



# Finding of Necessity

THE NORTHEAST INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT AREA

DECEMBER 01, 2022

Community Development Department  
OSCEOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS | 1 COURTHOUSE SQUARE,  
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741

## Table of Contents

Introduction

Proposed Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area

Study Area Legal Description

Slum and Blight

Analysis and Findings

Primary Objectives and Strategies

Conclusion

Appendix A – Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area Boundary Map

Appendix B – Site Photo Inventory

## Introduction

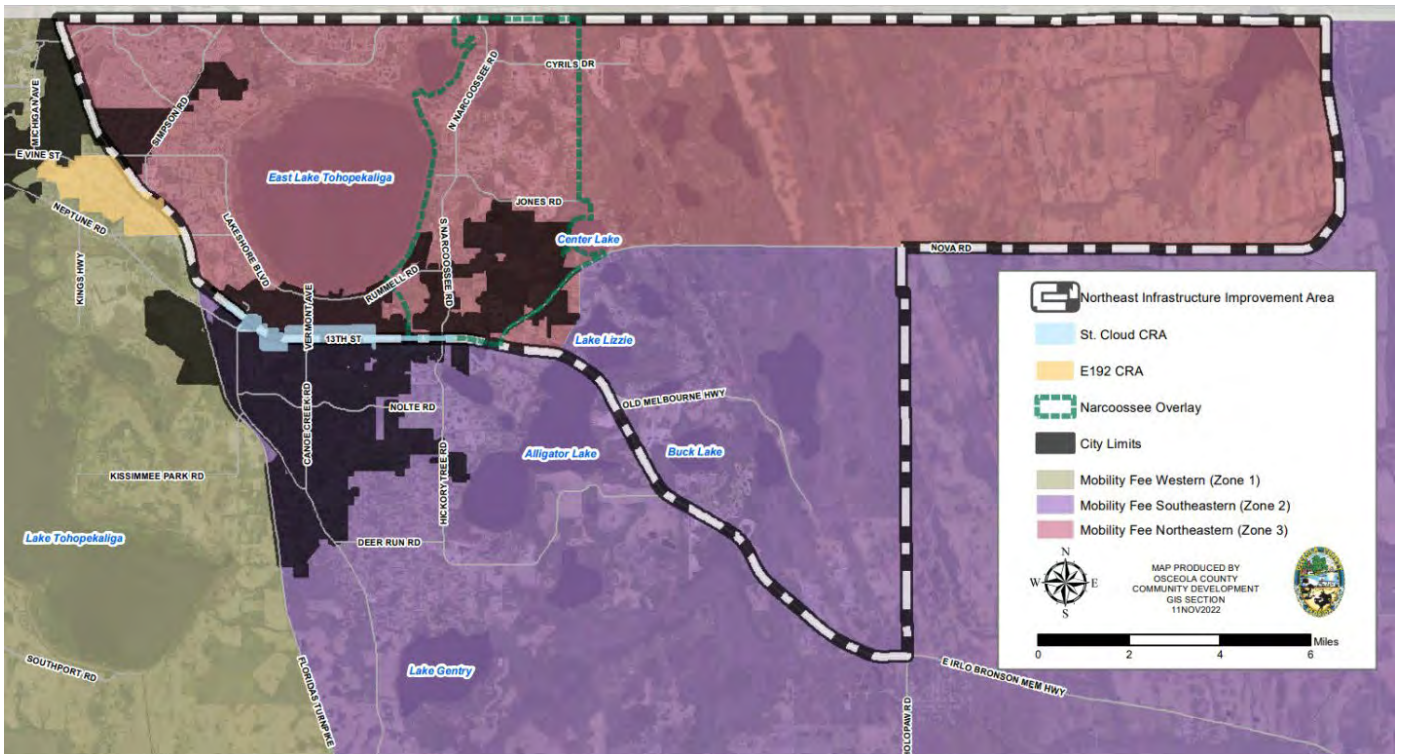
Osceola County conducted the Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area [the Northeast Improvement Area (NIA)] study to identify slum and blighted areas within the subject boundary. Through this process, the NIA can be established and the regulatory processes to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the causes of slum and blight in declining areas of the County shall be set in motion.

This “finding of necessity” is based on field observation and data and analysis, in order to determine that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area. This study includes an assessment of blight, a conclusion of findings, and an appendix of data and analysis inclusive of photo documentation of the study area.

Conclusive evidence now exists to demonstrate the NIA includes a predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, and public transportation facilities, which constitutes a serious and growing menace, threatening the sound growth of the County and injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the County.

## Proposed Northeast Improvement Area

The proposed NIA boundary area is located mainly within unincorporated Osceola County with small portions within the City of St. Cloud and the City of Kissimmee. The area is approximately 126,000-acres and is illustrated on the map below.



## Study Area Legal Description

This finding of necessity study for an improvement area is focused on the area of the northeast quadrant of Osceola County, Florida. The subject area is described below.

Begin at the intersection of the Osceola County boundary line and the centerline of the Florida's Turnpike; thence easterly along the northern County boundary line to the intersection of the centerline of Nova Road and the Osceola County boundary line; thence southerly and westerly along the easterly and southerly right-of-way lines of Nova Road to the intersection of the centerline of Nova Road and the east line of Section 26, Township 25, Range 32; thence south along the eastern line of Sections 26 and 35, of said Township and Range, to the north section line of Section 2, Township 26, Range 32; thence east to the northeast corner of Section 2, Township 26, Range 32; thence south along the east line of Sections 2, 11, 14, 23, 26, and 35, Township 26, Range 32 and Section 11, Township 27, Range 32, to the intersection of the centerline of East Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway; thence northwesterly along said centerline to the junction of the centerline of East 13<sup>th</sup> Street; thence continue westerly along said centerline to the junction of the centerline of 13<sup>th</sup> Street; thence continue westerly along said centerline to the junction of the centerline of East Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway; thence continue along said centerline to the intersection of the centerlines of Florida's Turnpike and East Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway; thence northwesterly along Florida's Turnpike to the point of beginning. Comprised of 126,627 acres, more or less.

## Slum and Blight

For purposes of this study, the terms "slum" and "blight" are to be understood as: areas that constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents. The prevention and elimination of slums and blight is a matter of concern in order that the state, its counties and municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by these areas. Certain slum or blighted areas, or portions thereof, may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition subject to use restrictions since the prevailing condition of decay may make reclamation impracticable and so that salvageable slum and blighted areas can be conserved and rehabilitated through appropriate public action.

This study provides the photographic evidence necessary to determine that slum and blight exist within the NIA study boundary through a predominance of defective or inadequate street layouts, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, and public transportation facilities.

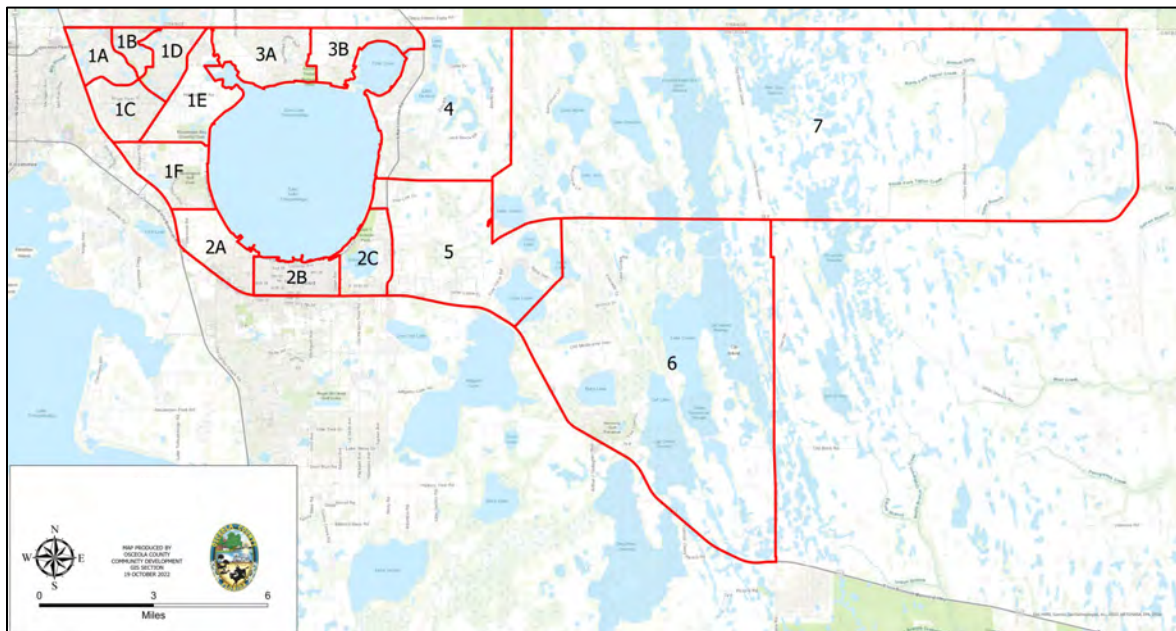
## Analysis and Findings

Determining the existence of slum or blight conditions within the study area is the initial step in evaluating the appropriateness of this area for designation as the Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area. The necessary steps are being taken to present the available data to produce the best opportunity to accomplish the long-range goals that

will benefit the community, thereby allowing for a transportation network that will facilitate quality development, access to emergency services, and alleviate pressure on existing roadways.

**Analysis and Findings:** The issue of blight, relative to transportation and connectivity is complex and difficult to narrow to a single factor. The fact is, blight and blighted areas, where transportation and connectivity issues are at their peak, are often a disjointed, disconnected conglomerate of factors which, on their own, appear innocuous. However, when viewed with a “wider lens”, tell a story of failure, deterioration, a lack of preventative maintenance and, for purposes of this document – opportunity.

With that, the 126,000-acres studied for this report were sub-divided into seven (7) zones for easier categorization. Zones with more density and infrastructure were further subdivided where necessary. The following is a list of the zones and sub-zones created for this study: 1 (1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F); 2 (2A, 2B, 2C); 3 (3A, 3B); 4; 5; 6; and, 7; all are illustrated on the map below.



Over 300 instances of blight were recorded by staff and nearly three-dozen more were pulled from Google Earth imaging to further demonstrate the expansiveness of a specific blight factor. More than 155 photos are incorporated into this report, see Appendix B – Site Photo Inventory, which demonstrate the need for community recovery.

Below is a brief summary of the types of blight factors found within each zone where older and newer developments coexist or infrastructure and connectivity are not maintained.

## **ZONE 1A**

A total of 22 photos were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of this zones blighted areas. A significant portion of the blight is evident in the inadequacies of the sidewalk systems existing, or non-existent within subdivisions or adjacent to roadways. Further, many of the existing sidewalk systems were installed prior to current standards and are of such a width, that it would be difficult for two people to walk side-by-side, and share the space with animals, bikes, or strollers.

## **ZONE 1B**

A total of 14 photos were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of this zones blighted areas. Similar to Zone 1A, Zone 1B also contains a high amount of inadequate sidewalk systems. However, iconic to Zone 1B are the number of sidewalks abutting roadways or swales which create unsafe conditions.

## **ZONE 1C and 1D**

A combined total of 27 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of blight in these zones. Along with sidewalks that abruptly end, insufficient sidewalk widths, neighborhoods without walkability – Zone 1C contains a few key intersections that appear unsafe, deteriorating, and insufficiently planned for the amount of growth seen in Osceola County.

## **ZONE 1E and 1F**

A combined total of 23 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of blight in these zones. Zone 1E consists of the varieties of blight thus far found within Zones A – D, with a focus on inadequate or insufficient sidewalks. Unique to Zone 1F is the inclusion of the aging bridge over the Florida Turnpike.

## **ZONE 2A, 2B, and 2C**

A combined total of 25 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of these blighted areas. Zone 2A – 2C, is a prime example of old standards meeting new standards. In this area, commonly known as St. Cloud, new construction, complete with to-standard sidewalks and roadways are sprinkled throughout existing developments. This combination of old and new has created numerous areas where adequate infrastructure abuts aging infrastructure.

## **ZONE 3A and 3B**

A combined total of 14 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of the blight in these zones. These zones contain a large amount of new construction that is approved and built to updated standards. What is evident here, similar to all previous zones, is existing infrastructure with defective or inadequate roadway infrastructure.

## **ZONES 4 - 5**

A combined total of 31 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of existing and potential blight in these areas. Located further east into the County than St. Cloud, Zones 4-5 also demonstrate the blight factors evident in Zones 2A – 2C.

However, Zones 4-5 exhibit a significantly higher rate of new housing developments existing adjacent to old growth fields or less dense residential areas.

## **ZONES 6 – 7**

A combined total of 11 pictures were chosen to demonstrate the variety and scope of existing and potential blight in these areas. Most notable in Zones 6 and 7, are the connectivity deficiencies throughout. These Zones demonstrates a large number of defective or inadequate roadway infrastructure due to the prevailing rural development patterns that currently exist.

## **PRIMARY OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

Affirming that blighted areas exist within the NIA allows progress to be made to pursue the primary objectives and strategies, listed below. This will allow staff to mitigate and eliminate slum and blight within the NIA and to provide for substantial infrastructure improvements.

Some of the Objectives and Strategies are listed below:

**Primary Objective 1:** Improve transportation facilities within the Redevelopment Area including sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, and other multi-modal options to enhance regional connection. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of defective or inadequate street layout, roadways and public transportation facilities, and unsafe conditions.

### **Strategies:**

1. The transportation component for the NIA will focus on developing an effective, safe, and efficient transportation system which will include multi-modal options.
2. The Primary Corridors enable the creation of gateways and focal points into the Area.
3. Roadway and streetscape improvements will improve safety, access, and traffic flow characteristics. Such improvements will also provide for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and foster community beautification. The following will be considered as guidelines for roadway and streetscape improvements:
  - a. Undertake roadway and streetscape improvements along the Primary Corridors (roadway names).
  - b. Explore innovative intersection designs to alleviate traffic congestion, such as roundabouts and signalization timing for better traffic flow.
  - c. Implement roadway and streetscape improvements based on a phasing plan which emphasizes visual impact in addition to improved access and circulation.
  - d. Provide the ability for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists to access an enhanced internal transportation network which connects the neighborhoods to services and commercial corridors.

- e. Integrate traffic calming techniques throughout the internal roadway system to enhance safety and facilitate a pedestrian/bicycle friendly environment. Traffic calming techniques may include the use of pavers or decorative concrete, raised pavement, roundabouts, change of landscape treatment, and the creation of pedestrian nodes at major intersection, mid-block crossings and other locations where potential conflicts exist between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Creative options to cross major streets should be investigated. Pedestrian safety and crime prevention design standards should be employed along with aesthetic considerations when evaluating, designing, and implementing pedestrian crossings.
- f. Traffic lights, crosswalks, and regulatory/wayfinding signage will be used to enhance the safety of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in key locations throughout the Redevelopment Area.

4. Improving transportation and pedestrian safety will positively transform the visual and real perception of Osceola County. The NIA shall develop transportation and pedestrian safety design guidelines and/or standards to focus on the following:

- a. Establish driveway spacing to prevent a motorist from encountering more than one conflict at a time.
- b. Develop driveway designs to allow vehicles to quickly exit the through lane.
- c. Encourage the use of roadway medians to provide a safe space for pedestrians to control turning movements, help to provide positive guidance to motorists, and allow beautification.
- d. Promote shared parking and cross access easements to alleviate the traffic congestion along the three primary corridors.
- e. Implement and incorporate lighting and landscape standards to design a safe and inviting environment.

5. Promote the Area through designing and implementing a signage and wayfinding system directing traffic to and from the Area, the major connectors, and destinations in the region.

6. Explore opportunities to partner with Metroplan, the County, and Lynx to recognize/enhance connections, and provide local and regional public transportation and associated facilities, such as bus stops, shelters, and hubs.

**Primary Objective 2:** Identify and promote a workable means to fund, finance, and deliver utility and infrastructure improvements needed for the redevelopment effort. These strategies will correct the blighted/underserved conditions.

**Strategies:**

1. Concurrent with roadway construction and repaving activities, there shall be coordination with the pertinent utility providers for the delivery of infrastructure and utility improvements (i.e., drainage structures, underground and overhead utilities, etc.).



2. The County/NIA shall implement and adhere to requisite stormwater and flood management requirements.

**Primary Objective 3:** Ensure regulatory measures are in place to promote the development of attractive, safe, viable, and sustainable non-residential nodes along framework roadways and internal to neighborhoods.

**Strategy:**

1. Implement Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan objectives of mixed use urban design/development standards for the primary corridors. The standards will address the incorporation of parking lot layout, building design, landscaping, signage, pedestrian connections, and linkages between land uses through a functional cross access system.

**Primary Objective 4:** Ensure regulatory measures are in place to promote the development of vibrant urban mixed-use corridors consisting of retail stores, supermarkets, restaurants, art galleries, professional offices, and service businesses with a potential for a mixture of residential and office in the same buildings or within the same neighborhood. These strategies will preclude the blighted conditions of faulty lot layouts; unsafe conditions; and deterioration of site or other improvements.

**Strategy:**

1. Implement urban design/development standards within the subject boundary.

## Conclusion

This study documents the existence of blight throughout the NIA. The data and analysis presented provides a factual basis that “slum” or “blighted” areas exist within the defined study area. Additionally, the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of the study area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents in the area. Further, the existence of slum or blighted area further creates an economic and social liability by hindering industrial, commercial, office or residential development, reducing employment opportunities, negatively impacting construction and improvement of transportation infrastructure. This study demonstrates the deficiency caused by the predominance of blighted influences within the NIA which constitutes a serious and growing menace, threatening the sound growth of the County and injurious to the public health, safety, the general welfare of the residents of the County.

[Appendix A – Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area Boundary Map](#)

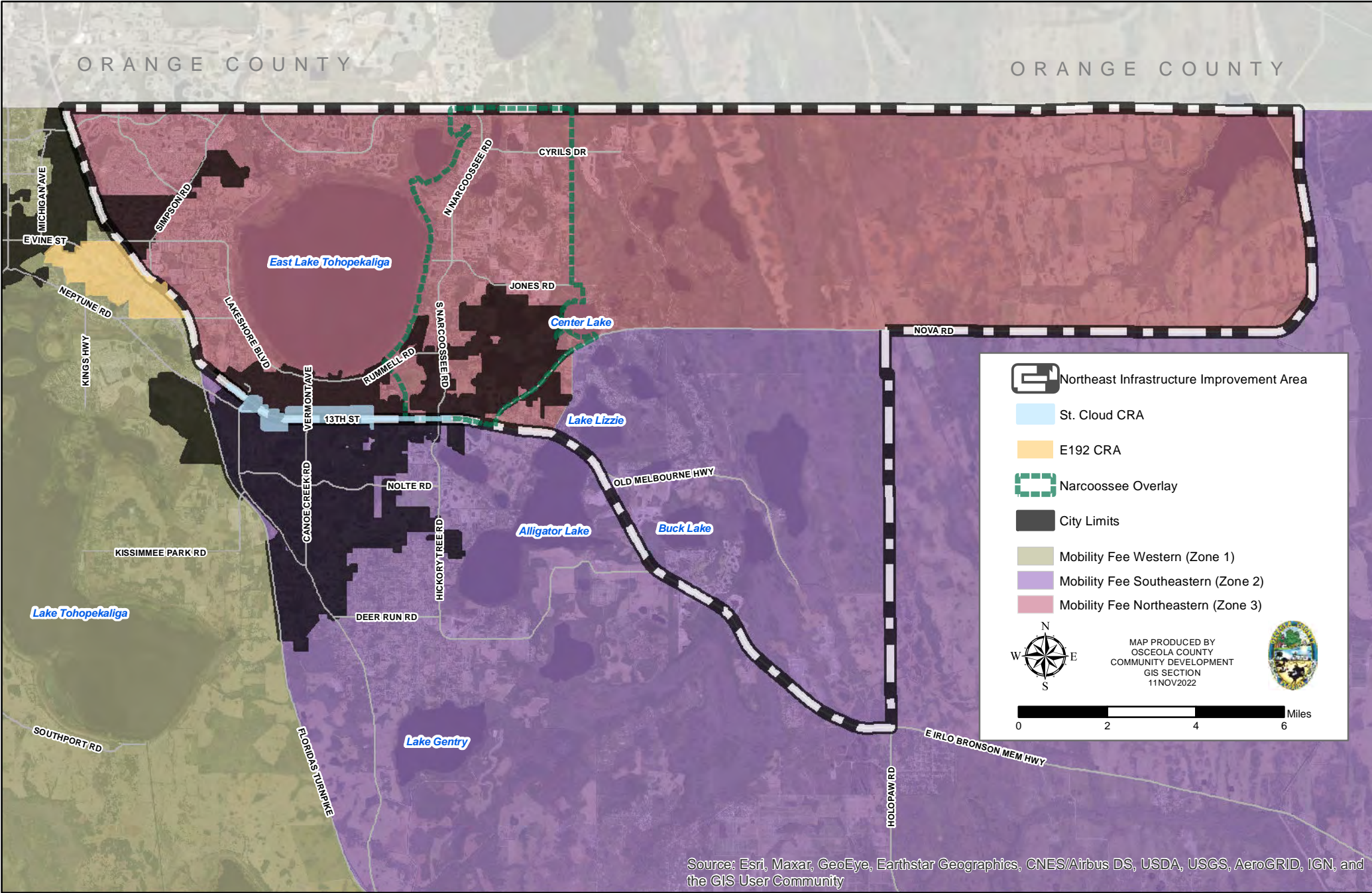
[Appendix B – Site Photo Inventory](#)

# APPENDIX A

Northeast Improvement Infrastructure Area Boundary Map

# Northeast Infrastructure Improvement Area

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Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community