



**Marion County
Board of County Commissioners**

Growth Services

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**PLANNING & ZONING SECTION
STAFF REPORT**

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| P&ZC Date: 04/27/2026 | BCC Date: 5/19/2026 |
| Case Number: | 260506SU |
| CDP-AR: | PL SUP-000432-2026 |
| Type of Case: | Special Use Permit for the relocation and expansion of a water treatment plant. |
| Owner | Marion County |
| Applicant | Tillman and Associates Engineering, LLC |
| Street Address | 14463 NE 250 th Ave., Salt Springs, FL., 32134 |
| Parcel Number | 12082-001-00 |
| Property Size | ±8.75-acres. |
| Future Land Use | Public (P) |
| Zoning Classification | Government Use (G-U) |
| Overlay Zone/Scenic Area | Secondary Springs Protection Overlay Zone (PSPOZ) |
| Staff Recommendation | Approval with Conditions |
| P&ZC Recommendation | Approval as Conditioned (4-0) |
| Project Planner | Sarah Wells, Planner II |
| Related Case(s) | None |

I. ITEM SUMMARY

John Harvey, of Tillman and Associates Engineering, LLC, on behalf of Marion County, has filed an application for a special use permit to allow for the relocation and expansion of a water treatment plant (see Attachment A), on property owned by Marion County. Figure 1 is an aerial photograph showing the location of the subject property. The Property Identification Number associated with the property is 12082-001-00, the site address is 14463 NE 250th Ave., Salt Springs, FL, 32134, and the legal description is displayed on the deed included as part of the application. The subject property is located within the Secondary Springs Protection Overlay Zone (S-SPOZ), within the Environmentally Sensitive Overlay Zone (ESOZ) is outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

The current water treatment plant is located on property (parcel 11679-004-00) owned by the United States Government Forest Service, as such, construction of additional equipment has the risk of incurring unexpected costs which could ultimately delay the project or halt construction. The subject parcel would not incur additional costs and is already being utilized for other Marion County services. On the property there is a fire station, a police station, a community center, and a public park. The subject parcel would also be moving the water treatment plant farther from Salt Springs itself, as the current location is within the Salt Springs recreation area.

The current water treatment plant has one potable water well; this application proposes two (2) for the new location. This allows for a backup in case of failure and for maintenance purposes; two wells would allow for one to be shut down and maintained while the other keeps allowing the community to continue to have a water source. The relocation of the existing water treatment plant will include several key components designed to support potable water production and system operations. These improvements consist of the drilling of two (2) 12-inch-diameter potable water wells equipped with above-ground wellhead piping and enclosed by protective fencing. Underground piping will connect the wells to the new water treatment plant site. The treatment plant itself will be secured with perimeter fencing and will feature all necessary piping, an access drive, two (2) 10,000-gallon storage tanks, and a standby generator. Additionally, the site will include a 200-square-foot concrete building with an overhang to accommodate electrical equipment, system controls, testing apparatus, and chemical storage. The applicant proposes utilizing a six-foot (6) ft. fence for screening all equipment. Staff notes that this will not be sufficient to screen the tanks in their entirety; however, landscaping is proposed that, given enough time, will shield the tanks from view.

Figure 1
Aerial Photograph of Subject Property



II. STAFF SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** due to the request being consistent with the Marion County Comprehensive Plan, compatible with the surrounding area, and will not adversely affect the public interest specified in Section VI.B. of this Staff Report. The recommended conditions are being imposed to address compliance with the requirements in LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B.

III. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

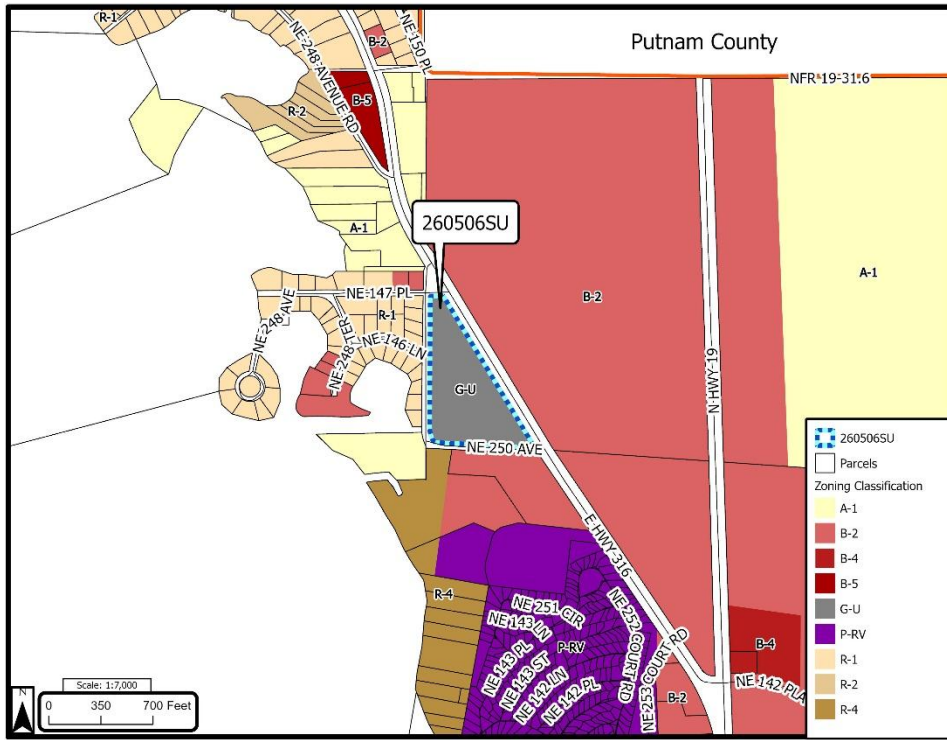
The Growth Services Director has interpreted the requirements of Land Development Code (LDC) Sections 2.7.3.C and 2.7.3.B to apply to SUP applications. LDC Section 2.7.3.C requires notice of public hearing to be mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property and notice was mailed to (25) property owners on April 10, 2026. As of the date of the initial distribution of this staff report, no letters of opposition and no letters of support have been received. However, during the Planning and Zoning board, six (6) citizens spoke in opposition citing concerns which include the overdraw of water from Lake Kerr, loss of public space, property values, noise, the costs to hook up to water lines, concerns of being forced to connect, and the disturbance of nature. Consistent with LDC Section 2.7.3.B., public notice was posted on the subject property

on April 14th, 2026, and consistent with LDC Section 2.8.3.E. due public notice was published in the Ocala Star-Banner on April 13, 2026. Evidence of the above-described public notices are on file with the Growth Services Department and is incorporated herein by reference.

IV. BACKGROUND/CHARACTER OF THE AREA

- A. *Existing site conditions.* Figure 2 provides zoning classification information while Figure 3 shows the FLUMS designation for the area. Table 1 outlines the existing uses of the surrounding area, while Figure 4 illustrates those uses in relation to the subject property. The surrounding area is a mix of government institutional uses occurring on the subject parcel, which include Salt Springs Community Center, Sherrif's Northeast District Office, Salt Springs Civic Park, and Marion County Fire Station #15, utility uses which include Clay Electric and a Marion County Wastewater treatment plant, the Ocala National Forest and residential uses.
- B. *Zoning district map.* Figure 2 shows the subject property designated as Government Use (G-U). The parcels to the east, south and southeast share a Community Business (B-2) designation. Parcels to the west of the subject parcel are designated as Single-Family Residential (R-1). Parcels to the north and southwest corner are designated as General Agriculture (A-1). The southwest boundary abuts Mixed Use Residential (R-4) zoning.

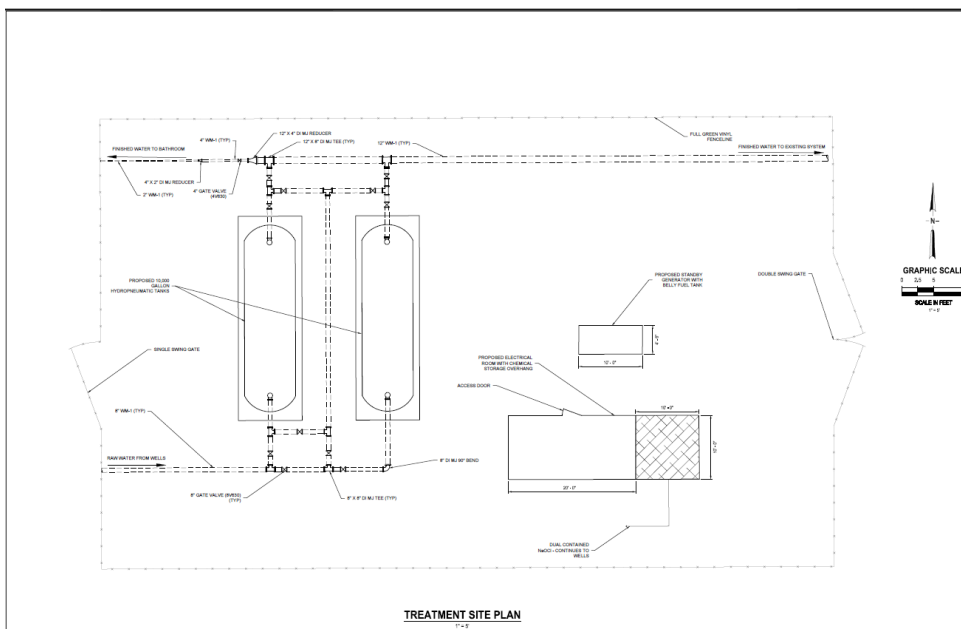
Figure 2 Zoning Classification



**Figure 5
Conceptual Plan**



**Figure 5A
Treatment Site Plan**



TREATMENT SITE PLAN

Figure 6
Marion County Water Treatment Plant in Deerpath



V. ANALYSIS

LDC Section 2.8.2.D provides that in making a recommendation to the Board, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall make a written finding that the SUP addresses nine (9) specific requirements. LDC Section 2.8.3.B requires consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff's analysis of compliance with these ten (10) requirements is addressed below.

- A. *Provision for **ingress and egress** to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and access in case of fire or catastrophe.*

Analysis: The applicant proposes utilizing the existing access from NE 250th Ave.

- B. *Provision for **off-street parking and loading areas**, where required, with particular attention to the items in (1) above and the economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the SUP on adjoining properties and properties generally in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: Per the submitted Findings of Facts, the applicant states there is ample parking provided to comply with requirements of all uses on site. Any noise, glare, or odor shall be mitigated to not have any adverse effect on adjacent properties.

- C. *Provisions for **refuse and service area**, with particular reference to the items in (1) and (2) above.*

Analysis: The submitted Findings of Facts state that maintenance shall occur on the facility as warranted. Any refuse product shall be disposed of according to required standards. This may include transport directly to Marion County Land Fill or Recycling Centers.

- D. *Provision for **utilities**, with reference to locations, availability, and compatibility.*

Analysis: Electric services will be provided by Clay Electric. Septic and well are unnecessary at this time. The site will include an offsite generator in case of power failures.

- E. *Provision for **screening and buffering** of dissimilar uses and of adjacent properties where necessary.*

Analysis: The proposed facility and equipment will be fenced and screened with existing vegetation to create an opaque screen to adjacent properties as required by code. The applicant proposes utilizing a six (6) ft. fence for screening, staff notes that this will not be sufficient to screen the tops of the tanks in their entirety, however landscaping is proposed that, given enough time, will shield the tanks from view. Staff imposes the following condition:

- All equipment shall be fully enclosed with an opaque fence measuring six (6) feet in height.

- F. *Provision for **signs**, if any, **and exterior lighting** with consideration given to glare, traffic safety, economic effects, and compatibility and harmony with properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: The applicant states that minimal directional signage on site is to be provided. Security lighting shall be compliant with Land Development requirements, including shielding if necessary. The location of the project area provides ample distance to adjacent properties to not adversely affect the area and maintain compatibility.

- G. *Provision for **required yards and other green space**.*

Analysis: Per the submitted Findings of Facts, there is a significant distance between the proposed use and the public park facility. The proposed use is located adjacent to the Law Enforcement and Fire Rescue Stations. This offers safety and security from damage or vandalism for this purpose.

H. *Provision for general **compatibility** with adjacent properties and other properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: Compatibility is defined in Chapter 163.3164(9) of the Florida Statutes, under the Community Planning Act, as “a condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.”

Figure 1 is an aerial photograph displaying existing and surrounding properties. Figure 4 displays the same properties based on their use code per the Marion County Property Appraiser. To assist in mitigating any sort of incompatibility, staff recommends the following condition:

- The site shall be operated and developed consistently with the submitted conceptual plan.
- An approved site plan shall be required that complies with all requirements of the Land Development Code.

I. *Provision for meeting any **special requirements** required by the site analysis for the particular use involved.*

Analysis: Staff notes that unlike a variance which runs with the land and is recorded in the public records, a special use permit is not recorded. As a result, a subsequent owner will not notice the requirements. The subject property will require a site plan review before additional development commences. The site plan will ensure that the development is consistent with the Land Development Code. Staff conclude that no special requirements are needed beyond the conditions provided in this report.

J. *Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.*

1. Policy 2.1.5: **Permitted & Special Uses** – The county shall identify permitted and special uses for each land use designation and zoning classification, as further defined in the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and LDC.

Analysis: LDC Section 4.2.30 states that the Governmental Use classification is intended to apply to those areas where the only activities conducted are those of the U. S. Government, State of Florida, and Marion County Board of Commissioners, Marion County School Board or incorporated communities in Marion County. Thus, the application is **consistent** with FLUE Policy 2.1.5.

2. Policy 2.1.25: **Public (P)** – This land use is intended to recognize publicly owned properties for the use of the general public or portions of the

community infrastructure and services, which includes items such as parks, government buildings, water treatment plants, public safety facilities, schools, etc. with a maximum Floor Area Ratio is 1.0, as further defined in the LDC. .

Analysis: Policy 2.1.25 explicitly lists a water treatment plant as an intended use under community infrastructure. Thus, the application is **consistent** with FLUE Policy 2.1.25.

Based on the above findings, staff concludes the SUP is consistent with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B, even with the conditions provided to attempt to address the ten (10) requirements imposed.

VI. ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing and make a recommendation to the Commission to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **DENY** the special use permit.
- B. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, amend the findings and conclusions contained herein so as to support the approval of the Ordinance with amended conditions, and make a recommendation to the Commission to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **APPROVE WITH AMENDED CONDITIONS** the special use permit.
- C. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, identify any additional data and analysis needed to support a recommendation on the proposed Ordinance, and make a recommendation to the Commission to **TABLE** the application for up to two months in order to provide the identified data and analysis needed to make an informed recommendation on the proposed Ordinance.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- A. Staff recommends the Board enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing and make a recommendation to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **APPROVE AS CONDITIONED** the special use permit based on compatibility in the area, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and a lack of adverse impacts to the surrounding area.

B. To address compliance with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B, the following conditions are imposed in the event that the Board chooses to agree with staff recommendation and approve the special use with conditions:

1. The site shall be operated and developed consistently with the submitted conceptual plan.
2. An approved site plan shall be required that complies with all requirements of the Land Development Code.
3. All equipment shall be fully enclosed with an opaque fence measuring six (6) feet in height.

VIII. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Approval as conditioned (4-0)

IX. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ACTION

TBD

X. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- A. SUP application
- B. Site Photos
- C. DRC Comments