

## 2. Existing Conditions

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### 2.1 Existing Land Use

Existing land use within the project corridor varies from county and state-owned conservation lands to High Intensity Planning (HIP) areas. Development within the study corridor is more concentrated at the project boundaries in Apopka and unincorporated Orange County, at the southern limits of the corridor; in Mount Dora, at the western limits of the corridor in Lake County West; and in Seminole County from Orange Boulevard to I-4. The remainder of the corridor consists of low density residential, agricultural, and State owned conservation lands, including Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Seminole State Forest, and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. The boundaries of the Wekiva River Protection Area extend from CR 435 in Orange County to Orange Boulevard in Seminole County. The 1988 *Wekiva River Protection Act* ensures that the rural density and character of the lands within the Wekiva River Protection Area (WRPA) is preserved.

The Orange County portion of the corridor is characterized by low to medium density residential, agricultural, and commercial land uses. Apopka is known as the “indoor foliage capital of the world” and there are several plant nurseries and backyard greenhouses within the corridor. The corridor encompasses lands within unincorporated Orange County and the City of Apopka. This area has seen significant growth in recent years, and several new developments in various stages of completion are located within and adjacent to the project study corridor. Development in this area is denser in the vicinity of US 441. Subdivisions within the corridor include Plymouth Harbor, Palmetto Ridge, Arbor Ridge, Wekiva Run, Benton Plymouth Oaks, Ponkan Pines, Oak Ridge, Walmar, Smith Emery, and Chaudoin Hills. At the onset of this PD&E Study, Plymouth Harbor was composed of undeveloped parcels.

The portion of the study corridor from the Orange/Lake County line, north to SR 46 in Lake County West is characterized by rural low density residential and agricultural land uses. Land uses along the SR 46 corridor from US 441 to east of Round Lake Road consist of industrial, commercial, low to medium density residential, and a high density residential apartment complex within the Mount Dora city limits near the SR 46/US 441 interchange. Currently, the majority of the development along SR 46 is on the south side of the roadway. Subdivisions along the south side of SR 46 include Sunset Pond, Hacienda Hill, Top of the Hill, Hilltop Park, and Sunset Hills. Summerbrooke at Mount Dora is currently under construction on the north side of SR 46, just east of US 441.

The portion of the study corridor in Lake County East is within the WRPA and includes lands within Neighborhood Lakes, Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Seminole State Forest, and Wekiva River Mitigation Bank (formerly New Garden Coal). Both Neighborhood Lakes and the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank were identified for acquisition in the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act. In July 2005, the state acquired a perpetual conservation easement over the mitigation bank to protect the land from future development, with the exception of the required right-of-way for the Wekiva Parkway. In December 2006, the

Governor and the Florida Cabinet approved the purchase of Neighborhood Lakes. This purchase secures right-of-way for the Wekiva Parkway and protects against future development. The land not needed for right-of-way will become conservation lands of the State of Florida. Development through this part of the corridor is adjacent to SR 46 and CR 46A, and consists of low density residential land uses and two plant nurseries.

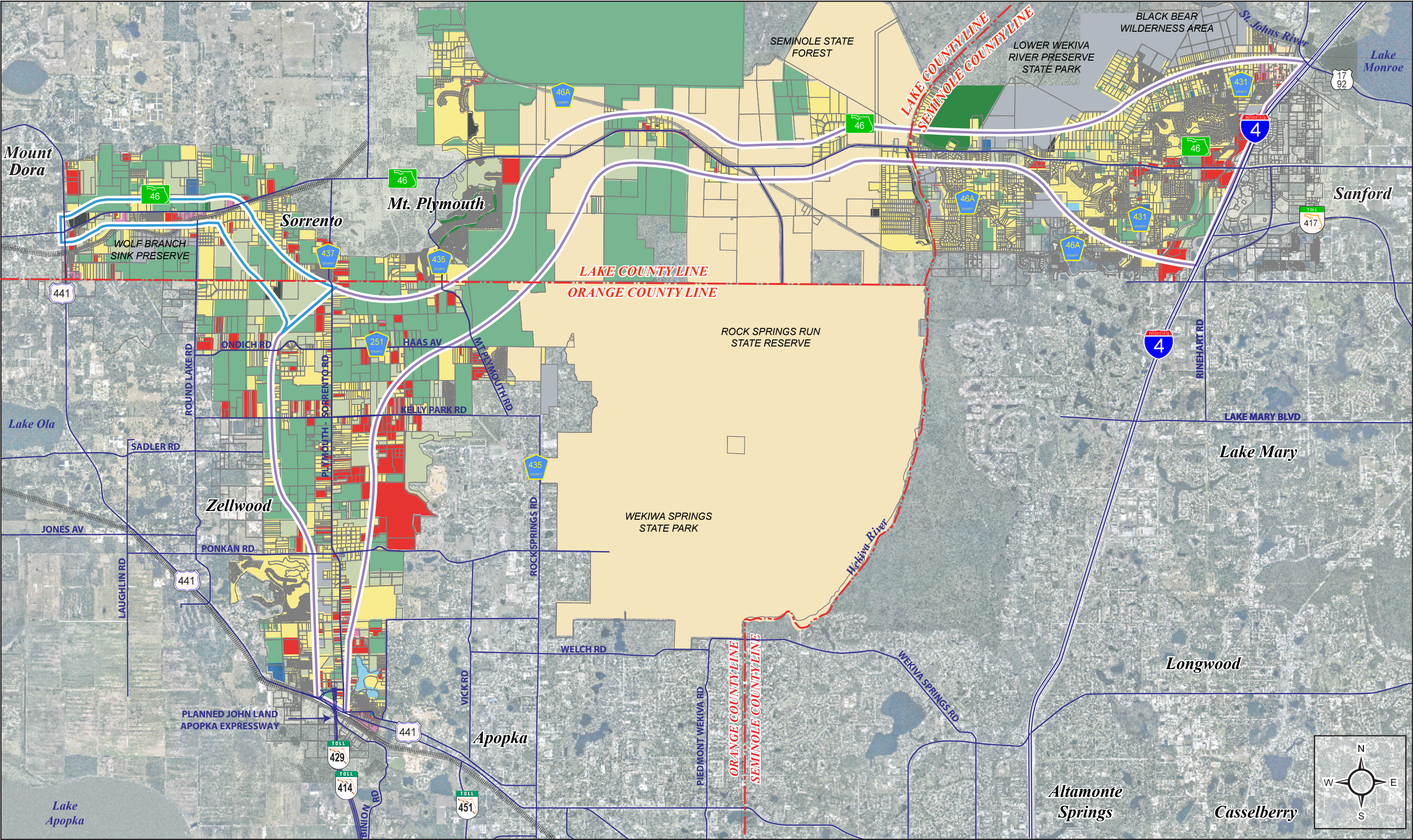
The area of Seminole County from Wekiva River to Orange Boulevard is within the WRP. Land uses primarily consist of recreational, conservation, and suburban estates. The recreational land use designation represents the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park, adjacent to Wekiva River on the north side of SR 46. Seminole County owns large tracts of conservation land adjacent to Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park which includes Yankee Lake and the associated wetlands and floodplains, the Northwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility, and Black Bear Wilderness Area north of the corridor. Other land uses along the north side of SR 46 within the WRP include low to medium density residential, Florida Fancy Nursery, Vaughan's Nursery, and Twelve Oaks RV Resort.

Seminole County also owns a tract of land south of the SR 46 corridor that includes wetlands associated with Wekiva River, and the Wekiva Canoe Launch. Existing subdivisions along the south side of SR 46 within the WRP include Wekiva River Oaks, Foxspur, Markham Forest, Ross Lake Shores, Bella Foresta (under construction), Grass Lake Estates (future), Sylvan Glade, and Sylvan Glade Estates. Other land uses include Rock Church (recently constructed), Designing Women Landscaping & Nursery, mobile homes, and Handyway Gas Station. Development between SR 46 and the I-4/SR 417 interchange includes Lakeside Fellowship United Methodist Church, Paola Wesleyan Church, Wilson Elementary School, Academy of Learning, Live Oak Animal Hospital, Ballantrae (formerly Cobblestone Crossing) Apartments, and several subdivisions including Capri Cove, Tall Trees, and Sylvan Lake.

East of Orange Boulevard to I-4, land uses include low to medium density residential, commercial, plant nurseries, and a HIP area located adjacent to I-4. The Seminole County HIP land use designation is a mixed used category intended to promote high density development, particularly target industry and high density residential developments along the North I-4/Lake Mary corridor to make the most efficient use of the infrastructure and services in place, to minimize urban sprawl, to promote target business in close proximity to the regional roadway network, and to support future mass transit systems.

The generalized existing land uses within the project corridor are shown in **Exhibit 2-1**.





**LEGEND**

Wekiva Parkway Study Corridor	Agricultural	County	No Data	Residential
SR 46 Realignment Study Corridor	Commercial	Industrial	Public Land	Vacant
	Conservation	Institutional	Recreational	

**Exhibit 2-1**  
**Existing Land Use**