



**ENVISION  
ALACHUA**



# **Envision Alachua Phase III Task Force**

**Summary of Task Force Meeting #7  
January 20, 2016**

prepared by

**MIG, Inc.**

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in support of the Envision Alachua  
process convened by Plum Creek



## **Background**

On January 20, 2016, Plum Creek convened the seventh Task Force meeting of Phase III of the Envision Alachua process. Envision Alachua is a community planning process to discuss future economic, environmental and community opportunities in Alachua County on lands owned by Plum Creek. Plum Creek is the largest private landowner in Alachua County, with approximately 65,000 acres. Nearly 24,000 of these acres are permanently conserved. The company's holdings are located throughout northern and eastern Alachua County.

Phase I of the process, which began in June 2011, yielded a community vision, goals and planning principles to guide Plum Creek's decision making as it explores potential opportunities for lands in East County that are suitable for uses other than timber. Phase II resulted in the development of the Long-Term Master Plan (LTMP) which serves as the basis for the Envision Alachua Sector Plan (EASP) application. The application was submitted on December 12, 2013, and finalized June 25, 2014. County staff completed its initial review in August 2014, and released its report August 29, 2014. Plum Creek revised the EASP in response to comments and questions received from County Commissioners, County staff, community members and Envision Alachua Task Force members, and submitted the revised application to the County on June 25, 2015. On November 19, 2016, the Alachua County Planning Commission voted to send the EASP application on to the County Commission. The County Commission will hold public hearings on February 16 and 18, 2016 at which it will decide whether or not to transmit the EASP to the State agencies for their review.

A Sector Plan is a long-range plan (50 years) for a specific geographic area of at least 15,000 acres in one or more local governmental jurisdictions. Local governments—or combinations of local governments—may adopt Sector Plans into their comprehensive plans. Alachua County adopted Sector Plans into its comprehensive planning options in 2012 in anticipation of the Envision Alachua Sector Plan application. Sector Plans are authorized by Section 163.3245 of the Florida Statutes. A Long-Term Master Plan is a vision document that is reviewed by the state and approved by the local jurisdiction. The LTMP includes maps, illustrations and text supported by data and analyses.

As part of its revision to the EASP application and in response to County and public input, Plum Creek separated out 1,364 acres of land, located within the Hawthorne Reserve Area, into a separate request for annexation to the City of Hawthorne, accompanied by an application for an amendment to the City of Hawthorne Comprehensive Plan. This land can be ready for use by 2017, and will house the Envision Alachua-Hawthorne Jobs Center, projected to attract 4,000 jobs by completion. The annexation was adopted and the comprehensive plan amendment accepted by the City of Hawthorne on November 17, 2015.

During Phase III, which began in Spring 2014, Plum Creek continues to work with the Task Force and the community to improve and refine the LTMP portion of the Sector Plan application. Through the Envision Alachua process, plans for the Detailed Specific Area Plans (DSAPs or zoning) will proceed. A DSAP is prepared for an area within the LTMP of at least 1,000 acres. It includes detailed analyses, policies and identifies the capital improvements needed for future land uses.

The objectives for the seventh Task Force meeting were to:

- Provide an update on the Envision Alachua process
- Discuss communications and engagement actions

This document summarizes the general discussion comments made by the facilitator, presenters and Task Force members during the January 20, 2016 meeting. It is intended only as a summary and should not be considered a transcription of the meeting. Meeting materials, information about the process and a videotape of the meeting can be found at [www.envisionalachua.com](http://www.envisionalachua.com).

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Pastor Adrian Taylor, who is a Task Force member, welcomed everyone to Springhill Missionary Baptist Church. Todd Powell, General Manager, Real Estate, Plum Creek, shared some opening remarks about the variety of activities that have occurred over the past few months. Todd specifically addressed an article that appeared in the Gainesville Sun that morning which made untrue and unsubstantiated claims about Plum Creek. Todd shared his frustration and recounted a pattern of false accusations made by Commissioner Byerly, who is deeply opposed to Envision Alachua. The newspaper article featured unsubstantiated and untrue claims that Plum Creek was exerting influence over the membership of the Planning Commission. Todd noted that the City is currently reviewing materials related to another project, Gainesville 121. Plum Creek has been in communications with the City regarding this application. Plum Creek was on the agenda of the City's December 3rd meeting regarding the status of this project. Todd was disappointed that the article did little or no fact checking and stated that any person doing just a few minutes' research on the internet would have learned the facts and come to very different conclusions. Todd noted that these actions were especially frustrating given the high level of transparency that Plum Creek has maintained in all activities related to Envision Alachua.

Daniel Iacofano added some welcoming remarks and complimented the group on their commitment, noting we were starting Year 5 in the process. He briefly reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives which were to: 1) provide an update on the Envision Alachua process and 2) discuss communications and engagement actions.

## **II. Update on Envision Alachua**

### **A. Weyerhaeuser/Plum Creek Merger**

Daniel then introduced Jim Kilberg, Vice President for Real Estate, Energy, and Natural Resources, Plum Creek, to provide an update on the Plum Creek/Weyerhaeuser merger. Jim thanked everyone for their support and acknowledged the recent favorable planning commission vote in support of the application.

Jim provided some background and shared the three main reasons for the merger. Firstly, Weyerhaeuser was interested in the company's footprint—Weyerhaeuser and Plum Creek's combined holdings will make them the largest landowner in the world. He briefly reviewed a map that displayed the holdings of both companies. Secondly, he noted the desirability of Plum Creek's work culture; four senior officers from Plum Creek will go to the new company. Jim will continue in his current role, in which he leads all the non-timber aspects of the company. Thirdly, Weyerhaeuser was attracted to Plum Creek's real estate platform.

Weyerhaeuser's leadership was described as being "all in" on Envision Alachua. Jim noted that Wall Street investors were very interested in Plum Creek's real estate approach. Jim reconfirmed that the Envision Alachua process won't change and the same local team and consultants will be in place. He noted that the Sector Plan process actually provides more certainty than the Comprehensive Plan. The two companies share the same values.

He explained that Plum Creek focuses on the "horizontal entitlement"—they are not "bricks and sticks" builders. Plum Creek desires to bring the best talent to its processes and development. Plum Creek's role is to lead the effort to secure the entitlements for the land.

Weyerhaeuser has a bigger team that is doing vertical development—buildings, curbs and gutters, streets, etc.—all the things that help bring a development to fruition. He showed a couple examples of Weyerhaeuser's mixed use developments. The first was Craven Thirty, a 550-acre mixed use development in New Bern, South Carolina that includes shopping, dining, a movie theatre, offices, hotel, a medical park and nearby residential areas connected by a pedestrian and bike trail. In St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, they are building an even more interesting project, an economic development deal in partnership with the North Shore Technical Community College. This is Tamanend, a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) oriented facility including a college campus, town center, business offices and recreation center with a variety of residences including housing for 5,000 students. These two projects are just a small example of what Weyerhaeuser does.

Jim was asked to clarify whether this was a merger rather than a purchase. Jim confirmed that the two companies merged and no money exchanged hands.

### **B. Hawthorne Annexation**

Next, Daniel introduced Ellen Vause, City Manager, City of Hawthorne, who gave an update on Hawthorne's Path to Progress beginning in 2009 to the present day. This included the following improvements:

- In 2009-2010, Hawthorne installed a new water tower, which improved the water quality, pressure and flow. It was paid for through \$827,000 in grants and loans. It is one of two connected towers; if one goes out of service, the other will kick in, so that they will never lose water service.
- In 2011, Hawthorne upgraded their wastewater treatment facility. They increased its capacity from 150,000 to 200,000 gallons per day, and made a number of other upgrades and repairs. They have plans ready for the next upgrade which will increase its capacity up to 500,000 gallons per day. They also greatly reduced their operating costs—from \$60,000 down to about \$30,000 per month. The upgrade was paid for by a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for \$650,000 and a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) grant of \$500,000.
- In 2009, Putnam Land Conservancy wrote a grant to Florida Community Trust. The City of Hawthorne was given a grant of \$4.5 million to purchase 1,100 acres to create Little Orange Creek Nature Park, with a 5,000 square foot house that is being renovated into an education and event center. Funds raised by donations and grants equal \$200,000 to date. The 1,100 acres are surrounded by Alachua Conservation Trust property and by Plum Creek lands that will go into conservation. Altogether, there are 3,300 acres that will be available for conservation and recreation.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is converting SR 20 to four lanes from the city limits of Hawthorne to the county line. In addition, they are adding a 10-foot multimodal path that goes from city limits out past the nature park. Through negotiations with the FDOT, Hawthorne was also able to secure a left turn lane into the nature park, along with a bridge for wildlife and horses to access the park by going under SR 20. This will comprise an estimated \$2.5 million in improvements by FDOT.
- Two years ago, Hawthorne and the County collaborated on improvements to Fire Rescue Station 25. Hawthorne invested \$90,000 in roof upgrades, then donated the building to the County (\$450,000 value). The County invested another \$850,000 in remodeling. The building now hosts a full ambulance and rescue staff, including four additional firefighters hired through an additional grant arranged by the County. During the remodel, the building was completely hardened to withstand storms. Response time for calls has improved and Hawthorne's insurance rating has also improved, lowering rates.

- Love's Travel Plaza has started construction. The plaza will provide 44 new jobs, and the City has received a \$1.5 million Department of Economic Opportunity grant to run a water line to the site for fire suppression.
- Another project in the works is the Downtown Water Line Replacement Project. Downtown Hawthorne has galvanized iron piping left over from the 1940s. They are losing 30% of their water through leakage due to the old piping. The project will include new fire hydrants, service lines and meters. Water quality and pressure will be improved and water loss due to leaks reduced. A CDBG grant for \$650,000 has been approved to help fund this project, and the city has applied for an additional \$500,000 St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) cost share grant. Construction will begin in Fall 2016.
- Hawthorne has also received an FDOT LAP Grant of \$450,000 to extend the Hawthorne to Gainesville trail through downtown SE 221st Street all the way to SR 20, with a link to the new multi-modal path to the nature park. It will also recondition existing pavement on SE 221st Street. In addition, the Hawthorne Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has a \$300,000 budget for upgrades. This will accomplish the goals of the 2014 Visioning Project for SE 221st Street in downtown Hawthorne, with new pavement, shared arrows, a serpentine layout, traffic calming and new hardscaping and landscaping.
- A local businessman recently bought the downtown theater and is planning to renovate it as a dinner theater.
- And last but not least—the annexation of Plum Creek lands increases city acreage by one-third. The annexation and changes to the land development regulations provide future opportunities for economic growth and development. The current unemployment rate in Hawthorne is 20%, compared to 5.1% in Alachua County overall. Hawthorne is ready for jobs.

The total investments in Hawthorne equal \$14,117,000 over the last 7 years. Hawthorne is ready and can handle Plum Creek's investment.

Ellen noted that what can't be measured monetarily is the spark that has been started over the last few years, particularly in education. Schools in Hawthorne were in decline. Hawthorne High School just announced that their graduation rate has risen from just 50% two years ago to 75% this past year. Also, the Superintendent of Schools announced the new grades for local schools today. Shell Elementary is upgraded to a C school and Hawthorne High School has a grade of D. Santa Fe College has been in the community, offering adult school courses on the middle school campus, for two years. Hawthorne is excited about what they have accomplished and about their future.

Tim Jackson, Director, Real Estate, Plum Creek, gave an update on the progress of the EA-Hawthorne application. The annexation of Plum Creek's land to the City of Hawthorne is complete and on the tax rolls for 2016.

The amendment to Hawthorne's Comprehensive Plan was approved to accommodate the mixed use future land use. Plum Creek is submitting an application this summer to change the zoning on the land north of SR 20 which will be included in Phase 1 of the jobs center, so it will allow industrial land use along the railroad tracks. It is hoped that this will be approved, along with a Phase 1 development plan, by the beginning of 2017, so that it will be "shovel-ready" for a new employer at that time.

### **C. Update on Alachua County Planning Commission Hearing**

Tim continued with a brief update on the hearing which the Alachua County Planning Commission held on November 19, 2015 regarding the EASP application. The Planning Commission voted to send the EASP application on to the County Commission with a recommendation for approval.

### **D. Upcoming Hearings**

The County Commission has scheduled two public hearings regarding the transmittal of the EASP application to state agencies on February 16 and 18, 2016, at Eastside High School. If the County Commission votes to transmit the application to the State Department of Economic Opportunity, they have 60 days to review it for consistency with the State Comprehensive Plan and offer recommendations to County staff. Once the State returns the application to the County Commission, they will have 180 days to make a final vote on approval.

Tim showed a slide which detailed how the EASP offers a significant improvement over the County's 2030 Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan):

- It accommodates needed major employment centers over a span of 50 years;
- It addresses documented economic disparities between East and West Alachua County; and
- It permanently protects a minimum of an additional 22,364 acres from development.

This unprecedented opportunity is made possible by the following factors:

- A large land owner offering to partner with the County for regional economic prosperity and environmental protection;
- An unprecedented community engagement effort resulting in a 50-year vision for economic prosperity and environmental protection; and
- Recent Sector Plan legislation that encourages long-term visioning and planning.

Tim described what will come before the County Commission on February 16 and 18:

- The County staff report, which identifies where the Envision Alachua Sector Plan is not consistent with current 2030 Comprehensive Plan;

- The Envision Alachua Sector Plan, which proposes long term 50-year vision for economic prosperity and environmental protection; and
- Policy issues to be decided by the Board of County Commissioners.

County staff will need direction from the Commission in order to consider these policy choices, which they have not yet received.

### **E. EASP SR 20 and SR 301 Jobs Centers**

In response to questions from Commissioner Chestnut and others, Tim developed a matrix clarifying just how the EASP differs from the Comp Plan, and what the major policy decisions will be to allow construction of the SR 20 and SR 301 jobs centers. He reviewed slides explaining these differences.

In terms of urban development, the 2030 Comp Plan only allows new urban development in urban reserve areas adjacent to existing cities. Tim reviewed a map of potential urban development allowed by the Comp Plan; it shows the city of Gainesville growing to the west until it essentially abuts the other existing cities. The EASP proposes 3,380 acres of new job centers on SR 20 and on US 301 in East County, where they can attract jobs to address economic disparity.

In terms of conservation, the Comp Plan only requires protection for rural conservation lands, wetlands and unique environmental features on development sites. Any additional conservation lands or new conservation easements would need to be bought through tax referendums. The EASP includes the requirement to protect onsite conservation land, plus an additional 6.6 acres of off-site conservation for every one new acre of development. In exchange for the 3,380 acres of development for the two new jobs centers, it will protect an additional 23,000 acres, including the Lochloosa Creek Preservation Corridor and Waldo Forest.

The third big policy area under consideration is limiting impacts on wetlands. The Comp Plan allows a maximum of a half-acre of impact per 10 acres of wetlands on a site. For the EASP, that would be 535 acres maximum. The EASP, however, allows limited wetland impacts up to 400 acres specifically for the benefit of the jobs centers and only if permitted by the Army Corps of Engineers and Water District. Tim showed the following chart which distinguishes the wetland criteria in the Comp Plan from that in the EASP:

2030 Comp Plan	EA Sector Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overriding public interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overriding public interest</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All practicable project modifications to avoid and minimize impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All practicable project modifications to avoid and minimize impacts while balancing locations of job centers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing wetlands to be impacted are of minimal function and value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited impacts to wetlands that will be mitigated so there is no net loss of wetland function</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum impact of ½ acre per 10 acres of all wetlands (excluding existing easements), or 535 acres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum impact of 400 acres</li> </ul>

The EASP states that bringing jobs to an area beset by economic disparity is an overriding public interest, and has considered practicable project modifications to avoid and minimize impacts while achieving the goal of the project, which is to create these new jobs centers. The maximum acres impacted under the EASP are less than those allowed by the Comp Plan.

Tim was asked to explain what is meant by “no net loss of wetland function.” He noted that the functions of wetland include: to help store water, limiting flooding; to help treat water for quality; and to provide wildlife habitat. If wetlands are impacted, the Water District requires that they be replaced so that there is no net loss of these wetlands functions. There are a number of ways to mitigate, including restoration of wetlands that have been drained or protecting additional existing wetlands (which might also preserve adjacent uplands). This is both a federal and a state requirement, and would affect wetlands under any jurisdiction.

Tim displayed a map showing the limited wetland impacts of the SR 20 Jobs Center. The jobs center will be about 450 acres, a compact walkable mixed use center with easy access for East Gainesville and Hawthorne residents via SR 20. Significant wetlands and uplands to be preserved were shown on the map in green.

Charles Lee commented that he looked at the property using Google Maps and noted that many of these areas are planted pine. He suggested that a color gradation be added distinguishing those wetlands that have significant natural value from those that fit the technical definition of wetlands but are lower in function. Tim agreed that is a good idea and it will be added to the map.

Tim summarized that these three areas—urban development, conservation and wetland impacts—are the areas on which policy choices must be made.

Tim went on to explain how the conservation will be implemented. Of the nearly 28,000 acres that will change use, 88% are protected from development. This 88%, about 24,000 acres, will be protected via a deed

restriction which takes away rural agricultural use and the accompanying right to build one residence per five acres. This is enforced by the County with assistance from a third party environmental management group chosen by the County. This goes into effect as soon as there is a final approval of the EASP from the County, so that even if no development happens, these lands will still go into conservation. When the first zoning is done and the first DSAP is approved for any of the jobs centers, the whole preservation area goes into effect. All timber activities stop and the land will be managed solely for its natural resources value. As construction takes place, the deed restrictions convert to conservation easements. Tim presented slides showing the phases with maps of how they would take place.

Tim explained how the next important component of the jobs centers is their integration with the University. This is based on Dr. David Denslow's report demonstrating how UF must seek a new engine of economic growth in order to stay at the forefront of the knowledge economy. Eighty to ninety percent of Alachua County's economic activity depends on UF. UF is now experiencing less growth in enrollment than it has in the past, and more competition for increasingly limited public support. UF must seek new and innovative funding sources to support its efforts to become a top 10 public research university. The SR 20 jobs center will integrate with the University campus and research functions. Tim showed illustrative conceptual drawings which detailed how this will take place.

A frequent question has been whether this project will compete with downtown and east Gainesville. Tim's response was that no, these job centers will not compete. Tim showed a scale map of the area of East Gainesville that had been studied, as well as the EASP and EA-Hawthorne areas. First of all, the SR 20 and US 301 jobs centers are served by rail, and there is no mainline railroad track anywhere else in Alachua County. Secondly, looking at the scale of the jobs centers, nothing of comparable size exists in East Gainesville. Redevelopment opportunities in East Gainesville are at a smaller scale; the jobs centers allow a different kind of opportunity, with space for collaboration between the University and major employers, and will accommodate those with easy access. He compared the distance from Five Points in East Gainesville to the SR 20 jobs center and a comparable route from Five Points to Shands Hospital. The distance is about the same.

Tim concluded by summarizing the reasons for creating a new jobs center in East County:

1. **Address Economic Disparity:** The rate of poverty and underemployment in East County is far higher than west County; new jobs in East County would bring equity.
2. **Diversify the Economy:** Over 85% of all employment in Alachua County is directly or indirectly related to the University of Florida; a more diverse employment base will benefit all people within the County.

3. **Diversify the Property Tax Base:** Because over 45% of the property value in Alachua County is tax exempt, the current tax base is heavily dependent on residential uses. With more private employment, the tax base will be diversified and costs of facilities and services will be spread over a larger and broader tax base.
4. **Accommodate major new private employers** to collaborate with UF and bring revenues to UF, replacing decreasing state and federal funding, in order to maintain and advance preeminence.
5. **Seize the opportunity now with a single owner** that will permanently protect over 22,364 acres of off-site land from development, including 3,538 acres in permanent preservation, in return for receiving urban development rights on 3,380 acres.

Daniel asked the Task Force if they had any questions regarding the jobs centers.

Steve Seibert commented that Tim started by reminding the group that the EASP is a different vision rather than an extension of the current Comp Plan. He noted that this understanding was fundamental to the conversation, and asked whether progress has been made on helping County staff understand this distinction. Tim responded that unfortunately, they have not been successful in conveying this to staff. County staff believes that they should only look at the Comp Plan and that new development should only happen at the edges of existing development. There is no acknowledgement of the EASP as a great opportunity for jobs and conservation. The EASP was created to address large scale developments that were advancing without any emphasis on conservation. Legislation responded by creating the Sector Plan tool that deals with planning for lands over 15,000 acres. We need to continue to explain what an economic opportunity the EASP represents.

Adrian Taylor commented on the belief of some that the job centers will take away from opportunities in East Gainesville. Does this plan complement the assets of East Gainesville and the rest of the region? Tim replied that yes, this plan brings opportunity and will attract investment throughout the region. The rest of the cities would benefit from the jobs this would bring. This is an opportunity to look at big steps versus a slow, incremental approach to job growth.

Vivian Filer noted one Commissioner's vision that Plum Creek should purchase land along Waldo Road, and asked whether this is issue that still needs to be addressed. Tim replied that he believes Commissioner Hutchinson is still focused on Waldo Road. Vivian added that Hutch's plan involves moving people off their land and requiring them to give up their heritage. This would significantly disrupt this community. Tim noted that the scale of this proposed project is not significant enough to accomplish our vision.

Lindsay Kreig asked if we have data that correlates jobs growth in the region with institutional development and enhancement. Tim said that yes, we have research from David Denslow that provides these numbers. Daniel also referenced the case studies done by Envision Alachua that reference best practices from other areas. He noted the case study related to the University of California San Francisco (UCSF).

Charles Lee commented that the concerns he hears are focused on wetlands. He recommended that we drill down in further detail to help people understand the different quality of the wetlands that would be impacted and how few high quality wetlands would be impacted. This might help change the discussion. If they really are high quality wetlands, then the Army Corps and Water District will not grant the necessary permits. If this is an issue, plans for the development should be reconfigured now to avoid these wetlands. Tim clarified that all of the high quality wetlands are already in preservation.

Charles went on to say that the current discussion approaches wetlands as if they belong in Everglades National Park, and that we need to help people understand the different quality of the different wetland parcels. Tim replied that we have bent over backward to not be specific at this stage of the process. However, given that there is one ideal location, we should go ahead and be more specific on this aspect of the development. Charles suggested noting that even if the configuration of the job center does change, the high quality wetlands won't ever be affected—they are permanently off the table.

Susan Baird commented on the public turnout at the County hearings, noting that we really need to make sure there is a balanced turnout. It really can make a huge difference, and it's sad and frightening that such a big decision can be made on based on a small public turnout supporting only one side.

She noted that staff only addressed one of the three major goals of the Comp Plan—conservation—in their review, and that they should be held accountable for that. We need to get focus as well on economic development, the second goal of the Comp Plan, which in turn will lead to achieving the third goal—social equity. One of the key things that will help is continued participation and acknowledgement from UF, Santa Fe College and the Chamber of their involvement, confirmation of the vision and the process that we need to go through. Plum Creek has been criticized as “just being here to make a profit.” That is one of the goals, but you can't make a profit without going through the process of creating economic development. She referenced what we have learned from the various economic development trips that have occurred. She also cited examples such as Lake Nona that make it clear we have lost significant opportunities. We need more involvement from high level representatives, and need to make them understand that they are not going out on a limb—instead, they are participating in the greatest opportunity that will come to our community.

She continued by commenting on the urban reserve boundary area, asking if some swapping can be done of the urban reserve boundary areas on the west side to balance the traffic flow and growth. On the topic of water, she noted that the recharge areas are just as valuable, and development is being allowed in recharge areas on the west side.

### **III. Task Force Discussion: Supporting the EA Vision**

Daniel asked Task Force members to suggest what we need to tell the Commission at the meetings in February.

Todd Powell asked a question. He noted an Op-Ed from a County Commissioner which claimed that Plum Creek had not responded to the County's letter regarding their concerns about the Hawthorne Annexation and Comp Plan Amendment, and asked Tim to explain. The County Commission sent a letter to the City asking Plum Creek to further amend the Hawthorne Comp Plan to improve on wetlands protections, designate conservation areas, and specify buffers in between incompatible uses. The City held a workshop on January 12 to examine how these issues would be addressed. They came away with a new set of Hawthorne Comp Plan amendments designating lands for conservation so that key areas will be protected. They also stipulated that all rezoning requests be made as planned unit development, which will require the city to look at all associated compatibility issues. They also compared Hawthorne's requirements for wetlands buffers to those of the County (and adjacent counties) and the City of Gainesville. The County requires a 50-foot buffer for all wetlands. The City of Gainesville requires a 35-foot minimum buffer, with an average of 50 feet. However, that is for an urban area, whereas the County's buffer requirement was established for rural areas. Plum Creek asked Hawthorne to change their requirement to that of Gainesville. This is more than is required in surrounding counties where there are competing sites. Plum Creek has now addressed all of the points in the County's letter. Previous to this, they also modified the application significantly. Since commercial development isn't desirable south of SR 20, that area was revised to residential use. Plum Creek also took out 400 acres to address the issue of creating pockets located so as to make it difficult to provide services.

Rose Fagler added that the City videotaped some of the meetings and they can be found on the EA website. The videotapes confirm that staff agreed all their points were addressed.

Rob Brinkman commented that people want much more certainty than this process requires. They need to understand how, with such a large development, the overall process of development approval takes place, and that answers will come, but not at this phase. He also noted that Plum Creek has the option of going to the state legislature to create their own city. He noted that Hawthorne has done a great job of rising to the occasion. A project of this scale may do best under the auspices of the County. Even if

some don't want us to grow, people still want to move here and will do so anyway. Since growth is inevitable, it's better if we plan for our future.

Adrian Taylor noted that people need to be informed about how businesses pick a site to expand. There seems to be a lack of information or level of ignorance about how this works. Secondly, a discussion about census info and migratory information might help, especially if put in terms of people. For instance, are younger people staying here or moving? There appear to be a lot of retirees that are moving here, attracted by medical services and community amenities. That's not a sustainable model from an economic standpoint. We need to have the best trained workforce in order to continue to support these amenities.

Charles Lee noted that, based on his experience of arguing in front of various commissions—usually for the denial of a plan—one thing that happens is that the minute you win that denial, there's a short period of exhilaration and then it all starts over. A piece of land is always in play until something happens to record a deed or easement that determines the permanent fate of that property. He noted that he thinks that Alachua County has an excellent Comp Plan. However, it was created prior to the advent of such things as Sector Plans and the current situation with a large landowner wanting to make changes that affect their entire future in the County. The reality is that a planning or zoning decision does not achieve permanent protection. Envision Alachua is thinking bigger than that in order to ensure permanent protection of 88% of the property.

Pete Johnson commented that septic tanks are finally being considered "evil," and their impacts on water are starting to be noticed. Hawthorne finally put people on the east side on their sewage system. It would be interesting to note what improvements occurred. The Comp Plan allows these lands to be developed with septic tanks. Our plan addresses these water quality issues. All of east Gainesville is currently on septic tanks. Pete expressed that it's incredible how we have refused to address this issue. He believes that the pollution at Newnans Lake is due to septic systems.

Steve Seibert commented that this group has sat here for years and knows we have a clean, precise plan with a summary matrix distilling it down to three major policy issues. Based on this, we need to ask: what do we really need to do in the next month? Daniel responded that Vivian's comment about getting a good turnout of supporters at the County Commission's EASP hearings in February is critical. We can also write to the newspapers. Our explanations should be simple and meet people where they are. They may not understand the jargon and planning terminology.

Bobbi Walton commented about one of the Commissioners having his own plan. She read a letter posted on social media by Commissioner Hutchinson with his proposed plan. She was concerned that Plum Creek would change their plan to make the swaps and trades he proposes. He spells out a very

clear plan to accomplish this and he is promoting this to people who don't support Envision Alachua.

Susan Baird added that a number of eastside community members have attended a number of community events. We need more of these participants to be more forceful in getting recognition for the need to address the economic needs of the African American community. There needs to be an outcry to insist that we need to move forward, and we have to give this opportunity a chance. Elections are coming up and we need leaders who will address the economic needs of the community. We also need supporters who can persist until the end! The process requires stamina.

Lindsay Kreig suggested that snacks be brought to the hearings to make it easier to stay longer. Susan Davenport shared that the Chamber will provide food and snacks.

Bill Strassberger noted that, looking back twenty years or more, the only other thing he can remember being proposed for east Alachua County was a dump, and we now have a chance to consider better opportunities.

Scott Koons noted that he is encouraged by the tremendous opportunity to balance economic development with permanent conservation.

Chris Moran noted that he had no comments at this time, and that he was here to listen.

Susan Davenport noted that we need to focus on pending projects in many other communities, including some where they have only half the assets we have here and were still able to create thriving communities.

Dr. Gladys Wright commented that we need to continue to communicate with those who are ill-informed. The more succinct we can be in communicating the real facts, the more effective we will be. The group has already done a fantastic job representing Envision Alachua. Unfortunately, we have some hard-nosed folks determined to go in a different direction, so we must continue our positivity moving forward.

#### **IV. Additional Updates**

##### ***A. Update on Education Compact***

Daniel introduced Ian Fletcher to provide an update on the Education Compact. This is a key element of our process to ensure that K-12 education, Santa Fe College and UF are working in alignment with our educational and workforce goals. Ian opened his comments by expressing appreciation to Plum Creek on the work that has been done, noting that Plum Creek has handled the obstacles well.

The Education Compact was signed on May 18, 2015. In June a group started working on strategy development for the six goals, five focus areas and four outcomes of the Education Compact. The group includes: Robert Woody from the Santa Fe Board of Trustees; John MacNeely, Dr. Karen Cole-Smith and Dr. Stephanie Waschull, also of Santa Fe College; Nancy Waldron from the UF College of Education; Dr. Russell Robertson from the UF College of Arts; Dr. Eric Segal from the Harn Museum; Dr. Elio Chiarelli from the College of Agriculture; Karen Clarke, Assistant Superintendent, Alachua County School Board; Melissa Gentry, School Nurse Program Supervisor, Florida Department of Health; and Linda Fuchs, First Lady of the University of Florida.

This Friday (January 22, 2016) at the Chamber of Commerce they will be introducing their six strategies which include:

1. Support and enhance collaborative partnerships with arts, business, civic, cultural, education, faith-based, health, and social service communities to support the development of the whole child.
2. Support and enhance high-quality teaching and learning in classrooms and other learning environments.
3. Support and enhance innovative practices and/or programs that are working to enhance learning, inclusion of the arts, healthy lifestyles and social responsibilities.
4. Coordinate advocacy on Pre-K through 20 funding and educational policy issues at every level of government.
5. Provide students multiple pathways for workforce and career preparation.
6. Ensure opportunities and support services for students and families.

The Education Compact is a community compact—working together with the entire community. The Southwest Advocacy Group (SWAG) is leading an effort to implement a Children’s Service Council, along with many partners. On October 5, 2015, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners voted 5-0 for staff to move forward with this effort. On January 5, the BOCC held a special meeting at which they voted 5-0 approve a contract with WellFlorida Council, Inc. to conduct a children services needs assessment. The Children’s Service Council will serve all children in Alachua County, supporting them with Early Learning during the first 2,000 days of their lives.

The Alachua County Public School District’s overall graduation rate has risen to 74.3%. If you look at just the seven Alachua County public high schools, the graduation rate increased from 84.2% to 87.9%. We’re on our way to 100%, which is one of the goals of the Compact.

The Alachua County Public Schools are holding their first annual Vex IQ Robotic Competition, an important part of STEM education. Seven elementary and middle school teams will proceed to the state level Vex Robotic competition in Mid-February in Tampa. Teams from William Elementary and Lincoln Middle School will compete at the global competition in Louisville, Kentucky in April.

The School Board has also established the Parent Academy, whose programs include Gainesville Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY), the School Connection, Parent Emissary and Mobile Teaching Unit. The mobile units will help train parents to navigate their school system.

Dollar General reached out to CareerSource NCFL (CSNCFL) to donate 62 pallets of non-fiction and fiction books. CSNCFL referred Dollar General to the United Way of North Central Florida. Ian connected the United Way with the CEO of the Gainesville Airport, who donated space for the pallets to be delivered and stored. United Way dispersed the books to their Impact Partner.

Dr. Dale Brill of Thinkspot is writing a USDOE and USDOL grant for the Greater Gainesville Region titled "Strengthening Working Families Initiatives (SWFI)." The grant focuses on the removal of child care barriers faced by working families in need of training to secure better jobs.

Ian then shared a news clip focused on the first annual Career Discovery Workshop hosted by the Gainesville Chamber to introduce middle and high school students to a variety of careers. Kids can begin their careers as early as high school graduation. The Education Compact is focused on preparing the talent pipeline for the future and giving kids an opportunity to get into jobs from the entry level all the way to the supervisory level.

Ian concluded by listing some of the funding needed for Alachua County Education Compact Partner projects:

- The Parent Academy—\$175,000
- STEM Robotics Supplies—\$98,000
- United Way Check and Connect—\$300,000

### ***B. Boston Tour of Economic Development***

Daniel then provided a brief update on recent tours of Boston and Greenville, South Carolina to learn best practices for economic development from other successful communities with top research universities. He noted the cluster of businesses concentrated near Kendall Square in Boston; the Bristol Myers Squibb Biopharmaceutical Facility in Devens, Massachusetts; and the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CUICAR). Clemson University has the world's only Ph.D. in advanced automotive research. The latter case demonstrates how the upstate region of South Carolina was able to recover and become a center of the automotive industry after the departure of the textile industry.

Todd commented that there will be an article in tomorrow's paper about the business recruiting trips that have been conducted. This is where we really need to have the rubber hit the road. On the recent trip to Greenville, we were joined by the Chamber leadership, the Mayor, one of the County

Commissioners and other local leaders. Our key take away from the trip was that Greenville's success is just based on the automotive industry. We should be able to create something three times the size of this based on food and agriculture, and it can be the anchor for the jobs center. He noted that Devens, MA is 30 miles outside of Boston, about the same distance that the job centers are from Gainesville, making it the closest parallel to our situation. He noted that we need to push the concept of an IFAS campus forward.

Susan Davenport noted that the Chamber is "all in" recruiting opportunities for Hawthorne and east Gainesville. The opportunities will be there and the Chamber will be charging full speed ahead.

Todd noted that Plum Creek is working with the County on the exchange of Parcel E and the Fairgrounds property, and the marketing of the opportunities made available by these lands will be included in Chamber efforts. We need to get a win for east Gainesville right away.

## **V. Summary and Next Steps**

Daniel thanked the presenters and the participants for their attendance. He asked that any additional comments be provided. Rose called out the times, dates and locations for the February 16 and 18 hearings. She noted that everyone has a postcard with the information about the hearings, and additional postcards are available. She also encouraged everyone to enjoy the souvenir Envision Alachua umbrellas provided by the "I Support" group. She noted that this is all about improving the community. She commented on the Gatorade, which was provided in orange and green—the Envision Alachua colors. It's Gatorade's 50th anniversary, and supporters will need their stamina to last through the hearings. Finally, she passed out sheets that summarize the three basic policy questions concerning the EASP.

Susan Baird asked about the two hearings—are they two different meetings, or is one the continuation of the other? Tim Jackson clarified that they are one hearing, starting on the 16th. He hopes that the commentary is completed on the 16th and the Board votes on the 18th, but this cannot be guaranteed, so he encouraged everyone to attend both dates.

Todd closed the meeting by expressing thanks to the group and their contribution to a great work product. He commented that Plum Creek's intent is to keep the Task Force informed and schedule some additional meetings as needed.

A meeting wallgraphic and an attendance roster of Task Force members are attached at the end of this document. Members of the public were invited to submit comment cards, but none were received.

# ENVISION ALACHUA

## TASK FORCE

### REGARDING WETLANDS...

▷ SHOW BREAKOUT OF "WETLAND QUALITY" LEVELS ON SEWER PLAN DIAGRAM



### KEY TALKING POINTS...

- ▷ THE "SECTOR PLAN" IS BY DEFINITION DIFFERENT FROM THE A.C.C.M.P.
- ▷ SEWER DOES NOT TAKE AWAY FROM OTHER OPPORTUNITY AREAS.
- ▷ IS THE WOULD TO CONSIDER A POTENTIAL JOB CENTER SITE?
- ▷ JOB CREATION + UNIVERSITY GROWTH.
- ▷ AN UNDERSTANDING OF WETLANDS VALUES IS CRITICAL

- ▷ GET A GOOD TURN-OUT... A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- ▷ ECON. DIVERSITY
- ▷ SOCIAL EQUITY
- ▷ CONSERVATION
- ▷ NEED UP + SFC TO WEIGH IN...
- ▷ EXPLAIN THE PROCESS, THE STEPS WE NEED TO TAKE
- ▷ ADDRESS THE URBAN RESERVE BOUNDARY...  
↳ NOT NEUTRAL

- ▷ WATER: RE-CHARGE AREAS ARE NEEDED TOO!
- ▷ ADDRESS THE DESIRE F/ CERTAINTY  
↳ INFORM PEOPLE ON DIVERS. APPROACH
- ▷ OTHER OPTIONS?  
... ANNEX?  
... NEXT CITY?  
... ALACHUA COUNTY?
- ▷ PRESENT CENSUS INFO RE: THOSE MOVING AWAY, MOVING IN...
- ▷ "DENIAL" IS NOT REALLY THE OLD

▷ IMPACT OF SEPTIC TANKS...  
↳ A SEWER SYSTEM IS SO MUCH BETTER!

EXPLAIN SITE SELECTION PROCESS

- ▷ BE FORCEFUL !!
- ▷ BRING FOOD !!
- ▷ BRING "QUALITY" DIVERSITY TO E.G.
- ▷ SHOW EXAMPLES
- ▷ INFORM THE ILL-INFORMED.

**Envision Alachua Phase III  
Task Force  
Meeting #7 – January 20, 2016**

## Appendix A: Roster of Task Force Members

denotes in attendance at January 20, 2016 meeting

**Jane Adams**

Vice President, University Relations  
The University of Florida

**Susan Baird, MBA\***

Broker/Senior Vice President  
Bosshardt Realty Services, LLC;  
Former Alachua County Commissioner

**Rob Brinkman\***

Chair of Citizens Advisory Committee to  
MTPO, Former Chair of Suwannee St. Johns  
Sierra Club

**Dorothy M. Brown\***

Windsor Resident; Accountant, Richardson  
& Ellison CPA

**Yvette Carter**

Interim Community Relations Director  
Gainesville Regional Utilities

**Robert Castellucci**

President, CEO  
RoomSync

**Dr. Karen Cole-Smith**

Executive Director  
Community Outreach and East Gainesville  
Instruction  
Santa Fe College

**Susan Davenport\***

Interim President  
Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce &  
Council for Economic Outreach (Founding  
Partner)

**Mike Dykes**

Officer, Cracker Boys Hunt Club  
Senior Project Manager, CH2MHILL

**Vivian Filer\***

Chair, Cotton Club Museum & Cultural  
Center  
Retired, Santa Fe College and UF Healthcare

**Eric Godet**

President & CEO  
Godet Industries

**Jason Hurst\***

Associate Director  
Front Street Commercial Real Estate Group

**Pete Johnson\***

Principal, Goalmasters; Former Board  
Member  
Gainesville Regional Airport Authority

**Dug Jones\***

Associate Vice President of Economic  
Development  
Santa Fe College  
Center for Innovation & Economic  
Development

**Nona Jones**

Chief External Affairs Officer  
PACE Center for Girls

**Julian Kinsey**

Media Sales Associate  
Cox Communications

**Lindsay Krieg\***

Director of Volunteer Services  
UF Health

**Charles Lee\***

Director of Advocacy  
Audubon Florida

**Vicki McGrath**

Director, Community Planning  
Alachua County Public Schools (Founding  
Partner)

**Chris Moran** (alternate for Dr. Jack  
Payne)\*

Special Assistant for Communications to the  
Vice President of IFAS  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences  
University of Florida

**Dr. Jack Payne**

Senior Vice President Agriculture and  
Natural Resources  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences  
University of Florida

**Brad Pollitt**

Vice President of Facilities  
UF Healthcare

**Steven Seibert, J.D.\***

Founding Partner triSect, LLC  
Former Executive Director, Century  
Commission for Sustainable Florida; Former  
Secretary, Florida Department of  
Community Affairs

**Bill Strassberger\***

District Engineer  
Clay Electric

**Adrian Taylor\***

Pastor  
Springhill Missionary Baptist Church  
Vice President, Gainesville Area Chamber of  
Commerce

**Kevin Thorpe**

Senior Pastor  
Faith Missionary Baptist

**Bobbi Walton\***

President Community Service for Windsor,  
Retired, CH2MHILL and Environmental  
Science & Engineering

**Helen Warren**

City of Gainesville Commissioner; Agent,  
Prudential Trend Realty; Audubon Florida,  
Alachua County Chapter

**Justin Williams**

Officer, Public Relations, Cracker Boys Hunt  
Club; Employee Relations Training  
Specialist, Clay Electric

**Robert Woody**

Chair, Board of Trustees Santa Fe College;  
Former Deputy Secretary, Florida  
Department of Juvenile Justice; Former  
Director of Jails, Alachua County Sheriff's  
Office

**Dr. Gladys Wright\***

Retired Principal, Chester Shell Elementary  
School, Alachua County School Board

**Ex Officio Member**

**Scott Koons\***

Executive Director  
North Central Florida Regional Planning  
Council

**Participating Task Force Members  
Representing Plum Creek**

**Todd Powell\***

General Manager, Real Estate  
Plum Creek

**Rose Fagler\***

Manager Community Relations  
Plum Creek

**Plum Creek Resource Liaison to the  
Task Force**

**John Sabine\***

Resource Supervisor  
Plum Creek

**MIG, Inc.**

**Daniel Iacofano\***

Principal & Lead Facilitator  
MIG, Inc.

**Joan Chaplick\***

Principal  
MIG, Inc.