

BRAC
2521 S. Clark St. Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

SEP 08 2005

Received

Esteemed Members of the Commission,

On September 1st, I attended a town meeting with Jacksonville Mayor Peyton with regards to the Navy closing Oceana NAS and moving back to Cecil Field. At the beginning of the meeting the Mayor and his staff (all retired Naval Officers) said the opportunity to bid for the return to Cecil was unexpected. They were in Washington to pitch keeping NADEP and other operations in Jacksonville. They supposedly got word at the last moment that the BRAC was going to vote on closing Oceana and were asked if they wanted to pitch Cecil as the replacement. So after a quick "huddle", the team came up with their plan and pitched returning the Navy to Cecil.

The satellite photos and graphics that the Mayor and his staff displayed at our meeting did not show any of the new developments that have built up in the areas close to Cecil Field. They certainly did not show that part of Clay County, which is due south of the Cecil complex, where Oakleaf Plantation, Eagle Landing and Branan Field Development are built, in fact those portions of the graphics were conveniently left off. My guess is that the Jacksonville contingent did not even mention those burgeoning developments that have built up since the Navy moved out of Cecil Field in 1999.

According to Mayor Peyton, the areas surrounding Cecil Field are unchanged from 1999. I am here to tell you that they have most certainly changed in the last five years. The developments listed above were planned and built only after the Navy moved, and those lands were opened up for residential development. Prior to the Navy leaving, they were limited to tree farming because of the dangers posed by Naval aircraft. Has the BRAC investigated the lands surrounding the facility to see if they do indeed meet the environmental criteria for reopening the base? Or are the BRAC commissioners just taking the word of a politician that all is wonderful in River City?

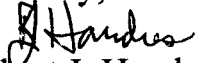
It is the opinion of many thousands of residents that the Navy will face the same encroachment problems at Cecil as it is now facing in Oceana. The money spent to move the squadron to Cecil would be better spent on retaining Oceana. I invite members of the commission to survey the affect areas around Cecil by helicopter to get a handle on what they will be making the Navy deal with. Since the commission only surveyed the facilities on the ground, this would be a prudent measure before this issue comes back up in the March 06 meeting.

I also invite the commission members to look at the scope of two developments that will have 22,000-24,000 residents in close proximity to Cecil when completed. To make things easier, please look at the following web sites and do a bit of research: www.oakleafplantation.com and http://www.claycountygov.com/Planning/Plans_and_Amendments/Branan_Field_Plan/Branan_Field_Plan_Planning.htm. These are the biggest residential communities in the area, and they are located in Clay County just south of Cecil. There are numerous other smaller communities scattered about in Duval County near the Cecil complex as well.

I urge you to look closer at the areas around the Cecil Commerce Center before making a hasty a decision to move Oceana here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Handres

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OAKLEAF PLANTATION

Cecil Commerce Center

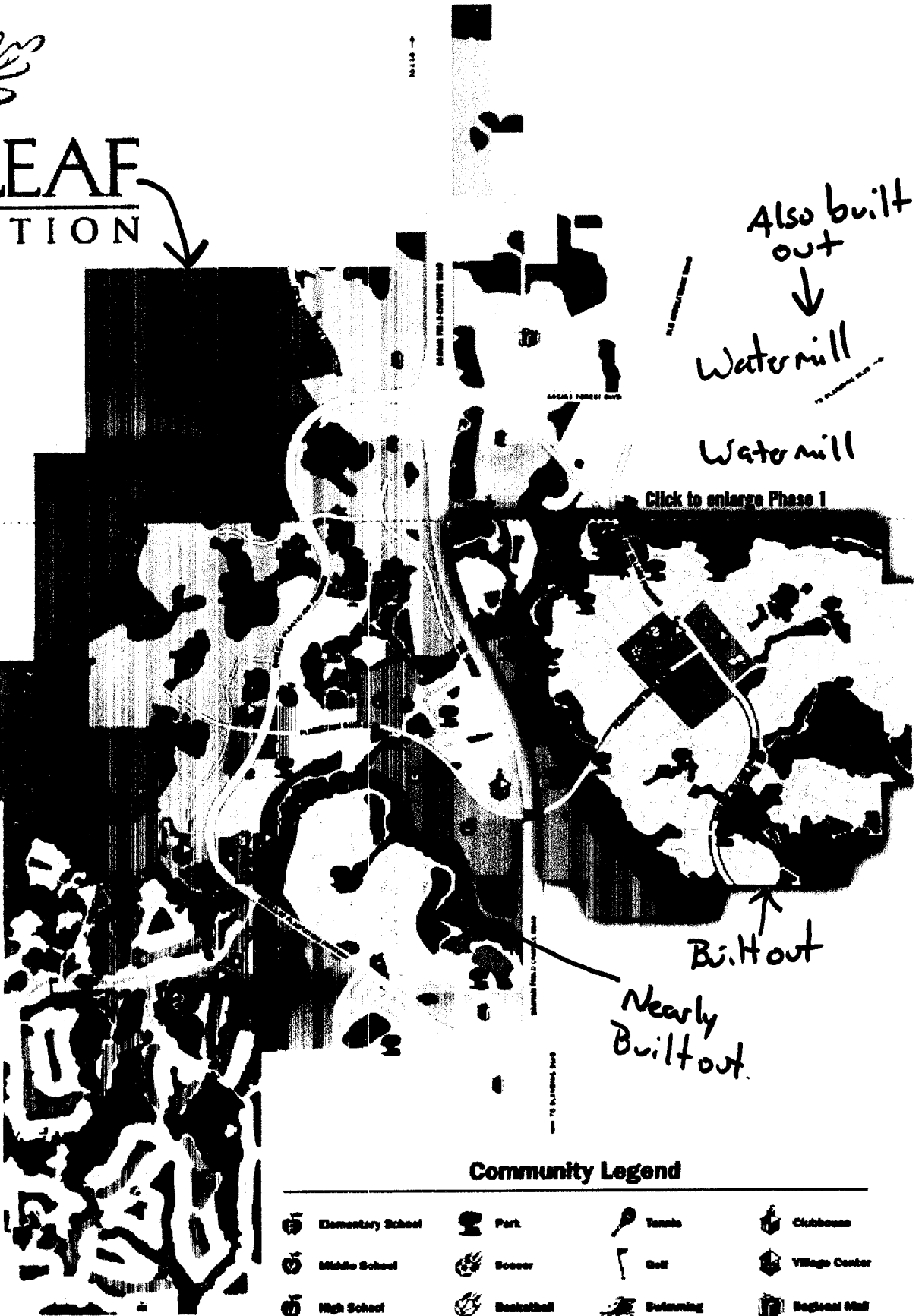
Also built out

Watermill

Watermill

Click to enlarge Phase 1

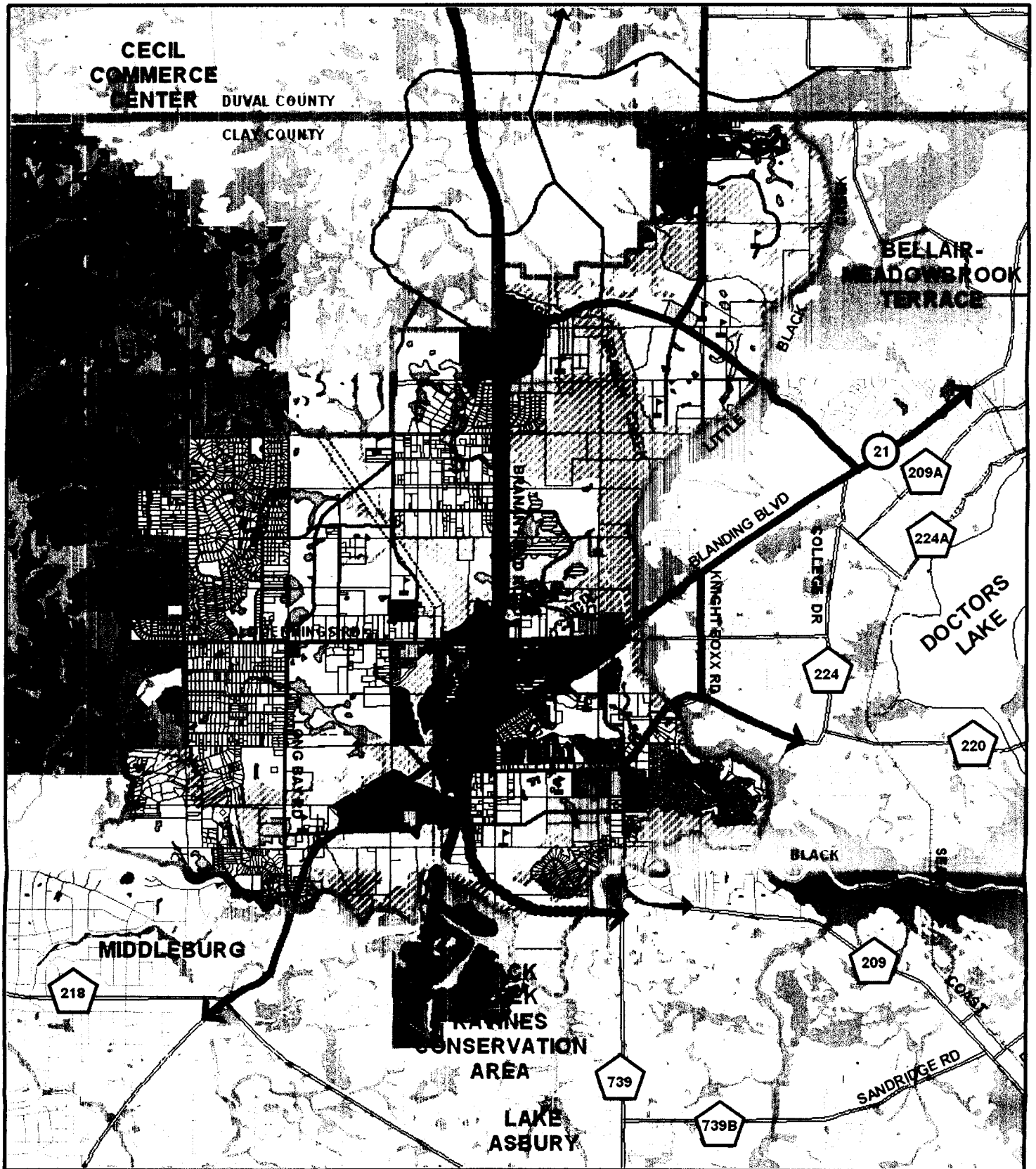
- Single-Family
- Multi-Family
- Commercial
- Office/Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Community Recreation
- Schools
- Village Center
- Nature Preserve
- Forest/Silviculture



Half built out.

Community Legend

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------|-----------------|
| Elementary School | Park | Tennis | Clubhouse |
| Middle School | Baseball | Golf | Village Center |
| High School | Basketball | Swimming | Regional Mall |
| Library | Baseball | Waterpark | Retail Shopping |
| Church | Future Overpass. Access to Claxton Rd. is Temporary. | | |



BRANAN FIELD MASTER PLAN

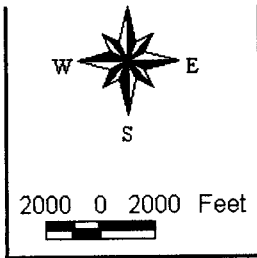
LEGEND

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□ Planning Area
 ~ Powerline Corridor

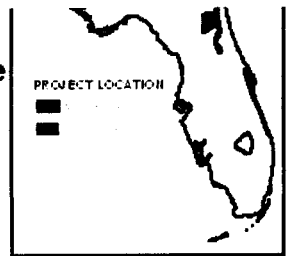
▨ Master Planned Community
 ▨ Traditional Neighborhood





- Natural Wetlands
- ▨ Degraded Wetland
- District Park
- Rural Activity Center
- Community Center
- Activity Center
- Existing Suburbs
- Rural Suburbs

- Existing Elementary School Site
- Existing Senior High School Site
- Institutional
- Military Installations
- State Forests
- PCN
- ⬇ Proposed School Sites



PREPARED BY THE CLAY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT