

July 17, 2015 - DAILY COMMERCIAL

LSSC WILL BUILD NEW CAMPUS IN MOUNT DORA

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 Posted: Friday, July 17, 2015 1:27 pm

MOUNT DORA — Several property owners are donating 20 acres to Lake-Sumter State College to construct a satellite campus in the eastern part of the county near the Wekiva Parkway and within the Wolf Branch Innovation District.

County and college officials said the new campus will help foster economic development in the Mount Dora area, with opportunities to train the workforce near the 1,300-acre Wolf Branch Innovation District in hopes of attracting well-paying jobs to the region.

The Wolf Branch District is expected to feature 730 acres for industrial uses, 300 acres for office and 100 acres for retail and facilities like the college.

The college will offer workforce training programs and general classes, according to LSSC President Charles Mojock.

“There will be a strong workforce component to the campus being in proximity to this employment center,” he said. “We would be ready to work with companies to do things on site with their own facilities.”

The new campus is in the college’s five-year strategic plan, and Mojock said he hopes construction can begin in five years, but that is contingent on state funding.

“We are extremely grateful to the property owners who have the foresight to want to have the college there as part of their overall development,” he said. “It is a great plan from their standpoint and something that is going to benefit employees and residents of that community and help them get access to offerings LSSC has to achieve what they want to do from a career standpoint.”

The campus would be located east of Round Lake Road, south of State Road 46 and north of the Orange County line.



LSSC and Mount Dora officials signing documents to start a new campus in east Lake. Charles Mojock, Lake Sumter State College President, speaks during a signing ceremony at LSSC in Leesburg, Fla., on Tuesday, July 21, 2015. Several property owners are donating 20 acres to Lake-Sumter State College to construct a satellite campus in the eastern part of the county near the Wekiva Parkway and within the Wolf Branch Innovation District. County and college officials said the new campus will help foster economic development in the Mount Dora area, with opportunities to train the workforce near the 1,300-acre Wolf Branch Innovation District in hopes of attracting well-paying jobs to the region. (Brett Le Blanc / Daily Commercial)

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If constructed in five years, the campus would complement the expected completion of the Wekiva Parkway, a 25-mile state toll road beginning at State Road 429 and ending near Mount Dora, in 2021.

“You can’t overstate the importance of the college making a commitment like this to the area,” said Robert Chandler, the county’s economic growth director. “It legitimatizes that as an area that is going to experience job-generating growth.”

Mount Dora Mayor Cathy Hoechst applauded the donation.

“The whole area is a significant part of what we believe will be future growth for Mount Dora with the Wekiva Parkway,” she said. “That is one of the areas we will look for opportunities for schools, education and wellness programs.”

Discussions about a new campus began a year ago, Mojock said. The broker for the land owners, Daryl Carter, has a history working with the college.

“When we initiated the south Lake campus, Daryl and his dad, Maury, were instrumental in helping us work with the hospital and get the property for our campus,” Mojock said.