

County staff responses to Questions from the Alachua County Transportation and Economic Workshop on the Envision Alachua Sector Plan application that was held on September 22, 2014 at the County Administration Building.

Staff has attempted to respond to questions from the workshop that were focused on factual matters. Some statements at the workshop appeared to be rhetorical or to raise issues beyond the scope of this application or the County's Comprehensive Plan. If you asked a question at the workshop that was not answered here or have any other questions, please contact the Growth Management Department at 352-374-5249.

1. Would Plum Creek or the County Commission consider a compromise plan to allow development in Hawthorne?

Absent a specific proposal from Plum Creek or request from the County Commission, staff can not speculate what may change in the application submitted by Plum Creek. If a revised application is submitted, staff will evaluate the revised application and present their findings to the Commission.

2. How can we allow building in the floodplains?

The County does provide for some very limited development within floodplains under certain site conditions that do not significantly impair the natural functions of floodplains and floodways, including water purification, flood hazard mitigation, water supply and wildlife habitat and connectivity. Buildings are allowed in the floodplains only when the drainage/watershed areas are modeled to accommodate the water in retention/detention areas. The buildings and the roads leading to the buildings have to be elevated at or above the base flood level which is a level to which flood waters would rise.

The Plum Creek development proposed in eastern Alachua County is subject to a unique combination of physical constraints regarding floodplain development, due to the presence of poorly drained soils, floodplains, wetlands, high water table, and the downstream presence of the state designated nutrient-impaired Newnans, Lochloosa, and Orange Lakes.

In this location, the types of drainage improvements and stormwater treatment techniques needed to allow filling of floodplains require ditching, piping, and large area/shallow wet detention basins that cause downstream impacts to water quality, especially during heavy rainfall events. The naturally occurring phosphate rich clayey soils are prone to leaching when exposed due to the required excavation and ditching. The ultimate receiving waters for these nutrient loadings are Newnans, Lochloosa, and Orange Lakes, which are already designated by the State of Florida and USEPA as nutrient impaired.

3. Because Plum Creek has not committed to covering costs, does the County Commission believe it is ok to burden the County's tax payers?

The staff report on the Envision Alachua Sector Plan pointed out that one of the problems with this application was that provision of infrastructure and services that would be needed as a result of this development have not been fully described in the proposed policies. The applicant has proposed policies that would defer identifying and ensuring funding of adequate public facilities and infrastructure until the Detailed Specific Area Plan, which would be the next step if the Long-Term Master Plan comprehensive plan amendment is adopted (Proposed Policy 10.6.4). A policy is also proposed that states that "The County reserves the right to condition approval of development on the availability of funding for the necessary infrastructure to support the proposed development" (Proposed Policy 10.6.6) and a policy that states that prior to development approval, the County shall amend its Capital Improvements Element to include the timing and funding of public facilities required by the Detailed Specific Area Plan (Proposed Policy 10.6.6.1). Identification of needed services and infrastructure as a result of this potential development and identification of adequate funding of those services and infrastructure is a requirement for comprehensive plan amendment proposals and needs to be considered at the same time the County Commission is considering amending policies to allow this level of development in the rural area. The County Commission is expected to consider this issue at public hearings on the proposed sector plan.

4. Does the County Commission consider the congestion that Plum Creek would impose to be ok?

County Staff have recommended denial on the project as it is currently proposed in part based on a review of the transportation data and the results of the transportation study that indicate the impact on roads that have potential capacity constraints. From a transportation perspective, there are several rationales in the staff report that detail why staff felt the transportation mobility policies proposed were not adequate to accommodate the land use program. The proposed amendment does not include enough detail or commitments in terms of transportation infrastructure or transit service to adequately provide mobility for the land uses proposed.

5. What are the specific growth target industries that the staff and County Commission is moving forward to expand economic opportunity for people in our region?

In addition to the state incentives through Enterprise Florida for Qualified Targeted Industries in the areas of cleantech, life sciences, infotech, aviation/aerospace, homeland security/defense, financial and professional services, emerging technologies and manufacturing, the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2011-2030, in its Economic Element, has a list of targeted industries that includes industries that are growing, high-skill, and high wage, or that contribute to regional economic diversification. These targeted industries include, but are not limited to: logistics, and

distribution; building component design and manufacturing; aviation services and products, bio-fuels and energy; healthcare services and projects business services; communication services; medical and pharmaceuticals, including biotech; technology driven manufacturing; electronics and other electrical equipment; regional or corporate headquarters; information technology; research and development; eco-tourism; multimedia productions. Other industries specifically sought by the County include energy conservation, alternative energy, reuse/recycling based industry and sustainable food production and processing businesses.

6. How will the County staff achieve a more balanced capital investment in our region not just the westward march toward the Gulf that seems to be the direction that everyone is comfortable with but we are uncomfortable with in this community?

From a transportation perspective, most of the County's capital investment is to mitigate the mobility impacts of new development in the form of Transportation Impact Fees and the Multimodal Transportation Mitigation program. The demand driving the need for new capacity is derived from new development. The County's mitigation programs are broken up into districts (Northwest, Southwest, East) in order that there is an observable connection between the development and the new capacity as required by law. To the extent that there is more capital infrastructure planned in the western portions of the County, it is due to the level of development. In addition, the Urban Cluster Boundary sets an outer limit on both urban development to the west and development east of the City of Gainesville in the unincorporated areas.

The County currently has a transportation capacity project in East Gainesville funded by Transportation Impact Fees. This project includes adding a center turn lane, bicycle lanes and a completed sidewalk network to SE 43rd St between East University Avenue and Hawthorne Road.

7. How can any economically significant project occur in east Gainesville when the City recently put in an environmental overlay that also affects the eastern portion of our County that brings the impediments to economic development to the same level as the County?

The environmental overlay (strategic ecosystems) recently added within the City of Gainesville affects approximately 167 acres of undeveloped lands in east Gainesville. Of these 167 acres, 64 acres are wetlands or floodplains. The remaining properties in the overlay area are in public ownership or already developed. This overlay does not prevent development but requires that any development on these parcels is designed in a way to protect the critical environmental resources on the property.

The majority of the environmental overlay in East Gainesville is centered on the protection of Lake Forest Creek and associated wetlands. Lake Forest Creek drains into Newnan's Lake, a State-designated impaired water body due to nutrient pollution.

8. Where does the existing plan anticipate accommodating growth and development beyond the year 2030 and is it in the reserve areas of each city?

The capacity of the Urban Cluster is evaluated as part of the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan, to determine a sufficient and non-excessive amount of land within the Urban Cluster to accommodate urban land uses for a ten-year and twenty-year time frame. This evaluation compares the forecasted need for land for urban residential and non-residential development based on projected populations, average household size, residential vacancy rate, and market factors. By using no longer than a twenty-year time horizon, there is some reliability of the population projections. An Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) is completed every seven years, which translates into a major Comprehensive Plan amendment. Between the EARs there are opportunities for other revisions, including privately-initiated comprehensive plan amendments. The most recent analysis of the Urban Cluster capacity was completed as part of the [Evaluation and Appraisal Report \(EAR\) on the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2009](#). This analysis indicated that there was sufficient land available in the Urban Cluster to accommodate the projected unincorporated population growth through the Year 2035. This analysis did not take into account policies that were adopted in 2010 to allow mixed use Transit Oriented and Traditional Neighborhood developments at densities and intensities higher than the adopted land uses used in the 2009 EAR. These allowances for more residential units and commercial square footage ensure that the Urban Cluster can accommodate anticipated growth well beyond the year 2035. The municipalities in the County also have undeveloped land that can accommodate future growth. In the event an analysis determines that the Urban Cluster with the adopted land uses cannot accommodate future growth, policies in the Comprehensive Plan require either revisions to density standards and land development regulations, revising the allocation of land uses within the Urban Cluster to increase the allowable density and intensity, or coordination with municipalities regarding reallocation of forecast need to incorporated areas, prior to considering an expansion of the urban cluster.

9. Does the staff believe that the development of the land owned by Plum Creek within the Hawthorne Reserve with the policies as proposed in the Envision Alachua Sector Plan is consistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan and where does the Envision Alachua Sector Plan actually exceed the policies of the Comprehensive Plan?

The land within the Hawthorne Reserve Area is designated Rural/Agriculture on the County's Future Land Use Map 2030. Allowable uses within the land use designation are agriculture and rural residential with limited opportunity for commercial oriented to the rural population. The Envision Alachua Sector Plan is proposing to change the land use designation to EA-EOMU (Envision Alachua Employment Oriented Mixed Use), which would allow residential, commercial, industrial, agriculture, mining, excavation and fill and other uses. This proposed land use designation is not consistent with the current County Comprehensive Plan land use designation for this area. Staff is not aware of any policies proposed in the Envision Alachua Sector Plan that would exceed any current County requirements for conservation set asides.

10. From the County staff's perspective, what would be the ideal thing to have happen to this large amount of land?

Considering the extensive presence of poorly drained soils, floodplains, wetlands, high water table, downstream impaired lakes, and the high capital and maintenance costs to provide sufficient infrastructure and public services to offset these constraints, the preferred land use is either its current use or another use that is consistent with the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

11. How many acres of land that had rural ag land use in the County Comprehensive Plan have been annexed into one of the cities over the past twenty (20) years?

County staff has available annexation data going back to the year 2000. Between 2000 and 2013, there were 25,052 total acres annexed into one of the cities in Alachua County. The City of Gainesville annexed 8,758 acres during this time period. Much of the area annexed into Gainesville was previously within the unincorporated Urban Cluster, and had a variety of urban Future Land Use designations at the time it was annexed (i.e., not Rural/Agriculture). Gainesville's annexations included one large annexation of approximately 3,600 acres in the north part of the City around the SR 121 and CR 231 split, near Deerhaven, which was designated Rural/Agriculture at the time it was annexed.

The other eight municipalities annexed approximately 16,294 acres in total over this same time period. Most of the land annexed into the other eight municipalities was designated Rural/Agriculture at the time it was annexed.

12. Has the staff looked at how much of Plum Creek's land is eligible for annexation into an existing city, an adjacent city or how much could be incorporated as a new municipality? What is the process for this or for the lands not currently eligible for annexation to become eligible?

The Alachua County Boundary Adjustment Act, a special act adopted by the State governing annexation in Alachua County, spells out the legal requirements for annexation in Alachua County. These criteria include that the area proposed for annexation must be located within the Reserve Area of the City proposing the annexation, contiguous to the existing City limits, not located within the boundary of another County or another incorporated City, reasonably compact, and does not create an enclave (e.g., an unincorporated area completely surrounded by an incorporated City). The area identified in Plum Creek's application as Employment Oriented Mixed Use 'Area B' is fully within Hawthorne's Reserve Area for annexation, meaning that lands within 'Area B' would be eligible for annexation into the City of Hawthorne if the annexation meets the other legal requirements. Plum Creek's other lands that are proposed for 'Employment Oriented Mixed Use' (Areas A, C, D, and E) are not located within a designated municipal Reserve Area. The Reserve Areas are reviewed every 5 years in accordance with the Boundary Adjustment Act, and any of the cities may

propose a change to its Reserve Area as part of that review process. The next scheduled review and update of Reserve Areas will be in 2016.

The procedures and requirements for the creation of a new municipality are provided in [Chapter 165, Florida Statutes](#), known as the “Formation of Municipalities Act”. The statute includes specific criteria that must be met for creation of a new municipality, such as a minimum population of at least 5,000, a population density of at least 1.5 persons per acre, and a minimum distance of any part of the area proposed for incorporation from an existing municipality within the county of at least 2 miles. Based on the current municipal boundaries with the distances to the sub-areas of the proposed sector plan, and considering the maximum potential buildout of the sub-areas, sub-areas A, C and D might be eligible for incorporation in the future under the requirements of Florida Statutes.

13. What happens if the land is developed 100 acres at the time like Tampa or Orlando?

Question #21 contains a more detailed answer to this question. Any development on this property would have to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Policies in the plan are in place to limit sprawl and provide for efficient and fiscally responsible development. Much of this property is located within designated strategic ecosystems and there are comprehensive plan requirements for clustering of rural developments with 50 percent of the property to be set aside as open space.

Due to the extensive presence of poorly drained soils, floodplains, wetlands, high water table, downstream impaired lakes, and the high capital and maintenance costs to provide sufficient infrastructure and public services to offset these constraints, the County’s current comprehensive plan policies encourage new development to be located where adequate infrastructure exists and natural resource impacts can be minimized.

14. What is going to happen to State Road 26 on the other side of the bridge? When are they going to four-lane up to that side?

There is not currently a proposal to four lane any portion of State Road 26. The Envision Alachua amendment does not propose to four lane SR 26.

The FDOT does have funding for Right of Way acquisition to four lane SR 20 into Putnam County but full construction funding has not yet been identified in the FDOT 5 year work program.

15. Is there a need to attract more jobs than in the current plan? If the County could, would it be a bad or good thing?

The Economic Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan has numerous policies to promote economic development and job growth in the County, including policies relating to economic diversification and recruitment and expansion of targeted

industries. The County's Comprehensive Plan also designates areas for employment-based land uses, such as industrial, commercial, and office. There is the potential for new development to occur in these designated areas, which could generate substantial new employment opportunities in the County.

A detailed inventory of the lands designated for industrial, commercial, and office uses can be found in Exhibit 2 of the County's staff report. This indicates that there are approximately 9,597 acres of industrial-designated lands countywide, approximately 4,533 acres of which are undeveloped. Most of these areas are strategically located proximate to existing economic and physical infrastructure such as Gainesville Regional Airport, Interstate 75 (I-75), railroad lines, communications networks, local road networks, and centralized potable water and sanitary sewer systems; this includes 368 undeveloped acres designated for industrial use in the City of Hawthorne's Comprehensive Plan. Using the 1.2 jobs per thousand square foot multiplier identified in the Sector Plan application for "advanced manufacturing uses" and development at a floor area ratio of 0.1 (i.e., 1,000 square feet per every 10,000 square feet of land), this current land use inventory could accommodate nearly 20 million square feet of new industrial development and nearly 24,000 new jobs. Exhibit 2 of the staff report details additional information for the 3,743 acres of undeveloped commercial designated lands in Alachua County which are estimated to potentially accommodate over 40,000 jobs, as well as the 252 acres of undeveloped land designated for office uses in Alachua County which could potentially accommodate over 4,000 jobs. Based on the analysis in the staff report, the undeveloped areas currently designated for industrial, commercial, and office uses in Alachua County could potentially accommodate an estimated 68,000 jobs if these areas were to be developed in accordance with their adopted Future Land Use designations.

As noted in the staff report, as part of the evaluation of the County's Comprehensive Plan completed in 2009, the changing nature of industrial uses in the 21st century and the relationship of those changes to the type and location of space for those uses sought by emerging businesses was considered; as a result of this assessment, when the County's Plan was updated in 2011 a new policy was added to the Future Land Use Element to provide for location within Transit Oriented Developments or Activity Centers in the Urban Cluster of "certain office and light industrial uses, such as research and development and experimental laboratories or the manufacturing or fabrication of products that have minimal offsite impacts." This additional flexibility for development of such uses in areas not formally designated on the Future Land Use map for Industrial uses adds further opportunities to accommodate such employment generating uses.

16. If we cannot maintain our roads now, why build more for Plum Creek?

This is a concern that staff addressed in the staff report. At the present time, an adequate funding source is not available for the maintenance of the County's existing transportation infrastructure. There is currently an estimated roadway maintenance

backlog of \$380 million. The Envision Alachua amendment proposes no long term infrastructure maintenance solutions.

**17. Would like to know if the number of full time jobs is 30,000 or 6,000?
(Asked twice)**

Staff has conducted additional review of the Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) results submitted as background material with the final submittal of the Envision Alachua Sector Plan application. In the FIAM there is no documentation of the difference between “Employment” and “Full-time Equivalent Employees” other than to indicate that the “employee FTE calculation is based upon the number of workers and the percentage of time they spend at work (40 hours per every 168-hour week). Staff initially interpreted this to mean that the “Full-time Equivalent Employees” number presented was the number of 40-hour per week jobs provided by the development scenario analyzed in the FIAM. However, after further review, Staff provides the following revision that will be reflected in a revised Staff Report.

The FIAM indicates that the number of employees for the development program at build-out is 27,362 (Appendix Table 1, Year 2067 in the submitted FIAM Analysis). This number includes both full- and part-time employees of the various types of employers analyzed in the FIAM. This number includes only direct employees, not jobs that are derived from support industries, such as construction, landscaping or service industries. Based upon the 10,500 units proposed as part of the Sector Plan, the employment to housing ratio would be 2.6 employees per household. Proposed Envision Alachua Sector Plan Policy 10.2.6.4.a identifies achieving a “...jobs-to-housing balance of 3 jobs per residential unit that is measured over the entire land use category (that is, jobs divided by residential units meets or exceeds 3.00 at total project build out).” The FIAM is not consistent with the proposed Envision Alachua Sector Plan policy regarding job creation.

The FIAM includes, for the purposes of calculating revenues and expenditures, a “full-time equivalent employee” number. This number represents the portion of time that individuals are receiving services as an employee, rather than as a resident. This number is calculated from the total number of employees of the development. Thus, since a full-time employee works 40 hours out of a 168 week, the individual is an employee 23.81% of the time. Therefore, the number of “full-time equivalent employees” is the total number of employees multiplied by the factor 0.2381, or 6,515 FTE employees. This number is only used for calculating revenues and expenditures and is not an assessment of the number of full-time jobs.

18. What would be the cost to the tax payers to develop Hawthorne and East Gainesville and help them grow compared to Plum Creek?

Specific costs for development would depend on the type and intensity of the proposed development, the characteristics of the land, and the costs for extending public facilities and services to accommodate new development. There is existing infrastructure in East Gainesville and the City of Hawthorne. It is more cost effective to develop in areas where public facilities and services exist and can be expanded if necessary to

accommodate the development. Developing in an area that lacks the necessary infrastructure will be more expensive initially and more expensive to maintain. Generally, developing in an area that contains wetlands and soils not suitable for the intensity and density of development proposed in the Envision Alachua Sector Plan is much more expensive to develop than in more environmentally suitable locations.

19. Are the jobs broken down into temporary construction jobs and long-term jobs?

The FIAM indicates that the number of employees for the development program at build-out is 27,362 (Appendix Table 1, Year 2067 of the submitted FIAM analysis) based on the proposed square footage of non-residential development. This number includes both full- and part-time employees of the various types of employers analyzed in the FIAM. This number includes only direct employees, not jobs that are derived from support industries, such as construction, landscaping or service industries.

20. Could staff work with Plum Creek to develop a mosquito control taxing authority?

Mosquito control is a real challenge for residential development projects associated with poorly drained soils, high water table, floodplains, wetlands, and the types of drainage alterations and stormwater treatment facilities required by the Plum Creek Sector Plan proposal.

Mosquito Control Districts are authorized by Section 3880.021, Florida Statutes, and may be created for any County or portion thereof. The mosquito control district has taxing authority and must be created (in counties) by the County Commission.

21. If this sector plan is not approved and the land is sold off and farmed or developed in a more piecemeal fashion, what do you consider the allowable “worst case” scenario under our current Comprehensive Plan? How many wells and septic tanks are currently permitted on this 60,000 acres with no land use change, and what is the projected water use from that? Does the current comp plan allow more intensive agricultural uses such as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and farming of vegetables, ornamentals and the like? Would the conservation easements proposed by Plum Creek prevent such damaging uses? For how long?

If the Plum Creek proposed plan is not approved, the land use designations and policies in the adopted County Comprehensive Plan, including the natural resource protection policies, would apply regardless of who owns the land. As detailed in the staff report, portions of the property in the proposed sector plan are designated in two principal Future Land Use categories in the County’s adopted Plan: Preservation, including 22,885 acres under conservation easements limiting use to terms consistent with those easements, and approximately 37,250 acres designated Rural/Agriculture. In addition, as detailed in the staff report, portions of the property are also conservation areas with natural resources including wetlands, floodplains, and strategic ecosystems. These

conservation areas are subject to policies in the Plan requiring protection of those resources.

Some of the major requirements relating to properties that have a Rural/Agriculture Future Land Use designation are that uses are limited to agricultural activities (including forestry) and other uses serving, or ancillary to, agricultural activities and limited rural residential uses. Policies in the Comprehensive Plan and implementing land development code detail requirements for things such as paved public road access, stormwater and other subdivision requirements for any new rural residential development. Such new rural residential development is limited to a maximum development density of one unit per five acres, and the maximum density shall not be allowed if it would be harmful to natural resources. A clustered subdivision design setting aside a minimum of 50% of the development as open space is required for new developments of 25 or more units, and adopted policies in the Plan also indicate this is the preferred form for developments of less than 25 units and provide incentives to encourage this clustered form. Clustering is also required in strategic ecosystems with set asides of wetlands and wetland buffers and up to 50% of the upland area. Additionally, adopted policies provide that any new rural residential subdivisions that contain more than 100 lots may be allowed only after adoption of a Comprehensive Plan amendment based on a completed special area study that addresses impacts on surrounding land uses and ensures natural resource protection and identification and provision of needed public facilities.

Conservation easements can be written to restrict or allow certain types of uses including agriculture. The easement would be good for as long as both parties agree.

22. The whole point of the Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, and long term contracts like conservation easements is that they are adopted to ensure that desirable standards are upheld, regardless of who owns the land. Assuming that this is true, then can you explain what difference it makes, if any, if Plum Creek seeks others to do the so-called “vertical development?”

If the land is sold, any future land owner would be bound by the adopted policies in the Comprehensive Plan and regulations in the Alachua County Unified Land Development Code. Owners of the property, including Plum Creek, could request that the County amend the policies adopted in the Comprehensive Plan. Requests for such amendments would require public hearings with the County Commission in the same manner as they were first approved. Conservation easements may also be amended with the agreement of all parties associated with the conservation easement.

23. How many acres of poorly drained soils, or somewhat poorly drained soils, are within existing city boundaries or within the Urban Cluster? How many acres of these soils are in the Reserve Areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan?

Soil Table: Acres of land by soil type within the current boundaries of each municipality, reserve area, and urban cluster. Soils identified as ‘unranked’ are not included in this table. The

acreage provided includes all lands inside the boundaries regardless of whether the lands are developed, undeveloped or in conservation. Source: Alachua County Soil Survey

Acres of each soil type						
Municipality	Excessively well drained	Well drained	Moderately well drained	Somewhat poorly drained	Poorly drained	Very Poorly drained
Alachua	13.2	12,998.2	4,164.8	1,891.1	2,568.1	268.3
Archer	1,515.6	2,129.2	297.2	25.9	46.0	0
Gainesville	300.5	3,531.0	9,347.7	1,602.3	18,920.2	4,082.8
Hawthorne	409.1	17.2	758.3	713.7	761.7	396.5
High Springs	3,985.1	7,425.4	1,211.0	61.0	228.3	0
Lacrosse	30.2	351.8	472.6	1,211.5	715.3	58.6
Micanopy	0	0	166.8	303.5	184.5	58.6
Newberry	9,110.6	18,932.5	3,836.8	1,402.8	216.5	37.4
Waldo	0	0	115.8	344.4	626.3	260.6
Reserve Areas						
Alachua	142.0	9,168.1	4,922.5	3,781.2	1,990.8	503.7
Archer	5,752.7	6,867.6	1,449.5	19.4	23.3	0
Gainesville	6,528.9	14,827.2	18,461.8	6,904.3	19,366.1	6,794.3
Hawthorne	1,331.6	19.7	2,819.7	3,185.7	2,414.9	2,421.7
High Springs	5,333.0	7,030.3	2,113.2	464.7	528.1	15.4
Lacrosse	0	157.9	722.8	2,968.8	2,364.6	274.4
Micanopy	0	0	326.3	679.5	1,215.2	380.1
Newberry	3,614.7	9,954.6	4,041.1	861.0	352.4	40.0
Waldo	0	16.3	115.2	2,873.1	4,555.1	1,689.5
Urban Cluster						
Urban Cluster	3,619.6	9,666.2	13,674.8	3,433.6	7,054.4	1,509.9

Historically, development was allowed by local governments that would not comply with current standards, such as the filling of wetlands and floodplains and building on unsuitable soils. The current County Comprehensive Plan reflects the “lessons learned” from problematic developments allowed during an era without today’s safeguards, including unforeseen costs to local governments for maintenance and repair of substandard or failing infrastructure and avoidable demands for public services.

24. Has the County allowed development in flood prone areas in recent years? If so, under what conditions, and for what development?

Historically, development was allowed by local governments that would not be allowed by today’s standards, such as the filling of wetlands and floodplains and building on unsuitable soils. The current County Comprehensive Plan reflects the “lessons learned” from problematic developments allowed during an era without today’s safeguards, including unforeseen costs to local governments for maintenance and repair of substandard or failing infrastructure and avoidable demands for public services.

Under current County regulations, the County has permitted development in the floodplain only when the drainage/watershed areas are modeled to accommodate the water in retention/detention areas. Projects such as Oakmont and Wilds Plantation were

approved and the Developer obtained a LOMR (Letter of Map Revision) with County's overview from FEMA.

- 25. I have heard it stated that the County doesn't regulate things like water use, irrigation and native landscaping. Plum Creek has said it will voluntarily agree to deed restrictions, covenants and conservation easements that would be permanent and stay in place regardless of land ownership or who the developer is. What is the truth? Can water use and landscaping be addressed through these means, and are such commitments enforceable?**

The water management districts have exclusive and preemptive authority for the regulation of water consumptive use permits under Section 373.217, Florida Statutes. This authority includes prohibitions on individual wells for residences or business and restrictions on the use of potable, groundwater or reclaimed water. Alachua County enforces the Landscape Irrigation Watering Restrictions (days of the week, hours of the day) established by the water management districts. The County is authorized to enforce the existing Water Management restrictions; however, it is preempted from enforcing more stringent standards. In addition, the County may enact and enforce ordinances related to protecting water quality throughout the County, including irrigation standards. However, the County does not have the authority to enforce some of the "voluntary restrictions" proposed by the applicant through the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

The County does have the authority to require "native landscaping" in certain areas of development and to regulate existing native vegetation. The County's tree retention requirements can be found in Sec. 406.09 of the Alachua County Land Development Code (generally retaining 20% of the existing canopy of non-planted pine forests) and the Landscaping requirements can be found in Sec. 407.40 of the Alachua County Land Development Code (generally requiring 30% if the entire development site to be canopied in 20 years). Newly planted trees are given credit for their 20 year future canopy as defined in Table 407.50.1 of the County's Land Development Code. These requirements are generally not applicable to residential lots but could be required for the creation of residential subdivisions, commercial property and institutional property (such as churches). The County also regulates the amount of landscaped area that can be maintained using high-volume irrigation (60 %) within the High Aquifer Recharge Area of the County, Sec. 406.59.1 Alachua County Code. The areas proposed to be developed as part of the EASP are not located within the County's High Aquifer Recharge Area.

The applicant's Water Resource Protection Strategy is outlined in EASP Objective 10.4.3. The proposed comprehensive plan amendments do not include deed restrictions, covenants and conservation easements provisions to implement the provisions of EASP Objective 10.4.3.

26. **What is the definition of “intensively managed pine plantation” referenced in the staff presentation on September 16th? Other than Plum Creek lands, what other timberlands in the County are “intensively managed pine plantations”? Actually, what other timberlands exist in the County and who owns those lands – private, public, and non-governmental organizations?**

Intensively managed pine plantations are subject to management strategies that include site preparation (clearing, ditching and bedding if necessary), densely planting pine trees (often genetically modified) in rows often in the range of 400 - 600 trees per acre, and sometimes fertilizing. Ongoing management also may include thinning and competitive vegetation control through herbicide treatment or vegetation removal, with relatively short harvesting rotations before the cycle is started over again. The primary goal of intensively managed pine plantations is to maximize yield. These techniques and activities have more adverse impacts to water quality, water quantity, biological diversity, and wildlife habitat than less intensive, more benign forestry management practices.

Other than Plum Creek lands, what other timberlands in the County are “intensively managed pine plantations”?

Based on Florida Natural Area Inventory (2010) data there are approximately 133,937 acres of land classified as Coniferous Plantations. This classification category most closely fits the definition of “intensively managed pine plantation.”

Table: Total acres in some form of forestry practice in Alachua County based on Florida Natural Area Inventory (2010) land use classifications.

Land Classification Type	Total Acres
Coniferous Plantations	133,937
Rural Open Forested	57
Rural Open Pine	268
Tree Nurseries	602
Upland Pine	2,908
Wet Coniferous Plantations	260
TOTAL	138,032

Actually, what other timberlands exist in the County and who owns those lands – private, public, and non-governmental organizations?

Evaluation of what lands in the county are “timberlands” may result in different conclusions depending on the sources of information available. Below is an example of timberland acreage in the county provided by the Florida Forest Service. This source does not distinguish between intensively managed pine plantations and more ecologically managed forests.

Table: Summary list* of landowners in Alachua County that have submitted a Notice of Intent to harvest to the Florida Forestry Service.

Plum Creek	63,845 acres
Other timber company lands	21,240 acres
Water Management Districts	23,585 acres
Private property owners/Developers/Investment companies	4,883 acres
TOTAL	113,553 acres

* Source: Florida Forestry Service data of lands enrolled in Silviculture Best Management Practices and submitted Notice of Intent as of Sept 16, 2014, information provided by Florida Forestry Service staff.

Alachua County Forever owns and manages approximately 3,100 acres of forestland, of which approximately 2,553 acres had been intensively managed pine plantation and currently are being managed with the primary goal of habitat restoration (ACF staff, personal communication). Site restoration activities may include the harvesting of trees, prescribed burning, site preparation if necessary to restore natural ground and soil conditions, and the allowance for natural plant recruitment.

Another data source to answer this question is the Alachua County Property Appraiser and at the time of this report this data set was not available in a comparable format.

27. FY 14 Property Taxes: Do unincorporated properties (owners) pay 16.77 cents per property tax dollar and 8.18 cent per property tax dollar?

All Alachua County property owners pay 16.77 cents per property tax dollar for countywide programs provided by the County Commission. In addition, property owners in the unincorporated area pay the combined Municipal Services Taxing Unit tax of 8.16 cents per property tax dollar for fire, sheriff and general services provided by the County Commission. Property owners living within incorporated cities pay their city's property tax instead of the County MSTU.

28. How can a sector plan from such a huge company like Plum Creek not address renewable energy? (Wants to propose a 1,000 acre solar field before any other compromises are made)

Sector Plan applicants are not required to address renewable energy and Plum Creek has not proposed any policies related to renewable energy. The application does indicate that portions of the Plum Creek property will continue to be used for timber production, which is one source of renewable energy.

29. Why is it such a problem/resistance getting upper SES/Jobs in the eastern quadrant of the County? Why is there redundant overgrowth continuing in SW Gainesville? Who's promoting and accomplishing growth in Alachua? Can positive growth be accomplished in east Gainesville?

There are no obstacles in the Comprehensive Plan or Land Development Regulations to creating these types of jobs in the eastern quadrant of the County in areas suitable for development. There are available areas within the County's Urban Cluster boundary on the east side of Gainesville and within the City of Hawthorne for development that could produce these jobs. County policies include Plan East Gainesville and other policies that encourage development in the unincorporated area east of the City of Gainesville. The current landscape of employment opportunities is a primarily market based and not County policy based.

30. Does the County have plans to improve blighted slum housing in SE and east Gainesville? If so, what and when?

Alachua County has been actively involved in improving blighted housing in SE and East Gainesville through its implementation of affordable housing programs. Since 1997, Alachua County has invested over \$20 million directly through its affordable housing programs and indirectly through its bonding authority of the Alachua County Housing Finance Authority.

This funding has been directed in a multi-prong approach to both preserve and expand the inventory of affordable housing stock. Alachua County assists very low and low-income residents to preserve existing housing stock through repair and replacement of existing owner-occupied single family housing and assists in expanding inventory through support of new single family developments and multi-family developments in southeast Alachua County and East Gainesville. In addition, residents in East Gainesville area have been assisted with SHIP down payment assistance, home repairs, rental and security deposits, and foreclosure intervention. Through a partnership with GRU and the City of Gainesville, East Gainesville residents were assisted with a pilot program to connect very low and low-income residents with central water. Most recently, Alachua County has administered the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Funds were used to acquire blighted foreclosed homes, renovate them to both address health and safety issues and to address energy efficiency of these homes. Homes were then either made available for both homeownership and affordable rental housing.

Between 2001 and 2004, Alachua County provided \$620,000 in SHIP Single Family Development Program funding in deferred payment loans to support three new affordable single family developments in unincorporated East Gainesville. Alachua Habitat for Humanity developed Celebration Oaks, resulting in 20 new homes, located on SE 21st Avenue. Doug Seymour developed Lake Forest Glen/Trails, resulting in 51 new homes, located on SE 6th Avenue off of SE 43rd Street. Neighborhood Housing and Development Corporation developed Lake Forest farms, resulting in 44 new homes, located on East University Avenue and NE 45th Avenue. Of the 115 homes developed, 48 homes were assisted with SHIP funds in deferred payment loans to very low or low-income households.

Between 1997 and 2004, 456 affordable apartments have been developed in part, through funding from Alachua County. The Alachua County Housing Finance Authority issued \$14,288,892 in multi-family mortgage revenue bonds, resulting in three multi-family developments. In addition, \$500,000 in SHIP Multi-Family Development Program funds were provided in deferred payment loans as match to leverage tax credit funding for two of these developments. Lewis Place at Ironwood, located at 4121 NE 15th Street, provides 112 affordable rental units. Verdant Cove Apartments, formerly Eastgate Apartments, located on SE 43rd Street near Eastside High School, provides 140 affordable rental units. Bonds were also issued to provide funding to provide needed repairs to Forest Green/Village Green Apartments, located at 3501 NE 15th Street, preserving 100 units of affordable rental housing for very low and low-income households.

Since 2010, Alachua County utilized approximately \$3.6 million in East Gainesville of its funding for the Neighborhood Stabilization Programs (NSP1 and NSP 3). Through these programs, 29 foreclosed homes in NE and SE Gainesville. HUD required that specific target neighborhoods be identified to address the most urgent need in NSP 3. One target neighborhood is located in the Carol Estates/Highland Court Manor area of northeastern Gainesville. The other target neighborhood is generally located in East Gainesville, east of SE 15th Street. Substantial home repairs were made to both address blight, health and safety issues, as well as to improve energy efficiency. Of the 29 homes purchased to date, 24 have either been sold to very low to moderate income households or transferred to not for profit agencies for use as affordable rental housing. The remaining five homes are being repaired at this time and will be made available for homeownership or as affordable rental housing.

Alachua County has administered the SHIP since 1993. While data is not specifically available for assistance provided to individual households in East Gainesville, staff conservatively estimates that over \$500,000 were utilized in this area in SHIP funds to provide home repairs, down payment assistance, foreclosure intervention, central water connections, and security and utility deposits. Staff conservatively estimates that at least \$500,000 in CDBG Housing Rehabilitation funds have been expended in the unincorporated portion of East Gainesville and eastern Alachua County.

Currently, Alachua County is taking applications for its CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program. This program is available to very low and low income homeowners living anywhere in unincorporated Alachua County. A total of \$650,000 is available for this program. The Alachua County Housing Finance Authority Emergency Home Repair Program is currently accepting applications through October 31st, 2014 for roof repair, septic and well repair, electrical hazard repair, or accessibility repairs. A total of \$100,000 is available for this program. Ongoing SHIP funding is available for home repairs and down payment assistance. Through a cooperative partnership with the County's Department of Community Support Services, funding is also available for the SHIP Rental Deposit Program to assist very low income households. While these funding sources are not specifically targeted to East Gainesville residents, the funding is now available to eligible households. Approximately \$300,000 in remaining Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding is specifically targeted to East Gainesville.

Summary of Funded Affordable Housing in East Gainesville
New Single Family Housing Developments

Name of Development	SHIP Funding	Units Assisted	Total Units Constructed
Celebration Oaks SE 21st Avenue Gainesville, FL	\$400,000	20	20
Lake Forest Glen/Trails SE 6th Avenue Gainesville, FL	\$80,000	14	51
Lake Forest Farms NE 45th Ave and E University Ave. Gainesville, FL	\$140,000	14	44
	<hr/>		
	\$620,000	48	115

Multi-Family Housing Developments	Multi-Family Bond Issues	Bonds Issued*	SHIP Match	Total	Rental Units
Lewis Place @Ironwood 4121 NE 15th Street Gainesville, FL	1999 Series	\$4,000,000	\$150,000		112
Verdant Cove Apartments formerly Eastgate Apartments			\$350,000		140
Eden Park @Ironwood 1400 NE 39th Avenue Gainesville, FL	2003 Series	\$4,188,892			104
Forest Green/Village Green Apartments 3501 NE 15th Street Gainesville, FL Renovation of existing units	2004 Series	\$6,100,000			100
		<hr/>			
		\$14,288,892	\$500,000	\$14,788,892	456

Neighborhood Stabilization Program 1	\$2,480,000	18
Neighborhood Stabilization Program 3	\$1,122,112	11

Total	\$3,602,112	29
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Scattered site Estimated Investment through SHIP and CDBG

SHIP Down Payment Assistance Program	\$200,000
SHIP Home Repair Program	\$250,000
SHIP GRU Connect Program	\$25,000
Other SHIP Program funding	\$25,000
CDBG Housing Rehab Program	\$500,000

Estimated combined investment from these programs: \$1,000,000

Combined, these programs have served hundreds of households in East Gainesville and the eastern portion of Alachua County.

31. Is East Gainesville the part of the County that has aquifer and drinking water concerns so there are not any of these concerns all along Newberry Road to Jonesville?

The water supply concerns are not limited to the eastern part of the County or the County itself. As described in the staff report the water supply issues are a regional concern.

32. Is Plum Creek being built in a flood zone?

The table below shows the acres and percent of land in the 100-year floodplain for each proposed development area within the Sector Plan's Employment-Oriented Mixed Used (EOMU) areas.

Development Areas	Total acreage	Floodplain acreage	% floodplains
Area A	2,893	1,120	39%
Area B	1,284	534	42%
Area C	2,760	582	21%
Area D	3,634	616	17%
Area E	819	107	13%

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency

33. Is traffic congestion not a concern on Archer and Newberry Road?

Traffic congestion is a concern for Archer and Newberry roads. In order to address transportation capacity and general mobility needs, the County has recently adopted long term Capital Improvements Element amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally the County has adopted the Multi-Modal Transportation Mitigation Program and the Southwest Transportation Improvement District to address this issue. The primary way that the County is planning on addressing these corridors is to provide parallel roadways as opposed to further widening to 6 lanes and beyond. One of staff's concerns about creating congestion in this eastern rural area of the County with the Envision Alachua proposal is the lack of parallel roadway opportunities due to the environmental constraints on the Plum Creek property and the location of Newnan's Lake between the property and Gainesville.

34. Can we figure out how to accomplish this goal of building homes and businesses in east Gainesville?

The Plan East Gainesville Master Plan map and policies relating to the unincorporated area initiatives were adopted as part of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan in 2006. Several of these Plan East Gainesville initiatives have been completed or are currently underway. An update of the Eastside Activity Center Plan was completed in 2009 for the area located north of the intersection of Hawthorne Road (State Road 20) and SE 43rd Street, and surrounding Eastside High School. The Eastside Activity Center Plan provides a policy framework to encourage the development of this area as a mixed use activity center for the eastern part of the Urban Cluster, including higher density residential, commercial, and employment-based land uses. The County's Comprehensive Plan also identifies a bus rapid transit route connecting the Eastside Activity Center with existing employment centers in Gainesville. The proposed sector plan is located several miles east of the eastern boundary of the Plan East Gainesville study. For a detailed list of recent accomplishments and development activity in the unincorporated area east of the city limits of Gainesville see Question #41 from the Workshop Question Responses dated September 16th.

- 35. Within the mobility districts, i.e., within the areas A, B, C, D, and E, does the applicant suggest a mix of transportation choices (bus, bicycle, pedestrian)? I see that a projected mobility fee is indicated to fund multimodal transportation, but short of limited bus service (none on SR 26!) (see Policy 1.10.11 Transportation Facility Improvements), I see no other reference to bicycle and pedestrian facilities? And two, how would the proposed mobility fee work?**

The proposed Envision Alachua amendment does have policies related to the goal of providing a range of transportation choices and a bicycle and pedestrian friendly design and mix of uses. Staff has concerns about how effectively these policies could be realized due to the scale and fragmented nature of the proposed EOMU land uses as well as the significant environmental constraints on the property.

Proposed Envision Alachua Sector Plan Policy 1.10.11 calls for the extension of bus service along SR 20 between Gainesville and Hawthorne though there are no details on the service, including headways, type of service or costs. There is no additional information provided on other transit service to be provided within and through the interior of the project.

A Mobility Fee would require a sound legal basis to be implemented. That basis would need to include a rational connection between the demands on infrastructure to serve the development and the amount of the fee. Since no significant offsite infrastructure improvements are proposed in the amendment to serve the development, the implementation of a mobility fee would be problematic as it would have no identified legal basis. Absent a mobility district, the existing concurrency and impact fees would be applied to new development.

- 36. I have heard it stated that this proposal has “massive” wetlands impacts, but in talking to Plum Creek representatives, I’ve heard that the actual impacts would be less than 300 acres, which is less than 1/2 of one percent of the land area included in this sector plan. Can you confirm or deny this?**

The Plum Creek Amendment would authorize development activities within the 11,390 acres of the Envision Alachua Employment Oriented Mixed Use (EA-EOMU) area as well as additional impacts for road crossing within conservation lands along the Lochloosa Creek corridor. There are approximately 1,918 – 2,787 acres of wetlands (based on best available data) within the EOMU and any road crossings across Lochloosa Creek would impact additional wetland areas. Based on proposed policies and development limitations, the most significant wetland impacts would occur in Development Area A and the northern portion of Area B and lesser amounts within Area C and on Conservation lands along the Lochloosa Creek corridor. There are approximately 834 – 1,218 acres of wetlands in Area A and the northern portion of Area B combined. The proposed amendment policies do not put a lower or upper cap on the amount of wetlands that may be impacted.

Alachua County’s wetland protection policies which strongly discourage loss of wetlands have been successful in simultaneously allowing growth and development while avoiding wetland impacts. In the last 10 years, Alachua County has approved over 3,600 acres of land

development while allowing less than 1 acre of wetland loss. And most of these impacts were authorized to allow access to buildable upland portions of the parcels.

Wetlands are considered “nature’s kidneys”, and provide a cost effective filter to protect water quality. Wetlands also serve as a “sponge” that stores floodwaters during high rainfall events as well as extended drought conditions.

In eastern Alachua County, the importance of avoiding any additional wetland impacts is heightened due to the presence of the state designated nutrient impaired surface waters, including Newnans, Lochloosa, and Orange Lakes.