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Direct Testimony of

J. Michael Zimmerman

On Behalf of The Community of Fort White

Before the Florida Public Service Commission

January 11, 1999

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12 Question: Please state your name, business, address, and title.

CMU

13

14 Answer: J. Michael Zimmerman, Rt. 2 Box, 9192, Fort White, Florida 32038,
15 President and CEO of Cruise & Tour Emporium, Inc., a small business
16 that services the surrounding area in specialty travel, cruising and diving.

17 Question: Please describe your educational background and business experience.

18 Answer: Graduate of LaSalle University, Bachelors of Science Degree in Business
19 Management. My experience includes eighteen years of purchasing and
20 purchasing management, responsible for a thirty million dollar annual
21 budge in purchasing raw materials and services for four manufacturing
22 plants in the area of high tech electronics and computer room
23 environmental systems. Additionally, a Senior Purchasing Agent for
24 The University of Florida. Supervised the purchases of capital equipment
25 and operating supplies for the medical and dental departments.

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FTSD-RECORDS/REPORTING

1 **Currently I own a small business and sell travel, primarily cruises and**
2 **diving packages to customers in a small market area, including the**
3 **surrounding areas of the Fort White community (defined as the city of Fort White**
4 **area having the 497 exchange as well as the 454 exchange within southern Columbia**
5 **County).**

6. **Question:** **Please describe your role as a community leader in the Fort White Community.**

7. **Answer:** **My role as a community leader in the Fort White Community, as a founding**
8 **member of the Fort White Area Chamber of Commerce my belief is to help**
9 **promote economic growth that will aid in bringing business and jobs to the**
10 **community, which will support a better quality of life than is now possible.**

11. **Question:** **Why is it appropriate that the Florida Public Service Commission be**
12 **concerned with the 497 extension extended area service for the Fort White**
13 **Community?**

14. **Answer:** **It is appropriate that the Florida Public Service Commission be involved in**
15 **the consideration of extended calling service for the 497 exchange as it will**
16 **immediately yield economic relief to those having the need to call Gainesville**
17 **where the majority of the community of interest is located. The majority of**
18 **the medical facilities, doctors, higher education, and commerce are located in**
19 **the Gainesville area. Additionally, with an improved infrastructure in**
20 **communications the doors for growth will be opened, as the community**
21 **grows the utilities will grow proportionally.**

22 **Furthermore, it is important as one company, BellSouth, Inc., is not under**
23 **the guidance of the Florida Public Service Commission, and Alltel, Inc.**
24 **remains under guidelines and regulations of The Florida Public Service**
25 **Commission.**

1 Question: In what way will the implementation of the Extended Calling Area impact
2 your business and community interest?

3 Answer: With the greatest part of the community of interest being in Gainesville,
4 individuals needing medical treatment, care, higher education, family,
5 employment and commerce would benefit by being relieved economically
6 when calling Gainesville for these needs, whereas it is presently a toll call. In
7 the same community, the telephone exchange 454 exists and the people in this
8 area can access Gainesville toll free. Many people in this area are on fixed
9 incomes and the current toll charges can be significant especially when dealing
10 with medical and health issues.

11 Question: In what way do you foresee the implementation of the Extended calling
12 service impacting the economy of Fort White area?

13 Answer: The economic impact would be significant to the residents of this area. As
14 mentioned before, many are on fixed incomes or government assistance. The
15 lack of businesses and employment opportunities are partially do to the
16 communications infrastructure with associated high costs. With
17 communications more affordable, the residents of the Fort White Community
18 will be able to take advantage and utilize the community of interest on a
19 wider basis and develop growth. The Fort White Community is a bedroom
20 community to Gainesville. Businesses and jobs will migrate to the Fort White
21 area with all the open land and low prices.

22 Question: Describe what you see as the Fort White Community's growth potential with
23 the extended area service for local telephone usage.

24 Answer: With the lower tax base in Columbia County and the new High School to be
25 built and staffed by the year 2001, businesses and families will be moving into

1 the area in great numbers. It has been estimated that one thousand people
2 will be moving into the area just because of the new high school. Of course,
3 high telephone service can be a deciding factor in deciding in community
4. growth.

1 Direct Testimony of

2 Truett George, Jr.

3 On Behalf of The Town of Fort White

4 Before the Florida Public Service Commission

5 October 13, 1998

6
7 **Q. Please state your name, business name, address and title.**

8 **A.** My name is Truett George, Jr. I am the Mayor of the Town of Fort White. My
9 business address is State Road 47, South, Fort White, Florida. The name of my
10 business is Advent Glass Works, Inc.

11
12 **Q. Please describe your educational background and your business experience.**

13 **A.** My educational background consists of a Masters and Bachelors degrees in Business
14 Administration. My background in business involves over twenty-five years as
15 President and General Manager of Advent Glass Works, Inc. in Fort White, Florida.
16 Prior to moving to Fort White, I was employed as an Senior Accounts Representative
17 in an advertising agency New York City, Louisville, Kentucky and Savannah,
18 Georgia.

19 **Q. Please describe your role as a community leader in Fort White.**

20 **A.** My involvement in the community consists of serving on the Town Council of Fort
21 White for over nine years. I have served two terms as President of the Fort White
22 School Parent Teacher Organization. I have served two terms as Chairman of the Fort
23 White School Advisory Committee. I served as the founding Chairman of the Friends

1 of the Fort White Library. I served as a founding member and on the Board of
2 Directors of the Fort White Community for Historic Preservation. This organization
3 was responsible for raising \$ 850,000.00 for the restoration of the old Fort White
4 School and writing the nomination for this property to be placed on the National
5 Register of Historic Places.

6 **Q. Why is it appropriate that the Florida Public Service Commission be concerned**
7 **with the provision of extended area telephone service for Fort White.**

8 **A.** I believe the Florida Public Service Commission should be concerned with the need to
9 extend telephone service for Fort White for many reasons which include the fact that
10 the population of the south end of Columbia County is the fastest growing part of our
11 county and most of the growth (85%) uses the Fort White telephone prefix of 497.

12 **Q. In what ways will the implementation of extended area telephone service impact**
13 **your business and community interests?.**

14 **A.** The population of the area serviced with the 497 exchange is the southern portion of
15 Columbia County and includes the Town of Fort White. In my opinion, the majority
16 of the residents of this area consider the facilities for shopping, educational, cultural
17 and medical needs to be more adequate in Alachua County and the City of
18 Gainesville. The availability of less expensive communication costs would be a plus
19 for the residents and businesses of the Fort White Community.

20 **Q. In what ways do you foresee the implementation of extended area telephone**
21 **service impacting the economy of Fort White and South Columbia County?**

22 **A.** Projections for continued population growth in this area indicate the area will continue
23 growth over the next ten to twenty years. There is a new High School under

1 construction in Fort White. There are many new businesses and real estate
2 developments underway due to the attractiveness of moving to an area with great
3 educational facilities.

4 **Q. Describe what you see as the areas growth potential with extended area**
5 **telephone service for local telephone usage.**

6 **A.** Extended area telephone service is a decided plus for businesses contemplating
7 locating in the Fort White area. It is also a decided plus for the natural migration of
8 people and businesses contemplating moving to the area from the Alachua County and
9 Gainesville area. Extended area telephone service makes it easier for the school
10 system and the businesses in the area to recruit potential employees and potential
11 customers from the Alachua County and Gainesville areas. In addition, extended area
12 telephone service will enable existing and potential businesses in the area to better
13 serve the area.

Prehearing Statement

Docket NO. 971627-TL

1. A statement of all pending motions or other matters the party seeks action upon

1. We with the 497 telephone exchange, only seek to call Gainesville, Fl., our community of interest, as a local call, just as the 454 exchange within our same community does. We do endorse the State of Florida's Public Service Commission's suggestion that the 25/25 plan is appropriate.

2. A statement as to any requirement set forth in this order that cannot be complied with, and the reasons therefore.

1. Based upon the recommendations of the Public Service Commission, there is nothing with which we, the users of the 497 exchange cannot comply.

Prehearing Statement

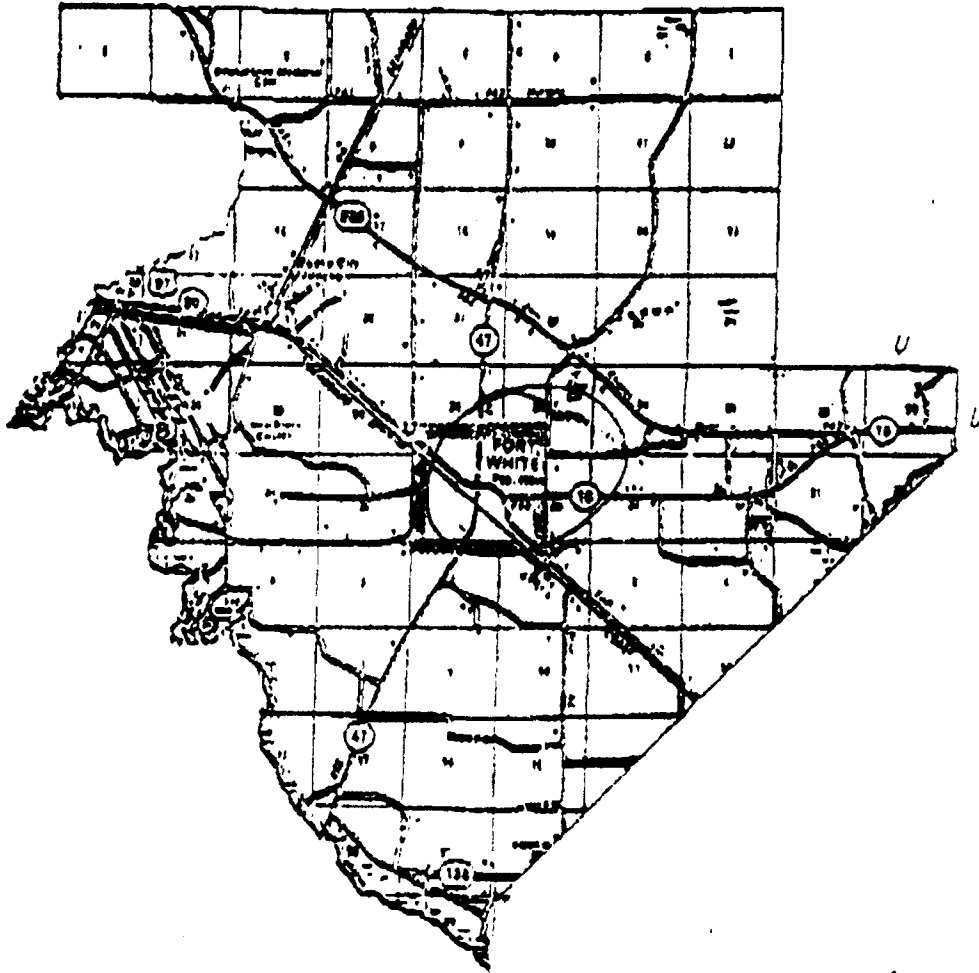
Docket No. 971627-1L

I A description of all known exhibits that may be used by the party.

A. Exhibits I and IA are maps, supplied by the Columbia County Commissioner's office detailing the boundaries of the Fort White community and further broken down into telephone exchanges.

- 1. Exhibit I: Is the geographical area of the Fort White community that is in the said exchange of 497 under the area code 904. This area of the community is currently being charged long distance rates when calling Gainesville, Florida. As previously discussed in Tallahassee, September 22, 1998, with Florida Public Service Commission, Alltel, Inc and BellSouth, Inc. it was agreed the majority of the Community of interest is in Gainesville, Florida.**
- 2. Exhibit IA: Is the geographical area of the balance of the community of Fort White that is in the said exchange of 454 under the area code of 904. This area of Fort White has local access to Gainesville, Florida with no additional long distance charges being impinged.**

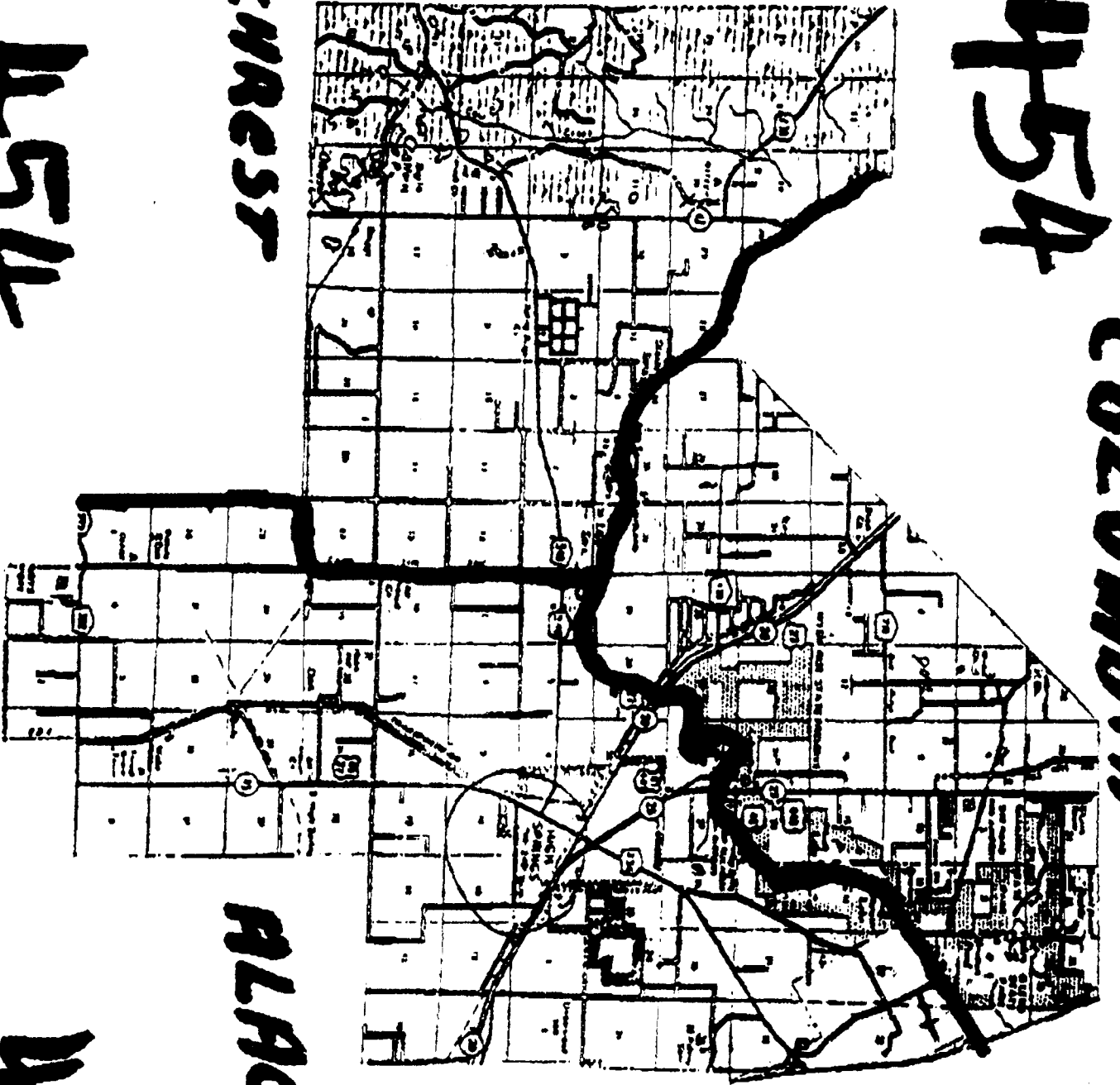
EXHIBIT 1



497

EXHIBIT 1A

454 COLUMBIA



GILCHRIST

ALACUNA

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Prehearing Statement

Docket No. 971627-TL

i. A statement of basic position in the proceeding.

Our belief is that the long distance charges being impinged on the residents and businesses of the Fort White area of Southern Columbia County (not being limited to the city limits of Fort White, FL.) who have the 497 telephone exchange and the 32038 zip code are discriminatory and create a hardship for many people living in this area where the majority of the Community of Interest is in Gainesville, Florida. While the residents and business in the Fort White community, in the 454 exchange and the zip code 32038, have local access to Gainesville, Florida.

Prehearing Statement

Docket No. 971627-TL

1. A statement of each question of fact the party considers at issue, the party's position each such issue, and which of the party's witnesses will address the issue.

1. The fact is that the majority of the Community of interest for the community of Fort White, located in the southern end of Columbia County with a postal zip code of 32038 is in Gainesville, Florida.

2. The fact is that the community of Fort White has two telephone exchanges, 454 and 497, both under the area code of 904. The 454 exchange can access Gainesville as a local call, Whereas the 497 exchange is charged a per minute toll to access the same areas of Gainesville.

3. The fact is the toll charges for the 497 exchange when calling Gainesville appears to be discriminatory and does create an economic hardship for most residents and small businesses in the 497 exchange since the majority of the Community of interest is in Gainesville.

2 The witnesses will be Mr. Truit George , Mayor of Fort White, and Mr. J. Michael Zimmerman, President , Cruise & Tour Emporium, Inc. We the witnesses will be prepared to answer questions pertaining to any and all the facts listed above.

3. Being this is a public hearing, we would like to ask the court if it would be possible for the attending citizens of Fort White to give verbal testimony without being listed as a witness on this document.

Prehearing Statement

Docket NO. 971627-TL

1. A statement of each question of law the party considers at issue and the party's position on each such issue.

1. There has been nothing illegally done among all parties concerned. It appears, however, that the 497 exchange is being discriminated against in terms of having to pay a toll to contact the community of interest whereas the 454 exchange within the same community accesses the same community of interest as a local call. We, the residents and small businesses currently in the 497 exchange, are requesting equality to the 454 exchange and being granted economic relief.

Prehearing Statement

Docket NO. 971627-TL

1. A statement of each policy question the party considers at issue, the party's position on each such issue, and which of the party's witnesses will address the issue.

1. We feel that it is discriminatory for the residents and business of the same zip code within the same community to have varying telephone charges within the same community of interest, one being long distance and one being local. We are requesting that the court rule in our favor to make the 497 telephone exchange local to our community of interest as is the 454 exchange.

2. Witnesses on this issue: Mr. Truit George, Mayor of Fort White, and J. Michael Zimmerman, President of Cruise & Tour Emporium.

Prehearing Statement

Docket NO. 971627-TL

1. A statement of issues that have been stipulated to by the parties.

1. Parties involved are Alltel, Inc., Bell South Inc., the State of Florida, Public Service Commission, and the residents and businesses of the 497 telephone exchange in southern Columbia County including but not limited to Fort White, Florida in the 32038 zip code area.

2. Both telephone companies agreed on September 22, 1998, to examine their connect and disconnect charges and Alltel agreed to report their findings to the Public Service Commission. In addition, the State of Florida Public Service Commission has suggested that the 25/25 plan man be the most equitable solution for all parties. The residents and business within the 497 exchange area who have been contacted are in favor of this program.