



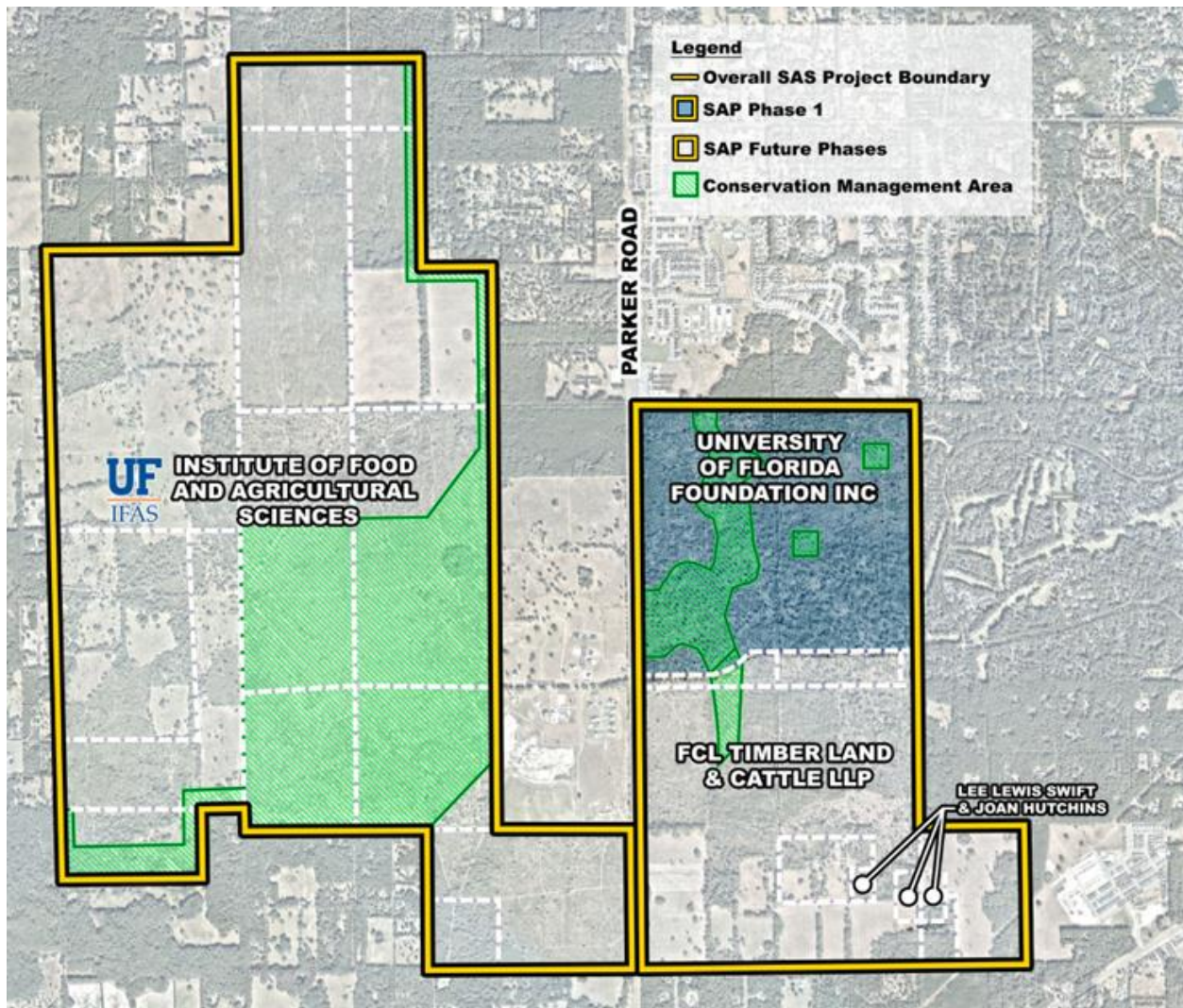
Department of Growth Management Staff Report

Application Z26-000002

Staff Contact:	Gerald Brewington, Senior Planner
Staff Phone Number:	352-374-5249 ext. 2220
PC Hearing Date:	April 15, 2026
BoCC Hearing Date:	April 28, 2026 (Transmittal)
Requested Action	A request by England-Thims and Miller, Inc. (Lindsay Haga, agent) for the University of Florida Foundation, Inc. (owner) for a large-scale land use amendment from Rural/Agriculture (1 dwelling unit per 5 acres) to UF Golf Institutional future land use and associated policies 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:	Resolution 2023-97 - Hickory Sink Special Area Study (November 2023)
Violation History:	None
PC Recommendation:	The PC recommended that the BoCC transmit Z26-000002 to FloridaCommerce for their review and comment (5-1 McCaslin recusal).
Staff Recommendation:	Staff recommends that the Board find the proposed land use amendment consistent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and that they transmit the comprehensive plan amendment to FloridaCommerce for review and comment.

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 November 2023. As accepted by the Board, this large area (see map below) is comprised 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 – Excerpt of Proposed Hickory Sink Special Area Study Map (Map F17a)

The entirety of the SAS lies outside the Urban Cluster Line adopted as part of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan (Plan). As such, any proposed development will be required to adopt goals, objectives and policies along with proposed map changes specific to the SAS. The owner for Phase 1 (UF Foundation) is submitting an application for a large-scale land

use amendment along with proposed policies for its 580 acre parcel. The intent is to establish a UF Golf Institutional land use designation on the parcel (see map below) and would include adoption of 3 maps included in Appendix A. Additionally, the application proposes policies for implementation of a portion of the Special Area Study that would permit 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 included in Appendix B. The proposed map amendments, along with the proposed policy additions, implement the Special Area Plan following the Special Area Study.



Map 2 – Excerpt of Proposed Land Use Map (Map F17b)

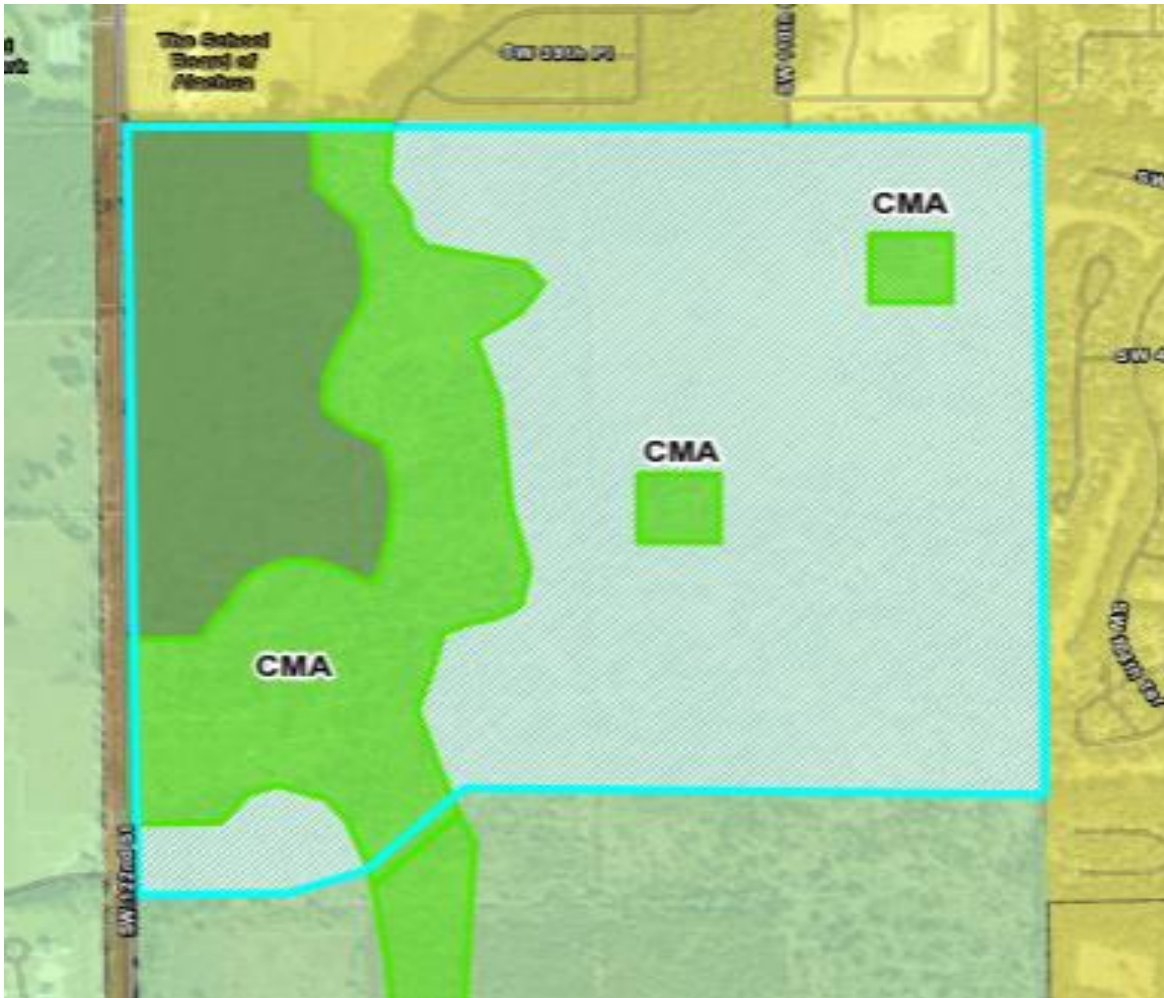
Should the comprehensive plan amendment be adopted, an associated Planned Development (PD) district implementing the proposed policies is also concurrently being submitted for consideration by the Board (Z26-000004).

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 2023 (see map below).



Map 3 – Excerpt of Proposed UF Golf Resource Map (Map F 17c)

Consistency with Existing Policies, Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan

In considering the proposed land use amendment, staff has analyzed consistency with existing policies, goals and objectives within the Plan that may apply to this request.

Future Land Use Element

Objective 6.2 of the Future Land Use Element (FLUE) identifies that the existing Rural/Agriculture future land use designation on this parcel allows for outdoor activity-based recreation and specifically identifies golf course as one of the permitted uses. However, the site has also been through a special area study (SAS) process that was approved by the Board in November 2023. The SAS includes the provision that a special area plan (SAP) be adopted for the property.

Per Policy 6.2.10, the current future land use designation could allow residential development up to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, or up to 116 units, although there are numerous additional policies that limit that potential. Indeed, Policy 6.2.8 of the FLUE would require a Special Area Study for development of more than 100 units. In this case, the accepted Special Area Study included conditions limiting the subject property to development of a golf course and associated accessory uses. Additional discussion of the Special Area Study is included in the analysis of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

The present request will adopt policies and provide a new land use designation (UF Golf Institutional) as part of this SAP. The proposed changes will tailor this specific property for use as a golf course and provide additional guidance on facilities associated with the golf course. To permit these additional uses, some of which are not necessarily consistent with the Rural/Agriculture land use (e.g. restaurant), the applicant is proposing a large-scale land use change to 'UF Golf Institutional' along with an implementing Planned Development (PD) zoning district (Application Z26-000004).

Policy 5.1.1 of the Future Land Use Element states that *Potential locations for major future institutional uses are identified on the Future Land Use Map. **Institutional uses may be allowed in other land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map and implemented in accordance with the guidance and policies within this Section 5.0., and within the Comprehensive Plan as a whole.***

The proposed change to the future land use designation, and the proposed policies associated with implementation of the Hickory Sink Special Area Study are not inconsistent with the policies of the FLUE. The new policies will guide implementation of the golf course through the PD rezoning process.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The subject property is within the Hickory Sink Strategic Ecosystem. Objective 4.10 of the Conservation and Open Space Element includes policies related to Strategic Ecosystems

and, consistent with Policy 4.10.3, the subject application includes policies related to the implementation of a Special Area Study to demonstrate that the proposed development will not negatively impact the resources of the Strategic Ecosystem.

Specific guidelines for the Special Area Study are discussed later in this report.

Capital Improvements Element

The Capital Improvements Element includes policies related to the provision of services for properties within the unincorporated area. The following sections provide an analysis of potential impacts to levels of service for public facilities included in the Capital Improvements Element. Level of Service (LOS) standards adopted in the Capital Improvements Element (CIE) of the Plan that identify public facilities needed to support development and establish 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 Southwest 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 impact to water and sewer levels of service resulting from this request. As the project lies outside the urban cluster boundary, extension of water and sewer services will need to occur to support development of the parcel. This is being addressed through a policy included in the text language associated with this request. Extension of services outside the cluster line is consistent with provisions of PWSS Policy 3.1.5(a) for protection of resources and the public health and safety.

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 land use amendment to UF Golf Institutional 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 land use amendment to UF Golf Institutional does not carry with it residential density and no additional permanent residential units will be constructed. The proposal will add limited public recreation in the form of nature trails and other passive recreation uses associated with conservation management areas. In addition, uses such as First Tee (golf opportunities for youth) will also occur on-site. There will be no impact to Recreation Level of Service standards as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element

The **Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element** specifically provides criteria for extension of municipal water and sewer services outside the cluster line.

Policy 3.1.5 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element states that Proposed extensions of potable water and sanitary sewer lines outside of the Urban Cluster

designated by the Future Land Use Element shall be subject to approval by the Board of County Commissioners. Approval of such extensions shall be based on one or more of the following:

(a) the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners finds that the absence of such facilities would result in a threat to the public health or safety...

Extension of water and sewer services is necessary for development of Phase 1 of the SAS. Staff notes that no extension of the urban cluster line is being contemplated nor is capital expenditure being sought from the County to extend these services (all expenses will be assumed by the applicant). However, the resources identified in the area and the karst topography present on the site necessitate the use of municipal water services to protect the aquifer and other resources. The allowance for municipal water service to the site (especially the use of reclaimed water for irrigation purposes) will serve to protect the aquifer below by minimizing well use. While extension of the cluster line is not being proposed, a policy is being added to the SAP for extension of water and sewer outside the cluster. Adopted LOS standards will not be exceeded by this request.

Recreation Element

The proposed use as a golf course is intended as a private recreation facility although the public will have limited access to various components though IFAS, First Tee and other educational opportunities. While the primary focus of the **Recreation Element** is publicly-owned facilities, certain policies are none-the-less applicable to this request.

Policy 1.1.7 of the Recreation Element states that *facilities, equipment and landscaping installed at each recreation site shall be energy efficient and cost-effective and shall include characteristics that provide for low- maintenance (e.g. native landscape plants), durability, longevity and resistance to vandalism, and will provide for multi-uses.*

The policies proposed for the SAS include provisions for the use of native or Florida-friendly landscaping within Phase 1, golf course phase of development. Also, policies are included that promote the use of reclaimed water for irrigation, with potable and well water contemplated only as emergency back-up water sources. Multiple uses outside the recreational aspect of the golf course are also being contemplated for the property consistent with this policy. These include educational opportunities in conjunction with IFAS and the University of Florida and transient residential uses (cottages).

Proposal for New Hickory Sink Special Area Study (SAS) Policies, Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan

When the Board adopted the SAS boundaries in November 2023, they also adopted a series of **conditions** detailing how they wished environmental resources within the SAS to be protected while permitting development within the various phases. The applicant has proposed a series of policies and associated maps meant to address these **conditions**. These can be found in the application materials and in the appendices of this Staff Report. In general, these policies and maps provide a framework for development of the 580 acres owned by the UF Foundation as a golf course facility with associated support facilities such as a club house, UF golf team facilities, cottage units for visiting alumni along with an internal transportation network. Most importantly, these policies implement the protection of significant environmental resources on the site as well as promoting development of the golf course in such a way as to minimize impacts resulting from both construction and ongoing maintenance of the course. This will ultimately be achieved through adoption of a Planned Development zoning district (with associated conditions) as well as a series of Best Management Practices (BMP) as part of a separate zoning application.

Significantly, the proposed policies implement a Water Budget for the golf course and its associated development. As found in proposed Policy 8.6.5.d, the golf course will be limited to maximum irrigable areas for both play area and non-play areas. Additionally, the policy sets limits on the maximum annual irrigation allowance for both play and non-play areas. The water conservation policies also include requirements for irrigation water source and landscaping with native and Florida-friendly species. During the PD zoning, the applicant will identify specific techniques to address the Water Budget established in the Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed policies include a requirement to minimize ground disturbance during development. Studies have shown that land disturbance alone increases nitrate loading in Alachua County's sensitive karst areas more than tenfold. Limiting the area of disturbance will help protect and preserve water quality. To that end, the proposed policies, in 8.6.5.h requires a monitoring plan for water quality. At the PD zoning stage, a detailed Best Management Practice will be required that includes pre- and post- development monitoring of surface and ground water. Finally, the proposed policies include protections for identified conservation management areas that were identified as contributing to the Hickory Sink Strategic Ecosystem.

Alachua County staff has reviewed these materials and, in consultation with the applicant, developed a series of Objectives, Goals and Policies with associated maps that the Board can adopt for inclusion in Section 8.0 of the Plan's Future Land Use Element.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners find the proposed large-scale comprehensive plan amendment consistent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and that they **transmit** application Z26-000002 to the FloridaCommerce for review with the following bases:

Bases

1. Policy 3.1.5 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element states that Proposed extensions of potable water and sanitary sewer lines outside of the Urban Cluster designated by the Future Land Use Element shall be subject to approval by the Board of County Commissioners. Approval of such extensions shall be based on one or more of the following:

(a) the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners finds that the absence of such facilities would result in a threat to the public health or safety...

Extension of water and sewer services is necessary for development of Phase 1 of the SAS. Staff notes that no extension of the urban cluster line is being contemplated nor is capital expenditure being sought from the County to extend these services (all expenses will be assumed by the applicant). However, the resources identified in the area and the karst topography present on the site necessitate the use of municipal water services to protect the aquifer and other resources. The allowance for municipal water service to the site (especially the use of reclaimed water for irrigation purposes) will serve to protect the aquifer below by minimizing well use. While extension of the cluster line is not being proposed, a policy is being added to the SAS for extension of water and sewer outside the cluster. Adopted LOS standards will not be exceeded by this request.

2. Policy 1.1.7 of the Recreation Element states that *facilities, equipment and landscaping installed at each recreation site shall be energy efficient and cost-effective and shall include characteristics that provide for low- maintenance (e.g. native landscape plants), durability, longevity and resistance to vandalism, and will provide for multi-uses.*

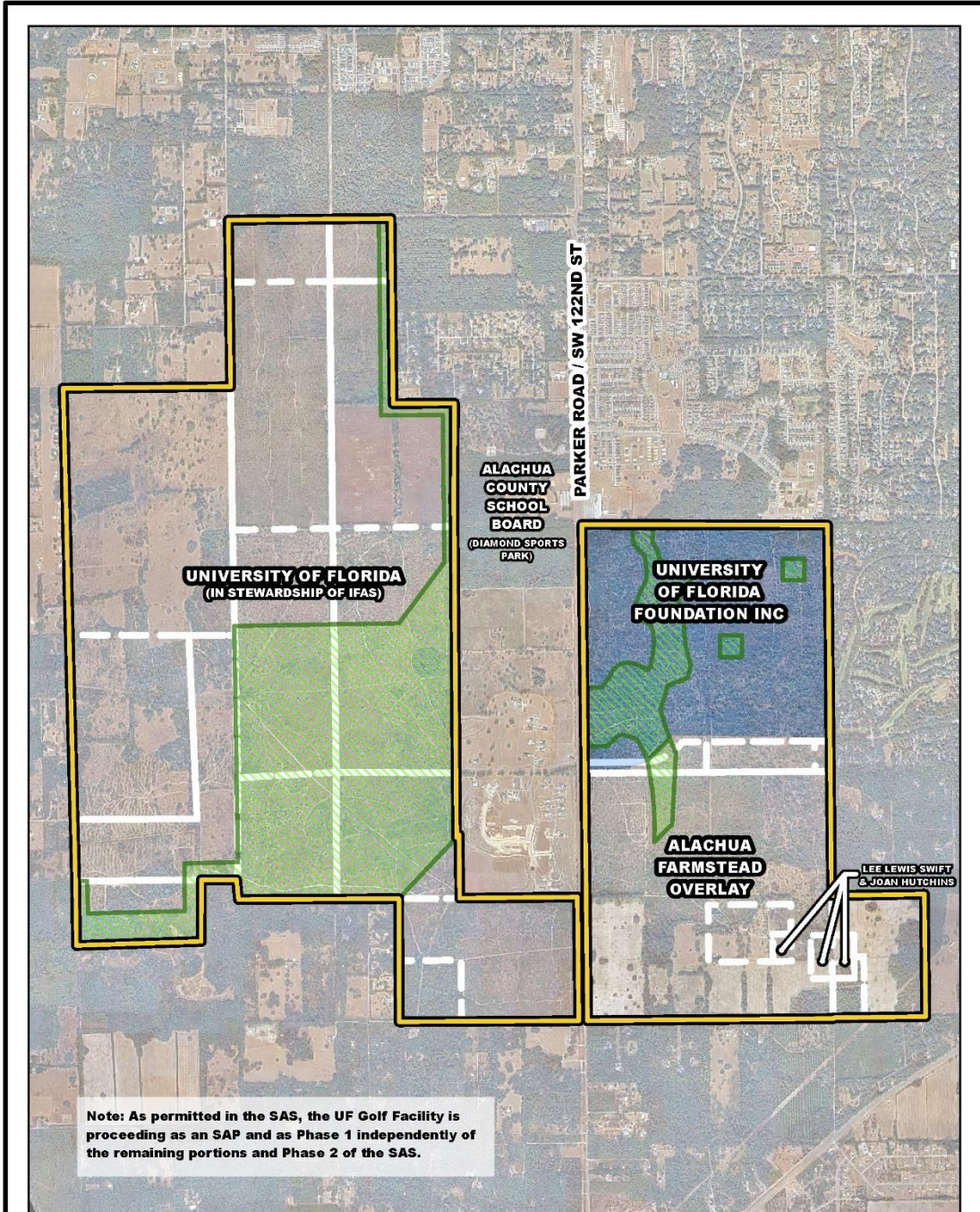
The policies proposed for the SAS include provisions for the use of native or Florida-friendly species in landscaping in the golf course phase of development. Also, policies are included that promote the use of reclaimed water for irrigation. Multiple uses outside the recreational aspect of the golf course are also being contemplated for the property consistent with this policy. These include educational opportunities in conjunction with IFAS and the University of Florida and transient residential uses (cottages).

3. Objective 4.10 of the Conservation and Open Space Element provides for the establishment of a Special Area Study to determine appropriate conservation resources within designated Strategic Ecosystems. The policies proposed with this application

implement the conditions of the accepted Hickory Sink Special Area Study for the Phase 1 UF Golf area.

4. Alachua County Board of County Commissioners Resolution 2023-97 accepted the Hickory Sink Special Area Study with Conditions. The proposed future land use amendment and proposed policies implement conditions of the Resolution related specifically to the first phase identified in Exhibits B and C of the Resolution.

Appendix A – Proposed Maps for Adoption

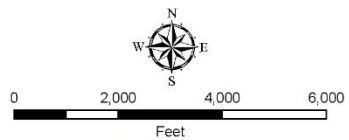


UF Golf

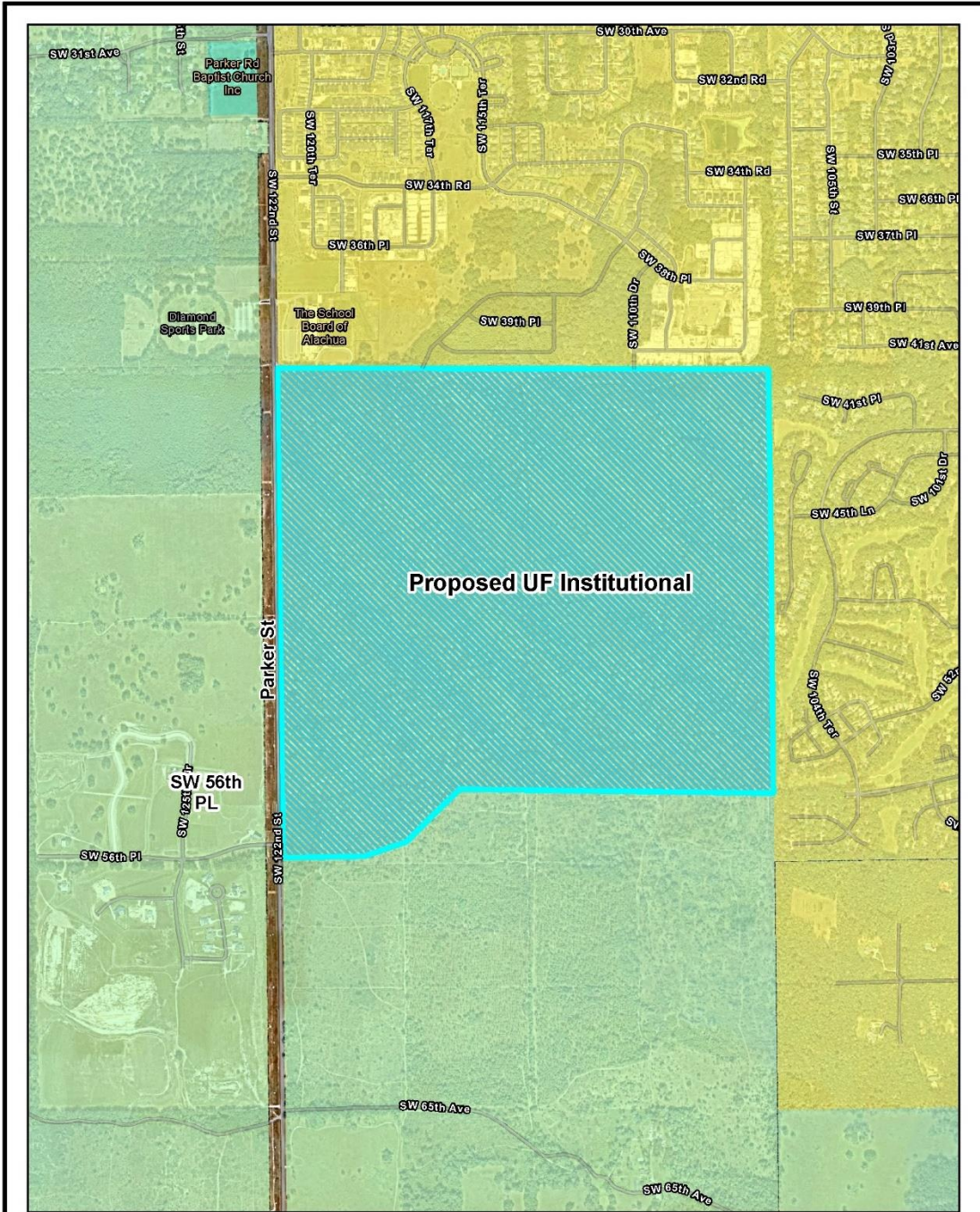
Map F17a
Hickory Sink Special Area Study

Source: ETM, Alachua County, Est. Neamed

- Overall SAS Project Boundary
- SAP Phase 1
- SAP Future Phases
- Conservation Management Area

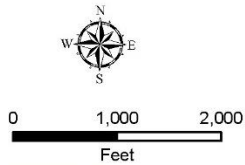


ETM
ENGLAND-THIMS & MILLER
14775 Old St. Augustine Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32259
904.642.8990 | www.etmgeo.com | www.etmnc.com



UF Golf
Map F17b
Source: ETM, Alachua County

- Proposed UF Institutional
- Institutional
- Low Density Residential
- Rural/Agriculture



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 14775 Old St. Augustine Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32258
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Appendix B – Proposed Policies for Adoption

OBJECTIVE 8.6 SPECIAL AREA STUDY - HICKORY SINK A Special Area Study is established for the resource area identified as Hickory Sink, which shall be subject to the policies and standards contained in this section.

Policy 8.6.1 General. The Special Area Study (accepted November 2023) is described in Map F17a – Hickory Sink Special Area Study. Where specific policies within this objective conflict with general policies in the remainder of the Plan, the specific policies herein shall prevail.

Policy 8.6.2 Natural Resources. It is the intent of this Special Area Study to conserve, manage, restore and access natural resources within the study area.

Policy 8.6.3 Conservation Management Areas. Conservation Management Areas are depicted on Map F17b – Hickory Sink Special Area Study.

Policy 8.6.4 Permanent Protection Plan. A plan for managing designated Conservation Management Areas, including permitted uses such as pedestrian trails, limited outdoor recreation features, and stormwater ponds will be submitted for adoption at the time of development plan approval. Boundary adjustment, without loss of total aggregate acreage, may be permitted as part of the final development plan approval process. All Conservation Management Areas will be placed under a conservation easement as part of the final development plan approval process. A Conservation Area Management Plan shall be submitted with the conservation easement and referenced in the conservation easement.

Policy 8.6.5 UF Golf Institutional Land Use. A UF Golf Institutional Future Land Use is established within the SAS on the approximately 580 acres located within Parcel 04492 - 001-001, as shown in Map F17c – Hickory Sink Special Area Study Phase 1. The following policies are applicable within the UF Golf Institutional Future Land Use designation.

- a. Permitted Uses. The following uses are permitted: outdoor recreation, golf course, golf clubhouses, accessory retail uses, research and office uses, maintenance facilities, supporting sporting and athletic uses, environmental and educational programs of the University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), cottage lodging and similar resort-based lodging.
- b. Planned Development Zoning. Specific implementation of this Policy shall be achieved through a Planned Development zoning. The

Planned Development shall address the topics identified in this Policy as well as other applicable policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

- c. Public utilities. Extension of municipal water and sewer services outside of the Urban Cluster Line shall be permitted in this phase of the Special Area Study consistent with Public Water and Sanitary Sewer (PWSS) Element Policy 3.1.5(a) to protect the sensitive environmental nature of the area while promoting development consistent with the land uses approved as part of the Hickory Sink Special Area Study Map.

- d. Water Budget. It is the intent of this policy to establish total irrigation demand based parameters such as the maximum annual irrigation allowance, maximum acreage of permanently irrigated areas, plant and turf water requirements, irrigation system efficiency, evapotranspiration, and seasonal rainfall patterns.

- 1. **Irrigable areas.** The total irrigable area shall not exceed 360 acres between golf and non-golf areas. The annual irrigation allowance for each area shall be calculated by multiplying the irrigated area in acres by inches per acre list below.

	<u>Maximum Irrigable Area (acres)</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Irrigation Allowance (in/ac/yr)</u>
<u>Golf Area</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>Non-Golf Area</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>25</u>

Note: Acreages are conceptual and shall be determined at the time of Final Development Plan, but shall not exceed the values depicted in the table above.

- 2. **Irrigation water sources.** The Water Budget shall account for initial golf course grow-in and ongoing seasonal irrigation demand and shall demonstrate that routine irrigation demand can be met through the prioritized use of stormwater capture from on-site lakes and water hazards and reclaimed water.

- 3. **Emergency supplemental water sources.** Potable water from Gainesville Regional Utilities and water from existing permitted wells within Hickory Sink, or any new well permitted specifically for emergency use, may be used only during drought conditions

or when primary sources are limited or unavailable, and shall not serve as routine irrigation sources.

4. **Total irrigation demand.** The annual irrigation allowance shall represent the maximum allowable permanent irrigation, excluding rainfall and authorized temporary emergency use watering.
- e. All landscaping plans will use 100% native and/or Florida-Friendly plants. Landscape design will minimize clearing within certain disturbance limitations to maintain existing native vegetation, and restoration plans will identify plant species to reintroduce to the site.
- f. Land disturbance within the development area will minimize clearing by establishing disturbance limitations interior to and outside of areas of vertical and horizontal improvements for construction purposes and establishing tree and understory vegetation protection measures through the PD zoning process. Additional standards that minimize clearing of native vegetation, such as location and size of construction staging areas, also will be determined through the final development plan process. Selective clearing will be permitted within the Conservation Management Areas for allowable uses as defined in the management and restoration plan. A nutrient management plan that considers soil amendments, minimizes fertilizer, and accounts for nitrogen and phosphorus provided by reclaimed water shall be approved with the PD Zoning.
- g. Golf course design will incorporate existing native vegetation as much as possible. Where land clearing is required, development will include landscaping incorporating native vegetation to restore areas of original habitat species removed through previous property uses.
- h. Water Quality monitoring shall be completed in accordance with ULDC 404.66.5(b) and 406.59.1 and the UF Golf Phase 1 Water Quality Best Management Plan "WQBMP", as may be amended. The WQBMP will include pre and post construction ground and surface water monitoring locations, reporting periods, and threshold reductions for nutrients and chemicals.
- i. All accessory retail, cottage common areas, and maintenance uses (collectively known as "non-golf areas") shall be designed with native Florida and/or Florida Friendly landscaping including the use of

- bioswales and stormwater management systems that maintain the hydrologic function of the site, reduce impervious surfaces, and introduce alternative parking surfaces. Mineral fertilizer use is prohibited in landscaped areas outside golf play turf and event lawn areas. Stormwater pre-treatment shall be designed to drive denitrification prior to infiltration in the treatment train.
- j. Vehicular access to the site shall be from S.W. 122nd Street/Parker Road. Conceptual points of access, number and location of proposed crossings of the Conservation Management Area (for vehicles and golf carts), and internal vehicle circulation will be determined through the PD zoning process. Bicycle and pedestrian access, but no vehicular access, may be provided at the southeast corner of the property abutting Haile Plantation.
- k. Community and public access shall be provided to a trailhead and a trail network within the Conservation Management Area and to a pedestrian and bicycle network along Parker Road, and portions of the northern and southern property boundaries of the property. The trail network should also be shown in the conservation area management plan and consistent with the requirements outlined in the conservation area management plan and conservation easement. Additionally, other areas within this phase of the Special Area Study may include environmental and educational programs of the University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and/or areas which may be designated for public use at certain times or for use by charitable or non-profit sports education users.