

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL Joint Alachua County BoCC / City of Waldo Special Meeting Meeting Agenda

April 17, 2025 6:30 PM Waldo City Square 14450 NE 148th Avenue, Waldo, FL 32694

In-person **Public Comment** is taken after each non-ministerial motion A the conclusion of the meeting, **individuals** can also speak for up to 3 minutes about any matter during the **General Comment** period.

All persons are advised that, if they decide to contest any decision made at any of these meetings, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose they may need to ensure that verbatim record of the proceedings is made which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (Section 286.0105 Florida Statutes)

If you have a disability and need an accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office at (352) 374-5275 at least 2 business days prior to the meeting. TTY users please call 711 (Florida Relay Service).

- A. Call To Order
- B. Welcome
- C. Introduction
 - 1. Louie Davis, Mayor, City of Waldo
 - 2. Charles Chestnut, Chair, Alachua County Commission
- D. Adoption of the Agenda

Recommended Action:

To approve the Agenda.

- E. Items For Discussion
 - 1. Resource Center
 - 2. Lake Alto to Little Lake Santa Fe Canal Clean Up
 - 3. Plans for Dinh Property
 - 4. Bike Path Tourism and Economic Development 25-00322
 - 5. Cleaning of Ditches on 1475 Update
- F. Public Comment
- G. Commission General Comments and Information Discussion
 - 1. County Commission Comment
 - 2. City Commission Comment
- H. Adjourn

Recommended Action:

To adjourn the meeting.



Alachua County, FL

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 25-00322 Agenda Date: 4/17/2025

Agenda Item Name:

Bike Path Tourism and Economic Development

Presenter:

Alison Moss, Jessica Hurov, Sean McLendon

Description:

Staff will provide a brief County update on bike path tourism and economic development opportunities in Waldo. Information will be shared on bicycle and pedestrian safety, the Safe Streets SS4A High Injury Network study, roadway infrastructure investments, and Waldo's Forward Focus economic development and tourism priorities.

In January 2025, the Forward Focus team had an opportunity to hear about Waldo residents' economic development needs. They are very proud of their community and want to see it thrive. A key theme was the desire to build upon Waldo's authentic character rather than see it replaced by large-scale development. They want to see the empty downtown buildings revitalized and parking issues addressed, as current conditions may deter new business.

Tourism and recreation were identified as significant opportunities, with ideas ranging from a sports complex to festivals that celebrate Waldo's unique culture. There is also a strong desire to promote outdoor activities, especially around Lake Waldo.

Residents also emphasized the need for direct support for local businesses through grants, advertising, and community engagement. They see the expansion of the new Constellation Charter School to attract families to the area. Finally, the development of local food businesses, such as a country store, was discussed.

Waldo residents want economic development that respects their community's identity and provides growth opportunities.

Waldo Forward Focus Economic Development Key Themes:

- Preserve & Enhance Local Character:
 - Build upon Waldo's authentic community rather than replacing it.
 - Address empty downtown buildings, parking issues, and low property values to attract businesses.
- Tourism & Recreation:
 - Develop tourism opportunities: festivals (Swamp Fest, Sweet Potato Festival).
 - Promote outdoor activities, especially Lake Waldo.

Business Support:

- Provide grants, advertising, and community engagement to support local businesses.
- Expand Constellation Charter School to attract families.

Local Food Access:

Develop local food businesses, such as country stores.

Forward Focus Summary:

- Waldo residents want economic development that respects their community's identity.
- Tourism, local business support, and improved infrastructure are key priorities.

Other Key Themes:

Transportation & Safety:

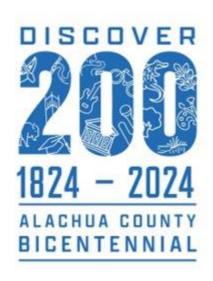
- Address dangerous speeds on 301 and SR 24.
- Increase police presence and speed limit enforcement.
- Improve communication with the DOT.
- Enhance pedestrian safety: crosswalks, caution lights, and signage.

Healthcare Access:

- Address the lack of healthcare facilities, such as pharmacies, medical facilities, fresh groceries, and senior care.
- Restore the UF Health Bus with expanded hours.
- Explore UF Health satellite location or Azalea Health in small municipalities.
- Assisted living facilities.

Community Engagement & Trust:

- Improve communication about county programs and events.
- Increase outreach to residents outside the main Waldo area.
- Amplify local voices to county departments.
- Addressing the perception that the county neglects eastern Alachua County.



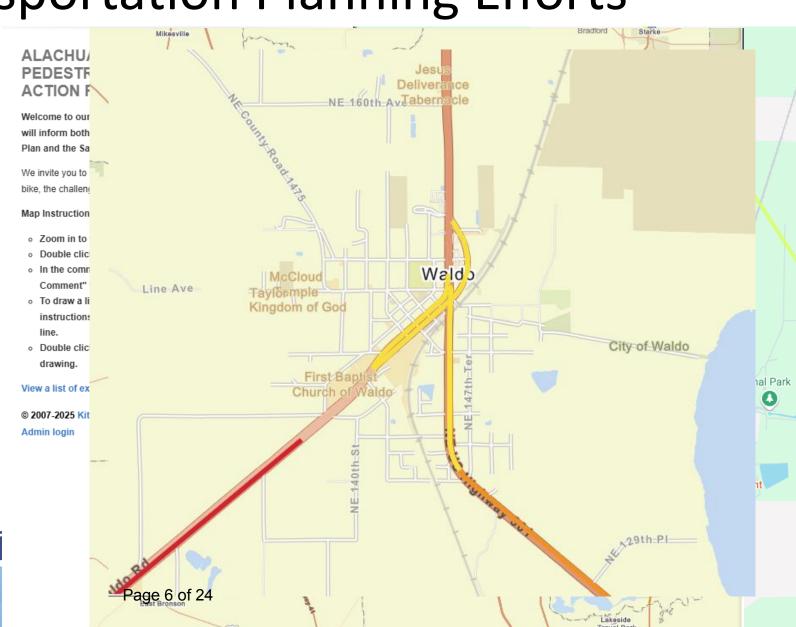
Waldo: Bike Path Tourism & Economic Development Opportunities

Alison Moss, Jessica Hurov, Sean McLendon

April 17, 2025

County Transportation Planning Efforts

- 1. Waldo Greenway Extension
- 2. Alachua Countywide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan
- 3. County Safe Streets and Roads for All Action Plan





City of Waldo Marketing and Media

Inviting the culturally curious and active outdoor enthusiasts to explore a historic Florida community.



Sports

THINGS TO DO

OUTDOOR RECREATION

EAT & DRINK

STAY

EVENTS

Q SEARCH

Explore Our Communities

Alachua County, FL

Waldo and its attractions and events are promoted on the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County website year-round.

Waldo restaurants, lodging facilities and event venues and shops are featured throughout the site and on promoted pages like the Gatornationals and Festivals pages in order to increase destination awareness and to drive visitation.





Discover Waldo

A Charming Town with Rich History and Natural Wonders

The old red caboose in Waldo's city park is not just a conversation starter; it's a nostalgic reminder of the town's significance as a bustling train depot. Today, Waldo attracts bargain hunters to its renowned Farmers and Flea Market, celebrated as one of the largest flea markets in Florida

For those seeking adventure, explore the area's natural beauty by canoeing or kayaking along <u>Waldo's Canal Trail, which</u> <u>connects Lake Alto and Lake Santa Fe</u>. Experience the tranquility of nature while paddling through stunning landscapes—learn more about this outdoor gem by requesting a Waldo Padding Guide.

Read all about Waldo in Florida Farm and Family "Where's Waldo, Florida? Discover This Rural Retreat in North-Central Florida"

Whether you're interested in history, shopping, or outdoor activities, Waldo offers a unique blend of experiences waiting to be discovered. Plan your visit today and immerse yourself in the charm and beauty of this vibrant town!

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Waldo Motorsports Park



GET DIRECTIONS

Waldo on the

Visit Gainesville,

Alachua

County Website

VIEW WEBSITE

Waldo Plant Festival

Waldo City Square 14450 NE 148th Ave. Waldo, FL 32694

DIRECTIONS

EVENT WEBSITE



Waldo Antique Village

17805 US HWY 301 Waldo, FL 32694

352-468-3111

GET DIRECTIONS

VIEW WEBSITE

NIQUE. WEDDING

Embassy Event Hall

14630 NE Waldo Rd Waldo, FL 32694

352-374-3244

GET DIRECTIONS

VIEW WEBSITE











Explore the Santa Fe Canal and Lake Santa Fe

Get to know Waldo!

Located northeast of Gainesville, Waldo is a great place to explore natural wonders by canoe or kayak. Paddle along Waldo's canal trail, which connects Lake Alto and Little Lake Santa Fe.

Visitors to Waldo enjoy treasure hunting at the Waldo Farmer's and Flea Market, grabbing a bite at the Classic Cafe, taking photos at the red caboose and attending events at Waldo City Square and the Waldo Motorcross Park.



Download our Lake Alto and Lake Santa Fe Paddle Guide [ndf]

Results from Paid Google and FB Ads for views of Waldo Paddling Guide (2020 – 2025)

• 87,521 Impressions

912 Clicks and Engagements

Waldo Paddling Guide Webpage (2020 – 2025)

• 12,126 Views

Waldo Featured on Gatornationals Page 2025

7,320 Views

Popular Search Term Impression

(April 2024 – April 2025)

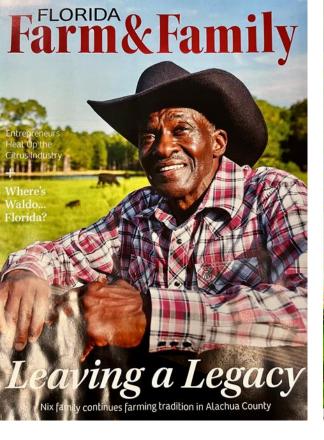
Waldo Flea Market – 26,053

Waldo, Florida – 18,936

Best Western, Waldo – 6,149

Waldo Antique Mall – 1,303











Florida, the quaint town of Waldo exudes a rich heritage, natural beauty and Old Florida charm. With its small-town allure, Waldo

boasts vintage buildings, antique treasures, scenic waterways and warm hospitality.

charming municipalities," says Elizabeth Reyes, tourism development Alto Park and exploring Waldo's manager for Visit Gainesville, Alachua County. "Visitors can fuel up on delicious Southern comfort food in the town's eateries, enjoy a relaxing day finding treasures at the Antique Village and touring nearby attractions authentic taste of rural Florida.

adventure, launching from Lake In this walkable community, visitor will find friendly locals, charming

restaurants and a calendar filled with community events, all providing an like Carson Springs Wildlife. Outdoor Check out these must-sees.







HISTORIC RED CABOOSE

Founded in the 1820s, Waldo has been attracting people since the early days of railroad travel. Back in the day, the train depot welcomed Civil War troops, winter tourists and settlers drawn to the soil and warm climate. The town's iconic landmark - the historic red caboose - serves as a picturesque reminder of its storied past. "The red caboose at City Square Park offers the perfect backdrop for an Instagram-worthy snapshot," Reyes says.

O WALDO FARMERS AND FLEA MARKET

Calling all bargain-hunters! As north-central Florida's largest flea market, this venue serves as a hub of community spirit and commerce market space and hundreds of vendors. A community staple for over 40 years, the flea market, regularly draws more than 40,000 giant chair, windmill and horse, and

3 NEW WALDO ANTIQUE VILLAGE

Forget the malls and big box stores. Instead, get your retail fix old-school style. Stroll through this 20,000-square-foot, two-story building bursting with antiques and collectibles, ranging from jewelry and silverware to curios and knickknacks, Located on the same large property as Waldo Farmers and Flea Market, this indoor space serves

4 LAKE ALTO AND

paddleboard along the serene water of Lake Alto and Lake Santa Fe offering breathtaking views of the enthusiasts can enjoy a paddling adventure launching from Lake Alte Park and exploring Waldo's histor waterways." Reves says. She notes the

ISLAND GROVE

Located in nearby Hawthorne, this

Waldo in the Media

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County provided the in-depth information and images used to create the July 2024 Waldo feature which appeared in Florida Farm & Family. Approximately 127,652 Florida families read Florida Farm and Family, which is published four times a year. The print publication reaches 60 counties. Thousands more read the publication online.

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The 10 Best Towns For Antique Shopping In Florida

Don't-miss destinations on your next antiquing adventure.

By Linnea Bailey Updated on February 10, 2025



Beyond its picturesque beaches and crystal-clear natural springs, the Sunshine State is home to dozens of many charming and historic downtowns. In addition to the thrill of antique malls (such as those in Waldo and Jacksonville), these towns serve as prime shopping haunts for antique and vintage enthusiasts. From the Georgia border down to West Palm Beach, here are destinations not to be missed on your next antiquing adventure through Florida.

Travel

3 of the Best Places To Go Antiquing in Florida



The New Waldo Flea Market, Waldo

Wear your best walking shoes to explore this popular 50-acre bazaar on U.S. Highway 301 in Waldo, northeast of Gainesville. To reach the antique mall, just look for the white clapboard house with green shutters, Inside are two full stories and 20,000 square feet of antiques, collectibles and knickknacks. As you hunt for treasures among the various rooms, knowledgeable staff are on hand to answer questions. In addition to its thousands of antiques, this eclectic property has a



Waldo in the Media

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County assisted Southern Living and AAA Living magazines with articles featuring Waldo as a top antiquing destination.

Waldo featured on Meta and Instagram



The sun is setting on another breathtaking Florida day in the middle of it all. Whether you're paddling between towering cypress trees, casting a line, or simply taking in the golden hour glow, Santa Fe Lake is the perfect spot to unwind. Launch your adventure from Jill McGuire Santa Fe Lake Park (24500 NE SR 26) and explore the interconnected waterways leading to Little Lake Santa Fe, the Santa Fe Canal, and Lake Alto (also accessible from Waldo Canal Park). Plan your paddle at bit.ly/LakeSFPaddle

The Santa Fe Lake social media post links to the Waldo Paddling Guide page.



Waldo featured on Meta and Instagram

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· March 29 at 7:00 PM · €

Roaring Through Waldo – Plan a Weekend of Timeless Treasures and Natural Wonders.

Plan a fun escape to historic Waldo - a hidden gem, just north of Gainesville, Florida, offering a unique blend of history, nature, and local charm.

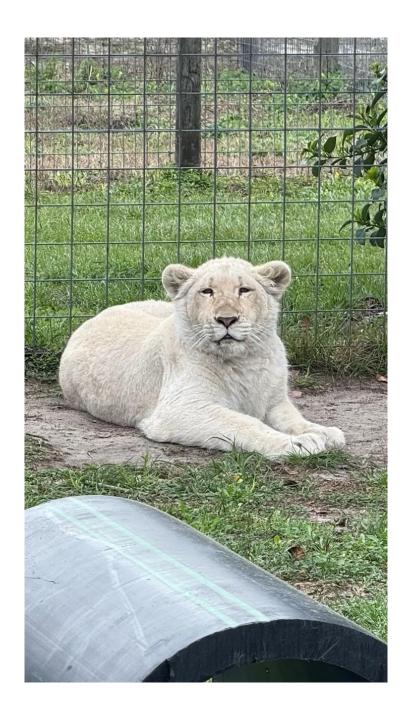
- Start your journey at nearby Carson Springs Wildlife Conservation Foundation to see Lotis the white lioness in action! Don't miss the Spring Safari on April 5 from 10 a.m. 2 p.m., an unforgettable opportunity to get up close with incredible wildlife.
- Mark, a nostalgic nod to Waldo's past as a bustling train depot.
- Treasure hunters, take note! The Waldo Farmer's and Flea Market is one of Florida's largest, offering a shopper's paradise filled with unique finds. And for families, don't miss the 10,000-egg Easter Egg Hunt at Kids Fest on April 19!
- Love the outdoors? Canoe or kayak along the Waldo Canal Trail, connecting Lake Alto and Lake Santa Fe. Paddle through stunning landscapes and soak in the beauty of Florida's natural scenery.

No matter your adventure style—wildlife, history, shopping, or the great outdoors—Waldo has something special waiting for you.

Ready to roar and explore? Plan your visit today: bit.ly/VistWaldo

#VisitWaldo #LotistheLion #WhatsGoodAlachuaCounty #ROARing #RoadTrip #springbreak #summervibes #WheresWaldo #FloridaAdventures #WildlifeEncounter #WhereNatureAndCultureMeet #ExploreMore #SpringSafari #FleaMarketFinds #OutdoorEscape #HiddenGems

The Roaring Through Waldo social media post tags the Waldo Farmer's and Flea Market, mentions the Waldo Canal Trail and leverages a near by attraction to elicit attention. The post links to VisitGaines Coffe City of Waldo Landing page.



Waldo featured on Meta and Instagram



landscapes, it's a destination worth exploring.

- January 25 - 🗷

Celebrate National Florida Day in Alachua County!
Nestled in the heart of the Sunshine State, Alachua County is where stunning natural wonders meet rich history, culture, and unforgettable experiences. From quaint small towns to breathtaking

№ Dive into Nature: Paddle along the Santa Fe River to uncover its famous springs, hike or bike the scenic trails at San Felasco Hammock Preserve, or experience a piece of history while spotting wildlife at Dudley Farm Historic State Park in Newberry. For a truly wild Florida experience, visit Payne's Prairie in Micanopy, where wild bison and horses roam freely.

Immerse Yourself in Arts, History, and Live Performances: Whether you're soaking in the arts or treasure hunting, Alachua County adds a unique brushstroke to the Sunshine State's cultural canvas. Dive into Florida's artistic flair with year-round live theatre and performances, stroll downtown Alachua's friendly shops and cafés, or hunt for hidden gems in High Springs, Waldo's and Micanopy antique havens.

Celebrate National Florida Day by exploring the trails, springs, arts, and traditions that make Alachua County a must-visit destination. Plan your trip today and see why it's so fun to find yourself #InTheMiddleOfitAll.

#DiscoverAlachua #NationalFloridaDay #SpringsAndTrails #SmallTownCharm #VisitGainesville #AlachuaAdventures #ExploreFlorida #SunshineState #TravelFlorida VisitGainesville.com

The social media post for National Florida Day includes mention of Waldo as an antiquing haven.

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Have you ever asked yourself "Where's Waldo?" From a history museum in a train car to a renowned flea market and paddling trails, explore the city of Waldo with Florida Farm & Family and find fun things to do on your next road trip.

#WhatsGoodAlachuaCounty #WaldoFL #WheresWaldo #FloridaRoadTrip #OffTheBeatenPath #LoveFL— in Waldo, FL.



Where's Waldo, Florida? Discover This Rural Retreat in North-Central Florida

Catch a train ride to the past at the Waldo Area Historical Society Museum, now open Saturdays. In the 1870s, travel guides advertised Waldo as a winter playground destination thanks to its railroad, opera house and cruises on Lake Alto.

Located at Waldo City Square (14450 NE 148th Ave., Waldo, FL 32694) from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., the museum features a historic train car and artifacts from the City of Waldo's past.

Photo: State Archives of Florida... See more



More Waldo Promotions Throughout the Years

What do Waldo and 007 Have in Common? Discover a Local Connection to the James Bond Series with New Displays at Waldo's History Museums

Saturday, August 3, 2:30 p.m. | Waldo Historical Railroad Museum 14... See more



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for more of What's Good 8: bit.ly/wkatsgood10-2

What's Good Event Guide Statistics



Waldo's public-facing, visitation-driving events are featured in What's Good®,
Visit Gainesville, Alachua County's signature weekly event guide.

Events can be submitted directly at:
www.visitgainesville.com/events/community/add

What's Good® is emailed weekly to more than 24,000 subscribers and achieved a total of 1.1 million email deliveries in FY24. The website version is viewed by tens-of-thousands more visitors each week.

WUFT REGIONAL + INMARKET

WUFT ads air over 16 counties in North Central Florida and target audiences within a 2 hour of less driving radius to Alachua County. WUFT radio ads reach: approx. 32,206 persons with a projected 3.6M gross impressions per year for our buys. Sample Radio: Supported by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, producers of the What's Good guide of events. Starting Friday, Downtown Gainesville welcomes three days of music at "Fest Twenty-Two". And at the U.F. Phillips Center, Dance Alive National Ballet presents "Dracula and Vampyra." On Saturday, the Waldo Fall Festival hosts family fun at Waldo City Square. Plus, on Saturday and Sunday, the Micanopy Fall Festival features hundreds of artist booths and food vendors.

Details at What's Good Alachua County dot com.

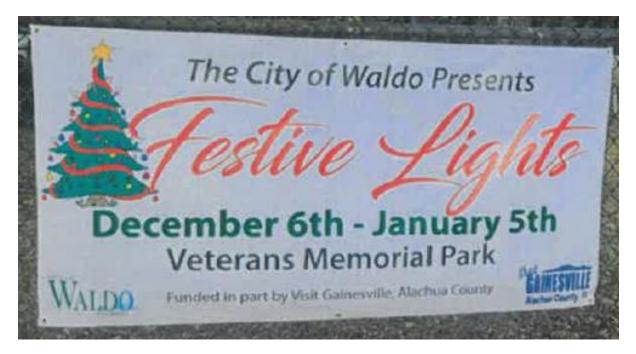
(Click Sound Icon for Sample Radio Spot)



Waldo events are publicized on branded radio campaigns the week preceding

the event achieving approximately 69,230 gross impressions per week and a projected 3.6 million gross impressions per year.

Alachua County sponsored the Festive Lights display



Veterans Memorial Park through the Visit Gainesville,
Alachua County municipalities grant
December 6, 2024 - January 5, 2025

New for Summer 2025

A Regional Targeted Display Ads Campaigns in Partnership with Grey Media

Projected 2.5 Million Impressions

Reaching Outdoor Adventure Seekers and Adults with School-aged Children

in the following DMAs:

- Orlando
- Jacksonville
- Tampa
- Miami
- Tallahassee







Forward Focus: Community Economic Priorities





Waldo January 2025 Meeting

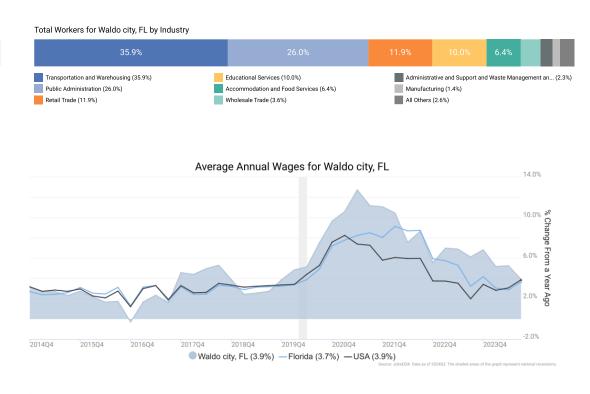
Key Themes:

- Preserve & Enhance Local Character
- Tourism & Recreation
- Business Support
- Local Food Access

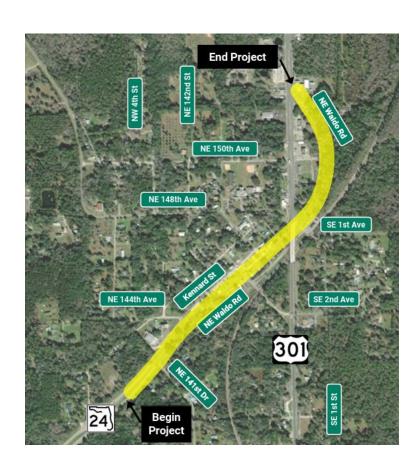
Waldo Economic Indicators

Summary:

- Waldo's employment is concentrated in a few key sectors, notably transportation and public administration.
- While there has been overall job growth, there are also sectors experiencing decline.
- Significant wage disparities exist, highlighting the need for diverse employment opportunities.



Investments in Infrastructure



- Municipal Match Projects (Surtax-Supported)
 - \$333,333 is available to support Waldo's surtaxrelated infrastructure priorities.
- County Road Projects (Surtax-Supported):
 - NE CR 1471 Major Rehabilitation:
 - US 301 to NE 143 Ave.: \$2.96 M (Planning/Design Phase, 2025)
 - NE 143 Ave. to Bradford County Line: \$5.07 M (Planning/Design Phase, 2025)
- State FDOT Road Projects:
 - SR 24 (Waldo Road) Resurfacing: SR 222 to US 301: \$23.4 Million (Under Construction, est. completion Jul 2025)
- Total Investment Commitment: \$31.7M



ALACHUA COUNTY SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM

- Apply for up to 2 events annually
- Available now through September 30
- Funding renews on October 1