

4,600-acre Collier development gets assist from DeSantis, legislature

The governor signed legislation to create an independent special district to oversee the development in eastern Collier County.

By [Louis Llovio](#) | 7:05 p.m. June 25, 2025

Fort Myers-based **Alico Inc.**'s effort to develop thousands of acres in Southwest Florida got a boost from Tallahassee this week when Gov. Ron DeSantis signed legislation to create the Corkscrew Grove Stewardship District.

The district will work with the company to finance infrastructure, build and oversee a pair of master-planned communities and manage natural areas on the property in northwest Collier County, near the Lee and Hendry County lines.



Alico Inc. plans to build a 4,660-acre master planned community on a former grove on Corkscrew Road in northwest Collier County.

The bill DeSantis signed was House Bill 4041. It was sponsored by Rep. Lauren Melo, R-Naples, and passed both the House and Senate unanimously.

DeSantis signed the bill, along with 13 others, Monday.

Independent special districts in Florida are created to provide public services to a defined area, in this case eastern Collier County.

Alico in March announced plans to build Corkscrew Grove Village, a 4,660-acre master-planned community on a former grove on Corkscrew Road. The plans call for two 1,500-acre villages, with the possibility of 4,500 homes and 280,000 square feet of commercial space in each village.

There will also be 6,000 acres of permanent conservation area.

The company, in a statement Wednesday, says the independent special district will be overseen by a five-member Board of Supervisors that will “help facilitate collaboration and communications” with government agencies and other parties.

That includes partnering with the Immokalee Water and Sewer District on the planning, design, construction and delivery of potable water and sewer to residents in the district, the company says.

Alico is an agribusiness and land company long known for its citrus operations. But in January it announced it was shutting down its citrus division this year and transforming itself into a diversified land company.

Alico’s President and CEO John Kiernan in May [told a group of](#) commercial real estate insiders that Alico owns 53,371 acres in 31 locations across eight Florida counties.

Its plan calls for 75% of the land it owns, about 40,700 acres, to remain in agriculture with the other 25% having development potential. Of that, 10%, about 5,500 acres, is to be developed within the next five years and 15%, about 7,100 acres, will be developed following that.

Alico has already submitted an application to Collier County for the East Village, the first of the two to be built at Corkscrew Grove Village.

It has also applied for permits with the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

If all goes as planned and the approvals are granted, construction could begin in 2028 or 2029.

Kiernan, in the statement, says approval of the district is “not only a key milestone in implementing Alico’s strategic transformation, which thoughtfully converts select properties to well planned communities, but also in executing Collier County’s Rural Land Stewardship Area plan.”

That land use plan, the county says on its website, was created in 2002 to protect agricultural areas, natural habitats, wetlands and flow ways while directing growth away from those areas. It was updated in 2021 to, in part, establish development standards.

https://www.businessobserverfl.com/news/2025/jun/25/collier-development-desantis-legislature/?_fl_id=b7a737cc-8b32-4ad7-b3b0-f507fd8dcbff&em=bWFnZ2llQGdzbWEucHJv