

THE 2011 ALVA PLAN



May 2011 Draft

Prepared by



ALVA, Inc.

in consultation with
Lee County Department of Community Development Division of Planning
and
Murphy Planning

Website - <http://www.alvafl.org/>

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2011 ALVA PLAN

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Forward to the 2011 Alva Plan

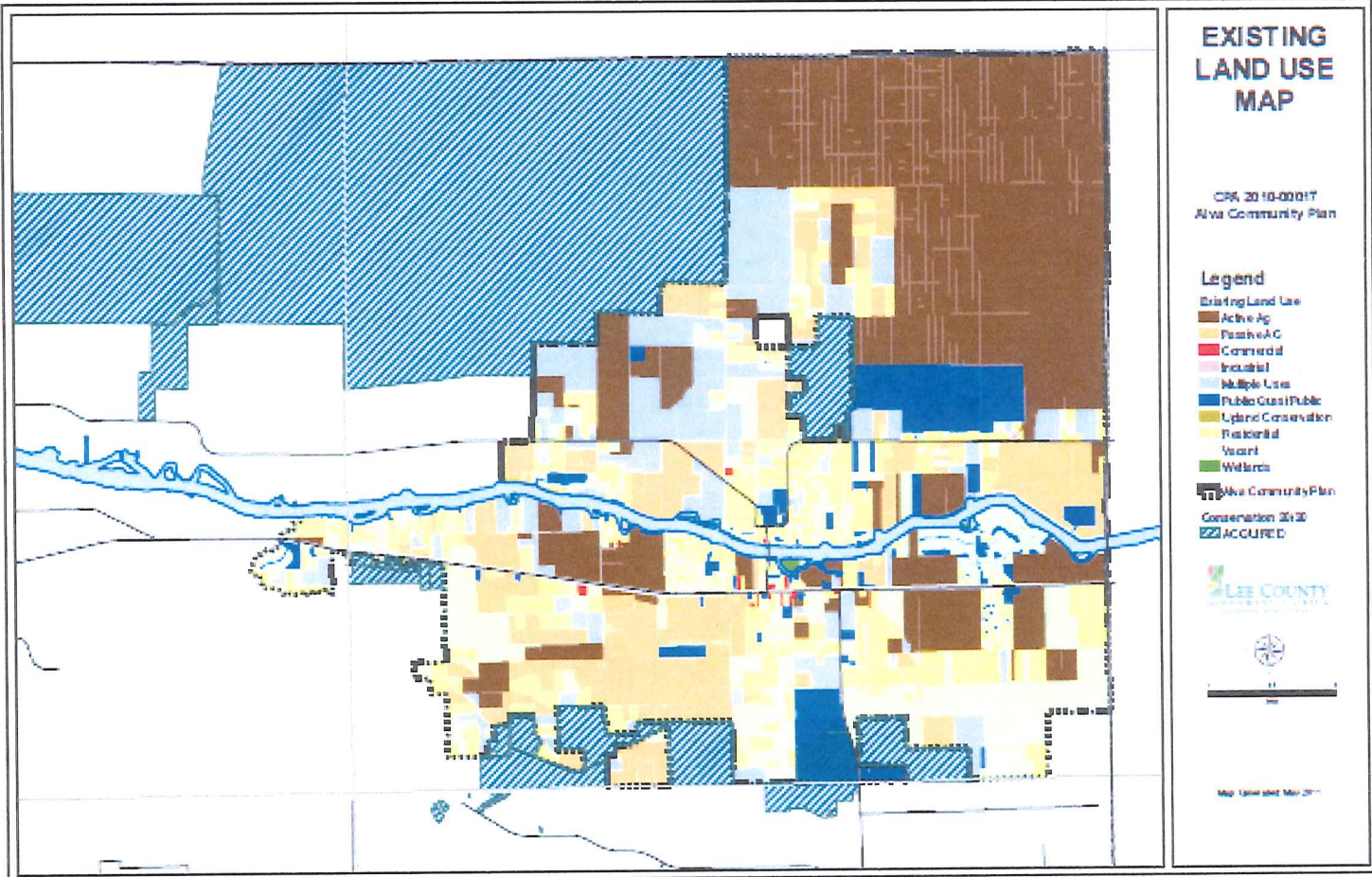
The 2011 Alva Plan began as an effort prior to the actual adoption of the goal, objectives, and policies, resulting from the 2006 plan, that were not officially adopted by the Board of County Commissioners until 2009. That planning effort was the culmination of a process that started in the spring of 2001 when 250 Alva citizens attended a meeting at the local firehouse to discuss rural planning issues. From that initial meeting the civic organization A Living Vision of Alva (ALVA), Inc., was formed.

Since the summer of 2001, ALVA, Inc. has invited numerous guest speakers who imparted to the community their knowledge and expertise regarding various growth-related issues and organized other civic informational programs such as candidate debates at the Alva School. In November, 2001 and again in the fall of 2006 ALVA, Inc. organized community charettes and subsequent town hall meetings where ideas were shared, maps were drawn, and everyone was given a chance to speak his mind. These efforts resulted in the cornerstone of a community plan that contains our collective current vision for the future. The 2011 Alva Plan seeks to expand on the goal and vision the Alva community has developed and to propose additional and revised objectives, and policies to be incorporated in the Lee Plan to achieve that vision over time.

The board of directors and members of A Living Vision of Alva (ALVA), Inc. have labored tirelessly to establish a vision and plan for the rural area surrounding the Rural Village. Pursuant to a grant from the Lee County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and voluntary in-kind and monetary contributions, the 2011 plan is the result of that effort.

Many things have happened in Alva and Lee County since the 2006 plan was completed. ALVA, Inc. has had the pleasure of working with Steven Brown, formerly of the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, and later with Julianne Thomas of the same organization. Their assistance is greatly appreciated. Like Mr. Brown, Rob Andrys has since moved away from Alva. Mr. Andrys was instrumental, as a member and director of ALVA, Inc., in guiding the 2011 plan and is greatly missed. Lee County staff, particularly the Division of Planning, have contributed greatly to the 2011 plan and their hard work is also appreciated.

The North Olga Community Planning Panel has formed and drafted a plan for the western portion of the area currently known as the Alva Planning Community or Planning Community 1. County staff and the community planning panels have worked together to develop a new name for this planning community: the Northeast Planning Community. This name change should eliminate much of the confusion that has occurred with regard to overlapping terms, e.g., Planning Community, Community Plan, Community Planning Panel, etc., previously employed in the county's various community planning efforts. Staff proposes amending the map that identifies all the planning communities with Lee County, Lee Plan Map 16, to accomplish this change.



Staff proposes to amend Lee Plan Map 1, page 2 of 8, to indicate two (2) special treatment areas within this new Northeast Planning Community: Alva and North Olga. These proposed changes result from a cooperative effort between ALVA, Inc. and the North Olga Community Planning Panel to resolve long-standing differences regarding future changes in this rural area. This cooperative endeavor has resulted in an opportunity for these community planning panels to coordinate their efforts to guide future change and to partner with public agencies to enhance the large public land holdings they share within the Northeast Planning Community.

During the pendency of these community planning efforts, Lee County also began a comprehensive review of the entire Lee Plan. In March 2011, Lee County submitted an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) to the State of Florida for their review and comments. Once received, Lee County will begin drafting EAR-based amendments to the Lee Plan. Based on the EAR, those amendments are likely to result in many changes in future planning in Lee County, particularly in regard to community planning, and especially future land use planning in the rural areas. ALVA, Inc., as participants in the revisions to the Northeast Planning Community and this 2011 Alva Plan are optimistic that our work with Lee County staff in these community planning efforts will inform the EAR-based amendments to the Lee Plan.

The 2011 Alva plan builds on and furthers the planning effort that began in the late 1980s and resulted in the 2006 plan subsequently adopted by the BOCC in 2009. The 2011 plan seeks to bring the planning interests of Alva forward from those earlier efforts, revise some language previously adopted by the BOCC with regard to the Alva Rural Village, and expand the plan to cover the rural areas surrounding the Rural Village. This expanded scope of the 2011 plan speaks primarily to rural character—what it is generally, what it means particularly to Alva, and how to maintain and further it through the organizing objectives of rural lands and rural village frameworks, connectivity, natural resources and environmental systems, public resource access, and public participation in shaping future development. It is this strong desire to maintain that rural character of Alva that underscores all the efforts of ALVA, Inc. Our work continues.

May 2011

Ruby Daniels, President
ALVA, Inc.

ORGANIZATION OF 2011 ALVA PLAN

The 2011 Alva plan brings forward, builds upon, and to some extent modifies the 2006 plan for the Rural Village to reflect changing conditions and community outlooks. It seeks to clarify certain ambiguities and confusion inherent in the 2006 plan that have been identified by the county and the community since the adoption of the current objectives and policies that follow from Lee Plan Goal 34. These proposed changes are identified in strike-through/underline format within the text of the adopted goal, objectives, and policies repeated herein.

Following a general introduction to Alva, its historic rural context, and a discussion of the planning activities of the citizens and Alva, Inc., this plan revisits the Alva vision statement and guiding statements for Alva's community character. This is followed by a discussion of the framework and structure of the Rural Village and proposed revisions to the currently adopted goal, objectives, and policies in the Lee Plan.

The 2006 Alva plan focused first on the rural village of central Alva and expanded outward. The plan described the form and character of the area then designated in the Lee Plan Future Land Use Element as Urban Community and recommended a new land use category of Rural Village to replace the Urban Community designation.

Within the proposed rural village, the 2006 plan then turned its focus more closely on the historic core of the rural village, the riverfront and bridge mixed-use village center (Sub-area 1), the mixed-use village center south of the River and north of Palm Beach Boulevard (Sub-area 2), Palm Beach Boulevard itself and the mixed-use village center immediately to the south (Sub-area 3). The residential rural village edge areas surrounding these village center, but currently designated Urban Community future land use map classification were identified (Sub-area 4), but with little or no discussion of the future changes foreseen for those areas. *See* Appendix 1 (Figure 2, page 15, of the 2006 plan)

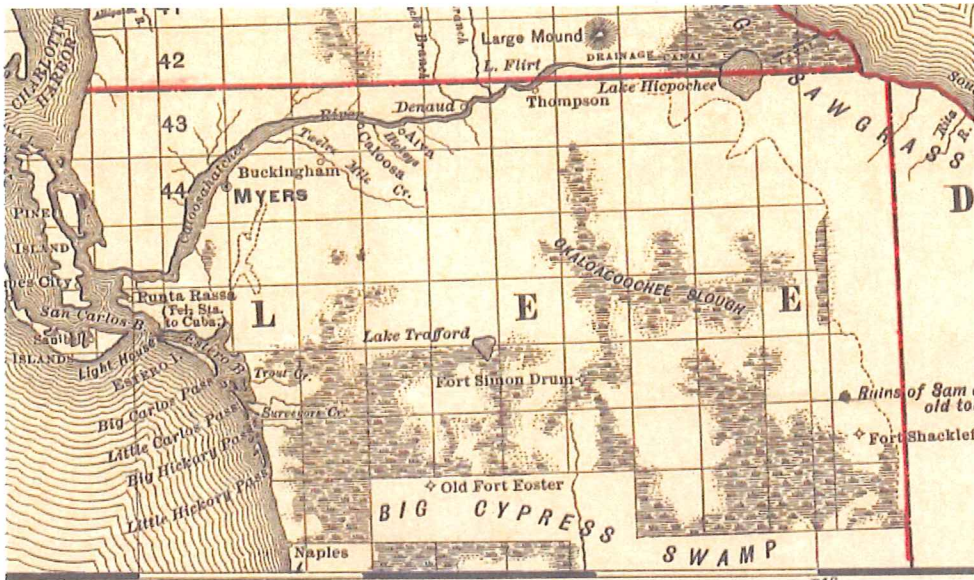
Following the review of the outcomes of the 2006 plan, this 2011 plan directs its attention out to the rural countryside areas surrounding the Rural Village, providing a discussion of the general rural character of the area, followed by objectives and policies that build on the current Lee Plan goal, objectives, and the policies that follow. The 2011 Alva Plan proposes a revised vision and goal, and expanded objectives and policies to direct future changes in the larger outlying rural area of Alva. These changes and revisions are proposed to support and supplement the rural vision for Alva and the rural village developed in the 2006 plan.

After much effort on the part of Alva, Inc. and Lee County Community Development staff, these proposed policies have been organized under several broad objectives: rural character, rural lands framework, rural village framework, connectivity, natural resources and environmental systems, and public participation. After a thorough review of past planning efforts for Alva, other Lee County community planning outcomes, and efforts of similarly situated rural places, Alva, Inc. submits the 2011 Alva Plan as part of an

ongoing effort to establish a comprehensively planned approach to sustain this rural area.

It is the hope of ALVA, Inc. that the 2011 Alva Plan will help guide future changes in Alva to support and supplement a quality environment. The vision for that environment is one with clean water, attractive buildings, and sustainable farms, forests, and open lands. ALVA, Inc. foresees that adhering to the plan will generate economic activity, sustain and enhance a high quality of life in Alva for the present, foreseeable future, and beyond.

INTRODUCTION



Who We Are

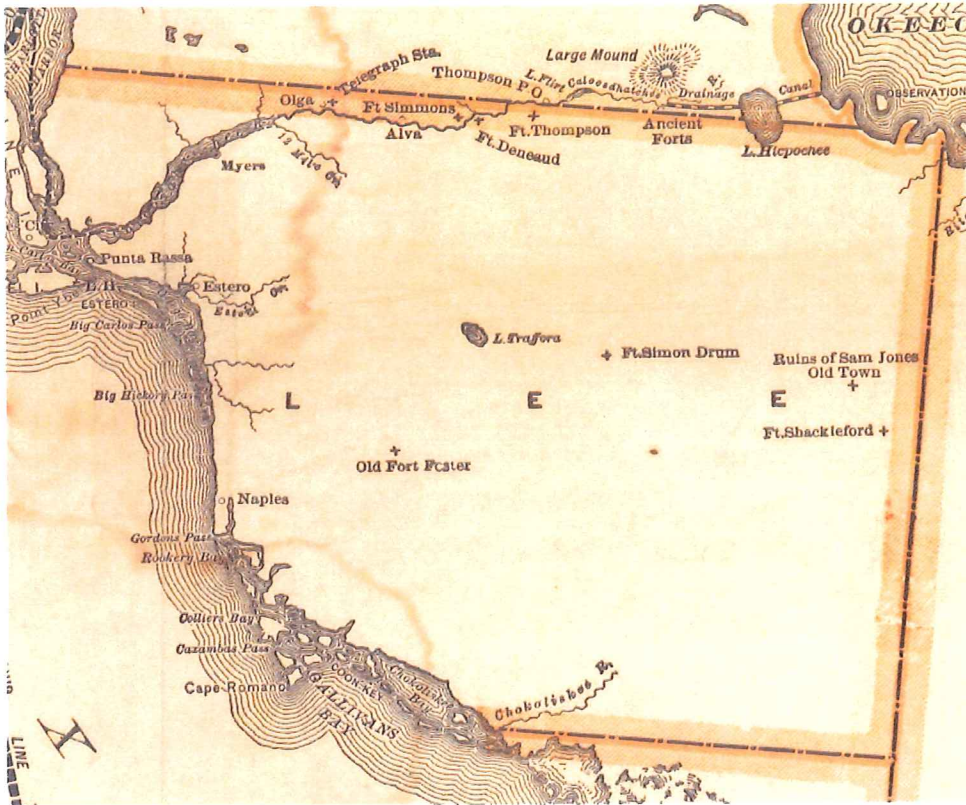
The people of Alva have been a community since 1866 when settlers first began making their homes in the Caloosahatchee River basin. The village of Alva was subsequently founded and platted in 1882. Irby Clay, granddaughter of the third settler of Alva and retired librarian of Alva High School, writing about the early history of Alva noted: “Thus grew slowly a community that worshipped together, played together, and worked together. To those who now live in distant areas, a homecoming is a highlight they look forward to.... Alva still remains a community rather than a town.”

What We Have Been Doing

Over the last twenty-five years—until quite recently—growth in Southwest Florida has been steadily increasing. In the early 1990’s the Alva Preservation Committee worked with Lee County Planning staff to prepare the Alva Sector Plan, applicable to the area within the Alva Fire District boundaries. The Alva Sector Plan was intended to protect the community from having rural lands converted to suburban development patterns. The Alva Sector Plan was not officially adopted by Lee County, but the community has continued to work together to address these important planning issues and other concerns.

A Living Vision of Alva, Inc. was incorporated in the spring of 2001. The mission of ALVA, Inc is: “to preserve and protect the unique historical, rural, agricultural and

equestrian ambiance of Alva.” Area citizens, through ALVA, Inc., have been working on a variety of specific measures that will benefit the people of Alva, including Palm Beach Boulevard roadway design and landscaping; planning for public lands; increasing park opportunities and facilities; promoting civic engagement with elected leaders and candidates for public office; promoting bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrian paths; and spearheading the development of this plan.



Why We Plan

Today, the concern about how to preserve the rural character that makes Alva special is even more acute. Numerous people attending the community workshops and ALVA, Inc. meetings noted that they had moved to live among the spacious natural areas and scenic resources and enjoy a quieter, less crowded community environment. The 2011 Alva plan does not aim to prevent change, but rather to guide such change to maintain the rural character of Alva.

Where We Are Going

The purpose of a *vision* is to establish a commonly-held description of the future that Alva plans to foster. The Alva vision builds upon the history of the area as an expansive rural community centered on an historic river-based mixed-use rural village. A vision provides a context to plan for the future. Some of the elements of a vision may occur in the near term, others may be realized only in the distant future, but all elements of the vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementing measures are based in a firm respect for existing property rights, do not imply or result in any mandated changes to existing buildings or structures, and are planned to give Alva the best or all possible outcomes.

How We Envision Our Future

The Alva vision—described in the following vision statement and the guiding statements for the Alva community character—resulted originally from two (2) community-wide workshops held on September 9, 2006, and September 23, 2006, and from all the prior public meetings of ALVA, Inc. The Alva Vision also drew from the vision statements of the Lee Plan and its amendments and from Alva’s previous work on the draft 1992 Alva Sector Plan and the 2002 Alva Community Plan.

The Alva vision was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Lee County to be included in the county’s comprehensive planning document—The Lee Plan—in 2009. Since completion of the Alva Plan in 2006, ALVA, Inc. has been working to develop this plan and its proposed additions and revisions along with proposed implementing language for consideration for amendments to the Lee County Land Development Code. The 2011 Alva plan proposes only minor revisions to the Alva Vision. These minor revisions generally address nomenclature issues, clarify ambiguities, refine punctuation, and eliminate conflicts in language that have been identified through the planning process. Specifically, references to prohibited through truck traffic have been removed to address the needs of commercial agriculture in the rural area, as have references to limited access identified to be in conflict with an overall objective of better connectivity. These proposed revisions are indicated in the statements below in strikethrough/underline format. This format may make the reorganization of the vision appear more modified than it is in substance.

THE 2011 ALVA VISION

1. **Alva** - The mission of the people of the community called Alva, Florida, is to preserve and protect its unique historical, rural, agricultural, ~~and small town~~ rural village flavor. Alva is the oldest settlement in Lee County. With its huge oaks and cypress trees, the Caloosahatchee River, surrounding citrus groves, ~~and cattle ranches,~~ natural environment, and natural resource areas, centered around its rural village. Alva has a unique country ambiance that is rapidly becoming hard to find in Florida. The recent history of Southwest Florida is experiencing ~~has been one of~~ extremely rapid development. It will take a concerted effort to ensure that ~~the growth~~ development change in Alva occurs in a manner that maintains the rural character and lifestyle of this area. As the Alva rural village grows ~~improves to accommodate the foreseeable population growth within the greater rural area,~~ we ~~aim to~~ will work together to make sure Alva ~~remains a~~ continues to be the place we want to live in and call home.

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The Guiding Statements for the Alva Rural Village and Community Character of the Alva Special Treatment Area

The Caloosahatchee River and its watershed, lined with huge oaks and cypress, flows westward to the Gulf of Mexico through acres of land devoted to citrus, cattle, farming, flower farms, and conservation areas. These resources, which characterize the Alva area, remain its primary assets. The historic character of the rural river town ~~town~~ village, ~~which was~~ originally a center of trade and transport, has been protected and revitalized, strengthening its function as a center of social interaction and civic, commercial, educational, and recreational activity.

~~Central~~ The Alva rural village, including the area originally platted in the late 1800's, has retained and enhanced its historic character. The design of new and renovated structures draws from 1890's ~~S~~southern ~~V~~victorian architecture. Infill development in the historic core produces a compatible mix of residential, professional office, small shops, ~~or~~ ~~or~~ cafes, and bed and breakfast lodging.

Streets remain narrow with a dense tree canopy. Interconnecting ~~ons of~~ streets, ~~and~~ and the addition of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and centralized, park-once parking areas ~~have made~~ make walking or biking pleasant and safe. Through-traffic on North River Road, which passes through the heart of the historic core, has been "calmed" and no longer threatens the safety and pedestrian ambiance of the area.

Riverfront pedestrian access to the Caloosahatchee River and additional dock space and children's facilities at the boat ramp area provide expanded opportunities for visitors to arrive by boat, for pedestrians to stroll along the riverfront, and for families to enjoy the recreational opportunities afforded by the River.

The bridge creates a sense of arrival into the ~~community~~ historic core and now provides a pedestrian walkway and bicycle lane—the essential links in the network of pathway systems connecting ~~central~~ central the Alva rural village to the agriculture, conservation,

and recreational areas ~~that surround that surround~~ within the rural area ~~community~~.

Residents and visitors can walk or bicycle from the Franklin Locks on to Caloosahatchee Regional Park, arriving at ~~central-central~~ the Alva rural village, and continuing south to Greenbriar Preserve and Lehigh's future linear park system. Children can walk or bike from Charleston Park on the east and River Oaks on the west side of the Alva rural village to school and the recreational facilities in ~~central-the village~~ central Alva. The community park system has been expanded and new recreation areas have been developed to accommodate the active recreation needs of both children and adults.

New development south of the bridge on both sides of ~~State Route 80 State Route 80~~ Palm Beach Boulevard is compact and concentrated within the rural village ~~a radius~~ around the area of the signalized intersection ~~a radius around the area of the signalized intersection~~ rather than lining the highway with strip commercial structures. New neighborhood-scale developments combine ~~community~~ community-serving commercial uses with mixed uses (office and residential above commercial). Site design features internal service roads with buildings framing the public streets and maximizing the views and pedestrian access to the River.

The newly four-laned ~~State Road 80 State Road 80~~ Palm Beach Boulevard has been designed to signal entry into the ~~central-central~~ Alva rural village ~~area~~ with curbed medians, a traffic signal at the Broadway intersection, ~~and~~ enhanced with generous plantings.

Strategically located median breaks and access ~~streets~~ points ~~points~~ allow safe entry into adjacent commercial mixed-use areas.

As pressure to convert the surrounding rural lands into residential subdivisions has increased, Alva has managed to preserve large areas of land in agricultural use or in its natural state. This was done by utilizing several successful programs including transferable development rights and agricultural lands easements developed as a rural toolbox in cooperation with Lee County and other partnering agencies and organizations.

Linking the large rural area together are North River Road (County Road 78) and the Caloosahatchee River. North River Road has retained its rural ambiance and is a popular scenic route for visitors and residents enjoying the countryside. ~~The long-standing prohibition against through truck traffic has been successfully enforced; signage~~ The long-standing prohibition against through truck traffic has been successfully enforced; signage ~~Street graphic are~~ is limited to directional and safety signs ~~and residential areas located along the roadway are designed with internal streets so that access points onto roadways are minimized; and residential areas located along the roadway are designed with internal streets so that access points onto the roadway are minimized.~~

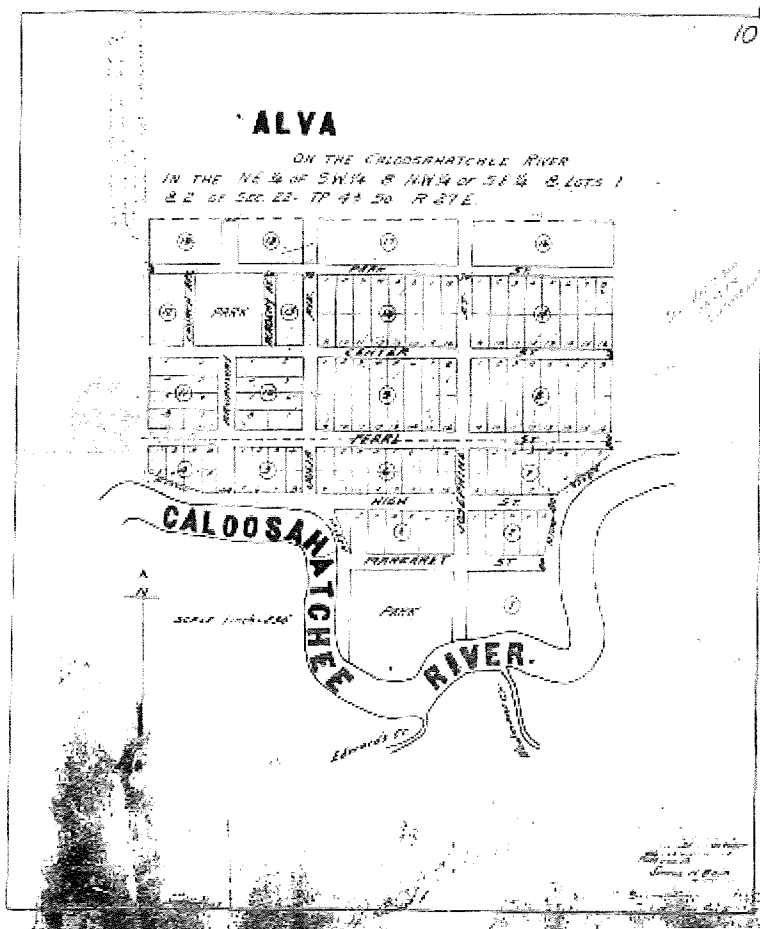
As it has historically, the Caloosahatchee River provides transportation, food, recreation, and a source of water. The citizens of Alva have joined with various volunteer organizations and public agencies to resolve the problems of water quality degradation

and loss of native wildlife habitat. The function, health, and beauty of the oxbows, or bends in the river that have remained after dredging projects (which began with the 1930s creation of the Cross State Ship Channel), have been gradually restored in response to the conditions unique to each. Maintenance and monitoring of their continuing viability provide ~~an~~ ongoing opportunities ~~essy~~ for education and scientific study.

Many opportunities exist to enjoy the river by boat, canoe, or kayak, from viewing areas, or in the regional parks. Dedicated volunteers continue to work towards a vision for the future of the Caloosahatchee River, which balances human needs while protecting and promoting the resources and natural beauty of the whole system for future generations.

By working together, ~~the the~~ Alva ~~communitycommunity~~ has enhanced the rural village and its surrounding natural amenities, preserved its heritage, and ensured ~~its~~ the long-term quality of life for the entire Alva area.

(Added by Ordinance No. 99-15, Amended by Ordinance No. 07-12, 09-07, 11-XX)



THE 2011 ALVA PLAN

Rural Character

The concept of rural character in Alva is complex and layered, and the idea of maintaining that rural character may be described as doing less with more. The 2006 Alva plan focused on a few strategies to be initiated and pursued through grass roots efforts, in partnership with county government and private sector interests. This plan seeks to build upon those early strategies and craft objectives and policies to further them with Lee County. The bases for these objectives and policies are discussed below followed by the proposed objectives and policies.

In Alva, we define rural character as the patterns of land use and development where open space, the natural landscape, agricultural lands, and vegetation predominate over the built environment, and that foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to live, play, and work in a rural setting. Rural communities are characterized by large and isolated areas of open country and low aggregated population densities. Rural land development patterns result in visual landscapes traditionally found in rural areas and communities, and are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat. Rural land development patterns reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development, generally do not require the extension of urban municipal services, and protect natural resources, including surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

The rural character of Alva is exemplified by a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low density residential dwellings, farms, forests, pastures, prairies, wooded areas, and open space, with outdoor recreation and other open space activities. Commercial buildings are small in scale and provide goods and services to the rural community. Rural Alva is productive, with activities related to and dependent on natural resources such as agriculture, farm markets, and eco-tourism. Home-based businesses and occupations occur throughout Alva but do not adversely affect their natural, agricultural, and residential neighbors. To advance this vision, ALVA, Inc. proposes the following Goal for the Alva Plan and Objective and Policies for furthering rural character

GOAL 34: ALVA. To support and enhance Alva's unique rural, historic, agricultural character and natural environment and resources, including the rural village and surrounding area, the boundaries of which are depicted on Map1, page 2 of 8.

OBJECTIVE 34.1: RURAL CHARACTER. Maintain and enhance the rural character and environment of Alva through planning practices that:

1. Manage growth and protect Alva's rural nature.
2. Maintain agricultural lands and rural land use patterns.
3. Provide needed community facilities, transportation systems, and infrastructure capacity.

4. Protect and enhance native species, ecosystems, habitats, natural resources, and water systems.
5. Preserve Alva's historic places and archaeological sites.

POLICY 34.1.1: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to evaluate and identify appropriate commercial areas with a focus on the rural village area as identified on Map 1, page 6 of 8.

POLICY 34.1.2: Alva will work with Lee County to develop sustainable land use practices through which transportation and infrastructure systems, public services, and parks are provided consistent with Alva's rural character.

POLICY 34.1.3: Alva will work with Lee County to identify appropriate locations for and promote the establishment of community gardens.

POLICY 34.1.4: New industrial activities or changes of land use that allow future industrial activities, not directly associated with Alva's commercial agriculture, are prohibited in Alva. By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish regulations in the land development code to further this policy.

POLICY 34.1.5: New mining activities are prohibited in Alva. By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish regulations in the land development code to further this policy.

POLICY 34.1.6: Outdoor display in excess of one (1) acre and commercial uses that require outdoor display to such an extent are prohibited.

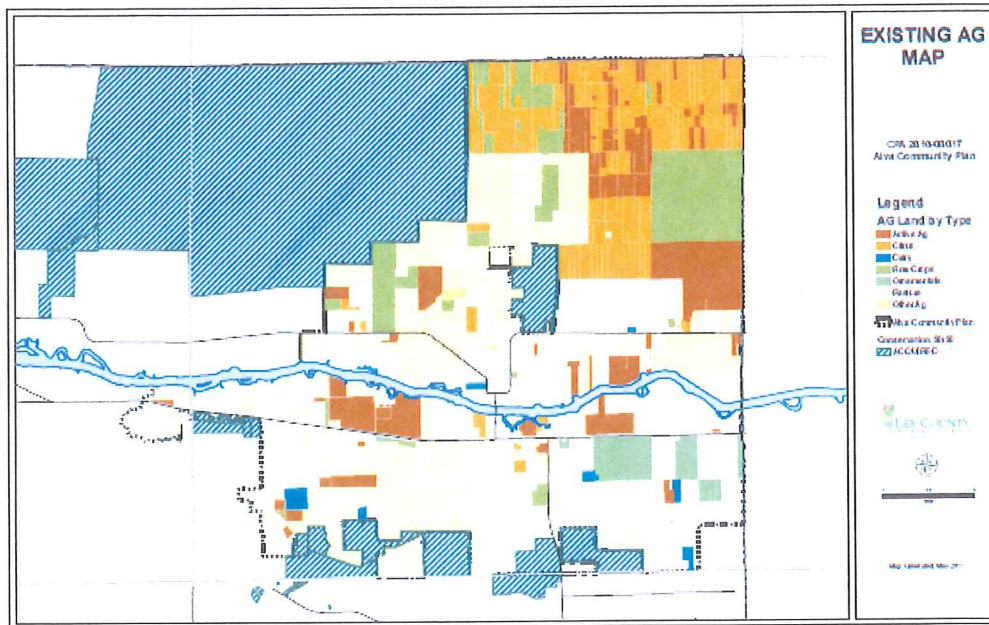
Rural Lands Framework

Agriculture

Maintaining rural character includes maintaining the viability of commercial agriculture. Of the over 14,000 acres in the Alva special treatment area, approximately over 9,000 acres are in active or passive agricultural use. Alva proposes through establishment of a group of policies promoting programs that may be used singularly or in combination: a Rural Toolbox.

Alva Community Plan Existing Land Use

	Acreage	Built ¹
Residential	1,482.51	1,166
Commercial	33.17	59,757
Industrial	2.64	12,288
Public/Quasi Public	1,042.20	180,814
Active Ag	5,380.63	
Passive Ag	3,638.97	
Vacant	2,377.44	
Conservation	330.48	
Total	14,288.04	
Residential Unit Type		
Single Family		854
Duplex		18
Mobile Homes		294
Hotel Rooms		10
¹ Residential = Units; Commercial, Industrial, Public = Square Feet		



Conservation Easements. In 2001 the Florida legislature passed the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act. The program is designed to meet three needs: 1) protect valuable agricultural lands; 2) create easement documents that work together with agricultural production to ensure sustainable agricultural practices and reasonable protection of the environment without interfering with agricultural operations in such a way that could put the continued economic viability of these operations at risk; and 3) protect natural resources, not as the primary purpose, but in conjunction with the economically viable agricultural operations. Under these provisions, owners can be paid up to 60% of their appraised land value for conservation easements if they qualify for the program. The program is approved up to the year 2011. In a year of budget cutting it remains to be seen if the legislature will extend this program into the next decade.

The purpose is to protect farmland that provides economic, open space, water, and wildlife benefits. Conservation easements are opportunities to ease the financial obligations associated with taxes. A conservation easement can result in a charitable deduction on income tax equal to the reduced value of land, a reduction in annual property taxes, a reduction of estate tax obligations, and preservation of the natural value of the land. Meanwhile, the property stays in private hands and the owner retains all rights to continue farming.

Agricultural Land Trusts. One opportunity to support agriculture and fund the acquisition of agricultural conservation easement is through local, regional, or statewide land trusts. Agricultural land trusts can work closely with land owners to ensure that the lands remain in agricultural use. Alva wants to assist local agricultural interests and leaders in ways to access this and other programs that can help make it economically feasible to continue agricultural production. Working with the University of Florida

Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences extension service and other local agencies, Alva could assist in the establishment of such a program.

Transferable and Purchasable Development Rights (TDR/PDR). Alva supports Lee County establishing a transfer and purchase of development rights (TDR/PDR) program to use the market to implement and pay for development density and location decisions. TDR/PDR programs allow landowners to sever development rights from properties in county-designated low-density sending areas, and sell them to purchasers who want to increase the density of development in receiving areas designated as higher density areas.

TDR/PDR programs offer many advantages to control land use but also compensate landowners for restrictions on the development potential of their properties. TDR/PDR programs can be easier to implement than typical zoning programs; they make development more predictable and use the market to compensate landowners for lost property value. TDR/PDR programs are also more permanent than traditional zoning regulations. Alva proposes that the rural village could become a receiving area for development rights within the Alva special treatment area and that all areas outside the rural village would be eligible sending areas to the rural village and also to receiving areas established elsewhere in Lee County.

Water Budget. Another means of protecting the viability of agriculture is to provide for the long-term water needs of agriculture in Alva. The Caloosahatchee River is the freshwater supply for Lee and Hendry Counties and is part of an enormous system that includes the central lakes of Kissimmee, Lake Okeechobee, and the St. Lucie River. From the main arteries, numerous canals from the lakes to the east coast, as well as to the Caloosahatchee system that serves our area, create a system whereby we are sharing water resources with east coast counties.

Within this system, the water needs of the counties west of Okeechobee have been under-represented. Since the deposit of water has no boundaries, a water budget would provide a system for equitably allocating water resources and ensuring that the existing and future water needs of our area are planned for.

The process begins with development of an accurate data base since, historically, there has been no consistent system for monitoring and auditing how much water is actually being used in our area, and by whom. When established, the water budget should provide a context within which to evaluate the individual and cumulative impacts of new development on the availability of water needed to sustain Lee County's agricultural uses.

Vision for Rural Alva

The rural area surrounding the Alva Rural Village preserves large areas of land in agriculture or in its natural state. An extensive network of conservation areas, regional parks, the Caloosahatchee River and creeks that are a part of the watershed, weave through the northeast corner of the county, protecting the integrity of ecological systems

and providing an attractive and desirable amenity to southwest Florida.

New development that is not directed toward the Rural Village is clustered in subdivisions that contribute sizable unbuilt areas for connections with the larger conservation network and recreational opportunities. Cooperative activity and several successful programs maintain the balance between private property rights and the natural qualities that make the area valuable and special. The Caloosahatchee River, Broadway Street Bridge, North River Road, Palm Beach Boulevard, and a system of bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrian paths provide the essential connections that enable residents and visitors to move easily from place to place and to access the scenic and historic treasures the area affords. The network of conservation lands and corridors support wildlife movement and habitat.

The rural area outlying the Alva Rural Village has considerable natural and scenic resources. The Caloosahatchee River flows from Lake Okeechobee and empties into San Carlos Bay. Telegraph Swamp drains into the Caloosahatchee River through Telegraph Creek and its associated wetlands, part of which is a public preserve. The resources of this rural area also include Cypress Creek north of the River and Hickey and Bedman Creeks on the south side of the Caloosahatchee River.

The area includes acres of conservation areas, recreation areas including the Caloosahatchee Regional Park, and land in agricultural production. It provides a variety of housing options including homes along the creeks and the Caloosahatchee River, estate homes, small ranches homes, and a very few suburban-style residential subdivisions. Residents and visitors are served by a few commercial uses. It is also an area rich in history and pre-history, inhabited by humans over ten thousand years ago. The earliest written accounts of the region by Spanish explorers in the early 1500s identified the inhabitants as Calusa Indians, who controlled the area from the Florida Keys to just south of Sarasota.

Efforts to enhance, maintain, and restore natural areas are ongoing, particularly through the efforts of the Lee County Conservation 2020 program that has been actively acquiring conservation lands in this area, including the Hickey Creek Mitigation Park and Telegraph Creek Preserve. The Caloosahatchee Regional Park provides both passive and active recreation opportunities and links these two areas. South of the Hickey Creek Mitigation Park, conservation acquisitions have completed a link to Greenbriar Swamp. In an effort to further this progress, ALVA, Inc. proposes the following Objective and Policies for the rural lands framework.

OBJECTIVE 34.2: RURAL LANDS FRAMEWORK. Provide for the varied residential, commercial, and natural resource needs of Alva's rural lands by establishing a planning framework that serves the area's different users.

POLICY 34.2.1: Alva will work with Lee County to ensure that future development projects maintain or enhance Alva's rural character by establishing planning policies and

land development code standards that are compatible with Alva's vision and guiding principles.

POLICY 34.2.2: Land use amendments that would increase the allowable total density of Alva are prohibited. Land use amendments that would decrease the allowable total density of the area and that are otherwise consistent with the objectives and policies of this goal are encouraged in Alva.

POLICY 34.2.3: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to promote sustainable residential development patterns and promote Alva's rural character by utilizing rural planning practices to establish land development code requirements that:

1. Limit new residential development clustered in compact, interconnected neighborhoods situated in appropriate locations.
2. Designate appropriate allowed uses.
3. Establish compatible parcel sizes, density, and intensity standards.
4. Conserve natural resources.
5. Provide standards for adequate open space.
6. Maintain commercial agricultural uses.
7. Incorporate green building standards.
8. Identify locations suitable for public services.

POLICY 34.2.4: By 2014, utilize the land development code to establish architectural standards that support and enhance Alva's historic rural character and quality of life by:

1. Featuring architectural and design themes consistent with Alva's historic architectural styles.
2. Including street graphic standards that address size, location, style, and lighting.

POLICY 34.2.5: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish standards in the land development code that promote economic opportunities, including ecotourism, commercial agriculture, and associated businesses that contribute to Alva's rural character.

POLICY 34.2.6: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish design standards in the land development code that:

1. Foster a unique landscape theme for North River Road and other county-maintained roads.
2. Address connectivity and separation among differing uses.
3. Preserve native plant communities, including subtropical and tropical hardwood hammock, scrub, and wetlands, to enhance the existing native vegetation and tree canopy.
4. Encourage the removal of exotic species.

POLICY 34.2.7: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish planning policies and development standards in the land development code that promote Alva's commercial agriculture including programs that address:

1. Farm to market demands on the area's roadway infrastructure.

2. Storage of commercial agricultural equipment at a private residence of an individual employed or engaged in an agricultural operation as a permitted use in residential zoning districts in Alva.
3. Maintaining land in commercial agriculture through programs such as farmland trusts and easements.
4. Location of associated packaging, processing, warehousing, and other value-added activities.

POLICY 34.2.8: Promote Alva's historic character by utilizing the land development code to:

1. Consider formal local designation of additional historic buildings and districts.
2. Identify potential national or state registered history buildings and districts.
3. Evaluate the effects of county regulations on designated historic districts.
4. Modify regulations, as necessary, to protect both the interests of the historic structures owners and Alva.

POLICY 34.2.9: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to develop and promote innovative rural planning tools, such as purchase and transfer of development rights, to:

1. Maintain commercial agriculture.
2. Conserve and restore agricultural lands, open lands, native vegetated uplands and wetlands.
3. Sustain the rural character of Alva.

Rural Village Framework – Historic Core and Riverfront Mixed-Use Village Center

Vision for the Historic Core and Riverfront Mixed-Use Village Center

The Riverfront, Bridge, and Historic Core have become the identifiable center of Alva. Enhanced views, expanded recreation and docking areas, and public spaces for strolling, dining, and relaxing have reintroduced to residents and visitors the beauty of the Caloosahatchee River and the pleasure of observing river activity. Whether one is arriving by car, walking, or biking over the bridge, the streetscape and architectural elements of the Historic Core have become a part of the view that establishes a sense of arrival or entry into the community.

The Historic Core functions as the heart of the Alva community consistent with its history as a community gathering-place for social interaction and civic activity. Historic community facilities such as the Alva Library (now housing the museum), the Methodist Church, and the Alva School are treasured community focal points. These, and other historic structures dating back to the 1890's, set the architectural standard for the design of new and renovated structures that frame the streets and shape the public space. Parking areas are unobtrusive and conveniently located to encourage parking once and then walking to multiple destinations.

The dense oak tree canopy provides a park-like atmosphere for the pleasant mixture of homes, small shops, cafes, professional offices, live/work spaces, and bed and breakfast lodging. These uses enhance the attraction of the heart of the community for its residents and visitors by providing needed neighborhood services and facilities for leisure and socializing, all within a pleasant walking distance along an interconnected grid street system and tree-lined bicycle and pedestrian paths.

The traffic on North River Road, as it passes through the center of Alva, has been calmed. Pedestrians and bicycles can cross safely. Motorists traveling along the scenic highway take advantage of slowed speeds to appreciate the peaceful charm of the Historic Core.

The historic commercial and residential and commercial mixed uses (similar in scale and type to those that would be found in an historic river settlement) of the Historic Core are clustered primarily in the area between the river and the school in the area intersected by Broadway and Pearl Street where stores were located in the early history of the community.

The blocks bordering the Historic Core and extending northward adjacent to the school and community park area, feature a mix of residential uses of varying densities, live/work

spaces, occasionally interspersed existing in-town agricultural uses.

The neighborhood to the east of the Historic Core continues to be a quiet residential area with homes of varying ages and size. New homes built on infill parcels, particularly along the river, reflect the southern Victorian heritage.

The school complex continues to function as the community gathering place for both children and adults. Activities at the school include educational functions, community meetings, and public events. The community members have worked in cooperation with the School District of Lee County to expand facilities around this site to strengthen the historically neighborhood nature of the school and enable more local students to attend school locally.

The expanded Alva Community Park to the north of the school is in constant use, providing active recreation facilities for all age groups. A public use complex has been developed to house a new community cultural facility as well as space for Fire and EMS services.

The activity of the Riverfront and Historic Core reflect the area's historic function as a riverfront settlement and true community rather than simply a town. The community continues to be a place where people of varying ages, background, and economic status find a range of housing choices, work, shopping, recreation, and social interaction close to home.

Existing Conditions, Planning Issues, and Opportunities

Riverfront and Bridge. As in 2006, the opportunities for public enjoyment of the Alva Village riverfront remain limited. The Army Corps of Engineers has easements on both sides of the River. The Alva Boat Ramp on Pearl Street, a Lee County Parks and Recreation facility consisting of one boat ramp with a small dock, picnic tables, and parking for approximately 20 cars with trailers, continues to experience heavy use. West of the bridge on the north side of the river south of the post office, a new river-oriented bait, tackle, and sandwich shop with a small outdoor seating area is proposed to open in 2011. This development fits nicely with the eco-tourism destination facet of the Village riverfront foreseen in the 2006 Alva Plan, with the potential to provide "a place where folks traveling the extensive system of paddle trails throughout the area can find supplies and respite."

Alva continues to prioritize better integration of the Caloosahatchee River into the social fabric of the Village. The Caloosahatchee is not just as an outstanding natural resource amenity, but the spine of the recreation system network. It is also a transportation alternative to the automobile. This priority includes maximizing views and public access to the Village riverfront. Expanding the Alva Boat Ramp into a park providing a waterfront play area with additional dock and a pedestrian promenade remains the most apparent opportunity to improve the public riverfront experience.

The Broadway Street Bridge is the most important connection in the Alva Rural Village. Providing pedestrian and bike lanes across the bridge and enhancing the views from the bridge continue to be an important objective for Alva. The bridge may also provide another opportunity for docking facilities at or near the base to accommodate people arriving by boat to visit the Alva Village.

The Alva Oxbow Island just south of the River, east of Broadway, and north of SR 80 continues to be an opportunity for a recreation area. A small portion of the island is privately owned but the majority is indicated on the original Alva plat as a park and once was a community park prior to the establishment of the current Alva Community Park. Alva continues to envision adopting Oxbow Island and once again making it available for recreation.

As identified in the 2006 plan, there continues to be an important private component to the future evolution of the riverfront. The public nature of the Caloosahatchee, especially in the core area of the Village, focuses on the need for public access, such as a boardwalk or riverwalk. New development with frontage on either side of the river in this area should be required to provide riverfront access and public amenity areas.

The 2006 plan identified potential funding sources to enhance access to the Riverfront to include private sector funding in connection with new development (and/or developer constructed improvements), park impact fees, gas tax funds, tourist development tax funds, and grant funds. This plan proposes a policy for Alva to work with the county to identify appropriate funding sources for a program to provide greater public access to the River. Phase 1 of this program is for Alva to work with Lee County to design an expanded plan for the Alva Boat Ramp Park.

Historic Core. The Historic Core—an approximately four-block area between the Caloosahatchee and the school on both sides of Broadway containing most of the remaining in-town historic structures—was established as part of the 2006 plan. The boundaries for the Historic Core are the river on the south, Julia Street on the east, the School/Community Center Complex on the north, and on the west by Savage Street. A commercial building, discussed above in conjunction with the riverfront café, and the United States Post Office are located on the west side of the base of the bridge along the Caloosahatchee River. Refurbished historic cottages on west Pearl Street and around to Savage Street, the historic Methodist Church and the Alva Museum, formerly the Alva Library, on east Pearl Street, round out the historic southern Victorian architectural context. Other homes, vacant lots, uncurbed paved streets, overhead utilities, and glimpses of the Caloosahatchee River through the dense canopy of predominantly live oak and other native trees complete the human context of this area. The vacant lots on east Pearl Street continue to provide an opportunity for redevelopment with unobtrusive, centralized parking as well as a relocation area for historic structures that might otherwise be demolished or left to deteriorate. Alva continues to prioritize preserving historic structures and utilizing them to set the design and scale for new buildings in the Historic Core.

The 2006 plan provided that specific design and development standards for the Historic Core, including minimum and maximum floor area, lot coverage, floors, height, and maximum amount of commercial development (in square feet) appropriate for the four block Historic Core area would be established. It suggested that these standards be developed as a part of the Rural Village Overlay Zone. Alva is currently working to craft these standards for proposal to Lee County as an amendment to the land development code.

Since the character of this section of the Village is primarily residential, compatibility of new development is of primary importance. In addition to architectural compatibility, the compatibility of any new commercial activity is secondary but significant. The 2006 plan envisioned live-work spaces, such as artists' or photographers' studios, galleries, professional offices, small retail shops, bed and breakfast lodging, and small cafés as being compatible commercial activities. It suggested that a cluster of historic cottages with a compatible mix of residences and commercial activities could make a charming area of small shops. Other than the proposed commercial bait and tackle café west of the foot of the bridge, little change has occurred to further this vision, but this continues to be Alva's vision for the Historic Core.

Rural Mixed-Use Village Core (Sub-area 1)—Surrounding close-in neighborhoods. Established as part of the 2006 plan, this area includes the blocks immediately bordering the east side of the Historic Core and the school/community Center and the area on the original Alva plat east of Julia Street and west of Josephine Street, from the river to Park Street and north on both sides of North River Road to Claytor Road. As in the 2006, this area currently contains a mixture of residential and non-residential uses, including some in-town agriculture, schools and the community center complex, predominantly single family residences. Residential buildings date back as long as the 1920s, with the majority built in 1950s and 1960s. A few of the homes are more contemporary. Approximately 20% of the lots remain undeveloped.

Existing streets in this area are narrow, lacking sidewalks or stormwater drainage, but generally connect to the platted grid pattern, providing alternate routes to reach Broadway or North River Road. Existing streets are narrow with no sidewalks or drainage systems. As in 2006, the block immediately east of the community park has no north/south connection with the grid, and to the east beyond the area designated for mixed use several streets remain unimproved—streets on paper only. Completing this grid would contribute strongly to the walkability and connectivity of the community.

In addition to residences, the 2006 plan foresees future activities including live/work spaces, offices, and commerce similar to that permitted in the Historic Core. Recognizing that incorporating mixed-use development into a predominately rural residential area requires careful consideration, Alva is currently crafting design and development standards comparable to the Historic Core for this area.

North River Road. North River Road is the major east-west street in the Historic Core,

continuing to witness a steady increase in automobile and truck traffic, remaining safety concern for school children and other bicyclists and pedestrians. The speed limit remains between 15/20 mph on the right angle turns and in the school zone, and otherwise at 45 mph. There is currently a prohibition on through truck traffic that is a transportation concern for commercial agriculture in the area. The high speed limits on portions of the road are a concern for human and wildlife safety.

North River Road remains the east-west transportation backbone of Alva north of the Caloosahatchee River. The 2006 plan provided that Lee County would designate North River Road as a County Scenic Highway and assist Alva's efforts to obtain Florida Scenic Highways designation for the Road. Although this has not yet occurred, efforts remain on-going. This plan proposes that the automobile-oriented pavement in this right-of-way not be expanded in the current planning horizon of the Lee Plan.

Pedestrian/Bicycle System. There are still no sidewalks or safe bicycling provisions in the Historic Core and the surrounding blocks proposed for mixed-use development. The pedestrian-oriented area envisioned by the 2006 plan as the "hub" for a system of bike lanes and pedestrian pathways extending throughout Alva and across the bridge to and from the Village Center remains unattained. As the economy improves and development opportunities return, Alva continues to envision such a system, the design of which emphasizes the use of pervious materials, and that emulates a rural, historic look such as existed in the late 1800s.

Implementing and Funding the Improvements. The 2006 Alva plan recommended a policy to prepare an Improvement Plan for the Historic Core and Riverfront. One purpose of the Improvement Plan was to implement the envisioned system of pathways, methods for traffic calming, central but unobtrusive parking areas, connectivity of the local street network, and an inviting pedestrian oriented streetscape. An additional purpose was to examine the feasibility of a number of measures to be used in combination to fund the implementation of the Improvement Plan.

The 2006 Alva plan suggested that developer-funded or developer-constructed improvements could contribute substantially to the implementation of the Improvement Plan. For example, rather than being required to provide parking on-site, a developer of a new building could achieve a greater percentage of lot coverage (or provide for more green space or on-site patio dining) by paying an equivalent fee towards provision of a common centralized parking area and being assessed proportionately for on-going maintenance of the facility. Typical land development code requirements for street frontage on-site landscaping could be replaced by a requirement to install a segment of the landscaped pedestrian pathway along the build-to line.

The 2006 Alva plan discussed implementing such improvements contemporaneous with development and redevelopment or through a continuous system constructed up front by a combination of county and grant funds, with the County funds being reimbursed to the county as new development comes on line and pays its proportionate share. It also identified federal transportation enhancement funding as another potential opportunity for

constructing improvements in the Historic Core.

The federal transportation enhancement program views functional, historical, economic, social, and visual elements, combined with scenic resources, as key elements in the preservation of communities and landscapes through which roads pass. The 2006 Alva plan discussed how successful grant projects have had a focus on community character, a strengthened sense of place, measures that contribute to revitalizing historic downtown commercial districts, and that promote heritage travel and tourism. In addition, the 2006 Alva plan noted that the National Trust for Historic Preservation works with communities to engage the potential of transportation enhancement activities to support historic preservation and sustainable transportation, including encouraging pedestrian and bicycle access for historic downtowns and scenic/heritage corridors. Many of the recommended activities of the 2006 plan continue to be potentially eligible for transportation enhancement grants and historic preservation grants. Moving forward, Alva will work closely with the county to pursue these grant opportunities and propose regulatory changes to the land development code to allow the transformations to the Historic Core to happen.

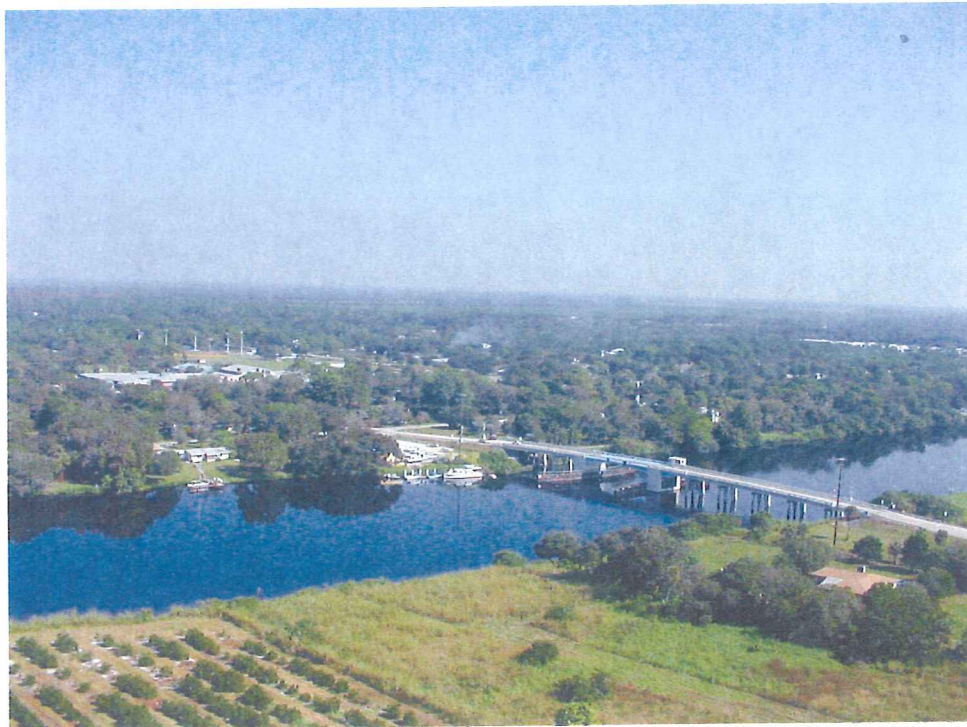
Ongoing opportunities to achieve the vision for the Historic Core and Riverfront. The 2006 Alva plan identified 16 activities Alva could pursue in conjunction with preparing the Rural Village Overlay and the Improvement Plan for the Historic Core called for in the plan. Those opportunities continue to remain viable.

1. Describe and provide examples of southern victorian or southern Florida indigenous architecture, providing a palette of design, colors, and materials for incorporation into commercial design standards.
2. Prepare design recommendations (which are advisory only) for new and renovated single- family residential development as a guide to those that wish to be consistent with historic architectural elements.
3. Prepare a list of permitted, strongly encouraged, and non-permitted uses (such as drive-through windows or gasoline stations) for the Historic Core and methods to encourage an appropriate mix rather than an overabundance of one type.
4. Consider implications of a probable expansion of the Post Office in its present location. That is, could an expanded facility serve as an anchor for activity in the Historic Village area and enhance the pedestrian character of the vision for that area, or do the vehicle-oriented activities of a post office facility suggest a location more accessible by automobile where the facility could serve as an anchor for new commercial and mixed use development?
5. Describe the mixture of uses envisioned for the surrounding close-in neighborhoods.
6. Work with Lee County DOT to identify and implement methods that can be used in the near term to reduce speed and improve safety on North River Road as it passes through the Village and Historic Core around the school. Methods could include a combination of reduced speed zone, crosswalks, and stop signs. Obtain traffic counts for this segment for evenings and weekends as well as school crossing hours.
7. Formulate a general design concept and criteria for the pedestrian and bicycle pathways for the Historic Core. Criteria would include such things as location

to reported negative affects that prohibition has on commercial agricultural interests in the area. The second is limited access to North River Road due to the policy conflict with the desire to improve connectivity suggested in item 14. At stated previously, items 4 and 7 through 15 remain vital and viable, but due to the involvement of multiple other agencies such as the School Board, Army Corp of Engineers, Lee County DOT and Parks and Recreation, their priority is lower than that of the 2011 Alva plan and the formulation of development standards for the Rural Village, the Historic Core Improvement Plan, and public access to the riverfront.

Rural Village Framework– Palm Beach Boulevard Mixed-Use Rural Village Center (Sub-areas 2 and 3)

The 2006 Alva plan envisioned a vibrant, mixed-use rural village center south of the Caloosahatchee River on both sides of Broadway Street and south of Palm Beach Boulevard from opposite Herzog Road to the western shore of Bedman Creek. The 2011 Alva plan carries that vision forward as a foundation for proposed regulations in the land development code.



Vision for the Gateway and Mixed-Use Rural Village Center

On the south side of the river, across from the Historic Core, is an extensive public plaza

(whether on private property as part of the site development requirements, or in the public right of way) approximate width, material, separation of uses, use of trees, and other landscaping.

8. Work with Lee County Parks Department to continue efforts to acquire additional acreage for expanding the existing community park and to plan and identify funding for the park improvements if and when expanded.
9. Begin to identify candidate parcels of suitable size and location for a community use site. Develop a concept for the desired community uses (such as a cultural center or an amphitheater and other needed public facilities that could be on the same site) so that criteria for site selection can be identified (such as minimum number of acres, maximum distance from a specified center of the community, etc.). The community plan can have a floating designation to be applied when a candidate parcel of suitable size and location is available.
10. Identify potential sites for unobtrusive and conveniently located parking areas that could serve multiple parking needs of the community within easy walking distance (for example, perhaps in connection with the expansion plans of the Methodist Church).
11. Work with county planning staff to develop an updated historic resources inventory, a program for recognizing historic places, and a walking tour of historic places.
12. Work with county staff to assist in informing property owners and connecting them with the array of existing programs that provide grants and loans for renovation of historic structures, commercial façade revitalization, and renovation of owner-occupied income-qualifying housing.
13. Pursue the concept of expanding the area near the existing school available for additional elementary and middle school classrooms so that more local children can go to school locally.
14. Work with county DOT and willing property owners to develop feasible options to improve connectivity by reestablishing walkable blocks, linking the street grid by connecting existing dead ends, and/or putting through some already platted narrow streets in key locations.
15. Work with the Army Corps of Engineers to find a means by which the portion of Alva Oxbow Island that is not privately-owned may be made available for passive recreational use.
16. Work with county staff to identify funding sources for the preparation of the Rural Village Zoning Overlay, the Improvement Plan for the Historic Core, and the Master Plan for Public Access to the Riverfront. Such sources could include funding from the County's Community Planning program, grants funds, and community fund-raising and volunteer activity.

Of the 16 items listed above, items 1 through 3, 5, and 16 are proceeding through a grant from the county's community planning program for development of proposed requirements for adoption and amendments to the land development code. This effort is a priority for Alva, as the citizens believe the recent economic downturn offers an opportunity to put in place an incentive-driven regulatory basis for maintaining and enhancing the rural character of Alva. Two of the suggestions in item 6 are being reevaluated. The first is increased enforcement of the no through trucks prohibition due

and walkway lining the riverfront, provided as part of the newly developed Mixed-Use Rural Village Center, a mixed-use center designed to compliment and expand the pedestrian scale and 1890's architectural elements of the Historic Core.

The design of the Village Center embraces the natural features, such as the river and the huge stand of ancient oak trees, as key focal points and public spaces and provides inviting pedestrian amenities such as shaded walkways and easy access to multiple locations from small mid-block parking areas. Buildings with architectural character that compliments that of the Historic Core help shape the public spaces of the Village Center. An inviting mix of stores, dwelling units, offices, and restaurants; an internalized system of service roads; and appropriate transitions from public to private space make the Village Center attractive, livable, successful, and an asset to the community.

South of Palm Beach Boulevard, a smaller commercial and mixed-use area with frontage on Palm Beach Boulevard mirrors the design principles of the Village Center to the north. A traffic signal at the redesigned intersection of Palm Beach Boulevard, Broadway Street, and Packinghouse Road and strategically located median breaks and access points, allow safe vehicular entry into adjacent commercial areas. Palm Beach Boulevard's new curbed medians, sidewalks, and generous plantings of oak trees, framed by the buildings and landscape of these centers, announces arrival at the Gateway of the Rural Village

Through a cooperative effort between Alva, Inc. and the county, Wayside Park, renamed Alva Heritage Park, has become an attractive focal point and gathering place for this Gateway area, hosting periodic activities such as Holiday Tree Lighting Festival as well as providing a shaded oasis equipped with benches, bike racks, and picnic tables for pedestrians, bicyclists, and folks waiting for the transit that now serves the village. Interpretive displays share the history of Alva and the story of the environment of the area with visitors.

Pedestrian ways and bike lanes extend from over the bridge to Palm Beach Boulevard and beyond, making it easy and enjoyable to walk or bike from the neighborhoods to the Historic Core and new Village Centers or reach the area by bicycle from as far away as the Caloosahatchee Regional Park or Charleston Park neighborhood.

Existing Conditions, Planning Issues, and Opportunities

Alva Rural Village West/Sub-area 2a (west of Broadway, north of Palm Beach Boulevard, south of the River). The portion of Sub-area 2 west of Broadway Street is approximately ¼ mile square and extends from Palm Beach Boulevard to the Caloosahatchee River. There are four parcels with frontage on the west side of Broadway, one of which is an approximately three (3) acre vacant parcel with frontage also on Palm Beach Boulevard. The three (3) other parcels between that and the River are approximately one (1) acre each and are in residential use. To the west of those parcels are two (2) additional parcels, approximately eight (8) acres and 17 acres respectively, both with frontage on Palm Beach Boulevard and on the Caloosahatchee.

Two (2) additional two (2) acre parcels with frontage on Palm Beach Boulevard complete the square.

Excluding the existing residential parcels along Broadway, the Alva Rural Village West side of Sub-area 2 contains approximately 30 acres of land primarily zoned AG-2, with the Palm Beach Boulevard frontage portions of the 17-acre parcel and the westernmost 2-acre parcel zoned commercial. This location, with frontage on Palm Beach Boulevard, the Caloosahatchee River, and Broadway Street is appropriate for a well-designed rural village center featuring community-serving mixed-use buildings, with residential above commercial, stand-alone residential, and civic uses. The site should be planned to maximize the views and public access to the Caloosahatchee River and maintain the context of the residences on Broadway Street. Building design and placement should provide structure and context to the Palm Beach Boulevard frontage and the intersection of Broadway Street and Palm Beach Boulevard and set a high quality design standard that announces the entry into the Alva Rural Village from the west.

The Alva Rural Village West should be pedestrian-oriented with tree shaded walkways and plazas, should include both attached and detached buildings, on-street parking, mid-block parking lots rather than one large parking area, minimal curb cuts, shared driveways, an internalized network of service streets. Heights, number of floors, building footprint, size of blocks, spacing between doors all should be planned and scaled to create an area that is walkable, inviting, and attractive. Taken together, the mix of uses and the design of the center should add to the charm and livability of the Rural Village.

A public plaza overlooking the south bank of the Caloosahatchee River should be incorporated into the master plan as a requirement for development of the Alva Rural Village West. Developer funding for, or developer construction of the plaza would provide a marketing advantage as well as a public amenity. Provision of dock space for day use would contribute to the marketing advantage and would facilitate visits by boat to the rural village and Historic Core, just a short walk over the Broadway Street Bridge. The master plan should also preserve the stand of ancient live oaks on the site and integrate them into the internal public space utilizing tree credits to offset more typical landscaping requirements.

Because this area consists of a limited number of large lots with few owners, it should be possible to develop a cooperative partnership among the property owners and Alva representatives to have a conceptual master plan or set of development criteria prepared for the area. These criteria could be incorporated into the rural village overlay specific to this area. This cooperative effort would allow the community to proactively ensure any commercial and mixed-use development is planned to be compatible with the rural village concept and an asset to Alva, Lee County, and the property owners. This process may also help assure that the property is ideally positioned for a development that is marketable and financially feasible.

Further west along SR 80 on the east side of Gardner Road and on the frontage of the River Oaks development, there is some existing undeveloped commercially zoned

property. The Rural Village Overlay Zone for Sub-area 2 should also address this area to provide a mechanism to discourage strip development and encourage neighborhood compatible development, if and when commercial development is proposed for these parcels.

Alva Rural Village East/Sub-area 2b (east of Broadway, north of SR 80, south of the River). The portion of Sub-area 2 east of Broadway Street, with frontage on Broadway Street between the Caloosahatchee River and Palm Beach Boulevard consists of six (6) parcels lots. A convenience mart and gas station are located on one parcel with commercial zoning at the corner of Palm Beach Boulevard and Broadway Street. The next parcel to the north is vacant. The next parcel north is occupied predominantly by a FDOT retention pond developed in conjunction with the widening of SR 80. Two residences are located on the three (3) parcels between the retention pond and the Caloosahatchee. All are zoned AG-2. Protecting their quiet rural setting should be a priority as the more active uses envisioned for the Village Center on the west side of Broadway is further specified. From the commercially zoned parcel in the northeastern corner of the intersection of Palm Beach Boulevard and Broadway Street, seven (7) additional parcels fronting on Palm Beach Boulevard, six (6) of which have frontage on the branch of the Caloosahatchee south of the oxbow island, round out the Rural Village East. The easternmost parcel is bounded on the east by a creek that drains into the oxbow. The two (2) parcels lying west of this parcel are zoned RPD. The next two (2) parcels to the west are zoned AG-2. The next parcel has commercial zoning on the Palm Beach Boulevard frontage, with the remaining portion to the river zoned AG-2, as is the parcel west of it bounding the commercially zoned convenience mart parcel.

The Rural Village Overlay Sub-area 2b could support additional mixed-use commercial/residential buildings, compatible with those of the Village Center. The areas with existing residential on both sides of Broadway south of the River could be designated as Residential-based mixed use so that if at some point in the future the landowners wanted to, the use of the property could be converted to a live/work, bed and breakfast type, or other river-oriented or eco-tourism uses. The location of the FDOT water retention pond on the east side of Broadway provides an opportunity to create a landscape feature as an amenity rather than a fenced enclosure, thereby providing a transition between the residential and agricultural property to the north.

Sub-area 3 (south of and including Palm Beach Boulevard). This area, envisioned for mixed-use buildings bounding the south side of Palm Beach Boulevard, west of Joel Boulevard to the parcel opposite the western edge of River Oaks. As with the Village Center north of Palm Beach Boulevard, working with existing property owners to conceptually master plan or establish criteria for future development of this area as “Rural Village Mixed-Use Center (Sub-area 3)”, will ensure that new mixed-use development is compatible with the Rural Village concept while still addressing the market for services for travelers on Palm Beach Boulevard. Alva should develop design standards that provide a framework for the character of mixed-use development on Palm Beach Boulevard including the architectural style of any business franchises. Additionally, Alva should establish appropriate commercial and site development

standards to prohibit the development of big box retail, car dealerships, and strip retail centers. Proposed new development must be reviewed by Lee County working with Alva to assure its compatibility with existing commercial establishments such as the Alva Diner. Landscaping, building design elements, shared access, and shared parking will be useful instruments to incorporate existing uses into the vitality of the evolving village activity center. Alva will work with Lee County to craft appropriate standards for codification in the land development code.

Palm Beach Boulevard. The design of Palm Beach Boulevard should provide for directed access to a regularly-spaced grid of streets that in turn provide access to adjoining properties. A centralized grid of access streets will maintain access for current businesses and encourage the internalization of streets in new development (buildings framing an internalized “main street”), thus minimizing the necessity for numerous individual drive-ways to access Palm Beach Boulevard.

As Palm Beach Boulevard evolves, it is essential that a traffic control device such as a roundabout or traffic light be provided at the intersection of Broadway Street and Palm Beach Boulevard. Traffic control intervention at this intersection is widely supported by the community and would improve safety and provide for more efficient and safe movement of vehicles. Live oak trees in the median of Palm Beach Boulevard are also a high priority of the community. Alva is currently working with Lee County and Florida DOT to plan for and fund landscaping within the Palm Beach Boulevard right-of-way. Bike lanes and sidewalks should be constructed to connect central Alva to Charleston Park on the east and to River Oaks on the west.

Other Activity Centers. Stepping back from the focus on the rural village and looking at the development pattern in the Palm Beach Boulevard corridor in northeast Lee County, Alva should address the issue of future commercial development. The entire length of Palm Beach Boulevard from downtown Fort Myers to Interstate 75 is currently lined with commercial development. This pattern is continuing eastward toward State Road 31 and then on to Old Olga Road. At the intersection of Palm Beach Boulevard and Old Olga Road, there is a marked transition into the rural area. Within the approximately six (6) mile stretch from Old Olga Road to Broadway Street there are only a few scattered commercial buildings that generally blend in with the rural countryside.

A concentration of community-serving businesses designed as a Village Center around the intersection of Palm Beach Boulevard and Broadway Street, connected by Broadway Street to the Historic Core, is consistent with the Florida Administrative Code Chapter 9J5 definition of a rural village—a small, compact center of development within a rural area supportive of and having a functional relationship with the social, economic, and institutional needs of the surrounding rural areas.

Future Commercial Development. It is important not to erode the viability of well-planned commercial activity centers such as those described in the 2006 Alva plan and above in this plan, selectively proposed within the rural countryside of Alva by allowing the pattern of strip commercial development found further west to stretch continuously

along Palm Beach Boulevard. The 2006 Alva plan recommended that the majority of acreage available for commercial development adhere to the rural village criteria and vision. The appropriateness of small businesses serving the needs of the community or an adjacent neighborhood—River Oaks or Charleston Park, for example—should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Development and redevelopment proposals should provide vehicular and pedestrian connections between adjacent commercial businesses in the rural village. Commercial building footprints should be limited 5,000 sq feet in area and the buildings should be compatible with the community's vision for the rural village. Standardized or formula franchise architecture—which would strongly contrast with the southern Victorian context—is prohibited, as are establishments in the business of commercial automobile sales or automobile dealerships. Alva will work with Lee County to develop and implement appropriate signage standards. In addition any new development on parcels within the rural village currently zoned commercial should be evaluated for consistency with the standards of the rural village in order to contribute to and be compatible with the scale and architecture that establish the rural character of the village and adjacent neighborhoods.

Rural Village Framework– Residential Village Edge to Outlying Rural Areas (Sub-area 4)

The Village Residential stepdown to the Rural Maintenance Area. Sub-areas 4 are envisioned for primarily future residential infill development around the Mixed-Use Village Core. Consisting of the areas within approximately 1/2± miles from and generally enclosing the edges of the mixed-use areas of the Rural Village. Sub-area 4 consists of existing platted subdivisions, smaller unplatted parcels, and parcels that are deemed appropriate for future village-oriented residential development. To the east, beyond the area designated for mixed use, several platted streets remain unimproved—these currently are streets on paper only. Completing this grid would contribute strongly to the walkability and connectivity of the community.

West of the Historic Core, the existing residential uses provide an appropriate transition between the Historic Core and the residential neighborhoods beyond. Further to the west on Captain Nelson Court, a new twelve lot residential subdivision is being developed with custom homes on approximately one-acre lots across the street from and along the Riverfront.

Rural Village Framework – Next Steps

There are certain activities Alva will pursue while this plan moves through the review process and the proposed revisions to the land development code are being drafted:

1. Consider the types of residential development needed in the community that could be

included as a part of the mix of uses in the village center and what civic and/or entertainment uses might be appropriate.

2. Consider ways to ensure that new development and redevelopment in the village center improves the appearance and mixed-use opportunities within the boundaries of the Historic Core.
3. Consider the intensity of use and scale of buildings that would be appropriate for the village center, including building heights, proportion and type of pedestrian-oriented public and open space.
4. Continue working with FDOT and Lee County DOT to secure traffic calming measures on Palm Beach Boulevard and North River Road, sidewalks, bike lanes, and installation of conduit to enable the extension north onto Broadway Street of state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure for the rural village area.

Alva, Inc. proposes the following objective and policies to further development and redevelopment of the rural village.

OBJECTIVE 34.3: RURAL VILLAGE FRAMEWORK. Through cooperative efforts among Alva and Lee County, establish the appropriate regulatory and incentive framework to implement Alva's vision for a mixed-use rural village center in the area depicted on Map1, page 6 of 8.

POLICY 34.3.1: Alva will work with Lee County to evaluate and amend the compact communities code, land development code chapter 32, to establish standards for a mixed-use rural village center that provides for walkable residential areas, appropriately located commercial and professional services, and public resources that meet the area's needs consistent with the Alva vision and guiding statements. Through this code, Alva will describe the form, function, street layout, streetscape, and public spaces of the rural village.

POLICY 34.3.2: Alva will work with Lee County to consider designating the rural village as a historic district.

POLICY 34.3.3: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish a maximum height standard in the land development code for the historic core that supports the Alva Methodist Church and the Alva School buildings position as dominant features and landmarks of the rural village.

POLICY 34.3.4: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County Parks and Recreation Department to explore the feasibility and potential funding for developing and implementing a site improvement plan for the existing boat launch area and facilities on Pearl Street and the Alva Heritage Park on Palm Beach Boulevard and the right-of-way for High Street.

POLICY 34.3.5: To prevent strip development along Palm Beach Boulevard, the majority of acreage available for commercial development will be located within the rural village, particularly the village center (sub areas 2 and 3). By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to amend the land development code to accomplish this policy.

POLICY 34.3.6: Any new development on parcels within the rural village area currently zoned commercial will be evaluated for consistency with the design and use standards of the rural village through the development review process in order to contribute to the overall design concept and be compatible with the village character and adjacent neighborhoods.

Connectivity

County Road 78—Scenic highways Designation. During the community planning process that resulted in the 2006 plan, there was considerable discussion about how to preserve the scenic character of North River Road and ensure that existing and future traffic conditions do not negatively impact the rural ambiance of the area. Currently, Lee Plan Policy 34.4.3 provides for pursuing Scenic Highways Designation for this rural county road. ALVA, Inc. submitted the first draft for a scenic highway designation to FDOT, but that paperwork appears to have been lost and that effort will need to begin anew.

The purpose of the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Florida Scenic Highways Program is to heighten awareness of and to protect and enhance outstanding resources along Florida's roadways. The program is voluntary, with nominations coming from grass roots coalitions of citizens, civic groups, businesses, and government that form a Corridor Advocacy Group (CAG). The CAG is responsible for developing partnerships and providing documentation demonstrating eligibility of the Corridor, documenting its intrinsic resources. After eligibility is determined, the CAG in cooperation with local government prepares a Corridor Management Plan (CMP), which defines the actions, procedures, protection measures and other operational practices relevant to the protection and enhancement of the corridor.

In addition to the benefits of protecting natural resources, enhancing the travel experience, providing education and history appreciation and other benefits that designation provides, obtaining the scenic designation provides a distinct advantage in qualifying for and obtaining grant funds. Combining the scenic highways designation with the concept of the pedestrian and bicycle improvements envisioned for the Historic Core and the concept of extending a bike path network to connect the conservation areas and regional parks, meets a wide range of eligibility criteria of numerous sources of grant funds which could be layered and leveraged to create some significant enhancements in the area that would be appreciated and enjoyed throughout the region, not simply benefiting Alva.

Bike Paths linking conservation and recreation areas. During the community planning

process that resulted in the 2006 plan and the effort preceding this plan, a high priority was given to linking the conservation and recreation areas of the rural Alva countryside and beyond with a system of bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrian paths. Providing these alternative transportation linkages provides a public amenity available to everyone and enhances the enjoyment of the recreational and scenic assets of the area as well as the rural village. Figure 3 in an Appendix to this plan provides an illustration of a conceptual bike path system.

One possibility to implement the policy of an extensive and interconnected system of paths along rural roads is to widen the shoulder. In this manner, miles of areas wide enough to accommodate safe bicycling can be provided cost effectively and without incurring additional liability to the county as would be the case if the lanes are dedicated and striped for bicycle lanes. Another option would be to construct a separate multimodal pathway that could safely accommodate pedestrians, rollerblades, bicycles, and equestrians. When these pathways enter the rural village, they would be designed and constructed according to the Historic Core Improvement Plan. Funding sources for this system of widened paving and shoulders along rural roads could come from gas tax funds, road impact fees, Transportation Enhancement funding, and other grant funds discussed above with relation to North River Road.

Wildlife corridors. Because Alva has large tracts of undeveloped and conservation land, the area is rich in wildlife. In order for wildlife to prosper it too needs mobile connectivity to travel to make a living. As part of the Conceptual Conservation and Recreation Network Map discussed above, known wildlife corridors should be identified and included and targeted for protection through acquisition and maintenance.

OBJECTIVE 34.4: CONNECTIVITY. Provide appropriate and reasonable access and linkages throughout Alva, while supporting the area’s rural character.

POLICY 34.4.1: Alva will work with Lee County to utilize the compact communities code, land development code chapter 32, to establish a walkable mixed-use rural village center that provides for the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, equestrian riders, and drivers. Through this code, Alva will describe the form, function, layout, streetscape, and public spaces of roadways and pathways within the rural village.

POLICY 34.4.2: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to provide for multiple connections to the existing transportation network by establishing land development practices and regulations through which new streets and roads—particularly those in residential areas or rural centers—will be required to interconnect with adjacent land uses. Additionally, the regulations will prohibit entry gates and perimeter walls around residential development.

POLICY 34.4.3: During all phases of transportation planning and review, Alva will work with Lee County to address roadway transportation needs in a manner that ensures the rural character of the area including:

1. Evaluating the capacity and level of service standards for rural roads.

2. Monitoring traffic levels in coordination with Hendry County.
3. Designating North River Road and other qualifying roads as county scenic roads and obtaining Florida Scenic Highway designation from the State.
4. Farm-to-market functions of rural roadways including North River Road and Palm Beach Boulevard.

POLICY 34.4.4: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to evaluate funding opportunities and feasibility of creating a multipurpose path to run the entire length of North River Road through Alva.

Natural Resources and Environmental Systems.

Help Protect the Viability of the Caloosahatchee River. The discussion of the water budget for Alva and the region under the agriculture topic leads into the overall importance of the Caloosahatchee River to Alva. The Caloosahatchee River and Estuary extend about 70 miles from Lake Okeechobee to San Carlos Bay. The watershed includes the East, West, and Tidal Caloosahatchee drainage basins; and the North Coastal, Telegraph Swamp, C-21 and S-236 drainage basins.

Much of the freshwater portion of the Caloosahatchee was channelized as canal C-43, extending 45 miles from the Moore Haven Lock and Dam to the Franklin Lock. Telegraph Swamp is listed as one of the 4 significant natural systems within the Caloosahatchee watershed. The major issues affecting the watershed are water supply availability, salinity variations, and nutrient levels.

Water supply availability is affected by limited surface water sources; negative impacts on water resources and associated natural systems; and pressure on these resources from increasing urban and agricultural demands. Ground water is the most important source of water supply for most of the Lower West Coast region, but the Caloosahatchee River is an important surface water source in the northern portion of the region. Rapid growth in population and irrigated agricultural acreage has caused demands for water to increase significantly. Increased withdrawals in the future may cause ground water levels to decline, potentially impact wetlands and aquifers in coastal areas.

To address the problems associated with regulatory releases and uncontrolled runoff that result in alteration of the freshwater flows of Lake Okeechobee, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is establishing minimum flows and levels (MFLs) for the lake and is developing a model to evaluate the effects of differing freshwater discharges. The MFLs are also intended to address the problems of water quality from the influence of nutrient-enriched waters from Lake Okeechobee.

Surface Water Management Issues (north of the Caloosahatchee River). Flooding and the catastrophic movement of surface water from outside of Lee County into that area of Lee County lying north of the Caloosahatchee River and east of SR 31, is of concern to citizens in the Telegraph Creek, Fichter's Creek, and Cypress Creek area. Water flows to

Spanish Creek area are also now lower than historical levels. This is a well-documented massive regional water management problem that directly affects Alva. Alva, Inc. has been working with Lee County and property owners in the Four Corners area on a plan to acquire property that would allow historic flows to Spanish Creek to be restored to the Caloosahatchee River in keeping with the principles of sound water management and the SFWMD permitting criteria, thereby eliminating downstream flooding of natural and manmade water courses within this area of Lee County. This property is currently being considered for acquisition under the county Conservation 20/20 program.

Surface Water Management Issues (south of the Caloosahatchee River). Flooding has occurred in the Hickey Creek and Bedman Creek areas as a result of increased development in Lehigh Acres and diversion of waters to streams and canals that flow north of Lehigh to the Caloosahatchee River. Water control issues need to be addressed in this area. In order to resolve this issue, the East County Water Control District should cooperate with Lee County and other appropriate water management entities to address flood flows from Lehigh Acres and other areas south of Alva without causing flooding in Alva planning. Care must also be taken not to negatively impact the health of the river or oxbows as the excess surface water is managed.

Increase the Inventory of Conservation Land. As noted above, conservation purchases in rural Alva have made a significant contribution to the protection of water resources and other environmentally sensitive areas. Because of the important position of this area in the Caloosahatchee River watershed, particularly the Telegraph swamp area, additional purchases should be pursued.

Maintaining rural character and safeguarding natural resources through conservation purchases and other measures such as the purchase of conservation easements and development rights, are positive and proactive means of furthering this goal. Alva will be proactive in continuing to support land acquisition through the Lee County Conservation 20/20 program. During the planning process that resulted in the 2006 plan, forming a land trust modeled after the highly successful Calusa Land Trust that is active in the Pine Island area was discussed. As an outcome of this planning effort, this idea remains valid. A local land trust can provide a valuable service in identifying, promoting, and facilitating acquisitions by the County's 20/20 program and programs of State agencies. This step could be implemented in the very near term as one of the tools in the Rural Toolbox. Among their many objectives and policy projects, Alva needs to prioritize community time and effort to accomplish this outcome.

Plan and Map a Conceptual Conservation and Recreation Network. In order to promote an expanded, interconnected conservation and passive recreation system in the northeast county area, Alva, the county, SFWMD, and other entities should work in cooperation to develop and map a conceptual network throughout Alva linked to other portions of the existing conservation network in neighboring areas. In Nature-Friendly Communities, Duerksen and Snyder note that, in addition to the natural resource benefits to wildlife, conservation corridors (i.e., greenways that do not provide public access) improve housing values more than greenways with multiuse recreation trails, but that both

increase values over similarly situated housing without such amenities.

Increase Regional Recreational Opportunities. In addition to those conservation lands purchased through the Conservation 20/20 program, there are several large parcels owned by SFWMD. Two adjacent parcels, together consisting of over 400 acres located just north of North River Road east of Alva rural village, have been identified in the community planning process as an opportunity for a future regional park, with its focus perhaps being a youth park with BMX facilities. Alva will work with SFWMD and Lee County to explore the feasibility of adding these lands to the regional recreational system and to identify appropriate public uses.

OBJECTIVE 34.5: NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS. Enhance, preserve, protect, and restore the physical integrity, ecological standards, and natural beauty of Alva.

POLICY 34.5.1: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to establish planning policies and development standards that:

1. Promote developments that protect the integrity, stability, and beauty of the natural environment.
2. Maintain wildlife habitat and habitat travel corridors.
3. Require new development and redevelopment to be designed and operated to conserve critical habitats of protected, endangered, and threatened species, and species of special concern.
4. Increase development setbacks from natural areas and surface waters.
5. Establish requirements for natural buffers from parcel lines to development areas.
6. Prohibit developments that would harm protected, endangered, and threatened species, or species of special concern.
7. Enhance connectivity to maintain uninterrupted wildlife corridors among, between, and within parcels.
8. Develop surface water management system design standards that incorporate natural flowway corridors, cypress heads, natural lakes, and restore impacted natural surface waters.
9. Evaluate the feasibility and opportunities for an overall surface water management plan.

POLICY 34.5.2: Alva will work with Lee County to protect vital natural resources, ecosystems, and habitats from the impacts of clear cutting for residential or agricultural purposes by identifying and evaluating land conservation funding opportunities and acquisition priorities.

POLICY 34.5.3: Lee County will require all new development and redevelopment to comply with State of Florida mandated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirement for designated water bodies.

POLICY 34.5.4: Applications for new development and redevelopment in or near existing and potential wellfields must:

1. Be designed to minimize the possibility of contaminating groundwater during construction and operation.
2. Comply with the Lee County Wellfield Protection Ordinance.

Public Resource Access

The citizens of Alva seek to increase the opportunity for public access to and enjoyment of the scenic, historic, recreational, and natural resources in Alva. To further this objective, they favor policies that link public lands and minimize disturbance of natural systems. This can be accomplished by amending the county Greenways Master Plan. Further efforts must be taken to identify significant historic structures and archaeological sites and develop potential public uses for these sites.

The Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries are recognized as an outstanding water resource. The citizens of Alva will continue to work with Lee County and other appropriate agencies to identify areas suitable for water-dependent/water-related recreational uses and activities. In association with these desired water-access improvements, Alva will also look to assist in identifying appropriate access to the area's Conservation 20/20 lands. In furtherance of this objective and policies, ALVA, Inc. proposes the following language for adoption in the Lee Plan.

OBJECTIVE 34.6: PUBLIC RESOURCE ACCESS. Increase the opportunity for public access to and enjoyment of the scenic, historic, recreational, and natural resources in Alva.

POLICY 34.6.1: Alva will work with Lee County to identify opportunities to link public lands, facilities, and recreation areas that minimize disturbance of natural systems and wildlife habitat and incorporate these links into the Greenways Master Plan.

POLICY 34.6.2: By 2014, Alva will work with Lee County to identify potential public uses for significant historic structures and archaeological sites.

POLICY 34.6.3: Alva will work with Lee County to identify areas suitable for water-dependent/water-related recreational uses and activities, such as canoe and kayak launch areas, boardwalks, jogging paths, fishing platforms, and waterside parks.

POLICY 34.6.4: Alva will continue to work with Lee County to evaluate appropriate access and use of Conservation 20/20 lands to support kayaking and canoeing, bird watching, hiking, and other passive recreation related to eco-tourism. Recreational opportunities will be balanced with the protection of natural resources and will comply with the Land Stewardship Plan prepared by the Conservation 20/20 Land Program.

Public Participation

Since it began its community planning efforts, Alva has continued to value the participation of its citizens in crafting the rural character of the area. By engaging its citizens as early as possible in the process, it is the objective of Alva to guide new development and redevelopment, and the persons undertaking such efforts, in the direction desired by the Alva citizenry. These proposed policies provide for notice, opportunities to comment, workshop, and be better informed in the maintenance of rural character and other Alva citizen values. This new objective and policies would supercede current language in the Lee Plan.

OBJECTIVE 34.7: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. Lee County will encourage and solicit public input and participation prior to and during the review and adoption of county regulations, land development code provisions, Lee Plan provisions, and zoning approvals.

POLICY 34.7.1: As a courtesy, Lee County will register individuals, citizen groups, and civic organizations within Alva who desire notification of pending review of land development code amendments and Lee Plan amendments. Upon registration, Lee County will provide registered groups with documentation regarding these pending amendments. This notice is a courtesy only and is not jurisdictional. Accordingly, the county's failure to mail, email, or to timely mail the notice, or failure of a group to receive mailed notice, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

POLICY 34.7.2: As a courtesy, Lee County will notify Alva about public hearings, workshops, and hearings for land development decisions in Alva for the purpose of enabling Alva to participate in and pursue the applicability of the guiding statements for Alva's rural character.

POLICY 34.7.3: Alva will work with Lee County to establish a document clearing house in Alva where copies of selected zoning submittal documents, staff reports, hearing examiner recommendations and resolutions will be provided for public inspection. The county's failure to provide or to timely provide documents to the document clearing house, or failure of the document clearing house to receive documents, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

POLICY 34.7.4: The owner or agent for any Planned Development of a requested Lee Plan amendment or zoning action (planned development, conventional rezoning, special exception, or variance requests) within Alva must conduct one public informational session where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. Lee County encourages zoning staff to participate in such the public workshops information session. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for providing the meeting space, providing notice of the meeting, and providing security measures as needed. Subsequent to this meeting, the applicant must provide County staff with a meeting summary document that

contains the following information: the date, time, and location of the meeting; a list of attendees; a summary of the concerns or issues that were raised at the public information session; and a proposal for how the applicant will respond to any issues that were raised.

POLICY 34.7.5: Alva will work with Lee County to improve its citizens' understanding of natural resources through educational programs on energy conservation, energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emission reductions, solid waste management, hazardous waste, surface water runoff, septic maintenance, water conservation, xeriscaping, green building, cultural resources, history, etc. The site for these programs will be located in Alva.

POLICY 34.7.6: Alva will work in coordination and partnership with North Olga to implement and achieve the Northeast Lee County vision, goal, objectives, and policies. As part of this effort, Alva will coordinate with North Olga on the review of development efforts that impact the Northeast Lee Planning Community.

POLICY 34.7.7: Alva will work in coordination and partnership with the other planning communities in the East Lee County area in order to ensure effective collaboration and coordinated planning efforts.

POLICY 34.7.8: Alva will work with Lee County to coordinate planning efforts with the adjacent counties, and other local, regional, state, and federal agencies to maintain the rural character of Alva.

Appendices

Two (2) Figures are attached as appendices to this plan. Figure 2 is a map of the Alva Rural Village from the 2006 Alva Plan. Figure 3 is a map of proposed bicycle paths. Both Figures are referenced in currently adopted policies under Goal 26 of the Lee Plan and in the body of this plan.

APPENDICES

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE 2006 ALVA PLAN

FIGURE 2: ALVA RURAL VILLAGE
FIGURE 3: PROPOSED BIKE PATHS

FIGURE 3 PROPOSED BIKE PATHS



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