

WORKSHOP

**Joint City/County Workshop
on Urban Services Area and Urban Fringe**

**Tuesday, January 15, 2008
12:00 – 2:30 p.m.**

**Renaissance Center, Second Floor Conference Room
435 N. Macomb Street**

This document distributed: Friday, January 11, 2008

***BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND
CITY OF TALLAHASSEE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM***

ACTION REQUESTED ON:	January 15, 2008
SUBJECT/TITLE:	Joint Workshop on the Comprehensive Plan: The Urban Service Area and the Urban Fringe Land Use Category

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

This consultant-facilitated workshop is intended to provide both Commissions with more information on the Urban Service Area (USA) and the Urban Fringe Land Use Category, and the opportunity to discuss related policy issues.

BACKGROUND

At the November 1, 2007 Joint City/County Transmittal Hearing on Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle 2007-2 both Commissions expressed an interest in having a joint workshop to begin working through issues related to expansion of the USA and development in the Urban Fringe Land Use Category. In December of 2007 the County Administrator and City Manager hired Wendy Grey Land Use Planning to prepare and present information on the above topic. An outline of the presentation is included as Attachment #1.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Accept the presentation and discuss future policy direction.

Wayne Tedder, Director
Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

For information, please contact: Brian Wiebler at 891-6400

Item Title:
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**Leon County Board of County Commissioners
And
City of Tallahassee Commission**

**Joint Workshop on the Comprehensive Plan:
The Urban Service Area and the Urban Fringe Land Use Category**

January 15, 2008

**Presented by Wendy Grey, AICP,
Wendy Grey Land Use Planning**

1. Objective of the Presentation

- 1.1. Overview of the planning process and role of the Urban Service Area (USA) in the Tallahassee –Leon County Comprehensive Plan
- 1.2. Explanation of the Urban Service Area
- 1.3. Projecting future growth and available land in the USA
- 1.4. The Urban Fringe Future Land Use Category
- 1.5. The Rural Future Land Use Category
- 1.6. Protecting Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability Outside the USA

2. Overview of the Planning Process and the Role of the Urban Service Area

- 2.1. Overview of the Planning Process
 - 2.1.1. Statement of Goal or Objective:
 - 2.1.2. Collection of data relevant to the objective
 - 2.1.3. Analysis of data
 - 2.1.4. Identification of strategies to achieve Goal or Objective
 - 2.1.5. Selection of strategy
 - 2.1.5.1. Public policy, public involvement

2.1.6. Adoption of Goals/Objectives and strategies

2.1.7. Implementation

2.1.7.1. Planning and regulatory decisions

2.1.7.2. Budgeting decisions

2.1.8. Evaluation

2.1.9. Refinements of Goal or Objective

2.2. Role of the USA in the Tallahassee Leon County Comprehensive Plan

2.2.1. The Plan's first objective states:

Direct development to those areas which have in place, or have agreement to provide, the land and water resources, fiscal abilities, and the service capacity to accommodate growth in an environmentally acceptable manner. This shall be accomplished in part through the establishment of an Urban Service Area (USA) concept. The USA concept is based upon a desire to have Tallahassee and Leon County grow in an environmentally responsible manner, with infrastructure provided economically and efficiently, and surrounding forest and agricultural lands protected from unwarranted and premature conversion to urban land use. An urban service strategy provides for well managed, orderly growth, which preserves natural resources and promotes fiscal responsibility. The location and size of the USA shall be depicted on the Future Land Use Map and is based upon the area necessary to accommodate 90% of new residential units within the County by 2020; the ability to provide urban infrastructure; and the presence of environmentally sensitive lands and water bodies requiring protection from the impacts of urban development. (Future Land Use Element Objective 1.1)

3. Explanation of the USA

3.1. Concept

3.1.1. The USA is the area which is intended to provide for growth and development within the Comprehensive Plan's horizon (20 years). Development within the USA is to be provided with an urban level of government services: roads, mass transit, stormwater, solid waste, parks, water, and sewer. (FLUE policy 1.1.5).

3.2. Intent

3.2.1. To provide for orderly development and the logical extension of capital infrastructure.

3.2.2. To encourage efficiency in provision of services by containing demand to defined areas.

3.2.3. To provide a tool for maximizing use of infrastructure, in conjunction with higher densities.

3.3. History

3.3.1. The Urban Service Area was adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan in 1990.

3.3.2. Data from the 2007 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) shows that the USA has remained virtually unchanged, meaning that sufficient land has been available to accommodate approximately 90% of the development that has occurred since the Plan's adoption.

4. Projecting Future Growth and Available Land in the USA

4.1. 2007 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) projections

4.1.1. Methodology used was proscribed by the Department of Community Affairs and assumes each land use category will develop at maximum density.

4.1.2. The EAR determined that the current USA could accommodate a population of over **898,000**.

4.1.3. Population in 2030 projected at approximately **378,000**.

- 4.1.4. The EAR population accommodation formula projects that an additional **520,000** can be accommodates after 2030.
- 4.1.5. Leon County population projected to grow at about **4,000** people per year.
- 4.1.6. Conclusion: No need for expansion of USA for **130** years based on population projections.
- 4.1.7. Important notes on assumptions in the EAR
 - 4.1.7.1. Some (waterbodies, wetlands, severe slopes) environmental lands were removed from the projections.
 - 4.1.7.2. All other land vacant land will develop at the maximum densities allowed by the Future land Use Category.
- 4.1.8. The EAR projections do not represent the historical pattern of development due to a number of factors including environmental requirements and provision of on-site infrastructure.
- 4.2. The Residential Land Availability and Affordability Committee report (June 2004) projected that **50,728** dwelling units were available inside the USA. This number was based on the densities achieved since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Using the EAR household size inside the USA of 2.29 persons, the projected population that can be accommodated is **116,167**.
 - 4.2.1. Leon County population is projected to grow at about **4,000** people per year.
 - 4.2.2. Conclusion: No need for expansion of the USA for **29** years, based on population growth.
- 4.3. Once an accommodation projection for the USA is established, provision of urban services must addressed.
 - 4.3.1. Current pending amendment # 07-2 will create an Urban Service Boundary to accommodate growth over the next 10 years.
 - 4.3.2. A 10 year capital improvement schedule will be prepared to prioritize the provision of urban services within the USB.

PROJECTING FUTURE GROWTH AND AVAILABLE LAND IN THE USA: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION:

1. WHAT ASSUMPTIONS WILL BE USED TO PROJECT THE POPULATION THAT CAN BE ACCOMMODATED INSIDE THE USA? ASSUMPTIONS EFFECT
 - i. DECISIONS REGARDING THE POTENTIAL EXPANSION OF THE USA
 - ii. DECISIONS REGARDING THE LEVEL AND TIMING OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT ANTICIPATED TO OCCUR IN THE URBAN FRINGE
 2. HOW WILL THESE ASSUMPTIONS BE IMPLEMENTED?
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5. The Urban Fringe Future Land Use Category

5.1. Defined as “[a]creage located primarily on the urbanized fringe presently characterized by low density residential and/or open space or agricultural activity. Extension of urban services into developable portions of the fringe to accommodate future population growth may be programmed during later period of the Plan’s scope (2005-2010) as urban service area is adjusted.” (Future Land Use Element Policy 2.2.2)

5.1.1. The Urban Fringe allows development at 1 unit per 3 acres. However, other options are available.

5.1.1.1. To encourage efficient provision of central water and sewer in the future, clustering has been permitted since the adoption of the Plan. Density increases to 1 unit per acre and must be clustered on 25% of the property. The remaining 75% of the property may be converted to urban land as the USA expands

5.1.1.2. To advance environmental resource protection, the Comprehensive Plan was amended by Leon County in 2004 to allow conservation subdivisions in the Urban Fringe. Such subdivisions have smaller lots and place 50% of the property in a permanent conservation easement.

5.1.2. Current development pattern of areas designated Urban Fringe

5.1.2.1. The various Urban Fringe areas have different characteristics in terms of aquifer vulnerability, extent of development, and proximity of the Urban Service Area.

URBAN FRINGE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION:

1. DOES THE URBAN FRINGE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY HAVE A PURPOSE OTHER THAN BEING AN AREA FOR FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE URBAN SERVICE AREA? IF SO, WHAT IS THAT ROLE?
2. TO THE EXTENT THAT AREAS DESIGNATED URBAN FRINGE HAVE DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS, SHOULD THEY BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY IN THE PLAN?
3. TO THE EXTENT THAT SOME OR ALL URBAN FRINGE AREAS ARE TO BE DESIGNATED FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT, HOW SHOULD THE PLAN ADDRESS THE TIMING FOR THE URBANIZATION, GIVEN THE USA'S ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE GROWTH?
 - i. SHOULD THE AVAILABILITY OF SEWER BE THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN ALLOWING INCREASED DENSITY IN THE URBAN FRINGE?

6. Role of the Rural Future Land Use Category

6.1. Defined as “[a]creage remotely located away from urbanized areas containing the majority of the County’s present agricultural, forestry and grazing activity during the scope of the plan due to lack of present and/or scheduled urban infrastructure services.” (FLUE policy 2.1.1)

6.1.1. Density is limited to 1 unit per 10 acres.

RURAL FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY: ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION:

1. SHOULD THE RURAL FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY HAVE AN INTENT THAT IS NOT DEFINED IN TERMS OF AVAILABILITY OF URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE?
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7. Protecting Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability Outside the USA

- 7.1. Several months after adoption of EAR, the Leon County Aquifer Vulnerability Assessment (LAVA) was released. Analysis resulted in classification of the County into four categories area based on relative vulnerability of the Floridan Aquifer.
- 7.2. City and County are developing Comprehensive Plan policies as part of the EAR based amendment process in response to the LAVA study's findings.
 - 7.2.1. Central sewer is considered the preferred method to reduce the impacts of nutrients on Wakulla Springs from wastewater.
 - 7.2.2. Since availability of sewer is currently a major criteria for increasing densities outside the USA, the provision of central sewer to improve water quality is likely to result in increased urbanization in areas designated as highly vulnerable under the LAVA study.

PROTECTING AREAS OF HIGH AQUIFER VULNERABILITY OUTSIDE THE USA: ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. WHAT ARE THE LAND USE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PROVIDING CENTRAL SEWER TO HIGHLY VULNERABLE AREAS AS DEFINED IN THE LAVA STUDY?
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