

## Wheelock Communities unveils first look at new Waterlin community

Growthspotter

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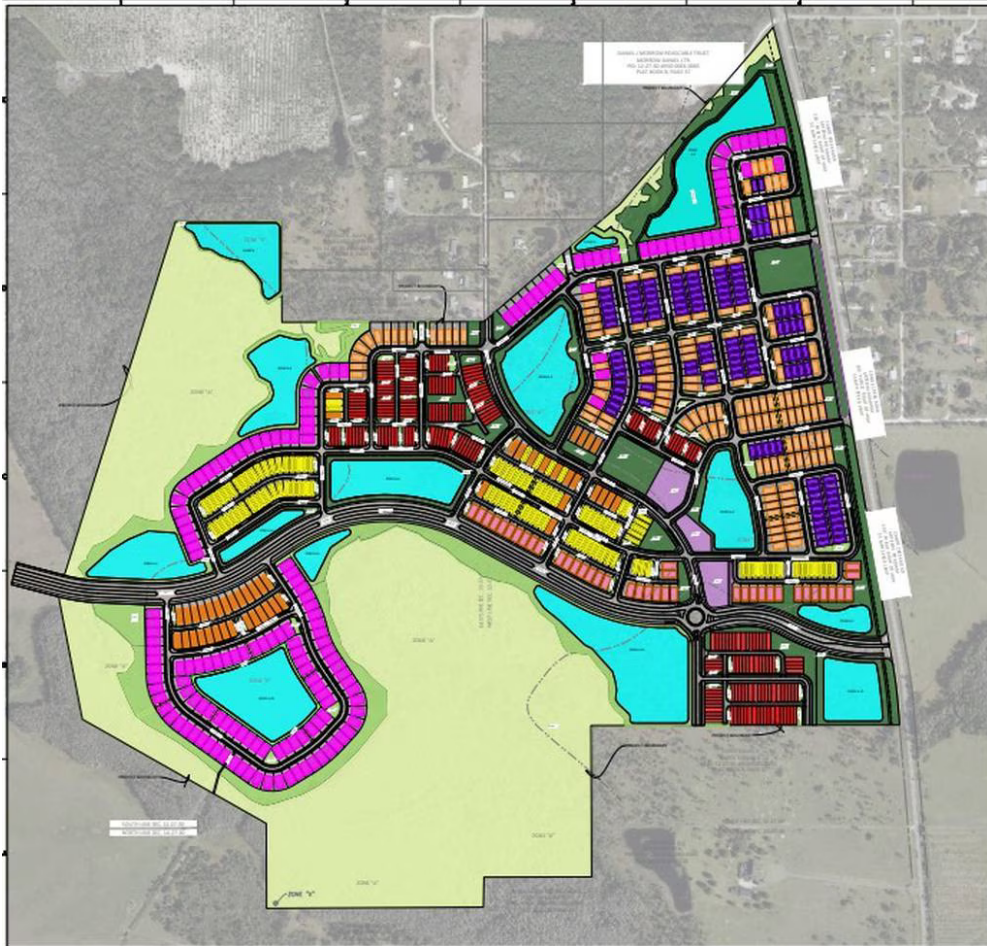
Wheelock Communities will build a welcome center and festival street in the neighborhood park in Phase 1 of Waterlin on the former Green Island Ranch. (Wheelock Communities)

With 2.5 miles of shoreline along Lake Tohopekaliga, the developers of the 6,000-acre Green Island Ranch have come up with a name for the community that captures the essence of the new lakefront town: [Waterlin](#).

[Wheelock Communities](#), which paid \$150 million in late 2021 for the sprawling ranch property, gave **GrowthSpotter** a sneak peek at conceptual images of the first neighborhood in Waterlin and discussed how the brand and theme would be realized throughout the development.

“What we really love about the brand that we’ve gotten to with Waterlin Florida is it’s authentic — not only to us as developers but

also to the property,” Project Manager Matt Call said. “And then as we put this together, we really want to come up with a brand that was unifying and really pulled all these different concepts together. I think the Waterlin brand does a great job of that.”



The first phase will have 847 units with a mix of lot sizes, each one a different color. The neighborhood park and welcome center are north of Waterlin Boulevard (light purple.) (Heidt Design)

With entitlements for over 17,000 homes and a future marina on Lake Toho, Waterlin will contain multiple districts and neighborhoods with their own unique character, but it would all fall under the umbrella of Waterlin, he said. The [first four neighborhoods](#) east of the Turnpike are entitled for 2,321 single-family homes, 622 multifamily homes, a K-8 school and 106,000 square feet of commercial space.

The primary east-west road corridor that will link the neighborhoods on both sides of Florida’s Turnpike will be named Waterlin Boulevard. It will be a four-lane premium transit corridor with a multimodal trail

along the roadway and an overpass over the Turnpike or, potentially, a half interchange.

Wheelock is waiting for final site development approval from Osceola County for Phase 1 and has pushed its construction start from summer to late fall. So far, Lennar Homes has confirmed it will have a presence in Waterlin, but no other homebuilders have been announced.

“The homebuilder announcements will probably be in the fourth quarter of this year,” Call said. The first section just off Canoe Creek Road is divided into five sub-phases. Plans call for 847 homes, including 213 townhomes, along with a Neighborhood Center with up to 21,000 square feet of non-residential uses.



The first neighborhood park will have a community pool, dog park, pickleball courts and an open lawn. (Wheelock Communities)

The neighborhood center will include amenities, a welcome center and a small amount of retail. Call said the developer would build a community pool and cabana, pickleball courts, a dog park, a playground, picnic pavilions and a large lawn area.

A brick street running alongside the park will be designed as a festival street that can be closed off temporarily for neighborhood events.

Call said the welcome center eventually will be relocated to the west side of the community, closer to the Turnpike interchange. "And then in the future that (building) can be converted to office space. It can be converted to a coffee shop or a small ice cream shop or something like that."



The initial welcome center will in Phase 1, overlooking the neighborhood park. That building can be repurposed into a cafe or ice cream shop after the center moves to its permanent location. (Wheelock Communities)

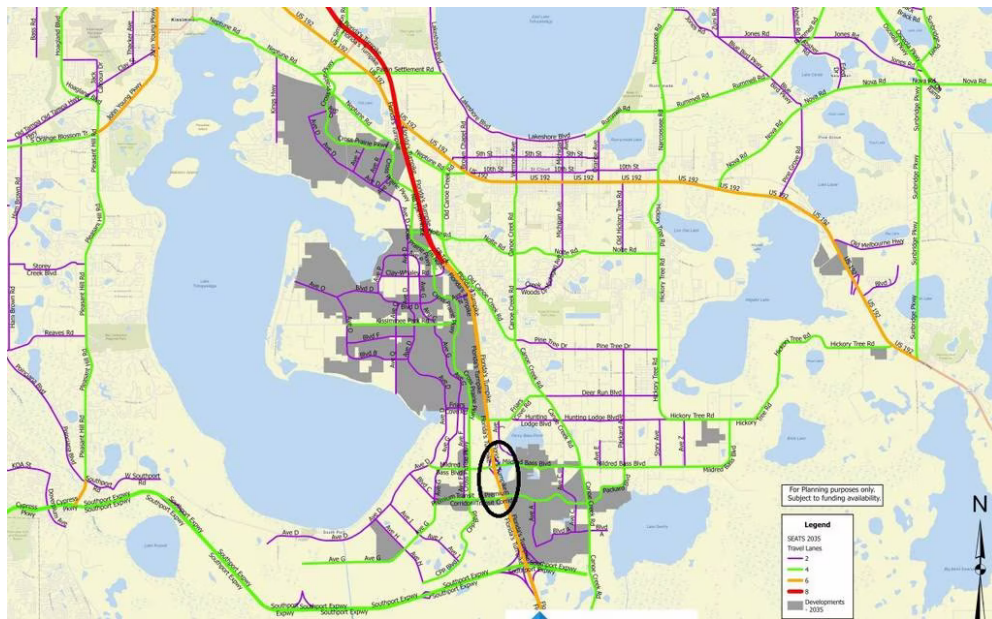
Wheelock has already submitted a Preliminary Subdivision Plan [for the next major phase](#). The Osceola Board of County Commissioners on Monday approved the PSP, which covers the southeast portion of the neighborhood with detached single-family homes. It calls for 126 rear-loaded bungalow lots and 131 front-loaded lots ranging in size from 45 feet to 60 feet – for a total of 257 lots.

Later subphases will include a K-8 school, a regional park and more commercial development, but the timing and design of any future phases will depend on whether the county and Florida Turnpike Enterprise agree to upgrade Waterlin Boulevard from an overpass to a half interchange. The current studies, including the Southeast Area Transportation Study (SEATS) show the interchange slightly north at Mildred Bass Road.

Mildred Bass Road currently ends at Canoe Creek Road, but it is slated to be extended as a four-lane boulevard as part of the [Canoe](#)

Creek Reserve master-planned community, led by developer Robert Zlatkiss.

Call said that with developer participation from Wheelock, the interchange at Waterlin Boulevard could be expedited and provide relief to residents along Canoe Creek Road sooner. Osceola Commissioners have already asked the Turnpike Enterprise to evaluate both interchange options as part of the ongoing Project Development & Environment Study (PD&E) of the Turnpike from Kissimmee to Yeehaw Junction.



This map shows the recommended road improvements projected for 2035, including the proposed Southport Expressway, Waterlin Boulevard (labeled Premium Transit Corridor) and a future Turnpike interchange at Mildred Bass Road. (Osceola County)

“When it comes to traffic, we see a lot of frustration out there,” Call said. “And we share some of the frustration.”

The county hired HNTB in February 2022 to coordinate with a dozen developers who have active or pending projects in the East Lake Toho, South Lake Toho and Alligator Lake mixed-use districts on future transportation needs. [The developers had to agree to follow the study’s recommendations in order to get county approval for their subdivision plans.](#)

Director of Transportation Planning Joshua DeVries updated commissioners on the SEATS Monday night. Wheelock is one of the 12 developers with master-planned communities who will be expected to contribute to off-site transportation improvements, including extending the Cross Prairie Parkway and widening Canoe Creek Road to four lanes. The study projects transportation demands and needs in 2035, 2040 and 2045.

“So I think it’s important that everyone really understands the SEATS study that was done here was a very comprehensive plan,” Call said. “The county has been working on it now for well over a year. So it’s not something that was just thought up on a whim. This was very well planned by staff.”

The county took a similar approach in [negotiating a development agreement with Tavistock Development Company](#) for over \$600 million in transportation improvements in and around Sunbridge. The total cost of the SEATS plan could be triple that amount. The county staff is also coordinating with the City of St. Cloud on a new Joint Planning Agreement that specifically addresses transportation improvements. DeVries said he would provide the SEATS update to the City Council in May. Once the plan is finalized, the city and county will be able to

“I don’t think that there’s really any disagreement between the county or the City of St. Cloud or the development community on what roads are important to get done,” Call said. “But now that we’ve done all the studying and all the modeling, now’s the time that everyone needs to come together and really work out a solution that can get implemented, not only to build new roads like Waterlin Boulevard and our Turnpike exit potentially but also to do improvements to existing roads, like Canoe Cree, Old Canoe Creek and Kissimmee Park Road.”

*Have a tip about Central Florida development? Contact me at [lkinsler@GrowthSpotter.com](mailto:lkinsler@GrowthSpotter.com) or (407) 420-6261, or tweet me at [@byLauraKinsler](https://twitter.com/byLauraKinsler). Follow GrowthSpotter on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).*

