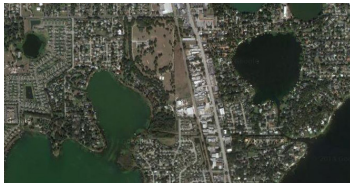


# Technical Assistance Panel: City of Edgewood, Florida



October, 2014  
Edgewood, Florida



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# Urban Land Institute Central Florida District Council Technical Assistance Panels

## What Are Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)?

Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Advisory Services Program has been assisting communities by bringing together week-long panels of seasoned real estate, planning, landscape architecture, financing, marketing, and development experts to provide unbiased pragmatic advice on complex land use and development issues. Several years ago, the Florida District Councils began providing panel services of one or two days to address specific local government issues in areas such as housing, parking, redevelopment, and future land use development.

## How Do TAPs Work?

A sponsor requests the services of a TAP with regard to a specific issue that can be addressed by a panel of experts in one or two days. The District Council assists the sponsor in refining the scope of the assignment and convenes a panel to address those specific issues. The sponsor works within ULI guidelines to provide background information to ULI panelists prior to the panel's convening. When convened, members of the TAP view the subject site, hear from public and private stakeholders, and then deliberate on the assigned issues. At the conclusion of its work, the panel presents an oral report to stakeholders; that is followed by a written report within approximately six weeks. To ensure objectivity, panel members cannot be involved in matters pending before the sponsor, be working for the sponsor, or solicit work from the sponsor during the panel's assignment period. Panel members volunteer their services to the project.

## Who Is ULI?

ULI was founded in 1936 as a non-profit institute to facilitate the open exchange of ideas and information among local, national, and international real estate industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. Today it has more than 32,000 members worldwide. The ULI does not lobby or act as an advocate for any single industry. It is committed to providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities.



# Executive Summary

Residents of Edgewood, population 2,600, know their city as a place where homes on tree-lined streets offer views to some of Central Florida's most beautiful lakes, including Conway, Gatlin, Jennie Jewel, Jessamine and Mary. They can easily commute to some of the region's largest employment centers, including downtown Orlando just minutes to the north, the theme parks and tourist district to the west, and Orlando International Airport and the Lake Nona "medical city" to the southeast.

But even though Edgewood can trace its origins back to 1881, when it became a commerce center along the South Florida Railroad line between Orlando and Tampa, it has never fully developed its personality.

Founded as a town in 1924 and incorporated as a city in 1973, Edgewood is often confused with Edgewater, a city of 21,000 residents about 65 miles north in Volusia County. Outsiders mostly know Edgewood as a place 40,000 vehicles travel through daily to get somewhere else. Sometimes it is even known as a speed trap where drivers can get stopped for traveling too fast. Edgewood's city limits seem to blend into neighboring South Orlando and the communities of Pine Castle and Belle Isle. Only when the city is described as the place along Orange Avenue where the road forks, becoming Hansel Avenue northbound, do outsiders say "Ahh, yes."

With its mix of local restaurants and retail centers, abundant office and industrial space, and growing medical complexes, Edgewood is ripe for change. Its elected mayor and five City Council members are considering the next phase of Edgewood's rich history.

In October 2014, city leaders asked the nonprofit Urban Land Institute to conduct a Technical Assistance Panel that would examine these questions:

1. How does Edgewood **create an identity** for the area along Orange Avenue?
2. What can the city do to **incentivize** the repurposing of existing **commercial centers**?
3. How would **annexation** along Orange Avenue fit, and should the city do it?
4. What can the city do to **calm traffic** along Orange Avenue?
5. What can the city do to address the use of specific, **key vacant parcels**, to assure they **develop in a quality manner**?
6. How should the city collaborate with adjacent jurisdictions to **create an identity** for Edgewood as a commercial district along Orange Avenue?
7. What are the **analogue cities** that have successfully addressed similar issues as Edgewood?

The TAP discussed these themes for Edgewood's to-do list:

- **Engagement** – Reach out and continue to engage the citizens of Edgewood and not lose the momentum of a recent electronic outreach program. Expansion of outreach to the local business community should be a priority.

- **Real Estate Market Opportunities** – Activate an Edgewood Business Leaders Council and undertake a market study to better identify and define market opportunity, service sectors and strategies for encouraging redevelopment through partnerships, tax credits and other financial support mechanisms. The city has a vast array of business uses, many underutilized land holdings that require retrofitting, large underutilized or vacant land holdings and shifting market opportunities.
- **Identity and Defined Vision** – Develop a plan for articulating a clear “vision” for the city identity through an interactive community discussion. This will set the groundwork for changes to land use and zoning strategies, annexation policy and community structure.
- **Connectivity** – Continue to work with state and county transportation organizations to enhance connections to the regional network of roads, rail lines and bus services. Expansion of and development improvements of station areas, service times and cross access links will help engage Edgewood residents to use these public facilities. Additionally, the city should work with the Orange County Commission and the Florida Department of Transportation on the redevelopment of the Orange Avenue Corridor to identify specific improvements for traffic flow, parking and pedestrian environments.
- **Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code Update** – Review current and proposed changes to its comprehensive plan upon the creation of an Edgewood Community Vision Plan to incorporate recommendations that support the future vision of the community and encourage business investment in Edgewood. The city should create a series of development design guidelines to help articulate the vision plan and set in motion redevelopment of current land holdings, corridors, streetscapes or public lands in a cohesive urban design framework. The city should also fully use all existing regulatory and financial tools and consider expanding new financial tools to support the realization of a vision plan that encourages partnership with businesses and residents of the community.
- **Other Success Stories** – Look to analogue communities to better understand the value, approach and development opportunities that come from a strong vision and implementation plan.

The panel’s findings and recommendations are the subject of this report.

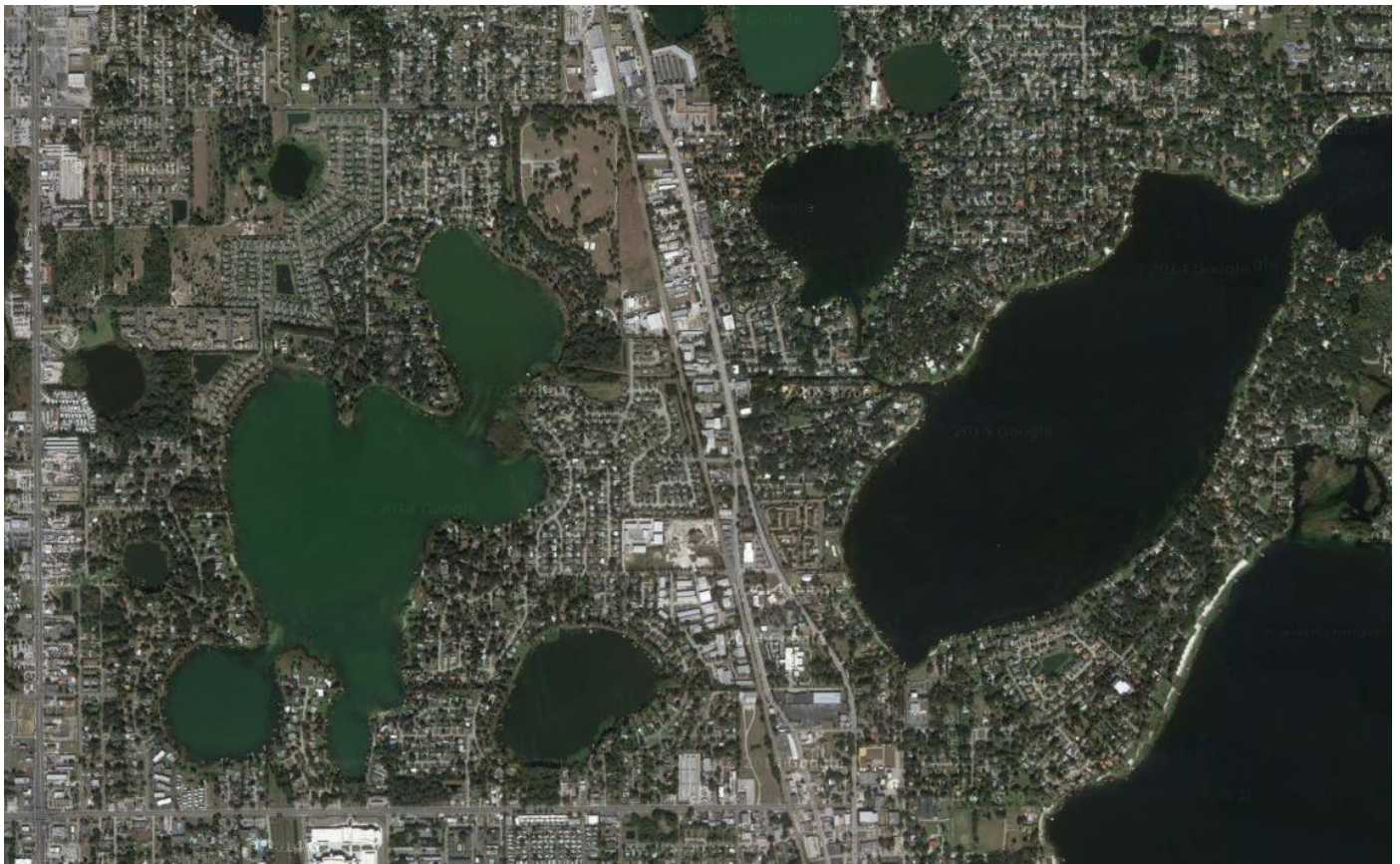
# Methodology

The ULI panel convened on October 29, 2014, for a tour of the area, interviews with city leaders, a brainstorming session to determine recommendations, and then a presentation of its findings to the City Council during a public hearing.

Panelists were chosen because of their experience in land use planning, urban design, community building, and commercial and retail development. They included:

- Chair: Steve Miller, P.E., a Consultant to VHB in Orlando.
- Pauline Eaton, CMSM, Economic Development Coordinator for the City of Orlando.
- John R. Jennings, RLA, ASLA, National Practice Leader for Design with VHB in Orlando.
- Steve Flanagan, Senior Advisor with Land Advisors Organization in Orlando.

See expanded biographies of the panelists in Appendix A.





# Introduction

During a tour of Edgewood's 1.5 square miles with Police Chief Chris Francisco, TAP members learned about the intricate zoning of the town and its surrounding areas. Without his expert guidance, it would have been nearly impossible to tell which businesses, homes and other pieces of property were within the city limits and which were in unincorporated Orange County, the City of Orlando, or historic Pine Castle.

Some city leaders want to reinvent Edgewood as “a place where there are things to do and places to go.” They're considering branding the city as something like “The Edgewood District,” giving the area a hip look and feel that would encourage residents and visitors to come to Edgewood to invest or expand businesses and actively engage residents to participate in local business and community activities: meet friends at a weekly farmer's market, eat an upscale lunch with business colleagues, or spend a night on the town with dinner and music.

Edgewood has defined its mission as posted on the city website:

## Mission Statement

The City of Edgewood's mission is commitment to protect and enhance the residential character and quality of life for the citizens of the City, while maintaining its environmental, aesthetic and economic aspects to a compatible and high standard.

But first the city has to get over the fact that it's considered a suburb of Orlando, which rebranded its southern tip a few years ago as Downtown South. It doesn't help that many businesses in Edgewood describe their location as “South Orlando,” or that Edgewood residents have Orlando or Pine Castle post office addresses.

Edgewood also has to get past its reputation as a collection of auto mechanic shops and thrift stores. Those do exist along Orange Avenue, but Edgewood also is home to notable locations including:

- **Cypress Grove Park**, 290 Holden Avenue, an Orange County public property that includes The Estate House at Cypress Grove, a circa 1925 colonial home on Lake Jessamine that hosts weddings, corporate events and holiday celebrations. The 80-acre park is a quarter-mile west of Orange Avenue and is surrounded on three sides by land zoned in Edgewood.
- **Le Coq Au Vin** at 4800 South Orange Avenue, a popular upscale dinner establishment opened in 1976 that says on its website it is “a French country jewel in the heart of Orlando.”
- **Friendly Confines** at 4757 South Orange Avenue, part of a chain of four sports restaurants with lunch and nighttime entertainment. This newest location is described on its website as “South Orlando.”
- **Shannon's Casual Café**, 4401 South Orange Avenue, a family-owned diner in operation for more than two decades.
- **Discovery Church**, 4400 South Orange Avenue, a popular modern church with services on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. This main location of the church's sites in Central Florida hires Edgewood police to manage traffic and help parishioners across Orange Avenue from satellite parking areas.
- **Julie's Waterfront**, 4201 South Orange Avenue, a restaurant established in 1986 along Lake Jennie Jewel and described on some review sites as being in Edgewood and by others as located in South Orlando in the Holden Heights area.

- **Vanbarry's Public House**, 4120 South Orange Avenue, a restaurant and bar that opened in April 2014 in a location that has seen numerous restaurants come and go in the past two decades, including most recently Tommy Addison's and Zenzi. Vanbarry's is part of a cluster of popular Central Florida restaurants under the Public House branding.

In an effort to expand the city's identity, Edgewood Mayor Ray Bagshaw and his wife created a Facebook page for "The Edgewood District" and it received 1,200 "likes" almost immediately. "That's a good sign," he said. Another good sign: The restaurateur who is opening a Beth's Burger Bar location in the city is touting it as being in The Edgewood District.

The city participates in Nextdoor.com, an increasingly popular website that calls itself "The private social network for your neighborhood" for 46,000 U.S. communities. Edgewood also has worked with the South Orange Chamber of Commerce to increase awareness of business and social opportunities in the city.

Changes are already evident in Edgewood. The city's Thursday evening farmer's market is attracting buzz. The Edgewood Isle shopping center is under renovation, while the Fort Gatlin Village Center and Water's Edge shopping plazas are 50% to 70% occupied. International developers are considering investing in vacant commercial properties. The city's largest employers, a Boise Cascade facility that handles building materials distribution and the Select Specialty Hospital medical complex, are thriving.

So how does the city develop into the kind of place its leaders envision?

## Community Background

The City of Edgewood is a total of 1.5 square miles and is bisected by State Route 527, also known as Orange Avenue. The city layout is a mix of land uses, primarily along Orange Avenue, that jog adjacent to Orange County, the City of Orlando and the City of Belle Isle in an inconsistent pattern. Edgewood's layout is also impacted by seven lakes that influence transportation networks, utility connections, and neighborhood access and identity. This current configuration of the city lands presents a challenge for service providers, emergency response teams and law enforcement, which must determine precisely where a call originates before knowing which agency should respond. Because of this, the Edgewood Police Department and the Orange County sheriff and fire departments have agreed to respond for neighboring agencies when necessary to assure coverage for city and county residents.



*The dock at Lake Jessamine Park.*

Today the city is looking to possibly annex land where it makes sense to clarify edges, ensure access to regional transportation networks, work around natural bodies of water to consolidate neighborhoods, and eventually even up its boundaries. This will help create a clearer definition of the city's limits and give Edgewood a better sense of place. For instance, Edgewood could adopt historic Pine Castle from Orange County but continue to leave it as its own entity, similar to the way Thornton Park and College Park are distinct sections of Orlando.

Despite the city's historic dependence on the railroad tracks for its sense of purpose and livelihood, valuable parcels of land around the railroad spur sit vacant and could add financial value to the city if a business were to come into Edgewood. Additionally, the region's new SunRail commuter train could offer opportunities. To the north and south of Edgewood, local governments have been developing stops along the SunRail tracks, but Edgewood turned down this opportunity. A commuter rail stop did not seem like a good investment at the time for 2,600 residents. However, looking at the apparent success of SunRail, Edgewood could revisit the idea of developing a stop in order to create another desirable destination for people to travel from downtown Orlando or points further north and south.

City leaders are also studying the properties at the north end of Edgewood, where Orange Avenue intersects with Holden and Gatlin avenues within a block. The intersection's unusual traffic pattern, with misaligned streets and a one-way arrow that keeps traffic flowing south, is slated for redesign by Orange County and the Florida Department of Transportation. The shopping plazas at the intersections on the east side of Orange have been in place for decades, although many of the businesses in them have changed hands numerous times. City leaders say realigning the intersection and encouraging a developer to build a cohesive commercial project that spans both sides of Orange Avenue would create a "gateway" to the north end of the city.

Edgewood offers an economic advantage to its neighbors with property taxes that are 2 mills cheaper than those in Orlando's city limits, and commercial properties offer rent prices that are lower than in many other areas of Central Florida. The city wants to capitalize on this and help identify ways to expand existing businesses, improve diversity of business types and create an economic identity and vitality to maintain its current tax advantages. Maximizing redevelopment of underutilized properties, expanding business opportunities and updating the Orange Avenue corridor can go a long way in helping the city improve its brand and regional identity.



# Recommendations

Edgewood is challenged to becoming more than a “pass-through” by creating a clear community identity and providing incentives for redevelopment of key large underutilized parcels and corridors. There are interesting options for fulfilling its goal of becoming a regional destination, the Technical Assistance Panel said. The city has saved as much as \$2 million in surplus funds that could be tapped for creating a comprehensive and “actionable” vision plan. The plan can influence strategies for annexing key properties, provide direction for updates to the comprehensive plan, support beneficial redevelopment and business expansion, and help focus attention on specific gateway and corridor beautification projects such as improving sidewalks and landscaping, adding ornamental streetlights, and constructing welcome and way-finding signage. All of these measures will be important to the process of developing a vibrant identity for Edgewood as a community with a sense of “place.”

Just one day before the TAP met, study results were released for an Orange Avenue Corridor Planning Study presented by Orange County government, the Florida Department of Transportation, and Enhance Central Florida. During a public meeting, presenters outlined plans for improvements along Orange Avenue between Sand Lake Road and Hoffner Avenue, which the FDOT has been studying since October 2012, and between Parkline Boulevard and Lancaster Road, which the county started studying in February 2013. One of the goals is to create a gateway into southern Orange County at Sand Lake Road.

Edgewood leaders would like to see a similar project at their end of Orange Avenue – improvements that would encourage people to walk, cycle and even just stop their cars to get out and visit.

Edgewood is in the middle of all that’s happening, but it doesn’t yet know how to articulate its dream, panelists said. There is much work to do.

The city must seize upon current interests of stakeholders and economic opportunities with a “turnaround” economy to define and create a more clear identity and brand for Edgewood. Real estate and economic redevelopment will transform the city’s character over time. However, some aspects of the city currently do not foster a thriving business climate and create a positive identity for Edgewood. Without a focus on quality of life, broad economic and community character changes are unlikely.

The ULI panel suggests that the city be prepared to engage in policy changes, service enhancements and strategic partnerships to create a more viable community and business environment. The ULI panel’s recommendations follow.

## Beginning Actions

### Engagement

Cities are reflective of the people who live, work and play within their boundaries. The community’s perception of itself projects the city’s culture and values to the outside. Edgewood suffers from a lack of clear identity, clarity of boundaries and celebration of regional importance. It is important that any planning process make sure there is engagement of city stakeholders and encourage the coming together as partners focused on quality of life, economic vitality and redevelopment opportunity. There is a direct correlation between successful economic development and quality of life factors such as: accessibility, healthcare, education, housing, urban form and design, and safety.

Edgewood has all ingredients for inclusiveness and partnership. The city is comprised of a strong administrative council and various long-tenured residents, business people and non-profit leaders that have a desire to work with the City Council to maximize possibilities to improve Edgewood’s identity, brand and economic opportunity while addressing the balance of transportation needs and a high-quality living environment. Any new planning should be structured to ensure citizen

participation. The City Council should advise and inform the community through workshops, hearings, town hall meetings about Edgewood's economic development goals and quality-of-life concerns, opportunity for framing a new vision for Edgewood, and strategies for implementation.

## **Real Estate/Market**

Today, Edgewood is about location and transportation. The city's favorable location is enhanced by good regional access via automobile, bus, and potentially rail. Using the current transportation networks, the city should be able to seize upon its advantageous location to stimulate business upgrades, economic change and long-term vitality.

But before the city spends any further time, effort or money on establishing its vision for the future, leaders should conduct an economic and market analysis study of where things stand today and where the community may find new market opportunities to support business development in the community. It is critical to understand the existing opportunities and what the economic conditions in Edgewood lend themselves to for the future.

There is also additional room for the city to grow its business community. But which types of businesses would be most likely to choose this location, and what could the city offer them? What might the city need to do to lure these businesses?

Edgewood needs to bring in smaller companies and grow small businesses. Orlando as a neighboring community has worked to develop the South Orange Avenue corridor as a medical support district to ORMC. Expanded growth in office, residential and supporting retail have strengthened the south Orlando neighborhoods.

Edgewood needs to look at expanded residential strategies and seek new residential patterns such as multifamily/mixed-use development to broaden the age and diversity of the residential populations that support redevelopment shifts from industrial to a vibrant urban city form. The single-family residential parts of Edgewood are well-developed, but Edgewood could take advantage of the opportunity to introduce more mixed-use, multistory projects along Orange Avenue, such as on the Bell Rentals site.

The TAP discussed different types of zoning the city offers today and types it would like to see for the future. For instance, Class C space seems to have been abundant in Edgewood, but it is aiming for more expensive and prestigious Class A designations. How can these zoning differences be handled with current and future property owners?

## **Identity and Defined Vision**

More than anything else, the city needs to decide on its vision for the future. Do Edgewood's residents and business owners share the dream elected officials have expressed for the city to become a popular regional destination for daytime and after-hours activity? To get started, the city must:

- Engage in a visioning process to identify key value statements. This will ensure that all leaders, businesses and residents are on the same page.
- Develop a clear consensus of types of development desired along the Orange Avenue corridor to reinforce community identity. This will prevent a haphazard look and feel to the Edgewood of the future.
- Begin the process of looking at the community as a "town" or "village" and develop a strategy to invest and reinforce that image throughout the visioning and implementation stages.

## Vision Plan and What It Offers

Answer key questions about Edgewood's present and future. The visioning process is likely to take between six and nine months and employ ways to get out the word to receive input from as many as possible of the communities' residents, business owners and other stakeholders such as churches and nonprofits. The process should answer at least these questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we get there?

Identify problems to be solved. What obstacles can stand in the way of the city developing its vision? Those need to be determined and handled before Edgewood can embark on any major changes.

Vision separate from comp plan. Panelists specified that the vision plan is completely separate from the city's comprehensive plan for growth. Results of the visioning process will inform the Comprehensive Plan and shape certain recommendations, but the vision has to stand on its own over time and act as a barometer for future decisions about how the city moves forward on each step it takes.

Actionable steps/direction desired. The city's vision should extend into a step-by-step plan of how it will be accomplished and what success will look like.

Solid results from dollars spent. Getting return on investment of its dollars will be especially important for Edgewood because it is a small city with a modest tax base. Instead of throwing money at any issues, Edgewood leaders must take care to take actions that will generate the most fruitful results.

## Connectivity

The ability of a community to draw new business, residents, and regional guests to its community is critical to securing long-term vitality. Edgewood has an existing resource in Orange Avenue that can become a positive armature for redevelopment and community focus. "Downtown" Edgewood contains several significant infrastructure systems that must be woven together into a cohesive whole:

- Vehicular circulation
- Transit connections
- Bicycle linkages
- Parking
- Pedestrian ways
- Gateways

One of the greatest challenges facing the city is how to integrate and improve connectivity of currently disjointed multiple modalities and transportation links with redevelopment strategies. The city must address the "through" commuter traffic to and from Orlando, yet find ways to minimize the impact of 40,000 vehicle trips a day. Orange Avenue must function not as an impenetrable barrier that just moves traffic but as a facility that can handle all modes of transportation and connects auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrian traffic to the commercial establishments of Edgewood.

The city needs to identify ways to improve the safety of cyclists and pedestrians in the Orange Avenue corridor and encourage streetscape improvements that add to the community identity and helps improve the "brand." Introduction of nodes along the corridor can be used to create mixed-use redevelopment and activity centers that link into the neighborhoods to the east and west. Nodes are points along the corridor where you cluster activities and maximize the benefits of adjacencies of similar or compatible businesses or increase in use and density.

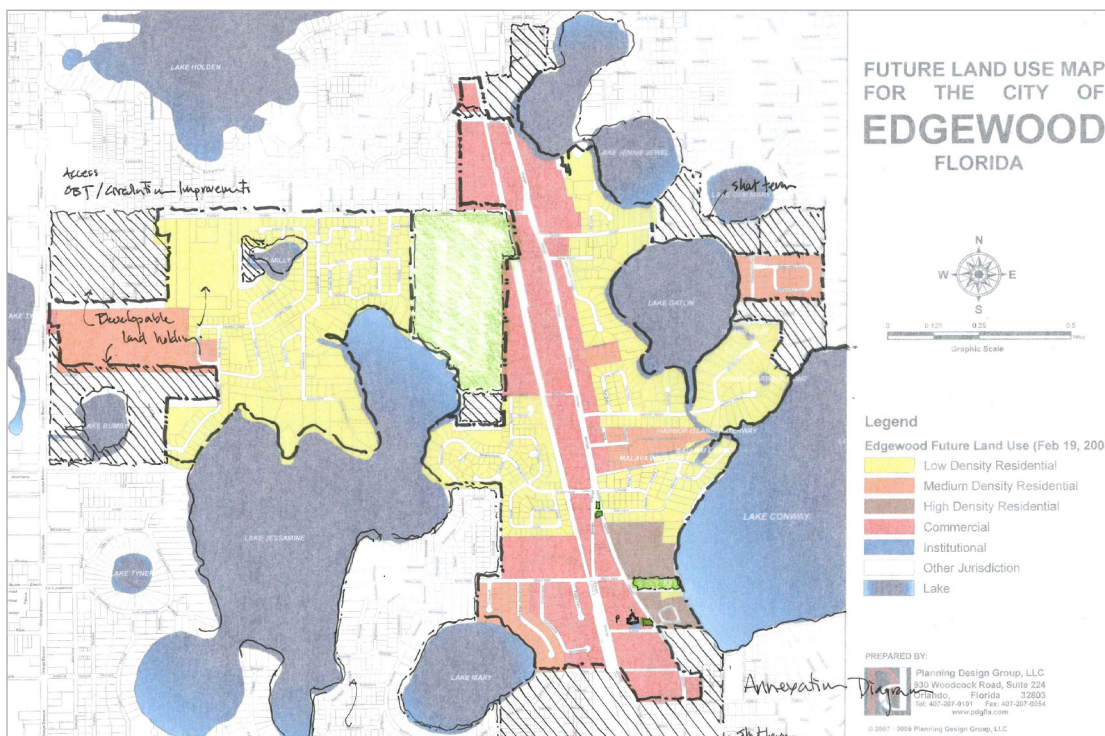
Edgewood also can improve its sense of community by connecting the city limits with the surrounding areas

through developments of projects that can serve as gateways. The city and the Florida Department of Transportation are currently looking at a temporary realignment of Gatlin and Orange avenues. The panel encourages the city to maximize the redevelopment of this important catalyst site with a long-term intersection design solution integrated into a comprehensive multimodal strategy for Orange Avenue. It would be in the city's best interests to postpone development of the intersection until the redevelopment strategies and reconfiguration of development parcels by adjacent land owners can be included to maximize return on investment.

## Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code Update

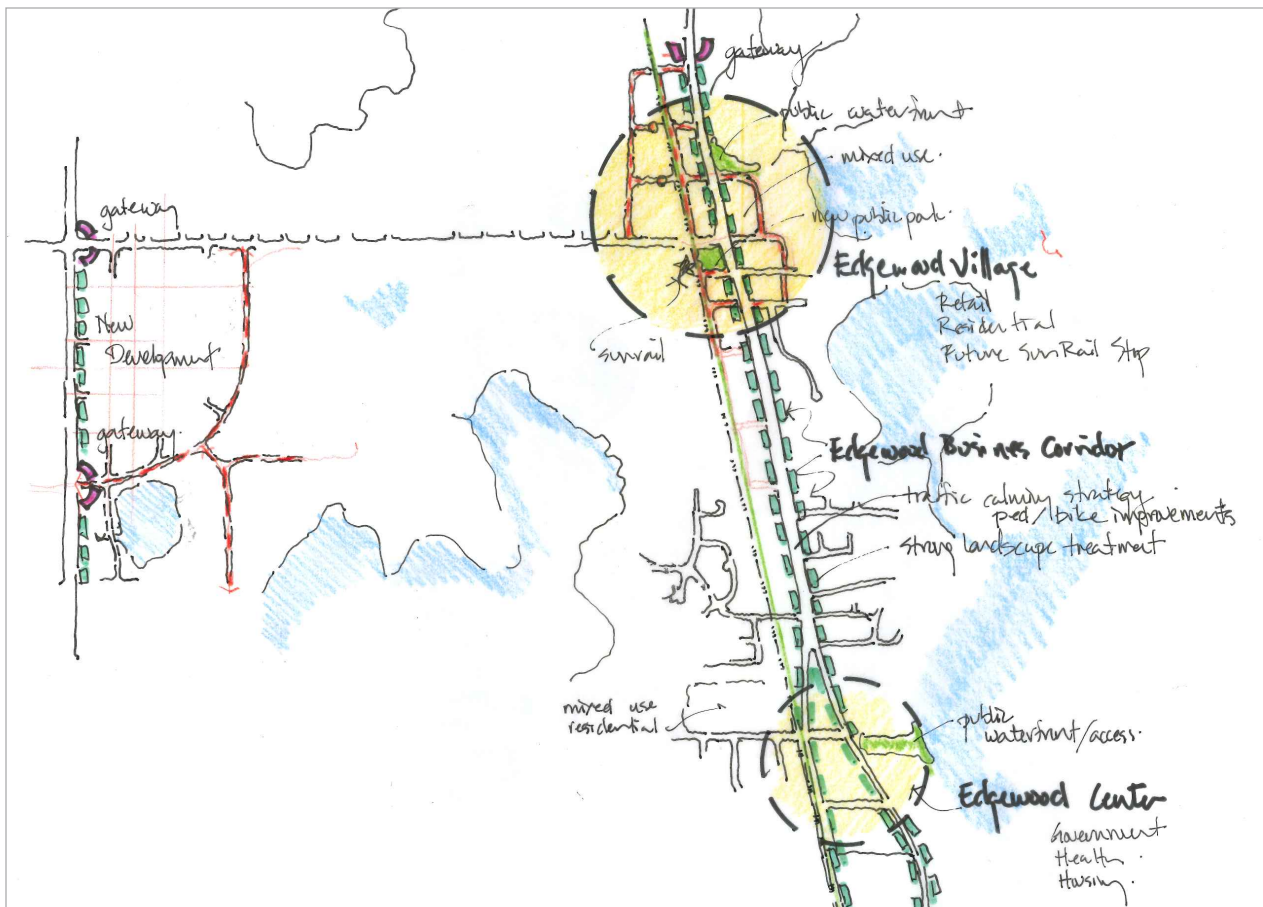
Creating a vision for the future of Edgewood and putting that vision to use will involve numerous angles. The TAP discussed these specific considerations:

- Develop the Vision Plan with implementation mechanisms.** The city has to establish implementation mechanisms for its vision, or the plan could languish for years. Edgewood should consider forming a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) or MSTU (Metropolitan Services Taxing Unit), a special district that handles public and private investments to encourage growth and improve the quality of life in an area identified as blighted or in need of redevelopment. CRAs qualify for financial and planning tools under state law that allow them to create programs that foster healthy growth. A CRA will also provide a financing mechanism for employing a full-time economic development professional, whose job it will be to implement the vision plan and ensure that a proactive approach to redevelopment will continue to move forward. It is possible that Orange County may use the same CRA approach for redeveloping lands to the south, so there may be some synergies there.
- Land use strategies (short-term and long-term).** The city can offer tax incentives such as discounted impact fees for certain types of businesses to locate in Edgewood, or flexibility in zoning, such as allowing for apartments or condominiums to be developed over street-level retail. The city could also provide for small façade improvement grants for existing businesses to improve their storefronts and signage.



*The TAP took a look at the city's current Future Land Use Map and defined areas of growth (see Appendix B).*

- **Annexation strategy.** Parcels of land along Lakes Jennie Jewel, Holden and Gatlin and the South Orange Blossom Trail area could be annexed from the county to square off the city's boundaries and help improve land planning, community access, regional traffic enhancement, emergency management access, law enforcement, and other issues related to brand and identity such as gateways and definition of community edges.
- **Comprehensive Plan amendment/overlay district.** To create a specific look and feel, the city should consider a town center overlay district, a mapped zoning area that accounts for new zoning standards while still allowing for existing entities to use previous zoning standards. The overlay would define where certain types of properties could be located and help city leaders show how they want the district to look.
- **Development guidelines.** With the overlay district, the city should create guidelines for any future development. This could involve laws that say when pieces of property change hands within certain areas, they will automatically be zoned to a different type of use, such as being required to be Class A or B office space instead of Class C, or to be zoned for retail instead of industrial. The city is scheduled for a charter review and an update to its land use codes in 2015.
- **Action plan – catalyst sites.** The city has some opportunities to capitalize on development of sites that will start a rebranding process rolling. For instance, Edgewood could create a “town center” around Lake Jennie Jewel, where the current Waters Edge, Wells Fargo and Fort Gatlin shopping centers exist. This would include using the lakefront access to enhance the entrance to the city, clean up and fix the Holden/Gatlin intersection properly and enhance the quality of life for residents. The town center could include shopping, dining and outdoor recreational activities focused along the lake. The city could encourage new or existing owners of any one of the shopping centers or large parcels of commercial property to develop something different that enhances the vision Edgewood desires. Creating a vision for the area and carrying it out visually will serve two important purposes: It will encourage motorists to slow down instead of creating danger by speeding through the area, and it will attract visitors to stop and spend money on a destination trip basis, contributing to the local economy. The vision could include implementing place-making strategies: beautifying and enhancing the community feel and safety of sidewalks and intersections, replacing streetlights with decorative lampposts, placing banners on lampposts, enhancing business signage through zoning requirements, decorating public areas for the holidays, and installing planters, trees or flowers. This could include a traffic light on the Hansel Avenue side of the Lake Mary Jess intersection, with marked crosswalks, to ensure pedestrians and cyclists can cross safely. It could also include a crosswalk area at the Lake Jessamine Estates entrance to slow traffic through this area for another pedestrian refuge zone. The city will have to coordinate with the FDOT and Orange County to carry out these improvements.
- **Management strategy.** The city needs to ask itself whether its current structure will work for this project. Edgewood's mayor, who serves as the CEO, and all five City Council members are volunteers. Under a CRA, the city might be able to afford a paid staff member such as a MSTU or CRA director to handle day-to-day operations as Edgewood blossoms into its new identity.
- **Economic development/marketing.** One of the keys to success of the city's vision will be getting residents and businesses on the same page. It won't work without the support of both groups. Both are concerned with safety and quality of life, so the vision should focus on those common values. Social media can help get the messaging out. The city needs to be careful not to alienate its businesses by setting up unhealthy competition. For instance, bringing in food trucks from outside Edgewood to set up at the Thursday farmer's market events could be considered taking business away from local restaurants, unless the city somehow finds a way for restaurants to participate or benefit from the activity. Rather than bringing customers to City Hall, having a marketing strategy to get residents and visitors to the community's businesses during promotional events would be a preferred and more sustainable approach.



*The TAP created an example vision for the future of Edgewood (see Appendix B).*

- **Funding strategies.** The city will need to investigate a wide array of both public and private-sector resources that could be used to implement parts of any vision plan. Some examples of potential funding sources:
  - Capital improvement funds
  - Community development block grants (CDBG)
  - Tax increment financing (TIF)
  - Federal or state brownfields remediation and redevelopment programs
  - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development neighborhood redevelopment grants
  - Special service district funding from a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) or Municipal Services Taxing District (MSTU)
  - Federal and state highway improvement programs
  - Regional transit funding (MPO and Lynx)
  - Industrial development and municipal revenue bonds

## Implementation

The city should strive to maintain and work toward an improvement in the quality of life in the Orange Avenue corridor as a catalyst for changes in Edgewood's image and identity. A revitalized corridor should attract and support a high-quality mixed-use redevelopment strategy of residential uses, new commercial and office space including medical facilities, and vibrant retail and entertainment establishments including restaurants. Such development will lead to new jobs, an increased tax base and a change in community "brand" identity. Some key activities need to be undertaken for Edgewood to see this happen:

- **Create consensus.** Engage the public and private sectors to create a common set of goals, a vision and strategies for change.
- **Take the lead.** Proactively use all tools and incentives to support the revitalization of the city core including the facilitation of participatory forums that enable residents to help articulate a shared vision.
- **Fully use existing tools.** Support infrastructure improvement incentives, zoning controls and community urban form guidelines.
- **Amend the Comprehensive Plan.** This is needed to support mixed-use and corridor redevelopment, transportation strategies, and community design framework and identity improvements.
- **Develop a strategy for property acquisition.** This is needed to support short-term acquisition of properties to position for redevelopment in order to ensure long-term return on the vision and the city's investment.
- **Engage market-based development.** Doing this through public/private partnerships will allow the private marketplace to influence specific land-use decisions within the context of a larger redevelopment strategy.
- **Create an outreach and communication network.** Distribute information and engage all city stakeholders. Generate understanding of the importance of key plan components and articulate goals and outcomes.
- **Expand city staff.** Specifically, the city needs an economic development officer. Edgewood's volunteer structure is not the best solution for implementing and accomplishing the vision. The current elected officials are dedicated to the project, but what if those who take office in the future are not as adept at planning? The city should have a paid position in place to handle responsibilities that include:
  - Overseeing infrastructure investment.
  - Identify and help apply tax incentives.
  - Articulate and manage public corridor improvements.
  - Manage marketing, branding and business development.

## Successful Analogue Cities

The TAP defined several municipalities as being comparable because they are bisected by a major thoroughfare such as Orange Avenue.

- City of Sanford
- City of Casselberry
- Village of Tequesta
- Town of Jupiter
- City of Oldsmar

For descriptions of the analogue cities, please see Appendix C.



# Conclusion



*Scenes from Edgewood.*

The Technical Assistance Panel applauded the foresight of Edgewood's current leaders in setting a plan for the city's future. Edgewood is at a crossroads. It could continue just as it has for years, a bedroom community of downtown Orlando that is a pleasant place to live and work but largely invisible to outsiders. Or it could grow into a place sought out by people in other parts of the region, convenient to the big city but charming for its small-town atmosphere, like College Park, Thornton Park, Audubon Park or Baldwin Park.

Panelists told city leaders it's important to understand this is not a one-year project. Instead, it's an undertaking that will evolve over a decade or more. For the city to move forward with a project of this magnitude, it will need the support of all of its stakeholders as well as its neighbors.



# Appendix A: TAP Biographies

## **Steve Miller, P.E., TAP Chair Consultant, VHB, Orlando**

Steve brings to VHB's clients 38 years of leadership with unparalleled professional experience and industry and community relationships needed to overcome complex challenges around water resources, permitting, public/private partnerships and land use.

For Fortune 500 clients, Steve has helped position assets for large-scale development and facilitated more than \$200 million in major regional infrastructure initiatives. He has directed engineering and environmental studies to obtain community support and agency approvals for new transportation corridors and has served as a leader in some of the most economically impactful activities in the region, including the Orlando Navy Base Re-Use Advisory Board, which led to the planning and development of Baldwin Park, one of the most successful infill communities in the Southeast.

Steve has been valued counsel to Central Florida elected officials and leaders on issues related to transportation, planning, education and regional water issues, most recently as a member of the Central Florida Water Steering Committee.

Steve has provided leadership to numerous civic, charitable and community organizations in greater Orlando, including serving as Technical Advisor to the ULI/ MyRegion.org Central Florida Water Strategy Steering Committee, Chairman of the City of Orlando Mayor's Educational Partnership Task Force II, Chairman of the Orange County Public Schools Business Advisory Board and Chairman of the Central Florida YMCA Metro Board.

He earned his degree in civil engineering from Auburn University.

## **Steve Flanagan Senior Advisor, Land Advisors Organization, Orlando**

As a 30-year veteran of the Florida real estate market, Steve offers expert advisory services to landowners and financial institutions, concentrating on managing, maintaining, adding value to and disposing of large-scale land assets for his clients, in addition to executing site selection assignments for a variety of clients and uses. Steve's expertise encompasses all facets of the real estate industry, including residential master plans, multi-family development, distressed lender-owned assets, and commercial and industrial properties.

As Crosland-Florida's Senior Vice President of Acquisitions and Development from 2004 thru 2008, Steve was responsible for acquiring more than 1,400 acres valued at approximately \$44 million and obtaining entitlements for 3,900 residential units and 475,000 square feet of retail/commercial space. Since beginning his career with Aetna Realty Investors in 1967, Steve has developed strong expertise in real estate loans, negotiating equity investments and joint ventures, managing corporate and real estate loan workouts, and the effective and timely liquidation of assets.

Steve's clients have included Colonial Properties Trust, Trizec-Hahn, Citicorp Real Estate and the FDIC on the acquisition, entitlement and disposition of significant land assets in Florida.

Steve graduated in 1967 from Husson College in Bangor, Maine, with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration. He attended graduate school at the University of Hartford in Hartford, Connecticut, with an emphasis in economics and finance.

He is professionally affiliated with the HBA of Metro Orlando and the Urban Land Institute and is a founding director of the Central Florida Commercial Real Estate Society.

**Pauline Eaton, CMSM**  
**Economic Development Coordinator, City of Orlando**

Pauline is a passionate economic development professional with experience in community development/revitalization. She has strong expertise in public speaking, building partnerships and relationships, fundraising, building awareness and bringing people together for a common cause. Additionally, her entrepreneurial spirit has been known to “rally the troops.” She is currently implementing an urban business district revitalization program utilizing the Main Street Four Point Approach in Orlando, Florida.

Pauline has created and managed the Orlando Main Street Program, an economic development program that works with local businesses, property owners, residents, and stakeholders to build a powerful business network through engaging of community.

She has also managed a statewide historic preservation/downtown revitalization organization with a five-person staff. She worked with more than 75 communities in organizing, planning, and implementing a comprehensive revitalization strategy that included strategic planning, marketing, fundraising, capacity building, and tourism planning. She has trained more than 100 Main Street directors, boards of directors, committee chairs, volunteers and public officials.

Pauline served 12 years as a city council member, and during that time she convinced the council to preserve key historic properties and embrace economic development for the future of the city. This included a \$3.5 million restoration of a pre-Civil War hotel on the town square. It also included upgrading key infrastructure.

Pauline graduated from Franklin University with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration. She has owned and operated a downtown restaurant and commercial property.

**John R. Jennings, RLA, ASLA**  
**National Practice Leader for Design, VHB, Orlando**

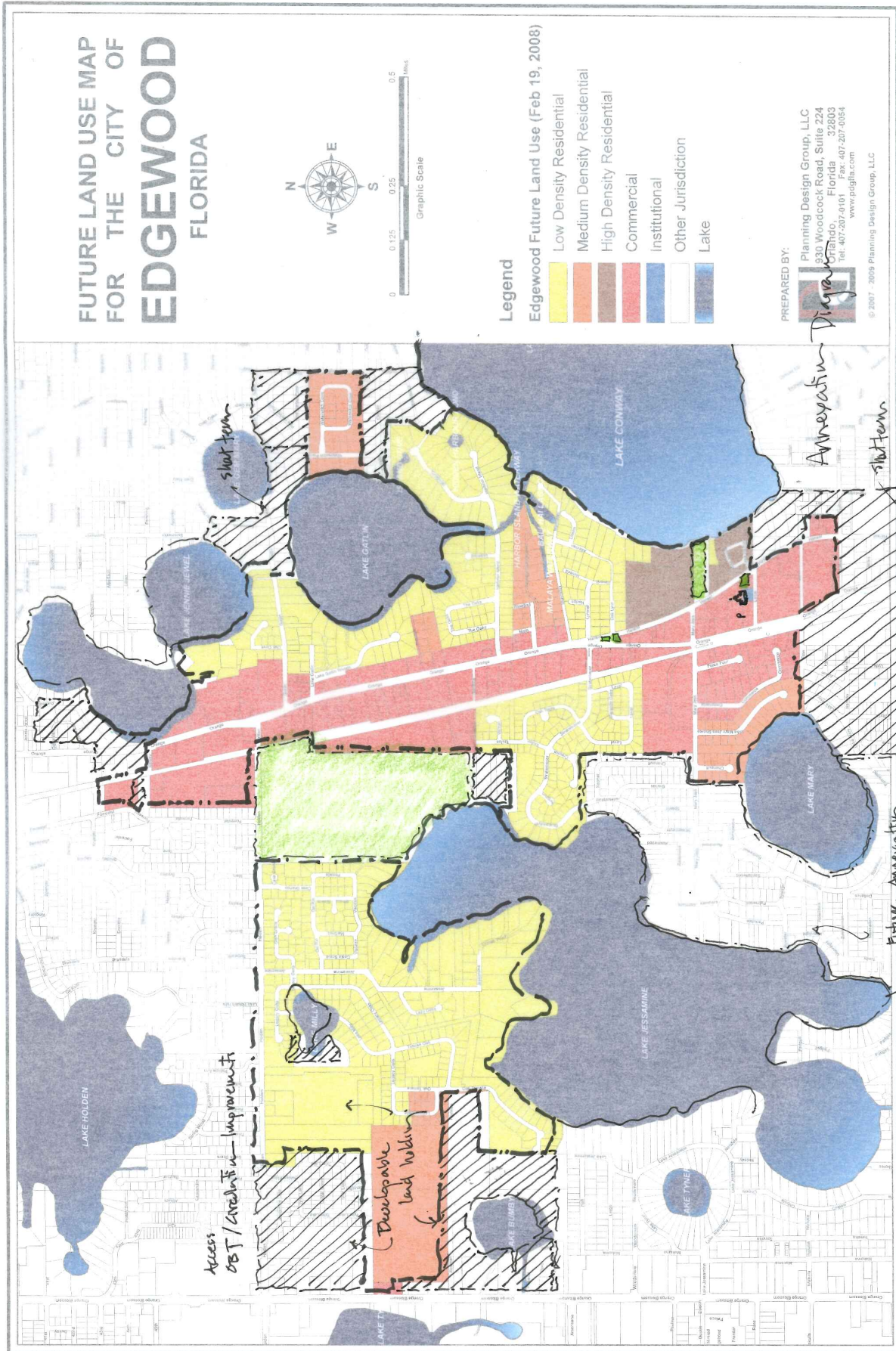
John Jennings brings to clients a tenured talent in bridging landscape and urban design with engineering while keeping an eye on the big picture of each project. He is a landscape architect who has worked worldwide providing planning and design services for hospitality, community planning, urban design and institutional design venues. From the earliest conceptual and planning levels through the development of implementation strategies for funding, design, and project implementation, he frequently serves as a principal, project manager or landscape architectural consultant for many of the firm’s national and regional planning, design and engineering projects.

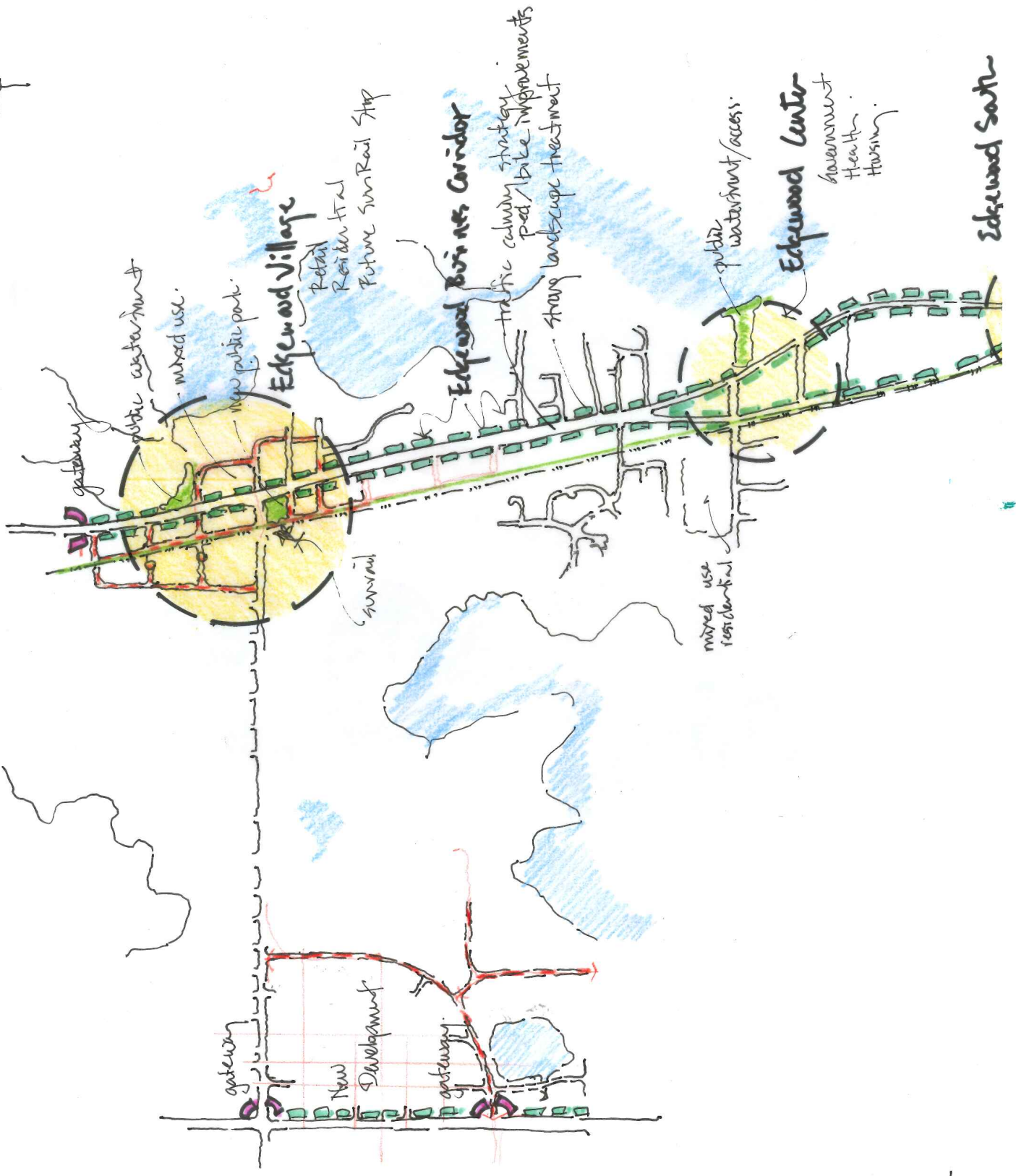
His practice brings together professionals from VHB’s offices with one clear objective: to enhance and expand the firm’s delivery of integrated services by providing high-quality site planning, design and permitting to internal VHB teams and external public, private and institutional clients.

With experience on more than 50 educational campuses across the U.S., John initiated the firm’s Southeast institutional practice and broadened the firm’s campus planning expertise to deliver integrated plans that support sustainable built environments, student-friendly open spaces, efficient transportation and infrastructure.

John earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in landscape architecture from the University of Oregon and is actively involved in industry associations including ASLA, CNU, SCUP and ULI.

# Appendix B: Illustrative Plans





# Appendix C: Analogue Cities

## **City of Sanford**

Located in Seminole County along the shores of Lake Monroe, Sanford has a population of about 56,000. The city encompasses about 26.5 square miles and is bisected by U.S. 17-92, which runs north and south. Sanford experienced a rebirth in the early 2000s, when it renovated its downtown district and added a RiverWalk pedestrian and cycling trail along the waterfront. City leaders got Sanford residents involved by launching an “Imagine Sanford” initiative that encouraged people to submit improvement ideas through a special website. Railroad tracks figure prominently in the history of Sanford, which is home to a SunRail commuter rail stop and an auto train depot.

## **City of Casselberry**

About 10 miles south of Sanford, U.S. 17-92 also bisects Casselberry, a city of more than 26,000 residents. Located in Seminole County, the city features more than 30 lakes and ponds in just 7.1 square miles. Casselberry and the county have been studying how to beautify the intersection at 17-92 and State Road 436, where the state Department of Transportation is building a flyover to carry more than 110,000 vehicle trips a day. Plans could include a “town center” type of development with local businesses, multifamily housing, restaurants and park land.

## **Village of Tequesta**

An unincorporated village in Palm Beach County, Tequesta has a population of about 5,600 on 2.2 acres. The land is divided by water, with part being on the mainland and part on Jupiter Island.

## **Town of Jupiter**

With a population of more than 55,000 on about 20 square miles, the Town of Jupiter is bisected by both U.S. Highway 1 and State Road A1A, along with two forks of the Loxahatchee River. It is located along the East Coast in Palm Beach County.

## **City of Oldsmar**

Located in Pinellas County on Florida’s west coast, Oldsmar has an estimated population of 13,600 on 9.7 square miles. It is bisected by State Road 580, which splits off into Tampa Road in Oldsmar and Hillsborough Avenue further east. The city’s rich history features the railroad, which brought people from the cold North to rejuvenate in sunny Florida in an area settled by the inventor of the Oldsmobile. The city has been undergoing a rejuvenation of its own, with community redevelopment efforts sprucing up Oldsmar’s downtown.

