

# COUNTY OKS BIRCHWOOD PLANS THE HUGE PROJECT NOW GOES TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR APPROVAL.

[CENTRAL FLORIDA Edition]

Orlando Sentinel - Orlando, Fla.

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Date: Sep 15, 1992

Section: OSCEOLA SENTINEL

Text Word Count: 331

## Document Text

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See microfilm for area map of proposed Birchwood development.

A project that could dramatically change the face of eastern Osceola County cleared another hurdle Monday when county commissioners unanimously approved plans for Birchwood.

The project, planned for 10,000 acres along U.S. Highway 192 near Holopaw, would be twice as large as St. Cloud if it is completed as planned.

Developer Maury Carter wants to build the community in three phases over the next 20 to 30 years. Development would be confined to only the western 5,000 acres.

"It was critical to get their approval," said Carter from his Orlando office Monday. "But it'll be quite a while yet before we can get work started."

Plans call for 4,800 homes, 444 apartments, two schools, a golf course, shopping centers and offices. Ideas for recreation such as boating and skiing also are included in the plans because the property has two natural lakes nearly 500 acres each in size.

Carter still must get approval from the state Department of Community Affairs - an approval he isn't expecting before the end of the year.

"It's difficult to tell how quickly these things can be done," Carter said. "I've been working to get to this point for three years now."

The project, which spans a 15-square-mile area about nine miles southeast of St. Cloud, won approval from the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council in May after developers agreed to pay for roads and water and sewer service.

That meeting followed weeks of negotiations between Carter and planning council officials, who wanted tougher restrictions. A council committee had recommended rejecting the project, saying it was inconsistent with county growth plans. Committee members said it was too far from urban areas and could harm the environment.

Carter said he still needs to work out a transportation plan with Osceola, St. Cloud and the state Department of Transportation. He is expecting to work that out by July 1993.

## [Illustration]

MAP: Area map of proposed Birchwood development. SENTINEL GRAPHIC

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### **Abstract** (Document Summary)

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