

Responses from Laurie Newsom, Gainesville Tea Party Representative, to Five Questions regarding EPD's Performance

Is EPD effective and efficient?

Actually my impression is that the EPD is extremely efficient in its goal of preventing development on private property. Its direction and efforts remain a roadblock to quality environmental protection as there appears to be little evidence of *partnering* with private landowners to preserve the environment.

Do any of its services duplicate services provided by other agencies?

It is my understanding that Alachua County's EDP duplicates and surpasses state and federal environmental regulations.

Does EPD act appropriately in carrying out Commission policies in the enforcement of environmental and land development regulations and in other areas?

Anecdotal evidence indicates that EDP personnel including its department head are unnecessarily harsh when interpreting and applying county regulations.

Should EPD's roles be changing given diminished budgets in other agencies (e.g. water management districts)?

In this economy and as the EPD is duplicative this department should be disbanded at the present time. This would help ease the burden of the ad valorem taxpayer and free up scarce tax dollars for core governmental functions. State and federal regulations could possibly be overseen by Code Enforcement and Growth Management.

What should EPD's future priorities be?

In view of the economic reality of our county should the EDP not be disbanded its priority should become one of collaboration and facilitation of the private land and business owners so that private enterprise can flourish. Draconian restrictions and sanctions do not attract private investments and make it impossible for residing businesses to grow and prosper. Increased reliance on federal and state funding to fuel our local economy is unstable and threatens the quality of life for our citizens.