

# VISION 2032

A 25-Year Strategic Vision Prepared for Nassau County, Florida  
“The Eastern Gateway to Florida”



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## The People of Nassau County

## Vision 2032 Volunteer Groups and Individuals

## School Board, Principals and School Staff for Use of the School Facilities

## Board of County Commissioners

- Jim B. Higginbotham, District 1
- Michael H. Boyle, District 2
- Stacy Johnson, District 3
- Barry Holloway, District 4
- Marianne Marshall, District 5

## Local Planning Agency

- Patrick J. Keogh
- Dennis V. Jasinsky
- Marjorie Weibe-Reed
- Wayne Arnold
- Jeanne Scott
- Gene Bennett
- Tom Ford
- John Stack
- Patsy Quaille
- Sharyl Wood

## Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach/Yulee Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors

- James L. Shroads
- Paul Audet
- Sean McGill
- Donna Lynn VanPuymbrouck
- Tony Baia
- Richard Goldman
- Pamela Brown
- Val Schwec
- Ray Poole
- George Langstaff
- Ron Flick
- Phil Kelley
- Meredith Lewis
- Randy Lindberg
- Theresa Hamilton



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Vision 2032 Steering Committee

- Walter Fufidio
- Barry Holloway
- Melinda C. Leudtke
- Malcolm Noden
- Todd Duncan
- Gene Bennett
- Wayne King
- John Stack
- Ken Walker
- John Beasley
- Shirley Graham
- Ron Flick
- Phil Kelly
- Jack Perrett
- Bill Moore
- Dean Woehrle
- Wendy Prather

## Others

- Nassau County Staff
- Greater Nassau Chamber of Commerce
- City of Fernandina Beach and Elected Officials and Staff
- Town of Callahan and Elected Officials and Staff
- Town of Hilliard and Elected Officials and Staff
- Nassau County Economic Development Board
- Nassau County Tourist Development Council

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- Steve Rieck, Economic Development Board
- Tommy Seagraves, Nassau County Sherriff
- Marci Larson, First Coast MPO
- Nancy Freeman, Nassau County Emergency Operations

---

*The Vision 2032 Plan was prepared by and facilitated by MGT of America. The MGT Consultant Team included:*



- Fred Seamon
- Reggie Smith
- Dennis Yecke (currently in Iraq)
- Jeri Birkes
- Rich McLaughlin
- Suzanne Woodcock
- Dee Torre

# LETTER FROM STEERING COMMITTEE

## TO THE RESIDENTS OF NASSAU COUNTY:

Everybody who has lived in Nassau County for any length of time knows that change is inevitable. The Steering Committee believes that the best way for this community to deal with change is to manage it by envisioning the future and preparing for it. Vision 2032 has been a process of engaging the citizens of Nassau County in thinking about their desired future. We recognize that residents are busy with the daily tasks of home and business and the visioning process provided multiple opportunities, venues and media for forging a shared vision of our community's future. The Steering Committee is truly grateful to those many residents and stakeholders who participated in the public outreach part of this visioning process. For those whose schedule did not allow them to participate previously, implementation will take place over years and we encourage and invite you to be a part of the realization of this plan.

The idea for Vision 2032 dates from early 2007 when the leadership of the Amelia Island Fernandina Beach Yulee Chamber of Commerce calculated that the strategic planning model used in the business environment would benefit the community. Many strategic planning processes include a step where those involved consider their desired future, or vision. The Board of County Commissioners endorsed the idea in April 2007 and later authorized the hiring of MGT of America and created this Steering Committee to administer the process. The Board determined that this process would transcend political jurisdictions and encompass Nassau County as a whole.

We intend this process to help the community identify the future it desires by defining its core values and goals as well as strategies to achieve that future. The vision created through this process – an overview of what the community should be like in 25 years – becomes the foundation on which land use decisions, fiscal budgeting, and detailed strategic policies can be based.

We encouraged people to focus on assets rather than present needs and assess future options based on shared purposes and ideals. We found similar priorities expressed among all geographic regions and age groups.

Adoption of the Vision 2032 Final Plan is not an end, but a beginning. It may not be attained in its entirety and for that matter, probably won't be. With leadership and continued commitment this plan will guide our future. Your participation made this document possible and you are major stakeholders in our community's future and are empowered to ensure its implementation. Thank you.

Councilman John Beasley; Town of Hilliard  
Gene Bennett; Planning & Zoning Board  
Todd Duncan; Keep Nassau Beautiful  
Ron Flick; The Compass Group  
Walter Fufidio; Nassau County Planning Director  
Mayor Shirley Graham; Town of Callahan  
Commissioner Barry Holloway; District 4  
Phil Kelley; Amelia Island Magazine  
Wayne King; District 5  
Melinda Leudke; District 1 Resident  
Bill Moore; Amelia Island Plantation  
Malcolm Noden; Cayuga Hospitality Advisors, (retired)  
Jack Perrett; Rayonier, Inc.  
Wendy Prather; Greater Nassau County Chamber of Commerce  
John Stack; Planning and Zoning Board  
Commissioner Ken Walker; City of Fernandina Beach  
Dean Woehrle; Boulougne

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1
LETTER FROM STEERING COMMITTEE	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
1: CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW	11
2: VISIONING PROCESS	12
3: WHERE ARE WE NOW?	15
4: WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?	39
5: WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?	44
6: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES	48
7: ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVES AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY	58
8: FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY FINDINGS	69
9: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF ACTION	71
10: APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITION REPORT (ECR) EXHIBITS	75

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXHIBIT 1: LOCATION MAP OF NASSAU COUNTY	75
EXHIBIT 2: 1864 MAP OF "NORTHERN PART OF FLORIDA"	76
EXHIBIT 3: MAP OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF FERNANDINA BEACH	77
EXHIBIT 4: FLORIDA STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM	78
EXHIBIT 5: HURRICANE EVACUATION ZONES MAP (1998)	79
EXHIBIT 6: NASSAU COUNTY EVACUATION ROUTES MAP (2006)	80
EXHIBIT 7: EXISTING LAND USE MAP (1995)	81
EXHIBIT 8: FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2010)	82
EXHIBIT 9: EXISTING/FUTURE 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN (2000)	83
EXHIBIT 10: MAIN ROAD NETWORK (2007)	84
EXHIBIT 11: YEAR 2030 ADOPTED COST FEASIBLE PLAN PROJECTS	85
EXHIBIT 12: YEAR 2030 LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFICIENCIES USING COST FEASIBLE PLAN NETWORK	86
EXHIBIT 13 - 15: BUDGET SUMMARY, NASSAU COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, ADOPTED BUDGET FISCAL YEARS 2006 - 08	87-89



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past 25 years, Nassau County's (County) population has grown 110 percent. This rapid growth has changed the economy, community fabric and built environment. The 2007-08 downturn in the real estate industry has temporarily slowed this growth, but the Board of County Commissioners (Board) recognizes that development pressures will continue to shape the future of Nassau County. Having an abundance of land, natural resources, and beauty, and being subject to external pressures from the First Coast Region and South Georgia, growth is inevitable. The Board understands that for a community to deal successfully with the challenges it faces, it must develop a clear picture of where its residents want to go. To this end, in May 2007, Nassau County, in partnership with the local Chambers of Commerce, began this long-term planning and consensus building process to create a vision for Nassau County.

The Vision Plan was developed by MGT of America, Inc., in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by Nassau County for a consultant to manage, facilitate, and lead an inclusive community visioning process that would result in a consensus on actions the County could take to guide its future.

As we take this journey through Nassau County together, picture how things will be in the Year 2032 – how do the people of Nassau County see life as the future unfolds?



*Quality of Life*



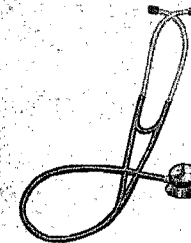
*Education*



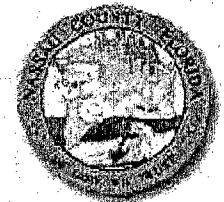
*Economic Development*



*Infrastructure and Growth Management*



*Health and Well Being*



*Governance and Leadership*

The Nassau County Board of County Commissioners identified 11 topics as the focus for the Vision 2032 discussion. What are the topics and how are they defined?



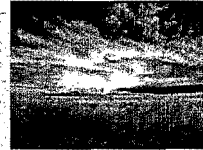
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (*Continued*)

## Topics and Definitions

- **Recreation & Open Space:** Indoor or outdoor recreation facilities such as parks, ball fields, or community centers; and outdoor space that is undeveloped and may or may not be open to public use.



- **Environment:** Land, water, and air left in its natural state.



- **Economy & Workforce:** Economy means creating and sustaining jobs. Workforce means the employees that fill jobs.



- **Tourism:** The practice of traveling for recreation or leisure and the services provided to those visitors.



- **Cultural Opportunities and The Arts:** Availability to groups, organizations, and individuals visual and performing arts expressing the heritage, values and character of Nassau County.

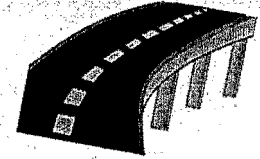


- **Education & School Facilities Plan:** Instructional programs and the physical buildings, lands, and contents of the school system.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (*Continued*)

## Topics and Definitions

- **Infrastructure:** Refers to the roads, airports, railways, utilities, and public transportation systems.
- **Growth Management:** Methods used by government to ensure that as the population grows that there are services available to meet their demands. These are not necessarily only government services. Other demands such as the protection of natural spaces, sufficient and affordable housing, delivery of utilities, preservation of buildings and places of historical value, and sufficient places for the conduct of business are also considered.
- **Healthcare & Social Services:** Health care means medical and dental facilities and access to medical and dental care. Social service means medical and public assistance services provided by the government.



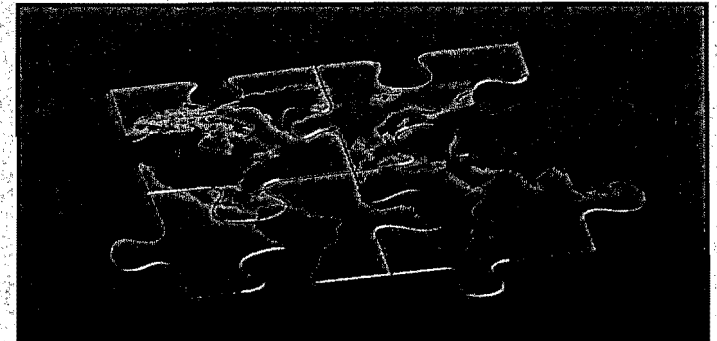
- **Public Safety:** Police and fire protection, emergency medical transport services, disaster planning, and public health services.



- **Governance:** The system of County government that has legal authority to regulate, zone, and enforce laws.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (*Continued*)

The Vision 2032 journey started with creating a current view of the County and ends with a view into the future. This exploratory journey was documented in an Existing Conditions Report describing current conditions in Nassau County and the visioning process. Vision 2032 gives a glimpse of the future and how to get there gathered from public input, population projections, financial data, and strategies for implementation.

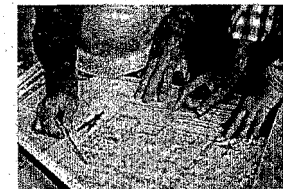


Imagine a puzzle where each piece fits together to create a picture – this journey took the pieces of the puzzle and put them together to create a Vision for Nassau County.



Vision 2032 represents:

- A blueprint or road map for the future.
- A tool for setting priorities and making decisions.
- A guidebook for residents to use as they continue talking with each other about the future of where they live.



# 1. CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

A vision plan is not a regulatory document! It is an incentive-based tool used to provide guidance to the County.

Developing a vision plan involves answering three questions:

- Where are we now?
- What do we want the community to look like in the future?
- What do we need to do to make it happen?



Look at the Vision as a "roadmap" or "blueprint" for future decision making that:

- Identifies community issues that need immediate attention.
- Reflects a shared concept for growth and development of Nassau County and identifies residents key issues of concern.
- Assists decision-makers in allocating priorities for government spending.
- Gives direction on where to: locate social services (for example, service centers, medical clinics); improve and build roads; schools; water treatment plants; sewage and drainage facilities; other public infrastructure such as bridges, port facilities, police and fire stations, emergency shelters, and recreation facilities including parks, ball fields, and boat ramps.
- Helps identify areas where additional housing, including workforce housing, is needed and desired.
- Identifies natural resources for environmental protection and areas to locate future outdoor recreation activities.
- Provides direction to residents as they continue talking with each other and actively planning for the future of Nassau County.
- Provides guidelines for local governments as they set priorities and make decisions.

Vision 2032 will provide information and identify community priorities in coordination with the Evaluation and Appraisal Report process as the County updates its Comprehensive Plan.

## 2. VISIONING PROCESS

### ***Public Participation***

In May 2007, Nassau County Board of County Commissioners, in partnership with the Board of Directors of Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach/Yulee (AIFBY) Chamber of Commerce, began a long-term planning and consensus building process to develop the Vision 2032 Plan.

- It was a transparent process with all meetings open to the public.
- A Steering Committee was established to provide administrative oversight of the Vision 2032 project.
- Input was received from stakeholder groups and residents of Nassau County through public involvement opportunities.

The Public Participation Process included:

- A kick-off meeting to launch the project.
- A public meeting with the County Commission and Local Planning Agency to present the project.
- Outreach to Nassau County residents to ensure their participation throughout the process.
- Eight public meetings throughout the County to present the project and receive public comment.
- Key informant interviews.
- A Web site that was established to provide public notice of the Vision Process, inform residents of Vision activities, and encourage participation (<http://nassauvisioning2032.mgtofamerica.com>).
- A communication plan that was developed and implemented to provide residents with information about Vision 2032.
- Regular Steering Committee meetings open to the community.



## 2. VISIONING PROCESS *(Continued)*

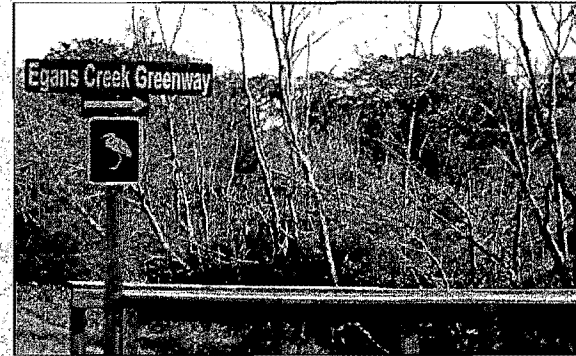
- Eight public involvement meetings were held at various locations throughout the County.



*Bryceville  
Community Center*



*Fernandina Beach  
Courthouse*



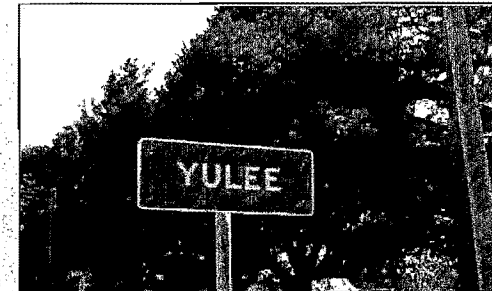
*Egans Creek Park, Fernandina Beach*



*Hilliard Community Center*



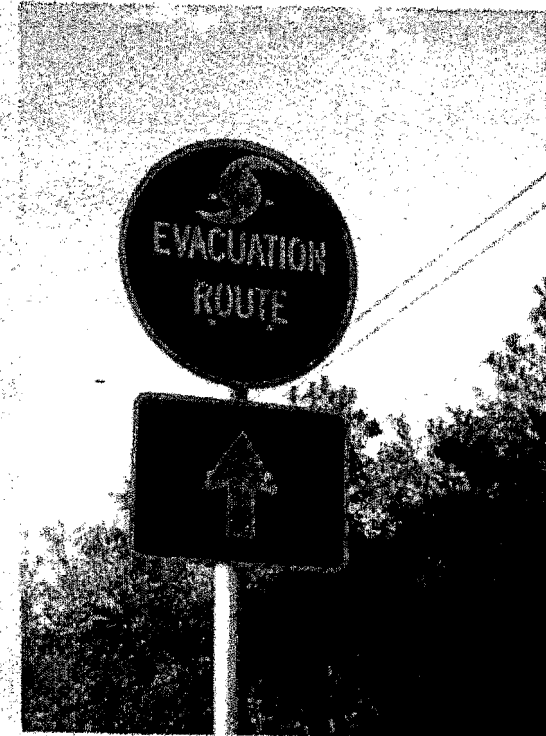
*Callahan Train Station*



*Yulee, FL*

## 2. VISIONING PROCESS (*Continued*)

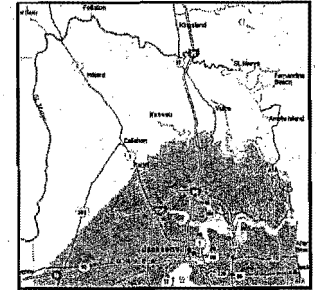
At each meeting, public comments were collected on a series of topics that included cultural opportunities, recreation and open space, the environment, education and school facilities, infrastructure, growth management, the economy and workforce, tourism, governance, public safety, healthcare, and social services. The public involvement meetings were used to gather the ideas, thoughts, and suggestions of Nassau County residents on their vision of how the County should look in the year 2032.



# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

## Overview

Visualize Nassau County at the northeast corner of Florida, adjacent to the Georgia state line, 30 minutes north of downtown Jacksonville, as the Eastern Gateway to Florida. You may enter Nassau County along one of four major state and interstate transportation corridors: I-95, U.S. 301/U.S. 1, U.S. 17, and State Road 200/A1A. If you want to see the role these transportation corridors play in Nassau County and this region, go any morning or afternoon to State Road 301 at the Nassau County/Jacksonville-Duval County line to see the line of trucks carrying goods throughout the southeast converge, along with people heading off to work, to make the trip, north, south, east, and west.



West of I-95, Nassau County is predominantly rural, sparsely populated areas dependent on agronomy with large areas of unspoiled natural beauty. East of I-95, Nassau County a mixture of developed urban uses with intensive commercial, residential and industrial areas, beautiful beaches, and historic areas.

Nassau County is part of the growing Northeast Florida and South Georgia regional economic system, with:

- Beautiful beaches, numerous year-round community and cultural events, including Concours d'Elegance classic car show; Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival; Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival; Holiday Bed and Breakfast Tour; golf tournaments, fishing competitions, and reenactments and historical events at Ft. Clinch, the Civil War era fort on Amelia Island.
- The pristine St. Mary's River surrounding the entire northern and western edge of the County providing a natural boundary line between Florida and Georgia.
- Historic sites and buildings throughout the County, including the 50 block historic district in Fernandina Beach and historic American Beach on the south end of Amelia Island, attract thousands of visitors year-round.
- Distinct communities both small and large – each with its own identity and history:
  - The western county with small towns and rural communities interlaced with forested areas and numerous creeks and streams.
  - The eastern county, rivers, bays, beaches, and the Atlantic Ocean.
  - The rapidly growing Yulee residential and commercial community at the crossroads of A1A and I-95/U.S. 17 serving as the gateway to the beaches.
  - The bustling Fernandina Beach/Amelia Island woven from a rich fabric of historical, commercial and residential areas with modern commercial, industrial, and residential areas. The Atlantic Beaches from the eastern edge of Nassau County tie the traditional tourist and beachfront activities of Fernandina with the old/new residential and resort areas of the south end of Amelia Island.

The Atlantic beaches form the eastern edge of Nassau County and the small towns and rural communities form the western edge.

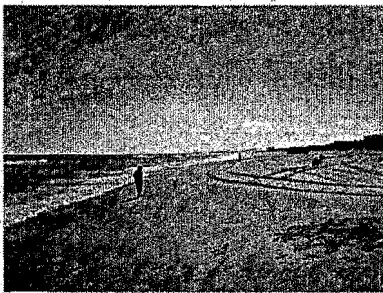


### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

#### *Overview Cont'd.*

Approximately 10 percent of Nassau County's 726 square miles of land is water (streams, creeks, rivers, wetlands), some designated for conservation or preserve land (such as, Timicuan Preserve, Egans Creek Greenway) and some in a relatively pristine condition.

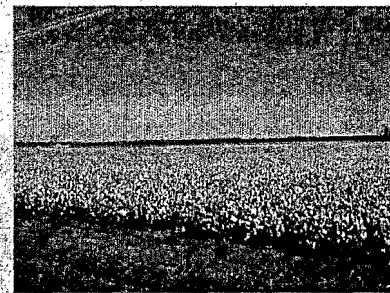
Nassau County contains many other distinct communities with their own identities, but are governed by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners. Four of the Nassau County communities have incorporated separate governments from that of the County.



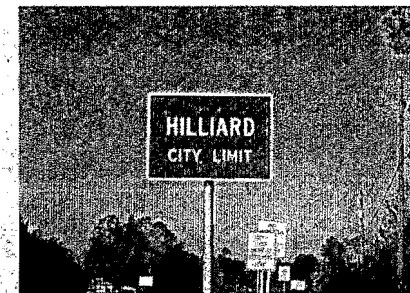
1. Beach/Island area, which includes unincorporated Amelia Island and the City of Fernandina Beach



2. Yulee area along SR 200/A1A - the road to Amelia



3. Callahan/Bryceville



4. Hilliard/Boulogne

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

#### *Overview Cont'd.*

A review of some current conditions and trends provides a picture of some factors that affect life and work within the County.

1. Tree farming (silviculture) is a continuing economic force with small tree farms in the western county and large forested land holdings by Rayonier, a major employer and the owner of a large pulp mill in Fernandina Beach.
2. Land used for tree harvesting is slowly being sold and developed into urban uses.
3. Cotton farming is continuing in the northwestern part of the County.
4. There is a trend in single-family, primarily low-density residential subdivisions along major roadways throughout the County or signs that identify planned communities – some with planned commercial and conservation/recreation areas.



*Rayonier Plant*

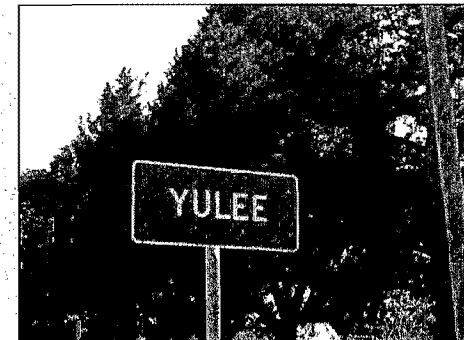


*Cotton Farm*

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

#### *Overview Cont'd.*

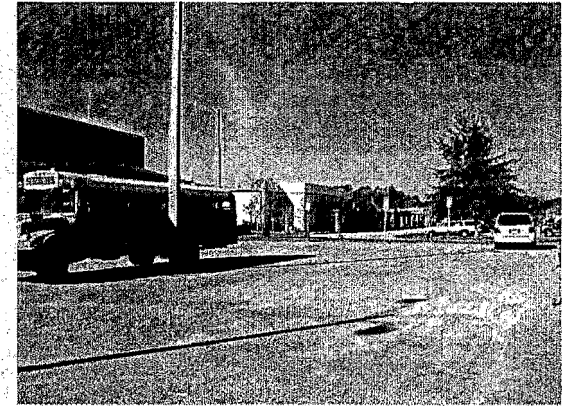
5. Residential subdivisions are springing up in and between the outlying small towns in the traditionally more rural western areas and in Yulee, the fastest growing area where people are attracted to lower land values than other areas of northeast Florida and close proximity to beaches.
6. Housing and commercial construction markets were characterized by a steady growth in building permits – the pace slowed in 2007/2008 due to the significant decline in the residential housing market felt throughout the nation and other economic factors, and several large scale, planned developments have been put on hold.
7. Large private landholdings dominate much of the undeveloped areas of the County including the White Oak Plantation (now a wildlife research and preservation center) in the central part of the County and large forest landholdings throughout the middle and western part of the County.
8. Fernandina Beach is home to the Port of Fernandina, a designated deepwater port and related businesses.
9. Fernandina Beach and Amelia Island – important Florida tourist destinations attracting thousands of tourists each year for the beaches, golf, restaurants, hotels, historic sites, and the numerous year-round cultural and recreational activities.



## 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

### *Population and Growth Rates*

- Increases or decreases in population affect demand for utilities, schools, workforce housing, public safety (including law enforcement, fire and rescue services, and evacuation needs), recreation facilities, parks and open space areas, and other public facilities and services.
- From April 1, 2000-April 1, 2007, Nassau County was one of fastest growing counties in Florida with the population increasing more than 20 percent due to strong growth in unincorporated areas and Callahan, Fernandina Beach, and Hilliard.
- Callahan, while still a small community, had the highest growth rate with a 21.7 percent population increase.
- A 17.8 percent growth rate in the unincorporated areas reflects rapid growth in Yulee and Amelia Island, with the influx of new residents wanting to be close to the beaches and major roads connecting Nassau County to Jacksonville to the south and Georgia to the north.



### *Population Trends and Forecasts*

**Unincorporated County** - The population growth for the unincorporated areas of the County peaked in 2005-06 and growth, in terms of percentage increase, is expected to decline to an annual growth rate of about 1.3 percent by 2030. An increase in absolute numbers is expected to continue.

**Callahan** - The estimated population growth in Callahan is expected to continue increasing until 2010, show a decrease through 2015 and then level off at about 3.5 percent from 2015 to 2030.

**City of Fernandina Beach** - The growth rate for Fernandina Beach was lower from 2000 to 2006 than the rest of the County with its peak around 2005-06.

**Hilliard** - The growth rate for Hilliard has increased since 2000 and is expected to increase until it peaks around 2010 and then slowly level off by 2030.

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

Jurisdiction	2000 Population	2007 Population	Increase
Unincorporated	45,450	53,520	17.8%
Callahan	962	1,171	21.7%
City of Fernandina Beach	10,549	11,911	12.9%
Hilliard	2,702	2,967	9.8%
<b>Nassau County<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>57,663</b>	<b>69,569</b>	<b>20.6%</b>

- In April 2007, the Nassau County population was estimated at 69,569, reflecting a more than 21 percent increase in the six years between 2000 and 2007.
- During this same timeframe Callahan saw a 22 percent population increase; Fernandina Beach a 13 percent increase; Hilliard a 10 percent increase; and the unincorporated areas an 18 percent increase.

- In 2006, 77 percent of the people lived outside of the incorporated cities and towns.
- From 2000 to 2006, Fernandina Beach's growth rate was lower than the rest of the County until it peaked around 2005-06.
- Since 2000, the growth rate for Hilliard has increased.

#### **Age of Population**

Age is a key factor to consider when projecting future needs of the County, including medical facilities, schools, parks and recreation sites, the need for social services, and disaster planning, including special needs planning for an elderly population.

The tables that follow show the ages of Nassau County residents in 2006 and Florida residents from 1970 through 2030.

Nassau County is experiencing impacts from the aging population along with the rest of Florida but also has a mix of younger residents. As shown, in 2006, about 58 percent of Nassau County residents were younger than 45 compared to about 60 percent of Florida residents. In 2006, about 42 percent of Nassau County residents were older than 45 compared to about 40 percent in Florida overall. A majority of the people over 45 had not reached the traditional retirement age of 65. Through 2030, the number of Florida residents under 25 is expected to remain relatively constant while those 45-64 and those over 65 are expected to slowly increase. This slow increase in the age of the population will increase the demands for medical, transportation, and other services required by an older population, while the relatively constant younger population will continue to require schools, parks with playgrounds, and other facilities to serve a younger population.

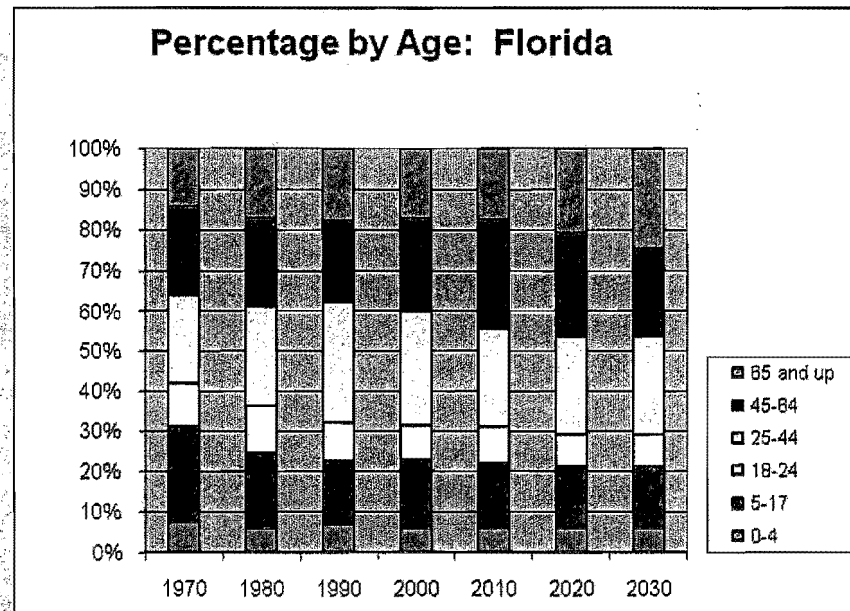
<sup>1</sup>Sources: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida, and Nassau County Growth Management Department.

# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

## Age Distribution of Nassau County Residents (2006)

0-4	5-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
5.8%	12.7%	7.0%	6.5%	11.1%	13.6%	15.3%	13.1%	9.0%	4.6%	1.3%

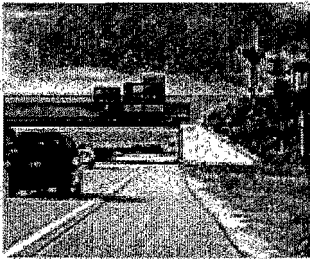
Source Data: Jacksonville Cornerstone, Regional Development Partnership, 2006.



Source: Florida Demographic Estimating Conference, February 2008 and the Florida Demographic Database, August 2008.

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

**In-Migration and Out-Migration:** In-migration is when people move into the County and out-migration is when they leave.



- As the job markets in South Georgia; Duval County (Jacksonville); and the rest of Florida expand, residents of Nassau County move to be near these jobs.
- Job stability and job creation in Nassau County keep existing residents in the County and attract new residents.
- In 2006, over 10 percent of the residents who paid taxes in Nassau County had lived in other counties the previous year.
- This is higher than the Florida average of 8.71 percent of residents who had lived in another county the previous year.
- Residents who moved to Nassau County from other counties in Florida/Georgia during 2005-06 came from Jacksonville-Duval County, Camden County, Charlton, and Fulton County, Georgia, across the state line, and Clay, St. Johns, and Broward counties, Florida.
- This reflects the trend for Nassau County to serve as a bedroom community, with increased residential development as compared to increased commercial and industrial development in adjacent counties.

Source: Enterprise Florida, 2006.

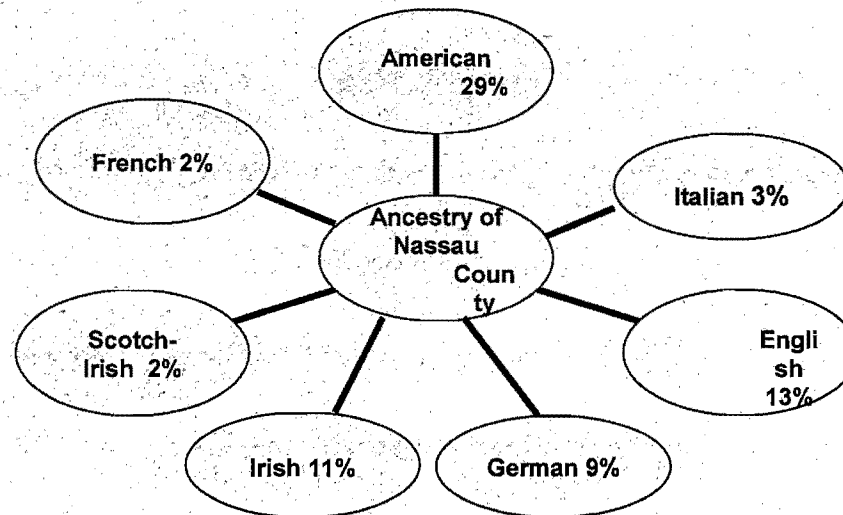
# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (Continued)

## Household Income

- In 2006, the median household income was \$52,785; the average household income was \$66,651; and per capita income was \$24,224.
- This showed an increase from 2005 when the median household income was \$50,307.
- Median incomes in Nassau County were and remain significantly higher than the Florida median household income of \$42,433.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2005, the average household size in Nassau County was 2.6 people compared to Florida with an average household size of 2.5 people.<sup>3</sup>

## Ethnicity

- In 2006, 89.4 percent of the residents in Nassau County were Caucasian; 8.4 percent African-American; and the rest classified as other.



<sup>2</sup>CityData.com

<sup>3</sup>CityData.com



### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

#### ***Economic Indicators***

Nassau County is:

- Easily accessible to Jacksonville International Airport.
- Served by two major railways.
- Home to the deepest natural port in the south Atlantic.
- Split by Interstate 95, and reached by three other U.S. highways - thirteen major U.S. cities are within 750 miles.
- Diverse economy with agricultural activity (mostly in the form of tree farms) in the west and central areas – variety of commercial, government offices, and retail activities closer to and on Amelia Island.
- Current tax millage rate is 14.3636 which includes the taxes assessed for schools, government operations, and special assessments for the unincorporated areas. Current County budget includes continuing 1 percent sales surtax used, in part, for specific items in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan .

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (Continued)

#### Employment by Industry 2006

In 2006, 18,210 people were employed in Nassau County with the following top six employment sectors:

- Leisure and Hospitality Industry, employing 21.4 percent.
- Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, employing 21.3 percent of the workers.
- Government, employing 20.9 percent.
- Construction, employing 6.9 percent.
- Professional and Business Services, employing 6.7 percent.
- Manufacturing sector, employing 6.4 percent.

**Tourism** is an important part of the Nassau County economy and lifestyle because:

- Tourism also supports the operation of city, county, and state-owned facilities, such as the Fort Clinch State Park, Amelia Island Museum, beachfront parks, and the Fernandina Beach waterfront.
- Collectively, tourism is the largest employer in Nassau County – providing approximately 21 percent of all jobs (Florida Legislative Research).

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY <sup>4</sup>		
Calendar Year 2006	Nassau	Florida
Average Annual Employment	18,210	7,852,023
Natural Resources & Mining	2.5%	1.2%
Construction	6.9%	5.0%
Manufacturing	6.4%	6.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	21.3%	20.9%
Information	0.7%	2.1%
Financial Activities	3.4%	6.6%
Professional & Business Services	6.7%	16.69%
Education & Health Services	5.8%	11.6%
Leisure & Hospitality Industry	21.4%	1.4%
Other Services	4.1%	3.1%
Government	20.9%	18.2%

- The Nassau County economy is twice as dependent on tourism as the average Florida County (*Fitch Ratings*).
- The tourism industry generated approximately \$274 million (or 35 percent) of \$781.6 million in 2006 taxable sales in Nassau County.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research, <http://EDR.state.fl.us>, December 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Telephone Interview with Gil Langley, Managing Director, Amelia Island Tourist Development Council, January 14, 2008.

# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (Continued)

- Tourism generated nearly \$17 million of the more than \$49 million of sales tax revenue collected in the County in 2006.
- Amelia Island is crucial to the County's tourist economy.



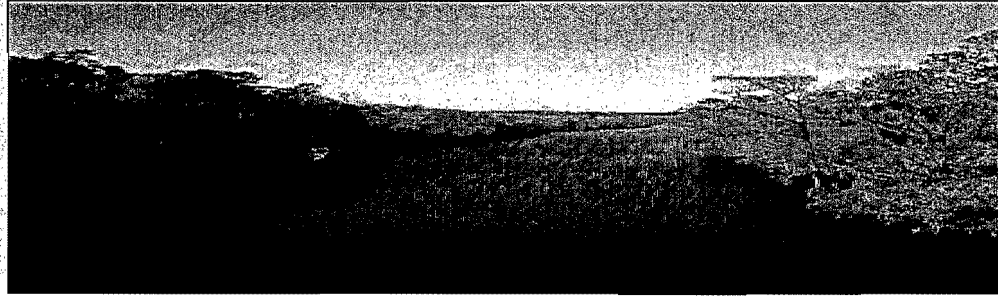
TAXABLE SALES REVENUE 2006 - NASSAU COUNTY	Taxable Sales	Sales Tax
Restaurants/Lunchrooms	\$35,333,151	\$5,232,562
Taverns/Nightclubs	\$8,069,267	\$1,189,584
Hotels/Apt. Houses/etc.	\$152,095,488	\$9,325,367
Photographers, Photo Supplies	\$435,364	\$26,321
Gift, Card, Novelty Shops	\$6,092,052	\$357,636
Admissions	\$14,929,009	\$900,431
Rental of Tangible Property	\$8,301,240	\$193,706
Parking Lots, Boat Dockings	\$9,067,656	\$153,713
<b>TOTAL TOURISM SALES</b>	<b>\$273,806,227</b>	<b>\$16,694,042</b>
<b>TOTAL TAXABLE SALES</b>	<b>\$781,621,030</b>	<b>\$49,257,160</b>
Percentage of Total	35.03%	33.89%

## Amelia Island

- Rated number five in the Top 10 North American Islands by Conde Nast Traveler's 2007 Reader's Choice Awards – highest ranked island destination in Florida.
- Popular tourist destination in Northeast Florida with Fernandina Beach downtown historic district (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), numerous shops and restaurants, and 13 miles of sandy beaches.
- Home to American Beach, the first east coast spot on the Black Heritage Trail.
- Attracts thousands of tourists yearly for golf, cultural and sport festivals and events, and the beach.
- In 2007, more than 21 year-round events attracted large numbers of tourists and brought important tourist dollars into the local economy.



### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*



#### **Targeted Employment Sectors**

The Nassau County Economic Development Board has:

1. Identified eight target industry clusters where they focus economic development efforts.
2. Established Small Business Assistance Programs, with a network of agencies available to assist in all stages of small business development, including real estate/site assistance, technology transfer, access to financing, job training programs, and access to all state incentives, and provides detailed demographic information on Nassau County to be used in the development of a business plan.<sup>7</sup>

TARGET INDUSTRY CLUSTERS <sup>6</sup>	
Aviation-Aerospace	Medical Equipment and Technologies
Corporate Headquarters	Customer Service and Technical Support Centers
Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology	Internet Technology
Electronics and Semiconductors	Motor Vehicle Parts and Accessories

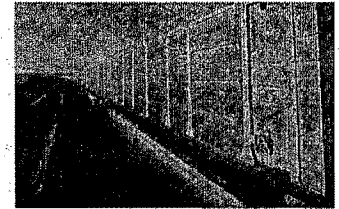
<sup>6</sup><http://www.nassaucountyfla.com/overview/target-industries.htm>; Nassau County Economic Development Board, 2007.

<sup>7</sup>CityData.Com; Nassau County Economic Development Board; and Nassau County School Board.

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

#### ***Role of Multi-Modal and Inter-Modal Transportation and the SIS***

Multi- or Inter-Modal Transportation are key factors to understand in creating a picture of where the County is and where it is going. In March 2007, the Florida Transportation Commission, which oversees activities of the Florida Department of Transportation, described in its status report that the State Intermodal System of Transportation will be planned in a more proactive manner, so that transportation investments support statewide goals related to high-tech job growth, trade development, rural development, urban revitalization, and environmental preservation. This is to ensure that:

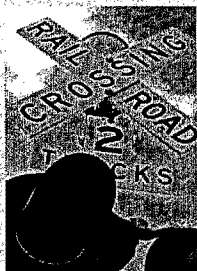


1. Freight and goods need to move securely and reliably between shippers and receivers within Florida, and between Florida and other states and nations.
  2. Florida's airports, seaports, rail and bus terminals, and the spaceport are important hubs for these transportation flows.
  3. Florida's highways, rail lines, and waterways are critical corridors for linking these markets.
  4. These interregional, interstate, and international transportation facilities are essential to the state's future economic growth and quality of life.
- Recognizing these linkages, the Florida Department of Transportation, along with private and public partners statewide, created the Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), a statewide network of high-priority transportation facilities that support transportation between regions in Florida, between Florida and other states, and between Florida and other nations.
  - This is where current and future funds will be spent for transportation. Thus, in Nassau County and throughout Florida, the new direction of transportation funding is and will be led by focusing limited state resources on the most significant transportation facilities that are part of this Strategic Intermodal System.
  - The SIS is expected to enhance Florida's economic competitiveness which reflects "... a fundamental shift in the way Florida develops – and makes investments in – its transportation system."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Excerpted from a March 2007, Florida Transportation Commission (an oversight board for the Florida Department of Transportation, created by the Florida Legislature), "Progress Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), Supplement to the Review of the Department of Transportation Tentative Work Program, FY 2007/2008 through 2011/12," and "A Five-Year Mission Plan 1998/1999-2002/2003, Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council."

# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (Continued)

**What is included in the SIS?** The SIS includes three different types of facilities – hubs, corridors, and intermodal connectors – each a component of an interconnected transportation system:



- **Hubs** are ports and terminals that move goods or people between Florida regions or between Florida and other markets in the United States and the rest of the world. These include commercial service airports, deepwater seaports, spaceports, interregional rail and bus terminals, and freight rail terminals.
- **Corridors** are highways, rail lines, and waterways that connect major markets within Florida or between Florida and other states or nations.

- **Intermodal connectors** are highways, rail lines, or waterways that connect hubs and corridors. The seaports require efficient landside connections, rail and highway, for "hinterland access." Expansion and growth of ports create intermodal issues of concern in which, in the case of seaports, there are land and waterside issues. Waterside issues relate to the need to expand port facilities to accommodate larger ships. The decision to expand Florida port facilities to accommodate these larger ships is a public policy decision being considered by both the local communities and the state. Existing landside issues at ports concern enhancement of roadways and rail lines as cargo volume and ship sizes increase.



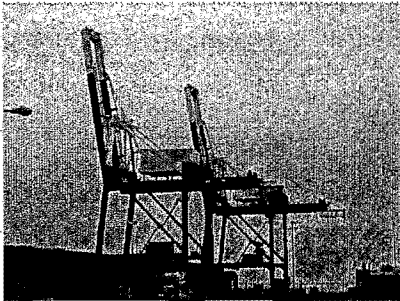
With the Port of Fernandina's expanded waterborne services and anticipated extension of its rail infrastructure to support cargo movement and storage, Nassau County is faced with these waterside and landside issues, including roadway capacity and congestion, mixed commercial/residential/cruise passenger/business traffic and their impacts on communities, interchange improvements, limited access points and routes to the port, at-grade rail-highway crossings, the use of local streets, oversized loads, and bridge conditions.

## List of SIS Facilities in Nassau County

▪ I-95	▪ First Coast Railroad
▪ U.S. 301	▪ Norfolk Southern Railroad
▪ AIA (Emerging SIS Facility)	▪ The Port of Fernandina (Emerging SIS Facility)
▪ U.S. 1	▪ ICWW (Intracoastal Waterway)
▪ CSX Railroad	

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

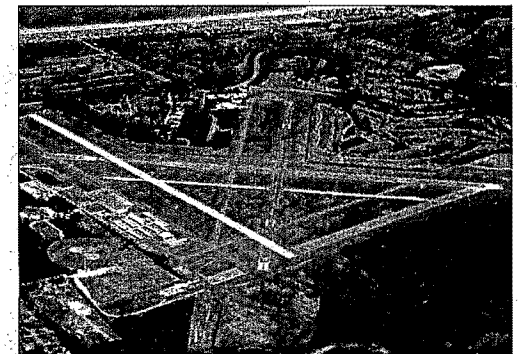
**Key Transportation Facilities:** The Port of Fernandina, a key facility on the SIS along with the Fernandina Beach Airport, which is not part of the SIS, both play a significant role in the economy of both Nassau County and the state of Florida as described below.



- 1. Port of Fernandina:** Operated by the Nassau County Ocean, Highway, and Port Authority, an independent, non-taxing, governing body created by the Florida Legislature – with a public mission to encourage economic development in Nassau County.
  - Both the Port of Fernandina and Port of Jacksonville are ports with rapid growth and diversification and the most extensive road and rail service of any ports in the state.
  - Port of Fernandina recognized for expanding its cargo of wood products to include containerized cargo and renovating its facilities which strengthens the competitive position of the forest products industry in North Florida.

**2. Fernandina Beach Airport:** On 602 acres in the center of Amelia Island, is operated by the City of Fernandina Beach, is like a Main Street for the community, and helps support existing economic development.

- Provides private air service to business, tourism, and leisure activities.
- Serves as a “reliever” airport for Jacksonville International Airport as do Craig and Herlong Airports outside of Nassau County.
- Exceptional aviation facilities including airport transport facilities and infrastructure to support aviation.
- Owns sufficient land to provide for future growth and expansion needs for both the airport operations and commercial businesses.
- First airport manager has been hired by the city to oversee and help expand airport operations.
- Generates revenue as city leases some of the airport-owned land for a golf course and some aeronautical-related commercial use.
- Airport has a small commerce park that serves mainly aviation uses but also provides for limited commercial space for development.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Telephone interview, December 31, 2007, with Richard Johnson, Airport Manager.

## 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

### ***Post-Secondary Education and Job Training Programs***

- Continuing education opportunities are provided at Florida Community College-Nassau Center and the joint-use Florida Community College/Nassau County Technical Training Facility.
- The Betty Cook Center, established and run by Florida Community College at Jacksonville, offers classes for a variety of post-secondary degrees.
- Workforce development through education and training is a critical need for economic development. For a community to attract higher paying industries to the area, skilled employees must be trained and available for work.
- The Nassau County Economic Development Board is strategically located at the Betty Cook Center of Continuing Education at the Florida Community College of Jacksonville in Yulee. This allows the economic development board to work closely with the center to ensure job training and education programs to meet the needs for highly skilled employees by the businesses targeted by economic development efforts.

### ***School Planning and Concurrency***

- Under Florida law all local governments (incorporated communities) in Florida must adopt a public school facilities element and school concurrency provisions to:
  1. Establish level of service standards for educational facilities and the concurrency service areas for schools.
  2. Establish school service areas.
  3. Demonstrate its public facilities element is financially feasible; amend the County's Five-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements to include these public facilities.
- Nassau County has an interlocal agreement that will ensure the same levels of service and concurrency are used throughout the County. The Nassau County Growth Management Department works with the school board and local municipal governments in the County to coordinate school planning efforts.
- In the summer of 2008, Fernandina Beach, Callahan, Hilliard, and Nassau County entered into an amended Interlocal Agreement with the Nassau County School Board and amended their comprehensive plans to comply with Florida law (Senate Bill 360) in a timely fashion. A system-wide level of service was established for the purpose of school concurrency implementation.



# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

## **Education and School Facilities**

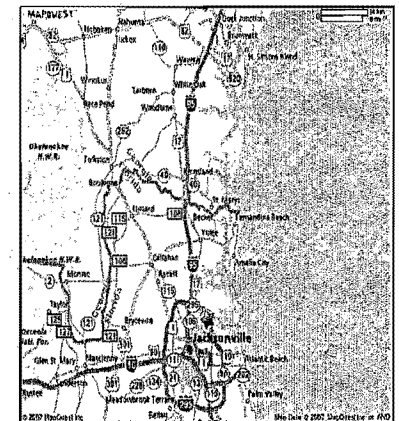
- Nassau County School District currently operates 16 schools and an adult education program in five communities.
- All of the district schools are fully accredited by the southern association of colleges and schools and students consistently perform at or above the state average on the Florida comprehensive assessment test (FCAT), which measures performance.
- District school staff consists of 646 instructional personnel; 22 principals/assistant principals; 14 district administrators; and 595 support people. The four-member school board and school superintendent are elected members who serve four-year terms.

## **External Impacts**

Activities and land uses in neighboring Georgia and Baker County create economic, social, and other impacts on Nassau County. Activities in Nassau County are impacting adjacent Georgia communities and adjacent Baker and Duval counties. Some of the major recent external activities that impact on Nassau County are:

### **Across the Georgia/Florida State Line:**

- 1. Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base** in Camden County, Georgia, adjacent to Nassau County, has welcomed the USS Georgia and USS Florida to be re-commissioned for deployment back to sea, bringing with them employees and families expected to stimulate the economies of both Camden County, Georgia, and Nassau County, Florida. This has created opportunities for Nassau County to benefit economically from the influx of people by providing goods and services including retail, housing, recreation, tourism, and other needs.
- 2. Villages of Kingsland:** A 15,000-acre planned development on land recently annexed into the City of Kingsland in Camden County, Georgia, across the state line from Nassau County, is expected to be built out by 2030. This massive development with over 40,000 residential units, 13.5 million square feet of industrial development, and 9.5 million square feet of commercial use planned, shows how one major activity can change the whole character of a community. The annexation of this land almost doubled the size of the City of Kingsland creating a substantial change in the character of this small town and is expected to impact Nassau County because it will provide industrial warehouse space for cargo from both the Ports of Fernandina and Jacksonville, thus creating traffic impacts along I-95 and U.S. 17 through Nassau County. This one development is expected to generate more than 15,000 direct jobs associated with the commercial and industrial uses, and a large increased demand for all government services including schools, roads, and safety services. This project presents opportunities for Nassau County to benefit economically from the influx of people to meet retail, housing, recreation, tourism, and other activities to meet their needs and growth challenges with increased traffic on local and state roadways in Nassau County and the potential for increased movement of residents to and from Georgia for employment and/or housing.



### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

These large-scale developments along with others, or similar character and scale, in Nassau County, adjacent Georgia and Baker and northern Duval counties are changing the nature and character of the region. The influx of new residents to the region, and the location of these projects throughout the region, results in consideration of economic, social, infrastructure, environmental, and other needs/costs from a regional perspective.

- **In Florida** - Northeast Florida is described as one region consisting of several counties surrounding the rapidly growing Jacksonville/Duval metropolitan area. In north and northwest Jacksonville, expansion of development activities and growth of outlying communities are pushing development further north and west into bordering Nassau and Baker counties. Baker County and adjacent western Nassau County, both with a lot of rural, undeveloped land, are attractive to Jacksonville residents seeking lower prices and less congestion. With the strategic location of these counties along the St. Mary's River and a short 30-minute drive from Jacksonville, the growth pressures and interest in creating large residential communities has increased.
- 1. **Port of Jacksonville Activities and Expansion Plans.** The Jacksonville Port Authority, known as JAXPORT, is an international trade seaport that owns and manages three public marine terminals, a passenger cruise terminal, and operates a local ferry service (the St. Johns River Ferry), connecting the north and south ends of State Road A1A in Duval County. JAXPORT is an economic development tool, as is the Port of Fernandina. JAXPORT develops, manages, and markets these publicly owned facilities to promote the growth of maritime and related industries in Jacksonville and elsewhere. The mission of the Jacksonville Port Authority is to be a major economic engine in Northeast Florida by continuing to be "... a premier diversified port in the Southeastern United States, with connections to major trade lanes throughout the world."<sup>10</sup> JAXPORT expansion plans include improvements to the three marine terminals and the Jacksonville harbor. At one marine terminal, Dames Point, JAXPORT, in coordination with Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL), a Tokyo-based ocean transportation company, is building a 158-acre container-handling facility to serve the Mitsui operations. It is estimated that, in the future, the Mitsui container facility will expand to cover 200 acres, all of it on land owned by JAXPORT. The Port of Jacksonville's expansion plans, its designation as a Foreign Trade Zone (along with the continuing growth and diversification of the Port of Fernandina), good access to road and rail service, and expansion of cargo operations and capabilities combined, have established this area as a good location for continued economic growth. The Port of Fernandina and Port of Jacksonville are described as ports with rapid growth and diversification and the most extensive road and rail service of any ports in the state.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.jaxport.com/>

## 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (*Continued*)

2. **Jacksonville International Airport** is a significant contributor to the economic well-being of Duval County and Nassau County by its location within a 30-mile drive of Nassau County.<sup>11</sup> The Jacksonville Aviation Authority owns and manages the Jacksonville Airport System consisting of Jacksonville International Airport (JIA), Craig Airport, Herlong Airport, and Cecil Field. These smaller airports, along with the Fernandina Beach Airport, serve as reliever airports for private air services in the northeast region. This system serves the commercial, business, and recreational aviation needs of the City of Jacksonville, Northeast Florida, and Southeast Georgia, and brings in tourists and business people. With the expansion of the Jacksonville airport and the improvement of the airport facilities and surrounding Commerce Park, it has created more attractive economic opportunities that benefit the entire northeast region.
  
3. **Large Scale Development in Adjacent Baker County, Florida.** Across the St. Mary's River in adjacent Baker County, large-scale developments called Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) and other smaller developments are changing the very nature and urbanizing this rural north Florida county on the Florida-Georgia border. It is estimated these new developments will triple the Baker County population. Currently planned are the 3,200+/-acre Cedar Creek project with 7,000 homes and 425,000 square feet of commercial use, and Navona Creek, a 3,654-acre development, with 8,300 homes, a 1.5 million square feet business park, and a 330,000 square feet village center. More than half of Baker County's workforce commutes to other counties to work. Impacts of development in adjacent counties create a demand on transportation facilities and increased traffic congestion. On the positive side, development of these communities in Baker County on the Nassau County line, as in adjacent Jacksonville/Duval County, is creating a market for Nassau County businesses as well as a labor pool for businesses located in Nassau County.

<sup>11</sup><http://www.jaa.aero/General/>

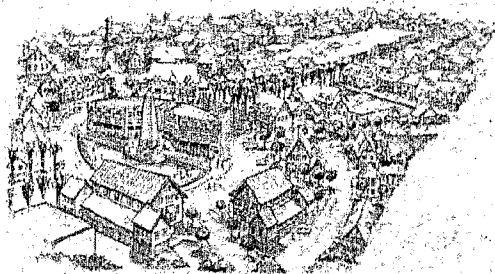
### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

**Land Use Patterns:** Considering land use patterns helps determine how future growth may be distributed across the community under a certain set of land-use and zoning policies and regulations.

If you look at Land Use Patterns, which are the distributions of various land uses, such as residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses throughout the community, it begins to create a picture of life in Nassau County.

Low-density, spread out, automobile dependent land uses are one example of a land use pattern occurring throughout Nassau County, the state, and the country. Lower density, spread-out, automobile dependent land use patterns of development have the following effects:

- Limited or no access between activities, particularly for the young, disabled, and elderly who do not drive, and/or the low-income residents who have limited or no access to an automobile when there is limited or no public transportation.
- Require more mobility to reach activities (jobs, shopping, recreation, etc.), and reduce transportation options (such as walking, cycling, public transit).
- Increase the cost of vehicle ownership; total transportation costs, including internal costs (costs paid directly by consumers); and external costs (costs borne by society as a whole, such as the cost to build and maintain roads and other transportation facilities).

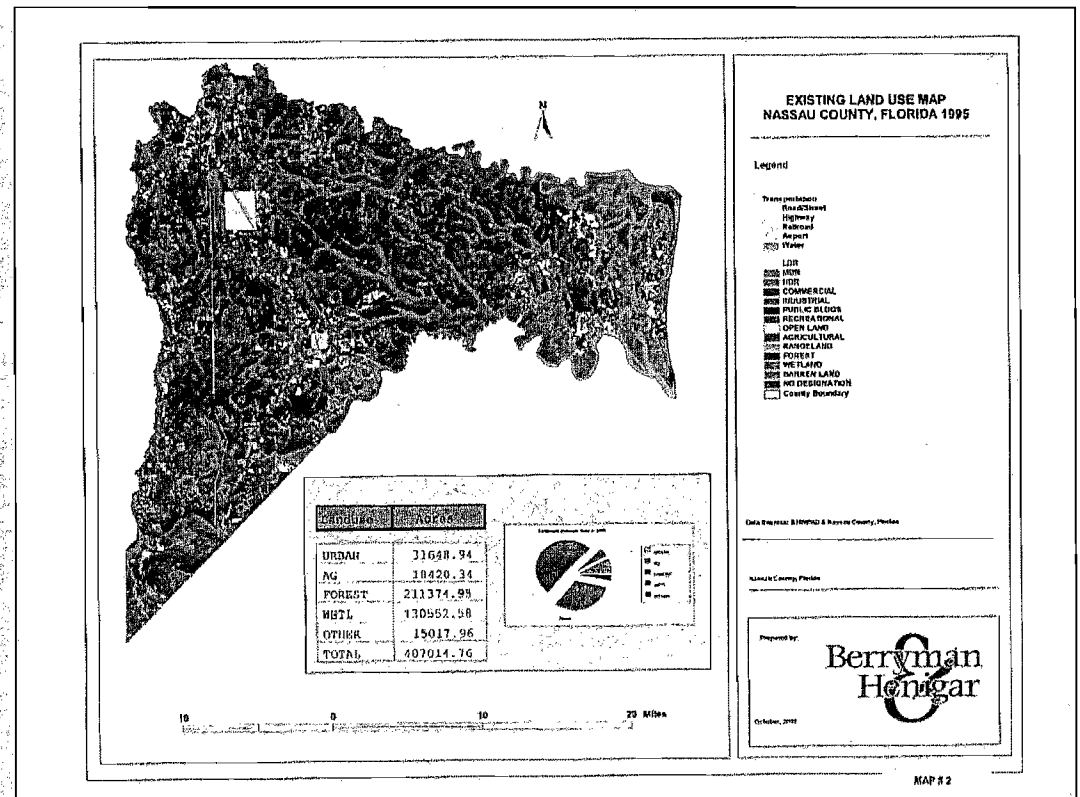


- More accessible and resource-efficient land use patterns can increase economic productivity and development. In resort communities and other tourist areas, land use patterns that preserve unique environmental and cultural resources support economic development. Excessive clearing of land and paving for roads and parking can destroy the amenities that attract visitors.
- Local government plans, policies, and regulations may dramatically affect future growth and land uses and have an impact on the costs of providing services. This includes the cost of providing services such as roads, street lighting, utilities, emergency services, and school transportation. The costs of providing these services increase with more spread out development because distribution costs increase (more infrastructure and travel is needed to provide a given level of service).

# 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? (Continued)

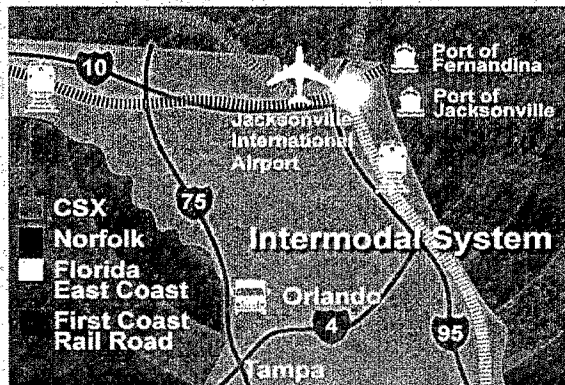
## What are the land use patterns in Nassau County?

- Traditional land use patterns in Nassau County consist of farms, woodlots, hamlets, villages, and towns that have shaped the way the communities look continue today.
- Land use patterns on Amelia Island have remained relatively the same with a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, tourist, and government uses, including the Port of Fernandina.
- Land use patterns off the island have changed more due to changes in land use over the last 50 years, including:
  - a) A reduction in timber operations and the subdivision of land for small residential lots for housing.
  - b) Some highway development and suburban development (residential, commercial, and industrial).
  - c) A decline in farming.



### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

- The 2006 Research Study by 1000 Friends of Florida (growth management watchdog organization) and the University of Florida predicted rapid growth and population increases in the City of Jacksonville/Duval County metropolitan area would have a far-reaching influence on northeast Florida by 2060.
- The City of Jacksonville/Duval County is projected to be completely built out sometime after 2040, and by the year 2060, and it is expected to cause population growth to spill over into neighboring Nassau, Clay, St. Johns, and Baker counties, forever changing their predominantly rural characters.
- The current pattern of large scale, single-use residential developments occurring throughout Nassau County and in adjacent Baker County and Georgia counties, already reflects the current growth trend in neighboring Duval County and the expected pattern of spillover growth to accommodate the increasing population in northeast Florida.



- The Port of Fernandina will play a crucial role in the future economic development – the significance of this role is recognized by its inclusion in the Florida SIS Plan of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).
- The Port of Fernandina and the Port of Jacksonville are listed in the Northeast Florida Ports Region of the SIS Plan.
- The SIS Plan looks at how Florida's seaports, in partnership with the FDOT, are pursuing funding for strategic intermodal connections and trade corridor improvements.

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW? *(Continued)*

#### NASSAU COUNTY PROJECTED PERMANENT POPULATION – 2000 TO 2030

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2030
Unincorporated	43,450	49,944	57,737	65,001	72,457	83,064
Callahan	962	1,274	1,658	1,976	2,322	2,600
City of Fernandina Beach	10,549	11,621	12,331	12,824	13,337	14,392
Hilliard	2,702	2,920	3,174	3,498	3,883	4,591
<b>Nassau County</b>	<b>57,663</b>	<b>65,759</b>	<b>74,900</b>	<b>83,300</b>	<b>92,000</b>	<b>104,646</b>

Sources: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida, and Nassau County Growth Management Department.

- Population growth for the unincorporated areas peaked in 2005-06 and growth, in terms of percentage increase, is expected to decline to an annual growth rate of about 1.3 percent by 2030. An increase in absolute numbers is expected to continue.
- Estimated population growth in Callahan is expected to continue increasing until 2010, show a decrease through 2015, then level off at about 3.5 percent from 2015 to 2030.
- The growth rate for Hilliard has increased since 2000 and is expected to increase until it peaks around 2010 and then slowly level off by 2030. *(Source: Bureau of Economic Business.)*

## 4. WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

Vision 2032 will tell a story of how Nassau County may prepare for future growth, determine future and use patterns, and the type of growth wanted/needed, and not wanted or not needed.

### *Prioritization of Issues and Selection of Priorities*

**Eleven topics** listed below were presented at the public meetings held throughout the County.

1. Economy and Workforce	7. Growth Management
2. Cultural Opportunities	8. Infrastructure
3. Education and School Facilities Plan	9. Tourism
4. Environment	10. Recreation and Open Space
5. Governance	11. Public Safety
6. Healthcare and Social Services	

These 11 topics were grouped as follows during the meetings:

1. Recreation and Open Space, and Environment
2. Economy and Workforce, and Tourism
3. Cultural Opportunities and the Arts, and Education and School Facilities Plans
4. Infrastructure and Growth Management
5. Health Care and Social Services, and Public Safety
6. Governance



## 4. WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE? (Continued)

The 11 topics ranked most important to residents were:

- Growth Management.
- Recreation and Open Space .
- Infrastructure.

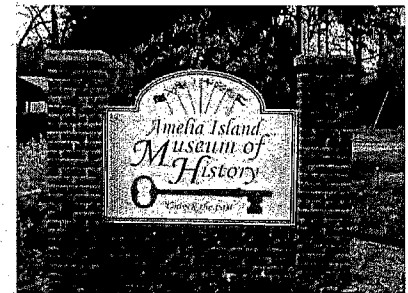
The two next most important issues were:

- Environmental.
- Education and School Facilities Plans.

Are there differences and similarities as you travel across the County?

Yes! During the public meetings, there were strong similarities in the top issues of concern, but key differences appeared, depending on the location of the public meeting as we traveled throughout the County. While all public meetings across the County were open to all residents and advertised countywide, the overall trend was for residents to attend the meeting closest to the community where they lived. It is important to note, however, that some residents attended several, and some all, of the public-involvement meetings.

In Yulee, Fernandina Beach, Bryceville, and Callahan, Growth Management was the # 1 ranked issue.



**Hilliard: Recreation and Open Space was the # 1 ranked issue** and was identified as priority by 44 percent of those at the public workshop. This was reflected in the discussions on maintaining the wide, open spaces in this area and the need for more outdoor recreation areas including boat ramps and fishing areas, and the nature of Hilliard, which is in the far-western county and a predominantly rural area. While Growth Management was # 2 here, it was an issue of concern for only 10.5 percent of the residents. This is likely reflective of the fact that the more typical concerns about "Growth Management," such as traffic, congestion, environmental protection, etc., tend to be less important than maintaining the rural lifestyle and interest in preserving open space areas, increasing outdoor recreation areas, such as boat ramps, and providing places for recreational activities for young people, which are more limited in these rural areas.

**Yulee, the fastest growing and urbanizing area of the County: Next to Growth Management, Infrastructure and the Economy and Workforce were identified as the most important issues with Recreation and Open Space following closely.** This reflects the concerns of residents in rapidly urbanizing areas over road congestion, strip urban development, overcrowding of schools, and the difficulty of keeping up with the demands for facilities including recreation and open space. These are statewide concerns in areas such as Yulee that are feeling the effects of rapid growth and the challenges it brings to provide the services needed to accommodate growth.

## 4. WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

*(Continued)*

**Fernandina Beach:** The top issues were **Growth Management, Infrastructure, and the Environment, followed by Recreation and Open Space.** As in Yulee, this area faces many of the issues of an urbanized area described for Yulee. The differences in Fernandina Beach, with regards to the Environment, are likely reflective of the residents concerns with protecting the many water resources on and adjacent to the island including beaches, rivers, and streams, and the issue surrounding the protection of the Egans Creek Greenway, a publicly-owned recreation and open space area that runs through the center of the community from north to south.

**Bryceville:** The top issues were **Growth Management, Education and School Facilities Plans, and the Environment.**

**Callahan:** **Growth Management** was also # 1 followed by **Education and School Facilities Plans** and **Infrastructure**, which were ranked equally, followed closely by **Public Safety.**

The chart that follows shows the prioritization of topics for the Nassau County Public Involvement meetings, the number of votes per topic, and voting percentages.



# 4. WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE? (Continued)

## NASSAU VISION 2032 Prioritization of Topics and Public Meeting Attendance Record

Topic	Yulee February 18, 2008		Hilliard February 19, 2008		Fernandina Beach March 18, 2008		Bryceville April 21, 2008		Callahan April 22, 2008		TOTAL	
	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage
Cultural Opportunities & The Arts	7	4.0%	4	3.0%	31	8.4%	8	3.8%	11	5.7%	61	5.7%
Recreation & Open Space	19	11.0%	59	44.4%	43	11.7%	20	9.6%	21	10.8%	162	15.0%
Environment	14	8.1%	8	6.0%	56	15.2%	25	12.0%	15	7.7%	118	10.9%
Education & School Facilities Plan	16	9.2%	10	7.5%	21	5.7%	38	18.2%	27	13.9%	112	10.4%
Infrastructure	24	13.9%	9	6.8%	56	15.2%	18	8.6%	27	13.9%	134	12.4%
Growth Management	33	19.1%	14	10.5%	76	20.6%	59	28.2%	36	18.6%	218	20.2%
Economy & Workforce	20	11.6%	8	6.0%	24	6.5%	4	1.9%	15	7.7%	71	6.6%
Tourism	6	3.5%	0	0.0%	9	2.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	15	1.4%
Governance	11	6.4%	6	4.5%	29	7.9%	6	2.9%	9	4.6%	61	5.7%
Health Care & Social Services	12	6.9%	9	6.8%	16	4.3%	11	5.3%	11	5.7%	59	5.5%
Public Safety	11	6.4%	6	4.5%	8	2.2%	20	9.6%	22	11.3%	67	6.2%
<b>Total Votes Cast:</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,078</b>	<b>100%</b>

Top 3

## 4. WHAT DO WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

*(Continued)*

### **Tourism:**

"The concept of sustainability as a resource development and management philosophy is permeating all levels of policy and practice relating to tourism, from local to global. More than ever before, sustainable tourism management of the natural and physical environments must coexist with economic, socio-cultural, health, safety and security objectives of localities and nations. Finding a balance between economic growth and protecting the natural and built resources is challenging governments and businesses alike to cooperate in sustainable tourism development. ..." from *Tourism Policy and Planning: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. David L. Edgell, Sr. et al Butterworth-Heinemann-2008. ISBN # 978-0-7506-8557-3)

While the Nassau County employment statistics incorporated into this Vision show the Leisure and Hospitality Industry is the largest single employment sector, at 21.4 percent of the workforce, and Nassau County is twice as dependent on tourism as the average Florida county, when taken as a whole, as shown in the table above, attendees at the various workshops held throughout the county simply did not rate tourism as a highly important issue.

Sustainable tourism has become a major factor in economic development of many communities in Florida and may be used to expand the economic development base of Nassau County in coordination with the expanded recreational activities identified as important to residents countywide. The need to support the existing tourism industry and ensure continued support for the importance of the social, economic, environmental, and structural issues associated with tourism, and the low level of importance assigned to it in the opinions of the local population, suggests the need for greater education and information flows on the part of both the public and private sectors in the County.

## 5. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

### *Vision 2032 Statement*

- *Nassau County is committed to managing growth and creating sustainable economic development in a way that maintains and improves the quality of life and unique character of the communities by utilizing its strengths – the people, the abundance of unspoiled natural resources, and its strategic location as the “Eastern Gateway to Florida.”*

## 5. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

*(Continued)*

***Nassau County residents will be able to say "Vision 2032 has allowed us to:"***

1. Establish priorities which are those of the people of Nassau County.
2. Budget financial and human resources (police, fire, medical, government, teachers, etc.) based on accurate, financially feasible budgets using a variety of available sources of revenue.
3. Direct and plan for growth, in a financially feasible manner, to those areas that can sustain the growth as it occurs and is planned.
4. Identify the strengths and attributes of the County, including its people, physical location, the Port of Fernandina, the Fernandina Beach Airport, the schools, the tourist attractions, and the need to establish and support economic development priorities.
5. Coordinate educational programs and training to meet the needs of existing and future employers.
6. Develop and implement guidelines to ensure good, stable, and affordable workforce housing.
7. Provide recreational and cultural opportunities throughout the County to meet the needs and desires of rural and urban lifestyles and availability of resources.
8. Maintain the natural beauty of Nassau County, the beaches, the St. Mary's River, publicly-owned forested areas, open space areas, and provide for public access to these resources.

### ***Guiding Principles and Strategies***

Guiding principles and strategies for future growth and development are constants that reflect the consensus of Nassau County Beliefs and Values. The objectives are "we will" statements and the strategies are tools and actions to implement the Vision.

### ***Implementation***

Implementation is not the culmination of the visioning process; rather, it is part of the continual cycle of public input, analysis, community development, implementation actions, evaluation, and updating. Implementation is both incremental and cumulative, and success requires participation from both public and private sectors. All segments of the community need to work together to protect the unique qualities and character of Nassau County in a proactive manner to achieve the desired vision for the future.

# 5. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

*(Continued)*

## *How do we implement Vision 2032?*

Nassau County's Vision 2032 Plan presents a picture of what Nassau County will look like in the future. Long-range visioning such as this requires a policy basis to guide future actions, growth, and development, and help local officials make decisions consistent with the residents' vision for the future.

A vision is the heart of the planning process for the future; goals and strategies are the guides for implementation. After development of the vision, the next step is to identify the ways to secure what the community desires. These changes are expressed in Goal and Objective statement, which provide the basis for more detailed policies or strategies to be used by Nassau County to implement its Vision 2032 Plan.

- Established goals and strategies reflect common ideas from citizens in the public participation process. Goals are overall or general statements about the quality and character of the community.
- Goals are translated into measurable and specific objectives that may then be prioritized and pursued by undertaking specific strategies.
- Objectives are the more specific ends towards which community leaders should direct their efforts.
- Performance Standards/Quality of Life Benchmarks are established in the Objectives and are used to:
  - Monitor progress in achieving Vision 2032.
  - Measure change in community over 25 years.
  - Be fluid and revised every five to ten years.
  - Reflect statements of where the County is at a period in time.
- Strategies are specific actions taken in support of a goal or the act of mobilizing resources towards a goal.
- Implementing the strategies requires a balance between the public purpose to direct the long-range vision for the future with the rights of property owners to appropriately use their land and the financial resources available to Nassau County.
- The limits on financial resources, the sources and amount of revenue available, require choices and priorities be made as Nassau County works toward their vision for the future.

The 11 public involvement issue areas have been grouped under three main categories. Each issue area has established goals, specific and measurable objectives, and implementing strategies:

### **QUALITY OF LIFE**

- Economy and Workforce
- Cultural Opportunities and the Arts
- Education and School Facility Plan
- Healthcare and Social Services
- Recreation and Open Space

### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

- Infrastructure
- Growth management
- Environment
- Tourism
- Public Safety

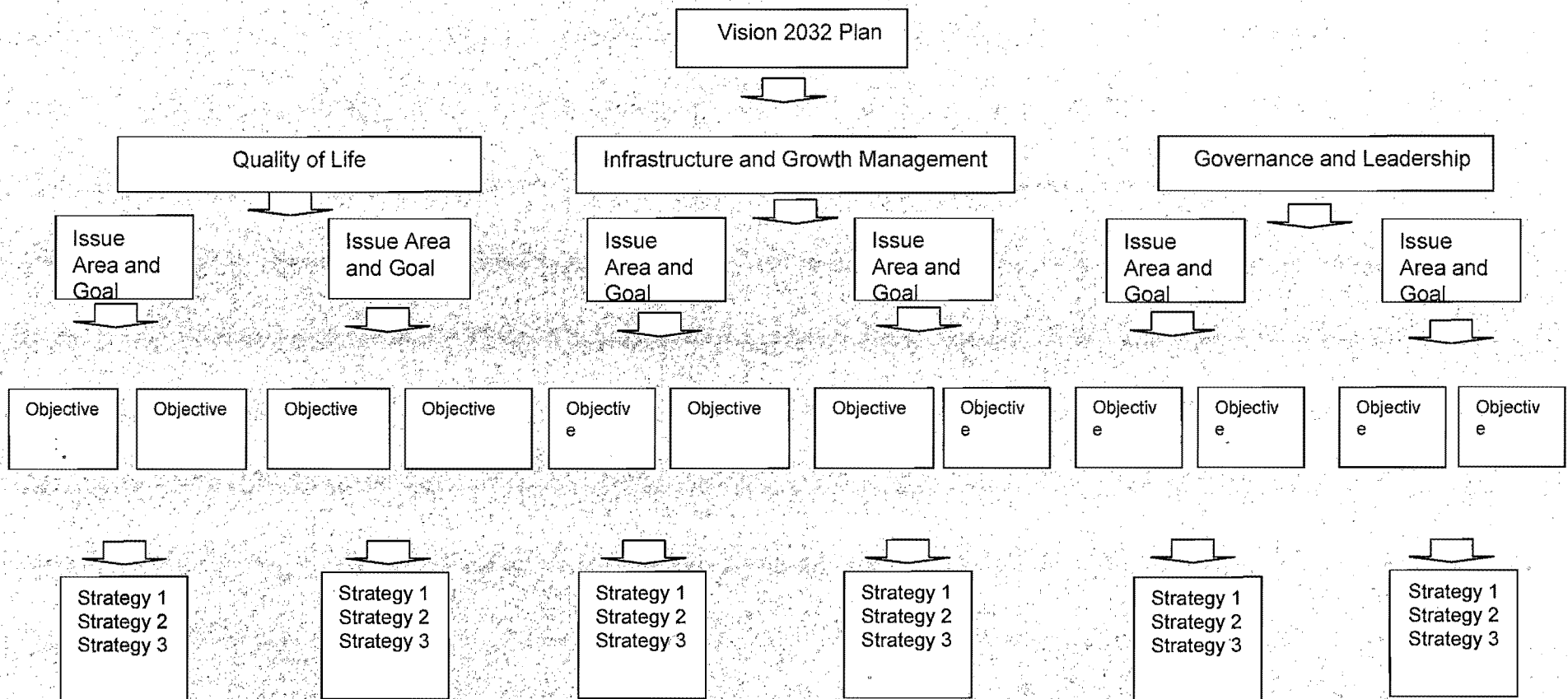
### **GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

- Governance

# 5. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

(Continued)

This illustration is a graphic depiction of the relationship between the Vision 2032 Plan, the goals, objectives, and strategies. The goals, objectives, and strategies that follow this graph were developed using a mixture of the public comments during the eight Public Participation Sessions and discussions with the Steering Committee and stakeholder groups.





# 6. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

## A. QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

Conservation and preservation of the natural environment, education and workforce training, health care, recreation and cultural activities and the arts all relate to quality of life and the values of Nassau County residents. Eastern Nassau County is characterized by urban land use patterns, which facilitate the use of public transportation and other services within walking distance of residences. Western Nassau County with its more rural nature and small central communities with limited facilities requires careful planning and design to ensure access and minimizing of the costs to provide these facilities. Locating community medical, health care, educational, cultural, and arts facilities and services, in small compact centers in existing rural communities, supports the existing and desired patterns of development in these areas communicated by many residents. One-trip to drop the children off at school, buy groceries, gas, visit the doctor, browse the library, or attend a community event, is possible in rural areas if rural centers are planned and designed with this goal in mind.

Government land use decisions, patterns of development, and decisions of the development community, can encourage or discourage cohesiveness in both urban and rural communities. Careful planning, design and funding of education, culture, arts, and community health care facilities facilitates easier access to rural residents without personal transportation, such as the elderly, young, and disabled, and reduces the cost of transportation to meet these needs. The goals, objectives, and strategies established below recognize the need to be creative in meeting these needs during the difficult economic times and the limitations on revenue and sources of funds to pay for existing and future needs.

### *Issue Area 1: Conservation and Preservation of the Natural Environment*

**Goal 1:** Conserve and/or preserve existing natural areas, including wetlands, floodplains, river corridors (such as, the St. Mary's River), streams, creeks, and wildlife habitats.

**Objective 1:** By the year 2032, the acreage of publicly-owned natural, open space areas, and natural areas set aside for voluntary conservation or preservation, shall be equal to or greater than the year 2008 acreage.

### **Strategies**

1. Incorporate natural areas and features into development plans, parks and recreation areas, non-residential development, and infrastructure projects.
2. Promote increased "limited activity" setbacks from water bodies including rivers, lakes, streams, and creeks.
3. Promote the maintenance and development of wildlife corridors through adjoining residential and non-residential areas including infrastructure expansion or rebuilding projects.

## 6. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES (*Continued*)

4. Protect trees by establishing a tree protection ordinance for all development activities and offer incentives to agriculture and silviculture operations that use best management practices to preserve and ensure the regeneration of forested areas.
5. Encourage resource preservation by establishing standards in the land development regulations that allow transfers of residential densities for residential developments and increased floor area ratios for non-residential developments in residential areas that meet established resource protection standards.
6. Identify the existing outdoor recreation, open space, and natural areas of local and regional significance and, using the Vision 2032 Plan and other data sources, develop a recreational and conservation Master Plan – a plan for an inter-connected network of these features – for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan.
7. Establish community meeting between local government agencies, landowners, and state and federal agricultural agencies to promote sustainable agriculture in Nassau County.
8. Coordinate efforts with communities countywide to establish a strategy for protecting and conserving the water supply and resources for competing uses.

### ***Issue Area 2: Education and Workforce Training***

**Goal 1:** Coordinate with the Nassau County Economic Development Board and the Florida Community College to continue the workforce development post-secondary education and job training programs and integrate youth and adult education.

**Objective 1:** Continue existing, and expand post-secondary education opportunities at Florida Community College-Nassau Center and the joint-use Florida Community College/Nassau County Technical Training Facility to meet the workforce training and post-secondary education needs of Nassau County residents.

#### **Strategies:**

1. By August 2009, establish a task force consisting of Nassau County School District staff and educators, the Nassau County Economic Development Board, and the Continuing Education Center of the Florida Community College of Jacksonville in Yulee to identify the workforce needs and training programs required to provide a skilled workforce to meet the employer needs of existing and targeted industries.
2. By June 2010, incorporate efforts such as dual enrollment, advanced placement, and virtual school courses into the Nassau County School District education planning to ensure students from the Nassau County area can compete for post-secondary school admission slots with students from across the state and the country.
3. By August 2011, identify a suitable location, or locations, for vocational training programs at area high schools in coordination with the Nassau County Economic Development Board and Community College to meet the workforce needs of the existing and targeted employment sectors.



## 6. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES (*Continued*)

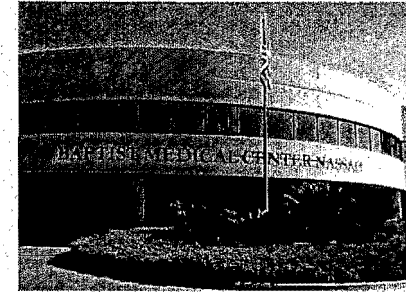
### *Issue Area 3: Health and Well-Being*

**Goal 1:** Increase availability of health care services, providers, and facilities throughout Nassau County.

**Objective 1:** By the year 2032, residents in Nassau County will have community medical care facilities for health care not requiring hospitalization.

#### **Strategies**

1. Support efforts of health care providers to expand hospital capacity in Nassau County, particularly west of I-95 and provide community satellite medical treatment and care facilities.
2. Starting in July 2009, coordinate with developers on establishing land uses for medical clinics, doctor's offices, and other medical facilities within existing and new communities and large-scale development projects.
3. Beginning in August 2009, begin to establish cooperative ventures between businesses, residents, libraries, schools, and the Health Department to continue providing public health programs and information on health issues, using grant funds when available.
4. Beginning in September 2009, work with the Florida Community College-Nassau Center and the joint-use Florida Community College/Nassau County Technical Training Facility and Nassau County School District to establish a vocational track for health care training in high schools that will transition into programs in the post-secondary institutions in the County.



### *Issue Area 4: Recreation and Open Space*

**Goal 1:** Preserve existing and expand outdoor recreation areas, publicly-owned natural and open space areas, recreational facilities and services throughout Nassau County.

**Objective 1:** By the year 2010, add additional level of service standards to the Comprehensive Plan for recreation and open space to include acreage for active outdoor recreation areas, numbers and standards for recreation facilities (including boat ramps, skate parks, and ball fields), and generalized locations based upon existing deficiencies and projected population growth.