A DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSAL FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING
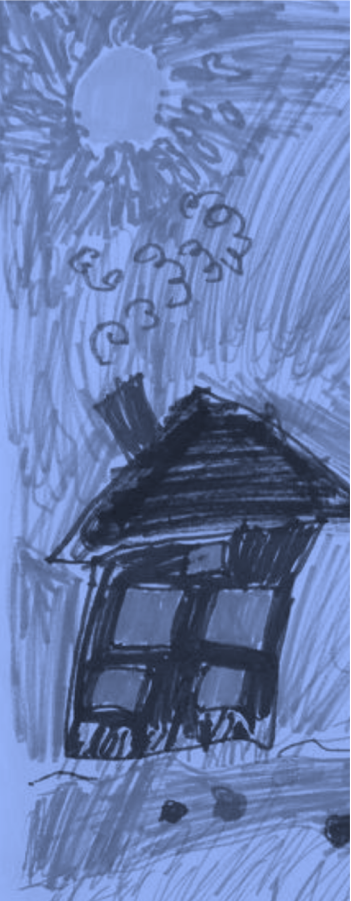
presented to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

November 12, 2019

GAINESVILLE NEIGHBORS UNITED

Images provided by tOrange.biz (some cropped)

WHO ARE WE AND WHY DO WE CARE?

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED IN THE LAST YEAR?

Without data, we cannot move forward intelligently

This is a national problem

There are no "silver bullets," anywhere

Sound bites are not solutions

This is not primarily an architecture problem, it is a "systems design" problem

We are doing many good things here in Alachua County…

OUR PROPOSAL--THE BIG PICTURE:

Principles—shared starting points

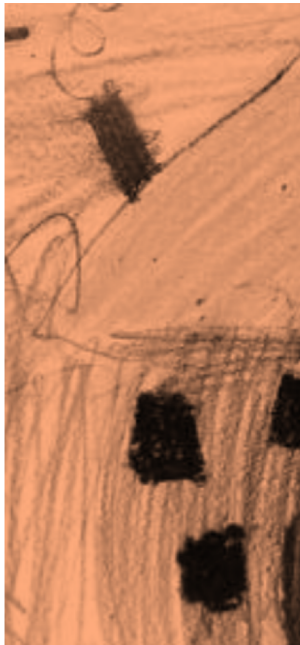**A. The Players—everyone must work together**

B. Do the most good for the most people as quickly and economically as possible
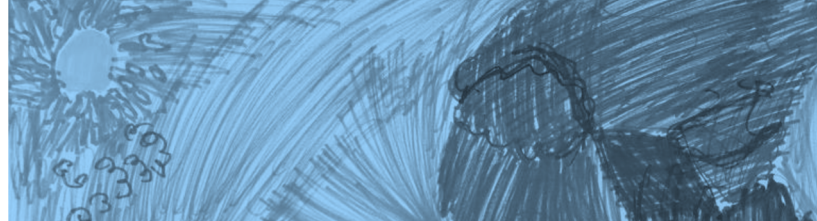
C. Change the game, collaboratively

DRAFT PROPOSAL:
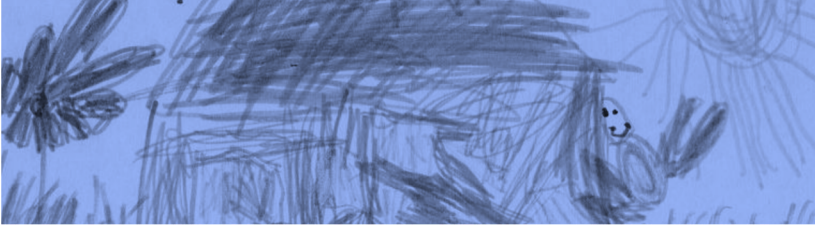
This is a *MENU* of widely supported ideas.

To prioritize them, we call for public discussion and consensus-building.

PRINCIPLES:

1. The Gainesville housing market should be more fair, accessible, and affordable, particularly for low to moderate income people.

2. ==We should maintain and enhance the character and community of Gainesville's diverse neighborhoods. They are the backbone of our city.==

3. The public should play a role in defining affordability and in making a variety of affordable housing options available for rent and for sale to a broad spectrum of occupants.

4. ==Gainesville is distinct, in part because of our enormous student population: Programs implemented elsewhere may not work here==.

5. Yet because the consequences of urban decisions unfold over many years, during which time irreversible damage may occur, it is wise to review experiences from other cities for examples of successes and failures.

6. All decisions involving tax dollars and government regulations should rely on sound evidence and appropriate planning, not supposition, fads, trends, or ideology and should enjoy substantial support from citizens.
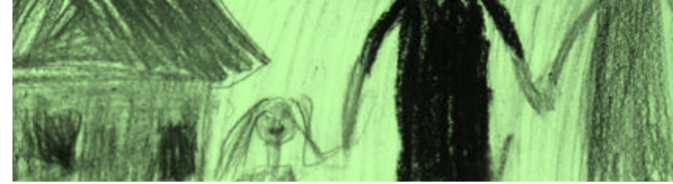
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ACKNOWLEDGE AND OPERATE WITHIN BROADER SYSTEMS AND PARTNERSHIPS:

It is essential that:

1. **The City and County work together.**

2. **Town & Gowns (UF and Santa Fe) work together.**

3. **Public, private, non-profit, religious, and neighborhood association partners better coordinate joint efforts.**

4. ==**A City/County-Citizen dialogue be established to assess feasibility and chart progress of new housing initiatives.**==
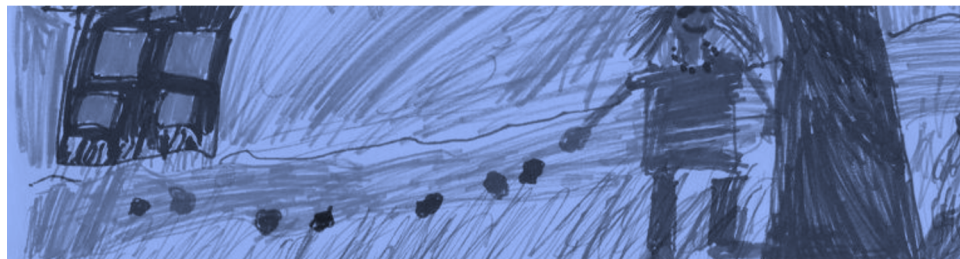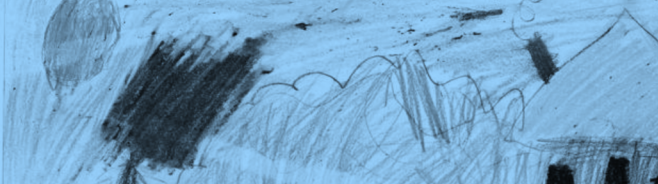
ADDRESS THE EASIER SOLUTIONS FIRST:

1. <mark>Recognize the community's successful efforts and build on them.</mark>

2. Upgrade and enforce existing codes and laws, especially those pertaining to ADUs and to home and neighborhood safety.

3. Place a moratorium on demolition and new development in vulnerable, especially historic, neighborhoods and natural areas.

4. Prioritize quality renovation and repurposing, at or on previously developed sites.

5. <mark>Inventory housing options countywide showing access to schools/shopping/services and public transport.</mark>

6. <mark>Strengthen City/County transport networks and make innovative options better known and available.</mark>

7. Use the heritage neighborhood and historic district nomination processes to help neighborhoods define, preserve, and protect Gainesville's unique character

8. Improve existing rental housing with weatherization, insulation, etc., to meet codes or beyond.

9. <mark>Develop and maintain a roommate matching service and housing information, countywide.</mark>

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DESIGN AND BUILD AN EQUITABLE GAINESVILLE:

1. Provide housing, new or renovated, that meets ADA requirements.

2. Create short term/one-time subsidies and rent-to-own programs for renters and first-time homeowners.

3. Develop an urban homesteading program perhaps linked to a community land trust.

4. <mark>Research, design, and prototype options such as single-room occupancy dwellings (SROs) and co-housing.</mark>

5. <mark>Fund a credit union to invest local money in local solutions.</mark>

6. Offer a landlord incentive program, to benefit tenants, for energy and water efficiency, and for the protection of environmental health and integrity.

7. Create an onsite-employment program for multi-unit facilities.

*Some efforts are already underway.

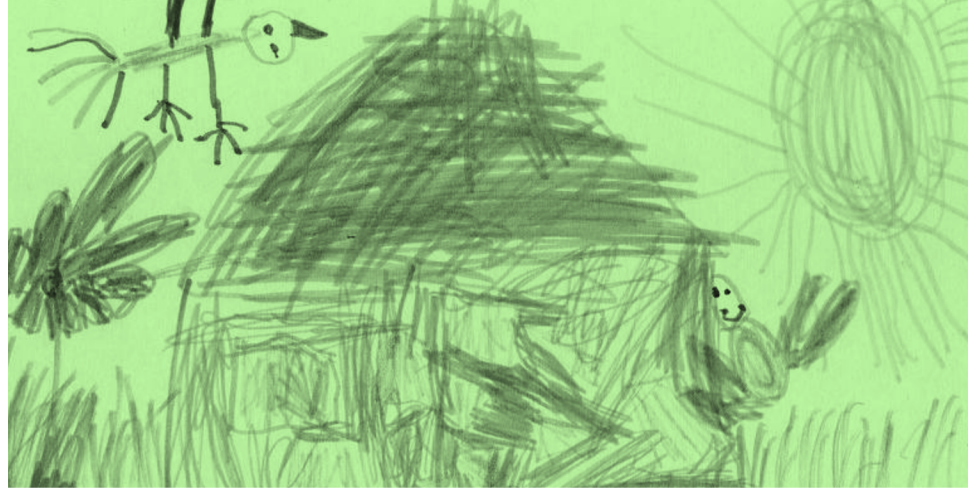*WE MUST COORDINATE OUR COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS:*

Alachua County Homebuilders' Forum

Gainesville Alliance for Equitable Development

Gainesville Sun

GNV4ALL

League of Women's Voters' efforts

NAACP Forum, "Housing for the Working Poor," February 2020

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WE REQUEST THE ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION'S HELP:

Take a leadership role as our elected representatives, and include citizens in decision making

Collect knowledge and distribute it across the community (Libraries? Guardian? Social services?)

Facilitate a community wide discussion or charrette

Map our community's assets

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THANK YOU