

CPA2010-17

**COMMUNITY PLAN FOR
NORTHEAST LEE COUNTY
& ALVA COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

**AMENDMENT
TO THE**

LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE LEE PLAN

**BoCC Public Hearing Document
For the
June 13th, 2011 Transmittal Hearing**

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May 27, 2011

**LEE COUNTY
DIVISION OF PLANNING
STAFF REPORT FOR
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT
CPA2010-17**



Text Amendment



Map Amendment

	This Document Contains the Following Reviews
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff Review
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Planning Agency Review and Recommendation
	Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Transmittal
	Staff Response to the DCA Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report
	Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Adoption

STAFF REPORT PREPARATION DATE: May 13, 2011

PART I - BACKGROUND AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

1. APPLICANTS:

ALVA, INC.

REPRESENTED BY JERRY MURPHY, AICP

2. REQUEST:

Amend the Lee Plan and Future Land Use Map to incorporate the results of the Northeast Lee County Community Planning effort and associated Alva planning efforts:

- New and revised vision, goal, objectives, and policies for Northeast Lee County Community Planning and North Olga. Amend the Future Land Use Map series to include a Special Treatment Area on Map 1, Page 2 of 8 to show the Northeast Lee County Planning Community and Alva area. Amend Map 16 to rename the Alva Planning Community to the Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

B. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF FACT SUMMARY

1. RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendment to Lee Plan.

Northeast Lee County Vision Statement

This Planning Community is located generally in the northeast corner of the county, east of SR 31 and north of Lehigh Acres. The vision for this Planning Community is a safe and friendly community where people want to live, work and recreate. The citizens desire a healthy local economy, balanced with environmental stewardship, and maintenance and enhancement of the area's heritage and rural character. The Planning Community currently contains two identifiable areas: Alva and North Olga.

The Alva area is located in the northeast corner of the county, west of the Hendry County line and south of the Charlotte County line. Alva is further identified with its mixed-use rural village located around the intersections of Broadway Street with North River Road and with SR 80. Infill development in the rural village produces a compatible mix of residential, professional office, small retail shops, cafes, and bed and breakfast lodging.

The North Olga area is located south of the Charlotte County line, north of the Caloosahatchee River, west of the Caloosahatchee Regional Park and the Bob Janes Preserve to State Road 31. The North Olga community is further identified by the W.P. Franklin North Campground, also known as the Franklin Locks and the Owl Creek Boat Works facility in the western end of the area.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Goal 33

GOAL 33: Maintain and enhance the heritage and rural character, natural resources, and agricultural lands within the Planning Community and manage future change in an ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable manner. The boundaries for North Olga and Alva are delineated on Map 1, Page 2 of 8. Alva and North Olga will work cooperatively toward this goal for the entire Planning Community through the objectives and policies that follow, and through their individual/local planning efforts.

OBJECTIVE 33.1: AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CHARACTER. Maintain and enhance the viability of the existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations, preserve open space, and retain the rural character of Northeast Lee County. For the purposes of this objective, rural character is defined as those characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands

POLICY 33.1.1: Support the agricultural and rural character within Northeast Lee County by encouraging continued commercial agricultural operations and encourage new development to be clustered to conserve large areas of open lands.

POLICY 33.1.2: Work with residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to develop standards and guidelines for clustering future development and conserving large areas of open lands to promote compatibility with adjacent residential and agricultural areas. These standards and guidelines are intended to give clear and meaningful direction for future amendments to the Land Development Code.

POLICY 33.1.3: Work with residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to amend the LDC to provide opportunities for rural mixed-uses that are connected to and compatible with adjacent areas.

POLICY 33.1.4: Work with the residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to establish amendments to the Land Development Code that will foster sustainable commercial agricultural operations and support rural uses.

POLICY 33.1.5: In all discretionary actions, consider the effect on Northeast Lee County's commercial agricultural operations and rural character.

OBJECTIVE 33.2: RURAL PLANNING TOOLBOX. To develop and further the use of a rural toolbox of incentives, programs, and regulations that enhance and maintain Northeast Lee County's sense of place and provide for the long-term preservation of large tracts of contiguous agricultural, natural resource, and open space areas.

POLICY 33.2.1: Work with Alva and North Olga to develop and refine rural planning tools including but not limited to: Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs, conservation and agricultural easements, farmland trusts, and Land Development Code regulations.

POLICY 33.2.2: The Northeast Lee County Planning Community may be a sending area for county-wide TDRs, but may only receive TDRs from within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

OBJECTIVE 33.3: NATURAL RESOURCES. Enhance, preserve, protect, and restore the physical integrity, ecological standards, and natural beauty of Northeast Lee County by focusing on:

1. Water Basins.
2. Native vegetation.
3. Wildlife habitat and resources.
4. Areas designated for long-term conservation.

POLICY 33.3.1: Identify opportunities for appropriate limited public access to and passive recreational use of the Bob Janes Preserve.

POLICY 33.3.2: Identify, maintain, and enhance appropriate public access to Northeast Lee County's public lands and surface waters, balanced with new and ongoing efforts to protect and enhance the community's water quality and natural resources.

POLICY 33.3.3: Lee County will work to identify areas suitable for public water-dependent/water-related recreation, such as canoe/kayak launches, boardwalks, jogging paths, fishing platforms, and waterside parks within Northeast Lee County

OBJECTIVE 33.4: CONNECTIVITY. Enhance and maintain high levels of connectivity across the Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

POLICY 33.4.1: Work to preserve the rural character and scenic qualities of North River Road, and support multiple modes of travel for residents, businesses, visitors, and commercial agriculture within Northeast Lee County.

POLICY 33.4.2: Plan and implement alternatives to roadways—e.g., greenways, blueways, equestrian trails, and other pedestrian pathways—within Northeast Lee County connecting people to public lands, recreation areas, public facilities, and the rural mixed-use villages.

POLICY 33.4.3: Proactively plan for wildlife corridors within Northeast Lee County that support habitat needs of native animals on public lands and waters. The needs of wildlife habitat connections will be considered in the evaluation of proposed changes to private land.

POLICY 33.4.4: Work with Alva and North Olga to evaluate funding opportunities and feasibility of creating a multipurpose path to run the entire length of North River Road through the planning community.

OBJECTIVE 33.5: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. To encourage and solicit public input and participation within Northeast Lee County on proposed amendments to county regulations, including the Land Development Code, Lee Plan, and zoning applications affecting the Northeast Planning Community.

POLICY 33.5.1: As a courtesy, register citizen groups, civic organizations, and interested individuals within Northeast Lee County who desire notification of pending amendments to the LDC, zoning actions, and Lee Plan amendments within Northeast Lee County. Upon registration, provide registrants with documentation regarding pending amendments. This notification is not jurisdictional. The county's failure to notify, or a registrant to receive notification, will not constitute a defect in the jurisdictional notice requirements or bar public hearings on an application.

POLICY 33.5.2: The owner or agent of a requested zoning action (planned development, conventional rezoning, special exception, or variance requests) or Lee Plan Amendment within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community must conduct public informational meetings with both the Alva and North Olga Communities where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for advertising, providing the meeting space, and security measures as needed. Subsequent to this meeting, the applicant must provide staff with a summary 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 meeting; and a proposal for how the applicant will respond to any issues.

POLICY 33.5.3: The Alva and North Olga Communities will coordinate their planning activities to maintain and enhance the rural character, natural resources, agriculture, and connectivity of Northeast Lee County.

Alva Vision

The mission of the people of the community called Alva, Florida, is to preserve and protect its unique historical, rural, agricultural, ~~and small town~~ 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.

The Guiding Statements for the Alva Rural Village and Community Character of the Alva area follow.

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-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~~ cafes, and bed and breakfast lodging.

Streets remain narrow with a dense tree canopy. Interconnecting ~~ons of~~ streets, ~~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~~ the Alva rural village to the agriculture, conservation, and recreational areas 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~~ 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 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~~ Palm Beach Boulevard is compact and concentrated within the rural village ~~a radius a found the area of the signalized intersection~~ rather than lining the highway with strip commercial structures. New neighborhood-scale developments combine 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~~ Palm Beach Boulevard has been designed to signal entry into the ~~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 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 through several successful programs developed 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~~ Street graphics 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.~~

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 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 Alva community~~ 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.

Future Land Use, Alva Goal 34

Goal 26 and the accompanying objectives and policies is to be replaced with Goal 34 and accompanying objectives and policies.

~~GOAL 26: ALVA. To preserve and enhance the unique historic, scenic, agricultural, and natural resource assets and rural ambiance of the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area of Alva and the surrounding countryside. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 26.1: Establish the appropriate regulatory and incentive framework and identify funding mechanisms to implement the Community's vision for the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area of Alva as stated in the Alva Community Plan. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.1: The County will utilize the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay, if an acceptable proposal is submitted by the Alva Community. The Mixed Use Overlay is intended to recognize and provide for the unique requirements of the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area by providing a procedure and mechanism through which the area may be master planned. Master planning will include development guidelines and standards that are intended to provide an incentive driven alternative to the standard zoning currently in place and other land development regulations. All new development must conform to regulations of the Mixed Use Overlay, once adopted. Rezoning to other conventional zoning categories is not permitted within the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area land use designation. The Mixed Use Overlay will provide a process for administrative approval for developments determined to be consistent with the provisions of the Mixed Use Overlay. Property developed under previous regulations will not be required to comply with the Mixed Use Overlay regulations. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.2: The Alva Community will prepare use, design, site location, and development standards for commercial and mixed-use development in the Historic Core and surrounding close in neighborhoods to be incorporated as standards into a “Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay, Sub-area 1” and will submit such standards to the County for adoption into the Land Development Code. These should address:~~

- ~~1. Permitted and prohibited uses.~~
- ~~2. Site location standards for commercial uses.~~
- ~~3. Architectural standards for buildings (other than single family homes).~~
- ~~4. Sign criteria.~~
- ~~5. Building setback.~~
- ~~6. Building height and/or number of floors.~~
- ~~7. Site design standards that bring buildings close to the street with parking behind.~~
- ~~8. Provision for shared access and parking areas across lot lines or in centralized off site parking areas.~~
- ~~9. On site landscaping and screening standards that contribute to an overall streetscape concept.~~
- ~~10. Variation of paving materials as alternative to impervious surfaces (shell, pavers).~~
- ~~11. Pedestrian, parking and streetscape improvements.~~
- ~~12. Provision for limitations on Floor Area Ratio for Commercial Uses.~~
- ~~13. Provision for pedestrian accessibility to commercial uses from side streets as well as main streets and for transitions between public and private space.~~
- ~~14. Provision for density or height bonus for mixed use (commercial on the ground floor with residential above).~~
- ~~15. Criteria that will allow for development of granny flats in the surrounding close in residential areas.~~

~~(Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.3: The Alva Community will prepare an improvement plan for the Historic Core, which will:~~

- ~~1. Connect residential and business areas by wide pathways that can safely accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and other non-motorized methods of personal transportation.~~
- ~~2. Design the pedestrian way and bike lanes that cross the Bridge.~~
- ~~3. Promote pedestrian and bicycle safety and access.~~
- ~~4. Centralize/consolidate parking areas from which people can park once and easily walk to community facilities and shopping.~~
- ~~5. Improve connectivity of the local street network.~~
- ~~6. Provide for an inviting pedestrian-oriented streetscape (walkways, lighting, benches, appropriate landscape, and underground utilities) and buffers where appropriate.~~

~~7. Provide for the continuation of the key elements of the streetscape (such as lighting, landscaping, street furniture) at the foot of the bridge on each side of the River and on the Bridge as appropriate.~~

~~8. Determine feasible methods to fund Streetscape/Parking/Pedestrian improvements from new and infill development as it occurs.~~

~~9. Identify funding sources for all improvements.~~

~~(Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.4: The Alva Community will work with the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department to explore the feasibility and potential funding for planning and implementing an expansion of the existing boat launch area and facilities. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.5: The County will update its historic sites survey of Alva as needed. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.6: The Alva Community will prepare use, design, and development standards for commercial and mixed use development in the new Village Centers to be incorporated into a master plan concept and as standards into a "Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay, Sub-area 2" and "Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay, Sub-area 3" (See Figure 2, page 15 of the Alva Community Plan) and will submit such standards to the County for adoption into the Land Development Code. These should address:~~

~~1. A list of uses that should be permitted and encouraged as a part of a Village Center and those that are prohibited and/or discouraged as incompatible with the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area character and particularly in relation to Sub-area 3, consider the appropriateness of uses that could be proposed to serve the travelers market.~~

~~2. A list of civic uses that should be considered for inclusion in the Village Center.~~

~~3. Maximum size of building footprint (for example, not to exceed 20,000 sf for a single user building).~~

~~4. Architectural standards for buildings.~~

~~5. Sign criteria.~~

~~6. Building setback.~~

~~7. Building height and/or number of floors.~~

~~8. Site design standards that bring buildings close to the street with parking behind or mid-block.~~

~~9. Pedestrian, parking and streetscape improvements.~~

~~10. Provision for pedestrian accessibility to commercial uses from side streets as well as main streets and for transitions between public and private space.~~

~~11. Maximums for block perimeters, space between pedestrian access points, spacing between storefront doors etc. to promote walkability.~~

12. ~~Parking ratios that reflect dual use and centralized parking areas.~~
13. ~~Preservation of unique natural features and vegetation.~~
14. ~~Provision of a riverfront public plaza and viewing area.~~
15. ~~Limit outdoor vehicle sales.~~

~~(Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.7: Upon completion and adoption of the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area, the County will amend the Lee Plan 2030 Land Use Allocations of commercial acreage to the Alva Planning area by amending Table 1(b) of the Lee Plan to reflect the precise number of acres needed to implement the Village Centers and provide for infill development in the Historic Core. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.1.8: As a courtesy, the County will notify ALVA, Inc. about public hearings, workshops, and hearings for land development decisions in Alva for the purpose of enabling the Alva community to participate in and pursue the applicability of the Guiding Statements for the Alva Community Character. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 26.2: Provide for appropriately located and well-planned commercial development to serve the needs of the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area of Alva consistent with the Vision stated in the Alva Community Plan. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.2.1: In order to prevent strip development along SR 80, the majority of acreage available for commercial development should be granted within the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area boundaries, especially sub areas 2 and 3 or on Joel Boulevard adjacent to sub area 3. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.2.2: Retail uses that require outdoor display in excess of one acre are prohibited. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.2.3: Any new development on parcels within the Rural Village Mixed Use Overlay area currently zoned commercial will be evaluated for consistency with the design and use standards of the Rural Village in order to contribute to the overall design concept and be compatible with the village character and adjacent neighborhoods. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~OBJECTIVE 26.3: Increase the opportunity for public access to and enjoyment of the scenic, historic, recreational and natural resources in the rural area. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.3.1: The County will designate County Road 78 (North River Road) from Highway 31 to the Hendry County line a County Scenic Highway in accordance with Lee Plan Policy 2.9.1 and will assist the Community's efforts to obtain a Florida Scenic Highways designation for the roadway. This policy does not preclude the County from future widening of North River Road if needed to address growth needs. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

~~POLICY 26.3.2: The County will make every effort to implement the system of bike paths linking the conservation and recreation areas (as shown conceptually in Figure 3, page 16 of the Alva Community Plan) by providing additional paving outside of the stripe for the travel lane and widening shoulders, based on a route and phasing plan to be developed in a cooperative effort between County staff and Alva Community representatives. (Added by Ordinance No. 09-07)~~

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.

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 discouraged. 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. No land use amendments to a more intensive category will be permitted unless a finding of overriding public necessity is made by three members of the Board of County Commissioners.

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.

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 Map 1, 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:

- The Northeast Lee County Planning Community includes two community planning areas North Olga and Alva, which share certain commonalities, characteristics, and needs.
- In October 2009, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) approved community planning grant applications for the development and update of separate community plans for two communities (North Olga and Alva) within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community. Through this grant approval, the Board of County Commissioners requested that ALVA Inc. and the North Olga Community Planning Panel (NOCPP) work together and develop coordinated plans which address their shared commonalities.
- During the course of the two year planning effort, both organizations facilitated extensive public input processes through which all community members were able to discuss the two community plans as well as the vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the entire Northeast Lee County Community Plan. This effort included the following public input opportunities:
 - Northeast Lee County – Six coordination meetings, six planning panel meetings (three sponsored by ALVA Inc. and three sponsored by NOCPP), and one Local Planning Agency workshop.
 - Alva – Fifteen community planning panel meeting and two planning panel meetings.
 - North Olga — Five community outreach meetings, twenty-six planning panel meetings, two community days, and twenty-seven stakeholder interviews
- Throughout the planning process, both organizations have continually revised the vision statements, goals, objectives, and policies for Northeast Lee County, Alva, and North Olga in order to address identified needs, concerns, and values.
- The two-year planning effort has resulted in a set of goals, objectives, and policies for Alva which was adopted by the Alva, Inc. at their April 30, 2011 meeting.
- As a result of this community planning effort, staff finds that Alva Inc. and the NOCPP adopted a single vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the entire planning community. Alva Inc. adopted the Northeast Lee County Planning Community vision, goal, objectives, and policies at their April 30, 2011 meeting while NOCPP adopted them at their April 21, 2011 meeting.

C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY PLANNING HISTORY

Community Plan Development

Community planning has a history that closely follows comprehensive planning efforts in Lee County. Lee County adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1984. Around the same time that Lee County was initiating county-wide comprehensive planning efforts, several communities expressed a desire to initiate area-specific planning projects. As a result of this interest, in 2001 the Board of County Commissioners initiated a community planning program, through which the county provides grants to support grass roots community planning efforts.

Since 2001, interest in community planning efforts has increased as citizens sought opportunities to have input in the development of their local communities. The county promotes these local grass roots planning efforts by supporting local community planning panels. The planning panels are groups of community members from the local area who have taken the time and initiative to build community consensus about how the community sees its future. The panels receive professional planning assistance in the development, formation, adoption, and implementation of the community plans, which are adopted as part of the Lee County comprehensive plan and land development code. The professional assistance comes from public and private sector planners who work to help the local communities build consensus about how to address their community's many interests and needs. As a result of the planning panel's efforts, a local community can work towards the realization of the community's future vision.

Coordinating Planning Efforts and Consensus Building

One of the most difficult challenges any community planning effort faces is consensus building. Building consensus is critical to the successful development and implementation of community plans because every community has many individuals with different ideas, needs, and concerns. By building consensus between these different points of view, the community planning process helps ensure that community members buy into the vision, policy direction, and land development strategies.

In order to help communities develop consensus, the county tries to support activities which promote collaborative discussions and community planning efforts that address the many different needs, concerns, and challenges. Such activities include community planning vision workshops, issue surveys, community planning panel meetings, and facilitated discussions, are conducted in an open and public forum. Additionally, staff and other professional planners work closely with the community planning areas to listen to concerns,

identify solutions, and develop policies and standards which address the various issues raised through the community planning process. As a result of such activities, a general level of community consensus is found by the time a community plan is presented to the Board of County Commissioners.

However, this does not mean that all community members agree about every item included within the plan. Despite the best efforts of the community, some differences may remain. This is an understandable outcome, as there are many different points of view being represented by the community plan. Yet, remaining issues is not an indicator of lack of consensus. Consensus simply means that there is general agreement about most items being discussed – not unanimity. The Board has recognized that community planning is about building general consensus, as identified during one of their discussions about community planning, community plans have rarely been embraced by all community members and none of them have been perfect.

NORTHEAST LEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMUNITY

The Northeast Lee County Planning Community is currently entitled the Alva Planning Community, which was the name of area's largest village. Early community planning efforts attempted to develop a plan for the entire planning community; however the community was not able to arrive at a community plan that was agreeable to both the large property owners, generally in the western portion of the community and the small property, mostly located owners in the eastern portion of the community.

Alva is located in the eastern portion of the planning community in area that includes a mix of a central village area, residential neighborhoods, and supporting agricultural lands. North Olga is located in the western portion of the planning community and includes mostly agricultural lands and large properties. The members of Alva wanted a plan which included tighter development controls in order to preserve and protect the rural lifestyle. The members of North Olga recognized the impact expanding residential areas could have on their ability to farm and, as such, wanted a plan to protect their agricultural lands while guiding future community development in a manner that protects the area's rural character. Additionally, they felt development controls impinged upon their personal property rights. The inability for the two groups to bridge their differences left the planning community without an ability to build consensus about a plan for the entire community.

In order to support the unique needs and concerns of each area while also seeking an avenue to build consensus within the entire planning community, on October 27, 2009 the Board of County Commissioners approved applications for two community plans – one for the Alva area and one for North Olga area. In the motion to approval the two community planning

efforts, the Board of County Commissioners instructed ALVA, Inc. (the planning panel for the Alva area) and North Olga Community Planning Panel (the planning panel for the Alva area) to coordinate their efforts so that common issues could be identified and addressed cooperatively. The Board acknowledged that the two communities had issues that were unique to them, but also had areas of common concern. As such, the Board instructed them to address those common issues while developing policies which support their unique needs and circumstances. Over the last year, ALVA Inc. and the NOCPP have been working together to comply with the Board's instructions as they sought to identify and address common needs, concerns, and issues.

ALVA COMMUNITY PLANNING

The community of Alva is one of the county's oldest settled areas, having been first settled in 1866. The community is located north of Lehigh Acres, east of the Hendry County line, south of the Charlotte County line, and west of the Bob Janes Preserve. As one of the oldest communities, Alva has a strong sense of place and unified sense of character. In the early 1990s, the Alva Preservation Committee sought to develop a sector plan, which supported their community's sense of place and character. The plan sought to accomplish this goal by preventing the community's rural lands from being converted into suburban developments. While the plan was never adopted by the county, in 2001, ALVA Inc. sought to build upon the previous community planning efforts by working to address specific community concerns including: State Route 80 design, park and recreations facilities and resources, transportation resources, and the Alva village sidewalks and paths. The results of these planning efforts form the basis of Alva's goal, objectives, and policies, which the Board adopted into the Lee Plan as Goal 26.

In 2009, the Alva community decided to update its plan and expand its planning efforts to include issues and areas not addressed by the 2002 plan. The Board supported this effort by providing ALVA Inc. a community planning grant, through which the community has hired professional planning assistance. As part of the support, the Board instructed the community to coordinate with the North Olga on issues related to the entire planning community. ALVA Inc. has cooperated with this direction and has sought to use the community planning effort as an instrument to address the needs and concerns of the Alva community as well as that of the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community. The community has held regular public workshops and meetings to work through the many issues they face. The result of their willingness to work cooperatively with the North Olga planning community is that Alva has updated its community plan vision, goal, objectives, and policies based on feedback provided by community members from across the planning community and has also approved the vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the larger Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

PART II - STAFF ANALYSIS

A. STAFF DISCUSSION

Drafts of the Northeast Lee County, Alva, and North Olga community plans were submitted to the Lee County Department of Community Development at various times throughout the process, with the final drafts being sent the week of April 25, 2011. Planning staff provided copies of each draft and requested comments from various county departments, including:

- County Attorney's Office
- Emergency Medical Service Division
- Lee County Sheriff
- Department of Natural Resources
- Lee Tran
- Lee County School District
- Parks and Recreation
- Lee County Department of Transportation
- Development Services Division
- Environmental Sciences Division
- Zoning Division
- Utilities Division
- Lee County Port Authority
- Lee County Economic Development
- Public Works Department
- Lee County Health Department
- Department of Public Safety
- Lee County Public Works
- Conservation 20/20

Written comments were received from the County Attorney's Office, the Department of Transportation, Zoning Division, Environmental Sciences Division, Lee County Parks, Lee County Public Works, and Department of Natural Resources.

Planning Division staff has met many times with members of ALVA Inc. and the North Olga Community Planning Panel as well as their respective consultants to review staff comments and identify needed policy modifications. As a result of these meetings, the communities have revised their plans' visions, goals, objectives, and policies to address staff concerns. Additionally, the organizations have met with community members from the larger community as well as from the adjacent communities of Bayshore and Caloosahatchee Shores and have adjusted their plan in order to address community concerns.

In April, 2011 the plans for Northeast Lee County Planning Community and Alva community planning area were submitted to the county for consideration as amendments in the Lee Plan. Staff has reviewed these plans and found it to be sufficient. The comments in this staff report are based on the review of final plans.

The following is the evaluation of the proposed vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the Northeast Lee County Planning Community and Alva planning area.

B. NORTHEAST LEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMUNITY

Northeast Lee County Vision Statement and Goal 33 Overview

One of the most significant outcomes of this community planning effort is the creation of a joint vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community. The Northeast Lee County Planning Community vision, goal, objectives, and policies have been created as the result of collaborative planning effort between the ALVA Inc. and NOCPP, which has been facilitated by Lee County staff. The Northeast Lee County plan's vision, goal, objectives, and policies were adopted by the North Olga Planning Panel on April 21, 2011 and ALVA, Inc. on April 30, 2011.

The cornerstone of the Northeast Lee County Planning Community's plan is the recognition that the Alva and North Olga community is comprised of two distinct areas with a shared common sense of place. While each of the areas has different characteristics, they both contribute to the shared sense of place which is based upon the community's rural nature and agricultural heritage. The plan acknowledges this relationship by:

1. Renaming the former Alva Planning Community to the current Northeast Lee County Planning Community in order that both communities may feel they have an equitable stake in the planning community's future.
2. Establishing a planning framework that fosters the shared sense of place through planning objectives and policies that support each area's unique character.
3. Ensuring that the policies found within the Alva and North Olga plans are mutually supportive and provide for the long term needs of the entire area.
4. Developing a procedure by which all community members in Northeast Lee County may provide input about any development proposed for the planning community.
5. Promoting cooperative relationships between ALVA Inc. and NOCPP through which the organizations share information, discuss common needs and concerns, and work towards common goals.

The planning effort reflects the diverse needs and concerns of the community, as it was done through a process that encouraged all of the planning community's citizens, business people, property owners, and other interested stakeholders to share their concerns and provide input. Specific proposals were added to the Northeast Lee County Plan including a vision, goal, objectives, and policies to help address community concerns and help build community consensus throughout the entire planning community.

As a result of the community's consensus building process, the final proposal includes policies that address with the following issues raised by community members:

- Rural character definition which specifically identifies the components of a rural character area as, *“those characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands.”*
- That the agricultural and rural character of Northeast Lee County ought to be maintained and enhanced through the continued viability of the existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations and preservation of open space.
- A rural toolbox should be developed to develop and further the use of a rural toolbox of incentives, programs, and regulations that enhance and maintain Northeast Lee County's sense of place and provide for the long-term preservation of large tracts of contiguous agricultural, natural resource, and open space areas.
 - Northeast Lee County Planning Community may be a sending area for county-wide TDRs, but may only receive TDRs from within the Northeast Lee County.
- Transfer of development rights sending and receiving area provision that expressly articulates no new density rights may be transferred into the planning community.
- Shared community planning efforts which will focus on issues of common concern including rural character, multi-purpose corridors, public lands, park resources, natural resources, agricultural, connectivity, and other issues.
- Public participation requirement that ensures all future development proposals within the Northeast Lee County planning community will hold public informational meetings within both the Alva and North Olga communities.
- Establishment of Alva and North Olga borders that do not include conservation lands, as these areas are recognized as common resources to be planned for by a joint effort.

By establishing a common vision, goal, objectives, and policies, the Northeast Lee County Planning Community has been able to build a general level of consensus within the entire community and set a framework for the future development of the Alva and North Olga planning areas. This consensus was established when ALVA Inc. and NOCPP worked together to develop and adopt the Northeast Lee County Planning Community vision, goal, objectives, and policies. By working together on this effort, ALVA and NOCPP established

consensus on the fact that they do share a single planning community, with a shared sense of place and rural character. Furthermore, in adopting this plan the communities recognized that they must work together to implement and achieve their common vision for the future.

Northeast Lee County Vision Statement

This Planning Community is located generally in the northeast corner of the county, east of SR 31 and north of Lehigh Acres. The vision for this Planning Community is a safe and friendly community where people want to live, work and recreate. The citizens desire a healthy local economy, balanced with environmental stewardship, and maintenance and enhancement of the area's heritage and rural character. The Planning Community currently contains two identifiable areas: Alva and North Olga.

The Alva area is located in the northeast corner of the county, west of the Hendry County line and south of the Charlotte County line. Alva is further identified with its mixed-use rural village located around the intersections of Broadway Street with North River Road and with SR 80. Infill development in the rural village produces a compatible mix of residential, professional office, small retail shops, cafes, and bed and breakfast lodging.

The North Olga area is located south of the Charlotte County line, north of the Caloosahatchee River, west of the Caloosahatchee Regional Park and the Bob Janes Preserve to State Road 31. The North Olga community is further identified by the W.P. Franklin North Campground, also known as the "Franklin Locks" and the Owl Creek Boat Works facility in the western end of the area.

Staff finds that the vision for Northeast Lee County, which was written through a collaborative effort of the North Olga and Alva planning panels, their consultants, and staff, clearly identifies the community's desire to maintain its rural lifestyle. Additionally, it establishes the location of the Alva and North Olga communities within the planning community. Finally, the vision identifies the key components of the planning community's vision – healthy local economy, environmental stewardship, and rural heritage. The vision is consistent with Lee County's intent to maintain the rural character and protect the natural environment of the county's northeast corner.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Goal 33

GOAL 33: Maintain and enhance the heritage and rural character, natural resources, and agricultural lands within the Planning Community and manage future change in an ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable manner. The boundaries for North Olga and Alva are delineated on Map 1, Page 2 of 8. Alva and North Olga will work cooperatively toward this goal for the entire Planning Community through the objectives and policies that follow, and through their individual/local planning efforts.

Staff finds that this goal supports the Northeast Lee County vision as it seeks to ensure that the community's rural character, natural resources, and agricultural lands are protected. Additionally, the goal indicates that future changes to the planning community must be done in a manner that is consistent with the rural nature of the planning community and supportive of the planning community's agricultural economy, natural resources, and social heritage.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Objective 33.1: Agricultural and Rural Character

OBJECTIVE 33.1: AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CHARACTER. Maintain and enhance the viability of the existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations, preserve open space, and retain the rural character of Northeast Lee County. For the purposes of this objective, rural character is defined as those characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands

POLICY 33.1.1: Support the agricultural and rural character within Northeast Lee County by encouraging continued commercial agricultural operations and encourage new development to be clustered to conserve large areas of open lands.

POLICY 33.1.2: Work with residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to develop standards and guidelines for clustering future development and conserving large areas of open lands to promote compatibility with adjacent residential and agricultural areas. These standards and guidelines are intended to give clear and meaningful direction for future amendments to the Land Development Code.

POLICY 33.1.3: Work with residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to amend the LDC to provide opportunities for rural mixed-uses that are connected to and compatible with adjacent areas.

POLICY 33.1.4: Work with the residents and property owners of Alva and North Olga to establish amendments to the Land Development Code that will foster sustainable commercial agricultural operations and support rural uses.

POLICY 33.1.5: In all discretionary actions, consider the effect on Northeast Lee County's commercial agricultural operations and rural character.

Staff finds this objective and policies set to be central to the understanding and implementation of Northeast Lee County's Planning Community vision as it establishes the planning framework for the planning community's future. First, the objective specifically defines rural character and set forth the primary components of Northeast Lee County's planning framework, which is significant because rural is not clearly defined elsewhere in the Lee Plan. Next, the policies establish a work plan for implementing the planning framework, which includes land development codes that support agricultural activities, rural mixed-use centers, clustered residential areas, and conserved open lands.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Objective 33.2: Rural Planning Toolbox

OBJECTIVE 33.2: RURAL PLANNING TOOLBOX. To develop and further the use of a rural toolbox of incentives, programs, and regulations that enhance and maintain Northeast Lee County's sense of place and provide for the long-term preservation of large tracts of contiguous agricultural, natural resource, and open space areas.

POLICY 33.2.1: Work with Alva and North Olga to develop and refine rural planning tools including but not limited to: Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs, conservation and agricultural easements, farmland trusts, and Land Development Code regulations.

POLICY 33.2.2: The Northeast Lee County Planning Community may be a sending area for county-wide TDRs, but may only receive TDRs from within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

Staff finds this set of objective and policies confirms Northeast Lee County's commitment to maintaining its rural character by creating a set of rural planning tools. The rural planning toolbox discussed in this objective and policy set is comprised of incentives, programs, and regulations which provide for the long-term preservation of agricultural, natural resources, and open space lands. Such tools include transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, property easements, land trusts, and land development regulations. Finally, the policies confirm that such programs may not be used to transfer development rights from outside the community into the community, as a property may only receive property rights from another property within the Northeast Lee County community.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Objective 33.3: Natural Resources

OBJECTIVE 33.3: NATURAL RESOURCES. Enhance, preserve, protect, and restore the physical integrity, ecological standards, and natural beauty of Northeast Lee County by focusing on:

- 1. Water basins.*
- 2. Native vegetation.*
- 3. Wildlife habitat and resources.*
- 4. Areas designated for long-term conservation.*

POLICY 33.3.1: Identify opportunities for appropriate limited public access to and passive recreational use of the Bob Janes Preserve.

POLICY 33.3.2: Identify, maintain, and enhance appropriate public access to Northeast Lee County's public lands and surface waters, balanced with new and ongoing efforts to protect and enhance the community's water quality and natural resources.

POLICY 33.3.3: Lee County will work to identify areas suitable for public water-dependent/water-related recreation, such as canoe/kayak launches, boardwalks, jogging paths, fishing platforms, and waterside parks within Northeast Lee County.

Staff finds this set of objectives and policies to support the Northeast Lee County vision and planning framework by confirming the planning community's commitment to protection and maintaining its natural resources. The objective and policies define how this will be accomplished by establishing specific planning priorities, limiting access and passive uses, and balancing water access and natural resource needs.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Objective 33.4: Connectivity

OBJECTIVE 33.4: CONNECTIVITY. Enhance and maintain high levels of connectivity across the Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

POLICY 33.4.1: Work to preserve the rural character and scenic qualities of North River Road, and support multiple modes of travel for residents, businesses, visitors, and commercial agriculture within Northeast Lee County.

POLICY 33.4.2: Plan and implement alternatives to roadways—e.g., greenways, blueways, equestrian trails, and other pedestrian pathways—within Northeast Lee County connecting people to public lands, recreation areas, public facilities, and the rural mixed-use villages.

POLICY 33.4.3: Proactively plan for wildlife corridors within Northeast Lee County that support habitat needs of native animals on public lands and waters. The needs of wildlife habitat connections will be considered in the evaluation of proposed changes to private land.

POLICY 33.4.4: Work with Alva and North Olga to evaluate funding opportunities and feasibility of creating a multipurpose path to run the entire length of North River Road through the planning community.

Staff finds this objective to be an essential component of Northeast Lee County's rural character as it recognizes the need to plan for high levels of connectivity within the planning community. Moreover, the policies recognize that connectivity in a rural context is different than connectivity in an urban or suburban context. As stated in the policies, rural context connectivity address issues related to both human and wildlife needs; greenways, blueways, and pathways for use by equestrian riders, cyclists, pedestrians, and hikers; and roadways that provide for the needs of residents, agricultural businesses, and visitors.

Future Land Use, Northeast Lee County Objective 33.5: Public Participation

OBJECTIVE 33.5: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. To encourage and solicit public input and participation within Northeast Lee County on proposed amendments to county regulations, including the Land Development Code, Lee Plan, and zoning applications affecting the Northeast Planning Community.

POLICY 33.5.1: As a courtesy, register citizen groups, civic organizations, and interested individuals within Northeast Lee County who desire notification of pending amendments to the LDC, zoning actions, and Lee Plan amendments within Northeast Lee County. Upon registration, provide registrants with documentation regarding pending amendments. This notification is not jurisdictional. The county's failure to notify, or a registrant to receive notification, will not constitute a defect in the jurisdictional notice requirements or bar public hearings on an application.

POLICY 33.5.2: The owner or agent of a requested zoning action (planned development, conventional rezoning, special exception, or variance requests) or Lee Plan Amendment within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community must conduct public informational meetings with both the Alva and North Olga Communities where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for advertising, providing the meeting space, and security measures as needed. Subsequent to this meeting, the applicant must provide staff with a summary 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 meeting; and a proposal for how the applicant will respond to any issues.

POLICY 33.5.3: The Alva and North Olga Communities will coordinate their planning activities to maintain and enhance the rural character, natural resources, agriculture, and connectivity of Northeast Lee County.

Staff finds that this set of objective and policies helps ensure that the entire Northeast Lee County planning community will continue to work together and collaborate on future planning efforts. The planning communities included these policies because they wanted to ensure the Alva and North Olga communities would build upon the consensus established through this planning process by continuing to work together to guide the future of their shared planning community.

C. ALVA COMMUNITY PLANNING

Alva Vision Statement and Goal 34 Overview

Alva is a diverse community made up of a small rural village area, a variety of neighborhoods, natural areas, and commercial agricultural lands. Its location at the north-eastern corner of the county provides an important linkage between Lee County and neighboring Charlotte, Desoto, and Hendry Counties. The community also acts as rural transition area between the state's interior rural counties and the suburban development areas located in Lehigh Acres to the south and Caloosahatchee Shores to the east.

The community recognizes that to maintain its place as rural transition area, it must establish planning measures which protect and support its rural character. This is the reason the community has been actively engaged in community planning efforts for over two decades. Previous planning efforts help address the rural context of its transportation corridors, natural resource areas, and rural village. The current plan update expands upon the community's past planning efforts by helping to address the rural context of rural neighborhoods, infrastructure systems, economic drivers, historic resources, and the area's agricultural industry. Additionally, the plan revises the 2002 Alva Community Plan's rural village policies in order to better define how the area ought to be developed.

As a result of these efforts, the 2011 Alva Community Plan establishes a framework for rural planning in the Alva area through policies that:

- Expand the plan's implementation beyond the village area to all areas within the Alva community planning area.
- Confirm the Alva community's commitment to not allowing new mining activities, increases in density outside the rural village, and non-agricultural industrial uses.
- Establish a planning framework for rural lands outside the village area.
- Institute the basis for form based land development regulations for the village.
- Promotes a transportation system that meets the diverse needs of the community and supports the area's rural character.
- Protects the area's scenic, historic, recreational, and natural resources.

The policies outline the community's future work plan priorities, which include the development of land development code standards, creation of park master plans, and review of development proposals. As a result of this plan update, the Alva community has developed a planning framework that guides how the community will change and develop.

Alva Vision Statement

The mission of the people of the community called Alva, Florida, is to preserve and protect its unique historical, rural, and agricultural flavor. Alva is the oldest settlement in Lee County. With its huge oaks and cypress trees, the Caloosahatchee River, surrounding citrus groves, 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 has been one of extremely rapid development. It will take a concerted effort to ensure that development change in Alva occurs in a manner that maintains the rural character and lifestyle of this area. As the Alva rural village improves to accommodate the foreseeable population growth within the greater rural area, we will work together to make sure Alva continues to be the place we want to live in and call home.

The Guiding Statements for the Alva Rural Village and Community Character of the Alva area follow.

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 village, 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.

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 1890s southern victorian architecture. Infill development in the historic core produces a compatible mix of residential, professional office, small shops, cafes, and bed and breakfast lodging.

Streets remain narrow with a dense tree canopy. Interconnecting streets, the addition of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and centralized park-once parking areas 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 historic core and now provides a pedestrian walkway and bicycle lane—the essential links in the network of pathway systems connecting the Alva rural village to the agriculture, conservation, and recreational areas within the rural area.

Residents and visitors can walk or bicycle from the Franklin Locks on to Caloosahatchee Regional Park, arriving at 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 the village. 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 80 Palm Beach Boulevard is compact and concentrated within the rural rather than lining the highway with strip commercial structures. New neighborhood-scale developments combine 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 Palm Beach Boulevard has been designed to signal entry into the Alva rural village with curbed medians, a traffic signal at the Broadway intersection, and generous plantings.

Strategically located median breaks and access streets—~~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 through several successful programs developed 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. Street graphics are limited to directional and safety signs.

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 ongoing opportunities 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, Alva has enhanced the rural village and its surrounding natural amenities, preserved its heritage, and ensured the long-term quality of life for the entire Alva area.

Staff finds that the revised Alva vision statement and guiding principles articulate results of the 2011 Alva Plan. The revisions clarify that the community's vision extends to the rural agricultural lands located within the Alva planning community as well as the natural resources and conservations lands located within Alva and greater Northeast Lee County Planning Community. As a result, staff finds that the revised vision and guiding principles will enable Alva to preserve and protect its unique historical, rural, and agricultural character through its future community planning and development efforts as Alva.

This vision is consistent with the results of the Alva community planning effort, through which the all community members discussed a desire to protect and maintain its rural quality of life and character. It is also consistent with the proposed vision for the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community which expresses the community's desire to promote a healthy local economy—balanced with environmental stewardship and the area's heritage and rural character. The Alva vision also supports Northeast Lee County's rural definition

by preserving and promoting, “*characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands.*” Through this vision, Alva seeks to ensure that the successful implementation of their plan will provide the community greater protection of their rural character and lifestyle.

Future Land Use, Alva Goal 34

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.

Staff finds that Alva Goal 34, which has been written to replace Goal 26, will enable Alva to improve the coordination of planning efforts between Alva’s village area and surrounding land uses. Specifically, the updated new goals, objectives, and policies more comprehensively address the community’s diverse needs related rural development practices, agricultural and tourism economic generators, rural transportation systems, public resource accessibility, and community planning efforts. Through Goal 34 and the associated objectives and policies, Alva has established a work plan which will guide the community future development practices and community priorities. The intended outcome of this goal and the associated objectives and policies is to achieve the rural character vision promoted by the Alva community and entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community.

This goal also supports and promotes the proposed vision and goal for the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community, which includes the North Olga community. Alva’s goal echoes the planning community’s proposed goal to, “*maintain and enhance the heritage and rural character, natural resources, and agricultural lands ... and manage future change in an ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable manner.*” The consistency of these two goals is important because they are interdependent and, as such, will need to be implemented at both a local community level through Alva’s planning efforts and a planning community level in partnership with North Olga.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.1: Rural Character

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.

Staff finds that this objective and policy series is critical to enabling the community to achieve its vision and goal as it outlines the community future planning framework. The policies accomplish this task by establishing the primary development, land use, and future planning priorities. Specific issues addressed through this objective and policy include: identification of priorities related to the Alva village, sustainable development land use practices, community gardens, industrial and mining uses. These issues are essential to

establishing a planning framework that sustains the community's rural character, supports a community village center, maintains its agricultural economy, and protects its natural resources. As such, they enable the community to address issues and concerns that are unique to Alva.

By developing policy directives for such concerns, the objective and policies support and fulfill the planning vision proposed for the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community. Specifically, they help support proposed Lee Plan Objective 33.1: Agricultural and Rural Character. Through this objective, the planning community commits to maintaining and enhancing the viability of its rural character, which is defined as, "those characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands." The Alva rural character objective supports this definition by establishing the basis for future planning efforts that protect and maintain the components that comprise Alva's rural makeup.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.2: 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 discouraged. 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. No land use amendments to a more intensive category will be permitted unless a finding of overriding public necessity is made by three members of the Board of County Commissioners.

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.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set fulfills the Alva vision by guiding future development practices and establishing a work plan to implement the community's goal and planning framework. The work plan, which is to be implemented by 2014, includes the following community planning efforts: the establishment of land development code and design standards according to the practices identified these policies, discouragement of increased density, evaluation standard for land use changes, preservation of historic resources, promotion of the agricultural industry, protection of natural resources, and creation of rural planning tools.

The issues addressed through this work plan deal with needs and interests that are unique to the community development character desired by the Alva community. At the same time, they are supportive of the Northeast Lee County's common values and rural character. Specifically, they put in action how the Alva community will work to achieve proposed in Lee Plan Objective 33.1: Agricultural and Rural Character and Objective 33.2: Rural Planning Toolbox. Through these proposed objectives, the planning community seeks to establish a foundation for rural development and commercial agricultural viability as it outlines what it means to be rural, what elements make up rural character, how the planning community will guide future activities to ensure its rural character is supported and maintained, and what planning tools are needed to help achieve the planning community's rural vision. As such, staff finds that this objective set identifies specific future planning efforts which the community will utilize to maintain the rural character envisioned by Alva while promoting the vision proposed for the entire Northeast Lee County planning community.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.3: Rural Village Framework

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 Map 1, 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.

Staff finds that this set of objective and policies effectively articulates how the community will support, maintain, and develop its village area. While based upon the objectives and policies established by the 2002 Alva Plan, these policies better defines the village's desired development pattern, design components, and public resources. One of the primary components of this set of policies is the idea that village area is to use the county's Compact Communities Code to promote a mixed-use, compact, walkable community, with a unique character and design that is supportive of Alva's rural character. The plan uses the Compact Communities Code as part of the Alva land development code work plan in order to ensure that the specific design characteristics desired by the Alva community are incorporated to the development of its rural village area.

Staff finds that in establishing a specific design and development pattern for Alva's rural village, this objective and subsequent policies also supports the proposed rural character Northeast Lee County vision, as expressed in proposed Lee Plan Objective 33.1: Agricultural and Rural Character and Objective 33.2: Rural Planning Toolbox. Specifically, Alva's rural village policies implements proposed policies 33.1.1, 33.1.2, 33.1.3, 33.2.1, and 33.2.2, which intend to guide future development into compact, integrated village areas in order to ensure the planning community's open lands and agricultural areas are supported and protected. Thus, Alva's plan helps address local issues regarding design features and development needs while promoting Northeast Lee County's planning vision of being a safe and friendly place where people want to live, work, and recreate.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.4: Connectivity

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.

Staff finds that this objective and policy set supports the proposed planning framework for Alva's rural lands and rural village area by promoting a well connected transportation system. The policies proposed through this objective set address the need to base an area's transportation resource upon the context within which the resource must function—whether it be a rural village area, agricultural farm-to-market corridor, multi-purpose path, or rural base residential roadway.

Staff finds that by recognizing that the rural context needs of transportation resources, this objective and subsequent work to achieve the Alva community vision while promoting the connectivity objective and policies proposed as part of the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community. In particular, Alva's policies regarding connectivity support and implement proposed Lee Plan Objective 33.4: Connectivity. This objective establish priorities regarding River Road's rural qualities, integrated multi-purpose rural transportation alternatives, wildlife corridors, and multi-purpose pathways—all issues which are further addressed through Alva's connectivity policies. By ensuring that Alva's connectivity policies are supportive of the planning community's connectivity priorities, the Alva plan seeks to support and promote the Northeast Lee County's vision.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.5: Natural Resources and Environmental Systems

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.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set addresses specific Alva community concerns related to the use and protection of the area's vital natural resources. The objective confirms the community's desire to enforce already established environmentally sustainable development practices, land conservation programs, water resource development

requirements, and wellfield protection standards. However, staff also recognizes that the parameters of such policies, specifically Policy 34.5.1, will have to be further refined and analyzed through the land development code. Additionally, the Alva community will have to work closely with local, regional, and state natural resource agencies to fully implement their previously established natural resource regulations and standards.

Through this objective and policy set the Alva community looks to ensure that the community's vital natural resources are fully addressed as identified in proposed Lee Plan Objective 33.3: Natural Resources. Through this objective, the Northeast Lee County Planning Community establishes a desire to enhance, preserve, protect, and restore the area's natural resources. The objective outlines specific areas of focus including: water basins, native vegetation, wildlife habitat and resources, and conservation lands. The Alva Plan utilizes this set of objective and policies to further explain how the planning community's natural resource priorities will be implemented, which supports the goal of the entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community. As such, the Alva Plan's policies regarding natural resource and environmental systems addresses specific community concerns while supporting the implementation of Northeast Lee County planning priorities.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.6: Public Resource Access

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.

By indentifying the borders for the Alva and North Olga within the Northeast Lee County Planning Community, the communities agreed that publically owned conservation lands ought to remain outside the separate community borders. The reason for leaving conservation lands outside the particular borders is that these lands are important to all members of the Northeast Lee County and, as such, ought to be planned through a collaborative effort of the entire planning community. This is the reason that Alva's Plan addresses the planning and public access of conservation lands in a manner that is very similar to the Northeast Lee County goal, objectives, and policies.

Staff finds that by establishing guidelines for the use, planning, and development of Alva's public conservation areas and natural resources, this objective and policy set supports the intended vision statements for Alva and the Northeast Lee County Planning Community. Specifically, the policies consider the community's intention to link public facilities and lands, provide for water related and water dependent uses, and allow appropriate access to conservation lands while protecting the community's vital natural resources. In doing so, the community addresses issues and concerns that are a concern to both the Alva community and entire Northeast Lee County Planning Community, as stated in proposed Objective 33.3: Natural Resources.

Future Land Use, Alva Objective 34.7: Public Participation

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.

Staff finds that this objective and policy set confirms the Alva community's intention to encourage public participation in all of its community planning activities in order that all community stakeholders—citizens, business people, land owners, and other interested parties—may take ownership of their community's future. This set of objectives and policies is similar to the practices established in Lee County's other community plans. Additionally, staff recognizes Alva's intent to support the Northeast Lee County Planning Community's vision, goal, objectives, and policies by promoting cooperative planning efforts between the Alva and North Olga as well as between Alva and other community planning panels and other local, regional, and state organizations.

Alva's public participation policies seek to support and implement proposed Lee Plan Objective 33.5: Public Participation. Through this objective, the Northeast Lee County Planning Community proposes provisions for ensuring that the collaborative partnership which the Alva and North Olga communities established to develop the Northeast Lee County Plan will be continued. Specifically, the Northeast Lee County Planning Community sought to ensure that the Alva and North Olga communities would work together on review of proposed development projects, community-wide planning projects, and communicating planning related information to their respective community members. The Alva Plan confirms their community's commitment to this partnership as they seek to ensure that the visions for Alva and the entire Northeast Lee County Planning are achieved.

B. CONCLUSIONS

The *Northeast Lee County Comprehensive Plan, Alva Comprehensive Plan, and North Olga Comprehensive Plan* together establish a sound planning framework for the future of the Northeast Lee County Planning Community. The visions, goals, objectives, and policies established through these three plans identify and address a number of challenges and opportunities. The process used to develop the plans has led to general consensus about the planning community's future and established a foundation for future community development and planning in Northeast Lee County.

C. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendments to Lee Plan.

**PART III - LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: May 23, 2011

A. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY REVIEW

Planning staff reviewed the staff reports and recommendations for CPA2010-05 and CPA2010-17 at the same time in order that the similarities and corresponding findings may be addressed jointly.

The Chair of the LPA asked for clarification regarding density, intensity, public input into the planning process, and mailing addresses. Staff confirmed that no density or intensity increases were proposed, there was meaningful and significant public input, and the mailing addresses would not change.

The next LPA discussion was regarding density concerns. One LPA member asked about the change in Alva Policy 34.2.2 which changed the word, “prohibited” to, “discouraged”. Staff explained that the change resulted from the staff review and a concern that the word prohibited could be construed as a taking. Staff also explained that any future development would be evaluated against the rural character definition as found in Northeast Lee County Objective 33.1. There was further discussion about the rural definition regarding how it would be applied, whether it precluded future density or intensity increases, and the level of rural protection or direction provided by it. Staff explained land use changes would have to be deemed consistent and compatible with the definition, which would be a higher level of judgment.

The Chair of the LPA then asked the agents of ALVA, Inc. to comment on the application for the Alva plan. The community’s planning consultant and president provided an overview of the Alva Plan, the planning process, and Alva’s efforts to collaborate with NOCPP on the Northeast Lee County Planning Community planning efforts. Additionally, they confirmed the community’s intent to maintain its rural character and lifestyle as they asked that the LPA not to support staff’s recommended change to Alva Policy 34.2.2 by recommending the word prohibit, rather than changing it to discourage. They stated that the hearing examiner does not recognize the word discourage and that the word may not hold the same level of protection against future density changes. An LPA member asked about other changes proposed in the attorney memo. They explained that all other issues had been addressed by subsequent changes to the plan and that they were accepting of the changes, except for the change to Alva Policy 34.2.2.

Following the presentations by the NOCPP and ALVA, Inc., the LPA Chair opened the items for public comment. In total, forty-four people commented on the two items. Public concerns generally addressed four topics: commercial agricultural needs, consensus about the North Olga plan, NOCPP by-laws, and Alva density concerns. However, the majority of the public supported the plans and associated planning efforts.

The LPA was pleased with the outcome of the Alva planning effort. They commented that having two local plans support a single community-wide vision is better than earlier proposals, which had two distinct and disconnected local plans. They also find that the plans do not support increase density or intensity as they provide better protection for Northeast Lee County's rural character. As such, they agreed with the change to Alva Policy 34.2.2 as they believe the rural character definition will provide the appropriate level of protection against density increases. One of the panel members stated that he would prefer that Alva policy 34.2.2 use the word prohibit but would accept the staff change if there was an additional language, similar to that found in the Buckingham Plan, which is, "no land use amendments to a more intensive category will be permitted unless a finding of overriding public necessity is made by three member of the Board of County Commissioners."

The LPA Chair had a number of comments regarding Northeast Lee County and Alva plan objectives and policies. Such concerns dealt with issues related to agricultural and farming needs, ecological standards, private property participation, repetitive policies, mining prohibition, density restrictions, allowable uses, North River Road landscaping, commercial use locations, interconnection requirements, and conversion of natural resources to agricultural lands.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend transmittal of CPA2010-17 the Alva Community Plan Update including the change to Alva Policy 34.2.2 to replace the word prohibit with discourage as follows:

POLICY 34.2.2: Land use amendments that would increase the allowable total density of Alva are ~~prohibited~~ discouraged. 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.

Another member asked for an additional amendment to Policy 34.2.2 consistent with the Buckingham Plan as follows:

POLICY 34.2.2: Land use amendments that would increase the allowable total density of Alva are ~~prohibited~~ discouraged. 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. No land use amendments to a more intensive category will be permitted unless a finding of overriding public necessity is made by three members of the Board of County Commissioners.

There was discussion about whether this addition was appropriate for Alva and what was meant by the term, “overriding public necessity.” The county attorney explained the Board would define the term through an evaluation of a specific land use application in which such a necessity was present based on a rational basis of finding. Based on the attorney’s comments, the LPA determined the language was appropriate as the BoCC will evaluate and determine this standard according to the facts presented by a proposed amendment. The motioner agreed to the additional amendment to Policy 34.2.2.

The motion passed 6-0.

B. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF FACT SUMMARY

1. RECOMMENDATION:

The Local Planning Agency recommended that the Board of County Commissioners transmit the amendment as recommended by staff.

2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:

The LPA accepted the findings of fact as advanced by the staff.

C. VOTE:

NOEL ANDRESS	<u>Aye</u>
CINDY BUTLER	<u>Aye</u>
JIM GREEN	<u>Aye</u>
MITCH HUTCHCRAFT	<u>Aye</u>
RONALD INGE	<u>Aye</u>
JACK MEEKER	<u>Aye</u>
CAROL E. NEWCOM-JONES	<u>Absent</u>