



Envision Alachua Task Force Initial Vision, Goals and Planning Principles

Based on the Task Force discussion
during Meeting #1 on June 27, 2011

prepared by

MIG, Inc.

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in support of the Envision Alachua
process convened by Plum Creek



Introduction

At the first meeting of the Envision Alachua Task held on June 27, 2011, members were asked to share their desires and expectations for the Envision Alachua Planning process. The Task Force member comments, expressed verbally during the meeting or provided via written comment cards, were reviewed and analyzed to create this initial vision statement, draft goals and planning principles for the Envision Alachua planning process. This draft text is provided as a basis for discussion at Task Force Meeting #2. This text will continue to be revised and updated based on Task Force member feedback throughout the planning process.

Based on this discussion, the following document was created. In creating this document, the following definitions were applied:

Vision statement – a description of a preferred future

Goals - desired end state, condition or outcome expressed

Planning Principles- key concepts or ideas to guide future planning and implementation

Initial Vision Statement for Plum Creek Lands in Alachua County

Plum Creek lands in Alachua County will:

- Provide economic development opportunities that support and grow the innovation economy, provide job opportunities for all economic levels, and ensure a robust and sustainable economy
- Support the development of communities that have a balanced and compatible mix of land uses and environmentally sustainable development practices while conserving environmentally sensitive areas and protecting agriculture
- Stimulate community engagement and participation in planning for a future that provides a high quality of life for current and future residents

Draft Goals and Planning Principles

A. Economic Development

Encourage development that provides for a sustainable economic future for residents at all wage and skill levels while being compatible with community goals for land conservation and natural resource protection

- A1. Ensure that jobs are created that enable East County residents to live and work in East County
- A2. Create and stimulate economic development opportunities that are sustainable and that create well-paying, long-lasting jobs
- A3. Encourage manufacturing and industrial uses (for example, those related to solar energy) that provide blue collar jobs
- A4. Encourage economic activities that help the community grow, leading to a better distribution of basic services in East County
- A5. Identify a potential draw or anchor that would attract development and new residents to East County (e.g. retail development, manufacturing companies, University of Florida, etc.)
- A6. Provide economic activities and related employment activities that retain graduates from the University of Florida, Santa Fe College and other educational institutions
- A7. Explore potential markets for new products and industries that respond to regional and global needs (e.g. biomass, furniture, goat meat, phosphates, etc.)
- A8. Create job opportunities that support the natural environment rather than displacing it
- A9. Link this visioning process to economic development activities in Gainesville, such as Innovation Gainesville, in order to complement rather than compete with these initiatives
- A10. Create a plan that anticipates or accommodates the resources available to support economic development; for example, consider working with agencies to restructure enterprise zones
- A11. Identify development sites with the potential to attract Fortune 500 or 1000 companies to the area

B. Environmental Conservation

Protect and retain lands for conservation, habitat protection and wildlife connectivity

- B1. Develop an ecologically-based plan that is built-around the objective of connecting people to nature
- B2. Support local and state conservation activities that enhance wildlife connectivity
- B3. Protect and retain lands for conservation and recreation
- B4. Protect habitat for sensitive species, wetlands and wildlife corridors
- B5. Create buffers between development and natural areas
- B6. Help complete the “emerald necklace” around Gainesville
- B7. Demonstrate the compatibility of conservation with economic development
- B8. Use a science-based approach for defining sensitive areas, habitat, water resources and other related factors
- B9. Use conservation easements to protect significant portions of any proposed project area
- B10. Ensure long-term watershed protection

C. Transportation

Create communities that are walkable, provide for multiple modes of transportation, and build on policies expressed in city and county transportation plans

- C1. Understand how future transportation trends (such as increased telecommuting) affect the assumptions used for long-term transportation planning
- C2. Increase availability of public transit
- C3. Use transportation plans to create economic development corridors
- C4. Complete the bike trail between Gainesville Hawthorne Trail and Waldo Road Trail
- C5. Build on policies expressed in the County’s transportation plan and Bus Rapid Transit Plan

D. Energy and Utilities

Work closely with utility providers to develop partnerships for planning and delivering required infrastructure

- D1. Work closely with utility providers to harness capabilities and develop partnerships with cities to meet the utility needs of outlying communities
- D2. Consider constructing needed utility infrastructure in advance to reduce developer risks and stimulate implementation of proposed economic development

E. Water

Address long-term needs for water supply, water quality and water conservation

- E1. Consider current and future water supply needs

F. Land Use

Create family-friendly, transit-supported, mixed-use communities that meet the needs of all residents

- F1. Use planning and development approaches that help the area develop in a new way to avoid repeating mistakes of the past that have yielded sprawl and traffic congestion
- F2. Work collaboratively with the County to build on results of previous successful planning processes
- F3. Be consistent with current land use planning policies, including those that emphasize higher densities, mixed use and transit-oriented development
- F4. Support activities that will encourage the movement of families with children to East County to help boost enrollment in East County schools
- F5. Support activities that encourage tourism and agriculture, two important drivers of the local economy
- F6. Consider preparing “development templates” that provide direction on ecologically appropriate areas for development and conservation, regardless of which type of economic development occurs
- F7. Conduct meaningful and strategic conversions of lands for development

G. Agriculture

Maintain agriculture and silviculture as viable and sustainable economic activities

- G1. Protect and enhance existing agriculture in the County
- G2. Preserve agricultural areas to ensure the availability and affordability of locally grown food
- G3. Consider activities that support urban agriculture and agricultural related eco-tourism

H. Social and Cultural Development

Provide a high quality of life for all residents

- H1. Address the historic and social constraints that have limited access to opportunities for many residents in the community
- H2. Involve faith-based leaders and related organizations to ensure broad community participation and representation
- H3. Ensure Envision Alachua process fully acknowledges the influence of all communities on the history and ongoing and sustained land use development patterns of the area
- H4. Increase arts and cultural opportunities for the community
- H5. Include community amenities that are family friendly, contributing to high quality of life for all residents

I. Envision Alachua Planning Process

Ensure that the Envision Alachua process remains open, transparent, inclusive and representative of all community members

- I1. Consider a long-term view for this process (50+ years)
- I2. Ensure that Envision Alachua has tangible, short-term results (over 1-3 years) to help build momentum and community support
- I3. Ensure that the planning process remains open and inclusive of all community members
- I4. Address short and long-term planning horizons – 1-3, 3-5, 10+ year planning horizons so that foundational activities can be implemented
- I5. Create a new economic, environmental and social engine for the region

- I6. Develop partnerships with area institutions, educational providers and organizations to develop and implement the vision; consider potential partners such as the water district and Plan East Gainesville, among others
- I7. Develop a buy-in and broad base of community support for vision and process
- I8. Ensure process results in activities that are scalable and economically sustainable
- I9. Explore availability of federal funds to support regional economic and community development processes
- I10. Align the plan with the Six Pillars For Florida's Future planning framework developed by the Florida Chamber Foundation so it can inform state-wide planning processes and qualify Alachua County as a "six pillars community"
- I11. Create a statewide model for future ecologically-planned communities
- I12. Plan for growth that is sustainable and ecologically friendly
- I13. Build community pride through public involvement in the community development process
- I14. Ensure broad-based participation from the community to ensure that all residents are represented in the ongoing planning process