



Envision Alachua Phase III

Summary of East Gainesville Community Workshop #1 February 25, 2015

prepared by

MIG, Inc.

March 2015

in support of the Envision Alachua
process convened by Plum Creek



Background

Plum Creek hosted the first Community Workshop of Phase III of the Envision Alachua planning process at Springhill Missionary Baptist Church in East Gainesville on February 25, 2015 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. More than 40 community members attended. A buffet dinner was served an hour before the workshop, and child care was provided to make it more convenient for people to attend the meeting.

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 prepared a 137-page report. Plum Creek is currently updating the EASP in response to the staff comments and questions received from Commissioners and community members. Plum Creek will be submitting a revised application in the next few months.

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.

During Phase III, which began in Spring 2014, Plum Creek is continuing 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 East Gainesville Community Workshop were to:

- Provide an overview of the Envision Alachua Planning Process and Revised Sector Plan Application
- Provide information regarding the following elements of the planning process:
 - Economic Opportunity
 - Environmental Conservation
 - Education and Community

To promote the Community Workshop, Plum Creek placed ads in local media (print, broadcast and on-line), sent e-mail notifications to more than 2,000 people, used

paid social media ads and publicized the meetings on its website and through social media.

This document summarizes the general discussion comments made by the facilitator and presenters during the February 25th workshop; it is not intended as a transcription of the meeting. Meeting materials, information about the process and a videotape presentation of the meeting can be found at www.envisionalachua.com.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Adrian Taylor, Pastor, Springhill Missionary Baptist Church, opened the workshop and welcomed everyone. Daniel Iacofano, lead facilitator for the Envision Alachua process, served as the moderator for the workshop. Daniel introduced Todd Powell, General Manager, Real Estate, Plum Creek, who thanked everyone for coming out. He explained that Plum Creek has tried to have a very open and collaborative process. He encouraged those who are with the opposition group or opposed to the project to engage, stay involved and help shape some creative collaborative solutions. He expressed that Plum Creek is excited about where they are in the process. He concluded by saying that those who participated in the County workshops in the fall will hear what Plum Creek is doing to respond to the County.

Daniel expressed appreciation to the participants and acknowledged the high level of community participation that has occurred over the past three and a half years since the process started. He noted that the group is working to figure out the best plan for the community—one that brings jobs and economic opportunity for East Gainesville and Hawthorne.

He reviewed the agenda which focused on an overview of the Envision Alachua planning process and revised Sector Plan Application, including the following subjects:

- A. Economic Progress Initiative
- B. Community Education Compact and Santa Fe College Activities
- C. University of Florida, IFAS Research and Recruitment Activities
- D. Alachua County Fairgrounds

He explained that the presentation would be followed by an open house period where participants could speak directly with Plum Creek team members, ask questions and get additional information.

II. Overview of the Envision Alachua Planning Process and Revised Sector Plan Application

Plum Creek is responding to the comments received from the County Commissioners, the 87 questions from the four Community Workshops hosted by the County and the 137-page County staff report.

Daniel reviewed the Envision Alachua Vision, in which Education and Community, Economic Opportunity, and Environmental Conservation combine to create an inclusive future for East Alachua County. He also reviewed the components of the vision, which include:

- Supporting and enhancing the innovation economy so the entire region is economically competitive
- Creating job opportunities for all levels of education from the GED to the Ph.D.
- A major environmental conservation win which completes the “Emerald Necklace” and supports regional landscape linkages

Daniel described the three simultaneous initiatives that make up Envision Alachua:

1. Economic Progress
 - Recruitment of employers in partnership with UF, Santa Fe College, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce
2. Education and Workforce Development
 - East County Educators Committee
 - Education Forum and resulting commitments
3. Land Use Approvals
 - First step: Sector Plan application for conservation and development

Daniel introduced Tim Jackson, Director, Real Estate for Plum Creek. Tim in turn introduced County Commissioners Ken Cornell and Lee Pinkoson, who were in attendance. Commissioner Cornell asked to address the group and discuss a Senate bill and companion bill related to the Sector Plan process. The Commission instructed County staff to take steps to oppose this legislation and invited Plum Creek to oppose the bills as well. Plum Creek has stated they will oppose these bills. Commissioner Cornell personally thanked Todd Powell for his leadership and said that he looks forward to working with Plum Creek.

In response to a question, Tim Jackson provided some background information about Envision Alachua. Daniel added that all materials are available on the project website at www.envisionalachua.com. Daniel clarified he is a consultant hired by Plum Creek and that Tim is a Plum Creek staff person.

Tim described the Sector Plan process and the general land use categories and policies the Plan will include. He explained that the application is trying to accomplish three key outcomes:

- Allows major economic opportunity not anticipated in the current growth trend
- Places new job locations to address economic disparity
- Permanently protects significant additional lands from development

Tim reviewed a map that showed the Envision Alachua Economic Progress Corridor connecting downtown Gainesville and UF with East Gainesville and Hawthorne, and

where the jobs activity would be concentrated. He noted the three major issue categories raised by the feedback received so far:

1. Proposed new jobs center in East County outside the urban cluster
2. Suitability of Employment Oriented Mixed-Use (EOMU) lands for proposed urban development
3. Funding and tax burden on existing residents

He also showed a map with a little more detail about what will happen and explained how there will be related policies.

He clarified that Plum Creek has not withdrawn the Sector Plan application; they are submitting a revised application. He believes that through this process, they will be submitting an application that is responsive to the questions received and that will be better for the community.

Tim summarized the revisions that are being made to the Sector Plan Application:

- **Update the data and analysis.** County staff made some good points and requested some clarifications, and in response, more information is being provided on transportation, water, wastewater, recreation, fire, etc.
- **Revise the Land Use Map (LTMP).** Consider expanding conservation areas and adding preservation.
- **Revise policies.** Changes are being proposed to clarify that: infrastructure funding will place no additional burdens on existing taxpayers; wetland impacts will be further limited; among others.

Tim then reviewed a potential EASP timeline, as follows:

- May: Task Force Meeting #5
Revised Application Submittal
- July-August: County Staff Report
- September-October: Public Hearings
- November-December: State Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Review
- February-March 2015: Board of County Commissioners Adoption Public Hearing

Daniel then introduced a series of speakers who gave brief remarks on various topics.

A. Economic Progress Initiative

Rose Fagler, Manager of Community Relations, Plum Creek, provided some examples of the types of companies and jobs that could come here. She explained that many of the companies we want to attract need larger property that isn't available as infill. We have lost some companies because there was not enough land for them to grow. This is a challenge we face in comparison to University of Central Florida (UCF) and other regional institutions.

She reviewed several case studies of the types of companies in need of large development sites and the related jobs that might come to the area, including:

- **Intel in Hillsboro, Oregon:** 2,240 acres with 16,000 employees; annual payroll of \$2.2 billion; \$7.28 million in community donations in 2012 alone
- **Volkswagen in Chattanooga, Tennessee:** 1,400 acres with over 3,200 employees; \$1.4 billion in taxes paid; workforce academy for job training
- **Amazon in Tampa, Florida:** \$200 million capital investment, over 1,000 permanent employees on 80 acres
- **Caterpillar in Athens, Georgia:** attracted by the presence of the University of Georgia; 240 acres; have hired 700 employees so far with 1,400 projected through 2018; estimated \$1.4 billion investment in Athens' economy and spinning off other businesses
- **Bristol Myers Squibb Biopharmaceutical Facility, Devens, Massachusetts:** 89 acres, part of a 4,400-acre site that houses about 3,200 employees
- **University of Central Florida and Central Florida Research Park, Siemens Energy Center:** A little closer to home, direct competition to UF, marketed to businesses that desire a "university relationship;" 1,027 acres, 58 buildings, 125+ companies, 9,500 employees; park is already full.
- **Medical City Lake Nona:** A second UCF-related campus, 22 miles south of UCF; includes Burnham Medical Research Institute; 650 acres, over 300 research jobs, \$85 million in construction alone; UF Research & Academic Center next door with \$61 million construction investment. Other related businesses have co-located with a total construction investment to-date of \$1.3 billion.
- **Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center:** Partnership with UCF and Osceola County, several university partners; anchor for 300 acre park, expected to generate 20,000+ jobs, paying \$2 billion in wages in next 10 years

Rose reviewed the five target industry sectors that the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce is focusing on in its recruitment efforts:

- Advanced Logistics
- Advanced Materials
- Agricultural Life Sciences
- Human Life Sciences
- Software/Information Technology

The Chamber is making trips to recruit companies and let them know about the opportunities in this area. Rose also noted that UF is unique in that it has the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)—none of the other universities in the state have this agricultural specialty.

Daniel introduced Adrian Taylor, Vice President of Regional Initiatives, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce. Adrian reviewed a slide giving details of sample career opportunities in each of the target industries. Based on the data collected and the companies already located in the region, we have an advantage in these sectors, so the Chamber can move forward and grow these industries.

- **Advanced Logistics.** The North Central Florida Region has three major ports and planned port expansions. Logistics is going to be a major industry. Adding to that are increased road and rail connections. This means more jobs that span the “GED to the Ph.D.”
- **Advanced Materials.** UF research in this area is marketable, and these opportunities are increasing.
- **Agricultural Life Sciences.** IFAS is doing world class research, and there are companies utilizing those technologies who would like to relocate closer to where this research is taking place.
- **Human Life Sciences.** Progress Park, with many companies in this sector, is a key demonstration of what happens when you take research to market, and that will only continue as we move forward with economic development plans.
- **Software/Information Technology.** This is another industry which everyone talks about and everyone wants.

Adrian explained that undergirding all of these industries is advanced manufacturing, which is already occurring in the region, with more than 200 manufacturers employing more than 4,000 people.

Part of the game-changing plan for the Chamber of Commerce is to increase business development for these industry sectors. As of last year, they created an Advanced Manufacturing Council which pulls together all of the advanced manufacturers in the region, giving voice and clarity to what they are doing. The Information Technology Services Council is also up and running. Additionally, there is another council being brought online—Agricultural Sciences.

Another part of the game-changing plan is outbound marketing. The opportunity that Envision Alachua gives the Chamber is that when trips are made to Washington, DC, New York, California etc. to recruit companies, they can say “and here’s a place where you can move forward, build and plan the next expansion of your company.”

He noted that this community has the necessary advantages to recruit companies. Some of the superlatives bestowed on the area include:

- In 2012, Forbes Magazine named the Gainesville area as the “#1 place for business and careers in North Florida.”
- NerdWallet named Gainesville as the “#2 fastest growing city in the nation.”
- CNBC named Florida as a “top ten best state for starting a business.”

Adrian expressed that we have a great community and region that people want to be in, we just have to offer up the opportunities to capitalize on the strategic advantages that we have. And as a final point for anyone who doesn't think that the area has an advantage, he suggested calling someone in New York or Boston right now and asking them.

Daniel explained why there is a focus on the game-changing plan. People have been saying this is just a vision; it's not going to get us all those jobs. However, the point of this exercise is to start the process, to get these companies interested. The land planning is just one part of the process—it doesn't get us the end result of all the new economic opportunities. That's why these economic progress studies have been done—to build confidence in the community that this kind of thing is happening in communities near here, that it could be happening here, and that it's essential to our future that we take this on. And as was said at the Task Force meeting last night, "the best way to predict the future is to create it." And as Adrian said, there is a lot already going on right now in this community to build this reality.

B. Community Education Compact and Santa Fe College Activities

Daniel described another part of this effort, for which Envision Alachua was the catalyst—the Community Education Compact. Envision Alachua hosted an Education Forum in October 2014 with more than 120 participants, including community education and business leaders. Daniel introduced Ian Fletcher, Vice President of Workforce Development for the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce and CareerSource North Central Florida, to say more about the Compact.

Ian explained that the process started about two years ago when Rose Fagler asked him to be a part of the Envision Alachua East County Educators Committee. This effort coincided with the Chamber's efforts to identify what role it wanted to play in education in the area. Ian received a fellowship through the Lumina Foundation to study best practices around education attainment. He was able to visit communities that had created similar education compacts. He showed a copy of the Envision Alachua Education Forum Summary and Action Plan, which includes case studies of best practices and a call to action, with strategies for improving education in the area based on discussions at the Forum.

The conclusion was that the Los Angeles Education Compact was the best model for this effort in our area, and so that was what they strove to replicate in forming the Alachua County Education Compact. The Chamber and Envision Alachua are working with Alachua County Public Schools to transform our educational system from the "Cradle to Career" by convening cross-sector stakeholders, leveraging limited resources, and pursuing collaborative strategies.

Currently, the Chamber is recruiting business and community leaders to sign the Alachua County Education Compact in support of the transformation and advancement of the local education system. Centralizing the business community around education and implementing early solutions ensures the development of a

talent pipeline for tomorrow's workforce, an investment into the future of this community.

Key focus areas of the Compact include strategies surrounding:

- K-12
- Early Childhood Education
- Parent Academy
- Higher Education
- Workforce

The Compact has six goals:

- All students graduate from high school
- All students have access to and are prepared for college or career success
- All students have access to pathways to sustainable jobs and careers
- All students develop an appreciation for the arts
- All students develop healthy lifestyle habits
- All students develop a sense of social responsibility

Its desired outcomes are:

- Improved rates of school readiness
- Increased high school graduation rates
- An aligned and productive workforce

He talked about how area employers are having a hard time recruiting local talent for jobs. The Compact's efforts are built around the workforce of tomorrow, not the workforce of today. The stakeholders that they are looking to work with include:

- Education Institutions
- Business
- Government
- Philanthropy
- Parents & Family
- Community Based Organizations

Ian explained how success will be evaluated by a collective impact model, a framework to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is an innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across sectors to achieve significant and lasting social change. It relies on five conditions:

1. A common agenda
2. Shared measurement
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Continuous communication
5. A backbone support organization

Daniel added that the added step is being taken to make sure that our local youth are trained and ready and that they are ones to get these local jobs. He noted that it's very unusual to combine the efforts of land planning and community development simultaneously with economic recruitment and educational development, as well as —this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring those things together, and that is what makes this such a strong plan. Furthermore, the size and scope of the plan enables the environmental conservation and preservation component, which calls for developing less than 15% of the Plum Creek lands in the Sector Plan.

Daniel also noted that there is a significant effort at Santa Fe College, which is one of the leading community colleges in the nation and now offers four-year degrees, to align their educational programs and courses to prepare students for the five target industries. He called out Dr. Karen Cole-Smith, who has spearheaded this component of the plan. This helps answer the question of whether jobs will be available and whether local students will be prepared to get those jobs. Daniel explained that every time they answer one of the communities' questions, the plan is improved.

C. University of Florida, IFAS Research and Recruitment Activities

Daniel introduced Dr. Kevin Folta, the Interim Chairman of the Horticulture Science Department at UF IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences), to talk about another component of the plan.

Kevin expressed excitement at being here, and shared some thoughts from the research community and their hopes for Envision Alachua. IFAS has more than 750 faculty members. They participate in the next generation of food and how it will be produced. Agriculture is and will continue to be one of the top industries in the state. UF has always been at the front edge of agricultural research. Kevin is a researcher and Horticultural Sciences Department chairman who works with 59 faculty scientists scattered throughout the state, covering every aspect of plant studies.

Kevin talked about the current state of UF and IFAS. UF was recently rated as the #10 agricultural school in the world. The big challenge is that, due to budget cuts and retirements, they have about half the faculty they used to. The question is how they are going to revitalize this. A big part of it has to do with their infrastructure. As part of the UF pre-eminence campaign, UF received money from the state to hire the best and brightest researchers nationwide. They found some top candidates and offered them excellent salaries, but weren't able to get their recruits to accept positions because their fields, labs and facilities are undersized and out-of-date. Envision Alachua has room for an additional UF agricultural research campus. This is needed to compete, and also to attract the necessary industry partnerships. Public-private partnerships are a mainstay in agricultural science. They have current relationships with seed producers and crop sciences companies, but they are encumbered by distance.

These companies have had a very positive response to the idea of coming here. Florida is a major agricultural state and agriculture will always do well here. Right now we also have some of the biggest crises in agriculture—e.g., the collapse of the citrus industry due to citrus greening disease. This is the place, along with California, for agriculture in the U.S. Florida is still a hotbed for this kind of technology, and it is extremely attractive to companies who want to come here and partner with UF. IFAS has expertise in all areas across the agricultural spectrum, bringing in diverse types of research and also constantly thinking about environmental sustainability. They are reducing water use and also use of fungicide on strawberries by 60%—simply through giving farmers an app on their phones that rings when the weather conditions are right to apply fungicide.

This effort to farm sustainably in Florida puts UF in a very good position to work with companies who want to come here and join this effort. Many companies have expressed interest and imagine this as a parallel setup to the Research Triangle in North Carolina. This gives us an opportunity to bring a trained workforce from UF into these jobs, and to offer internships with leading companies right here.

Kevin concluded by describing some of the unique plant research he's been doing that leads to the refrigerator of the future. Throughout his career, he has studied how light interacts with plants. Plants get different instructions from different colored lights. Fruit behavior can be programmed by changing the light it is exposed to. Just by adding a little bit of different colored LED light, we can extend the availability and nutrient value of our fresh fruits and vegetables.

Daniel then introduced a video tour of Area A, which is proposed for jobs centers including some of these IFAS activities, in order to show the status of these lands. They are currently in full timber production. The tour showed how the lands are a mosaic of higher and drier ground and some wetlands—to call it “swampland” is a mischaracterization. The video can be found on the Video Library page of the project website at www.envisonalachua.com.

E. Alachua County Fairgrounds

Daniel asked Tim Jackson to describe a new option being considered for the Sector Plan. Tim explained how the County Commission voted recently to formally ask Plum Creek whether it would be interested in swapping some of the company's land in East County for the Alachua County Fairgrounds site. This would entail trading 819 acres in Area E for the 98 acres of the existing Fairgrounds. He referred to a map showing where these areas are located.

Plum Creek has responded that it is interested, and would like to get together with the County to look at what is allowed on that site. The Fairgrounds are identified as urban land use and are inside the City of Gainesville. Plum Creek will conduct its due diligence and enter into a conversation with the County to determine what can happen on the two sites, what is their appraised value and what opportunities can come out of this trade. The Fairgrounds could accommodate job opportunities much sooner than Area E. Plum Creek could start to look at it as a master developer and use the site to attract businesses earlier in the process along with Areas A and B.

III. Open House

Daniel concluded by calling attention to the presence of a number of Envision Alachua Community Task Force members in the audience, who have been part of the process for four years. He invited participants to attend the various Open House stations, where Plum Creek staff would be available to discuss ideas and answer questions, and also encouraged them to fill out a Comment Card. The Comment Cards received are reproduced in Appendix A.

Appendix A: Comment Cards

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

Provided some answers to questions arising from last workshops & County Commission mtg.

Still no answers for regarding who will do & pay for infrastructure, schools, police/fire, waste water treatment ~~not~~ ect needed for development of any project of this projected size also concerned who will pay for the costs associated with job training for the kind of jobs you are talking about. Can UF & Santa Fe absorb those costs??

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer E-mail Personal Invitation

Announcement at community event or church service

Other Newspaper

Age:
18-25 25-45 45-65 Over 65

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 5 yrs.

What is your zip code? 32653

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

- ① I would like to see the greenway with 'jacks' on each side of it. Animals fight for territory and the more space they have the better.
- ② I am excited about the land swap for the Fairgrounds and hope that goes through.

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer

E-mail

Personal Invitation

Announcement at community event or church service

Other _____

Age:

18-25

25-45

45-65

Over 65

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 42 years

What is your zip code? 32601

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

- Slick. Seems a done deal.
- Would prefer ~~Area~~ Area B over Area A built out first in terms of phasing

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer _____

E-mail

Personal Invitation _____

Announcement at community event or church service _____

Other _____

Age:

18-25 _____

25-45

45-65 _____

Over 65 _____

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 20 years

What is your zip code? 32601

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer _____ E-mail _____ Personal Invitation _____

Announcement at community event or church service _____

Other CO-Workers _____

Age:

18-25 _____ 25-45 45-65 _____ Over 65 _____

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 30+ years _____

What is your zip code? 32641 _____

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer _____

E-mail _____

Personal Invitation _____

Announcement at community event or church service _____

Other news paper _____

Age:

18-25 _____

25-45 _____

45-65

Over 65 _____

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 37 _____

What is your zip code? 32605 _____

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com

Please share any comments or questions regarding the *Envision Alachua* planning process:

Please tell us a little more about yourself:

How did you hear about tonight's meeting?

Flyer _____ E-mail _____ Personal Invitation _____

Announcement at community event or church service _____

Other Grove Sud _____

Age:

18-25 _____ 25-45 _____ 45-65 _____ Over 65 X

How long have you lived in Alachua County? 60 yrs _____

What is your zip code? 32608 _____

Please turn in this card to a project team member at the end of the meeting.

Thank you for participating in the *Envision Alachua* planning process!

www.envisionalachua.com