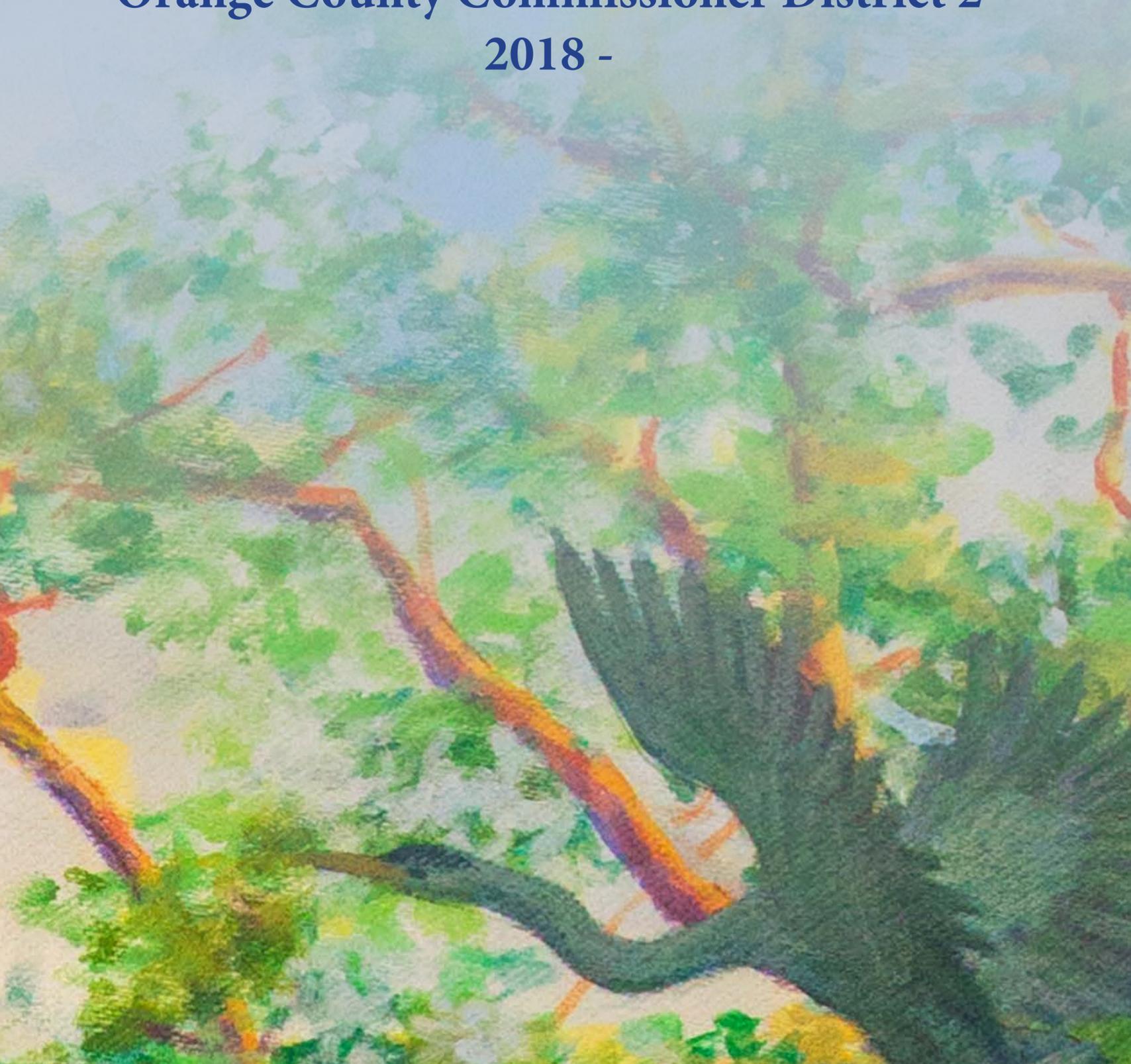


A Driving Tour of Northwestern Orange County

Plymouth, Zellwood, and Tangerine

By Christine Moore
Orange County Commissioner District 2
2018 -



Plymouth

One prominent Plymouth citrus farmer, Percival McDonald, even extended his business operations to Mexico. In 1894-95 due to hard freezes the packing plants lost 85 percent of their production. The industry soon regained production until yet another freeze in the 1980s and then citrus greening and residential sprawl ended most of it.

1. Plymouth Train Station

2983 W. Orange Avenue, Plymouth, FL 32768

The Florida Central Railroad is a division of the Pinesly Railroad Company and has been in business since 1968, when it took over operations from CSX.



ACTIVITY: Discuss the importance of available transportation on a town's economy.

2. Plymouth Warehouse District - Goya & Amazon

3012 General Electric Road, Plymouth, FL 32768

The packing area has existed since trains first arrived in the 1880s. The original packing company was the Vacuum Food Corporation. This became "Minute Maid", and today the property is owned by Coca-Cola.

This area is in the middle of a renaissance with the new Goya, Amazon, and other distribution warehouses.





ACTIVITY: Discuss why you think large companies chose to locate operations here?

3. Plymouth Community Center & School

3593 Hogshead Road, Plymouth, FL 32768

This location started as a church in the 1800s. Services were held when itinerant preachers were available. Before the 1955 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, a school also operated here. Students were then reassigned to larger Apopka-area schools.



ACTIVITY: Compare the amenities of this simple home with your home.

Zellwood

The earliest residents, the Gill and Goolsby families, first settled on Grassmere Lake. The town's namesake, Colonel T. Elwood Zell, arrived after the Civil War. After the US Army cleared part of Lake Apopka to grow crops during WWII, agriculture dominated the area until 1999, when all but one farm was purchased by the State of Florida for lake restoration.

4. N.O.C.I.A. & Tractor Club

4253 W. Ponkan Road, Zellwood, FL 32798

The Northwest Orange County Improvement Association (NOCIA) was organized in 1968. At first they hosted a corn boil, and by 1973, it became the Zellwood Sweet Corn Festival. Today, NOCIA rents their facilities to groups like the Florida Antique Tractor Club.





ACTIVITY: Discuss the changes coming to Zellwood due to the new highway SR 429.

5. Sydonie Mansion

5538 Sydonie Dr. Mt. Dora, FL 32757

(Tours by appointment only)

In 1885, construction began on steel magnate James Laughlin Jr.'s mansion in Zellwood. "Sydonie" originally sat on a 9,000-acre hunting preserve and featured 11 bathrooms, 13 bedrooms, 13 fireplaces, and an indoor swimming pool. It is now owned by the Frogley family for special events, tours, and weddings.



ACTIVITY: Discuss why wealthy families would have wanted to "winter" in Florida?

6. Zellwood Community Center & Museum

3160 Union Street, Zellwood, FL 32798

The Zellwood Community Center began in 1946. The Historical Society, Museum, and Library is co-located there. The museum is typically open on Sundays from 1-3 PM.



ACTIVITY: Visit the museum or play on their playground.

7. Little Tots on the Move

3602 N. Orange Blossom Trail, Zellwood, FL 32798

Originally, a small general store for residents living in the Willow Street area, this building is now operating as a daycare. Grove owners would pick up workers from this location.



ACTIVITY: Why do you think a local business was repurposed after the farms closed?

Tangerine

Dudley W. Adams of Iowa settled on the east side of Lake Beauclair in 1875. Adams was a poet, writer, and naturalist. Lake Angelina is named for his half-sister. Until 1879, the community was called Olaville, after Lake Ola. After Dudley's sister-in-law grew a tangerine tree, the town's name was changed to Tangerine.

8. Tangerine Improvement Society, Park & Church

7101 Wright Avenue, Mt. Dora, FL 32757

Congregational Church - This church was first organized on May 4, 1886 as the Union Church of Christ. It boasted a Ladies Aid Society by 1913, and in the late 1940s, the name was changed to the Tangerine Community Church.



Community Center - The hall sits on land donated by William H. Earl. Its first name was Tangerine Hall. The Tangerine Improvement Society was founded on April 3, 1909 for the general improvement of the town.



ACTIVITY: Discuss the value of community organizations for small towns.

9. Trimble Park

5802 Trimble Park Road, Mt. Dora, FL 32757

Trimble Park is located at the end of a 71-acre peninsula, between Lake Beauclair and Lake Carlton in the Harris Chain of Lakes. Early Tangerine pioneer, Sadie Connor Trimble, donated the land to the county for a park in 1926.



ACTIVITY: Bring a picnic lunch to eat with your family or take a nice hike.

10. Long & Scott's Farm

26216 CR 448A, Mt. Dora, FL 32757

(Open spring and fall seasons only)

In 1963, Frank Scott Jr. left his Virginia family farm to begin in Zellwood with Billy Long, a successful “muck” farmer. Frank began by clearing 100 acres of sand to grow vegetables, and expanded to 1,200 acres. Long & Scott Farms is now run by his son, Hank, and the family also operates a Farmers Market and Café, and Corn Maze.



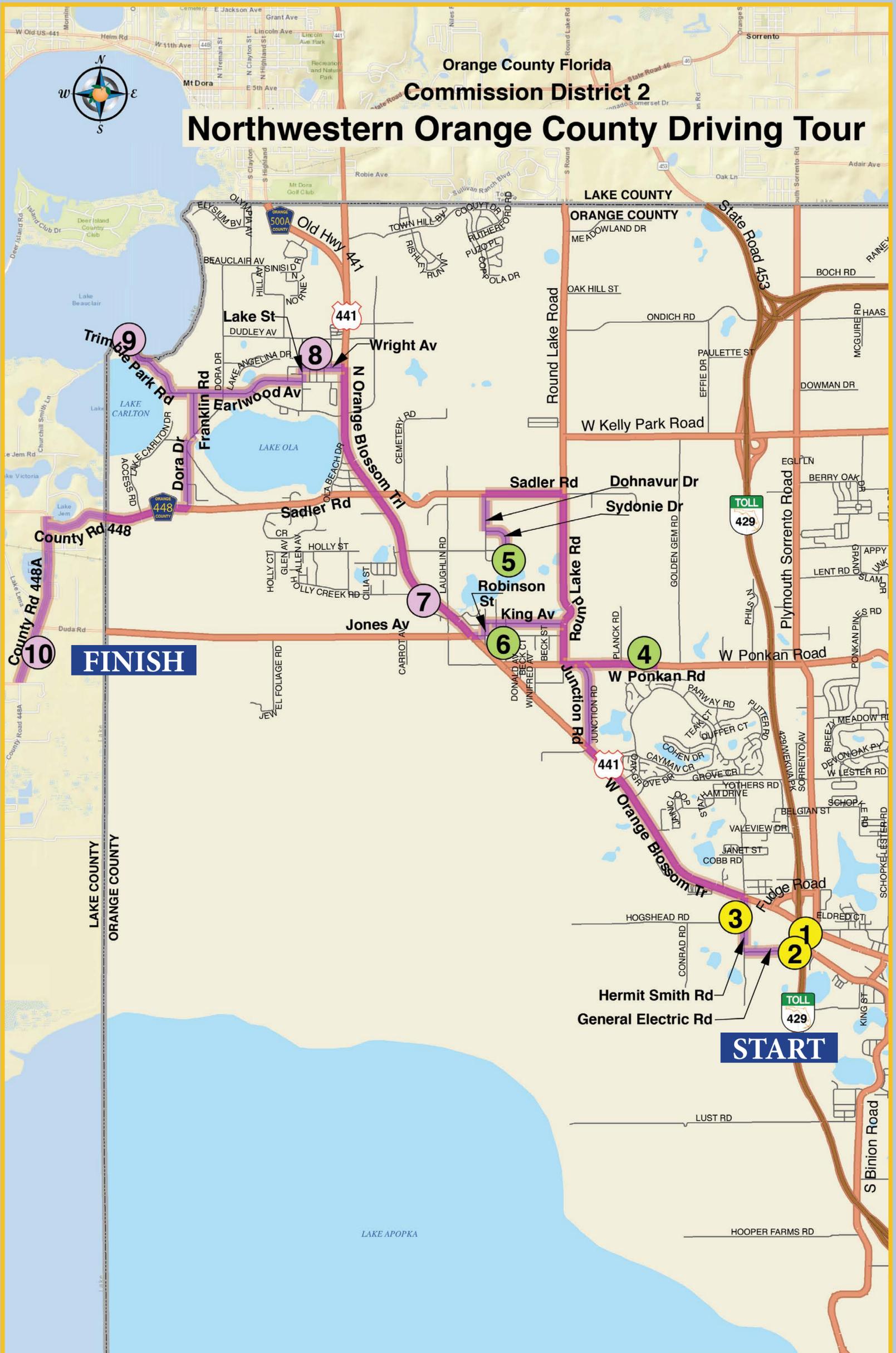
ACTIVITY: Stop to shop or grab a bite to eat or go through the corn maze during the fall season.

Artist: Lisa Mikler

Scene from Community of People



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The driving tour requires ninety minutes of time and covers about seven miles.

For more information:

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YouTube: Christine Moore or FB: Ahapopka

Digital version available at: www.ocfl.net/District2

It is recommended students read *Ahapopka* prior to taking the Northwestern Orange County Driving Tour. The entire series of driving tours is available at the North Orange Library and Canon Coffee.