

## Senate resolution on SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue extension

Despite the fact that the Alachua County Commission voted on 4 Nov 2003 to stop the design/construction of a four-lane SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, passage of the resolution reviewed by the Senate at its October meeting is still valid.

### Why the resolution is still valid

- 1) The University has yet to initiate prescribed procedures for amendment of the University of Florida Master Plan, the legal process by which such a change in land use should be reviewed and implemented.
- 2) The economic advantage to the University of donating land for any road right-of-way, including SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue has not been discussed, much less proven.
- 3) The potential curricular impacts of a four-lane road across a heavily used teaching laboratory have been inadequately discussed.

### Key facts relevant to the resolution

- UF Administration first publicly endorsed the donation of right-of-way for a four-lane extension of SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue through NATL on 31 Jan 2003, at a special meeting of the Alachua County Commission.
- By 25 Mar 2003, based on this endorsement, the Metropolitan Transportation Organization had amended its 20-year transportation plan, and Alachua County had instructed its Public Works Department to plan a four-lane SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue west of SW 34<sup>th</sup> Street that veered northward at its eastern end to align with the proposed four lanes of right-of-way through NATL.
- On 26 Mar 2003, President Young appointed a Focus Group to consider the academic impact of the SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue extension and "possible mitigation of [academic] impact and/or transfer of these programs to other locations."
- Upon appointment, the Focus Group had six members, five of whom were administrators. No chair was designated, and the Focus Group did not hold its first meeting until 6 May 2003. VP Poppell has convened and chaired all meetings.
- When the existence of the Focus Group has been used to justify delay in beginning the Master Plan amendment process, the Administration has sometimes indicated that the Focus Group has been asked to consider all aspects of the proposed donation. For example, in his remarks to the Faculty Senate on 16 Oct 2003, President Young stated that the Focus Group would "examine the pros and cons of whether or not there ought to be a road." (Actually the Focus Group is charged only with assessing the academic and research impact of the extension and how such impact might be mitigated.)
- At its 14 Nov 2003 meeting, the Focus Group learned that the County was considering building SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue west of SW 34<sup>th</sup> Street as a two-lane road with a median 14 ft wider than originally planned, to simplify the conversion of the roadway to four lanes, and that the Focus Group should still plan for a donation of right-of-way to accommodate as many as four lanes.

For details and documentation of these statements go to <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/24thAve.htm>.