



# CPA 04-20

## Large Scale Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment to Rural and Agricultural Policies in Section 6.0 of the Future Land Use Element

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners  
Adoption Public Hearing: October 27, 2020

## Background and Purpose of Public Hearing

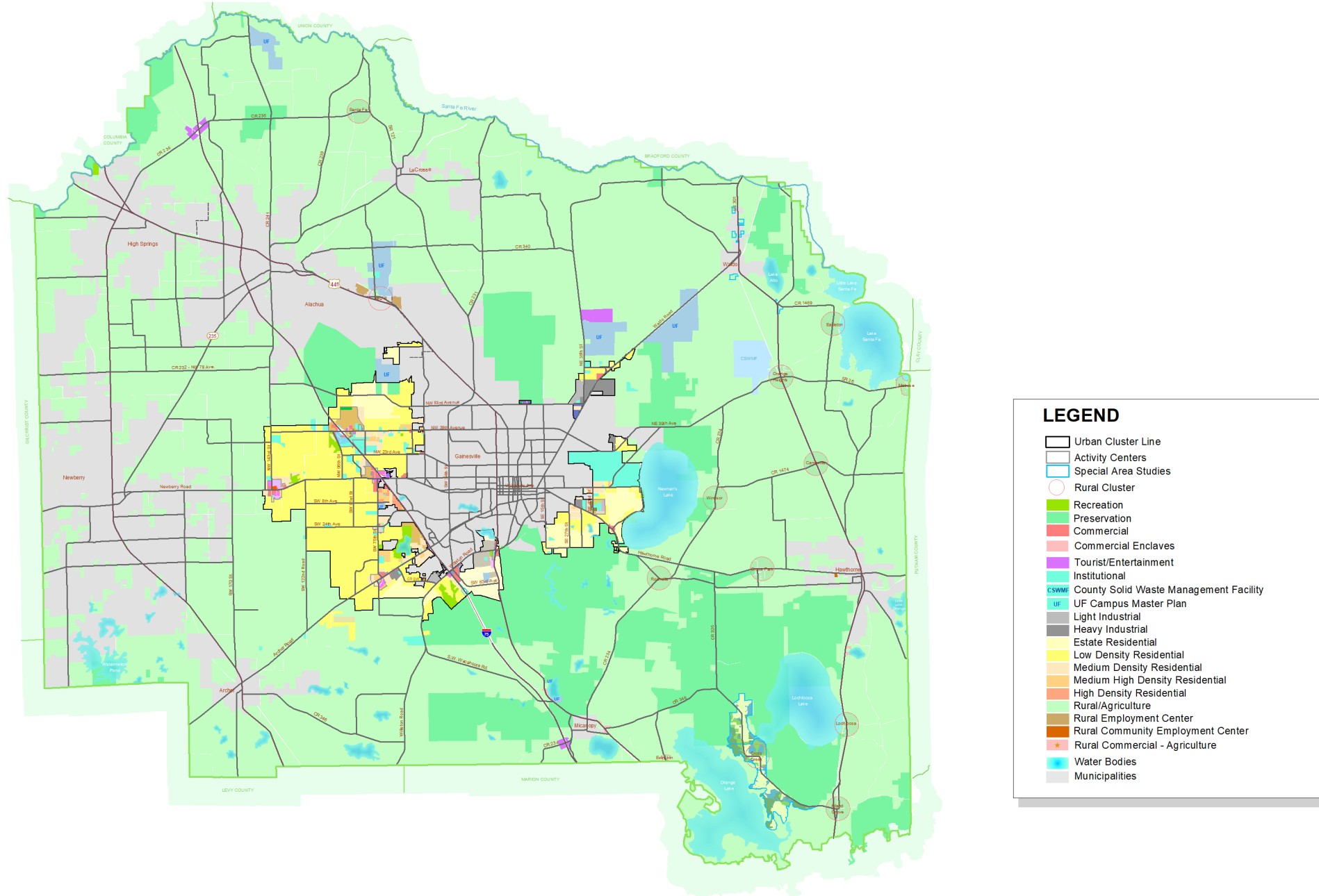
- **BoCC voted to transmit the proposed amendments for state review at its public hearing on September 8, 2020.**
- **Comments from reviewing agencies were due by October 14th.**
- **There are no changes from the transmitted amendments.**
- **Public hearing is for consideration of an ordinance to adopt the proposed amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.**

## Summary of CPA 04-20

Amendments to Policies relating to rural residential subdivisions, in 3 categories:

- 1) Lowering the threshold for requiring clustering, clarifying uses in the open space, and clarifying management plans and their implementation;
- 2) Increasing incentive for inclusion of agricultural uses in the open space to further the local foods initiative;
- 3) More flexibility regarding internal road paving requirements for rural residential subdivisions by increasing maximum number of lots allowed to have internal unpaved private easement roads.

# Adopted Future Land Use Map 2040 – Alachua County, Florida



# Adopted Rural and Agricultural Objectives and Policies

Use in areas identified as Rural/Agricultural on Future Land Use Map:

- Agricultural activities and related uses
- Rural residential at max density of 1 dwelling unit/5 acres (with certain exceptions)
- Other rural uses

Encourage continuation of productive agricultural uses through integrated strategies.

Protect Rural and Agricultural areas consistent with:

- Retention of agriculture, open space, rural character
- Preservation of environmentally sensitive areas
- Efficient use of public facilities and services

## Consistency with Community Planning Act (F.S. Ch. 163, II)

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan as amended by CPA 04-20 is consistent with the Community Planning Act and is internally consistent with and implements the overall framework in the adopted Comprehensive Plan:

- Innovative planning strategies while protecting environmentally sensitive areas
- Coordinates future land uses with topography, soil conditions, and the availability of facilities and services, and ensures protection of natural and historic resources
- Consistent with and furthers policies in several other Elements, including:
  - Conservation and Open Space
  - Energy
  - Economic
  - Housing

# Clustered Rural Residential Subdivisions

Strategy for ensuring compatibility between residential and agricultural uses while protecting key natural resources such as strategic ecosystems.



from *Conservation Design For Subdivisions*, R. Arendt

The Principles and Strategies of the Comprehensive Plan in the Future Land Use Element include *“Minimize the conversion of land from rural to urban uses . . . while preserving environmentally sensitive areas, according to the following: . . . Utilize mechanisms such as . . . conservation subdivisions.” (General Strategy 1)*

Benefits include protection of natural resources, preservation of agricultural areas, opportunities for local food production, reduced costs for infrastructure and maintenance.



# 1) Lowering the Threshold for Requiring Clustering, Clarifying Uses in Open Space, Management Plans

*Amendments to Policies by CPA 04-20 shown in blue italics underline ~~strikethrough~~*

- Lower threshold in Policy 6.2.14(a) for requiring clustering, from 25 lots to 10 lots, and rewrite Policy as follows:  
*“New rural residential developments of 10 or more lots shall be developed as clustered rural residential subdivisions in accordance with the policies and requirements under this section and implementing land development regulations.”*
- Add to Goals for clustering in Policy 6.2.9: *“Provide opportunities for agriculture areas such as community gardens or farms.”*



## Minimum 50% open space in accordance with design principles (Policy 6.2.12(b)(1)b.)

- Protect natural, historic, paleontological resources and agricultural areas
- Conservation areas receive top priority
- “Agricultural areas . . . shall be ~~included~~ evaluated for inclusion as part of the designated open space area . . . Agricultural uses consistent with Permitted and Prohibited Uses and in accordance with requirements for management plans are encouraged to be included as part of the designated open space area” (as detailed in Policies 6.2.12(c) 6.2.12(e)(3))
- Single contiguous area, logical boundaries, eliminate and minimize fragmentation
- Linked open space networks
- Permanent protection required in perpetuity, runs with land

## Uses in Open Space (Policy 6.2.12(c))

- (1) “Permitted uses in the open space area are natural resource conservation areas, non-intensive agriculture for food production including community gardens, non-intensive silviculture consistent with (3) below . . .”

*Eliminate: provision for continuation of existing homestead in open space*

- (3) “Intensive silviculture uses of planted monoculture “plantation” forests with intensive management regimes that include practices adverse to the natural resource values and functions of a natural forest system shall not be allowed . . .”

“Only natural forest management in accordance with open space management plan consistent with 6.2.12(e)(3) may be considered.”

# Ownership and maintenance of open space by one or a combination of:

(Policy 6.2.12(e)(1)a.-f.)

- “Original landowner *with provision for transition of ultimate ownership to one of the entities below*”
- Homeowners association
- Established Land Trust
- “Non-profit conservation *or agricultural* organization”
- County or public agency

## Open Space Management Plans (Policy 6.2.12(e)(3))

- Required for all open space
- Add to Policy on objectives, procedures, and responsibilities for management, wildfire mitigation:
- *“Consistent with Conservation and Open Space Element objectives and policies for preservation, enhancement, and restoration of natural resource values, protection of public health and safety”*
- *“Identify how any agriculture and silviculture operations shall avoid impacts to conservation resources according to standards in the land development regulation”*
- *“Any silviculture operations are required to be managed to a point where they can be made an acceptable fire risk and must transition to natural forest management”*

(continued)

# Open Space Management Plans (Policy 6.2.12(e)(3))

(continued)

*“Land Development Regulations shall be updated for:*

- *“Criteria for the timing of transfer of ownership and maintenance from original landowner to the homeowners association, such as some percentage of the lots sold or built upon, consistent with F.S. 720.307”*
- *“Recommended practices for any agricultural activities in the open space from sources such as UF-IFAS (e.g., for things such as animal stocking and crop planting rates), and principles of regenerative agriculture, shall be considered to the extent they are consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies including natural resource protection.”*

# Definitions

**Community Gardens:** Collaborative non-intensive agriculture on common open space primarily for consumption and use of residents.

**Natural Forest Management:** Forestry operations designed to preserve, enhance and restore the natural resource values of a forest with objectives that include, but are not limited to, improving the health and diversity of forested communities, restoring or maintaining the natural community structure and species composition, and establishing a natural community specific fire interval.

**Regenerative Agriculture:** A system of farming principles and practices that increases biodiversity, enriches soils, improves watersheds, and enhances ecosystem services.

## 2) Increasing Incentive for Rural Residential Subdivisions to be Clustered to further Local Food Initiative

### Density and Intensity (Policy 6.2.10)

“The overall development density shall not exceed the maximum gross density of one dwelling unit per five acres . . . , except . . . incentive bonuses for clustering as provided under subsection (d) below, subject to the resource protection standards in the Conservation and Open Space Element . . .

- (d) As an incentive to cluster . . . , if a new residential subdivision in the Rural/Agriculture area is clustered with a minimum of 50% of the development in open space, a total of 2 units in addition to the number of units based on the gross density of 1 unit per 5 acres are allowed, plus 1 additional unit per every 10 acres of conservation area or agriculture area such as community gardens set aside as open space; plus 1 additional unit per every 20 acres of other non-conservation area set aside as open space.”



### 3) More Flexibility Regarding Internal Road Paving Requirements for Rural Residential Subdivisions

“No subdivision may be created without paved public road access and all subdivisions created must have internal paved roads that meet county standards, except as provided under Policy 6.2.6.1 below . . .” (Policy 6.2.6)

“Subdivisions of no more than ~~six~~ nine lots may be created from any parent parcel . . . , with access to a private easement road internal to the subdivision if such internal subdivision road provides a direct connection to a public road with sufficient right of way to meet county standards. Such internal subdivision roads must meet county standards for minimum width, stabilization requirements, public safety, emergency vehicle access, and maintenance. A parent parcel, . . . shall not be divided into more than ~~six~~ nine lots without having paved roads throughout the subdivision.” (Policy 6.2.6.1)

## CPA 04-20 Next Steps

- **Today: BoCC Public Hearing on Adoption of Amendments.**
- **Adopted amendments become effective 31 days after notification by State Land Planning Agency that package is complete.**
- **If not challenged, staff estimates these amendments will become effective in December.**

# Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that  
the Board of County Commissioners **adopt ordinance  
approving Comprehensive Plan Amendment CPA 04-20.**