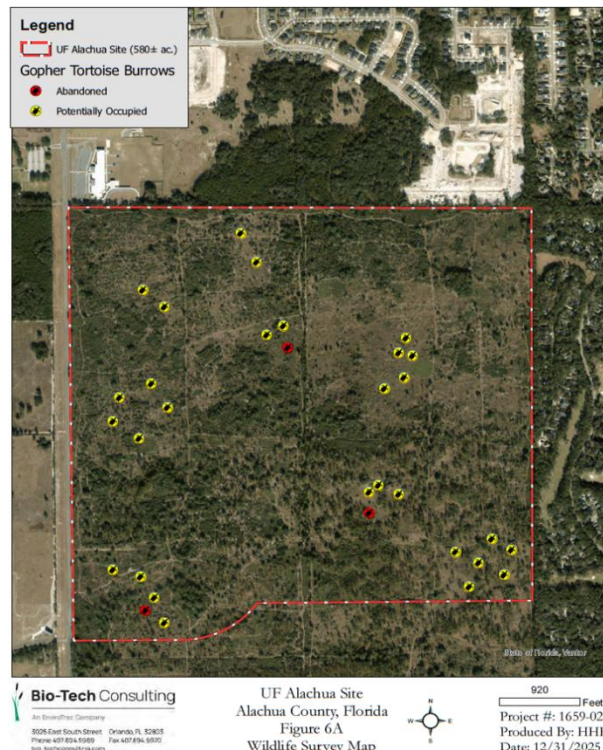


GT Burrow Surveys – 2022 & 2025

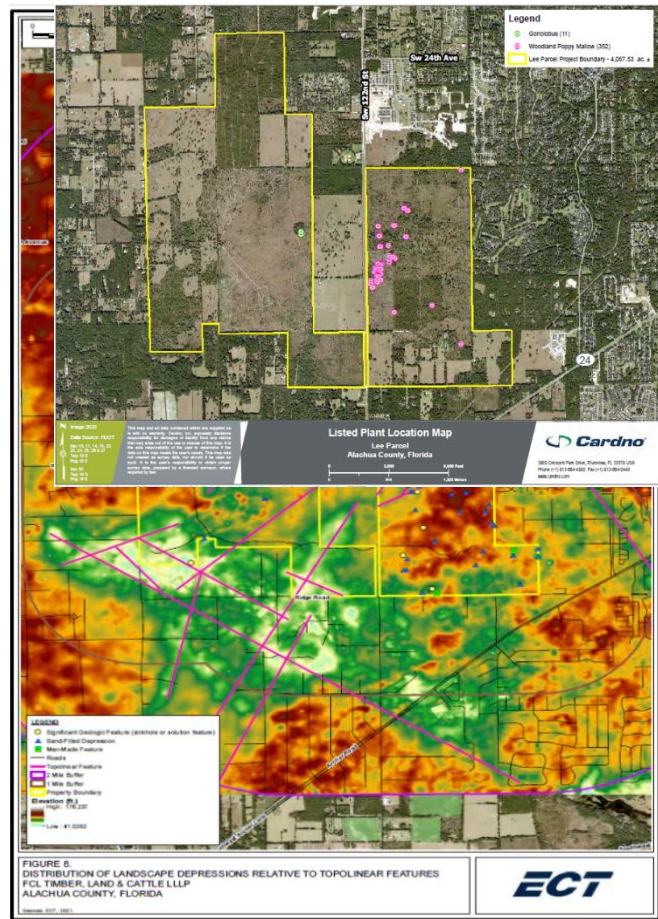
Survey transects with associated GPS coordinates of “potentially occupied” and “abandoned burrows” were conducted in 2022 by Cardno staff. As depicted on the right aerial, linear transects were established representing 15% coverage of the surveyed areas. A 10% burrow survey was conducted by Bio-Tech Consulting staff in 2025 (bottom aerial) located



clusters of GT burrows however Bio-Tech staff also noted finding “a high density of burrows throughout the site.” In general, individual GTs typically construct and regularly utilize two or more burrows. One burrow is the primary living quarters with second typically close to the primary burrow to utilize for escaping from potential predators, land management activities and resting while foraging further distances from the primary burrow. Recognizing the burrow surveys represent a low percentage of Phase 1 site combined with variable results, where proposed development crossings such as roadways, trails, cart paths, utilities, or other improvements occur within a CMA, a one hundred percent (100%) gopher tortoise burrow survey shall be conducted within a minimum of fifty (50) feet of the proposed disturbance area. Where development or land disturbance activities occur directly adjacent to a CMA boundary, a burrow survey shall be conducted within a twenty-five (25) foot buffer inside the CMA boundary. A 100% coverage survey of active and inactive GT burrows within the non-CMA areas is required within the Phase 1 site by FWC and EPD. The survey data will be critical in verifying the presence, location and population of GTs to cross-reference with the locations of the three designated CMAs and evaluate appropriate design and dimensions of primary golf areas (e.g. tees, fairways, roughs, greens) and retained native habitats not associated with the CMAs. The applicant



has indicated the preference to collect and conduct off-site relocation of GTs that require burrows removed from the primary golf areas. Relocation requires FWC permitting to transport GTs to FWC authorized recipient site(s) prior to any on-site clearing and construction activities. As a result, the burrow surveys will also be critical in documenting the locations, quantity, size and health conditions of individual GTs proposed for relocation. For those situations where relocation efforts cannot be completed within 90 days of a formal GT survey, FWC requires an additional 100% survey. This is a necessary requirement to verify if and where previously undocumented GTs have appeared within project areas. As with other development projects, EPD staff will be kept informed and copied on permit coordination issues with FWC (*Gopher Tortoise Permitting Guidelines, FWC, 2008, 2015 Update*).



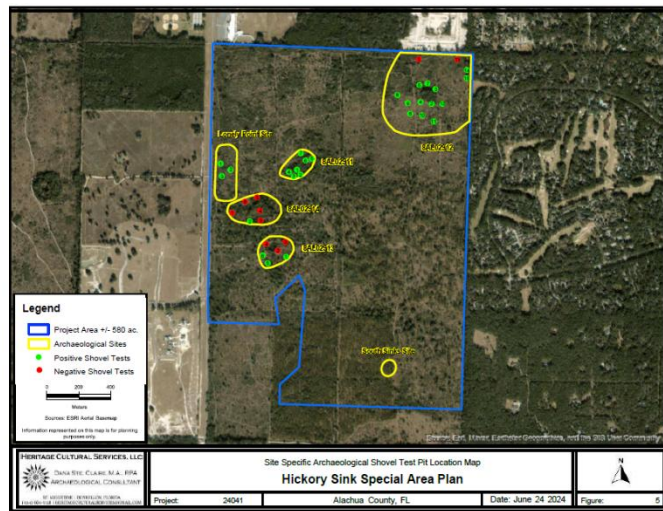
Woodland poppymallow (*Callirhoe papaver*) is an endangered plant species in Florida, occurring naturally in upland mixed forests and dry hammocks in only four counties. Woodland poppymallow has been documented primarily within the central western area of Phase 1 site (right aerial); the majority correlating well within the primary Conservation Management Area (CMA) proposed for preservation and habitat management.

Field evaluations and documentation prepared by consultants and EPD staff verified the entire Phase 1 site has appropriate features and factors to classify the area as Significant Habitat.

Significant Geologic Features (SGF) (ULDC – Article XVI)

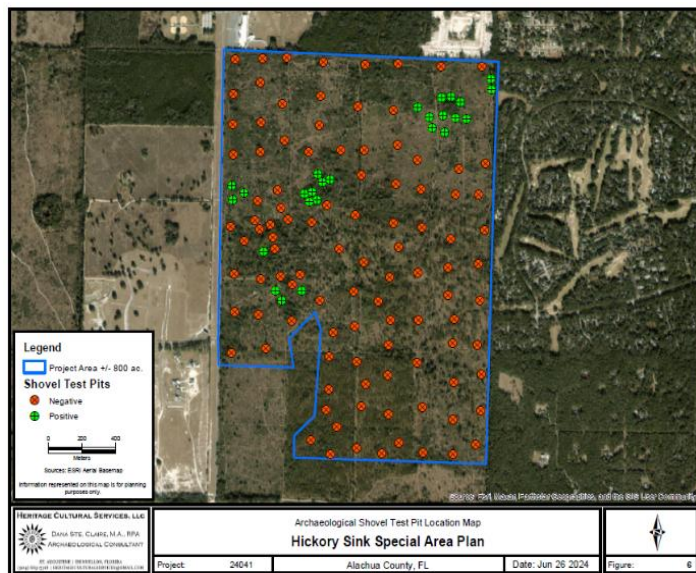
Significant geologic features (SGF) include but are not limited to point source features that have enhanced connectivity to the Floridan Aquifer such as sinkholes, caves, and limestone outcrops; lineal features such as lineaments, ridges, escarpments, springs, and swallets; and areal features such as steep slopes and springsheds. As depicted on the right aerial, SGF’s were identified as landscape depressions with steep walls and exposed limestone

and/or clay in the walls (yellow circles). Almost all the SGFs are located within a lower topographic contour “valley” depicted with the green topographic area within the northwestern portion of the Phase 1 site. These SGFs require setback protection, primarily average 75 ft. with minimal 50 ft. measured from outer concentric contour. These buffers are required not only to prevent discharge of potentially poor-quality water to the Floridan aquifer but also due to their uncertain stability and unique habitat benefits. Those features identified as sand-filled depressions (blue triangles on previous figure) represent relict sinkhole and other minor karst features (e.g. chimneys, vents). The protected SGFs and their associated buffers are evident on the right figure and located within the three designated CMA of the Phase 1 site.



Historic Sites, Archaeological & Paleontological Resources (ULDC – Articles XIII, XIV, XV)

A Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment (CRA) was conducted in 2024 for the 800-acres associated with the Hickory Sink Special Area Plan (SAP). Hickory Sink has been a landmark and placename at least as early as the late 19th century. Since the 1960s, the property was primarily used for cattle ranching and in the 1980’s, the longleaf pine were harvested and replanted to establish slash pine plantations. The patterned rows of planted pines of varying age are separated by troughs that occur between the elevated beds, the raised rows of soil, or furrows, in which the pines are planted. These highly disturbed areas, along with other lands cleared for agricultural activities, were field tested with shovel pits at greater intervals (previous page aerial), mainly to confirm their degree of disturbance. The results of these surveys aided in confirming conditions from previous CRAs conducted within and near the Phase 1 site. People often used forested features such as sinkholes for tool making but not for living quarters. Five of the SGFs are cataloged through the State Division of Historical Records including “Half-



Section Sink” (8AL02911), “*Hog Cave/Bat Cave*” (8AL02912), “*Unnamed Sink*” (8AL02914), “*Hickory Sink*” (8AL02914), and “*Lonely Point*” (8AL07584). Lithic flakes associated with tool making are the primary artifacts.

All five of these SGFs will be preserved within the three proposed CMA’s associated with the Phase 1 site. In conclusion, it is the “opinion and recommendation of the consultant (Heritage Cultural Services, LLC) that no cultural resources eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* will be impacted by development on the Hickory Sink Special Area Plan property. No further archaeological work is recommended.”

Conservation Management Areas (CMA)
(ULDC – Article XVII)

Collected data and site-specific evaluations were used to designate the locations and delineate the boundaries of the three separate CMAs. These evaluations were conducted to verify the presence of appropriate intact vegetation, including canopy, understory, and groundcover where applicable, in functional, clustered arrangement, with logical contiguous boundaries to eliminate fragmentation to the greatest extent practicable. The two isolated SGFs also designated as CMAs represent ecological integrity, maximized use by wildlife and aid in maintaining the long-term viability of natural plant or animal communities. The evaluation and determination are primarily based upon the following conditions:

- * Function and value of natural resources;*
- * Quality and condition of natural resources;*
- * Protectability and manageability;*
- * Size and shape (emphasis should be on avoiding enclaves of development or areas; fragmented by development; and, on providing, where appropriate, adequate buffers from the secondary impacts of development and adequate wildlife corridors);*
- *Contiguity with adjacent existing habitat, functional wetland system, floodplain, or habitat corridor;*
- * Existing species population sizes and life history requirements;*
- * Proximity and accessibility to other populations of the same species;*
- * Compatibility of conservation with adjacent land uses; and*
- * Recommendations from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and other appropriate agencies.*

The purpose of the ***Conservation Management Areas (CMA) Management Plan*** is to establish standards for vegetation, fuels, and wildlife management consistent with SAS Resolution within the three defined CMAs in Phase 1 SAP Institutional Use UF Property. These standards ensure CMAs will be protected using the management practices congruent

with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and the conditions specified in the Special Area Study Resolution. As required of Alachua County's Unified Land Development Code (ULDC, Chapter XVII), a thorough Conservation Management Area (CMA) Management Plan will be prepared and submitted as a component of the application for the Preliminary Design Phase (PDP). Key requirements of the CMA Management Plan will include:

- **Purpose:** To manage and protect ecological integrity since the CMAs represent unique Significant Geologic Features (SGF), Significant Habitat (SH), Listed Species Habitat (LSH), Historic Sites, Archaeological & Paleontological Resources, and have exceptional features associated with the Hickory Hill Strategic Ecosystem (SE).
- **Plan Components:** Detailed descriptions of perpetual management activities, including authorized and prohibited actions within the CMAs.

Protection Measures: Fencing: Installation of fencing to prevent unauthorized entry while allowing appropriate wildlife movement.

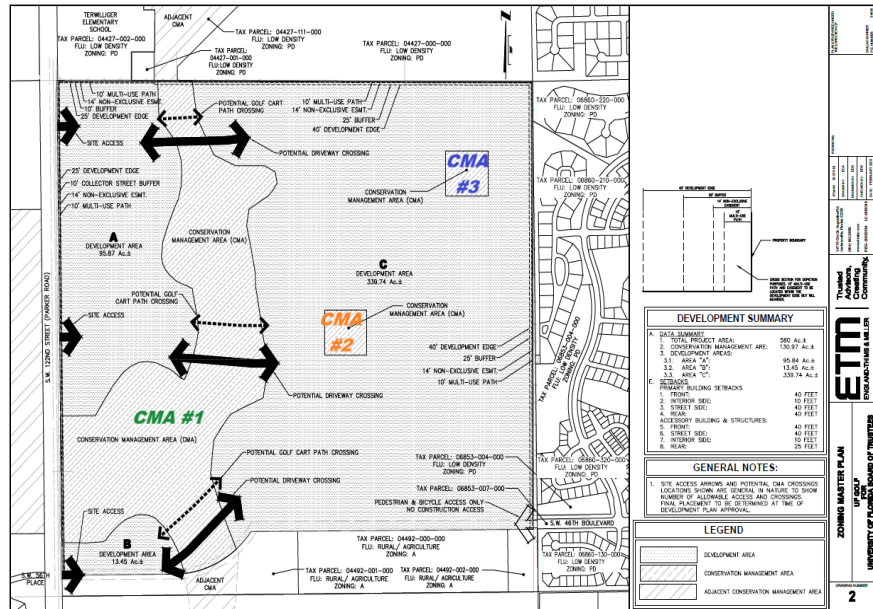
Signage: Installation of signs marking the perimeter of the CMAs.

Erosion Control: Implementation of erosion control and barrier fencing during clearing and construction activities.

Gopher Tortoises: Site specific gopher tortoise burrow survey methodology, proposed protection measures, potential tortoise relocation, monitoring, etc. Information will include coordination of proposed evaluation and potential relocation permitting through the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

Measures to Limit Impacts, Uses, and Number of Crossings in CMAs:

CMAs shall be preserved in accordance with the Special Area Study (SAS) and the CMA Management Plan established for this development. To limit impacts, multiple approaches will be established. The Master Plan (below) depicts the approximate locations of where three access roads and three golf cart paths will be evaluated and submitted as part of the Preliminary Design Plan (PDP) application.



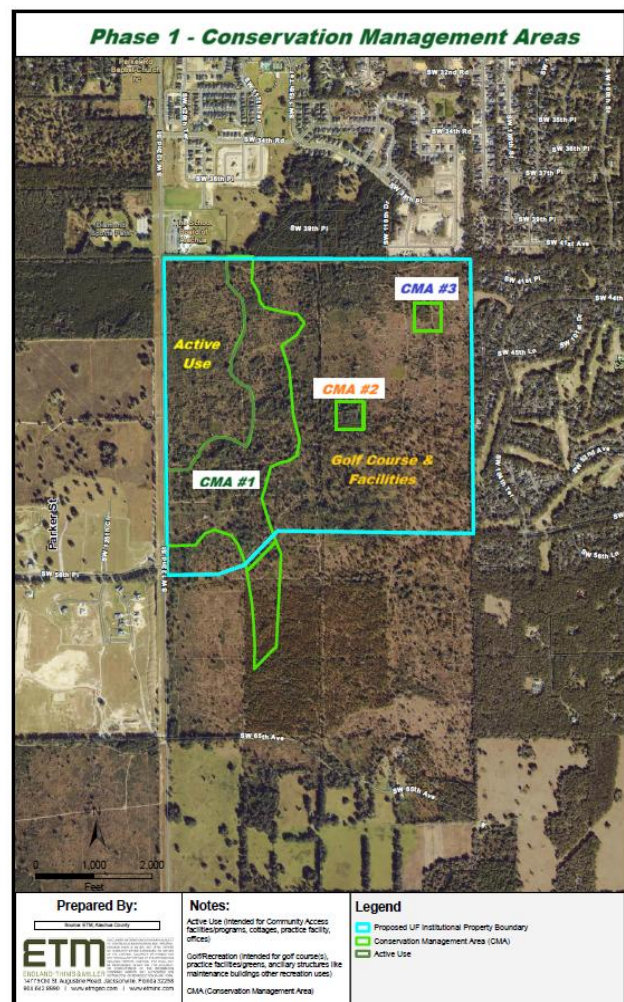
- Fencing will be used when necessary to delineate CMAs, restrict access to CMAs, and reduce potential human wildlife conflicts in high use golf course areas. Use of wildlife fencing (e.g., 42-inch, 3 strand non-barbed wire) may be installed along the designated perimeter of the CMAs to ensure wildlife access. Use of six (6) foot fencing may be installed within or adjacent to the public access areas.
- Use of heavy equipment will be restricted to the extent possible within CMAs to preserve soil structure, plant communities, and sensitive soil dwelling fauna. Pedestrian trails will be defined within CMAs to address Condition 15 within the community access plan. Trails may be impervious or pervious surfaces. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be relegated to trails to limit impacts of human use, except when necessary to accomplish management objectives regarding vegetation, fuel, and wildlife maintenance activities. These restrictive measures are particularly important for preservation of active gopher tortoise burrows which are sensitive to collapsing under the weight of equipment and foot traffic. Gopher tortoise burrow surveys will be conducted within the limits of the three designated CMAs. Where proposed development crossings such as roadways, trails, cart paths, utilities, or other improvements occur within a CMA, a one hundred percent (100%) gopher tortoise burrow survey shall be conducted within a minimum of fifty (50) feet of the proposed disturbance area. Where development and land disturbance activities occur directly adjacent to a CMA boundary, a burrow survey shall be conducted within a twenty-five (25) foot buffer inside the CMA boundary. The locations of active and inactive burrows will be located using a Global Positioning System (GPS) with coordinates and burrow status depicted on appropriate recent aerials. Active burrows proposed for protection will be permanently marked with minimum 5-ft. tall painted metal stakes and flagging ribbon tied

to adjacent shrubs and trees to delineate the required 25 ft. buffers. These buffers will be depicted on appropriate aerials to delineate and protect from mechanized equipment and limited to pedestrian foot traffic to monitor gopher tortoise activities. Flagging ribbons will be re-established at the same 25 ft. buffer boundaries after prescribed fire applications within associated CMAs.

- A minimum buffer of 50-ft between active burrows and permanent structures and impervious surfaces shall be maintained upon initiation of establishment. If impacts to occupied gopher tortoise burrows cannot be avoided, relocation shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable FWC permitting requirements and relocation guidelines in effect at the time of relocation. Relocation activities shall be completed by authorized agents to approved recipient sites prior to any land-disturbing activities, and all required buffers, monitoring, and reporting shall be implemented to ensure compliance with FWC standards.

Prescribed Fire Management

Flora and fauna of the Hickory Sink Strategic Ecosystems evolved with frequent wildland fire and thus, recurring prescribed fire is the preferred tool for the protection of native flora and fauna. Low intensity surface firing techniques will be utilized on a <3 year fire return interval to maintain the native plant community composition and structure needed to support gopher tortoises and other wildlife species and to reduce fuel loads to avoid wildfire risks. Prescribed fires will be carried out with a certified prescribed burn manager on site, in accordance with a notarized prescribed burn plan, and with the necessary smoke permits on the day of occurrence in accordance with applicable county and state regulations. When necessary, mechanical or chemical means can be used to maintain desired native plant community composition and structure. In the case of invasive plant species, prescribed fire may not control and could promote those species and thus, may necessitate mechanical or chemical control measures as needed. No ornamental landscaping turf establishment, fertilizer



application, or irrigation is permitted within CMAs.

Permanent Protection

CMAs shall receive permanent protection and a management plan limiting impacts, uses and the number of crossings to ensure ecological integrity. CMA management activities shall be designed to maintain native vegetation communities by emphasizing practices and measures that conserve the existing natural communities of plants and wildlife.

