

LOCAL BUSINESS

Alico clears another hurdle in its efforts to build two villages in rural Collier County



Laura Layden

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Plans for two new villages in the eastern stretches of Collier County have quietly taken another step forward, with the formal creation of a stewardship district.

Creating the district required legislative action.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announced that he'd signed off on the necessary bill on June 23, along with a list of others.

Known as the Corkscrew Grove Stewardship District, the new special-purpose local government will focus on long-term community development and management for the villages, including infrastructure, such as roads and utilities.

The district is similar to those created for other large master-planned communities in Florida, such as Ave Maria and Lakewood Ranch.

Fort Myers-based **Alico Inc.** is behind the plans to build [two new 1,500-acre villages](#), known as Corkscrew Grove East and Corkscrew Grove West. It's seeking approval for the East village as its first step.

The review and approval process is anticipated to take about a year, with a final decision made by Collier County commissioners in 2026.

Separately, Alico has submitted permit applications to the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for both villages.

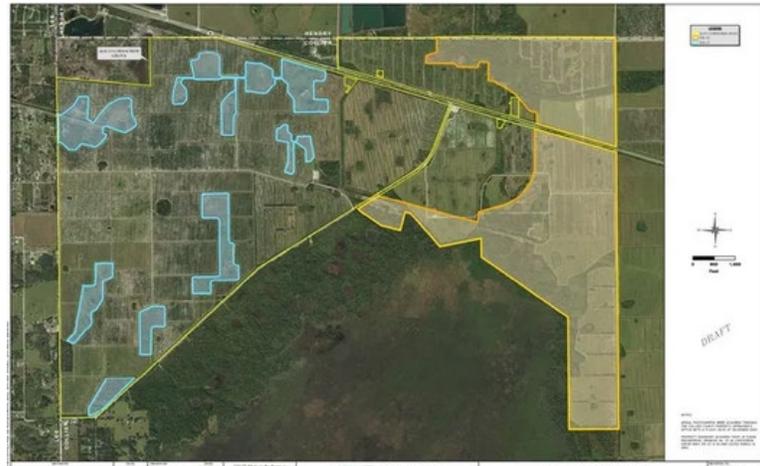
Construction on the first village could begin in 2028 or 2029, if all the necessary approvals are granted.

In a press release, Alico explained the stewardship district will help it effectively finance infrastructure, restore and manage natural areas and oversee the administration of the new villages.



The district will be overseen by a five-member Board of Supervisors, which will facilitate collaboration and communications with local, state and federal governments and other critical agencies. This will include partnering with the Immokalee Water and Sewer District to provide services for residents of the villages.

In a statement, John Kiernan, Alico's president and CEO, said he's grateful for the governor's support, and the support of the "entire Florida Legislature," including state Rep. Lauren Melo, R-Naples, who sponsored the bill.



Alico Inc. plans two 1,500-acre villages of about 4,500 residential units in each along with commercial areas on what is now citrus groves near the intersection of Collier, Lee, and Hendry counties. It also will integrate 6,000 acres of protected conservation land. Provided By Collier County Growth Management Website.

“Their approval of the Corkscrew Grove Stewardship 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.”

Alico is planning to build the villages on land it has traditionally used for agriculture.

In January, the public company announced it was getting out of the citrus business for good after its trees failed to recover from the blow of Hurricane Ian in 2022.

Alico owns and manages about 54,000 acres of land in Florida.

The land chosen for the villages is located in a corner of Collier County, bordering Lee and Hendry counties, off Corkscrew Road, close to State Road 82. It's in the Rural Lands Stewardship Area, or RLSA.

The RLSA encompasses 185,000 acres around Immokalee east of Golden Gate Estates with the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge to the south and the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest to the north. The stewardship overlay allows developers to build towns and villages on property with lower conservation value, in exchange for preserving the most environmentally sensitive land through a credit system.

The Corkscrew Grove development will create new sending and receiving areas. In sending areas, land is preserved, creating the credits needed to build more compact and concentrated developments in the receiving areas.

Along with the development itself, the Collier County commission will have to approve the new sending and receiving areas. In the sending areas, more than 6,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land would be preserved.

Since making the decision to get out of the citrus business, Alico has identified four properties with development potential over the next five years, with project approvals running on parallel tracks, in other parts of the state.

The other projects are in Highlands, Polk and Hendry counties, each with their own approval processes, and unique characteristics.

The RLSA overlay is unique to Collier, and it requires the inclusion of affordable housing to help meet a dire need for it in the county.

Alico has 31 properties in all, across eight counties in Florida, but the company said it remains committed to keeping about 75% of its land in agriculture for the foreseeable future, through leases with other growers.

<https://www.naplesnews.com/story/money/business/local/2025/06/26/alicos-efforts-to-build-two-new-villages-in-rural-collier-county-advance-clear-hurdle/84359386007/>