

RESOLUTION NO. 2002- 242

A RESOLUTION OF THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, ST. JOHNS COUNTY FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY 2020 VISION.

WHEREAS, the residents and interested parties within the Southeast St. Augustine area have worked together to develop the **Southeast Community 2020 Vision**; and,

WHEREAS, the **Southeast Community 2020 Vision** reflects the future for Southeast St. Johns County and displays all the desires aspects and attributes that the residents and interested parties wish for their future; and,

WHEREAS, many of the Elements identified within the **Southeast Community 2020 Vision** can only be accomplished with the assistance of St. Johns County; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners recognize that many of the proposals within the **Southeast Community 2020 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 **Southeast Community 2020 Vision** and directs that it be utilized within St. Johns County as a working guide for decisions affecting the Southeast St. Johns County area in part or in whole.

PASSED AND ADOPTED, by the Board of County Commissioners, State of Florida, this 5th day of November, 2002.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

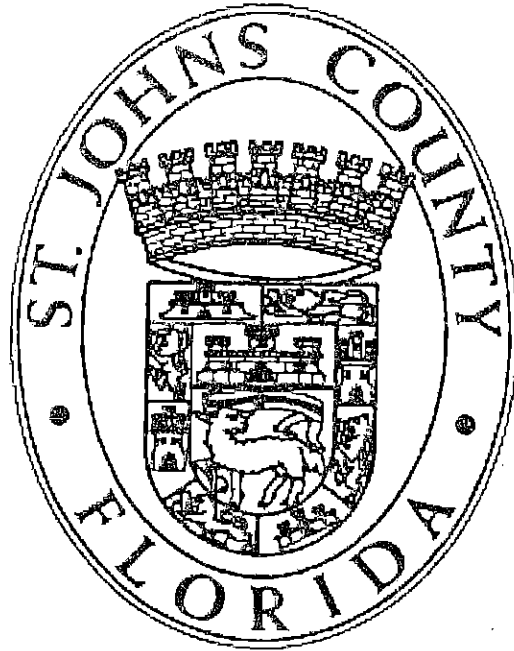
By: James E. Bryant
James E. Bryant, Chairman

ATTEST: Cheryl Strickland, Clerk

By: Patricia A. Grande



RENDITION DATE 11-12-02



SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY 2020 VISION

FOR

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

June 8, 2002

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY 2020 VISION

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Participants in the Vision

Many thanks for your hard work and long hours of consultation and review. Special thanks to Marc Jacalone, District 3 County Commissioner, Theresa Bishop, dir. and Vickie Renna of the Planning Dept., GIS, SASCA, St. Augustine Shores Service Corp., Kraig McLane and colleagues of the SJR Water Management District, Dr Patricia A. Gill, PhD, Prosperity Bank, Ancient City Surveying, Episcopal Church of the Reconciliation, Mike Reed, St. Aug. Record and many others. For more information or to comment contact: Leo O'Farrell (794-4755, email Southeastcounty@cs.com or Roger Van Ghent (797-5997, email rogervg@mac.com).

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SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY 2020 VISION

Vision Statement

The Southeast Vision Community 2020 Vision is of a well planned community with attractively designed parks, eye-pleasing open space, conservation areas consisting of pedestrian and bike friendly subdivisions that are architecturally pleasing. The commercial, industrial and agricultural uses will sustain and support the community residential development. These uses will be contained within the campus park settings that are clean and compact and are in harmony with the natural environment that we currently enjoy. The Southeast Vision Area we envision will function as a safe, attractive, and sustainable community that will serve as a model community admired throughout the United States

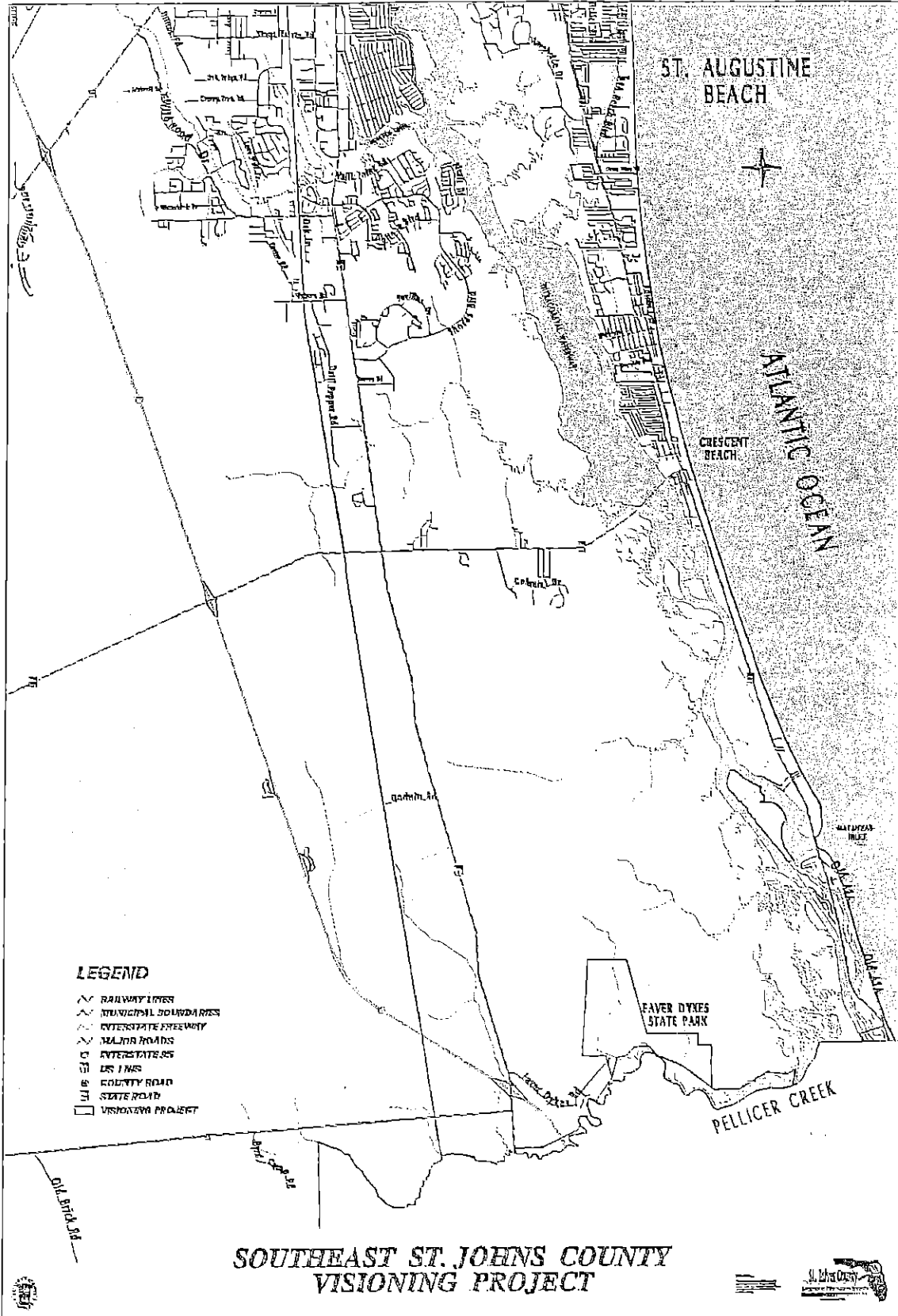
SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY 2020 VISION AREA

BOUNDARIES

On the East, the Matanzas River (ICW), on the South, Pellicer Creek and the Flagler County line, on the West, Interstate 95 and State Road 207 and on the North Wildwood Drive and Moultrie Creek. See map on page 2.

CRITICAL CONSIDERATION

The residents of the Vision Area hereby request that a **Southeast Area Overlay District** be created as soon as possible to implement the action items spelled out in the vision document. The residents also petition the St. Johns County Board of Commissioners to initiate a **Southeast Area Sector Plan** for the Southeast Vision Area based upon this Vision. Within this document a **Town Center Special Area Plan** should be created for the Dupont Center area. We request that the Board hire a consultant who will utilize our *Southeast Community 2020 Vision* to create an overall comprehensive vision design, including goals, objectives, action statements and a map, and recommend the changes to be made to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations (LDR'S) that would implement our Southeast Vision.



**SOUTHEAST ST. JOHNS COUNTY
VISIONING PROJECT**

SE Vision Area Map

I. Future Land Use and Growth Management Element

Focus Statement

The Goal of the Future Land Use and Growth Management Element is the orderly, efficient and visually pleasing use of lands within the defined Vision area, and the preservation and maintenance of its natural resources, while providing for the health, safety and welfare of its residents.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL

The Southeast Community 2020 Vision area is one of the County's last remaining areas of both sparse population and sparse development. We recognize the probability of its impending growth. However, with growth management strategies, community involvement, developer cooperation, area-wide dedication and positive action, we believe the citizens of the Southeast Vision Community can influence that growth and development and see it occur in the way we have planned. As a means to this goal, we recommend the adoption of the following objectives and actions. Until these are achieved, we petition the Board of County Commissioners to invoke a moratorium on changes to the existing Future Land Use Map 2015.

Objective 1 Land Use

- Action 1:** Eliminate urban sprawl through efficiently designed mixed-use developments that promote clustered land uses into park or campus like settings compatible with the natural environment.
- Action 2:** Integrate commercial, and public or civic facilities, into park or campus settings with pedestrian and bicycle friendly transportation systems.
- Action 3:** Encourage the retention of agricultural and silviculture areas, through the use of conservation easements and incentives.

Transportation

- Action 1:** Interconnect all neighborhoods with efficient transportation routes that provide for controlled and limited vehicular access.
- Action 2:** Require that development plans include the capability of and the design and location of pedestrian friendly multi-purpose paths, bike paths, hiking trails, greenways/blueways, linear green space and wildlife corridors, as a means of interconnecting individual neighborhoods and abutting developments.

Environmental

- Action 1:** Preserve and protect identified open lands within the entire Southeast Vision Area.

Housing

- Action 1:** Require that development plans include the construction of affordable housing to support the anticipated industrial and business growth in the Southeast Vision Area.

Objective 2 Unique Land Quadrants

To better plan for existing and future development, the Southeast Vision Area is divided into four unique land quadrants bisected vertically by U.S.1 and laterally by S.R. 206. The four quadrants consist of the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest areas and are defined below:

- Northeast Quadrant defined by Moultrie Creek on the north, the Matanzas River on the east, S.R. 206 to the south, and U.S.1 on the west.
- The Northwest Quadrant is defined by S.R. 206 on the south, Interstate 95 on the west, S.R. 207, Wildwood Drive / Moultrie Creek on the north and U.S.1 on the east.
- The Southeast Quadrant is defined by S.R. 206 on the north, the Matanzas River on the east, Flagler County Line and Pellicer Creek on the south, and U.S.1 on the north.

- The Southwest Quadrant is defined by U.S.1 on the east, Interstate 95 on the west and S.R. 206 on the north.

Northeast Quadrant

The Northeast Quadrant's current land use is predominantly residential with mixed single family and multi-family residential. It has minimal commercial and industrial use in the US 1 corridor. Continuing its growth pattern in essentially the same manner could produce a sprawl of isolated pockets of residential property remote from commercial consumer services.

- Action 1.** Encourage clustered commercial/consumer service areas within new residential PUDs.
- Action 2.** Encourage multi-use paths connecting residential and commercial uses.
- Action 3.** Encourage communities where residents can safely and conveniently walk or bicycle to commercial outlets along visually pleasing, multi-use walkways. This would mitigate the already existing problem of almost total reliance on the automobile for even simple lifestyle functions.

Northwest Quadrant

The Northwest Quadrant's current land use is predominantly agriculture, silviculture and horticulture between the Florida East Coast Railroad and I 95, with mixed residential and commercial in the Wildwood Road, SR 207 and US 1 corridors.

- Action 1:** Establish clustered residential, commercial and public or civic facilities on the north side of S.R. 206, between U.S.1 and Interstate 95, within a 3000 foot roadside margin, avoiding wetland impact.
- Action 2:** Develop a secondary road system that approximately bisects this quadrant from Wildwood Drive on the north to S.R. 206 on the south, avoiding wetland impact.
- Action 3:** Establish a 1000' buffer strip parallel and east of Interstate 95, keeping it as rural silviculture (R/S) or native vegetation with no billboards allowed.
- Action 4:** Establish a 100' buffer on each side of Moses Creek and its flowing tributaries, west of U.S.1.

Southeast Quadrant

This quadrant's current land use is almost exclusively Silviculture, with sparse single-family residential development along U.S.1 and S.R. 206. This is probably the least developed and populated of the four quadrants. Much of the acreage is coastal marshland being considered for acquisition by the St. Johns River Water Management District and is part of the NE Florida Blueway Phase II Project.

- Action 1:** Maintain existing patterns of residential development along S.R. 206
- Action 2:** Zone the NW section of this quadrant for residential development. Encourage a broad spectrum of interconnected neighborhoods including affordable housing.
- Action 3:** Require the inclusion of the design and location of Greenways, multi-use paths, a public boat ramp and community park and a secondary road system to service these facilities.
- Action 4:** Conserve and protect the remaining open land within this quadrant.

Southwest Quadrant

The Southwest Quadrant's current land use is almost exclusively Agriculture, Silviculture and Horticulture, with sparse residential use along the US 1 and SR 206 corridors.

- Action 1:** Treat the Southwest Quadrant as a possible St. Johns County "Triangle of Opportunity", to be utilized by large scale, eco-friendly industrial or office park and campus settings defined by commercial land uses. The "Triangle of Opportunity" shall be located immediately south of S.R. 206 and west of U.S.1, avoiding wetland impact & Cracker Branch. Refer to the

following Land Use and Community Design document entitled, "Exhibit A - Industrial/Business Campus"

Objective 3 Highway Corridors

Within the Southeast Vision Area along U.S.1, S.R. 206, S.R. 207 and Wildwood Drive, create special regulations to control various development standards, including but not limited to types of land uses, building set backs, road access ways, road buffers, land clearing, landscape, sign and design standards.

Land Use

- Action 1:** To prevent strip commercial and /or industrial roadside development, require these types of land uses to be clustered into park or campus like settings.
- Action 2:** Require commercial and residential development to be efficiently clustered together, to allow for the close proximity of commercial consumer services to residents. This in turn will minimize dependency on the automobile and will promote the use of bicycle and walking paths.
- Action 3:** Set industrial and commercial land uses well back from major arterial roads and establish buffers or "greenbelts" adjacent to these major roadways. Set street-side parking behind vegetative screens, earth berms, landscaped areas and/or walls.
- Action 4:** Minimize cell and radio towers heights by using stealth tower design and multiple uses for each tower and require an environmental impact statement for each tower, prior to permitting.
- Action 5:** Review and coordinate all county zoning, land use regulations and the Future Land Use Map 2015, and the current environmental, building and traffic laws with these proposed elements of the Southeast Community 2020 Vision.

Transportation

- Action 1:** Separate all development from major arterial roads with frontage roads.
- Action 2:** All neighborhood communities and adjoining subdivisions or developments shall be interconnected with roads, linking all phases of the developed communities. The links shall not be done through the major arteries such as U.S.1 or the state or county roads.
- Action 3:** Control the design and placement of major entrance access ways of industrial and commercial developments leading to and from major arterial roads.

Design

- Action 1:** Require that the corridors of U.S.1, S.R. 206, S.R. 207 and Wildwood Drive, be enhanced by the planting of new, and the preservation of existing native trees, and the prudent use of open space in the roadside setbacks fronting residential and commercial property alike, with attractive and environmentally efficient landscaping and groundcover.
- Action 2:** Identify the start of Rt.1 north at the junction of Interstate 95 as being St. Johns County's principal "Southeast Gateway" to Historic St. Augustine, for north bound travelers. Erect eye-pleasing, tasteful and well-designed signage to declare it so.
- Action 3:** Revitalize Dupont Center, and Interstate 95 / S.R. 206 junction as they become major "Hubs" of our Vision area. Consider these as optimum locations for government satellite services.
- Action 4:** The SE Vision Group requests that an Overlay District and an Architectural Review Board (ARB) be created as soon as possible to protect and control the highway land uses, transportation access ways as well as create architectural standards and landscape requirements.

Landscaping / Tree Protection

- Action 1:** Emphasize tree preservation adjacent to all major arteries.
- Action 2:** Landscape all commercial and industrial developments both within the development and adjacent to major arterials. Screen parking areas from the view of the road with landscaping and/or earth berms instead of screening with walls or fences. Utilize native landscape materials and/ or Xeriscaping.

- Action 3:** Emphasize landscaping, Xeriscaping, tree planting and preservation and encourage buffering at abutting side and rear property lines of commercial and industrial use property

Coordination

- Action 1:** Identify and coordinate effort in conjunction with all federal, state and local agencies, boards and departments having jurisdiction or oversight powers in our Vision Area, and all environmental, ecological, conservation and wildlife organizations which are currently active within it, or may be expected to become so in the future.
- Action 2:** Seek information and guidance from SJC Growth Management Department, Parks and Recreation, Utility Departments, Land Acquisition and Management Program (L.A.M.P.) and SJC School Board and coordinate efforts for land use with FDOT, Army Corp of Engineers, St. Johns River Water Management District and other such entities.

Overlay considerations

Land Use

- Action 1:** Prohibit residential development fronting on the highway other than required frontage for designed and landscaped entry and exit drives.
- Action 2:** Require consistent and uniform, substantial front lot line setback requirement for commercial and industrial development, with landscaped planting between highway and service roads.

Transportation

- Action 1:** Require service roads parallel to the highway at commercial developments.
- Action 2:** Require long right turn deceleration lanes entering commercial developments.

Beautification

- Action 1:** On U.S.1, require Xeriscaped medians with fewer access cuts and longer left turn deceleration lanes, from Moultrie Creek south
- Action 2:** Require landscaped buffers instead of fences, or masonry walls along the highway to conceal residential, commercial and industrial development.
- Action 3:** Require continuous greenbelts on all boundaries between all individual abutting commercial, residential, industrial development and public service or utility uses. Each use shall the required buffer width mandated by land use regulations.

S.R. 206 (east) Corridor

Land Use

- Action 1:** Request a moratorium on all building permits issued at Dupont Center until land use studies, recommendations and changes to LDRs are completed.
- Action 2:** Limit commercial development and prohibit industrial development in this corridor.

Beautification

- Action 1:** Apply the same greenway and buffer requirements as on U.S.1. Provide for less density by requiring larger minimum lot sizes in residential subdivisions that abut clustered residential/consumer service developments.

S.R. 206 (west) Corridor

Land Use

Beautification

- Action 1:** Provide the same greenway and buffer requirements as on U.S.1.

Exhibit A - Industrial/Business Campus

Prospective Location:

Southeast Community 2020 Vision Area, Southwest Quadrant

Project:

Large Scale Industrial or Business Campus located east of Interstate 95, south of S.R. 206, west of U.S.1, bisected by FEC Railroad, in what might be considered a "Triangle of Opportunity" in St. Johns County.

Area:

Approximately 3600 acres, (+/- 5.6 sq. mi.) or roughly 9% of the Vision Area.

Vision:

An expansive eco-friendly industrial park bordered on the north and east sides by land having zoning classifications other than Industrial, kept back from S.R. 206 and U.S.1 by a minimum of .5 mile but with access from both 206 and Rt. 1. It should have a contiguous Greenway, roughly through its north/south corridor.

It should be designed and developed in total, by a single development entity who will be responsible for all phases of design, construction, infrastructure, utilities environmental compliance and control

It should have ample, areas of Xeriscaped open space between occupants, with native trees and plants. It should not be laid out in a grid pattern; rather in random industrial sites, sized and spaced as wetlands, buffers and upland grades dictate. It should be completely buffered from development on its north and east sides, which in all likelihood would be, clustered residential/ commercial.

It should have a continuous series of retention ponds interconnected by open streams or covered culverts, its location taking advantage of the wetlands located in the site. This waterway should serve to carry off storm and surface water drainage through the system of connected ponds in a manner engineered to cleanse the water as it progresses to Cracker Branch Creek, and Pellicer Creek, both tributaries of the Matanzas River.

Utilities should be underground. Parking areas should be interspersed with shade trees and moderately site-screened from a main interior, arterial roadway. Street and parking area lighting should be adequate but subdued, compatible with each other and of a design that would minimize skyward light pollution. Signage should be uniform in size, (or proportionate to building floor area) design and appearance except for logos. Portions of the area between groups of industries should be passive mini-parks with benches grassed areas, picnic tables, bicycle and walking paths (Much like the grounds at the Mayo Clinic complex in Jacksonville), designed to provide leisure and passive recreation for employees and visitors to the campus.

Other ideas will surface as the proposal is discussed in the Land Use sub-committee and with input from community residents.

Rationale:

A 1996 Financial Trends Report done voluntarily for the county contains the statement, "*Residential development creates expenditure drains, industrial development creates revenue surpluses and commercial development usually breaks even.*" This is a widely accepted growth management and assessment premise. St. Johns County would benefit greatly from a large-scale industrial park. There is ample available land in the combined four quadrants of our 40,000 acre (+/-64 square miles) Vision Area for development of affordable home construction, a commodity sadly lacking in St. Johns County. In fact it might be practical to offer incentives to encourage such development, since it is not currently a market of choice among builders. In addition, the northern portion of adjacent Flagler County would also be a viable location for affordable work force housing.

Also, this location for an industrial park is unique in that it is surrounded, in close proximity, by three major highways with ready access to two of them and has a railroad running through its entire north/south length.

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II. Architecture & Community Design Element

Focus Statement

Formulate guidelines and standards that can be applied to all commercial, industrial and multi-family developments, e.g., all new construction. These guidelines and standards should also apply to signs, building additions and exterior renovations. The site design and development standards should be consistent with the objectives and actions as established within this vision document. The objectives of such requirements are to protect residential communities, to cluster complimentary uses, to protect scenic views, natural habitats and the environment, and to enhance physical appearance through increased landscaping and signage controls.

Objective 1 Compatibility

The compatible relationship of architecture along roads in the Southeast Community is of critical public concern for any building or site improvements.

Action 1: Locate and configure all proposed developments, additions and renovations in a manner visually harmonious with the terrain and vegetation of a parcel and surrounding parcels.

Objective 2 Style and Design

The architectural design of structures and their materials and colors should be visually harmonious with the overall appearance of existing structures and natural surroundings. Ancillary buildings, sheds and structures should not be intrusive or obtrusive.

Action 1: Encourage consistent architectural style, color and textures throughout the Southeast Community Vision boundaries.

Action 2: All wall and ground signs (monument signs) shall be located and sized to an appropriate scale related to the style and features of the main buildings.

Action 3: Require facade, elevation and height compatibility within developments and neighborhoods.

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III. Recreation and Cultural Element

Focus Statement

The Recreation and Cultural Subcommittee recognizes the importance of recreational and cultural activities for both the citizens and visitors of St. Johns County within Southeast Vision Area. These activities contribute to the common good, enhance the quality of life, and promote the physical and spiritual well-being of the county's citizens and visitors. Our objective is to identify, preserve, protect and promote existing and future recreational and cultural activities within Southeast Vision Area for now and for future generations to enjoy.

There are several primary objectives identified by the Southeast Vision recreational and cultural sub-committee.

Goal A Recreation

Recreation contributes to the spiritual and physical well being of the citizens and visitors to our Vision area.

Objective 1 Resources

Identify existing resources and form a strategy to preserve and enhance these resources.

Action 1: In an effort to maximize the existing park resources, coordinate with other governmental agencies (i.e., SJRWMD, DEP, SJC School Board) to increase the use of existing natural, passive and active park lands and park facilities.

Action 2: Coordinate with the St. Johns Recreation Department to enhance existing parklands and park facilities. These parklands include, but are not limited to:

Recreation

Treaty Park
Gamble Rogers (school)
Middle Schools
Menendez High School
Shores Ball fields
Shores Shuffleboard court

Natural

Moses Creek Conservation Area
Favor-Dykes State Park
Vaill Point Park (Future)
Future Conservation Areas
Future State Parks

Cultural

Library (near future)
Library Site
Auditorium/theater
Menendez High School
Otis Mason
Community Auditorium
Community Center (future)
Lecture Groves (Favor-Dykes,
Moses Creek)
Osceola Site

Action 3: Coordinate with the St. Johns County SE Library Association and initiate the preservation of the remaining portion of the library site for passive recreational park uses.

Action 4: Coordinate SE Vision parkland needs with Florida's Department of Parks, the Friends of the Favor-Dykes Park and the St. Johns County Recreation Dept.

Objective 2 Land Acquisition

There are insufficient public parks and natural features for recreational enjoyment within the SE Vision Area. In order to solve this problem, which will increase as the area is developed, the SE Vision Group needs to establish an aggressive program to acquire conservation lands and parks. Wherever possible encourage and maintain existing treed areas.

Strategically locate future parklands within the SE Vision Area based on the projected population and adopted LOS standards for neighborhood, community and regional parks.

- Action 1:** Identify future needs for park sites including preservation lands and initiate a program to purchase these lands.
- Action 2:** Preserve natural open space and establish ecological and environmentally sensitive park areas.
- Action 3:** Obtain additional public land (such as passive parks) and identify specific lands to conserve. Set aside and preserve more trees and land for parks as development proceeds.
- Action 4:** Initiate a program to create pocket parks in commercial, industrial and residential areas.
- Action 5:** Encourage both the acquisition of conservation easements and the Transfer of Development Rights as another means of creating open spaces.
- Action 6:** Require all subdivisions to submit conservation plans to be reviewed by the county and the environmental management to be discussed with the subdivision community associations and developers. Encourage developers to participate in the community planning process.

Objective 3 Park Facilities

Identify existing and future active park facilities based on the projected population and LOS standards for these facilities.

- Action 1:** Identify future needs for ball fields and initiate a program to purchase lands and / or possible co-op with school board for use of school lands to fulfill these needs.
- Action 2:** Identify the need for a boat ramp accessible to U.S. Highway 1 near the Matanzas Inlet and initiate and coordinate a program to purchase lands and rights of way to fulfill this need.
- Action 3:** Initiate and coordinate efforts to build a community swimming pool.

Objective 4 Greenways / Blueways

Establish an interconnected and diverse Comprehensive Greenway System throughout the SE Vision Area that will provide for multi-purpose pathways, hiking trails, linear green space, wildlife corridors.

- Action 1:** Establish and protect natural areas with blueways, greenways and natural trails to connect passive parks. Become the envy of entire state for our Greenway system, landscaping, conservation, and wildlife protection.
- Action 2:** Develop walkable and friendly parks and connections and establish nature trails.
- Action 3:** Initiate and coordinate efforts to create multi-use paths (bike paths, jogging trail, etc.) connecting the existing subdivisions throughout the SE Vision Area.
- Action 4:** Initiate a program to create a contiguous greenbelt from Vail Point to Flagler County along the west shore of the Matanzas River.
- Action 5:** Encourage the County to establish Greenways adjacent to the west side of the SE Vision Area (west of Interstate 95) in the Greenways/Blueways Master Plan.

Goal B Cultural

The cultural arts (art, music, literature and fitness programs) shall be promoted and organized throughout the SE Vision Area.

Objective 1 Art Component

- Action 1:** Locate a central Community Center to allow for easy vehicular and pedestrian access within the SE Vision Area.
- Action 2:** Initiate and coordinate efforts to create a community center for Arts for local exhibits and arts and crafts classes including, but not limited to, painting, sculpture, pottery, woodworking, weaving, photography, etc.
- Action 3:** Install and maintain a convenient smooth wall or surface capable of being cleaned periodically or repainted. This wall would allow aspiring youthful artists and painters to display their creativity, provided the subject matter was suitable in content.

Objective 2 Music Component

- Action 1:** Arrange for various musical performances throughout the SE Vision Area.
- Action 2:** Invite local musicians (e.g., St. Augustine Jazz Society) and school choral and band groups to perform at SE Vision parks and community center.
- Action 3:** Invite national, state and local military bands to play at the community center. Musical performances shall celebrate national and spiritual holidays with appropriate music.
- Action 4:** Invite vocal and dance groups to perform and teach at parks and the community center.
- Action 5:** Construct a band shell at the new Southeast County Library site for presentation of music, lectures, readings, etc.

Objective 3 Theater, Literature and Lecture Component

- Action 1:** Establish a theater, literature and lecture series that can be enjoyed throughout the SE Vision Area both within the Community Center and located within open space areas.
- Action 2:** Establish appropriate open areas for outdoor presentation and events to be held at various parks and natural areas throughout the SE Vision Area. Within the parks provide for a natural seating (vandal-proof) area made of coquina or tabby so as to keep with the ambiance of the park setting.
- Action 3:** Organize a local lecturer series on relevant subjects pertaining to history, geography and genealogy.
- Action 4:** Invite local authors and poets to speak and sign their books.
- Action 5:** Organize cultural events, including, but not limited to, theatric presentations, travelogues, lectures, foreign language classes and special discussion groups to be held within the Community Center.

Objective 4 Physical Fitness Component

- Action 1:** Establish a SE Vision area physical fitness program.
- Action 2:** Initiate "self-help" instruction classes for all ages in areas of health, fitness and personal well-being.
- Action 3:** Establish nature trails or paths with benches and exercise stations. Include plaques that indicate distances traveled and prescribed exercises.

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IV. Environmental Element

Focus Statement

The community affirms a stewardship attitude toward our green areas, waterways and wildlife. This stewardship encompasses native landscaping and Xeriscaping, preservation of trees and natural areas, provision for buffers and green space, preservation of our water resources and a successful melding of nature and humans. The loss of any species (such as the recent loss of the Scrub-jay population in the SE) is unacceptable in our community.

Objective 1

Wildlife Preservation and Wildlife Observation

- Action 1:** Establish a nature/environmental education center within the SE Vision Area.
- Action 2:** Establish a wildlife and environmental stewardship program within the SE Vision Area.
- Action 3:** Establish compatibility between development and environment by avoiding wetland and upland fragmentation, nest and den destruction and loss of critical plant and animal habitats that define the bio-diversity in this area.
- Action 4:** Initiate a neighborhood habitat program that encourages wildlife friendly vegetation in the front and backyards, as well as along local street medians.
- Action 5:** Preserve and protect existing wildlife. Create underpasses and guide fences; avoid creating isolated and fragmented habitats; maintain a variety of habitats and wildlife corridors including greenways and blueways.
- Action 6:** Establish and protect bird roosts and rookeries throughout the area.
- Action 7:** Coordinate all activities such as prescribed burns, dredging and spoil storage, road improvement, road widening and landscaping by Federal, State and local agencies which impact wildlife, especially listed plant and animal species.

Objective 2

Potable Water

- Action 1:** Enforce conservation at the tap and educate the community about the dangers of over-consumption. Require local citizens, business and developments to utilize their irrigation systems when needed and never after rain. Strongly recommend the use of rain gauges and irrigation automatic shutoff systems.
- Action 2:** Monitor salt-water intrusion in the Floridan Aquifer by establishing test wells in the vision area.
- Action 3:** Establish proper water management programs to protect the native vegetative habitats and encourage Xeriscaping and native vegetative landscaping, gardens and plantings.
- Action 4:** Encourage conservation of water through the preservation of trees, which help to conserve water and clean the air.
- Action 5:** Encourage the use of permeable surfaces in low usage, spillover public parking areas, especially in parks, in an effort to replenish and preserve the surficial aquifer and groundwater systems.

Objective 3

Sanitary Sewer

- Action 1:** Require wastewater to be recycled and used for irrigation of golf courses and public lawns.
- Action 2:** Encourage a more aggressive program of regulation to control non-point source contaminants, especially those from fertilizers, pesticides, sewage and septic sludge and from anticipated water treatment processes such as reverse osmosis and desalinization.

Objective 4

Wildlife Friendly Stormwater Retention Ponds

The Vision area is subject to flooding, drainage problems and pollution. Many areas are in the lowest parts of the floodplain, and subject to significant insurance rates. Design retention ponds that are environmentally friendly and mimic nature's natural ecological systems.

- Action 1:** Redesign retention ponds and existing borrow pits to look like natural lakes.
- Action 2:** Create wildlife rookeries in the middle of large ponds, retention ponds and lakes by reconfiguring the contours and planting the appropriate trees and native vegetation.
- Action 3:** Support new stormwater retention designs that slow down the runoff process. Retention ponds and wetland projects shall be designed to limit and clean the flow of freshwater from developed areas and agricultural lands. Stormwater runoff shall be purged of toxic chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and sediments.
- Action 4:** Create secondary marsh-like pond systems within the retention areas to slow down surface water runoff and trap nutrients on-site. This will prevent high and rapid volumes of water runoff from reaching the estuary or rivers.
- Action 5:** Plant native vegetation around retention ponds and lakes instead of installing a chain link fence. Establish wildlife and native vegetation habitats within new retention pond designs. Create terraced retention ponds slopes that will allow foraging areas for shore and water birds.

Objective 5

Trees and Vegetation

- Action 1:** Establish a strong tree protection ordinance that requires shade trees to be planted with at least 67% total tree canopy cover on each lot.
- Action 2:** Prohibit the clear-cutting of trees.
- Action 3:** Urge the use of indigenous plants (drought tolerant and water wise) and use native landscaping or Xeriscaped trees and vegetation.
- Action 4:** Require shaded parking areas with smart tree plantings.
- Action 5:** Plant trees to shade air-conditioning units and minimize the energy costs of cooling.
- Action 6:** Plant wildflowers and butterfly friendly vegetation plants in the road medians and parklands.
- Action 7:** Encourage local governments and environmental organizations to offer educational programs and materials describing landscaping methods and use of native plants not dependent on fertilizer and irrigation.
- Action 8:** Save and protect all Champion and Protected trees as specified in the County tree ordinance.
- Action 9:** Require local developers to use native vegetation and Xeriscaping that use substantially lower quantities of water and fertilizers.

Objective 6

Buffers

- Action 1:** As recommended by scientific studies, establish buffers to protect water quality, improve stormwater runoff and improve wetland habitats for wetland dependant wildlife, e.g.: Bald Eagles, Swallow-tailed Kites, Wood Storks, Otters and Turtles.
- Action 2:** Establish a minimum 300 foot buffer along all water bodies, streams and wetlands that flow into the aquatic preserves and intracoastal marshes.
- Action 3:** Establish and maintain natural wildlife buffers around wetlands
- Action 4:** Protect Moultrie Creek, the Matanzas Estuary, Salt Marshes, Pellicer Creek, the Intracoastal Waterway and all other creeks, branches, ponds and lakes with substantial buffers at least double the current buffer requirement.
- Action 5:** Establish native vegetative buffers around all commercial developments.

Objective 7

Best Management Practices

- Action 1:** Use Best Management Practices (BMP) for Golf Courses, Silviculture, Landscaping, Mosquito Control, Lawn Fertilization and Pest Control. Minimize polluted lawn and golf course stormwater runoff.
- Action 2:** Minimize the use of pesticides by encouraging natural systems to control pests. Use pesticides and fertilizers that do not harm wildlife and their habitats. Do not use any toxicant, a chemical which can produce toxic effects, including toxicants produced by living organisms. Example: DDT and PCBs are toxicants, strychnine and pyrethrins are toxins produced by plants. Do not use pesticides such as Fenthion, herbicides such as Atrazine or fertilizers that harm or leave residue in the groundwater, wetlands or streams of the County.
- Action 3:** Encourage local governments to refrain from the use of inappropriate commercial fertilizers. Educate citizens about the use of native vegetation, Xeriscaping and landscaping methods that will prevent the overuse of commercially prepared fertilizers. Encourage the use of slow release fertilizers.
- Action 4:** Work with Water Management Districts, DEP and major distributors of commercial fertilizer products in an effort to create fertilizers that do not leach excess nutrients into our water bodies and aquifers.
- Action 5:** Encourage residents of the SE Vision Area to prepare soils for plants using naturally composted materials. Encourage the inclusion of these protections in homeowner association covenants. Explore and implement the use of compost converted from trash.
- Action 6:** Establish a Pesticide, Herbicide and Fertilizer ordinance that will protect the Aquatic Preserve, Matanzas Estuary, all ponds, creeks and branches in the SE Vision area.
- Action 7:** Consider the establishment of privately or publicly owned land mitigation banks in the Southeast Vision Area. Require that all mitigation in the Southeast Vision Area be retained within the vision area.

Objective 8

Air Quality and Sound Quality

- Action 1:** Establish monitoring stations and strong goals for air quality to minimize, or eliminate respiratory diseases.
- Action 2:** Minimize, through tool and construction filters, dust from construction and industrial activities.
- Action 3:** Establish and enforce guidelines that will minimize sound pollution, one of the most annoying affronts to the quality of life.

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V. Infrastructure Element

Focus Statement

Our Vision is to provide the optimal level of services and facilities for the people of Southeast St. Johns County, thereby promoting the health, safety and general welfare of the people.

- The land use infrastructure will ensure sensible growth and development of the region, review and adjust density requirements to establish compatibility between development and environment, require school concurrency and require that funds collected from impact fees be retained within the SE Vision Area.
- The transportation infrastructure will require that new county roads be designed to service local needs and provide efficient and economical transportation throughout the county and beyond. It will create pedestrian friendly roadways and frontage roads.
- Beautification infrastructure will ensure that, throughout the community, all roadway and highway medians will be landscaped or Xeriscaped with natural vegetation and wild flowers.
- Public safety infrastructure will reinforce security and safety throughout the community by increasing existing Police, Fire and EMS support.
- Potable water infrastructure will ensure there is an adequate supply of clean and potable water for the present population and future generations to come.

Objective 1

Sewer & Stormwater Drainage

Encourage the SJC Utility Department to develop a master sewer and stormwater drainage plan. New residential, commercial and industrial developments should be required to connect to central sewer systems.

Sanitary Sewer

- Action 1:** Support the inclusion of facilities to divert sewage to treatment facilities where it can be used for irrigation and aquifer recharge rather than entering the Matanzas River estuary and its tributaries and away from the 100 year floodplain.
- Action 2:** Ensure that all future construction projects started within our community vision boundaries include provisions for connection to sanitary sewers and recycled irrigation water lines.
- Action 3:** Encourage the utilization of wastewater effluent for irrigation on golf courses and wherever practicable.

Stormwater Management

- Action 1:** Review the stormwater impacts to minimize flooding. Establish a target year to eliminate stormwater runoff from reaching public waters without first passing through a treatment facility.
- Action 2:** Reverse negative environmental impacts to the Matanzas River.
- Action 3:** Enforce the timely and adequate maintenance of all retention ponds, drainage ditches and catch basins.
- Action 4:** Reduce health risks resulting from declining water quality by improving stormwater management and sanitary sewer design standards.

Objective 2 Utilities

To the greatest extent possible, utilities should be underground. Above ground utility poles, power and telephone lines, such as those located along U.S. Highway 1 south, State Road 206 and Wildwood Drive and the subdivisions located along those arteries are vulnerable to storms, present fire and electrical hazards and are a "visual eyesore" to the community. Encourage the use of underground utilities, which will improve the safety and quality of life for all citizens residing in, and passing through our community.

- Action 1:** Require utility construction occurring on governmental rights of way and along public and private roadways to place utility pipes and power lines underground.
- Action 2:** Require use of underground utilities, including, but not limited to, telephone, power and communications cable, for new residential construction and mandate it for new commercial and/or residential development construction.
- Action 3:** Enforce stricter zoning restrictions through an overlay district as they apply to telephone and radio communications towers (see also Land Use, Objective 3, Action 4).
- Action 4:** Encourage the use of the most current technology in broadband installation.
- Action 5:** Require the installation of buffers or parapets to visually screen propane tanks.

Objective 3 Flooding and Drainage

Flooding affects travel on our roadways, especially on Wildwood Drive, and it also affects lives, property and the environment. Resolve to correct flooding and drainage problems that exist within our community.

- Action 1:** All drainage improvements should protect natural bodies of water from pollutants.
- Action 2:** Encourage the citizenry and government to work together to solve the problems connected with flooding, and to act quickly.
- Action 3:** Place a moratorium on future development in areas where flood and drainage problems exist.

Objective 4 Vehicular Use of Roadways

With expectations for population growth within our community as a result of residential, commercial and industrial development, our roadways should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Safety and our quality of life should be uppermost in the minds of those in government who make laws and decide vehicular use and roadways policy.

- Action 1:** Residents & business owners, residing or operating within our community boundaries, shall review, in the planning stages, proposed major traffic modifications (including bridges) proposed by the Florida Department of Transportation that affect the citizens of Southeast St. Johns County.
- Action 2:** All arterial roads and streets in residential subdivisions must meet all requirements and specifications of the county, whether intended to be public or private ways.

Objective 5 Water Resources

The quality, quantity and pressure of our water must be maintained at adequate levels to be available for fire protection and consumption. Other sources of water, such as wastewater effluent, should be used wherever practical to reduce the impacts on our aquifers.

- Action 1:** Establish a water conservation program and develop long term supply solutions.
- Action 2:** Calculate the availability of water from the aquifers, taking into account the usage by private wells and utilities. Determine the future water needs and shortages of the community.
- Action 3:** Require a distance of not more than 660 feet between fire hydrants in residential subdivisions and in the construction of public and private water systems.

Objective 6 Beautification of Roadways

It is important for our quality of life to enhance the beauty and ambiance of our roadways through beautification and landscaping.

- Action 1:** Make US Highway 1, our "Main Street", the focus of a cohesive beautification plan implemented by local business, county government and civic organizations.
- Action 2:** Considering the potential for increased commercial and residential activity projected by the County, require that landscaping and buffering, sufficient to protect the atmosphere and attractiveness of the area, accompany all off street parking.

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