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## **Auburndale chamber board opposing Amendment 4**

By [Kara Phelps](#)

*News Chief staff*

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AUBURNDALE - The Auburndale Chamber of Commerce has come out against a Florida ballot initiative that would allow voters to have a direct say on whether local governments can change their comprehensive land-use plans.

Amendment 4 will appear on the state general election ballot in November. The proposed constitutional amendment would require that before a local government adopts a new comprehensive land-use plan or amends an existing plan, the land-use change will be subject to approval by local voters.

The Auburndale Chamber of Commerce announced Wednesday that its board of directors has passed a resolution opposing Amendment 4 and is urging people to vote "no" on it.

In a prepared statement, the chamber board suggests that the amendment would "impede progress on smarter grown policies aimed at improving citizen input; enabling public participation and engaging every community;" would pose a "threat to Florida's unique quality of life; the stability of its communities ;and the prosperity of its economy;" and would hinder local

government efficiency and local businesses.

Supporters of the amendment call it "The Florida Hometown Democracy Amendment." They argue that it would be a safeguard against poorly planned growth. The campaign Web site, [www.floridahometowndemocracy.com](http://www.floridahometowndemocracy.com), maintains that "Our commissioners' failure to protect the public interest helps to explain Florida's destructive boom-bust cycle that wrecked the economy with over-building and led to job losses, declining property values, rising local taxes, foreclosures and business failures."

Wednesday's statement from the chamber said comprehensive plan changes are already based on legal requirements and "policy issues that require a balancing of the needs and desires of the community as a whole." It proposed leaving local comprehensive plans in the hands of experts as the Auburndale area experiences what the chamber expects to be "significant economic growth due to, among other things, its location at the center of a super-region between Tampa and Orlando."

The Polk Transportation Planning Organization board voted Tuesday to recommend placement of a high-speed rail station at the intersection of Interstate 4 and the Polk Parkway, where the future University of South Florida Polytechnic campus and a larger commercial development are planned. The campus and development sites will be located near the Auburndale city limits.

Supporters of Amendment 4 contend on the campaign Web site that "If the change being proposed is sensible and necessary, proponents of the change should easily be able to convince the majority of local voters that the plan change serves the public interest."

Florida's general election is Nov. 2.

[kara.phelps@newschief.com](mailto:kara.phelps@newschief.com)

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