

FEFPA

Florida Educational Facilities Planners' Association

Top Five Potential Site Selection Surprises



FEFPA 2026
SUMMER
CONFERENCE

June 29, 2026



THE FIVE!

- 1. Entitlements**
- 2. 100-Year Floodplain Impacts**
- 3. Utility Availability**
- 4. Geotechnical/Soil Conditions**
- 5. Environmental/Natural**

1. Entitlements

POTENTIAL SURPRISES

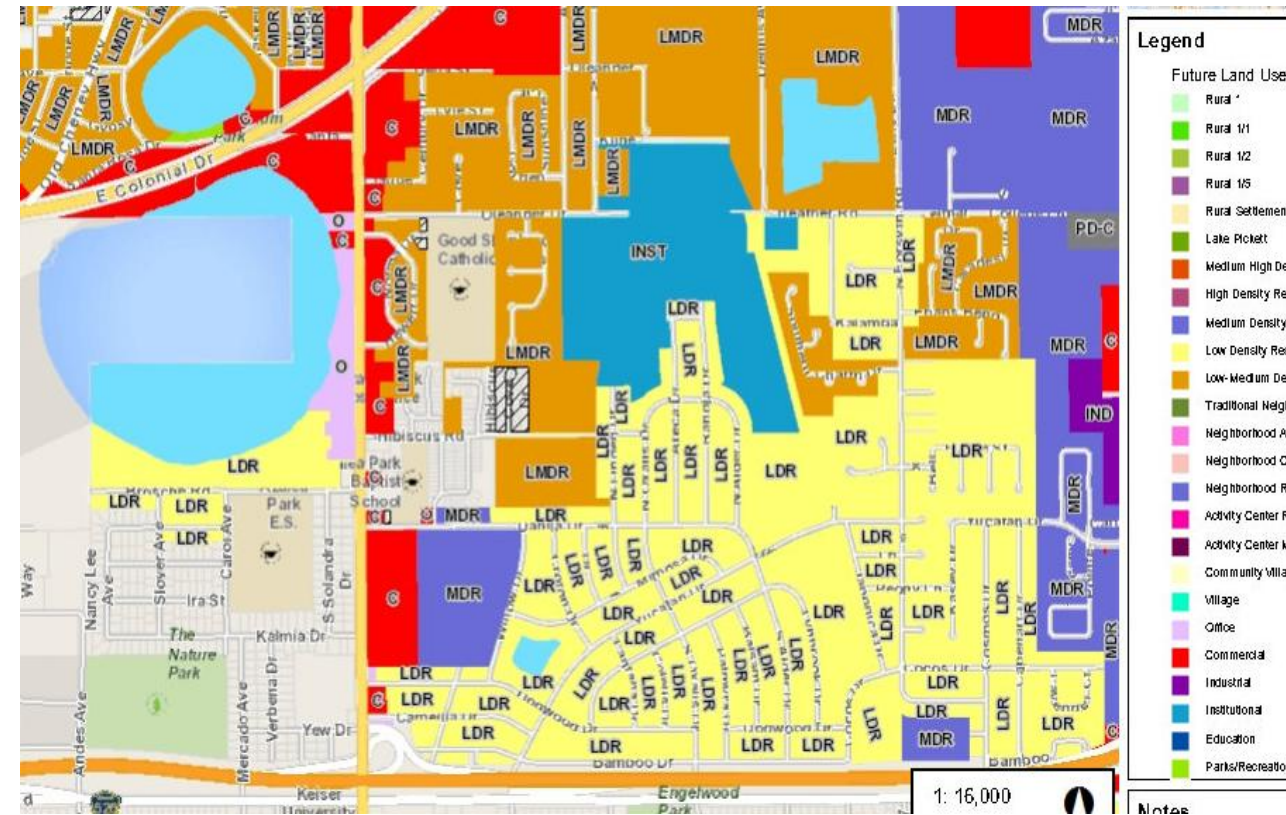


- Parcel Not Entitled as Advertised
- Future Land Use and Zoning are Not Compatible
- Overlay Districts
- Zoning Restrictions or Conditions
- Concurrency Issues

1. Entitlements

Future Land Use

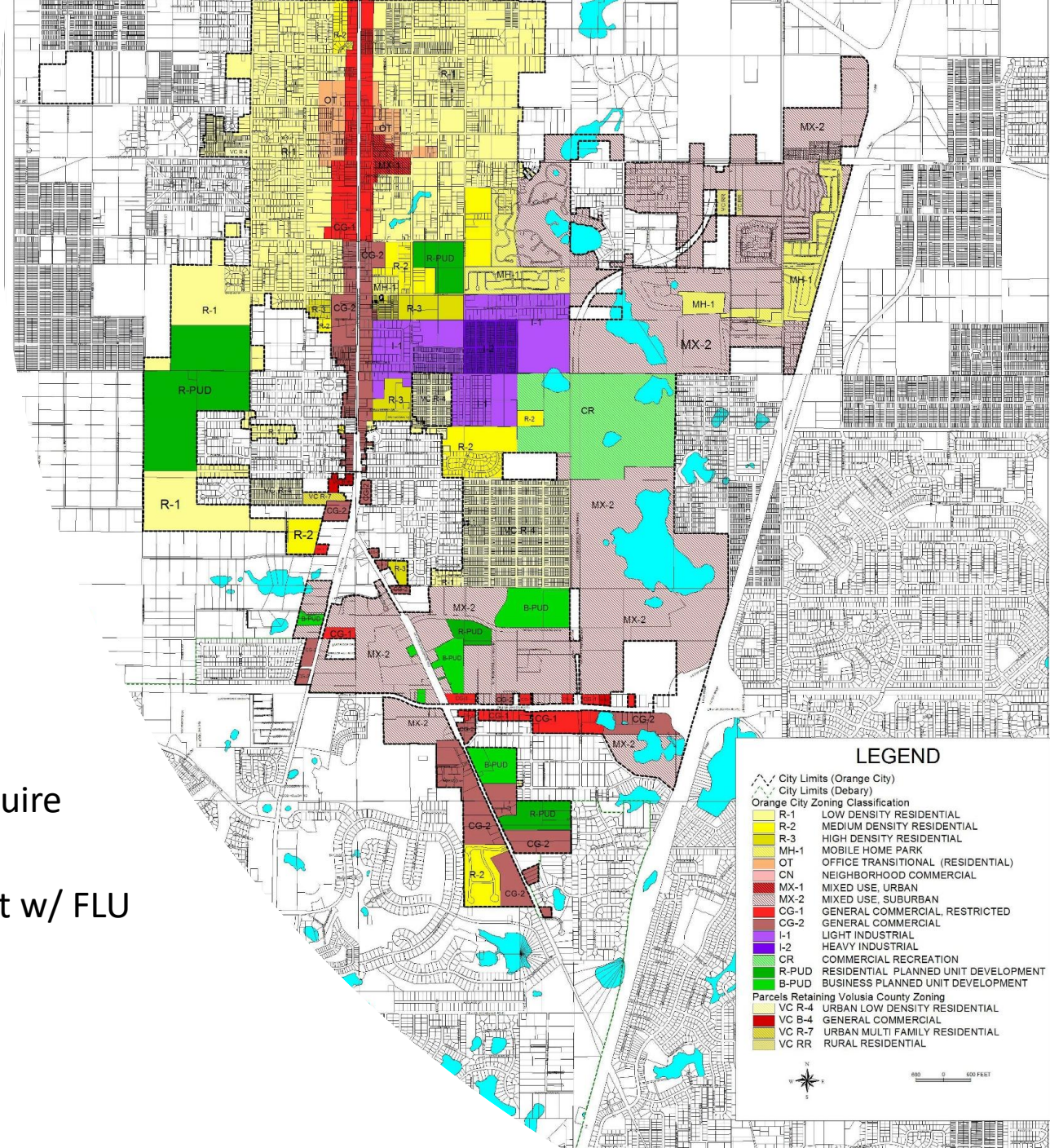
- Comprehensive Plan Designation – Florida Statute
- Spells Out General Uses (Residential, Office, etc.)
- When in the Future is Not Stated or Guaranteed
- Governs Over Zoning (with Exceptions)
- PD Land Use in Many Jurisdictions
 - Negotiated Land Uses (Typically Mixed)
 - Existing PD LUPs Can be Fragmented Over the Years
- Compatibility with Adjacent Properties
 - FLU, Zoning, Existing Land Use
- Typically, No Waiver or Variance Options
- Change Requires Comp Plan Amendment
 - State Review and **Public Hearings**
- Check for Overlay Land Use Areas



1. Entitlements

Zoning

- Required for Every Jurisdiction
- Rules Vary Greatly Between Agencies
- Defines Very Specific Uses
- Dictates “Permitted Uses” vs. “Conditional Uses”
- Restrictions May Exist from Previous Re-zonings
- Computability with FLU and Adjacent Properties
- Rezoning NOT Guaranteed, Even if Consistent FLU
- Local Planning Agency Review and **Public Hearings**
- Zoning Must (*) Match FLU – Permitted Use May Require Comp Plan Amendment if Not Aligned w/ Zoning
- (*) Existing Uses May Sometimes Remain Inconsistent w/ FLU
- Check for Overlay Districts – Will Override Zoning



1. Entitlements

Existing Use

- Not Typically Codified
- Many Properties DO NOT Match Zoning and/or FLU
- Defined by “What is There”
- Change in School Type
 - Some Jurisdictions Have Different Designations for ES, MS, & HS
 - Not Always Permitted Even if No Outward Changes
 - Not Always Caught by Building Dept if Uses are Similar

Don't Be Fooled By Existing Uses



2. 100-Year Floodplain Impacts

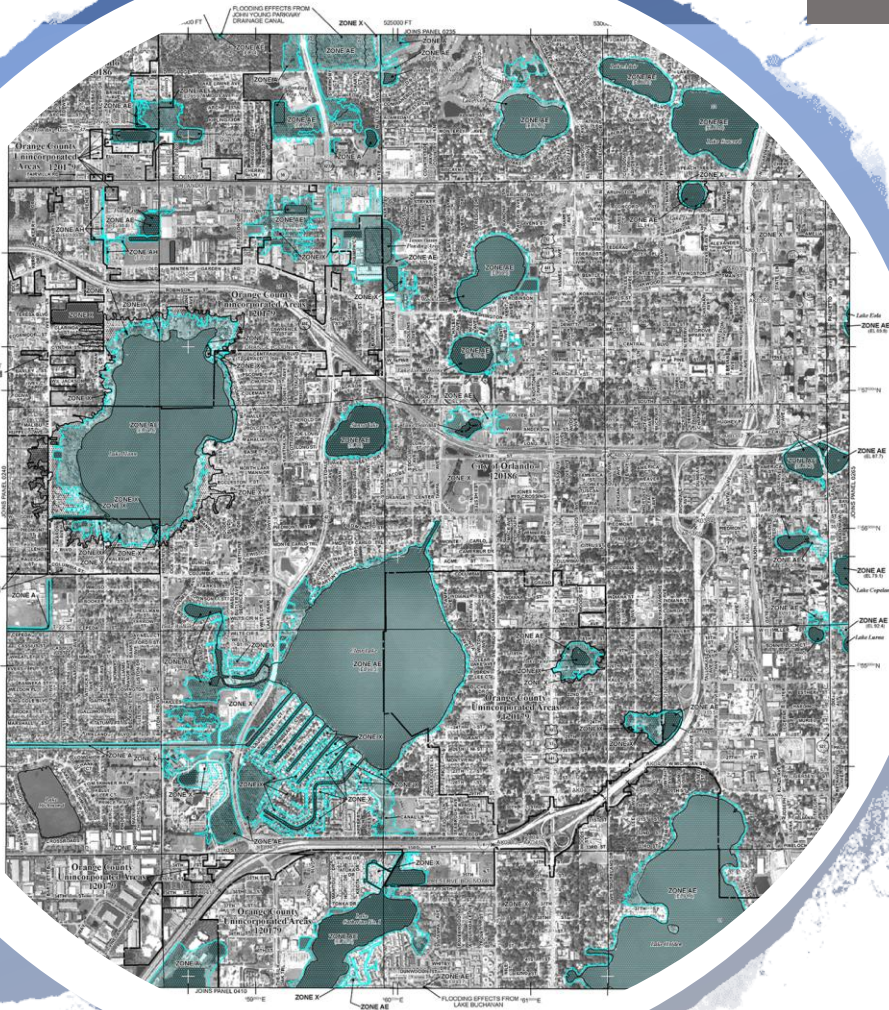
POTENTIAL SURPRISES



- Site Fully in Floodplain
- Zone A is Undefined
- Modifications in Process to FEMA Maps
- FEMA Adopts Higher Base Flood Elevation
- High SHGW Leaves Little Space for Compensating Storage

2. Floodplain Impacts (100-Year)

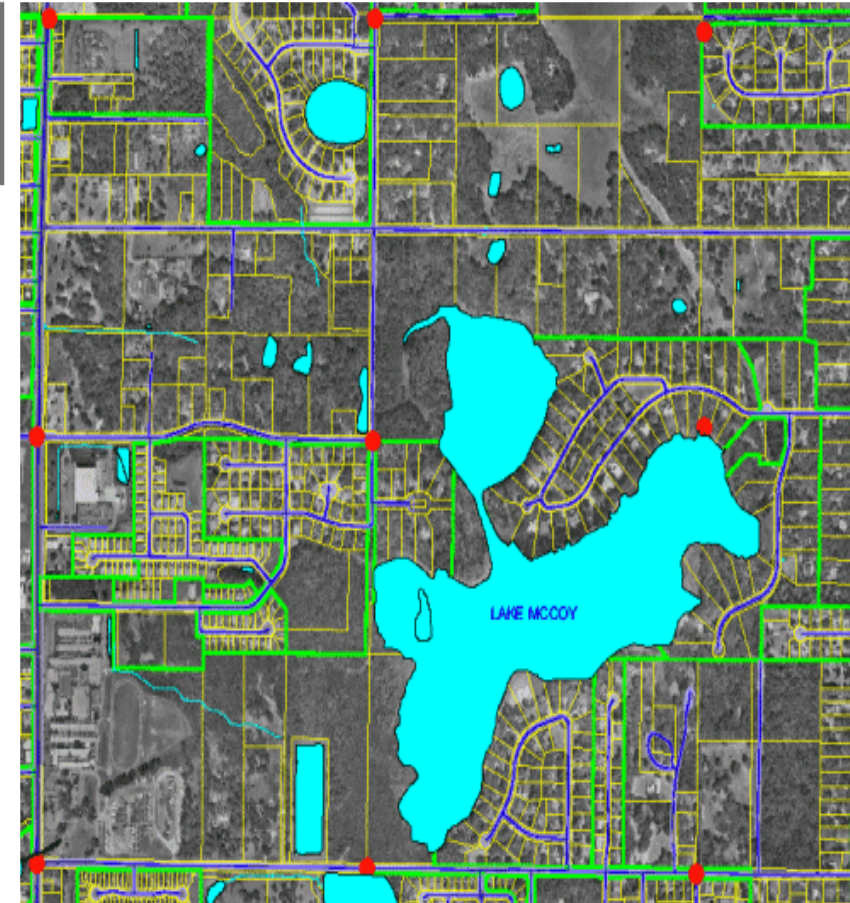
- Start With FEMA Maps
 - Map Service Center Online
- Zone X – Out of Floodplain (*For Now)
 - Check for Any Updated Studies
 - FEMA Can Add to the Floodplain*
- Zone AE – In Floodplain with Basin Study on File
 - Stated Elevation on FEMA Panel
 - Flood Line May Still be Approximation
 - Topo Required to Confirm Line



2. 100-Year Floodplain Impacts

Zone A – Estimated to Be in Floodplain

- Based on Historical Evidence
- Usually Reasonable Representation
- No 100-Year Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Provided
- Basin Study Likely Required for Any Development
 - Many Municipalities Have Performed Studies
 - Developer May Be Responsible for Study
 - Study Will Establish Base Flood Elevation (BFE)
- Topo Also Required to Establish New Flood Line
- Map Revision to FEMA Likely Required by Municipality



***Impacts to Floodplain Require Compensating Storage
= Likely Loss of Developable Property***

3. Utility Availability

POTENTIAL SURPRISES



- Potable Water
 - Existing Lines Lack Capacity (Fire Usually Governs)
 - Existing Lines Lack Capacity (Low-Flow Toilets)
 - District Cost to Extend Lines
 - Water Quantity Not Available for Fire Demand
- Sanitary Sewer
 - Existing Lines Lack Capacity
 - Existing Manhole Not Deep Enough
 - Existing Lift Station too Small
 - Distance to Closest Force Main with Capacity

3. Utility Availability

Rural Areas

- Water and Sewer Likely Unavailable
- Obtain Atlas from Water/Sewer Companies
- Check Provider's Master Plan
- Locate Closest Tie-In Points (Work with Provider)
- Determine Distance to Tie-In
- Check with Provider on Potential Impact Fee Credits
- Check with AHJ of Roadway on Road Requirements Related to Utility Installation (particularly Gravity)



4. Geotechnical /Soil Conditions

POTENTIAL SURPRISES



- Muck Layer Below the Surface
- Hardpan Layer Below the Surface
- Clay Layer Below the Surface
- High Seasonal High Ground Water
- Contaminated Soil

4. Geotechnical / Soil Conditions

- Phase I Contamination Assessment
- Preliminary Borings
- Stakeholder Meeting to Identify Issues
- Questions:
 - Cost to Remove Muck?
 - Will Hard Pan Create Percolation Issues?
 - Will Clay Create Expansion/Shrinkage Issues?
 - Will Water Table Require Excessive Fill?
 - Is There Contamination to Be Removed?
 - Will Contamination Impact Dewatering Operations?



5. Environmental / Natural

POTENTIAL SURPRISES



- Eagle's Nest
- Cara Cara
- Skinks
- Scrub Jays
- Unmitigable Wetlands



5. Environmental / Natural

- Some Species with Big Impacts
 - Eagles – Mating Season Can Stop Construction
 - Scrub Jay – Can Require Upland Mitigation
 - Cara Bird – Mating Season Issues
 - Sand Skinks – Expensive Boarding Process
- Hire an Environmental Consultant for Preliminary Assessment
- Check Local Ordinances for Wetlands
 - Can Be Stricter than State Standards
 - Class I Wetlands Protected





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