Supporting Data & Analysis for Evaluation & Appraisal Based Update of Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

(Note: The material in this Section is not proposed for adoption.)

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Data and Analysis for Evaluation & Appraisal Based Update of Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

Future Land Use Element

Introduction

This document provides data and analysis relating to the Future Land Use Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, and the proposed amendments to the Element. Section I of the document provides the core Comprehensive Plan data related to population estimates and projections, and the land needed to accommodate population growth. Sections II through VI provide descriptions of the proposed amendments to the goals, objectives, policies, and maps in the Future Land Use Element as well as data and analysis relating to those amendments.

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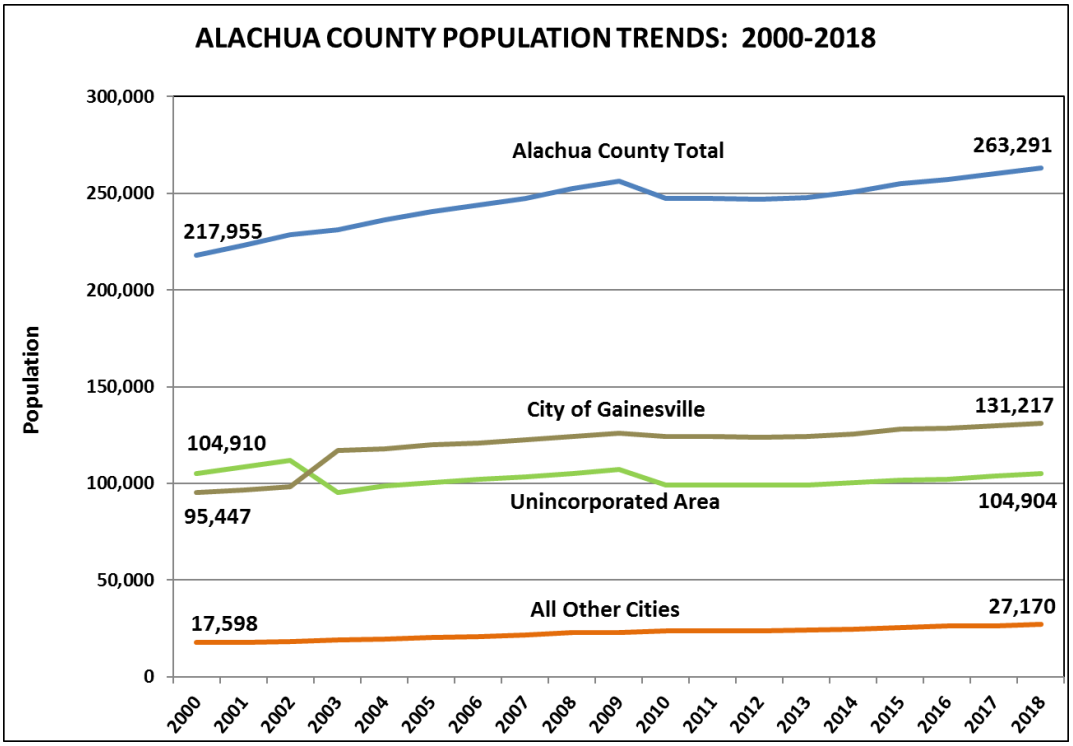
I. POPULATION ESTIMATES, POPULATION PROJECTIONS, AND AVAILABLE LAND TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE GROWTH

Population Trends and Projections

The most recently published (2018) population estimate for Alachua County is 263,291. The City of Gainesville accounts for about 50% of the County's population, while the unincorporated area accounts for about 40%, and the remaining eight cities/towns account for about 10% of the County's population.

Figure 1. Alachua County Population Trends: 2000 to 2018



Sources: For years 2000 and 2010: United States Census
For other years: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, "Florida Population Estimates for Counties and Municipalities".

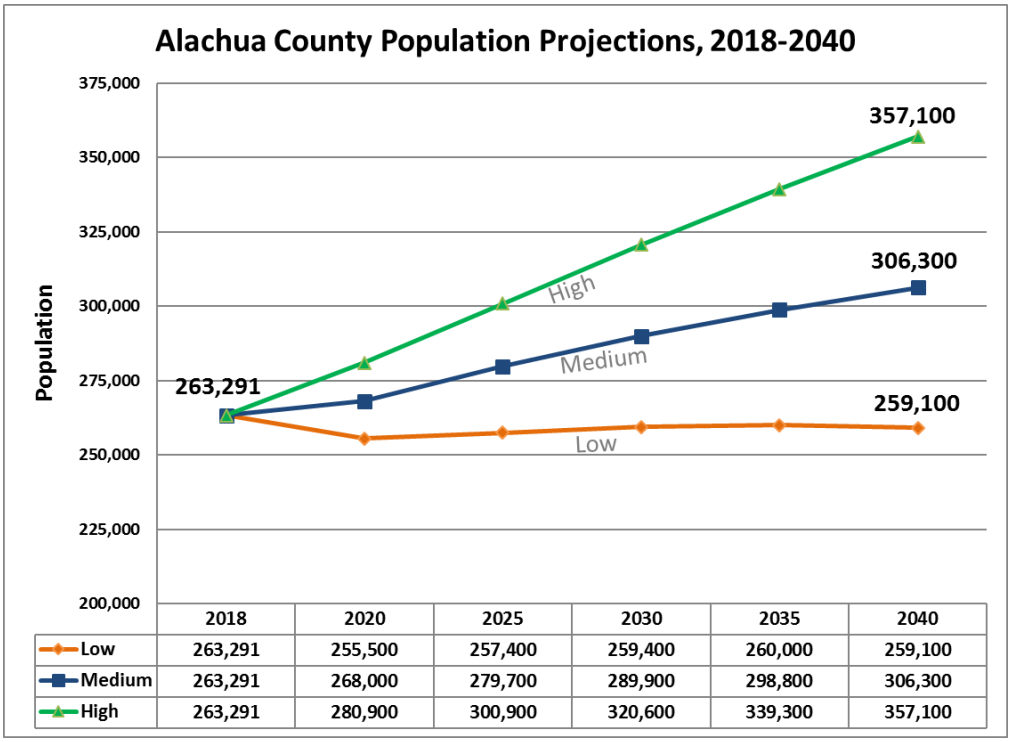
As shown in Figure 1, over the past 18 years, the population of Alachua County has grown by about 45,000 people, from 217,955 in 2000 to 263,291 in 2018. The countywide annual population growth over this period has averaged about 2,500 persons per year.

The Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida publishes annual reports on population projections for the State of Florida and each county. BEBR publishes "low", "medium", and "high" sets of projections, which are shown in Figure 2 for Alachua County. Alachua County uses the "medium" population projections for planning purposes. According to a recent report published by BEBR, "To account for uncertainty regarding future population growth, we publish three series of projections. We believe the medium series is the most likely to provide accurate forecasts in most circumstances, but the low and high series provide an indication of the uncertainty surrounding the medium series." State law requires that the Comprehensive Plan be

based on at least the minimum amount of land required to accommodate the medium population projections for at least a 10-year planning period.

The 2040 population projections for Alachua County range from a low of 259,100 (representing a loss of about 4,000 from the 2018 population by 2040) to a high of 357,100 (representing an increase of almost 94,000 from the 2018 population by 2040). The 2040 Medium population projection for Alachua County is 306,300, which represents an increase of 43,000 over the 2018 population by the year 2040.

Figure 2. Alachua County Population Projections: 2018 to 2040 (Low, Medium, and High Series)



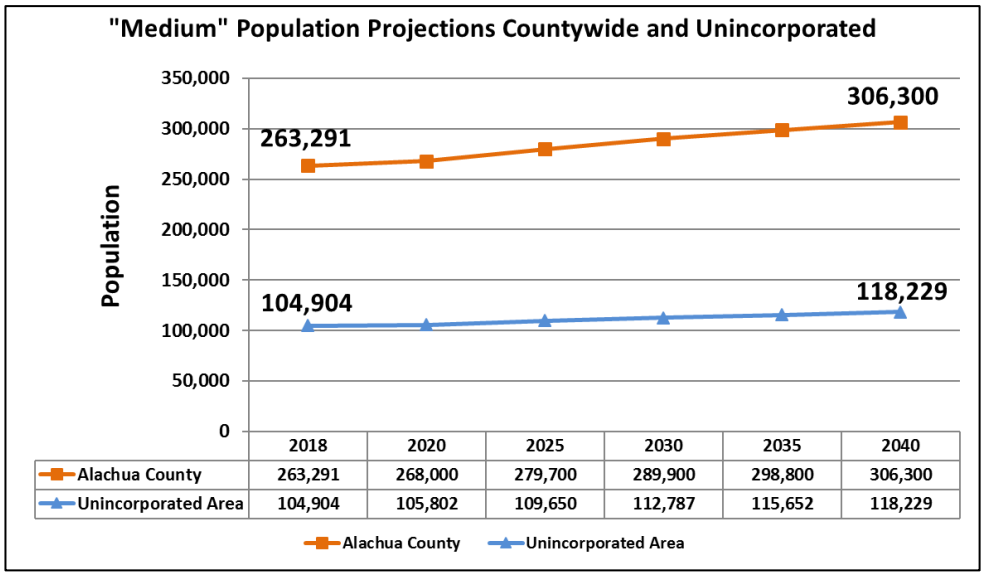
	2018	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Low	263,291	255,500	257,400	259,400	260,000	259,100
Medium	263,291	268,000	279,700	289,900	298,800	306,300
High	263,291	280,900	300,900	320,600	339,300	357,100

Sources: 1) University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, "Projections of Florida Population by County, 2020–2045, with Estimates for 2017", Volume 51, Bulletin 180, January 2018. 2) University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, "Florida Population Estimates for Counties and Municipalities April 1, 2018".

Based on the BEBR "medium" projections, Alachua County's population is projected to increase from 263,291 in 2018 to 306,300 in 2040 (about a 43,000 increase). This amounts to a population increase of 16% by 2040, which would be nearly 1,955 people per year countywide, on average, over the next 22 years.

BEBR does not prepare population projections for unincorporated areas or cities, therefore, Alachua County must derive its population projections for the unincorporated area based on the countywide projections. For purposes of this analysis, County staff calculated unincorporated area population projections based on the assumption that the unincorporated area would maintain a constant 2018 share of the total County population going forward through 2040. In 2018, the unincorporated area population accounted for about a 40% share of the total County population. The chart below shows how the population of the unincorporated area would increase through the Year 2040 based on a constant 40% share of the total county population.

Figure 3. "Medium" Countywide and Unincorporated Population Projections: 2018 to 2040



	2018	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Alachua County	263,291	268,000	279,700	289,900	298,800	306,300
Unincorporated Area	104,904	105,802	109,650	112,787	115,652	118,229

Sources: 1) University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, "Projections of Florida Population by County, 2020–2045, with Estimates for 2017", Volume 51, Bulletin 180, January 2018. 2) University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, "Florida Population Estimates for Counties and Municipalities April 1, 2018".

Unincorporated population projections calculated by Alachua County staff by projecting the 2018 unincorporated share of the County population through the Year 2040.

Alachua County's age profile has traditionally been younger than the state average due in part to the large presence of college students associated with the University of Florida and Santa Fe College.

According to 2017 data:

- 25% of Alachua County's population was within the age ranges of 15 to 24, as compared to 12% for the State of Florida.
- 14% of Alachua County's population was age 65 and over, as compared to 18% for the State of Florida.
- The primary working-age groups (20-64) represented 63% of Alachua County's population as compared to 58% for the State of Florida.
- The median age in Alachua County was 31 as compared to 42 for the State of Florida.

Source: Florida Demographic Estimating Conference, December 2017 and the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Population Studies, Bulletin 181, June 2018.

Data indicate that the age profile of Alachua County will become older by the Year 2040. It is not clear how much of this will be due to current residents aging in place versus in-migration.

According to population projections for the year 2040:

- 24% of the County's population will be in the age ranges of 15-24 by 2040, which is 1% lower than in 2017.
- 19% of the County's population will be age 65 and over by 2040, which is a 5% increase over 2017.
- The primary working-age groups (20-64) are projected to represent 57% of Alachua County's population by 2040, which is a 6% decrease from 2017.

Source: Florida Demographic Estimating Conference, December 2017 and the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Population Studies, Bulletin 181, June 2018.

In terms of whole numbers, Figure 4 compares the population of Alachua County in 2017 to the projected population in 2040, by age ranges. According to these projections, Alachua County could have about 59,957 residents age 65 and over by the year 2040, which is 23,271 more than in 2017. This represents a significant increase in the retirement-age population in Alachua County, which could present challenges in planning for the population increase in this age range.

Figure 4. Alachua County Population by Age Range, 2017 and 2040

Age Range	Population 2017	Population 2040 (proj.)	Change 2017-2040	Percent Change 2017-2040
0 to 4	13,167	15,104	1,937	14.7%
5 to 9	12,498	14,562	2,064	16.5%
10 to 14	12,080	14,930	2,850	23.6%
15 to 19	23,713	27,402	3,689	15.6%
20 to 24	42,216	45,192	2,976	7.0%
25 to 29	22,055	22,566	511	2.3%
30 to 34	17,156	17,519	363	2.1%
35 to 39	14,634	15,049	415	2.8%
40 to 44	12,762	14,186	1,424	11.2%
45 to 49	12,164	14,944	2,780	22.9%
50 to 54	13,215	16,531	3,316	25.1%
55 to 59	14,370	15,782	1,412	9.8%
60 to 64	14,287	13,567	-720	-5.0%
65 to 69	12,332	11,927	-405	-3.3%
70 to 74	8,830	10,844	2,014	22.8%
75 to 79	5,972	11,888	5,916	99.1%
80 to 84	3,984	11,007	7,023	176.3%
85 and over	4,568	13,291	8,723	191.0%
Total	**260,003**	**306,291**	**36,288**	**14.0%**

Source: Florida Demographic Estimating Conference, December 2017 and the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Population Studies, Bulletin 181, June 2018.

Evaluation of the Capacity of the Urban Cluster

One of the fundamental land use strategies of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan is the implementation of an urban growth boundary, known as the "Urban Cluster". The Urban Cluster boundary is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan on the Future Land Use Map. It includes about 39,000 acres of unincorporated area generally surrounding, and adjacent to, the City of Gainesville. The Urban Cluster and its related policies were initially established as part of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan in 1991, replacing the dynamic urban services area line that was adopted as part of the County Plan prior to 1991 and was based on a points system.

The Comprehensive Plan directs new urban development such as higher density residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed use development to occur within the Urban Cluster. Within the Urban Cluster, the necessary public services and infrastructure to support urban development, such as transportation facilities and potable water and sanitary sewer facilities, are generally available or can be expanded in a cost-efficient manner. This approach to growth promotes the efficient and cost-effective use of public services and infrastructure and efficient use of land, and also provides for a separation of the urban and rural areas of unincorporated Alachua County. The Urban Cluster also helps to protect existing agricultural lands from encroachment by urban development and

enables the preservation of significant environmentally sensitive lands and historic resources within the rural areas of Alachua County. Within the Urban Cluster, policies in the Comprehensive Plan promote compact, mixed use, and interconnected development.

Policy 7.1.3 of the Future Land Use Element requires that, as part of the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan, the County must conduct an evaluation to determine whether "a sufficient and non-excessive amount of land" is available within the Urban Cluster to accommodate urban uses for a ten year and twenty-year time frame. The purpose of the following analysis is to evaluate whether there is sufficient capacity within the Urban Cluster for urban land uses to accommodate the projected population growth for ten and twenty-year time frames. There are two primary data components of this analysis: (1) projections of future population growth, and (2) inventory of land for urban development.

As part of the Evaluation and Appraisal of the Comprehensive Plan in 2018, County staff evaluated the capacity of the Urban Cluster in accordance with Policy 7.1.3 of the Future Land Use Element. The evaluation found that there was sufficient capacity within the Urban Cluster to accommodate the projected population growth in the unincorporated area for both the ten and twenty year planning time frames, and therefore, there is not a need for consideration of expanding the Urban Cluster line at this time. The following sections summarize the evaluation of the Urban Cluster.

Distribution of Projected Population Growth between Urban Cluster and Rural Areas

For the Urban Cluster evaluation, it is necessary to project how the future population growth in the unincorporated area will be distributed between the Urban Cluster and the Rural areas of the unincorporated County. One of the fundamental strategies of Alachua County Comprehensive Plan is to promote future urban development within the designated Urban Cluster where public facilities and services can be most efficiently provided, and to promote the separation of urban and rural land uses. For areas outside the Urban Cluster, the Comprehensive Plan generally provides for new residential development in the Rural/Agriculture areas at a maximum gross density of 1-unit per 5 acres, and a range of agricultural land uses. Given these general land use strategies in the Comprehensive Plan, it is anticipated that the substantial majority of future population growth and new development in the unincorporated area will occur within the Urban Cluster.

In order to estimate the portion of population growth and new development that will occur within the Urban Cluster in the future, it is useful to look at past evaluations and updates of the Comprehensive Plan, and to also look at recent trends in development approvals. The major evaluation and update of the Comprehensive Plan that occurred during the 1998 to 2002 time period was based on a projection that 80% of future new residential development would occur within the Urban Cluster. The next major evaluation and update of the Comprehensive Plan during the 2008 to 2011 time period was based on a projection that 85% of future new residential development would occur within the Urban Cluster. More recent data indicates that the percentage of new residential units that have been located within the Urban Cluster has been increasing in the last several years. Data on final development plans approved by the County from 2010 through 2018 indicates that about 99% of the new residential units approved during this time period were part of development plans for areas within the Urban Cluster.

Based on the projections used in past Comprehensive Plan evaluations, and more recent trends in development plans approved by the County, this analysis has projected that 90% of future new residential development in the unincorporated area will be located within the Urban Cluster.

Urban Cluster Land Availability and Estimates of Capacity for New Development

The following section provides data on the undeveloped land within the Urban Cluster and estimates of the amount of new development that could potentially be built on that undeveloped land. This inventory takes into account both undeveloped lands within the Urban Cluster, and previously-approved development plans which are under development or have not yet been built.

Undeveloped Lands Inventory

This section provides an inventory of undeveloped lands that can potentially accommodate future urban development within the Urban Cluster. For purposes of this analysis, undeveloped lands include those that do not presently contain existing development and are not subject to any active approved development plans. Publicly-owned lands, and lands that are subject to known conservation easements, have been excluded from this inventory. Additionally, lands that contain significant conservation resources, such that future urban development of that land would be unlikely, have been excluded from the inventory.

It should be recognized that in addition to undeveloped lands in the Urban Cluster, there are some lands that are not developed at the density or intensity that would potentially be allowable under the applicable Future Land Use designation in the Comprehensive Plan. For example, if a ten-acre tax parcel is presently used for one single-family residence, then it would not be considered undeveloped land because it is developed with a residence. If that tax parcel had a “Low Density Residential” Future Land Use designation, then it could potentially be redeveloped in the future at a density between 1 and 4 residential units per acre. Such “underdeveloped” lands have not been included in the inventory of undeveloped lands for purposes of this analysis because they are currently developed with some land use. However, such lands do have the potential to accommodate additional residential capacity within the Urban Cluster if or when they are redeveloped in the future in accordance with the residential density that is allowable under the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, there are some lands within the Urban Cluster that are undeveloped (or partially developed), and are subject to development plans that have been approved by Alachua County. There is a separate inventory of these active/ongoing development plans in the subsequent section of this report, which shows the remaining unbuilt residential dwelling units that may be permitted under the approved development plans (see “Approved Development Plans and Subdivision Plats” on the following pages).

Figure 5 provides a table that summarizes the inventory of undeveloped lands within the Urban Cluster. The table shows the number of undeveloped acres and the allowable residential density ranges for each Future Land Use category that provides for residential uses in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff estimated the potential number of residential units that could be accommodated within each Future Land Use category using density multipliers for each Future Land Use category. The density multiplier is an estimated average density (in dwelling units per acre) that could be

anticipated for future development, and is based on a combination of recent development trends and the density ranges that are allowed pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 5. Inventory of Undeveloped Lands and Estimated Residential Capacity in Urban Cluster

Future Land Use Map Category	Acres	Density Range Per Comprehensive Plan (dwelling units per acre)	Density Multiplier Used for Capacity Analysis (dwelling units per acre)	Estimated Number of Dwelling Units
Estate Residential	1,650	maximum 1 per 2	1 per 2	825
Residential Low	3,000	1 to 4	2	6,000
Residential Medium	354	4 to 8	6	2,124
Residential Medium-High	48	8 to 14	10	480
Residential High	36	14 to 24	18	648
Residential 0-2	586	0 to 2	1	586
Residential 2-4	131	2 to 4	3	392
Mixed Use Low	20	1 to 4	2	40
Mixed Use Medium	71	4 to 8	6	426
Mixed Use Medium-High	10	8 to 14	10	100
TOTAL	**5,905**			**11,621**

Source: Alachua County G.I.S. and Development Plan Database, June 2018

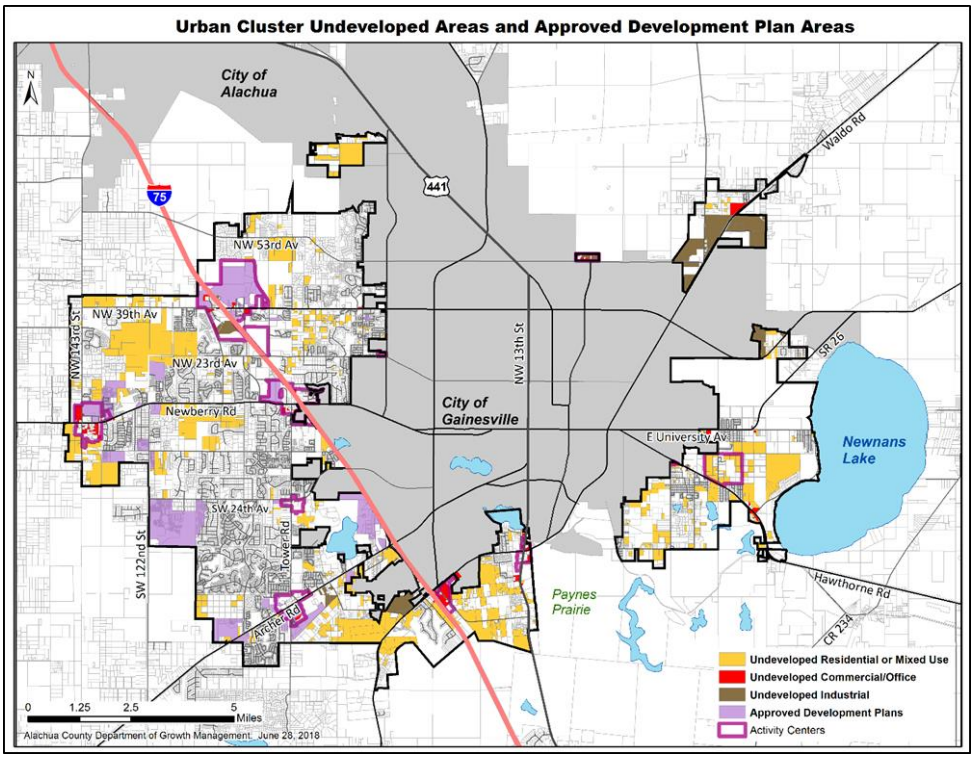
There are about 5,905 acres of undeveloped lands within the Urban Cluster that are designated for residential uses or mixed uses that include residential. The largest amount of undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster is within the Low Density Residential category with 3,000 acres, followed by Estate Residential with 1,650 acres, Residential 0-2 (Idylwild-Serenola) with 586 acres, and Medium Density Residential with 354 acres. Figure 6 provides a map showing the locations of undeveloped lands in the Urban Cluster.

Based on the acreages of undeveloped lands by Future Land Use category and the average residential density multipliers, staff calculated the estimated number of residential units that could be developed within each category as shown in Figure 5. It is estimated that the undeveloped lands in the Urban Cluster have the capacity to accommodate about 11,621 total new dwelling units. The majority of these would be within the Low Density Residential (6,000) and Medium Density Residential (2,124) categories. Additional residential dwelling units can be accommodated within the numerous development plans that have been approved by the County, as discussed in the following section, “Approved Development Plans and Subdivision Lots”.

It should be noted, that while this analysis has used density multipliers based on estimated average residential densities within the allowable ranges for each Future Land Use category, the

Comprehensive Plan also provides for higher densities above the maximums of these ranges as part of Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND), Transit Oriented Developments (TOD), and Cottage Neighborhoods.

Figure 6. Undeveloped Lands in the Urban Cluster



Approved Development Plans and Platted Subdivision Lots

There are some lands within the Urban Cluster that are undeveloped, and for which there are development plans or subdivision plats that have been approved by Alachua County that would enable new residential construction to occur in the near term future. The number of unbuilt residential units in approved preliminary or final development plans, and unbuilt residential platted lots, are included in the estimate of the Urban Cluster capacity because the actual approval numbers are a good indicator of the development potential of those areas. The number of unbuilt residential units is based on the number of units that have been approved, excluding the number of units that have already been built according to the County's permit data. The acreage of the areas with approved development plans and unplatted residential lots has not been included in the inventory of undeveloped lands discussed in the previous section to ensure that those areas are not counted twice.

According to County data, there were 12,664 unbuilt residential units within approved development plans, and 670 unbuilt residential lots within platted subdivisions (as of June 2018 when this evaluation was done). These numbers will constantly change as new dwelling units are permitted and constructed. Additional detail on the approved development plans that are included in this total are provided in the Appendix.

Summary Data on Urban Cluster Capacity Evaluation

Based on the data presented in the previous sections, the following is a summary analysis comparing the estimated capacity of the Urban Cluster to the projected need for urban residential development based on projected population, average household size, residential vacancy rate, and a market factor, in accordance with the methodology in Policy 7.1.3 of the Future Land Use Element. Based on this analysis, there is sufficient capacity in the Urban Cluster to accommodate the projected need for new residential dwelling units for both 2030 and 2040.

Population Projections

Countywide Population 2018:	263,291
Countywide Projected Population 2030:	289,900
Countywide Projected Population 2040:	306,300
Unincorporated Area Population 2018:	104,904
Unincorporated Area Projected Population 2030:	112,787
Unincorporated Area Projected Population 2040:	118,229

2030 Projection of Urban Cluster Dwelling Unit Need

Unincorporated Area Projected Population Growth 2018-2030:	7,883
Share allocated to Urban Cluster = 90%	
Urban Cluster Share of Projected Population Growth 2018-2030:	7,095
Divided by Persons Per Household of 2.34	
Additional Dwelling Units Needed in Urban Cluster:	3,032
Plus Vacancy Rate of 10%	
Additional Dwelling Units Needed in Urban Cluster, factoring in vacancy rate:	3,335
Multiplied by Market Factor of 2.0 per Policy 7.1.3, FLUE	
Additional Dwelling Unit Need for 2030 with Market Factor applied:	**6,670**

2040 Projection of Urban Cluster Dwelling Unit Need

Unincorporated Area Projected Population Growth 2018-2040:	13,325
Share allocated to Urban Cluster = 90%	
Urban Cluster Share of Projected Population Growth 2018-2040:	11,992
Divided by Persons Per Household of 2.34	
Additional Dwelling Units Needed in Urban Cluster:	5,125
Plus Vacancy Rate of 10%	
Additional Dwelling Units Needed in Urban Cluster, factoring in vacancy rate:	5,637
Multiplied by Market Factor of 1.5 per Policy 7.1.3, FLUE	
Additional Dwelling Unit Need for 2040, with Market Factor applied:	**8,455**

Available Capacity in Urban Cluster

Estimated Development Capacity of Undeveloped Land	11,621 dwelling units
Unbuilt Residential Units in Approved Development Projects	12,664 dwelling units
Unbuilt Lots in Platted Subdivisions (not included in number above)	670 lots
Total Capacity for New Residential Development in Urban Cluster:	**24,955 dwelling units**

Potential for Higher Densities in Urban Cluster

As part of the Evaluation and Appraisal of the Plan, the potential to increase densities within the Urban Cluster was considered. The evaluation of the capacity of the Urban Cluster that was discussed in the previous section included assumptions about the densities of new development that could be anticipated in the future, and those assumptions were based in part on both the density trends of new development that has been approved since the year 2000 and the density ranges that are allowable pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan. The County has adopted policy changes in recent years to promote increased density in the Urban Cluster. The following section contains a discussion of these recent policy changes to promote higher densities. The more recent trends (since about 2010) suggest that the densities of approved development have been generally higher than the longer term past density trends have indicated.

In 2009, as part of the County's Mobility Plan linking land use and transportation, new policies were adopted in the Comprehensive Plan which provided for Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Transit Oriented Developments (TOD) within urban residential future land use categories and Activity Centers within the Urban Cluster (see Objectives 1.6 and 1.7 and related policies of the Future Land Use Element). TNDs and TODs may be approved for residential densities that are higher than the allowable density ranges of the underlying future land use categories, subject to meeting specific design requirements. These policies have resulted in the approval of several new TNDs and/or TODs within the Urban Cluster over the past several years, many of which have been approved for residential densities that exceed the maximum density of their underlying future land use categories (see Figure 7 below).

Figure 7. Density of Approved Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Transit Oriented Developments

Name	Construction Permits Issued	Future Land Use Category	Acres	Non-Residential (sq. feet)	Residential Units	Gross Residential Density
23 West TND	Yes	Res. Low	22	42,400	174	7.9
Celebration Pointe TOD	Yes	Mixed Use	244	896,000	1,772	7.3
Dogwood Park TND	No	Res. Low	25	184,750	224	9.0
Lugano TND	Yes	Res. Low	145	127,000	460	3.2
GWR TND Jonesville	No	Res. Low and Med.	130	30k - 90k	246 - 653	1.9 - 5.0
Multerra TND	No	Res. Low	25	22,000	228	9.1
Newberry Park TND	Yes	Res. Low	31	27,650	300	9.7
Park Avenue TND	Yes	Res. Medium	28	14,250	298	10.6
Springhills TND/TODs	No	Mixed Use/ Activity Center	388	1,668,500	1,509- 3,296	3.9 - 8.5
TOTALS			**1,038**		**5,211 - 7,155**	**5.0 - 6.9**

Source: Alachua County G.I.S. and Development Plan Database, March 2019

Another recent strategy adopted in 2018 to further increase densities within the Urban Cluster is "Cottage Neighborhoods", which are groups of smaller homes that are built around a common green space (Objective 1.8 and related policies, Future Land Use Element). Cottage Neighborhoods offer opportunities for creative, diverse and high quality infill development within the Urban Cluster, and promote a variety of housing types and sizes meet the needs of a population that is diverse in age, income, and household composition. Residential developments that meet the design requirements for Cottage Neighborhoods are permitted to develop at two times the maximum density of the underlying future land use designation. To date, there has been one Cottage Neighborhood approved in the County. It was approved for a density of approximately 8 dwelling units per acre within the Low Density Residential future land use category, which has a standard maximum density of 4 dwelling units per acre. It is anticipated that the Cottage Neighborhood policies will result in increased densities within the Urban Cluster as more of these types of development projects are approved and constructed.

While the TND and TOD policy framework has been effective in providing for higher residential densities in the Urban Cluster, and the Cottage Neighborhood policies are expected to do the same, a discussion of increasing densities should also consider residential development that is not part of one of these development types. If a proposed residential development is not a mixed use TND or TOD, or a Cottage Neighborhood, then it is subject to the standard residential density ranges in Policy 1.3.2 of the Future Land Use Element. The standard density ranges for the major residential future land use categories are identified in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Standard Density Ranges for Urban Residential Future Land Use Categories

(as adopted in Comprehensive Plan)

Future Land Use Category	Minimum Density	Maximum Density
Estate Residential	N/A	1 unit per 2 acres
Low Density Residential	1 unit per acre	4 units per acre
Medium Density Residential	4 units per acre	8 units per acre
Medium-High Density Residential	8 units per acre	14 units per acre
High Density Residential	14 units per acre	24 units per acre

Each of the residential future land use categories, with the exception of Estate Residential, has both a minimum and a maximum density. Proposed residential development is generally required to have a gross residential density that falls within these ranges.

The County Commission discussed various options to promote higher densities in the Urban Cluster as part of the Evaluation & Appraisal of the Plan, including: increases to the minimum and/or the maximum densities for various Future Land Use categories, consolidation of residential Future Land Use categories, changes to the Future Land Use Map, flexibility in the existing requirement for a non-residential component within Traditional Neighborhood Developments, and the potential for use of common or shared stormwater management facilities. The County Commission has directed staff

to bring back various options to promote higher densities in the Urban Cluster for consideration as a follow-up to the Evaluation & Appraisal-based amendments.

Housing Types

The unincorporated Urban Cluster, and its related policy framework, provide for areas that may be developed for a variety of housing types. Previous sections of this report describe the undeveloped areas that are available for residential development in the Urban Cluster, and their designations on the Future Land Use Map. Within those areas, a variety of housing types may be permitted.

The County's urban residential future land use categories are based on gross density ranges for residential units, and they generally do not dictate specific housing types that may occur within those prescribed density ranges. Most of the major urban residential future land use categories that are identified on the Future Land Use Map allow for various types of residential development. Adopted policies in the Comprehensive Plan specifically allow for a mix of single-family residential detached or attached dwellings, and multiple family residential dwellings, within the Low, Medium, Medium-High, and High Density Residential future land use categories (see Policies 1.3.7.1, 1.3.7.2, 1.3.8.3, 1.3.9.1, 1.3.10.2, and 1.4.2, Future Land Use Element).

The Comprehensive Plan also allows for one residential unit that is accessory to a primary residence ("accessory dwelling unit") on single family residential lots in the Estate, Low, and Medium Density residential areas without the second residential unit being included in gross residential density calculations (see Policy 1.3.6 Future Land Use Element). This provides for a greater range of choices of housing types within single family residential areas.

Also as previously discussed, Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Transit Oriented Developments both provide for a variety of housing types within compact, mixed use and interconnected developments. Housing options within TODs and TNDs are provided in close proximity to employment, shopping, dining and recreation in pedestrian-oriented and transit-accessible neighborhoods. TODs and TNDs may be permitted within urban residential future land use categories and Activity Centers.

Also, if Cottage Neighborhoods begin to develop in Alachua County in accordance with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan policies, this would also be a unique type of housing option that would become available in Alachua County.

II. ACTIVITY CENTER POLICIES (FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT SECTION 2)

Activity Centers are part of the Urban Cluster concept and are characterized in the Comprehensive Plan as nodes of higher density and intensity land uses. Most of the existing Activity Centers were originally designated in the Comprehensive Plan in the 1980s and early 1990s. At that time, the unincorporated urban area (which later became the Urban Cluster line) was identified in the Comprehensive Plan for predominantly lower density residential uses. The Activity Centers were envisioned as the primary areas for more intensive non-residential development within the urban area. Each Activity Center had its own unique set of policies that were adopted in the Comprehensive Plan to address things such as allowable land uses, densities, and intensities, development standards, ingress/egress, zoning implementation, natural resource protection, and other site-specific considerations. To a great extent, these original Activity Center Plan policies focused on limiting development intensity, and separating residential uses from non-residential uses. Many of the original Activity Center Plan policies are still a part of the Comprehensive Plan today.

Over the last 20 to 30 years, various amendments to the Comprehensive Plan have added more policy detail to the individual Activity Center Plans to address site-specific issues with certain properties. Some of the individual Activity Center Plans have been amended to enable large mixed use development projects within certain Activity Centers. Many of the individual Activity Center Plan policies could now be characterized as having a level of detail that is more appropriate for the land development regulations, or as conditions of development approval. Also, many of the individual Activity Center Plan policies are now generally addressed in other parts of the Comprehensive Plan or in the Unified Land Development Code. Examples of such types of policies include:

- Limitations on numbers of residential units for specific parcels
- Identification of the allowable uses for specific parcels (in some cases these policies conflict with the underlying land use category or zoning district)
- Redundant standards that enable Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) design on certain parcels, when those standards are now generally applicable in the Urban Cluster
- Ingress/egress standards
- Tree canopy coverage standards
- Limits on certain land uses based on trip generation
- Parcel-specific buffering requirements
- Transportation concurrency references
- Landscaping requirements
- Setbacks for specific parcels
- Requirements for the use of Planned Development zoning

In recent years, the County's Comprehensive Plan and land development regulations have evolved to include more generally-applicable standards for development in the Urban Cluster, as opposed to Activity Center-specific standards. The generally applicable development standards for the Urban Cluster are intended to enable and encourage mixed use interconnected development, promote higher densities, and to promote a multimodal transportation system. In addition, standards for ingress/egress, landscaping, tree protection, setbacks, and buffering within Activity Centers are now

generally addressed in other parts of the Comprehensive Plan or in the Unified Land Development Code. In some instances, Activity Centers which were in the unincorporated County at the time they were designated in the Comprehensive Plan, have now been fully or partially annexed into the City of Gainesville, therefore the individual policies are no long applicable.

As part of the Evaluation and Appraisal-based update of the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2011, there were amendments to the general policies that apply to all Activity Centers. These amendments to the general policies enabled mixed use development in all areas of Activity Centers, and provided development standards to ensure an urban form that is compact, pedestrian-oriented, and provides for multimodal interconnectivity. Additionally, the requirement for the County to initiate Master Plans for all Activity Centers was eliminated. A new policy was also adopted that allows for development plans which are consistent with the new general policies for Activity Centers to proceed through the development plan review process, notwithstanding any conflicting provisions in the individual Activity Center plans.

Much of the land within the designated Activity Centers has already been developed, or is subject to approved preliminary or final development plans for large mixed use projects that have not yet been built (eg Springhills TOD, Santa Fe Village TOD, Newberry Village TOD). There is a relatively small amount of undeveloped land remaining in Activity Centers that is not covered by an existing approved development plan. Also, parcel ownership in most of the Activity Centers is fragmented and the remaining undeveloped parcels are mostly infill in character. In the Appendix of this report, there are maps of each Activity Center which show the areas that remain undeveloped, along with a more detailed table showing the acreage of undeveloped land available within each Activity Center.

In light of the evolution of the County's planning concepts for the Urban Cluster and the general policies for Activity Centers, as well as the fragmented character of the undeveloped land remaining in Activity Centers overall, there is no longer a need for some of the more detailed individual Activity Center Plan policies. Many of these policies have become obsolete or redundant, and are no longer effective in promoting the type of development that is more generally promoted in the Comprehensive Plan throughout the Urban Cluster. Updating the individual Activity Center Plan policies in light of the County's more recent goals, objectives, policies, and land development regulations will help to streamline development processes while more effectively achieving the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan within the Urban Cluster.

The requirement for completion of a market or employment study as part of the designation of new Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map has been eliminated. Given the adopted policies that promote Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Transit Oriented Developments (TOD) which effectively function as mixed use activity centers without being designated on the Future Land Use Map, it is unlikely that there would be a need for new Activity Centers to be designated on the Future Land Use Map.

Existing policy language that calls for certain development standards for Activity Centers to be adopted in the land development regulations has been deleted because such development standards have been adopted.

The proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan would streamline the adopted policies that apply within individual Activity Centers as provided in Objective 2.2 and Policies 2.2.2 to 2.2.10. The proposed amendments would eliminate or clarify outdated policies for individual Activity Centers where those policies are now in conflict with, or have been replaced by, generally-applicable policies or development standards in the Comprehensive Plan and/or the land development regulations. Examples of such changes that are included in the proposed amendments to the Activity Centers policies include:

- Eliminating unnecessary procedural requirements (such as Planned Development zoning).
- Eliminating specific setback, buffering, and landscaping requirements that are redundant of, or in conflict with, more generally-applicable policies in the Plan, or are more appropriately addressed in the land development regulations.
- Removing outdated policies relating to transportation concurrency and transportation access standards because these issues are addressed in generally-applicable policies or regulations.
- Eliminating policies for Activity Centers, or parcels within Activity Centers, that have been annexed into the City of Gainesville.

III. OFFICE, INDUSTRIAL, AND COMMERCIAL LAND USES (FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT SECTIONS 3 AND 4)

In the Commercial section (Objective 3.1 and subsequent policies), outdated policies referring to different levels of “shopping centers” has been modified to instead refer to “commercial centers”. Commercial uses may include a combination of retail, personal services, professional services, and related uses, and are not limited to only shopping centers. Most new stand-alone commercial uses are required to be located within Urban Activity Centers.

Office policies would be revised to allow additional compatible uses such as business incubators and research and development activities within areas designated for Office uses on the Future Land Use Map, and to clarify that Office uses are appropriate in mixed use developments including Activity Centers, TNDs and TODs.

Industrial policies would be streamlined, where appropriate, to refer to performance standards in the Unified Land Development Code.

Policy 4.2.4, which provides for a public planning process to evaluate alternatives to the adopted Industrial Future Land Use designation for the area southeast of the Gainesville Regional Airport, is proposed to be deleted because this task has been completed.

Light Industrial Objectives would be revised to include certain warehousing and transportation uses where performance standards can be met.

Policy 4.3.1 would be revised to add advanced and computer assisted manufacturing as an allowed use in areas designated for Light Industrial or Office land use on the Future Land Use Map.

Language has been added to Policy 4.1.5 which would prohibit the use of tires, plastics or plastic derived materials as a fuel source or as feedstock for a waste-to-energy facility (mirror policy language has also been added in Policy 5.5.4 of the Institutional land use section of the Future Land Use Element and in the Solid Waste Element).

IV. INSTITUTIONAL LAND USES (FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT SECTION 5)

Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes

Proposed changes to Policy 5.4.5.3 would clarify terminology related to Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes, providing that both of these uses are allowable within the same group of Future Land Use designations. Current policy provides that ALFs are considered residential uses and Nursing Homes are considered Institutional uses, and this distinction is based on definitions in Florida Statutes. Because of this distinction, the two uses are not allowable within the same set of future land use designations identified in the Comprehensive Plan. In terms of their land use characteristics, however, ALFs and Nursing Homes have many similarties. The proposed policy changes clarify that both ALFs and Nursing Homes would be allowable within the same set of future land use categories; the changes also expand those areas to include “Medium Density Residential” areas.

The proposed changes provide that the land development regulations will include zoning and development standards which address site size, scale, intensity, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts associated with ALFs and Nursing Homes.

Proposed changes to Policy 5.4.5.3 would also clarify that certain health facilities such as outpatient medical clinics and emergency facilities are allowable uses in Transit-Oriented Developments and Traditional Neighborhood Developments, in addition to other areas designated on the Future Land Use Map.

V. IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES (FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT SECTION 7)

Design Priorities for County Rights of Way

A new policy is proposed (Policy 7.1.32) that would provide general direction for the design of developments within the Urban Cluster, by establishing priority in County-owned rights-of-way to the primary transportation purposes of providing roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities (including landscaping). The proposed policy assures that County-owned rights-of-way provide for the safety and comfort of the intended users of the transportation facilities by allocating sufficient space to provide for the required transportation amenities, separation, and landscaping, and making utility locations subordinate to the primary transportation functions. Updates to the land development regulations will be necessary to implement this policy change.

VI. SPECIAL AREA PLAN POLICIES (FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT SECTION 8)

Update of Plan East Gainesville Policies

The proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element add language in Policy 8.5.2, which provides that, as part of the County's strategy to expand employment and eliminate disparities identified in the study of Racial Inequity in Alachua County (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2018), infrastructure improvements that would facilitate development focused within the vicinity of the Eastside Activity Center as designated on the Future Land Use Map, will be identified as part of a special area planning process for that area.

The proposed amendments would also delete existing Policies 8.5.3 and 8.5.4, which call for specific implementation actions relating to Plan East Gainesville that have been completed by the County. The adopted Policy 8.5.3 calls for coordination with the City of Gainesville and other stakeholders in the development of a strategy for the conversion of the existing Alachua County Fairgrounds site to a mixed-use employment center. The adopted Policy 8.5.4 calls for coordination with the City of Gainesville to evaluate the site east of Fred Cone Park as a potential cultural or recreational center to be compatible and complementary with the existing uses at Cone Park, and support co-location of a library branch or other related community-type facilities and services. Both of these Plan East Gainesville implementation actions have been completed by the County, therefore, these two policies are not necessary.

Elimination of Urban Service Area (USA)

The Urban Service Area (USA) shown on the Future Land Use Map, and the related policies in Objective 8.6 of the Future Land Use Element are proposed to be eliminated or revised. The Urban Service Area, which includes a portion of the western Urban Cluster, was originally adopted as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2011. In accordance with the Florida Statutes that were in effect at that time, the purpose of the USA and its related policies was to exempt new development in the most built-up areas of the Urban Cluster from state-mandated transportation concurrency requirements, and from the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review process requirements. The intent of the USA and its related policies was to encourage new development and infill within the areas where it could be most efficiently provided with a range of urban services (particularly transportation).

With recent changes in Florida Statutes, including the removal of transportation facilities from the list of facilities for which local governments are required to implement concurrency pursuant to Section 163.3180(1), F.S., and the elimination of the separate review process for DRIs under Section 380.06(12), F.S., the Urban Service Area is no longer needed as a planning tool in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed amendments would delete the policies relating to the Urban Service Area and eliminate the Urban Services Area line from the Future Land Use Map. Some of the adopted policies which were applicable within the USA would be moved into other sections of the Future Land Use Element. For example, adopted Policy 8.6.1, which requires new development in the USA (with certain exceptions) to be designed in accordance with the Traditional Neighborhood Development

design standards for "Site and Building Design", "Transportation Network", and "Parking" under Objective 1.6, would be moved to Policy 7.1.33 and would be made applicable to the entire Urban Cluster. Also, the existing thresholds that specify when larger scale developments are required to be developed as a mixed use Traditional Neighborhood Development or Transit Oriented Development (see adopted Policies 8.6.2 and 8.6.3) would be consolidated and moved into Policies 7.1.34, 7.1.35, and 7.1.36.

Additionally, related amendments to the Transportation Mobility Element would remove all policy references to transportation concurrency, thereby repealing transportation concurrency in both the Urban and Rural Areas of Alachua County. Those amendments are intended to align the County's Comprehensive Plan with the provisions of Florida Statutes Section 163.3180(5)(f) and (i) for the County's adopted alternative mobility funding system as described in the Transportation Mobility Element.

VII. FUTURE LAND USE MAP SERIES UPDATES

There are several other proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element Map Series. This includes:

- Updating the planning horizon year for the Future Land Use Map ("Map A") from 2030 to 2040.
- Updating the Urban Cluster Transportation Mobility Districts Map ("Map B") to be consistent with updates to the Transportation Mobility Element Map Series.
- Updating the Express Transit Corridors Map ("Map C") and Rapid Transit Corridors Map ("Map D") to be consistent with the updates to the Multimodal Transportation Capital Improvements Program and updates to the Transportation Mobility Element Map Series.
- Updating the Wetlands and Floodplains Map ("Map E") to depict the most current available data layers for Wetlands and Special Flood Hazard Areas.

FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT DATA AND ANALYSIS APPENDIX

Approved Development Plans Included in Urban Cluster Capacity Analysis

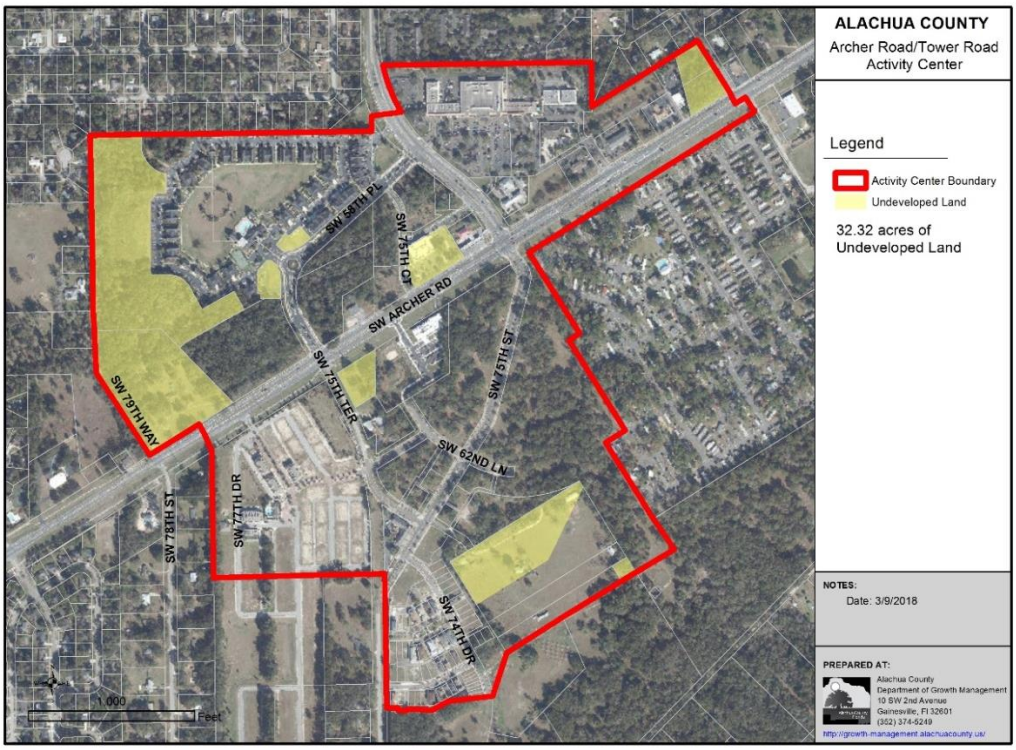
Development Name	Approval Type	Acres	Approved Number of Units	Number of Unbuilt Units
Town of Tioga PD - South	Final	75.6	104	91
Lexington Place	Final	8.3	17	10
Arbor Greens Phases I II III	Final	123.0	400	229
Amariah Park Subdivision	Final	37.6	80	74
Arbor Greens PD, Phase 4	Final	22.7	260	260
Tioga Town Center Phase 6	Final	2.3	59	59
Villas of West End PD Unit B Phase 2	Final	10.7	52	52
Brytan PD	Final	144.1	700	654
Grand Preserve at Kanapaha	Final	40.3	240	206
Celebration Pointe TOD	Final	247.7	1,772	1,772
Estates of Wilds Plantation	Final	76.6	99	47
Lugano TND	Final	146.0	460	427
Oakmont PD	Final	535.0	999	767
Chesnut Plantation	Final	31.6	137	137
Crofton Subdivision	Final	9.4	16	16
Gloria's Way	Final	21.0	42	35
Southpointe PD	Planned Development	70.0	246	246
Standridge PD	Planned Development	15.8	219	219
Dogwood Park TND	Preliminary	25.0	224	224
Newberry Village TOD	Preliminary	89.3	801	801
Springhills TOD	Preliminary	349.5	3,296	3,296
Santa Fe Village TOD	Preliminary	158.6	2,310	2,310
Jonesville Business Park Mixed Use PD	Preliminary	80.3	300	300
Multerra TND	Preliminary	25.5	228	228
Park Lane Phase IIA	Preliminary	12.7	176	176
Park Lane Mixed Use Retail/Residential	Preliminary	1.0	28	28
Total		**2,359.6**		**12,664**

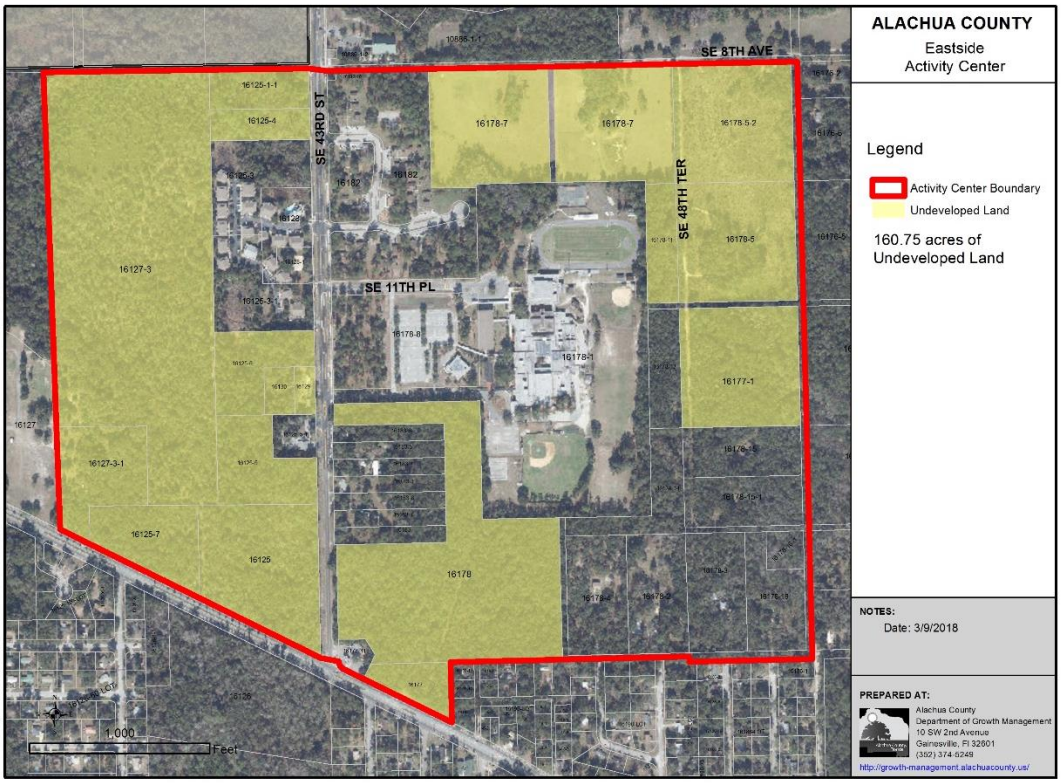
Source: Alachua County G.I.S. and Development Plan Database, June 2018

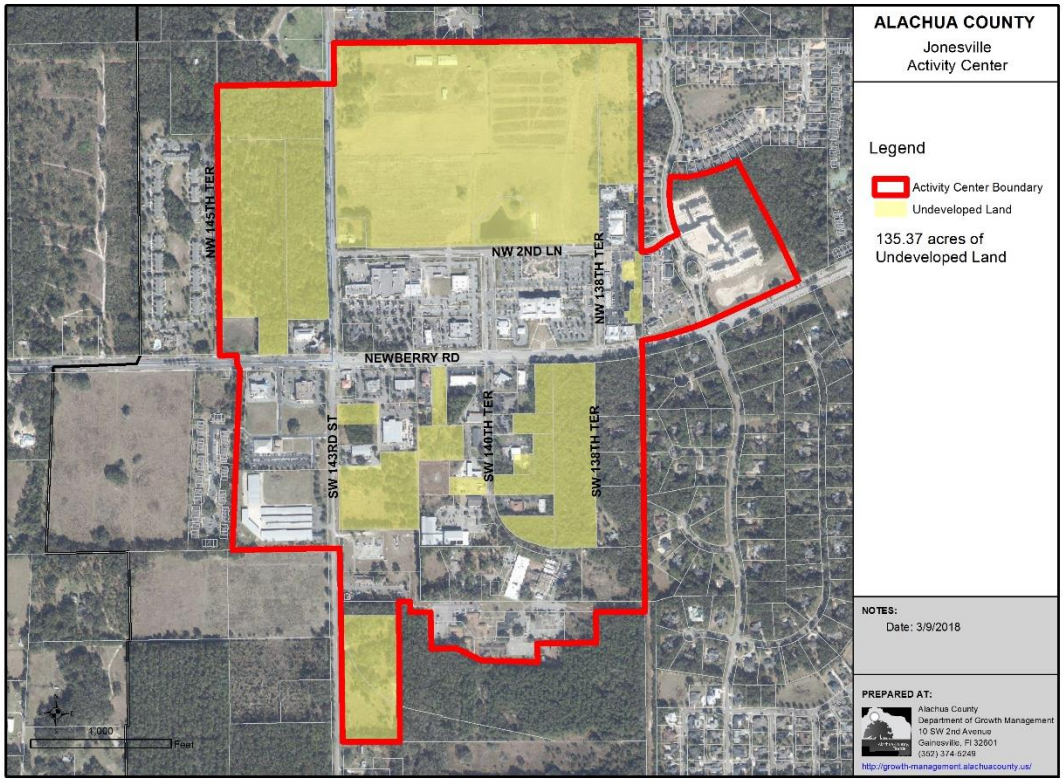
APPENDIX

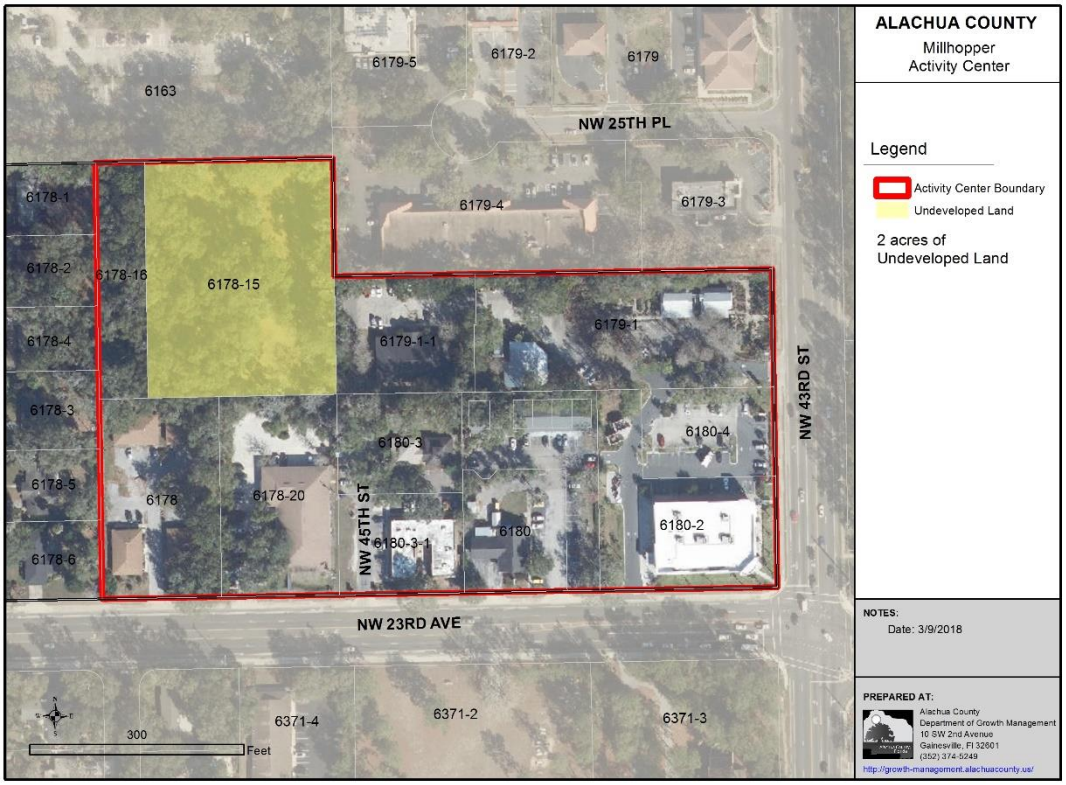
Activity Center Maps

Note: Areas shown on the following maps as "undeveloped land" include land that is currently not developed, as well as land that is covered by approved preliminary development plans. Land that is covered by an approved final development plan would be considered developed.




ALACHUA COUNTY
Eastside
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
160.75 acres of
Undeveloped Land
SE 8TH AVE
SE 43RD ST
SE 48TH TER
SE 11TH PL
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
1,000
Feet


ALACHUA COUNTY
Jonesville
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
135.37 acres of
Undeveloped Land
NW 145TH TER
NW 2ND LN
NW 138TH TER
NEWBERRY RD
SW 143RD ST
SW 140TH TER
SW 138TH TER
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
1,000
Feet


ALACHUA COUNTY
Millhopper
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
2 acres of
Undeveloped Land
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
6163
6179-5
6179-2
6179
NW 25TH PL
6178-1
6179-4
6179-3
6178-2
6178-16
6178-15
6178-4
6179-1-1
6179-1
6178-3
6180-3
6180-4
NW 43RD ST
6178-5
6178
6178-20
NW 45TH ST
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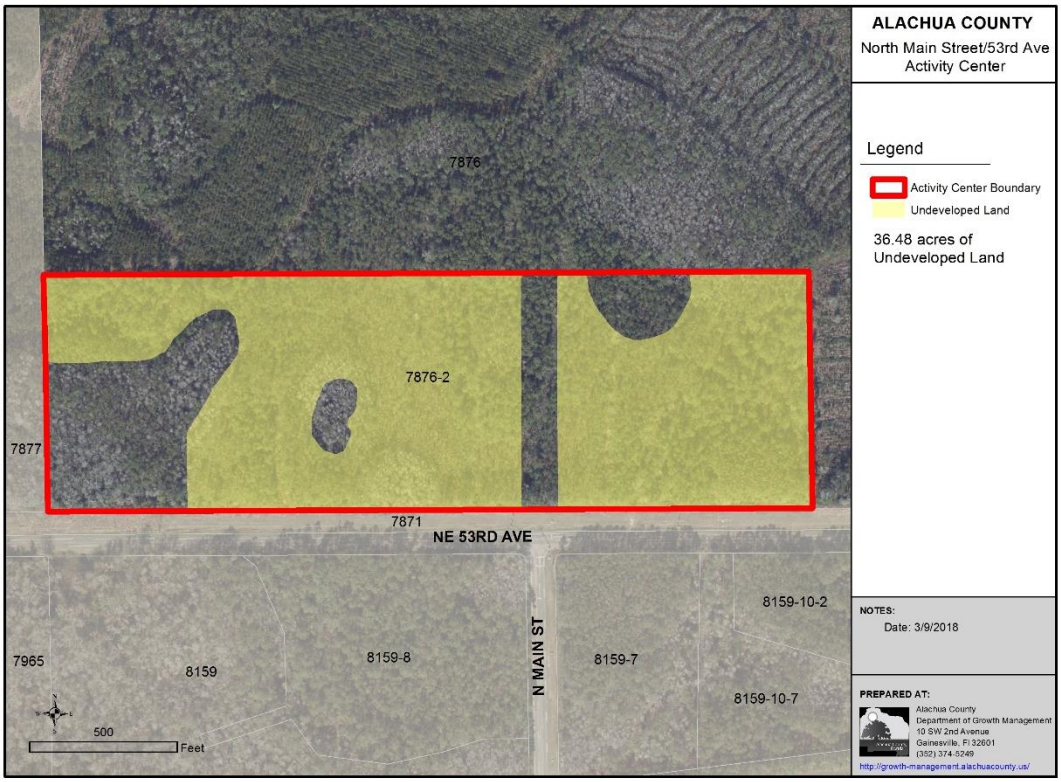
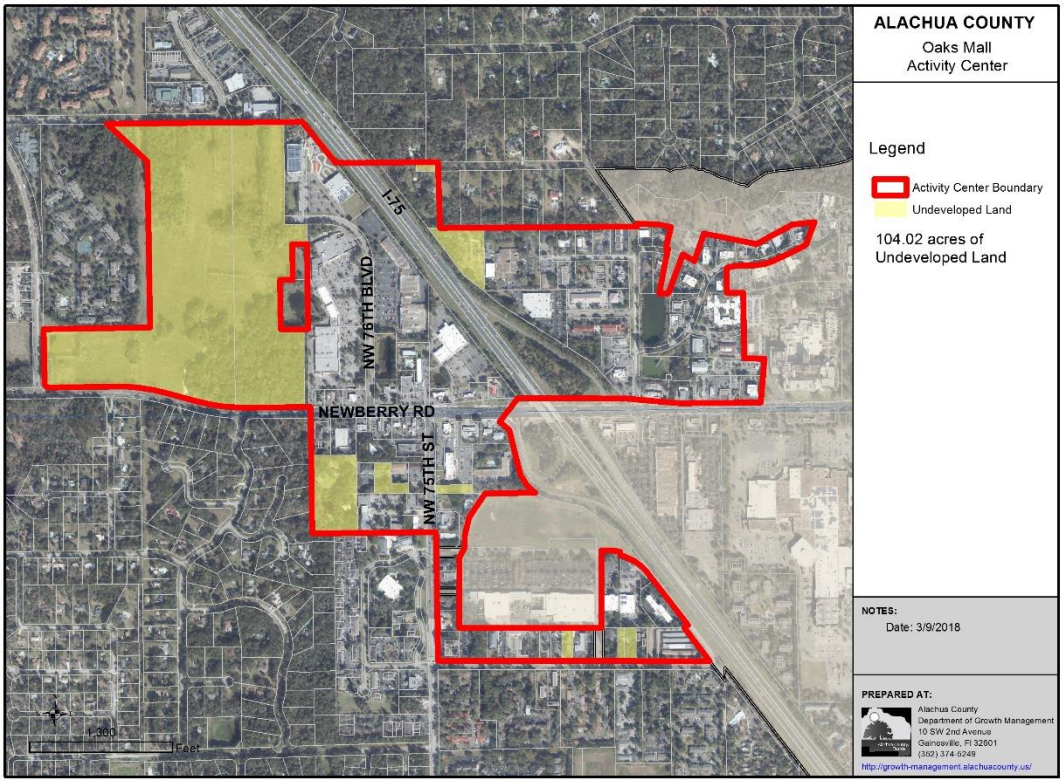
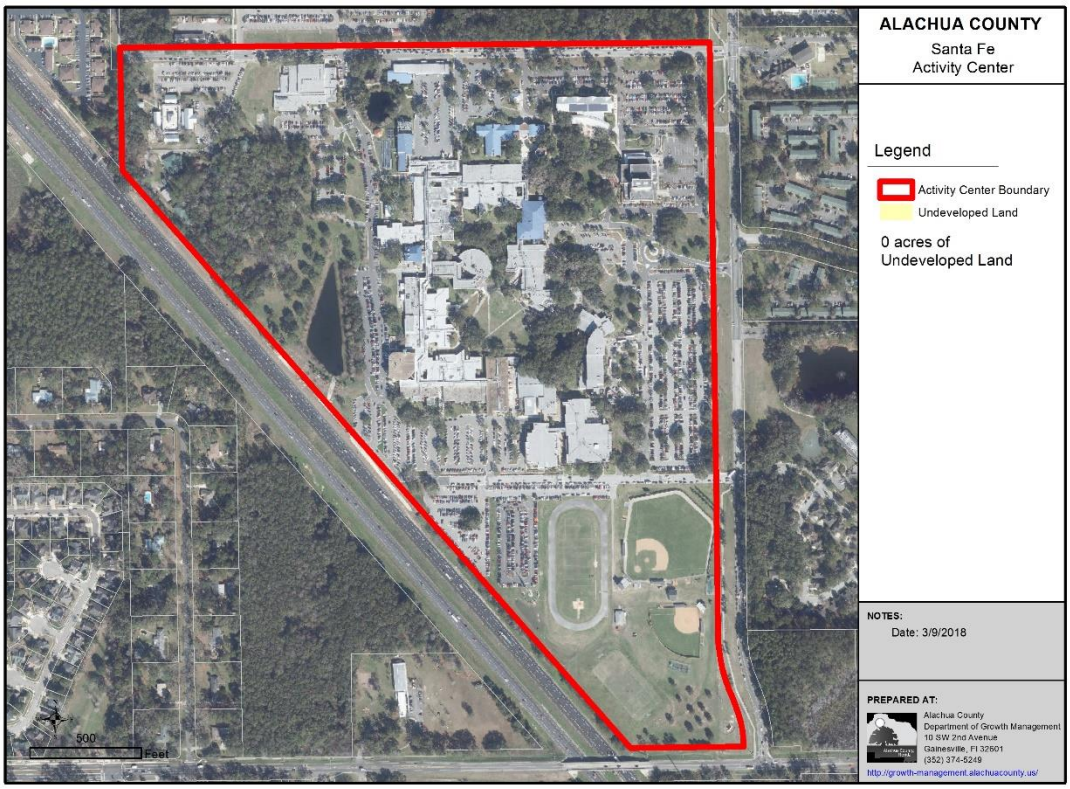
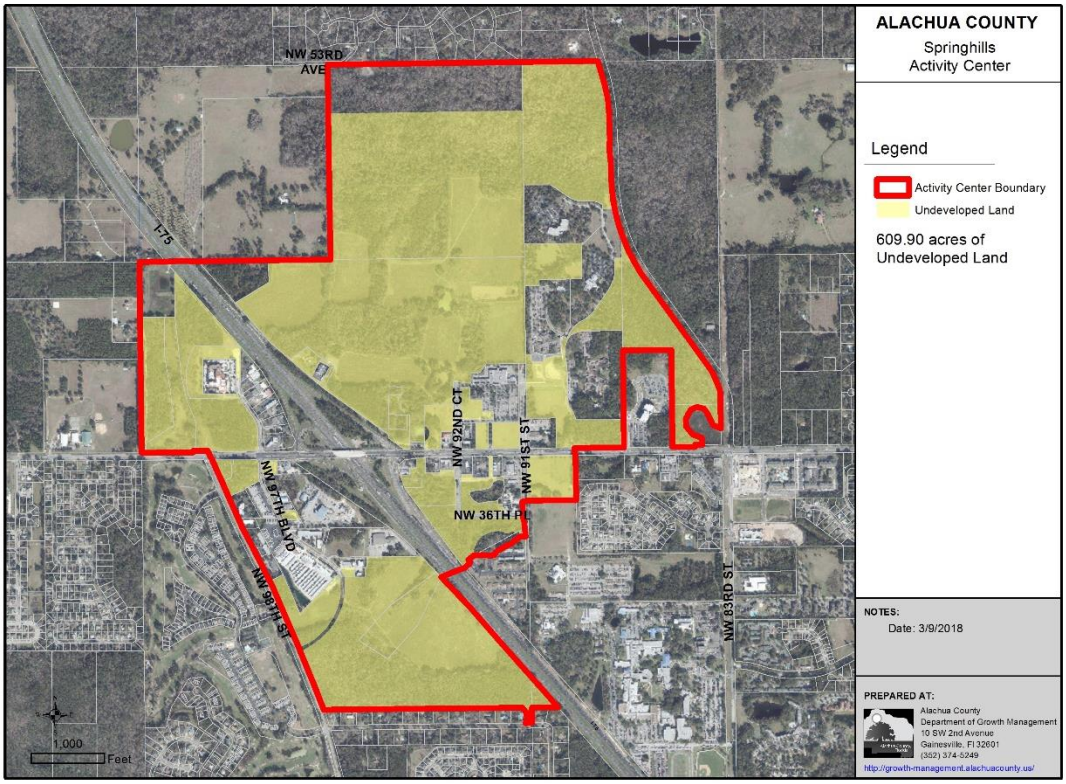
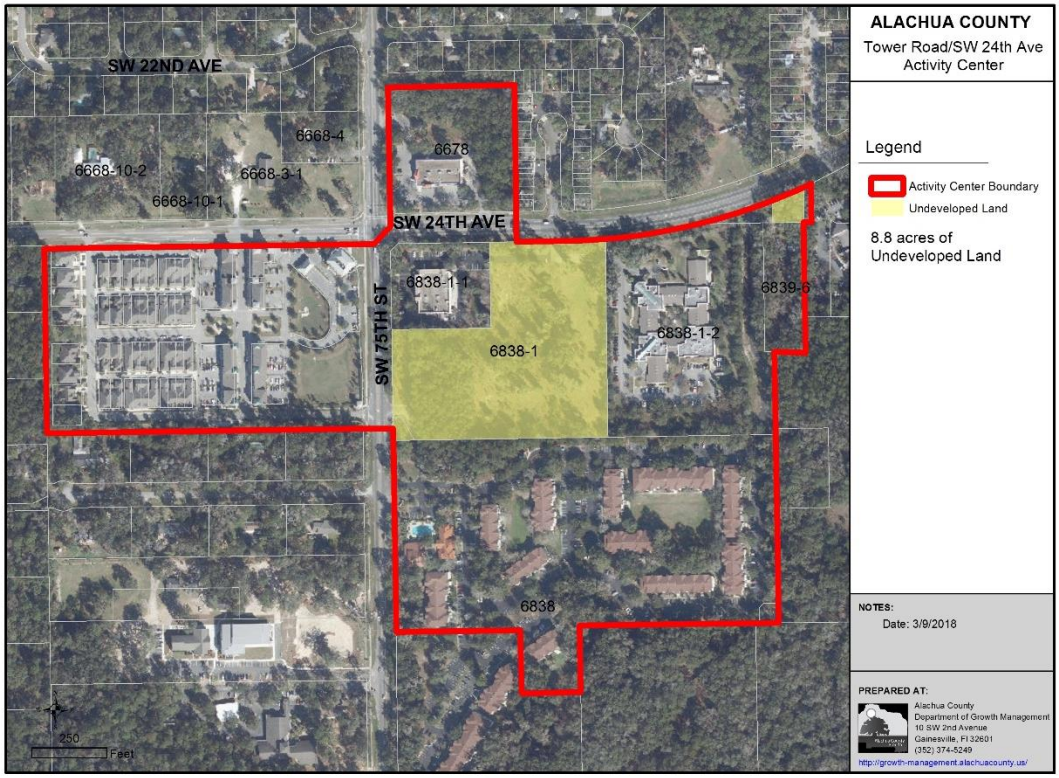
6371-4
6371-2
6371-3
300
Feet


ALACHUA COUNTY
North Main Street/53rd Ave
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
36.48 acres of
Undeveloped Land
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
7876
7876-2
7877
7871
NE 53RD AVE
8159-10-2
7965
8159
8159-8
N MAIN ST
8159-7
8159-10-7
500
Feet

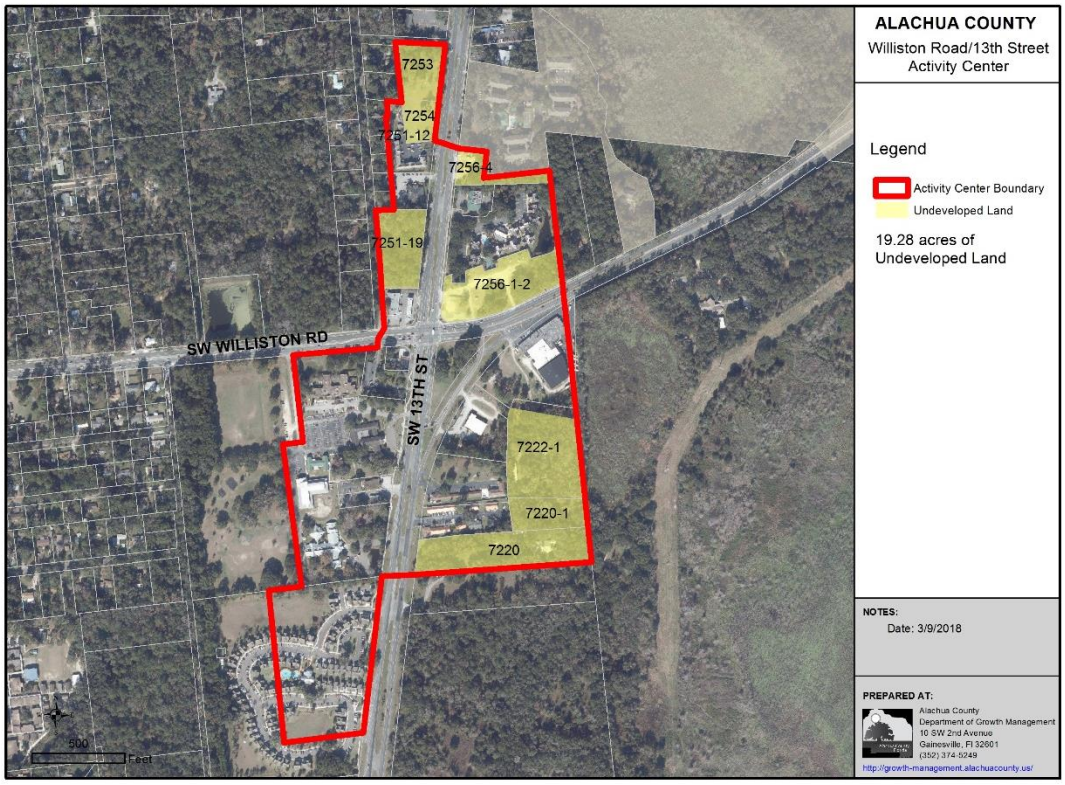

ALACHUA COUNTY
Oaks Mall
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
104.02 acres of
Undeveloped Land
I-75
NW 76TH BLVD
NEWBERRY RD
NW 75TH ST
1,500
Feet
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/

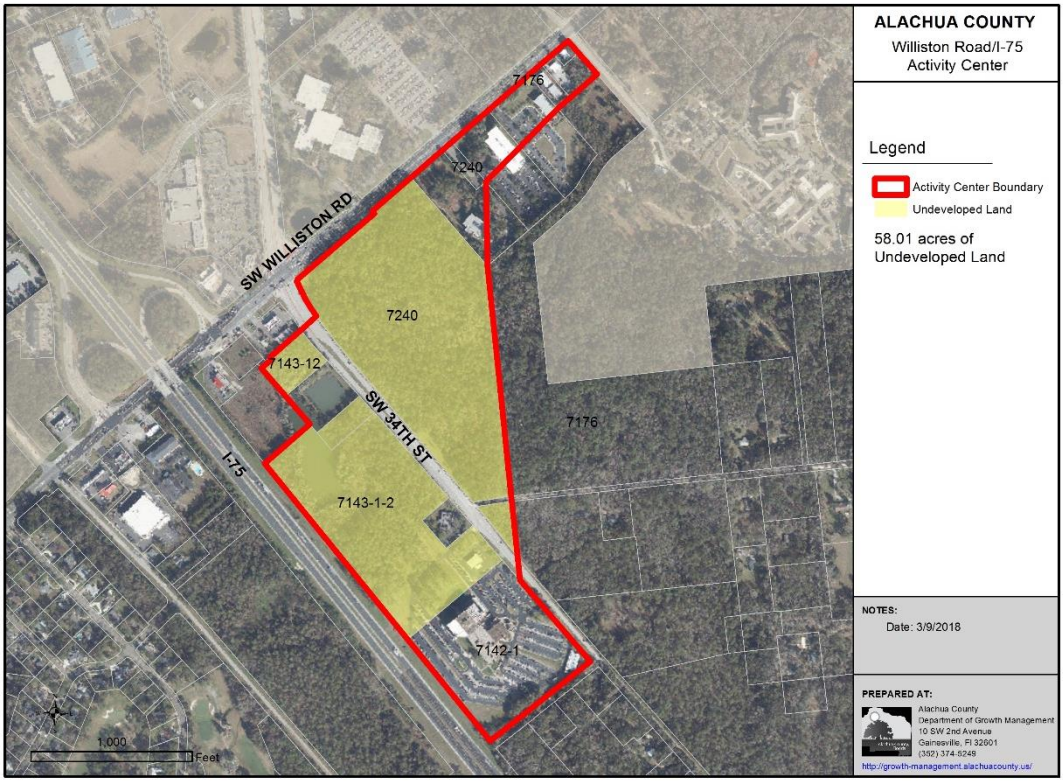

ALACHUA COUNTY
Santa Fe
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
0 acres of
Undeveloped Land
500
Feet
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/


ALACHUA COUNTY
Springhills
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
609.90 acres of
Undeveloped Land
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
NW 53RD AVE
I-75
NW 92ND CT
NW 91ST ST
NW 87TH BLVD
NW 36TH PL
NW 83RD ST
1,000
Feet


ALACHUA COUNTY
Tower Road/SW 24th Ave
Activity Center
Legend
Activity Center Boundary
Undeveloped Land
8.8 acres of
Undeveloped Land
NOTES:
Date: 3/9/2018
PREPARED AT:
Alachua County
Department of Growth Management
10 SW 2nd Avenue
Gainesville, Fl 32601
(352) 374-5249
http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/
SW 22ND AVE
6668-4
6668-10-2
6668-3-1
6668-10-1
6678
SW 24TH AVE
6838-1-1
6839-6
SW 75TH ST
6838-1-2
6838-1
6838
250
Feet

Williston Road/13th Street Activity Center Map





APPENDIX

Data on Undeveloped Land within Activity Centers

Numbers given in acres

Activity Center	Undeveloped Land - Portion that is not Covered by any Approved Development Plans	Undeveloped Land - Portion that is Covered by Approved Preliminary Development Plans	Total Undeveloped Land
Archer Road/Tower Road	8.35	23.97	32.32
Eastgate	4.31	--	4.31
Eastside	160.75	--	160.75
Jonesville	67.13	68.24	135.37
Millhopper	2.00	--	2.00
North Main Street/53rd Avenue	36.48	--	36.48
Oaks Mall	14.73	89.29	104.02
Springhills	145.85	464.05	609.90
Tower Road/24th Avenue	0.23	8.57	8.80
Williston Road/13th Street	19.28	--	19.28
Williston Road/I-75	58.01	--	58.01
Totals	**517.12**	**561.91**	**1171.24**

Source: Alachua County Department of Growth Management, March 2018

Note: Undeveloped lands include both land that is not developed and land that is covered by approved preliminary development plans. Both categories have been shown separately in the above table. Lands that are covered by approved final development plans are considered to be developed, even if the development plans are not yet built.

APPENDIX

Additional Reference Materials Relating to Future Land Use Element

- Supplemental Report Relating to Urban Cluster Evaluation presented at August 21, 2018 Board of County Commissioners Meeting.
- Gainesville Regional Utilities Memo of August 9, 2018 on Conceptual Water & Wastewater Plan for Areas within the Urban Cluster
- Supplemental Report with Data on Density Trends for New Development in the Urban Cluster presented at May 17, 2018 County Commission meeting

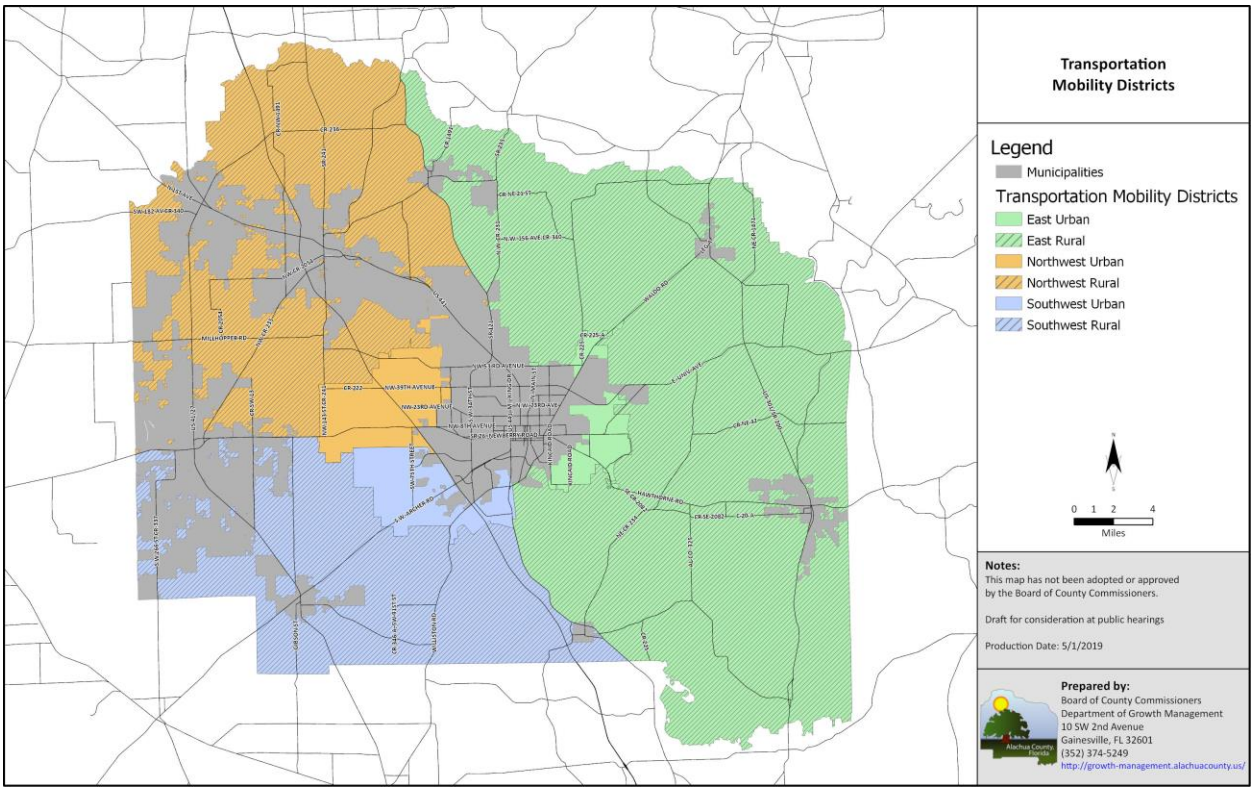
Introduction

The Transportation Mobility Element (TME) contains numerous Principle, Objective, and Policy revisions derived from the Evaluation and Appraisal (EA) process and related to the topics detailed below. There are instances where a single Policy revision touches on several of the topics below. The text of individual revisions can be found in the transmittal draft of the TME.

I. Transportation Concurrency

The State Legislature approved broad changes to the State growth management statutory framework in 2011 (Ch. 2011-139 Laws of Florida). One of these changes made the implementation of transportation concurrency an optional component of local government comprehensive plans (F.S. 163.3180(1)). The practice of transportation concurrency, which required transportation facilities to be in place within a reasonable timeframe before the local government could approve new development, had previously been a requirement of local government comprehensive plans. The changes in 2011 also included language that encouraged local governments to adopt "Alternative Mobility Funding Systems" (F.S 163.3180(5)(i) which included land use controls, multimodal funding systems and other tools found in (F.S 163.3180(5)(f)). The statute also placed new requirements on jurisdictions that continued to implement transportation concurrency by requiring specific methodologies tied to maximum service volumes for the calculation of "proportionate share" contributions (F.S 163.3180(5)(h)2.a.)

Previous to this change in statute, the County adopted amendments to the Comprehensive Plan (CPA-01-09) that were collectively known as the "Mobility Plan" in 2010. The Mobility Plan made many of the revisions that were subsequently encouraged in the statute including broad changes to the implementation of transportation concurrency amongst other land use, capital planning and funding policies. The Mobility Plan amendments created the foundation for the Multi-Modal Transportation Mitigation (MMTM) by creating Mobility Districts within the Urban Cluster and by adopting a long range Capital Improvements Program into the Comprehensive Plan.



PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY DISTRICTS MAP

The proposed EA based amendments explicitly repeal transportation concurrency both inside and outside the Urban Cluster Boundary (Principle 4, Objective 1.1, and Objective 1.2). The primary rationale is so that the County can continue to use the adopted MMTM or similar mobility fee methodology for mitigation purposes consistent with the "Alternative Mobility Funding System" language of the statute. Policy 1.1.7 provides for the concept of the mobility fee which is a key element of the alternative system. Additionally the proposed revisions will allow the County to expand this system to the entire unincorporated area. For the area inside the Urban Cluster, this would have little practical effect but would allow the County to continue to pursue the innovative policies that were first initiated with the Mobility Plan amendments nine years ago. For the area outside the Urban Cluster, the repeal of transportation concurrency would allow for a more unified mobility planning and funding system.

As an ancillary effect of the broader repeal of transportation concurrency there is the need to delete several of the concurrency exceptions that are present in the adopted document including Policies 1.1.9 through 1.1.10.1.

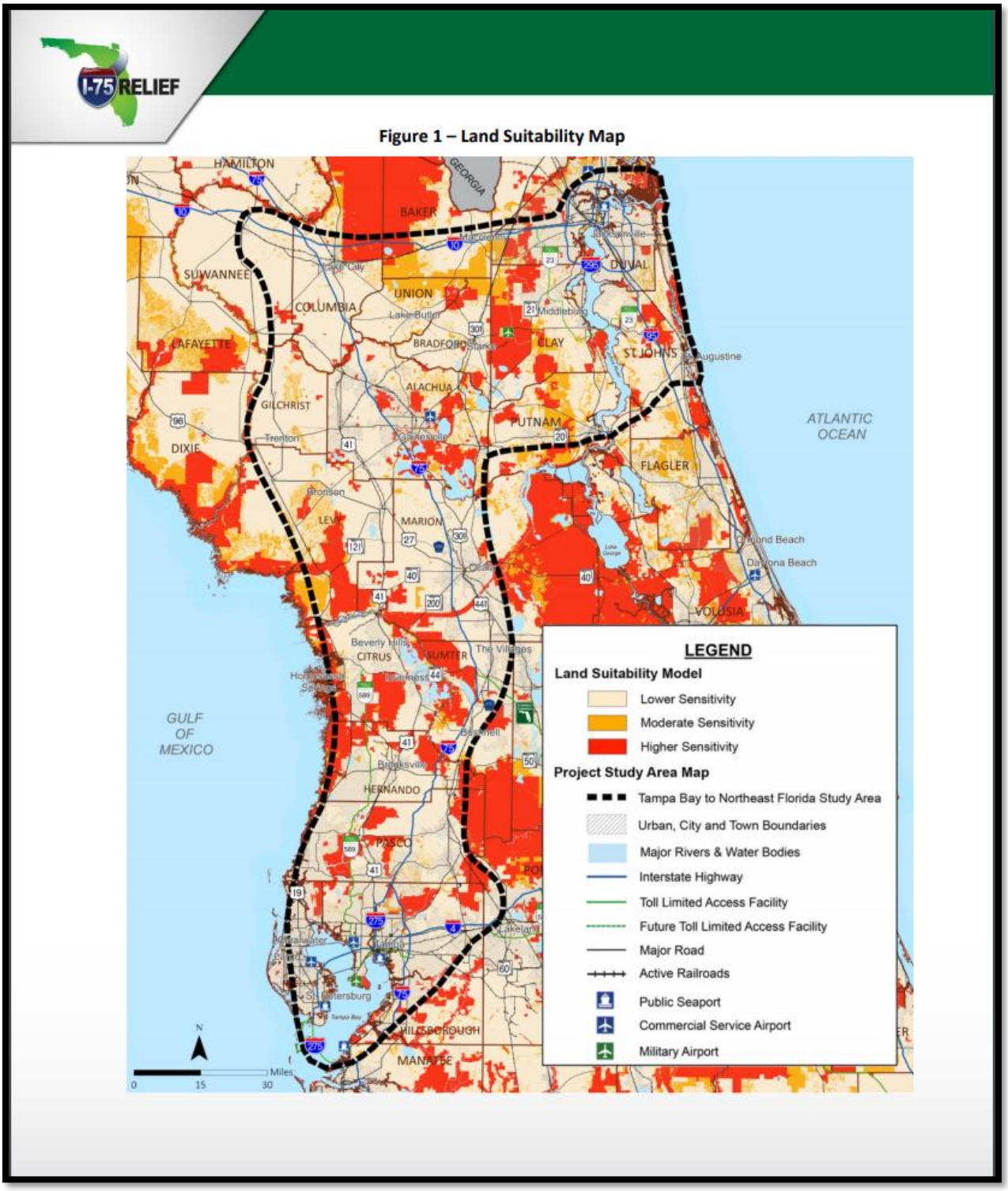
II. Transportation Backlog Authority

The Mobility Plan amendments from 2011 also included new language that encouraged the usage of a Transportation Backlog Authority (TBA) as a potential governance and funding source for alleviating congestion on major corridors. A TBA would allow the use of a Tax Increment Funding to fund transportation infrastructure. TBA's were provided for at the time in F.S. 163.3182. With recent statutory revisions, they have subsequently been renamed as Transportation Development Authorities and some of the enabling language has been revised.

The proposed amendments remove the Transportation Backlog Authority language that is currently in the Comprehensive Plan. The County has utilized a tax increment financing based formula to fund transportation in both the Southwest and Northwest Transportation Improvement Districts via agreements with Celebration Pointe and Santa Fe Village respectively. This technique is a functionally equivalent funding system that does not have the same structural and procedural issues incumbent in the Transportation Development Authorities.

III. Limited Access Highways

The County was active in the I-75 Relief Process that was conducted by FDOT in 2016. During this process the County reviewed the data and analysis presented by FDOT and concluded that it would not be in the public interest to have a new turnpike or limited access roadway located within Alachua County. This was primarily due to several factors in different areas of the County. The environmental sensitivity on the eastern side of the County makes the location of a new highway there undesirable. The likely impacts to already developed areas around the City of Gainesville is similarly undesirable. A new limited access highway west of the Gainesville urbanized area would have the potential to induce sprawl and counteract the County's FLUE and TME goals of maintaining development and new infrastructure within compact centers. There are sufficient opportunities for the State to make safety, operational and capacity improvements to existing highway corridors. Therefore, the TME Policy 1.5.3 is proposed in order to clearly state the County's position on this subject in the Comprehensive Plan.

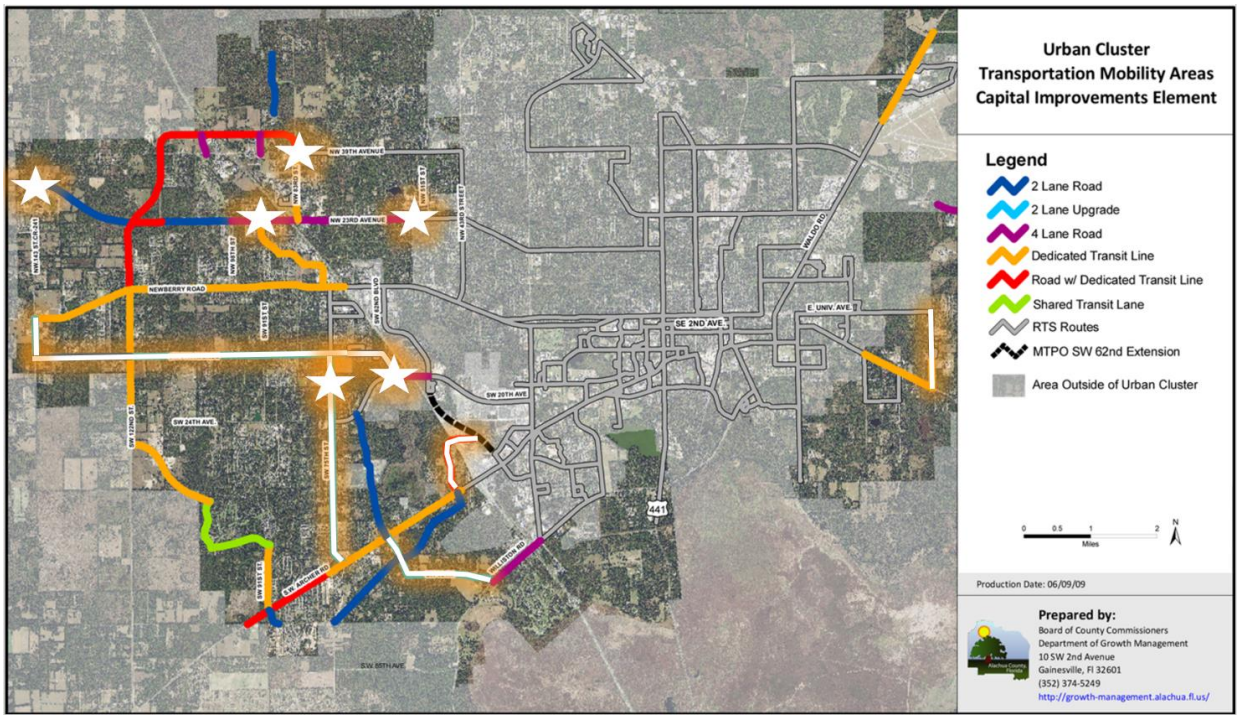


LAND SUITABILITY MAP FROM 2016 FDOT I-75 RELIEF PROCESS

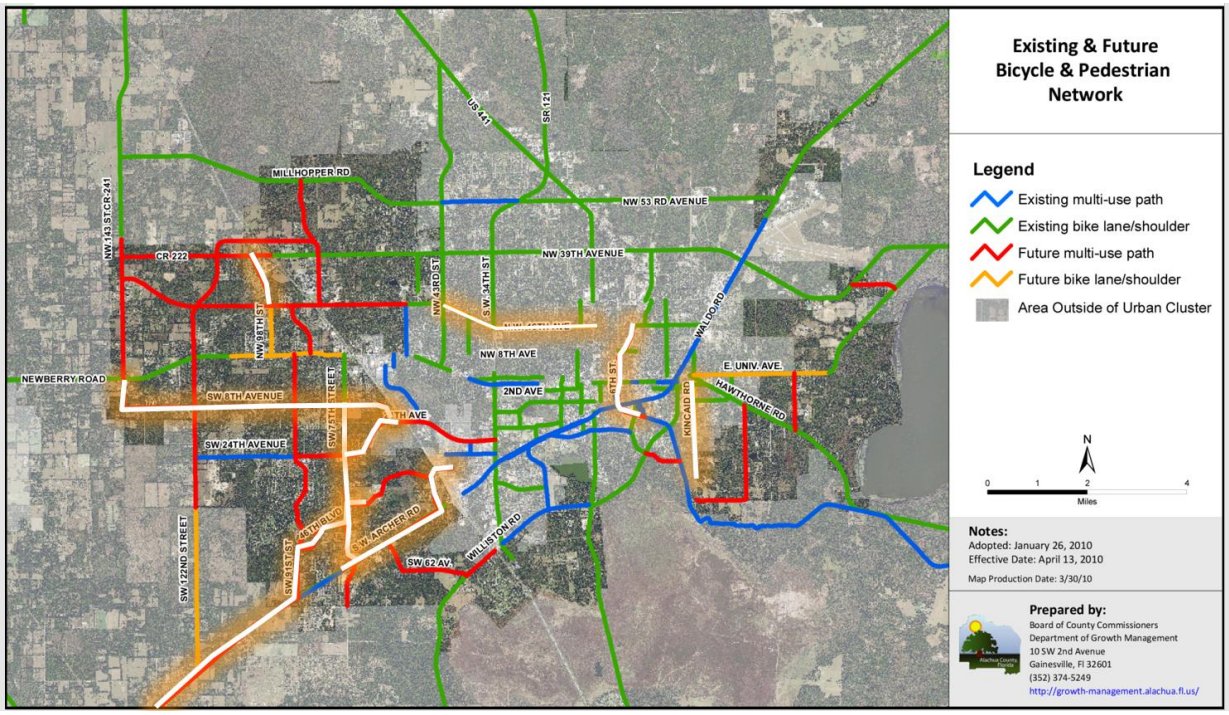
IV. Updated Transportation Mobility Plan Policies and Maps

In 2010, The County adopted a set of land use, transportation and capital planning amendments known as the Mobility Plan. Included in these amendments were revised multi-modal levels of service for transportation. These new levels of service included an areawide level of service for automobiles. This focus on areawide level of service reduced the overreliance on segment by segment congestion analysis. The new levels of service informed the adoption of a multimodal capital improvements element for transportation that focused on providing parallel capacity in the roadway network, a bicycle and pedestrian network on existing roadway corridors and new transit service once sufficient density is present in the Urban Cluster to support it. The County has completed a number of transportation projects since the adoption of the Capital Improvements Element (CIE). The maps in the EA based amendments are consistent with the updated CIE tables. The following maps identify completed projects that are reflected in the updated maps in the Transportation Mobility Element. Revised maps include:

- Future Transportation Functional Classifications (Maps 1 and 2),
- Future Transportation Circulation (Maps 3 and 4), and
- Existing and Future Bicycle Pedestrian Network (Map 8).



MOBILITY PLAN ROADWAY PROJECTS THAT ARE EITHER CONSTRUCTED OR UNDER CONTRACT (WHITE HIGHLIGHTED IN GOLD)



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS THAT ARE EITHER COMPLETED OR UNDER CONTRACT (WHITE HIGHLIGHTED IN GOLD)

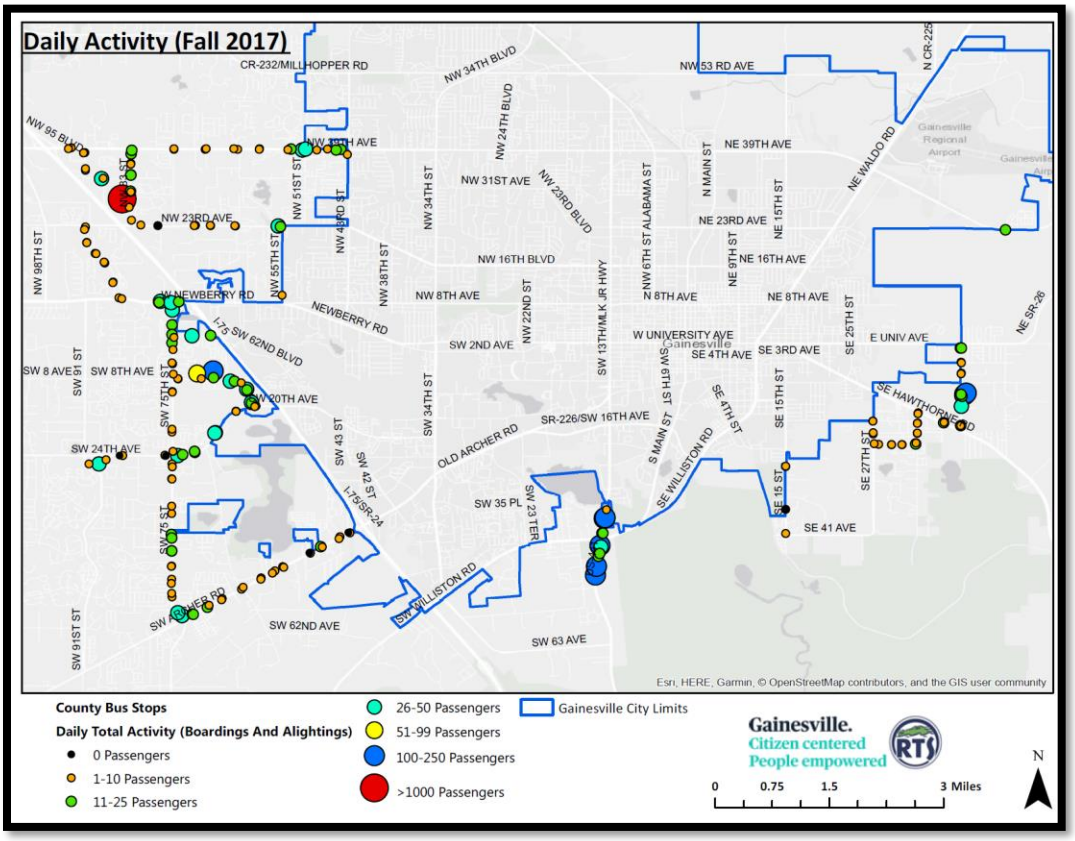
Analysis demonstrates that the areawide level of service for automobile travel is being met inside the Transportation Mobility Districts and there are no roadway segments overcapacity in the unincorporated area outside the Urban Cluster.

Transportation Mobility District	Northwest	Southwest	East
Average Annual Daily Trips	265,237	208,952	75,923
Areawide Maximum Service Volume	408,655	349,370	229,350
Volume/Capacity	64.9%	59.8%	33.1%

TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY DISTRICTS LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS (COUNTY DATA – 2017)

There are several individual County maintained roadway segments that do not currently have average annual daily trip levels over that of their maximum service volume including portions of SW 20th Ave and Tower Road.

Daily activity on County funded RTS routes has seen slight reductions in recent two years after many years of growth.



DAILY ACTIVITY ON COUNTY RTS STOPS

V. Elimination of Future Transportation Circulation Map

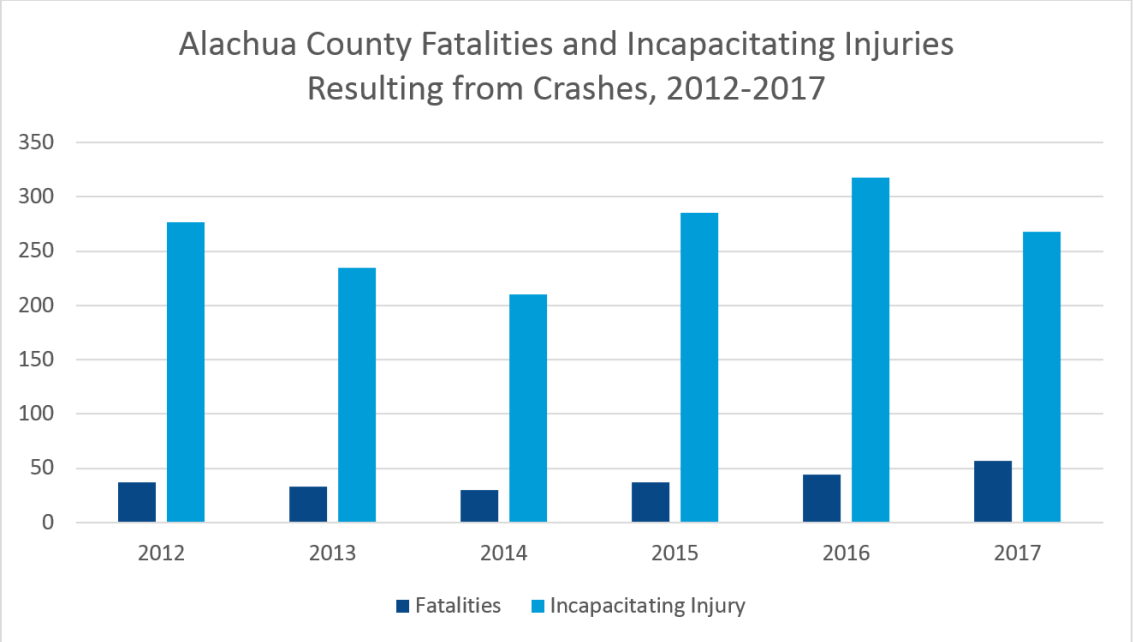
The Future Transportation Circulation Map (FTCM) and related Policies under Objective 1.4 are proposed for deletion. This map was adopted more than ten years ago and the policy objectives are met by the County adopting a Long Range Capital Improvements Element.

VI. Electrification of the Vehicle Fleet

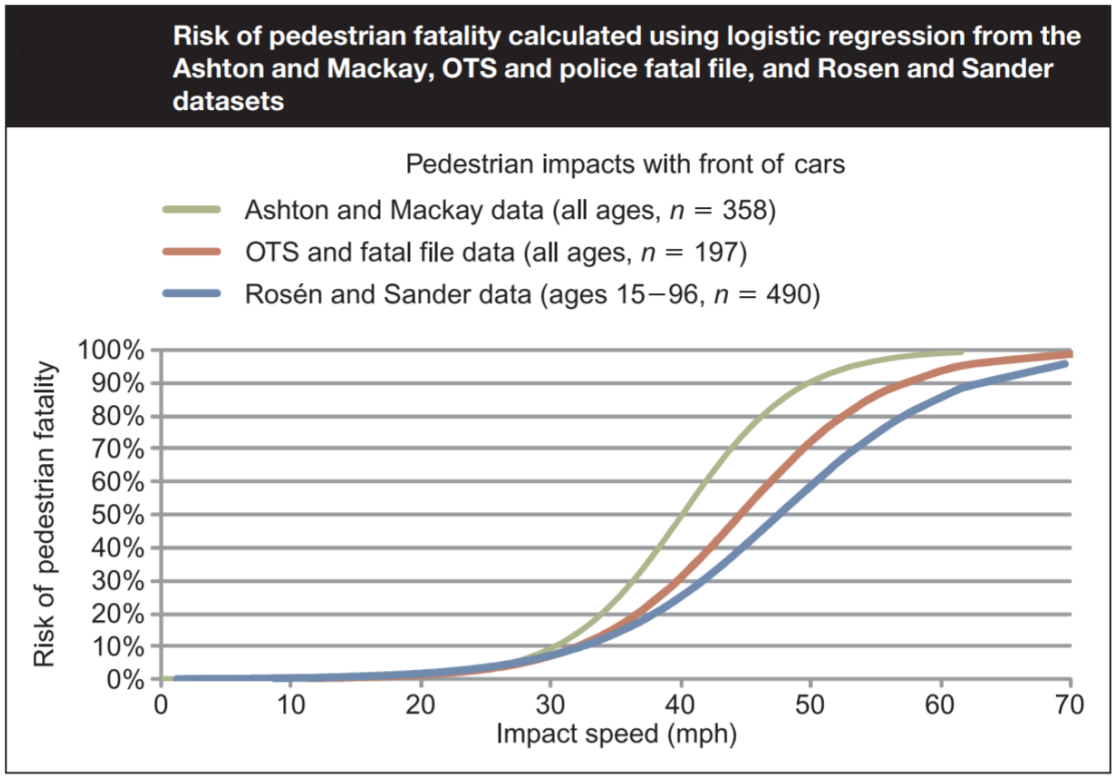
Recognizing the continued expansion of electrical vehicular fleets and necessity of charging infrastructure, Policy 1.4.1 was added to require Level 2 charging stations in new multifamily and mixed use developments.

VII. Safety

Objective 1.8 and subsequent Policies are proposed to address safety issues within the transportation system. Policy 1.8.5 is proposed to specifically emphasize the demonstrated effect of speed on serious injuries and fatalities amongst system users. The Policy aims to keep speeds at the minimum necessary for safe and efficient travel.



SOURCE: SIGNAL FOUR ANALYTICS (HTTP://S4.GEOPLAN.UFL.EDU). DATA RETRIEVED APRIL 5, 2018.



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT: LONDON, ROAD SAFETY WEB PUBLICATION NO. 16: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPEED AND RISK OF FATAL INJURY: PEDESTRIANS AND CAR OCCUPANTS. TABLE 4.1, SEPTEMBER 2010.

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Housing Element include policy revisions that:

1. Preserve and extend the affordable housing stock;

2. Improve and maintain public housing;

3. Ensure that housing opportunities affordable to very low- and extremely low-income households are dispersed throughout the community; and,

4. Identify strategies for affordable rental housing for very low- and extremely low-income households.

Based on a set of recommended strategies generated through an Affordable Housing Workgroup process, the following strategies were approved by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners for inclusion in the draft Housing Element policy revisions for public hearings:

- Pilot matching grant program for landlords to increase water and energy efficiency of affordable units (Policy 2.2.6);
- Use revenue from sale of escheated/acquired properties to develop affordable housing (Policy 1.4.11);
- Preserve and expand the public housing supply (Policies 1.3.7, 2.1.6);
- Incentives to rehabilitate older homes (Policy 2.2.7);
- Strategies to address the continuum of needs (Policies 1.4.9, 3.1.7, 3.1.8 and 3.1.9);
- Repurposing of existing structures for affordable housing (Policy 2.4.6);
- Establish concept plan review process for affordable housing projects (Policy 1.2.9);
- Review land development regulations to ensure that “Cohousing” is allowed (Policy 1.2.7).
- Regulatory incentives for development and redevelopment of affordable housing units (Policy 1.2.8)
- Coordinate with fair housing programs to provide protections (Policy 1.3.8)

Background

Alachua County's Role in Affordable Housing

The Housing Element provides goals, objectives and policies to promote safe, sanitary and affordable housing in Alachua County. Objectives include providing a framework for development that disperses affordable housing throughout the County, evaluating land development regulations for their impacts on the costs of housing, partnering with agencies and developers of affordable housing, providing funding for affordable housing, providing a systematic approach to preservation and redevelopment of existing affordable housing, and promoting sustainable construction and rehabilitation techniques.

Affordable Housing Defined

In keeping with state and federally funded homeownership programs, the Housing Element defines affordable housing as a monthly mortgage payment (including principal, interest, taxes and insurance) that does not exceed 30% of a household's gross annual income, adjusted for size. Affordable rents are defined as a monthly rent payment, including utilities, that does not exceed 30% of a household's gross annual income. Homeowners or renters paying more than 30% of their gross annual income for housing are deemed to be "cost-burdened". Those homeowners or renters paying more than 50% of their gross annual income for housing are considered to be "severely cost-burdened".

Florida Statutes includes definitions of Extremely-Low-income, Very-Low-income, Low-income, and Moderate-income persons as those whose total annual household incomes do not exceed 30%, 50%, 80%, and 120% respectively, of the area median income, or AMI. (For the Extremely-Low category, the Florida Housing Finance Corporation may adjust this amount for lower or higher income counties; for the Very-Low, Low, and Moderate categories, the percentage may refer to Metropolitan Statistical Area or County, whichever is greater. The Housing Element includes definitions of all these income categories except the Extremely-Low-income category.)

Analysis of Proposed Amendments

Household Income and Cost Burden

Estimates from the UF Shimberg Center for Housing Studies indicate that a large portion of Alachua County households pay in excess of 30% of their income on housing.

- Out of 106,197 total households in Alachua County 43.9% (46,595) pay at least 30% of income on housing or "cost burdened".
- 26.6% (28,253) of total households in Alachua County pay in excess of 50% of income on housing or "severely cost burdened".

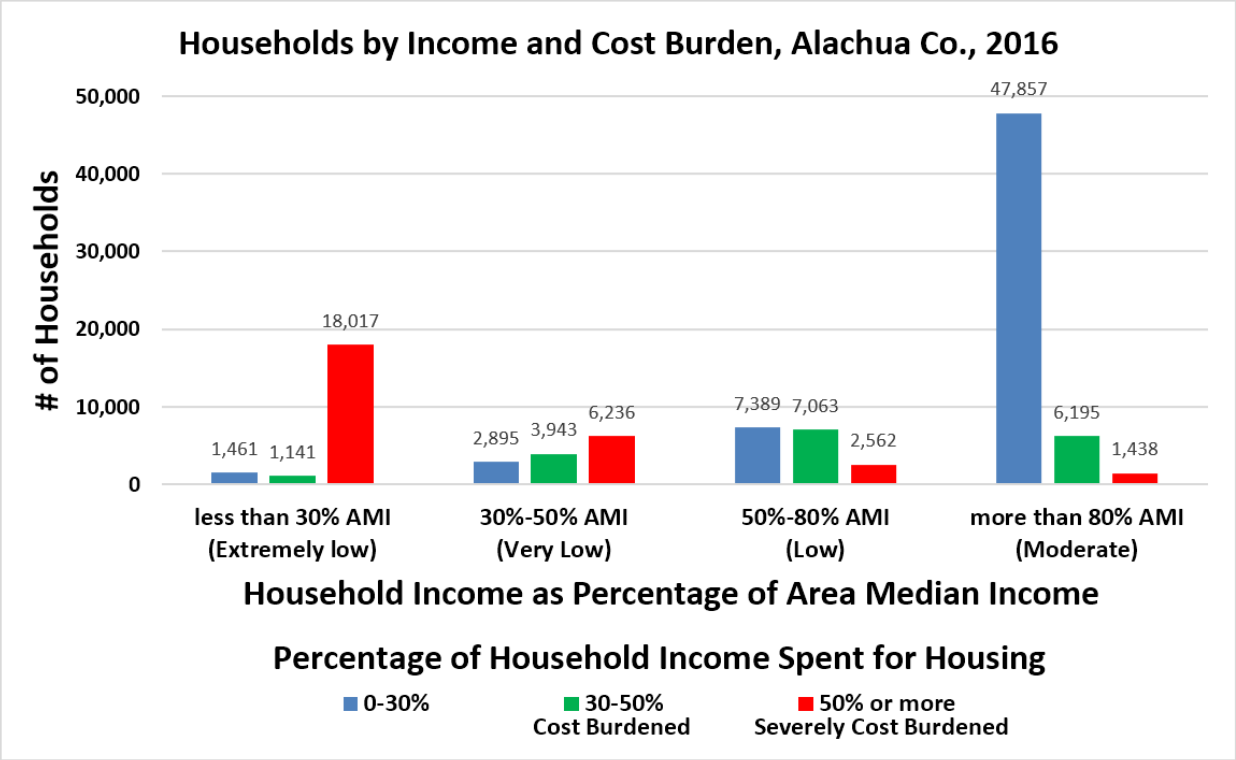
Table 1

Households by Income and Cost Burden, Alachua County, 2016

Household Income as Percentage of Area Median Income	Amount of Income Paid for Housing		
	0-30%	30-50%	50% or more
<=30% AMI	1461	1141	18017
30.01-50% AMI	2895	3943	6236
50.01-80% AMI	7389	7063	2562
80.01+% AMI	47857	6195	1438
Total	59602	18342	28253

Notes: Click here to get household projections by tenure, age of householder, income, and cost burden.
Sources: Not Available.

Graph1



Sources: Estimates and projections by Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, based on 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data and population projections by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida.

For those in the Extremely Low Income[1] household category:

- 92.9% of households had a housing cost burden of over 30%
- 87.4% of households had a housing cost burden over 50%

For those in the Very Low Income household category:

- 77.9% of households had a housing cost burden of over 30%
- 47.7% of households had a housing cost burden over 50%

For those in the Low Income household category:

- 56.6% of households had a housing cost burden of over 30%
- 15.1% of households had a housing cost burden over 50%

For those in the Moderate Income household category:

- 13.8% of households had a housing cost burden of over 30%
- 2.6% of households had a housing cost burden over 50%

Affordable Housing/Living Wage

Table 2

	% of household income spent on housing		
Occupation (# of total workers in Gainesville MSA)	**Entry-level**	**Median wage**	**Experienced**
Cashier (3,990)	60%	58%	54%
Cook (1,070)	59%	51%	44%
Janitor (3,050)	59%	51%	43%
Maid/Housekeeping (1,100)	59%	54%	48%
Retail Salesperson (4,040)	60%	56%	41%
Secretary/Admin. Assistant (2,500)	47%	36%	30%
Waiter/Waitress (2,640)	59%	55%	42%

Source: Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse http://flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu

Table 2 references data from the University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies. The occupations shown are selected as those with at least 1,000 workers in the Gainesville Metropolitan Statistical Area in 2016 (which is comprised of Alachua County and Gilchrist County). The percentages shown in the table

1 Total annual household income categories, including Extremely-Low, Very-Low, Low, and Moderate, are defined in Florida Statutes, Sect 420.0004, as percentages of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the state. **"Extremely-low-income persons"** means one or more natural persons or a family whose total annual household income does not exceed 30 percent of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the state. The Florida Housing Finance Corporation may adjust this amount annually by rule to provide that in lower income counties, extremely low income may exceed 30 percent of area median income and that in higher income counties, extremely low income may be less than 30 percent of area median income.

indicate the amount of household income that would be required to spend on a two bedroom unit at the fair market rate as determined by the U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which equates to $887. As Table 2 shows, most of these occupations have housing costs burdens well above 30% for all levels of work experience, and at entry levels housing costs burdens range as high as 60%.

2018 Racial Inequity in Alachua County Report

There is data from the recent study completed by the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research titled "Racial Inequity in Alachua County" (January 2018) on racial disparities in Alachua County and how those disparities affect key factors that are significant to access to affordable housing – income and transportation. See the Economic Element Amendments Data & Analysis for further discussion of the factors and forces behind racial disparities in Alachua County.

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments related to Solid Waste include the following:

1. Revised Level of Service standard for Solid Waste (Policy 1.1.1)

2. Maintaining the prohibition on incineration in the County's solid waste system, clarifying that biomass and certain hazardous waste may be incinerated, prohibiting use of plastic as a fuel source for waste to energy, providing exceptions for waste related research. (Policy 1.2.5)

3. Amend formula for calculating waste diversion rate to FDEP methodology; revise compliance rate for recycling goals; revise wording addressing coordination and assistance for recycling programs (policies 1.5.2, 1.5.4. 1.5.6)

4. Added definitions for Solid Waste System and Research and Development.

Analysis of Proposed Amendments:

The Comprehensive Plan includes policies addressing Public Facilities, which includes Solid Waste. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) establishes rules addressing waste collection and disposal, including data collection and reporting which cities and counties must compile and submit. Over time, municipalities in Florida, including Alachua County, have reported that the total tonnage of waste per-capita has increased, therefore, Solid Waste element Policy 1.1.1 is amended to revise the Level of Service standard for Solid Waste.

Recycling goals for municipalities in Florida were established by FDEP. Subsequently, FDEP revised the methodology for calculating recycling rates to include incineration in a waste to energy facility. Incineration is prohibited as part of the Alachua County solid waste system. Policy 1.2.5 maintains the prohibition on incineration in the County's solid waste system, and adds text clarifying that biomass (vegetation) and certain regulated hazardous waste may be incinerated, and explicitly prohibits the use of plastic as a fuel source for waste to energy in Alachua county while providing exceptions for waste related research, which could occur at the Eco-industrial Park.

Because FDEP establishes rules addressing waste collection and disposal, Alachua County must report data regarding waste disposal and recycling consistent with FDEP methodology and Policy 1.5.2 is amended to reference the FDEP methodology. Policies 1.5.4 and 1.5.6 are amended to update the compliance rate for commercial and multi-family recycling goals and revise wording addressing coordination and assistance for recycling programs among municipalities and community institutions such as the Santa Fe College, University of Florida, UF Health, and others.

Solid Waste System and Research and Development were added to the Definitions.

Issue Background:

The following information was excerpted from Planning for Sustainable Material and Waste Management (Planners' Advisory Service Report 587). Copyright 2017 by the American Planning Association.

OVERVIEW OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE IN THE U.S.

Municipal solid waste (MSW) loosely refers to nonhazardous waste generated from residential, commercial, institutional, and some industrial activities. MSW often comprises both inorganic (e.g., glass, metals, and many synthetics) and organic (e.g., food, yard trimmings, paper, cardboard, and timber) components. Construction and demolition debris (C&D) is increasingly managed separately. MSW can include toxic materials such as fluorescent lamps, paint, batteries, and other electronics. “Solid” waste, as regulated by the U.S. EPA, can also include liquids, semisolids, or gasses.

Local definitions of MSW can be highly variable. The composition and volume of MSW varies by geographic location, economic structure, the extent of urbanization, and the socioeconomic status of individual communities. It can also change over time due to changes in MSW regulations (e.g., landfill bans for certain materials), recycling programs, and citizens’ lifestyles, as well as population and economic growth.

According to national estimates by the U.S. EPA (2016a), Americans generated 258 million tons of MSW in 2014, which is nearly triple the mass generated in the 1960s. At present, over half of MSW is landfilled. Another 13 percent is combusted for energy recovery, and the remaining one-third is recycled. Food scraps are the largest single component in the MSW disposal stream.

FOSTERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH WASTE DIVERSION

It is an underappreciated fact that waste diversion, whether regulatory or market induced, creates new businesses and jobs. More jobs are created by recycling material than disposing of it into landfills because once material has been collected, hauled, and placed into the landfill, its value becomes nearly zero. Reuse, recycling, and remanufacturing (R3) activities provide a range of opportunities to create value and jobs from further material handling, sorting, processing, manufacturing, distribution, research and development, marketing, sales, and related administrative and support activities. Further, conventional waste collection is occurring in an increasingly concentrated waste management industry, while waste diversion provides opportunities to create jobs and businesses at the local level.

While the need to address long-term unemployment and the challenges of the hard-to-employ may be greatest in our largest cities, all local and regional economies may wish to explore the business and job creation potential from implementing waste diversion and waste-to-profit strategies that will grow the R3 industry.

Reuse, Recycling, And Remanufacturing (R3)

One significant way the R3 industry can be stimulated is through legal mandates at the state or local levels that require general waste diversion from landfills. R3 development can be industry driven because of sustainability objectives or fear of legislative response, as in the Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE) of the major U.S. carpet manufacturers. The recovery of valuable or rare materials can be a strong motivator of R3 development, and is a key impetus

for the zero-waste and waste-to-profit movements. Zero-waste programs seek to eliminate waste by designing products and processes such that discarded materials become resources for other uses. The waste-to-profit movement matches local generators of wastes and byproducts with local businesses interested in recycling the materials as substitutes for raw materials, making waste a significant economic resource.

Both for-profit and nonprofit firms are engaged in R3 activities. The for-profit sector includes large and sophisticated firms, some of which process very high-value materials (e.g., medical instruments and precious metals). There are also many small and medium-sized businesses engaged in R3 activity. The U.S. used merchandise stores industry, made up of nonprofit and for-profit resale shops, consignment shops, thrift shops, and antique stores, has 25,000 stores and a combined annual revenue estimated at $17 billion (NARTS 2010). Some nonprofits engaged in R3 activity have a goal of providing employment to ex-offenders or the homeless.

Community-Specific Waste Management Planning

While higher landfill diversion rates and lower disposal volumes are common goals of local MWM, the logistical challenges and cost implications of meeting these goals vary across communities. Waste composition is community specific and changes over time. Content analyses of landfill-bound waste streams can help planners identify missed opportunities for recycling specific types of materials in various regions. Accordingly, goal setting and policy design can be tailored to local characteristics. Many states have conducted waste characterization studies and adopted them as the basis for solid waste plans, which are required by federal regulations in the RCRA. When coupled with local demographic and community profiles, the refined scale of waste characterization data can help planners identify neighborhoods that tend to throw large amounts of recyclables in the garbage and target groups for promoting recycling and education programs. Because waste characterization studies require resources and are labor intensive, however, they are not regularly undertaken.*

*Excerpted from Planning for Sustainable Material and Waste Management (PAS 587).
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Florida and the 2020 75% Recycling Goal

“The over 37 million tons of municipal solid waste generated by 20 million Floridians and about 113 million visitors every year, provides many opportunities for recycling. Unfortunately, Floridians and our visitors continue to discard valuable commodities when there are better uses for those items. The Florida Legislature recognized that fact and through the Energy, Climate Change and Economic Security Act of 2008, established a statewide weight-based recycling goal of 75% by 2020 (see Appendix G). The Act instituted the 75% recycling goal, directed the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish a reporting protocol and directed counties to report annually. The Legislature also established interim recycling goals: 40% by 2012, 50% by 2014, 60% by 2016 and 70% by 2018”…

“Recycling in Florida, the United States, and the world has changed significantly over the last 10 years. Many of the challenges we currently face with recycling have occurred as a result of

changes in collection methods, shifts in the recycling markets and new and lighter weight packaging. Given these challenges and others detailed in the report, the current practices in Florida are not expected to significantly increase the recycling rate beyond the state's current rate of 56%; causing it to level of. Without significant changes to our current approach, Florida's recycling rate will likely fall short of the 2020 goal of 75%."

"In 2012, DEP implemented a new methodology for calculating the recycling rate to include renewable energy recycling credits as a result of legislative changes to Section 403.706, F.S. To promote the production of renewable energy from solid waste combustion, the Legislature allowed that each megawatt-hour produced by a renewable energy facility using solid waste as a fuel counts as 1 ton of recycled material, and is applied toward meeting the recycling goals. Section 403.708(12)(c), F.S., states that DEP shall, by rule, develop and adopt a methodology to award recycling credit for the use or disposal of yard trash at a Class I landfill having a gas-collection system that makes beneficial use of the collected landfill gas."

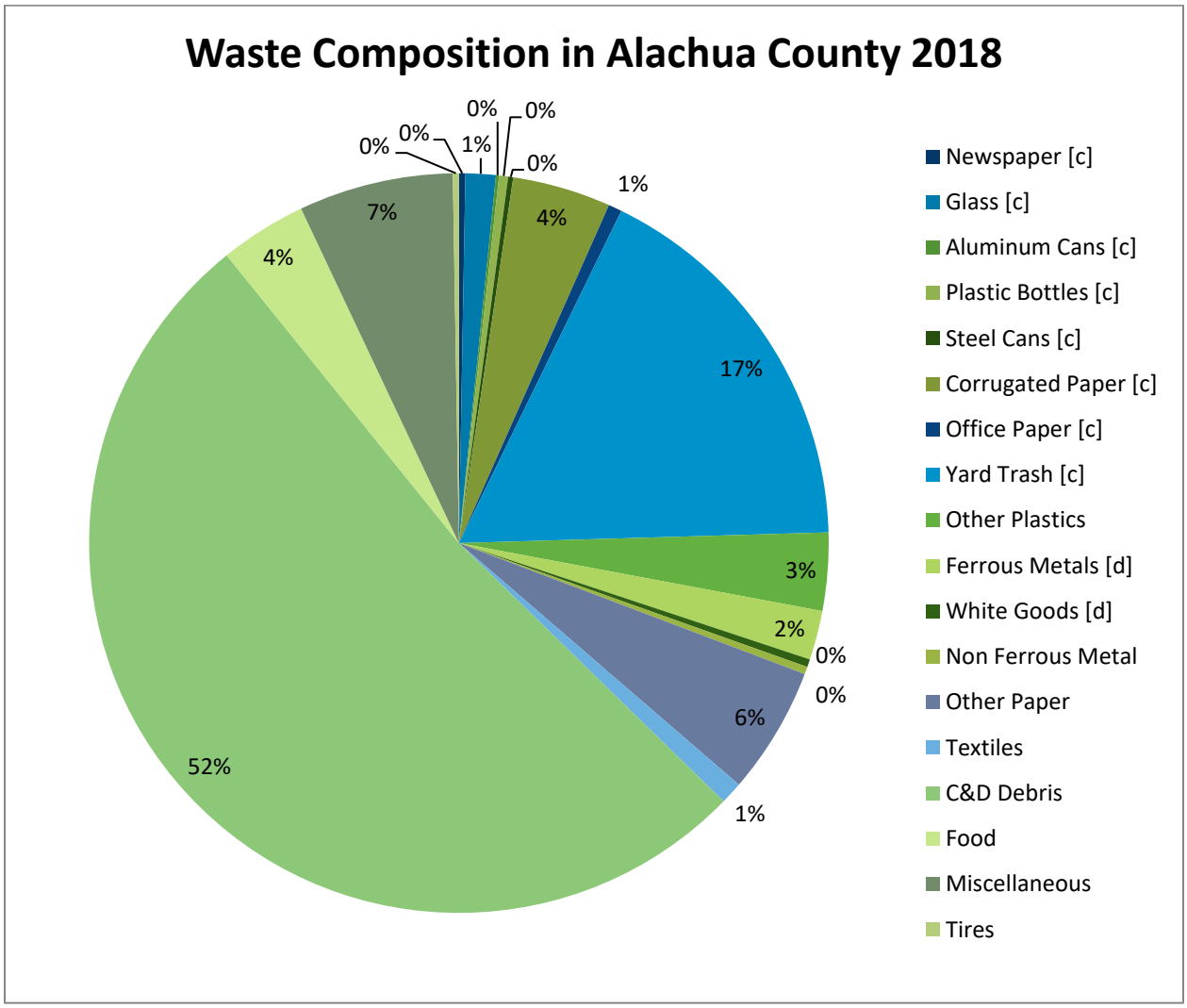
"Renewable energy is statutorily defined as "electrical energy produced from a method that uses one or more of the following fuels or energy sources: hydrogen produced from sources other than fossil fuels, biomass, solar energy, geothermal energy, wind energy, ocean energy and hydroelectric power." A means of creating renewable energy by using solid waste occurs through waste-to-energy (WTE). WTE is the process of generating energy in the form of electricity and/or heat from the primary treatment of MSW. Most WTE processes produce electricity and/or heat directly through combustion or produce a combustible fuel commodity. Currently, there are 12 WTE facilities that accept MSW from 22 Florida counties. Approximately 12% of Florida's MSW is combusted in WTE facilities. Research suggests that increasing the number of WTE plants in Florida could raise the recycling rate under the 2012 methodology. For example, by strategically adding new WTE capacity in higher population areas that currently do not have access to WTE could potentially increase the adjusted recycling rate by more than 5 percent."

Final Recycling Report - FDEP
https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/FinalRecyclingReportVolume1_0_0.pdf

Solid Waste and Resource Recovery in Alachua County

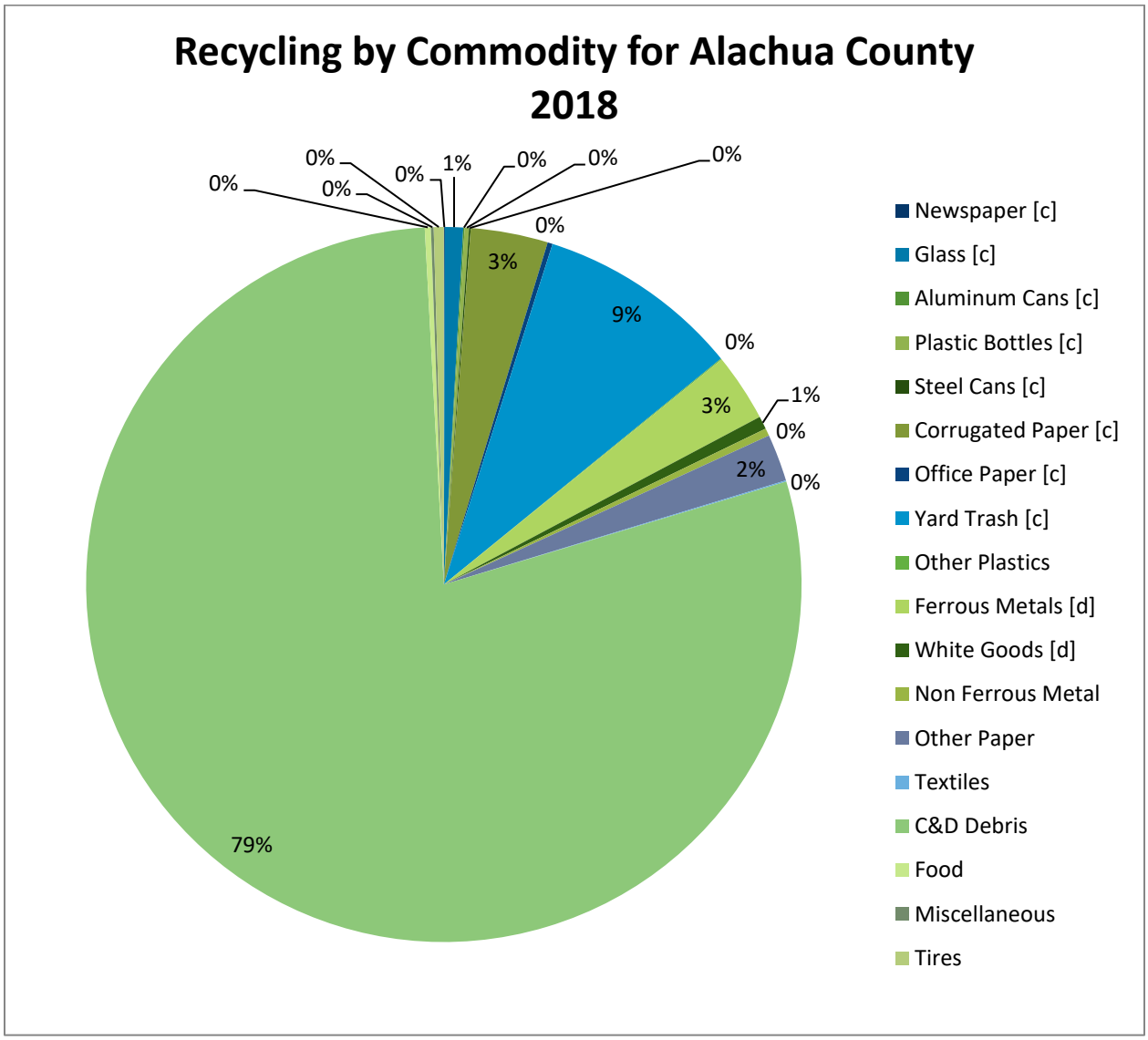
The Alachua County Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Department is responsible for ensuring the proper management and disposal of municipal solid waste from within Alachua County. Municipal solid waste (MSW) includes garbage, recyclables, and yard waste collected from residences, businesses, and institutions as well as construction and demolition debris (C&D debris).

For the 2018 calendar year, Alachua County generated a total of 802,584 tons of MSW of which 468,557 tons were recycled. An additional 73,668.76 tons of MSW was used to create renewable energy for an overall recycling rate of 68%. Of the total MSW generated, nearly half is construction and demolition debris. C&D debris also accounts for nearly 80% of the recycling credits due to the materials weight and relative ease of recycling.



Currently, through the use of disposal agreements with municipalities and the waste haulers, all of the garbage collected within Alachua County is currently brought to the Leveda Brown Environmental Park to be transferred into long haul trailers. From there it is transported to New River Landfill located in Union County. By statute, local governments are not able to direct where recyclables generated on commercial premises are delivered for processing (F.S. 403.7046). For this reason only a portion of the commercial and municipal recyclables are processed at the County's Materials Recovery Facility located at the Leveda Brown Environmental Park. In 2018, the Leveda Brown Environmental Park sent 195,485 tons of waste to the landfill and processed approximately 9,160 tons of recyclables at the Materials Recovery Facility.

Construction and demolition debris is disposed of at regulated C&D debris landfills. F.S. 403.707 requires that all C&D debris landfills and materials recovery facilities process the debris to remove recyclables prior to disposal when economically feasible. In 2018, a total of 416,434 tons of C&D debris was generated in Alachua County and of that tonnage 369,208 tons were recycled.



In 2010, the State legislature put into place F.S. 403.7032 which, among other things, established a statewide recycling goal of 75% by the year 2020 and set benchmarks for achieving this goal. As a county, Alachua County adopted the 75% recycling by 2020 goal into its comprehensive plan and has begun the process of working towards Zero Waste along with the City of Gainesville. Part of this effort is to help create additional markets and opportunities for recycling. The Eco-Industrial Park (formerly referred to as the Resource Recovery Park) has the potential to create these markets and opportunities for recycling and waste reduction. With an initial area of 37 acres, and a planned space for waste reduction research, there is an opportunity for established businesses or startups to put into place outlets for waste from the region preventing it from ending up in a landfill. Based on the waste composition of Alachua County, additional outlets for C&D debris, food waste, yard trash, paper products, non-ferrous metals, and plastics would benefit the county and should be targeted industries for the Eco-Industrial Park.

Responsibilities by area

Office of Waste Collection:

- Curbside Collection Contract
- Enforcement of residential solid waste ordinances
- Preparation of solid waste management, rural collection, and curbside collection assessments

Office of Waste Alternatives:

- Public education and outreach
- Enforcement of mandatory commercial recycling ordinances
- Preparation of FDEP annual solid waste and recycling report

Leveda Brown Environmental Park

- Accept and transport waste to New River landfill
- Recycle white goods, scrap metal, tires, and yard trash
- Screens waste for prohibited items prior to disposal
- Accept and sort recyclable commodities
- Market bales of recyclables
- Houses Environmental Protection's primary hazardous waste collection center

Rural Collection Centers:

- Offers rural residents disposal options for garbage, recycling, yard trash, and hazardous waste
- Brings collected waste to the Leveda Brown Environmental Park

Engineering and Compliance:

- Monitor solid waste facility permit compliance
- Closed landfill compliance monitoring
- Oversees capital improvement projects

Figure 2 County Recycling Credits - Large Counties

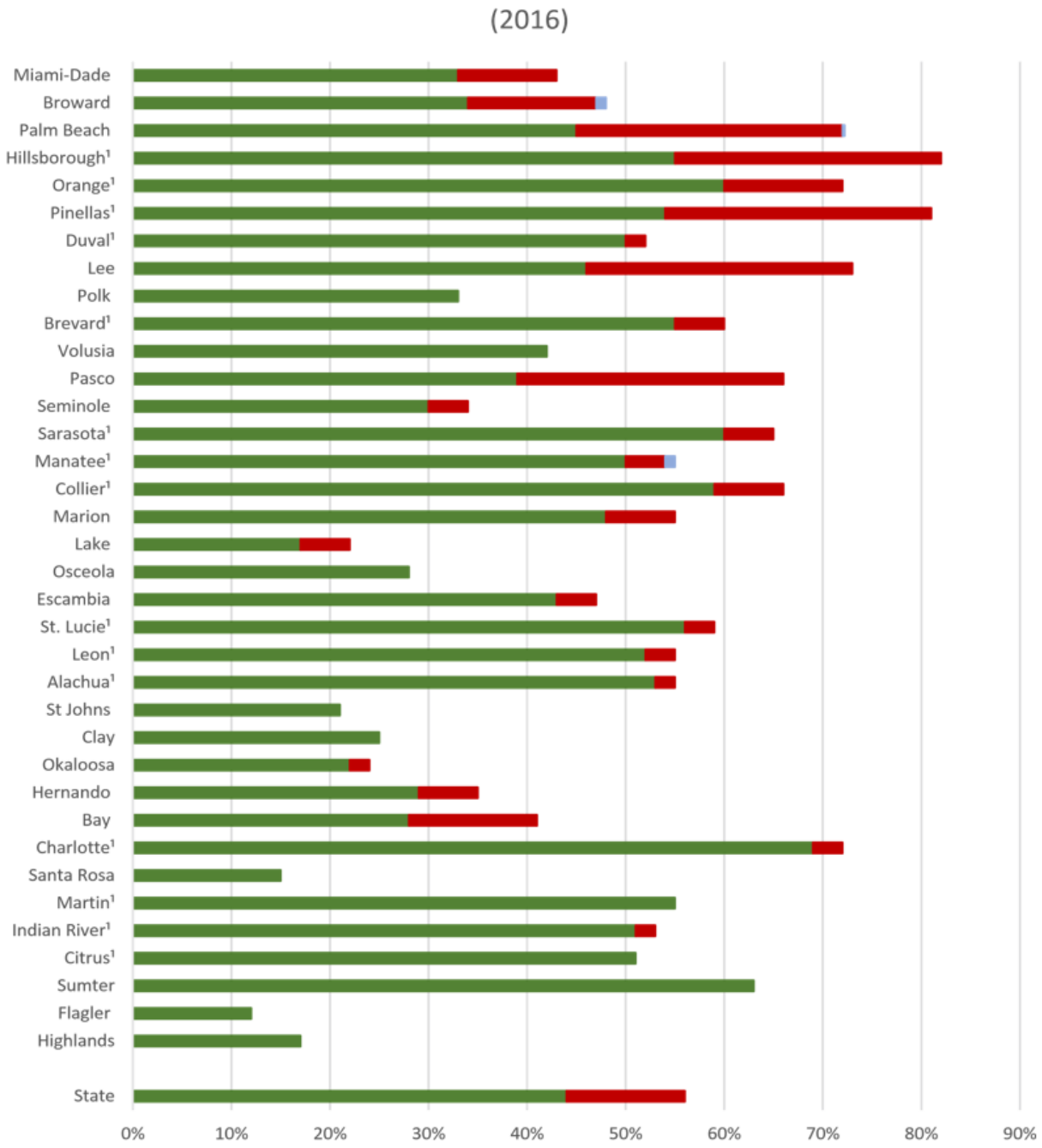
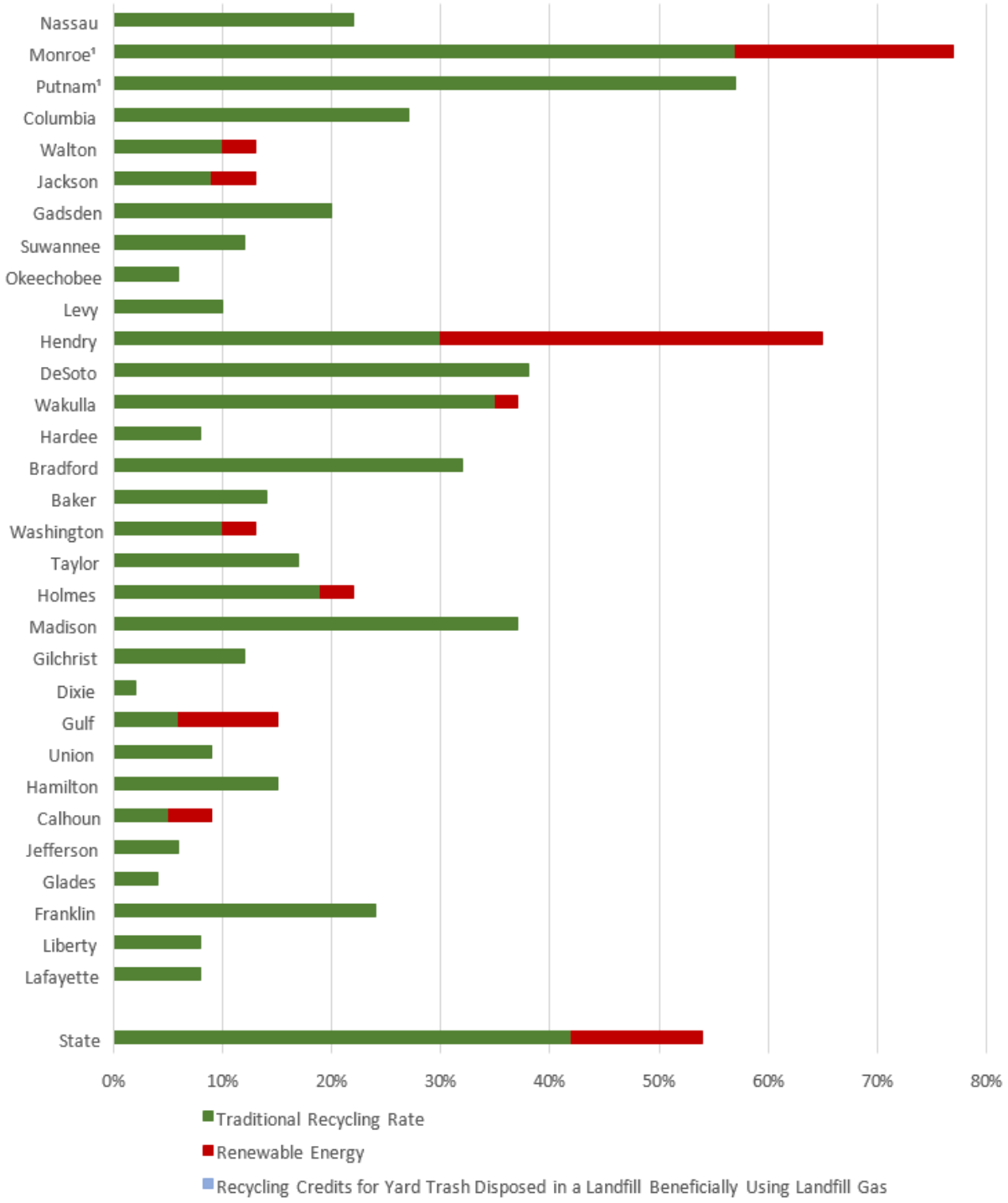


Figure 3 County Recycling Credits - Small Counties

(2016)



Data and Analysis for Evaluation & Appraisal Based Update of Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

Environmental-related Policies

Conservation and Open Space Element
Portable Water & Sanitary Sewer Element
Energy Element
Future Land Use Element
Stormwater Management Element

Introduction

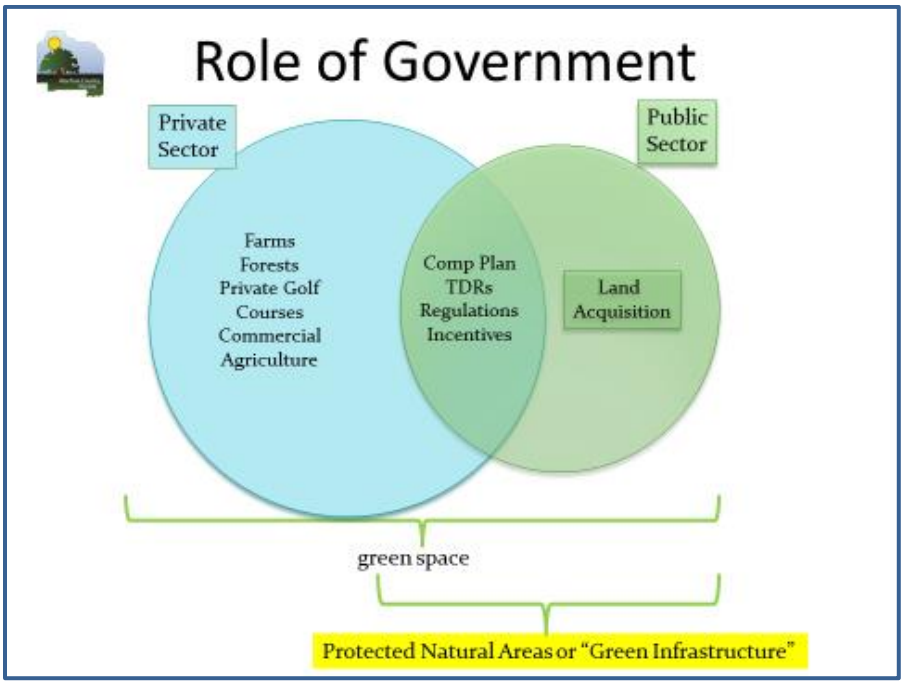
The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments related to environmental policies include the following:

1. Revises open space policies for new development
2. Adds and updates new Greenway Master Plan policies.
3. Increases the Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) buffer requirements
4. Updates wetland mitigation language to be consistent with State requirements and current county policies and practices
5. Strengthens policy to address particulate air pollution adjacent to streets
6. Updates Hazardous Material Code language
7. Updates Springs protection language
8. Updates water conservation, reuse, and reclaimed water policies
9. Adds map of Outstanding Florida Springs (OFS) Priority Focus Areas and extends prohibited activities and regulations that currently apply in the high aquifer recharge areas to OFS Priority Focus Areas.
10. New language requires code to be updated to reduce permanently irrigated areas for new developments
11. Adds new definition of resilient landscaping
12. Updates stormwater language to be consistent with State requirements and current county policies and practices
13. Updates language to be consistent with State requirements for Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
14. Adds Santa Fe River and Orange Lake to the list of Impaired Waters
15. Requires development of watershed management plans
16. Updates the Critical Ecological Corridors Map and associated language
17. Updates the Land Conservation Program objectives and policies
18. The USDA Soils Map (Map 3), which is currently adopted in the Conservation and Open Space Element by reference, would be updated with a link to the latest soil survey online mapping tool.

Background and Analysis of Proposed Amendments
OPEN SPACE

This section addresses items related to open space and resource protection strategies related to development activities. Parks and Habitat acquisition and management is also a significant component of Green Infrastructure and is covered in a separate section (see Land Conservation and Greenway Corridors). Green infrastructure can be defined as nature-based services that provide a cost-effective approach to managing water and natural resources, protect our water supply and reduce flooding, and serve to provide an ecological framework for social, economic, and environmental health for a resilient community. Green infrastructure concepts include upland and wetland habitat protection, restoration and acquisition (see section on Land Conservation and Greenway Corridors for details); water conservation strategies; water quality and stormwater management; and can incorporate Low(er) Impact Design (LID), conservation development concepts, and other approaches in an effort to maximize ecological functions and benefits.

The county has taken a holistic approach to green infrastructure since the adoption of the 2001-2020 Comprehensive Plan. Since the adoption of that Plan, the county has incorporated LID options, new water quality requirements, additional buffer and wetland protection standards, initiated new land acquisition and management programs, and incorporated new land development code requirements for open space, clustering and added incentives for LID, Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) and conservation development strategies. Additionally, ordinances focused on water quality and water conservation have been adopted and implemented.

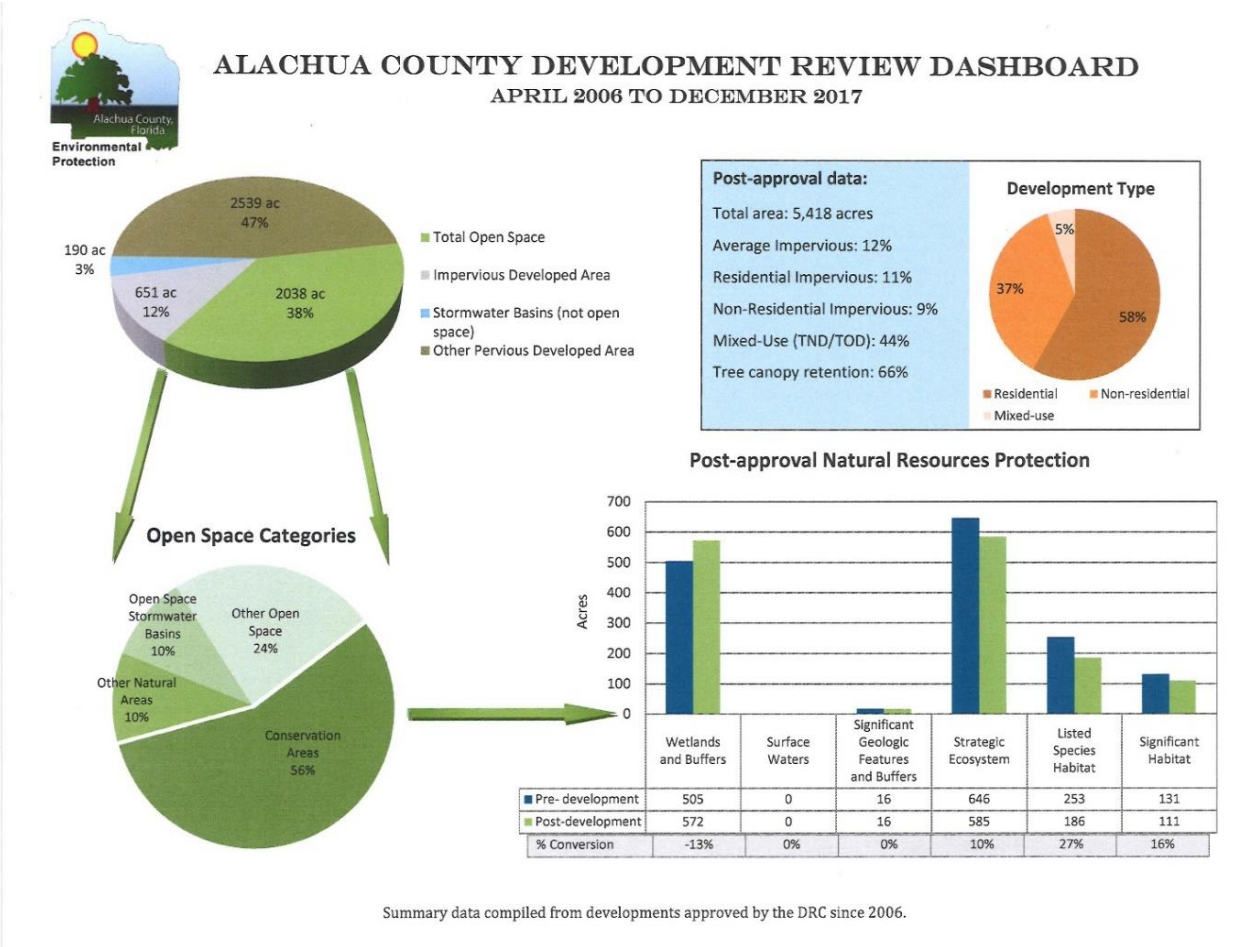


This holistic approach has been very successful in protecting many of our natural and conservation resources in Alachua County. These accomplishments include over 24,000 acres of natural areas protected since 2000 (discussed in separate paper) as well as protection strategies that have been in place since 2005 or earlier, including strong wetland and surface water avoidance and buffer requirements, open space requirements, conservation area protection as part of land development, and required clustering in the rural areas. These results are summarized in the Development Review Dashboard included below.

In 2008, the County was recognized by the National Association of Counties (NACO) "Best of Category" Achievement Award, Planning Category, for the County's success in integrating and leveraging local investment in the environmental protection provisions of the County's Comprehensive Plan and development review process and through the Alachua County Forever land conservation program. This Evaluation and Appraisal process gives us a chance to review our efforts and make any changes necessary to continue to optimize our green infrastructure investment opportunities.

Between April 2006 and December 2017, approximately 2,038 acres were approved to be preserved as open space within approved development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan open space requirements. The breakdown of the types of permanent open space set aside within approved developments is shown in the diagram below. During this time period, 1,470 acres of the open space conserved as part of approved development plans has been comprised of conservation areas, which include wetlands, surface waters, floodplain areas, listed species habitat, significant geological features, and strategic ecosystems. The remainder of the preserved open space has been comprised of other natural areas, other pervious areas, and stormwater management areas which qualify as open space.

The following figure summarizes the Open Space preserved within new development approvals from April 2006 to December 2017.



While the current Comprehensive Plan has many effective policies, there are areas that could be improved to address the ongoing challenges we face related to the protection of our aquifer and water supply, flooding and stormwater issues, sinkholes, and air and water quality problems and challenges that come with population growth and related development impacts and patterns.

Policies changes and updates to address the Issues

The proposed language for open space will not change the protection strategies and requirements for conservation areas (listed in the figure above, which include strategic ecosystems, listed species, wetlands and surface waters and their associated buffers, significant geologic features, 100-year floodplains, and significant habitat) but it will change the requirements for what is currently identified as secondary open space. The proposed language (COSE Policy 5.2.1) changes the percent open space requirement from 20% to 10% for residential developments (and any development that has a residential component) but removes the ability to count stormwater toward the open space. The new language will not require non-residential developments to meet the 10% open space standard (COSE Policy 5.2.6 listed development

projects that are not required to provide additional open space). However, the non-residential development may need to provide for a greenway corridor connection were applicable.

In addition there is a stronger emphasis on the identification and location of a single open space area for each development that either augments required conservation areas, provides accessible open space in the forms of community gardens, fields, and pocket parks, and/or provides links to greenways, trails, and other parks and open space. This standard will be further clarified in the code.

WATER CONSERVATION

Alachua County predominately relies on groundwater for our water needs. According to data compiled in the North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan (NFRWSP), an estimated 49.60 million gallons a day (MGD) of groundwater was pumped in Alachua County in 2010. The largest water use in the county is public supply (25.46 MGD or 51%) that is metered and provided by utilities. This use is largely driven by residential water use, but also includes commercial and industrial uses that are supplied by local utilities. Domestic self-supply includes the estimated water use from private residential wells and is relatively small at 3.53 MGD and 7% of the total water use. Agriculture is the second largest use at 16.75 MGD and 34% of the total use and is mostly estimated based on calculations of crop coverage, crop needs, and rainfall data. Power generation represents 5% of the total water use at 2.5 MGD, while industrial uses that rely on wells instead of public supply represent 1% of the total water use at 0.67 MGD. Recreational water use represents golf courses within Alachua County and is low at 0.69 MGD and 2% of the total use.

The 2016 Water 2070 report from the University of Florida states, “the clear takeaway is that development-related water demand is the major driver of increased water consumption in Florida by 2070, and that the combination of more compact development patterns and modest water conservation measures would result in a fairly significant reduction.” The report identified reducing water used for landscape irrigation as the single most effective strategy for reducing water use, since at least 50% of household water use is used for irrigation. While Alachua County adopted an Irrigation Design Code in 2015 for improving the efficiency of new irrigation systems in unincorporated Alachua County, the current trend is still to install landscapes dominated by irrigated turf in new construction.

Some areas have turned to the use of reclaimed water for irrigation as a strategy to reduce potable water use. While this practice has some advantages, it also has the unintended consequence of increased nutrient pollution, while encouraging over irrigation and the use of water intensive landscaping materials. Additionally, water management district irrigation restrictions do not apply to reclaimed water, which complicates enforcement of the water conserving restrictions. As landscapes become less water and chemically-dependent due to conservation measures and changes in development patterns, extension of reclaimed water systems for landscape irrigation becomes less of a priority. The best uses of reclaimed water is for industrial uses that offset potable demand and for recharging the aquifer following additional treatment, such as that provided by infiltrating wetlands.

Alachua County has long promoted the conversion of water and chemically-intensive landscapes to more natural and resilient landscapes. EPD recently completed a grant funded program offering a 50% rebate up to $2,000 for each property that reduces irrigated turf. While this grant-funded program was a good

start, participation is dampened by the barriers presented by Homeowners Association landscaping policies. While the 2009 Florida Friendly Landscaping legislation aimed to reduce these barriers, the legislation failed to identify an enforcement mechanism. The April 2019 addition of the Florida Friendly Landscaping for Homeowner Associations Article to the Water Quality Code should help property owners wanting to make changes in their landscapes. The Evaluation and Appraisal process provides an opportunity to explore additional mechanisms to reduce these barriers in an effort to further encourage landscapes that are protective of water quality and quantity.

An additional challenge to creating resilient landscapes is screening requirements (fencing, walls, etc.). Fencing is often added after landscapes are designed and installed; creating inefficiently irrigated landscapes and fragmented open spaces. These unintended consequences will be explored by staff during this process of identifying techniques for maximizing water conservation for new construction.

Policies changes and updates to address the Issues

To maximize water conservation strategies, Comprehensive Plan Policies have been updated or added in an effort to reduce outdoor water use. In particular, staff updated the current policies in the Conservation and Open Space Objective 4.5 Groundwater and Springs, as well as policies in the Potable Water and Sewer Element Objectives 4.1 and 8.1, and the Energy Element Objective 1.1. Policies on landscaping and irrigation have been updated to include strategies to reduce permanent irrigation and to increase the participation in the Florida Water Star^{SM} program. Policies addressing reclaimed water and treated effluent will be evaluated and strengthened to avoid negative unintended consequences and inconsistencies. Additionally, language has be updated to assist with overcoming the barriers of Homeowners Associations resistance to less water and fertilizer intensive landscapes and improvements to screening requirements. Finally, the Comprehensive Plan currently uses the outdated “xeriscape” terminology. This term has been phased out of state and local programs and will be replaced with the term ‘resilient landscaping’.

Per Board direction, staff updated reclaimed water language and water quality and conservation language. Staff updated a policy to include modern approaches for promoting programs and update policies to be consistent with how staff administers these policies. Many of the changes are consistent with Board’s 2010 Water Conservation Initiative addressing irrigation and general water conservation strategies. And finally, staff updated water conservation policies to discourage the use of permanent landscape irrigation.

SURFACE WATERS

Introduction

Newnan’s, Lochloosa, and Orange lakes have been determined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to be impaired waters under the Florida Watershed Restoration Act (Chapter 403.067, Florida Statutes [F.S.]) and the Impaired Surface Waters Rule (Rule 62-303, Florida Administrative Code). Both Newnan’s Lake and Lochloosa Lake are impaired for nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) and Orange Lake is impaired for phosphorus. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) were

developed for Newnan's and Orange lakes in 2003 and Lochloosa Lake and Cross Creek in 2017. TMDLs for fecal coliform for Hogtown, Sweetwater Branch, and Tumblin creeks were developed and finalized in 2003 and are still in effect. A basin management action plan (BMAP) outlining projects for water quality improvement in the Orange Creek Basin (OCB) was completed in 2007 and adopted in 2008. Phase 2 of the OCBMAP was adopted in 2014, with a focus on water quality improvement for the major lakes in the OCB.

The Santa Fe River Basin (SRB) was verified as impaired by nutrients based on elevated chlorophyll a and the presence of algae. It was included on Florida's Verified List of impaired waters for the SRB that was adopted by Secretarial Order on June 3, 2008. The purpose of this TMDL is to establish the allowable amount of pollutants to the Santa Fe River that would restore the river and springs to meet their applicable water quality criteria for nutrients (the springs 0.35 mg/L nitrate standard). TMDLs for fecal coliform bacteria, developed in 2014, in the SRB include six steams in Alachua County: Pareners Branch, Mill Creek, Monteocha Creek, Turkey Creek, Hague Branch (Cellon Creek), and Blues Creek. The Santa Fe River BMAP was adopted in 2012.

Summary of Fecal Coliform Impairments by Waterbody for Gainesville Urban Area of the Orange Creek Basin and Santa Fe River Basin.

Watershed#	*Water Body ID (WBID)*	*Impaired Waters Listing*
Hatchet Creek	*2688*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Little Hatchet Creek	*2695*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Possum Creek	*2696*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Sunland Drain (Lake Forest Creek)	*2709*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Unnamed Drain (Beville Heights Creek)	*2710*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Lake Alice Outlet	*2719*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Alachua Sink Outlet	*2720*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Alachua Sink*	*2720A*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Little Orange Creek	*2713*	*FDEP Verified List 12-18-2017*
Pareners Branch**	*3626*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Mill Creek Sink**	*3644*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Monteocha Creek**	*3654*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Turkey Creek**	*3671A*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Hague Branch (Cellon Creek)**	*3678A*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Blues Creek**	*3682*	*SFRB Fecal Coliform TMDL August 2014*
Hogtown Creek	*2698*	*Hogtown Creek TMDL 9-19-2003*
Sweetwater Branch	*2711*	*Sweetwater Branch TMDL 9-19-2003*
Tumblin Creek	*2718A*	*Tumblin Creek TMDL 9-19-2003*

**All waterbodies except Alachua Sink are streams.*

***These six waterbodies were addressed in the 2014 Santa Fe River Basin (SFRB) Fecal Coliform TMDL (Turner 2014) and are also listed on the comprehensive impaired waters verified listing 12-16-2017 (FDEP 2017).*

#Little Orange Creek in the OCB is impaired for fecal coliform

Minimum flows and levels (MFLs) are the minimum water levels and/or flows adopted by the water management district governing boards to prevent significant harm to the water resources or ecology of an area resulting from water withdrawals permitted by the districts.

Establishing MFLs is a requirement of Florida Statutes 373.042(2) and criteria to be assessed are set forth by FDEP in Chapter 62-40 FAC, Water Resource Implementation Rule. Section 62-40.473, FAC requires the consideration of 10 human use and ecological criteria or "Water Resource Values" (WRVs) when establishing MFLs including: recreation in and on the water, fish and wildlife habitats and the passage of fish, estuarine resources, transfer of detrital material, maintenance of freshwater storage and supply, aesthetic and scenic attributes, filtration and absorption of nutrients and other pollutants, sediment loads, water quality, and navigation (FDEP, 2006). When developing MFLs technical studies are conducted, and

the WRVs are evaluated to determine the limiting value, which then will be used to set the minimum flow and/or level.

MFLs define how much water levels and/or flows may change and still prevent significant harm. MFLs take into account the ability of water resource-dependent communities to adjust to changes in hydrologic conditions. MFLs allow for an acceptable level of change to occur. MFLs apply in water management district decisions regarding water use permits. Computer models for surface and groundwaters are used to evaluate the effects of existing and proposed water withdrawals on water resources and ecological systems. The water management districts are required to develop recovery or prevention strategies in those cases where a water body currently does not or will not meet an established MFL. Water uses cannot be permitted that cause any MFL to be violated. Each water management district is required to annually update their priority water body list and schedule for the establishment of MFLs for surface waters and aquifers within their respective districts.

Effective December 10, 2007 MFLs (approved by the SRWMD Governing Board) were effective for the Upper Santa Fe River Near Graham, FL, gage and the Worthington Springs gage based upon the Technical Report by SDII and others: MFL Establishment for the Upper Santa Fe River, May 2007.

In June 2013, the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) Governing Board requested that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) adopt MFLs it proposed for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers and Priority Springs. The decision was based on the technical work conducted for the proposed MFLs by SRWMD staff, and the potential for cross-basin impacts originating outside of the SRWMD. SRWMD staff had also assessed the streamflows observed in the recent historical record and recent trends in the flow regime, and determined that a recovery strategy was required. The Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers and Priority Springs MFLs were adopted by DEP. The proposed DEP rule was ratified by the Legislature (HB 7081) and signed into law by Governor Scott with an effective date of June 10, 2015 (Chapter 2015-128, Laws of Florida).

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

The policies related to Total Maximum Daily Loads, Basin Management Action Plans, and Minimum Flows and Levels are out of date and have been updated.

STORMWATER

Urban development can degrade water quality by accelerating eutrophication in surface waters receiving runoff and can increase nutrients in groundwaters. The reduction in pervious surface and vegetation in the developed landscape removes natural filtration mechanisms and increases pollutant loads discharged into receiving waters. Fertilizers, pesticides, bacteria, oils and greases, and other pollutants characteristic of urban land uses are flushed from the watershed during storms becoming trapped in stormwater. In Florida, excess nutrients are the greatest water quality issue facing our surface and groundwaters. The

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) adopts Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) that sets a watershed-based pollutant loading cap for these "impaired waters."

The ultimate stormwater management goal is to minimize the adverse effects of urban development on communities, watersheds, water bodies, wetlands, floodplains, and other natural systems. More specifically, these goals include:

- Pollutant load reduction as needed to ensure that discharges do not cause or contribute to violations of State water quality standards.
- Preventing or reducing on-site and off-site flooding.
- Maintaining or restoring the hydrologic integrity of wetlands and aquatic habitats.
- Maintaining and promoting groundwater recharge with clean water.
- Minimizing erosion and sedimentation.
- Promoting the reuse of rainfall and stormwater.

Stormwater treatment systems use best management practices (BMPs) that can be categorized into two basic categories:

(a) Nonstructural BMPs (source controls). These BMPs are used for pollution prevention to minimize pollutants getting into stormwater or to minimize stormwater volume. They include site planning BMPs such as preserving vegetation, clustering development, and minimizing total imperviousness or directly connected impervious areas. They also include source control BMPs such as minimizing clearing, minimizing soil compaction, and using Florida Friendly Landscapes.

(b) Structural BMPs. Structural BMPs are used to mitigate the changes in stormwater characteristics associated with land development and urbanization. Structural BMPs include retention and detention basins and filtration systems.

Low Impact Design or Development (LID) is a stormwater and land use management strategy that strives to mimic pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation, and transpiration by emphasizing conservation, use of on-site natural features, site planning, and distributed stormwater management practices that are integrated into a project's design, especially it's landscaping and open space. Successful adoption of LID stormwater management requires a fundamental shift in thinking from the traditional "collect, concentrate, convey, centralize, and control" approach to a new stormwater management mantra of "retain, detain, recharge, filter, and use". Unlike conventional stormwater systems, which typically control and treat runoff using a single engineered stormwater BMP located at the "bottom of the hill," LID systems are designed to promote volume attenuation and treatment at or near the source. LID systems use a suite of stormwater BMPs – site planning BMPs, sustainable landscaping, source control BMPs, and structural BMPs such as retention, detention, infiltration, treatment and harvesting mechanisms – that are integrated into a project site to function as a "BMP treatment train."

Sinkholes and other karst features are natural and common geologic features in areas underlain by limestone and other rocks that are dissolved by water. In north-central Florida, sinkholes are formed by solution of near-surface limestone and by collapse of surface materials into underlying cavities in rock. Rapidly forming sinkholes rarely occur under natural conditions. Sinkholes most commonly form in western and central Alachua County, in areas where limestone is exposed or thinly covered by less than 25 feet of permeable sand. Sinkholes are less common where clay-containing materials are over 100 feet thick, such as in eastern Alachua County. Sinkholes have been increasingly common over the past twenty-five years, primarily due to human activities such as groundwater withdrawal, surface water diversion, and pond construction.

Soil and sediment subsidence (sinking) are common during periods of high rainfall, especially when preceded by dry periods. Land subsidence results from a number of factors, one of which is sinkhole development. Common causes of subsidence not related to sinkhole formation include decay of land-clearing debris buried when a structure was built, decay of tree stumps and large roots, leaking water pipes and fittings, cracked and leaking swimming pools, cracked stormwater piping carrying away soil with the stormwater runoff, poor compaction of soil around utility lines, and runoff from roofs, gutters, and pavement.

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

Low Impact Design techniques are encouraged in the Future Land Use Element Objectives 1.6, 2.1; Stormwater Management Objective 5.1; COSE Objective 3.6, 4.5 and Energy Element 3.2. Staff is evaluating the existing policies) in order to provide consistent and specific language for the implementation of LID techniques including, but not limited to, non-structural BMPs (such as landscaping and soil preparation requirements) and structural BMPs (such as limiting the use of basins that use constructed vertical drainage connections between the retention basin and a more pervious underlying geological formation, typically the Floridan aquifer).

Staff has updated policies in Objectives 4.4, 4.6, 5.2 primarily focus on the protection of existing sinkholes and other sensitive karst features and to be consistent with the new Countywide Stormwater Code. Additional changes were also made to policies in the Stormwater Element, Objective 5.1.

Stormwater Management Element Policy 6.1.3 has been revised for consistency with Florida Statutes regarding the County's processing and issuing of development permits (such as construction permits) in relation to other applicable state or federal permits.

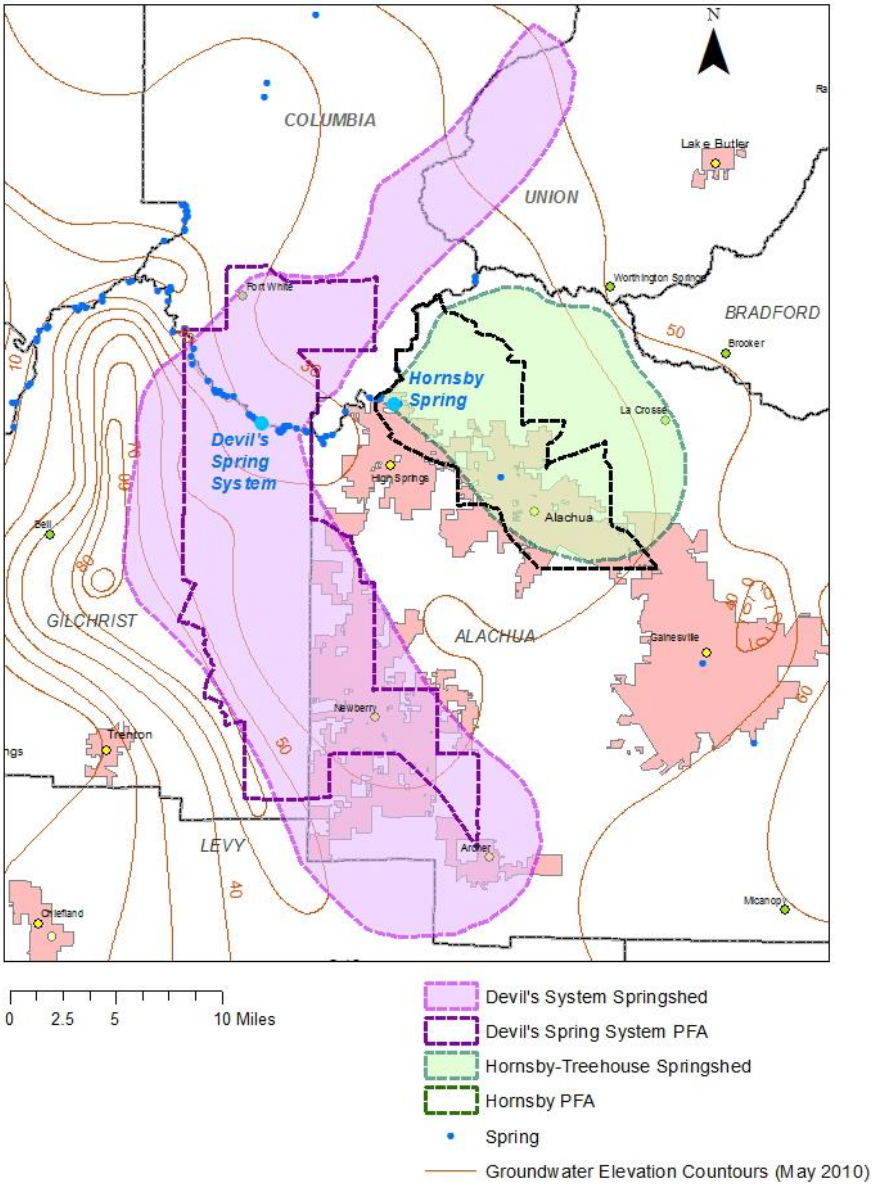
GROUNDWATER AND SPRINGS

COSE Objective 4.5 contains the majority of policies associated with aquifer recharge, springs protection, and groundwater. One of the most significant changes in the State regulatory framework since the adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan is the adoption of the Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act, adopted by the Florida Legislature in 2016 (Chapter 373, Part VIII, Florida Statutes [F.S.]). Under the Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is

required to delineate priority focus areas (PFAs) for all Outstanding Florida Springs identified as impaired. FDEP has completed draft Priority Focus Areas for two areas with impaired Outstanding Florida Springs in the vicinity of Alachua County; Devil's Spring System and Hornsby Spring. "Priority Focus Areas means the area or areas of a basin where the Floridan Aquifer is generally most vulnerable to pollutant inputs where there is a known connectivity between groundwater pathways and an Outstanding Florida Spring." (Chapter 373, Part VIII, FS 2016). The Priority Focus Areas will eventually become the geographic basis for important regulatory, funding, and protection measures by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management Districts, and local governments.

Poe Spring is also an Outstanding Florida Spring, but does not currently meet the Florida Department of Environmental Protection definition of impairment. While Poe is currently not listed as impaired for nitrate, there is substantial supporting hydrogeologic and groundwater data available that support the protective measures afforded of PFAs. High aquifer vulnerability, the presence of soils with high leaching potential, and the large number of septic systems in this springshed clearly demonstrate the need for a PFA for Poe Spring. Delineating a PFA for Poe Spring would aid Alachua County in proactively taking measures to protect the spring in hopes of preventing further impairment and expensive remediation activities.

Additionally, some of the wellhead protection policies in the current Comprehensive Plan are out of date and should be updated. Many of the wellhead protection areas are small water systems at mobile home parks or other uses which are protected by the Hazardous Materials Management Code. Alachua County is pre-empted from regulating well construction and for the most part these are located on private property and operated by private owners or contractors.



Strategies for Addressing the Issues

Staff updated the existing policies in Objective 4.5 Groundwater and Springs and consider the establishment of a priority focus area and corresponding protections for Poe Spring consistent with the criteria developed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection under the Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act. Additionally, staff updated the existing wellhead protection policies in Objective 4.5.

WETLAND PROTECTION

The protection of our wetland and surface waters has been recognized as one of the most critical needs of our community to protect our aquifer and minimize the impacts from severe weather events. This includes not only preserving these water resources but also maintaining sufficient upland natural buffers around these features. The uplands areas adjacent to wetlands are essential to their survival and functionality. Buffers protect and maintain wetland function by removing pollutants and sediments from stormwater runoff, removing nutrients and contaminants from upland sources, and increasing or maintaining their habitat value and function. The County has wetland and surface water protective safeguards that are stronger than what is required by the State because our community has strong expectations for water resource protection and desire to maintain a quality of life that is dependent on a clean (and inexpensive) water supply.

Through the approval of the Alachua County Charter Amendment 1 on November 7, 2000, the voters of Alachua County elected to give the Board of County Commissioners the authority to establish countywide standards for protecting the environment by prohibiting or regulating air or water pollution. The County adopted Ordinance 18-05, known as the Countywide Wetland Protection Ordinance in January 2018, effectively expanding the protections of wetlands and associated buffers within both the unincorporated and municipal areas of the County. This ordinance created a new article (Article II) of Chapter 77 that set minimum requirements for wetland protection and buffer requirements. This approach is supported by the Comprehensive Plan's Intergovernmental Coordination Element Objective 8.1 and Policy 8.1.1.

<u>Outstanding Florida Waters</u>

An Outstanding Florida Water (OFW) is a water designated worthy of special protection because of its natural attributes. This special designation is applied by the State to certain waters and is intended to protect existing good water quality.

Most OFWs are areas managed by the state or federal government as parks, wildlife refuges, preserves, marine sanctuaries, estuarine research reserves, scenic and wild rivers, or aquatic preserves. Generally, the waters within these managed areas are OFWs because the managing agency has requested this special protection.

Waters that are not already in a state or federal managed area may be designated as "special water" OFWs if certain requirements are met, including a public process of designation. The designated OFWs in Alachua County are: Santa Fe River System, San Felasco Hammock State Preserve, Payne's Prairie State Preserve, Devil's Millhopper State Geological Site, Lochloosa Lake, and Orange Lake.

At a November 2016 public meeting, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) requested staff investigate the need for additional OFW protection requirements. This concern was raised again at the January 23, 2018 adoption hearing for Ordinance 18-05. At that meeting, staff was asked to consider increasing OFW buffer requirements from 150 ft. to 200 ft., consistent with the buffer distance the City of Gainesville requires for Payne's Prairie, a designated OFW.

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

The County Charter and Comprehensive Plan already support the establishment of countywide standards for protecting the environment by prohibiting or regulating air or water pollution. However, the BOCC requested staff investigate additional protection strategies for Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW).

The table in COSE policy 3.6.8, which provides the default buffer distances, was updated to include OFW buffer protects to an average of 200 feet. This is consistent with Gainesville's buffer protection for OFWs (Paynes Prairie). Increasing the buffer requirements increase the protection of these systems for wildlife protection and water quality, particularly nitrogen. A 200 ft. average buffer is considered within the range used for wildlife and water quality protection of sensitive water resources. Many other local jurisdictions through the country set the minimum buffer of 100 ft. or more for their most sensitive wetland/surface water features (i.e. Petersburg, VA; Northeastern Ohio Model Ordinance; Henrico County, VA; Monroe County, NY; Barnstable, MA; Sturbridge, MA; Island Co., WA; Sammamish, WA).

The Wetlands and Floodplains map, which is adopted as part of the Future Land Use Element, is also proposed to be updated with the most recent available data.

Also, the USDA Soils Map (Map 3), which is currently adopted in the Conservation and Open Space Element by reference, would be updated with a link to the latest soil survey online mapping tool.

PERMANENT PROTECTION

Staff received direction from the BOCC on February 14, 2017 to look at existing permanent protection language in the land development code as it relates to temporary uses and other applications that do not fit well into existing code requirements and procedures. The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan requires the protection of conservation areas (including wetlands and surface waters and their associated buffers), 100-year floodplains, significant geologic features, upland habitat areas, and strategic ecosystems as part of the development plan review process. The Unified Land Development Code, which implements the Comprehensive Plan, requires the permanent protection of conservation management areas that are identified through a natural resource assessment as part of a development plan application using a legal instrument that remains with the land (preferably a conservation easement that is conveyed to the County).

Current code language provides little flexibility related to the options available for permanent protection of regulated natural resources that are defined as 'Conservation Areas.' Broad changes in the strategies for protection of natural resources would require changes to the policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The goals, objectives, and policies relating to conservation areas and their protection are both interwoven among multiple parts of the Conservation and Open Space Element and integrated with other elements of the plan, especially the Future Land Use Element.

Changes to wetland mitigation strategies are limited to what is authorized under State regulations. The Unified Mitigation Assessment Methodology (UMAM), Chapter 62-345, Florida Administrative Code, is

used in Florida to ensure consistency in mitigation statewide. Current Comprehensive Plan language is consistent with this requirement. Under State law there is little flexibility to go beyond what is currently provided in the Comprehensive Plan for applying wetland mitigation options.

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

COSE Policy 4.7.7 has been updated to be consistent with State law and provides clarity to policy and procedures for how projects that are proposing surface water, wetland, or associated buffer impacts are handled by the County.

AIR QUALITY

Motor vehicles are one of the largest sources of air pollution in the United States. Physical characteristics and patterns of land development can affect air quality by influencing the availability of a variety of travel modes and ultimately which modes of travel people select.

Development patterns that locate jobs, housing, and recreation in close proximity increase the use of alternative forms of travel, such as walking, biking, and mass transit. Alternative forms of travel reduce the number of vehicles on the road, reduce the amount of pollution emitted by motor vehicles, and improve air quality.

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

The policies in Conservation and Open Space Element Objective 4.1 (Air Resources) specifically address the issues raised by EPAC. Staff updated Policy 4.1.5 that addresses air quality issues during land use planning and development review and added language that supports the concept of physical barriers, if necessary, to reduce particulate air pollution and reduce energy consumption.

LAND CONSERVATION AND GREENWAY CORRIDORS

Open space and greenspace are general terms that can describe a range of land uses, from urban parks to nature preserves. Such areas can be either publically or privately owned. As the terms suggest, these lands share the basic characteristic of an emphasis on the open, green, pervious, and natural as opposed to the built, impervious, and manmade. But more than just lands having similar characteristics, when these green and open spaces are managed as a system they can provide benefits on a larger scale. Just as built infrastructure is understood as components such as roads and power grids that are planned and constructed to systematically provide essential services to society, “green infrastructure” is a strategically planned and managed network of open space, parks, greenways, conservation easements, working lands with conservation value, and wilderness that provide essential services. These services include supporting native species, maintaining natural ecological processes, sustaining air and water resources, and contributing to health and quality of life. However, at the larger scale, green infrastructure, unlike built

infrastructure, is rarely practical to recreate; we can only protect what remains. Green infrastructure is an ecological framework essential for environmental and economic sustainability, and a key to preserving quality of life.

For the last 30 years, Alachua County has addressed the strategic protection of its green infrastructure through various means. In 1987, a Comprehensive Inventory of Natural and Ecological Communities in Alachua County was prepared for the County by KBN Engineering and Applied Sciences, Inc. Specific policies were adopted in the 1991-2011 Comprehensive Plan for protection of significant natural uplands. A follow-up, more comprehensive study was completed for the County by KBN/Golder Associates in 1996, providing an Ecological Inventory of significant upland habitats in private ownership that were deemed worthy of protection either through acquisition, management, or regulatory processes. This study also recognized the importance of connectivity, and identified additional sites to connect larger areas, providing corridors for wildlife species and surface water connections. In 2002, the areas identified in the KBN/Golder Study were adopted as Strategic Ecosystems in the 2001-2020 Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, which also included policies to protect them and promote the development of a linked open space network. This linked open space network or "greenways system" was envisioned to not only protect natural systems but also provide "unique opportunities for recreation, multi-modal transportation, and economic development" (2011-2030 Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) 6.3).

The KBN Study provided an impetus for the creation of the local land conservation program, Alachua County Forever. This Program began in November of 2000 as a citizen initiated voter approved referendum to acquire improve and manage environmentally significant lands to protect water resources, wildlife habitats, and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation through a 29 million dollar bond. Since 2000, over 24,000 acres were protected through acquisition, conservation easements, land donations and partnerships. Specific objectives and policies relating to the Alachua County Forever Program were adopted in the 2001-2020 Alachua County Comprehensive Plan COSE Section 6.

COSE 6.2.4 states that "Lands shall be selected for acquisition under the Alachua County Forever Program based on an evaluation of environmental, social and management criteria as adopted by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC)." The BoCC adopted the most recent version of this selection criteria, known as the Land Conservation Decision Matrix (Matrix) via Resolution 15-106. Alachua County staff use a wide variety of resources to evaluate the selection criteria in the Matrix. Resources are updated periodically and new resources are added as they become available.

The Critical Ecological Corridors Map, adopted in COSE Policy 6.3.2 has been updated and is one of the resources that help prioritize the selection of lands for acquisition. The updated policy states that the "County shall prioritize maintenance of ecologically functional linkages between ecological corridor core areas as shown on the Critical Ecological Corridors Map through various programs and activities, including:

(a) Implementation of development review

(b) Special area planning for Strategic Ecosystems

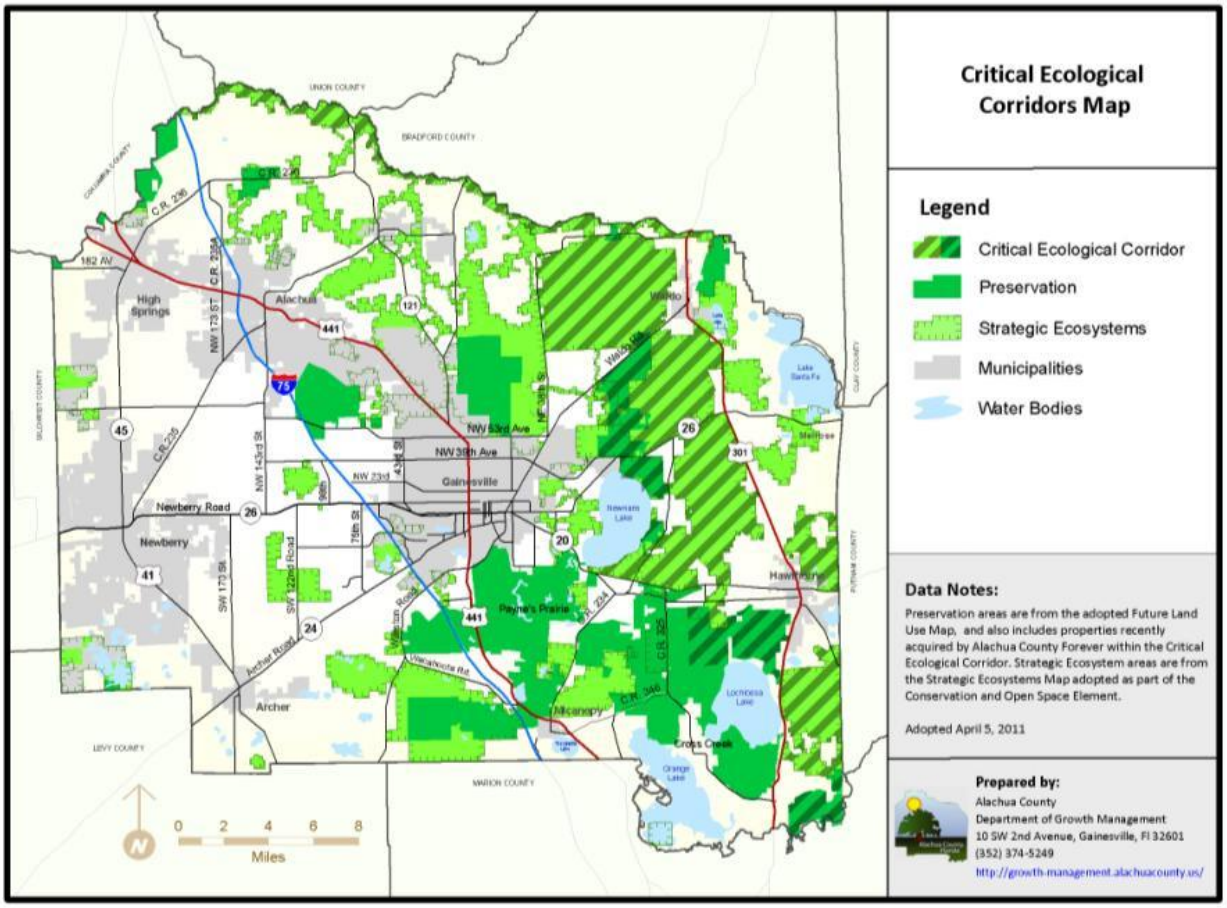
(c) Land acquisition programs and associated management plans

(d) Transfer of Development Rights program (see Future Land Use Element Section 9.0)

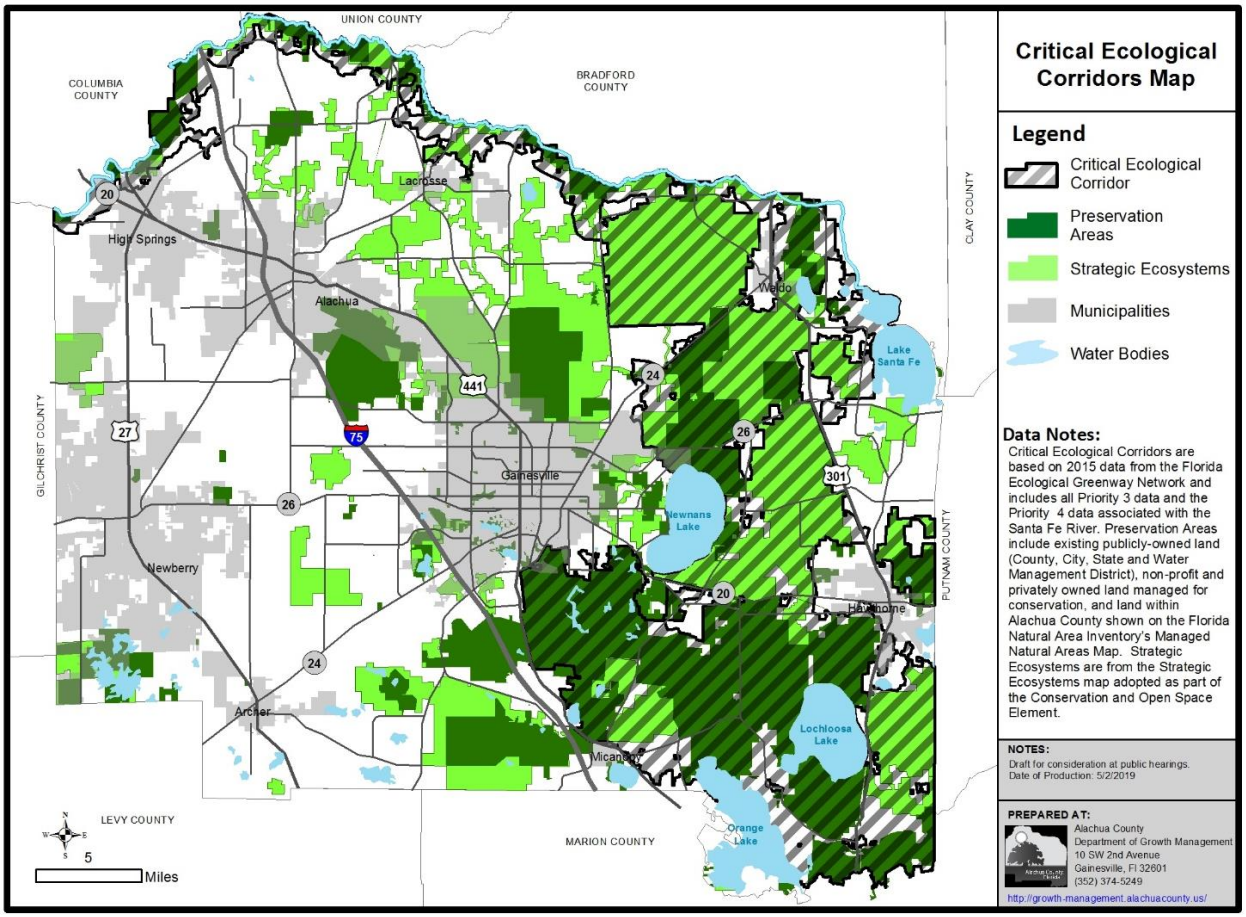
(e) Intergovernmental coordination efforts with municipalities, adjacent counties, regional entities, state and federal agencies

(f) Outreach programs to promote the value of conserving linked ecosystems/corridors and support tax incentives that promote the preservation of mapped ecological core areas."

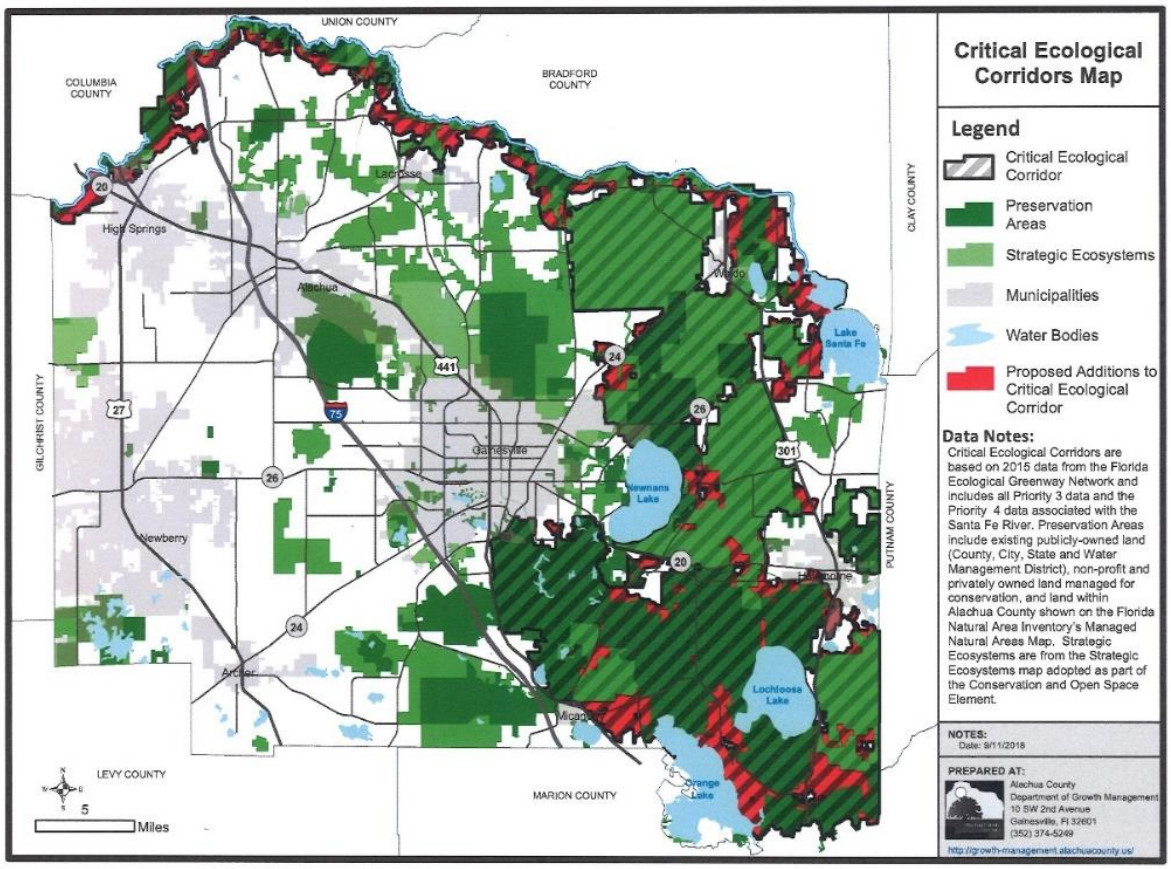
The information used to create this map changes over time. These changes include the inclusion of new properties in the County's Preservation Future Land Use category, new managed conservation lands, and new information from state and county critical lands and ecological corridors analyses. Below is a copy of the original map, the updated map, and a map that shows the changes between the two (in red).



Critical Ecological Corridors Map from COSE 6.3.2 (adopted 2011)



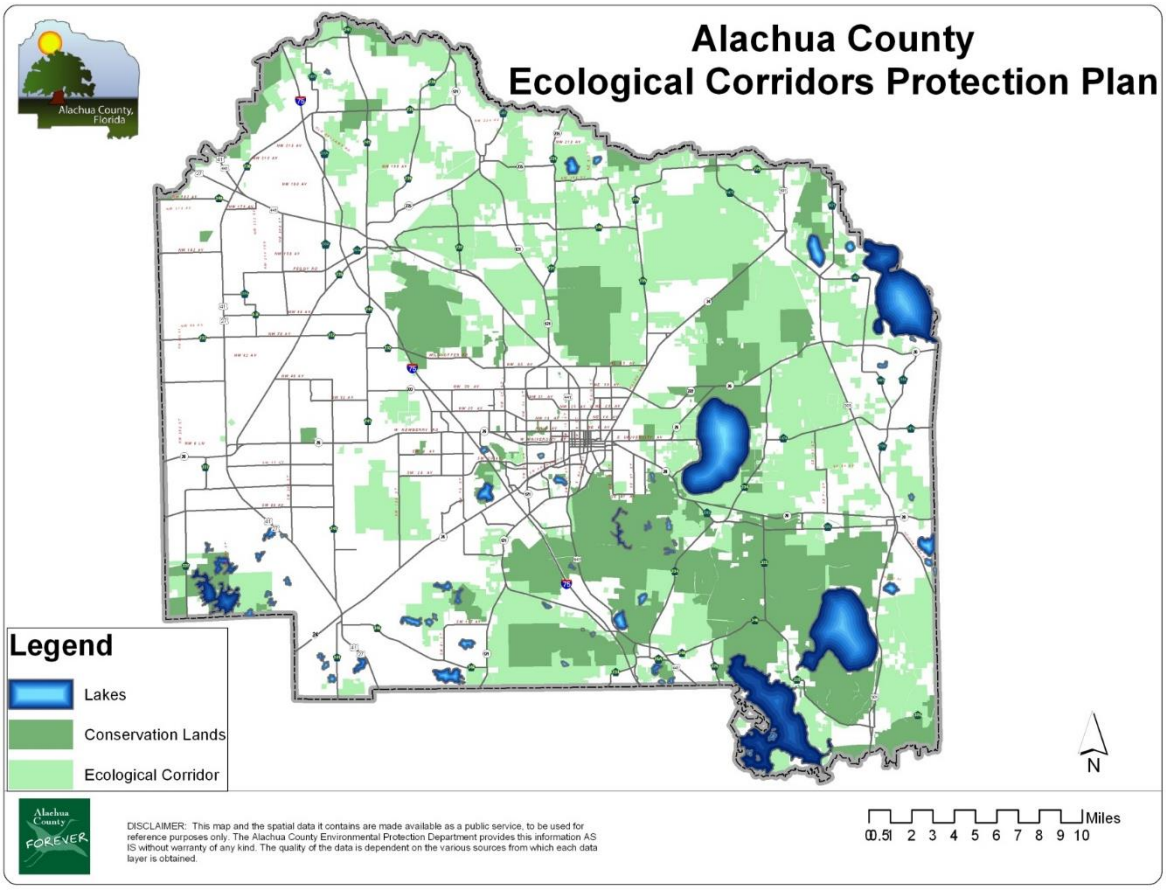
Updated Critical Ecological Corridors Map (2019)



Updated Critical Ecological Corridors Map with changes shown in red (2019)

In 1991, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection established a Statewide Greenways Program to achieve greater connectivity among the state's large ecologically significant lands. The Florida Ecological Greenways Network (FEGN) is a component of this Program. "The goal of the FEGN database is to identify and prioritize a functionally connected statewide ecological network of public and private conservation lands", link to State wide conservation map http://conservation.dcp.ufl.edu/FEGN.html. FEGN updates occur periodically, with the most recent update in 2016; primary goals included addressing potential sea level rise impacts on FEGN priorities, elevating the priority of FEGN corridors that could functionally link Florida conservation lands to other states, consolidating FEGN priority levels from eight levels down to six, and conducting boundary edits and data updates, link to Statewide conservation map http://conservation.dcp.ufl.edu/FEGN.html. Data from the FEGN, that is no longer the most current available data, contributed to the development of the original Critical Ecological Corridors map (COSE 6.3.2). The updated map includes all best available data and includes all FEGN Priority 3 areas and FEGN Priority 4 areas along the Santa Fe River (link to technical report https://www.fnai.org/pdf/CLIP_v4_technical_report.pdf).

Alachua County proposed an intergovernmental land conservation initiative to establish the "Emerald Necklace", a publicly accessible, connected and protected network of trails, greenways, open space, and waterfronts surrounding the Gainesville urban area in 2001 through a federal grant. In 2009, the County created the Alachua County Ecological Corridors Protection Plan. The objective of the Plan is to implement Comprehensive Plan policies that conserve land and create a linked ecological corridor system – The Emerald Necklace – that can be managed to support the protection, enhancement and restoration of functional and connected natural systems while providing unique opportunities for resource-based recreation through voluntary land acquisition, conservation easements or covenants, and education and partnerships to change landowner practices. The BoCC adopted the Alachua County Ecological Corridors Protection Plan through Resolution 09-33 also known as "the Emerald Necklace", to help guide Alachua County Forever acquisitions and leverage funds from Florida Communities Trust.



Alachua County Ecological Corridors Protection Plan Map (2009)

Strategies for Addressing the Issues

- Staff updated the existing Critical Ecological Corridors Map to include the current Florida Ecological Greenways Network Priority 3 areas and those Priority 4 areas that are adjacent to the Santa Fe River and updated the associated layers used on the map.

- Staff reorganized and updated the existing land conservation policies in Objective 6.1 and 6.3 and created a new Objective 7.0.

The Comprehensive Plan provides general language in COSE Objective 3.6 and associated policies that require that parcels adjacent to conservation and preservation areas shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts on conservation and preservation lands. The Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) provides the specific requirements and standards. Staff finds the current Comprehensive Plan language in COSE Obj. 3.6 and associated policies adequate and did not recommend making any changes.

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Recreation Element include the addition of new policies (Policies 1.1.9, 1.1.10 and 1.1.11) that:

- Address the overall update of the countywide recreation master plan;
- Provide for the update of the level of service standards for active and resource-based recreation; and,
- Provide for collaboration with other local governments.

Background

The Alachua County Countywide Recreation Master Plan was accomplished in two phases, with the second phase being completed in 2005. The implementation of the original Master Plan was largely hindered by the lack of funding. The update to the Master Plan is scheduled to occur, or at least begin, in FY 2018-2019. With a funding source in place, this updated plan will have a more realistic approach to park system enhancements. The most recent voter-approved "Wild Spaces - Public Places" funding will provide for capital projects, maintenance and operation costs as part of an overall park improvement strategy. Every County park will be improved in terms of accessibility, activities and education.

Currently, the level of service for both activity-based and resource-based parks is determined by the countywide unincorporated area population and all of the County-owned and County-maintained parks. The current standards are based on a number of improved or developed acres per thousand of unincorporated area population.

The level of service standard for activity-based parks is 0.5 acres/1,000 unincorporated population and the standard for resource-based parks in 5.0 acres/1,000 unincorporated population. Both standards are being not only met, but exceeded. One of the contributing factors to the level of service standard is the extent to which a park is deemed developed or improved. Several activity-based and resource-based parks are shown as being 100% developed. As part of the update to the Master Plan, that factor will be reconsidered based on a more realistic set of possibilities for each park.

The shared use of school facilities for community recreation continues to be a challenge and an opportunity. Historically, the School Board of Alachua County has allowed the use of recreational facilities at schools on a case-by-case basis as decided by the school principal. This continues to be their policy. See the SBAC Policy below:

7510 - USE OF DISTRICT FACILITIES

The principal may approve the use of school property, facilities, and equipment for any group provided herein. The use of school property, facilities, and equipment shall not interfere with the educational program of the school. The principal shall be responsible for safeguarding the school property, facilities, and equipment; enforcing and informing groups of Board policies; executing property forms; and collecting payments.

In the recent past, the School Board has entered into interlocal agreements with municipalities to "share" responsibility for the upkeep/maintenance of certain facilities made available for community use.

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Intergovernmental Coordination Element include the following:

1. Elimination or revision of specific references to the Alachua Boundary Adjustment Act (repealed by State legislature) from the Comprehensive Plan, and elimination of the adopted map of municipal Reserve Areas. References to the Boundary Adjustment Act in the Future Land Use and Public School Facilities Elements have also been eliminated or revised.

2. Revisions to existing objectives and policies to provide for coordination with municipalities on annexation and related services delivery issues, not tied to the Boundary Adjustment Act.

3. Revisions to policies to provide tools for the consolidation of public services provided by the County and its municipalities.

Background

The Alachua County Boundary Adjustment Act (BAA) was a Special Law adopted by the State of Florida legislature in 1990 which governed annexation in Alachua County until 2015, when the Act was repealed by the Florida Legislature (Ch. 2015-199, Laws of Florida, which became effective February 29, 2016). The BAA formerly provided a legal mechanism for coordination between the County and its municipalities on annexation and the provision of urban services. With the repeal of the BAA, annexation in Alachua County is now governed by general annexation law, as provided in Florida Statutes, Chapter 171.

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes several adopted policies that refer to the former Boundary Adjustment Act, including policies on intergovernmental coordination processes relating to annexation and service delivery that were required under the former BAA. Those policies are proposed to be deleted and/or amended to eliminate now obsolete references to the BAA. The Intergovernmental Coordination Element also includes an adopted map of annexation reserve areas for municipalities, which is proposed to be deleted. There are other adopted policies in this Element relating to intergovernmental coordination but not tied to the BAA. Several of those policies have been updated to provide generally for intergovernmental coordination on issues of annexation and service delivery.

Analysis of Proposed Amendments

The stated purposes of the Boundary Adjustment Act were to ensure sound urban development and the efficient provision of urban services; to promote cooperation between municipalities and Alachua County; assure procedures that protect all parties affected; and encourage development that efficiently utilizes services and prevents urban sprawl.

The BAA provided a legally enforceable tool for planning and coordination of future annexations among the ten local governments in Alachua County (9 cities and the County), through the designation of "reserve areas" by those entities. Reserve areas were geographic areas outside of each city's current municipal boundaries that were reserved exclusively for annexation by that municipality. For each Reserve Area, the County and the municipality were required to adopt a statement of services identifying which public facilities and services were to be provided within the reserve areas before and after annexation, and which local jurisdiction was responsible for providing those services. Under the BAA, Reserve Areas and statements of services were required to be updated every five years by each municipality and the County.

The BAA also provided procedures for municipal annexation. Notably, the Act required that, prior to the consideration of a proposed annexation, a municipality was required to prepare and adopt an Urban Services Report which addressed its plans for providing various public facilities and services to the area proposed for annexation and the effect on municipal services and taxes. The Urban Services Report was required to be provided to property owners and to the County prior to the annexation.

There are several adopted policies in the Intergovernmental Coordination Element that still refer to the Boundary Adjustment Act. The adopted policies that refer to the BAA have been proposed for deletion or amendment to eliminate references which are no longer applicable. Also, as required by the BAA, the map of annexation reserve areas for municipalities is an adopted map in the Intergovernmental Coordination Element, and this map is proposed to be eliminated. Where possible, the specific references to the BAA have been replaced with policy language referring to general coordination with municipalities on annexation and service delivery issues.

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element contains multiple adopted policies that promote intergovernmental coordination on the provision of services. For example, Policy 5.1.4 calls for the County to use interlocal agreements for the provision of services that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Also, Policy 5.1.7 calls for Alachua County to pursue developing and implementing interlocal agreements with municipalities on fire suppression services, law enforcement, emergency medical services, animal control, building inspection services, plans for centralized potable water and wastewater system, and multi-modal approaches to transportation planning. The adopted policies are generally sufficient and broad enough to allow for the County to pursue various intergovernmental coordination mechanisms for service provision that may be available under Florida Statutes, such as Interlocal Service Boundary Agreements (Part II of Ch. 171, F.S.) and joint planning agreements.

Update of Policies Relating to Transportation Concurrency and Transportation Funding

Various policies in the Capital Improvements Element relating to the elimination of transportation concurrency and the funding of transportation facilities have been amended or deleted to be consistent with corresponding changes in the Transportation Mobility Element. These changes are summarized, with supporting data and analysis provided, as part of the Transportation Mobility Element Data and Analysis.

Update of Fire Rescue Level of Service Guidelines

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Capital Improvements Element relating to Fire Rescue Level of Service Guidelines include the following revisions:

- Eliminate the fire response time guideline for the "Urban Service Area" in Policy 1.2.5(a)(1). The reason for eliminating this guideline is that the County's Comprehensive Plan no longer defines an "Urban Service Area", therefore, this guideline serves no purpose. The currently adopted fire rescue level of service guidelines for the Urban Cluster (initial unit response within 6 minutes for 80% of all emergency responses within a 12 month period) and the rural areas (initial unit response LOS guideline is within 12 minutes for 80% of all emergency responses within a 12 month period) would remain unchanged.
- Eliminate the language in Policy 1.2.5(a)(2) which sets a guideline of Insurance Service Office (ISO) Class protection 6 or better for the Urban Cluster. The level of service guideline for initial unit response (within 6 minutes for 80% of all emergency responses within a 12 month period) for the Urban Cluster would remain in place and unchanged.
- Revise Policy 1.2.5(a)(4) to include language providing for periodic updates of the Alachua County Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan. The last full Master Plan was completed in 2004, with an Update in 2012. In accordance with the existing policy language, the Master Plan shall serve as a basis for consideration of an amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan to establish level of service standards for fire rescue services as part of the County's concurrency management requirements. The Master Plan is scheduled to be updated in Fiscal Year 2019-2020.
- Data on fire rescue response times in relation to the adopted level of service guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan was included in a presentation by Alachua County Fire Chief Harold Theus at the December 6, 2018 Alachua County Board of County Commissioners meeting. This presentation is included as part of the supporting data and analysis for the Evaluation & Appraisal-based update of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, and can be found at the following link: https://alachuacofl.civicclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=17627

Updates of Capital Improvements Program Capacity Project Schedules

- **Multi-modal Transportation:** The currently adopted schedule of multi-modal transportation capital improvements which covers the period from Fiscal Year 2010-2011 to Fiscal Year 2029-2030 (Table 1) would be replaced with an updated schedule of multi-modal transportation capital improvements which covers the period from Fiscal Year 2019-2020 to Fiscal Year 2039-2040. Changes to the table include eliminating projects that have been completed, revising cost estimates and funding sources, and revising project time frames. The dollar figures included in the table are estimates of project costs.

- **Public School Facilities:** A proposed new Public School Facilities Schedule of Capacity Projects for Fiscal Years 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 would be added as Table 2 of the adopted Capital Improvements Element. The proposed new table is adapted from the capacity project schedule contained in the Alachua County Public Schools 5-Year District Facilities Work Plan for Fiscal Years 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 (November 2018). There is one new elementary school that has been identified in the proposed new table. The new elementary school is identified as an unfunded project in the Five-Year District Work Program for the 2021-2022 school year. According to the Alachua County Public Schools 2019 Annual Concurrency Report (February 2019), with the passage of the County schools sales tax referendum in 2018, the funding and programming of this new elementary school will be of primary importance in the 2019-20 Five Year District Facilities Work Plan scheduled to be adopted by October 1, 2019.

- **Recreation Facilities:** The currently adopted schedules of recreation facilities capital improvements, which cover the period from Fiscal Year 2010-2011 to Fiscal Year 2014-2015 (Table 3 of adopted Element), would be replaced with updated schedules. Dollar figures included in the tables are estimates of project costs.

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments related to Economic Opportunity and Equity in the Economic element as well as equity-related policies in the Public School Facilities element and Capital Improvements element include the following:

1. Addresses the elimination of disparities as part of the Economic Element Goals and Objectives for policies related to Economic Diversity and Sustainability (Objective 1.1 and related Policies), Economic Development Strategy (Objective 1.2 and related Policies), Education and Employment (Objective 1.4 and related Policies), Expansion of Economic Opportunities and Reduction of Poverty (Objective 1.5 and related Policies)

2. Adds equity considerations to the Public School Facilities Element Objectives for Coordination of Infrastructure (PSFE Objective 3.7) and School Site Selection (PSFE Objective 4.4)

3. Addresses disparities as a factor of Capital Investment programming and funding criteria (Capital Improvements Element Objective 1.6 and Policy 1.6.14)

Analysis of Proposed Amendments

Economic Element Goal 1 is amended to address economic equity within Alachua County, and the revisions to the Economic element include incorporating the Understanding Racial Inequity report as a baseline so that progress in the elimination of disparities can be measured. Amendments to Objective 1.1 and Policy 1.5.1 address job skill training for employees and organization partnerships. Objective 1.2 describes the Economic Development Strategy for the County and amends policies relating to supporting education and job skills training to increase workforce participation (Policy 1.2), collaboration with local economic development organizations (Policy 1.2.5, 1.2.6, 1.2.7), elimination of disparities by supporting local, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses (Policy 1.2.13, 1.2.14), reporting on economic indicators and measures established to economic opportunity and elimination of disparities (Policy 1.2.18).

Education and Employment is addressed in Objective 1.4 and is amended to include the elimination of disparities in the Objective, and Policies 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 are amended to include the elimination of disparities in the efforts to align workforce needs of employers and in giving priority to those locations and populations that have the highest indicators of disparities.

Objective 1.5 addresses Economic Opportunity and Reduction of Poverty and is amended to include the goal of elimination of disparities. Amended Policies include Policy 1.5.1 which recognizes CareerSource NCF as a partner in coordinating job expansion initiatives, and Policy 1.5.8 which directs the County to explore adding employer apprenticeship programs as a factor in its purchasing policies.

Equity considerations are added to the Public School Facilities Element in Policy 3.7.2 by adding a policy to ensure that adequate school building conditions and design are provided districtwide, and Objective 4.4 is amended to add equity to the process for identification and selection of school sites, and review of expansions and closures.

Capital Improvement Element Objective 1.6 is amended and Policy 1.6.14 is added to include equity objectives as a factor in decisions on programming and funding capital projects needed to meet pubic facility needs.

Background Information

The adopted Economic Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan consists of numerous policies that address economic opportunity, and therefore an appropriate location for amendments to the plan to add equity objectives and address disparities identified in local community analysis. The following narrative information provide data and analysis that relates to the issues and informs the basis for the amendments. It is organized in sections as follows:

- Economic Opportunity and Social Equity
- Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County
- Living Wage
- Joint Planning Strategies
- Jobs-Housing Balance
- Public Schools and Capital Investment
- Appendix A: Selected Excerpts from Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

Economic Opportunity and Social Equity

The core of the Economic Element can be found in Objective 1.5:

ECONOMIC ELEMENT
OBJECTIVE 1.5 - EXPAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND REDUCE POVERTY

Provide sustainable economic opportunities for all segments of Alachua County. Particular emphasis shall be given to activities which increase economic opportunities for persons at or near the poverty level and to activities which redevelop economically distressed and under-utilized areas. Alachua County shall utilize the following indicators:

a. per capita incomes for Alachua County.

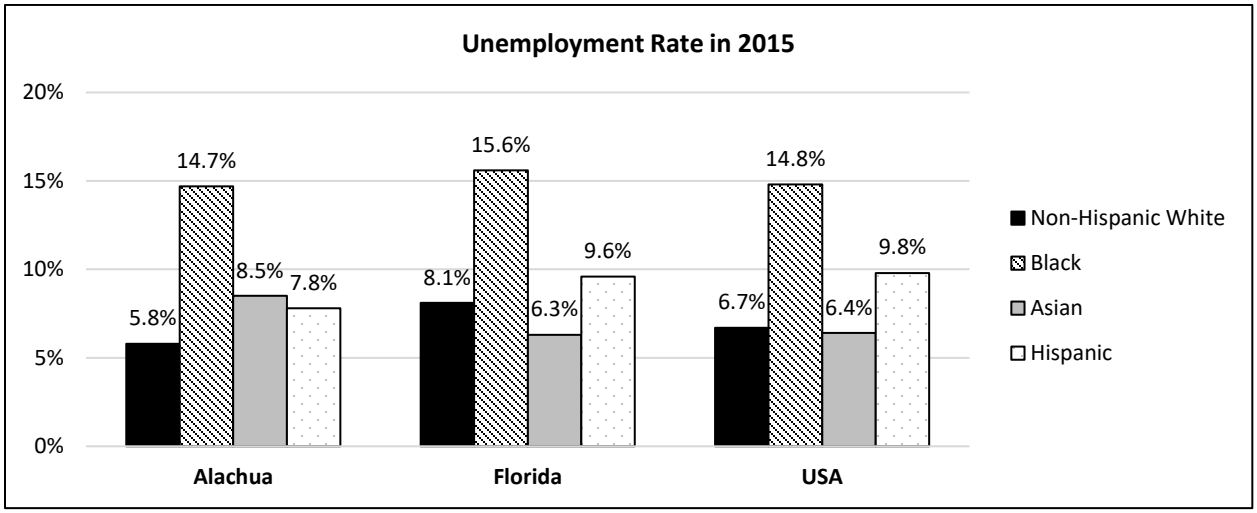
b. percentage of persons living at or below the poverty level.

c. unemployment rates.

Poverty and lack of economic opportunity remains an issue in many communities, both nationally and locally.

The Center for American Progress reported in 2007 that 37 million Americans were living below the official poverty line (Greenburg et al. 2007). At the micro level, persistent poverty translates

into lost potential for children or lower productivity and earnings for adults. At the macro level, persistent poverty can impair the nation's ability to remain competitive in a world of increasing global competition. Because having approximately 12 percent of the nation's population living below the poverty level can impose enormous costs on society, it is all the more critical for practitioners to be acutely sensitive to the relevance of social equity rather than passively treating it as inconsequential during the planning and development process.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

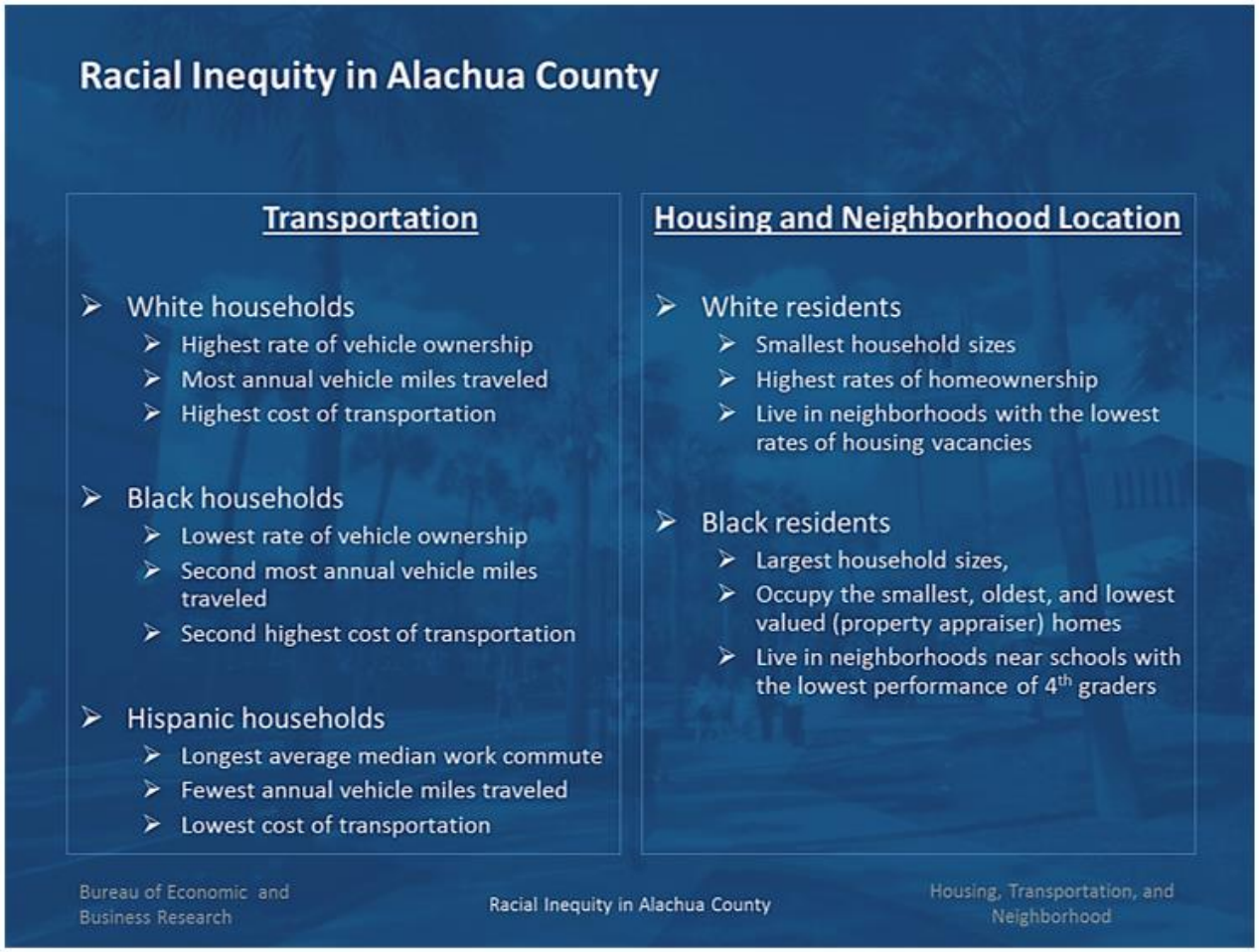
Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

The "Friendship 7" refers to a group of local governments and community organizations (Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe College, UF Health, and University of Florida) which jointly commissioned an analysis and report titled "Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County", which was prepared by the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (January 2018). The foreword states:

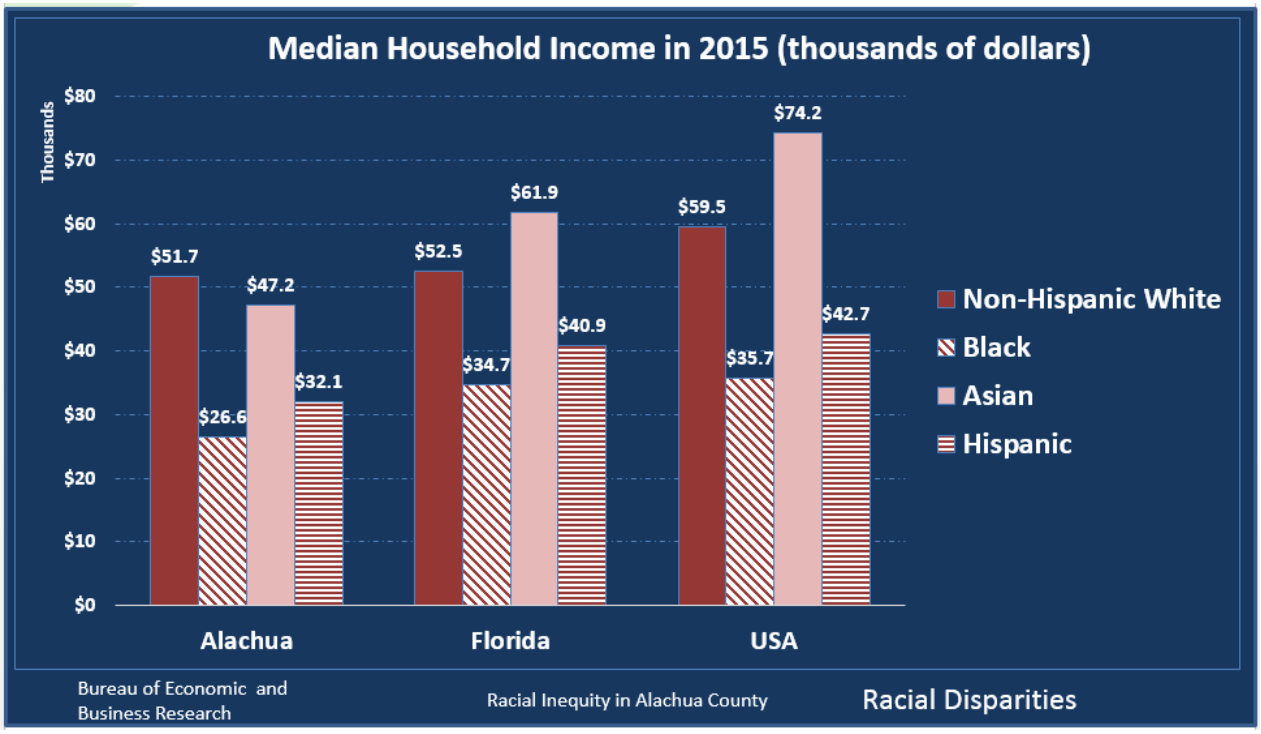
"Racial inequity is a long-standing issue in many communities across the United States, affecting the opportunities of minority individuals and families. In March 2016, the United Church of Gainesville and the Alachua County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sponsored a weekend-long seminar to focus community efforts on inequities in the Alachua County area. The seminar featured speakers from the Dane County, Wisconsin Race to Equity Project. This project collected existing national, state, and local data documenting racial disparities in the county and comparing those disparities to Wisconsin and the United States overall. Their study led to a community-wide focus on how their community can work together to meet the challenge of narrowing the gaps in quality of life among all racial and ethnic groups.

A group of Gainesville, Florida community leaders representing Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe College, UF Health, and University of Florida saw value in completing a similar project. Wishing to understand and document racial inequity in Alachua County, this group called for the development of a baseline report grounded in quantitative findings to document and provide insights about the extent, nature, and source of racial inequality in Alachua County. The University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) led this project in collaboration with the University of Florida Program for Resource Efficient Communities (PREC)."

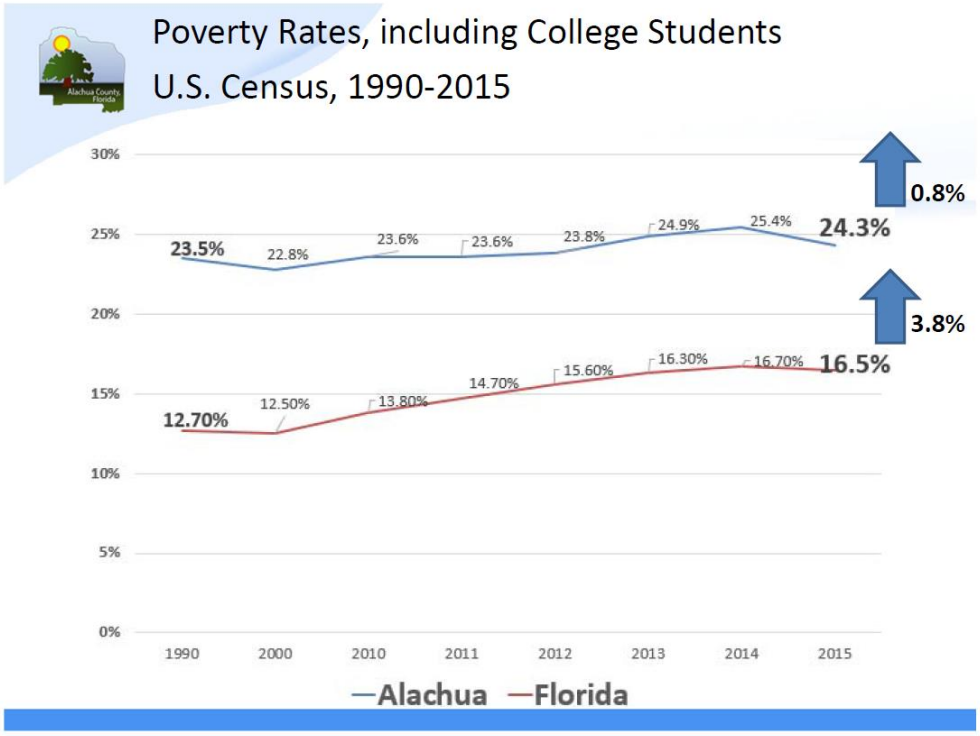
Selected excerpts from the report are attached in Appendix A. Snapshots capturing some of the findings based on BEBR data in the report are below. The first graphic addresses differences in Transportation, Housing and Neighborhood Location and highlights the differences by race.

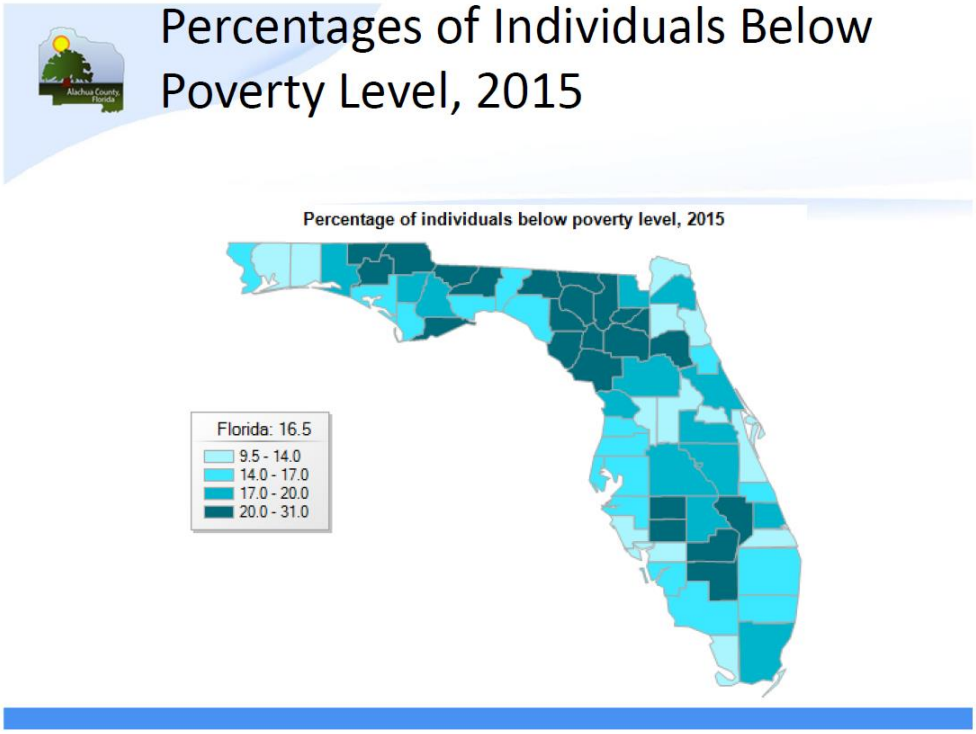


The second graphic shows the comparative Median Household Income in 2015 for Alachua County, Florida, and the United States, and shows that for all races, median household income in Alachua County trails that of Florida and the United States.


Median Household Income in 2015 (thousands of dollars)
Thousands
$80
$70
$60
$50
$40
$30
$20
$10
$0
$51.7
$26.6
$47.2
$32.1
$52.5
$34.7
$61.9
$40.9
$59.5
$35.7
$74.2
$42.7
Alachua
Florida
USA
Non-Hispanic White
Black
Asian
Hispanic
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
Racial Inequity in Alachua County
Racial Disparities

Poverty remains an issue in Alachua County, and poverty rates are higher than in Florida overall, as depicted in the following map and graph based on U. S. Census data:





Issues that contribute to racial inequity in Alachua County:

1. Geography of Alachua County
2. Limited provision of services 9affecting education)
3. Education system
4. Lack of wealth accumulation
5. The justice system vis-à-vis minorities

The primary conclusions (Section VII) of the Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County report emphasize the importance of both education and employment to economic opportunity and social equity.

> *"Racial inequity is a massive tangle of issues that are deeply connected and all potential solutions are constrained by the available resources. An important lesson from this project is that all these factors and forces are interconnected and cannot be pulled apart. While an improvement in one area might be possible, it can be negated by other connecting factors that may have resources drawn away from them in an effort to improve that one area. Nonetheless, there are two areas that are worth attention.*
>
> *First, both the experts and minorities widely recognize that providing a high quality educational experience for them will have a significant impact. A successfully educated resident will have a higher lifetime income, more and better employment opportunities, and is less likely to become involved with the criminal justice system. Additional education beyond a high school diploma is recognized as beneficial, but a high school diploma is perceived to be the baseline. Moreover, going to college is not necessary to get a good job, but getting good skills training is essential.*
>
> *Second, finding employment is often seen as a challenging task by minority residents. More jobs are needed that pay a living wage; more employers are needed who are willing to hire minorities, even those with a criminal record. Jobs are essential to lift people out of poverty, improve educational outcomes, and reduce crime."*

Living Wage

A living wage is the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet their basic needs, which are defined to include food, housing, and other essential needs such as clothing. Again, Economic Element Objective 1.5 addresses the core of the issue:

OBJECTIVE 1.5 - EXPAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND REDUCE POVERTY
Provide sustainable economic opportunities for all segments of Alachua County. Particular emphasis shall be given to activities which increase economic opportunities for persons at or near the poverty level and to activities which redevelop economically distressed and under-utilized areas. Alachua County shall utilize the following indicators:

a. per capita incomes for Alachua County.
b. percentage of persons living at or below the poverty level.
c. unemployment rates.

The table below shows the living wage for Alachua County:

Living Wage Calculation for Alachua County

Hourly Wages (each adult working full-time)	1 Adult	2 Adults 2 Children
Living Wage	$10.93	$14.99
Poverty Wage	$5.00	$5.00
Minimum Wage	$8.25	$8.25

Living Wage Calculator
Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, 2018

In 2016, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners enacted a living wage ordinance which raised the minimum wage for county employees and county-contracted workers to $14.57, which is 125% of the federal poverty level. A living wage is an important measure to promote economic opportunity and reduce income disparity.

Joint Planning Strategies

In addition to Plan East Gainesville, recent efforts to provide greater economic opportunity include a recent joint partnership by Alachua County and the City of Gainesville to nominate portions of eastern Alachua County and the City of Gainesville as Opportunity Zones. These areas met criteria stipulated by the Federal Government, and currently have a layer of incentives seeking to stimulate this economically depressed area of our community.

The City of Gainesville proposed designating those areas of the City of Gainesville that lie within the recently re-constituted Enterprise Zone (the area roughly lying east of 6th Street to the City limits and north to NW 53rd, south to SW 16th Avenue). With the re-constituted Enterprise Zone, the City of Gainesville is looking to facilitate development and economic opportunities in this area.

Alachua County proposed designating those areas of the County that lie in the East side of the unincorporated County. Last year, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners approved for applicants in the East side of the unincorporated County to receive a 50 percent reduction in application fees for Comprehensive Plan amendments, Zoning Changes, or Development Review applications. The intent of the reduced fees in this area is to help incentivize economic development on the east side.

Jobs-Housing Balance

The concept of jobs-to-housing balance generally refers to a ratio of the number of jobs to the number of households within a community or other geographic area. The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan has various objectives and policies (Particularly Economic Element Objective 1.5 and subsequent Policies) that promote a jobs-housing balance by promoting compact urban development patterns and mixed use development within the Urban Cluster. Jobs-housing balance is defined in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan (Future Land Use Element Definitions), as follows:

> ***Jobs-Housing Balance:*** *Provision of employment choices in reasonable proximity to adequate and affordable housing to ensure efficiency of the transportation system, by bringing jobs and workers in a given context area into numerical balance, usually at somewhere between 1.3 and 1.7 jobs per household.*

Jobs-housing Balance, Alachua County, 2016

Number of Households	106,197
Number of Jobs	126,951
Job-Housing Balance	1.2

Number of Households Source: University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse. Retrieved from http://flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu on 2/20/18.

Number of Jobs Source: State of Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research, Alachua County Profile. Retrieved from http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/area-profiles/county/Alachua.pdf on 2/20/18.

Based on the countywide data above, the jobs-housing balance for Alachua County is about 1.2 jobs per household, which is close to the general range of 1.3 to 1.7 that is identified in the Comprehensive Plan definition of "jobs-housing balance". In addition to the overall countywide jobs-housing measure, there is a geographic component which is also important. As the definition states, jobs-housing balance involves having, "employment choices in reasonable proximity to adequate and affordable housing to ensure efficiency of the transportation system".

Toward that end, the land use policies in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan promote, and in some instances require, a mix of non-residential and residential uses for new developments within the Urban Cluster. Policies in the Comprehensive Plan promote a greater mix of residential and non-residential land uses within the Urban Cluster in order to ensure that there are more employment, retail, and office areas in closer proximity to residential areas. The County's Mobility Plan, which was adopted into the Comprehensive Plan in 2010, provides a policy framework for Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Transit Oriented Developments (TOD) which are higher density and intensity, mixed use developments within the Urban Cluster for which complimentary policies were established in the Future Land Use Element. There are requirements in the Comprehensive Plan for these types of developments to provide a mix of higher density residential and non-residential land uses which helps to ensure that there are potentially more employment opportunities in close proximity to residential areas.

The Comprehensive Plan requires that any proposed development project that exceeds certain thresholds for number of dwelling units must be developed as a mixed use TND or TOD. Specifically any proposed development within an Urban Residential land use category that will contain 150 or more dwelling units and is contiguous to a planned Rapid Transit or Express Transit Corridor is required to be developed as a mixed use TND or TOD; also, any proposed development within an Urban Residential land use category that will contain 300 or more dwelling units shall be developed as a mixed use TND.

The County has approved several mixed-use TND and TOD development projects in the last few years, and many of those projects have either just been built or are beginning to be built. These development projects, once they are built, will contain both residential and non-residential components, which will contribute to a more geographic balance of jobs to housing, and should help to reduce commuting distances within the Urban Cluster. Staff recommends the continued implementation of the policies promoting mixed use development in the Urban Cluster, as discussed above, as a strategy on the issue of jobs-housing balance.

Public Schools and Capital Investment

Each of the Objectives of the Economic Element of the Comprehensive Plan seek to address ways in which the Comprehensive Plan can enhance the viability of the community. Adequate investment in staffing and capital projects by Alachua County is necessary in order to maintain these investments and provide necessary services to the public.

Recently, the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce engaged in a process to understand the infrastructure needs of the community, called the Putting Children First Infrastructure Investment Initiative or i3. Over nine months, the i3 Steering Committee engaged in a variety of meetings, public forums and community presentations, which resulted in the following conclusion:

… the infrastructure needs in our community are great, and that:

- *repairing our K-12 public schools,*
- *fixing our roads,*
- *ensuring our public safety officers can communicate,*
- *improving our parks and recreational facilities,*
- *providing for our birth-to-five children,*
- *upgrading our internet coverage,*
- *and expanding transit options are top-of-mind needs to our residents.*

Having evaluated the needs as presented and researched funding options available to pay for these needs, the i3 Steering Committee and the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce support a School Board of Alachua County sales-tax initiative in 2018 to fund infrastructure repairs to our K-12 schools.

The School Board proposed a ballot initiative for November 2018 which was subsequently approved by the voters of Alachua County to establish a local sales tax to fund capital projects for the School Board of Alachua County to make repairs and upgrades for local public schools.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Putting Children First Infrastructure Investment Initiative

Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County Housing Transportation Neighborhoods

Jobs-Housing Balance, American Planning Association, PAS Report 516, 2003

Planning for Equitable Development, American Planning Association, PAS Memo, 2017

Plan East Gainesville Final Report

Worlds Apart Inequality between Americas Most and Least Affluent Neighborhoods

APPENDIX A.
SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM

Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

Prepared by the University of Florida

Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR)

(January 2018)

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Foreword

For many years, racial disparities have made an impact on the lives of people in Alachua County, Florida. Many advocacy groups have been working diligently on improving conditions for minorities in order to reduce these disparities. A wealth of data exists exemplifying specific areas that may be helpful to these organizations. The following report provides a baseline of racial disparity data in the county, showing the differences between Whites and four minority groups: Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Other. With this baseline, future data has the potential to show changes and trends, illuminating the effects of programs attempting to address the myriad of issues that contribute to these disparities.

We hope that the information contained in this report will be informative to residents of Alachua County and useful to the programs trying to make an impact. We look forward to the possibility of building on this report in the future with updated data on the indicators included as well as other indicators that may further shed light on racial inequities.

We would like to thank the organizations who commissioned this report for giving us the opportunity to perform this work: Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe College, UF Health, and University of Florida. We would also like to thank the many people who contributed to the effort necessary to complete the report. Cynthia Clark moderated the focus group, and Mark House conducted the one-on-one interviews with community members and experts and compiled the information from both formats. UF Bureau of Economic and Business Research students and staff including Mark Girson, Hui Hui Guo, Art Sams, Anthony Chen, Nelsa Vazquez, and others collected data, performed quality control, and managed the project.

We would also like to thank the community members and experts who participated in the focus group and one-on-one interviews, whose involvement made possible the qualitative component of this undertaking.

Finally, we appreciate the work of the University of Florida Program for Resource Efficient Communities research team led by Hal Knowles and Lynn Jarrett, who collected, analyzed and reported on more in depth housing and transportation disparity issues in a separate volume.

Hector H. Sandoval
Project Director
Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

V. Factors and Forces Behind Racial Disparities in Alachua County

Racial inequality is a problem in Alachua County as well as in the country as a whole; however, beyond the general conditions that create racial disparities in the United States, Alachua County has a number of specific issues that foster these disparities.

A series of personal interviews with experts who have direct insight into racial disparities in Alachua County were conducted to understand the forces and factors behind the disparities in the county. This section relies solely on these experts' opinions and summarizes them. From these interviews, six important interconnected issues emerged. First, the geography of the county prohibits the development in areas that are traditionally occupied by minorities, which creates isolated and under-resourced areas. Second, the reduced provision of services affects minorities more. Third, there are important issues related to the education system. Fourth, for many generations, minority populations have been unable to accumulate wealth. Fifth, in addition to an important mismatch existing in the labor market, college students are crowding out the job opportunities that would otherwise exist for the local minorities. Finally, there are important issues arising from the interaction of minorities with the justice system.

First, the east side of Gainesville, as it is separated by Main Street, is home to a large percent of minorities. Additionally, some areas of the southwest side of Gainesville and along Tower Road are predominately populated by minorities. In these areas, low education minorities are purchasing homes for lower prices. In contrast, places like Haile Plantation are predominately occupied by educated Whites such as faculty and professionals who have a significantly higher income. This higher income allows them to purchase properties of greater value, which in turn creates a higher tax base for that area. This generates important disparities between regions in Gainesville.

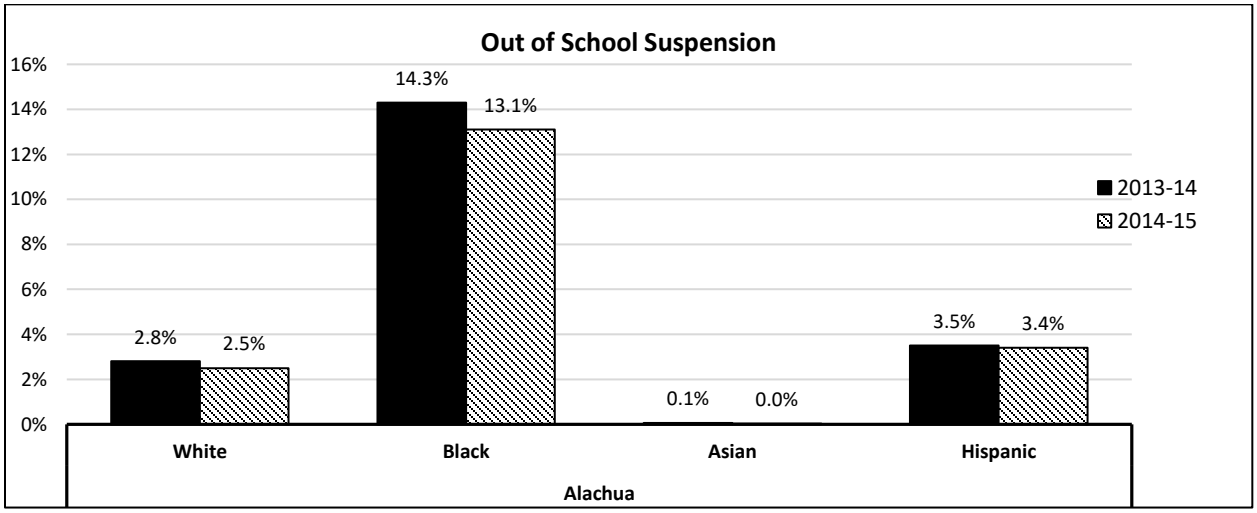
The ability of an area to attract development is critical to bringing in necessary jobs, schools and other services. However, economic development is generally focused on the West side of Gainesville, where minorities are not present because there is very little on the East side to attract developers who are looking for customers with disposable incomes. Moreover, the geography of the East side presents particular difficulties that are absent in the west side. The east side is lower and tends to have more sensitive wetlands, making development difficult in general. In some cases, federal laws that protect these sensitive areas push developers away from the east side into areas that are around the University and primarily on the West side of town, both of which are predominately occupied by Whites.

A second issue is that these pockets of minorities are generally under-resourced in a number of ways. Due to low state and federal funding, for example, teacher pay throughout the county is low, there is low investment in pre-kindergarten programs, and available resources are limited for supplemental programs such as mental health services. This low level of overall funding often affects minority/disadvantaged students disproportionately because they typically have a greater need for such programs.

Additionally, the county budget is restricted. It's not possible to provide adequate social services because the funding to support them is not available. Because Florida is a low-tax state, counties

must fund social services themselves. With a large portion of Alachua County off the tax rolls because of the University of Florida and other public institutions, decreased taxes result in decreases services.

Third, in addition to the low investment in education, there are two other factors related to the education system in Alachua County. First, schools pull their student base from the surrounding areas. In neighborhoods that are primarily inhabited by minorities, the result is a student body that is almost entirely composed of minorities. Nationwide, busing students to different neighborhoods was an attempt to integrate different races and create an environment of acceptance between races. Alachua County created magnet schools in minority neighborhoods, thereby attracting higher performing students to these schools; however, when high-performing students are mixed into a group of average or below average minority students, minority's perceptions might be unintentionally reinforced as these minorities perform at lower levels than the students bused in. Minorities who see these high performers may then become discouraged if they mistakenly attribute these differences to race. A second issue is out-of-school suspensions. When a student is removed from school, they quickly fall behind in their classwork, and may also develop a resentment towards the school system. Both of these factors make the student more likely to be disruptive a second time. When they are suspended they are also more likely to be at home alone, which can create a difficult situation for the child. If a student is suspended and must stay at home without any supervision, they are much more likely to create problems that get reported to the police. [1]

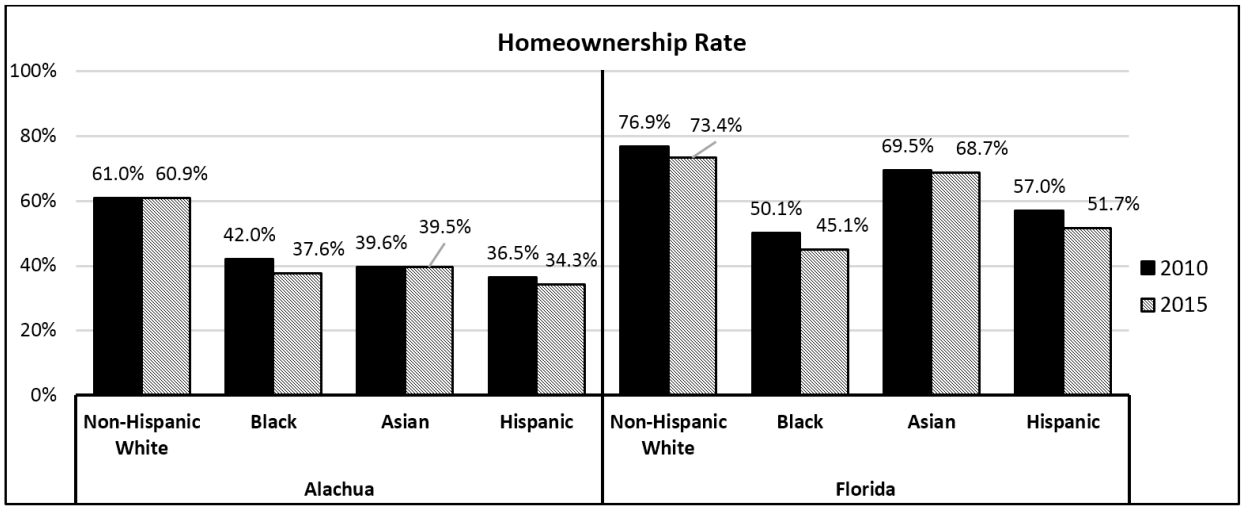


Source: Florida Department of Education.

Fourth, though minority populations have lived in this area for generations; they haven't been able to accumulate wealth to pass on to future generations. Wealth and income are very different

1 Alachua County Public Schools has implemented policies and programs that have reduced out-of-school suspensions among all students, most significantly among African-American students.

issues. Wealth includes assets that a person can draw upon in a time of need. Owning a home or property of any sort allows a person to have collateral for a loan if an emergency were to happen. The homes on the east side of Gainesville, where a large portion of minorities live, are worth far less than those in other areas of the city. This reduces the resources available to minority families in a time of emergency. As mentioned previously, the lack of wealth also drives development away from the area because businesses want customers who are able to afford their products and who can make purchases on a regular basis. This lack of wealth also reduces the tax base that can be used for schools and other basic needs.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

A fifth issue in Alachua County is related to the labor market. A mismatch exists between the skills acquired and the skills needed. On the supply side, there is a disproportionately higher percentage of minorities with lower educational levels and skills. This disproportionality is most pronounced among African Americans.[2] On the demand side, approximately two-thirds of the jobs require postsecondary vocational training, an associate's or higher college degree.[3] Furthermore, the highest paying occupations represent one-third of the jobs in the county and are in occupations such as legal; health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other healthcare technical; management, business, and financial; and computer, engineering, and science and most of these jobs require a fairly high degree of education.[4] And while jobs exist for both higher and lower skill workers, the labor market shows a higher unemployment rate for lower skill workers in the county.[5] One possible contributing factor to this disparity is that some of the lower skill jobs in the area could employ residents without a higher level of education, but they are sometimes filled with college students who have some advantages over lower skill minority applicants in the eyes of employers. College students can be highly flexible with their schedule and usually have an advanced knowledge of technology that may reduce training costs.

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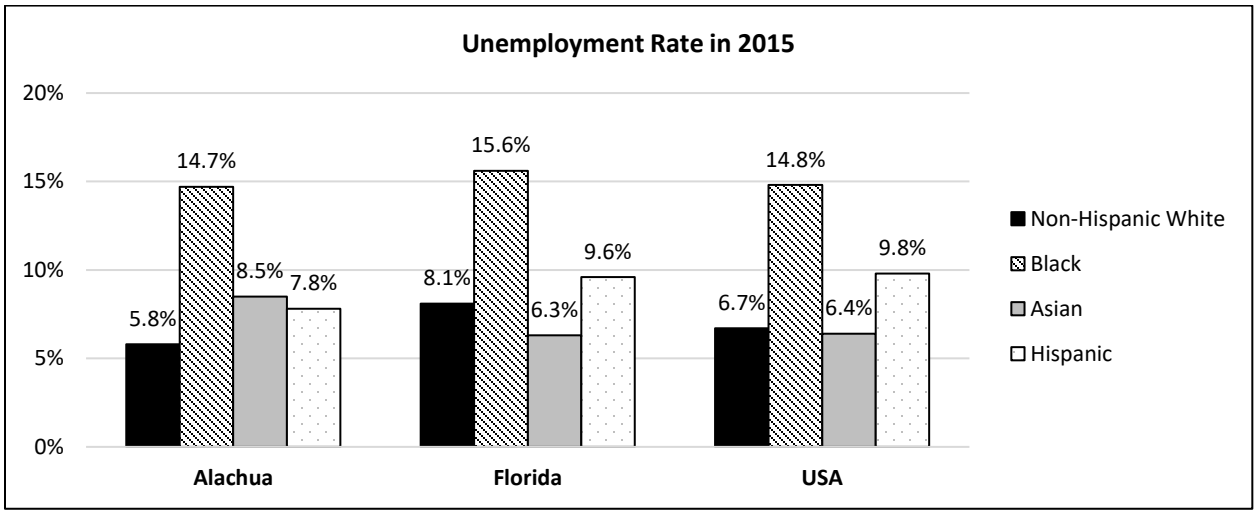
2 According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, around 46.2 percent of non-Hispanic Whites have a bachelor's degree or higher and only 5.2 percent have less than high school diploma in Alachua County. In contrast, 16.3 percent of African Americans have a bachelor's degree and 15.4 percent have less than a high school diploma. Around 39.7 percent of Hispanics have a bachelor's degree or higher and only 9.5 percent have less than a high school diploma.

3 According to the estimates of employment by occupation in 2015 from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, around 30.1 percent of jobs require a minimum educational level of postsecondary vocational training to enter the occupation, 37.3 percent require at least an associate's degree, and 30.2 percent require a high school diploma or less.

4 Occupational categories are according to the U.S. Standard Occupational Classification System. According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, the estimated median earnings in the past 12 months (in 2015 dollars) for legal occupations was $62,778, for health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other healthcare technical occupations was $63,222, for management, business, and financial occupations was $49,841, and for computer, engineering, and science occupations was $46,363. These occupations account for 30.9 percent of the total employment in the county. Required educational level data on jobs and occupations are from Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

5 According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, around 16.9 percent of those with less than a high school diploma were unemployed in Alachua County, while only 8 percent of those with a high school diploma, 7.5 percent of those with some college or an associate's degree, and 2.9 percent of those with a bachelor's degree or more were unemployed.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

Finally, employment for anyone convicted of a crime is more difficult because having a criminal record is a strike against them for most employers. African-American men are disproportionally affected because there is a larger percentage of African-American men incarcerated around the country, including in Alachua County. Moreover, the county has a "war on drugs." Although drug use is fairly equally split among races,[6] African-Americans are more likely to be caught with low levels of narcotics or other drugs. One reason is because they are more likely to use drugs in public spaces. Moreover, African-Americans are also more likely to be caught because police patrol minority neighborhoods more. Given the limited resources to control crime, law enforcement uses statistical tools to identify areas of high crime and patrol those areas more often. An area that is patrolled more often is more likely to result in more arrests.

VII. General Conclusions

As portrayed by the quantitative data, greater disparities appear in terms of economic well-being, education, and involvement in the justice system. From our qualitative analysis, the insights and opinions from the experts were very valuable in highlighting the factors and forces behind the disparities in Alachua County. Furthermore, the minority group residents of the county also complemented our understanding of such forces and factors.

Racial inequity is a massive tangle of issues that are deeply connected and all potential solutions are constrained by the available resources. An important lesson from this project is that all these

6 According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015, the use of illicit drugs among people aged 12 and over was 10.2 percent for Whites, 12.5 percent for African American, 9.2 percent for Hispanic, and 4 percent for Asians, https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus16.pdf#050

factors and forces are interconnected and cannot be pulled apart. While an improvement in one area might be possible, it can be negated by other connecting factors that may have resources drawn away from them in an effort to improve that one area. Nonetheless, there are two areas that are worth attention.

First, both the experts and minorities widely recognize that providing a high quality educational experience for them will have a significant impact. A successfully educated resident will have a higher lifetime income, more and better employment opportunities, and is less likely to become involved with the criminal justice system. Additional education beyond a high school diploma is recognized as beneficial, but a high school diploma is perceived to be the baseline. Moreover, going to college is not necessary to get a good job, but getting good skills training is essential.

Second, finding employment is often seen as a challenging task by minority residents. More jobs are needed that pay a living wage; more employers are needed who are willing to hire minorities, even those with a criminal record. Jobs are essential to lift people out of poverty, improve educational outcomes, and reduce crime.

Broadband

Broadband is a high data-transmission, high-speed internet connection. It provides a higher-speed of data transmission equivalent to 10 times that of dial-up service through phone lines. It also provides access to videoconferencing and other uses that require large amounts of data transmission.

In numerous studies, broadband has been shown to have a positive impact on economic development of an area. School children need ready quick-access to the internet and adults need to be able to access the internet for business, educational, social, medical and other opportunities. Electronic services replaced paper processes decades ago. The speed of accessing electronic services is the new evolution, driving the need for faster internet service. As witnessed during Hurricane Irma, internet access is also important to getting information to the public during disasters.

Currently a large geographical barrier to broadband exists that exacerbates the financial barriers. Unserved and underserved areas of the County are the eastern urban cluster and the rural areas of the County. Past attempts and federal government programs have not closed this gap and technology is constantly changing.

"Comprehensive broadband connectivity is a sure-fire way to achieve many community development goals, both new and existing:

- *Expand workforce and attract new companies.*
- *Support area farmers and ranchers, which can help grow locally sourced restaurants and farmers markets.*
- *Allow local hospitals to improve services and reach new patients through telehealth.*
- *Foster education and workforce development at local schools and universities.*
- *Boost small businesses and towns that can become "destination spots" unique to the area.*
- *Enhance equity by providing equal access to digital services and opportunities for civic and cultural participation, employment, and lifelong learning."*

"Equal Access Equals Opportunity" Eric Frederick, AICP, LEED AP, Planning Magazine, July, 2019

"Broadband has become as necessary as electricity. And, like the early days of electricity, it is not available everywhere, and even where it is available, it may be too expensive or too slow to deliver smart city services or meet needs of businesses and residents. Communities without affordable broadband access are finding themselves being left behind by a world in which transactions – both economic and social- are increasingly conducted online. For communities already underserved and disadvantaged by other factors, the lack of access only compounds that inequity."

"A Need for Speed" Madeline Bodin, Planning Magazine, October 2017

Local Foods

[Note: This addendum provides supporting data for Local Foods polices in the Economic Element. All objectives and policies under Energy Element Section 6.0 Local Food Production and Processing, as well as Policy 9.1.3 have been moved to the Economic Element, where they are now renumbered as Objective 1.7 - Objective 1.10, and include both adopted text and proposed amendments to be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.]

Food System

Florida farms are considered the vegetable basket of the US. And, yet, less than 10% of this food is staying in our state. We have vibrant urban areas within a tractor ride of farms growing delicious, healthy produce, but the vegetables and fruits are being shipped out across the nation and sometimes the world, at a high energy cost and negative impact on economic opportunity and natural resources. Recently "Florida's Roadmap to Living Healthy" provides an interactive, online map to visualize data, which can help government agencies, nonprofits and other organizations identify gaps in services. It includes data on Florida's food deserts. FL Roadmap to Health

The Food System includes the growing, processing, distributing, getting, making and disposing of surplus food.

Figure 1: The Food System; Source- Healthy Food Policy Project

In 2015 the US Agriculture Local Food Marketing Practices Survey was designed to collect data related to the marketing of foods directly from farm producers to consumers, institutions, retailers who then sell directly to consumers, and intermediate markets who sell locally or regionally

branded products. According to the USDA, Local Food is defined as the direct or intermediated marketing of food to consumers that is produced and distributed in a limited geographic area. There is no pre-determined distance to define what consumers consider "local," but a set number of miles from a center point or state/local boundaries is often used (i.e. 40 to 400 miles). More importantly, local food systems connect farms and consumers at the point of sale.

Local Food is sometimes used as a term of art that conjures a sense of place and values, promoting food and farm identities and relationships between producers and consumers. Many people and institutions purchase local food because it is seasonal, fresher, tastes better, is more nutritious, and reduces environmental impacts. When consumers purchase food from local producers they can see first-hand where their food is coming from, as well as support more sustainable growing practices and a diversified local economy.

Consumers, schools, hospitals and other institutions purchase from farms or buy farm products that originate from known, local farms that preserve the identity of the farm for each item. Each of these varied Direct to Consumer marketing techniques joins farmers and consumers in the local food system.

Direct to Consumer Common Sales Points	# Located in Alachua County
Farmers markets	8
Pick-Your-Own (http://pickyourown.org/FLnorth-Alachua.htm	38*
U-Pick (https://www.freshfromflorida.com)	8*
Farm stands	Varies
Community supported agriculture (CSA) partnerships	7

* Note: Not all the Pick-Your-Own are included in State Fresh from Florida /U Pick data. This may be since not all local farms have the Fresh from Florida certification

Local food systems operate within the existing framework for all food regulations and policies. The State of Florida has a "Fresh from Florida" certification. At the Federal level, the USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food task force supports and coordinates the work of local food systems across government agencies. Public and non-profit organizations work to shape food policy and regulations. In some jurisdictions food policy councils are comprised of a broad range of individuals from all aspects of a local food system. The mission is to review the local food system to develop policy recommendations and strategies for expanding and improving local food systems to meet specific challenges at local and State levels. A range of local, State, and Federal regulations guide marketing, food safety, licensing, and other activities related to food production and sale. "Local Food Week" has been celebrated here for many years.

There are many interrelated aspects to Local Food system, including but not limited to Food Security, Food & Nutrition, Local Agriculture & Economic Development, Soil Health, Food Waste Reduction and Agritourism. Going forward, there is an opportunity to refocus the County's partnerships and investments under two big ideas of creating a Sustainable Local Food System: Local Food Entrepreneurship and Regenerative Agriculture.

Local Food Economics, Entrepreneurship and Facilitators

Food that is branded local is big business with a strong consumer preference. In 2013, an analysis of Florida's local food economic potential were calculated value of over $19 billion in revenue, $850 million in local, state and federal taxes and an estimated at 183,625 jobs (Fig. 1; Alan W. Hodges, 2013). For additional information see Hodges et.al. Appendix Detailed Economic Contributions of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Food Industries in Florida Counties in 2013.

Table ES1. Summary of total economic impacts of local food purchases in Florida in 2011-12

Impact Type	Employment (Jobs)	Labor Income (M$)	Value Added (M$)	Output (M$)	Indirect Business Taxes (M$)
Producer Margin Direct Effect	55,656	$1,182	$2,270	$5,511	$14
-Indirect Effect	23,423	$775	$1,213	$2,662	$75
-Induced Effect	66,854	$3,213	$5,178	$8,286	$407
-Total Effect	145,933	$5,170	$8,661	$16,459	$496
Retailer Margin Direct Effect	34,045	$1,189	$1,672	$2,496	$338
Restaurant Margin Direct Effect	3,648	$96	$138	$245	$18
Total All Industries	183,625	$6,455	$10,470	$19,200	$851

Values in millions 2013 dollars, and employment in fulltime and part-time jobs.
Estimates reflect total multiplier effects for producer margin, and direct effects only for retailer and restaurant margins.

Figure 1. Alan W. Hodges, 2013

Local food has impacts on the energy system by impacting transportation costs and by impacting water supplies. One way to increase the demand is for Alachua County, with other large institutions, to increase the number of healthy, local food procurement policies in Alachua County institutions (schools, child care, hospitals, and universities) and in large gathering places (community centers, worksites, recreational/cultural settings). To assist this being successful, there will need to be an increase in technical assistance for sourcing locally - farmers/ producers will need help with retail-readiness and market connections and marketing assistance will need to be provided for institutions, restaurants, and retailers. Another important aspect is to improve the local food processing, aggregation, distribution, and marketing infrastructure in Alachua County. This infrastructure is critical as consumers and retailers consistently identify basic food processing such as wash-and-pack and bulk quantities as their top needs when sourcing locally. This infrastructure will also support local business development in food-related industries. Work is needed in researching and supporting emerging markets for selling locally- produced food. Possible partnerships should be considered with other community priority program development efforts, like public transportation or waste reduction to increase distribution and access to local food. Last, but not least, educational efforts will be crucial to engage citizens, and could include identifying and implementing strategies with the retail sector to promote and incentivize fruit and vegetable purchases, including an awareness campaign to educate consumers about Alachua County-produced food via marketing and programming. (Growing a Vibrant Local Food System for Alachua County; Spring 2018 Evaluation and Appraisal Report White Paper; Anna Prizzia, UF Field and Fork and Working Food).

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Community Health Element include:

1. Updates to address Health Equity and Health in All Policies
2. Updates to strengthen coordination among local health systems
3. Updates regarding the built environment and health impacts including transportation systems
4. Policy framework for mental health and dental health
5. Policies addressing prevention and treatment of substance abuse including tobacco
6. Policies regarding the food system including at school sites and neighborhoods

Background

The Community Health Element was adopted in 2011. At that time a Community Health Assessment (CHA) was conducted by the Florida Department of Health (DOH) in conjunction with WellFlorida Council to determine the health needs of Alachua County. This assessment included the best available local data in addition to input from community members and health experts. A health team consisting of two groups, the Healthy Communities group and the Safety Net Collaborative, was formed to address these needs. A Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) was developed as a strategic planning tool for improving community health. The CHIP used CHA data to identify priority issues, develop and implement strategies for action, and establish accountability to ensure measurable health improvement.

In 2015, the health team assessed the community's needs again, and a new Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan were developed for Alachua County. A Community Health Assessment steering committee was formed, made up of a partnership of the Florida Department of Health, along with UF Health Shands Hospital who identified and organized community leaders to join the steering committee.

MAPP Process

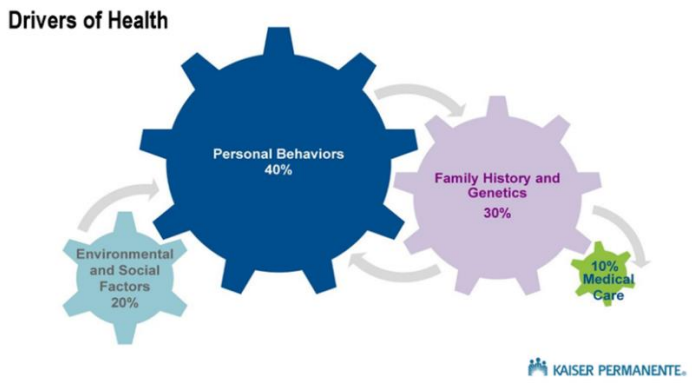
The CHA steering committee, with the assistance of WellFlorida, utilized national best practices and models of needs assessments. The core component of this was the utilization of the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process. The MAPP process is a nationally recognized standard of conducting health needs assessments, with a vision for "achieving improved health and quality of life by mobilizing partnerships and taking strategic action." The MAPP process included four key components:

- A Community Health Status Assessment that highlights the existing health indicators and behaviors of Alachua County, comparing this information to the state of Florida. This is a quantitative perspective on the health of the community.
- A Community Themes and Strengths Assessment that utilizes surveys and input from community members to provide qualitative feedback on the health of the community. This highlights the issues and opinions of Alachua County residents.

- A Forces of Change Assessment that gathers diverse community leaders to identify events, trends, and factors that impact the public health of the county.
- A Local Public Health Systems Assessment that uses surveys and polls to identify existing public health services and infrastructure, while also providing feedback on how well those services met the needs of the county.

The CHA utilized qualitative feedback from community members and local leaders, as well as quantitative analysis from existing data. From the CHA, the 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan was developed and two overarching goals were selected: (1) To ensure access to comprehensive care for all Alachua County residents, and (2) To promote wellness among all Alachua County residents. Relying on data from the CHA and guidance from the CHIP, the health team determined that focusing on increasing mental health awareness, decreasing tobacco use, promoting oral health, and reducing obesity will be the most effective way to address the needs of our community.

Figure 1. Drivers of Health



Source: Determinants of Health and Their Contribution to Premature Death, JAMA 1993.

As shown in Figure 1, health is driven by multiple factors that are intricately linked—of which medical care is only one component. To address health issues, all factors should be taken into consideration.

To effectively address these four focus areas and other local issues, the health team recommended a "Health in All Policies" framework in the County Comprehensive Plan. Accounting for health outcomes and equity in the plan ensures a focus on improving overall community health, accounting for social determinants of health, the built environment, and other factors that inadvertently shape the health of a community. This approach has five key elements as explained in a national report.

'Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Governments'

Promote health, equity, and sustainability. *Health in All Policies promotes health, equity, and sustainability through two avenues: (1) incorporating health, equity, and sustainability into specific policies, programs, and processes, and (2) embedding health, equity, and sustainability considerations into government decision-making processes so that healthy public policy becomes the normal way of doing business.*

Support intersectoral collaboration. *Health in All Policies brings together partners from the many sectors that play a major role in shaping the economic, physical, and social environments in which people live, and therefore have an important role to play in promoting health, equity, and sustainability.*

Focus on deep and ongoing collaboration. *Benefit multiple partners. Health in All Policies values co-benefits and win-wins. Health in All Polices initiatives endeavor to simultaneously address the policy and programmatic goals of both public health and other agencies by finding and implementing strategies that benefit multiple partners.*

Engage stakeholders. *Health in All Policies engages many stakeholders, including community members, policy experts, advocates, the private sector, and funders, to ensure that work is responsive to community needs and to identify policy and systems changes necessary to create meaningful and impactful health improvements.*

Create structural or process change. *Over time, Health in All Policies work leads to institutionalizing a Health in All Policies approach throughout the whole of government. This involves permanent changes in how agencies relate to each other and how government decisions are made, structures for intersectoral collaboration, and mechanisms to ensure a health lens in decision-making processes.*

Source: 'Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Governments;' Public Health Institute, the California Department of Public Health, and the American Public Health Association

According to RWJ Health Rankings data, the percentage of Alachua County households with at least 1 of 4 housing problems (overcrowding, high cost, or lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities) was 21 % for 2011-2015. The Alachua County Sheriff Civil Bureau reported 900 households were evicted in 2017 (February 27, 2018 BoCC Regular Meeting Presentation). Improving these statistics will require a "Health in All Policies" approach.

The 2019 RWJ Health Rankings Food Environment Index, using data from 2015-2016, reports 6% of Alachua County households have Limited Access to Healthy Foods and 20% experience Food Insecurity.

Analysis of Proposed Amendments

Process

The proposed amendments to the Community Health Element are the result of input from the County Health Care Advisory Board (with members appointed by the County Commission). Additional input was provided by the Healthy Communities Initiative, an interagency/interdisciplinary group meeting for the previous ten years. The discussions focused on health equity and UF and community health professionals provided expertise in areas not part of the existing Plan, including dental and mental health services. Tobacco Free Alachua advocates and DOH Tobacco Free staff also provided input regarding tobacco prevention and treatment. A thorough review of the existing policies was completed in order to ensure specific issues were addressed, including transportation needs for accessing health care, since this is identified by community paramedics as an issue in the County. Data from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) County Health Rankings was provided for the Community Health Issue Paper and updated 2019 data is now available. Additional data from

the UF Health Community Health online dashboard provides visual comparisons from over 30 sources including RWJF.

Built Environment and Health

Earlier policy focus on obesity is amended to further healthiest weight management recognizing the programs of the Florida DOH. The built environment is recognized as a contributing factor. The built environment includes the physical makeup of where we live, learn, work, and play—our homes, schools, businesses, streets and sidewalks, open spaces, and transportation options. The built environment can influence overall community health and individual behaviors such as physical activity and healthy eating, and updated policies address this to improve multimodal transportation facilities and access to parks.

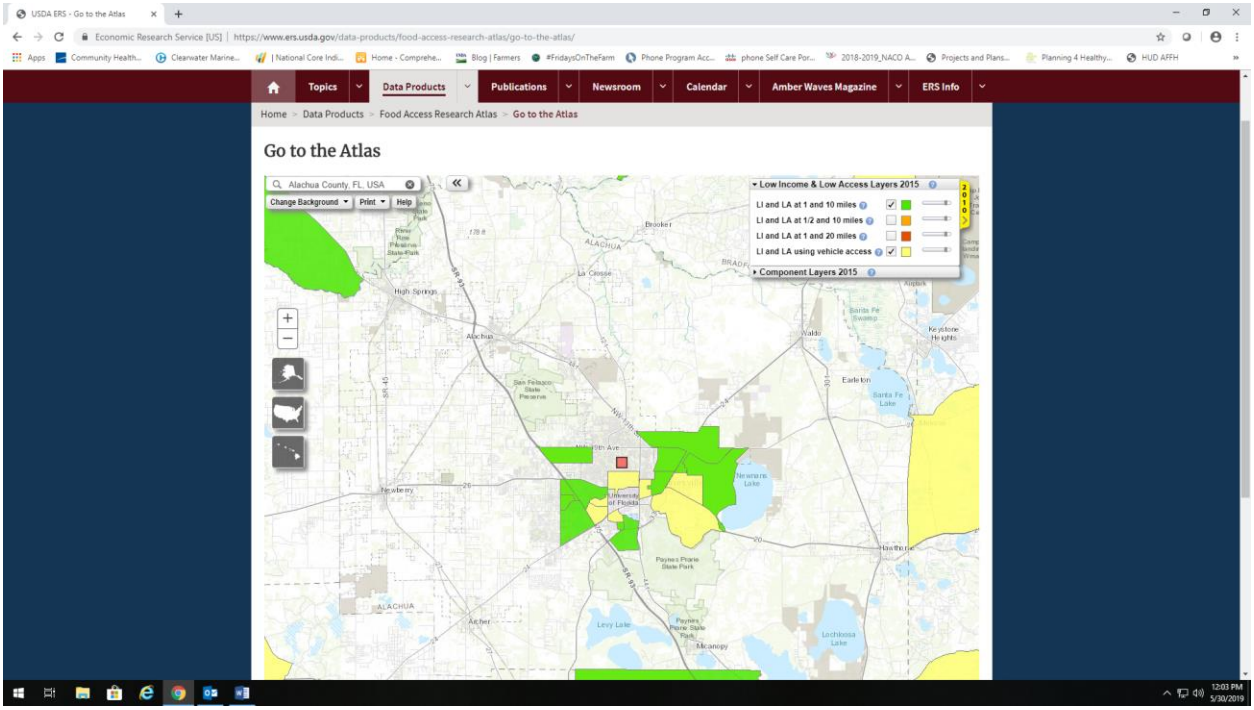
Local Food System and Nutrition

There is also more policy focus on the local food system and nutrition since although the initial CHE includes some food policies there is evidence that more accessible healthy foods in neighborhoods is important. New policies for healthy corner stores and food distribution sites at schools are included. The important role of IFAS/County Extension to provide nutrition education is part of the policy framework. Although the Food System was not discussed in the 2018 BEBR report on "Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County," since there is an impact of food on health a local food system will improve equity. The policies on the Local Food System emphasize partners and programs that will address economic, educational and health equity. A new policy establishes a target date to end food insecurity in Alachua County by 2050. A new definition is included:

> **Food desert** - A geographic area where residents have limited access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh produce) determined by low income and distance to major supermarket locations. Food deserts are based on USDA data with low income census tracts determined by a poverty rate of 20% or higher, or tracts with a median family income less than 80% of median family income for the state or metropolitan area. Food deserts are low-income census tracts where at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population reside more than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.
>
> USDA Food Access Maps and info are online- https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/.
>
> The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services includes a food desert layer in Florida's Roadmap to Living Healthy- this does not include the limited vehicle access areas -- https://roadmaptohealth.freshfromflorida.com/MapView?Theme=Food%20Access

Food Desert 2015 Data- Bright green area denotes Food Desert definition.

The areas shown in yellow on this map depict Low-income census tract where more than 100 housing units do not have a vehicle and are more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket, or a significant number or share of residents are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket.



Background for the USDA Food Access Maps of Low Income (LI) and Low Access (LA) areas

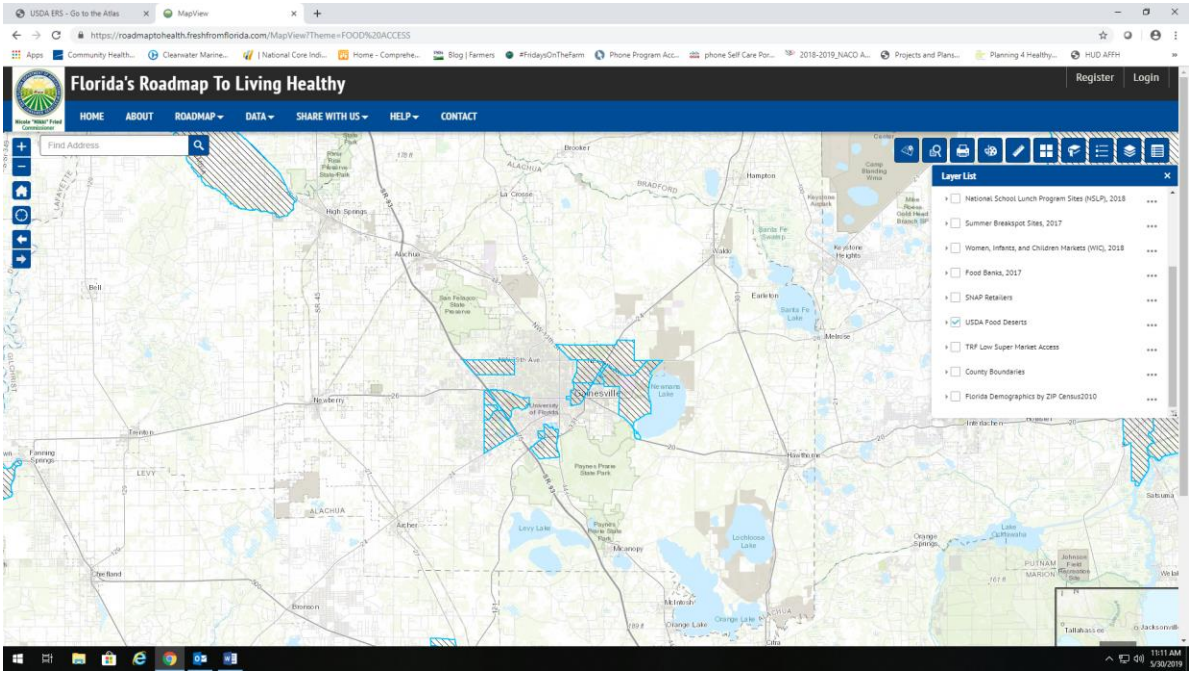
Map of Low Access criteria only (including low vehicle access and high group quarters). There are major areas within Alachua County where this impacts the population. Therefore income criteria should also be included to focus on areas of greatest food access need.

LI and LA using vehicle access- Low-income census tract where more than 100 housing units do not have a vehicle and are more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket, or a significant number or share of residents are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket.

Vehicle Access- Low-income census tract where more than 100 housing units do not have a vehicle and are more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket, or a significant number or share of residents are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket.

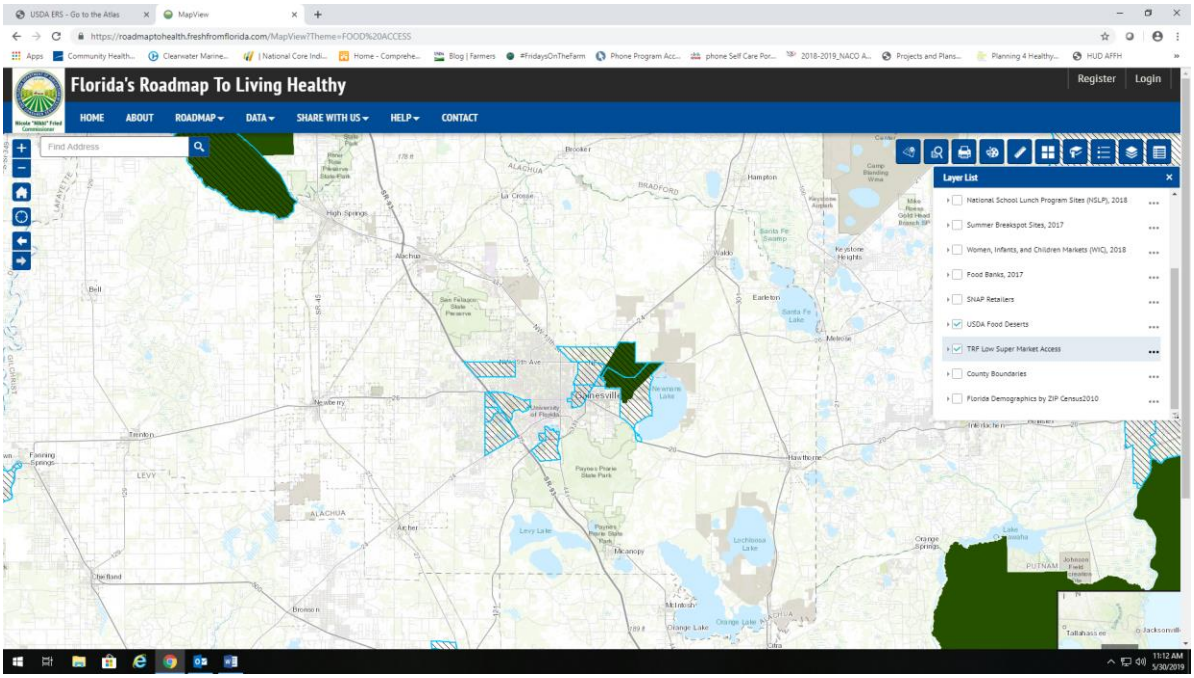
Low Income- Tracts with a poverty rate of 20% or higher, or tracts with a median family income less than 80% of median family income for the state or metropolitan area.

State "Florida's Roadmap to Living Healthy"- showing LI and LA Food Desert areas (USDA)



State "Florida's Roadmap to Living Healthy" - Food Desert and TRF Low Supermarket Access (Brookings The Reinvestment Fund Study-

https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/supermarket-access-in-low-income-areas/)

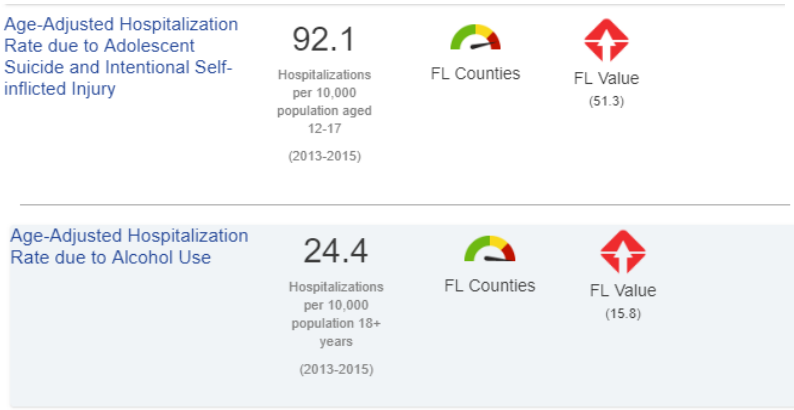


Neighborhood Safety, Mental Health and Substance Abuse

A new policy focuses on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) for County parks and facilities, providing a design approach for 'defensible space'. As established by Architect Oscar Newman, defensible space must contain two components. First, defensible space should allow people to see and be seen continuously. Ultimately, this diminishes citizens' fear because they know that a potential offender can easily be observed, identified, and consequently, apprehended. Second, people must be willing to intervene or report crime when it occurs. By increasing the sense of security in settings where people live, work, and recreate, it encourages people to take control of the areas and assume a role of ownership. When people feel safe in their neighborhood they are more likely to interact with one another and intervene when crime occurs.

Mental Health and related substance abuse issues are addressed in new objectives and policies. A majority of persons with mental health and substance use conditions have these conditions as a result of trauma. Such traumas can range from child abuse, to the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse associated with poverty, to the mental and physical trauma of the battlefield. Trauma is extremely pervasive in modern American society, and it plays a major role in generating illnesses. Many mental health care recipients also need support services, including job, housing, and social supports. Access to evidence-based care and a continuum of care for recovery and wellness are required for a full life in the community. A new peer respite center in Gainesville offers innovative peer support for persons in crisis (http://www.gainesvillerespite.org/). In this context, a peer is a person who has experienced overwhelming mental or emotional distress and seeks to form meaningful relationships with others. Data available on the UF Community Health Dashboard indicates for most Mental Health/Mental Disorder and Substance Abuse indicators Alachua County has better outcomes than the State, although several indicators show a higher hospitalization rate.

Mental Health and Mental Disorders Alachua County



Source:UF Health Community Health Dashboard

In 2018 Alachua County ranked 2nd in State for Youth Opioid Addiction. The Alachua County Health Prevention and Wellness Coalition (HPW Coalition Website) is working to address this epidemic and other substance abuse, with programs which are strategically designed to target areas of need based on research and implemented using evidence-based strategies. The Opiate Task Force

includes partners from the UF Department of Epidemiology, HealthStreet, VA Hospital, UF Health Pediatrics, North Florida Regional Medical Center, community coalitions such as the Levy County Prevention Coalition and Hernando Community Coalition as well as law enforcement support from the Alachua County Sheriff's Office. According to data provided by the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey for Alachua County in 2014, middle school and high schoolers underestimate the harm of using marijuana and drinking alcohol. HPW Coalition will now hold mini-meetings with individual school PTAs to discuss reported data of youth substance abuse.

Dental Health

Dental Health is now addressed in a separate objective and policy framework as need is evident. The Alachua County DOH now provides dental services, and non-profit ACORN Clinic continues to serve low income patients who are not insured or underinsured and cannot afford private insurance, using a sliding scale to determine fees based on household income using Federal Poverty Guidelines. ACORN Clinic operates with volunteer health professionals in training and volunteer physicians, nurses, dentists, hygienists, and counselors. In 2014, volunteerism totaled 8,156 hours valued at almost $900,000. In 2017, the ACORN Dental Clinic served 2,167 patients in 4,982 visits. In addition to fees from patient care, ACORN receives funds from private and public sources including the United Way of North Central Florida; civic groups; churches; Alachua, Bradford and Union Counties; Florida Department of Health; Medicaid; Medicare; private insurance; foundations; and contributions from individual donors. In July 2019, due to reduced funding, the ACORN Clinic Board of Directors announced the medical clinic would close in 3 months and only dental services will continue. The group assisted patients to transition to new "medical homes."

Health/Oral Health Alachua County

	VALUE	COMPARED TO:	
Adults who did not Visit a Dentist due to Cost	22.9% (2007)	FL Counties	
Age-Adjusted ER Rate due to Dental Problems	114.5 ER visits per 10,000 population (2013-2015)	FL Counties	FL Value (82.5)

Source: [UF Health Community Health Dashboard]

RWJF County Health Rankings 2019

	Alachua County	Error Margin	Top U.S. Performers	Florida	Rank (of 67)
Health Outcomes					31
Length of Life					12
Premature death	6,900	6,500-7,300	5,400	7,200	
Quality of Life					51
Poor or fair health **	19%	19-20%	12%	19%	
Poor physical health days **	4.4	4.3-4.5	3.0	3.8	
Poor mental health days **	4.3	4.2-4.4	3.1	3.8	
Low birthweight	9%	9-10%	6%	9%	
Additional Health Outcomes (not included in overall ranking)					
Life expectancy	79.2	78.8-79.5	81.0	80.0	
Premature age-adjusted mortality	350	340-360	280	340	
Child mortality	70	60-80	40	50	
Infant mortality	8	7-9	4	6	
Frequent physical distress	14%	13-14%	9%	12%	
Frequent mental distress	13%	13-14%	10%	12%	
Diabetes prevalence	9%	8-10%	9%	11%	
HIV prevalence	427		49	615	
Health Factors					6
Health Behaviors					22
Adult smoking **	15%	14-15%	14%	15%	
Adult obesity	25%	23-29%	26%	27%	
Food environment index	6.6		8.7	6.9	
Physical inactivity	23%	21-26%	19%	25%	
Access to exercise opportunities	86%		91%	88%	
Excessive drinking **	21%	20-21%	13%	18%	
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths	29%	25-32%	13%	25%	
Sexually transmitted infections	860.5		152.8	467.4	
Teen births	14	13-15	14	23	

Additional Health Behaviors (not included in overall ranking)				
Food insecurity	20%		9%	14%
Limited access to healthy foods	6%		2%	7%
Drug overdose deaths	11	9-14	10	21
Motor vehicle crash deaths	10	9-12	9	14
Insufficient sleep	36%	35-37%	27%	34%

	Alachua County	Error Margin	Top U.S. Performers	Florida	Rank (of 67)
Clinical Care					1
Uninsured	12%	11-14%	6%	15%	
Primary care physicians	670:1		1,050:1	1,390:1	
Dentists	590:1		1,260:1	1,700:1	
Mental health providers	170:1		310:1	670:1	
Preventable hospital stays	5,336		2,765	5,066	
Mammography screening	46%		49%	42%	
Flu vaccinations	45%		52%	41%	
Additional Clinical Care (not included in overall ranking)					
Uninsured adults	14%	12-16%	6%	18%	
Uninsured children	6%	4-8%	3%	7%	
Other primary care providers	393:1		726:1	1,035:1	
Social & Economic Factors					11
High school graduation	84%		96%	82%	
Some college	76%	73-79%	73%	62%	
Unemployment	3.7%		2.9%	4.2%	
Children in poverty	20%	15-25%	11%	21%	
Income inequality	6.1	5.7-6.5	3.7	4.7	
Children in single-parent households	35%	32-38%	20%	38%	
Social associations	9.8		21.9	7.1	
Violent crime	561		63	484	
Injury deaths	60	56-65	57	76	
Additional Social & Economic Factors (not included in overall ranking)					
Disconnected youth	5%	3-7%	4%	8%	
Median household income	$45,200	$42,300-48,100	$67,100	$52,600	
Children eligible for free or reduced price lunch	48%		32%	58%	
Residential segregation - black/white	39		23	54	
Residential segregation - non-white/white	31		15	44	
Homicides	4	3-5	2	6	
Firearm fatalities	10	8-11	7	13	

Source: ***RWJF Alachua County Health Rankings 2019***

Data and Analysis for Evaluation & Appraisal Based Update of Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

Energy Element

Introduction

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Energy include:

1. Updates to County Government Initiatives policies including revisions to policies addressing energy conservation investments, Zero Waste initiative in coordination with the municipalities and University of Florida, and renewable energy goals. (Policy 5.1.3, 5.1.4, 5.2.1).
2. Policies on water conservation strategies including Florida Water Star Standards (Policy 2.2.3).
3. The diversion rate calculation (Policy 8.1.2) is established in Solid Waste element policy 1.5.2, and is amended in Policy 8.1.2 for internal consistency in the Plan.

Background

Zero Waste

Zero Waste is an innovative approach to waste management that will conserve energy and landfill space. Mimicking natural systems, a Zero Waste System is cyclical and does two fundamental things: It redesigns our systems and resource use—from product design to disposal—to prevent wasteful and polluting practices. It then captures discards and uses these, instead of natural resources, to make new products, creating less pollution and growing the local economy. Therefore Energy policies take a responsible approach to using and conserving dwindling natural resources and support recovery infrastructure. Alachua County Solid Waste and Recovery, in conjunction with the City of Gainesville, has a website about current efforts- Zero Waste Gainesville website. Also Eco-Cycle Solutions identifies cities, counties and states with zero waste goals and plans, recycling and composting policies, and disposal bans. Eco Cycle Solutions website. In fact this approach was celebrated in a Florida folk song lyrics "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without" from the past.

In 2010, the State legislature put into place F.S. 403.7032 which, among other things, established a statewide recycling goal of 75% by the year 2020 and set benchmarks for achieving this goal. As a county, Alachua County adopted the 75% recycling by 2020 goal into its comprehensive plan and has begun the process of working towards Zero Waste along with the City of Gainesville. Part of this effort is to help create additional markets and opportunities for recycling. The Eco-Industrial Park (formerly referred to as the Resource Recovery Park) has the potential to create these markets and opportunities for recycling and waste reduction. With an initial area of 37 acres, and a planned space for waste reduction research, there is an opportunity for established businesses or startups to put into place outlets for waste from the region preventing it from ending up in a landfill. Based on the waste composition of Alachua County, additional outlets for C&D debris, food waste, yard trash, paper products, non-ferrous metals, and plastics would benefit the county and should be targeted industries for the Eco-Industrial Park.

A policy for consideration of a County zero waste initiative in coordination with the municipalities and University of Florida is included as Policy 5.1.4. Currently research and data for this initiative is being

developed and will be presented in the future to the Board of County Commissioners for direction. Policy 5.1.3 renames the Utility Saving Reinvestment account to the Energy Conservation Investment Program to more accurately reflect the program, which works in conjunction with Policy 5.2.1 to increase the amount of renewable energy consumed and produced by Alachua County buildings and operations.

The issue of food waste has direct impact on energy consumption. The United States EPA estimated that in 2015 in the United States, more food reached landfills and combustion facilities than any other single material in our everyday trash, at 22 percent of the amount landfilled and at 22 percent of the amount combusted with energy recovery. Reducing food waste will help address climate change, as 20 percent of total U.S. methane emissions come from landfills. By keeping wholesome and nutritious food out of our landfills, Alachua County can help address the persons that live in food insecure households. On September 16, 2015, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and EPA announced the first ever domestic goal to reduce food loss and waste by half by the year 2030. EPA Sustainable Food Management

Renewable Energy

Alachua County's main electricity provider is GRU (97% of use). As of the first quarter of 2019 GRU's renewable energy component of the fuel mix was 42%. Therefore, approximately 42% of Alachua County's energy consumption is renewably supplied, Annualized, this is approximately 8 million kWh/year.

Alachua County currently produces about 324,000 kWh/year of energy from solar photovoltaic installations, representing 2% of the County's total demand.

Alachua County currently uses 19 million kWh/year of electricity.

One solution to achieve the policy goal of 100% renewable from solar power:

Estimated System Size and Cost for 100% Solar PV Energy: Offset of 19M kWh Use by Alachua County

- 14.1 MW PV system covering 78 acres at an estimated $21.2 M
- It is roughly calculated based on FY18 usage and an estimated utility scale capital project cost of $1,500 installed solar PV per kW that to produce 100% of the County's usage from solar would require approximately $21.2 M for a system sized to over 14.1 MW with a total space need of 78 acres.
- This cost does not take into consideration land acquisition, substation, operations and maintenance.
- Final installed costs would need to be determined by competitive bid or another purchasing procedure appropriate for major capital projects.

Water

Water conservation for food production and landscape irrigation is central to energy conservation. Detailed information regarding water system is provided in the Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) Data and Analysis.

To maximize water conservation strategies, several policies in the Energy Element of the Comprehensive Plan have been updated or added in an effort to reduce outdoor water use. Looking at total groundwater

usage is the best method to measure water conservation. Specific language addressing public capital projects has been updated to require water conservation measures. Energy Element Policy 1.1.3 addressing water conservation and identifying indicators of improvement such as participation in Florida Water Standards and other similar measures is revised to delete reductions in potable water use per capita and increased use of reclaimed water from the list of tracking measures. Alachua County does not support all uses of reclaimed water, as landscape irrigation use can support landscaping practices that are not sustainable, and reductions in potable water use per capita can be reflective of various factors such as increases in density and may be misleading as a measure of improvements or increases in use of water conservation measures. To improve water conservation strategies, related policies have been updated in Conservation and Open Space Element Objective 4.5 Groundwater and Springs, and in Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element Objectives 6.1 and 8.1.

Fiscal Impacts and Impacts on the Cost of Housing

The Alachua County Unified Land Development Code Section 402.05(a)17 calls for an evaluation of the impacts of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments on the initial cost of housing, the long term cost of home ownership and the fiscal impacts to the County and the County's taxpayers. The proposed amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan that are being considered are part of the overall evaluation and update of the Comprehensive Plan that is required at least every seven years in accordance with Section 163.3191, Florida Statutes. This update includes proposed amendments to various goals, objectives, policies, and maps throughout fourteen of the fifteen Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendments address a wide range of topics such as land use and development standards, public facilities and services, intergovernmental coordination, economic opportunity and equity, affordable housing, community health, energy, local food systems, and protection of natural resources and water quality, and would establish policies to guide subsequent implementation activities related to these topic areas. Because of this, identification of precise fiscal impacts and effects on the cost of housing would be appropriate when these policies are translated into specific implementation activities as outlined below.

Fiscal Impacts to County

The Comprehensive Plan contains broad policies which provide guidance for many budgetary, operational, and development-related decisions within County government. The ways in which the policies in the Comprehensive Plan are implemented are determined at subsequent stages in the decision-making process, such as through the County's annual budget process and capital improvements programs, as part of operational plans and projects for specific County departments, through updates to the land development regulations, and through other County ordinances. Any specific expenditures of County funds, or fiscal impact associated with policies, programs, or actions described in these proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments would be determined at these subsequent stages of the decision-making process.

Impacts on Cost of Housing

As noted above, the proposed amendments address a wide range of topics across multiple elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Many of the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan have little or no relationship to the cost of housing, but deal with topics such as non-residential land use policies, local food systems, community health, intergovernmental coordination, economic opportunity, public facilities and services, and protection of natural resources and water. The proposed amendments to policies relating to these topics should not have any direct impact on the cost of housing.

Fiscal Impacts and Impacts on the Cost of Housing

One of the fundamental concepts that is built into the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan is the periodic evaluation of the capacity of the Urban Cluster to accommodate future population growth. This evaluation includes the use of "market factors" which provide for a "cushion" in the supply of undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster, to help ensure that the local real estate market has an adequate supply of land area for the potential development of new housing needed for projected population growth (see Urban Cluster Analysis in the Future Land Use Element Data and Analysis, which shows there is more than a sufficient supply of land for the projected population growth).

The Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses issues related to affordable housing most directly. The proposed amendments to the Housing Element generally call for the County to implement various strategies and programs that are aimed at increasing the supply of housing and retaining the currently-available housing stock that is affordable to very low and extremely low income households (see proposed amendments to Housing Element and data and analysis for Housing Element). As these updated policies in the Housing Element are implemented, it is expected that they would result in more housing units in Alachua County that would be affordable to very low and extremely low income households and retention of such housing units over the long term.

Some of the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan address policies that provide guidance on site development standards for new development, which are intended to provide benefits to the community in terms of a higher quality of life in the built environment, promotion of multimodal mobility options, and the long-term protection of natural areas and water resources. Examples of such policy amendments include restructuring of the open space requirements for new development and strengthening the policies for use of Low Impact Design for stormwater facilities in Sensitive Karst Areas. These types of policy revisions may have some impact on the initial cost of developing new housing. The specific impacts on affordable housing of such policy changes is dependent on how the updated policies are implemented through the land development regulations, the characteristics of particular development sites, and various factors affecting the local housing market.