

Resolution No. 97- 84  
of the  
Board of County Commissioners  
St. Johns County, Florida

**WHEREAS**, the residents of County Commission District 4 have worked together to develop a VISION; and

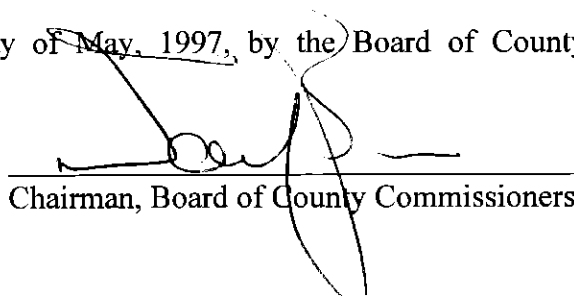
**WHEREAS**, this VISION reflects a future for the District that displays all desired aspects and attributes that the residents wish for their future; and

**WHEREAS**, many of the ACTIONS identified within this VISION can only be accomplished by St. Johns County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners recognize that many of the proposals within the VISION are indeed meritorious.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, that the Board of County Commissioners accepts the VISION for District Four and directs that it be utilized within St. Johns County as a working guide for decisions affecting District Four in part or in whole.

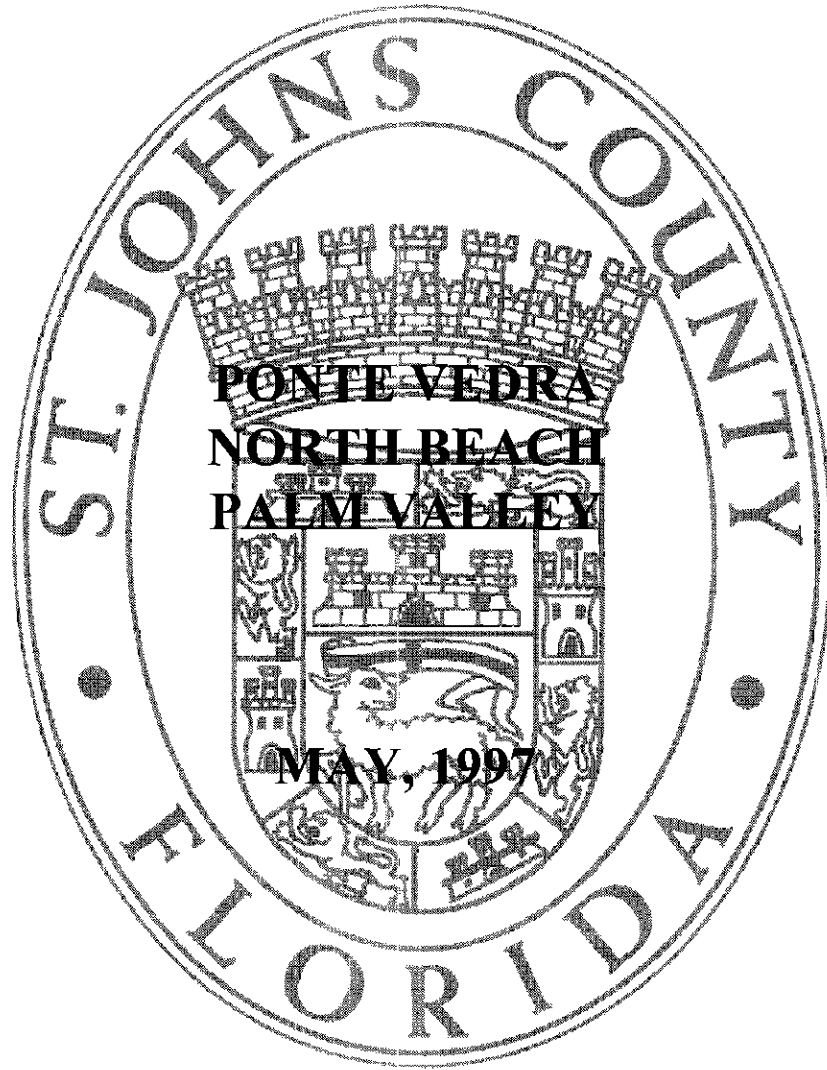
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 27th day of ~~May~~, 1997, by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida.

  
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Chairman, Board of County Commissioners

Attest: Cheryl Strickland, Clerk

  
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# VISIONING



# DISTRICT 4

## PREFACE

This report is a product of the community. The citizens came together, worked together and developed a picture of the future. The ideas, strategies and priorities offered are those that we developed. One way that we can gain a perspective of our vision for the future is to project with our mind set into the future. This is exactly how the visioning process was begun in District 4. Let us now also take that future view as we review the following conversation.

*Much has happened since we began to direct our future. It all started during the "Decade of the Nineties". Remember people saying, "Its a nineties sort of thing"? It was, on the surface, a lighter time, but deeper down we were not satisfied with the status quo. We were all feeling a need to be shapers of what our communities were to be.*

*As citizens of the North Beach, Ponte Vedra Beach and Palm Valley areas, we were no longer satisfied with the path we appeared to be taking. There were many who, if they could, would have stopped things in their tracks and turned the clocks back to an earlier more simple time. Fortunately for most of us, this was not an option. Rather, we chose to become involved in what our future was to be.*

*The unifying theme that brought us together was our appearance, or more importantly at that time, what we thought it could be. Our vision pictorially was one of oak lined roadways, abundant green spaces and public gathering places. They were reflections of a life style that in our dreams we cherished and fostered.*

*Now as we look upon all that we have in this year 2010 we can see the wisdom of that earlier time. The low profile of our architecturally tasteful buildings whose impacts are muted by bountiful placement of landscaping demonstrate the visual freshness that we have become. In turn, the greenway system which is reinforced through roadways whose primary role is the movement of all transportation forms - not simply high speed automobiles. It's almost hard to believe that the automobile was once viewed as the preferred means of travel within our community. Not that the auto is not important, but it is only one of the means of conveyance at our disposal.*

*It has been a blessing to have our community focal points - our town centers. To have shopping, meeting areas, cafes, entertainment, offices, all close by each other allows us to have outings that fulfill us in so many ways. All this and to still be on a course where our community continues to demonstrate increasing unity.*

Is this conversation only a fantasy? For now the answer is yes, but will it remain that? It is up to us, it's our vision and now it needs to become reality. That's our job.

## OVERVIEW

**“Without vision the people shall perish.” Proverbs.**

The residents of County Commission District 4 have worked with each other to develop a VISION portraying a changed future. Changes, when they take place within the developing framework of the area, will result in a community that the inhabitants helped to shape and create and neighborhoods where the citizens know that they helped guide it to what it has become.

The process of creating this vision was approximately fourteen months in length. It began in September 1995, when Commissioner Cody organized and held a meeting of several district residents at the Ponte Vedra Library. The first three months the effort moved slowly with an ever changing group of participants. In December, the group heard of the effort which had taken place in St. Augustine by former Mayor Baker, which led to a redirection of the process. January 1996, a formal Steering Committee was established. The Committee quickly set about structuring the process and identifying issue areas around which to build the VISION. There were five issue areas established which are as follows:

- Land Use and Environment
- Infrastructure
- Culture and Leisure Activities
- Local Governance
- Finance

Considerable discussion took place among members of the Committee as to whether additional focus areas should be included. In fact, for the entirety of the process the list increased and decreased on an irregular basis. In the end it was the five areas of discussion which became the building blocks of this VISION.

The Committee established a schedule which began with a Community-wide meeting at the Landrum Middle School. There were over sixty participants in attendance. At this meeting the purpose of the tasks, the areas to be addressed and the upcoming schedule of events were outlined. In addition, Brian Wheeler of the Genesis Group conducted a visional preference survey. The survey was comprised of a series of slides of different development patterns which those in attendance were asked to rate from a personal preference basis. The results of this survey helped to provide a sense of direction for the process.

The intent of all of this was to foster interest and enthusiasm among those present for the process. Those in attendance were asked to volunteer to serve on one of the Working Committees which were being established for each of the five issue areas. Previous to this meeting, members of the Steering Committee had volunteered to guide each of the respective Working Committees. Each Working Committee also had a County staff member who volunteered to support their needs.

The Working Committees, with the exception of Finance, quickly began meeting in earnest. In a few weeks they had all submitted draft documents to the Steering Committee. With the submittal of these reports, the Finance Working Committee began their effort which culminated in a ranking system to prioritize the activities or ACTIONS identified in the other four reports.

The remainder of this report portrays the VISION as we developed it. You will not, however, find a section devoted to the priorities of the Finance Group. The product which they produced was a matrix.

The purpose of this matrix was to provide a means whereby the ACTIONS as identified could be ranked. It was this matrix that the Steering Committee utilized in determining the priority of the ACTIONS. The order that ACTIONS appear by grouping reflects the order of priority with the highest priority being listed first.

During July and August of 1996 the Steering Committee met weekly to prioritize the individual ACTIONS. The fact that this Committee met at this frequency for an evening meeting through the heart of the summer is but one reflection of the dedication they had for the process. When the Steering Committee completed the ranking process, it was all turned over to the County staff for compilation into this report.

## THE VISION

**District 4 is an area of great natural beauty, containing beaches, rivers, marshes, protected parks and wildlife areas. Amidst these natural resources are unequaled neighborhoods. Preservation of its natural resources, enhancement of its residential quality, development of a sense of integrated place, and positive interaction between community and local government makes the District a unique and special place to live and work.**

The key points to this statement are:

- Preserve Natural Resources
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Sense Of Community
- Positive Interaction Between Community and Government

The remainder of this Report is composed of five sections with each section being a reflection of the results of each of the Working Committees. For each of the individual Issue Areas there is a separate FOCUS Statement or Statements. Each of these FOCUS Statements build upon and reinforce the overall VISION. The individual Statements are in turn supported by Objectives. The Objectives are then achieved through accomplishment of the individual ACTIONS which are listed in their order of priority. It is through the ACTIONS that change will take place.

Before concluding this Section it would be helpful to review the basic structure. The VISION for District 4 is encapsulated in one overall statement. It is supported by individual FOCUS Statements for the five ISSUE AREAS, which in turn are reinforced by OBJECTIVES, which are achieved through the accomplishment of the separate and individual ACTIONS. The individual ACTIONS are listed by order of priority. With these, the future has been charted, and looking back on how the ACTIONS were ultimately accomplished will reflect the zeal in which we pursued them.

# **LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT**

## **DISTRICT 4 VISION PROCESS**

### Steering Committee Members

Marie Church

Mary Gebhart

Pauli Kirby

Ray Spofford, AICP, St. Johns County Planning

### Land Use and Environmental Subcommittee Participants

Cynthia Ahre

Mark Ambach

Greg Amos

Harold Baker

Gina Bliss

David Bruner

Rita F. Barrett

John Delaney

Ed Gill

Monica Harty

Roz Harty

Veola Hayes

Marilyn Jacobs

Edita Kaye

Mel Kutzer

Craig A. Maguire

Carole McManus

Bill McQuilken

Lynn Moffitt

Chris Neuman

Jack R. Pope

Carole Salinas

Francis Shields

Barbara Silon

Nathaniel Silon

Bob Stoll

Kenneth Walser

G. Brian Wheeler

Larry D. Wright

## FOCUS STATEMENT

District 4 has many diverse types of land use. There are premier resort facilities, hotels, large and small commercial businesses, and residential uses comprised of everything from single family homes to large Planned Unit Developments, multi-family housing, and even some rural land use.

The environmental aspects of the District are closely tied to the quality of life. The mixture of relatively pristine natural and recreational areas such as Guana River State Park, the Intracoastal Waterway and Atlantic Ocean, and commercial, resort, limited agriculture and residential development makes it important to focus on how St. Johns County may reasonably guide our future.

In this Committee, we developed a vision that will guide development for the residential, rural and commercial areas while maintaining our unique community and preserving our natural resources and still meet the needs of our citizens' health, safety and welfare.

## OBJECTIVE I

**Avoid uncontrolled growth.** The present Comprehensive Land Plan allows for clustered residential subdivisions in order to provide open space between developments, with a small "wetland bonus" system in order to preserve lands considered wetlands by allowing the tract's overall density to be concentrated within the uplands. The intent of the Comprehensive Land Plan is limited in its own scope and further by the land use regulations insofar as the minimum width, length, and square feet of the individual lots. These codes can be overridden by the use of Planned Unit Development or Planned Special Development, but cannot exceed the Comprehensive Land Plan maximum density for the particular geographic location of the development.

ACTION 1. Create meaningful open space by providing better definition and greater flexibility to transfer density between and within parcels of land.

ACTION 2. Establish minimum recreation and open space requirements to be provided by proposed development.

ACTION 3. Create a set of development guidelines and standards that a review committee can utilize to prevent inappropriately designed multi-family and high-rise development.

ACTION 4. Maintain the 35 foot maximum building height within the Coastal Corridor, and allow a maximum living space of two stories for oceanfront and Intracoastal development.

ACTION 5. Increase the distance between structures based on a formula related to height.



ACTION 6. Allow distance/setback requirements based upon traditional neighborhood development standards.

## **OBJECTIVE II**

**Establish district-wide design and development criteria, particularly architectural controls, in order to create a cohesive appearance.**

ACTION 1. Establish development standards and guidelines for all new development other than single family development.

ACTION 2. Develop building siting guidelines and minimum design standards.

ACTION 3. Create a District 4 architectural review committee consisting of a professional architect, a landscape architect, representatives from Palm Valley, Ponte Vedra, North Beach and Vilano and an advisor from St. Johns County to:

- establish and create site architectural themes to be utilized throughout District 4 and insure adherence to standards and guidelines.

ACTION 4. Billboards should not be allowed in District 4. Also limit future off-building signage.

ACTION 5. Review and/or limit development in District 4 until the above are established.

## **OBJECTIVE III**

**Restore and protect the waters of District 4 to provide a continuous and abundant supply of clean, chemical-free water for both human and wildlife populations, maximizing a healthy environment and maintaining the natural beauty of the area for present and future generations.**

ACTION 1. Manage lakes, drainage ditches and retention ponds by monitoring them frequently to maintain a high water quality.

ACTION 2. Develop a District 4 water distribution and sewage treatment plan that will insure high quality water, maintain a consistent level of service, eventually eliminate wells and septic tanks.

ACTION 3. Encourage the use of natural compost for fertilization, and/or use of natural or organic fertilizers.

ACTION 4. Promote the use of indigenous salt, pest and drought resistant trees and plants and make them easily available at local nurseries and labeled as such.

## **OBJECTIVE IV**

**Foster a sense of community by creating a plan for several town centers appropriately designed and scaled for each community.**

ACTION 1. Identify several sites to be designated in the Comprehensive Plan or overlay district for neo-traditional, mixed use (civic, residential, and commercial) town centers, one each in South Ponte Vedra, North Ponte Vedra, Palm Valley and Vilano Beach. Possible sites include a 38-acre DRI site at the intersection of A1A and CR-210, and along Vilano Road.

ACTION 2. Roadways should be designed to enhance the community and its entries. Investigate the use of round-a-bouts and traffic calming for intersection efficiency instead of traffic lights. (For example, intersections of A1A and Sawgrass Village, A1A and Corona Road, A1A and CR-210, and Solano Road and Marsh Landing Parkway.

ACTION 3. Convert A1A from its classification as a rural section to an urban section, re-landscape, and design with curbed medians and bikeways along the sides.

## **OBJECTIVE V**

**Habitat preservation and acquisition. Preserve and protect the natural resources of St. Johns County, and District 4 in particular, including coastal, wetland, and upland areas and their associated plant and animal communities and habitat, with the goal of saving these resources for existing and future generations of people.**

ACTION 1. In Planned Unit Developments, use cluster designs to help preserve open space, natural habitat and wildlife as much as possible (See Goal A.1 and Objective A.1.1 of the County Comprehensive Plan).

ACTION 2. Protect existing species of Federal/State protected flora and fauna throughout the County.

**ACTION 3.** Establish a local land trust in St. Johns County to develop land acquisition programs, and accept donations of land.

- Several greenways are presently proposed for St. Johns County. These proposals will require active support of District 4 residents for successful implementation.
- Wildlife corridors are under study for the northeast Florida Region. These corridors will provide protection and suitable habitat for animals threatened by land fragmentation, proliferation of roads, and the worsening threat of extinction due to loss of natural habitat.
- The National Estuarine Research Reserve proposed for St. Johns County is a major step toward environmental protection. It will need constant community support to reach fruition.

**ACTION 4.** Create a Master Resource Management Plan for District 4 and the County which will itemize and describe significant upland, wetland, and coastal resources along with habitat areas and perimeter buffer areas adjacent to development (See Policy G.a.1.a, G.2.2.8 and G.2.5.1 of the County Comprehensive Plan).

**ACTION 5.** Pursue acquisition of environmentally sensitive, endangered lands through County State and Federal acquisition programs. A voter approved bond referendum is currently the most popular source of revenue in Florida for land acquisition. Priority may be given to larger tracts of land, and lands adjacent to the proposed National Estuarine Reserve (GTM-NERR)(See Policy G.2.5.2, A.1.13, and H.1.4.4 of the County Comprehensive Plan).

## **OBJECTIVE VI**

### **Educate the public to care for the environment.**

**ACTION 1.** Identify and support local merchants, businesses and individuals who make an extra community effort to enhance and protect our natural resources by awarding a plaque or some sort of recognition. Coordinate and integrate all efforts with organizations who have common goals by sharing information and lending support.

**ACTION 2.** Educate the public through newspaper articles, newsletters, school science class projects, library resources, camps, brochures, advertisements, etc.

**ACTION 3.** Eliminate littering on our roadways and beaches by:

- Establish an Adopt a Mile/Road program.
- Institute a No Tolerance for Littering program and advertise the program and impose fines.
- Place attractive trash barrels on the beach every one-half (½) mile and ensure the County will collect the trash throughout the entire year.
- Lobby for better legislation to control littering from boats.
- Place reader-friendly signs on beaches to leave only your footprints, etc.
- Establish a Forgiveness Day where you can drop off toxic and hazardous household materials at a central, well publicized location.

# **INFRASTRUCTURE**

## **DISTRICT 4 VISION PROCESS**

### Infrastructure Committee

Paul Fletcher, Co-Chairman

Jeff Sneed, Co-Chairman

Laura Becker

Roger Gibson

Gwen Hunter

Mary Kohnke

Chris Wadelton

Bobbie Zeman, AICP, St. Johns County Planning

## FOCUS STATEMENT

St. Johns County's District 4 is perceived by most of the residents and business owners as a unique and very special place to live and work. It is a community with a significant emphasis on "quality of life."

This quality of life cannot be maintained without an ongoing emphasis placed on maintaining and expanding the infrastructure (transportation, drainage, potable water and sewer, fire and police protection). It is the objective of this community to:

1. Analyze existing facilities with focus on current deficiencies and identification of possible solutions.
2. Analyze future demands that will be placed on the infrastructure system to determine possible solutions.
3. Prioritize (1) and (2) above and explore possible sources of financing.

## OBJECTIVE I

**The provision of a network of adequate roads which meets the Level of Service Standards to serve all of the transportation needs of the residents and businesses in Ponte Vedra and Palm Valley.**

The Community recognizes the need for adequate roads to safely move people and goods in and through the Community. With the expectations of an additional 10,000 residents, road improvements have to be anticipated. However, the Community feels strongly that roads should not degrade the unique character and environmental qualities of the District which make it a special place to live, work and enjoy the pursuit of life.

ACTION 1. Four-lane S.R. 210 from I-95 to S.R. A1A, and four-lane the S.R. 210 bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway.

ACTION 2. Construct a limited access two lane road in the 55 foot power line easement which extends from Solano Road to J.Turner Butler as an alternative to six-laning A1A.

ACTION 3. Support FDOT's Study of the A1A Corridor from Northern Duval County to S.R. 210 .

ACTION 4. Consider widening A1A from S.R. 210 to Duval County only as a last option due to its negative impact on the community. However, the Ponte Vedra Coalition is

vehemently opposed to this alternative and the Board of County Commissioners is on record in opposition of six laning roads in St. Johns County.

## **OBJECTIVE II**

**Unify the Community by constructing bikepaths and landscaped pedestrian walk-ways which link residential areas to commercial and business areas, recreational activities, and the beaches.**

ACTION 1. Construct bike lanes on A1A from Duval County south to Vilano Beach. Continue west on Mickler Road/S.R. 210 to U.S. 1 (The Committee recommends against bike lanes on Roscoe because of insufficient right-of-way, and wetlands.)

ACTION 2. Construct sidewalks to fill in the gaps on A1A from Duval County to Mickler Road and landscape existing sidewalk sections and new sections.

## **OBJECTIVE III**

**A1A is the entrance way to the Community, both at the North end at the Duval County line and at the South end at Vilano Beach. The entrances create an identity, a “Sense of Place.”**

ACTION 1. Adopt Architectural Guidelines for commercial development on A1A.

ACTION 2. Continue the beautification of the north A1A medians by planting oak trees which will add arching spans in 10 years. Add flowers to the medians. Add wells, irrigation systems.

ACTION 3. Landscape the sidewalks for shade; beautify with flowers.

ACTION 4. Landscape the entrance into Vilano, coming off the Vilano Bridge.

ACTION 5. Support an Overlay District Zoning for A1A.

## **OBJECTIVE IV**

**Resolve and correct the drainage problems in District 4 to protect lives, property, and the environment. These drainage problems are specific to different areas of the District.**

ACTION 1. All drainage improvements should protect the receiving bodies of water from pollutants from paved areas.

ACTION 2. Encourage the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District to continue with the Engineering Study to evaluate, recommend improvements, and implement drainage improvements as quickly as possible.

ACTION 3. Encourage the County and residents of North Beach to work together for a solution to flooding in North Beach.

## **OBJECTIVE V**

**Fire and Police services should meet the needs of the Ponte Vedra urban areas and Palm Valley/Vilano Beach urbanizing areas.**

ACTION 1. Support the Tri-Data, Inc. Fire Service Study recommendations to improve the delivery of fire and rescue protection to the Community.

ACTION 2. The Sheriff's Office should significantly increase patrols of the beach parking areas.

## **OBJECTIVE VI**

ACTION 1. Consider burial of all utility lines over a period of years.

ACTION 2. Enact zoning restrictions on phone and radio towers in or near residential areas..



## **Culture and Leisure Activities**

### District 4 Vision Process

Steering Committee:

Ruffin Beckwith, Chair

Hetty Dick, Member

Janine Rinderknecht, Member

Chris Kuhn, St. Johns County Planning

## FOCUS STATEMENT

The importance of cultural and leisure activities to the citizens of our district cannot be overstated. They contribute significantly to the common good, to the general quality of life, to the expansion of horizons for our youth, to physical and spiritual well-being, and to the acceptance of diversity into our lives. It is our objective to prepare a document that will establish the long range strategy for the District in the area of culture and leisure, one that will guide us into the next century.

This area has two primary objectives: 1. Determine the resources currently available within the District and a form strategy to preserve and enhance these resources. 2. Determine unavailable resources that can be acquired through the establishment of new programs.

### OBJECTIVE I

**The Beaches. The beautiful beaches characteristic to District 4 are the greatest leisure and recreational resource of the community. These beaches play a defining role in our quality of life, and have affected many people's decision to visit or move to District 4. The community recognizes that the beaches and associated dunes are environmentally sensitive and a continuously changing ecosystem, and their protection is a foremost priority. Additionally, because the beaches are a natural resource and recreational magnet, the provision of public access for present and future generations is of major importance.**

ACTION 1. Eliminate all vehicular traffic on the beach, excluding bicycles, north of the Fiddler's Green restaurant location in Vilano/North Beaches area.

ACTION 2. Through the cooperation of County and State agencies, local schools, and the citizens of District 4, the beaches and their associated dunes will be monitored and surveyed for their protection, enhancement, and renourishment needs.

ACTION 3. In order to provide public access to the beaches for present and future generations, all County-owned beach access easements will be surveyed annually to prevent encroachment and loss of land; furthermore, easements will be clearly identified and developed as necessary.

ACTION 4. In conjunction with the identification and future development of beach access easements, provide vehicle parking, public restrooms, bicycle racks, and picnic facilities as necessary.

ACTION 5. Expand the construction plans for Mickler Beach Parking to include picnic facilities, public restrooms, bicycle security rack, and shaded area.

ACTION 6. Allow the beaches, Matanzas Bay, and the North River to play short-term and long-range roles in the redevelopment and infrastructure improvement plans for the Vilano Road District.

## **OBJECTIVE II**

**The Parks. District 4 is a community characterized by single-family and multi-family planned unit developments which often provide small parks and recreational areas within individual developments. However, there is a need to acquire larger, consolidated tracts of parkland in the District, as well as undertake beautification and education efforts. The District is home to approximately 12,000 acres of public parks and beaches, including the 11,500 acre Guana State Park and Wildlife Management Area in the center of the community. In conjunction with the regular acquisition of neighborhood and community parks, the District should capitalize upon its existing park resources.**

ACTION 1. Coordinate and communicate with Guana State Park Rangers, State Park officials, and Friends of Guana to educate the community on Guana's existing facilities, trails, guided tours, natural resources, and long-range plans for future improvements.

ACTION 2. Initiate and coordinate efforts in District schools to include educational activities and field trips to Guana State Park.

ACTION 3. With the aid of Guana Rangers and interested community organizations, explore the feasibility and secure a location for a much-desired northern access to Guana State Park near the CR210/Mickler Road Cutoff intersection.

ACTION 4. Initiate a Beautification effort to clean up and enhance all District parks and facilities, specifically North Shores' parks and boat ramp.

ACTION 5. Provide for the continuing beautification and enhancement of District 4 parks and facilities through creative partnerships between the County, local schools, volunteer organizations, and civic groups.

ACTION 6. Coordinate with Guana State Park Rangers to explore the feasibility and steps necessary to improve the existing trails within Guana Park.

ACTION 7. Secure land and devise an innovative, attractive plan that will provide for a boat ramp, fishing area, and park to be located underneath and flanking the new CR210 Bridge upon construction.

**OBJECTIVE III**

**The North Shores Community Center.** The North Shores Community Center is an outstanding resource for the District 4 citizens of the North Shores and Vilano Beach communities. The community building, the associated ballfield, and adjacent wooded area provide a location for the citizens to meet, recreate, and hold annual or weekend events.

- ACTION 1. Ensure that the North Shores Community Center and facilities are maintained, enhanced, and available to the public for their use.
  
- ACTION 2. Locate and construct a boardwalk that extends from the northwest corner of the Community Center’s property to the North River/Intracoastal Waterway.
  
- ACTION 3. Provide the North Shores and Vilano Beach community with an additional public tennis court to be located at the Community Center or in the immediate vicinity.
  
- ACTION 4. Explore the feasibility and demand for a small platform structure and picnic facility that could be used for outdoor gatherings and informal performances.

**OBJECTIVE IV**

**The Center at Ponte Vedra Beach.** The Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is a recent asset to the District 4 community, and its initial success looks to secure its presence in the area for the future. The Center is a community and cultural facility providing the District with a meeting place for non-profit, community, and for-profit groups; the Center offers educational workshops and leisure programs for adults, teenagers, youth and preschool children.

- ACTION 1. Support The Center in its efforts to promote the current curriculum and to expand the number and variety of classes and activities available to the public.
  
- ACTION 2. Support the expansion of current space or securing of more suitable space for The Center.
  
- ACTION 3. Recognize and enlist The Center as a primary resource and facilitator in the active pursuit of a “Community Calendar” or “clearinghouse” for District-wide information.

## OBJECTIVE V

**The Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. The Library is perhaps the most valuable District-wide cultural resource. The Library houses in excess of 52,500 books and periodicals, and they have acquired computer hardware and software for the public's use. The Library also provides the District with a place to hold community meetings and presentations. As the growing population continues to place demands upon the Library, the facility is faced with shortages in square footage for additional book shelving area, meeting rooms, and computer activities space. The Library must continue to be a functional and accessible outlet for culture and leisure activities in District 4.**

ACTION 1 Coordinate the efforts and interests of local community groups to reach a collective decision on the future expansion of the Library.

ACTION 2. Create a Library Expansion Master Plan to ensure that plans for expansion address the future use of adjacent Library property as park or open space. The Plan for the expansion and the park should be a creative, collaborative effort in order to the maximize building efficiency while providing a public green space.

ACTION 3. Consider the inclusion of the St. Johns County Library System into the County Comprehensive Plan and the County Capital Improvement Plan.

## OBJECTIVE VI

**The Vilano Road Business District. The Vilano Road Business District entails the commercial businesses and restaurants lining Vilano Road extending from the pier (Old Vilano Bridge) at the westerly end to the Atlantic Ocean and beach at the easterly terminus. The construction of the new Usina Bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway rendered the Old Vilano Bridge to a pier while relocating a number of vehicular trips one block north of the Vilano Road Business District. In its wake, however, the new bridge has created an incredible planning opportunity for visioning and redevelopment. The business owners and citizens envision this road becoming a corridor of unique shops and festive dining surrounded by natural resources and leisure activities. The business district needs basic infrastructure improvements that will immediately enhance vehicular accessibility and pedestrian activity. Additionally, the area requires economic development and an overall design framework which will allow the business district to evolve into its vision as a community and visitor destination.**

ACTION 1. Establish a greater communication network between the County and Vilano Road business owners.

- ACTION 2. Create a Vilano Road Business District Master Development Plan for the Vilano Road Business District that will address various issues including: pedestrian activity, infrastructure and parking, economic development, design and landscaping, natural resource utilization, and financing.
- ACTION 3. Commission an engineering study to investigate the safety issues surrounding the pier (Old Vilano Bridge) and to determine the specific structural needs and costs associated with rehabilitation. Based upon study conclusions, the Master Development Plan, and public interest, determine the best use for the pier in the future.
- ACTION 4. Include County officials, Vilano Road business owners, and adjacent residential property owners in all discussions contributing to a plan for the Business District.
- ACTION 5. Assist the Business District representatives in their search for private development candidates for the redevelopment effort.
- ACTION 6. Address the current transition of Vilano Road from a State Road to a County Road in the Master Development Plan. Ensure that FDOT and other allocated monies are utilized to achieve objectives established in the Plan.

## **OBJECTIVE VII**

**Bicycle Path & Sidewalk Master Plan.** As mentioned in a previous objective, much of District 4 is dominated by developments which do not interconnect or access more than one arterial. Advancing this development pattern is the north-south orientation of the District's boundaries, the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway, and its major artery, State Road A1A. The result is a series of fractionalized developments isolated from one another and the surrounding land uses. Throughout the Visioning Process, there has been a recurring theme regarding the lack of connectivity in the community. Furthermore, as envisioned ACTION Statements are implemented, how will they be accessible by the community? The result of this situation has been an overwhelming desire to create and implement a Bicycle Path and Sidewalk Master Plan.

- ACTION 1. Create and implement a Bicycle Path and Sidewalk Master Plan for District 4 that addresses the following community concerns:
- ▶ bicycle and pedestrian safety;
  - ▶ enhanced community cohesiveness;
  - ▶ utilization of existing and future resources;
  - ▶ convenience and accessibility to surrounding land uses;
  - ▶ adequate design guidelines for bicycle paths and sidewalks;

- ▶ roadway congestion;
- ▶ personal health and fitness.

ACTION 2. Ensure that the Master Plan acts upon the Visioning Process Culture and Leisure Committee’s recommendations and prioritized road segments. Further, allow for active public participation in the design and implementation process of this Plan. Consult the listing of prioritized road segments following this Objective and Action Statements.

ACTION 3. Utilize the bicycle paths outlined in the Master Plan to connect the North Shores community with the Ponte Vedra and Palm Valley communities.

ACTION 4. Construct, repair, or retrofit all existing sidewalk and bicycle path deficiencies in order to create a complete system.

ACTION 5. Utilize the Master Plan to increase safe, public access to the beaches as well as to future facilities.

ACTION 6. Create a safe bicycle and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere along Roscoe Boulevard and County Road 210.

ACTION 7. Ensure that safe bicycle and pedestrian access is provided to all schools and public buildings.

ACTION 8. Require all new construction to provide a sidewalk and bicycle path accessing their development; investigate the feasibility of retrofitting existing developments with a sidewalk and bicycle path which would, at a minimum, “stub out (into)” the development.

ACTION 9. Include a bicycle path and sidewalk in the design and construction of the new Palm Valley Bridge.

ACTION 10. Ensure that all bicycle paths and sidewalks take into consideration the needs of the senior, youth, and handicapped populations. Measures should include, but are not limited to, accessibility ramps, crosswalk signals, appropriate road striping, shading, etc.

ACTION 11. Provide for the creative design and implementation of the Master Plan to ensure its functionality and adaptability to changing conditions.

Listing of Prioritized Road Segments for the Bicycle Path and Sidewalk Master Plan.

1. **Roscoe Boulevard, from SR A1A to CR 210.** There are significant issues that make this number one priority of the Plan somewhat problematic. However, the sub-committee felt strongly about this segment due to the narrow width of Roscoe Blvd. and associated safety problems. Additional reasons for its priority status are that Roscoe provides access to Landrum Middle School and the new Ocean Palm Elementary school being developed, and also because it will be a primary route of approach to the new Davis Park.
2. **Vilano Beach, SR A1A extending from Vilano Road north to 24th Street,** including access to the new Usina Bridge.
3. **Complete the breaks in the existing bicycle path and sidewalks on SR A1A in Ponte Vedra.** The group noted that the existing bike path/sidewalk between Butler Blvd. and Sawgrass Village has a number of gaps that force riders out onto A1A. Completion of this path should be a priority issue.
4. **SR A1A, south from sidewalk/bike path current termination point to Mickler's Landing.** The bike path on A1A now ends at the old Food Lion Ponte Vedra Pointe shopping center, and it should be continued to Mickler's to promote the availability of that public beach access point.
5. **Landrum Connector.** A sidewalk and bike path on the connecting road between CR 210 and Roscoe Blvd., where Landrum Middle School and the new Ocean Palms Elementary school are located, is important for obvious safety and accessibility reasons.
6. **Ponte Vedra Blvd., from The Lodge location to Mickler's public beach access point.** The existing path on Ponte Vedra Blvd. between the Ponte Vedra Club and The Lodge currently receives heavy use. Extension of the path south to Mickler's would, again, assist in opening up the public beach access point to bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
7. **Vilano Road.** Where this segment falls on the priority list is somewhat arbitrary and subject to change, as it will depend upon the entire redevelopment scheme for this stretch between the beach and the Old Vilano Bridge.
8. **CR 210, from SR A1A to Davis Park.** This segment is another very dangerous road segment that will be more heavily traveled in the coming years; it is the other main artery approaching Davis Park from the east and north.
9. **SR A1A, from Mickler's Road Cutoff and Beach Parking to the Guana State Park North Parking facility.** This will be the first step in uniting the North Shores and Ponte Vedra/Palm Valley communities.
10. **SR A1A, from 24th Street in Vilano to the Guana State Park South Parking facility.** This bicycle path/sidewalk will be the second step in the aforementioned unification effort.



**11. Ponte Vedra Lakes Blvd., from SR A1A to the Butler Blvd. interchange ramp.** This will give Marsh Landing residents access to the A1A bike path/sidewalk, and consequently, it will yield access to the library and points south.

**12. SR A1A, from the Guana North Parking facility to the Guana South Parking facility.** This will be the final step in linking the north and south communities.

## OBJECTIVE VIII

**A Community Focal Point.** Throughout the Visioning Process there has been an attempt to locate and identify a community focal point. There has been discussion to the effect that there is not a central, accessible location that is suitable for family gathering, socializing, hosting special events, or passive relaxation. Therefore, in an effort to improve the sense of community, there is interest in developing such a focal point.

ACTION 1. Work with County Staff and citizens to locate a potential site for a Town Green which would be central and accessible to all District residents.

ACTION 2. Enlist public input in the development and design of the Town Green in order to create a sense of community ownership.

ACTION 3. Research the Town Green concept as implemented in other communities. The study should include an exploration of issues detailing the following:

- ▶ public use, function, and design of the Green;
- ▶ Town Green maintenance and associated responsibilities;
- ▶ economic feasibility and opportunities;
- ▶ traditional and creative financing techniques;
- ▶ land ownership and innovative joint ventures between public and private entities.

ACTION 4. Provide the Town Green with basic public facilities and attributes which will assist in the utility and popularity of the site.

## OBJECTIVE IX

**Special Events.** There is recognition that cultural events, festivals, and artistic exhibitions are anchored in the communities surrounding District 4; and, to this end, the District has become a drive-through community for those traveling to these various weekend events. The citizens of District 4 seek to establish and host cultural events, and enhance current activities, that will complement those of the surrounding areas while strengthening the sense of community within the District.

ACTION 1. Designate a group, agency, or business to be the District-wide clearinghouse for information. Commission this entity to work with community groups and citizens toward enhanced coordination and communication of events and information.

ACTION 2. Commission the clearinghouse entity to establish, or initiate with another existing

informational resource, a Community Calendar for the District.

**ACTION 3.** Establish a Community Group Resource Directory that details the contact person, function, resources, and events for all community groups in District 4.

**ACTION 4.** Encourage all community groups to utilize the designated clearinghouse as an informational hub for the distribution and collection of information within the District.

**ACTION 5.** Initiate a District 4 Annual Cultural and Competition Weekend that would include community activities, cultural displays, arts and crafts, and athletic contests for the citizens of North Shores/Vilano Beach and Ponte Vedra/Palm Valley.

## **Compendium**

The District 4 Visioning Committee on Culture and Leisure Activities set out to determine a dozen or so major issues on which it could focus in the short time allotted for the Visioning process; specifically, the Committee focused on resources currently available in the District that can be enhanced and currently unavailable resources that need to be established. Philosophically, there were several themes that emerged throughout the Visioning meetings held in the North Shores and Ponte Vedra communities. These recurring themes are detailed in the following paragraphs.

The first theme is that there is a strong sense of disconnection and frACTIONalization among the citizens of the District. However, there is an earnest desire to overcome the structural and physical reasons for those feelings and to begin to foster a greater sense of community.

Secondly, there is a great demand for better communication among citizens and community groups of District 4. There is an identified need for a central clearinghouse of information and activities in the culture and leisure area. Occasional Committee comments touched on the communications needs in the various Visioning areas, such as local governance, land use, and infrastructure; therefore, the Committee steering group suspects the communication issue will be a common theme for all committees.

Next, there is a universal sense that we, District 4 residents, are very fortunate in terms of our existing assets; however, we do not take full advantage of these current resources. There is a need for local education as to our resources (i.e., Guana Park), and a greater awareness and sense of pride for what is part of our daily existence in District 4.

Finally, there is a common hope that this Visioning process is not too late, but also, there is a feeling that it might very well be. Ponte Vedra in particular appears to be a perfect example of a community that has experienced extraordinary growth with absolutely no master plan to follow, no particular

sense of where it is going. Fractionalization of the community has already occurred, and consequently, we are faced with trying to fix and mend what should never have been broken.

Nevertheless, there was a positive and optimistic spirit in this volunteer group, and some very specific OBJECTIVES and ACTIONS were identified. It is our sincere hope that this effort will not go unrewarded, that the work of this committee will be further refined at the County Staff level, to ultimately become part of the visioning fabric that will guide District 4 for many years to come.

## Culture and Leisure Activities Sub-Group Participants

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273-3205 (FX)

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Ponte Vedra, 32082  
273-0268

Janine Rinderknecht, Member  
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North Beach/PVPV

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### Committee Participants:

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## **GOVERNANCE**

### **DISTRICT 4 VISION PROCESS**

#### Governance Subcommittee

Andy Abate, Co-Chairman

Elaine Dilbeck, Chairman

Chris Benjamin, St. Johns County Administration

Louise Leve

Ester Marshall

# VISION STATEMENT

The environment of District 4 is one in which local government and the community work together as equal partners for the benefit of all citizens in the District and in which trust and integrity are shared values.

## Focus Statement

The role of the Governance Subcommittee in the visioning process is (1) to re-establish the theme that the people govern themselves and (2) to establish guidelines for effectively communicating with the officials to whom we delegate the powers and responsibilities of government.

The visioning process is really an evaluation of previous visions and their relevance to the community of today. The community as it exists today reflects the vision of government past; the changes which are currently taking place are elements of the vision of government present; and the impact of these past and present visions are what we are evaluating as we attempt to preserve and improve our quality of life in terms of future government.

We must examine, modify, or stop those ideas and practices which are inconsistent with our community values and desires, support and sustain the elements and services provided by government that are beneficial, and provide detailed alternatives based on community standards to replace inadequate or failed components of the existing system.

## OBJECTIVE I

**Encourage the pro-active involvement of District 4 citizens in County government.**

ACTION 1. Promote the formation of citizen advisory committees, with representatives from different affinity groups within the District (homeowners' associations, churches, etc.) to assist and communicate with County government.

ACTION 2. Identify and enlist a community leadership team of active citizens to network within District 4.

ACTION 3. Encourage commissioners and officials to regularly schedule town meetings to discuss public issues.

ACTION 4. Encourage the community leadership team and other representatives of District 4 to attend and review all local government meetings, at the County seat and elsewhere, and to create mechanisms (meetings, newsletters, etc.) to provide feedback to District 4 citizens, organizations, and groups.



## **OBJECTIVE II**

**Establish guidelines for effectively dealing with public officials.**

- ACTION 1.** Provide the citizens of District 4 with a video tutorial, pamphlet, and follow up speakers to explain the commission form of government and how it operates in the State of Florida.
- ACTION 2.** Provide every household in the District and the County with an updated County Directory.
- ACTION 3.** Dedicate a “HELP” phone line answered by a staff person capable of directing callers to appropriate department(s) for resolution of problems. The object of this ACTION is to connect callers with an actual person who can provide an answer within a reasonable amount of time.
- ACTION 4.** As soon as possible, train volunteers or hire interns to take over the duties described in ACTION 3.
- ACTION 5.** Create and distribute a short description of County government and provide job descriptions for those staff positions which are relevant to local government activities in District 4.
- ACTION 6.** Encourage citizens to contact their commissioners and local officials about problems and to assist in solving those problems by developing possible solutions.

## **OBJECTIVE III**

**With citizen assistance, County Government should implement a comprehensive, user-friendly information network for District 4.**

- ACTION 1.** Establish a County address on the Internet and create a County WEB page site, with access via computer from all libraries and public buildings.
- ACTION 2.** Make the annual report, budget, meeting agendas, and other relevant materials available, in several formats, to libraries, the Internet, and other appropriate District 4 media.
- ACTION 3.** Describe and explain “The State of the County” once a year in a manner which reaches all County residents.

ACTION 4. Support the funding of a local GIS system for accurate reporting of County demographics and data.

ACTION 5. Require all cable providers to dedicate a clear channel for government/education/public programming in accordance with FCC regulations.

ACTION 6. Use today's technologies - interactive polling, for example - to invite citizen participation in government.

## **OBJECTIVE IV**

**Construct an inventory of District 4 needs and resources.**

ACTION 1. Produce an accurate map of the District which details District resources as identified by the community and by local officials.

ACTION 2. Insist on accurate and timely reporting of taxes collected vs. taxes expended in District 4.

ACTION 3. Establish ownership of all District resources, keeping in mind that those who create a resource should maintain it.

## **OBJECTIVE V**

**Establish a volunteer committee or group to evaluate, on a timely basis, the progress made in achieving the objectives of the District 4 Vision Plan and to suggest modifications and additions to the Plan.**

# FINANCE

## DISTRICT 4 VISION PROCESS

### Finance Committee

Jerry Swietnicki, Chairman

Ed (Mike) Barrett

Phil Buranam

Harold Pruner

Jonathan Mantay, Deputy County Administrator

## **Finance**

The Finance Committee did not develop a separate report in the format of the other working groups. As pointed out earlier, this Committee developed a matrix which was then utilized by the Steering Committee to prioritize the individual action statements. It was this effort that tied the entire process together.