

# EVALUATION & APPRAISAL REPORT ON ALACHUA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 2001-2020



7/31/2009

Alachua County, FL

For Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing on  
August 11, 2009

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# Evaluation and Appraisal Report on Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020

*For Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing on August 11, 2009*

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In collaboration with the following Alachua County Departments:

Community Support Services  
County Manager's Office  
Environmental Protection  
Fire Rescue  
Office of Management and Budget  
Public Works  
Visitors and Convention Bureau

# Evaluation and Appraisal Report

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL

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## INTRODUCTION

Alachua County is located in North Central Florida, 85 miles south of the Georgia state line, 50 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, and 67 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. Alachua County encompasses 977 square miles, which includes approximately 874 square miles of land area. Alachua County has 9 the municipalities within its borders, including: Archer, Alachua, Gainesville (county seat), Hawthorne, High Springs, LaCrosse, Micanopy, Newberry, and Waldo. The County has an estimated year round population of 252,388, including approximately 47,000 University of Florida students. There are approximately 105,051 residents in the unincorporated area of the County (BEBR Estimates of Population, April 1, 2008).

There is a large amount of publicly owned land in Alachua County because of the presence of the University of Florida and other healthcare and government institutions. Seven of the top ten employers in the County are public institutions, including the top three: University of Florida, Shands Hospital, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Alachua County Property Appraiser, 2008). Alachua County serves as the primary regional employment center, accounting for approximately 65% of all employment in the eleven county North Central Florida Region (State of Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics, "Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages", Sept. 2008).

Alachua County has experienced a moderate but steady rate of growth and development in recent years, although Alachua County's growth has been slower than that of the State of Florida and many of the coastal counties. The population of Alachua County increased by just over 34,000, or 15.8%, between 2000 and 2008. The county's population growth rate during this period was approximately 2% or 4,300 persons annually. Alachua County's moderate growth trend is projected to continue through the Year 2035, although the growth rate is expected to decrease as compared with the growth trends in the early part of this decade. The "Medium" population projections published by BEBR (March, 2009) project a countywide population of 330,400 by the Year 2035, which would be an increase of just over 78,000 over the next 26 years, or approximately 3,000 persons annually.

### Purpose of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report

The State of Florida's Growth Management Act (§163.3191, F.S.) requires each local government to adopt an Evaluation and Appraisal Report ("EAR") on its Comprehensive Plan once every seven years according to a phased schedule established by the state land planning agency, the Florida Department of Community Affairs ("DCA"). The intent of the EAR is to assess progress in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, and to respond to changes in state, regional and local policies on planning and growth management, changing conditions and trends, ensure intergovernmental coordination and identify major issues regarding achievement of the community's goals. The key purpose of the EAR is to provide recommendations for revision and update of the Plan. These recommendations in the form of strategies to address major community issues are contained in Chapter 1 of this Report, based primarily on the analysis of major community issues contained in Chapter 6.

The Evaluation and Appraisal Report for Alachua County must be adopted and submitted to DCA by September 1, 2009, in accordance with the schedule established and adopted into the Florida Administrative Code by DCA. Each of the nine municipalities in the County are required to adopt their EARs approximately one year to 18 months after the County's deadline.

The last EAR prepared for the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 1991-2011 was adopted in 1998. This was followed by an update of the Comprehensive Plan that was first adopted as the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 in 2002. Although the Florida Department of Community Affairs issued a "Notice of Intent" to find this updated Plan in compliance with the State's Growth Management Act, several affected persons challenged the updated Plan resulting in a mediation process and adoption of settlement



agreement amendments in 2003; this was followed by additional legal challenges which went through an administrative hearing resulting in a Final Order of Compliance on the updated plan in 2005, and the updated Plan then went into effect in May 2005. This EAR therefore evaluates the effectiveness of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan from May 2005 forward, a period of roughly four years. The thirteen Elements of the Plan evaluated in this document include those Elements that were part of the 2002 update, as well as the Public School Facilities Element adopted in 2008. A summary of each Element is included in Chapter 4.

## The EAR Process

The development of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 was organized into a three-phased process as established in the Public Participation Plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners and Local Planning Agency in January of 2008 (see Appendix B).

Phase I involved the identification of major community issues to be addressed in the EAR through a series of local advisory committee, community meetings and other sources of input between January and June of 2008. A list of major community issues to be addressed in the EAR was approved by the County Commission on June 24, 2008. This list was subsequently submitted to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), and DCA issued a Letter of Understanding to the Chair of the Alachua County Commission on the scope of the EAR, based on the list of major issues and other requirements of §163.3191(2)(a) through (p), F.S., dated July 17, 2008 (see Appendix C). The list of major community issues to be addressed and other EAR-related information may be found online at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>

Phase II of the process involved developing the data, analysis and strategies on the major community issues. In this phase, a set of draft “issue papers” was developed to frame the specific issues, evaluate the current Comprehensive Plan polices relating to those issues, and provide options to address the issues in the next update of the Comprehensive Plan. The public participation process for this Phase included review and comment by advisory committees, community groups, and the public at community meetings and workshops. At the conclusion of the public participation process for this Phase, the EAR issues, options and strategies to address the issues were presented to the Board of County Commissioners and Local Planning Agency (BoCC/LPA) who provided further direction to staff, including revisions, additions and deletions to the proposed options identified for each issue.

Phase III of the process includes workshops and public hearings on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report, based on the identification of issues and recommendations to address those issues developed in Phases I and II. The workshops and public hearings will lead to final adoption of the Report before September 2009.

## Amendment and Update of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Based on the EAR

Following adoption of the EAR and review by agencies, DCA will issue a “final sufficiency determination” on the EAR within 90 days of receipt of the adopted EAR, in accordance with section 163.3191(6), F.S. Alachua County will then have up to 18 months to amend and update its comprehensive plan based on the recommendations identified in the EAR.

## Overview of the Report

This Report is organized into eight chapters, plus appendices. The chapters are as follows:

1. **Recommendations to Address Major Issues**  
Provides the strategies to address the major community issues; these strategies will provide the foundation for the subsequent amendment and update of the County's Comprehensive Plan
2. **Public Involvement Process**  
Summarizes the public participation process and activities undertaken in preparing the EAR
3. **Population, Development and Land Use Analysis**  
Includes analysis of major demographic trends, land use inventory, and review of recent development activity in the County
4. **Assessment of Comprehensive Plan Elements**  
Provides a brief assessment of each element of the Plan and their successes and shortcomings
5. **General Level of Service Analysis**  
Reviews the implementation of the Plan and infrastructure needed to maintain adopted level of service standards for concurrency
6. **Major Issue Analysis**  
Provides data and analysis relating to the major community issues, and identifies strategies to address those issues
7. **Assessment of Changes to Florida Statutes, Administrative Rules, State and Regional Plans (Required Pursuant to s. 163.3191(2)(f), F.S.)**  
Reviews changes to law and policy relating to comprehensive plans since adoption of the 2002 update of the County's Plan, whether and where and how the changes are addressed in the County's Plan, and whether amendments are needed to address these changes
8. **Special Topics (Required To Be Addressed Per s. 163.3191(2)(k)-(o), F.S.)**  
Reviews five specific topic areas in accordance with statutory requirements, including their applicability to Alachua County

## CHAPTER 1 | RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS MAJOR ISSUES

Table 1 below identifies the recommendations to address each of the major community issues established in the first phase of the EAR process. This identifies the strategies to address the major community issues; these strategies will provide the foundation for the subsequent amendment and update of the County’s Comprehensive Plan in the 2009 to 2011 period subsequent to the EAR being found sufficient by DCA. The Board of County Commissioners originally adopted a list of eleven major issues, and as the process moved forward these categories were reorganized into seven major issue areas for purposes of discussion at joint Board of County Commissioner/Local Planning Agency workshops. Each sub-table below includes the recommendations for one of the seven issue areas. These recommendations were originally developed as strategies within the Issue Papers developed during Phase II of the process, and were further refined during the joint workshops held in Phases II and III. A full overview of the issue development process and analysis of all the major issues developed in the Issue Papers is included in Chapter Six, Major Issues Analysis.

**TABLE 1. Evaluation and Appraisal Report Recommendations for Alachua County (with Sub-tables by Issue Area)**

**Table 1.1. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – URBAN AREA**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
1.1	Identification of ways to promote compact, higher density, mixed use development while assessing the capacity of the Urban Cluster relative to updated population projections	1.1.1*	Establish locational criteria and development standards for Transit Oriented Development, in order to promote higher residential densities and compact mixed use development (also see Land Use/Transportation Issue 2.1 recommendations).
		1.1.2*	Modify existing Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Village Center policies to provide greater flexibility on the minimum required site acreage and the maximum allowable commercial floor area, in order to promote more opportunities for mixed use transit oriented development (also see Land Use/Transportation Recommendations).
		1.1.3	Assessment of the forecast land needed for urban development based on population projections, average household size, and residential vacancy rates, indicates that there is sufficient capacity in the Urban Cluster to accommodate projected population growth in the adopted Urban Cluster at least through the year 2035.
		1.1.4	Review the policies relative to open space requirements within the Urban Cluster to assess impact on the ability to achieve higher density, mixed use development within the Cluster; based on that review, consider modifications to those requirements as determined to be desirable and necessary to facilitate higher density/intensity mixed use development within the Urban Cluster.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
1.2	Promoting economic development in East Gainesville in a manner consistent with environmental stewardship	1.2.1	Develop and promote economic-based incentives that continue to support the County’s protection standards while encouraging Low Impact Development (LID) and other environmentally-friendly approaches for parcels with wetlands and surface waters, or within Strategic Ecosystems, including strategies to: 1) increase economic opportunity by bringing higher paying jobs and providing services; 2) strengthen economic, social, and transportation linkage between the East Gainesville area and other parts of the Gainesville urbanized area, including the areas of downtown, the University of Florida, and the western urban areas; 3) expand range of housing choices to attract and retain residents with varied income levels; 4) protect vital natural resources, such as wetlands, watersheds, strategic ecosystems, creeks, tree canopy, and scenic vistas that make East Gainesville unique; and 5) promote and incentivize redevelopment of areas already in development or impacted by prior development.
		1.2.2	Increase outreach and education about the value and benefits of natural resources within the community. Clarify the limitations and uses of available data and maps on the web and stress the value of ground-truthing (inspecting) of regulated resources on site prior to development. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>
1.3	Implementation of potable water and sanitary sewer connection policies and water supply concurrency	1.3.1	Develop additional policy language addressing connection requirements to potable water and sanitary sewer for development within Urban Cluster: Such language should address the following: Revisions to the existing criteria for exceptions to the connection requirements (PWSSE Policy 2.1) shall provide additional groundwater protection measures by reducing the amount of effluent generated by development within the Urban Cluster for which an exception is granted (e.g., requiring waterless urinals or other ultra-low flow fixtures for non-residential development).
		1.3.2	Review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.
1.4	Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Activity Center Master Plans) in light of fiscal constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints.	1.4.1	Provide a mechanism to implement the general policies for Activity Centers through the development plan review process. Amend Policies 2.1.7 and 2.1.14 to replace the requirement for separate Master Plans for each Activity Center with detailed design standards, similar to the Transit Oriented Development standards now in process, for mixed use, multi-modal, and integrated development, building upon the existing Activity Center policy concepts.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
		<b>1.4.2</b>	As a complementary recommendation to Recommendation #1 above, continue to develop Master Plans for Activity Centers in appropriate instances, such as to promote redevelopment, or where special circumstances exist that make general standards inapplicable, using only in-house staff and resources, and as staff workload permits. Where Activity Center Master Plans are appropriate, explore potential opportunities to develop them through public/private partnerships. As a complementary strategy, continue to utilize less costly and more effective methods for publicizing the Master Plan process.

\* Recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) are addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment for alternative transportation concurrency strategies (CPA 01-09). Information about this process and the proposed amendments are available online at: [http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm\\_docs.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php)

**Table 1.2. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>2.1</b>	Development of alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion (e.g. Transit Oriented Development, Transportation System Management, alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips)		Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan have been proposed as part of the first large scale amendment cycle of 2009 to establish multimodal approaches to transportation concurrency management, which will provide an alternative approach to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion. The options identified below are several of the components of the proposed amendments, as they relate to this EAR Issue. Recommendations marked with an asterisk (*) are addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment for alternative transportation concurrency strategies (CPA 01-09) Information about this process and the proposed amendments are available online at: <a href="http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php">http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php</a>
		<b>2.1.1*</b>	Develop a multimodal approach to transportation concurrency management which promotes sustainable land use patterns and energy efficiency by directing higher density, mixed use, transit oriented development to select locations along planned transit routes in the Urban Cluster.
		<b>2.1.2*</b>	Establish locational criteria and design policies for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) within the Urban Cluster.
		<b>2.1.3*</b>	Modify existing Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Village Center policies to provide greater flexibility on the minimum required site acreage and the maximum allowable commercial floor area in order to promote more mixed use transit-oriented development in the Urban Cluster.
		<b>2.1.4*</b>	Establish a transportation impact fee structure to complement the Multimodal Concurrency Management System which includes incentives for development types, such Transit-Oriented Development and Traditional Neighborhood Development, which provide for internal capture of vehicle trips and contribute to a mode shift toward the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes, and reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita.
<b>2.2</b>	Extending effective multi-modal transportation to outlying areas of the county to enable access to major destinations in the urban area	<b>2.2.1*</b>	Establish a long range plan for a system of enhanced transit service, including dedicated transit lanes, to serve heavily traveled commuter routes.
		<b>2.2.2*</b>	Plan for a system of future transit corridors with the idea to eventually connect with outlying areas outside of the Urban Cluster, municipalities, and adjacent Counties through park and ride facilities, express bus service, van pools, etc.
		<b>2.2.3*</b>	Explore new funding sources for enhanced transit service for areas outside the Urban Cluster.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>2.3</b>	Review of road function and design standards in an urban context	<b>2.3.1</b>	The Comprehensive Plan contains policies relating to road function and design in an urban context which were implemented through updates to the Unified Land Development Code adopted on Feb 24, 2009. The updates included provisions for reduced pavement widths, required traffic calming mechanisms, and alternative pedestrian and bicycle design criteria.
		<b>2.3.2*</b>	Evaluate existing policies relating to design standards for reconstructed roadways relative to requirements for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
<b>2.4</b>	Determination of best ways to integrate policies relating to these issues and promote energy conservation and green building and design, including consideration of an Energy Element	<b>2.4.1</b>	Add an Energy Element as an optional Element in the Comprehensive Plan, focusing on overarching goals for energy conservation in the Element, and pointing to specific implementation policies to be added/updated in the existing Elements, including policies to meet new legislative mandates in HB 697 (2008).
<b>2.5</b>	Assessment of Activity Center/Commercial policies meeting the goals of promoting enhanced quality of life, efficient use of land, greater energy efficiency and a reduction in the County’s carbon in footprint	<b>2.5.1*</b>	Establish revised policies and development standards to better encourage mixed use, multi-modal development within all Activity Centers (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Issue 2.1).
		<b>2.5.2</b>	Continue to update existing Activity Center plans in order to provide the necessary policy framework for mixed use multi-modal development that is consistent with the general mixed use design concepts for Activity Centers. (also see Urban Area recommendations under Issue 1.4)
		<b>2.5.3*</b>	Enhance multi-modal transportation linkages between Activity Centers and other major employment and retail destinations through the County’s proposed mobility plan and alternative approach to transportation concurrency (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Issue 2.1).
		<b>2.5.4*</b>	Establish multimodal design standards for mixed use and limited non-residential development located outside of Activity Centers (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Issue 2.1).
<b>2.6</b>	Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities and adjacent counties relative to transportation facility service levels	<b>2.6.1*</b>	Strengthen existing policies to require better coordination with adjacent jurisdictions on multi-modal approaches to transportation planning and implementation of concurrency.
		<b>2.6.2</b>	Explore mechanisms for coordination of long range transportation planning on a county-wide and regional basis.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>2.7</b>	Update transportation map series based on population projections and planning horizon (currently 2020)	<b>2.7.1*</b>	The County's proposed multimodal transportation amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, described under Land Use/Transportation Issue 2.1 will include new long range transportation system maps for the time period of 2010 to 2030. Many of the adopted maps in the Transportation Mobility Element Map Series will be updated, and new maps will be added for future bicycle/pedestrian networks, future express transit corridors, and future rapid transit corridors. These maps will be used to implement a multimodal approach to concurrency management for Alachua County.
<b>2.8</b>	Assess transportation maps and related policies in context of land use, natural resource and economic development goals	<b>2.8.1*</b>	The supporting data and analysis for the County's proposed multimodal transportation amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, described under Land Use/Transportation Issue 2.1, includes an assessment of the transportation maps and related policies. Many of the adopted policies and maps in the Transportation Mobility Element are being updated as part of this process to be more consistent with the overall land use, natural resource, and economic development goals identified in the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
<b>2.9</b>	Clarify corridor preservation policies and use of the Future Traffic Circulation Corridors Map	<b>2.9.1*</b>	Modify adopted corridor preservation policies to better reflect the intent of the adopted Corridors Map as a tool for right-of-way corridor protection. Amendments to the Transportation Mobility Element are in process, including the recommended clarifications to the adopted corridor preservation policies under Objectives 1.5 and 1.10, as part of the County's multimodal concurrency management amendments described under Land Use/Transportation Issue 2.1.
<b>2.10</b>	Evaluate capital project capacity (transportation) in light of current fiscal constraints.	<b>2.10.1*</b>	The County's proposed multimodal transportation amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, described under Land Use/Transportation Issue 2.1, will establish a financially feasible long range multimodal capital improvements program for the Years 2010 through 2030. The proposed capital improvements program will initially focus on additional roadway capacity through parallel road facilities and bicycle/pedestrian enhancements, then gradually transition to focus more on transit and express transit service in the latter years of the CIP, as higher densities and more compact development patterns emerge in the Urban Cluster.

\* Recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) are addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment for alternative transportation concurrency strategies (CPA 01-09). Information about this process and the proposed amendments are available online at:

[http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm\\_docs.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php)



**Table 1.3. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>3.1</b>	Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e. Countywide unincorporated vs. community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County role relative to recreation facilities	<b>3.1.1</b>	Consider access as part of a customized measure or LOS standard for different park/recreation facility types. For example, "X acres of X park type within X-mile radius of every household."
		<b>3.1.2</b>	Base the level of service on county funded and county developed facilities (regardless of jurisdiction/entity currently operating the facility). For those projects jointly funded with other local agencies the percentage of county funding can be used to determine the percentage of the facility that can contribute toward the county's level of service. Also see recommendation 3.3.4 relative to facilities provided by other entities.
<b>3.2</b>	Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community	<b>3.2.1</b>	Utilize the park/recreation system as a whole, instead of focusing on individual parks/recreation sites, to implement recreational programming that meets community needs.
<b>3.3</b>	Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks	<b>3.3.1</b>	As provided in the Alachua County Recreation Master Plan, use park districts or service areas to analyze the needs of different geographic areas.
		<b>3.3.2</b>	Integrate planning for recreation facilities into the Countywide Visioning (CVPC) process to address recreation needs for the next 20 to 30 years. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>
		<b>3.3.3</b>	Review impact fee credits and other incentives for developers to provide land for public parks. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>
		<b>3.3.4</b>	Consider a LOS standard that accounts for facilities provided by other entities (e.g., UF, School Board, and private facilities) based on cooperative agreements between Alachua County and those entities.
<b>3.4</b>	Determine key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy needing incorporation into Plan	<b>3.4.1</b>	Include specific projects from the Local Mitigation Strategy into the Comprehensive Plan /Capital Improvements Program and update the policy framework for hazard mitigation to improve potential eligibility for project funding through grants.
<b>3.5</b>	Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including need for a Public Safety Element	<b>3.5.1</b>	No change to existing policies (e.g. level of service guidelines) which should be maintained and implemented.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>3.6</b>	Consider ways to promote public health, including possible Public (Community) Health Element.	<b>3.6.1</b>	Adopt a new Community Health Element with the following initial priority areas of focus: 1) Improved access and affordability to a comprehensive array of care including primary medical care, specialty care, hospital care, dental care and behavioral health care; 2) Elimination of preventable chronic illness; 3) Reduction of obesity among adults and children; 4) Coordination among local health systems and entities; 5) Enhancement of school-based health promotion and activities; 6) Sensitivity to needs of special populations and those populations affected by health disparities; and integrate the issue as appropriate with other pertinent elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
<b>3.7</b>	Evaluate capital project capacity in light of current fiscal constraints	<b>3.7.1*</b>	An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is in process (CPA 01-09) as part of the first large scale amendments cycle of 2009, which will establish a financially feasible capital improvements program for public facilities subject to concurrency, including long range multimodal transportation projects. As part of these amendments, new policies are proposed to explore alternative funding sources for multimodal transportation projects, in light of current fiscal constraints.
<b>3.8</b>	Prioritize capital projects, particularly for transportation and recreation facilities, to serve existing populations	<b>3.8.1*</b>	An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is in process (CPA 01-09) as part of the first large scale amendment cycle of 2009, which will establish a financially feasible capital improvements program for public facilities subject to concurrency, including long range multimodal transportation projects. The proposed multimodal transportation capital improvement projects identified as part of this process are focused primarily within the Urban Cluster area where approximately 87% of the existing unincorporated population resides. For recreation facilities, see recommendation 3.1.2.

\* Recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) are addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment for alternative transportation concurrency strategies (CPA 01-09). Information about this process and the proposed amendments are available online at:

[http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm\\_docs.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php)

**Table 1.4. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
4.1	Promotion of job diversification/creation/retention	4.1.1	Review and update the Economic Element based on an assessment of the Economic Development Strategic Plan in terms of its adequacy as a comprehensive economic development strategy that builds on the community’s assets and incorporates economic, physical, environmental, community, and human development. This strategy should include measurable goals and performance benchmarks.
4.2	Linkage between tourism and arts/culture development	4.2.1	Promote partnerships with local arts/cultural organization and sports organizations, and promote unique recreational tourism opportunities including agritourism, paddling trails, the African American Heritage Trail and the Old Florida Heritage Highway (scenic highway) Master Plan.
4.3	Evaluate policies promoting nature based tourism	4.3.1	See recommendation 4.2.1 above.
4.4	Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives	4.4.1	Promote industrial Recycling Market Development Zone (RMDZ)/Resource Recovery Park and economic development business recruitment, and include a program for mandatory Curbside Recycling and composting (anaerobic or aerobic) of organic waste.
4.5	Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)	4.5.1	Recommendation to complete the Historic Preservation Master Plan and adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance as a basis for seeking 'Certified Local Governmental Certification,' including providing incentives to discourage teardowns, with focus on historic Rural Clusters, rural communities and possibly urban neighborhoods; ensuring Intergovernmental Coordination during annexation for continued protection of Historic Structures; and encouraging LEED certification for adaptive reuse projects and/or allowing other incentives for adaptive reuse. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>
4.6	Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for industrial and office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies	4.6.1.a	Review the suitability of location of Industrial and Office uses designated on the Future Land Use Map within the unincorporated county and modify current Industrial and Office land use designations to resolve conflicts with existing uses or conditions (residential, environmental, etc.), and increase development intensity within County Activity Centers.
		4.6.1.b	Update policies relating to Industrial and Office land uses to facilitate recruiting of targeted industries to the County, consistent with employer workforce needs and emerging Industrial and Office land use trends.
		4.6.2	Evaluate Industrial and Rural/Agriculture land use categories and assess policies for the location of certain types of agricultural product processing facilities (i.e., food, fuel and fiber) within the County and determine whether changes are needed.

**Table 1.5. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – AGRICULTURE AND GREENSPACE**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>5.1</b>	Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture	<b>5.1.1</b>	Add/revise policies to further support retention/promotion of local agricultural operations, including the following: increased focus on sustainable agriculture through policy incentives; evaluation of policy framework for local farmers' markets and community gardens; increased emphasis on agritourism and removal of barriers to agritourism-related activities in the unincorporated area; expansion of policy framework to include educational and promotional component; and assessment of implementation of the new TDR Program to consider adjustments as needed. (See also recommendation 4.6.2 on agricultural product processing facilities) <i>For further elaboration on recommendations, see Chapter 6, Major Issue Analysis, Agriculture Retention &amp; Sustainability section)</i>
<b>5.2</b>	Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County and consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program	<b>5.2.1</b>	Adopt an overlay map to identify a continuous ecological corridor connecting Preservation areas (these include lands owned by Alachua County, State, WMD in-fee or otherwise) and Strategic Ecosystems that should be protected as follows: <b>a.</b> The critical ecological corridors overlay shall include at a minimum the following adopted Strategic Ecosystems: Lochloosa Slough, East Lochloosa Forest, Lochloosa Creek, Lochloosa Creek Flatwoods, Little Orange Creek, East Side Newnans Lake, Austin Cary, Northeast Flatwoods and the Santa Fe River. <b>b.</b> Make it a priority to protect mapped ecological corridor core areas and preserving linkages between mapped ecological corridor core areas in the implementation of the development review process for Strategic Ecosystems, and also in land acquisition programs, and in Special Area Management Plan development <b>c.</b> The County should coordinate with County-wide Visioning and Planning Committee, Non-governmental organizations, State, federal municipal and adjacent counties to extend ecological linkages beyond County jurisdiction. <b>d.</b> The County should develop and/or support tax incentives that promote the preservation of mapped areas by landowners. <b>e.</b> Develop an outreach program to promote the value of conserving linked ecosystems/corridor. <b>f.</b> Prioritize core areas of, and linkages between, the corridors in the implementation of any Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights Program. <b>g.</b> Review Land Conservation Master Plan and adopt additional Greenspace-conserving tools as appropriate.
<b>5.3</b>	Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process	<b>5.3.1</b>	As part of the EAR-based updates of the Comprehensive Plan, the County should coordinate with municipalities to review and update the July 2005 Conceptual Land Use Plan Map and Countywide Vision and develop policy language recognizing and promoting implementation of the Countywide Vision that can also be used both in the County and Municipal Comprehensive Plans as part of their EAR-based updates.

		<b>5.3.2</b>	Coordinate through Elected Officials' Group and Staff Workgroup to address the concept of neighborhood school districts as identified in the CVPC Conceptual Plan Objectives as part of the School Board's long term capital planning.
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**Table 1.6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS – RESOURCE PROTECTION**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
6.1	Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques	6.1.1	<b><u>SURFACE WATER</u></b> Develop policy language supportive of surface water quality protection and improvement. Such language should address measures and incentives to promote the following: 1) Low Impact Development (LID) strategies as policy in the Stormwater Element and Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE); 2) Protection of surface waters from nutrient enrichment by adding policies that reduce landscape fertilization practices, improvement of septic tank system maintenance, drainfield design standards for rebuilds, installation of performance based septic systems, and improvement of domestic wastewater treatment plant processes and effluent and solids treatment and disposal practices (COSE and Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element); 3) Restoration of impaired water bodies in COSE Section 4.6; and 4) Maintenance and protection of surface water levels and flows in COSE Section 4.6 and update policies corresponding to water management district actions to protect levels and flows of surface waters and springs and promote water conservation and reuse.

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
		<b>6.1.2</b>	<b>GROUND WATER &amp; SPRINGS</b> Develop policy language supportive of groundwater quality and springshed protection and improvement, and adequate water supply with language to address measures and incentives to promote the following: 1) More stringent water conservation measures including, Florida Friendly landscaping, water efficient irrigation and reduced indoor water use; 2) Education strategies in coordination with utilities and other agencies such as the Alachua County Extension Office and IFAS; 3) Discouraging new or expanded large water withdrawals that may impact the springs on the Santa Fe River to protect levels and flows of surface waters and springs and promote water conservation and reuse; 4) Support and promote water reuse conducted in an environmentally sound manner that protects groundwater and surface water quality from nutrient enrichment; 5) Address potential water quality problems associated with intensive agriculture related to concentrated animal densities; 6) Address potential problems occurring from utility lines installed beneath stormwater basins in karst sensitive areas; 7) a. Update data and analysis, including assessment of current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10 year period, as required by Section 163.3177(6)(d), F.S., in coordination with the updates of the water supply plans for the St. Johns River and Suwannee River Water Management Districts and Gainesville Regional Utilities; b. Should Alachua County or any portion of it be identified as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area as part of the updates of the Water Management Districts Water Supply Plans scheduled to be finalized by December 2010, initiate Comprehensive Plan amendments within 18 months of adoption of a Regional Water Supply Plan pursuant to Section 373.0361, F.S. to incorporate appropriate water supply projects, including conservation and reuse projects, identified in the regional water supply plan into the Comprehensive Plan, as needed to meet the County’s projected water supply needs in accordance 163.3177(6)(c) and (d), F.S. Such amendments will be coordinated with Gainesville Regional Utilities.
<b>6.2</b>	Assess water conservation and reuse strategies	<b>6.2.2</b>	See recommendations 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 above.
<b>6.3</b>	Develop effective approaches to interjurisdictional and interagency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.)	<b>6.3.1</b>	Use the current Gainesville/County cooperative approach to protecting annexed lands and develop an interdisciplinary team to address protection of strategic ecosystems and other natural resources within each city’s reserve area - could include TDR strategies, protective guidelines, density and design standards, and special area planning if necessary. Create subcommittee of Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee to work toward implementation of relevant guiding principles and action strategies to protect natural resources countywide and include environmental analysis and environmental protection standards/requirements in Boundary Adjustment Act (BAA) or related interlocal agreements. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
		<b>6.3.2</b>	Add an environmental liaison for the county and city on the Gainesville–Alachua County Orderly Annexation Team. <i>No change to Comprehensive Plan required.</i>
<b>6.4</b>	Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans	<b>6.4.1</b>	Make necessary updates to special area plan policies in Idylwild/Serenola and Cross Creek Special Areas to reflect changes in federal guidelines for bald eagles. (Also update pertinent supporting data and analysis as part of EAR-based Comprehensive Plan updates)
<b>6.5</b>	Evaluate need for Air Quality Program	<b>6.5.1</b>	Delete Policies 4.1.1, 4.1.2, and 4.1.3 related to regulatory and monitoring activities; requirement for biennial report on air quality in Policy 4.1.4.4; and, since the County has no delegated regulatory authority from FDEP for air quality, revise Item 5 under policy 4.1.6 relating to promotion of industries that exceed federal and state air quality and emission standards to remove the following language: "Existing and new industries shall be regulated as follows: a. Existing industries not meeting these standards shall be brought into compliance under a specified schedule. b. New industries shall be designed to exceed the specified standards." Maintain policy (4.1.3.7) on inventory and reduction of greenhouse gases and revise Policy 4.1.4 public education component to state the County should maintain a general Air Quality website to provide the public with education about air quality, radon information and indoor air pollution issues.
<b>6.6</b>	Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints	<b>6.6.1</b>	Give priority to special areas studies within strategic ecosystems that have been the subject of development review to make efficient use of the results of ground-truthing of resource areas as a basis for expanded ground-truthing of ecosystem resources on other adjacent properties; schedule special area studies to coincide with periods when there is reduced work load on staff for other activities such as development review; promote and facilitate participation by property owners in coordinated planning including ground-truthing and identification of strategic ecosystems resources and notification of adjacent property owners within strategic ecosystems of opportunities and potential benefits of coordinated special area plan efforts; pursue alternative funding strategies through partnerships with other public agencies, non-profits or private sector, to fund special area studies and develop special area plans for strategic ecosystems; and increase the priority of implementing Strategic Ecosystem policies including Special Area Studies in the budget and in County work programs. <i>(Internal process changes – no Comprehensive Plan Amendments needed)</i>



**Table 1.7. SUMMARY OF EAR RECOMMENDATIONS – HOUSING**

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
7.1	Assess how Plan policies and implementation impact the cost of housing	7.1.1	BOCC direction on Feb. 17, 2009 to establish a standard procedure to consider impacts on cost of housing (see rec. 7.3.1, subsection 2 below). Also considered accessory dwelling units and referred this issue to EAR process (see rec. 7.5.1 below).
7.2	Assess need to require affordable housing in all developments and consider funding sources to provide affordable housing retroactively in existing development	7.2.1	Implement financial strategies to address the affordability of existing housing, promote the development of new affordable units, and prevent the replacement of affordable housing with more expensive housing or non-residential uses; consider strategies to prevent the replacement of affordable housing with more expensive housing or non-residential uses; and empower residents to purchase and retain market-rate housing.
		7.2.2	Investigate County's inclusionary housing incentives, particularly density, to determine why incentives are not effective.
7.3	Address recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC)	7.3.1	The BOCC received the AHAC Report, considered AHAC & staff recommendations and gave direction on Feb. 17, 2009 as follows: 1) for profit and not-for-profit affordable housing permits shall be available within six days after the application is found sufficient (implemented through administrative directive – revisions pending to Land Development Code); 2) directed staff to establish a process to consider, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing, by requiring a staff analysis in staff reports for any recommended amendments to the Land Development Regulations or to the Comprehensive Plan (implemented by administrative directive – revisions pending to Land Development Code); 3) monitor utilization of the Impact Fee Assistance Program and consider increasing the amount budgeted for the program from \$25,000 to \$100,000 should demand for assistance justify an increase in funding; 4) re-evaluate locally-owned public lands with criteria such as the possible rezoning of suitable parcels and the potential for redevelopment of under-utilized property; 5) advertisements promoting the County's affordable housing and impact fee relief programs shall be placed in the Builders Association of North Central Florida and Gainesville-Alachua County Association of Realtors newsletters; brochures explaining the County's affordable housing programs be placed with the Alachua County Housing Authority; and, brochures explaining the Impact Fee Assistance Program and Incentives for Building Affordable Housing be placed with the Department of Growth Management's Building Division; 6) requested the Financial Planning Group to evaluate the Tax Collector's Lands Available and tax delinquent properties lists and the County will explore the possibility of acquiring property through rebuilding condemned structures for use as affordable housing. <i>All recommendations are being implemented administratively and do not require amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.</i>

#	ISSUE	#	RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUE
<b>7.4</b>	Assess special needs housing and how to best coordinate to meet needs	<b>7.4.1</b>	Review land use policies for possible barriers to providing special needs housing and identify ways to eliminate those barriers.
		<b>7.4.2</b>	In addition, the following recommendations are also included that do not require amendments to the Comprehensive Plan: provide for periodic review of the SHIP strategy to ensure that there is flexibility in the Special Needs Program in order to address the ever changing needs and circumstances of the special needs population, and develop stronger partnerships with special needs service providers (e.g., mental health agencies, criminal justice professionals), particularly the Alachua County Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Grant Planning Committee, to pursue opportunities to leverage SHIP funds with other resources.
<b>7.5</b>	Evaluate effectiveness of Plan in promoting affordable housing, including a range of housing types and lot sizes and policies promoting live/work units	<b>7.5.1</b>	Consider revisions to policies for accessory dwelling units to allow accessory units in new developments maintaining requirement for homestead status for accessory or principal unit, to be implemented through means such as deed restrictions or covenants.

## CHAPTER 2 | PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Alachua County has a very large and diverse range of citizens and interest groups that participate regularly in the planning and development efforts of the County. Multiple avenues were used to reach these groups as well as the population in general in an attempt to generate as much participation as possible. A Public Participation Plan establishing the scope of work for the EAR was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 8, 2008 breaking the process up into three phases (see Appendix B). The following information highlights the public involvement during each phase of the process (see Appendix for more detailed information):

### *PHASE I: Identification of Major Community Issues (January-June 2008)*

- Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved scope of work and public participation plan: January 8, 2008
- Local Planning Agency (LPA) approved scope of work and public participation plan: January 16, 2008
- EAR Website established with general information and updated on a regular basis:  
<http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>
- Email address established to gather comments
- Four community meetings conducted in locations around the County: 38 participants
- Public notices submitted for all meetings in four local papers
- Workshops announced at bi-weekly County Commission meetings
- Online survey conducted via website: 14 respondents
- Written comments solicited during community meetings: 9 submittals
- Met with 12 County Citizen Advisory Boards: 7 Boards submitted formal comments
- Met with four citizen groups
- Joint BOCC/LPA meeting to review and provide direction on proposed major community issues: May 6, 2008
- Agency Meeting to discuss major issues and identify information sources: June 2, 2008
- LPA approved list of Major Community Issues: June 18, 2008
- BOCC approved list of Major Community Issues: June 24, 2008
- Department of Community Affairs Letter of Understanding on list of Major Community Issues: July 17, 2008

### *PHASE II: Development of Recommendations for Update of Plan (June-Nov. 2008)*

- Publicity as identified for Phase I
- Preparation of draft issue papers organized by topic area
- Follow up meetings with Citizen Advisory Boards to gather comments and input on draft Issue Papers
- Three community meetings conducted in locations around the County: 44 participants
- Email address used to gather supplemental comments/input following community meetings

### *PHASE III: Workshops/Public Hearings on the EAR (January-August 2009)*

- Publicity as identified for Phase I

- Six joint Board of County Commissioners/Local Planning Agency Meetings/Workshops to consider input from above-listed sources and staff recommendations, as well as additional verbal and written comment from public held by issue area as follows:
  - Community Facilities and Services – 2/12/09
  - Economic Development – 2/19/09
  - Agriculture/Greenspace – 3/3/09
  - Land Use and Transportation – 3/12/09
  - Resource Protection – 3/17/09
  - Urban Area/Energy and Housing – 3/31/09

Agendas from the six joint BoCC/LPA workshops are available at:

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/government/bocc/calendar/agendas.aspx>

Minutes from the six joint BoCC/LPA workshops are available at:

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/government/bocc/calendar/minutes.aspx>

- Public Hearing by Local Planning Agency on the draft EAR to provide recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners: May 20, 2009
- Briefing to Board of County Commissioners on transmittal of Local Planning Agency proposed EAR and transmittal for agency review: May 26, 2009
- Public Hearing by Board of County Commissioners to adopt EAR: August 11, 2009

## CHAPTER 3 | POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE ANALYSIS

This section provides the basis for understanding the dynamics of growth in Alachua County as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the Comprehensive Plan. The assessment includes analysis and projections of population, analysis of land use, recent development trends, and estimates of land needed to support projected population growth. A key element of the assessment is an analysis of the capacity of County’s Urban Cluster to accommodate expected population growth through 2035.

### Population Analysis: Trends and Projections

#### Population Growth Trends

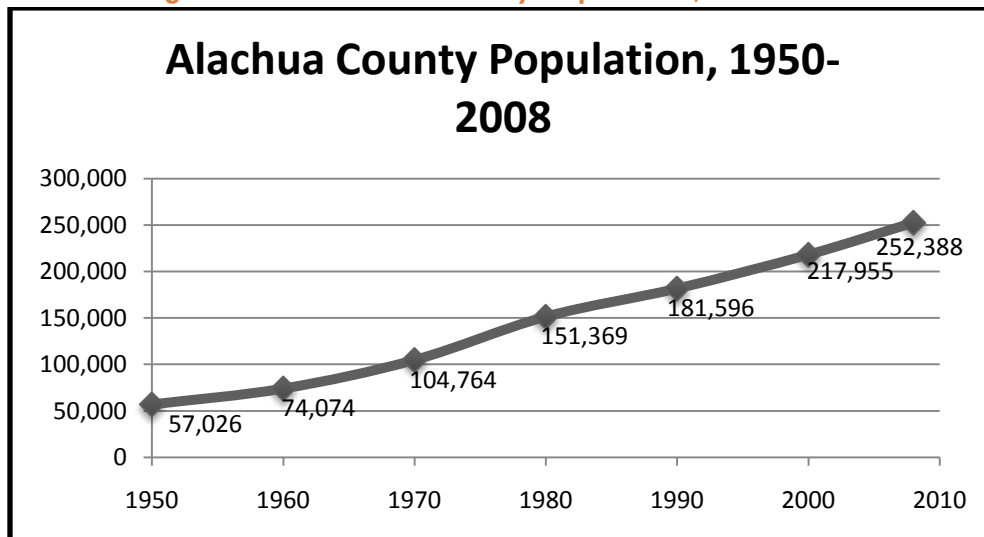
Between 1950 and 2000, Alachua County’s population grew by 160,535 or approximately 3,210 persons annually. Alachua County saw its greatest annual growth rates in the decade of the 1970s, when the County grew at an average rate of about 4,661 persons per year. During the 8-year period since 2000, the Alachua County population grew at an average rate of 4,304 persons per year, or 15.8% overall.

**Table 3.1. Long Term Population Growth Trend: Alachua County and Florida**

Year	ALACHUA COUNTY		FLORIDA	
	Population	Average Annual Change	Population	Average Annual Change
1950	57,026	--	2,771,305	--
1960	74,074	1,705	4,951,560	218,026
1970	104,764	3,069	6,789,443	183,788
1980	151,369	4,661	9,746,961	295,752
1990	181,596	3,023	12,938,071	319,111
2000	217,955	3,636	15,982,824	304,475
2008 est.	252,388	4,304	18,807,219	353,049

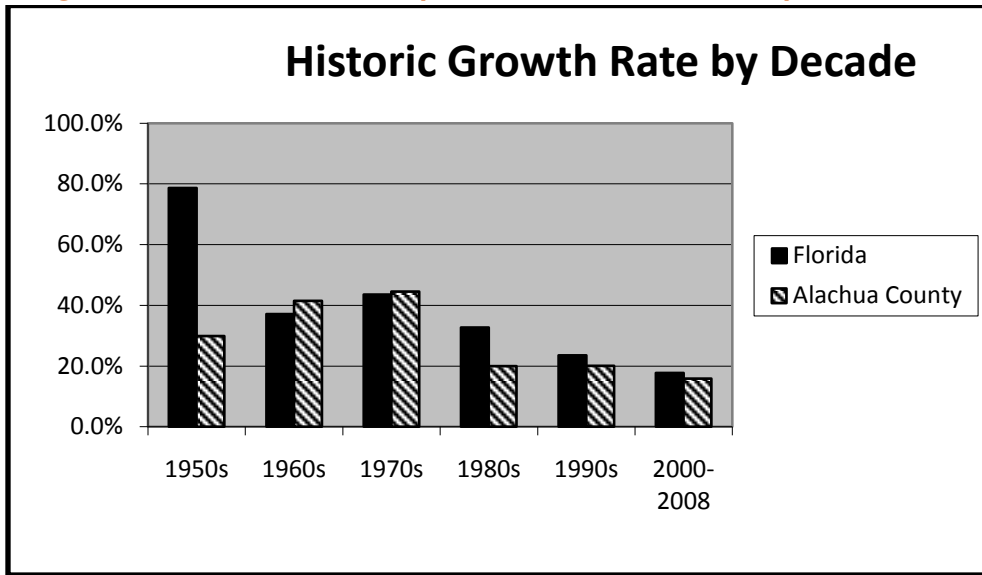
Sources: U.S. Census and Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Estimates of Population, 2008.

**Figure 3.1. Alachua County Population, 1950-2008**



Sources: U.S. Census and Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Estimates of Population, 2008.

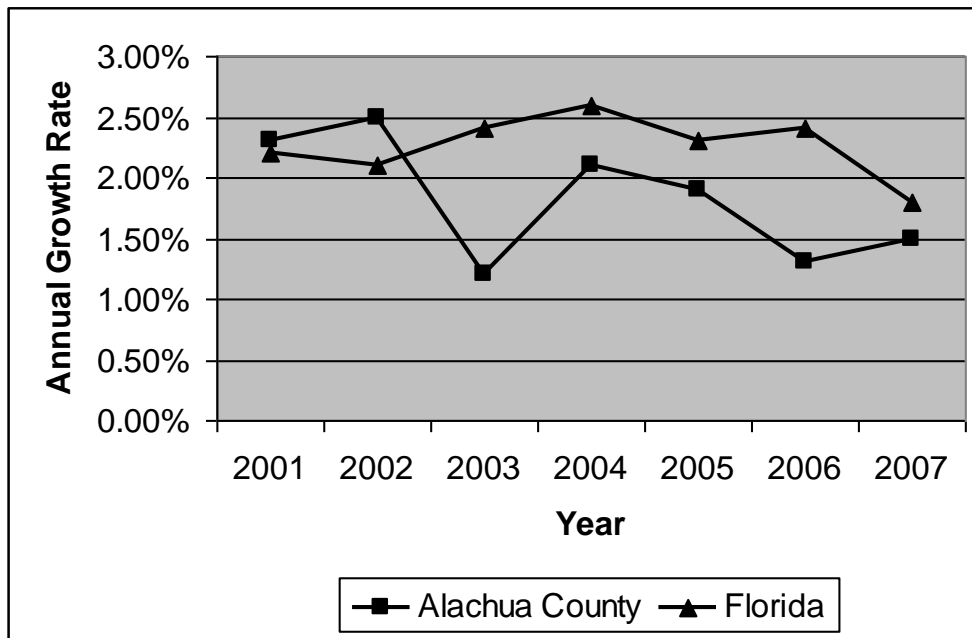
**Figure 3.2. Growth Rates by Decade: Alachua County and Florida**



Sources: U.S. Census and Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Estimates of Population, April 1, 2008.

The current population estimate for Alachua County as of April 1, 2008 from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) is 252,388. Alachua County’s population represents approximately 1.3% of the State of Florida’s population. The County’s average annual growth rate has generally been lower than that of the State over the long term, although the County’s annual growth rate has closed that gap in recent years.

**Figure 3.3. Annual Growth Rates, Alachua County and Florida**



Sources: BEBR, Florida Estimates of Population for 2001 to 2007, and U.S. Census for 2000

An important component of population change when comparing trends for Alachua County to the State of Florida, is the ratio of natural increase to net migration. According to the Florida Statistical Abstract 2008, Alachua County had a lower percentage of its population increase due to net migration (76%) than the State as a whole (87.5%) for the time period of 2000 and 2007. Conversely, Alachua County had a higher percentage of population increase due to natural increase (24%) than the State as a whole (12.5%) during the same time period.

### Population of Municipalities and Unincorporated Area

The nine municipalities within Alachua County account for approximately 59% of the total county population, with the remaining 41% in the unincorporated area. The current unincorporated population is estimated at 105,051, as of April 1, 2008 (BEBR). The majority of the incorporated population is located within the City of Gainesville with 124,491 people, or about 49% of the total County population. The next most populous municipality is Alachua with 8,742 people, or about 3% of the total county population.

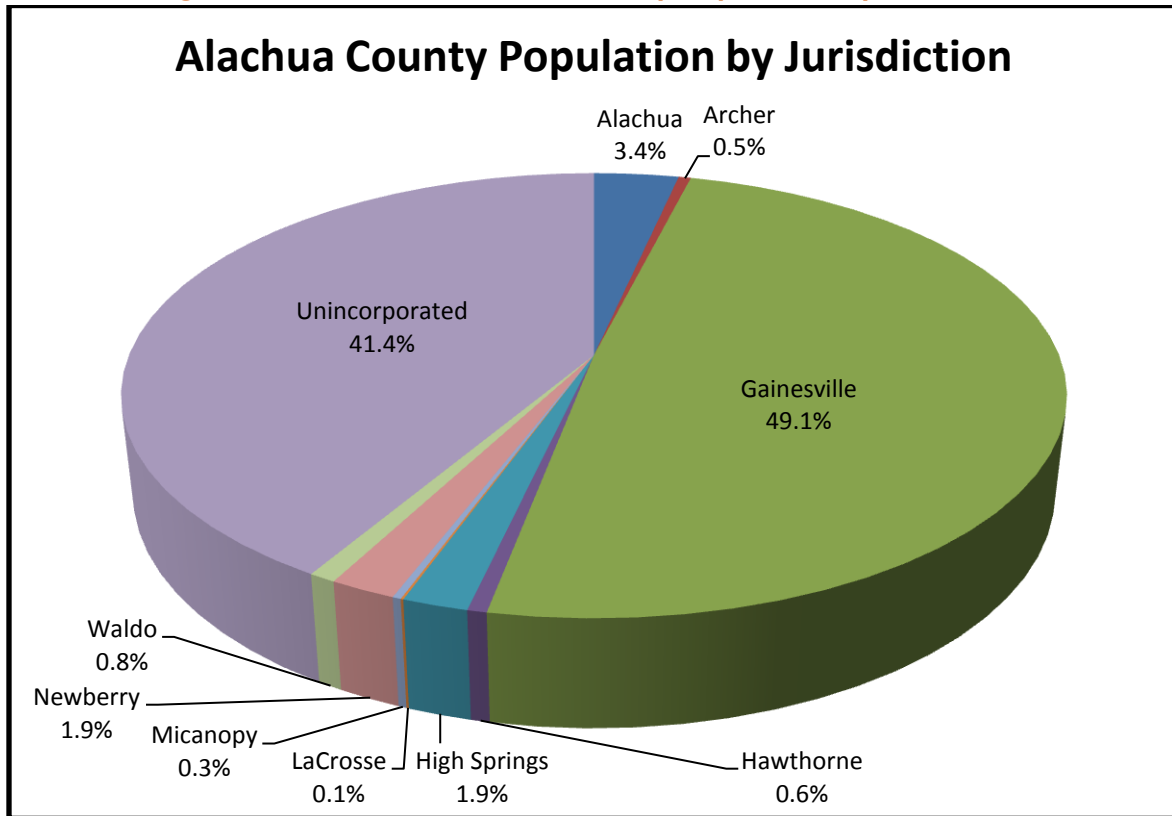
**Table 3.2. Population Estimates, April 1, 2008**

Jurisdiction	Population Estimate, April 1, 2008	Share of County Total Population
Alachua	8,742	3.4%
Archer	1,255	0.5%
Gainesville	124,491	49.1%
Hawthorne	1,436	0.6%
High Springs	4,855	1.9%
LaCrosse	202	0.1%
Micanopy	636	0.3%
Newberry	4,914	1.9%
Waldo	836	0.8%
Unincorporated	105,051	41.4%
Alachua County Total	252,388	100%

Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), Florida Estimates of Population, April 1, 2008.

The greatest population increases by jurisdiction for the time period of 2000 to 2008 occurred in the cities of Gainesville, Newberry, Alachua, and High Springs. The unincorporated area had only a small increase in population between 2000 and 2008, which is primarily due to loss of land area resulting from annexations, and the population located in the annexed areas. It should be noted that the recent growth rates for all of the County's municipalities and the unincorporated area are influenced to some degree by annexation and changes in land area within municipalities.

**Figure 3.4. Share of Alachua County Population by Jurisdiction**



Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), Florida Estimates of Population, 2008.

**Table 3.3. Population Change by Jurisdiction, 2000 to 2008**

Jurisdiction	Census 2000	April 1, 2008 Estimate	Total Change 00 - 08
Alachua	6,098	8,742	2,644
Archer	1,289	1,255	-34
Gainesville	95,447	124,491	29,044
Hawthorne	1,415	1,436	21
High Springs	3,863	4,855	992
LaCrosse	143	202	59
Micanopy	653	636	-17
Newberry	3,316	4,914	1,598
Waldo	821	836	15
Unincorporated	104,910	105,051	141
<b>Alachua County Total</b>	<b>217,955</b>	<b>252,388</b>	<b>34,433</b>

Sources: U.S. Census, and Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), Florida Estimates of Population 2008.

Note: Municipal and unincorporated population is effected by annexation and changes in land area.

Despite only a minor population increase since 2000, the annual growth rate in the unincorporated area was positive for all years except 2003. The unincorporated population grew at a rate of about one to four



percent per year over the past seven years, with the exception of a large one-time decrease in 2003. This large decrease was primarily due to the annexations into the City of Gainesville. Annexation has had an effect on the population estimates for the unincorporated area and municipalities in Alachua County. Unincorporated Alachua County has a reduction of 16,938 acres of land area between 2002 and 2009 due to annexations by all municipalities. The greatest gains in land area within the jurisdiction of municipalities during that time period were within Gainesville (+6,252 acres), and Newberry (+3,604 acres).

**Table 3.4. Estimated Changes in Land Area, 2002 - 2009**

Municipality	Land Area at Plan Adoption (2002)	Land Area at Plan Effective Date (2005)	Land Area 2009	Land Area Change, 2002 to 2009
Alachua	19,795	20,504	20,896	1,101
Archer	1,390	2,745	3,051	1,671
Gainesville	28,725	30,411	34,977	6,252
Hawthorne	1,488	1,855	2,903	1,415
High Springs	10,304	11,060	12,054	1,750
LaCrosse	1,776	2,776	2,776	1,000
Micanopy	599	602	602	3
Newberry	28,103	29,620	31,707	3,604
Waldo	855	1,164	1,200	345
Unincorporated	472,910	465,200	455,972	-16,938
County Total	567,964	567,964	567,964	--

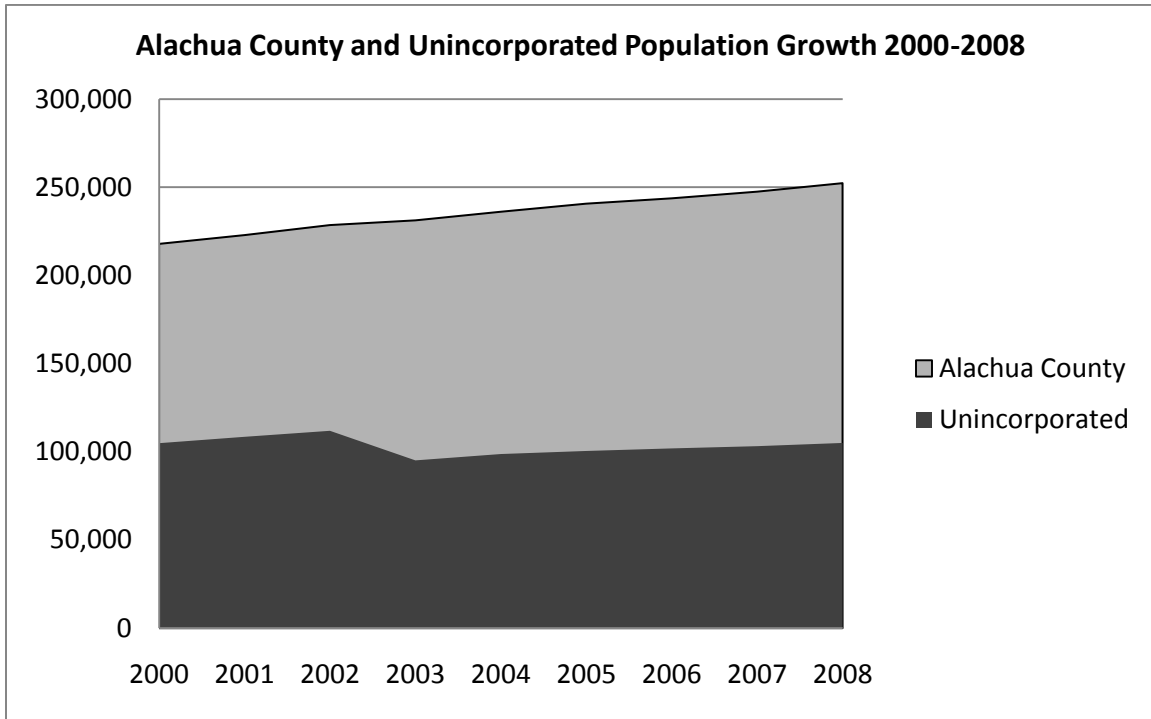
Source: Alachua County Growth Management, G.I.S. Division, Feb. 2009

**Table 3.5. Annual Population Growth Rate**

YEAR	COUNTY		UNINCORPORATED	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2000	217,955	--	104,910	--
2001	222,935	2.3%	108,532	3.4%
2002	228,607	2.5%	111,939	3.1%
2003	231,296	1.2%	95,161	-17.6%
2004	236,174	2.1%	98,755	3.8%
2005	240,764	1.9%	100,507	1.8%
2006	243,779	1.3%	101,950	1.4%
2007	247,561	1.6%	103,217	1.2%
2008	252,388	1.9%	105,051	1.8%

Sources: 2000 U.S. Census  
 2001 to 2008: BEBR Annual Population Estimates

**Figure 3.5. Unincorporated Share of County Population, 2000-2008**

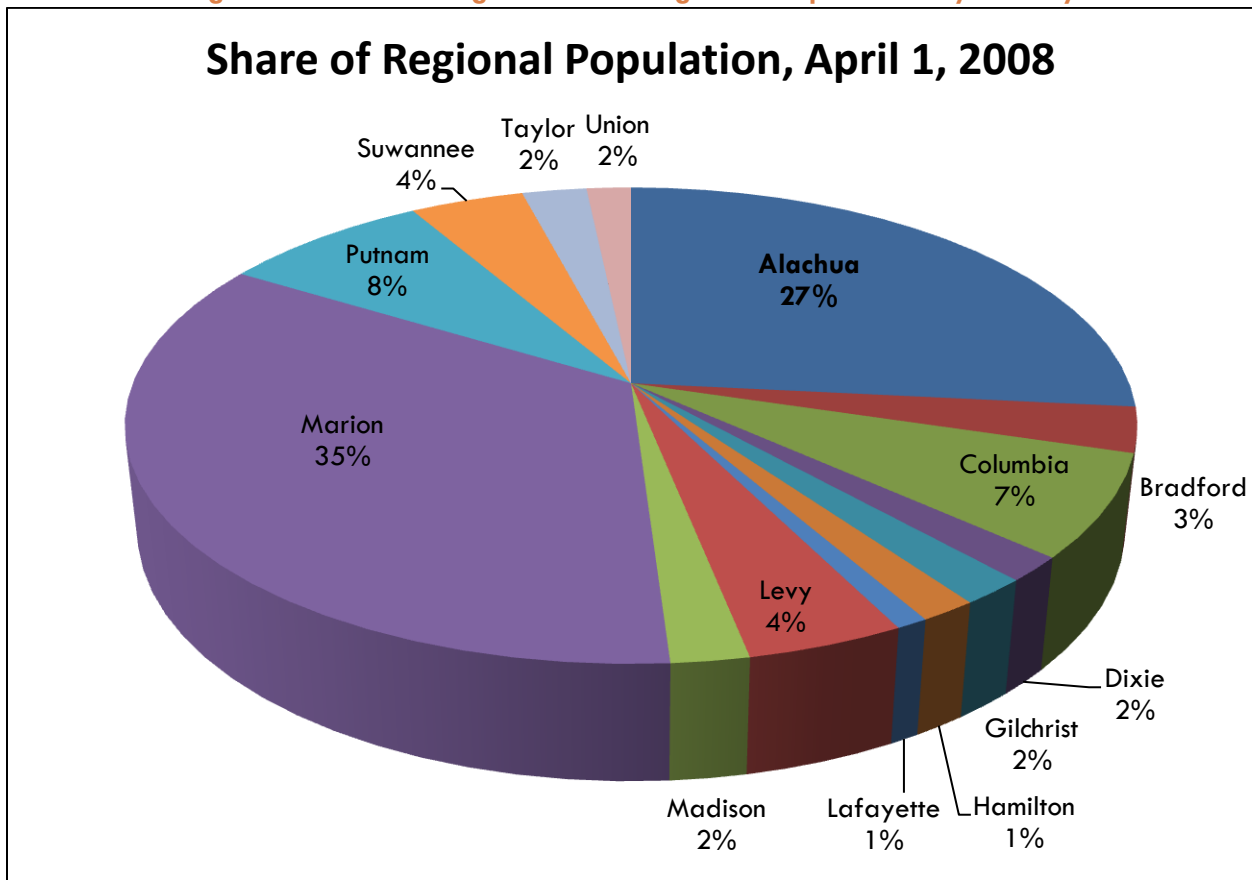


Sources: 2000 U.S. Census  
2001 to 2008: BEBR Annual Population Estimates

### Population Growth in Surrounding Counties

The counties surrounding Alachua County are primarily rural in character. As Figure 3.6 indicates, Alachua County, along with Marion County to the south, serve as the primary population centers for several counties in North Central Florida. The Counties shown in the Chart include those counties which are adjacent to Alachua County, as well as counties within the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council region.

**Figure 3.6. Percentage Share of Regional Population by County**



Source: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Estimates of Population for Counties and Municipalities, April 1, 2008.

Table 3.6 shows population growth from 1950 to 2008 for counties in North Central Florida. The population of Alachua County increased by 195,362 during the time period of 1950 to 2008. This was the second highest population increase among North Central Florida counties during this time period, after Marion County, which experienced a population increase of 291,231. The next highest population increases over the same time period were Putnam County (51,374) and Columbia County (47,905).

**Table 3.6. Population Growth of Alachua and Surrounding Counties, 1950-2008**

County	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008 Est.	Change 1950-2008
<b>Alachua</b>	<b>57,026</b>	<b>74,074</b>	<b>104,764</b>	<b>151,369</b>	<b>181,596</b>	<b>217,955</b>	<b>252,388</b>	<b>195,362</b>
Bradford	11,457	12,446	14,625	20,023	22,515	26,088	29,059	17,602
Columbia	18,216	20,077	25,250	35,399	42,613	56,513	66,121	47,905
Dixie	3,928	4,479	5,480	7,751	10,585	13,827	15,963	12,035
Gilchrist	3,499	2,868	3,551	5,767	9,667	14,437	17,256	13,757
Hamilton	8,981	7,705	7,787	8,761	10,930	13,327	14,779	5,798
Lafayette	3,440	2,889	2,892	4,035	5,578	7,022	8,287	4,847
Levy	10,637	10,364	12,756	19,870	25,912	34,450	40,817	30,180
Madison	14,197	14,154	13,481	14,894	16,569	18,733	20,152	5,955
Marion	38,137	51,616	69,030	122,488	194,835	258,916	329,418	291,231
Putnam	23,615	32,212	36,290	50,549	65,070	70,423	74,989	51,374
Suwannee	16,986	14,961	15,559	22,287	26,780	34,844	40,927	23,941
Taylor	10,416	13,168	13,641	16,532	17,111	19,256	23,199	12,783
Union	8,906	6,043	8,112	10,166	10,252	13,442	15,974	7,068
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>229,491</b>	<b>267,056</b>	<b>333,218</b>	<b>489,891</b>	<b>640,013</b>	<b>799,233</b>	<b>949,329</b>	<b>719,838</b>

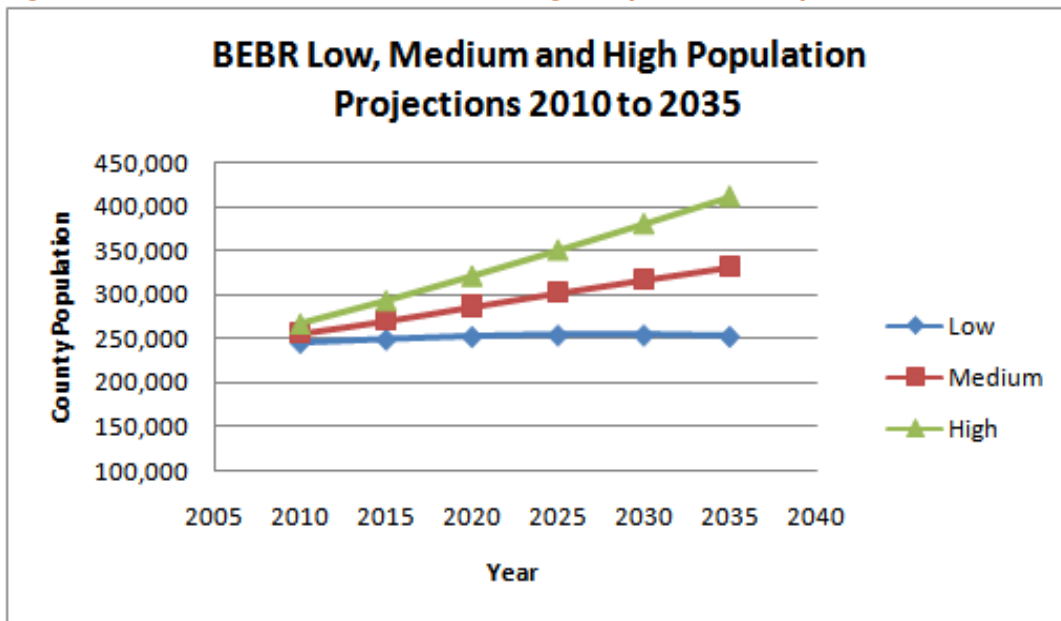
Sources: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research: Historical Census Counts for Florida and its Counties, 1830 through 2000; and Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida, April 1, 2008

## Population Projections for Alachua County

The University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) publishes population projections on an annual basis for the State of Florida and each county. BEBR publishes "low", "medium", and "high" projections of population approximately 25 to 30 years into the future in 5-year increments. The most recent projections available at the time of this report were from March 2009, and they project population to the Year 2035. Florida Administrative Code Rule 9J-5 provides direction on the use of population projections in local government Comprehensive Plans. Rule 9J-5.005(2)(e) provides that:

*(e) The comprehensive plan shall be based on resident and seasonal population estimates and projections. Resident and seasonal population estimates and projections shall be either those provided by the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, those provided by the Executive Office of the Governor, or shall be generated by the local government. If the local government chooses to base its plan on the figures provided by the University of Florida or the Executive Office of the Governor, medium range projections should be utilized. If the local government chooses to base its plan on either low or high range projections provided by the University of Florida or the Executive Office of the Governor, a detailed description of the rationale for such a choice shall be included with such projections.*

**Figure 3.7. BEBR Low, Medium, and High Population Projections, 2010-2035**



**Table 3.7. BEBR Low, Medium, and High Population Projections, 2010-2035**

YEAR	“LOW”	“MEDIUM”	“HIGH”
2010	245,800	256,100	266,300
2015	249,200	270,200	292,600
2020	252,200	286,100	321,000
2025	253,800	301,600	350,500
2030	253,900	316,300	380,800
2035	252,500	330,400	411,900

Source: BEBR- Florida Population Studies: Vol. 42 Bulletin 153, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2008-2035, March 2009

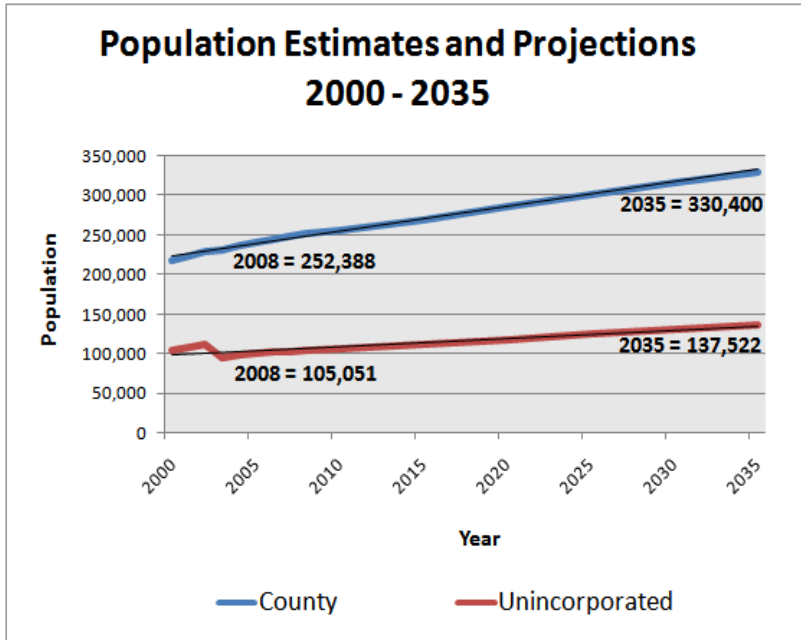
Alachua County uses the “Medium” population projections published by BEBR. This approach is consistent with the Florida Administrative Code section cited above, and with previous planning analysis completed as part of past Comprehensive Plan updates. The “Medium” population projections for Alachua County published by BEBR in March 2009 were the most recent available data at the time of this report, and have been used for this analysis.

BEBR does not publish population projections for unincorporated areas. In the past, Alachua County has calculated unincorporated projections using a constant share methodology. Unincorporated projections have been determined by projecting a constant (2008) share of the total County population into the future. The 2008 unincorporated share of the County population is approximately 42%.

According to the “Medium” countywide population projections, Alachua County is expected to continue a steady population growth trend, adding about 2,000 to 3,000 people per year through the Year 2035. The total population of Alachua County is projected to increase by about 78,012 between 2008 and 2035 (from 252,388 to 330,400), a 31% increase during this time period. Using a constant share methodology, the unincorporated area population is projected to increase by about 32,471 by 2035 (from 105,051 to

137,522), or just over 1,000 people annually. The chart below shows the population trends and “Medium” projections for Alachua County and the unincorporated area through 2035.

**Figure 3.8. BEBR “Medium” Population Projections for County and Estimated Unincorporated Area Projections**



For Countywide projections: BEBR- Florida Population Studies: Vol. 42 Bulletin 153, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2008-2035, March 2009.  
 For unincorporated projections: Alachua County Growth Management Department.

**Table 3.8. Population Estimates and Projections Summary Table**

YEAR	COUNTY POPULATION	ANNUAL CHANGE*	*UNINCORPORATED POPULATION	ANNUAL CHANGE**
<b>Previous Census Population</b>				
2000	217,955		104,910	
<b>BEBR Annual Estimates***</b>				
2001	222,935	4,980	108,532	3,622
2002	228,607	5,672	111,939	3,407
2003	231,296	2,689	95,161	-16,778
2004	236,174	4,878	98,755	3,594
2005	240,764	4,590	100,507	1,752
2006	243,779	3,015	101,950	1,443
2007	247,561	3,782	103,217	1,267
2008	252,388	4,827	105,051	1,834
<b>BEBR "Medium" Projections (5-Year Increments)****</b>				
2010	256,100	1,856	106,596	772
2015	270,200	2,820	112,465	1,174
2020	286,100	3,180	119,083	1,324
2025	301,600	3,100	125,534	1,290
2030	316,300	2,940	131,653	1,224
2035	330,400	2,820	137,522	1,174

\* Population Projections for 2010 to 2035 for the unincorporated area are calculated by carrying forward a constant share of the 2007 unincorporated BEBR population estimate through 2035.

\*\* The annual change for the BEBR 5-Year population projections is calculated by dividing the increase for the 5-year period by 5. Similarly, for the 2008 to 2010 period, the annual change was calculated by dividing by 2.

\*\*\* BEBR - Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida, for April 1 each year

\*\*\*\* BEBR- Florida Population Studies: Vol. 42 Bulletin 153, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2008-2035, March 2009

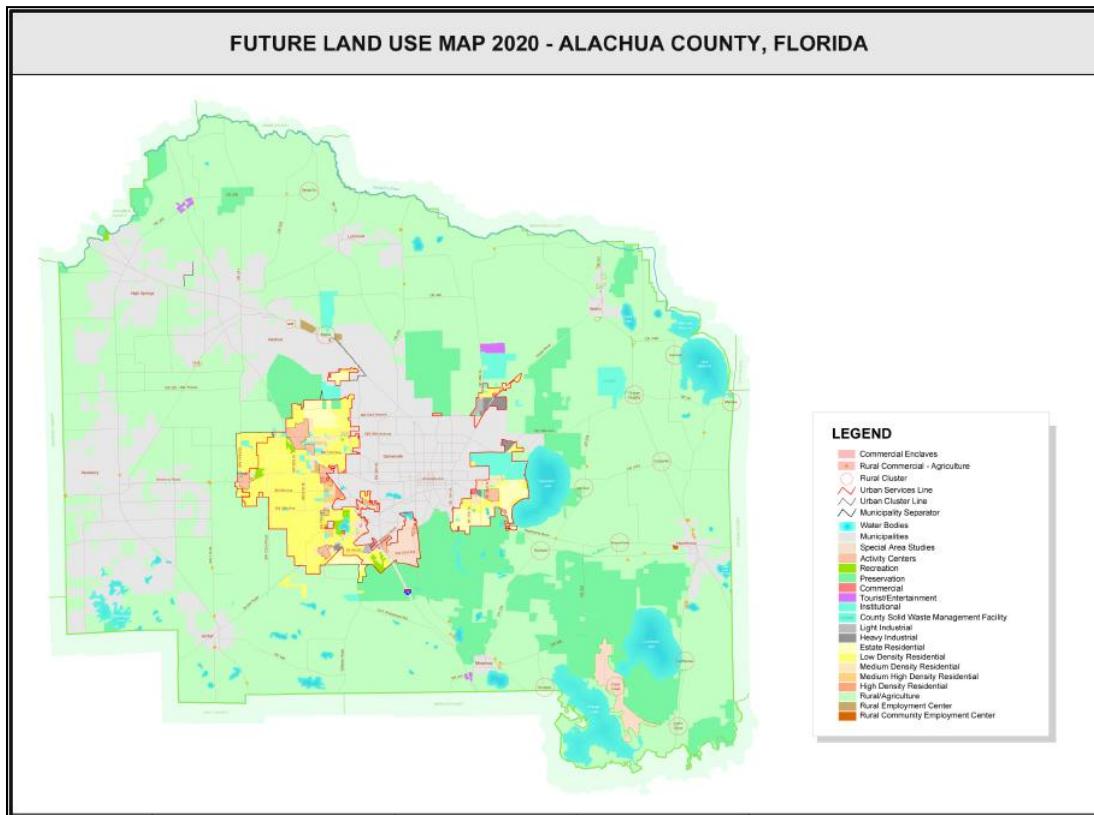
## Land Use Inventory

Alachua County contains approximately 620,000 acres, with approximately 480,000 acres within the unincorporated area. The unincorporated Urban Cluster contains approximately 37,507 acres, or about 8% of the total unincorporated land area.

### Mapped Future Land Use Categories within Unincorporated Area

Land areas within unincorporated Alachua County are designated with land use categories on the Future Land Use Map. These categories describe the allowable land uses, density, and intensity of development.

**Map 3.1. Future Land Use Map for Unincorporated Alachua County**



**Table 3.9. Undeveloped Land by Future Land Use Map Category Group**

Category Group	Unincorporated Total		Urban Cluster	
	Mapped Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage	Mapped Acreage	Undeveloped Acreage
Commercial/Office	1,147	522	1,142	516
Preservation, Conservation, and Submerged Lands	81,527	N/A	480	N/A
Cross Creek Special Area Study	2,933	2,162	0	0
Recreation	1,225	76	1,129	58
Industrial	1,833	1,301	1,833	1,301
Institutional	8,228	1,163	3,517	785
Residential	29,417	12,654	28,895	12,566
Mixed Use	360	250	360	250
Tourist/Entertainment	882	427	150	56
Rural/Agriculture Categories	352,443	276,520	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>479,995</b>	<b>322,317</b>	<b>37,507</b>	<b>15,532</b>

Source: Alachua County Growth Management, G.I.S. Division, August 2008

Note: For purposes of this summary table, the mapped Future Land Use categories have been condensed into several major category groups. In most cases there are several land use categories included within each category group.



The majority of the unincorporated land area (73%) is designated on the Future Land Use Map for Rural/Agriculture uses, which include Rural/Agriculture, Rural Cluster, Rural Commercial Agriculture, and Rural Employment Centers. The unincorporated area also includes a large amount of land that is classified on the Future Land Use Map as Preservation and Conservation, or is within Submerged Lands (17% of unincorporated area). The majority of the areas designated on the Future Land Use Map for urban development (e.g., Commercial, Industrial, and Residential) are located within the Urban Cluster boundary. Within the Urban Cluster, 28,895 acres are designated for Residential uses, which includes a variety of land use categories and density ranges. Residential land use categories account for 77% of the Urban Cluster area.

Table 3.10 provides a detailed breakdown of the mapped Future Land Use designations within the unincorporated Urban Cluster, and the amount of the mapped acreage that is undeveloped. Undeveloped land includes land that is not currently built upon, although some undeveloped land may have approved final development plans to allow for development to occur.

**Table 3.10. Undeveloped Land by Detailed Future Land Use Category in Urban Cluster**

<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Mapped Acres</b>	<b>Undeveloped Acres</b>
Commercial	662	227
Commercial Enclaves	38	19
Conservation	60	N/A
Heavy Industrial	1,003	579
Industrial/Manufacturing	131	94
Institutional	3,505	780
Light Industrial	598	567
Mixed Use	251	180
Mixed Use Commercial	59	57
Mixed Use Residential Medium Density (4-8 du/acre)	49	13
Office	200	133
Office/Business Park	113	77
Office/Medical	22	3
Office/Residential	28	14
Office/Residential (2-4 du/acre)	36	17
Office/Residential (4-8 du/acre)	27	18
Open Space	15	N/A
Preservation	265	N/A
Recreation	1,129	58
Residential Estate (0.5 du/acre)	4,960	3,209
Residential High Density (14-24du/acre)	370	109
Residential Low Density (1-4du/acre)	19,123	7,125
Residential Medium Density (4-8du/acre)	2,077	779
Residential Medium High Density (8-14du/acre)	751	335
Residential Medium Low Density (2-4 du/acre)	431	174
Residential Very Low Density (0-2du/acre)	1,184	836
Right of Way or Easement	12	N/A
Shopping Center	15	8
Tourist/Entertainment	150	56
Warehouse/Distribution	101	61
Common/Submerged Lands	141	N/A

Source: Alachua County Growth Management, G.I.S. Division, August 2008

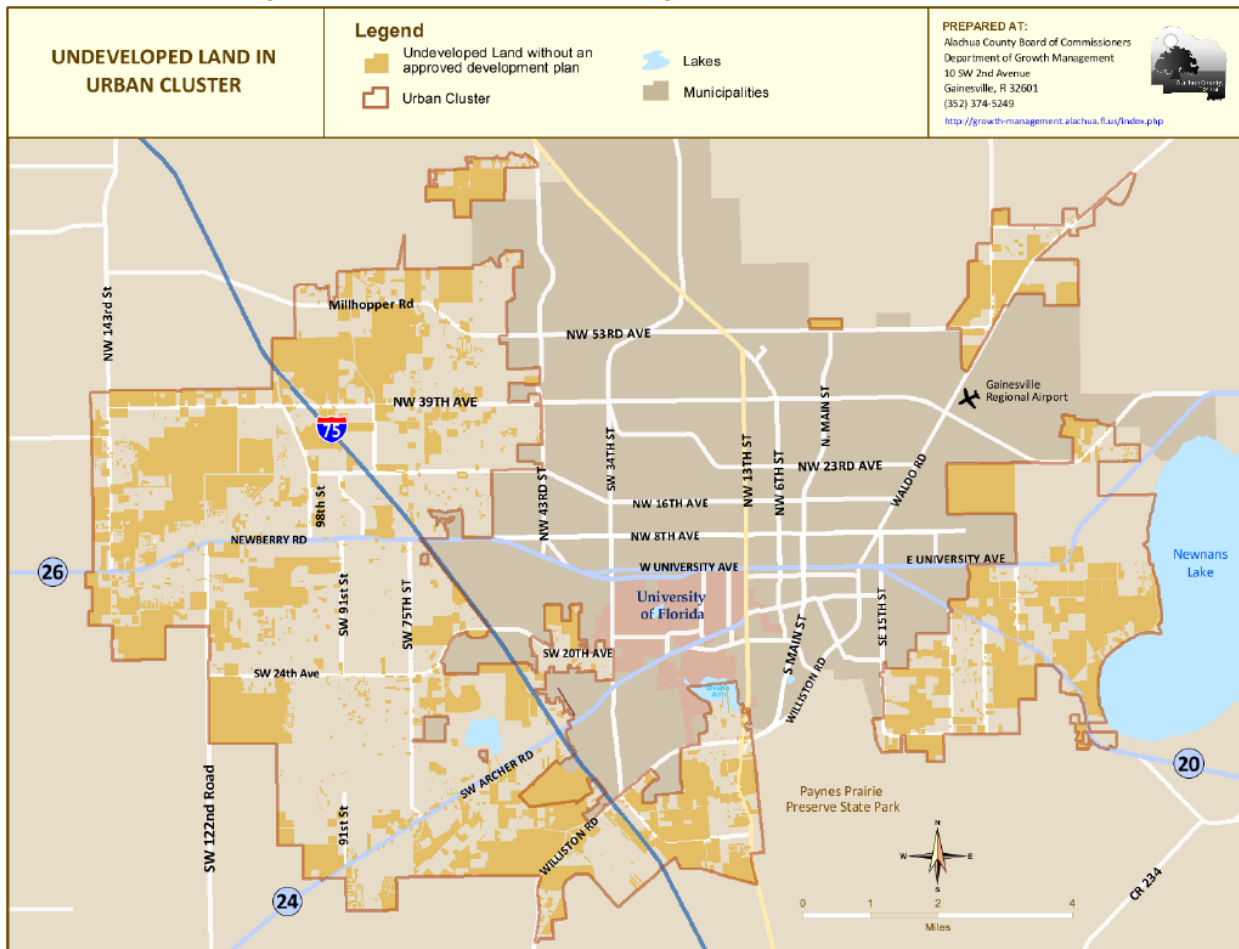
The residential future land use designations include several sub-categories based on the allowable density of development. Lower density residential categories (density of 4 units per acre or less) comprise about 25,267 acres (67%) of the Urban Cluster, including the categories of Estate Residential (1 unit per 2 acres), Residential (max. 2 units/acre, Idylwild-Serenola area only), and Low Density Residential (1-4 units/acre). There are also land areas designated for Medium Density (4 to 8 units per acre), Medium-High Density (8 to 14 units per acre), and High Density (14 to 24 units per acre).

**Undeveloped Land in Urban Cluster**

There is about 15,532 acres of undeveloped land within the Urban Cluster. Approximately 6,273 acres of the undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster is subject to approved development plans, meaning that the land is not currently built upon, but a plan for development of that land has been approved by the County. After factoring out approved development plans, there is about 9,259 acres of undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster that could potentially be available for urban development, subject to environmental constraints and other Comprehensive Plan policies.

Map 3.2 shows the location of the undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster. The undeveloped areas shown on the map without approved development plans are the areas where new urban development could occur, provided that it is consistent with all provisions of the Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that the undeveloped lands shown on this map have not been analyzed at a parcel level to determine the presence of environmental features which may limit development potential in accordance with policies in the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Depiction of land areas on this map does not necessarily indicate that a development plan would be approved on a particular parcel.

**Map 3.2. Location of Undeveloped Land in Urban Cluster**



Source: Alachua County Growth Management, G.I.S. Division, August 2008

**Table 3.11. Summary of Undeveloped Land in Urban Cluster**

<b>TOTAL ACREAGE IN URBAN CLUSTER</b>	<b>37,507</b>
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster	15,532
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster with Approved Development Plans	6,273
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster without Approved Development Plans	9,259

Source: Alachua County Growth Management, G.I.S. Division, August 2008

### Analysis of Urban Cluster

Unincorporated Alachua County is projected to add 32,471 new residents by the Year 2035, based on BEBR Medium population projections. This increase in population can be translated into a projected number of additional housing units using the most recent available data on persons per household published by BEBR. The projected number of new housing units is then adjusted for local vacancy rates to arrive at an estimated number of additional housing units that may be needed to accommodate the projected population increase.

According to the BEBR publication “Number of Households and Average Household Size in Florida: April 1, 2008”, Alachua County had an average household size of 2.30 countywide. The vacancy rate for Alachua County is calculated to be 9% for the unincorporated area, based on Census 2000, Summary File 1, 100 Percent Data. Using these figures, the estimated number of new housing units that may be needed to accommodate the projected unincorporated population increase through 2035 is calculated in Table 3.12 below.

**Table 3.12. Estimated Number of Housing Units Needed for Population Growth in Urban Cluster through 2035**

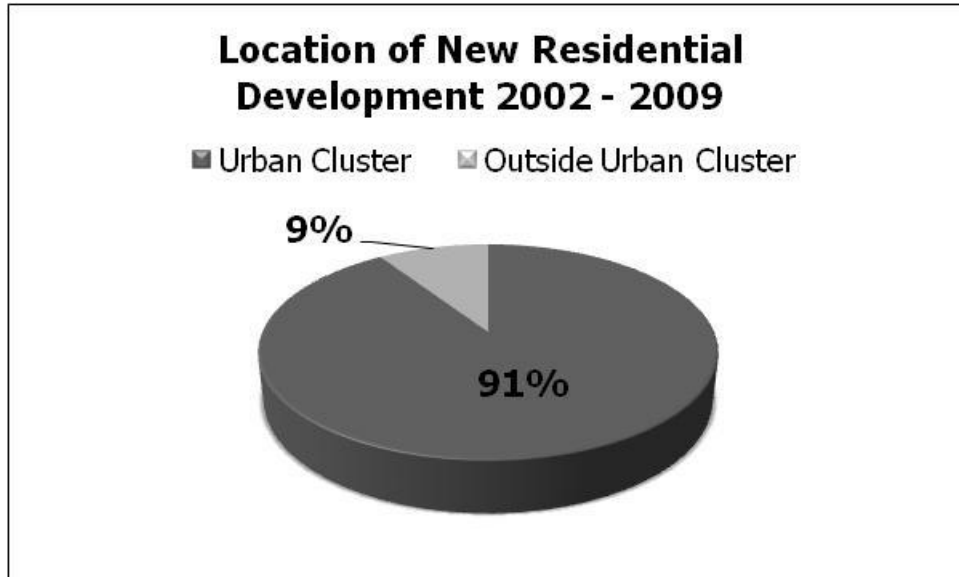
<p>Projected new population in unincorporated area by 2035 = 32,471</p> <p><i>Divided by 2.30 persons per household, equals</i></p> <p>14,118 housing units in unincorporated area (not vacancy-adjusted)</p> <p><i>Plus 9% Vacancy Rate, equals</i></p> <p>15,389 additional housing units in unincorporated area by 2035</p> <p><b>Number of dwelling units estimated to be located in Urban Cluster (85% of unincorporated total) = 13,081</b></p>
---

Notes: Persons per Household is countywide. Source: BEBR, Number of Households and Average Household Size in Florida: April 1, 2008. Vacancy rate is for the Unincorporated Area. Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100 Percent Data

It is expected that the majority of the new residential dwelling units in the unincorporated area through 2035 will be located within the Urban Cluster. The Data and Analysis for the Comprehensive Plan update adopted in 2002 estimated that 80% of new residential development would occur in the Urban Cluster. Data since 2005, however, indicates that approximately 91% of new residential units in approved development plans in

the unincorporated area have been located within the Urban Cluster. This suggests that a greater percentage of new development has occurred in the Urban Cluster than was anticipated at the time of the last Plan update. For purposes of the current analysis, it is estimated that 85% of new residential development in the unincorporated area during the planning period will be located within the Urban Cluster.

**Figure 3.9. New Residential Development: Urban Cluster vs. Outside Urban Cluster**



Percentages based on number of dwelling units approved within new development plans between April 2002 and February 2009.

Source: Alachua County Development Review Committee Database. Includes final Residential Development Plan approvals, 2002-2009.

Based on population projections and the estimated persons per household figure, the analysis indicates that 13,081 additional dwelling units may be needed to accommodate the projected population growth in the unincorporated Urban Cluster through 2035. Most new dwelling units will be located within Residential categories shown on the Future Land Use Map. For each residential land use category, three estimates of the projected density for the undeveloped areas have been identified. The estimated residential density is based on density ranges identified in the Comprehensive Plan and designated on the Future Land Use Map. One estimate is at the low end of the density range, one is in the middle of the density range, and the other estimate is at the high end of the density range. The actual residential density that occurs in the undeveloped areas will most likely be closer to the medium density estimate, which is based on actual trends in development since 2002.

There has been a recent upward trend in the gross density of new development in the Urban Cluster. The last Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan indicated that the density of new residential development plans approved in the Urban Cluster during the period of 1991 through January 1998 was 2.31 dwelling units/acre. For comparison, new residential development plans approved in the Urban Cluster from April 2002 to February 2009 had an average density of 2.59 dwelling units per acre. The development plan approval data indicates that gross densities within the Urban Cluster have increased since the last EAR.

**Table 3.13. Development Capacity of Undeveloped Land in Urban Cluster**

<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Undeveloped Acres</b>	<b>Density Estimates Low/Medium/High (units/acre)</b>	<b>Number of Dwelling Units Low Est.</b>	<b>Number of Dwelling Units Medium Est.</b>	<b>Number of Dwelling Units High Est.</b>
Residential Estate (0.5 du/acre)	3,209	0.5/0.5/0.5	1,604	1,604	1,604
Residential High (14-24du/acre)	109	14/18/24	1,532	1,962	2,626
Residential Low (1-4du/acre)	7,125	1/2.1/4	7,125	14,962	28,499
Residential Medium (4-8du/acre)	779	4/6/8	3,114	4,674	6,228
Residential Medium-High (8-14du/acre)	335	8/10/14	2,681	3,350	4,692
Residential (2-4 du/acre)*	174	2/3/4	347	522	694
Residential (0-2du/acre)*	836	1/1.5/2	836	1,254	1,672
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,566</b>		<b>17,240</b>	<b>28,328</b>	<b>46,016</b>

\* Category located in Special Area Study areas only

Using the undeveloped land area figures and the low, medium, and high density ranges for each residential land use category, an estimate of the potential number of dwelling units that could be accommodated in the Urban Cluster is derived (see Table 3.13). Based on this methodology, the medium density estimate indicates that the Urban Cluster can accommodate approximately 28,328 additional dwelling units. The analysis indicates that 13,081 additional dwelling units would be required to accommodate the projected population increase in the Urban Cluster by 2035. This analysis estimates, therefore, that there is a sufficient amount of undeveloped land available in the unincorporated Urban Cluster to accommodate projected population growth through 2035. This estimate is based on current growth trends, population projections, and current amounts of undeveloped land available within the Urban Cluster.

## **Amendments to the Future Land Use Map and Recent Development Activity**

### **Amendments to the Future Land Use Map**

There have been 45 amendments to the Future Land Use Map adopted since August 2003 (date of adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement amendments based on the 1998 EAR), 27 of which were initiated by the County and 18 of which were initiated by private applicants.

The majority of the map amendments initiated by the County were either corrections to previously mapped preservation lands (changing the designation from Preservation to Rural/Agriculture), or additions of newly acquired preservation lands to the Preservation land use category (changing the designation from Rural/Agriculture to Preservation). The only other County-initiated map amendment was the Eastside Activity Center Master Plan, which provided a planning framework for mixed use development to occur within an existing 300-acre Activity Center, consistent with Plan East Gainesville as provided in Policy 8.5.2 of the Future Land Use Element.

In addition to the County-initiated amendments, there were 18 privately-initiated Future Land Use Map amendments adopted since the last update of the Comprehensive Plan. Of these 18 amendments, 5 were large scale amendments covering 304 acres of land, and 13 were small scale amendments covering 82 acres of land. Only one of the 18 total privately-initiated map amendments was located outside of the Urban Cluster, and it was a small scale amendment changing the designation of 7.95 acres from Rural Commercial Agriculture to Rural/Agriculture (a reduction in intensity).

There have been no Comprehensive Plan amendments adopted to expand the Urban Cluster boundary since August 2003 (date of adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement amendments based on previous EAR).



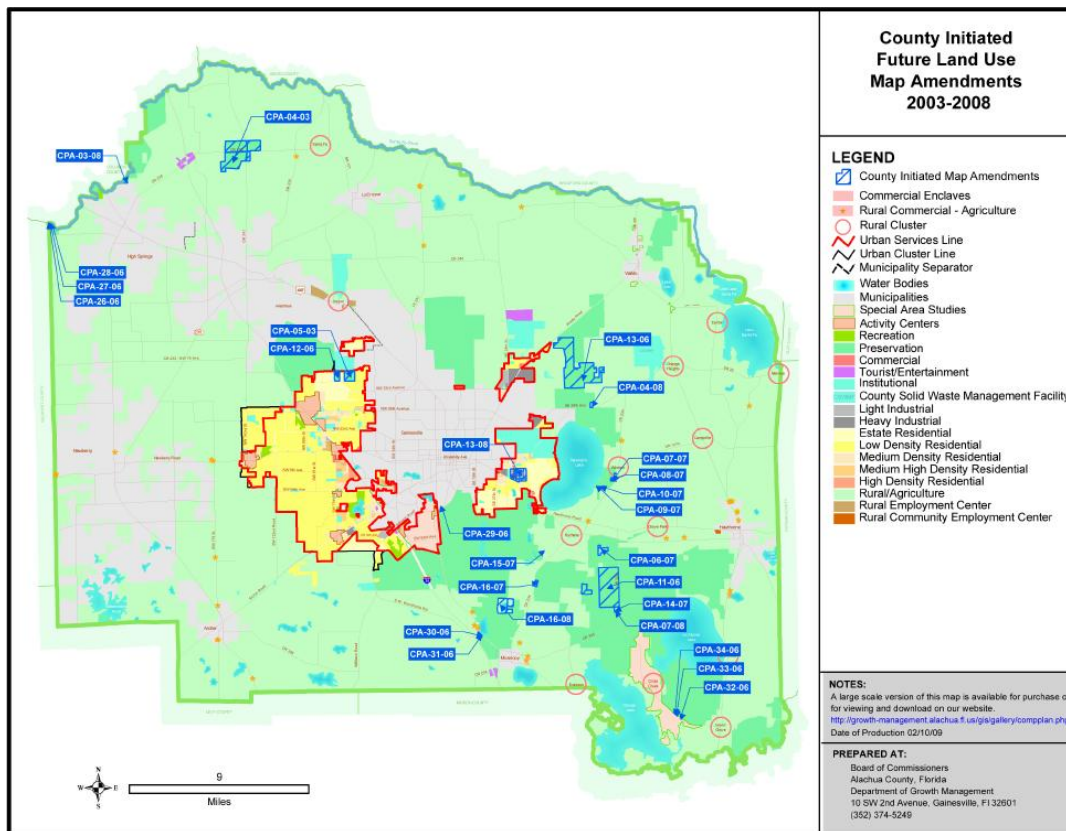
**Table 3.14. County-Initiated Future Land Use Map Amendment Summary 2003-2008**

<b>COUNTY INITIATED FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT SUMMARY</b>		
<b>Amendment Type</b>	<b>Number of Amendments</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Small Scale Map Changes*	13 <i>All are corrections to previously mapped Preservation lands</i>	<b>60</b>
Large Scale Future Land Use Map Changes	14 <i>Includes:</i> 5 Preservation land acquisitions 8 Corrections to previously mapped Preservation lands 1 Activity Center Master Plan	<b>5,410</b> <b>4,511</b> <b>587</b> <b>312</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5,470</b>

Inventory of Future Land Use Map amendments includes those approved since adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement on the previous EAR-based amendments in August 2003.

\* Small Scale is defined as an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of 10 acres or fewer.

**Map 3.3. County-Initiated Future Land Use Map Amendment Locations, 2003-2008**



Inventory of Future Land Use Map amendments includes those approved since adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement on the previous EAR-based amendments in August 2003.

\* Small Scale is defined as an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of 10 acres or fewer.



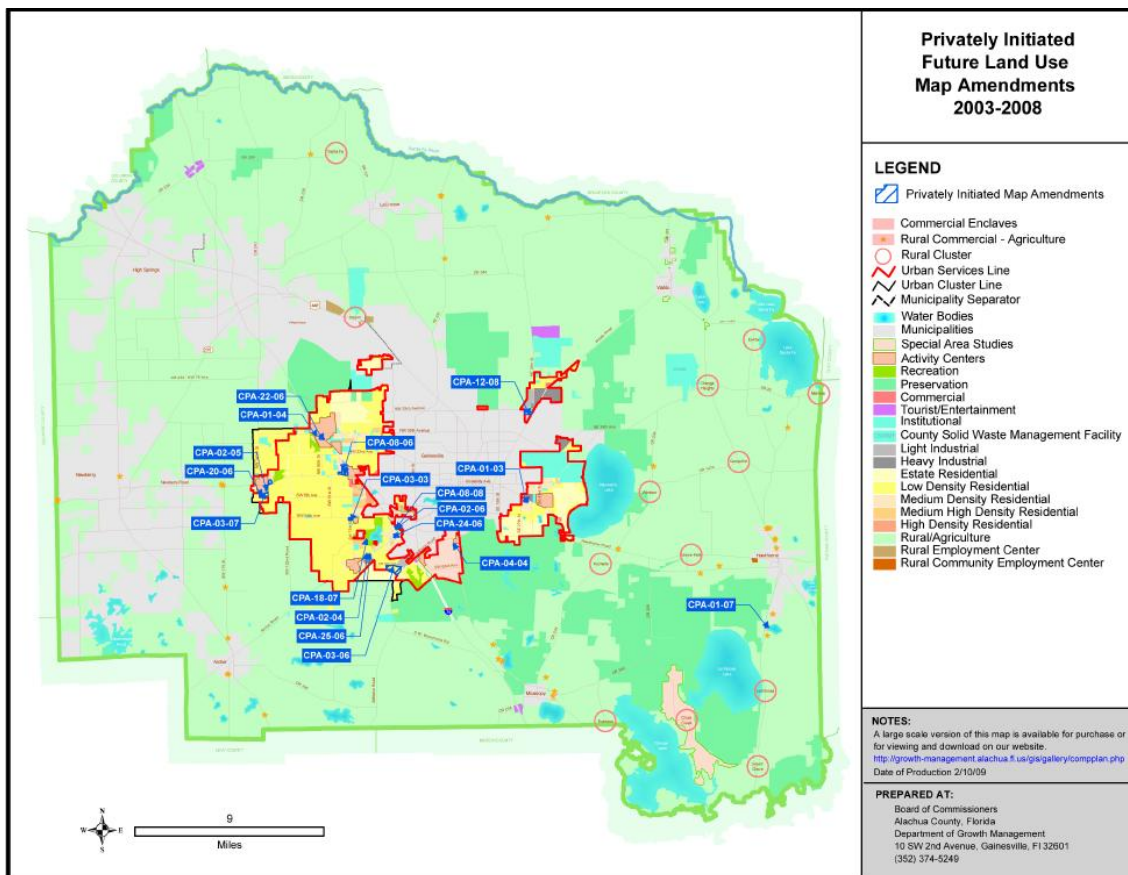
**Table 3.15. Privately-Initiated Future Land Use Map Amendment Summary 2003-2008**

<b>PRIVATELY INITIATED FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT SUMMARY</b>		
<b>Amendment Type</b>	<b>Number of Amendments</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Small Scale Map Changes*	13	<b>82</b>
Large Scale Future Land Use Map Changes	5	<b>304</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>386</b>

*Inventory of Future Land Use Map amendments includes those approved since adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement on the previous EAR-based amendments in August 2003.*

*\* Small Scale is defined as an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of 10 acres or fewer.*

**Map 3.4. Privately-Initiated Future Land Use Map Amendment Locations, 2003-2008**



*Inventory of Future Land Use Map amendments includes those approved since adoption of the settlement/compliance agreement on the previous EAR-based amendments in August 2003.*

*\* Small Scale is defined as an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of 10 acres or fewer.*

### Development Plan Approvals, 2002 - 2009

Since the adoption of the last EAR-based amendments in April 2002, there were 7,454 new dwelling units approved as part of new development plans in unincorporated Alachua County. Of this total, 6,759 dwelling units (91%) were approved in the Urban Cluster and 695 dwelling units (9%) were approved outside the Urban Cluster in the Rural/Agriculture areas. These figures do not include residential construction on existing lots of record.

**Table 3.16. Residential Development Plan Approval Summary, 2002 - 2009**

<b>TOTAL NEW DWELLING UNITS APPROVED, APRIL 2002 – FEBRUARY 2009</b>	<b>7,454</b>
Inside Urban Cluster	6,759
Outside Urban Cluster	695

Source: Alachua County Development Review Committee Database. Data includes final residential Development Plan approvals, April 2002 to Feb. 2009.

During this same period, there was 2,807,836 square feet of new non-residential development approved as part of development plans in unincorporated Alachua County. The Table below summarizes the non-residential development plan approvals from 2002-2009. The majority of non-residential development approved was located within the Urban Cluster. Commercial development outside the Urban Cluster includes land uses within existing Rural Clusters or Rural Commercial Agriculture areas, and development within Tourist/Entertainment areas at I-75 interchanges. Institutional development outside the Urban Cluster includes land uses such as churches, schools, and government facilities.

**Table 3.17. Non-Residential Development Plan Approval Summary, 2002 - 2009**

<b>TYPE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>FLOOR AREA (SQURE FEET)</b>	<b>AMOUNT IN URBAN CLUSTER</b>	<b>AMOUNT OUTSIDE URBAN CLUSTER</b>
Commercial	1,211,748	1,066,978	144,770
Office	478,621	478,621	0
Industrial	373,585	373,585	0
Institutional	743,882	641,171	102,711
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,807,836</b>	<b>2,560,355</b>	<b>247,481</b>

Source: Alachua County Development Review Committee Database. Includes final non-residential Development Plan approvals, April 2002 to Feb. 2009.

## CHAPTER 4 | ASSESSMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

### Introduction

The State of Florida requires all local governments (counties and municipalities) to adopt Local Government Comprehensive Plans that guide future growth and development. Such plans have been required since the adoption in 1985 of Florida's Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, also called the Growth Management Act (Chapter 163, Part II, F.S.) One key component of the Act is the concurrency provision, requiring facilities and services to be present concurrent with development impacts. The following assessment outlines the thirteen elements currently included within Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan 2001-2020 as adopted in 2002 (effective May 2005, and amended with addition of the Public Schools Facility Element in 2008) including some of the key policies and objectives contained in each Element, followed by an assessment of the successes and shortcomings of each Element.

### Future Land Use Element

The Future Land Use Element designates the proposed future general distribution, location and extent of the uses of land. This Element also includes standards for the densities and intensities of each land use category. The Element contains both a series of maps depicting the Future Land Use pattern and a complementary section of Goals, Objectives and Policies.

The Future Land Use Element serves as a guide for the sustainable development and use of land. This includes the determination of an efficient pattern and location of future land uses through the relationship between land use and the transportation system, the provisions of public facilities and services, and protection of the natural environment. The Future Land Use Element contains objectives and policies that promote more compact growth, while providing choice of living environments, separation of urban and rural areas, and protection of agriculture and natural resources.

The key planning concepts in the Future Land Use Element include:

- Urban Cluster boundary for separation of urban and rural areas, and providing for residential densities greater than one unit per acre with major commercial and employment centers;
- Activity Center standards which encourage compact mixed-use development, public spaces, pedestrian scale design and multimodal interconnectivity;
- Traditional Neighborhood Developments with Mixed Use Village Centers emphasizing connected streets and public spaces;
- Rural/Agriculture policies promoting the continuance of viable agriculture in the County with a residential density of  $\leq$  one unit per five acres, and a requirement that new rural residential subdivisions of 25 or more lots be clustered in order to protect the characteristics and features of rural areas;
- Plan East Gainesville implementation policies; and
- Transfer of Development Rights Program.

### URBAN CLUSTER BOUNDARY

The Comprehensive Plan directs urban development within a compact urban growth area, known as the "Urban Cluster". The Urban Cluster Boundary is identified on the adopted Future Land Use Map, and is used to indicate the separation of urban developable land and rural land in the unincorporated County. The Comprehensive Plan directs new urban development to occur within the Urban Cluster, which contains about 37,507 total acres. New development within the Urban Cluster is required to connect to centralized potable water and sanitary sewer facilities.

The Urban Cluster is the primary policy tool in the Comprehensive Plan for containing urban sprawl and encouraging the efficient use of land in the unincorporated area. The Urban Cluster boundary may only be expanded upon a determination of need for additional land to accommodate urban land uses for a 10 and 20 year time frame based on methodology established in the Comprehensive Plan. The determination is required to compare the forecast need for land for urban residential and non-residential development based on projected population, average household size, residential vacancy rate, and market factors. Expansion of the Urban Cluster is further controlled by FLUE Policy 6.2.2 which prohibits extension of potable water and sanitary sewer lines into the Rural/Agricultural area (i.e., outside of the Urban Cluster boundary), unless those services are needed to correct a public or environmental health threat, or as necessary for the efficient delivery of services to the Urban Cluster. Within the Urban Cluster, new development or redevelopment is required to connect to central water and sewer services per Policy 2.1 of Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element.

The adopted policy framework has been effective in concentrating unincorporated growth within the Urban Cluster. Approximately 87% of the existing unincorporated area population is located within the Urban Cluster (based on 2000 Census Block Group Data). The majority of new development in the unincorporated area has also occurred within the Urban Cluster. Approximately 91% of residential dwelling units and non-residential floor area within final development plans approved between April 2002 and February 2009 were located within the Urban Cluster (see Table 3.16 and 3.17 of Chapter 3). New residential developments approved in the unincorporated Urban Cluster between April 2002 and February 2009 had an average density of about 2.59 units per acre. This figure is an increase from the 2.3 dwelling units per acre density for new developments approved in the Urban Cluster from 1991 to January 1998 identified during the last EAR process.

The Urban Cluster boundary has not been expanded since the last EAR based amendments to the Comprehensive Plan became effective May 2005. An assessment of the Urban Cluster indicates that there is a sufficient amount of undeveloped land available to accommodate urban land uses through at least the Year 2035 based on current projections of population growth.

### **ACTIVITY CENTER STANDARDS**

Activity Centers are identified on the Future Land Use Map within the Urban Cluster as nodes of high density and intensity land uses characterized by mixed-use, compact development (commercial, institutional, office, and medium to high density residential) in a pedestrian-oriented environment which supports a multi-modal transportation system. Most new commercial development is directed to locate within the thirteen (13) designated Activity Centers in the unincorporated area.

The Comprehensive Plan characterizes Activity Centers into two types based on the primary land use. A retail-oriented Activity Center has commercial activities as its primary use and an employment-oriented Activity Center has institutional, industrial, or office as the primary use. Activity Centers are also designated at varying levels. The levels correspond to the market size, area, and intensity. A high Activity Center serves as a regional shopping center for residents within a ten mile or larger radius; a medium Activity Center serves a radius of two miles or more as a community shopping center, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses; and a low Activity Center serves as a neighborhood shopping center within a radius of one and a quarter miles or more, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses.

New general development standards for Activity Centers were adopted as part of the last update of the Comprehensive Plan, which went into effect in 2005 (see Policies 2.1.4 through 2.1.13, FLUE). These standards provide that development within Activity Centers should be mixed use, pedestrian-friendly, compact, integrated with surrounding development within and outside the Activity Center, and be accessible to

multimodal transportation opportunities. In order to implement these standards for Activity Centers, Policy 2.1.7 of the Future Land Use Element requires that a detailed Activity Center Master Plan be provided for each Activity Center. If a Master Plan is not in place, then development plans must be consistent with the Activity Center general policies.

There have been several developments in Activity Centers approved since May 2005 which have provided for mixed use buildings and pedestrian-oriented design features. The overall Activity Center policy direction for mixed uses, pedestrian-orientation, and multimodal design, however, has not been fully realized. The adopted policy framework outlines many of the general concepts for Activity Centers, but could be more effective in providing an efficient implementation mechanism to encourage and achieve mixed use development pedestrian-oriented design through the development plan process. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are underway (CPA 01-09) to establish a policy framework and development standards for Transit Oriented Development, which could be implemented in Activity Centers or along established transit corridors through the development plan review process. The policy framework will include specific criteria for mixed use development with design features to promote pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use.

### **TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND VILLAGE CENTERS**

Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Village Center policies were established during the last update of the Comprehensive Plan, effective in May 2005. A TND is a distinct type of development which contains mixed housing types and a limited mix of non-residential land uses (known as a “Village Center”). Policy 1.4.2 FLUE allows TNDs with mixed use Village Centers to be located within residential zoning districts. A TND is required to be served by a network of paths, streets and lanes that are functional for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicles. This multi-modal connectivity, combined with the mix non-residential uses within a Village Center provides residents the option of walking, biking or driving to certain destinations, such as employment, shopping or dining, within their immediate neighborhood.

Alachua County’s policies for TND/Village Centers (1.4.2, 1.4.3 and Objective 1.6 with subsequent Policies in the Future Land Use Element) allow for mixed uses within residential developments in the Urban Residential Future Land Use categories. The TND/Village Center development type is allowable through the development review process, provided that the development meets specific design standards, which include the following key principles:

1. Connectivity and integration of the non-residential Village Center area with surrounding residential development
2. Allowance for a mix of residential and non-residential uses within individual buildings
3. System of small pedestrian-scale blocks with streets and roads that are fronted by design features which define and contribute to a pedestrian street character.
4. A grid system of interconnected streets and blocks which provide multiple routes from origins to destinations. The street grid system must be designed as multi-use space such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served.
5. Parking is screened from streets and on-street parking is allowed
6. Creation of usable, interconnected open space and recreational facilities on the development site.
7. Clustering of residential dwelling units and use of density gradient to promote compatibility with surrounding development
8. Range of housing types and lot sizes to serve a variety of age and income groups

There are additional limitations on the non-residential, or Village Center, portion of a TND. In order for a TND/Village Center development to be considered through the development review process, it must meet the following criteria:

1. The development must be a minimum of 30 acres;
2. The non-residential area cannot exceed 30,000 square feet of gross leasable area;
3. The mixed use Village Center portion of the development may not be less than ½ mile from any other Village Center.

Mixed use Village Centers with a gross leasable area greater than 30,000 square feet but not exceeding 50,000 square feet may be allowed through the Planned Development rezoning process.

Since 2005, there has been one TND/Village Center development which has received final approval in the unincorporated County. Given the short amount of time that the TND/Village Center policies have been in effect (since May 2, 2005), it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of these policies at this point in time. The County has received inquiries from developers interested in developing TND/Village Centers in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Many of these potential development opportunities have not been realized because they were not able to meet all of the current Comprehensive Plan requirements, and particularly the minimum 30 acre site requirement. Limiting the size of the development site to a relatively high fixed acreage may unnecessarily discourage development of otherwise viable TND/Village Centers in appropriate locations. The limitation of the non-residential component of the Village Center to 30,000 square feet of floor area may also be a limiting factor, particularly for potentially larger developments. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are underway which would provide more opportunities and incentives for TND/Village Center development in the Urban Cluster. The amendments would reduce the minimum acreage requirement for TNDs, allow bonus residential density above the base density range, and expand the amount of non-residential floor area allowed in a TND/Village Center to be proportional to the number of dwelling units in the development.

## **RURAL/AGRICULTURE POLICIES**

Section 6.0, Rural and Agricultural Policies, of the Future Land Use Element lays out a framework to support and protect rural and agricultural areas to retain agriculture while protecting the valuable natural resources throughout the rural area. There are several policies that promote continuation of agricultural pursuits and support of local markets. These policies include reference to innovative land use strategies such as transfer of development rights and stewardship programs such as Rural Lands Stewardship Areas, both of which are further described in this report. The policies also refer to more sustainable agricultural strategies, including adherence to Best Management Practices (BMPs) and voluntary participation in certification programs and federal and state cost-share programs.

There are also policies that outline the types of uses permitted in the Rural/Agriculture Future Land Use category, including various agricultural activities and related support uses, as well as limited residential development. The Plan allows for residential uses in the Rural/Ag area at a gross residential density of up to one unit per five acres. The standards for this residential development attempt to balance property owner interests in potential development of land in the Rural/Ag area with standards for adequate access and public services to the various scales of residential development, recognizing the public costs associated with such services and facilities in the rural area:



- New Rural/Agriculture subdivisions of six lots or less are permitted to access internal private easement roads that provide direct connection to public roads meeting County standards;
- Subdivisions of 7-24 lots may developed as traditional subdivisions and must have paved internal local roads and paved public road access;
- Larger subdivisions with 25 lots or greater must be designed as clustered subdivisions<sup>1</sup> with a minimum of 50% of the property set-aside as open space and density clustered onto smaller lots on the other 50% of the property;
- A permitted use within open space areas is non-intensive agriculture, which would allow a farmer to develop a portion of their property while continuing to farm on the remainder;
- Clustering is also required for any new subdivisions located within a Strategic Ecosystem, many of which are in the Rural/Ag area of the County; and
- There is a cap of 150 subdivision lots that may be permitted per year in the Rural/Agriculture Future Land Use category that are less than eight acres in size. Lots in clustered subdivisions do not count toward this cap.

As part of the Plan update adopted in 2002 and settlement agreement amendments adopted in 2003 (effective 2005), Section 6.0 of the Future Land Use Element was expanded to include several policies to facilitate and promote clustered subdivisions as the preferred approach in the Rural/Ag area. The policies streamline the process for such clustered developments and include a set of incentives to promote clustering: 1) clustered subdivisions can now be approved by the Development Review Committee rather than having to go through the longer and more expensive Planned Development rezoning process with the Board of County Commissioners; 2) there are now bonus units for clustered subdivisions, granting two bonus units for each subdivision with an additional unit for every 10 acres of conservation area in open space as well as an additional unit for every 20 acres of non-conservation area in open space. To date, there have been four clustered subdivisions approved in the Rural/Ag area. One was approved and developed under the previous Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1991, with the remaining three adopted under the current Plan from May 2005 forward, containing 238 clustered units.

### **PLAN EAST GAINESVILLE IMPLEMENTATION**

Plan East Gainesville was a joint City of Gainesville and Alachua County special area plan developed in 2002/2003 to revitalize the eastern urbanized area of Gainesville and unincorporated Alachua County. The Plan East Gainesville guiding vision, including policies relating to several specific initiatives for the unincorporated area were adopted under Objective 8.5 of the Future Land Use Element in 2006. The specific initiatives identified for the unincorporated area include:

1. Update of the Eastside Activity Center Plan
2. Coordination with the City of Gainesville to develop a strategy for conversion of the existing Alachua County Fairgrounds site to a mixed use employment center
3. Coordination with the City of Gainesville to evaluate a site east of Fred Cone park as a potential cultural or recreational center

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<sup>1</sup> Policy 6.2.9 of the Future Land Use Element identifies the following goals in encouraging clustered subdivisions: protection of natural & historic resources; support of continued agricultural activities; minimizing land use conflicts, providing recreation & habitat corridors through linked open space networks; providing flexibility, efficiency & cost reduction in provision of services & infrastructure; and reduction of natural hazard risks to life & property.

4. Coordination with the MTPo and City of Gainesville to establish Bus Rapid Transit connecting East Gainesville with local employment centers
5. Creating incentives for more market rate housing through the County's housing program.
6. Assigning priority in the Capital Improvement Program to projects that enhance implementation of Plan East Gainesville.

Several of the Plan East Gainesville initiatives are complete or are currently underway. An update of the Eastside Activity Center Plan was completed and went into effect in January 2009. This plan provided for new higher density residential opportunities and a framework for mixed use development to occur within the 300-acre Activity Center. The Plan takes into account the potential linkage of new development in the Activity Center with other local employment centers through bus rapid transit. The County's proposed multimodal transportation plan and concurrency management system, which will come forward as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan in April and May 2009, will include plans for a rapid transit route connecting East Gainesville with existing employment centers. Plans are also underway to convert the existing County Fairgrounds site to a mixed use employment center and establish a new Fairgrounds site.

### **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM**

The County adopted new policies on September 23, 2008 establishing a Transfer of Development Rights Program to protect both conservation lands including strategic ecosystems and properties on the Alachua County Forever Acquisition List, and agricultural properties by identifying these as potential sending areas (Section 9.0). The program allows for owners of property in sending areas to sell development rights to owners of property in receiving areas within the Urban Cluster, and includes language supporting the development of interlocal agreements with municipalities to identify receiving areas within municipal boundaries. The County is currently in the process of developing land development regulations to implement these new policies.

## **Transportation Mobility Element**

The Transportation Mobility Element addresses long range planning for the provision of transportation mobility and sets level of service standards for roadways, including county roads within municipalities. It also sets level of service standards for roadway facilities in the unincorporated area that are maintained by entities other than the County (such as state-maintained facilities). Level of Service (LOS) is defined in accordance with the Level of Service Handbook prepared by the Florida Department of Transportation and is calculated based on peak hour conditions.

There is one overall Element goal and four sub-goals addressing specific aspects of transportation mobility. Each of the goals and their subsequent objectives are summarized below.

### **TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT GOAL**

Establish a multimodal transportation system that provides for the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorized vehicle users, users of rail and aviation facilities, and is sensitive to the cultural and environmental amenities of Alachua County.



### GOAL 1

To establish and maintain a safe, convenient, and efficient automobile, bicycle and pedestrian transportation system, capable of moving people and goods throughout the County.

There are ten objectives under Goal 1 which are summarized below:

- Establish Level of Service standards for roadway facilities
- Promote innovative solutions to concurrency including:
  - Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas
  - Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public Transportation
- Promote innovative solutions to concurrency such as Multimodal Transportation Districts
- Promote efficiency of the transportation system through coordination of land use decisions and driveway access locations and configurations;
- Provide for acquisition and protection of existing and future rights-of-way from development;
- Provide a system of safe, pleasant, convenient, and continuous bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community;
- Promote a process which coordinates state, regional, and local transportation plans;
- Coordinate the traffic circulation network with the future land use map;
- Resolve existing and potential future safety problems within the transportation network;
- Establish a Future Traffic Circulation Corridor Map (FTCCM) for future right of way protection.

### GOAL 2

To establish a balanced transportation system that preserves and enhances natural and historic resources and scenic quality.

There is one objective under Goal 2 which is summarized below.

- Avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to natural and historic resources and scenic quality during the development of the transportation system.

### GOAL 3

To encourage the provision and use of a safe, efficient, and financially feasible mass transit transportation system which is responsive to community needs, consistent with land use policies, environmentally sound, and which promotes economic opportunity and energy conservation.

There are six objectives under Goal 3 which are summarized below.

- Assist providers of mass transit in Alachua County through participation in planning efforts;
- Coordinate and assist the agencies providing service delivery for transportation disadvantaged;
- Provide for protection of future mass transit rights-of-way and corridors;
- Promote the use of mass transit through land use planning in coordination with the City of Gainesville/Regional Transit System (RTS);
- Promote an appropriate rail transportation system;
- Improve the functioning of the traffic circulation network through use of measures to reduce individual vehicle trips.

#### GOAL 4

To facilitate the availability of airport facilities to meet future demand in a manner that maximizes safety, convenience, economic benefit, environmental compatibility, and consistency with other elements.

There are three objectives under Goal 4 which are summarized below.

- Coordinate expansions of aviation facilities with the Future Land Use Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element; and to prevent obstructions to airport operations;
- Coordinate expansions of aviation facilities with the Transportation Mobility Element;
- Coordinate capital improvement plans associated with aviation facilities of the Federal Aviation Administration, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization, the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, and the Multi-County Regional Airport Task Force.

The goals and objectives of the Transportation Mobility Element have had mixed success. The majority of the roads in unincorporated Alachua County are meeting the adopted level of service (LOS) standards, but there are some segments that do not meet the adopted LOS standards when accounting for existing traffic plus reserved trips (e.g., segments of I-75, Newberry Road (SR 26), Archer Road (SR 24), and Tower Road). The 2008 Roadway Level of Service summary table provided in Appendix C shows the current level of service conditions for State and County road segments in the unincorporated area, including information on the presence of bicycle lanes and sidewalks. The Table shows that many of the roadways not meeting the adopted level of service standards have significant numbers of reserved concurrency trips from development which is approved, but not built. The LOS Table also indicates that several of the roadway segments not meeting the adopted LOS standards are either substantially within the City of Gainesville or have recently been annexed by the City. A more recent Level of Service Report is now available which provides updated traffic count data and level of service conditions for State and County road, which will be used for other planning purposes and subsequent plan updates.

The implementation of the adopted level of service standards for roadways through the concurrency management system has not resulted in effective multimodal mobility within the Urban Cluster. Traditional roadway-oriented concurrency has had the unintended result of restricting development closer to the existing urban core, while new development has occurred on the edges of the Urban Cluster where adequate roadway capacity is more readily available. The adopted Comprehensive Plan encourages innovative solutions to concurrency such as Multimodal Transportation Districts (MMDT), Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (TCEPPT), and Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEA). Alachua County has not established any Multimodal Transportation Districts (MMDT) or Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEA). The County has approved one development under the provisions of the Transportation Concurrency Exception for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (TCEPPT). Although not widely utilized in Alachua County, these types of concurrency alternatives may result in a fragmented approach to transportation planning, and they fail to address multimodal mobility in a comprehensive and community-wide manner.

One of the major community issues identified for the EAR is to develop alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion. In order to address this issue, the County has initiated amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the first large scale cycle of 2009 which would provide a new multimodal approach to transportation concurrency for the Urban Cluster. The proposed amendments will establish level of service standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes to be applied within three mobility districts in the Urban Cluster. The roadway level of service standards for automobiles will be

modified so that concurrency will be evaluated based on area-wide standards rather than the current segment-by-segment approach. A long range multimodal capital improvements program will be adopted, which will set out a schedule of improvements that are needed to maintain the new multimodal level of service standards over a 20 year period. The long range schedule of improvements will include a combination of roadway capacity additions and express transit service in the early years of the schedule, and dedicated transit infrastructure in the latter years of the schedule.

In addition to the changes to the transportation concurrency implementation system and long range multimodal capital improvements program, the proposed amendments will modify the Future Land Use Element in order to strengthen the connection between land use and transportation. The amendments will provide a framework for higher density mixed use development along mapped future transit corridors through implementation of Traditional Neighborhood Development and Transit Oriented Development policies. The desired long term outcome of these amendments is to achieve a community-wide reduction in vehicle miles traveled per capita, as well as some degree of mode shift away from the automobile to alternate modes such as walking, bicycling, and transit.

Information on the proposed alternative concurrency amendments is available online at:

[http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/TPIF/cm\\_docs.php](http://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php)

## Housing Element

The Housing Element evaluates existing housing conditions and to provide projections and analysis for future housing needs. Specific emphasis is placed on identifying deficits in the housing supply for moderate, low, and very low income households, as well as those with special needs.

### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Encouragement and incentives for provision of affordable housing dispersed throughout the County;
- Intergovernmental coordination to promote affordable housing within municipalities;
- State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funding dedicated to down payment assistance and funding for affordable single family and multifamily construction;
- Promotion and funding of restoration and rehabilitation of existing housing stock; and
- Access to housing opportunities for special needs groups (incl. elderly, homeless, disabled and farm workers).

The Housing Element provides a framework for addressing the affordability of housing to all segments of the community. To this end, some key revisions have been made to the County's land development regulations. These revisions comprise a host of incentives to promote the development of affordable housing. The Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) implemented density based zoning districts that allow for flexible lot sizes and better use of densities allowed within land use categories.

The revised ULDC removed barriers to the development of affordable housing such as minimum lot size, rigid setback requirements, as well as restrictions on unit types allowed in different residential zoning districts. Changes were made to the residential districts that promote more density by allowing flexible lot sizes and improved utilization of densities, accessory dwelling units, and a greater range of housing types and unit prices.

Accessory dwelling units, either attached or detached from the principal dwelling on a single family lot and ranging from 400 to 800 square feet, are now allowed by right in all residential zoning districts and do not count toward the allowed density. While there is no guarantee that accessory dwelling units will be affordable, this creates an opportunity for affordable rental units to be included within market rate single family developments. Accessory dwellings can be an excellent way to provide affordable homes for family members or caretakers and can also provide opportunities to expand the supply of rental homes while generating income for homeowners.

The revised ULDC has two more provisions that equate to tangible incentives for developers to include affordable housing units in their developments. First, developers are allowed to increase the number of attached units allowed from four to eight units for Affordable Housing Developments<sup>2</sup>. A second provision allows Affordable Housing Developments to reserve long-term traffic concurrency without having to utilize the Planned Development (PD) process. The reservation of traffic concurrency has been a critical element of the development approval process as traffic capacity on many major County roads is limited. The incentive of offering long term concurrency reservations with a development plan approval for an affordable housing project allows for long term multi-phase projects without the additional effort, time and costs required to pursue a PD zoning approval.

## Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element

The Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element involves the development of policies regarding potable water and sanitary sewer systems, which directly address public health and safety as well as groundwater quality. Goals and policies are formulated in the State Comprehensive Plan, which form the basis for the goals and policies in the regional comprehensive plans. In turn, local governments are required by law to develop comprehensive plans which are “consistent with and further” the State and regional plans.

### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Level of Service standards for developments in Urban Cluster on central systems;
- Requirements for connection to central systems within the Urban Cluster; and
- Minimum lot sizes for properties on well & septic.

In general, the adopted objectives and goals of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer element have been met successfully. The Level of Service standards for development in the Urban Cluster on central systems have been maintained, and expansion of the central water and sewer system in the Urban Cluster has been coordinated with Gainesville Regional Utilities, the provider of potable water and sanitary sewer within the Urban Cluster. Connection to central water and sewer is required for new development at urban densities within the Urban Cluster, and the extension of potable water and sanitary sewer lines outside of the Urban Cluster is strictly limited by Policy 3.5 of the PWSSE, and must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Approval by the Board of County Commissioners of extensions of potable water and sanitary sewer lines beyond the Urban Cluster line must be based on one or more criteria, including:

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<sup>2</sup> In an affordable housing development, at least 50% of the units meet the definition for affordable housing for low-income households, or at least 20% of the units meet the definition for affordable housing for very low-income households (Chapter 410, Article 3, ULDC).

- a finding that the extension protects public health and safety;
- the extension is necessary to enhance the safe, effective and efficient delivery of central water and sewer within an existing urban service area;
- a finding that the extension of such facilities would serve a purpose consistent with the comprehensive plan;
- a finding that the extension of such facilities is needed as part of a comprehensive expansion of public facilities to encourage urban development in a new area as part of a comprehensive plan amendment.

Since becoming effective in 2005, there have been no extensions of potable water and sanitary sewer facilities beyond the Urban Cluster boundary. The minimum lot size for properties on private well and septic, which is generally one (1) acre has been maintained, and in addition the system is required to meet state standards established and monitored by the Alachua County Public Health Unit. Policies to promote water conservation and reuse have been successful and Gainesville Regional Utilities is supportive of efforts to increase water conservation and reuse within Unincorporated Alachua County.

## Solid Waste Element

The Solid Waste Element indicates the ways solid waste is provided for in the County. Alachua County provides a variety of solid waste services, including solid waste disposal for all of Alachua County and Gilchrist County. Solid waste collection services are provided to single family residents in the unincorporated area of the county, a portion of which has mandatory collection. Five rural collection centers are available to residents without collection service. County-wide public education programs focus on waste reduction, waste prevention, composting and recycling. The County provides long term care for four closed landfills. The Solid Waste Element addresses solid waste issues such as operational responsibility, existing service facilities, solid waste collection, landfills and household hazardous waste disposal.

### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Level of Service standards for solid waste disposal of 0.73 tons per person per year;
- Long term solid waste management system utilizing Leveda Brown Environmental Park;
- Waste reduction strategies; and
- Promotion of recycling and other waste alternatives.

Alachua County has an interlocal agreement with the New River Solid Waste Association for solid waste disposal at the New River Solid Waste Facility in Union County. The current agreement for solid waste disposal between Alachua County and the New River Solid Waste Association is in effect until December 31, 2018. Alachua County operates a solid waste transfer station to manage the local solid waste stream. The transfer station processes solid waste from Alachua and Gilchrist Counties.

The permitted capacity of the County's transfer station is 1,200 tons per day. The highest tonnage of solid waste processed over the past five years was 643 tons per day in 2007. In 2008, the transfer station processed 627 tons of solid waste per day.

The policy framework emphasizes that Reduce/Reuse/Recycle is important for solid waste management in a County that currently transfers all solid waste to an out of county landfill. Alachua County operates a state-of-the-art Hazardous Waste Collection Center (HWCC), which together with five rural collection sites located at the Waste Management Division's Rural Collection Centers throughout the County, anchors a Hazardous

Waste (HW) Collection Program that serves over 30,000 households and 2,000 small businesses and processes over 1.6 million pounds of hazardous waste each year. The County's HW program recycles or properly disposes of household chemicals, motor oil, automotive products, batteries, pesticides, oil-based and latex paints, fluorescent lamps, and electronic scrap including computer monitors and televisions. There is a potential for increased recycling and promotion of local industries that utilize and recycle this electronic waste in addition to other waste, to create jobs and add to the local economy while reducing adverse environmental impacts. The local payroll for 1,500 or more waste-related jobs could be up to \$50,000,000, according to an EPA study. The Resource Recovery Park planned adjacent to the existing Leveda Brown Transfer Station is an important project underway to meet the goal of increased recycling.

Correctly measuring the diversion stream is an important component of the 75% state goal. County Solid Waste /Alternatives office is working to update the Waste Composition Study in March 2009. UF research team led by Dr. Tim Townsend will help identify the composition of Alachua County and UF's waste in order to improve recycling rates and expand the scope of current programs.

Alachua County Public Works completed "The Southwest Landfill Bio-reactor Research Project 2008 Summary and Evaluation," about the Southwest Landfill near Archer. The report summarizes the landfill's third phase of research, which began in 1999 and concluded in 2008. During this period Alachua County, Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), and University of Florida researchers focused on operating a bio-reactor (a bio-reactor optimizes solid waste to accelerate production of methane gas). The methane gas was converted into electricity. By converting methane gas into electricity, Alachua County was able to avoid 1500 tons (U.S.) of carbon emissions, conserve 9 million gallons of water, and avoid 7800 tons of fly ash production.

In addition to these figures, the County saved an estimated \$444,000. The savings comes from combining gas revenues, avoided hauling and treatment costs, and avoided electricity consumption. The research also created numerous practical operations lessons that can improve future designs in the areas of gas pretreatment, lightning protection, and engine controller design. The landfill continues to be managed, but no longer produces electricity for the County. The project provides important information for the implementation of energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction programs.

## **Stormwater Management Element**

The purpose of the Stormwater Management Element is to prepare a general stormwater management plan that addresses existing deficiencies, analyzes projected future needs, and establishes recommended goals, objectives and policies. The plan is also intended to minimize future environmental degradation. The adopted goals, objectives and policies provide the direction to be followed for future stormwater management activities.

The regulation of stormwater management in Alachua County is governed by the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Suwannee River Water Management District in their respective jurisdictions. Alachua County has a Stormwater Ordinance intended to provide additional control over the type, location and maintenance of stormwater facilities and impacts due to erosion and sedimentation.

### **Key Objectives and Policies:**

- Level of Service standards for stormwater management with pre/post conditions for 100 year critical storm event;
- Development of Stormwater Management Program Master Plan;

- Compliance with state requirements;
- Protection of natural drainage features; and
- Protection of water quality.

All Level of Service standards for stormwater management with pre/post conditions are written to the 100 year critical storm event. The County continues to work on a Development of Stormwater Management Program Master Plan. In July 2008, the Stormwater Management Program Task Force concluded a series of facilitated meetings to arrive at a list of prioritized projects, anticipated costs and gaps. While a list of projects was drafted, the means to fund the projects was not achieved through this process. Compliance with state requirements continues through the County's Development Review Process with major review of potential impacts to or within the 100yr flood-plain coming from the Departments of Public Works, Environmental Protection and Growth Management. Comprehensive Plan policies in the Stormwater Element are also supported by Conservation and Open Space Element policies severely limiting development activities within the 100-yr floodplain, which further protect natural drainage features, and protect water quality. The County engaged in a process to assess the efficacy of the Floridan Aquifer Confinement Map and expects to replace that map with an updated version using new technology and among other criteria, natural drainage features such a buffered stream to sink to protect water quality.

## Conservation and Open Space Element

The goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) were adopted to embrace multiple, diverse strategies for the conservation of natural systems in Alachua County, and establish environmental conservation as a priority in all decision-making for the County. The Element works in harmony with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan in ensuring environmental protection while fostering economic growth and development.

The Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) addresses long range planning for the conservation and protection of the natural resources and human-related resources, including open space areas, in Alachua County. The primary purpose of the Element is generally to identify the natural resources of the area and establish policies to protect and conserve those resources, including the following:

- earth resources (soils, minerals, and geological resources),
- water resources (groundwater and surface water quantity and quality floodplains, natural groundwater recharge areas and natural drainage features), and
- natural communities and wildlife (vegetative communities, wildlife and wildlife habitats including Strategic Ecosystems)

### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Identifies six conservation areas for protection:
  - Wetlands
  - Surface Waters
  - 100-year Floodplains
  - Listed Species Habitat
  - Significant Geologic Features
  - Strategic Ecosystems
- Establishment of information system for natural and human-related resources;
- Protection of resources during land use planning and development review;



- Steps to maintain and improve all natural resources;
- Provisions for energy efficiency;
- Mitigation of risks associated with natural disasters (e.g. wildfire) and human risks (e.g. hazardous materials);
- Encouragement of reduction of hazardous waste generation; and
- Establishment and maintenance of land conservation programs, including Alachua County Forever.

In the 2002 Comprehensive Plan update, strategic ecosystems was added to the list of conservation areas to be protected based on the KBN/Golder Report (1996) inventory and general mapping of significant natural areas in the County. The purpose was to recognize and protect natural resources within privately owned lands in the County because of their ecological value, uniqueness and sensitivity to development activities. These resources require stringent protective measures to sustain their integrity, connectivity and contribution to the health, welfare and safety of the County's citizens.

The County established a land conservation program, Alachua County Forever (ACF), through a public referendum in November 2000 to acquire, improve and manage environmentally significant lands in Alachua County, to protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation. The program also supports other non-profit land acquisition and land management programs. As of March 2009, ACF has 17,056 acres in protection. The recent passage of the half-cent sales tax per public referendum for parks and recreation, "Wild Spaces, Public Places", also provides funding for ACF maintenance activities to protect and enhance resources acquired for preservation in perpetuity.

Protection of natural and cultural resources during land use planning and development review is maintained through the County's DRC (development review committee) process to review development applications and compliance with COSE as well as other resource protection policies in the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC (unified land development code) regulations. The 2002 Comprehensive Plan update and ULDC regulations have resulted in minimal loss of wetland resources (< 2.0 ac) compared to previous policies. Existing COSE policies and the ULDC require monitoring of specific standards such as wetland buffers, floodplain fill compensation, and tree canopy protection, for example, in order to maintain the integrity of natural resources. Growth Management Department code officers and Environmental Protection staff respond to citizen complaints as well as opportunistic monitoring of natural resources and potential violations affecting resource function and values.

COSE policies provide for information sharing and access to the public through web-page formats. The County's GIS map gallery provides accessible images of the County's natural and human-related (cultural) resources.

COSE policies in the current Comprehensive Plan recognize the importance of energy efficiency in land use decisions and have laid the groundwork for expansion of these policies in future Comp Plans. The County in the current Comp Plan created a policy framework for wildfire mitigation and for a Local Mitigation Strategy which lends itself for expansion. The County maintains an active hazardous materials recycling and waste generation education program. Updated mapping of the County's aquifer vulnerability and high recharge areas using the best available data will not only enhance the County's ability to improve mitigation and siting of hazardous materials projects and cooperative response efforts, it provides added protection of water quality to the Floridan aquifer and stream to sink resources..

The County also promotes a transfer of development rights program which incentivizes sending development rights from significant natural resources areas to appropriate development areas within the urban cluster or activity centers. The County requires a portion of each new development proposal to set aside pervious open



space. The County adopted a map that identifies significant natural areas on private land. These areas are considered strategic ecosystems because of the connectivity, potential restorative context and conservation management of the habitats, especially if they are large and proximate to other systems. Property owners are encouraged to participate in master planning of the strategic ecosystems and incentives are provided within increased protection of the planning area.

## Recreation Element

The information presented in the Recreation Element identifies the current recreation sites within Alachua County that are available to the public. Examination of these sites including types of facilities, availability to the public, demand for additional recreation sites and existing undeveloped recreation acreage were used to project future needs and to provide guidance for the goals, objectives and policies of the Element.

### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Level of Service standards for recreation facilities:
- 0.5 acres of improved activity-based recreation per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of the County
- 5.0 acres of improved resource-based recreation per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of the County
- Provision of both activity-based and resource-based recreation facilities;
- Development of a Recreation Master Plan (to be implemented when funded); and
- Intergovernmental coordination for provision of recreation facilities Countywide.

Alachua County has maintained its established Level of Service standards for both activity-based and resource-based recreation facilities. The inclusion of *Alachua County Forever* properties has been most effective in ensuring the current and future provision of public resource-based facilities. A key issue for the County is the effectiveness of its LOS standards for recreation. A combination of measures (access, amount of park land, capacity of facilities, quality of experience, etc.) may offer a more accurate and equitable assessment of service provision. There is a need for further analysis concerning the use of access as a measure. In addition to park acreage, proximity/travel distance is important as a measure of level of service. There is also a need to adjust the LOS standard due to the impacts of annexations. County-funded and County-developed parks that are turned over to municipalities should be considered in the LOS standard.

The recent passage of the half-cent sales tax for parks and recreation, “Wild Spaces, Public Places”, provides funding for several park/recreation facilities throughout Alachua County (in unincorporated and incorporated areas). However, the County’s Recreation Master Plan remains unfunded and not fully implemented.

## Intergovernmental Coordination Element

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element identifies and analyzes intergovernmental relationships in the context of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. Relevant federal, state, regional and local agencies including adjacent counties, cities in Alachua County and utility providers are identified. A variety of intergovernmental coordination mechanisms are reviewed and specific existing coordination mechanisms are analyzed, in terms of their effectiveness in addressing issues with intergovernmental implications. The purpose of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element is to identify and improve the processes of coordination between the County and these various authorities to create compatible, efficient and effective relationships.

#### Key Objectives and Policies:

- Coordination with the school board and other government agencies;
- Coordination on municipal annexations and establishment of municipal Reserve areas through Boundary Adjustment Act (Special Act of FL Legislature for the County);
- Coordination of provision of services and information;
- Coordination of traffic and circulation issues; and
- Coordination for environmental protection.

The County has consistently worked to coordinate with outside agencies on various planning issues affecting the County and surrounding region. The County continues to further these efforts through the work of the Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee, particularly in areas such as annexation issues, promotion of neighborhood school districts, greenbelt preservation, and environmental protection, including planning for Strategic Ecosystem properties that are annexed into municipalities. The County is also working to improve efforts to coordinate on transportation planning for the County and region to provide multimodal access to major employment and activity centers.

### Capital Improvements Element

Capital improvements are physical assets constructed or purchased to provide, improve or replace a public facility and which are large scale and high in cost. The cost of a capital improvement is generally non-recurring and may require multi-year financing. For the purpose of this element, physical assets which have been identified as existing or projected needs in the individual comprehensive plan elements shall be considered capital improvements.

#### Key Objectives and Policies include:

- Level of Service standards identified for :
  - Transportation
  - Stormwater
  - Solid Waste
  - Recreation Facilities
  - Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer
  - Public Schools
- Five-year Capital Improvements Program for projects needed to maintain Level of Service standards;
- Evaluation of need for public facilities as identified in other Elements;
- Cost estimation of improvements for which Alachua County has fiscal responsibility;
- Analysis of fiscal capability of the County to finance and construct improvements;
- Financial policies guiding the funding of improvements; and
- Schedule for funding and construction of improvements to ensure capital improvements are provided when required based on needs identified in other Comprehensive Plan Elements.

The Capital Improvements Element contains adopted policies which identify the level of service standards for public facilities subject to concurrency, and provides procedures for how development is required to comply with those standards. Policy 1.3.3.B of the Capital Improvements Element further provides that the 5-Year Capital Improvement Program for those public facilities subject to concurrency requirements must be financially feasible based on currently available revenue sources.

Recent changes to Florida Statutes require that local government Comprehensive Plans must be financially feasible, and that an annual update to the Five-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements must be submitted by December 1, 2008, and yearly thereafter, in order to meet this requirement. If this deadline is missed, no amendments to the comprehensive Plan are allowed until the update is adopted. Financial feasibility is determined using professionally accepted methodologies and applies to the 5-year planning period, except in the case of a long-term transportation or school concurrency management system, in which case a 10-year or 15-year period applies. Chapter 163.3164, F.S. defines financial feasibility as follows:

*"Financial feasibility" means that sufficient revenues are currently available or will be available from committed funding sources for the first 3 years, or will be available from committed or planned funding sources for years 4 and 5, of a 5-year capital improvement schedule for financing capital improvements, such as ad valorem taxes, bonds, state and federal funds, tax revenues, impact fees, and developer contributions, which are adequate to fund the projected costs of the capital improvements identified in the comprehensive plan necessary to ensure that adopted level-of-service standards are achieved and maintained within the period covered by the 5-year schedule of capital improvements. A comprehensive plan shall be deemed financially feasible for transportation and school facilities throughout the planning period addressed by the capital improvements schedule if it can be demonstrated that the level-of-service standards will be achieved and maintained by the end of the planning period even if in a particular year such improvements are not concurrent as required by s. [163.3180](#).*

The adopted Five Year Schedule of Improvements contained in the Capital Improvements Element includes lists of capacity-related projects for transportation and public school facilities (the public school project list was added as part of the new Public School Facilities Element amendments adopted in June 2008, effective October 2008). The Five Year Schedule has not yet been updated in accordance with the new financial feasibility requirements, although the County has maintained a financially feasible capital improvements program through the annual budget process.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are in process as part of the first large scale amendment cycle of 2009 (CPA 01-09) to establish a financially feasible five year capital improvements program for public facilities subject to concurrency, including a long range (20 year) schedule of improvements for multimodal transportation projects. As part of these amendments, new policies are proposed to explore alternative funding sources for capital improvements in light of current fiscal constraints.

## **Economic Element**

The Economic Element, an optional Element in the Comprehensive Plan, was created with assistance from the County Commission appointed Economic Development Advisory Committee, whose initial directive was to develop a Strategic Economic Development Plan and to develop criteria by which economic development projects seeking County assistance are evaluated. This plan was adopted by the County Commission in 2001 and helped frame the key issues as part of the update of the Economic Element in 2002.

### **Key Objectives and Policies:**

- Employment opportunities;
- Poverty alleviation;
- Revenue and economic diversification;
- Coordination of educational, vocational and technical training;
- Promotion of tourism, including eco-tourism; and
- Compatibility of growth with environmental preservation.

The base of the community's economy hinges on two sectors – Education & Health Services and Trade, Transportation & Utilities. The impact of a large (college) student population is reflected in the County's median income, which was \$8,000 less than the State of Florida's median income in 2006. This same population segment skews the number of persons in the County who are living in poverty. A special Census tabulation of the County's non-college population conducted in 2005 revealed that 13.9% of the County's population was in poverty, compared to 23% including the college student population. Because of the community's reliance on the leisure and hospitality industry (third largest employment sector), the County has a low unemployment rate. More detailed data is provided in Chapter 6 – Major Issue Analysis – of this report. Also important to note is that the County's Economic Development Advisory Committee has recently been re-established to provide input into the implementation of a strategic plan for sustainable economic development in the community.

Promoting eco-tourism is important. Whether travelling to Alachua County for business, education or recreation, many first time observers of Paynes Prairie are aware of the special qualities of this place. The prairie has lessons to lead the community towards sustainability.

...“There's a hardiness about the plants in a wild setting. When you look at a prairie, you don't see complete losses from anything---you don't see net soil erosion or devastating pest epidemics. You don't see the need for fertilizers or pesticides. You see a system that runs on sun and rain, year after year, with no one to cultivate the soil or plant the seeds. It drinks in no excess inputs and excretes no damaging wastes. It recycles all its nutrients, it conserves water, it produces abundantly, and because it's chock-full of genetic information and local know-how, it adapts.” (12-13) (Hawken, Lovins and Lovins. 1999. *Natural Capitalism, Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.)

Promoting Alachua County for heritage tourism and reaping the economic benefits is an important goal while maintaining the ecosystems that sustain the local community. Agritourism offers potential, and the Old Florida Heritage Highway, Potano Canoe Trail, African American Heritage Trail and Yulee Railroad Days are current initiatives that link historic and natural sites to tourism development.

## Historic Preservation Element

The Historic Preservation Element is an optional Element in the Comprehensive Plan, and was include in 2002. Historically significant properties and resources are required to be addressed by the Future Land Use and Housing Elements under the Growth Management Act. The Historic Preservation Element meets the requirements for these elements and serves to preserve and protect historic, archaeological and paleontological resources and properties within the County.

Key Objectives and Policies:

- Policies to establish a Historic Resources Preservation Plan;
- Strategies for the preservation of historic, archaeological and paleontological resources and properties; and
- Policies to promote the use of historic resources for heritage tourism.

The Alachua County Historic Structures Survey project was one of several historic preservation-related projects undertaken by Alachua County and the Alachua County Historical Commission. The project involved a historic structures survey that located and documented historic resources located within the unincorporated areas of Alachua County. It was funded by the County with assistance from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. A historical overview of the county and a complete description of this project are found on the Alachua County Web site at:

[http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/histstruct/infosys/historic\\_survey.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/histstruct/infosys/historic_survey.php).

The survey, completed in 2000, was required to base evaluations on significance of each historic resource on the criteria established by the National Register. It provides a uniform, yet subjective, method of analysis throughout the preservation field. This will provide data for work needed on a Historic Preservation Master Plan and Ordinance.

A process to consider additional structures to be added to the survey by nomination from citizens, following the same criteria, is under review. When implemented it will require the structure must meet the approval of the Alachua County Historic Commission and the Alachua County Commission.

Heritage tourism is supported by an application submitted to the National Scenic Byways program to designate the Old Florida Heritage Highway as a national byway.

## **Public School Facilities Element**

In 2005, the Florida Legislature amended Section 163.3180, F.S. to require the inclusion of a Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) in the comprehensive land use plan. The PSFE, along with supporting data and analysis, was developed by a Staff Workgroup comprised of staff representing Alachua County, the School Board of Alachua County and the municipalities within Alachua County. Alachua County successfully amended its comprehensive plan to adopt the PSFE by the July 1, 2008 deadline prescribed by the Florida Department of Community Affairs. The PSFE became effective in October 2008, requiring all new residential development in the unincorporated area of Alachua County to meet the requirements for public school concurrency.

The PSFE serves to establish the framework for the implementation of a uniform, district-wide public school concurrency system addressing the requirement that public school facilities needed to serve new residential development be in place prior to or concurrent with the impacts of the development. The overall purposes of public school concurrency are to ensure that the community is adequately served by schools, coordinate school plans and local government plans, link land use and capital planning for schools, and link development approvals and school capacity.

### **Key Objectives and Policies:**

- Level of Service (LOS) Standards for elementary, middle and high schools;
- School Concurrency Service Areas;
- Financial Feasibility (Public Schools Capital Facilities Program);
- Proportionate Share Mitigation; and
- Supporting Infrastructure.

## CHAPTER 5 | GENERAL LEVELS OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

Chapter 163.3191(2)(c) requires that the EAR provide an assessment of the financial feasibility of implementing the Comprehensive Plan and of providing needed infrastructure to achieve and maintain adopted level-of-service standards and sustain concurrency management systems through the capital improvements element, as well as the ability to address infrastructure backlogs and meet the demands of growth on public services and facilities.

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan contains Level of Service (LOS) standards for public facilities that are subject to concurrency, including transportation, potable water, sanitary sewer, stormwater management, solid waste, activity-based and resource-based recreation, and public school facilities. These LOS standards are contained in the adopted Capital Improvements Element as well as in those elements relating to the specific types of public facilities. The Capital Improvements Element also contains a Five Year Schedule of Improvements which identifies capital projects needed to maintain the adopted level of service standards through the concurrency management system.

The following sections identify the Level of Service standards adopted in the Comprehensive Plan, and discuss the County's capacity to achieve those standards and meet the demands of growth on public services and facilities.

### Transportation Facilities

Objective 1.1 and Policies 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 of the Transportation Mobility Element establish the level of service (LOS) standards for functionally classified State-maintained and County-maintained roadways in the unincorporated area. The adopted LOS standards are as follows:

*Objective 1.1: Level of service standards, in accordance with the latest version of the Level of Service Handbook developed by the Florida Department of Transportation Systems Planning Office, shall be adopted in order to maximize the efficient use and safety of roadway facilities in order to coordinate capital improvement planning with land use decisions to meet the requirement that adequate roadway facilities be available concurrent with the impacts of development.*

*Policy 1.1.1 Alachua County shall adopt the following minimum level of service standards based on peak hour conditions for functionally-classified, State-maintained roadways, except for constrained-as identified in Policy 1.1.5.a.*

TYPE	Rural	Trans/Urban/Comm*	Urbanized
<i>Intrastate</i>			
Limited Access	B	C	C
Controlled Access	B	C	C
Other State Roads	Rural	Trans/Urban/Comm*	Urbanized
Other Multi-lane	B	C	D
Two-lane	C	D	D
SR 121 from the Levy County Line to SW 85 <sup>th</sup> Street (MPO Boundary)	D		
SR 24 from Levy County Line to SW 91 <sup>st</sup> Street (MPO Boundary)	D**		
SR 26 from SR 222 to the Putnam County Line	D		

\*Transitioning Urbanized Areas, Urban Areas, and Communities

\*\* SR 24 from the Levy County Line to SW 91<sup>st</sup> Street (MTPO Boundary) shall be maintained at the existing LOS D until such time as adequate Transportation System Management strategies are implemented that raise the segment to LOS C at which time the LOS standard shall be modified and maintained at LOS C.

Policy 1.1.2: Alachua County shall adopt the following minimum level of service standards based on peak hour conditions for paved, functionally-classified, County-maintained arterial and collector roadways.

TYPE	URBAN	RURAL
minor arterials	D	D
collectors	D	C

The Alachua County Roadway Level of Service Report, 2008 is provided in Appendix C. The Report contains data from January 2009 on the level of service conditions on road segments for which the County monitors concurrency. The LOS Report shows the maximum daily capacity of each segment which corresponds to the adopted LOS standard as provided in the FDOT LOS Handbook; the Average Daily Traffic for each road segment from the most recent available traffic count data; the reserved concurrency trips from approved but not-built development; and the available capacity remaining. As the Roadway Level of Service Report indicates, the majority of the road segments in the unincorporated area are operating within the adopted LOS standards.

The LOS Report indicates that there are several road segments that do not meet the adopted roadway LOS standards when accounting for existing traffic and reserved trips (e.g., segments of: I-75, Newberry Road (SR 26), Archer Road (SR 24), and Tower Road). The Report shows that many of the roadways not meeting the adopted level of service standards have significant numbers of reserved concurrency trips from development which is approved but not built. The LOS Report also indicates that many of the roadway segments not meeting the adopted LOS standards are either substantially within the City of Gainesville or have been recently annexed into the City. A more recent Level of Service Report is now available which provides updated traffic count data and level of service conditions for State and County Roads, which will be used for other planning purposes and subsequent Plan updates.

The implementation of the adopted roadway LOS standards through the County’s concurrency management system, has contributed in part to increased amounts of development near the edges of the unincorporated Urban Cluster, where roadway capacity has typically been more available. Development in many of the



core areas of the Urban Cluster (i.e., closer to the City of Gainesville and I-75) is currently restricted under the regulatory component of transportation concurrency. Proposed developments along portions of roads within the Urban Cluster are currently unable to receive final development plan approval due to a lack of available roadway capacity. This could potentially lead to increased pressure for new development at the edges of the Urban Cluster or in the Rural areas.

In an effort to address roadway level of service and concurrency implementation issues, the County has proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the first large scale cycle of 2009 (CPA 01-09). The amendments will significantly modify the implementation framework for transportation concurrency within the Urban Cluster in order to reinforce the concept of concentrating new development within the existing Urban Cluster. The amendments will address existing LOS deficiencies through identification of transportation capital improvement projects as part of a proposed long range multimodal capital improvements program. The proposed amendments will:

- Establish Transportation Mobility Districts within the Urban Cluster to form the basis of a fee-based concurrency system, replacing traditional concurrency and proportionate fair share.
- Establish an incentive based multimodal transportation fee structure that will incentivize developments such as Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Transit Oriented Developments by recognizing their reduced impact on the major roadway network.
- Modify adopted development standards for Traditional Neighborhood Developments and establish new development standards for Transit Oriented Developments in order to allow for higher density mixed use development within the Urban Cluster and along planned transit corridors.
- Identify long range multimodal transportation capital project needs that can be reasonably anticipated by the land uses allowed under the current Comprehensive Plan.
- Shift transportation capital improvement plans from being solely automobile-oriented to include pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure in a manner that positions those modes to be viable means of mobility in the future.
- Alter the existing transportation impact fee ordinance so that it can be utilized to fund the capital costs of the proposed multimodal infrastructure plan.
- Enhanced intergovernmental coordination in regards to anticipated transportation infrastructure needs in annexed areas.

## Recreation Facilities

Policy 1.2.4.2.B of the Capital Improvements Element establishes minimum level of service standards for Recreation facilities as follows:

- (1) 0.5 acres of improved activity-based recreation sites per 1,000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County; and



- (2) 5.0 acres of improved resource-based recreation sites per 1,000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County.

The level of service standards for recreation facilities are implemented through the County's concurrency management system in accordance with Policy 1.3.2 of the Capital Improvements Element.

The Alachua County Recreation System currently consists of 109.78 acres of improved activity-based recreation and 670.54 acres of improved resource-based recreation. The actual level of service achieved for activity-based recreation, as of April 2009, is 1.65 acres of improved acreage per 1,000 persons in the unincorporated area. For resource based recreation, the actual level of service achieved is 7.76 acres of improved sites per 1,000 persons in the unincorporated area. Alachua County currently meets the adopted level of service standards for activity-based and resource-based recreation.

The Table entitled Recreation Facilities Level of Service Projections 2009 – 2014, April 1, 2009 in Appendix C provides a tabular inventory of the acreage of existing and planned improved recreation sites and the actual level of service achieved relative to unincorporated population projections, for the 5-year time frame of 2009 through 2014. The table includes the acreage of existing improved recreation sites and planned recreation improvements that are included in the proposed 5-Year CIP Schedule. The data indicates that the actual level of service achieved for recreation facilities will be 1.64 improved acres per 1,000 population for activity-based recreation, and 14.91 improved acres per 1,000 population for resource-based recreation in the Year 2014.

During the 5-year period from 2009 to 2014, several capital improvement projects will be added to maintain or improve the level of service provided for activity-based and resource-based recreation in Alachua County. These recreation projects will be added as part of an overall update of the five Year Schedule of Capital Improvements during the first large scale amendment cycle of 2009.

Based on population projections for the unincorporated area, and with the addition of the proposed recreation capital improvement projects identified in the proposed 5-Year Schedule of Improvements, Alachua County will continue to meet the adopted level of service standards for recreation in the 5-year time frame.

## **Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer**

Policy 1.2.4.2.E of the Capital Improvements Element establishes the level of service standard for potable water and sanitary sewer. Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), which is owned and operated by the City of Gainesville, provides centralized potable water and sanitary sewer services within the unincorporated Urban Cluster (as identified on the Future Land Use Map). Development within the unincorporated Urban Cluster is required to connect to centralized potable water and sanitary sewer per Policy 2.1 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element. Unincorporated areas of Alachua County that are outside of the Urban Cluster are generally served by private well and septic tank systems.

The potable water and sanitary sewer levels of service identified in the Comprehensive Plan are tied to the operating capacities and treatment volumes of GRU's potable water and sanitary sewer facilities. Because the potable water and sanitary sewer facilities for are provided by a public utility which is not owned or operated by Alachua County, there are no Capital Improvement projects identified in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan for potable water and sanitary sewer. It is important to note that the City of Gainesville Comprehensive Plan includes capital projects to maintain the level of service standards for potable water and sanitary sewer for the GRU Service Area, which includes the unincorporated Urban Cluster.

GRU operates one potable water treatment plant, the Murphree Water Treatment Facility, which provides service to areas within the City of Gainesville and the portions of the unincorporated area within the Urban Cluster. The Murphree Water Treatment Facility has a design capacity of 54 million gallons per day (mgd), for the peak day. The facility currently treats an average of about 25mgd (Nov. 2008 data from Florida Department of Environmental Protection, [Flow Data for Drinking Water Plants](#)).

GRU also operates two sewage treatment plants, Kanapaha and Main Street, which provide service to areas within the City of Gainesville and portions of the unincorporated area within the Urban Cluster. The Kanapaha Water Reclamation Facility has a design capacity to treat 14.9 mgd, average annual daily flow (AADF) and the Main Street Wastewater Treatment Plant has a design capacity to treat 7.5 mgd, AADF for a combined total of 22.4 mgd, AADF. The Kanapaha Facility currently treats about 10mgd, while the Main Street Facility treats about 5 mgd, for a combined total of 15mgd (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, [Reuse Inventory Report 2007](#), March 2009).

GRU indicates that, based on their most recent forecasts, there is adequate water and wastewater plant capacity to accommodate population growth within the GRU service area through 2029.

## Public School Facilities

The Public Schools Facilities Element (PSFE) was adopted as a new Comprehensive Plan element on June 24, 2008, and a Notice of Intent to find the adopted element in compliance was published by the Department of Community Affairs on September 12, 2008. The PSFE became effective on October 3, 2008. Policy 2.2.2 of the Public School Facilities Element provides the adopted level of service standard for public school facilities.

The Alachua County School District has a current enrollment of 25,853 elementary, middle and high school students, based on the most recent semi-annual School Capacity and Enrollment census taken in March 2009 and included in Appendix C. Existing core facilities have the Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) capacity to serve 32,461 students, and planned improvements are programmed to address the interim Level of Service to achieve the district-wide LOS standard of 100% of Permanent Program Capacity by the 2010-2011 school year. Alachua County currently meets the adopted level of service standards for public school facilities.

The Capital Improvements Element includes a list of capacity-related projects for school concurrency for the five year planning period, which is based on the descriptions, costs, and funding sources provided in the School Board of Alachua County's [5-Year District Facilities Work Program, 2007-2008](#). Based on population projections for District-wide public school enrollment, and with the addition of the planned school construction projects identified in the Capital Improvements Element, Alachua County will continue to meet the adopted level of service standards for public school facilities for the 5-year planning period.

## Solid Waste

Policy 1.2.4.2.C of the Capital Improvements Element establishes the level of service standard for solid waste as 0.73 tons per person per year. Alachua County has an interlocal agreement with the New River Solid Waste Association for solid waste disposal at the New River Solid Waste Facility in Union County. The current agreement for solid waste disposal between Alachua County and the New River Solid Waste Association is in effect until December 31, 2018.

Alachua County operates a solid waste transfer station to manage the local solid waste stream. The transfer station processes solid waste from Alachua and Gilchrist Counties. The permitted capacity of the County's

transfer station is 1,200 tons per day. Table 5.1 shows the annualized tons of solid waste per day processed at the Alachua County transfer station over the past 5 years. In 2008, the transfer station processed 627 tons of solid waste per day. The highest tonnage of solid waste processed over the past five years was 643 tons per day in 2007. Recent trends indicate that the actual tonnage of solid waste processed at the transfer station is well below the permitted capacity of the facility.

**Table 5.1. Waste Received at Alachua County Solid Waste Transfer Station FY 2003-2008**

	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
<b>Tons</b>	180,048	135,223	167,050	194,729	199,207	194,454
<b>Annualized Tons Per Day*</b>	581	436	539	628	643	627

Source: Alachua County Public Works Department

\* Based on 310 Days Per Year – Transfer Station Permitted Capacity is 1,200 tons per day.

Historically, annual growth in waste generation has been approximately 3%. Using this historical trend as an indicator, Table 5.2 provides the projected annualized tons of solid waste per day for FY 2009 to 2013 at the transfer station. Based on an estimated 3% growth in waste generation per year for the next five years, the amount of waste received at the Alachua County transfer station will remain below its permitted capacity of 1,200 tons per day.

**Table 5.2. Projected Waste Received at Alachua County Solid Waste Transfer Station FY 2009-2013**

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
<b>Annualized Tons Per Day</b>	646	665	685	706	727

Source: Alachua County Public Works Department and Growth Management Department

\* Based on 310 Days Per Year – Transfer Station Permitted Capacity is 1,200 tons per day.

## Stormwater Management

Policy 1.2.4.2.D of the Capital Improvements Element establishes the adopted level of service standards for stormwater management. Stormwater management is provided on a site-by-site basis for new development. The level of service standards are required to be achieved by individual stormwater management facilities within new development at the time it receives development approval. There are no County-funded stormwater management projects included as part of the 5 Year Schedule of Capital Improvements at this time.

## CHAPTER 6 | MAJOR ISSUE ANALYSIS

In January of 2008 staff began holding community workshops and gathering public input through various alternatives including meetings with community groups, County advisory boards, and an online survey on the County website to help identify the Major Community Issues to address in the County's EAR. This input was synthesized to form the list of 12 Major Community Issues presented to the Local Planning Agency (LPA) and Board of County Commissioners at a special meeting on May 6. Following joint approval by the two bodies, staff distributed the proposed list to various agencies including the County's nine municipalities, adjacent Counties, the Water Management Districts and Regional Planning Council, and various state agencies for review and comment at the County's EAR Scoping Meeting held on June 2, 2008. At the meeting the agencies provided comments including ideas for improved intergovernmental coordination on transportation planning (both within the County and across County boundaries) and springshed and wellhead protections, emphasis on long-term concurrency management and multi-modal transportation options, awareness of changing state standards/planning for threatened and endangered species, and emphasis on low impact development strategies, water reuse and alternative water supply planning. Staff subsequently revised the list of Major Community Issues based on this input and the Board of County Commissioners approved a list of the following eleven issues and related sub issues for submission to DCA as the basis for the Letter of Understanding on the scope of the EAR:

1. **How to strengthen the land use/transportation connection to enhance quality of life, make efficient use of land, promote energy efficiency and reduce the County's carbon footprint, including:**
  - Identification of ways to promote compact, higher density, mixed use development while assessing the capacity of the Urban Cluster relative to updated population projections;
  - Assessment of Activity Center/Commercial policies in meeting goals indicated above;
  - Development of alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion (e.g. Transit Oriented Development, Transportation System Management, alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips);
  - Extending effective multi-modal transportation to outlying areas of the county to enable access to major destinations in the urban area;
  - Review of road function and design standards in an urban context;
  - Prioritize capital projects, especially for transportation and recreation facilities, to serve existing populations;
  - Determination of best ways to integrate policies relating to these issues and promote energy conservation and green building and design, including consideration of an Energy Element.
  
2. **How to enhance the economic strength of the community in a sustainable manner that protects natural resources, including:**
  - Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for industrial and office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies;
  - Promotion of job diversification/creation/retention;
  - Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture;
  - How can economic development in East Gainesville area be promoted in a manner consistent with environmental stewardship?
  - Review of policies promoting eco-tourism and linkage between tourism and arts development;
  - Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives.

**3. How to ensure sufficient protection of greenspace:**

- Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County;
- Consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program.

**4. Water Resources:**

- Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques, and potable water and sanitary sewer connection policies and implementation;
- Assess water conservation and reuse strategies.

**5. Affordable and Special Needs Housing:**

- Evaluate effectiveness of Plan in promoting affordable housing, including a range of housing types and lot sizes and policies promoting live/work units;
- Assess how Plan policies and implementation impact the cost of housing;
- Assess need to require affordable housing in all developments and consider funding sources to provide affordable housing retroactively in existing development;
- Address recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (due by Dec. 08);
- Assess special needs housing and how to best coordinate to meet needs.

**6. Recreation:**

- Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e. Countywide unincorporated vs. community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County role relative to recreation facilities;
- Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community;
- Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks.

**7. Intergovernmental Coordination and Planning:**

- Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process;
- Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities and adjacent counties relative to service provision and facility service levels;
- Develop effective approaches to interjurisdictional and interagency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.);
- Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans;
- Determine key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy needing incorporation into Plan.

**8. Review and update Long Range Transportation Map Series:**

- Update maps based on population projections and planning horizon (currently 2020);

- Assess maps and related policies in context of land use, natural resource and economic development goals;
- Clarify corridor preservation policies and use of the Future Traffic Circulation Corridors Map.

**9. Public Health and Safety:**

- Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including need for a Public Safety Element;
- Consider ways to promote public health, including possible Public Health Element.

**10. Fiscal Constraints:**

- Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems, Activity Center Master Plans) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints;
- Evaluate need for Air Quality Program;
- Evaluate capital project capacity in light of current fiscal constraints.

**11. Historic Preservation:**

- Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)

As part of Phase II of the EAR process, staff reorganized the Major Community Issues and sub issues into seven issue areas for purposes of discussion with the public, BOCC and LPA. These seven issue areas are the frame of reference used for the remainder of this document (see Appendix for full list of issues by issue area).

<b>URBAN AREA</b>	<b>AGRICULTURE/GREENSPACE</b>
<b>LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>RESOURCE PROTECTION</b>
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	

## AGRICULTURE AND GREENSPACE

The vast majority of the land area in unincorporated Alachua County is classified as rural in nature, consisting primarily of agricultural areas, natural areas, and areas of low density residential development. The County has made a long-standing commitment to protect and retain these areas both for their benefit to the County and the larger region, and there are many policies in place to help ensure their protection, such as the County's Alachua County Forever land conservation program and the Transfer of Development Rights program adopted in 2008. Yet, there are still factors that threaten the conversion of these lands to other uses, including development pressures in the rural area, increased costs associated with agricultural production, and annexation of rural areas into municipalities. The EAR addresses these potential concerns by addressing the following issues related to agriculture and greenspace:

- Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture.
- Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County
- Consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program.
- Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process.

### Agriculture Retention and Sustainability

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture.

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Food is one of society's most basic needs for survival. As agricultural technology advances improving efficiency and productivity, allowing food to be shipped further distances (estimates average 1,400 miles from farm to fork), new opportunities are available regarding the transportation and distribution of food and other agricultural products while the potential risks and costs increase. Energy related costs are particularly notable as fuel prices continue to rise, especially in Florida where the soil typically needs more inputs than in other locations to be productive. There is also a continuing trend where the average age of farm operators is rising<sup>3</sup> as many children of farmers are either not interested in farming or are encouraged by their parents or grandparents to find a more predictable or reliable occupation.

Statewide, there is a continued decline in the amount of available land for agriculture. In 2006, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) provided estimates on the loss of agricultural land to both development and conservation acquisitions, predicting a loss of as much as five million acres by 2020. Forestland, one of the larger agricultural sectors present in Alachua County, is also on the decline. While private forests currently comprise 80% of land in the state, FDACS reports a loss of 80,000 acres annually statewide.

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<sup>3</sup> The 2007 Census of Agriculture reports an average age of 59.4 for farm operators in Alachua County, up from an average age of 57 in 2002 and 55.8 in 1997, consistent with statewide averages.



In Alachua County, the available data is somewhat mixed, but suggests the potential for a declining trend in lands used for agricultural production<sup>4</sup>. Municipalities have annexed over 16,500 acres since 2002, while development continues to occur throughout the Rural/Ag area. The data from the USDA Census of Agriculture, released every five years, shows an increase of land in farms of approximately 18,000 acres from 1997 to 2002, but that increase is followed by a decrease of almost 50,000 acres from 2002 to 2007. The Alachua County Property Appraiser's office shows a decline from 2003-2008 of approximately 20,000 acres receiving the agricultural classification.

The 2007 Census of Agriculture reports over 30% of the County's land area in farms<sup>5</sup>. In 2005 the University of Florida Department of Food and Resource Economics prepared a report for the County using the 2002 Census data that cited a total direct output for agriculture of \$117.29 million and 1,554 jobs, and an estimated total output impact<sup>6</sup> of over \$185 million to the County's economic activity and 2,500 jobs. This accounted for a total of 1.85% of the County's economic activity attributable to agricultural productivity and sales, noting that for every dollar of direct sales in agriculture, \$1.58 of economic activity results in the County.

Sustainable agriculture as a concept is relatively new, only emerging in the last several decades. While a definition has yet to be agreed upon, the general notion is that "sustainable agriculture must be an economically, environmentally, and socially balanced farming system that preserves the viability of resources for future generations." This is the description cited in a 2006 report, *Barriers to the Adoption of Sustainable Agriculture Practices*, released by Auburn University's Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, sponsored by the USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. According to the report, there are several barriers to the implementation of sustainable practices, including economic factors, social perceptions, and regulatory barriers. However, implementation of sustainable agricultural practices in the County has the potential to allow for increased productivity, maximized profits, and protection of the County's valuable natural resources.

Retention of local agricultural operations and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices can also contribute to energy conservation. Sustaining a local food supply helps to reduce the energy costs needed to ship and store foods, providing a more secure source of food for the community. Also, certain agricultural lands could be used for farming of biofuels or for carbon sequestration to help reduce the County's carbon footprint. Carbon sequestration has recently emerged as an opportunity for potential income for agricultural operations that can sell carbon credits, also called offsets, to utilities, manufacturing companies and others (such as the University of Florida) who want to offset their carbon emissions. Earlier this year the Florida Farm Bureau established their Carbon Trading Program to provide assistance to eligible operations. Thus, it is important when evaluating the support and promotion of agricultural operations to consider not only those agricultural operations that exist currently, but also consider the larger context and future opportunities for agricultural production. For these reasons, there are multiple benefits in helping to retain existing local agricultural operations while finding ways to promote more sustainable agricultural practices.

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<sup>4</sup> More detailed data is found in the Information & Analysis section of the report beginning on page 9.

<sup>5</sup> The Census definition of a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

<sup>6</sup> Total outputs include a summary of direct impacts as well as the indirect impacts (as agricultural operations purchase inputs from other businesses) and induced impacts (as farm owners and employees spend their earnings) resulting from the direct agricultural outputs.



## RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

### The 2008 Farm Bill

The Federal Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, also known as the Farm Bill, was enacted on June 18, 2008. The new Bill reinforced and expanded upon a number of conservation programs geared toward education, technical support, incentives, and in some cases payment for farm practices that promote environmental stewardship, as well as various programs and practices providing greater energy efficiency for farms and rural small businesses. The new bill also includes language that strengthens support for the compatibility of grazing on conservation lands as a tool to control the spread of invasive plant species.

### Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

In December of 2007, President Bush signed into law legislation that increases the amount of biofuels required to be added to gasoline to 36 billion gallons by the year 2022, up from 4.7 billion gallons in 2007. The Act also specifies that 21 billion gallons of these biofuels must come from non-cornstarch products, such as sugar or cellulose. This legislation furthers the potential for agricultural operations to gain additional income through production and distribution of renewable energy from various crops, agricultural wastes and residues, and other biomass.

### CS/HB 7135 – Florida Energy Bill (§526.06, F.S.)

Earlier this year the state legislature passed a comprehensive Energy Bill that also provides further potential for additional income to agricultural producers and landowners in two ways. The bill requires all gasoline in Florida to contain 10% ethanol by 2010, which could provide income to some agricultural landowners relating to production of alternative energy sources. The bill also sets pollution limits for utilities, requiring them to purchase carbon credits when exceeding the limits, which could be purchased from agricultural properties.

### CS/HB 1427 – Agritourism (§570.96, §570.961, §570.962, F.S.)

On June 27, 2007, the Governor approved a law that authorizes FDACS to provide marketing advice, technical expertise, promotional support, and product development related to agritourism to assist local governments and other entities. This legislation was enacted as Sections 570.96, 570.961, and 570.962, F.S. The law defines agritourism activity as, “any activity carried out on a farm or ranch or in a forest that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own, or nature-based activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity.”

### Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (§570.71, §259.105, F.S.)

Following the passage of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act in 2001, FDACS prepared an Agriculture and Resource Conservation Assessment that highlighted the continued loss of agricultural land to development throughout the State. As data continues to predict further loss of agricultural land to urban conversion, the legislature approved funding this year for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP) as part of the re-authorization of the Florida Forever Program. The legislature appointed approximately \$10.5 million for permanent easement acquisitions to maintain the integrity and function of working agricultural landscapes and ensure opportunities for viable agricultural activities on working agricultural lands. The Division of Forestry developed a rule to implement the program that was reviewed and approved by the Governor and Cabinet on September 16 and became effective in November 2008. The application cycle also began in November.

In order to qualify for the program a property must protect the integrity and function of working landscapes, ensure opportunities for viable agricultural activities on working lands threatened by conversion to other uses, and meet at least one of the following public purposes:

- Perpetuate open space on working lands that contain significant natural areas;
- Protect, restore or enhance water bodies, aquifer recharge areas including uplands and springsheds, wetlands or watersheds;
- Promote a more complete pattern of protection, including buffers to natural areas, ecological greenways, functioning ecosystems; and military installations; or
- Promote the restoration, enhancement or management of species habitat, consistent with the purposes for which the easement is acquired.

While the County could assist in providing information to local landowners relating to this program, another opportunity exists in partnership with the Transfer of Development Rights Program further described in this report. If a property owner was willing to sell their development rights, but could only find a buyer for a portion of the rights, this program would offer an opportunity to sell all the rights on the property and provide additional income to the farmer while allowing them to continue to farm their land.

#### **Rural Lands Stewardship Area (RLSA) Program (s.163.3177(11)(d), F.S.)**

The RLSA program was established by the Florida Legislature in 2001 as part of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act to provide an alternative, incentive-based planning process for conserving agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands. The program was initially established as a pilot program for five communities and was opened up to the entire state in 2004. As the name of the RLSA statute indicates, the emphasis is on stewardship. The goal of the program is to further each of the following principles of rural sustainability:

1. Restoration and maintenance of the economic value of rural land;
2. Control of urban sprawl;
3. Identification and protection of ecosystems, habitats, and natural resources;
4. Promotion of rural economic activity;
5. Maintenance of the viability of Florida's agriculture; and
6. Protection of the character of rural areas of Florida.

The current version of the legislation establishes a minimum acreage for RLSAs of 10,000 acres. Only one RLSA has been approved under the statute in St. Lucie County, but others have submitted or expressed interest in the program. Collier County created a rural lands area prior to the adoption of the statute and is not subject to the requirements of the statute.

The Department of Community Affairs is in the process of drafting a new rule for RLSAs to ensure the legislative intent to 'further the broad principles of rural sustainability'. The following purpose statements from the legislation are those the new rule is intended to reinforce:

- Restoration and maintenance of the economic value of rural land
- Maintenance of the viability of Florida's agricultural economy
- Promotion of rural economic activity
- Protection of the character of rural areas of Florida
- Control of urban sprawl
- Identification and protection of ecosystems, habitats, and natural resources

There may be few areas large enough in Alachua County to qualify. Also, in an RLSA the development potential is moved from one part of the unincorporated rural area into another. This is in contrast with the

County's TDR program which allows density to be transferred into more appropriate areas such as the Urban Cluster or municipalities. This approach is more consistent with the Countywide Vision to direct growth toward existing centers and protect rural and agricultural areas. While the RLSA approach may be well suited for large landowners in the County such as Plum Creek, the TDR approach or in some cases the Planned Development with Transfer of Development Rights (PD-TDR) approach (allowing density transfers in the Rural/Ag area for properties in Strategic Ecosystems) is most likely a better fit for the majority of landowners in the County.

The current Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) includes mention of RLSAs as a permissible option for allowing single family residential units within conservation management areas in §406.99(g), but the RLSA program itself was not available to the County prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **DATA AND ANALYSIS**

### **Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

The ULDC implements the Rural/Agriculture future land use designation through establishment of the Agriculture (A) and Agriculture-Rural Business (A-RB) Zoning Districts in Chapter 403. The Agriculture (A) District allows three acre minimum lot sizes provided the density of one unit per five acres is met, and the A-RB District allows for nonresidential lots ranging from one to three acres in size. Chapter 407 (§407.77-78) also includes a set of standards for Rural/Agriculture Clustered Subdivisions as established in the Comprehensive Plan, allowing the 50% open space set-aside to include agricultural uses. This allows a farmer to develop a portion of their property utilizing the permitted density for the entire site by clustering the units onto smaller lots while retaining a portion of the property in active agricultural use, excluding only more intensive agricultural uses such as feedlots or milking barns.

**Table 6.1. Agricultural Uses Permitted in the Unincorporated Area**

USE	WHERE PERMITTED	ADDITIONAL STANDARDS
Ag Uses, except as listed below	All districts	Must have 5 acres or more in districts other than A or A-RB
Ag products, processing, packaging and sale (grown offsite)	Special Exception in A, Limited use in A-RB	Processing activities must be in enclosed buildings, setbacks required
Roadside Produce Stand	Limited use in A, A-RB, Special Exception in commercial districts	In A products must be grown onsite, standards for structure, vehicle circulation
Ag Services	Special Exception in A, Permitted use in A-RB	None
Ag Warehousing/Distribution	Special Exception in A-RB	Limited to agricultural items, outdoor storage limitations
Poultry/Livestock raising on less than 5 acres	Limited use in A, A-RB, RE & RE-1	Maximum # of animals by type
Dairy, commercial	Special Exception in A	Standards to minimize environmental impacts and impacts to adjacent properties
Commercial Livestock Market	Special Exception in A, Permitted use in A-RB	None
Private Agricultural Event Center or Arena	Special Exception in A	Minimum 5 acres, served by public paved road, buffering requirement, limited to uses consistent with Rural/Ag FLU
Slaughter Plant	Special Exception in A	None
Farm Machinery & Lawn and Garden Equipment Repair	Limited use in A, Permitted use in A-RB, BA, BA-1, MS & MP	Allowed only as home-based business in A
Feed & Ag Supply Sales	Permitted use in A-RB and commercial districts	None

SOURCE: CHAPTER 404, USE REGULATIONS, ALACHUA COUNTY ULDC

Chapter 406 of the ULDC includes the standards for protection of natural resources in the unincorporated area. In some cases, separate approaches apply to agricultural uses:

- **Section 406.05(a)** exempts agricultural properties that are not part of a development application and meet the provisions and criteria under the Agricultural Lands and Practices Act (§163.3162 F.S.) or the Right to Farm Act (§823.14(6) F.S.) from any provisions of Chapter 406 not in existence prior to July 1, 2003.
- In keeping with the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter **§406.05(c)** requires adherence to the most recent federal, state and water management district Best Management Practices (BMPs), as applicable for all agricultural and silvicultural activities.
- For those properties that verify adherence to applicable BMPs, **§406.11(b)** exempts the clearing and replanting of vegetation for agricultural activities from the tree protection standards of the ULDC, with

the exception of removal of champion trees or heritage trees within a given proximity to the property boundaries.

- Regarding the protection of Strategic Ecosystems, §406.34 states “the County shall work with owners of agricultural and silvicultural lands to retain the ecological integrity and ecological value of strategic ecosystems through management plans and incentives,” and further requires completion of a management plan before any agricultural activity occurs in a strategic ecosystem that has not been used for bona fide agriculture or silviculture in the last 20 years.
- Under §406.50(a), silvicultural activities meeting BMPs are exempt from wetlands regulations as are agricultural activities meeting BMPs under certain circumstances, and in other cases non-silvicultural operations may request an administrative determination for activities impacting wetland areas.

In September of 2008 Alachua County also adopted an expanded set of policies in the Comprehensive Plan to establish a Transfer of Development Rights Program in an effort to provide market based incentives to maintain agricultural uses as well as to protect Strategic Ecosystems and properties on the Alachua County Forever acquisition list. The next step will be to develop and adopt implementation language for the program in the ULDC.

**Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables**

Alachua County has experienced a steady rate of growth (approximately 2-3% annual increase in population) over the last several years, and development trends have pushed development further into the western portion of the Urban Cluster designated on the Future Land Use Map. Overall, since adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan in 2002, municipalities have annexed approximately 16,500 acres of the unincorporated area. The cities of Alachua, Archer and High Springs have all expanded their boundaries by over 1,000 acres while the City of Newberry has grown by over 3,500 acres. Because of soil conditions and the resulting amount of wetlands in the eastern half of the County, much of the County’s agricultural activity occurs in the west although there are a great deal of timber holdings in the east. As the populations grows, and development spreads into rural areas, less land is available for agricultural production.

**Table 6.2. Land Area in Farms in Alachua County, 1997 & 2002**

	1997	2002	2007
<b>Number of Farms</b>	1,437	1,493	1,532
<b>Land Area in Farms (acres)</b>	204,420	222,728	172,843
<b>Proportion of Total Land Area in Farms</b>	36.5%	39.8%	30.9%

SOURCE: USDA CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, 2002 & 2007

Table 2 shows roughly a 3% increase in the amount of land area in farms from 1997 to 2002, with an increase of approximately 18,000 acres. This is followed by a drop of about 50,000 total acres from 2002 to 2007, which translates to a 22% decrease. So in the last 10 years, the overall proportion of land in farms in the County dropped roughly 5%, decreasing by a total of 31,577 acres. The following table shows the number of parcels and total acreage for properties receiving an agricultural classification (not all of which are commercial farms) from the Alachua County Property Appraiser’s Office, as provided in their Annual Reports from 2003-2008:

**Table 6.3. Parcels with Ag Classification in Alachua County, 2003-2008**

Year	# Parcels	# Acres	% of Total Acreage
2003	7,533	366,230	58.5%
2004	7,459	360,864	57.7%
2005	7,512	360,075	57.5%
2006	7,429	353,147	56.4%
2007	7,404	341,536	54.6%
2008	7,558	346,510	55.4%

SOURCE: ALACHUA COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER'S OFFICE

The data from the Property Appraiser's office indicates roughly a four percent decrease totaling over 24,000 acres from 2003 to 2007 in the amount of land in the County with the agricultural classification, but shows an increase of approximately 150 parcels on 5,000 acres in the rolls for 2008, leaving an overall reduction of approximately 20,000 acres.

There have also been several developments approved in the Rural/Agriculture land use category. Table 4 shows the number of units and acres receiving final approval by the DRC from 2000-2008 (to date).

**Table 6.4. New Lots in Rural/Ag Approved Annually by DRC, 2000-2008**

Year	All New Lots	Clustered Lots	# Acres
2000	14	None	111
2001	6	None	82
2002	100	None	1062
2003	29	None	311
2004	72	None	433
2005*	27	None	168
2006	24	None	183
2007	197	158	846
2008 (to date)	105	80	467
<b>Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>3663</b>

\*The highlighted boxes show those years in the period since the Plan became effective in 2005. In this time frame, 238 of the 353 new lots were clustered lots (67%).

To summarize this table, here are some of the resulting statistics for the Rural/Ag area since the year 2000:

- Nearly 600 new residential units
- Approximately 3,600 acres of residential development
- Approximately 20% of new units clustered
- Nearly 80% of new units clustered from 2007-2008

It is important to note that these new lots are only a portion of the over 4,300 existing vacant lots under 10 acres currently in the Rural/Ag land use category, which altogether total more than 19,000 acres.

**TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM**

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan update adopted in 2002 identified development of a voluntary Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as one of the strategies to encourage continuation of productive agricultural uses and identified a preliminary policy framework for development of such a program. In 2007 and 2008 the County conducted a series of stakeholder meetings to develop a TDR program that would be suited to the circumstances in Alachua County<sup>7</sup>. The County revised the preliminary policies relating to TDR that were in the 2002 Plan and in September 2008 adopted Comprehensive Plan amendments incorporating the full policy framework for implementation of a voluntary TDR program. Staff is now preparing the needed revisions to the Unified Land Development Code to submit to the Board in the Spring.

The County's newly adopted program provides a mechanism to protect areas deemed valuable either for their potential for agricultural production or their conservation resources by allowing a property owner to sell the development rights on their land to another property owner or developer. The rights can then be used on a different piece of property in a more suitable (or less sensitive) location.

The program includes designated *sending areas* from which the development rights in the form of density or intensity may be transferred as well as *receiving areas* to which the density or intensity may be transferred. Agricultural sending areas are identified as any properties receiving an agricultural classification from the Property Appraiser that are at least 160 acres in size. There are no designated receiving areas currently identified, but development rights must be purchased with any request to expand the County's Urban Cluster, or they may be purchased to reduce the amount of open space required on a non-residential development site. The County also hopes to partner with municipalities to identify receiving areas within their boundaries.

Once the development rights are transferred off of a property, a mechanism (such as a conservation easement) is put in place to permanently protect the land from development. The TDR program provides a viable option for struggling farmers who wish to continue to farm their land, but could use the additional profit gained from selling that land for development. The program would allow the landowner to sell their development rights at a price negotiated with the buyer while continuing to farm their land as well.

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

There are also other strategies to retain agriculture used throughout the state. One of the most notable efforts is in Hillsborough County with their Agriculture Industry Development Program administered through the Economic Development Department. The program's manager works under the guidance of the Agriculture Economic Development Council appointed by the Hillsborough County Commission. According to their website, "The purpose of the Agriculture Industry Development Program is to initiate and assist with efforts to create a business atmosphere that is conducive to the continuation and expansion of agricultural businesses within Hillsborough County for the benefit of all its residents." The programs stated goals are as follows:

- To discourage the premature conversion of productive farmland to non-agricultural use.
- Minimize the impact of the regulatory process on agriculture's ability to conduct business, while still achieving the goals of those regulations.
- Improve the economic sustainability of agriculture in Hillsborough County through increased marketing options, alternative crops, value-added processing, capital financing opportunities, and identification of other barriers to the expansion or sustainability of agriculture.
- Promote the expansion and relocation of agribusiness firms in Hillsborough County.

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<sup>7</sup> A reference to the Final TDR Report resulting from this process is included at the back of this paper.



One facet of the program is the Agriculture Stewardship Program. The program establishes a 10 year easement on an agricultural property to prohibit conversion of the land to a non-agricultural use. In turn, the property owner is paid a grant for the term of the contract based on a percentage of the ad valorem taxes paid on the taxable value of land with an agricultural classification from the Property Appraiser. The program was funded in November 2006 by the Hillsborough County Commission with \$1,000,000 from general ad-valorem revenues, which would allow for roughly 40,000 acres in the program. The first year of enrollment resulted in 8,700 acres preserved on 218 parcels. Staff expected the program to expand in the years following, but because of budget shortages the program was capped at current enrollees with a current budget of \$205,000.

### **BIOFUELS**

The nationwide focus on alternative fuels and renewable energy continues to increase as the Country works to reduce dependence on foreign oil. Both federal and state legislation adopted in recent years further support and promote this focus, increasing the potential for economic benefits to the agriculture industry. Charles Bronson, the Commissioner of Agriculture and head of FDACS, contends that the State of Florida is in a prime position to become the leader in biofuel production, and he is not alone in his prediction. Many in the agricultural industry argue that Florida can be a leader in the production of renewable energy due to a unique climate that allows for a long growing season.

FDACS and IFAS are working and partnering with producers throughout the State to identify the most efficient crops for use in producing alternative fuels, either from the crops themselves or from post-harvest residues. While corn is most widely recognized for the production of ethanol, it is not necessarily the most efficient crop for ethanol production, requiring 90 gallons of water for every gallon of fuel produced. Corn-based ethanol can also impact the cost of numerous food products as supply is shifted to use for ethanol rather than for food consumption. Other crops and waste byproducts such as sorghum, soybeans, sweet potatoes and even some types of algae can also be used for the production of biofuels, as can cellulose and other wood byproducts, often much more efficiently than corn.

In 2007, the State of Florida enacted legislation dedicating \$20 million for the University of Florida and IFAS to construct a multi-faceted research and demonstration cellulosic ethanol plant with the goal of accelerating the commercial development of the cellulosic ethanol process and providing alternative sources of income for Florida agriculture. The plant is being built in Palm Beach, FL using sugar cane waste from Florida Crystals, Inc. to produce ethanol. A pilot plant on the local Gainesville campus was completed and dedicated in October 2008 that will be used for research and to train graduate students. The research gathered will be used at the larger facility in Palm Beach.

### **CARBON SEQUESTRATION**

An emerging topic of discussion in the agricultural arena is that of carbon sequestration. Many big businesses and public entities such as utilities and universities, either voluntarily or through regulation, are making a commitment to become 'carbon neutral' or reduce their 'carbon footprint,' terms used to describe reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and resulting impacts of such emissions on the environment. The way to achieve such reductions is through the purchase of carbon credits from entities whose activities 'offset' or reduce the effect of GHGs. Many of these activities exist within agricultural operations meeting certain criteria, including grazing lands, forestry practices and waste products, certain types of conservation soil tillage and facilities that participate in the collection and combustion of methane.

Many operations do not generate enough credits to deal directly with purchasers. As a result, there are groups around the Country forming regional 'carbon exchanges', the most notable being the Chicago Climate



Exchange. The exchanges utilize brokers who assist in the negotiation of the transactions between those buying and selling the credits.

There are several projects in development to help assist landowners with this process. The Florida Farm Bureau recently established a Carbon Trading Program to provide assistance to landowners in registering eligible properties and practices. The Florida Forestry Association also established a Carbon Sequestration Pilot Project. The project is working to calculate the estimated carbon sequestration achieved by various management options and is developing 'offer sheets' for landowners to use as a template to offer credits to potential buyers. The University of Florida's School of Forestry is also involved in this project.

Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) is also developing a carbon-neutral, 100 megawatt biomass facility in the City of Gainesville using leftover waste wood from timber harvesting and other indirect sources such as urban vegetation. The plant is set to be online by 2013.

### **CARES PROGRAM**

In addition to the Farm Bureau's carbon trading pilot program, there are other non-regulatory programs that provide assistance and/or incentives to agricultural operations to utilize more sustainable practices. One such example is the CARES program administered through a partnership of the Florida Farm Bureau and the Suwannee River Partnership. The Suwannee River Partnership was formed in 1999 as a coalition of state, federal and regional agencies, local governments, and private industry representatives working together to reduce nitrate levels in the surface waters and groundwater within the basins, or watersheds. CARES stands for County Alliance for Responsible Environmental Stewardship. The program's original focus was the Suwannee River Basin, but was expanded in 2003 to include the Santa Fe River Basin. Participating agencies in the program assist landowners with identifying the practices that will address nutrient and irrigation management. Through the adoption of these voluntary best management practices, any farm within the basin can receive an award and positive recognition within the community as a participant in the CARES program. There are also opportunities for cost share programs to implement such practices.

### **AGRITOURISM**

While the City of Gainesville is primarily a college town, Alachua County offers a unique opportunity for an agritourism market. The County has a vast amount of natural and cultural resources and can draw crowds not typical for its size. There is potential for creating a market for agritourism with the people visiting the county for sporting events, cultural events or coming to visit any of our natural resources.

In the past several years, rural landowners have approached the County to inquire about hosting educational tours and classes related to various agricultural operations. To the extent such activities involve new buildings or significant generation of traffic the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC do not provide clear guidance related to such activities. The Alachua County Visitors and Convention Bureau also receives requests at times for agritourism locations, and there are already several locations in the County. There are historic farm sites such as Dudley Farms State Park and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings State Park, as well as private farms that are open to the public including Mill Creek Retired Horse Farm and the Greathouse Butterfly Farm. There are also several other seasonal activities such as farmers markets, 'U-Pick' produce operations and farms that host seasonal events such as corn mazes or Christmas tree sales.

Portions of US 441 are now recognized as a Florida Scenic Byway (with possible national designation in the future), much of which is lined with agricultural operations that could market themselves as being associated with the Byway. The County's Rural Concerns Advisory Committee also hosts an annual tour of agricultural operations in the County and larger region that are open to the public. An opportunity exists, especially with the new potential for support from FDACS, to improve the linkages between these various operations and

events to further promote agritourism in Alachua County and provide a potential alternative source of income for agricultural operations.

### **LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM/FOOD SECURITY**

With the recent rise in fuel prices and concerns with food safety, there are multiple benefits in promoting a local or regional food supply. The recommendations of the Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee of the County's Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) include several recommendations relating to maximizing local food production and processing<sup>8</sup>. Local agricultural operations could greatly benefit from increased support and use of local agricultural products through decreased costs and increased recognition and awareness in the local community. While food production and sales are influenced largely by the market in the private sector, there may be opportunities within the Comprehensive Plan to further promote the support of local food systems. This could include support of farmers markets and community gardens, increased attention to food processing and packaging needs, and assistance with access to data useful in promotion of a local food system. Some data needs suggested by the ECSC include assessing the amount of land needed to produce enough food to meet the daily caloric needs of the County's population and preparing an inventory of public lands and rights-of-way within the County that might be suitable for cultivation (community gardens, edible landscapes, etc.).

While the current Plan encourages local farmers' markets, the ULDC does not specifically provide for them and no longer includes the option for a Special Use Permit for any uses not otherwise covered in the code. In the State of Florida, Alachua County is second only to Miami-Dade County in the number of farmers markets. Miami-Dade County has eight, while Alachua, Brevard and Pinellas County each have six. Because this is such a prevalent and beneficial activity in the County, it may be appropriate to further support and provide for farmers' markets in both the Plan and ULDC. This would not only properly authorize those existing farmers' markets in the County, but would also ensure opportunities exist for new markets, both within urban areas that may have few other opportunities for access to fresh locally grown foods and also at the rural/urban fringe serving outlying residential areas. More policies in the Comprehensive Plan expressly providing for farmers markets could address logistical issues such as parking, access, and criteria regarding the types of products that could be sold.

Community gardens are becoming more and more prevalent within urban and suburban neighborhoods, as residents living on smaller lots look for a place to grow their own foods. Some local examples are the Dreamers' Garden in the Grove Street neighborhood in the City of Gainesville and the community gardens located on the University of Florida Campus. Community gardens not only provide the benefit of local food for the individuals that participate, but also can provide additional greenspace within communities. Participants provide the upkeep themselves, so little input is required by the public sector. If community interest exists for such gardens, there are opportunities for local government to become more involved. One possibility to explore is the County leasing surplus lands to local groups for community gardens.

The current Plan and ULDC provide for packaging and processing of agricultural products, both onsite as a permitted agricultural use, and offsite as a special use with conditions in the agricultural area. At some point, however, certain processing activities reach a scale at which access to central utilities and a regional infrastructure network become necessary, making such a use more appropriate as an industrial use located within the Urban Cluster. More local processing and packaging facilities could benefit the County in helping to providing a means for the products to be packaged for sale at local markets, decreasing energy costs for

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<sup>8</sup> A link to the full draft report of the ECSC subcommittee is included at the end of this paper.

producers and consumers, increasing economic development and job opportunities, and helping to keep fresh local food products within the Community for consumption. As part of the EAR process, the County can assess whether the existing framework provides enough flexibility to allow for limited scale packaging facilities within the rural area to help support and promote a local food supply.

Opportunities also exist for using local foods in the public institutions within the County. As part of the 2008 Rural Concerns Committee's Tour of Agriculture, the IFAS facility in Citra highlighted their partnership with the Marion County Jail, who provides inmate labor in exchange for produce from the farm used to feed inmates at the jail. Since the tour, the Alachua County Sheriff's Office has begun to explore the possibility of a similar partnership with IFAS to provide local food for the Alachua County Jail. The Alachua County Extension Office is also working with the University of Florida to explore the possibility of using more locally produced foods on their campus, and works through the public school system to help students establish gardens on many campuses around the County. As part of their 'Farm to School' initiative, FDACS has instituted an online network to connect local farmers with County school personnel to help facilitate the sale of local products to local schools. The County could include policies in the Plan to assist in the facilitation and intergovernmental coordination with such efforts to help retain and promote local agriculture.

### **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE STRATEGIES**

As stated earlier, the current Comprehensive Plan includes very little that specifically addresses sustainable agriculture. However, there are several policies in the Future Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, and Economic Elements that promote sustainable agricultural principles (full text of these policies is at the back of this report). The Future Land Use Element encourages clustered subdivisions in the Rural/Agriculture Future Land Use Category with 50% set asides that can be maintained in productive agriculture. The Future Land Use and Conservation and Open Space Elements require adherence to adopted Best Management Practices (BMPs) and encourage voluntary participation in certification programs that exceed BMPs. The Future Land Use and Economic Elements both include policies to support and promote markets and programs that promote locally produced agricultural goods.

Sustainable agriculture varies largely depending on the type of farm and characteristics of the land on which it is located, making it difficult to define what specific practices define sustainable agriculture. The USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program places emphasis on the primary goals of sustainable agriculture, explaining that each farmer or rancher develops their own strategies to achieve these goals. In the SARE Report *Exploring Sustainability in Agriculture*, the following primary goals are identified:

- Providing a more profitable farm income
- Promoting environmental stewardship, including:
  - Protecting and improving soil quality
  - Reducing dependence on non-renewable resources, such as fuel and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and
  - Minimizing adverse impacts on safety, wildlife, water quality and other environmental resources
- Promoting stable, prosperous farm families and communities

The report goes on to include examples of various practices utilized around the Country to achieve these goals. Some of the practices identified include diversified crop rotations, pasture-based dairy farming, conservation tillage, the use of cover crops and rotational grazing, integrated pest management, direct marketing and community supported agriculture enterprises.

Implementation of such practices is primarily driven by the interest of the farmers themselves and by the costs and benefits associated with achieving these goals. In the State of Florida there are statutory limitations on

the degree to which a local government can regulate the practices of a bona-fide agricultural operation. The Right to Farm Act (823.14 F.S.) and the Agricultural Lands and Practices Act (163.3162 F.S.) both prohibit a local government from adopting policies or ordinances that prohibit, restrict or limit operations of an agricultural entity that is otherwise regulated by the regional water management district, the State, or the Federal Government. The County must evaluate what the role of local government, particularly in the context of the Comprehensive Plan, should be to determine whether any changes need to be made in the Plan itself.

### **COUNTYWIDE VISION**

The need for retention of existing agriculture and promotion of sustainable agriculture go hand in hand with the Countywide Vision adopted by the Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee (CVPC) in 2005 and updated earlier this year. The vision speaks to directing growth toward existing centers and preserving greenbelts around municipalities in the County, including some of the following action strategies:

- Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries.
- Create greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities utilizing public lands, conservation easements, transfer development rights, and other tools.
- Promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns.
- Pursue policies jointly that protect key natural resources
- Promote the creation of local renewable energy and energy efficiency policies and goals, as well as implementation plans to achieve them.
- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.

Any additional emphasis on promoting retention of agriculture in the County's Comprehensive Plan would help to further the goals and strategies identified within the Countywide Vision and could serve as a model for municipalities as they prepare to update their Comprehensive Plans in the coming years.

### **STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING ISSUE**

The following strategies identify the types of direction that can be taken to update the Comprehensive Plan as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report Process:

#### ***Add policies to further support retention/promotion of local agricultural operations***

Examples could include providing further technical support to farmers in obtaining easements or participating in incentive or recognition programs offered at the state level that further promoting environmental stewardship, and ensuring sufficient development standards exists to protect and buffer existing farms from the impacts of adjacent new developments in the Rural/Agricultural area.

#### ***Increase focus on sustainable agriculture through policy incentives***

Examples could include further policies promoting and providing for community gardens (including utilization of publicly owned parks or surplus properties for community gardens), encouraging use of byproducts from the County's waste stream as compost material for farms, providing policy incentives for farms (including timber owners) participating in voluntary certification programs, and working to promote use of locally grown food and fiber by the public sector (jail, schools, UF, etc.)

#### ***Evaluate policy framework for local farmers' markets and revise policies to further support and promote them***

Language could be added to the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC that more directly provides for farmers markets on both public and private lands in the unincorporated area of the County subject to appropriate criteria and review procedures.

***Assess policies for Industrial and Rural/Agriculture land uses related to local ag processing and/or packaging facilities and determine whether changes are needed***

Assess whether adjustments are needed to the current policy framework to provide adequate opportunity and flexibility for local packaging and processing facilities for food and fiber products in an effort to help promote and maintain a local food/fiber supply, taking into account scale and impacts.

***Increase emphasis on agritourism and remove barriers to agritourism-related activities in the unincorporated area.***

As mentioned previously, the County receives inquiries about hosting educational tours and events at farm sites and policy language could be added in the Plan to further support, promote and guide local agritourism activities in the unincorporated area. While the current Plan promotes agritourism activities, the ULDC does not specifically provide for them and no longer includes the option for a Special Use Permit for any uses not covered in the code. Policies could be developed to specifically provide guidance for such activities on agricultural properties in the unincorporated area.

***Expand policy framework to include educational and promotional component***

Policies could be added to the Plan to assist with the facilitation, promotion and coordination of programs relating to carbon trading and methane gas production from on-farm animal waste, coordinating information on these programs with information on the County's TDR program. The County could partner with other entities such as IFAS, the Farm Bureau, and utility companies to identify and promote existing programs and assist in research related to the viability of such programs in Alachua County.

***Assess implementation of the new TDR Program and consider adjustments as needed***

As part of the EAR process, the County can monitor implementation of the new TDR program and consider any policy adjustments that may be necessary. Some examples include identification of the ratio of acres set aside to open space reduced, and language calling for monitoring or re-evaluation of the program within a specified time frame.

## Greenspace Protection/Level of Service for Conservation Land

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE: HOW TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT PROTECTION OF GREENSPACE:

- Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County
- Consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program.

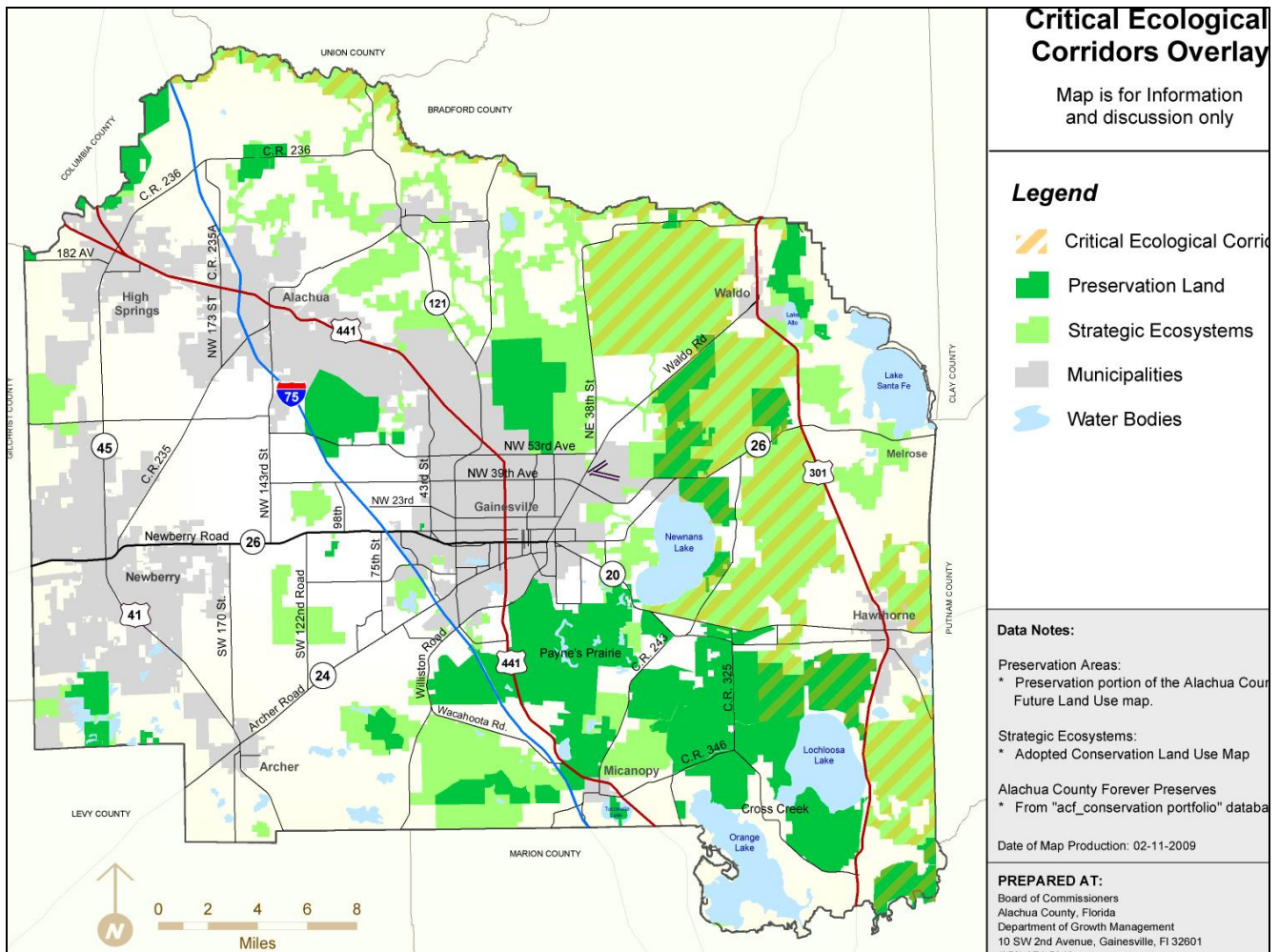
Questions about greenspace/green infrastructure with regard to sustainability and benefits to human and natural infrastructure have surfaced through citizen and stakeholder dialogue during the EAR process. In Phase I of the EAR process, identification of issues such as this was addressed through a series of Land Conservation Board meetings between January and June of 2008, approved by the County Commission on June 24, 2008, and subsequently submitted to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA). DCA issued a Letter of Understanding to Alachua County for the scope of the EAR. Some of the questions are: Current deficit or surplus of greenspace infrastructure, future needs, location in right places relative to needs/"service area", sufficient quantity and quality function relative to service area, role of private landowners and the County, cost of provision/maintenance, and cross-jurisdictional coordination. Four key conservation values were outlined in support of a green infrastructure network; sustains air and water resources, supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, and contributes to the health and quality of life for human and natural communities.

Phase II (current phase) involves developing the analysis and strategies through a draft "issue paper" to frame specific issues, evaluate the current Comprehensive Plan polices relating to those issues, and provide options to address the issues. The initial response to these questions in the Issue Paper has been the development of a map overlay tool to identify a continuous ecological corridor connecting Preservation (dedicated public lands) and Strategic Ecosystems (significant natural resources on private lands) that should be protected (Map 6.1.). State agencies also identified a need to develop a statewide, cooperative "ecological network" (Gordon et al. 2005), referred to here as the "Cooperative Conservation Blueprint", a process which works to harmonize existing efforts into a single agreed upon and unified blueprint. The process would likely begin by integrating, updating, and unifying existing conservation planning efforts, such as the Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (Cox et al. 1994), Alachua County's KBN/Golder report (1996), Florida Conservation Needs Assessment (Knight et al. 2000), and University of Florida's Ecological Network (Hector et al. 2000).

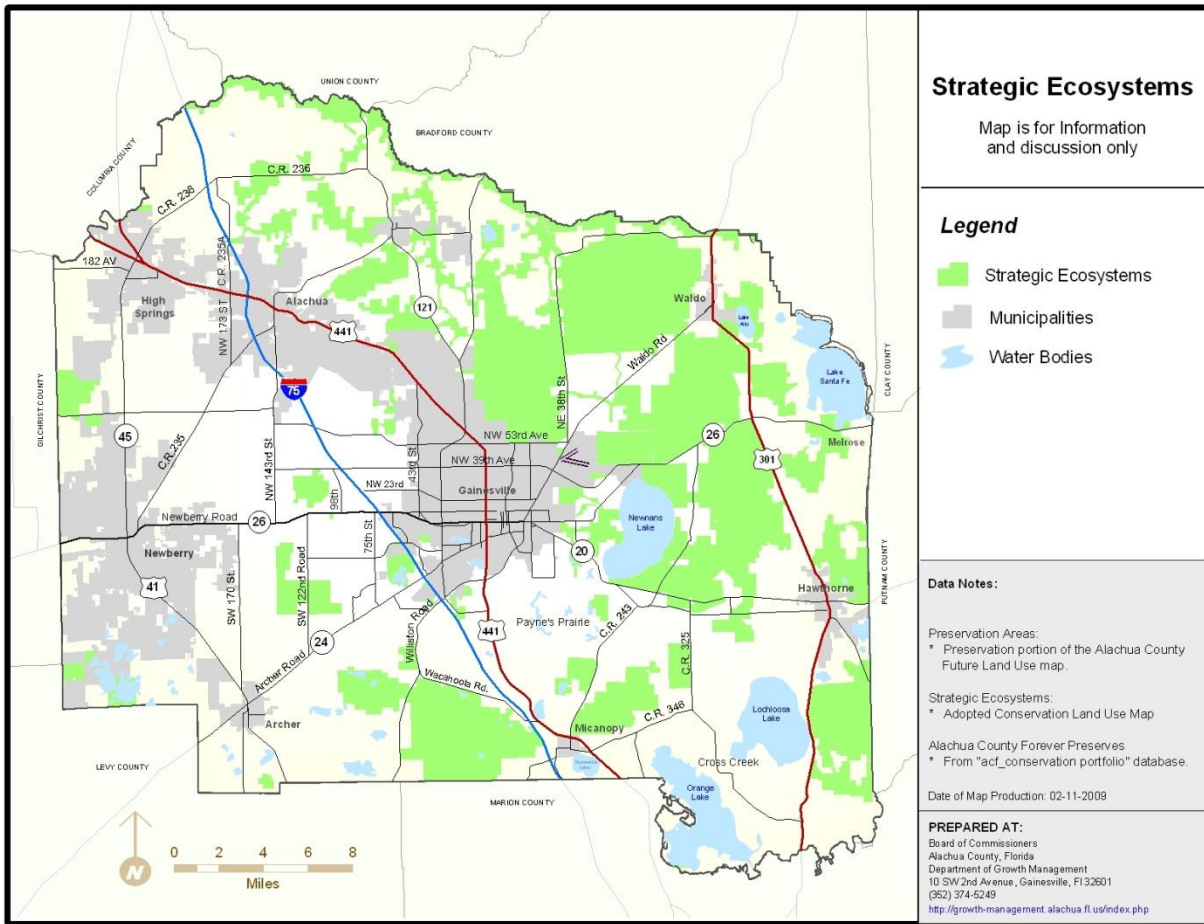
The main strategy to achieve a greenspace/green infrastructure network is to prioritize protection of mapped ecological corridor core areas and preserve open space linkages between these core areas in the implementation of policies in COSE Objective 6.3; i. e. develop a linked open space network or greenways system that can be managed to support the protection, enhancement and restoration of functional and connected natural systems, among other goals. The Strategic Ecosystems identified as the backbone of the corridor exemplify common landscape features that stretch across the county from the southeast to the northwest (Map 6.2). The corridor contributes significantly to the green infrastructure needs of the County by providing accessible recreation opportunities, important stormwater storage and flood mitigation (Map 6.3), natural water and air purification and noise abatement. The nine strategic ecosystems identified as the minimum for protection and management of the corridor link large areas of pine flatwoods, mixed hardwoods, isolated freshwater swamps, lakes, marshlands, and rivers important to the region's wide variety of indigenous plant and wildlife heritage which enhance genetic and biodiversity pathways for Florida Black Bear and potentially Florida Panther both of which require large territories for survival.



Map 6.1. Alachua County Critical Ecological Corridors Overlay.



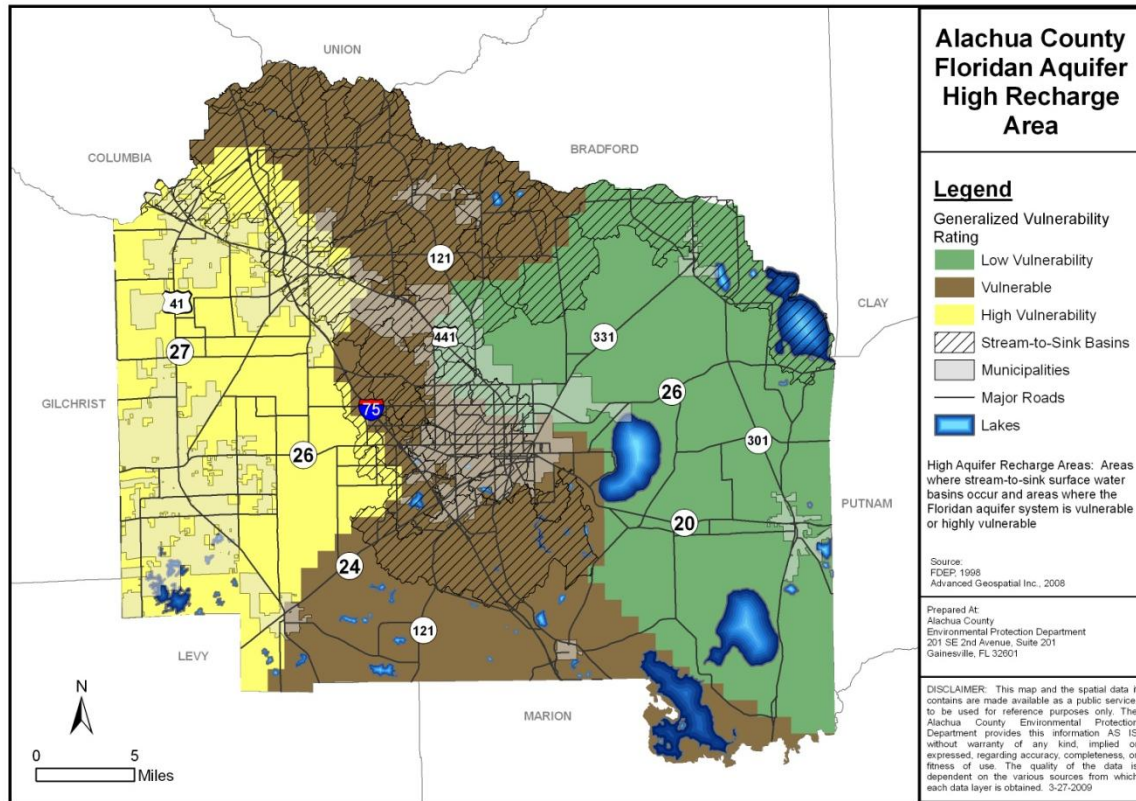
Map 6.2. Alachua County Strategic Ecosystems



The County’s existing regulatory framework and processes such as development review for Strategic Ecosystems, land acquisition programs, and Special Area Management Plan development provide sufficient protection oversight (COSE Policy 6.3.2). The focus of the mapped ecological corridor is on achieving and maintaining linkages among significant public (Map 6.4.) and private ecological landscapes through recognition and maintenance of a linked network priority using the existing regulatory and planning mechanisms such as Strategic Ecosystem protections and clustering under Future Land Use Element (FLUE), Conservation Open Space Element (COSE) and/or Special Area Planning Process policies. No new regulatory initiatives are involved, rather the implementation of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs (under Objective 9.0 in the FLUE) and the Planned Developments (PDR/TDR) program under Policy 6.2.5.1.

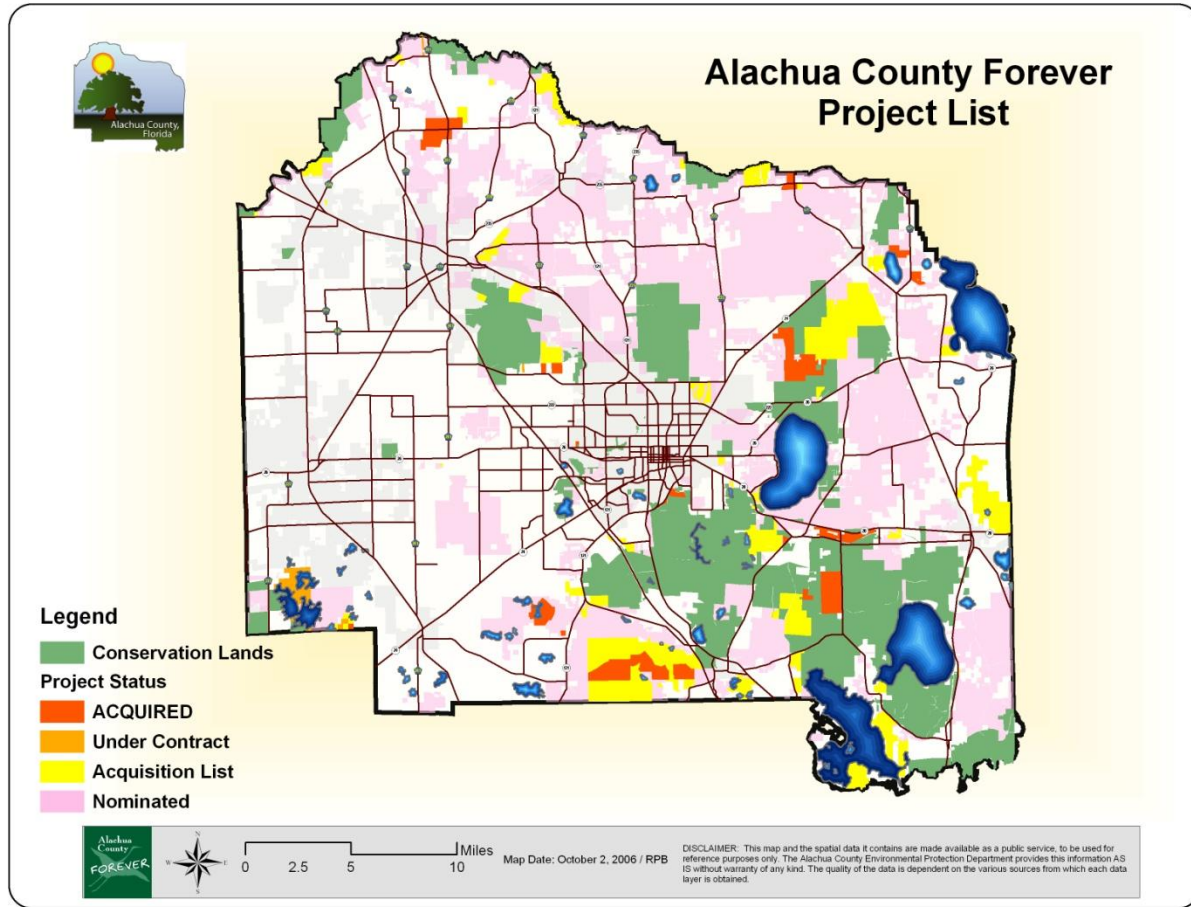


Map 6.3. Alachua County Floridan Aquifer High Recharge Area



Other mechanisms to achieve a greenspace/green infrastructure network is coordination with County-wide Visioning and Planning Committee, Non-governmental organizations, State, federal municipal and adjacent counties to extend ecological and open space linkages beyond County jurisdiction. Another is to develop and/or support tax incentives that promote the preservation of mapped areas by landowners as described in the recent Constitutional Amendment (#4) whereby a “property tax exemption, classification and assessment of land used for conservation purposes under Section 3 of Article VII would require the creation of an ad valorem tax exemption for real property dedicated in perpetuity for conservation purposes, and the amendment to Section 4 of Article VII requiring land used for conservation purposes to be classified by general law and assessed solely on the basis of character or use for purposes of ad valorem taxation, shall take effect upon approval by the electors and shall be implemented by January 1, 2010. This section shall take effect upon approval of the electors.”

Map 6.4. Alachua County Forever Project List (publicly owned properties).



The advisory board, community groups, and the public at community meetings and workshops had an opportunity to review refinement of the issue and strategies to achieve a recommended policy. At the conclusion of this phase, the issue, options and strategies to address the recommendations were presented to the Board of County Commissioners and Local Planning Agency (BoCC/LPA) to provide further direction to staff.

**DATA AND ANALYSIS - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Currently, the strategic ecosystem framework (COSE Policies 4.10 et seq.), Alachua County Forever Program, and the County’s encouragement towards the persistence of meaningful agriculture and forestry play a large part in greenspace protection. The County’s Rural/Ag Clustering provisions are expected to provide some meaningful greenspace connectivity as well. Development practices should be encouraged that maintain an adequate level of ecosystem services (wildlife habitat, recreation, air and water purification, etc.) through connectivity, green design, Low Impact Development and sustainability and increase the effectiveness and longevity of the County’s green infrastructure as the goal.

Alachua County Forever is nearing completion of the Land Conservation Master Plan; an interactive tool designed to help resolve land use conflicts towards conservation alternatives.

Another tool for enhancing greenspace infrastructure (and ecological services) is the requirement for 20% open space set-aside for development projects within the County (COSE Policies 5.2 et seq.). The ideal for these protected open space acres is to contribute to a system of connectivity or at least proximity of open space infrastructure to facilitate mobility and interchange of genetic resources to maintain biological diversity within the County and ultimately through the region as well as provide a continuously productive, connected ecological infrastructure capable of providing incalculable bio-remedial services such groundwater recharge, water and air purification. Results from the open space requirements through development approval are provided below.

Green Space Set-Aside through Development Approval –

Data Summary (Apr. 2006 – Aug. 2008):

Total Project Acreage 2111 (1,816 ac. of residential)

Total # Projects 81

Total Open space protected 906

**Other Resource Protection Measures- TDRs**

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan update adopted in 2002 identified development of a voluntary Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as one of the strategies to encourage continuation of productive agricultural uses and identified a preliminary policy framework for development of such a program. In 2007 and 2008 the County conducted a series of stakeholder meetings to develop a TDR program that would be suited to the circumstances in Alachua County. The County revised the preliminary policies relating to TDR that were in the 2002 Plan and in September 2008 adopted Comprehensive Plan amendments incorporating the full policy framework for implementation of a voluntary TDR program.

The County's newly adopted program provides a mechanism to protect areas deemed valuable either for their potential for agricultural production or their conservation resources by allowing a property owner to sell the development rights on their land to another property owner or developer. The rights can then be used on a different piece of property in a more suitable (or less sensitive) location.

The program includes designated sending areas from which the development rights in the form of density or intensity may be transferred as well as receiving areas to which the density or intensity may be transferred. Agricultural sending areas are identified as any properties receiving an agricultural classification from the Property Appraiser that are at least 160 acres in size. There are no designated receiving areas currently identified, but development rights must be purchased with any request to expand the County's Urban Cluster, or they may be purchased to reduce the amount of open space required on a non-residential development site. The County also hopes to partner with municipalities to identify receiving areas within their boundaries.

Once the development rights are transferred off a property, a mechanism (such as a conservation easement) is put in place to permanently protect the land from development. The TDR program provides a viable option for struggling farmers who wish to continue to farm their land, but could use the additional profit gained from selling that land for development. The program would allow the landowner to sell their development rights at a price negotiated with the buyer while continuing to farm their land as well.

## INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS ON RELEVANT VARIABLES

It is too early to tell after the last Comprehensive Plan revision in 2005, whether the current Plan is better at protecting green space than before. There was no systematic tracking of green space protection measures prior to the 2001 Comp Plan. When the on-going green infrastructure assessment and mapping of DRC-approved open spaces is complete, we may begin to address these issues and develop a Level of Ecosystem Service standard.

GIS mapping is continually updating the FLU map to include fee simple acquisitions, less-than-fee easements and transfers of development rights to monitor the effects of greenspace planning and protection.

Development of a community-vetted and acceptable Level of Service for ecosystem function is needed.

## STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING ISSUE

Adopt an overlay map to identify the area within a continuous ecological corridor connecting Preservation areas (these include lands owned by Alachua County, State, WMD in-fee or otherwise) and Strategic Ecosystems should be protected.

- The critical ecological corridors overlay include shall at a minimum the following adopted Strategic Ecosystems: Lochloosa Slough, East Lochloosa Forest, Lochloosa Creek, Locloosa Creek Flatwoods, Little Orange Creek, East Side Newnans Lake, Austin Cary, Northeast Flatwoods and the Santa Fe River.
- Make it a priority to protect mapped ecological corridor core areas and preserving linkages between mapped ecological corridor core areas in the implementation of the development review process for Strategic Ecosystems, and also in land acquisition programs, and in Special Area Management Plan development (COSE Policy 6.3.2)
- The County should coordinate with County-wide Visioning and Planning Committee, Non-governmental organizations, State, federal municipal and adjacent counties to extend ecological linkages beyond County jurisdiction. (COSE Policy 6.3.7).
- The County should develop and/or support tax incentives that promote the preservation of mapped areas by landowners (COSE Policy 6.3.3)
- Develop an outreach program to promote the value of conserving linked ecosystems/corridor (COSE Policy 6.3.3).
- Prioritize core areas of, and linkages between, the corridors in the implementation of any Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights Program.
- Review Land Conservation Master Plan and adopt additional Greenspace-conserving tools as appropriate.

## Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Visioning & Planning Process

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

When planning for the future land use and development of the County, it is important to look at the County as a whole despite the fact that there are 10 different political jurisdictions. All of these entities share the same stores, roads, schools, civic and religious organizations, hospitals, natural resources, and other amenities that make Alachua County a desirable place to live and work. Thus it is important to identify a common vision for the future growth of the County as a whole. In January 2001, the County Commission sponsored a Countywide Summit to discuss issues relating to the Boundary Adjustment Act, annexations and joint planning. As a result, the Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee (CVPC) was formed as a steering committee with volunteers representing each of the nine municipalities and the unincorporated area. The Committee conducted surveys, provided community newsletters, held numerous town hall and other public meetings, and in July of 2005 provided the results of their efforts to the community as the 'Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan for the unincorporated areas of the County'. As stated in the report:

**"The plan captures the common goals articulated by each municipality to protect environmentally sensitive areas, preserve the unique identity of each community, direct future growth into existing urbanized areas, prevent inefficient, sprawling development between one community and the next, and preserve the rural character of the county. It also articulates specific recommendations for the character of development or preserve lands in the unincorporated areas."**

The Plan also outlined a series of 'Action Strategies' needed to move the vision forward and create implementation tools and techniques. These steps included new intergovernmental coordination efforts to deal with annexations, seeking funding and developing a countywide economic development strategy to direct growth to existing centers, as well as several steps related to comprehensive planning.

On October 29, 2007 in a joint meeting with the City of Gainesville and Alachua County, both commissions agreed to reconvene the Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee to oversee continued discussions on implementing the countywide vision. On October 30, 2007, a letter was sent to all municipalities asking for the reappointment of a representative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee. The first meeting of the CVPC (consisting of the appointed representatives from each municipality) was held on January 24, 2008. At this meeting, discussion took place concerning common issues, the update of the Boundary Adjustment Act, and the election of officers. The Committee formed a Boundary Adjustment Act Task Force to consider possible changes to the Act and is currently meeting to discuss potential options. The Committee also updated the guiding principles and action steps from the original Conceptual Plan. The following revised steps are those related to comprehensive planning:

- Evaluate county and municipal comprehensive plans within the context of the countywide vision.
- Encourage municipalities to integrate the Countywide Visioning and Planning Guiding Principles into county and municipal comprehensive plans.
- Develop special area plans within each community's Reserve Area and Extraterritorial Reserve Area based upon the countywide vision and develop joint planning processes.



- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.
- Create a Springs Protection and Strategic Resources overlay district in the northwest quadrant of the county.
- Work with the School Board to protect neighborhood school districts as growth occurs county-wide.

## **REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANS RELATIVE TO CVPC CONCEPTUAL PLAN**

### **Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

The final report of the CVPC was not released until July 2005, at around the same time as the County's updated Comprehensive Plan went into effect in May 2005. However, there are some initiatives in the Plan and the County's Unified Land Development Code that address some of the guiding principles and action steps identified in the Conceptual Plan. The following paragraphs include an overview of these initiatives, followed by short summaries of the same type of information for the municipalities, as provided by municipal staff.

#### **URBAN CLUSTER**

The Future Land Use Map, 2001-2020, identifies an Urban Cluster boundary for the unincorporated area nearest to the City of Gainesville as the area expected to be developed with a mix of uses and residential densities supported by public services such as public water and sewer, and a multimodal transportation network. The Urban Cluster (which has been in the County's Comprehensive Plan in some form since at least 1984) has been the area of most active development in the unincorporated area of the County where almost 94% of the 3,600 new residential subdivision lots approved by the Development Review Committee since the updated Plan went into effect in May 2005 are located<sup>9</sup>. The Urban Cluster was established as a means to prevent sprawling development throughout the County and make the most efficient use of urban infrastructure within its boundary and helps to achieve the countywide goal of directing growth toward existing centers. The unincorporated area outside of the Urban Cluster is largely in the Rural/Agriculture future land use category, with the exception of the County's Rural Clusters identifying the following existing rural communities: Cross Creek, Evinston, Campville, Grove Park, Rochelle, Windsor, Lochloosa, Island Grove, Orange Heights, Melrose, Earleton, Hague, and Santa Fe.

The County's Plan (Policy 7.1.3, Future Land Use Element) requires the Urban Cluster boundary to be evaluated based on the forecasted need for additional urban residential or non-residential development compared to the amount of available land in the Urban Cluster for such uses. The Plan identifies consideration of increased density within the Urban Cluster boundary as one of the options to be considered as an alternative to expansion of the Urban Cluster boundary. Then, if warranted, evaluation of appropriate locations for expansion must include factors such as impacts to existing agricultural uses, sufficient services and

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<sup>9</sup> The Data and Analysis for the last update of the County's Comprehensive Plan indicated that the Urban Cluster was expected to accommodate approximately 80% of residential development in the unincorporated area based on population projections through the planning period of 2020. Analysis for the EAR using most recent Bureau of Economic and Business Research middle range population projections for Alachua County indicates there is adequate land available in the Cluster to accommodate projected population through at least 2030 without expansion of the Urban Cluster.

infrastructure, and planned open space and greenway areas. The County has held this line firmly with no expansions since the last update of the Plan in 2001, and there have been few expansions since the 1993 settlement agreement for the 1991 Plan.

### **ACTIVITY CENTER GUIDELINES**

One way in which the County helps to further the guiding principle of promoting “fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns” is through the Activity Center policies in the County’s Comprehensive Plan (Section 2.0, Future Land Use Element) that encourage higher-intensity compact, mixed-use development. The policies call for the development of Activity Center Master Plans for each of the County’s thirteen Activity Centers that promote a mix of uses with a range of residential densities and non-residential uses that also include design standards such as multi-modal transportation connectivity and public civic and green spaces. The Plan identifies both retail-based and employment-based Activity Centers, and new non-residential development is encouraged to locate within these identified Centers.

### **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

TDR programs provide a mechanism to protect areas deemed valuable either for their historic or conservation resources, or their potential for agricultural production, by allowing a property owner to sell the development rights on their land to another property owner or developer. The rights can then be used on a different piece of property in a more suitable (or less sensitive) location, or sold to a government-sponsored ‘bank’ of development rights. Such programs often include designated *sending areas* from which the development rights in the form of density or intensity may be transferred as well as *receiving areas* to which the density or intensity may be transferred. Once the development rights are transferred off of a property, a mechanism (such as a conservation easement) is put in place to permanently protect the land from development. The County recently adopted updated policies to begin a TDR program in Alachua County to protect both conservation lands including strategic ecosystems and properties on the Alachua County Forever Acquisition List, and agricultural properties by identifying these as potential sending areas (Section 9.0, Future Land Use Element). The program allows for owners of property in sending areas to sell development rights to owners of property in receiving areas within the Urban Cluster, and includes language supporting the development of interlocal agreements with municipalities to identify receiving areas within municipal boundaries. If successful, this program has the potential to further both the guiding principles of directing growth toward existing centers and creating greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities.

### **NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTIONS**

The County has a wealth of policies and programs designed to protect the County’s valuable natural resources. The County’s Comprehensive Plan identifies six categories of conservation areas in Policy 3.1.1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element: wetlands, surface waters, 100-year floodplains, listed species habitat, significant geologic features, and strategic ecosystems. The Plan also specifies protection standards and procedures for each of these areas, and includes policies for protection of other natural resources as well. The County works to protect these resources through methods such as its development review process, education and outreach, and purchasing property through the Alachua County Forever program approved by the voters in 2000.

### **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

The County’s Comprehensive Plan has several policies encouraging various energy conservation strategies and promoting the use of energy efficient goods and materials. The Future Land Use, Transportation Mobility, Housing and Conservation and Open Space Elements all address energy conservation and help further the guiding principle of promoting creation of energy efficient policies and goals.

The County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report focuses on several aspects of energy conservation, drawing largely from the work of the County's Energy Conservation Strategies Commission, as further described later in this report.

### **Municipal Comprehensive Plans**

Like the County, many of the currently adopted municipal Comprehensive Plans were adopted prior to the development of the Countywide Vision by the CVPC, yet still incorporate goals and/or policies that implement some of the specific guiding principles and action strategies identified by the CVPC. The following summaries of policies that implement the Countywide Vision in the various municipal Comprehensive Plans were provided by municipal staff for this Issue Paper at the request of the County. The information includes all submissions received as of February 13, 2009.

#### **CITY OF ALACHUA<sup>10</sup>**

The City of Alachua's Comprehensive Plan includes several policies that further the following Guiding Principles and Action Strategies in the Countywide Vision:

##### **Guiding Principles:**

- Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries.
- Create greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities utilizing public lands, conservation easements, transfer development rights, and other tools.
- Preserve the unique character of existing downtowns and town centers.
- Focus future annexations primarily on enclaves, urbanized areas, greenbelts and future growth corridors.
- Promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns.
- Ensure equal participation by municipalities, residents and the county in planning for the unincorporated areas with regard to buffers and all other aspects of Countywide Visioning and Planning Conceptual Plan Objectives.
- Facilitate relationship building and communication between unincorporated communities and municipalities in Alachua County.
- Pursue extraterritorial joint planning concerning major development in accordance with Comp Plans and other legislatively approved tools.
- Pursue policies jointly that protect key natural resources

##### **Action Strategies:**

- Pursue legislation to allow for the easier annexation of enclaves
- Evaluate county and municipal comprehensive plans within the context of the countywide vision.
- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.
- Work with the School Board to protect neighborhood school districts as growth occurs county-wide.
- Develop a countywide economic development strategy to identify opportunities for growth in each municipality consistent with each individual community's economic goals and current economic development plans.

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<sup>10</sup> A copy of the full summary letter provided via email by Kathy Winburn of the City of Alachua on 2/6/09 is included in the Appendix.



**CITY OF GAINESVILLE<sup>11</sup>**

The City of Gainesville's 2000-2010 Comprehensive Plan is consistent with and supportive of many of the Guiding Principles identified in the Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan developed by the CVPC. The following Guiding Principles are clearly supported by policies of the City's comprehensive plan:

- Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries.
- Preserve the unique character of existing downtowns and town centers.
- Focus future annexations primarily on enclaves, urbanized areas, greenbelts and future growth corridors.
- Promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns.
- Pursue policies jointly that protect key natural resources.

The City's comprehensive plan does not specifically address the following Guiding Principles, but is not inconsistent with them:

- Create greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities utilizing public lands, conservation easements, transfer development rights, and other tools.
- Protect and maintain private property rights.
- Ensure equal participation by municipalities, residents and the county in planning for the unincorporated areas with regard to buffers and all other aspects of Countywide Visioning and Planning Conceptual Plan Objectives.
- Facilitate relationship building and communication between unincorporated communities and municipalities in Alachua County.

**CITY OF HAWTHORNE<sup>12</sup>**

The City of Hawthorne's Comprehensive Plan incorporates several of the goals in the Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan.

In the Future Land Use Element, Hawthorne's Plan calls for the concentration of urban uses within the City, which incorporates the CVPC's guiding principle #1, "Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries." Also, Objective I.5 limits the extension of public community water and sanitary sewer system geographic service areas to the corporate limits of the City.

Goal I of the Future Land Use Element is to direct development to areas which have in place or have agreements to provide service capacity to accommodate growth in an environmentally acceptable manner. Furthermore, Policy I.1.1 of the Future Land Use Element states that the land development regulations shall limit the location of high density residential, high intensity commercial and heavy industrial uses to areas where public facilities are available to support such higher density or intensity. This goal and this objective incorporate the CVPC's guiding principle to "promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns."

Policy I.1.2 of the Future Land Use Element states that all structures in lands classified as commercial will be restricted to height limitation of 35 feet, which preserves the unique character of Hawthorne's downtown.

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<sup>11</sup> Memo provided by Ralph Hilliard, City of Gainesville, via email 1/8/09.

<sup>12</sup>Letter provided via email by Kelly Moosbrugger, City of Hawthorne, 1/12/09.

Policy I.10.2 of the Future Land Use Element states that the City shall coordinate with agencies responsible for the implementation of any regional resource planning and management plan, and Policy VI.4.2 of the Recreation and Open Space Element requires that the City recommend lands for the purchase of open space by public agencies and provide support in managing the lands.

**CITY OF WALDO<sup>13</sup>**

The current Waldo comprehensive plan does not address the countywide vision. The City is in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan; the adoption hearing is scheduled for Feb. 24th. The new Plan addresses the countywide vision for Waldo through the adoption of a Center City future land use category for a mixed use downtown, a mixed use designation for the SR 301 corridor north of the City, increasing environmental protections for wetlands, and promoting the City as a destination for ecotourism.

**Additional Background Information Related to Countywide Visioning and Planning Conceptual Plan**

The following information provides further background information relevant to the Conceptual Plan developed by the CVPC, including changes that have occurred since development of the original plan in 2005. This information should be taken into consideration as the County and municipalities work together to transition into implementation of the Countywide Vision.

**ANNEXATION DATA**

Since the completion of the Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan, annexations have occurred that may impact the conceptual future land use goals identified on the conceptual plan map. The following table identifies changes that have occurred since adoption of the plan in 2002 to its effective date in May 2005, and then to May 2008. Note that the unincorporated area of the County shows annexation of over 16,000 acres into municipalities during this time frame. Additional annexations have occurred subsequent to May 2008.

**Table 6.5. Estimated Changes in Land Area: Alachua County, Unincorporated, and Municipalities**

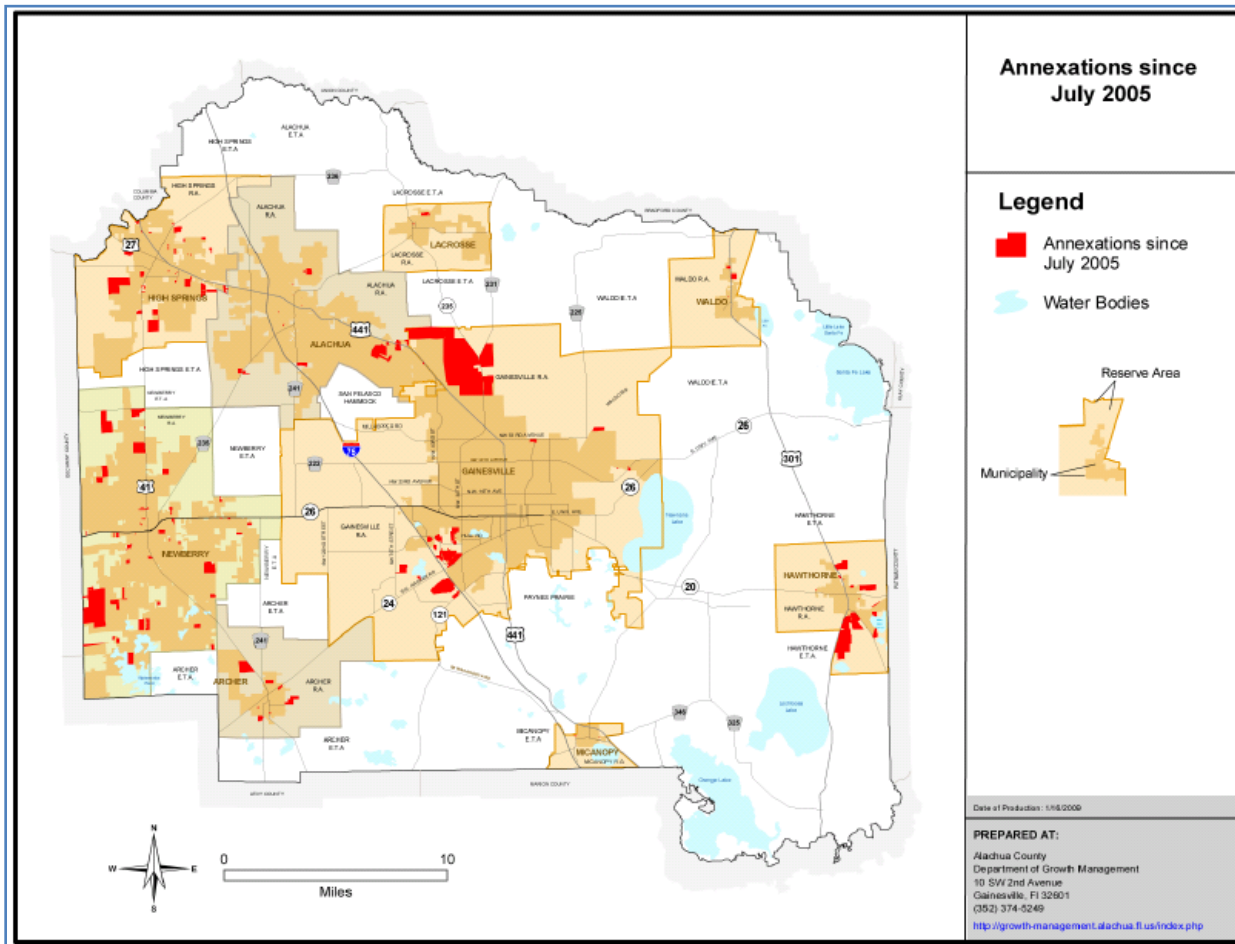
Municipality	Land Area at Plan Adoption (2002)	Land Area at Plan Effective Date (2005)	Land Area 2009	Land Area Change, 2002 to 2009
Alachua	19,795	20,504	20,896	1,101
Archer	1,390	2,745	3,051	1,671
Gainesville	28,725	30,411	34,977	6,252
Hawthorne	1,488	1,855	2,903	1,415
High Springs	10,304	11,060	12,054	1,750
LaCrosse	1,776	2,776	2,776	1,000
Micanopy	599	602	602	3
Newberry	28,103	29,620	31,707	3,604
Waldo	855	1,164	1,200	345
Unincorporated	472,910	465,200	455,972	-16,938
County Total	567,964	567,964	567,964	--

SOURCE: ALACHUA COUNTY GIS DIVISION, FEBRUARY 2009

<sup>13</sup> Summary provided via email by Laura Dedenbach, consultant to the City of Waldo, 2/10/09.

The map on the following page shows municipal boundaries, as well as the Reserve Areas identified for each municipality under the Boundary Adjustment Act, a special act of the Florida legislature which governs annexation in Alachua County (Ch.225 of Alachua County Code). The darkest areas on the map identify where annexations have occurred throughout the County since the release of the Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan in July 2005 to those that were in effect as of January 15, 2009.

Map 6.5. Municipal Annexations from July 2005 through January 2009



**2006 UPDATE OF RESERVE AREAS**

Reserve areas are designated pursuant to the Alachua County Boundary Adjustment Act. The Reserve Areas are the exclusive areas within which the corresponding municipality may annex property. Extra-Territorial areas have also been designated for some municipalities.

Every five years, the Boundary Adjustment Act requires each municipality and the County to review Reserve Areas and associated Statements of Services and requires the County to review the same for all the municipalities. Each Statement of Services is to identify how services are to be provided before and after annexations by the County and the municipalities, and how these services will be financed. In 2003, as part of the original Countywide Visioning process, the County and municipalities went through an update process through several town hall meetings where citizens identified conceptual future land use visions and Reserve Area concepts. Following this process, in 2005 each municipality conducted public hearings on their updated Reserve Areas and Statements of Services. The final updated Reserve Areas were adopted by the Board of County Commissioners Resolutions 06-04 through 06-12 on Jan 10, 2006 and became effective on March 13, 2006 pursuant to the Boundary Adjustment Act.

**SERVICE TRANSITION AGREEMENTS**

One of the action strategies identified by the CVPC is to, “Adopt a new model template for transition of service agreements that distinguishes between urban and rural services.” In March 2007, the City of Gainesville entered into an interlocal agreement with the County for the transition of services following annexations within the City’s Reserve Area. The agreement addresses issues such as the transfer of building and development permits, codes enforcement, road maintenance and ownership responsibilities, solid waste, fire rescue, and public safety services. The agreement also establishes a process to plan for orderly annexation of the City’s Urban Reserve Area, which led to the establishment of the Gainesville/Alachua County Orderly Annexation Team. This agreement and the processes identified within it could serve as a model to begin the work of developing a template for other municipalities as well.

**CHANGES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES PLANNING**

Since completion of the original Countywide Vision and Conceptual Plan, there have been many changes to the way the County plans for public school facilities. In 2005, the Florida Legislature amended Section 163.3180, F.S. to require the inclusion of a Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) in local government comprehensive plans and to establish level of service standards for concurrency for public schools.

The Alachua County Elected Officials Group, established by the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning, is comprised of representatives of the School Board, the County and the municipalities within the County. This Group received the “whitepaper strategy” outlining the basic framework for the development of these comprehensive plan amendments in August 2007. They made a formal recommendation to accept the strategy and directed the Staff Workgroup to proceed with presentations to their respective local governments. The strategy was subsequently approved by each local government. Over the course of the next few months, the actual Public School Facilities Elements were developed.

The School Board, the County and the municipalities within Alachua County coordinated the adoption of the Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) and amendments to the Intergovernmental Coordination and Capital Improvements Elements to ensure that all local government comprehensive plan elements within the County are consistent with each other and School Board plans. The School Board served as the lead agency in this process, and the development of these amendments was coordinated by a Staff Workgroup consisting of County staff, staff of the municipalities in the County, the School Board staff and its consultant. To date, the following local governments have formally adopted their Public School Facilities Element:

- Alachua County
- City of Alachua
- City of Gainesville
- City of High Springs
- City of Newberry

The City of Hawthorne and the City of Waldo are scheduled to take action on their PSFE in February/March 2009.

**CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

As part of a more comprehensive solution to transportation concurrency issues, Alachua County is developing an alternative strategy for implementing state mandated concurrency requirements. The alternative approach will emphasize multi-modal mobility by establishing levels of service for several modes of transportation (vehicle, bike, pedestrian, and transit) within the Urban Cluster. Concurrency assessments for new development will take into account the levels of service for each of these modes.

The multi-modal levels of service will be accompanied by a long range transportation infrastructure plan for the unincorporated area which will include planned system improvements such as parallel roadway facilities and significant transit and bus rapid transit components. This new approach will help to facilitate multi-modal mobility within the Urban Cluster and help provide access to major employment centers in the City of Gainesville. An additional goal is to also provide more multimodal options (such as Park & Ride facilities) for commuters from outlying municipalities, as well as to provide alternatives for residents of the City of Gainesville to travel to employment centers in other municipalities.

#### **CHANGES IN ENERGY PLANNING**

On December 2, 2008, the Alachua County Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) presented their final report to the Board of County Commissioners. This report culminates over a year of work by the Committee to identify steps the County can take over the next 100 years to create a more energy efficient and resource resilient community. As part of the CVPC's update of its Conceptual Plan Objectives, the Committee added a guiding principle to, "Promote the creation of local renewable energy and energy efficiency policies and goals, as well as implementation plans to achieve them." The work of the ECSC identifies many ways in which the County can work to achieve this goal. There is a separate Issue Paper prepared for the County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report on the topic of Energy that identifies possible options the County can consider to lead the way in addressing this specific principle of the Countywide Vision.

#### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- As part of the EAR-based updates of the Comprehensive Plan, the County can coordinate with municipalities to review and update the July 2005 Conceptual Land Use Plan Map and Countywide Vision and develop policy language recognizing and promoting implementation of the Countywide Vision that can also be used both in the County and Municipal Comprehensive Plans.
- Coordinate through Elected Officials' Group and Staff Workgroup to address the concept of neighborhood school districts as identified in the CVPC Conceptual Plan Objectives as part of the School Board's long term capital planning.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The Comprehensive Plan provides direction regarding the provision of various essential community facilities and services, including recreation, stormwater management, public safety, disaster relief, and the capital projects that support these and other services. Many of these facilities and services are facing potential reductions due to current fiscal constraints all communities are facing, and so it is important to make the most efficient use of existing resources and to plan efficiently for future facilities and services. In evaluating the policies of the current Comprehensive Plan with regard to these areas, the following issues were identified to be addressed in the EAR:

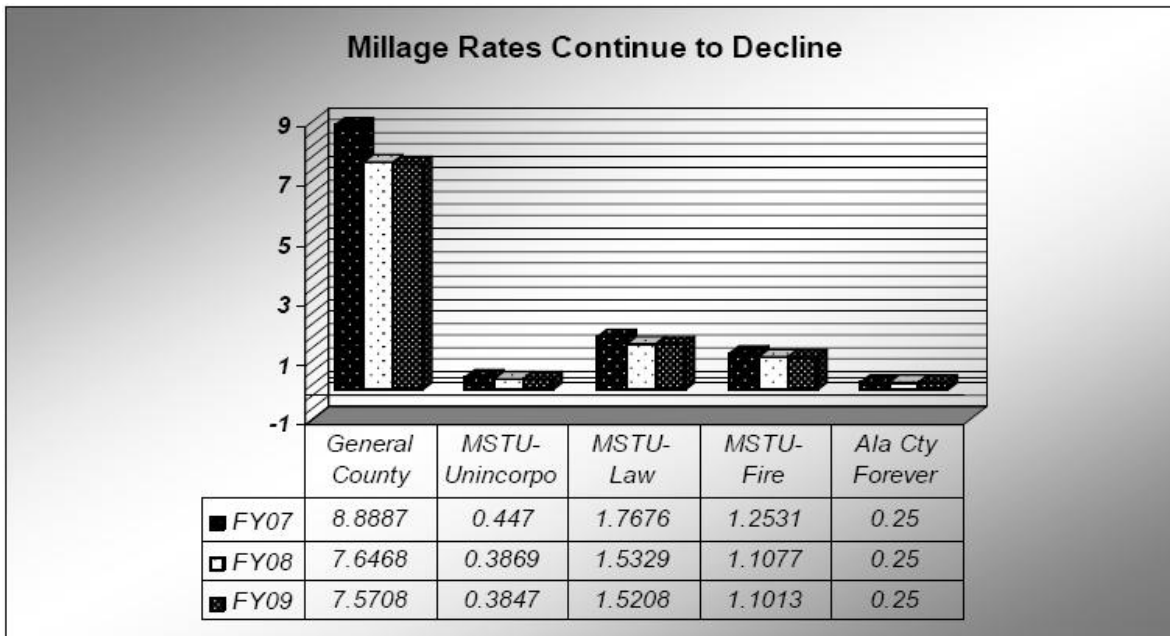
- Evaluate capital project capacity in light of current fiscal constraints
- Prioritize capital projects, particularly for transportation and recreation facilities, to serve existing populations
- Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e. Countywide unincorporated vs. community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County role relative to recreation facilities
- Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community
- Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks
- Determine key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy needing incorporation into Plan
- Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including need for a Public Safety Element
- Consider ways to promote public health, including possible Public (*Community*) Health Element.



### Capital Project Capacity

Alachua County, like other local governments in Florida, is experiencing fiscal constraints resulting from the tax reform legislation and referendums enacted in 2007 and 2008, combined with the impacts of the general economic downturn at the local and national levels. The recent tax reform measures have resulted in declines in millage rates and corresponding declines in overall county revenues, including revenues for capital projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The table below shows the general decline in Alachua County millage rates over past three fiscal years.

**Figure 6.1. Alachua County Millage Rates, FY2007 to FY 2009**



Source: Alachua County Office of Management and Budget, FY09 Tentative Budget Summary

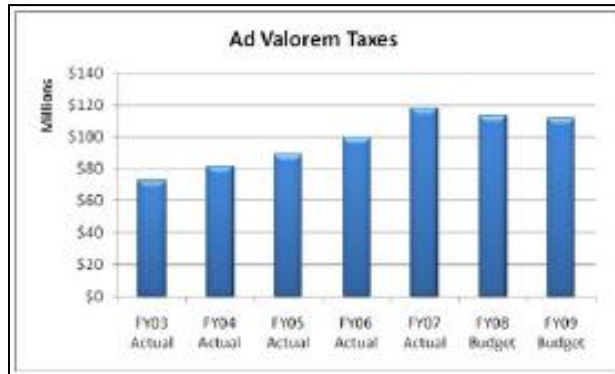
In addition to declining millage rates, taxable property values have also declined as a result of recent legislative actions. According to estimates released by the Property Appraiser on June 27, 2008, the FY09 taxable property value in Alachua County is \$12,750,766,782, which is a decrease of less than 1% from FY08. The estimates indicate that the Save Our Homes portability option resulted in a \$38 million loss in taxable property value; the tangible personal property exemption resulted in an additional \$105 million loss in taxable value; and the doubled homestead exemption reduced taxable property values by nearly \$1 billion. These losses in taxable value correspond to a \$7 million loss in overall revenue from FY08 to FY09. For the County’s General Fund and MSTU Fund, the FY09 net total property tax revenue decreased by \$2.1 million, as compared to the FY08 Adopted Budget.

Other factors have also contributed to the recent fiscal constraints experienced by Alachua County. The downturn in home building and consumer sales has caused reductions in sales tax proceeds of over \$500,000 in FY09 as compared to FY08. Building fee revenues have decreased significantly, reflecting the decline in the housing market locally as well as nationally. Historically, Alachua County’s strong government based economy has provided some economic stability, although cutbacks in funding at the University of Florida and other state agencies have contributed to lower overall economic activity in the community.

One impact of the recent tax reform measures and the economic downturn is that less revenue is now available from traditional sources for capital projects needed to maintain the levels of service adopted in the Comprehensive Plan. The key revenue sources used for capital projects in Alachua County include ad valorem taxes, gasoline taxes, and impact fees. Revenues from each of these sources have declined or remained level over the last two years.

The chart below shows the trend in the County’s ad valorem tax revenues for the Countywide, MSTU, and Alachua County Forever ad valorem taxes. Ad valorem tax revenues have generally decreased since 2007.

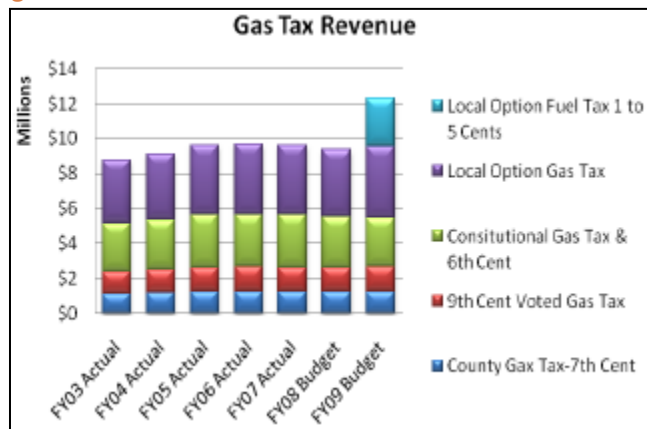
**Figure 6.2. Ad Valorem Tax Revenue, FY2003 to FY 2009**



Source: Alachua County FY 2009 Adopted Budget and FY 2010 Planned Budget Document

Gasoline taxes are an important source of funds for transportation capital projects, maintenance, and road resurfacing. Gasoline taxes collected within Alachua County are distributed among the County and its nine municipalities. The gasoline taxes are assessed per gallon of gasoline and are not based upon the price of the fuel. As throughout Florida, gasoline tax revenue growth is level and expected to decline due primarily to increased fuel efficiency of automobiles and the gasoline cost increases which have reduced fuel consumption.

**Figure 6.3. Gas Tax Revenue, FY2003 to FY 2009**



Source: Alachua County FY 2009 Adopted Budget and FY 2010 Planned Budget Document

Impact fees on new development were implemented in March, 2005 to finance capital facilities needed to maintain levels of service identified in the Comprehensive Plan, including roads, parks and fire. In 2007, the Board of County Commissioners voted to increase transportation impact fees on new development. The increased fees went into effect mid-year in FY08 and will gradually increase in subsequent years to reflect the actual cost of providing services to new development. However, due to significant decrease in new construction activity, higher impact fees are not expected to result in a significant revenue increase.

The following table summarizes the total expenditures and funding sources for capital projects, as provided in the Alachua County adopted budgets from FY05 to FY09.

**Table 6.6. Summary of Expenditures and Funding Sources for Capital Projects, FY05 – FY 09**

	FY05 Adopted Budget	FY06 Adopted Budget	FY07 Adopted Budget	FY08 Adopted Budget	Change from FY07 to FY08	FY09 Adopted Budget	Change from FY08 to FY09
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>							
CAPITAL OUTLAY	4,141,802	9,241,463	36,310,396	34,194,573	-5.83%	30,984,945	-9.39%
NON-OPERATING *	1,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	0.00%	0	-100.00%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>5,141,802</b>	<b>12,241,463</b>	<b>39,310,396</b>	<b>37,194,573</b>	<b>-5.38%</b>	<b>30,984,945</b>	<b>-16.69%</b>
<b>FUNDING SOURCE(S)</b>							
CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDS	4,141,802	9,241,463	36,310,396	34,194,573	-5.83%	30,984,945	-9.39%
TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND	1,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	0.00%	0	-100.00%
<b>TOTAL FUNDING SOURCE(S)</b>	<b>5,141,802</b>	<b>12,241,463</b>	<b>39,310,396</b>	<b>37,194,573</b>	<b>-5.38%</b>	<b>30,984,945</b>	<b>-16.69%</b>

\* Beginning in FY09, the \$3,000,000 Transportation Trust Fund contribution is now being used to fund debt service from bond issues dedicated to transportation projects.

## Recreation Facilities Level of Service and Intergovernmental Coordination

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE #1

Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e., Countywide unincorporated versus community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County's role relative to recreation facilities.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Level of service (LOS) has been historically used to measure the adequacy of public services (e.g., police, fire, roadways). While there is not a universally accepted LOS standard for recreation facilities, there are established guidelines – the Florida State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recommends a minimum LOS of two acres per 1,000 population for neighborhood parks; two acres per 1,000 population for community parks; and four acres per 1,000 population for regional parks. The SCORP does acknowledge that these guidelines don't allow for localized differences or specific environments and encourages local governments to develop their own guidelines that adequately reflect local conditions in determining recreation needs.<sup>14</sup> In terms of a quantitative measure, LOS standards for recreation facilities should be customized to fit the community's needs and address local conditions. It is also important to recognize that uniform standards are not always good indicators of whether or not the community's needs are being met.

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

#### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

The Recreation Site Classification for Countywide Park System (adopted as Table 1 in the Recreation Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan) is shown in Appendix C – Supplemental Information at the end of this report.

The current levels of service standards for recreation are provided in Policy 1.1.2 of the Recreation Element. The county-wide standards are 0.5 acres of improved activity-based recreation sites per 1,000 unincorporated Alachua County population and 5.0 acres of improved resource-based recreation sites per 1,000 unincorporated Alachua County population. The attached spreadsheet – Alachua County Parks Level of Service Projections - shows an inventory of each park/recreation site in Alachua County with current and projected level of service calculations.

As indicated, the level of service standard for activity-based recreation is met and exceeded currently and over the next six years based on the development of two existing parks/recreation sites – Jonesville Park and SE 35<sup>th</sup> Street Park. After 2009, resource-based parks fall slightly short of the adopted level of service standard. However, when combined with Alachua County Forever Preservation Lands, the resource-based level of service standard is exceeded throughout the six year period.

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DEFINITIONS

activity-based: sites that provide recreation which is user-oriented independent of location or the natural environment.

resource-based: recreational activities that are essentially dependent upon the natural, scenic, or historic resources of the area provided the associated activities do not have significant

<sup>14</sup> Outdoor Recreation in Florida – 2000: Florida's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, February 2002.

adverse impacts on the ecological integrity or ecological or historical values of the resources in these areas.

## INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS ON RELEVANT VARIABLES

### Recreation Master Plan Implementation

The Alachua County Recreation Master Plan, created in two phases, was completed in October 2005; however implementation of the master plan has not been accomplished largely due to a lack of funding. Phase 1 of the Countywide Recreation Master Plan documents existing parks and recreation facilities and recreational programming. It also identifies future park/recreation needs and potential locations of new recreation facilities. Phase 2 targets the specific implementation of the plan by assessing recreation needs by planning districts, determining costs to meet those needs, examining how projects will be funded, and who will have responsibility for coordinating the plan's implementation.

### Issues related to LOS by Districts

Currently the LOS is based on the countywide unincorporated population and all the county maintained parks. Determining the LOS by districts will result in some districts meeting the current LOS and others being deficient. Those districts that are deficient will need to have funding for acquisition and development to meet the LOS standard or the LOS will need to be adjusted allowing all districts to meet the required LOS.

### “Wild Spaces – Public Places” Referendum

On November 4, 2008, Alachua County voters approved a two-year, half-cent sales tax measure to fund land preservation and improvements to public recreation facilities – identified in a specific list of projects in Alachua County and each of the nine municipalities. It is estimated that \$39.7 million will be generated by the tax. Half of the funds will go toward land conservation projects in Alachua County (through Alachua County Forever) and land conservation efforts in the City of Gainesville. The other half will be divided among Alachua County and the nine municipalities for recreation improvements. Alachua County's projects include the Kanapaha Park Community Center, partnership with the City of Gainesville to build a senior recreation center, and completion of the Gainesville/Archer Regional Bike Trail. The impact of these improvements will undoubtedly have a positive effect the County's overall level of service.

## STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE #1

- Consider access as part of a customized measure or LOS standard for different park/recreation facility types. For example, “X acres of X park type within X-mile radius of every household”.<sup>15</sup> As provided in the County's recreation Master Plan, use park districts or service areas to analyze the needs of different geographical areas.
- Base the level of service on county funded and county developed facilities. For those projects jointly funded with other local agencies, the percentage of county funding can be used to determine the percentage of the facility that can contribute toward the county's level of service.
- Consider a LOS standard that accounts for facilities provided by other entities (e.g., UF, School Board, and private facilities) based on cooperative agreements between Alachua County and those entities.

## STATEMENT OF ISSUE #2

Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community.

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<sup>15</sup> “From Recreation to Re-creation: New Directions in Parks and Open Space System Planning, APA Planning Advisory Service Report Number 551, January 2008.

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

As the definition of “recreation” expands, recreation facility planning will need to broaden as well. The function of recreation is basically delivered by three areas:

1. Park spaces that offer opportunities for informal recreation activities;
2. Recreation facilities for specific activities; and,
3. Recreation programs.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

#### COUNTYWIDE RECREATION MASTER PLAN

As stated in the master plan, recreation must be economically self-sustaining. If funding sources are not identified for capital projects, maintenance and operations, the master will become less feasible to implement as the recreation deficit keeps growing. The policies in Objective 1.5 of the Recreation Element should be revised to reflect the reality of the County’s role in terms of recreation programming and to address references to the unfunded master plan implementation.

#### Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables

The County Commission’s Guiding Vision #9 states “The County desires to transition from providing direct urban service delivery by encouraging and facilitating municipalities to provide municipal services. Emergency Services, with the exception of Emergency Management functions assigned to county governments by State law, and recreational programming should be services provided by municipalities as urban services. The County should facilitate the transition of these services on an equitable basis for all County residents. In situations where the County funds urban programs, the County will discourage fee structures and policies that differentiate between municipal and unincorporated residents.”

The County currently provides limited funding to the City of Gainesville for two recreation programs. The programs are the middle school after school program “TeenZone”, and the summer recreation program “HeatWave”.

-The TeenZone program has been funded by the County since 2005. Currently, TeenZones at Kanapaha Middle School and Ft. Clarke Middle Schools are funded at \$75,000 each.

-The Summer HeatWave program was first funded by the County in 2008. The County approved funding the program for 2009 at \$60,000.

Based on the County Commission’s Guiding Vision #9 the County will not provide recreation programming directly but has shown willingness to provide funding for programs operated by other agencies on a case-by-case basis.

### STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE #2

- Utilize the park/recreation system as a whole, instead of focusing on individual parks/recreation sites, to implement recreational programming that meets community needs.

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE #3

Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks.

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

Parks and recreation facilities are essential to vibrant communities. In order to maintain their viability, parks and recreation facilities must be viewed in a larger community context. When communities treat recreation facilities as connections and linkages, their viability is enhanced.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

Currently, the park/recreation level of service (LOS) does not account for recreational facilities provided by municipalities, schools or privately-owned facilities. It only accounts for County owned and maintained recreational facilities. While the LOS standards (0.5 developed acres/1,000 unincorporated population for activity-based recreation and 5.0 developed acres/1,000 unincorporated population for resource-based recreation) are currently being met, there is an ultimate need for land acquisition. Most parks are already at or near 100% developed, so as the population base increases so does the need for more park sites. Given the high costs associated with land acquisition (particularly in the area where most of the population growth is occurring), financially feasible LOS standards will become more difficult to maintain.

### Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables

A critical issue concerning Recreation in Alachua County is centered on the distribution of governance and responsibility for funding among the local governments within the County. In the Organizational Structures Alternatives section of the Alachua County Recreation Master Plan (HHI), several options are presented to address this issue. These options/alternatives are summarized below:

- Community Council – Responsibilities for programming and funding allocation are divided into four quadrants of the County. The Alachua County Task Force on Recreation (ACTFOR) serves as a model that could lay the groundwork for this structure.
- Recreational Authority – Based on the Alachua County Library System as a model, the authority would operate and fund all parks and recreation facilities for all local governments. The authority would have taxing capacity and would be governed by a board appointed by the local governments.
- City-County Partnerships – County provides funding for expanding existing and building new parks/recreation facilities and the Cities fund all recreational programming.
- Parks Area Regional Concept (PARC) – The County would maintain and operate parks/recreation facilities and receive funding from Cities for programming and maintenance.

### PARK IMPACT FEES

Alachua County does assess park impact fees for new development in the unincorporated area of the county. Currently, there are two park projects being funded with impact fees:

- \$210,000 for Jonesville Park Soccer Field Lights & Lightning Warning System;
- \$197,500 for Forest Park Soccer Field Lights.

### IMPACT OF ANNEXATION AND/OR TRANSFER OF COUNTY PARKS TO MUNICIPALITIES

The annexation of areas containing parks developed by the County with the possible transfer of the park to the annexing municipality or the voluntary transfer of County parks adjacent to municipalities may result in a deficit in the County's LOS.



**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE #3**

- As provided in the Alachua County Recreation Master Plan, use park districts or service areas to analyze the recreational needs of different geographic areas.
- Integrate planning for recreation facilities into the Countywide Visioning (CVPC) process to address recreation needs for the next 20 to 30 years. This will provide a multi-jurisdictional approach to recreation planning.
- Review impact fee credits and other incentives for developers to provide land and facilities for public parks.

## Public Safety

Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including the need for a Public Safety Element.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Protecting public health and safety is arguably the most essential task of a local government. It is the local government's responsibility to ensure that the provision of services to the community is done so in an efficient and cost effective manner. The timely provision of public safety services should be a consideration in the land use decision-making process. In addition to fire and emergency medical [rescue] considerations, emergency management and hazard mitigation are components of the mitigation, preparation, response and recovery efforts associated with incidents that may occur in the community like large storms, flooding, wildfires, or terrorist activities.

#### Level of Service Standards

The Comprehensive Plan can help ensure the efficient provision of public facilities and services to meet demands by establishing a Level of Service (LOS) for these facilities and services that must be maintained to meet the needs of existing and new residents. Level of service standards also guide the development of the County's Five-Year Capital Improvement Program and Schedule of Capital Improvements. Rather than having an adopted LOS for Fire Rescue the Capital Improvements Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan includes a set of advisory guidelines based on response times. Response time standards have been established by the National Fire Protection Association as a means of assessing the emergency service delivery and response capabilities of fire departments. Response times are also important measures for the people served by these fire departments. However, response time standards by themselves may not be the most effective method to use in capital planning for emergency services and facilities.

It was suggested that the Alachua County Commission evaluate the existing guidelines in the Capital Improvements Element and determine whether changes should be made to improve efficiency and allow for more effective capital planning for fire and emergency services. It was suggested that minimum staffing (such as number of fire fighters per 1,000 population served) would be a better tool for projecting capital needs than the current response time based guidelines. Similarly, a combination of response times and minimum staffing and associated equipment may be used to best determine future need from the standpoint of location and response capacity. Given the wide variation in development patterns in Alachua County, a tiered level of service for facility planning – such as with the current response time guidelines – may be appropriate to differentiate between urban and rural areas of the County.

#### Emergency Management

Emergency Management is a function assigned to County governments by Florida statute. The emergency management functions of local government include hazard mitigation, preparedness, response to, and recovery from large scale incidents. Emergency management and hazard mitigation planning should be fully integrated into the local comprehensive planning process. For example, a basic tenet of effective emergency management is the adequate provisions of shelter space when incidents would require the evacuation of people and their relocation to secure facilities to provide for life safety– such as with hurricanes or other large storm events. It was suggested that consideration should be given to the creation of additional shelter space to meet the needs of existing and new residents.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Legislative Framework

Chapter 163 Part II, FS, Growth Policy, County and Municipal Planning, establishes the requirements for local government comprehensive plans in Florida. In addition to required plan elements, Chapter 163 also provides for the adoption of optional elements to address various areas of concern to local governments. Specifically section 163.3177(7) (h), FS provides for the adoption of an optional safety element by a local government should it choose to do so. Specifically this section provides for: “A safety element for the protection of residents and property of the area from fire, hurricane, or manmade or natural catastrophe, including such necessary features for protection as evacuation routes and their control in an emergency, water supply requirements, minimum road widths, clearances around and elevations of structures, and similar matters.”

### Adopted Comprehensive Plan Implementation

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The adopted Alachua County Comprehensive Plan currently contains policy guidance related to public safety concerns in the Conservation and Open Space Element, the Capital Improvements Element, and the Intergovernmental Coordination Element. The Conservation and Open Space Element establishes objectives for eliminating or minimizing community vulnerability to wildfire and provides policies to guide wildfire mitigation activities relating to development oversight, fuel management, and public education. This element also establishes an objective to reduce the risk associated with the use and storage of hazardous materials and provides policy guidance to reduce the community risks associated with hazardous materials through actions such as staffing and training or emergency medical and fire personnel.

The Capital Improvements Element establishes a three-tier classification system for public facilities – Category A, B, and C. Category “C” public facilities include correctional, emergency medical, fire, and law enforcement facilities. Category “C” facilities are governed by advisory level of service guidelines for the analysis and identification of capital improvement projects. The LOS guidelines for the provision of fire service protection based upon response times, and the advisory level of service guidelines for jail space and jail alternatives are tied to population trends and crime rate factors.

The Capital Improvements Element provides for an update to the Fire Service Master Plan and evaluation of the capital and operational needs to meet the LOS guidelines. Per Policy 1.2.5.A.4 of the Capital Improvements Element, the Master Plan update and any associated capital improvements plan is to form the basis of consideration for establishing Fire Rescue level of service standards as part of concurrency management requirements. The Capital Improvements Element also provides for local roadway standards for emergency vehicle access.

The Fire/EMS Services Master Plan update was completed in 2004. The relevant components of this plan [such as ratio of firefighters to population served and emergency equipment inventory] can form the basis of level of service standards for fire rescue services. An impetus for establishing level of service standards is to prevent the current level of service for fire rescue services from being degraded over time by the demands of new development until new resources are brought online and the level of service only partly restored. In effect a repeating cycle of “catch up” efforts could be created for fire rescue services that is characterized by an overall decline in level of service over time.

To illustrate this point at the time the Fire and EMS Services Master Plan was completed in 2004, the ratio of firefighters [response personnel] employed by Alachua County to the population protected was 1.25 firefighters per 1000 population protected. At that time it was noted that Alachua County was below the

regional median of 1.56 firefighters per 1000 population protected for the Southern Region of the United States for communities of 50,000 to 100,000 people. Currently the ratio of firefighters to 1000 population protected is approximately 0.92 and 0.87 for emergency medical service providers per 1000 population served [based upon Fiscal Year 2007-08 staffing for response personnel only – 95 FTE Fire Operations, 90 FTE EMS- and BEBR 2007 unincorporated Alachua County population estimate of 103,217 people].

Potential remedies to this situation include establishing a level of service standard based upon minimum staffing or equipment needs as noted above. Such level of service standards would provide a tool to assist in determining when and where new facilities or staff will be needed to serve an increased population. Application of this standard could range from a planning standard to a concurrency requirement. Implementation of a planning standard would facilitate capital planning for fire rescue service and facilities based upon the population of a particular service area. A planning standard would not be binding on the County to provide services or facilities but would facilitate capital project planning to provide these services and facilities.

If a level of service standard is adopted as a concurrency requirement, then the necessary fire rescue facilities and services must be in place and available to meet the demand for these services and facilities so that the adopted level of service standard is maintained over time. There would need to be a financially feasible schedule of capital improvements to achieve and maintain the adopted level of service standards over time, and concurrency standards would be applied in the development plan approval process, with approval of final development plans subject to determination that adequate fire rescue facilities based on adopted level of service standards would be available to serve the proposed development.

Current LOS advisory guidelines for fire rescue service are as follows (per Policy 1.2.5, Capital Improvements Element):

**Table 6.7. Fire Rescue Level of Service Guidelines for Alachua County**

	LOS GUIDELINE	SUPPRESSION/PROTECTION SERVICE LEVEL	WATER SUPPLY
URBAN CLUSTER	4 min. for 80% of responses in 12 month period	ISO Class Protection 4 or better	100% development served by hydrants
URBAN SERVICE AREA	6 min. for 80% of responses in 12 month period	ISO Class Protection 6 or better	100% development served by hydrants
RURAL AREA	12 min. for 80% of responses in 12 month period	ISO Class Protection <10	Developments provide adequate supply & fire service compliant fire connections

**UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE**

The adopted Unified Land Development Code currently addresses the following areas of concern for public safety:

Article 4, Section 407.43 (i) Firewise Requirements: Lists designs for landscaping and planting that help reduce the risk of wildfire around structures.

Article 8, Section 407.79.5(a) Subdivision Street Network Standards: Sets the standards for two access points into subdivisions with 25 or more lots. This section also provides for emergency service access into subdivisions with only one access point.

The Alachua County Department of Public Safety recommended revisions to the ULDC to clarify the requirements for emergency vehicle access and water supply so as to be consistent with the Florida Fire Code and the applicable National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) standards. The ULDC was revised in early 2009 to include additions to Section 407.82 (c) Fire Protection Suppression; regarding fire hydrant location, Section 407.78 Rural/ Agriculture Cluster Subdivision Design to clarify emergency access and fire suppression water supply requirements, and Section 407.79.5 Subdivision Street Network Standards that clarify when access will be available and the type of locking systems to be provided on gated communities and emergency access roads.

A draft code to implement ULDC Chapter 406 Article 19 Wildfire Hazard Mitigation is currently under development. This draft code has been circulated to various stakeholder groups and citizen committees for comment. This section of the ULCD will implement Conservation and Open Space Element Objective 5.6 and related policies concerning wildfire mitigation.

## **SUMMARY**

At the Special Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners and Local Planning Agency the concept of a Public Safety Element and provisions for level of service standards for Fire Rescue Services was reviewed and discussed. The consensus of the combined commissions was that the current provision of fire rescue services was adequate and in light of the current and foreseeable economic conditions there was no support for development of an optional Public Safety Element nor for development of additional level of service standards – concurrency based or not. Therefore, no revisions will be made to the existing policy framework and advisory guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan and the specific implementation directives in the Unified Land Development Code will continue to be followed.

## Local Mitigation Strategy

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Intergovernmental Coordination and Planning:

- Incorporate key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy into Plan

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Alachua County is preparing an update to the Local Mitigation Strategy to include Critical Facilities list and Land Use documentation. The Local Mitigation Task Force identified stormwater management as a key issue, and wildfire mitigation is an ongoing effort.

Mission Statement of the LMS:

The Alachua County Local Mitigation Strategy Work Group is committed to implementing effective mitigation strategies to significantly reduce or eliminate the damage or loss of life, property and economic vitality in the event of a natural, societal or technological disaster. These strategies will be expressed in a comprehensive Local Hazard Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Plan, to be adopted by Alachua County, participating municipalities and agencies/institutions. Using all-hazards, interdisciplinary and intergovernmental framework, the Work Group fosters information and resource sharing and integration of activities among all jurisdictions within Alachua County.

The Local Mitigation Strategy includes these goals (with associated objectives):

- Goal 1 – Establish an ongoing Local Hazard Mitigation Strategy Planning Process as part of a comprehensive community-based emergency management program to protect public health, safety, economic vitality, and property through inter-agency cooperation.
- Goal 2 – Promote disaster preparedness for individuals, communities, and businesses to encourage greater self-reliance and develop public-private partnerships.
- Goal 3 – Engage in hazard mitigation project planning and implementation to protect public health, safety, economic vitality, and property including natural and cultural resources, critical facilities and government buildings.

The 2002 Comprehensive Plan Capital Improvements Element Policy 1.5.2. lists “new public facilities and improvements or modifications to existing public facilities that eliminate public hazards” as Priority 2. This is indicative of high priority, with only LOS standard projects having higher priority in County capital improvements planning.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

**STORMWATER:** To mitigate stormwater problems and protect water quality, a Stormwater Master Plan is underway and will provide needed analysis including hydrologic/hydraulic County-wide model network setup. This process, utilizing major drainage basin delineation and primary drainage system data, will prepare a County-wide hydrologic-hydraulic model to qualitatively evaluate the performance of the County’s major drainage conveyance and storage ways. Based on the results of the modeling efforts, recommendations will be made for future model expansion, refinement, calibration, and verification. This data will be used to identify major system flooding concerns, identify primary drainage structure deficiencies, and make recommendations regarding future development impacts. The model results will be used to assess deficiencies from flood stages and conveyance deficiencies, no floodplain mapping will be performed.

Results will be compared to stormwater facility specific LOS criteria for deficiency evaluation, and a Technical Memorandum detailing model parameterization and setup, summarizing results, and identifying and quantifying drainage deficiencies will be completed.

Needs Assessment will result in a Technical Memorandum detailing identified needs and providing a preliminary prioritization for implementation.

Funding analysis will summarize capital project needs and develop final prioritization of projects. Included will be a discussion of County funding options, including grant and external funding options, based on the findings.

**WILDFIRE:** Since the Fall 2008 a Wildfire Mitigation Work Group is now working in Alachua County, chaired by Ludie Ehlers of the Division of Forestry. Criteria for membership was decided by the group to include the state, county and city fire suppression/mitigation agencies, as well as law enforcement (ACSO) and one representative for each municipality. An overview of the county with regards to fuels, fire occurrence and available resources will direct mitigation efforts.

#### **Information and analysis on relevant variables**

Even though Alachua County is far less vulnerable than its coastal neighbors, it still has dealt with four tropical storms over the past four years and with five wildfires since 2000, which damaged approximately 19,700 acres of land.

#### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Include specific projects from the LMS into the Comprehensive Plan CIP.
- Update the policy framework for hazard mitigation to improve project funding.



## Public (Community) Health

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

This issue was raised during the EAR Phase 1 meetings by a group of stakeholders, the “ Women for Wise Growth.” When the BoCC included the issue for public input, planning Staff decided to request assistance from Well Florida health planners and seek input from the Alachua County Health Care Advisory Board using a facilitated group process.

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

A recent fifth annual "F as in Fat" report from the nonprofit Trust for America's Health, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, indicates three-year average of adult obesity from 2005 to 2007 in Florida are 23.3% (rank 38)(CBSnews). The Health Care Advisory Board reports in Alachua County 63.3% of adults are overweight or obese. Alachua County illnesses related to obesity risk include hypertension (22.2% of adults in county), coronary heart disease (7.0% of adults), and diabetes (6.3% of adults).

The collaboration between the County Health Care Advisory Board and WellFlorida, assisted by County staff in Growth Management and Community Support Services, resulted in a thorough report of the healthcare issue. This report is included in the Appendix. Nancy Hardt, MD, Professor, Ob-Gyn and Pathology and Senior Associate Dean for External Affairs) is a member of the Health Care Advisory Board. She has presented a report to the County Commission concerning data including birth statistics, and some of this data is included in the Appendix.

A survey titled ‘Active Living Approaches by Local Government, 2007’ by International City/County Management Association (ICMA) addressed actions local government can take to promote healthy eating and active living. The top three results to a question regarding possible actions (any of which could be the focus of a health element to a comprehensive plan) were develop a cohesive system of parks and trails (50%); use zoning to support a mix of land uses (37%); and requiring streets to be designed with pedestrians and cyclists in mind (33%).<sup>16</sup> “How Cities Use Public Parks to Improve Public Health” ( City Parks Forum Paper 2007)

A study in the October 2000 issue of *The Physician and Sportsmedicine* found that physically active individuals had lower annual direct medical costs than did inactive people. The cost difference was \$330 per person, based on

<sup>16</sup> The complete list of local government actions for active living from the ICMA survey are:

1. Develop a cohesive system of parks and trails, incorporating accessible neighborhood parks.
2. Use zoning to support active living (mixed use).
3. Require neighborhood streets to be designed with pedestrians and cyclists in mind (design guidelines).
4. Support or sponsor active living programs.
5. Enact measures that ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety.
6. Support farmers' markets.
7. Collaborate with schools to open school facilities for after-hours use.
8. Partner with nonprofits, local businesses, and community organizations to share costs, expertise, and resources.
9. Use incentives to target growth to strategic infill locations.
10. Collaborate with school officials to address youth obesity.
11. Facilitate collaboration among governmental departments.
12. Encourage walk-to-school programs.
13. Increase measures to keep pedestrian and bicycle routes crime free.
14. Incorporate health considerations into planning processes, such as inviting a health official to provide input.
15. Support community gardens.
16. Realign bus routes or provide other transportation to connect underserved neighborhoods with grocery stores.
17. Implement regulations or programs that encourage grocery store development in underserved neighborhoods.

1987 dollars. Certain features predict greater use for physical activity. These include accessibility, proximity, good lighting, toilets and drinking water, and well-designed and well-maintained paths, as well as attractive scenery (Frumkin, 2003). [http://web.frpa.org/pdfs/advocacy/APA%20Papers/ImprovePublicHealth\\_07.pdf](http://web.frpa.org/pdfs/advocacy/APA%20Papers/ImprovePublicHealth_07.pdf)

Increasing physical activity has been shown to lower health care costs. While it is not a substitute for medical insurance it will save money and improve quality of life. Health care coverage is an issue in Alachua County, with County uninsured rates, from the 2004 Florida Health Insurance Study by AHCA and UF, of 13.4% for 0-64 years of age, and 6.2% for 0-18 years. (HCAB Report, November 19, 2008).

The infant mortality rate in the County was 11 per 1,000 live births from 2003-2005. Teenage pregnancy includes 15.9% of girls ages 15-17 having repeated births. Also, county teenagers are infected with sexually transmitted infections approximately 1.57 times the state average.

Underlying some of these problems related to community health and behavior, 23% of our population lives in poverty. Over half of all Alachua County births are covered by Medicaid. In 2007, 11.6% of adults could not see a doctor due to cost and 22.9% could not see the dentist.

### Recent Legislative Changes

In August 2005, Congress established the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program primarily to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school. The SRTS program broadens the federal transportation role in that it is the first surface transportation program designed to address concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety of children traveling to and from school, childhood obesity and inactivity, and traffic and environmental problems in the vicinity of schools, rather than primarily to address broader concerns about the condition of surface transportation infrastructure or highway safety.

## INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS ON RELEVANT VARIABLES

2005 Health and Human Services Master Plan (186 pages, posted online at <http://alachuacounty.us/government/depts/css/health.aspx>

[www.designforhealth.net](http://www.designforhealth.net)

National Aging in Place Council- A Guide to Aging in Place

<http://www.naipc.org/AGuidetoAginginPlace/tabid/74/Default.aspx>

Local Mental Health System- <http://medinfo.ufl.edu/~compsych/index.html>

## STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE

Adopt a Community Health Element into the Comprehensive Plan in order to impart reasonable value to individual and public health concerns, obviate potential impacts of future development on public health, and responsibly manage growth to better facilitate health care delivery and preserve the health of Alachua County residents to the best of the county's ability.

Detailed below are initial priority areas of focus identified by the Health Care Advisory Board and approved by the County Commission upon which the community health element should be built:

- Improved access and affordability to a comprehensive array of care including primary medical care, specialty care, hospital care, dental care and behavioral health care.
- Elimination of preventable chronic illness.
- Reduction of obesity among adults and children;
- Coordination among local health systems and entities.

- Enhancement of school-based health promotion and activities.
- Sensitivity to needs of special populations and those populations affected by health disparities.

The Health Care Advisory Board Report includes a list of potential strategies to consider addressing these priority areas. This report also recommends guiding principles.

Work on the Community Health Element should also incorporate the following:

#### **DESIGN APPROACH- "ACTIVE LIVING"**

Rodriguez, et.al. note need for awareness of the connection between planning and health, mechanisms to support coordination across disciplines and departments, and data generation and sharing. A study of walkable neighborhoods reported 3 walkability factors: mix of shops, homes, and schools, residential density, and a number of connecting streets (American Journal of Preventative Medicine, February 2005). Traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. (Source: ITE [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3734/is\\_199707/ai\\_n8781078](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3734/is_199707/ai_n8781078)). This is important to create walkable communities.

There are policies in the County Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Mobility, Recreation, and Conservation and Open Space Elements) that will provide a framework for building on active living concepts.

#### **LINK SERVICES APPROACH & POLICY APPROACH**

1. GRACE (10 year Plan to End Homelessness) includes these recommendations:

- Seek funding-locally, creative funding options could include an allocation of a portion of development funds for homeless initiatives and approaching Shands Healthcare and North Florida Regional Medical Center to assist with prevention and other health care programs for homeless (which will result in a cost savings to these medical centers).
- Implement the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) at the system-wide level to facilitate coordination of services.

2. Implement Public Schools Facility Element [Existing] Policy 3.4.1 Safe Ways to School-

Alachua County shall coordinate with the School Board of Alachua County to implement in the annual review and update of the Capital Improvement Program.

Work will expand existing Future Land Use policies requiring major health facilities should be accessible by mass transit. Support facilities and services shall locate in close proximity to hospitals. The Future Land Use Map designates areas for Institutional/Medical land uses where new major health facilities, e.g., hospitals and medical complexes shall be located. Other health facilities such as outpatient medical clinics, including emergency facilities and nursing homes, may be allowed in the urban cluster in areas designated on the Future Land Use Map for Institutional, Institutional/Medical, Commercial, Medium-High Density Residential, and High Density Residential, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts. Outpatient clinics, including emergency facilities, may be allowed in areas designated for Rural/Agricultural uses and Rural Clusters on the Future Land Use Map subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts. [The specific policies are included in the Appendix].

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The objective of Economic Development within communities is to create a set of conditions that allow and encourage existing and new employers to meet local economic objectives, including conditions such as an adequate supply of land properly zoned for employment-oriented activities. Other economic development objectives include provision of essential infrastructure and services, finding new and unique ways to bring new dollars into the local economy, and making efforts to create and retain jobs in the community. The EAR addresses these objectives through analysis of the following issues:

- Promotion of job diversification/creation/retention
- Linkage between tourism and arts development
- Evaluate policies promoting nature based tourism
- Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives
- Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)
- Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for industrial and office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies

### Job Creation and Retention

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Promotion of job diversification, creation, and retention.

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Economic development is a complex, multi-dimensional process that involves a series of efforts to build and improve the economic foundation of a community. Economic development for local governments has three broad components:

1. Policies to meet wide-ranging economic objectives (e.g., high employment, large tax base, sustainable growth);
2. Policies and programs to provide infrastructure and services (e.g., affordable housing, education, transportation system); and,
3. Policies and programs directed toward job creation and retention.

Economic diversity is a means to achieve economic stability. A diverse economic framework generates strength in the community because no single economic sector is relied upon too heavily. This insulates the economy of the community from severe repercussions if an important segment of the economy experiences a serious downturn.

The creation of jobs for all residents is the first crucial step toward creating vibrant communities. Economic opportunity is provided through job creation and retention. Opportunities for entrepreneurship, small business development and expansion and job training are also key components of economic development.

The Council for Economic Outreach (CEO) is the designated economic development entity for Alachua County. CEO works with Alachua County and municipalities within Alachua County to secure resources available to new and expanding businesses and industries through the following programs:

- Site Location Assistance

- Quick Response Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Qualified Target Industry Tax Incentive
- Local Government Permitting Assistance.<sup>17</sup>

As the primary contact for businesses and industries looking to locate or expand in Alachua County, CEO assists in the site selection process, maintains information on existing industrial sites, provides labor and training information, markets Alachua County as a business location, and provides demographic data and economic analysis.

**DATA AND ANALYSIS**

**Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

Policy 1.1.5 of the Economic Element basically sets the framework for Alachua County’s economic development program. The function of implementing this program is currently performed by the Council for Economic Outreach.

**Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables**

The following table provides data on the major employers in Alachua County with the type of industry and number of employees.

**Table 6.8. Major Employers in Alachua County (with 1,000 or more Employees)**

Name	Industry	Number of Employees
University of Florida	Education	14,723
Shands Hospital	Healthcare	12,588
Veterans Affairs Medical Center	Healthcare	4,317
Alachua County School Board	Education	4,299
City of Gainesville	City Government	2,200
Publix Supermarkets	Grocery	2,056
North Florida Regional Medical Center	Healthcare	1,700
Nationwide Insurance	Insurance	1,300*
<b>Alachua County</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>1,120</b>

SOURCE: COUNCIL FOR ECONOMIC OUTREACH

\*DATA DOES NOT REFLECT RE-STRUCTURING.

<sup>17</sup> [www.gainesvillechamber.com](http://www.gainesvillechamber.com)

**Table 6.9. Employment by Industry in Alachua County & Florida**

Type of Industry	Alachua County	State of Florida
Agriculture, Forestry, Mining	1%	1%
Construction	6%	11%
Manufacturing	4%	6%
Wholesale Trade	1%	4%
Retail Trade	10%	13%
Transportation & Warehousing	2%	5%
Information	2%	2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	6%	9%
Professional, Administrative	10%	11%
Education, Healthcare, Social Service	40%	18%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Hotel & Food Service	9%	10%
Public Administration	4%	5%
Other Services	5%	5%

SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2006

The next table shows the household income distribution for Alachua County and the State of Florida.

**Table 6.10. Alachua County & State of Florida: Household Income**

Income Dollars	Alachua County		State of Florida	
	# of Households	Percent	# of Households	Percent
Less than \$10,000	13,798	14.3%	543,202	7.6%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	7,960	8.3%	423,588	5.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	13,848	14.4%	882,568	12.4%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	10,421	10.8%	879,081	12.3%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13,440	14%	1,128,398	15.8%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	14,017	14.6%	1,360,289	19.1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	9,213	9.6%	776,410	10.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7,192	7.5%	680,283	9.6%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3,890	4%	204,551	2.8%
\$200,000 or more	2,118	2.2%	227,672	3.2%
Total Households	95,897	100%	7,106,042	100%
Median Income	\$36,899		\$45,495	

SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2006.

#### EMPLOYMENT

According to information provided in an overview of the Alachua-Bradford Regional Workforce Board, the Gainesville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced the largest over-the-year gain and the fastest job growth rate of all Florida metropolitan areas from October 2007 to October 2008. This is largely attributed to gains in the number of jobs in the leisure and hospitality sector and government sector. Other industry sectors experiencing gains were trade, transportation and utilities, information, and education and health services. Those gains were somewhat offset by losses in the construction, financial activities, professional and business services and manufacturing sectors. Overall, total non-agricultural employment was up by 0.5% (or 700 jobs) over the year.

While the unemployment rate for Alachua County remains lower than that of the State of Florida, the period from October 2007 to October 2008 saw an increase in unemployment from 2.9% to 4.6%.

#### POVERTY

Following the 2000 Census, Alachua County requested a Special Tabulation on Poverty removing college students from the tabulation. With a non-college population (for 1999) of 187,570, there were 26,085 persons – or 13.9% of the non-college population in Alachua County – living at or below the poverty level. While this poverty rate is considerably lower than the overall rate of nearly 23% (including the college student population), Alachua County's rate is higher than the State of Florida's poverty rate – 12.5% in



2000.<sup>18</sup> Due to the costs involved, the Special Tabulation focused on individuals and did not address poverty among different age groups, ethnic or racial groups, geographic location (within the County) and family status. The following table provides the income guidelines for determining poverty levels as prescribed in 1999.

**Table 6.11. Alachua County Poverty Guidelines (1999)**

Persons in Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$8,501
2	\$10,869
3	\$13,290
4	\$17,029
5	\$20,127
6	\$22,727
7	\$25,912
8	\$28,967
9 or more	\$34,417

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, HOUSING & HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STATISTICS DIVISION

**STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

Review and update the Economic Element based on an assessment of the Economic Development Strategic Plan in terms of its adequacy as a comprehensive economic development strategy that:

- builds on the community's assets; and,
- incorporates economic, physical, environmental, community, and human development.

This strategy should include measurable goals and performance benchmarks.

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<sup>18</sup> Florida Fact Sheet, American Fact Finder, U. S. Bureau of Census.

## Industrial and Office Land

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

How to enhance the economic strength of the community in a sustainable manner that protects natural resources, including:

- Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for Industrial and Office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Industrial and Office land uses are an important component of the community and provide direct and indirect benefits that contribute to the quality of life in the community. Some of these benefits are short- and long-term employment, creation of related businesses, assistance in technology transfer, construction, and enhancement of the tax base.

In 2007, the Alachua County Council for Economic Outreach (CEO) developed its Special Task Force – Space/Land Report. The report, presented to the County Commission in April of 2008, discussed the availability of industrial and commercial land throughout Alachua County. The discussion included information from the CEO regarding the types of businesses investigating locating in Alachua County. The Report indicated that the most requested facilities were office spaces between 30,000 and 50,000 square feet and bio-technology facilities between 10,000 and 25,000 square feet. According to the Report, the CEO was only able to place 11 of 42 projects during a 15 month period (A total of 1.8 million sf of building space was requested, and there was 580,000 sf of space available). The report emphasized that most businesses wanting to locate in Alachua County are not interested in the traditional industrial park, but are instead looking for more modern alternatives. According to the report, “larger companies want a professional looking building, often times in a campus-like setting, close to amenities such as coffee shops, lunch spots, and recreation” that appeal to the “creative class.” The report also identified several other jurisdictions that compete with Alachua County for recruiting of new businesses. These comparable locations include: Ocala; Tallahassee; Valdosta, GA; Birmingham, AL; Greenville, SC; the Raleigh-Durham, NC area; Colorado Springs, CO; Boston, MA; and San Diego, CA.

The types of land and buildings requested from potential businesses highlights the point that the nature of Industrial land uses is changing. “The changes that reflect today’s industry sectors create problems in defining ‘Industrial Land’. In earlier decades industrial land was used to make, assemble, process, and store products for sale and shipment. New production techniques, varying space requirements, flex buildings, and ‘flex zoning’ have changed the once straightforward definition. Research and development functions are now an integral part of many contemporary manufacturing operations, as are headquarters functions, sales and showroom operations, and computer operations that control production and manage records. Flex space buildings; in particular, afford a wide range of uses not found in traditional land use definitions – office showrooms, business centers and office warehouses are uses not found in older industrial parks or areas. These uses often demand street or highway visibility and access as well as above average landscaping. (Palm Beach County Light Industrial Land Use Study: White Paper prepared by Swiger Consulting, p. 7)

A benefit of industrial and commercial property is its contribution to the local economy in terms of wages paid to employees, property taxes, and relatively light demand for public services. “Manufacturing and commercial properties cost a community less for services such as police, EMS, and fire protection, water and sewer than residential or institutionally zoned properties.” “A recent study in Leon County, Florida, found that

for each dollar of revenue generated by industrial and commercial-use land in that county, expenditures were only thirty-six cents. On the other hand, residentially zoned land had expenditures of \$1.38 for each dollar of revenue, indicating that residential development does cost appreciably more to service than industrial or commercial uses.” (Palm Beach County Light Industrial Land Use Study: White Paper prepared by Swiger Consulting, p.19) “According to the National Association of Manufacturers, manufacturing jobs pay an average of 25 percent above what the rest of the workforce receives. Industrial businesses also bolster the local and regional economies by supporting and creating jobs in other business sectors such as finance, construction, transportation, and trade, according to the manufacturers association. (“Blue Collar, Green Collar”, *Planning* magazine, February, 2009) “High Technology Manufacturing” land uses typically generate more revenue than the cost of providing public services for them. In addition to generating jobs and creating wealth in the community, they serve as low-cost taxable property that helps support the cost of other types of land uses.” (Palm Beach County Light Industrial Land Use Study: White Paper prepared by Swiger Consulting, p.20)

Evaluation of the Alachua County Industrial and Office future land use categories includes:

- analysis of the current quantity and location of land designated for Industrial and Office uses,
- the amount of Industrial and Office land that has been annexed by other jurisdictions, and evaluation of Industrial and Office land use Objectives and implementing Policies,
- identification and evaluation of emerging technologies, processes and business sectors that are suited for Industrial and Office lands,
- identification of emerging economic sectors that are not adequately accommodated within Alachua County’s existing Industrial and Office land use categories,
- evaluation of current and emerging development and performance standards, desired practices, and operational requirements, and analysis of economic and sustainability factors associated with successful Industrial and Office uses.

## REVIEW OF CURRENT FUTURE LAND USE POLICIES

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

#### Industrial

The Industrial Future Land Use policies are contained in Part 4.0 of the Future Land Use Element. Objective 4.1 states:

Industrial land use categories shall be established to allow for a range of industrial activities, subject to the policies and standards contained in this Chapter. Industrial developments are characterized by the fabrication, manufacturing, transporting, warehousing or distribution of goods.

The policies further identify that industrial activities are appropriately located within the urban cluster (Policy 4.1.1). An exception is provided for “material-oriented” development. These types of uses are dependent on resources or materials located or produced in the rural areas of the County and proximate to the site of their production. Policy 4.1.2 directs the County to identify land areas and locations for the different types of industrial uses that are anticipated to locate in Alachua County. Specifically, the Policy directs that the “County shall identify a number of potential locations with suitable infrastructure, including parcels with rail access, interstate access, or proximity to cargo terminals, and suitable environmental characteristics for such uses.” This policy seems to be oriented toward industrial development that has high volumes of truck or rail shipments both in and out of the facility. Furthermore, the Policy clearly requires evaluation of environmental characteristics on Industrial Future Land Uses.

Policy 4.5.1 defines the Light Industrial Future Land Use designation. The Light Industrial areas are intended to allow for “industrial parks or office parks in a campus like setting.” The Policy directs that this designation only be used for “large” tracts of land, either within or outside the urban cluster. While the Policy directs that “stringent” development standards be developed to limit any adverse impacts, no further guidance is provided. Lastly, “certain” research and development facilities, along with warehousing, transportation, and distribution uses, “may be appropriate.”

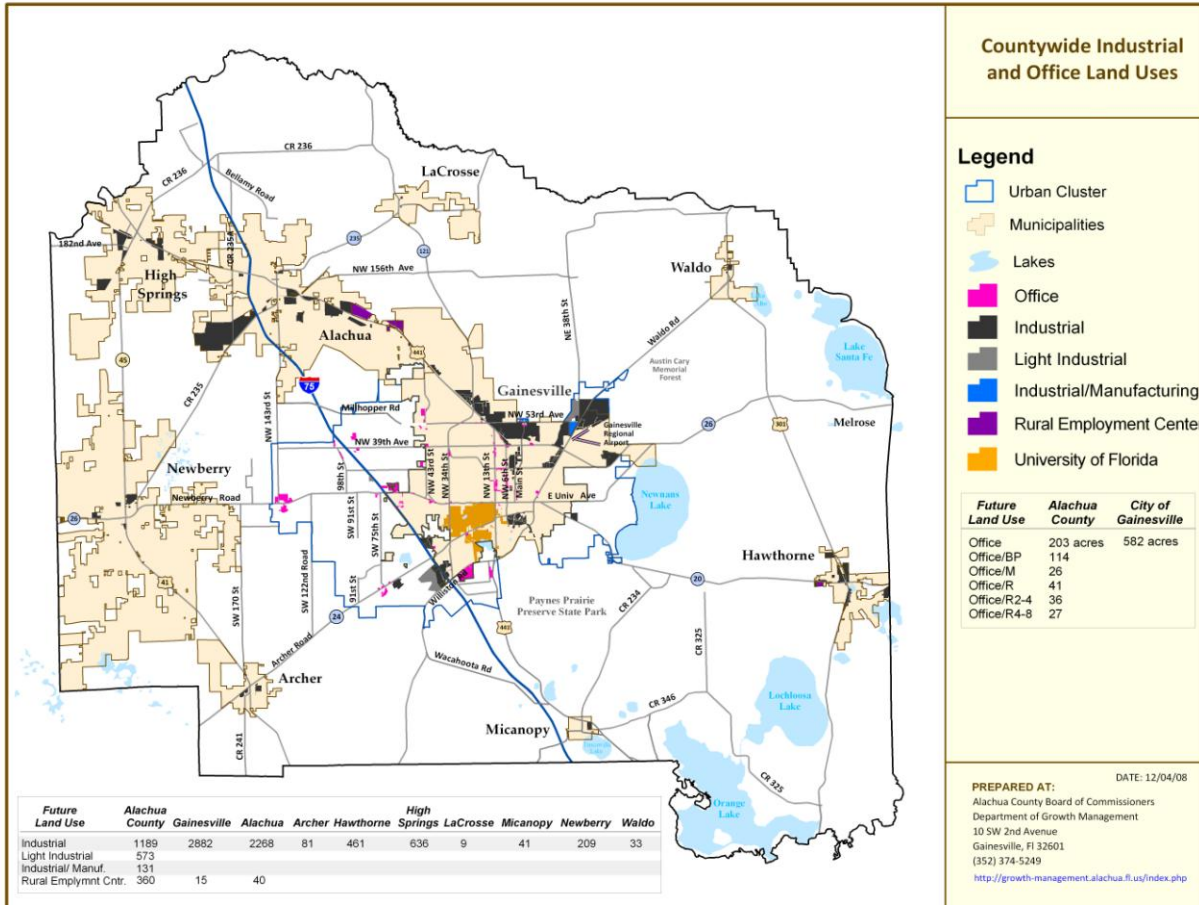
### **Office**

Office land uses are defined in Policy 3.9. Specifically, the Policy states “An Office land use category shall be established for individual offices or office parks to provide for professional and business services, exclusive of retail trade.” The Policy directs that Office uses should only be allowed in activity centers, planned developments, traditional neighborhood developments, rural employment centers, and rural clusters. Furthermore, the policy indicates that, while office uses are not appropriate between low and medium density residential, they are appropriate along major roadways along with high density residential uses.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Quantity and Distribution of Land Assessment

**Map 6.6: Countywide Industrial and Office Land Use Designations**



### INDUSTRIAL

The various categories of industrial future land use currently make up approximately 2,193 acres of unincorporated Alachua County (Table 6.12), with 1,833 acres (83%) located within the Urban Cluster. Approximately 1,442 acres (65%) of all industrial land is undeveloped. Within the Urban Cluster, 71% of industrial land is vacant. Lands within the Urban Cluster are relatively less developed than those located in the rural areas.

**Table 6.12. Quantity of Industrial Future Land Use by Designation and Location, 2008**

Future Land Use Category	All Unincorporated		Urban Cluster	
	Total	Vacant	Total	Vacant
Heavy Industrial	1,002.9	579.4	1002.9	579.4
Industrial/Manufacturing	131.2	93.9	131.2	93.9
Light Industrial	598.2	567.2	598.2	567.2
Rural Community Employment Center	32.7	27.3		
Rural Employment Center	326.8	113.8		
Warehouse/Distribution	100.7	60.8	100.7	60.8
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,192.5</b>	<b>1442.4</b>	<b>1,833.0</b>	<b>1,301.3</b>

Map 6.6 (above) shows the location of Industrial and Office land use designations throughout Alachua County and the municipalities. Map 6.7 (next page) shows the location of undeveloped Industrial and Office land use designations throughout Alachua County and the municipalities.

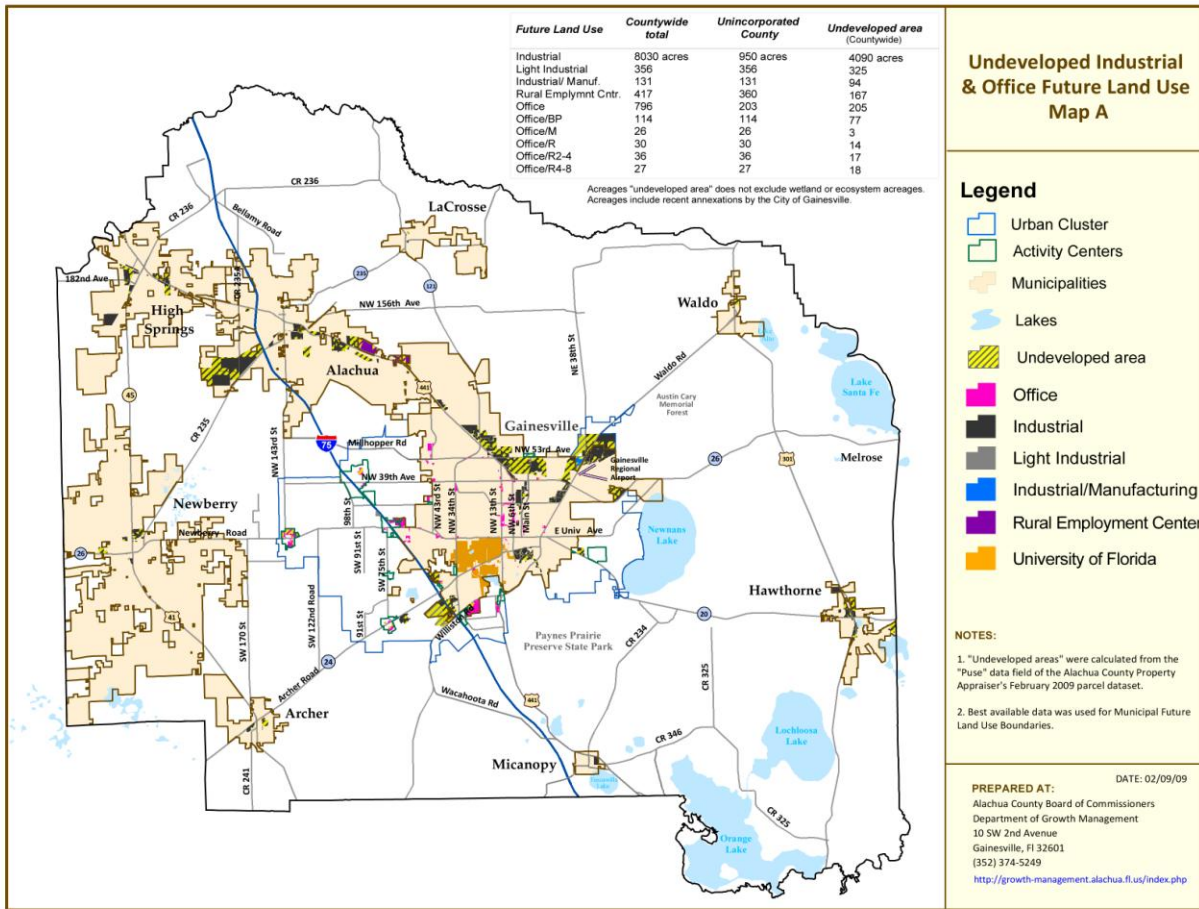
**OFFICE**

At the current time, office land uses include 427 acres of land in the unincorporated area (Table 6.13). All office land uses are located within the Urban Cluster. Office land use categories range from the relatively high-intensity Office/Business Park to the lower-intensity Office/Residential categories. Approximately 262.1 acres (62%) of Office land is undeveloped.

**Table 6.13. Quantity of Office Future Land Use by Designation, 2008**

Future Land Use Category	Total	Vacant
Office	200.1	132.7
Office/Business Park	112.9	76.7
Office/Medical	22.2	3.1
Office/Residential	28.4	14.4
Office/Residential (2-4 du/acre)	36.4	16.9
Office/Residential (4-8 du/acre)	27.0	18.3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>427.0</b>	<b>262.1</b>

Map 6.7: Undeveloped Industrial or Office FLU designation



**ANNEXATION/REDESIGNATION OF LAND**

In 2002, at the time of adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan, the unincorporated portion of the County included approximately 2,607 acres of land designated for Industrial or Office land uses. Since that time, 319 acres of Industrial land use and 80.04 acres of Office land use have been either re-designated to other land use categories (through comprehensive plan amendments) or have been annexed by other local governments (Table 6.14). It should be noted that the immediate effect of annexations of Industrial or Office land is simply a change in the local government jurisdiction, which does not necessarily affect the land use designation immediately.



**Table 6.14. Quantity of Industrial and Office Land Uses, 2002 - 2008**

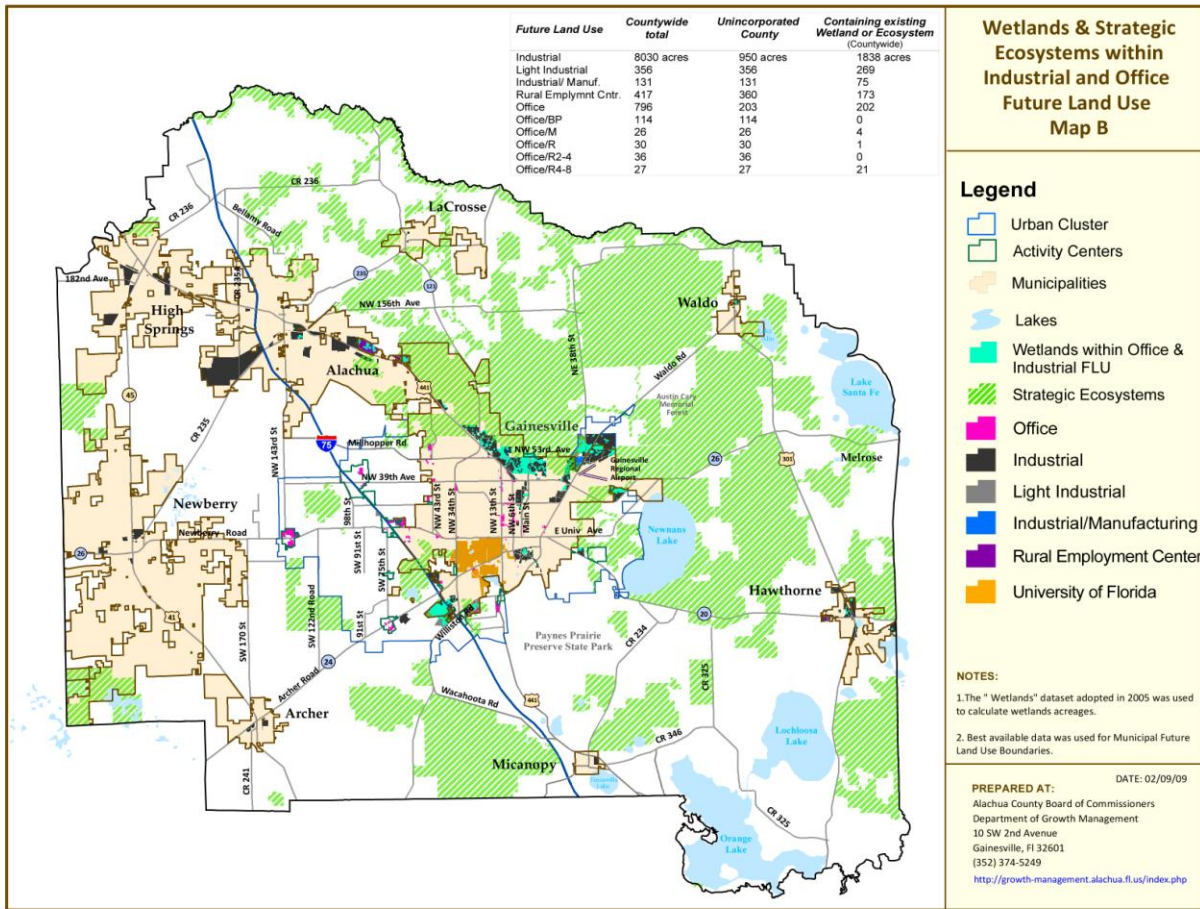
	2002 Acres	2005 Acres	2008 Acres	Change, 2002-2008
Annexed	0	183.04	367.20	367.20
Commercial	0	7.20	12.88	12.88
Heavy Industrial	1202.29	1202.29	1015.33	-186.96
Light Industrial	730.91	602.31	598.66	-132.25
Industrial/Manufacturing	131.31	131.31	131.31	0.00
Low Density Residential	6.48	6.48	35.05	28.57
Office/Business Park	145.17	145.17	113.77	-31.40
Office/Medical	34.07	25.65	25.65	-8.42
Office/Residential	42.67	21.42	29.95	-12.72
Office/Residential (2-4du/acre)	36.59	36.59	36.59	0.00
Office/Residential (4-8du/acre)	27.03	27.03	27.03	0.00
Office	230.78	198.81	203.28	-27.50
Tourist/Entertainment	0.00	0.00	10.49	10.49
Medium Density Residential	19.89	19.89	0.00	-19.89
				<b>-367.20</b>

NOTE: LANDS USED IN THIS ANALYSIS ARE EITHER CURRENTLY DESIGNATED OFFICE OR INDUSTRIAL LAND USE, OR WERE PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED OFFICE OR INDUSTRIAL LAND USE. ACREAGES ARE WHAT EXISTED AT BEGINNING OF YEAR STATED, EXCEPT FOR YEAR 2008; THAT IS WHAT CURRENTLY EXISTS

### SUITABILITY OF INDUSTRIAL SITED LANDS

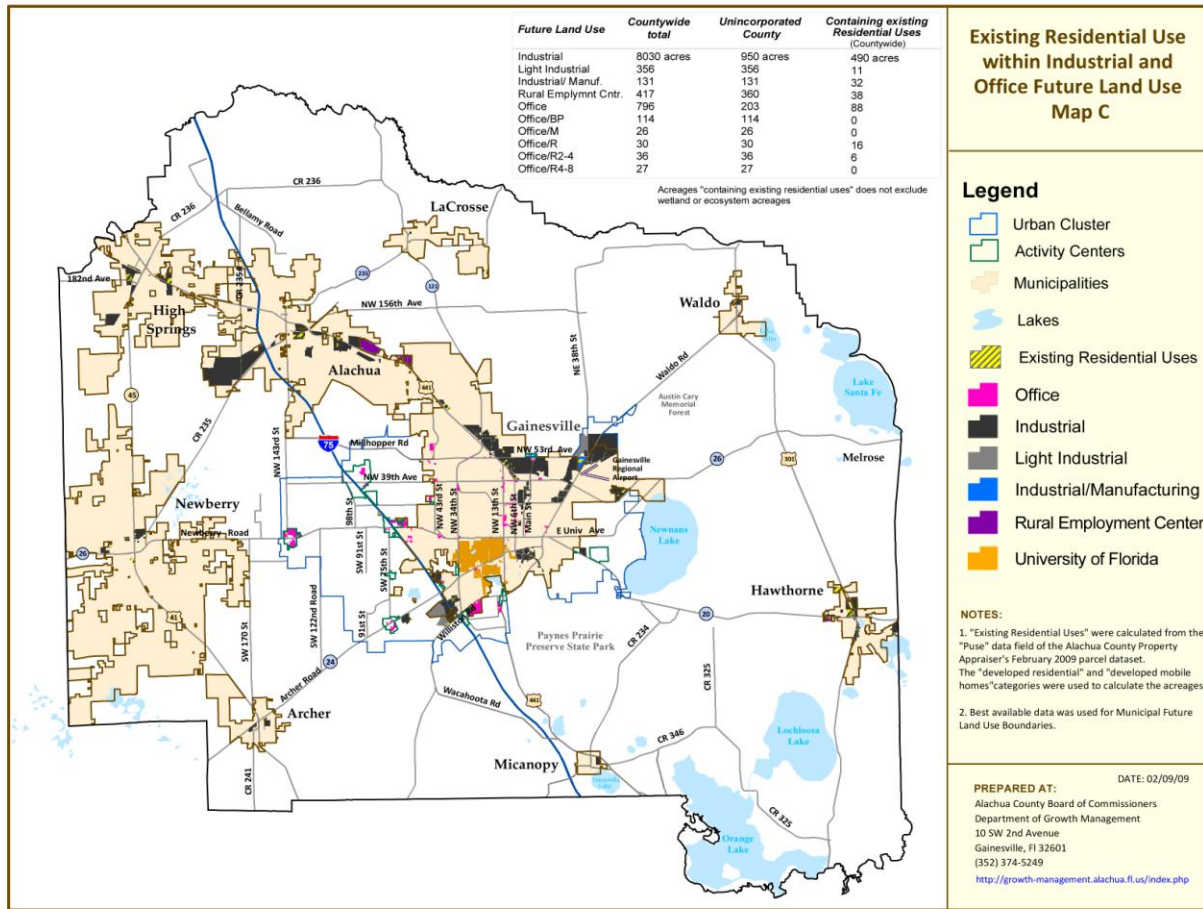
There are locations throughout the County where the Industrial future land use designation may be in conflict with environmental or development patterns and conditions should be re-evaluated to determine whether the Industrial land use designation is appropriate. One identified conflict is the designation of Strategic Ecosystems on lands with Industrial Land Use. The Strategic Ecosystem designation requires an additional set-aside of undeveloped land that further limits the amount of available Industrial land. Map 6.8 (below) shows the location of existing wetlands or Strategic Ecosystems on land with Industrial and Office land use designations throughout Alachua County and the municipalities.

Map 6.8: Key map of Wetlands or Ecosystems with Industrial FLU designation



A second conflict is that some existing Industrial land is currently used for pre-existing residential purposes, creating the potential for non-conforming use conflicts. Map 6.9 (below) shows the location of existing residential uses on land with Industrial and Office land use designations throughout Alachua County and the municipalities.

Map 6.9: Key map of Residential uses with Industrial or Office FLU designation



A number of communities nationwide have observed trends in industrial uses and processes and have undertaken studies of their respective communities' industrial lands. Communities such as Jacksonville, Jupiter, and Palm Beach County in Florida and states including Oregon, Washington, and New York have studied the issue of the supply of available industrial land. (Palm Beach County Light Industrial Land Use Study: White Paper prepared by Swiger Consulting)

"In many instances, areas lack adequate public utilities and the basic framework for economic development... For many of the smaller municipalities in the North Florida region, the lack of wastewater treatment is an impediment to growth. Directly associated with the lack of existing infrastructure is the lack of local financial resources with which to finance the cost of infrastructure improvements. Many local communities do not have the financial capacity to purchase sites suitable for industrial development or to extend the necessary utilities to those sites. Nor do they have the monetary resources to finance community facilities such as recreation facilities or cultural centers. These types of facilities, while not absolutely necessary to enhance economic development, make a community more attractive to private investors." (NCF EDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2008-2012)

## TRENDS AND TARGETED INDUSTRIES FOR ALACHUA COUNTY AND NORTH FLORIDA REGION

Targeted industries are those groups of businesses that the County has previously identified for recruitment to the community. The targeted industries for Alachua County are emerging types of industries such as pharmaceutical/biotechnology, surgical, medical and dental instruments and supply, and electronics, instruments and telecommunications equipment, clean industry including manufacturing sectors, and research parks and regional headquarters type businesses. The following section assesses the current and past industry trends in Alachua County in order to begin to ascertain what areas the County may need to focus on in order to attract targeted industries.

### Targeted Industries for Alachua County and North Florida Region:

Following are recommended objectives and targeted industries compiled from the reports of various agencies in Alachua County and the North Florida Region.

### Strategic Plan for Sustainable Economic Development Alachua County, Florida

This plan was developed to provide a framework for making consistent decisions regarding the use of community resources for projects, and to improve the coordination among the many organizations participating in economic development activities. Six issue areas are identified in the paper and following are excerpts related to industrial land use.

- Objective: Enable Alachua County to become a leader in the development and expansion of businesses in the technology and telecommunication sectors, known as the “New Economy.”
- Target economic development efforts in specific areas that increase diversity and opportunity of employment, while supporting and expanding existing assets
  - Pursue and encourage specific ‘clean’ industrial sectors:
    - a. Business services
    - b. Transportation and distribution
    - c. Communication services
    - d. Medical and pharmaceuticals, including biotech
    - e. Technology driven manufacturing
    - f. Electronics and other electrical equipment
    - g. Regional or corporate headquarters
    - h. Information technology
    - i. Research and development
    - j. Eco-tourism
    - k. Multimedia productions
- Develop business parks (employment centers) integrated with residential and retail development where feasible.

### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2008-2012 (North Central Florida Economic Development District)

Enterprise Florida worked with the North Central Florida Economic Development District through a series of workshops to identify target industries for the creation of catalyst projects that hope to increase those industries. They analyzed trends, statewide initiatives, and goals of economic development groups to identify clusters of focus:

- Pharmaceutical/Biotechnology
- Surgical, Medical and Dental Instruments and Supply
- Electronics, Instruments and Telecommunications Equipment

The industries that are either growing, have been targeted as high skill, high-wage area of desired growth, or fill needs in economic diversification for the region are as follows:

- Logistics and distribution
- Building Component Design and Manufacturing
- Aviation Services and Products
- Bio-Fuels and Energy
- Healthcare Services and Products

#### **Energy Conservation Strategies Commission Recommendations Concerning Economic Development:**

- Encourage energy conservation businesses, alternative energy businesses, and waste-based industries.
- Determine food processing facilities needed to process locally-grown foods. Identify other food-related infrastructure needs and local (or regional) solutions. As an economic development strategy, encourage development and/or location of food processing facilities within the County.

#### **TYPES OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Industrial uses have historically been associated with high-intensity uses and activities, and may have some level of nuisance associated with them. Office uses can provide a transitional or “step-down” land use between higher intensity uses (such as commercial or industrial districts) and lower intensity uses (such as residential districts).

Traditional industrial development is often considered to require highly intense resource use that may have negative external impacts on surrounding properties. Indeed, Objective 4.1 of the Future Land Use Element says “Industrial developments are characterized by the fabrication, manufacturing, transporting, warehousing or distribution of goods.” While this description may be applicable today, the similarities of modern clean manufacturing to historic manufacturing is limited. Many would imagine manufacturing as a steel mill: large buildings, rail shipments of iron ore and coal, smokestacks billowing black smoke into the air. To be certain, this would not describe even the limited amount of “heavy industry” we have in Alachua County. These historic industries are typically associated with their nuisances: noise, smoke, glare, and odor.

In contrast to the historic “heavy industry” described in the Comprehensive Plan, many new clean manufacturing industries have limited nuisance impacts on their neighbors. These less impacting manufacturing facilities have developed from competition, technology, and environmental regulation. For example, the businesses located at Progress Corporate Park in the City of Alachua are manufacturing oriented. However, from the outside, there is little to compare to the industrial chemical manufacturing located within the City of Gainesville’s Airport Industrial Park.



The following two definitions provide an idea about new types of industry. These are, specifically, definitions for “research and development facility”:

**An establishment which conducts research, development, or controlled production of high-technology electronic, industrial, or scientific products or commodities for sale or laboratories conducting educational or medical research or testing. This term includes but is not limited to a biotechnology firm or a manufacturer of nontoxic computer components. (Milwaukee, Wisc.)**

**A use engaged in research and development, testing, assembly, repair, and manufacturing in the following industries: biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical instrumentation or supplies, communications and information technology, electronics and instrumentation, and computer hardware and software. Office, warehousing, wholesaling, and distribution of the finished products produced at the site are allowed as part of this use. (Burien, Wash.)**

These definitions provide for those types of industries targeted by local economic development organizations.

**The typical research park in the United States is located in a suburban community with a population of less than 500,000. Most research parks are operated by a university or university-affiliated non-profit. Tenants are primarily private-sector companies but also include university or government facilities. University research parks provide a range of business services to their client companies, many through incubators. The typical park has 750 employees in primarily in the following sectors: IT-related industries, drug and pharmaceutical firms, and scientific and engineering providers. These fields account for 45 percent of all university research park jobs. (Characteristics and Trends in North American Research Parks: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Directions, Executive Summary, p.viii; prepared by Batelle Technology Partnership Practice)**

**A new model is emerging – strategically planned mixed-use campus expansions that include space for academic and industrial uses. These parks incorporate on-site amenities which are considered important in attracting innovative employees, and research parks are being developed to leverage the assets of non-university R&D organizations such as federal laboratories. More emphasis is being placed on sustainability as a design principle, while international partnerships are becoming more important in university research parks. (Characteristics and Trends in North American Research Parks: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Directions, Executive Summary, p.xi; prepared by Batelle Technology Partnership Practice)**

## RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

### Development of Regional Impact Thresholds (Section 380.0651(3))

(c) *Industrial plants, industrial parks, and distribution, warehousing or wholesaling facilities.*--Any proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or distribution, warehousing, or wholesaling facility, excluding wholesaling developments which deal primarily with the general public onsite, under common ownership, or any proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing activity or distribution, warehousing, or wholesaling activity, excluding wholesaling activities which deal primarily with the general public onsite, which:

1. Provides parking for more than 2,500 motor vehicles; or
2. Occupies a site greater than 320 acres.

(d) *Office development.*--Any proposed office building or park operated under common ownership, development plan, or management that:

1. Encompasses 300,000 or more square feet of gross floor area; or
2. Encompasses more than 600,000 square feet of gross floor area in a county with a population greater than 500,000 and only in a geographic area specifically designated as highly suitable for increased threshold intensity in the approved local comprehensive plan.

## UPCOMING PROJECTS

The County is currently working on plans for a Resource Recovery Park. Alachua County has purchased approximately 75 acres of land adjacent to the east side of the Leveda Brown Environmental Park located off of NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, which is south of the future Alachua County Fairgrounds and Industrial Park. “The Resource Recovery Park will serve as a waste to wealth facility and will help the County reach a 75% waste diversion state mandate by 2020. The Park will also create a regional, raw material, green collar job center in eastern Alachua County. Based on Institute for Local Self Reliance Estimates, a regional population base of 1 million people could support waste to reuse operations creating 1500 jobs while generating \$250 million for the local economy.” (*New Alachua County Fairgrounds Economic Stimulus Project report*)

## STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE

Although Alachua County as a whole has a significant amount of industrial land, much of the industrial land is located within the municipalities. Further, Alachua County’s Industrial future land use does not allow for the targeted industries identified in various economic development plans for the area. While the Light Industrial future land use does allow for the targeted industries, there is little of it in the Urban Cluster and much of it is either developed, encumbered by wetlands or strategic ecosystem, or used for residential purposes. The Light Industrial future land use also requires a “campus like setting” that may not translate into the compact urban form identified throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Likewise, the Office future land use specifically excludes retail uses. This limitation on the ability to appropriately incorporate mixed uses into a single development is not consistent with either the goal of creating compact urban development, or with the stated goals of activity centers. The following strategies may be used in addressing the issues associated with sufficiency and definition of Office and Industrial future land uses.

- Update Policies on Industrial and Office land use consistent with employer workforce needs and emerging Industrial and Office land use trends to facilitate recruiting of targeted industries to the



County. Evaluate the need for new land use policies and categories that facilitate the development of targeted industries.

- Review the suitability of location of Industrial and Office uses designated on the Future Land Use Map within the unincorporated county. Modify current Industrial and Office land use designations to resolve conflicts with existing uses or conditions (residential, environmental, etc), facilitate recruitment of targeted industries, and increase development intensity within County Activity Centers and Rural Employment Centers.
- Evaluate land use categories for the location of certain types of agricultural product processing facilities (i.e., food, fuel and fiber) within the County as discussed in the Retention of Agriculture and Agricultural Sustainability issue paper.

## Recycling and Waste Alternatives

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Recycling began in Florida with the 1988 Solid Waste Management Act. Currently, Alachua County generates approximately 800 tons per day (t/d) of municipal solid waste, of which 32% is recycled. Much of this recycled material is processed at the Leveda Brown Environmental Park through SP recycling. SP is a contractor to the County that operates a materials recycling processing facility on site. The remaining 68% is shipped to New River Landfill (Union County) where the disposal fee is \$28.22/ton [based on internal documents from the Division of Waste Management]. Adding the hauling cost (continually rising because of fuel cost), brings the total disposal cost to about \$39/t, for an annual cost of about \$7.8 million. Yard waste of about 4,200 tons per year is taken to Wood Resource Recovery (WRR) located on Highway 121 just north of its intersection with US 441. There it is either chipped for fuel or composted. The annual recycling cost at WRR is about \$94,500. (Source: Alachua County, Florida, Energy Conservation Strategies Commission, July 22, 2008). There is potential for increased recycling and promotion of industries that utilize the materials. (Note: these costs were FY 07-08)

The Alachua County Division of Waste Management provides a variety of solid waste management services, including receiving, collecting and transporting solid waste, and recycling and various methods of promoting waste reduction. The Division also provides disaster debris management in the event of a natural or man-made disaster in Alachua County. Among the programs are the following:

The Leveda Brown Environmental Park and Transfer Station (LBEP):

- Operates the Transfer Station in accordance with Federal, State and local regulations, and in accordance with the operating permit from Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Screens waste for prohibited items prior to transporting to the New River regional landfill
- Recycles vegetative wood waste, pallets, waste tires, scrap metal and appliances
- Provides Hazardous Waste management through the Hazardous Waste Center
- Wood waste is ground into mulch, and the mulch is given away free to the public.
- SP Recycling, Inc., leases the recycling processing facility at the LBEP. This facility receives the recyclable material collected through the City of Gainesville's and the County's curbside collection areas and from the Rural Collection Centers. In addition, this is a regional processing facility, receiving recyclables from several surrounding counties.

Waste Alternatives Office:

- Monitors and reports to Florida Department of Environmental Protection on recycling and waste reduction in Alachua County, as required by Chapter 403, Florida Statutes and Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 62-770
- Educates on ways to increase recycling, reduce disposal costs and save landfill space

- Instills in the next generation, through educational programs, a strong ethic for preserving natural resources through recycling, waste reduction, and reuse
- Through the web-based Alachua Exchange program, at [www.alachuaexchange.com](http://www.alachuaexchange.com), facilitates reuse of surplus materials and products that would otherwise be thrown away
- The Tools for Schools program provides the opportunity for businesses, institutions, and individuals to donate surplus materials and overstocked supplies to public school teachers.
- Promotes innovations with Trashformations Art Competition for middle, high school and college students
- Promotes special events including distribution of compost bins, telephone book recycling, waste tire recycling and various public informational forums and provides recycling containers for special events

#### Waste Collection Office:

- Provides contract management for the volume-based curbside collection of solid waste, recyclable material and yard waste for unincorporated Alachua County
- Meets requirements of Florida Statutes, Section 403.7049, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection Rule 62-708 by collecting and developing information necessary to publish the annual full cost of collection, recycling and disposal of solid waste

#### Rural Collection Centers:

- Provides environmentally sound disposal sites for rural residents to drop off solid waste, recycling, yard waste and Household Hazardous Waste:
- Increases recycling as a percentage of waste
- Screens various categories of waste for prohibited items prior to transporting for disposal or recycling and prevents unsafe disposal of Household Hazardous Waste
- Decreases the amount of illegal dumping

#### ENFORCEMENT:

- Provides both proactive and reactive investigations, inspections and enforcement to achieve a higher degree of compliance with Chapter 75 of the Alachua County Code of Ordinances, especially those sections related to the volume-based collection system and the mandatory commercial recycling ordinance, along with continuing education and assistance.

Alachua County operates a state-of-the-art Hazardous Waste Collection Center (HWCC), which together with five rural collection sites located at the Waste Management Division's Rural Collection Centers throughout the County, anchors a Hazardous Waste (HW) Collection Program that serves over 30,000 households and 2,000 small businesses and processes over 1.6 million pounds of hazardous waste each year. The County's HW program promotes reuse, recycles or properly disposes of household chemicals, motor oil, automotive products, batteries, pesticides, oil-based and latex paints, fluorescent lamps, and electronic scrap including computer monitors and televisions. Currently more than 80% of all household and small business hazardous waste that is collected is reused or recycled. Of the total 1.6 million pounds collected, 15 % of 240,000 lbs annually are reused. Recycling of hazardous waste includes the recycling of automotive fluids, oils, and



A Recycling Materials Development Zone program, allowing incentives such as low lease rate, tax reductions or carbon credits, could handle traditional recyclables such as metal, plastic and paper. These programs could also handle building materials from deconstructed buildings, electrical components from discarded electronics goods, and other goods from salvage operations. Market development is an important part of zero waste. Overall benefits of a RMDZ include energy savings, GHG reductions, job creation, decreased landfilling, one stop shopping locations, economic development benefits, and public awareness of sustainability. The local payroll for 1,500 or more waste-related jobs could be up to \$50,000,000, according to the US EPA

Composition of Construction and Demolition Debris is Concrete and Mixed Rubble (40-50%); Wood (20-30%); Drywall (5-15%); Asphalt Roofing (1-10%); Metals (1- 5%); Bricks (1- 5%); and Plastics(1-5%).Source: Construction and Demolition (C&D) Materials, EPA (cited by ECSC)

OBJECTIVE 1.5 has been achieved through the Waste Alternatives Program which provides public education and resources for our community on a new philosophy in waste reduction; “Embrace Zero Waste”. Waste Alt programs focus on source reduction, recycling, composting, household hazardous waste and litter prevention using a variety of learning tools. Waste Alternative Specialists visit schools throughout the County using our own School Board of Alachua County (SBAC) approved curriculum for students in grades pre-K through 12. School recycling/composting programs include Recycling in Your School, Composting in Your School. Presentations are also provided to civic groups and businesses. A large multi media campaign supports our program and serves as an additional outreach mechanism to our community. Costume characters (The Waste Watcher, Big Blue, Litter Pal, and Compost Kid) are included.

The County Office of Waste Alternatives assists businesses in compliance with the Mandatory Commercial Recycling Ordinance and sponsors multi-media (mass media) public education campaign targeting all businesses and residents in the County utilizing Public Service Announcements (television and radio spots), Waste Watchers Tips (of the month) via email; Press releases; Websites (TheWasteWatcher.com, Tools for Schools.com, AlachuaExchange.com) and print media in the form of educational brochures and guides.

Objective 1.7 which requires the County to maintain a safe and economic disposal and recycling of household hazardous waste is being successfully met by the operations and services of the Hazardous Waste Collection Program with the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department. The program has been effective in increasing public awareness and recycling of electronic waste in particular, and has been recognized statewide and nationally for its proactive environmental focus.

### **Comprehensive Plan Implementation- Economic Element**

Policy 1.5.1. requires that Alachua County shall expand its economic base by creating an environment which encourages entrepreneurship. Dr. Neil Seldman, Waste to Wealth lecturer from the Institute of Self Reliance, has recommended to Alachua County green collar jobs with the opportunity to take advantage of a local resource management programs. These programs could divert large amounts of materials from disposal, create small businesses and job opportunities for residents, and result in reduced energy consumption.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Promote Recycling Market Development Zone and Resource Recovery Park as low-impact industrial development
- Mandatory Curbside Recycling
- Economic Development Business Recruitment
- Composting (anaerobic or aerobic) organic waste

## Tourism and Arts/Culture Development

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Promote eco-tourism and linkage between tourism and arts/culture development.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Artistic enterprises, eco-tourism and the cultural milieu are important to the ambiance and economy of Alachua County. When a community attracts cultural tourists, it harnesses even greater economic rewards. Non-local audiences spend twice as much as their local counterparts (\$40.19 versus \$19.53)(Americans for the Arts).

“The issue of heritage corridors ties perfectly with tourism—building cultural resources and recreation resources, and then linking them as tourist attractions, and building economic development from that theory of tourist attractions....” (Jane Brooks, Nov. 1999, The City Parks Forum). The Old Florida Heritage Highway, a state designated scenic highway, links two state parks and several historic communities. Improving this connection through enhanced bicycle network will promote tourism, since Visit Florida data indicates bicycling is a significant activity.

Heritage Tourism is defined as “traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past.” (National Trust for Historic Preservation). Building partnerships with arts organizations to promote heritage tourism is important to economic development. Alachua County VCB funded the scenic trails booklet designed by the Artists Alliance of North Florida. One goal of the Alachua County Visitors and Convention Bureau is “ Work with all local, regional, state and national partners that can influence the impact of tourism to the area.”

[The State of Florida requires a nine-member Tourist Development Council (TDC) comprised of: Three elected officials; Three or four hotel, motel, or bed & breakfast operators; Two or three citizens involved in the tourism industry, to act as an advisory board to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on tourism issues.]

### RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

CS/HB 1427 (2007) – Agritourism is discussed in the section of this Chapter on Agriculture Retention and Sustainability.

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

The 2007 Arts and Economic Prosperity Report, by Americans for the Arts, studied the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences in Alachua County (Friends of Paynes Prairie provided detailed financial and event attendance information). Utilizing an input/output analysis- the study shows typical attendees spend \$27.79 per person, per event, in addition to the cost of administration:

Nonprofit Arts and Culture are a significant industry in Alachua County, representing \$40.98 million in local economic activity including \$22.2 million in nonprofit arts and culture organizations. This economic activity provides \$3.22 million in local and state government revenue.

A complete list of art & culture organizations is on file in the Department of Cultural Affairs. There is a need identified by Arts Association of Alachua County for a cultural center facility available to various arts organizations (<http://alachuaarts.org/index.php>) .

Water is recognized as a major theme in regional artistic works (the Florida’s Eden, a creative enterprise organization with over 250 members, sponsored a Water Forum and art event at Santa Fe College in Fall 2008), and also provides unique recreation/tourism opportunities. A proposal for a “Potano Paddle Trail”

was submitted by the Alachua Conservation Trust and approved by the Department of Environmental Protection. Alachua Conservation Trust and Friends of Paynes Prairie are partnering on this canoe trail. Open water comprises 6.0% of Alachua County, with wetlands an additional 12.7%. In November 2008 a total of 107,097 acres, or 17.3% of the total County, were conservation areas. (ACT Gazetteer, Nov. 2008)

### **Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

The County has partnered with the Florida's Eden (formerly Artists Alliance of North Florida) on the First Edition of the Heart of Florida Scenic Trail. There is a Master Plan for the Old Florida Heritage Highway and a nomination to the national scenic byway program is completed. There is also an African American Heritage Trail which includes the "Cotton Club" in Gainesville and several county locations are major locations in this heritage.

The 2004 Cultural Plan Developed by the Gainesville/Alachua County Cultural Affairs Board under the auspices of the City of Gainesville Department of Cultural Affairs, the Local Arts Agency for Alachua County includes--

Goal 6 (Cultural Tourism) -- A coordinated, county-wide effort to promote cultural tourism, ecotourism, and historical tourism in Alachua County.

Objective 1: To revise the cultural tourism plan every 3-5 years by identifying:

- the types of cultural events, activities, ecological resources, museums, parks, and historical facilities which are most likely to be effective in attracting tourism to Alachua County;
- the most effective means for promoting those events and activities; and
- a long-term plan for the development of local cultural resources which support the appeal of the area as a tourism destination.

Objective 2: To maintain public funding for cultural tourism development based upon the cultural tourism plan.

### **Information and analysis on relevant variables**

Visitor Demographics Research:

Recent research indicates 77% of visitors to Alachua County primary mode of transportation is the automobile and just over 18% of travelers arrive via air. The top five states of origin are Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio and New York. Sixty-five percent have an average annual income greater than \$50,000; nearly 65% have some college education.

Research has shown us that the top purposes of travel to Alachua County are Sports (spectators, participating and families of participants), Conferences/meeting/business, VFR travel, Festivals and Events, Outdoor Recreation, Campus, passing through, Medical and Relocation.

Visitation Trends:

A higher number of overnight visitors are tracked during the fall, September through November, and again in the mid-winter and spring February through June traditionally as compared to lower visitation months, such as December, January, July and August. This variable in visitation has remained consistent since 1997 and is primarily attributed to local university activities and meetings/conferences. Leisure travelers account for 26%.



**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

The following strategies will address the issue as part of the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

- Implement Historic Preservation Element
- Implement Old Florida Heritage Highway (scenic highway) Master Plan
- Promote partnerships with local arts/culture organizations and sports organizations
- Promote unique recreational tourism opportunities including Agritourism, Paddling Trails, and the African American Heritage Trail

## Historic Preservation

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)

### ISSUE BACKGROUND:

Although Alachua County includes an exceptional array of historic structures, documented in the June 2000 "Historic Structures Survey of Unincorporated Alachua County," the 2002 Comprehensive Plan included a Historic Preservation Element for the first time. Since challenges to the Plan resulted in this Plan taking effect in 2005, there is still a pending requirement to develop an Historic Preservation Master Plan and a local ordinance to implement the Plan policies and protect all of this historical fabric including significant archaeological sites.

Policies 1.1 and 1.2 of the Historic Preservation Element require a Historic Preservation Master Plan. A comprehensive survey of the community's historic resources was completed in 2000. The process identified over 900 structures built before 1950 that are examples of Frame Vernacular, Carpenter Gothic, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Mediterranean Colonial revival, Mission, Masonry Vernacular, Neo Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Queen Anne, or Ranch building styles. Some of these structures may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Structures, or potentially a local register could be established. A local register is supported by the Alachua County Historical Commission and a process to nominate structures for this registry has been proposed. The next step is to identify the issues relating to historic preservation that are important to Alachua County residents. Local stakeholders must be brought into the process early on and their concerns must be addressed. While the Historic Preservation Element adopted in 2002, which went into effect in 2005 establishes the goals and objectives for historic preservation in Alachua County, major issues for discussion of the Historic Preservation Master Plan may include:

- Process and implications of designating particular historic properties and districts for regulatory protection by local preservation ordinance.
- Mechanisms for dealing with the economic issues associated with preservation, including rehabilitation (tax credit & zoning) incentives, allowance for energy retrofits, and determination of economic hardship.
- Ways to link preservation planning with ongoing County planning and development decisions

Due to the impact of climate, in particular the 2004 hurricane season, some notable structures needing preservation are now in stages of decay. Unfortunately the efforts by the County Historical Commission to stabilize the Scott Phifer House, donated by a local family, were ended when the chimney failure collapsed the structure, and current budget restrictions prevent further work on the project intended to display a structure built during slavery by ancestors of some county families. Budget limitations are particularly difficult when the needs are time sensitive as in the case of efforts to stabilize historic structures. Another structure in the Historic Survey in the Hague Rural Cluster was recently annexed into the City of Alachua. While County Rural Cluster policies offered the structure limited protections, the land use change subsequent to annexation is likely to result in relocation of the structure.

A methodology to qualify a historic resource or property as significant for a local ordinance (and listed on a local registry) has been outlined by the Historical Commission but is not yet adopted and formalized as a review process. This proposal includes the following excerpt:

“The area of concern for future nominations consists of all the unincorporated area of Alachua County. Typically, these areas are rural or located near the city limits of a municipality. Most of the resources in the original survey date from the 1880's to the mid-twentieth century and are associated with the overall development of Alachua County. The design of the buildings and the materials used in their construction are consistent with contemporary national and statewide architectural trends. Most buildings show the influence of national styles, but, due to time and money constraints, are the product of local craftsmen and materials. Additional nominations should be consistent with the intentions of the original survey.

**Criteria for Evaluation:** The following is taken from criteria published by the United States Department of the Interior to evaluate properties for possible inclusion in the National Register. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, objects that possess integrity of locations, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history;
- That are associated with lives of persons significant in the past;
- That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

There are a total of fifty (50) properties within Alachua County and the municipalities and University of Florida Campus listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several of these notable historic sites are located within the unincorporated County. These include the Wood and Swink Country Store, Dudley Farm, Lake Pithlachocco Canoe Site, Liberty Hill Schoolhouse, Newnansville Town Site, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings House and Farm Yard, Rochelle Church, and Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church.

In November 2008 the Dudley Farm site was included on a list of Florida State Parks facing possible closure due to budget cuts. This unique site offers an example of early Florida homestead. The park citizen support organization is actively working to ensure the site is maintained and open to the public. Florida's Eden held a Paint-Out there in March 2009.

Conserving our rural heritage through Historic Preservation helps build more sustainable local economies and increases quality of life. Florida's Eden has been actively working to promote creative enterprises. Their fundraising efforts to assist the Wood and Swink Country Store and Post Office in Evinston have been valuable to this project. Recently the Alachua Conservation Trust has begun a project at the Rochelle Church to stabilize the structure, and is engaging community volunteers. These examples of community support for Historic Preservation are evidence of the interest in Historic Preservation in Alachua County. These are just two examples of the success Historic Preservation. Meanwhile, recent interest in energy conservation may also indirectly benefit Historic Preservation.

Significant energy savings are possible through Historic Preservation according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation: It takes a lot of energy to construct a building – for example, building a 50,000 square foot commercial building requires the same amount of energy needed to drive a car 20,000 miles a year for 730 years. If demolition is avoided there is considerable savings--Construction debris accounts for 25% of the waste in the municipal waste stream each year.

While it is often assumed that older and historic buildings are "energy hogs" and that it is more environmentally friendly to demolish these buildings and construct new energy efficient buildings than to preserve these existing buildings, recent calculations indicate that it takes about 65 years for an energy efficient new building to save the amount of energy lost in demolishing an existing building.

- Far from being energy hogs, some historic buildings are as energy efficient – or more so – than buildings constructed in later decades. Data from the U.S. Energy Information Agency finds that buildings constructed before 1920 are actually more energy-efficient than those built at any time afterwards – except for those built after 2000. An increasing number of case studies demonstrate that historic buildings can go green. LEED certification is possible for this rehabilitation projects.

Presently in Alachua County there are 45 sites on the National Register of Historic Places. A total of 64 Historic Preservation Grant Projects in Alachua County, 1983-2002, had an economic value of \$3,715,724. (UF CGR). Linking land conservation efforts with historic preservation has potential for increased benefits.

Historic ad-valorem exemption property values totaled \$903,230 or 2.1% of Alachua County in 2007 ([http://www.acpafl.org/pdf/annual\\_report2007.pdf](http://www.acpafl.org/pdf/annual_report2007.pdf)). This compares with Historic ad-valorem exemption property values of \$861,410 or 3.1% of county total in 2004.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Implement Policy 1.1- Complete a Historic Resources Preservation Plan
  - Provide incentives to discourage Teardowns- Historic Rural Clusters and rural communities and urban neighborhoods can and should be protected from teardowns, through a variety of tools and approaches.
  - Intergovernmental Coordination during Annexation to ensure continued protection of Historic Structures.
  - Encourage LEED certification for adaptive reuse projects, and/or allow other incentives for adaptive reuse.
- Following Preservation Plan Adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance
- Seek "Certified Local Government Certification."

# HOUSING

## Housing Issues

### STATEMENT OF ISSUES

- Address recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.
- Assess how Comprehensive Plan policies and implementation impact the cost of housing.
- Evaluate effectiveness of Plan in promoting affordable housing, including a range of housing types and lot sizes and policies promoting live/work units.
- Assess the need to require affordable housing in all developments and consider funding sources to provide affordable housing retroactively in existing development.
- Assess special needs housing and how to best coordinate to meet needs

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Providing affordable housing to the citizens of Alachua County is a primary goal addressed in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Through the Future Land Use and Housing Elements, the current Plan includes several policies that encourage and provide for a range of housing options for all income levels, including allowances for mixed unit types in Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Planned Developments, multi-family housing, manufactured homes, and accessory living units in residential land use categories.

In 2003, Alachua County completed the Affordable Housing Study called for in the Comprehensive Plan that identified two primary objectives for action: 1) the financial gap for moderate, low and very low income households must be closed, and 2) greater geographical dispersal of affordable units is needed to bring affordable housing closer to jobs and shopping areas. These objectives were addressed in the Land Development Code by shifting the emphasis for residential zoning districts from minimum lot size to density ranges, by allowing for a mix of unit types within residential land use categories and through the provision of incentives for including affordable units within residential developments.

Through local efforts such as the Affordable Housing Study and various state and national initiatives, the focus on affordable housing provision has continued to increase through the years. In a 2008 report to the County Commission staff reported the following information on three commonly used indicators of affordable housing, each of which suggests a continued need in Alachua County:

Cost-Burdened Households – This refers to those households where greater than 30% of household income goes to housing costs. The 2003 Alachua County Housing Study estimated an 8% growth in the number of cost-burdened households from 2002 to 2010, from 18,602 to 20,109, respectively.<sup>19</sup>

Gap between buying power and median sales price – In Alachua County, a family of four with an annual income of \$56,625 is considered to be at 100% of Area Median Income (AMI); that same family would have buying power of \$169,900 in a community where the median sales price for an existing single-family home in September 2008 was \$187,800.<sup>20</sup> This translates to a resulting “gap” of \$17,900.

Number of affordable homes sold - Including Gainesville, 1,253 single family homes were sold in Alachua County in the first six months of 2007. Of these home sales, 885 (71%) were affordable to

<sup>19</sup> The Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing provided the numbers for the Alachua County Housing Study.

<sup>20</sup> Alachua County Growth Management, Affordable Housing Needs in Alachua County.

higher-income households earning at least \$81,000, which is 150% of AMI for Alachua County.<sup>21</sup> However, only 126 (10%) of homes sold during the same period were affordable to lower-income households earning \$38,000, which is 70% of AMI for Alachua County.

The Tables below provide a more detailed indication of need and the housing market in Alachua County relative to Households at different income levels:

**Table 6.15. Alachua County: Number of Severely Cost-burdened Low Income Renters (Adjusted by eliminating 15-24 year old households that are severely cost-burdened and earning <20% AMI)**

Household Income (As % of AMI)	2005
Less than 30% AMI	4,279 (58%)
30% - 50% AMI	2,562 (35%)
50% - 80% AMI	561 (7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,402 (100%)</b>

Source: Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse

**Table 6.16. Alachua County: Number of Severely Cost-burdened Low Income Owner Households**

Household Income (As % of AMI)	2005
Less than 30% AMI	2,201 (56%)
30% - 50% AMI	1,210 (31%)
50% - 80% AMI	502 (13%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,913 (100%)</b>

Source: Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse

<sup>21</sup> Data from Florida Housing Coalition journal *Housing News*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Fall 2007).

**Table 6.17. Homes for Sale: Affordable to Lower-Income Households**

Percent of (Family of Four)	AMI Household Income	Buying Power	Homes Available	% of Homes Sale	All for
<b>100 % (Moderate)</b>	\$56,625	\$169,900	333	21%	
<b>80% (Low)</b>	\$45,300	\$135,900	163	10%	
<b>50% (Very Low)</b>	\$28,300	\$84,900	38	2%	
<b>30% (Extremely Low)</b>	\$17,000	\$51,000	9	0.5%	

Source: Gainesville-Alachua County Association of Realtors (September 2008 Sales Figures)

**Inclusionary Housing**

In May 2003, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) received a presentation on the just completed Alachua County Affordable Housing Study. Three options to establish an inclusionary zoning policy were presented:

- Incentive-based inclusionary housing;
- Inclusionary housing for planned developments;
- Mandatory inclusionary housing for all new residential developments.

In November 2003, staff presented the Affordable Housing Study Addendum. The BoCC accepted the Addendum and directed staff to prepare an ordinance that creates an incentive-based inclusionary housing program. This was implemented through subsequent revisions incorporated in the land development regulations. These revisions included things such as: density based residential zoning districts eliminating minimum lot sizes in most cases; mixed housing types in residential zoning districts; provision for accessory dwelling units; and allowance for concurrency reservations for developments with specific percentages of units meeting criteria for affordable housing.

Other process and program-based incentives include expedited permitting for affordable housing projects, an Impact Fee Assistance Program for affordable housing, and the waiver of development review application fees for non-profit organizations developing affordable housing. Staff was later directed to coordinate with the Alachua County Housing Finance Authority to develop incentive-based inclusionary policies for the Multi-Family Mortgage Revenue Bond Program and the Single Family Mortgage Revenue Bond Program.

**Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

As a result of the 2001-2020 Comprehensive Plan and the 2003 Affordable Housing Study, there are several provisions in the County’s Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) that implement the Board’s direction from November 2003 and address affordable housing generally, including the following:

**DENSITY-BASED RESIDENTIAL ZONING (§403.07)**

As mentioned previously, one method identified in the Affordable Housing Study was to shift from the traditional minimum lot-size for residential zoning districts to density-based zoning. This allows for a range of lot sizes within a development as long as the overall density can be achieved. In doing so, developers can provide some smaller, more affordable lots in a subdivision while still including larger lots as well. The following table identifies the density ranges for single-family residential districts in the unincorporated area.



**Table 6.18. Density of Single Family Residential Districts**

Density Range	Zoning Districts				
	RE	RE-1	R-1aa	R-1a or R-1c	R-1b
Dwelling units	1 per 2 acres or less	1 per 2 acres to 2 per acre	1-3 per acre	1-4 per acre	4-8 per acre

**NOTE: PERMITTED HOUSING TYPES IN EACH DISTRICT ARE ESTABLISHED IN CHAPTER 404 OF THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE.**

**MIX OF UNIT TYPES (CH. 404 USE TABLE, §404.20(D))**

Another new addition to the ULDC following the Affordable Housing Study is the allowance for mixed unit types in single-family residential districts. The Code now allows for single-family attached and detached units as well as zero-lot line developments in the single-family districts identified in the table above. One example of a development that has taken advantage of this allowance is Southampton Traditional Neighborhood Development on SW Archer Road. Several other developments have incorporated a mix of unit types through the Planned Development Rezoning process that would have been allowed by right, including Cottage Grove, Finley Woods, Arbor Greens and Tower24.

In addition to the mix of unit types allowed for all developments, affordable housing developments may exceed the maximum of four attached units in a row, up to a maximum of eight units. To date, no one has utilized this allowance.

The Code also now allows residential units over commercial by right in the lesser-intensity commercial districts (RP, AP, HM, BP, BR & BR-1). This provides the potential for more affordable live-work units with reduced transportation costs, a significant budgetary factor not often considered when measuring affordability of housing.

**CONCURRENCY RESERVATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS (§407.121(B))**

The County added an additional incentive following the Affordable Housing Study allowing affordable housing developments to reserve trips similar to the allowance for Planned Developments. Affordable Housing Developments may be issued a preliminary Certificate of Level of Service Compliance according to a phased schedule, for up to a five-year period. This incentive has not been utilized either.

**ACCESSORY LIVING UNITS**

A new provision adopted as part of the current Comprehensive Plan was the allowance for accessory living units in the Urban Cluster on single-family lots that do not count toward the density of a development and do not require the division of a lot. The stated intent of the policy (1.3.6 FLUE) is to “provide for a greater range of choices of housing types in single family residential areas, affordable housing, and the promotion of infill to new and existing neighborhoods while maintaining single family character.” The subsequent policies outline the standards for such units relating to size, number of bedrooms, and ingress and egress. The policies also require that a property owner maintain certification of homestead exemption status on either the primary or accessory unit in an effort to ensure owner occupancy and help maintain the ‘single family character’ called for in the policy.

When the County went through the process of updating the Land Development Code in 2004-2005, the decision was made to also allow such accessory units in the Rural/Ag Future Land Use area, provided the density could be met. This meant that a property owner would have to have a parcel at least 10 acres in size in the rural area to be allowed an accessory unit. The units are also allowed to be slightly larger, and the owner must still maintain a homestead exemption on the property. Since the time of the Comprehensive Plan going into effect in May 2005, there have been 14 accessory units approved in the Urban Cluster, and nine approved in the Rural/Ag area.

There may be a reason to allow greater flexibility for accessory dwelling units in new residential developments. The need to require maintenance of homestead exemption status on one of the two units is not as great in a new development scenario when buyers are aware up front of the presence of accessory units. The homestead requirement was included originally as a way to protect existing neighborhoods from the potential negative impacts of ending up with two rental units with no resident owner in a developed single family neighborhood.

Another possible modification to consider would be the allowance of accessory units that do not count toward the density on lots in the rural area as a way to provide more opportunities for affordable rentals. However, if this were something the County chose to pursue, it would be beneficial to maintain the homestead requirements in this type of scenario.

### **MANUFACTURED HOUSING**

Manufactured homes are often a more affordable option for homebuyers than purchasing a site-built home. The County allows for placement of manufactured housing in two residential districts in the County – the Agriculture district in the Rural/Agricultural Future Land Use Category and the R-1c district in the Low Density Residential Future Land Use Category. Florida Statute also classifies modular homes as ‘Manufactured Buildings’ that are to be allowed in any residential district where single-family detached dwellings are permitted. In accordance with the statute, the ULDC includes the definition of Manufactured Building and allows such modular construction types in any single-family residential zoning district.

### **HOME-BASED BUSINESSES**

While the allowance for home-based businesses in the County does not directly impact the cost of housing, in allowing for such businesses the County helps reduce the transportation costs of a homeowner. This in turn frees up additional income for the homeowner to allocate toward housing costs. The County allows two types of home-based businesses. Those of a smaller scale that are ‘home office’ type businesses are permitted in any residential area through an administrative permitting process. In the Agriculture zoning district, rural home-based businesses are also allowed at a slightly larger scale allowing a limited number of employees on site and an accessory building for the business, subject to approval by the County’s Development Review Committee.

### **TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING COSTS**

There is a growing body of research that suggests housing costs should be looked at as more than just shelter, but should also take into account transportation costs. As housing in urban areas becomes less affordable, residents will often locate further from their jobs in outlying communities where the housing is less expensive. However, the tradeoff in this situation is that the commuting homeowner ends up spending far more in transportation costs, particularly as fuel costs continue to rise. A 2006 report by the Center for Housing Policy<sup>22</sup> found that working families in the 28 metropolitan areas studied spent on average 57% of their income on combined housing and transportation costs, with approximately 28% spent on housing and 27% on transportation. There are also community wide costs to consider, including additional impacts on road infrastructure and increased greenhouse gas emission from commuters traveling longer distances.

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<sup>22</sup> A Heavy Load: The Combined Housing and Transportation Burdens of Working Families. Center for Housing Policy, October 2006.

Another 2006 study by the Brookings Institution<sup>23</sup> states, "...affordability goes beyond just 'affordable housing' and the costs of shelter. ...in most cases, transit-rich environments have a positive effect on household disposable income...[and there is a] ...critical role [for] public investment in transportation and housing in supporting wealth-building strategies for low- to moderate-income families." These and other studies suggest it is imperative to consider housing and transportation costs together, and encourage the development of more affordable housing in areas with multiple transportation alternatives and direct access to employment centers. These issues are discussed in more detail in the issue paper dealing with Land Use and Transportation issues.

### Recent Legislative Changes

#### **SB 2188 (s.197.502 SECTION 2)**

In 2004 the Legislature adopted a law providing legislative findings with respect to the shortage of affordable rentals in the state. The law included a statement of important public purpose and authorized local governments to permit accessory dwelling units in areas zoned for single-family residential use based upon certain findings, allowing accessory dwelling units to apply towards satisfying the affordable housing component of the housing element in a local government's comprehensive plan. The current Comprehensive Plan includes provision for accessory living units allowed in the Urban Cluster without counting toward the density calculation of the lot or development. Although the provision was included prior to this legislation and is not required to meet its requirements, these units still provide the potential for more affordable rental units in infill areas within the Urban Cluster. The Land Development Code also allows for accessory living units in the Rural/Agriculture area as long as the density requirement of one unit per five acres can be met. These units can also provide potential affordable rental units in the rural area.

#### **HB 1363 (s.125.379 F.S.)**

In 2006, the State of Florida passed legislation requiring each county and municipality to prepare an inventory list of all real property to which it holds fee simple title within its jurisdiction that may be used for affordable housing. County staff evaluated County-owned properties to establish their potential for affordable housing in the manner set forth in the legislation. There were five parcels that appeared to be surplus County property; however, these parcels were not recommended as suitable for inclusion on a surplus lands for affordable housing inventory.

#### **HB 1375 (s.420.9076 F.S., s.163.3177(6)(F)(1)H F.S.)**

HB 1375 passed in 2007 requiring the formation of Affordable Housing Advisory Committees (AHAC). Previously, these committees were only required to be active during formation of a local jurisdiction's initial affordable housing incentive plan. House Bill 1375 mandates the reestablishment of AHACs, which must now include members representing a wide variety of interests, including the local planning department. The Committee now reviews Comprehensive Plan policies and procedures, land development regulations, ordinances, and initiatives that encourage affordable housing. The Committee must report every three years on recommendations for and implementation of affordable housing incentives that target regulatory reform in certain specified areas relating to affordable housing.<sup>24</sup> The Committee's report was presented to the Board

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<sup>23</sup> *The Affordability Index: A New Tool for Measuring the True Affordability of a Housing Choice*. The Brookings Institution Center for Transit Oriented Development and Center for Neighborhood Technology, January 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Summarized from the Alachua County Growth Management Department's Affordable Housing Update presented to the County Commission on April 08, 2008.

of County Commissioners December 2008 and their findings and recommendations were acted upon by the Board on February 17.

An additional amendment in HB 1375 requires that adequate sites for future affordable workforce housing are provided for in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Workforce housing is defined as “housing that is affordable to a person who earns less than 120% of the area median income, or less than 140% of the area median income if located in a county in which the median purchase price for a single-family existing home exceeds the statewide median purchase price of a single-family existing home.” This statewide median is determined by the Florida Sales Report for existing single-family homes released each January by the Florida Association of Realtors and the University of Florida Bergstrom Center for Real Estate Studies. According to the 2007 Year End Report, the statewide median purchase price was \$233,600 and the median purchase price for the Gainesville Metropolitan Statistical Area was \$210,400. Therefore, in Alachua County the standard to be applied for affordable workforce housing is affordable to those earning less than 120% of the area median income, which is the category of households currently classified in the Housing Element as ‘moderate-income.’

HB 1375 also required certain counties to adopt a plan for ensuring affordable workforce housing by July 1, 2008, providing that a local government that fails to comply with such requirement is ineligible to receive state housing assistance grants. The threshold established was for each county in which the gap between the buying power of a family of four and the median county home sale price exceeds \$170,000, as determined by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, and which is not designated as an area of critical state concern. Alachua County does not fall into this category and is therefore not required to address this specific provision in the Housing Element.

## INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS ON RELEVANT VARIABLES

### Housing Trends

An increasing number of homes in Alachua County were purchased by persons outside the County for investment purposes over the three year period from 2003 to 2005. This tends to contribute to increased real estate prices. However, the sale prices of existing homes are now decreasing across the nation and the state. The current lending market, as well as the overall economy, is in a critical state, creating difficulties for even the most qualified home-buyers.

### Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

In 2007, the Florida Legislature passed HB 1375 requiring the establishment of Affordable Housing Advisory Committees. The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners established, by resolution, the Alachua County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) on May 13, 2008. The role of this committee is to evaluate local government policies and procedures, to make recommendations for specific ways to encourage affordable housing, and to address specific areas that target regulatory reform.<sup>25</sup>

AHAC members represent a variety of interests. The committee is required to report every three years on the implementation of affordable housing incentives directed at regulatory reform. The committee submitted its report to the BoCC in December 2008. A Summary of the Recommendations in the Report, as well as a Summary Table indicating how the eleven areas the Committee was required by s. 420.9076 to review and

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<sup>25</sup> Alachua County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee – Board Description, <http://www.boards.alachua.fl.us/advboardlist1net.asp> .

where those areas are implemented in the County's Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code, is provided in the Appendix to this paper.

On February 17, 2009, the BoCC amended its Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) to include the local housing incentives to be implemented in Alachua County. The Board's approved the following:

- For profit and not-for-profit affordable housing permits shall be available within six days after the application is found sufficient
- Direct staff to establish a process to consider, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing, by requiring a staff analysis in staff reports for any recommended amendments to Land Development Regulations or to the Comprehensive Plan, and by continuing to invite the public to submit comments to the BoCC regarding the impact on housing affordability. Staff analysis would be required of any comprehensive plan amendments or land development regulation text amendments, prior to adoption, to evaluate the impact(s) on the cost of housing, and to incorporate the findings in the staff report. This would be implemented by revising procedures outlined in ULDC Chapter 402
- County monitor utilization of the Impact Fee Assistance Program and consider increasing the amount budgeted for the Program from the reduced amount of \$25,000 to the original amount of \$100,000 should demand for Program assistance justify an increase in funding.
- Direct staff to present an update of the 2003 Affordable Housing Study.
- County re-evaluate locally-owned public lands with criteria such as the possible rezoning of suitable parcels and the potential for redevelopment of under-utilized property
- That advertisements promoting the County's affordable housing and impact fee relief programs be placed in the Builders Association of North Central Florida and Gainesville-Alachua County Association of Realtors' newsletters; that brochures explaining the County's affordable housing programs be placed with the Alachua County Housing Authority; and that brochures explaining the County's Impact Fee Assistance Program and Incentives for Building Affordable Housing (when finalized) be place with the Department of Growth Management's Building Division.
- Requested the Financial Planning Group to evaluate the Tax Collector's Lands Available and tax delinquent properties lists, that the County explore the possibility of acquiring property through rebuilding condemned structures for use as affordable housing, and any other elements that the Financial Planning Group would deem appropriate; and referred to the County Manager the invitation of Mr. Kildee, of Flint, Michigan, as funds are available.

### Funding Sources

#### STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) PROGRAM

Alachua County's SHIP allocation is formula-based with population as the main variable. The Florida Legislature recently put a cap on distributions from the state's housing trust funds, thereby preventing local governments from receiving their maximum entitlements. In FY 2007, Alachua County received \$1.2 million in SHIP funding; without the cap on distributions, Alachua County would have received \$3.1 million.<sup>26</sup>

The Alachua County State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) was amended to increase the maximum purchase price of new and existing homes to the maximum amounts

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<sup>26</sup> Florida Housing Coalition, [www.flhousing.org](http://www.flhousing.org) .

allowed by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. In addition, income limits and subsidies to very low, low, and moderate income households were expanded.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)**

Alachua County participates in a competitive process to obtain CDBG funding. Staff anticipates applying for \$750,000 in the 2008 funding cycle.

#### **IMPACT FEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Alachua County assesses impact fees on the development of new housing units to offset the impact of the new development on public facilities such as roads, parks/recreation and public safety (fire rescue) facilities. The Impact Fee Assistance Program was established by the BoCC in 2005 and assists low and very-low income home-buyers in purchasing homes by offsetting the cost of impact fees for affordable housing units. The County uses two strategies to offset impact fees for affordable housing. First, the impact fee schedule is based on square footage as opposed to housing type. And, the County has an Impact Fee Assistance Program to offset the cost of impact fees for affordable units purchased by low and very-low income home-buyers. More than thirty (30) homebuyers have received assistance through this program.

This is an example of a regulation that increases the overall cost of housing to the extent that the costs associated with impact fees are passed on to the home-buyer.

#### **Special Needs Housing**

Special Needs Housing is defined as:

Transitional housing needs of persons who have special housing needs, including, but not limited to, persons with developmental disabilities; persons with mental illnesses or chemical dependency; persons with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) disease; runaway and abandoned youth; public assistance recipients; migrant and seasonal farm workers; refugees and entrants; the elderly and disabled adults.

The Special Needs Program is a component/strategy identified in the LHAP. Through an Interlocal Agreement, Alachua County and the City of Gainesville jointly sponsor the Special Needs Program directed at the construction or rehabilitation of temporary, transitional, or long-term rental housing addressing the housing needs of persons described above. Alachua County builds partnerships with a wide range of community-based organizations and social service organizations working with special needs clients (e.g., St. Francis House, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.).

The special needs housing population is more likely to have low income levels, spend more of their income on housing. The following information summarizes data on three special needs sub-groups: persons with disabilities; persons with extremely low incomes (30% or less than the Area Median Income – AMI); and homeless persons. In 2000, there were 22,734 households (approximately 25% of all households) with a disabled person in Alachua County.<sup>27</sup> In 2005, there were 3,737 severely cost-burdened (spending more than 50% of their income on housing) households with a disabled person.<sup>28</sup> According to the 2006 American Community Survey, there were 9,430 extremely low income (30% or less of the Area Median Income – AMI) households in Alachua County. This number was adjusted to exclude student-headed non-family households.

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<sup>27</sup> [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

<sup>28</sup> Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse, Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing, University of Florida.



In 2008, Alachua County's homeless population was estimated at 1,381, up from the 2007 estimate of 952.<sup>29</sup> To serve that population, there were 106 transitional housing beds and 124 supportive housing beds for homeless individuals; and, 25 transitional housing units and 2 supportive housing units for homeless families.<sup>30</sup>

The Alachua County SHIP Program has expended \$205,937 in Special Needs funding since the inception of the program, providing grants to Arbor House, Bridges of America, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Peaceful Paths, Pleasant Place, and St. Francis House. Alachua County and the City of Gainesville jointly advertise Special Needs Program funding. There is currently \$50,000 available. The amount of funding designated for the Special Needs Program is determined by the following factors:

- potential demand - knowledge of current special needs projects being developed;
- past interest and participation;
- statutory requirement that no more than 30% of annual SHIP allocation be designated for rental activities (Special Needs Program is considered rental activity);
- statutory requirement to monitor for fifteen years rental developments that receive more than \$3,000 in SHIP funding within one fiscal year;
- amount of SHIP funding available.

Typically, the population served by the Special Needs Program often has incomes in the extremely low income range (30% or less of Area Median Income). This is the primary way in which extremely low income residents are served by the SHIP program. By way of its LHAP, Alachua County has made changes to the Special Needs Strategy to eliminate barriers to funding Special Needs housing projects, including elimination of the 50% match requirement and an increase in the maximum award per bedroom unit from \$6,000 to \$10,000.

The Alachua County Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Grant Planning Committee is an advisory committee that is charged to make formal recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the implementation of the Criminal Justice, Mental Health & Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant. This committee is comprised of representatives from local agencies that serve a broad range of the special needs population. One of the areas of focus for the committee is the issue of housing for the community's special needs population.

## STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE

### **Issue #1: Address Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Recommendations**

Board direction provided on AHAC Report on February 17, 2009, as specified in background (see Appendix for full summary AHAC Recommendations and Board Action).

### **Issue #2: Impact of Plan Policies on Housing Costs**

Board direction provided on AHAC Report on February 17, 2009, as specified in background (see Appendix for full summary AHAC Recommendations and Board Action).

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<sup>29</sup> Id.

<sup>30</sup> Id.



**Issue #3: Comprehensive Plan Effectiveness in Promoting Affordable Housing**

While the Comprehensive Plan includes policies to encourage the provision of affordable housing and the ULDC revisions allow for more flexibility in lot sizes and unit types, it is difficult to determine whether such units, once constructed, will be affordable to the buyer. It is just as difficult to determine whether a decrease in home prices is directly correlated to the types of housing permitted, or more a result of the housing market in general. While the County cannot regulate the cost of housing, it can do its best to ensure that the policies of the Plan and the implementation of those policies through the Land Development Code do not contribute to increases in the cost of housing for the citizens of the County.

On February 17, 2009, the County Commission reviewed the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Report and addressed the recommendations of the Committee and staff. The following recommendation was made by AHAC:

AHAC Recommendation - Do not penalize construction of new affordable housing with density requirements when accessory dwelling units are proposed for that housing.

The Board did not act on this recommendation and instead referred the issue to the EAR process. The following strategy is identified to address this issue:

- Consider revisions to policies for accessory dwelling units to allow accessory units in new developments by maintaining requirement that either the principal or accessory unit maintain homestead status, to be enforced by the community through mechanisms such as deed restrictions or covenants.

**Issue #4: Need to Require Affordable Housing in All New Development & Consideration of Funding Sources to Provide Retroactively**

- Implement financial strategies to address the affordability of existing housing, promote the development of new affordable units.
- Consider strategies to prevent the replacement of affordable housing with more expensive housing or non-residential uses.
- Empower residents to purchase and retain market-rate housing through education, counseling services, etc.
- Investigate the County's inclusionary housing incentives, particularly density, to determine why the incentives are not effective.

**Issue #5: Special Needs Housing**

- Provide for periodic review of the SHIP strategy to ensure that there is flexibility in the Special Needs Program in order to address the ever changing needs and circumstances of the special needs population.
- Review land use policies for uses such as group homes, transitional housing programs, and assisted living facilities for possible barriers to providing special needs housing and identify ways to eliminate those barriers.
- Develop stronger partnerships with special needs service providers (e.g., mental health agencies, criminal justice professionals), particularly the Alachua County Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Grant Planning Committee, to pursue opportunities to leverage SHIP funds with other resources.

## LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

### Alternative Approaches to Standard Concurrency

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

How to strengthen the land use/transportation connection to enhance quality of life, make efficient use of land, promote energy efficiency, and reduce the County's carbon footprint, including:

Development of alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion (e.g. Transit Oriented Development, Transportation System Management, alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips).

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Steady population growth and associated new development have created transportation challenges in Alachua County. The County has grown by about 35,000 residents in the past seven years, from 217,955 at the time of the 2000 Census to 252,388 in 2008 (BEBR Estimates, April 1, 2008), and is expected to grow to a population of about 330,400 by the Year 2035 (BEBR Medium Projection, March 2009).

Alachua County is now at a point where demands on the road network in the urban area, especially in the western urban area, are projected to result in key roadway corridors exceeding their capacity. Traditional approaches to transportation concurrency have the unintended and undesired result of restricting new development in the core of the urban area and forcing new development to the fringes of the urban area where transportation capacity is more readily available. If not addressed, this trend could impair opportunities to address emerging community issues such as energy efficiency and reduction in the carbon footprint of new development. Alachua County is evaluating alternative approaches to transportation planning and concurrency in order to provide enhanced mobility options and strengthen the connection between land use and the transportation system.

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRATEGIES RELATING TO ISSUE

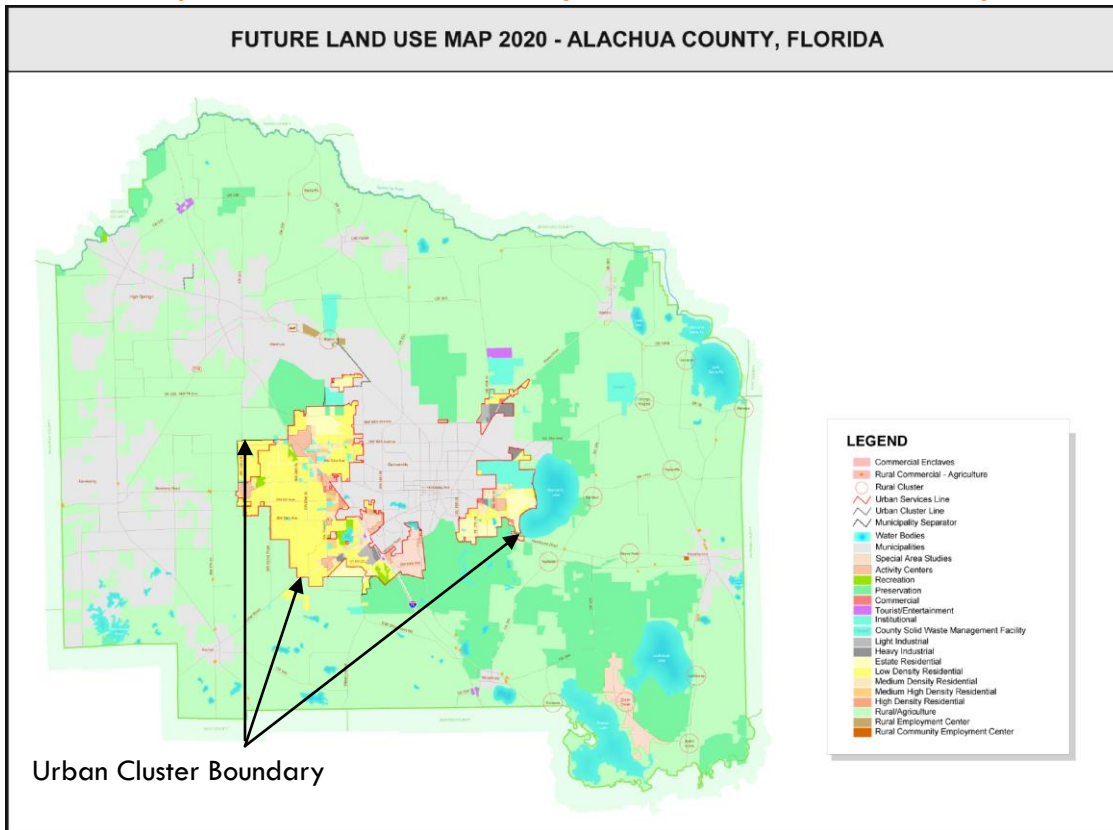
The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2001-2020 contains concepts which are intended to link land use and transportation by encouraging efficient development patterns. These provisions include identification of areas for urban development (Urban Cluster), promotion of compact mixed use Activity Centers and Traditional Neighborhood Development, and general support for multiple modes of transportation. In order to implement these provisions, the Comprehensive Plan provides several strategies including:

- Mapped Urban Growth Boundary (i.e., Urban Cluster)
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Village Center Policies
- Mixed Use Activity Centers
- General Support for Transportation Concurrency Alternatives

#### Urban Cluster Boundary

The Comprehensive Plan focuses urban development within a compact urban growth area, known as the "Urban Cluster". The Urban Cluster Boundary is identified on the adopted Future Land Use Map (see Map 6.10), and is used to indicate the separation of urban developable land and rural land in the unincorporated County. The Comprehensive Plan directs new urban development to occur within the Urban Cluster, which contains about 37,507 total acres.

Map 6.10. Future Land Use Map with Urban Cluster Boundary



The Urban Cluster is the primary policy tool in the Comprehensive Plan for discouraging urban sprawl and encouraging the efficient use of land in the unincorporated area. The Future Land Use Element identifies the following general strategies relating to the Urban Cluster.

**GENERAL STRATEGY 1**

*Minimize the conversion of land from rural to urban uses by maximizing the efficient use of available urban infrastructure, while preserving environmentally sensitive areas, according to the following:*

- a. *Designate and maintain on the Future Land Use Map an Urban Cluster that sets a boundary for urban growth.*

The Urban Cluster boundary cannot be expanded unless there is determination of need for additional land to accommodate urban land uses for a 10 and 20 year time frame based on methodology established in the Comprehensive Plan. The methodology is based on a comparison of the forecast need for land for urban residential and non-residential development based on projected population, average household size, a residential vacancy rate, and market factors. In addition to the required determination of need as a prerequisite, expansion of the Urban Cluster is further controlled by prohibiting extension of potable water and sanitary sewer lines into the Rural/Agricultural area (i.e., outside of the Urban Cluster boundary), unless those services are needed to correct a public or environmental health threat, or as necessary for the efficient delivery of services to the Urban Cluster (see Policy 6.2.2, Future Land Use Element).

The existing Urban Cluster policy framework has been effective in concentrating unincorporated growth within a compact and well-defined area. Most new development that has occurred in the unincorporated area has

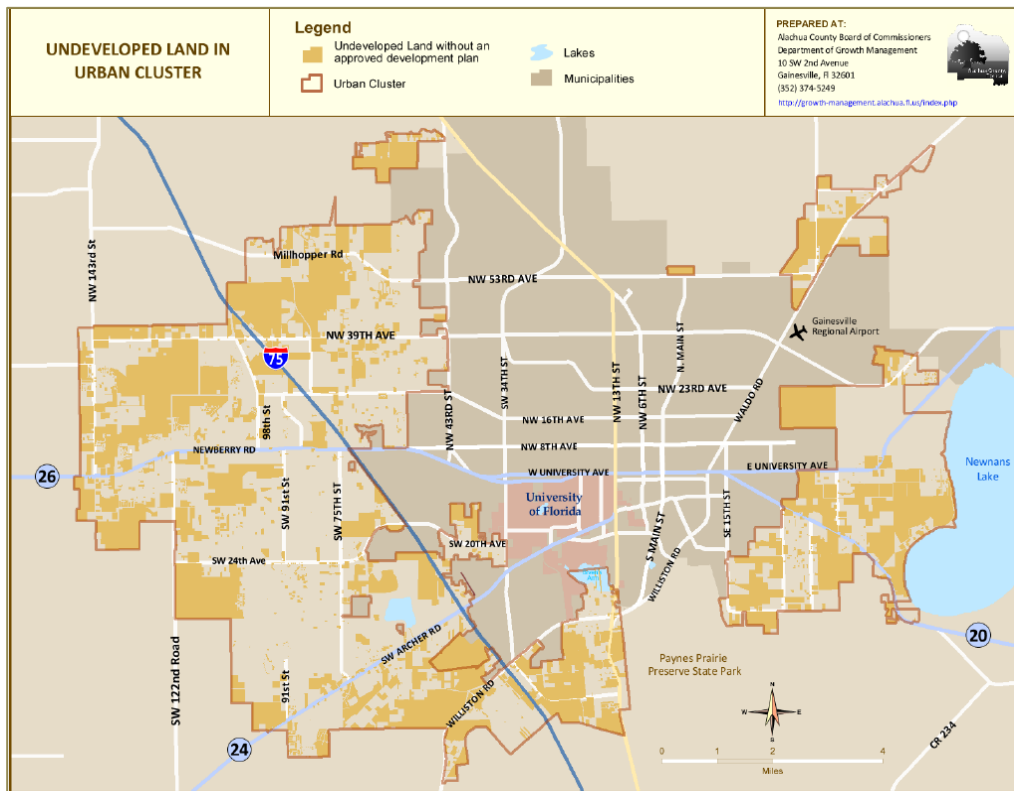
occurred within the Urban Cluster. Since the last update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2002, about 91% of new dwelling units approved as part of final development plans in unincorporated Alachua County were located within the Urban Cluster, while only 9% were located within the Rural/Agricultural areas. These figures do not include residential construction on existing lots of record. There have been few expansions of the Urban Cluster boundary since 1991, and no expansions since the 2002 EAR-based Plan amendments became effective in May 2005.

Land areas within the Urban Cluster are assigned Future Land Use category designations according to the adopted Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan. The majority of the land area within the Urban Cluster is designated for residential land uses (77%). The residential designation includes several sub-categories based on the allowable density of development. Lower density residential categories (density of 4 units per acre or less) comprise about 25,267 acres (67%) of the Urban Cluster, including the categories of Estate Residential (1 unit per 2 acres), Residential (max. 2 units/acre), and Low Density Residential (1-4 units/acre). There are also land areas designated for Medium Density (4 to 8 units per acre), Medium-High Density (8 to 14 units per acre), and High Density (14 to 24 units per acre).

New residential developments approved in the unincorporated Urban Cluster between April 2002 and February 2009 had an average density of about 2.59 units per acre. For comparison, this figure has increased from 2.3 dwelling units/acre identified in last Evaluation and Appraisal Report for the period of 1991 through January 1998. The relatively low density of new development in the Urban Cluster is due in part to the fact that the majority of the land is designated for lower density residential land uses. The average density of recent development is generally indicative of the allowable density ranges provided in the categories shown on the County's Future Land Use Map. Despite the recent increases in average density within the Urban Cluster, there are potential opportunities for the Comprehensive Plan to allow for higher densities in certain locations where infrastructure and services are available. Increases in density could be considered as part of an overall plan to better link land use and transportation within the Urban Cluster.

Currently, there are about 15,532 acres of undeveloped land within the Urban Cluster. Approximately 6,273 acres of the undeveloped land in the Urban Cluster is subject to approved development plans, meaning that the land is currently not built upon, but a plan for development has been approved by the County. After factoring out the undeveloped land with approved development plans, there are about 9,259 acres of undeveloped land remaining in the Urban Cluster. The undeveloped areas in the Urban Cluster without development plans are the most likely areas for new development to occur, subject to environmental constraints and other Comprehensive Plan policies.

**Map 6.11. Location of Undeveloped Land in Urban Cluster**



Total Acreage in Urban Cluster	37,507
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster	15,977
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster with Approved Development Plans	6,273
Undeveloped Acreage in Urban Cluster without Approved Development Plans	9,704

**Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Village Centers**

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan enables innovative development types which seek to strengthen the land use and transportation connection and maximize multi-modal transportation opportunities. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Village Centers were established during the last major update of the Comprehensive Plan as an allowable and encouraged residential development type for the unincorporated area. A TND is a distinct type of residential development which contains mixed housing types and a mix of non-residential land uses (known as “Village Centers”) at a scale that is compatible with residential development.

A TND is required to be served by a network of paths, streets and lanes that are functional for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicles. This multi-modal connectivity, combined with the mix non-residential uses within a Village Center provides residents the option of walking, biking or driving to certain destinations, such as employment, shopping or dining, within their immediate neighborhood. Incorporating a limited amount of non-residential land use into new residential neighborhoods potentially results in some internal capture of

vehicle trips that would otherwise utilize the County's arterial road system. Some examples of existing TNDs from around the country may be found at: <http://www.indtownpaper.com/neighborhoods.htm>

Alachua County's policies for TND/Village Centers (1.4.2, 1.4.3 and Objective 1.6 with subsequent Policies in the Future Land Use Element) allow for mixed uses within residential developments in the Urban Residential Future Land Use categories. The TND/Village Center development type is allowable through the development review process, provided that the development meets specific design standards, which include the following key principles:

1. Connectivity and integration of the non-residential Village Center area with surrounding residential development
2. Allowance for a mix of residential and non-residential uses within individual buildings
3. System of small pedestrian-scale blocks with streets and roads that are fronted by design features which define and contribute to a pedestrian street character.
4. A grid system of interconnected streets and blocks which provide multiple routes from origins to destinations. The street grid system must be designed as multi-use space such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served.
5. Parking is screened from streets and on-street parking is allowed
6. Creation of usable, interconnected open space and recreational facilities on the development site.
7. Clustering of residential dwelling units and use of density gradient to promote compatibility with surrounding development
8. Range of housing types and lot sizes to serve a variety of age and income groups

There are additional limitations on the non-residential, or Village Center, portion of a TND. In order for a TND/Village Center development to be considered through the development review process, it must meet the following criteria:

- The development must be a minimum of 30 acres;
- The non-residential area cannot exceed 30,000 square feet of gross leasable area;
- The mixed use Village Center portion of the development may not be less than ½ mile from any other Village Center.
- Mixed use Village Centers with a gross leasable area greater than 30,000 square feet but not exceeding 50,000 square feet may be allowed through the Planned Development rezoning process.

Since 2005, there has been one TND/Village Center development which has received final approval in the unincorporated County. Given the short amount of time that the TND/Village Center policies have been in effect (since May 2, 2005) and the lack of a sufficient number of approved TND/Village Center developments, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of these policies at this point in time. The lack of approved TND/Village Centers may be somewhat attributable to the recent economic conditions which have drastically slowed new development in general. There may also be aspects of the Comprehensive Plan policy framework which have not effectively encouraged this type of development to occur.

The County has received inquiries from developers interested in developing TND/Village Centers in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Many of these potential development opportunities have not been



realized because they were not able to meet all of the current Comprehensive Plan requirements, and particularly the minimum 30 acre site requirement. Limiting the size of the development site to a relatively high fixed acreage may unnecessarily discourage development of otherwise viable TND/Village Centers in appropriate locations. The limitation of the non-residential component of the Village Center to 30,000 square feet of floor area may also be a limiting factor, particularly for potentially larger developments. Alternative options could be explored to allow some flexibility on the minimum size of the development site and the maximum size of the non-residential Village Center component, provided that other criteria are achieved to meet the intent of the TND/Village Center policies.

One possible option for consideration is to allow greater flexibility on the amount of non-residential floor area that may be allowable within a Village Center. This could be done by establishing the allowable non-residential floor area of a TND/Village Center (the Village Center portion) as an amount proportionate to the number of residential units in the development. The concept of a commercial-to-residential ratio could work effectively for larger and smaller development because the amount of non-residential floor area in the Village Center would be proportional to the size of the surrounding residential neighborhood. As an example, Haile Plantation is approved for 2,686 dwelling units and 280,000 square feet of commercial floor area. The Haile "Village Center" portion of the development contains about 155,000 square feet of non-residential floor area, which includes retail, service, office, and civic uses. That results in a ratio of about 58 square feet of non-residential floor area per dwelling unit, including retail and office. The development contains Traditional Neighborhood Development and Village Center design elements, although it was approved prior to the current policy framework for TND/Village Centers.

As a related option, additional flexibility could be provided on the minimum 30 acre site acreage for a TND/Village Center development. Smaller sites (< 30 acres) could potentially be effective TNDs if they have enough residential density and total number of dwelling units to support a non-residential Village Center. Smaller sites could function as TND/Village Centers if they contain the right mix of uses, have a high degree of connectivity between the residential and non-residential areas, and have appropriate design standards to promote walking, biking, and transit use. The Comprehensive Plan should not necessarily preclude the TND/Village Center development option on sites of less than 30 acres in all instances. Consideration should be given to modifying the minimum site acreage required for a TND/Village Center development, or applying some other alternative criteria.

### **Mixed Use Activity Centers**

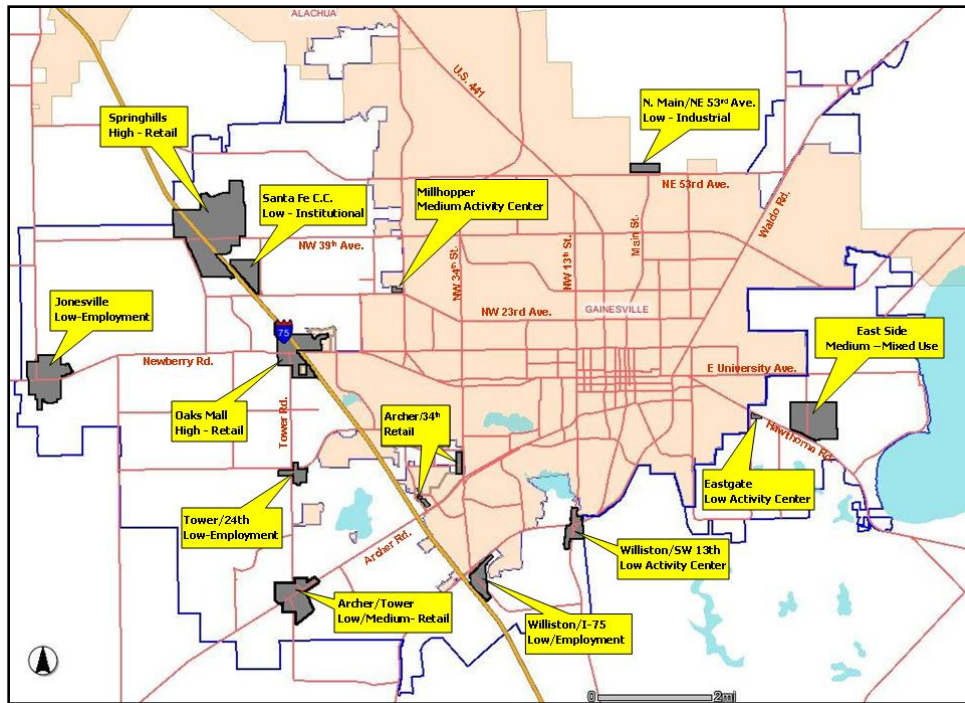
Another strategy affecting the land use/transportation connection is the concept of mixed use Activity Centers. Activity Centers are identified on the Future Land Use Map within the Urban Cluster as nodes of high density and intensity land uses characterized by mixed-use, compact development (commercial, institutional, office, and medium to high density residential) in a pedestrian-oriented environment which supports a multi-modal transportation system. Development in Activity Centers is required to relate to the streetscape and transportation network in a meaningful way, providing a destination for residents and visitors, and functioning as a cornerstone for the community served. New commercial development, such as retail sales, professional services, business services, and personal services is encouraged to locate within the thirteen (13) designated Activity Centers in the unincorporated area.

The Comprehensive Plan characterizes Activity Centers into two types based on the primary land use. A retail-oriented Activity Center has commercial activities as its primary use and an employment-oriented Activity Center has institutional, industrial, or office as the primary use. Activity Centers are designated at varying levels. The levels correspond to the market size, area, and intensity. A high Activity Center serves as



a regional shopping center for residents within a ten mile or larger radius; a medium Activity Center serves a radius of two miles or more as a community shopping center, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses; and a low Activity Center serves as a neighborhood shopping center within a radius of one and a quarter miles or more, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses.

**Map 6.12. Activity Centers in Unincorporated Alachua County**



In total, there are approximately 2,130 acres within Activity Centers in the unincorporated area of Alachua County, and approximately 1,107 acres remain undeveloped. Only Springhills, Eastside, Jonesville, and Archer/Tower have significant amounts of undeveloped land that could be potentially accommodate large developments. The other Activity Centers have relatively small amounts of contiguous undeveloped land, but still have opportunities for infill or redevelopment.

New general development standards for Activity Centers were adopted into the Comprehensive Plan in 2005. These design standards provide that Activity Centers should develop as pedestrian-friendly compact nodes integrated with surrounding uses and connected to a multi-modal transportation system. The design standards were a departure from the more automobile-oriented single-use development which has been common in the County’s Activity Centers to date. In order to implement the more recent design standards for Activity Centers, Policy 2.1.7 of the Future Land Use Element requires that a detailed Activity Center Master Plan be provided for each Activity Center. The Activity Center Master Plans provide detailed development standards tailored to the context of the particular Activity Center. The master plans must incorporate standards for site and building design, parking, multimodal transportation facilities, community green space, and surface stormwater management facilities in the context of how each Activity Center will function.

Many of the County’s Activity Centers have had specific plans in place dating back to the 1980s or 1990s. These plans are part of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, but in most cases, they provide for future land use designations and design standards that are unique to each Activity Center. In some cases, these Activity Center plans contain policies which are not supportive of the more recently adopted general Activity

Center standards in terms of encouraging mixed use urban development, pedestrian-oriented development, and connections to multi-modal transportation. For example the Archer/Tower and Jonesville Activity Centers have policies which call for retaining the suburban residential character of the area. Other Activity Centers have Future Land Use designations, such as “Commercial”, “Office/Business Park”, or “Shopping Center” which do not allow for mixed use development to occur.

Another consideration with the current Activity Center Policy framework is that, although the policies emphasize multi-modal transportation, many of the current policies in the specific Activity Center Plans allow single-use suburban-style development to occur that does not provide for connections to public transit. For example, while several Activity Center Plans refer to transit accessibility generally, none of the Activity Center Plans provide specific development standards for transit oriented development. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan does not identify a dedicated funding source or infrastructure plan for transit to serve the Activity Centers.

These examples illustrate some of the conflicts that exist within the overall Activity Center policy framework. These types of conflicts present barriers to achieving the type of mixed use and pedestrian-oriented development that is called for in the more recently adopted general Activity Center policies.

In order to overcome some of these conflicts, Policy 2.1.14 of the Future Land Use Element was established in 2005, and requires the County to evaluate and update existing Activity Center Plans for compliance with the general standards for mixed use, pedestrian-friendly activity centers which went into effect in 2005. The purpose of requiring the updated Plans is to make the older suburban style Activity Center Plans consistent with the more recent Activity Center standards which promote mixed uses, pedestrian-scale development, and multimodal transportation. Prior to having the updated Plans in place, all applications for new development or redevelopment of individual parcels or multiple parcels within Activity Centers are required to demonstrate compliance with the general Activity Center policies.

The recent general Activity Center policies have had some success in promoting new mixed use development. Alachua County has approved several new mixed use developments in the past few years, particularly in the Archer/Tower and Tower/24<sup>th</sup> Activity Centers. A limited amount of vertical mixing of uses (residential or office above retail) has also occurred, which is consistent with the new Activity Center standards.

Despite the recent approval of new mixed use development in Activity Centers, these areas have not fully realized the goal of serving as mixed use, multi-modal nodes. Much of the development in Activity Centers has continued to be single-use and automobile-oriented, and has not been functionally integrated with an overall multi-modal transportation system. This may be attributable to a variety of factors. One factor is that most Activity Centers are divided into many smaller parcels with multiple owners, which provides an impediment to large-scale master planned development with functional connectivity of different land uses. Another potential factor is that, in the west urban area, transportation concurrency is limited on certain roads in and around Activity Centers, thereby restricting development in these areas which are targeted for the most intense development in the unincorporated area.

### **Transportation Concurrency Implementation**

Florida Statutes require that land use and transportation facilities be coordinated to ensure that there is adequate roadway capacity to support the future land use adopted in the Comprehensive Plan. Policy 1.1.8 of the Transportation Mobility Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan requires that adequate roadway capacity needed to support new development shall be available “concurrent” with the impact from new development. In order to implement this requirement, Level of Service (LOS) standards for roadways are

established in Policies 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 of the Transportation Mobility Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. These standards are based on the number of vehicle trips on a particular roadway.

The State’s Growth Management Act calls for implementation of the mandate known as “concurrency” through a combination of regulation and capital improvement programming. As applied to roadway-based level of service standards, the regulatory component consists of a review of the impact of new development to determine if there is adequate roadway capacity to serve the traffic generated by the new development. Concurrency approval is granted to the new development if there is sufficient roadway capacity available at the time of approval, or if new capacity is fully funded for construction within three years of development approval (see s.163.3180 (2)(c), F.S.). The capital improvement programming component of concurrency consists of adopting a financially feasible Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to provide the roadway improvements needed to maintain the adopted roadway level of service standards. Local governments have been required to show in the five (5) year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that needed transportation improvements can be fully funded and constructed in a five (5) year period to meet projected transportation needs. The legislature has put added emphasis on the requirement for a financially feasible Comprehensive Plan, mandating that local governments update their CIP to ensure it is financially feasible, or be subject to various sanctions (see s.163.3177(2)(b)(1), F.S.), such as prohibitions on the ability to amend the Future Land Use Map.

Alachua County monitors roadway concurrency on about 100 road segments in the unincorporated area. The majority of roads in unincorporated Alachua County are meeting the adopted Level of Service standard established in the Comprehensive Plan, but several roadways are not currently meeting the adopted standard because of reserved trips for development which has been approved but is not yet built. Some of the key roadways with segments that do not meet the adopted Level of Service standard are listed in Table 6.19. More detailed segment-based data on roadway level of service is provided in Appendix C.

**Table 6.19. Unincorporated Roadway Segments Exceeding Capacity (with reserved trips)**

See detailed Roadway Level of Service Report 2008 in Appendix B
Segments of... Interstate 75 State Road 24 (Archer Road) State Road 26 (Newberry Road) Tower Road SW 20 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SW 24 <sup>th</sup> Avenue

Source: Alachua County Roadway Level of Service Report 2008, January 2009

Note: Capacity analysis includes traffic from reserved trips from approved but not built development

The Concurrency Management System in Alachua County, especially for the western urban area, has been under an increasing level of stress as a number of roadways in this area are operating either near or over capacity. Many of the roadways which are listed as exceeding capacity are operating below the adopted level of service due to reserved trips from development which is approved but not built. The reserved trips from unbuilt development, in some cases, account for a large percentage of the maximum service volume of a road. Proposed developments along portions of Archer Road, Newberry Road, and Tower Road in the unincorporated area are currently unable to receive final development plan approval due to a lack of available roadway capacity.

The traditional implementation approach to transportation concurrency, if continued, could contribute to unintended and unsustainable land use patterns. Instead of ensuring that adequate roadway capacity is available concurrent with new development, the concurrency implementation system restricts development in the Urban Cluster under the regulatory component of concurrency, creating pressure for new development in areas that are distant from the urban core where road capacity is readily available. The end result of this approach to concurrency is that denser development within existing urban areas is stopped or significantly delayed due to lack of roadway capacity, while a favorable climate is created for development that is located more distant from the urban core. The Florida Department of Community Affairs has acknowledged the unintended consequences of transportation concurrency implementation, and encourages alternative approaches.

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan currently provides for regulatory alternatives to conventional transportation concurrency in order to encourage efficient development patterns and the use of alternative modes of transportation. These alternatives are enabled by Florida Statutes, and include Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (TCEPPPT) and Multi-Modal Transportation Districts (MMTD).

Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (TCEPPPT) in accordance with F.S. 163.3164 and F.S. 163.3180 may be permitted for qualifying projects within or adjacent to certain Activity Centers. In order to be eligible for this concurrency exception, the project must be generally designed as a Transit-Oriented Development, with specific standards for transit accessibility, mixed uses, and pedestrian-oriented spaces. The recent Newberry Village Comprehensive Plan amendment was adopted (via settlement agreement) on the basis of this concurrency exception.

Another concurrency alternative provided in the Comprehensive Plan is the Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD). The MMTD designation, as provided in F.S. 163.3180, is an area which incorporates a complementary mix and range of land uses including educational, recreational, and cultural, of a density and intensity appropriate to support transit within walking distance. A Multi-Modal Transportation District facilitates the use of multiple modes of transportation (e.g. walking, bicycling, and transit) through land use strategies which encourage a balance between residential and employment land uses within a designated area. The end result of this approach is an overall reduction in automobile use and vehicle miles traveled. The designation of such districts recognizes the inherent, integral relationship between transportation, land use and urban design and the degree that these elements affect the other.

These alternatives (TCEPPPT and MMTD) have not been widely utilized as solutions to concurrency issues in Alachua County. In fact, there are very few instances state-wide where these alternatives have been used. These types of concurrency exceptions do not provide comprehensive solutions to transportation concurrency issues because they focus on individual development projects or small geographic areas. They do not adequately address mobility needs and infrastructure planning on a community-wide basis in areas with severely stressed infrastructure. Despite their shortcomings, many of the fundamental principles of TCEPPPT and MMTD, such as multimodal mobility, balanced mixture of uses, and transit-accessible design are useful concepts that could be utilized in strengthening the land use and transportation connections on a community-wide basis.

### **Multimodal Alternative to Traditional Concurrency**

Alachua County is developing an alternative approach to traditional concurrency that will shift some of the focus away from traditional roadway-based concurrency, and more toward providing multimodal mobility within the Urban Cluster. The multimodal approach being considered will attempt to achieve a reduction in

Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) per capita and achieve a shift in the transportation mode choice away from the single-occupant vehicle to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes.

The alternative approach will establish area-wide levels of service for multiple modes of transportation including automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. Concurrency assessments for new development will take into account the levels of service for each of these modes. The levels of service will be maintained through a long range transportation infrastructure plan for the unincorporated area which will include planned system improvements such as parallel roadway facilities, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and significant transit and bus rapid transit components. Long range transportation capital improvements will be funded in part by a modified impact fee structure which will provide incentives for development which contributes to an overall reduction in Vehicle Miles of Travel.

The alternative approach will feature land use based solutions to concurrency issues, including new policies authorizing Transit Oriented Development in certain locations along planned transit routes, and stronger standards for Traditional Neighborhood Development. Rapid Transit service on dedicated transit lanes is planned to serve daily commutes by connecting Transit Oriented Developments in the unincorporated Urban Cluster with the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, Downtown Gainesville, the Gainesville Regional Airport and Fairgrounds, Shands Hospital, North Central Florida Regional Medical Center and other regional employment centers. The future rapid transit network could eventually be expanded to connect with municipalities outside of the Urban Cluster.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) refers to higher density mixed use centers that are designed to maximize mobility via transit and non-motorized transportation, and with design features to encourage transit ridership. TOD maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating higher density residential and non-residential around transit stations and along transit routes. A typical TOD has a rail or bus station at its center, surrounded by relatively high-density mixed use development, with progressively lower-density spreading outwards one-quarter to one-half mile, which represents pedestrian scale distances.

Transit Oriented Development generally requires a minimum of 6 dwelling units per acre in residential areas and 25 employees per acre in commercial centers, and about twice that for premium quality transit, such as rail service (Pushkarev and Zupan, 1977; Cervero, et al, 2004; Reconnecting America and the CTOD, 2008). Higher residential densities and the presence of both retail and non-retail employment help to generate adequate transit ridership to justify frequent service, and help create active street life and commercial activities within convenient walking distance of homes and employment sites.

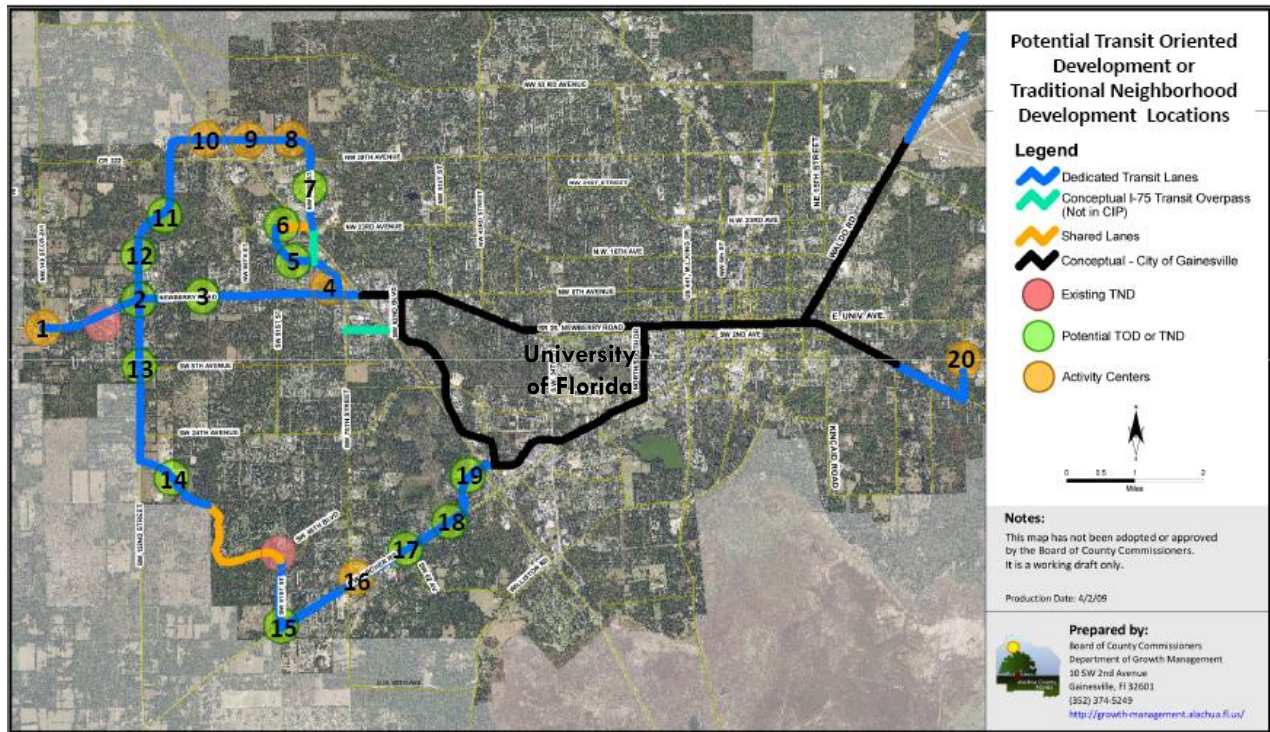
The viability of Transit Oriented Development is also affected by factors such as demographic mix, transit pricing, parking availability, quality of transit service, walkability, and street design. Examples of TOD principles include:

- Balanced mix of uses including retail, employment, civic uses, and a variety of housing types and prices, to generate 24-hour transit ridership.
- Transit service that is fast, frequent, reliable, and comfortable, with headways of 15 minutes or less.
- Streets with a high degree of connectivity and traffic calming features to control vehicle traffic speeds.
- Parking management to reduce the amount of land devoted to parking compared with conventional development.
- Transit stops and stations which are convenient, comfortable and safe, with features such as comfortable waiting areas and vehicle schedule information. Transit-oriented development should be located within a five-minute walk of a transit stop, or about a quarter-mile from stop to edge.



With an emphasis on multimodal mobility as the means of linking land use and transportation, new TODs and TNDs can be planned as a means to encourage efficient use of land within the Urban Cluster by directing new development to areas where a high level of mobility will be provided. By focusing on the provision of goods and services in close proximity to residences, and by planning for transit service to serve commute trips, there is the potential for a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled, reduced congestion, and improved energy efficiency for the community.

**Map 6.13. Potential Locations for Transit Oriented or Traditional Neighborhood Development**



**Land Use, Transportation, and Energy Linkage**

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan generally encourages energy efficiency in land use and development patterns in order to reduce overall energy requirements for the County (Objective 5.1, Conservation and Open Space Element). The Comprehensive Plan also recognizes that efficiency of transportation systems is a major factor in achieving energy conservation (Policy 5.1.6, Conservation and Open Space Element). Several strategies which are provided in the Comprehensive Plan (e.g., Urban Cluster boundary, Mixed Use Activity Centers, and Traditional Neighborhood Development with Village Centers) attempt to increase energy efficiency from a land use perspective. Greater opportunities for more energy efficient land use trends could be achieved by strengthening the linkage between land use and transportation.

Local land use characteristics have a significant impact on a community’s energy consumption because of the amount of fuel energy used by transportation. The prevailing land use trends influence transportation mode choice and how far people need to travel from their place of residence to common destinations such as work, school, or shopping areas. Research shows that different land use patterns have implications for travel behavior and energy consumption. Compact land use patterns have the potential to reduce travel distance and travel frequency, and therefore, reduce the amount of energy consumed by transportation as compared with lower density non-compact development.

One of the most significant factors influencing personal travel behavior is density. Density has been shown to influence transportation mode choice and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Research has found that higher population and housing density at the trip origin and/or destination is associated with decreased travel distances and trip frequency (Newman and Kenworthy, as cited in APTA, 2008). In a study of modal split, van de Coevering and Schwanen (2006) found that higher population density is associated with a smaller share of car mode selection and a larger share of pedestrian/bicycle mode selection.

Several studies have also linked increased population density to a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). In a study on travel patterns in the U.S., Chatman (2003) found that an additional 1.5 housing units per gross acre is associated with a 0.2 mile reduction in personal VMT on a given day. A 1996 study found that residents of higher density areas travel fewer miles in automobiles than residents of lower density areas (Dunphy and Fisher, 1996).

Employment density, or the number of jobs within a certain geographic area, is also considered an indicator of travel behavior. Frank and Pivo (1994) found a significant positive correlation between employment density at the trip origin and/or destination and public transportation use. Likewise, Chatman (2003) found an average half-mile reduction in personal commercial VMT for each additional 10,000 employees per square mile at the workplace, as well as a 3% decrease in probability of using an available car to commute to work for every increase of 1.5 employees per gross acre at the workplace (Chatman, 2003).

Land use mix also has a significant effect on mode choice as well as VMT. Mix of uses is positively correlated with public transit use and walking, and negatively correlated with single occupancy vehicle use (Frank and Pivo, 1994). Sun, Wilmot, and Kasturi found that land use mix is a significant factor in reducing household Vehicle Miles Traveled. They found that people living in areas with a more balanced mix of land uses drive about 45% fewer miles than those in areas with segregated land uses (Sun et al., 1998).

The implication of these factors for energy efficiency is that a community could potentially reduce its long term energy consumption for transportation, and increase the mobility options available to residents through encouragement of more compact development patterns, higher residential and employment density, and a diverse mixture of uses. These factors have been shown to result in reduced travel distances and trip frequency as well as a more balanced transportation mode split. Land use patterns which produce shorter and fewer single occupant vehicle trips could reduce local energy consumption by the transportation sector.

In 2006, the Alachua County Commission created a citizen advisory board to be known as the Alachua County Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC). It was tasked with creating a “menu of options” of a short and long term nature for an effective and efficient community-wide energy conservation program, as well as implementation recommendations. The ECSC Mission was to draft a comprehensive report on energy use, its relationship to climate change and local socio-economic impacts, including actions that can be implemented by the Board of County Commissioners and the community at large. The Alachua County Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) issued its final report and recommendations in December 2008. The report, which was accepted by the County Commission on December 9, 2008, contained many energy-related recommendations, some of which relate directly to land use and transportation. Some of the key recommendations concerning land use and transportation include:

**Energy Conservation Strategies Commission  
Recommendations Concerning Land Use and Transportation**

**Full Report: <http://issuu.com/msexton/docs/ecscfinalreport>**



- Minimize energy use: better coordinate transportation and school locations; ensure new residential neighborhoods are carefully coordinated with new school locations; and ensure through transportation planning that children do not face hazardous walking conditions near schools; complete sidewalk system around schools is a priority.
- Adopt policy that location of County government buildings are conveniently located to those residents trying to receive services & ensure decisions about buildings consider multiple transportation choices. At minimum, buildings should be located along transit or bus rapid transit corridors.
- Set a date by which BOCC will adopt a pathway map that includes all roadways & streets on which electric vehicles can be driven. Adopt policies that allow these vehicles to be driven on appropriate public streets & roads.
- Identify methods for Alachua County to promote bicycle and pedestrian access through cul-de-sacs to adjacent neighborhoods or retail areas, or in other such (currently) restricted areas.
- Identify and implement services for additional markets for transit (e.g. new park and ride, downtown shuttles from outlying communities, services similar to those during special community events, carpools and vanpools to areas with low ridership populations). License one or several private carriers with small buses (10-30 passengers) and put on more frequent schedule over broader area and feed into main trunk lines where large buses would provide service, and connect again to smaller carriers along the route.
- As bus and bus rapid transit routes are considered, ensure routes are added along corridors that also serve visitors.
- Amend Transportation Element to increase multimodal flexibility. Increase multi-modal opportunities by requiring movement for all modes of transportation, including transit, bicycle, and walking. Merge Mass Transit Element and Traffic Circulation Element into single objective of Transportation Mobility Element and address needs of all users, including bicycle, pedestrian, and other active modes. Incorporate expenditure plans for all modes of transportation in Capital Improvements Element.
- Amend Comprehensive Plan to require bus rapid transit service for all future development in unincorporated area.
- Amend Comprehensive Plan to increase allowable density along bus rapid transit lines.
- Designate areas served by bus rapid transit as receiving area for a Transfer of Development Rights program.
- Land Use and Transportation Mix: Encourage development within existing municipalities, along transportation corridors, in business/employment centers, and in civic and cultural centers; develop urban neighborhoods and communities that incorporate principles of traditional city design; allow and encourage variety of transportation choices, particularly alternative to single-occupant vehicle.
- Transportation Analysis: Include in all analyses of transportation needs the requirement that peak oil production and decline variables be reviewed and tested so as to: 1) determine potential future transportation and land use scenarios necessary to mitigate local effects of peak oil production and decline; and 2) that County staff recommend alternatives to accomplish transportation and land use mitigation strategies.
- Adopt land use and development policies that maximize energy efficiency. Make energy security and sustainability the primary consideration in decisions about land use mix, density with amenities, and design – that will at the same time improve affordability and livability. Develop land use projects and patterns that result in reduced community and countywide energy consumption.
- Economic Development Opportunities: Encourage energy conservation businesses, alternative energy businesses, and waste-based industries

### Recent Applicable Legislative Changes

Several recent legislative changes affect land use, transportation, and energy issues.

2005 S.B. 360 – Made several key changes to requirements associated with the Capital Improvements Element, including requirement that local government Comprehensive Plans must be financially feasible; requiring the capital improvements element to include a schedule of improvements that ensure the adopted Level of Service standards are achieved and maintained; and authorizing local governments to adopt a 10 or 15 year long-term concurrency management system for transportation and school facilities under certain circumstances. S.B. 360 also made numerous revisions to transportation concurrency rules, including a requirement that local governments adopt a proportionate fair share ordinance as part of their concurrency management system, and allowing proportionate fair share payments to be applied as a credit to transportation impact fees under certain conditions.

2007 H.B. 7203 - amended several State requirements concerning Proportionate Fair-Share mitigation of transportation impacts, including:

- Provides that proportionate fair-share mitigation improvements may address one or more modes of travel. This is a shift in emphasis from the prior focus, which was on road widening or new road construction.

2008 CS/HB 697-

- Requires that data and analysis for the Future Land Use Element now include information about “energy-efficient land use patterns accounting for existing and future electric power generation and transmission systems”; and “greenhouse gas reduction strategies.”
- Requires that the Traffic Circulation Element incorporate transportation strategies to address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.
- Requires that the Transportation Element for urbanized areas per s339.175 shall address “the incorporation of transportation strategies to address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.”
- Requires that the Housing Element include standards, plans, and principles relating to “energy efficiency in the design and construction of new housing” and “use of renewable resources.”
- Requires an addition to Future Land Use Map series relating to “energy conservation.”

### Strategies for Addressing Issue

Amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan are in process to establish multimodal approaches to transportation concurrency management. If adopted, the amendments would provide an alternative approach to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion. These amendments were considered for transmittal to DCA by the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing on June 9, 2009, and the hearing has been continued to August 25, 2009.

The EAR strategies identified below are several of the components of the proposed multimodal transportation concurrency amendments. Information about this process and the proposed amendments are available online at:

#### **Mobility: Alachua County’s Plan to Link Land Use and Transportation**

[http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm\\_docs.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/TPIF/cm_docs.php)

- Develop a multimodal approach to transportation concurrency management which promotes sustainable land use patterns and energy efficiency by directing higher density, mixed use, transit oriented development to select locations along planned transit routes in the Urban Cluster.
- Establish locational criteria and design policies for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) within the Urban Cluster.
- Modify existing Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Village Center policies to provide greater flexibility on the minimum required site acreage and the maximum allowable commercial floor area in order to promote more mixed use transit-oriented development in the Urban Cluster.
- Modify the existing transportation impact fee structure to better complement the Multimodal Concurrency Management System, including incentives for development which provides for internal capture of vehicle trips and contributes to an overall mode shift toward the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes, and results in a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita. Provide for reduced impact fees for Transit-Oriented Development and Traditional Neighborhood Development.

## Activity Center and Commercial Policies

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Assessment of Activity Center and Commercial policies in promoting compact, higher density mixed use development.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan policies on Activity Centers and Commercial uses are key components of the County's overall land use strategy. Existing Comprehensive Plan policies characterize Activity Centers as nodes of higher density and intensity land uses containing mixed-use, compact, and pedestrian-friendly development (commercial, institutional, office, and medium to high density residential) that is connected to a multi-modal transportation system. Activity Centers should relate to the streetscape and transportation network in a meaningful way, provide a destination for residents and visitors, and function as a cornerstone for the community served. New commercial land uses, such as retail and office development, are required to be located primarily within the thirteen (13) designated Activity Centers in the unincorporated area.

#### Activity Center Policy Framework

The Comprehensive Plan, Policy 2.1.1 of the Future Land Use Element, characterizes Activity Centers into two types based on the primary land use. A retail-oriented Activity Center has commercial activities as its primary use and an employment-oriented Activity Center has institutional, industrial, or office as the primary land uses. Activity Centers are also designated at varying levels, which correspond to market size, area, and intensity. A "High" Activity Center serves as a regional shopping center for residents within a ten mile or larger radius; a "Medium" Activity Center serves a radius of two miles or more as a community shopping center, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses; and a "Low" Activity Center serves as a neighborhood shopping center within a radius of one and a quarter miles or more, or an equivalent concentration of employment-oriented uses.

In total, there are approximately 2,130 acres designated within Activity Centers in the unincorporated area, and approximately 1,107 of these acres remain undeveloped. Only Springhills, Eastside, Jonesville, and Archer/Tower Activity Centers have significant amounts of undeveloped land which could potentially support larger-scale mixed use development. Other Activity Centers contain relatively small amounts of contiguous undeveloped land, which would most likely support smaller-scale infill development.

**Table 6.20. Developed vs. Undeveloped Area in Activity Centers**

Activity Center	TOTAL ACRES (unincorporated only)	Developed Acres	Undeveloped Acres	% Undeveloped
Archer Road/ SW 34 <sup>th</sup> Street	40.58	38.43	2.15	5%
Williston Rd./ I-75	86.38	48.48	37.9	44%
Williston Road/ SW 13 <sup>th</sup> Street	65.14	41.97	23.17	36%
Tower Road/ SW 24 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	58.91	43.48	15.43	26%
Archer Road/ Tower Road	183.26	92.53	89.76	49%
Jonesville	271.41	115.81	154.41	57%
Millhopper	10.93	9.86	0	0%
North Main Street/ NE 53 <sup>rd</sup> Ave.	47.54	0	47.54	100%
Eastgate	4.41	0.24	4.17	95%
Oaks Mall	221.2	183.52	14.5	7%
Santa Fe Community College	117	117	0	0%
Springhills	727.78	178.58	537.96	74%
East Side	296.31	115.7	180.61	61%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,130.85</b>	<b>985.6</b>	<b>1,107.6</b>	

Source: Alachua County G.I.S, July 2008. Note: The total acreage is not necessarily the sum of the developed and undeveloped acreage. Common areas, although not developed, are not considered undeveloped either. Environmental constraints, such as wetlands or Strategic Ecosystems may further deduct from the undeveloped acreage that is potentially available for new development.

As part of the last major update of the Comprehensive Plan which went into effect in May 2005, new general design standards were adopted for development within Activity Centers. The design standards provide that Activity Centers should develop as compact mixed use nodes that are pedestrian-friendly, functionally integrated with surrounding uses, and connected to a multi-modal transportation system. These relatively new design standards are applicable to all new development or redevelopment within Activity Centers. The general design standards for Activity Centers include the following key concepts (see policies 2.1.1 through 2.1.14 of Future Land Use Element in Appendix):

- Integration of commercial development with residential, civic, and open space
- Mixed use development is encouraged in order to reduce transportation-related trip lengths and to support pedestrian, bicycle, and transit (multi-modal) opportunities.
- Development is required to provide pedestrian friendly design elements through building design and arrangement, smaller blocks, and screening of parking areas.
- Transportation connectivity is required between development within the Activity Center and development in the adjacent areas.

Policy 2.1.7 of the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan requires that the new Activity Center design standards be implemented through either the development plan review process or through a detailed Master Plan for the entire Activity Center. Master Plans are required for larger developments that exceed certain thresholds defined in the Land Development Code. They are intended to provide for an evaluation of an entire Activity Center in the context of the surrounding development, transportation facilities, infrastructure,

and natural resources in order to develop a plan which has an appropriate mix of land uses and maximizes multi-modal transportation opportunities and connectivity. Master Plans are required to provide policies relating to site and building design, parking, multimodal transportation facilities, community green space, and surface stormwater management facilities.

Many of the County's Activity Centers currently have specific plans or interim guidelines in place which were adopted under previous versions of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. In some cases, these older plans contain policies which do not support the newer general design standards for Activity Centers discussed above. The Master Plan process provides an opportunity to update these existing plans to bring them into compliance with the newer design standards. Policy 2.1.14 of the Future Land Use Element requires an update of all Activity Center Plans to bring them into compliance with the new mixed use, pedestrian-friendly design standards that went into effect in 2005. Alachua County recently adopted a new Master Plan for the Eastside Activity Center, which updated the existing interim guidelines and provided a framework for mixed use development to occur.

In the absence of an updated Activity Center Master Plan, applications for new development or redevelopment within Activity Centers are required to demonstrate consistency with the new design standards as part of the development review process. The new design standards are sometimes difficult to implement at the development plan review stage because there are no generalized Future Land Use categories or zoning districts that provide for mixed use development, and there are no standards to determine how many residential units could be allowed in association with non-residential uses in a mixed use development. Consequently, most proposed mixed use developments would need to be approved through a Comprehensive Plan amendment or a Planned Development (PD) rezoning.

Alachua County has approved a few mixed use/higher density developments within Activity Centers in the last few years, specifically in the Archer/Tower Road Activity Center and the Tower Road/SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue Activity Center. Portions of these new developments have been built and have provided for some degree of vertical mixing of uses. Vertical mixing of uses increases the efficiency of land use, results in fewer external automobile trips placed on the major road network, allows people to live closer to shopping and employment, and provides residents with more housing options.

### **Activity Center Implementation Issues**

While the Activity Center policies have resulted in some initial positive steps in encouraging mixed use and multi-modal development, there have been challenges relating to implementation of the Activity Center policies.

The general design standards for Activity Centers (Policies 2.1.5 through 2.1.13 of the Future Land Use Element) encourage mixed use development, which combines residential and non-residential development within close proximity, or within the same building. Such development can include, but is not limited to, combinations of residential, office, retail, civic, and/or light industrial in a compact urban form. Mixing residential units with non-residential areas increases the efficiency of land use because fewer external automobile trips are placed on roads; people live closer to shopping and employment opportunities, residents are given more housing options, and a favorable environment is created for multi-modal centers.

Although the adopted Comprehensive Plan policies encourage higher density and intensity mixed uses in Activity Center, the adopted policies do not facilitate mixed use development as well as they could. The mapped Future Land Use designations and underlying zoning districts within all Activity Centers are generally non-residential. This means that the only allowable land uses in these areas would be non-residential (e.g., retail, office, services, etc.). As a result, a large-scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment and/or Planned

Development rezoning is needed in order to allow for mixed use development to occur. In some Activity Centers, specific plans or Interim Guidelines provide policies to allow some degree of mixed uses in various land use categories, but this is not common. The Activity Center Master Plan process could also be used to establish a framework for mixed use development to occur in Activity Centers. Each of these options can be costly and time consuming, and lead to uncertain outcomes. The existing policies for Activity Centers could be modified to more effectively encourage mixed use development. For example, the policy framework could be modified to provide a methodology for allocating how many residential units may be allowed in non-residential land use categories, and identify what design elements are required.

The benefit of establishing general mixed use standards for Activity Centers in the Comprehensive Plan is that they could potentially be implemented through the development plan review process. This process is generally less costly and time consuming than the Comprehensive Plan amendment or Master Plan process. Mixed use standards could take various approaches, including establishing an appropriate ratio of the number of residential units to non-residential gross leasable floor area. Design standards may include specific guidelines for street design, multi-modal accessibility, and parking, among other factors. Waiting until each Activity Center Plan is updated or requiring a Comprehensive Plan amendment to determine an appropriate mix of uses and design standards may risk losing opportunities to achieve the mixed use Activity Center goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Alachua County is developing a long range mobility plan to more effectively link land use and transportation in the Urban Cluster. This plan will include development standards and incentives for mixed use development and Transit Oriented Development that could be implemented through the development plan review process.

Objective 2.1 of the Future Land Use Element establishes that a central theme for Activity Centers is connection to a multi-modal transportation system and integration with surrounding land uses in the urban area. Activity Centers should have a high degree of accessibility via multiple modes of transportation including pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and public transit. Activity Centers should provide opportunities to walk or bike short distances from residential areas to nearby employment, shopping, or entertainment destinations. For residential areas that are not in close proximity to Activity Centers, there should be accessibility via automobile or public transit. Policy 2.1.8.e provides that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation shall be equitably served by the street system in an Activity Center. Policy 2.1.8.e also provides that development shall provide pedestrian and bicycle- friendly access, and shall provide transit facilities to the development and the surrounding community.

The recent design standards for Activity Centers have not resulted in a high degree of multi-modal accessibility. The design standards have been challenging to implement from a mobility standpoint because most Activity Centers contain existing development that is exclusively automobile-oriented and was built prior to the new design standards which emphasize multi-modal accessibility. There is a challenge to functionally integrate the existing automobile-oriented development with newer development which requires multi-modal transportation facilities to be incorporated into the design of site. New development in Activity Centers is required to provide the basic internal framework for multi-modal transportation such as sidewalks, bike paths, and transit shelters, however, there is often a lack of opportunity for these new multi-modal facilities to provide functional connections to adjacent developments because the adjacent developments are older and do not have multi-modal infrastructure in place.

It is expected that, as redevelopment of Activity Centers occurs over time, the existing suburban style automobile-oriented development will begin to transition to mixed use development with better multi-modal connections to adjacent areas. As redevelopment occurs consistent with the new design standards, it is expected that a greater level of multimodal connectivity will begin to take shape on a community-wide basis. The County is also in the process of developing a long term mobility plan which would enhance multi-modal



linkages between Activity Centers. The plan would identify future multimodal transportation corridors , with a focus on providing mobility between Activity Centers in the urban area.

**Commercial Policy Framework**

The Comprehensive Plan policies for Commercial land uses, contained in Section 3.0 of the Future Land Use Element, are closely related to the Activity Center policies discussed above. The Future Land Use Element encourages most new commercial development in the unincorporated area to occur within designated Activity Centers. The design standards for Activity Centers, therefore, affect the majority of new commercial development or redevelopment in the unincorporated area. Since 2005, there has been approximately 900,808 square feet of new commercial development approved as part of development plans in the unincorporated area, and 456,377 square feet of that was located within Activity Centers. Other commercial development has occurred in areas outside Activity Centers, including areas designated “Commercial”, “Office”, “Tourist/Entertainment”, and “Commercial Enclaves”, or as part of mixed use development.

The Commercial polices in the Comprehensive Plan (Objective 3.4 through 3.11, Future Land Use Element) identify several types and scales of commercial development, with specific location standards associated with each type or level of commercial. The types of commercial development are defined in terms of site area, gross leasable area, market area, and typical tenants. The Comprehensive Plan also identifies locational criteria for various types of commercial development.

**Table 6.21. Types of Commercial Development Identified in Comprehensive Plan**

Type of Commercial	Where Allowed
Regional Shopping Center	High Activity Centers
Community Shopping Centers	Medium or High Activity Centers
Neighborhood Shopping Centers	Low, Medium, or High Activity Centers
Neighborhood Convenience Commercial	Allowed in Commercial, Low, Medium or High Activity Centers, Rural Employment Centers, Rural Clusters
Office	Areas mapped Commercial, Low, Med or High Activity Centers, Planned Developments, Village Centers, Traditional Neighborhood Developments, Rural Employment Centers, Rural Clusters
Tourist Entertainment	Oriented towards short term visitor, Highway (I-75) interchanges, or near cultural or tourist destinations.
Rural Commercial	Rural Clusters or Rural Commercial Agriculture outside of Rural Clusters (these are properties with pre-existing commercial zoning districts.)
Roadway Commercial (including Commercial Enclaves)	Allowed as limited infill in existing roadwaycommercial areas or as limited commercial uses in designated Enclaves.

**Table 6.22. Scales of Commercial Development Identified in Comprehensive Plan**

Shopping Center Type	Minimum Site Area	Gross Leasable Area	Minimum Support Required (population)	Market Area Radius	Number of Stores	Leading Tenants
Regional Center	30-50+ acres	300,000 to 1,000,000+ sq. ft.	150,000	10-15+ miles	40+	1 or more full-line department store of at least 100,000 s.f. GLA
Community Center	10 acres	100,000 to 300,000 sq. ft.	20,000 to 60,000	2 miles or more	15 to 40	Variety, discount, or junior department store
Neighborhood Center	4 acres	30,000 to 100,000 sq. ft.	5,000 to 10,000	1.25 miles or more	15 to 20	Supermarket
Neighborhood Convenience Center	4 acres	3,000 to 30,000 sq. ft.	3,000 to 30,000	At least 1 mile from another Neighborhood Convenience Center	N/A	Convenience store, drug store, grocery store

There are about 2,027 acres designated on the Future Land Use Map for the various types of commercial uses in the unincorporated area. Approximately 948 of these acres remain vacant. The majority of the commercially land is designated “Commercial”, “Office”, or “Tourist/Entertainment”.

**Table 6.23. Commercial Acreage Designated on Future Land Use Map**

Future Land Use Designation	Acres Designated on Future Land Use Map	Undeveloped Acres
Commercial	662	227
Commercial Enclaves	42	24
Office	200	133
Office/Business Park	113	77
Office/Medical	22	3
Office/Residential	28	14
Office/Residential (2-4 units/acre)	36	17
Office/Residential (4-8 units/acre)	27	18
Shopping Center	15	8
Tourist Entertainment	882	427
Total	2,027	948

Source: Alachua County G.I.S, July 2008

### Commercial Policy Implementation Issues

Most commercially-designated land within the Urban Cluster is located within Activity Centers. The Comprehensive Plan relies heavily on the Activity Center policy framework to provide the development standards for commercial development. The policies for development within Activity Centers include such details as requiring a balanced mix of uses with compact, multi-purpose, mixed-use centers including residential; well defined centers and edges with a public or civic space as an organizing element; a pedestrian circulation system; buildings designed at a pedestrian scale; automobile and non-automobile modes of transport to be equitably served. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan provides that large-scale non-residential uses shall integrate development into the surrounding community by creating a series of smaller, well-defined customer entrances to breakup long facades and provide a pedestrian scale and the use of pocket parks and courtyards to soften large building masses. All new commercial development in Activity Centers must provide vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to adjacent commercial development and to adjacent residential development.

Although most commercial development must be located within Activity Centers, there are some areas outside Activity Centers in the Urban Cluster where commercial uses could be located. These areas include “Commercial”, “Office”, and “Tourist/Entertainment” designations outside of Activity Centers, and areas designated as “Commercial Enclaves”. Non-residential land uses may also be located within the mixed use Village Centers of Traditional Neighborhood Developments. In contrast to the Activity Center commercial policies, the policies in the Comprehensive Plan that apply to non-residential mixed use development outside Activity Centers are much less specific. For example, the Commercial policies state that development shall be designed to maintain compatibility with neighboring residential uses and support pedestrian activity, taking into account scale and intensity, and should provide adequate buffering or transitional design practices to adequately integrate the development along the edges of different land uses. These types of broad statements do not provide clear standards for how commercial development should be designed at the development review stage.

Since the general Commercial policies are not as detailed as Activity Center policies, there is a need to determine to what extent the design standards for Activity Centers should be applied to other non-residential or mixed uses located outside of Activity Centers. Some of the Activity Center design policies could potentially be applied to non-residential and mixed use development outside Activity Centers, but others may be difficult to achieve outside the Activity Center context. For example, the requirement that Activity Centers contain a mix of uses would be difficult to achieve on small, typically single-use commercial properties, or in an existing commercial development that has only small vacant parcels available. On the other hand, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessibility requirements, and connectivity requirements could be applied similarly within Activity Centers and on properties outside of Activity Centers. Alternatively, new design standards for all types of commercial development identified in the Comprehensive Plan could be considered, independent of the Activity Center policies.

### RECENT APPLICABLE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

No applicable changes.

### STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE

- Establish revised policies and development standards to better encourage mixed use, multi-modal development within all Activity Centers (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Recommendation Summary, Issue 2.1).

- Continue to update existing Activity Center plans in order to provide the necessary policy framework for mixed use multi-modal development that is consistent with the general mixed use design concepts for Activity Centers. (also see Urban Area recommendations under Recommendation Summary Issue 1.4)
- Enhance multi-modal transportation linkages between Activity Centers and other major employment and retail destinations through the County's proposed mobility plan and alternative approach to transportation concurrency (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Recommendation Summary, Issue 2.1).
- Establish multimodal design standards for mixed use and limited non-residential development located outside of Activity Centers (also see Land Use Transportation recommendations under Recommendation Summary, Issue 2.1).

## Intergovernmental Coordination on Transportation

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Intergovernmental Coordination and Planning:

Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities and adjacent counties relative to service provision and facility service levels (transportation).

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

This issue paper relates primarily to transportation facilities, and the coordination of service provision and service levels among the various local and regional agencies in Alachua County and the surrounding counties. There is also another component of this issue dealing with coordination of recreation facilities and natural resources, which is addressed in separate EAR Issue Papers.

Alachua County serves as a retail and employment center for the larger north central Florida region, bringing in traffic daily from surrounding counties. The County's unincorporated Urban Cluster and the City of Gainesville, including the University of Florida, serve as the urban core for the region, and much of the peak hour traffic on Alachua County roadways is from work-related commuters who live outside the County and travel to employment destinations in Gainesville or the unincorporated County. Alachua County monitors and maintains levels of service on many roadways which cross jurisdictional boundaries into municipalities and surrounding counties. Land use and development decisions made by adjacent jurisdictions have an impact on the levels of service of unincorporated road segments, and vice versa.

A need continues to grow for a multimodal transportation system to serve not only the unincorporated County and Gainesville, but also the larger region. Likewise, as the outlying municipalities in the County continue to grow and expand, there is increased potential for development closer to the County line, which may impact the level of service of roadways in such a way that impacts levels of service in adjacent counties. Alachua County has proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to establish a long range mobility plan and concurrency management system for the unincorporated area which will focus more on multiple modes of transportation as well as land use strategies to provide incentives for mixed-use development. In order for this system to be effective, it will require countywide coordination.

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan has policies which address coordination among adjacent local governments with regard to transportation facilities and levels of service.

Objective 2 of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element suggests the establishment of mechanisms to address the resolution of intergovernmental issues related to impacts of development proposed in the Comprehensive Plan upon municipalities within the County, adjacent counties, the region and the state. Policies 7.2, 7.3, and 7.6 of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element require Alachua County to coordinate with various entities, including FDOT, the MTPO, municipalities within the County, and adjacent counties on issues relating to inter-jurisdictional and inter-county roadways. According to the existing policies, there should be coordination with regard to:

- 1) Designation of constrained or backlogged roadway facilities and standards for roads within any transportation concurrency exception areas (TCEAs) or transportation concurrency management areas (TCMAs)
- 2) Establishing level of service standards for roadways

### 3) Intergovernmental traffic impacts

The adopted Comprehensive Plan policy framework addresses intergovernmental coordination of transportation issues in broad terms, with a focus on mitigation of development-related impacts to the road system. In practice, intergovernmental coordination has occurred in a variety of ways including the Comprehensive Plan Amendment review and comment process established under Florida Statutes, participation in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO), and other staff level coordination between the County, cities, and adjacent Counties.

Alachua County typically reviews and comments on Comprehensive Plan amendments proposed by adjacent municipalities and counties. This review function is granted under the provisions of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes and Section 9J-5, Florida Administrative Code. Adjacent jurisdictions are required to send copies of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to Alachua County. County staff reviews proposed amendments, and identifies potential level of service issues on unincorporated road segments that may result from adoption of the amendment. Formal written comments are generally provided to the adjacent jurisdiction and to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) if significant issues are anticipated. Issues that are raised by the County, such as transportation level of service deficiencies, are ultimately taken into account in the Comprehensive Plan amendment review process, and may be incorporated into the Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report that is issued by DCA. This review process also works the opposite way, where Alachua County is required to send proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to adjacent municipalities and counties, who then have an opportunity to comment and raise any transportation and other issues that they may identify with Alachua County's proposed amendments.

The State review process for Comprehensive Plan amendments provides a forum to raise concerns about transportation issues relating to a particular land use action. It sometimes leads to further coordination on a project between jurisdictions, resulting in appropriate mitigation for transportation impacts. There are times, however, where adjacent jurisdictions adopt amendments without adequate coordination on transportation issues which may impact the County. In such cases, the County has an option to file a legal challenge to the amendment which is a lengthy and difficult process. The State review process is reactionary and is limited to a particular land use action for a property. The State mandated review framework does not provide for proactive and coordinated transportation planning among various local government jurisdictions. The review framework also does not generally involve coordination on the establishment of Level of Service Standards for roads, or on the implementation of transportation concurrency. Any coordination that occurs would be done voluntarily.

Alachua County participates in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) transportation planning process. The MTPO is composed of the Gainesville City Commission, the Alachua County Commission, and non-voting representatives of the University of Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation, and a rural advisor selected by the Alachua County League of Cities. County staff serves on various MTPO subcommittees. The MTPO is responsible for the ongoing, transportation planning program for the Gainesville Urbanized Area, which includes the City of Gainesville and most of the unincorporated Urban Cluster area. The MTPO planning program is required in order to receive federal and state funds for local transportation projects. One of the primary functions of the MTPO is to develop and implement a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which serves as a basis for allocating funds for transportation projects within the Urbanized Area. The MTPO is not intended to provide a forum for countywide or regional transportation planning, however, because the focus area of the MTPO is limited to the City of Gainesville and the urbanized areas of the unincorporated County. Municipalities in the County that are rapidly urbanizing, such as Alachua and Newberry, are not part of the MTPO.

Transportation coordination often occurs directly between County staff and the staffs of municipalities, FDOT, the MTPo, and the Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS) on a variety of transportation issues including traffic impacts from proposed development or roadway design and planning. Recently, County staff has participated in more focused discussion with City of Gainesville staff about potential options for addressing long range transportation planning and concurrency implementation within the urbanized area through a more proactive multi-modal approach.

Alachua County has proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to establish a long range mobility plan and concurrency management system for the unincorporated area which will focus more on multiple modes of transportation as well as land use strategies to provide incentives for mixed-use development. The amendment are intended to encourage compact mixed use development, transit oriented development (TOD), and traditional neighborhood development that is connected to a multi-modal transportation system, with rapid transit service targeted toward serving commuter trips to major employment centers and commercial destinations. It will establish level of service standards for multiple travel modes including automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. As this process moves forward, coordination with the City of Gainesville on transportation planning will be a key element of the County's plan because of the cross-jurisdictional Level of Service concerns and because the City operates the regional transit system.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Strengthen existing policies in the Intergovernmental Coordination and Transportation Mobility Elements to require better coordination with adjacent jurisdictions on transportation level of service, implementation of concurrency, and mitigation of development impacts to the roadway system. The general concept of coordination between jurisdictions on transportation issues is already provided for in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan (Policies 7.2, 7.3, and 7.6 of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element). These policies should be strengthened to focus more on multi-modal approaches to transportation planning and implementation of concurrency.
- Explore mechanisms for coordination of long range transportation planning on a county-wide and regional basis.



## RESOURCE PROTECTION

Alachua County has a wealth of natural resources that are important to protect, both at the local level and for the good of the region and state. There are already many policies in the County's Comprehensive Plan to protect and preserve these resources, however there are still changes that need to be made to update these policies due to more recent fiscal constraints, and to address intergovernmental coordination for those resources that cross jurisdictional boundaries. The following set of resource protection issues are addressed in the EAR:

- Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques
- Assess water conservation and reuse strategies
- Develop effective approaches to interjurisdictional and interagency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.)
- Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans
- Evaluate need for Air Quality Program
- Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints

### Fiscal Constraints – Air Quality

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Evaluate need for Air Quality Program

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Section 4.1, Air Resources, of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan presents as a primary Objective (4.1) the need for Alachua County to protect the public health and the environment by taking steps to maintain and improve ambient air quality by meeting or surpassing minimal compliance with state and national ambient air quality standards.

To support this objective, several policies (4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4) were adopted that recommended the establishment of a local air quality program with the following capabilities and responsibilities: 1) local ambient air monitoring, 2) adoption of state air quality regulations and pursuit of an approved local air program with delegated regulatory authority from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), 3) a planning and analysis capability to study levels and sources of air pollutants in the County and to regulate land use and development activities to protect air resources, 4) an air quality and radon public education component including a biennial air quality status report to the community, and 5) an inventory of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions (GHG) and implementation of a plan to reduce County GHG emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.

From 1999 to 2004, Alachua County made progress in development and implementation of activities in support of an Air Quality program and specifically air resource policies (4.1.1 to 4.1.4) in the adopted Comprehensive plan. Many if not most of these policies and activities were previously recommended to the Board of County Commissioners by the Alachua County Air Quality Commission in their report of January 2000. In 1998 the AQC was established by the Board of County Commissioners to review air quality issues in

Alachua County during a period when a new cement plant was being proposed and permitted by FDEP near the City of Newberry. Alachua County through the Environmental Protection Department (ACEPD) established several air monitoring stations in 1999 to gather preliminary data on the levels of primary pollutants, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulates (PM 10 and PM2.5) in Alachua County.

From 2001 to 2004, Alachua County committed staff and equipment resources and actively pursued the development of a local delegated air quality program and establishment of an FDEP approved air quality monitoring program. Technical engineering and support staff were hired to operate the monitoring program and supervise the air quality program. Alachua County also joined the ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability "Cities for Climate Protection Campaign" and completed the development of GHG inventory for County operations and developed a local action plan for GHG reduction in County operations. The program successfully achieved the capability to generate ambient ozone and particulate data according to FDEP Quality Assurance protocols. The County established an Air Quality website which contained information for the public on air pollution levels in Alachua County and included public information and education on radon levels and indoor air pollution and greenhouse gases.

By early 2004, it became apparent from discussions with the FDEP Air Program management that achievement of the County's goal to establish a FDEP delegated local air pollution control program with the regulatory and monitoring capabilities envisioned by the policies in the adopted Comprehensive Plan would require establishment of a duplicative regulatory program at the local level to that performed by FDEP in order to prove that the local program was capable of performance to FDEP regulatory standards. In addition FDEP indicated that Alachua County would need to establish and maintain an ambient air quality monitoring program for several years including staff and equipment at a sufficient level to meet FDEP Quality Assurance standards. The financial commitment required by Alachua County to achieve these goals was projected to increase significantly to a level approaching \$500,000 annually to fully meet the personnel and equipment requirements required by the FDEP. Additionally FDEP did not appear receptive to delegation of regulatory authority to Alachua County within a reasonable time frame. Ambient air quality monitoring data available from FDEP monitors and performed by Alachua County during the Year 2000 to 2004 period indicated that air quality in Alachua County was generally good with all regulated pollutants being below federal and state regulatory standards. However, concerns about fine particulates (PM2.5) and ozone concentrations remained of concern to the community due to measured concentrations were approaching federal regulatory levels.

Based on fiscal budget constraints in FY 2005 budget, the County made a decision in late 2004 to eliminate continued financial support for the pursuit of a local air quality program within Alachua County and further progress on implementation of Policies 4.1.1 through 4.1.4 ceased. By doing so the County also eliminated staffing that would have been used to carry out the implementation and tracking of the local County GHG reduction plans and projects envisioned in Policy 4.1.3.7.

Additional policies not directly related to establishment of a local air quality program were also adopted in the current Comprehensive Plan to support Objective 4.1 for protection of ambient air quality. The fiscal constraints issue associated with evaluating the need for an air quality program does not apply directly to these policies. Policy 4.1.5 ensures the safety of the public and the environment through regulation of open burning practices. Policy 4.1.6 directs that factors contributing to the maintenance and improvement of air quality be considered during land use planning and development review. Policy 4.1.7 directs the County to support programs that improve air quality through increased use of mass transit and increased use of bikeways. Policy 4.1.8 addresses the proper use and handling of asbestos. Policy 4.1.9 requires the establishment of a tree planting program to improve air quality. Policy 4.1.10 directs the County to establish and intergovernmental task force to coordinate on air quality issues and use of alternate fuels and use of hybrid vehicles.

County progress on many of these issues has been made through application of land development and other County regulations.

### **DATA AND EXISTING CONDITIONS RELATING TO ISSUE**

Currently, air quality in Alachua County remains generally good. Some concern remains with ozone which has approached federal regulatory 8-hour maximum standards on during several periods during the last two years. Fine particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) remain below federal standards but average about 70% to 80% of federal annual average standards and therefore remain a concern if future increases in development, traffic and any new pollution sources cause an increase in emissions. Ozone levels (8-hour maximum values) in the County have been approaching and occasionally exceeding federal regulatory standards in the last several years. FDEP continues to measure ozone concentrations in Alachua County using a monitoring station located in Paynes Prairie. Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) concentrations are not currently monitored in the County. The County continues to maintain an Air Quality website that provides the public with general information about air pollution and air quality in Alachua County including radon and greenhouse gases.

Current and future County fiscal budgets are projected to continue to be significantly constrained and are unlikely to be able to support additional expenditures for a regulatory based Air Quality program as envisioned in the current adopted Comprehensive plan. The County has recently established an Energy Strategies Conservation Commission (ESCC), a citizens advisory board which developed recommendations to the Board of the County Commissioners on strategies and programs the County can implement to enhance energy efficiency, reduce the generation of greenhouse gases associated with global warming and develop a sustainable energy strategy for the County.

Recommendations from the ESCC if adopted by the County will likely result in continued progress in tracking GHG emissions and a reduction in air pollutants through various strategies to limit the consumption of fossil fuels for power generation in the areas of building construction, land use, transportation and waste management.

### **RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

The need for the County to resume and enhance its ability to monitor and track the amount of GHG emissions generated by County operations and the Community has increased due recent state legislative actions and the increase in emphasis on GHG reductions expected from the federal government. The state of Florida in recent legislation (2008 CS/HB 697) has adopted the following language:

Future Land Use Element data and analysis must include information about “energy-efficient land use patterns accounting for existing and future electric power generation and transmission systems”; and “greenhouse gas reduction strategies.” Transportation strategies must address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Delete Policies 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3 (except Policy 4.1.3.7 dealing with the requirement to inventory and reduce County GHG emissions) of the current adopted Comprehensive Plan that are related to a regulatory and monitoring based Air Quality program.
- Revise Policy 4.1.4 that relates to an air quality public education component to state the County should maintain a general Air Quality website to provide the public with education about air quality, radon information and indoor air pollution issues
- Delete the requirement for a biennial report on air quality contained under Policy 4.1.4.4.

- Since the County has no delegated regulatory authority from FDEP for air quality, remove the following language from Item 4.1.6.5 relating to regulation of industries that exceed federal and state air quality and emission standards:
  - “Existing and new industries shall be regulated as follows:
    - a. Existing industries not meeting these standards shall be brought into compliance under a specified schedule.
    - b. New industries shall be designed to exceed the specified standards.”

## Water Resources

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including:

- linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques, and potable water and sanitary sewer policies and implementation, and assess water conservation and reuse strategies.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The use and allocation of water resources in Alachua County are emerging issues. Historically, water resources have been viewed as virtually unlimited, and past practices are now contributing to declining water quality and limited availability. Evaluation of the existing policies in the Comprehensive Plan related to Water Resources Protection has identified the following areas that need to be addressed:

- Protection of surface waters, wetlands, springsheds, groundwater and wellfields including reducing the number of impaired water bodies, avoiding impacts to wetlands and buffers, and improving stormwater management and low-impact development techniques;
- Linking protection of water quality with policies related to groundwater impacts, including water use, conservation and reuse;
- Implementation of potable water and sanitary sewer policies.
- Availability of adequate water supplies to serve new development

### Surface Water

The Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) addresses surface waters and the standards used to measure water quality, establishes protection standards, and establishes standards for wastewater and stormwater discharges to surface waters and wetlands. Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) Policy 4.6.1 uses Class III water quality criteria (for predominantly fresh water) (FDEP, 2008) as “minimum criteria” for surface water quality in Alachua County. Alachua County has a number of impaired waters that do not meet these minimum state criteria. No development activities are allowed in wetlands or wetland buffers that could have an adverse impact without demonstrating efforts to follow a 3-step process of first attempting to avoid any impacts, second attempting to minimize any impacts and third proposing mitigation when the first two steps are unsuccessful, as outlined in Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE), Policy 4.7.4. In addition, any development activity that will have an adverse impact and require wetland mitigation must obtain Board of County Commission approval for the mitigation and monitoring plan prior to wetland or buffer alteration (COSE Policy 4.7.6). The policies requiring protection of wetland and surface waters and their buffers have been effective.

### Ground Water and Springs

COSE Policy 4.5.1 requires the county to establish a comprehensive wellhead protection program to protect current and future public water supplies from adverse effects. Wellfields and others large water uses can have a detrimental impact on groundwater and springs. Policy language is adequate in protecting wellfields from potential threats, but should be stronger in protecting groundwater resources from overuse. COSE Policy 4.5.3 requires completion of an aquifer vulnerability/recharge study. This assessment was completed in 2008, and a new map of high aquifer recharge areas has been approved by the County Commission for transmittal as part of the first large scale plan amendment cycle for 2009. The COSE provides several policies addressing groundwater resources, including wellfield protection areas to protect the potable water supply, mapping and protection of high aquifer recharge areas, restrictions on large volume withdrawals or transfers of water out of Alachua County, and groundwater protection and remediation. Protection of flows to the springs and maintenance of groundwater levels should be included in related policy language. Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element policies in Objective 8 promote the increased conservation and reuse of water. These policies should be updated to further enhance water conservation activities in Alachua County. Policies should be developed to further protect groundwater and springs that reference innovative wastewater treatment technologies and disposal options. Policies should be developed to further promote environmentally sound methods of effluent disposal and prohibit the use of rapid infiltration basins (RIBs or percolation ponds), which do not provide adequate nutrient removal. Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element Policy 6.2 requires disposal of biosolids through means such as land application. The use of emerging technologies for wastewater treatment and effluent disposal are important tools for water quality improvement and protection of the Floridan aquifer. Strategies that include water reuse for irrigation and created wetlands can further reduce nitrogen concentrations from land application of wastewater. Disposal options that disperse the effluent help in two ways; first reducing hydraulic loading that forces nutrient rich water to recharge groundwater and secondly allowing vegetation to uptake the nutrients before they reach the groundwater. The same principles apply to septic systems. Water reuse is an important aspect of water resource conservation and protection. Reclaimed water (treated effluent from domestic wastewater treatment plants) can be reused in a number of applications: industrial uses (such as cooling water) landscape irrigation, and wetland hydration. The use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation has increased over the past 15 years. COSE Policy 4.5.19 requires that disposal of effluent from wastewater treatment processes be accomplished by environmentally sound means. This includes policy language that slow-rate land application (spray irrigation) shall be considered a form of advanced waste treatment (AWT). Spray irrigation has been recently documented to increase nutrient concentrations (primarily nitrate) in groundwater and springs in some areas of north Florida.

New water conservation standards for consideration include 1) enhanced landscape irrigation standards, 2) requiring the retrofit (when resold) with ultralow flow plumbing devices in all buildings built before 1993 (effective year of changes to the Southern Building Code effective at the time and now required in the Florida Building Code mandating the use of low-flow plumbing fixtures in new construction), 3) reduction of indoor water use by changes to plumbing code, 4) requiring the use of reclaimed water and the connection to those systems to be used when reclaimed water becomes available, and 5) development of a water conservation outreach program targeting businesses and homeowners. The St. Johns River Water Management District Draft Water Supply Assessment 2008 has identified a portion of Alachua County as a Potential Priority Water Resource Caution Area. This designation identifies areas where current and anticipated sources of water and conservation efforts will not be adequate to meet projected needs and sustain the water resources and related natural systems. The Districts' water supply planning process may result in specific comprehensive plan amendment requirements. The time frame for these amendments will depend upon the final Priority Water Resource Caution Area determination, as part of the Districts' water supply plan updates, which are anticipated to be finalized by December 2010. Information on the Districts' water

supply planning process and water resource caution areas can be found on the St. Johns River Water Management District website at (<http://sjr.state.fl.us/dwsp.html>) and in this Section of the EAR under “Water Supply Concurrency and Planning”.

### **Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer**

The Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element (PWSSE) of the Comprehensive Plan provides specific policies that apply to land within the Urban Cluster, which require connection to potable water and sanitary sewer for all new development with limited exceptions related to engineering infeasibility. Data and analysis relating to these exceptions is provided in this section on Page 228. Minimum lot sizes are established in PWSSE Policy 2.3 for residential development served by private wells and septic systems. In order to prevent urban sprawl, extensions of potable water and sanitary sewer lines outside of the Urban Cluster are strictly limited by Policy 3.5 of the PWSSE, and must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Approval by the Board of County Commissioners of potable water and sanitary sewer extensions beyond the Urban Cluster line must be based on one or more criteria, including:

- a finding that the extension protects public health and safety;
- the extension is necessary to enhance the safe, effective and efficient delivery of central water and sewer within an existing urban service area;
- a finding that the extension of such facilities would serve a purpose consistent with the comprehensive plan;
- a finding that the extension of such facilities is needed as part of a comprehensive expansion of public facilities to encourage urban development in a new area as part of a comprehensive plan amendment. Application of these policies occurs principally in the context of the development review process.

### **Water Supply Concurrency and Planning**

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan contains several policies relating to availability of water supplies to serve new development through coordination with water suppliers. The adopted policies focus on coordination with potable water suppliers and the Water Management Districts on water supply issues, as well as concurrency for public potable water facilities. The adopted water supply policies are contained within various elements of the Plan, and the EAR recommends that these policies be reviewed, revised, and consolidated as needed to address recent legislative updates relating to water supply (see EAR Recommendation #1.3.2 in Table 1, “Summary of EAR Recommendations”).

The relevant Comprehensive Plan policies relating to water supply concurrency and planning requirements are summarized below and listed in Appendix D, specifically, as relating to Water Resources.

#### Conservation and Open Space Element

Policy 4.5.9 Local government cooperation and coordination in the evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources.

Policy 4.5.10 (...) Development shall occur only when adequate water supplies are concurrently available to serve such development without adversely affecting local or regional water sources or the natural ecosystem.



Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element

Objective 7 To protect the potable water supplies and sources.

Policy 7.2 Alachua County shall coordinate with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and/or the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) in determining and assessing impacts of proposed developments on the County's potable water supplies.

Policy 7.3 Alachua County shall coordinate future land use designations of this plan to ensure that water is available in sufficient quantity and quality.

Intergovernmental Coordination Element

Policy 3.4 In order to ensure adequate provision of utilities for proposed land uses in the Comprehensive Plan, Alachua County shall continue to include utility companies on the County's Development Review Committee.

Capital Improvements Element

Policy 1.3.2 Require public facilities and services needed to support development to be available concurrent with the impacts of development and require issuance of a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance (CLSC) as a condition of all final development orders.

**RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES****Surface Waters:**

Suwannee River Water Management District. 2007. MFLs adopted for the Upper Santa Fe River.

St. Johns River Water Management District. 1998, 2004. Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) adopted by the SJRWMD for Lake Tusawilla in 2004 and Lake Wauberg (1998).

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2008. Surface Water Standards and Table. Chapter 62-302 Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Draft 7- 1-08. The proposed rule adds criteria for nitrates in springs of 0.35 milligrams per liter (mg/L).

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2008. Chapter 62-303 Identification of Impaired Surface Waters. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Draft 7-1-08.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2008. Chapter 62-304. Total Maximum Daily Loads. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 6-3-08.

**Ground Water and Springs:**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2006. Chapter 62-40. Water Resource Implementation Rule. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 5-7-06.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2007. Chapter 62-550. Drinking Water Standards, Monitoring and Reporting. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 9-18-07.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2006. Chapter 62-601. Domestic Wastewater Facilities. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 4-13-06.

St. Johns River Water Management District. 2008. Applicants Handbook of Consumptive Uses of Water, Chapter 40C-2 FAC, August 12, 2008.

St. Johns River Water Management District. 2009. Permitting Consumptive Uses of Water, Chapter 40C-2 FAC, Rule for Landscape Irrigation Standards March 8, 2009.



Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2007. Chapter 62-610. Reuse of Reclaimed Water and Land Application. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 11-19-07.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). 2008. Chapter 62-528. Underground Injection Control. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 10-9-08.

### **Water Supply Concurrency and Planning**

The State of Florida has established a process for coordinated water supply planning under the Growth Management Act ([Chapter 163 Part II](#)) and the Water Protection and Sustainability Program ([Chapter 373](#)). Legislative changes in 2002, 2004, and 2005 have modified the water supply planning process to enhance the linkage between local land use planning and water supply planning.

The 2002 legislative changes added requirements to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes (F.S.), for local governments to coordinate comprehensive plans with the appropriate water management district's Regional Water Supply Plan (i.e. a plan adopted by a water management district for an area determined to be a Priority Water Resource Caution area, as described below) approved pursuant to Chapter [373.0361, F.S.](#) Local governments within the jurisdiction of a Regional Water Supply Plan are now required to prepare 10-year water supply facilities work plans, and to incorporate the work plans into their comprehensive plans. In addition, the 2002 legislation also required that all local governments - regardless of whether they are subject to an approved Regional Water Supply Plan - must assess their current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10-year planning period, and include that information as supporting data and analysis for the Comprehensive Plan.

In 2004, the Legislature further amended Chapter 163 to give local governments until December 1, 2006, to prepare the 10-year water supply facilities work plans, if necessary.

The 2005 legislative changes significantly modified Chapters 163 and 373, F.S., to further enhance the coordination of water supply and land use planning, including the addition of water supply to the items subject to requirements for concurrency, and additional requirements for coordination of local government Comprehensive Plans with Regional Water Supply Plans. Chapter [163.3180\(2\)\(a\)](#), F.S. was modified to require that adequate water supplies (in addition to public water facilities) must be determined by the local government to be available to serve the water supply demands of new development no later than the issuance of a certificate of occupancy (or functional equivalent), in consultation with the applicable water supplier. Chapter [163.3177\(6\)\(c\)](#), F.S. was also modified to require that the Comprehensive Plan be updated within 18 months of an updated Regional Water Supply Plan to incorporate the alternative water supply projects selected by the local government from those identified in the regional water supply plan pursuant to Chapter [373.0361\(2\)\(a\)](#) or proposed by the local government under Chapter [373.0361\(7\)\(b\)](#), F.S. This includes the requirement that the potable water element identify alternative water supply projects and traditional water supply, conservation, and reuse projects necessary to meet the water needs identified in Chapter [373.0361\(2\)\(a\)](#) within the local government's jurisdiction and include a work plan, covering at least a 10 year planning period, for building public, private, and regional water supply facilities, including development of alternative water supplies, which are identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development.

### District Water Supply Planning

The State's five water management districts are required to periodically evaluate whether adequate water supplies exist to meet the needs of their areas. Water supply assessments are conducted by the water management districts every five years, and those assessments form the basis of District Water Supply Plans. If the assessment finds that water supply will not be adequate to serve existing users and projected new development over a 20 year period without unacceptable impacts to water resources and related natural systems, then the District must prepare Regional Water Supply Plans for those Priority Water Resource Caution Areas (PWRCA) within the District with deficiencies, and identify how water supply needs will be met for the next 20 years. Such Regional Water Supply Plans identify alternative water supply projects to be implemented by local governments in these areas, in order to supplement their traditional sources of water to meet projected demand.

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) adopted its most recent District Water Supply Plan in 2005. The [2003 Water Supply Assessment](#) that was the basis for the [2005 SJRWMD Water Supply Plan](#) did not identify Alachua County as part of a Priority Water Resource Caution Area (PWRCA). The Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) adopted its most recent District Water Supply Plan in 2004, which did not recommend that regional water supply planning, as provided in Chapter 373.036, F.S. be undertaken within the District for the upcoming five-year cycle. This conclusion was based on "the lack of sufficient technical supporting data or analyses to support the designation of critical water supply areas" (pg. 19 [SRWMD Water Supply Plan 2004](#)). Since neither of the current District plans recommended regional water supply planning for Alachua County in accordance with Chapter [373.0361, F.S.](#), Alachua County is not required to adopt a 10-year water supply facilities work plan into its Comprehensive Plan.

The SJRWMD and SRWMD are currently in the process of updating their District Water Supply Plans, which are both scheduled for adoption around December 2010. Alachua County is coordinating with both Districts on their updates in order to develop Water Supply Plans that contain the most accurate data on projected needs and sources of water. As an initial step in the update process, the SJRWMD has prepared the [SJRWMD Draft Water Supply Assessment 2008](#), which will lead to the next update of the SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan. The Draft Water Supply Assessment identifies a portion of Alachua County as a Potential Priority Water Resource Caution Area (see Map 6.14).

If the updates to the SRWMD or SJRWMD Water Supply Plans that are currently underway determine Alachua County, or a portion of the County, to be a Priority Water Resource Caution Area (or equivalent), with a recommendation to initiate regional water supply planning in accordance with Chapter [373.0361, F.S.](#), then Alachua County will be required to adopt a 10-year water supply facilities work plan into its Comprehensive Plan which identifies water conservation measures and future sources of water, including reclaimed water, to meet increasing demands. Such Comprehensive Plan amendments relating to the EAR or the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and subsequent Plan Amendments must be adopted by the County within 18 months of adoption of the updated District Water Supply Plans (estimated to be December 2010), or whichever District adopts their plan last.

The SJRWMD describes the process for the 2010 District Water Supply Plan update as follows:

“The District’s northern area planning process for the 2010 District Water Supply Plan will launch June 18, 2009, at a comprehensive meeting in Gainesville. Subsequent meetings will be held at various locations. The process will concentrate on a 10-county area including the eight St. Johns District counties in northeast Florida, as well as portions of Columbia and Union counties in the Suwannee River Water management District. Alachua, Bradford and Baker counties span both water management districts. The process will be coordinated with the Suwannee District and will be an open public process involving local governments, water supply utilities, self suppliers, other governments and other interested parties.

District objectives for the process are to allow review and further evaluation of projected water resource impacts; finalize identification of PWRCA’s for the 2010 plan complete WSA 2008 and include it as an appendix in the 2010 plan; and identify strategies to prevent unacceptable impacts and incorporate these strategies into the 2010 plan.”

[http://www.sjrwmd.com/WaterSupplyFS\\_north.pdf](http://www.sjrwmd.com/WaterSupplyFS_north.pdf)

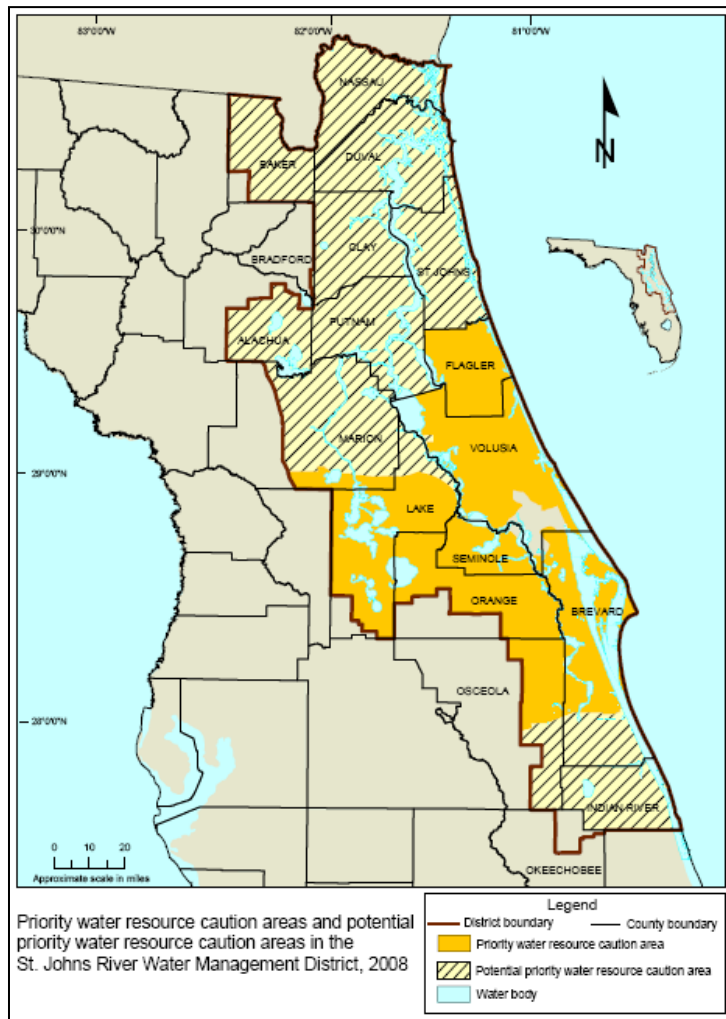
The Priority Water Resource Caution Areas (PWRCA’s) that have been identified in the SJRWMD’s Draft Water Supply Assessment 2008 cover all or portions of Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Seminole, and Volusia counties. In addition, in the 2008 Draft Assessment, the SJRWMD has identified *Potential PWRCA’s*. These are areas within which preliminary assessments indicate that SJRWMD could identify PWRCA’s, but for which additional evaluations are desirable before final decisions are made concerning this identification. SJRWMD plans to further evaluate these areas during the upcoming 2010 water supply planning process in coordination with SRWMD. This draft assessment places the SJRWMD portion of Alachua County in a Potential Priority Water Resource Caution Area, along with most of northeastern Florida, including all or portions of Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Brevard, Clay, Duval, Indian River, Lake, Marion, Nassau, Osceola, Putnam, and St. Johns counties (see Map 6.14).

The SJRWMD provided comments in its letter dated June 12, 2009 on the EAR proposed by the Local Planning Agency highlighting issues relating to water supply, and additional information regarding the water supply planning process and recommendations to address. These comments are provided in the background materials of the EAR proposed for adoption by the Board of County Commissioners. In response to the District’s comments and legislative requirements, recommendations for EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments are included in Table 1 of the EAR, “Summary of EAR Recommendations.” Recommendation 1.3.2 has been added for the County to review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier. Recommendation 6.1.2(7) has been modified from its draft version to address “regional” water supply planning requirements of Chapter 163.3177(6)(c) and (d), F.S, should Alachua County be designated as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area in the updated Water Management Districts’ Water Supply Plans to be finalized in December 2010. Recommendation 6.1.2(7) has also been modified from its draft version to provide for updates of water supply data and analysis in coordination with the updates of the Water Management Districts Water Supply Plans.

The approximate timeline for adoption of the updates of the Water Management District’s Water Supply Plans would be as follows:

- August 2009** Adopt County Evaluation and Appraisal Report
- November 2009** DCA Issues Sufficiency Notice for County EAR
- November 2010** Transmit EAR-Based Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- December 2010** WMDs adopt updated District Water Supply Plans and determine Priority Water Resource Caution Areas
- April/May 2011** Adopt EAR-Based Comprehensive Plan Amendments (within 18 months of DCA determination of sufficiency of EAR)
- May/June 2012** Adopt Comprehensive Plan Amendments required to Implement 2010 Regional Water Supply Plan (if determined to be in a Priority Water Resource Caution Area)

**Map 6.14 Water Resource Caution Areas, SJRWMD**



Source: Draft Water Supply Assessment, 2008, St. Johns River Water Management District

### Water Supply Concurrency

Chapter [163.3180\(2\)\(a\)](#), F.S. requires that adequate water supplies (in addition to public water facilities) must be available to serve the water supply demands of new development, and that water supply concurrency must be determined by local governments in consultation with the applicable water supplier.

Alachua County does not own or operate any public water supply systems, with the exception of the Santa Fe Hills water system which serves a residential subdivision of about 65 dwellings. Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), which is owned and operated by the City of Gainesville, provides centralized potable water services to unincorporated areas within the Urban Cluster adopted in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. Development within the unincorporated Urban Cluster is required to connect to centralized potable water service per Policy 2.1 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element. Development in the unincorporated area outside the Urban Cluster is generally served by private wells. GRU's Murphree Water Treatment Facility supplies potable water to areas within the City of Gainesville and the portions of the unincorporated area within the Urban Cluster. The Murphree facility has 15 water supply wells which are permitted to pump and deliver up to 29 million gallons of potable water per day. Current water use within GRU's service area is about 26 million gallons per day, on average ([GRU Web Site, July 2009](#)).

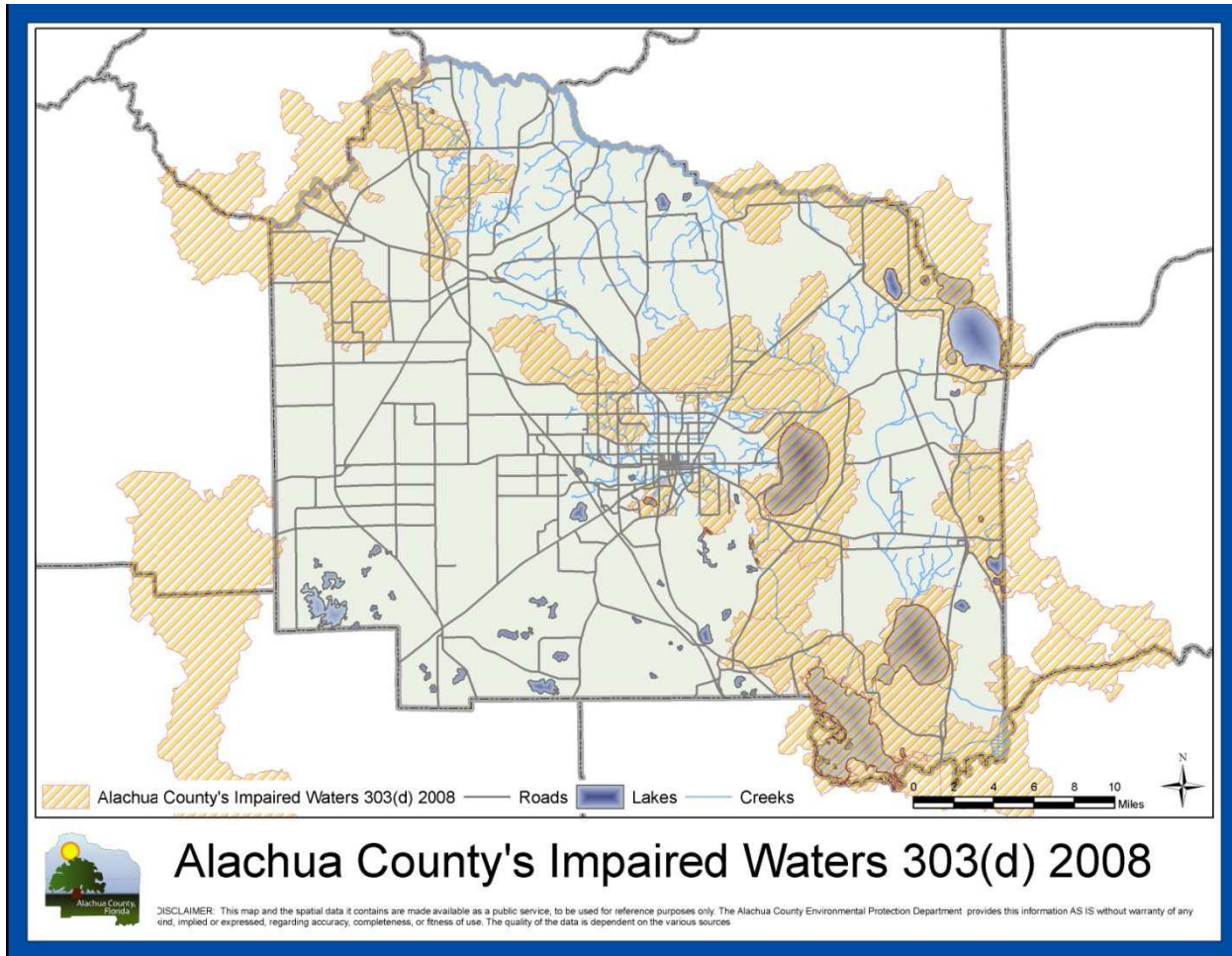
## **DATA AND ANALYSIS**

### **Surface Water**

As part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan that went into effect in May, 2005, numerous policies addressing protection of water quality, protection of groundwater, preservation of wetlands, and natural area buffers to surface waters and wetlands went into effect. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to submit lists of surface waters that do not meet applicable water quality standards (impaired waters) after implementation of technology-based effluent limitations and to establish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for these waters on a prioritized schedule. TMDLs establish the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can assimilate without causing exceedances of water quality standards. As such, development of TMDLs is an important step toward restoring our waters to their designated uses. In order to achieve the water quality benefits intended by the CWA, it is critical that TMDLs, once developed, be implemented as soon as possible. Chapter 99-223, Laws of Florida, sets forth the process by which the 303(d) list is refined through more detailed water quality assessments (Map 6.15 and Table 6.24). It also establishes the means for adopting TMDLs, allocating pollutant loadings among contributing sources, and implementing pollution reduction strategies. Implementation of TMDLs refers to any combination of regulatory, non-regulatory, or incentive-based actions that attain the necessary reduction in pollutant loading. Nonregulatory or incentive-based actions may include development and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), pollution prevention activities, and habitat preservation or restoration. Regulatory actions may include issuance or revision of wastewater, stormwater, or environmental resource permits to include permit conditions consistent with the TMDL. These permit conditions may be numeric effluent limitations or, for technology-based programs, requirements to use a combination of structural and non-structural BMPs needed to achieve the necessary pollutant load reduction.



**Map 6.15. Alachua County Impaired Waters on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Impaired Waters Listings 2008 (FDEP, 2008b; FDEP, 2008c)**



**Table 6.24. Alachua County Impaired Waters on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Impaired waters Listings 2008 (FDEP, 2008b; FDEP, 2008c)**

Name	Waterbody Identification Number (WBID)	Impairment	Basin
<b>Waccasassa River</b>	3699	Fecal Coliforms	Waccasassa River Basin**
<b>Bivens Arm</b>	2718B	Nutrients, Trophic State Index (TSI)* and Historical TSI	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Lochloosa Lake Outlet</b>	2738	Nutrients, TSI	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Alachua Sink</b>	2720A	Fecal Coliforms	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Turkey Creek</b>	3681	Fecal Coliforms	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Newnans Lake</b>	2705B	Nutrients, TSI	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Camps Canal Reach</b>	2733	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Little Orange Creek</b>	2713	Fecal Coliforms	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Prairie Creek</b>	2705A	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Santa Fe River</b>	3605C	Nitrate, Dissolved Oxygen	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Newnans Lake Outlet</b>	2705	Nutrients, TSI	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Little Hatchet Creek</b>	2695	Fecal Coliforms	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Poosum Creek</b>	2696	Fecal Coliforms	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Bivens Arm Outlet</b>	2718	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Alachua Sink Outlet</b>	2720	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Pareners Branch</b>	3626	Fecal Coliforms	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Mill Creek Sink</b>	3644	Dissolved Oxygen	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Santa Fe River</b>	3605	Mercury (in fish tissue)	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Altho (Alto) Drainage</b>	3605F	Dissolved Oxygen	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Hatchet Creek</b>	2688	Fecal Coliforms	Orange Creek Basin
<b>Blues Creek</b>	3682	Fecal Coliforms	Suwannee River Basin
<b>Lochloosa Creek</b>	2738A	Nutrients TSI and Historical TSI	Orange Creek Basin
<b>River Styx Reach</b>	2744	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin



Name	Waterbody Identification Number (WBID)	Impairment	Basin
Orange Creek	2747	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
Orange Lake Reach	2749	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
Orange Lake	2749A	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin
Cross Creek	2754	Dissolved Oxygen	Orange Creek Basin

\*TROPIC STATE INDEX IS A METRIC USED TO EVALUATE THE DEGREE OF LAKE EUTROPHICATION THAT MAY INCLUDE SECCHI, CHLOROPHYLL A AND PHOSPHORUS CONCENTRATIONS

\*\* NO SURFACE WATER INPUTS FROM ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDAN AQUIFER IN THIS AREA IS UNCONFINED

In the Orange Creek Basin TMDLs were developed for nutrients in Newnans Lake, Orange Lake, Lake Wauberg, Alachua Sink; and for coliform bacteria in Hogtown Creek, Tumblin Creek, and Sweetwater Branch (Table 6.25). A Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) was finalized and adopted in 2008 (FDEP, 2008a). Additional water bodies were listed as impaired in the Orange Creek Basin during 2008. TMDLs will be developed by FDEP for these water bodies. The Lower Santa Fe River was verified impaired for nutrients and a TMDL developed in 2008 (Hallis, 2008). A basin working group has been formed and will address issues of nutrient impairment through the development of a Basin Management Action Plan. The total number of impaired waters has risen between 2002 when the first verified list was developed and 2008 when waters with TMDLs were delisted and new impaired waterbodies were added. Many streams in Alachua County are impaired for fecal coliform bacteria (Table 6.24).

**Table 6.25. Alachua County Waterbody Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Orange Creek Basin\* and Santa Fe River\*\*.**

Basin	Waterbody Name	Waterbody Identifier (WBID)	Parameter	TMDL Baseline Loading (lbs./yr.)*	TMDL (lbs./yr.)*	Percent Reduction Needed*
Orange Creek Basin	Newnans Lake	2705B	Total Nitrogen (TN)	315,510	85,470	74%
			Total Phosphorus (TP)	25,732	10,924	59%
Orange Creek Basin	Orange Lake	2749A	Total Phosphorus (TP)	27,889	15,262	45%
Orange Creek Basin	Lake Wauberg	2741	Total Nitrogen (TN)	4,064	2,062.40	51%
			Total Phosphorus (TP)	748	374	50%
Orange Creek Basin	Alachua Sink	2720A	Total Nitrogen (TN)	462,557	256,322	45%
Orange Creek Basin	Tumblin Creek	2698	Fecal Coliform	1,633	800	52%
Orange Creek Basin	Sweetwater Branch	2718A	Fecal Coliform	3,077	800	74%
Orange Creek Basin	Hogtown Creek	2711	Fecal Coliform	2,667	800	70%
Suwannee River Basin	Santa Fe River	3605A, 3605C	Nitrate (as nitrate plus nitrate as a monthly average)	0.535 <sup>#</sup>	0.35 <sup>##</sup>	35% <sup>##</sup>

			Dissolved Oxygen <sup>##</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A
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Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Final 9/24/2008 (Hallis, 2008).

\* ORANGE CREEK BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. MAY 8, 2008 (FDEP, 2008A)

\*\*NUTRIENT AND DISSOLVED OXYGEN TMDL FOR THE SUWANNEE RIVER, SANTA FE RIVER, MANATEE SPRINGS, FANNING SPRINGS, BRANFORD SPRINGS, RUTH SPRING, TROY SPRING, ROYAL SPRING, AND FALMOUTH SPRING.

# MAXIMUM OF HISTORICAL MONTHLY AVERAGES

## OVERALL 35% EXCEEDANCE RATE FOR DISSOLVED OXYGEN IN THE SUWANNEE AND SANTA FE BASINS, REDUCTIONS IN NITRATE TO THE MONTHLY AVERAGE OF 0.35 MILLIGRAMS PER LITER (MG/L) WILL REDUCE ANY IMPACT ASSOCIATED WITH DISSOLVED OXYGEN.

Water quality in the large lakes in Alachua County fluctuates based with season and water level. Data from May 2005 through December 2008 (Table 6.26) continue to show that lakes Santa Fe and Alto have the lowest average nutrient levels among the lakes sampled (Florida LakeWatch, 2009). Water quality data for Lake Santa Fe has shown an increasing trend of nutrients. One example of this is phosphorus levels, an average of 0.018 milligrams per liter (mg/L) for May 2005 through March 2006, in the Melrose Bay area of the lake where phosphorus is observed to spike in late spring or early summer, possibly as a function of low lake levels and the use of fertilizers in the watershed. This is important, as the lake is phosphorus limited and not currently found to be impaired. It is important to use a combined regulatory and public education strategy to prevent further water quality degradation of Lake Santa Fe, which is designated an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW).

**Table 6.26. Alachua County Lake Nutrient Water Quality Data May 2005 to December 2008 (Florida LakeWatch, 2009).**

Lake Name	Watershed	Average Total Nitrogen (mg/L)	Average Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Average Chlorophyll a (mg/L)	Number of Measurements*	Period of Record
<b>Newnans</b>	Orange Creek Basin	2.969	0.177	0.136	111, 109, 114	05/2005-10/2008
<b>Lochloosa</b>	Orange Creek Basin	2.095	0.097	0.080	151, 151, 160	05/2005-11/2008
<b>Wauberg</b>	Orange Creek Basin	2.505	0.180	0.225	117, 117, 123	05/2005-11/2008
<b>Santa Fe</b>	Suwannee River Basin	0.642	0.015	0.010	102, 102, 108	05/2005-12/2008
<b>Alto</b>	Suwannee River Basin	0.775	0.018	0.012	110, 109, 117	05/2005-11/2008
<b>Orange</b>	Suwannee River Basin	2.005	0.120	0.051	141, 141, 153	05/2005-11/2008
<b>Bivens Arm</b>	Orange Creek Basin	3.002	0.224	0.160	93, 93, 96	05/2005-09/2008

\*Count of Average total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll a respectively

The Hawthorn Group sediments are prevalent in the surface soils along the edge of the Cody Escarpment in Alachua County. Some water bodies, including Lake Wauberg and possibly Bivens Arm may be naturally eutrophic, in part due to phosphatic sediments in the basin. Dr. Matt Cohen, UF School of Forest Resources and Conservation reports that much of the phosphorus in Newnans Lake was derived from erosion and downcutting of the streams that feed the lake (Cohen, 2009). Dr. Mark Clark, UF IFAS Soil and Water Chemistry (Clark,

2008) provided data from Flagler County indicating that phosphorus minerals may be leached from soils and sediments when fill using these materials is placed for lot fill. “The increased demand for fill requires deeper borrow areas, but more problematic may be the fact that the composition of the fill material can both increase phosphorus leaching and lower nitrogen availability and moisture holding capacity relative to native soils” (Clark , 2008). The potential for excavation and filling and subsequently mobilizing phosphorus is a significant water quality concern.

Minimum flows and levels or 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 that 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 water and groundwater 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 will 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 (Table 6.27).

Promulgation and adoption of MFLs or water reservation have not been set forth or adopted by SJRWMD for the large lakes in the Orange Creek Basin (Newnans, Lochloosa, and Orange). MFLs were adopted by the SJRWMD for Lake Tuscawilla in 2004 and Lake Wauberg in 1998 (Table 6.27). MFLs were adopted by the SRWMD for the Upper Santa Fe River in 2007. MFLs for the Lower Santa Fe River including Poe, Hornsby and Treehouse Springs as well as Santa Fe River Rise are scheduled to be completed in 2010 as funding permits.

**Table 6.27. Alachua County Waterbody Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) Established by the Water Management Districts (SRWMD, 2009; SJRWMD, 2009)**

Basin	Waterbody Name	Water Management District	Date Established or Proposed
Suwannee River Basin	Upper Santa Fe River	SRWMD	2007
Suwannee River Basin	Lower Santa Fe River	SRWMD	2010*
Suwannee River Basin	Treehouse Spring (ALA112971)	SRWMD	2010*
Suwannee River Basin	Poe Spring	SRWMD	2010*
Suwannee River Basin	Hornsby Spring	SRWMD	2010*
Suwannee River Basin	Santa Fe Lake	SRWMD	2011
Suwannee River Basin	Lake Alto	SRWMD	2011

Orange Creek Basin	Paynes Prairie*	SJRWMD	1994
Orange Creek Basin	Lake Wauberg	SJRWMD	1998
Orange Creek Basin	Lake Tuscawilla	SJRWMD	2004

\*NOT ESTABLISHED AS OF APRIL 2009

\*\*RESERVATION OF WATER ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE WATER TO PAYNES PRAIRIE STATE PRESERVE FROM PRAIRIE CREEK VIA CAMPS CANAL

Source: Suwannee River Water Management District May 2009 (<http://fl-suwanneeriver.civicplus.com/DocumentView.aspx?DID=87>)

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020, effective May, 2005, established new buffer standards for development in the unincorporated area to enhance protection of surface waters and wetlands. The following table (Table 6.28) outlines the minimum natural buffer distances established by these policies, absent any scientific evidence that a larger or smaller buffer width is appropriate:

**Table 6.28. Buffer Distances from the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Conservation and Open Space Element [TABLE 3.6.8.2 COSE].**

Protected Resource	Buffer Distance (feet)*
Surface waters and wetlands less than or equal to 0.5 acre that do not include OFWs or listed animal species as described elsewhere in this table	50 average, 35 minimum
Surface waters and wetlands greater than 0.5 acre that do not include OFWs or listed animal species as described elsewhere in this table	75 average, 50 minimum
Areas where federally and/or state regulated vertebrate wetland/aquatic dependent animal species have been documented within 300 feet of a surface water or wetland	100 average, 75 minimum
Outstanding Florida Waters (OFWs)	150 average, 100 minimum

\* IF THE BUFFER PRECLUDES ALL ECONOMICALLY VIABLE USE OF A PARTICULAR PROPERTY, DEVELOPMENT MAY BE ALLOWED WITHIN THE BUFFER IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY 3.6.5, AND WHERE APPLICABLE, POLICIES 4.6.6 AND 4.7.4.

These buffers apply to new development or alteration near a wetland and surface water. The average and minimum distance requirements have been effective in maintaining the required buffer distances to surface water resources. Since the updated Comprehensive Plan becoming effective in 2005 to date (October 2008), less than 1/2 an acre of wetland impacts have been authorized.

Approximately 215 acres of wetlands and surface waters have been protected through the development review process over the first three years that the plan has been in effect. Other direct wetland and buffer impacts were caused by unauthorized activities. To deal with these unauthorized activities, the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department has an enforcement and compliance program that also includes a public education component. Conventional stormwater systems collect stormwater from impervious surfaces, including roads, parking lots, and rooftops, and transport stormwater off site through buried pipes to treatment facilities or directly to receiving bodies of water. This approach efficiently collects and transports stormwater, but also can create high-velocity flows polluted with urban contaminants, including fertilizers, sediment, heavy metals, petroleum products, and pet wastes. Such flows can erode creek banks and deposit pollutants that may pose environmental and public health risks (Kloss and Calarusse 2006), which in turn, can also create significant economic costs (MacMullan and Reich 2007). Implementation of Low Impact Development (LID)

techniques for stormwater management can improve water quality. Past stormwater management practices, prior to the early 1990s, allowed the direct discharge of stormwater to surface waters, and stormwater management facilities were not designed to disperse stormwater runoff to slowly infiltrate into the ground and recharge the surficial aquifer, which in turn slowly discharges to stream and lakes. This has resulted in excessive sedimentation and nutrient enrichment of surface waters. Low Impact Development (LID) is a suite of stormwater and land development strategies at the parcel and subdivision scale that emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features integrated with engineered, small scale hydrologic controls to more closely mimic the preexisting natural hydrologic character of the site. These strategies store, infiltrate, evaporate, and detain runoff. LID strategies function best when we protect the natural areas, from a local scale to a watershed scale, which include protection of high-quality upland habitat, wetlands, and buffers to surface waters and wetlands because their proximity to contaminants from urban areas is a significant factor in pollution potential. LID strategies can enhance flow to surface waters through groundwater infiltration and slow discharge to surface water through natural seepage into streams and lakes. This slow recharge reduces flooding by attenuating peak stormwater flows. It enhances surface waters by allowing slow recharge over a longer duration, which provides sustained base flow to streams and lakes and improves the quality of the water. Examples include bioswales, rain gardens, green streets, rain cisterns, and pervious pavers (USEPA 2000). The use of these LID techniques with other conservation measures like upland habitat and wetland buffer protection, clustering, open space requirements, and the use of enhanced storm water designs (The UF SEEP Project as an example, <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/seep.htm>), all lead to a product that should result in less environmental impacts than conventional stormwater and development designs. In addition to the environmental benefits, LID controls can, in many situations, be more cost effective and have lower maintenance costs than conventional stormwater controls (MacMullan and Reich 2007).

### Groundwater and Springs

Groundwater resources are present in the surficial, intermediate and Floridan aquifers or aquifer systems in Alachua County. The Floridan aquifer underlies all of Alachua County and is under unconfined or semi-confined conditions in the western and central portions of the county and highly vulnerable to contamination. In the eastern part of the Alachua County the Hawthorn Group sediments overlie the Floridan aquifer, providing confinement that protects the aquifer from contamination (Williams et al, 1977). The Floridan aquifer is the primary source for all groundwater supplies throughout Alachua County, is the only source of groundwater in central and western Alachua County and is the source water for the springs along the Santa Fe River. Groundwater nitrate concentrations continue to be a threat to public health where they exceed the drinking water standard of 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L) or in springs (and surface waters) where they exceed the proposed springs criteria of 0.35 mg/L. Upchurch, et al. (2007) state that decades may be required to achieve significant reductions in nitrate contamination in springs. This is due in part to the delay between nutrient loading events at land surface and levels observed in groundwater and springs. Climate and other variables, including nitrogen loading, local aquifer recharge, groundwater flow and other factors can easily mask small changes or trends in water quality (Upchurch et al, 2007).

A study conducted in 2006 (Butt et al. ) showed a direct connection between Mill Creek Sink and Lee Sink in Alachua and Hornsby Springs, a first magnitude spring, on the Santa Fe River. Additionally, springs along the Santa Fe River have shown increasing levels of nitrates, increased algal growth and reduced growth of aquatic macrophytes. Springsheds for the springs along the Santa Fe River have been delineated (Upchurch et al. 2008). The springsheds are broad and encompass the Newberry Limestone Plain and domain of the Cody Scarp in Alachua County as the primary area for Floridan aquifer recharge and as the source area for many of the springs along the river. Along the Santa Fe River downstream of Santa Fe River Rise and upstream of Cow Creek, there are 36 springs and 10 siphons (Karst Environmental Services, Inc., 2007). During periods of low flow, spring flow discharging from the Floridan aquifer dominates flow in the lower portion of the Santa

Fe River and water clarity in the river is high. The Santa Fe River springs system can be thought of a linear spring with a series of vents. The springs on the Santa Fe River are an important regional resource to be preserved and protected. The Santa Fe River is designated an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW) and the nitrate levels in the springs contribute to the river's impairment. The SRWMD measures flow from selected larger springs on the Santa Fe River including: Treehouse, Gilchrist Blue, Columbia, Santa Fe, Ginnie, Hornsby and Poe. SRWMD flow data from June 1997 through January 2008 indicate a composite average flow from the springs on the Lower Santa Fe River (excluding Santa Fe Spring which is upstream of River Sink) of 563 cubic feet per second (cfs) and a median flow of 374 cfs (SRWMD, 2008). For comparison, this puts the average and median composite flow from these six springs above the average flow of Wakulla or Ichetucknee springs, 391 and 360 cfs, respectively (UF IFAS, 2008) See Map 6.16. (Approximate Scale 0.5 inches = 5 miles)

Groundwater impacts from nutrients related to multiple anthropogenic sources are evident throughout the county. Major sources of nutrients include fertilizers, animal waste, atmospheric deposition and domestic waste (sewage) (Katz and Griffin 2008; Katz et al, 2009). Elevated nitrates in the Floridan aquifer can be observed in proximity to agricultural areas and wastewater treatment plant effluent disposal sites. In areas where the elevated nutrients are from historical agricultural activities (fertilizer use or animal operations, such as dairies), there is little that can be done to reduce current nutrient concentrations in the groundwater. As residential development occurs in these areas, landscape fertilizer use has the potential increase nutrient loading to groundwater.

The Alachua County Health Department defined nitrate "surveillance areas" where private wells were found to have elevated levels of nitrates and they routinely monitor selected drinking water wells to assess changes in nitrate concentrations. Increased private well sampling throughout Alachua County has resulted in locating additional wells with elevated nitrate concentrations. The wells are generally located in proximity to areas that were historically used for agricultural purposes.

Intensive agricultural activities where concentrated animal densities are high, such as milking barns (dairies), feed lots, chicken houses and holding pens, groundwater quality may be impaired. There are no regulated concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) currently located in Alachua County (Sims, 2009). CAFOs are defined as having a minimum of 700 head of animals. Currently, there are two operating dairies in Alachua County, the University of Florida IFAS Dairy in Hague and the Lussier Dairy in Hawthorne (Table 6.29). The FDEP is in the process of rules changes that would require medium sized dairies, 200 – 699 head of animals, to register and follow applicable BMPs (FDEP, 2009). Concerns have arisen that nitrogen inputs in the lower Suwannee and Santa Fe River basins groundwater and springs have elevated nitrates from fertilizers, animal wastes, and atmospheric deposition (Katz, 2004).



Map 6.16. Springsheds for the Santa Fe River (draft report by Upchurch, et al, 2008).

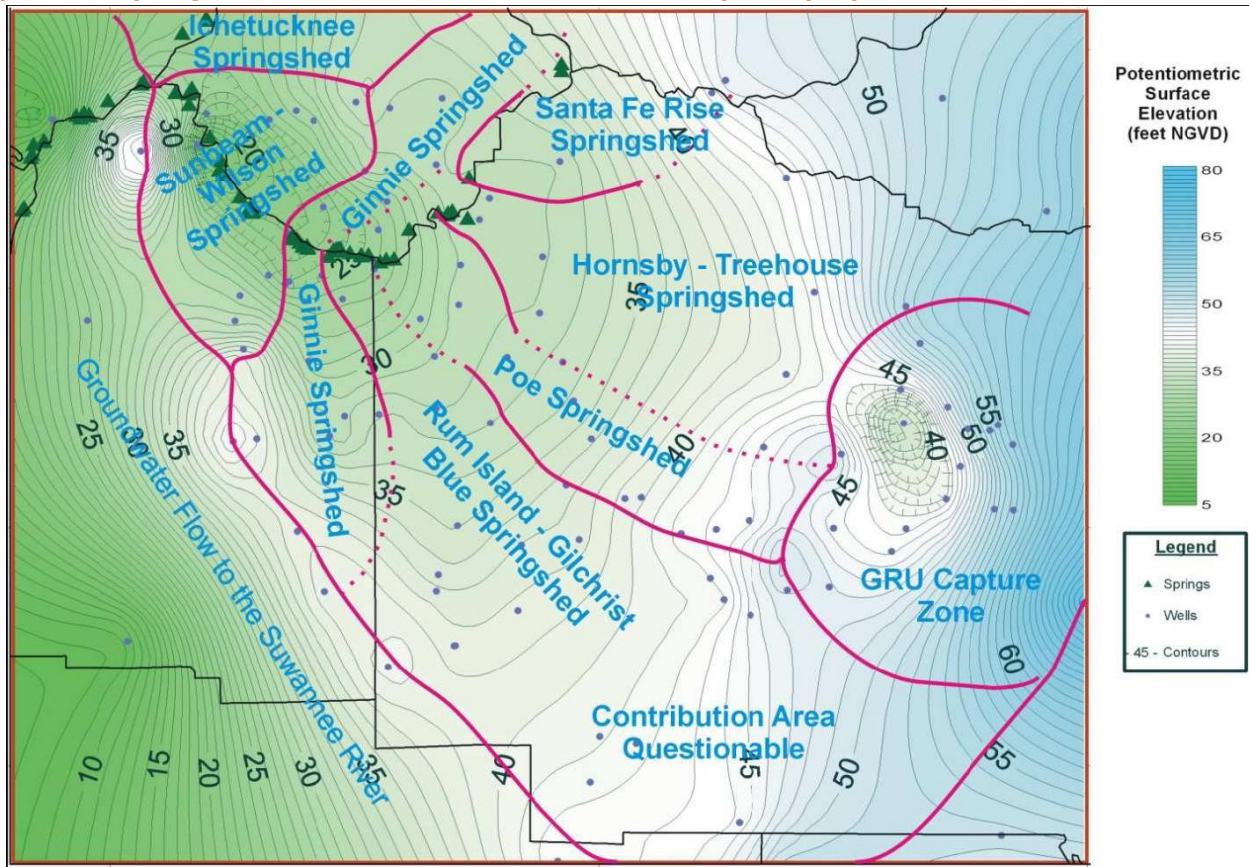


Table 6.29. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Identified Dairies Located in Alachua County, Dec 2008\*

Facility/Owner	Number of Head	Location
University of Florida - IFAS Dairy	550	Hague
Lussier Dairy	699	Hawthorne
<b>Total Number of Head</b>	<b>1,249</b>	

\* Data provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Sims, 09)

Nitrate levels in Gilchrist Blue (spring) continue to increase (Table 6.30). The springshed of Gilchrist Blue includes portions of western Alachua County. Nitrate levels observed in Poe and Hornsby springs have declined since 1998, due to hydrologic changes. During this same time, levels of organic carbon and color have increased, indicating these springs are now receiving more surface water (or river water) (Table 6.30). The lack of healthy aquatic macrophytes in Poe Springs and the associated spring run has been evident since 2004.



**Table 6.30. Nutrient Water Quality Data from May 2005 to November 2008 for Seven First and Second Magnitude Springs on the Santa Fe River\***

Spring Name	Location	Receiving Water	Magnitude	Median Nitrate Plus Nitrite (mg/l)	Median Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Median Total Organic Carbon (mg/l)	Number of Measurements#	Period of Record*
<b>Hornsby</b>	Alachua County	Lower Santa Fe River	First	0.46	0.10	1.40	43	5/2005-11/2008
<b>Poe</b>	Alachua County	Lower Santa Fe River	Second	0.16	0.10	0.95	48	5/2005-11/2006
<b>Treehouse**</b>	Alachua County	Lower Santa Fe River	First	0.35	0.11	0.53	16	06/2005-11/2008
<b>Columbia**</b>	Columbia County	Lower Santa Fe River	First	0.23	0.10	3.65	12	06/2005-11/2008
<b>Gilchrist Blue</b>	Gilchrist County	Lower Santa Fe River	Second	1.82	0.04	0.50	50	5/2005-11/2008
<b>Ginnie</b>	Gilchrist County	Lower Santa Fe River	Second	1.25	0.04	0.50	16	5/2005-11/2008
<b>Santa Fe</b>	Columbia County	Santa Fe River Upstream of River Sink	Second	0.11	0.13	2.05	16	6/2005-11/2008

\*Data provided by the Suwannee River Water Management District (McKinney, 2008).

\*\* These springs are dark water (river resurgence), receiving the majority of their flow from the Santa Fe River.

As development continues to move westward in Alachua County sinkhole and/or solution pipe formation in stormwater retention ponds is cause for concern and should be addressed. Additional protective measures for stormwater management in karst areas should be implemented. Areas defined as vulnerable or highly vulnerable on the map of Floridan Aquifer High Recharge areas should be considered karst sensitive areas and SJRWMD Karst Sensitive Area (KSA) criteria or the equivalent should be applied to these areas. Applying KSA criteria to these areas protects ground water quality by allowing sufficient filtration for reduction of bacteria and other pollutants and these criteria have been integrated into County Code (Chapter 407 Article 9). Avoidance of basin collapse due to excess hydrostatic pressure is a concern and LID techniques should be given special consideration in KSAs. Stormwater retention/detention basin depth should be consistent with the SJRWMD's stormwater requirements for KSAs and avoidance of basin collapse due to excess hydrostatic pressure in KSAs must be given special consideration. Construction and trenching for installation of utility lines beneath stormwater basins in karst sensitive areas increases the chances of subsequent sinkhole formation, and COSE Policy 4.5.5.2 provides stormwater basin design criteria in areas of high aquifer recharge, including a minimum depth from the basin bottom to any limestone bedrock, in order to minimize the risk of voids which can cause the failure of the unsupported utility lines. LID techniques should be implemented to reduce treatment and storage volumes. Creation of large basins should be minimized and water should be dispersed through the use of swales and small basins to reduce the potential for sinkhole development.

Groundwater levels in western Alachua County have been at the lowest levels on record from 1999-2003 and from 2006 to the present. This has been in part due to drought (Wetherington, 2008). Stage (level) and flow data for Poe and Hornsby springs are lacking and there are limited data available to assess historical spring flows. Under low groundwater conditions the springs are exceptionally vulnerable to reduced flows.

The use of emerging technologies for wastewater treatment and effluent disposal are important tools for water quality improvement and protection of the Floridan aquifer. Wastewater, whether from a municipal domestic treatment plant, small package plant or septic tank system has the potential to add nutrients to groundwater and surface waters. The use of performance based septic systems for nutrient reductions can be an important alternative to small package treatment plants for cluster developments or traditional septic systems in environmentally sensitive areas. Performance based systems require more maintenance than traditional systems, but reduce nutrients discharged to the drainfield. Additionally, the impacts of effluent disposal can be further reduced by the use of drip irrigation in the landscape to enhance vegetative uptake and further reduce the amount of nutrients that reach groundwater. Human wastewater been documented to be one of the sources of nitrogen that adversely impacts groundwater and springs. Land application of municipal sewage effluent (reclaimed water) and septic tank systems have been documented as sources of nitrogen impacting Wakulla and Ichetucknee springs, in Wakulla and Columbia counties, respectively (Davis et al, no date; Katz and Griffin 2008; Katz et al, 2009). The dye study conducted in Mill Creek and Lee sinks in 2006 (Butt et al. ) shows this has a potential to occur in Alachua County, another reason to treat wastewater effluent to the highest standards (lowest nutrient levels) possible and promote reuse and innovative disposal technologies. Strategies that include water reuse for irrigation and created wetlands can further reduce nitrogen concentrations from land application of wastewater. Disposal options that disperse the effluent help in two ways; first reducing hydraulic loading that forces nutrient rich water to recharge groundwater and secondly allowing vegetation to uptake the nutrients before they reach the groundwater. There are several items that need to be addressed relative to septic tank systems; first assessment of septic tank system function for those systems in proximity to lakes, improved septic tank system maintenance, and review of the grandfather clause allowing septic system drainfields rebuilt after failure to be less than 24 inches above the seasonal high water table.

Allowing failing septic tank systems to be rebuilt to older standards does not provide a 24-inch separation between the drainfield and the seasonal high water table. Retaining a minimum of a 24-inch separation between the bottom of the drainfield and seasonal high water table, improved system maintenance and dispersal of the effluent throughout the drain field or by drip irrigation can significantly reduce the nutrient impact on groundwater. Performance based septic systems or on-site storage and disposal, which have enhanced nutrient removal, are an important alternative to small package treatment plants, especially in cluster developments where the additional costs can be shared among the system users. The Alachua County Health Department has just completed a county wide inventory of septic systems and is considering a random assessment of these septic systems to evaluate function, construction and maintenance.

Water use, conservation and reuse are addressed in both the COSE and the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element (PWSSE). The COSE Policies address methods for protection groundwater resources through development regulations, and the PWSSE Objectives and Policies (Sections 3 thru 8) address the location, installation, and extension of Potable Water, Sanitary Sewer and Reclaimed water throughout the Urban Cluster, where the highest land use densities are allowed. COSE Policy 4.5.1 requires the county to establish a comprehensive wellhead protection program to protect current and future public water supplies from adverse effects. Wellfields and others large water uses can have a detrimental impact on groundwater and springs. Policy language is adequate in protecting wellfields from potential threats, but should be stronger in protecting groundwater resources from overuse. Protection of flows to the springs and maintenance of groundwater levels should be included in the text of Policy 4.5.1. The Comprehensive Plan needs updated policies reflecting recent water management district actions to protect levels and flows of surface waters and springs and promote water conservation and use of reclaimed (wastewater effluent) water. PWSSE policies in Objective 8 promote the increased conservation and reuse of water. These policies should be updated to further enhance water conservation activities in Alachua County.

The earliest that SJRWMD would consider partially funding a regional water supply plan for Alachua and surrounding counties is 2010, if it was determined to be a need by the SJRWMD (Hornsby, 2008). Alachua County would like to see that water management districts pool resources for the development of a water supply plan for the region that is protective of groundwater, springs, surface water and aquatic ecosystems. SRWMD has hired a consultant to conduct a district-wide water supply assessment (Good, 2009). Floridan aquifer groundwater levels are low, with SRWMD reporting low levels from droughts occurring from 1999 through 2003 and from 2006 to the present (September 2008). A summary of water use is presented in Table 6.31. This table summarizes data for the 30 largest permitted water users in each water management district within Alachua County and permitted water withdrawals total 66.67 million gallons per day (mgd). The highest permitted water use in the SJRWMD portion of Alachua County, 34.60 mgd, is public water systems and water utilities; the highest permitted water use in the SRWMD portion of Alachua County, 19.66 mgd, is agriculture (Table 6.31). In addition to public water systems for domestic supply, homes outside the service areas for public water or other water utilities obtain their water by private wells (self-supply domestic). In Alachua County 2005 self supply domestic water use was estimated to be 5.69 mgd (USGS, 2007). Alachua County does not supply public water, except through a small water system at the Santa Fe Hills Subdivision, a small enclave within the City of Alachua. This water system serves approximately 65 residences and was taken over by Alachua County under court ordered receivership in 2004 when the former owner could no longer operate the system. It is anticipated in the future that these residents will be connected to the City of Alachua public water system after needed improvements to the subdivision infrastructure are made. Many of the residents in the unincorporated area of Alachua County surrounding the City of Gainesville receive potable water from the Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) Murphree Wellfield in northeast Gainesville. GRU is evaluating the options of expanding the Murphree Wellfield or the using satellite wellfields to meet future water supply demands.

**Table 6.31. Summary of Permitted Water Use for the 30 Largest Water Users in Each**

Water Usage Description	Total Permitted Average Daily Rate (mgd)	SJRWMD Permitted Average Daily Rate (mgd)	Permitted Average Daily Rate (mgd)**
<b>Public Water Systems and Water Utilities</b>	34.60	29.70	4.90
Agriculture	21.38	1.71	19.66
Golf Course	2.53	1.33	1.21
Commercial and Industrial	0.95	0.08	0.87
Commercial and Agriculture	0.30	0.30	None reported
Industrial and Landscape	0.43	0.43	None reported
Landscape	0.09	0.09	None reported
Nursery	0.41	None reported	0.41
Power Production	0.69	0.69	None reported
Dewatering	0.44	0.44	None reported
Mixed Uses	4.85	4.85	None reported
Water Bottling	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Large System Permitted Water Use</b>	<b>66.67</b>	<b>39.62</b>	<b>27.05</b>

\* Data provided by the St. Johns River Water Management District as Water Use Permit allocations (Florence, 2008)

Data provided by the Suwannee River Water Management District as Water Use Permit allocations (Kruse, 2008 and 2009)

\*\* Summary does not include the municipal water systems for Archer, which has a permitted average daily rate of 0.279 mgd

There are no water bottling facilities in Alachua County. Water bottling for the six permitted facilities within the SRWMD is a small fraction of water use within the district. The permitted average daily rate (ADR) for all six water bottling facilities in SRWMD is 5.12 mgd (Table 6.32). The actual reported water use for these six facilities for 2006, the last year that compiled data were available was 0.90 mgd (Welch, 2009).

**Table 6.32. Water Bottling Plant Permitted Water Use and Actual Average Daily**

Facility/Owner	Permitted Average Daily Rate (mgd)	Actual Average Daily Rate (mgd) for 2006**	Location
Seven Springs Water/Coca Cola	1.15	0.36	Gilchrist County
Blue Springs Properties	0.50	Not used	Gilchrist County
Santa Fe Springs (Sawdust Spring)	0.15	Not used	Columbia County
Suntory Water Group	1.22	0.03	Levy County
Nestle Waters North America	1.45	0.51	Madison County
Aqua Blue Springs Water	0.65	Not used	Madison County
<b>Total Bottling Plant Water Use</b>	<b>5.12</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Data provided by the Suwannee River Water Management District (Welch, 2009)

\*\*2006 is the most recent year that Suwannee River Water Management District data compiled

In Alachua County well construction permitting is conducted by the water management districts. In the SRWMD portion of Alachua County all well construction, regardless of well diameter, is permitted by the water management district. In the SJRWMD portion of Alachua County wells over six inches in diameter and public supply wells of any size are permitted by the water management district. Wells under six inches in diameter that are not permitted by the SJRWMD are registered by ACEPD. The Alachua County Health Department is seeking delegation from both SJRWMD and SRWMD of responsibility for permitting all well construction in Alachua County. ACEPD will cease well registration in the SJRWMD portion of Alachua County when the ACHD or the water management district permits all well construction.

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has recently completed revisions to their district-wide water use permitting rules related to landscape irrigation Permitting of Consumptive Uses of Water, Chapter 40C-2 FAC (SJRWMD, 2009). Recent changes to the SJRWMD rule primarily address landscape irrigation; at the present time these restrictions apply only in the SJRWMD portion of Alachua County. New water conservation standards for Alachua County may include stringent landscape irrigation standards, reduction of indoor water use by changes to plumbing code, requiring the retrofit (when resold) with ultralow flow plumbing devices in all buildings built before 1993 (effective year of changes to the Southern Building Code now incorporated into the Florida Building Code mandating the use of low-flow plumbing fixtures in new construction), requiring the increased use of reclaimed water and the connection to those systems to be used when reclaimed water becomes available, and development of a water conservation outreach program targeting businesses and homeowners. Water reuse is an important aspect of water resource conservation and protection. Reclaimed water (treated effluent from domestic wastewater treatment plants) can be reused in a number of applications: industrial uses (such as cooling water, landscape irrigation, and wetland hydration). The use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation has increased over the past 15 years (Table 6.33).

**Table 6.33. GRU Kanapaha Water Reclamation Facility (KWRF) and Main Street Water\***

<b>Calendar Year KWRF Flows (mgd)</b>				
<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Total Effluent</b>	<b>Public Access Use</b>	<b>Recharge Wells</b>	<b>Calendar Year MSWRF Flow (mgd)</b>
1993	7.95	0.22	7.73	5.14
1994	6.81	0.33	6.48	6.66
1995	7.10	0.33	6.77	6.50
1996	7.97	0.35	7.62	6.46
1997	7.78	0.52	7.26	6.54
1998	9.18	0.45	8.73	7.17
1999	8.10	0.59	7.51	5.36
2000	8.24	0.78	7.46	5.34
2001	8.04	1.93	6.11	6.20
2002	9.02	2.25	6.77	6.05
2003	10.38	2.3	8.08	6.54
2004	11.17	2.47	8.73	5.46
2005	10.87	2.51	8.35	5.68
2006	10.16	2.96	7.20	5.17
2007	9.94	3.15	6.79	5.51

\*Data provided by Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) (Hutton, 2008).

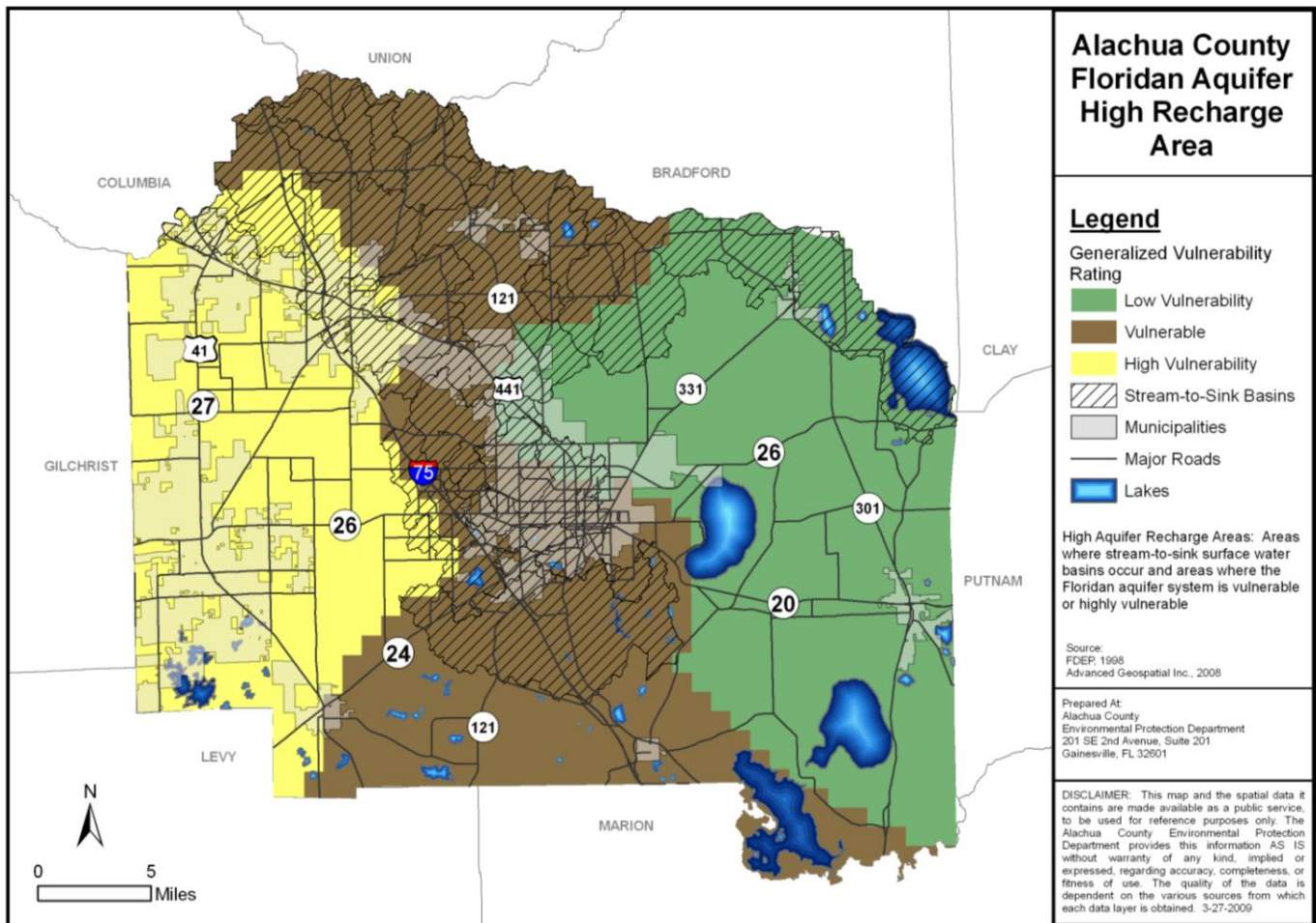
Due to variations in rainfall and resulting groundwater recharge, it is difficult to establish long term trends in groundwater levels. However, as population increases corresponding water use increases. It is estimated that 50% of residential water use goes towards outdoor irrigation. The County should demonstrate leadership in water conservation policy using its publicly-owned facilities by eliminating high-maintenance, high-water use turf lawns that require herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, water & expenditure of fuels for mowing & other maintenance operations that consume fossil fuels. The installation of a rain sensor device or switch that will override the irrigation cycle of the sprinkler system has been a requirement under Florida Statutes (F.S. 373.62) since 1991. The County should inventory all County-owned facilities to see that all automatic sprinkler systems have functional rain sensors, soil moisture sensors or other shutoff device and upgrade or install new soil moisture sensors where needed. The county should require all new development to install moisture sensors that can override timers or other automatic irrigation devices in case soil moisture is adequate & irrigation is not necessary.



The reuse of reclaimed water to the maximum extent possible should be required unless it is demonstrated that implementation is not technically, economically, or environmentally feasible. The goal of this reuse shall be to maximize the direct use of all available reclaimed water to meet irrigation needs in place of a higher quality water source (e.g. groundwater supply). Consideration should be given to the nutrient levels present in the reuse water. Runoff (of reuse water) into surface water bodies can degrade water quality. Water reuse should be regulated and monitored to protect groundwater and surface water quality.

The detailed Alachua County Aquifer Vulnerability Assessment (ACAVA) was completed by the Florida Geological Survey (FGS) in 2005 (Baker et al, 2005) and the map refined by Advanced GeoSpatial, Inc. to create the generalized Floridan Aquifer Protection Zones map in 2008 (AGI, 2008). The map provides a good relative proxy of aquifer recharge. This map shows the importance of the Newberry Limestone Plain in providing source water for the springs on the Santa Fe River. To make the Floridan Aquifer Protection Zone map more protective, stream-to-sink basins were added as an overlay to create a map of high aquifer recharge areas.

**Map 6.17. High Aquifer Recharge areas in Alachua County**





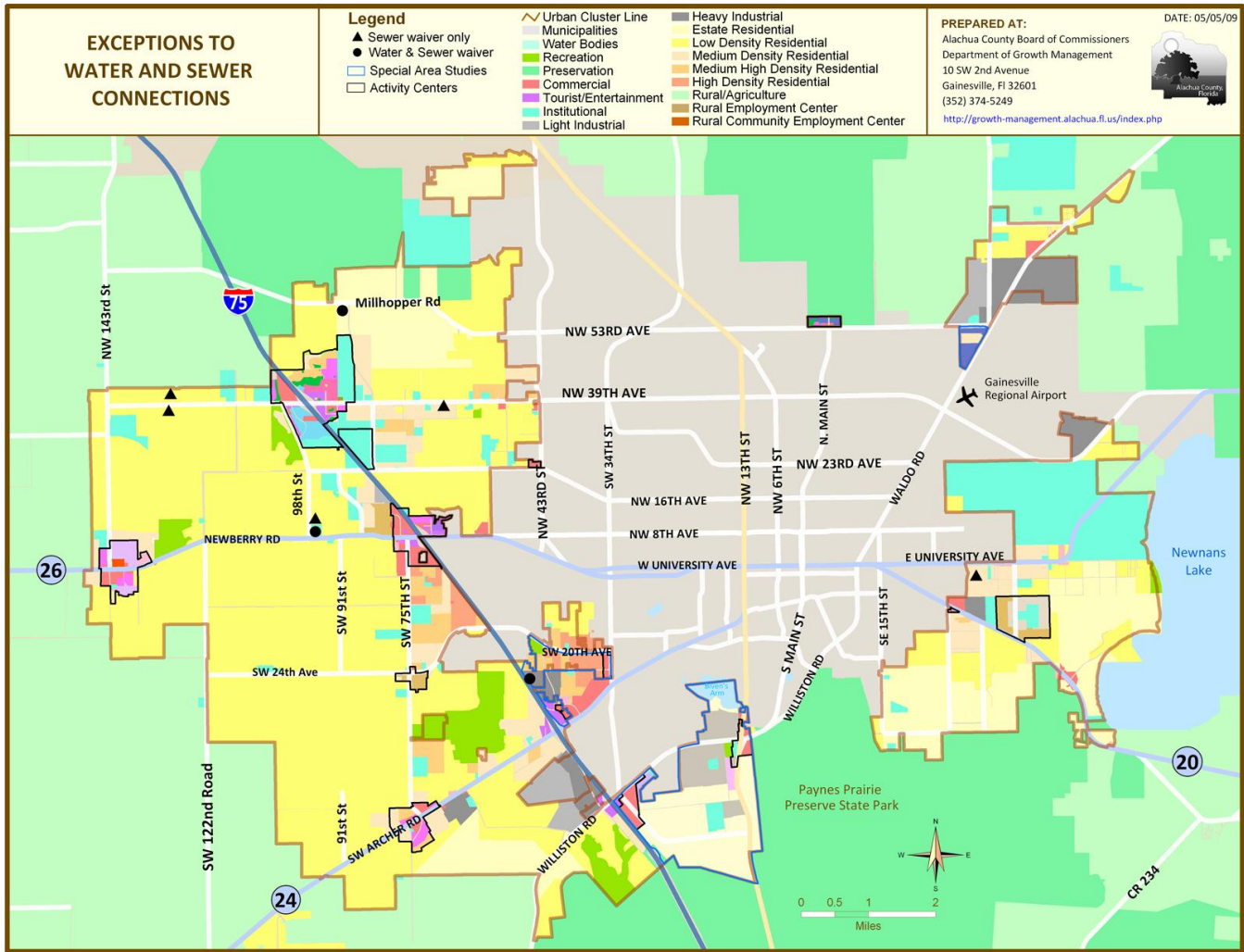
**Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer**

Requiring development at urban densities to connect to central water and sewer lines reduces urban sprawl and promotes protection of wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater and water quality by managing withdrawals from the potable water supply and monitoring the treatment and discharge of effluent (sewage). In certain instances, development may be proposed in a location that is not served by central water and sewer facilities, and Policy 2.1 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element of the Comprehensive Plan provides specific factors that must be considered for any exception to the connection requirements. These factors for evaluating exceptions to connection requirements are incorporated into the Land Development Regulations as part of the development review process. A review of the quantity, frequency, and location of requests for exception to the water and sewer connection requirements showed that for the four-year period between January 1, 2005 to January 9, 2009, a total of nine (9) exceptions to the water and sewer connection requirements have been approved by the Development Review Committee (DRC) for developments in the Urban Cluster (see map of exception locations below). Over the same four-year period, approximately 130 applications for new development were approved in the Urban Cluster. Of the nine development projects that were granted exceptions to the connection requirements, seven of the developments were churches, one development was a 13-lot residential subdivision, and one was an accessory office for a self-storage warehouse facility. This suggests the overall number and scope of exceptions (approximately 7% of all new development plans) granted is small compared to the total number of development projects approved in unincorporated Alachua County.

**Table 6.34. Water/Sewer connection waivers granted by DRC in Urban Cluster January 2005-January 2009.**

Development Type	Number of Connections	Percentage of Approved Plans* (based on 130 approvals)
<b>Churches</b>	7	5.4%
<b>Single-family Res.</b>	1	0.8%
<b>Multi-family Res.</b>	0	
<b>Warehouse</b>	1	0.8%
<b>Industrial</b>	0	
<b>Institutional</b>	0	
<b>Commercial</b>	0	
<b>Office</b>	0	
<b>Total</b>	9	7.0%

Map 6.18. Water and Sewer Connection Waiver Locations



**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

**Surface Water**

Develop policy language supportive of surface water quality protection and improvement. Such language should address measures and incentives to promote the following:

1. Low Impact Development (LID) strategies as policy in the Stormwater Element and COSE.
2. Protection of surface waters from nutrient enrichment by adding policies that reduce landscape fertilization practices, improvement of septic tank system maintenance, drainfield design standards for rebuilds, installation of performance based septic systems, and improvement of domestic wastewater treatment plant processes and effluent and solids treatment and disposal practices (COSE and Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element) Strategies also apply to groundwater.
3. Restoration of impaired water bodies in COSE Section 4.6, and
4. Maintenance and protection of surface water levels and flows in COSE Section 4.6. and update policies corresponding to water management district actions to protect levels and flows of surface waters and springs and promote water conservation and reuse.

### Groundwater and Springs

Develop policy language linking water quality with groundwater, springsheds, water use, conservation, and reuse: Such language should address measures and incentives to promote the following:

1. More stringent water conservation measures including, Florida Friendly landscaping, water efficient irrigation and reduced indoor water use.
2. Education strategies in coordination with utilities and other agencies such as the County Extension Office and IFAS.
3. Discouraging new or expanded large water withdrawals that may impact the springs on the Santa Fe River and update policies corresponding to water management district actions to protect levels and flows of surface waters and springs and promote water conservation and reuse.
4. Support and promote water reuse. Ensuring that water reuse is conducted in an environmentally sound manner, which protects groundwater and surface water quality from nutrient enrichment.
5. Address potential water quality problems associated with intensive agriculture related to concentrated animal densities.
6. Address potential problems occurring from utility lines installed beneath stormwater basins in karst sensitive areas.
7. a. Update data and analysis, including assessment of current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10 year period, as required by Section 163.3177(6)(d), F.S., in coordination with the updates of the water supply plans for the St. Johns River and Suwannee River Water Management Districts and Gainesville Regional Utilities; b. Should Alachua County or any portion of it be identified as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area as part of the updates of the Water Management Districts Water Supply Plans scheduled to be finalized by December 2010, initiate Comprehensive Plan amendments within 18 months of adoption of a Regional Water Supply Plan pursuant to Section 373.0361, F.S. to incorporate appropriate water supply projects, including conservation and reuse projects, identified in the regional water supply plan into the Comprehensive Plan, as needed to meet the County's projected water supply needs in accordance 163.3177(6)(c) and (d), F.S. Such amendments will be coordinated with Gainesville Regional Utilities.

### Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer

Develop additional policy language addressing connection requirements to potable water and sanitary sewer for development within Urban Cluster: Such language should address the following:

1. Revisions to the existing criteria for exceptions to the connection requirements (PWSSE Policy 2.1) shall provide additional groundwater protection measures by reducing the amount of effluent generated by development within the Urban Cluster for which an exception is granted (e.g., requiring waterless urinals or other ultra-low flow fixtures for non-residential development).
2. Review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.

## Fiscal Constraints – Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems, Activity Center Master Plans) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints.”

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

It is a goal of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2001-2020 (Plan) to conserve, manage, and restore or enhance the natural resources of Alachua County to ensure long-term environmental quality for the future. Using KBN/Golder Report (1996) as a guide, the county adopted a map of 47 sites (Map 6.19) and supporting information identified in the report as Strategic Ecosystems (SE). These sites identified and ranked the most significant areas of privately held natural and semi-natural lands greater than 50 acres using ecological, hydrological, and management characteristics.

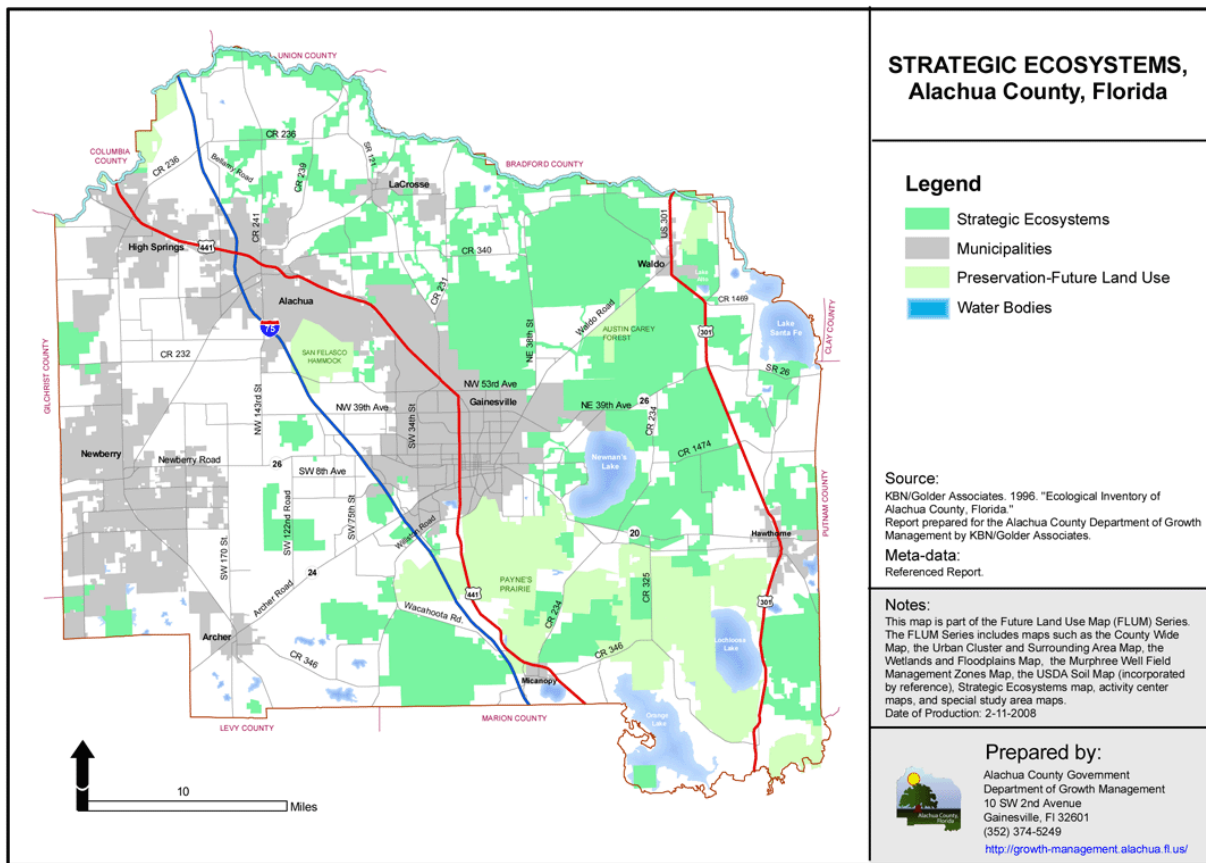
The Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) Objective 4.10 is to Protect, conserve, enhance and manage the ecological integrity of strategic ecosystems in Alachua County. Policy 4.10.1 reads in part as follows:

Conserve strategic ecosystems that are determined through ground-truthing using the KBN/Golder report as a guide to maintain or enhance biodiversity... Comprehensive Plan policies call for ground-truthing to determine more specifically where or what the natural resources are that need to be protected to maintain viability of the ecosystem using KBN/Golder (1996) as a guide. COSE policies call for Special Area Studies (SAS) and Plans (SAP) to be initiated by the County pursuant to a schedule as a means of doing this identification, or alternatively, doing this identification in connection with development applications and the development review process.

Fiscal constraints on the County limit both staff resources and funds allotted for consulting services to conduct these SAS. The question is how to identify/ground-truth ecosystem resources to delineate areas needing protection in order to achieve the objectives of the comprehensive plan of maintaining ecosystem viability. Following the May 2005 effective date of the updated Comprehensive Plan containing the SE policies, the County identified an initial list of SE areas in which to undertake

Special Area Studies (COSE 4.10.3) to implement cooperative protection of strategic ecosystem resources and development potential through a series of stakeholder and community involvement meetings in 2007. During this process, it was recognized that adjacent properties have similar function and value as the resources generally mapped within the KBN/Golder strategic ecosystem. By expanding the resource mapping inventory to include these areas, it gave the property owners a better inventory of related natural resources and connectivity with other natural systems and opportunities for more comprehensive plan strategies to protect the strategic ecosystem resources while providing innovative development options to property owners. Similar scenarios exist elsewhere such that a portion of a SE or an adjacent parcel has gone through some stage of development review or received development approval.

Map 6.19. Alachua County Strategic Ecosystems.



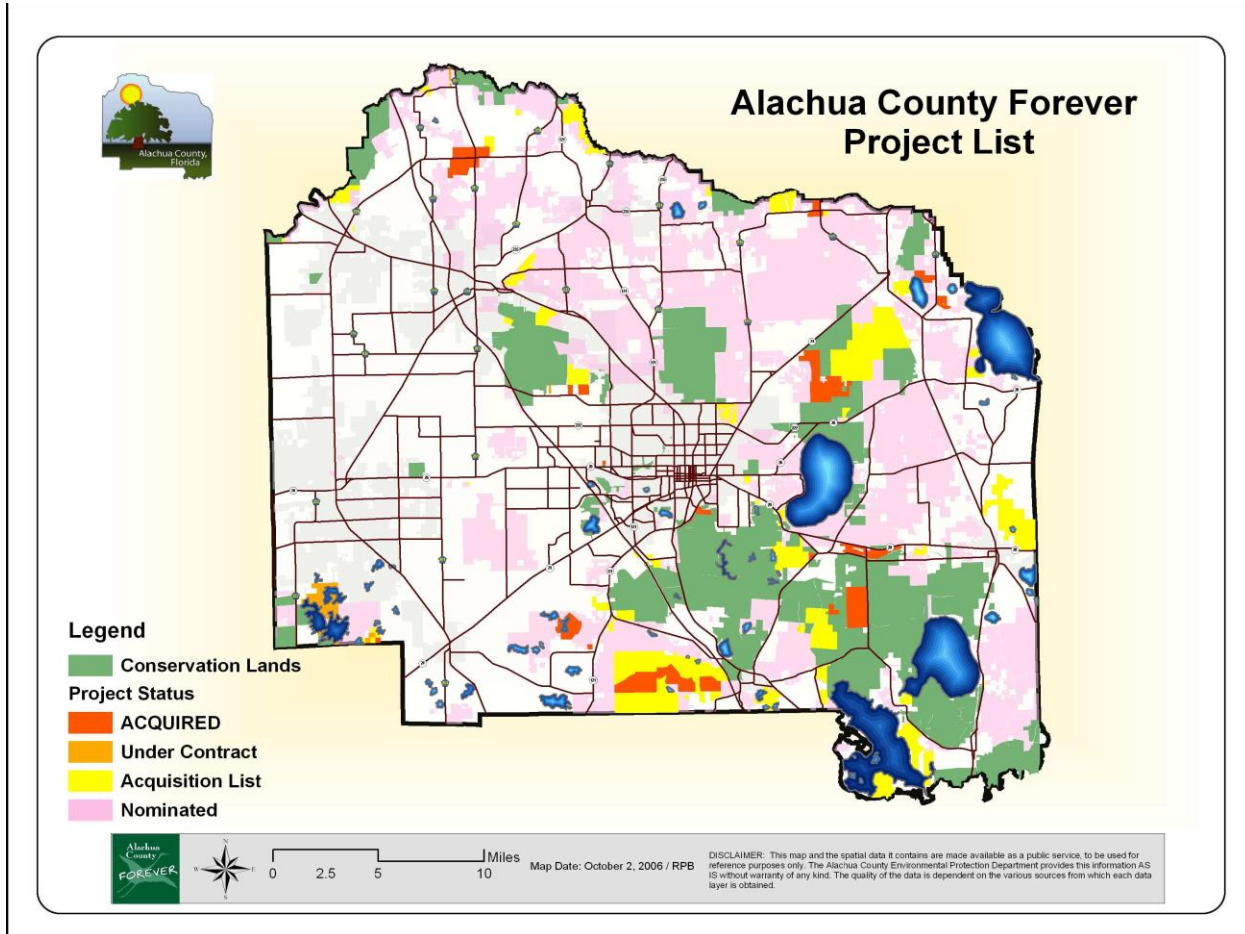
Ground-truthing of natural resources is a requirement of the development review process and provides a data source that can be expanded to map strategic ecosystem resources incrementally throughout the system. By incorporating ground-truthing of SE resources and similar ecosystem resources on adjacent parcels, there is potential for economies to be realized in identifying ecosystem value, function and connectivity while master planning development potential and identifying possible incentives. Properties adjacent to parcels within a strategic ecosystem should be given some priority in the development review process and encouraged to participate in a larger scale planning effort beyond the single parcel plan review. Adjacent property owners should be notified and engaged to explore benefits of master planning the strategic ecosystem. Incentives such as transfer of development rights, conservation easements, and joint ventures should be explored and encouraged.

Additionally, the County during times of constrained fiscal resources could establish the scheduling of county initiated Special Area Plans to coincide with periods when there is less workload for staff that has other program responsibilities, e.g. development review. Once the development process has been completed for a part of a SE, staff would have the capacity to continue special area planning for the entire or substantive portion of the SE (COSE 4.10.2) and engage adjacent property owners in planning scenarios that would benefit both the owners for future development potential through incentives (COSE 4.10.6; 4.10.7) and partnerships and the natural resources of the SE. For example, if a portion of a SE (or adjacent parcel) has already received approval for development, ground-truthing studies for those parcels would be used as the



basis for continuing additional ground-truthing of natural resources on other adjacent parcels. The first of these studies, Paynes Prairie West, was initiated in February 2007 and included engaging an ecological consultant to conduct the ground-truthing. A series of stakeholder and community involvement meetings have been conducted to review the results of ground-truthing by the consultant and develop strategies to cooperative planning. The Special Area Study is complete and the next step will be to develop the Special Area Plan to implement the study and adopt it into the Comprehensive Plan.

**Map 6.20. Alachua County Forever Acquisition Project List.**



The on-going success of the Alachua County Forever (ACF) program has continued to either acquire some SE properties or acquired properties adjacent to SE's and developed areas.

**RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

Property tax reform legislation adopted by the Florida lawmakers in 2007, combined with further reductions in property taxes adopted by voters in a 2008 constitutional amendment, have resulted in decreased revenues for local governments.

Constitutional Amendment 4 passed on November 4, 2008. Generalized text follows:

Requires Legislature to provide a property tax exemption for real property encumbered by perpetual conservation easements or other perpetual conservation protections, defined by general law. Requires

Legislature to provide for classification and assessment of land used for conservation purposes, and not perpetually encumbered, solely on the basis of character or use. Subjects assessment benefit to conditions, limitations, and reasonable definitions established by general law. Applies to property taxes *beginning in 2010*. Specific language of the Amendment is provided in this link [Amendment 4](#).

## DATA AND EXISTING CONDITIONS RELATING TO ISSUE

There is no current funding commitment to fulfill the county's obligation under COSE Policy 4.10.3. The result is that the county no longer benefits from a pro-active planning approach to these vital ecological systems. Nor do property owners or developers within these areas benefit, as owners and developers would be responsible to fund special area studies/plans under COSE Policy 4.10.3.3.

### Information and analysis on relevant variables

In the 'Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan for the unincorporated areas of the County', it is stated in the report:

**“The plan captures the common goals articulated by each municipality to protect environmentally sensitive areas, preserve the unique identity of each community, direct future growth into existing urbanized areas, prevent inefficient, sprawling development between one community and the next, and preserve the rural character of the county. It also articulates specific recommendations for the character of development or preserve lands in the unincorporated areas.”**

The Countywide Visioning Committee also updated the guiding principles and action steps from the original Conceptual Plan some of which listed below are relevant to special area planning and encouraging conservation on private lands.

- Develop special area plans within each community's Reserve Area and Extraterritorial Reserve Area based upon the countywide vision and develop joint planning processes.
- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.
- Create a Springs Protection and Strategic Resources overlay district in the northwest quadrant of the county.

## STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE

- Give priority to special areas studies involving ground-truthing of strategic ecosystem resources on areas adjacent to those properties within strategic ecosystems that have been the subject of development review, in order to make efficient use of the results of ground-truthing of resource areas as a basis for expanded ground-truthing of ecosystem resources on other adjacent properties. This would help to promote connectivity of strategic ecosystem resource corridors to areas identified for protection in the development review process.
- The County should schedule special area studies to coincide with periods when there is reduced workload on staff for other activities such as development review.
- The County should promote and facilitate participation by property owners in coordinated planning including ground-truthing and identification of strategic ecosystems resources by means such as



notification of adjacent property owners within strategic ecosystems of the opportunities and potential benefits of coordinated special area plan efforts.

- Pursue alternative funding strategies through partnerships with other public agencies, non-profits or private sector, to fund special area studies and develop special area plans for strategic ecosystems.
- Increase the priority of implementing Strategic Ecosystem policies including Special Area Studies in the budget and in County work programs.

## Intergovernmental Coordination - Resource Protection

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Intergovernmental Coordination and planning Develop effective approaches to inter-jurisdictional and inter-agency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.).

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Starting in December 2007 and as a result of a recent annexation of a large strategic ecosystem, the County and the City of Gainesville opened a dialogue on resource protection standards, greenbelt development versus redevelopment, green infrastructure, and Strategic Ecosystems (SE). Much of the discussion was focused on developing a cooperative and unified approach to the protection of resources within annexed areas in East Gainesville and other areas surrounding Gainesville. One of the goals, not just for the City of Gainesville, is to direct growth toward existing activity centers in other municipalities. Two action strategies include incentives for property owners to keep land in agriculture or undeveloped preserve areas, and to create a natural resources overlay.

At a presentation given in June 2008 to the Gainesville Community Development Committee (CDC), County staff made the following recommendations:

- Track green infrastructure with new development (open space, pervious area, tree canopy, habitat and Strategic Ecosystems (SE) protected)
- Coordinate tracking processes.
- Use GIS to provide visual representation of infrastructure (good planning tool and assists with identifying areas for protection)
- Promote green building and LID techniques
- Support county protection standards and encourage Low Impact Development (LID) standards for undeveloped areas, wetlands linked to creeks, streams, and lakes, or within Strategic Ecosystems.
- Maintain city standards for redevelopment areas, areas with existing buffer impacts or lack of buffers, or areas of high or medium density residential or other intensive land use.
- Adopt County approach to annexed Strategic Ecosystems that are part of greenbelt and currently undeveloped.
- Annexed SE within more dense urban areas or with existing intensive land use, consider hybrid approach with similar protection standards but more intensive development approach.

County and City of Gainesville staff have continued to discuss ways to protect strategic ecosystems that have been annexed into the city. Gainesville City staff is currently drafting new language to protect these resources and other sensitive lands within the City of Gainesville. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, City of Gainesville Commission passed a motion to have City staff submit draft land development regulations to the Plan Board. These regulations will include protection standards for strategic ecosystems, upland habitat, significant geological features, high aquifer recharge areas, and nature parks as well as new requirements for environmental assessments and management plans. These regulations are expected to be similar to the existing county environmental regulations.

There has been good communication between the cities and the County on comprehensive plan amendments that contain strategic ecosystems. The City of Alachua, for instance, requested information about recent annexations of land in the North San Felasco Hammock Strategic Ecosystem (SE) and East San Felasco Hammock SE. Even though these communications take place, it is often reactive in nature and therefore less

effective. A more proactive approach to including appropriate protection of the resources in municipalities' comprehensive plans is desirable.

## **DATA AND ANALYSIS**

### **Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

#### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT**

Goal 1: Coordinated and cooperative comprehensive planning, land development regulation, and service provision with agencies and governmental units affecting Alachua County.

Policy 1.3 Alachua County shall develop with the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, the Florida Department of Transportation, the cities of Alachua, Archer, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, LaCrosse, Micanopy, Newberry, and Waldo; Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, Marion, and Putnam Counties; Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council, and Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council coordination mechanisms to address inter-jurisdictional comprehensive planning issues.

The County reviews Comprehensive Plan amendments for adjacent jurisdictions (and vice-versa) and plays an important collaborative role with other jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) planning through formal Commission and informal staff level meetings with municipalities. For example, Gainesville and County staff have engaged in informal discussions regarding policies affecting protection standards of strategic ecosystems that become in part or in the whole annexed to the City of Gainesville such that these standards would remain unchanged when annexed and potentially subject to lower standards of protection.

### **Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables**

#### **COUNTYWIDE VISION**

The Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan identified various goals and action steps of significance to the County as a whole, including protection of conservation areas. The reinstated Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee updated these guiding principles and action steps from the original Conceptual Plan, including the following items specifically related to resource protection:

- Develop special area plans within each community's Reserve Area and Extraterritorial Reserve Area based upon the countywide vision and develop joint planning processes.
- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.
- Create a Springs Protection and Strategic Resources overlay district in the northwest quadrant of the county.

#### **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

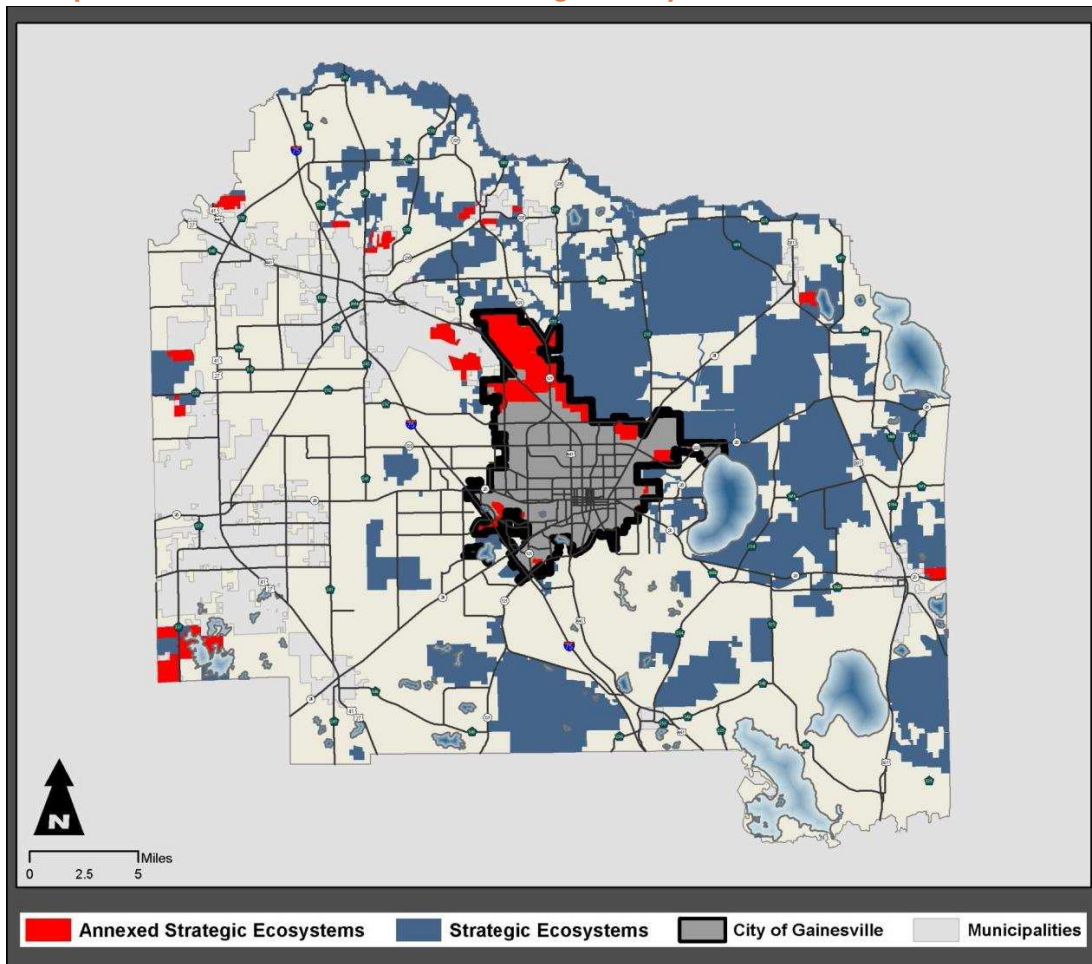
TDR programs provide a mechanism to protect areas deemed valuable either for their historic or conservation resources, or their potential for agricultural production by allowing a property owner to sell the development rights on their land to another property owner or developer. The rights can then be used on a different piece of property in a more suitable (or less sensitive) location, or sold to a government sponsored 'bank' of development rights. Such programs often include designated sending areas from which the development rights in the form of density or intensity may be transferred as well as receiving areas to which the density or intensity may be transferred. Once the development rights are transferred off of a property, a mechanism (such as a conservation easement) is put in place to permanently protect the land from development. The County recently adopted updated policies to begin a TDR program in Alachua County to protect both conservation lands such as strategic ecosystems and agricultural properties. The program allows for the

sending and receiving of development rights within the unincorporated area and includes language supporting the development of interlocal agreements with municipalities to identify receiving areas within municipal boundaries. If successful, this program has the potential to further both the guiding principles of directing growth toward existing centers and creating greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities.

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTIONS**

The County has a wealth of policies and programs designed to protect the County’s valuable natural resources. The Comprehensive Plan outlines several of these, including the policies protecting water resources, geological resources, listed species habitats, and more. The County works to protect these resources through education and outreach, monitoring the development review process, and purchasing property through the Alachua County Forever program approved by the voters in 2000 and with Wild Spaces Public Places funds approved in 2008.

**Map 6.21: Location of annexed strategic ecosystems as of December 2007.**



**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

The following strategies will improve environmental protection standards county-wide and/or improve coordination between municipalities and the county:

1. Develop an interdisciplinary team that develops an approach to protect strategic ecosystems and other natural resources within each city's reserve area. This could include TDR strategies, protective guidelines, density and design standards, and special area planning if necessary.
2. Add an environmental liaison for the county and city on the Gainesville Alachua County Orderly Annexation Team (GACOAT).
3. Include an environmental analysis and environmental protection standards/requirements into the Boundary Adjustment Act (BAA), or related interlocal agreements.
4. Create subcommittee of Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee to work toward implementation of relevant guiding principles and action strategies to protect natural resources countywide.
5. Use the coordinated approach being developed by the City of Gainesville as a model for coordination with other municipalities.

## Economic Development & Environmental Stewardship – East Gainesville

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

How to enhance the economic strength of the community in a sustainable manner that protects natural resources, including

- How can economic development in East Gainesville area be promoted in a manner consistent with environmental stewardship?

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The county needs to encourage, incentivize, and foster redevelopment and sustainable development in East Gainesville (Map 6.22) without jeopardizing the environmental health and integrity of the area. We need to enhance economic incentives to attract development (i.e. tax relief). The environmental regulations that apply to East Gainesville are the same regulations that apply throughout the county.

The environmental conditions in East Gainesville area are not that different than most of eastern Alachua County. This part of the county contains a confinement layer of clay-like soils below the surface that provide a barrier to the Floridan Aquifer that also creates a mosaic of wetlands, lakes, and floodplains throughout the landscape. Poorly drained soils and this confinement zone cause water to stay at the surface longer and take longer to drain (see Map 6.24). There is a perception that most of East Gainesville is wetlands; however, based on GIS data for the area of unincorporated East Gainesville within the Urban Cluster (see Map 6.23.), approximately 15% to 31% of the area may consist of wetlands. A third of East Gainesville, approximately 2,460 acres, is mapped within strategic ecosystems. A large portion of these strategic ecosystems are wetlands. None of the strategic ecosystems within East Gainesville have been ground-truthed to determine their exact boundaries.

During a presentation on green infrastructure and climate change to the Energy Conservation Strategies Commission on November 19, 2007, Dr. Sam Brody, a Climate change planning expert from Texas A & M University, stated “The most important local climate change adaption strategy for Alachua County is protecting wetlands and floodplains.” In addition to reducing climate change impacts, wetlands also provide: flood and rainwater storage, aquifer recharge, protection of impaired water bodies and streams, reduction in flash flooding and peak flows, treatment of contaminants, wildlife habitat and water sources, recreation (i.e. fishing at Newnan’s Lake), ecotourism, and carbon sequestration. Sustainable development practices in coordination with the protection of wetlands and other natural features will foster a long-term sustainable and economically viable community while maintaining its historic sense of place.

Many areas can probably be developed using standard and conventional practices without causing direct impacts to natural resources. However, to maximize the development potential as well as meet the protection needs for natural resources in many areas; innovative, smart, and environmentally-friendly development will need to be promoted and incentivized. New sustainable and environmentally-friendly designs and ideas like Low Impact Development (LID) techniques, LEED certification programs, and Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) should be utilized to drive a development pattern that will be sustainable and appropriate for the area. These techniques should be promoted throughout the county, not just East Gainesville.

### Public Perception and Available Information

It became apparent during discussions in 2008 with the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and the Gainesville Community Development Committee (CDC), that there may be a perception by the general public that environmental issues are preventing or severely limiting development in East Gainesville. Although there are extensive natural resources in East Gainesville, as described in this paper, the information that is available to the public may be exacerbating or over-estimating that amount of wetlands and other regulated resources in East Gainesville. Maps available on county websites and in the Comprehensive Plan show extensive wetlands throughout eastern Alachua County. The data used for these maps come from multiple sources (none of which were completely ground-truthed) and combined to make a single wetland layer. The property appraiser and growth management websites and the wetland map in the Comprehensive Plan (Future Land Use Element Map Series, Map 2 Wetlands and Floodplains) uses this composite wetland layer to depict wetlands in the county. This map, although useful for general purposes, is typically inaccurate at the individual parcel scale. The composite map shows that approximately 31% of East Gainesville is wetlands. The true amount of wetlands is not known because most wetlands have not all been ground-truthed, but by comparison, if we were to only look at one of the layers that make up the composite map, for instance the NWI (National Wetland Inventory) layer, only 15% of East Gainesville is wetlands. Staff estimates that if all the wetlands in East Gainesville were delineated (ground-truthed), wetlands could constitute between 15% and 30% on the land area in East Gainesville.

Wetland delineation (ground-truthing), the onsite evaluation of where wetlands are located, is always required prior to the approval of a development activity. If a citizen is interested in determining the development potential of a parcel, ground-truthing is the only accurate way to determine a wetland boundary. Public maps should never be used as the final determination of a wetland unless these maps accurately show surveyed wetland boundaries that have been verified and approved by either a state or local government. Mapped resources that are currently available to the public often over estimate and/or inaccurately locate wetlands at the parcel level.

The strategic ecosystem map, available on county websites and in the Comprehensive Plan, shows the boundaries of strategic ecosystems as identified by the KBN Golder Report. There may be a public misconception that parcels within these boundaries are off limits to development or that these boundaries represent the final delineated boundaries of a strategic ecosystem. Both of these perceptions are incorrect. Development can occur with strategic ecosystem boundaries (see comp plan policies below) at the same densities and uses as allowed in other parcels of the same land use and zoning designation, provided that the ecosystem is protected. In fact, under some scenarios, having this designation can increase density through clustering bonuses, conservation area protection bonuses, or special areas planning. Secondly, the boundaries shown on the designated strategic ecosystem map, are the default boundaries and may be modified based on ground truthing. The boundaries cannot be increased by ground truthing.

### Eastside Activity Center

The recently adopted Eastside Activity Center Master Plan (Map 6.25) is an example of a plan that incorporates economic incentives and land use options while protecting the environmental features of the area. This Plan was an update of the previous Eastside Activity Center Plan and Interim Guidelines, which had been in effect and adopted as part of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan since 1994. The Eastside Activity Center site, which is approximately 300 acres on the north side of Hawthorne Road between Newnan's Lake and the City of Gainesville, contains important natural resources including wetlands, flood plain areas, high quality uplands, and Strategic Ecosystems.

A large portion of the Activity Center, west of SE 43rd Street, is designated as a Strategic Ecosystem by the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. Strategic Ecosystems are defined in the Comprehensive Plan as sites



identified in the KBN/Golder Associates study, “Alachua County Ecological Inventory Project” (1996). These consist of 47 areas determined to be the most significant natural systems remaining in the County based on ecological, hydrological, and management considerations. The Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.10.1 requires the protection of strategic ecosystem resources that are determined through ground-truthing to have characteristics that maintain or enhance biodiversity.

The specific ecosystem within the Activity Center is known as the Eastside Greenway. The following general description of the Eastside Greenway ecosystem is provided in the KBN/Golder Associates study (1996):

This is a complex site designed to connect Paynes Prairie State Preserve, Morningside Nature Center, Gum Root Swamp, and at the west shore of Newnans Lake at Sunland Park, at Palm Point, and at a third point farther south together by greenways while also including some high quality natural areas such as Palm Point Hill and several large swamps. The diversity of habitats is high and the significance for Morningside Nature Center of remaining connected to the larger areas of wildlife habitat is also high.

The portion of the Eastside Greenway ecosystem located within the Eastside Activity Center boundary provides an important link to other areas of the ecosystem to the north, south, and east. The KBN/Golder study notes the following about the importance of this particular segment of the ecosystem:

This is a complex and difficult site, but it is also one of potential high value. The land between Paynes Prairie State Preserve and Morningside Nature Center is the most valuable and important connector.

The Eastside Activity Center Master Plan identified and mapped the general location of a conservation and wildlife habitat corridor which runs north-to-south through the Activity Center (see Map 6.25). The function of the corridor is to protect the ecosystem while utilizing the open spaces as amenities by providing passive recreation opportunities, flood storage, canopy cover, and bike and nature trails. The adopted policies require a set-aside of an average 300-foot width corridor within the portion of the Eastside Greenway Strategic Ecosystem in this area.

The following are the policies which were adopted for the Eastside Activity Center Master Plan

To protect the Ecosystem:

Policy 2.5.10.5...

b. Undeveloped areas within individual developments that are set aside for the protection of the Eastside Greenway Strategic Ecosystem, in accordance with Policy 4.10.5 of the Conservation and Open Space Element, shall be geographically and functionally connected to form a continuous corridor through the Eastside Activity Center. The primary function of the corridor shall be to preserve the ecological integrity of the Eastside Greenway Strategic Ecosystem, including providing a wildlife corridor. The corridor may also serve as a location for recreational trails.

1. The corridor width and location shown on the Community Facilities Map is generalized. The actual width and location may vary depending on the location and quality of the natural resources on a particular property, as determined through ground-truthing.

2. The preferred width of the corridor shall be an average of 300 feet. It may be less than 300 feet in some areas, provided that the ecological integrity of the Eastside Greenway Strategic Ecosystem is protected.

3. Land areas set aside for the corridor may be included in the acreage used for determining allowable gross residential density or nonresidential floor area within a development. The allowable density or non-residential floor area may be clustered in non-conservation portions of the development.

Ground-truthing, should be completed to determine the specific geographical boundaries and significant natural resources within the ecosystem, and to identify any additional protection strategies for this particular area, in accordance with the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Low impact development with a focus on protecting and managing natural resources will be an important consideration for development in the Activity Center.

### **DATA AND ANALYSIS**

Total size of East Gainesville Area within the Urban Cluster/Services Line: approximately 7,365 acres

Amount of wetlands based on GIS data: 1,300 - 2,300 acres (approx. 15% - 31% of area) In comparison, approximately 27% of land in Alachua County is identified as wetlands based on GIS data. (Map 6.22).

Amount of mapped Strategic Ecosystems (Figure B): approx. 2,460 acres (33% of area)

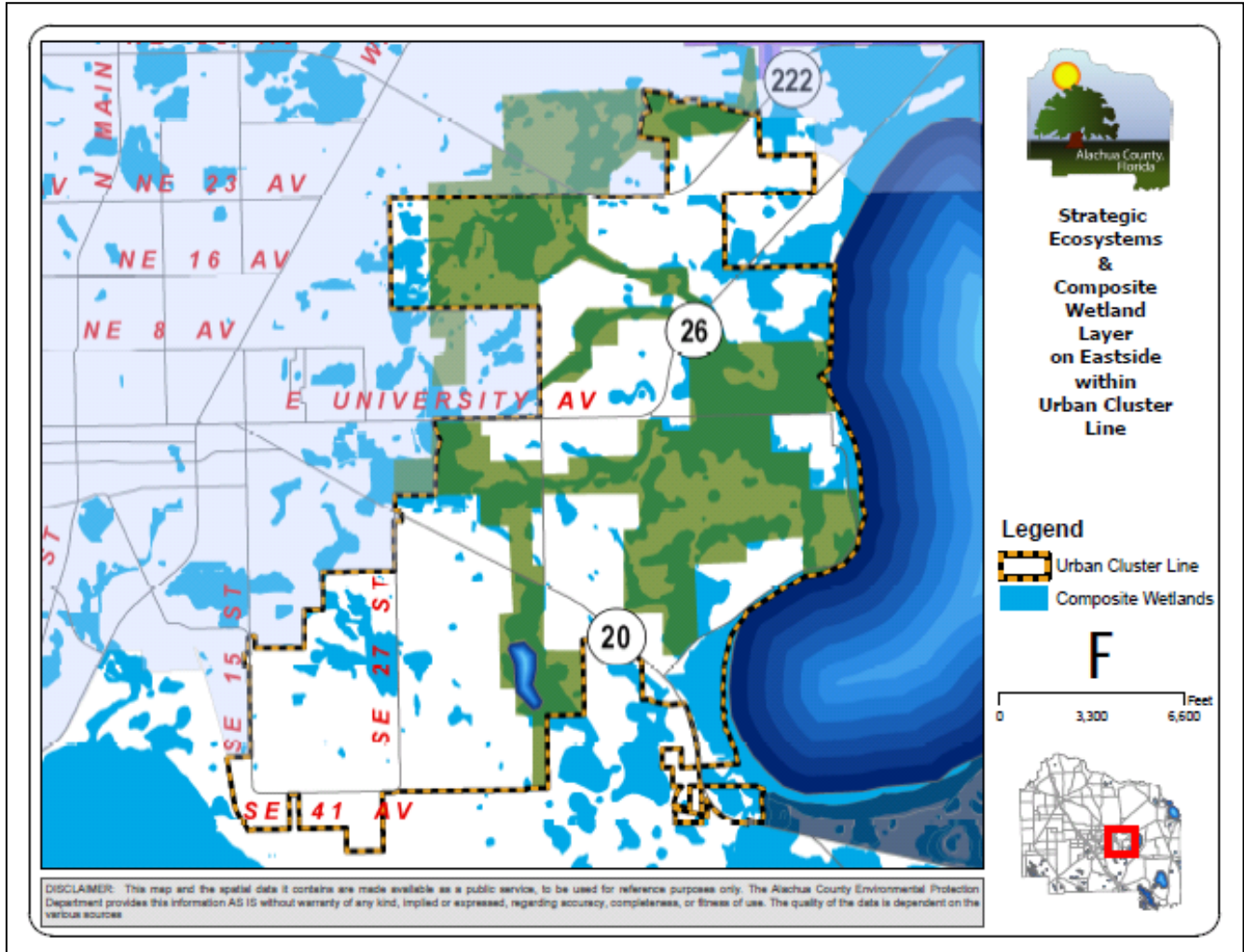
Amount of area identified within the 100-year floodplain (FEMA): approx. 1,800 acres

Existing impaired water bodies: Hatchet Creek, Little Hatchet Creek, and Newnan's Lake Amount of area under State-ownership: 1,947 acres (650 ac floodplain, 490+ acres of wetlands)

Map 6.22. A geographically based special area plan, The Plan East Gainesville Recommended Master Plan Map was adopted into the 2001-2020 Comprehensive Plan.

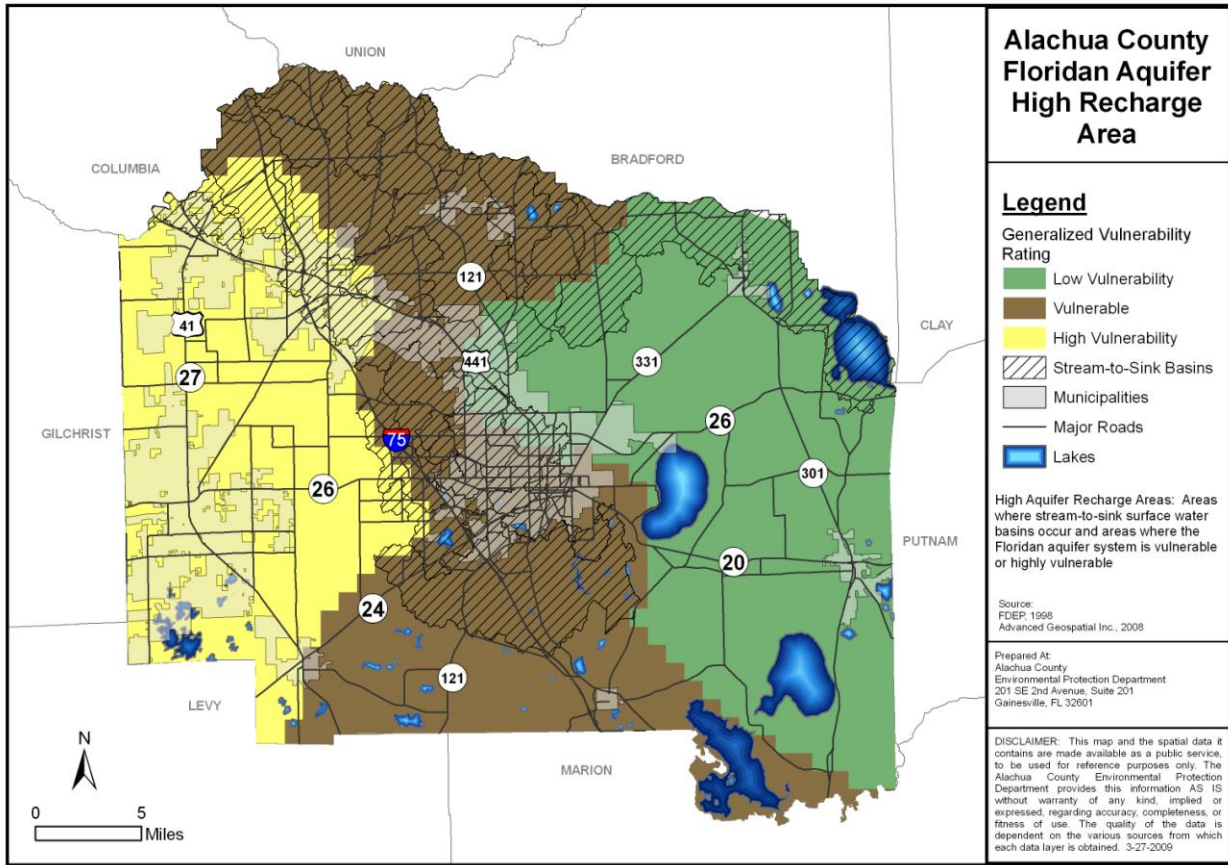


Map 6.23. Strategic Ecosystems (green) and wetland and surface waters layers (blue) in relation to Urban Cluster/Services Line on Eastside of Gainesville.

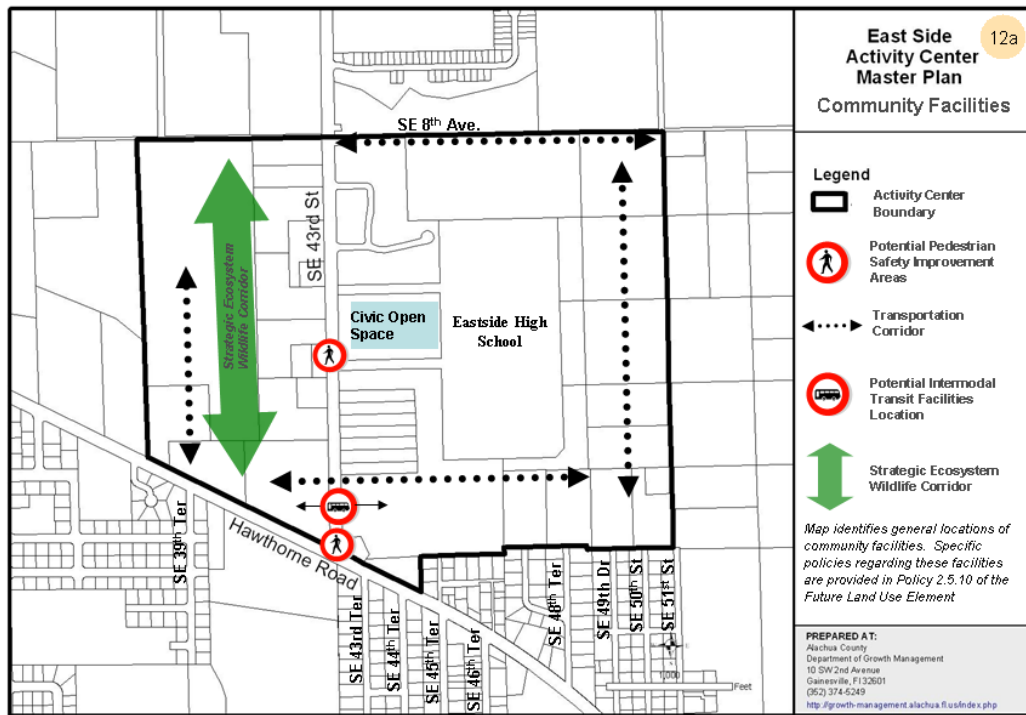




**Map 6.24. Floridan Aquifer System Protection Zone Map indicating generalized aquifer recharge and stream to sink watersheds (hatched areas), Alachua County Aquifer Vulnerability Assessment (ACAVA) Map, dated August 2008.**



Map 6.25. Eastside Activity Center Master Plan – Community Facilities Map



**INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS ON RELEVANT VARIABLES**

Environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to urbanized Gainesville or within the Urban Cluster east of Gainesville could be managed for development activity following a recent model adopted by the City of Gainesville for the Plum Creek/Land Mar Project (Ordinance No. 0-07-119, Petition 28LUC-07PB). Habitat and hydrologic constraints described in this project are similar to those found in the East Gainesville area. The Ordinance adopts a Planned Unit Development approach which includes specific protections of environmental features and uses Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and outlines the type of New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Development design that provides the goods and services to the population that sustain economic well being.

Starting in December 2007 and as a result of a recent annexation of a large strategic ecosystem, the County and the City of Gainesville opened a dialogue on resource protection standards, greenbelt development versus redevelopment, green infrastructure, and strategic ecosystems. Much of the discussion was focused on developing a cooperative and unified approach to protecting of resources within annexed areas in East Gainesville and other areas surrounding Gainesville. At a presentation given in June 2008 to the Gainesville Community Development Committee (CDC), County staff made the following recommendations:

- Track green infrastructure with new development (open space, pervious area, tree canopy, habitat and SE protected)
- Coordinate tracking processes.
- Use GIS to provide visual representation of infrastructure (good planning tool and assists with identifying areas for protection)

- Promote green building and LID techniques
- Support county protection standards and encourage Low Impact Development (LID) standards for undeveloped areas, wetlands linked to creek, streams, and lakes, or within Strategic Systems.
- Maintain city standards for redevelopment areas, areas with existing buffer impacts or lack of buffers, or areas of high or medium density residential or other intensive land use.
- Strategic Ecosystems (SE) annexed that are part of greenbelt and currently undeveloped: adopt County approach
- SE annexed within more dense urban areas or with existing intensive land use, consider hybrid approach with similar protection standards but more intensive development approach.

County and City of Gainesville staff have continued to discuss ways to protect strategic ecosystems that have been annexed into the city. Gainesville City staff is currently drafting new language to protect these resources and other sensitive lands within the City of Gainesville. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, City of Gainesville Commission passed a motion to have City staff submit draft land development regulations to the Plan Board. These regulations will include protection standards for strategic ecosystems, upland habitat, significant geological features, high aquifer recharge areas, and nature parks as well as new requirements for environmental assessments and management plans. These regulations are expected to be similar to the existing county environmental regulations.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Develop and promote economic-based incentives while continuing to support the County's protection standards while encourages Low Impact Development (LID) and other environmentally-friendly approaches for parcels with wetlands and surface waters, or within Strategic Ecosystems.
- 1. Increased economic opportunity by bringing higher paying jobs and providing services; 2. Strengthened economic, social, and transportation linkage between the East Gainesville area and other parts of the Gainesville urbanized area, including the areas of downtown, the University of Florida, and the western urban areas; 3. Expanded range of housing choices to attract and retain residents with varied income levels; and 4. Protected vital natural resources, such as wetlands, watersheds, strategic ecosystems, creeks, tree canopy, and scenic vistas that make East Gainesville unique.
- Promote and incentivizing redevelopment of areas already in development or impacted by prior development.
- Increase outreach and education about the value and benefits of natural resources within the community. Clarify the limitations and uses of available data and maps on the web and stress the value of ground-truthing (inspecting) of regulated resources on site prior to development.



## Intergovernmental Coordination – Listed Species

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

COSE Policy 4.9.7: “The County shall periodically review monitoring data from federal, state, regional, and local agencies to determine the status of listed species habitats in Alachua County.

The County shall use this information to maintain and provide, for the convenience of the public, a table of listed species and listed species habitats in Alachua County.” The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has continuously tracked listings and de-listings at the federal, state and FNAI (Florida Natural Area Inventory) levels. Tables of listed animal and plant species for Alachua County are derived from Federal and State list resources, which include: for animal species, Chapters 68A-27.003, 68A-27.004, and 68A-27.005, F.A.C.(state listing), and 50 CFR 17.11(federal listing); for plant species, the list resources include Chapter 5B-40.0055, F.A.C. (state listing), and 50 CFR 17.12 (federal listing).

The wildlife species list provided in Table 6.35 is the list that was created in 2002 during the Comprehensive Plan challenge. The end of the table identifies changes that have occurred to the list since 2005, which is when the current Comprehensive Plan became effective. Most recently, EPD staff has participated in stakeholder groups related to changes in status of gopher tortoises and bald eagles and has implemented new federal and state guidelines/management plans in a timely fashion within the development review context.

In summary, four vertebrate species (1 bat, 3 snakes) have been added and one species (a snake) has been removed since the original list was put together in 2002. The bald eagle was also removed from the State and Federal listings (it is still listed as S3 by Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). All other wildlife species removed or added to the list are invertebrates. Invertebrate species do not affect the classification of a listed-species wetland because the rules only apply to vertebrate species. Many of these listed invertebrate species are wetland dependent and would not impact the identification of upland listed species habitat or they are parasites or commensals (living in a relationship in which one animal derives food, refuge, or other benefits from another animal without hurting or helping it; i.e. Florida pine snake and Gopher Tortoise) to already identified listed species and therefore would also not have an impact of the classification of new listed-species habitat. EPD has also tracked federal, state, and FNAI status changes of rare, threatened, and endangered plants, and have applied these changes in a timely fashion within the development review context. Additionally EPD has created and updated (current as of May 2008) an informational tool (Rare and Regulated Plants of Alachua County spreadsheet) to inform and assist local governments, the development community, environmental consultants, and the general public on the status, ecology, and occurrence of these rare and regulated plants (see Appendix). EPD plans to add these lists to the website with the next website update.

### RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Some recent management plans have been provided by State Agencies of species relevant to property owners in the County for Gopher Tortoise and Bald Eagle (see below). The gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) has been upgraded by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) from a Species of Special Concern to Threatened. The change in the listing will not impact existing requirements and language in the Comprehensive Plan, since the tortoise is still a listed species and no specific management requirements and regulations are identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) was removed in 2007 from the federal list of endangered and threatened species by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) and at the state level by the FFWCC. FNAI still identifies the species as an S3 (which still qualifies the species as listed in Alachua County). Because of the delisting by the federal and state government, the bald eagle is no longer protected by the Endangered Species Act. However, the eagle is still protected by the Bald & Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (Eagle Act) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In 2007, the USFWS developed the Bald Eagle Management Guidelines that are the basis for the FFWCC Habitat Management Guidelines to ensure compliance with federal and Florida wildlife laws concerning bald eagles and to minimize potentially harmful activities around eagle nests. The new management guidelines change the buffer zones of 750 ft. and 1500 ft. to a single buffer zone 660 feet or less from the nest depending on the presence or absence of existing activities and visibility of the activity from the nest.

Only two areas of the comp plan identified specific requirements for eagle protection and eagle nesting zones. These areas are the Cross Creek Special Area Study and the Idylwild/ Serenola Special Area Study (SAS). Except for the fact that bald eagles are identified as a threatened or endangered species (FLUE policy 8.4.2.6), there are no references to a specific management plan and the language is broad enough to not be in conflict with the FFWCC Habitat Management Guidelines. The conflict is only in the Land Development Regulations that implement the Idylwild SAS, which specifically identify and apply the old FWS Habitat Management Guidelines for Bald Eagles in the Southeast Region.

The Cross Creek SAS policies specifically identify the old management guidelines (see FLUE policy 8.2.3.7.d.) and old nesting zones (see FLUE policy 8.2.3.f.3.). However, there is a section of interpretation (FLUE policy 8.2.3.7.c.) that provides some flexibility with consideration by the Board of County Commissioners on a case-by-case basis with any deviation from the standards contained in the section provided that the development is designed as a Planned Development (PD) and with consultation with FFWCC. As with Idylwild SAS land development regulations, the code language that implements these policies will have to be evaluated and possibly updated.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

The following terms are defined in the Comprehensive Plan relative to listed species and their habitat:

- Critical Habitat (also called essential habitat): The specific areas that contain biological or physical features upon which a listed species depends. These include recently documented feeding, breeding, nesting, or repetitive use areas.
- Documented [adapted from 9J-2.041]: The existence of a scientifically credible occurrence record for a listed species, including surveys, scientific publications, or other information from a developer or landowner, local, regional, state or federal agencies.
- Ecological Value: The value of functions performed by uplands, wetlands, and other surface waters to the abundance, diversity, and habitats of fish, wildlife, and listed species. These functions include, but are not limited to, providing cover and refuge; breeding, nesting, denning, and nursery areas; corridors for wildlife movement; food chain support; and natural water storage, natural flow attenuation, and water quality improvement, which enhances fish, wildlife, and listed species utilization.
- Listed Species: Those species of plants and animals listed as endangered, threatened, rare, or species of special concern by an official state or federal plant or wildlife agency, or the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI, includes species ranked as S1, S2, or S3). These species are targeted for protection for a number of reasons, e.g. they are in imminent danger of extinction, are rapidly declining in number or habitat, or have an inherent vulnerability to habitat modification, environmental

alteration, or human disturbance which puts them at risk of extinction. Federal and State sources for listed animal and plant species for Alachua County include: for animal species, Chapters 68A-27.003, 68A-27.004, and 68A-27.005, F.A.C.(state listing), and 50 CFR 17.11(federal listing); for plant species, the list resources include Chapter 5B-40.0055, F.A.C. (state listing), and 50 CFR 17.12 (federal listing).

Table 6.35 represents the listed vertebrate and invertebrate taxa or listed species as determined by federal, state and FNAI for Alachua County. The end of the table identifies changes that have occurred since 2005, which is when the current Comprehensive Plan became effective.

**Table 6.35. Alachua County "Listed " Species**

<b>MAMMALS</b>					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS*	FWC**	FNAI***	FNAI'08
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	big brown bat			S3	S3
<i>Neofiber alleni</i>	Florida round-tailed muskrat			S3	S3
<i>Plecotus rafinesquii macrotus</i>	Southeastern big-eared bat			S2	S2
<i>Podomys floridanus</i>	Florida mouse		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Sciurus niger shermani</i>	Sherman's fox squirrel		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear		T	S2	S2

<b>BIRDS</b>					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS	FWC	FNAI	FNAI'08
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's hawk			S3	S3
<i>Aimophila aestivalis</i>	Bachman's sparrow			S3	S3
<i>Aphelocoma coerulescens</i>	Florida scrub jay	T	T	S2	S2
<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	limpkin		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Athene cunicularia floridana</i>	Florida burrowing owl		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	little blue heron		SSC		
<i>Egretta thula</i>	snowy egret		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	tricolored heron		SSC		
<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	swallow-tailed kite			S2	S2
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	white ibis		SSC		
<i>Falco columbarius</i>	merlin			S2	S2
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	peregrine falcon		E	S2	S2
<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	Southeastern American kestrel		T	S3	S3
<i>Grus canadensis pratensis</i>	Florida sandhill crane		T	S2S3	S2S3
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	(delisted)	(delisted)	S3	S3
<i>Helmitheros vermivorus</i>	worm-eating warbler			S1	S1
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>	black rail			S2	S2
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	wood stork	E	E	S2	S2

<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	yellow-crowned night heron			S3	S3
<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	black-crowned night heron			S3	S3
<i>Picoides borealis</i>	red-cockaded woodpecker	E	(SSC)	S2	S2
<i>Picoides villosus</i>	hairy woodpecker			S3	S3
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	glossy ibis			S3	S3
<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	Louisiana waterthrush			S2	S2
<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	American redstart			S2	S2

REPTILES					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS	FWC	FNAI	FNAI'08
<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	American alligator		SSC		
<i>Crotalus horridus</i>	canebrake (timber) rattlesnake			S3	S3
<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	Eastern indigo snake	T	T	S3	S3
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	gopher tortoise		(T)	S3	S3
<i>Macrolemys temminckii</i>	alligator snapping turtle		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus</i>	Florida pine snake		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Pseudemys concinna suwanniensis</i>	Suwannee cooter		SSC	S3	S3
<i>Stilosoma extenuatum</i>	short-tailed snake		T	S3	S3

AMPHIBIANS					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS	FWC	FNAI	FNAI'08
<i>Ambystoma cingulatum</i>	flatwoods salamander	T	SSC	S2S3	S2
<i>Ambystoma tigrinum</i>	Eastern tiger salamander			S3	S3
<i>Notophthalmus perstriatus</i>	striped newt			S2S3	S2S3
<i>Rana capito aesopus</i>	Florida gopher frog		SSC	S3	S3

FISHES					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS	FWC	FNAI	FNAI'08
<i>Acantharchus pomotis</i>	mud sunfish			S3	S3
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	Gulf sturgeon	T	SSC	S2	S2
<i>Ameiurus serracanthus</i>	spotted bullhead			S3	S3
<i>Awaous tajasica (banana)</i>	river goby			S1S2	S1S2
<i>Enneacanthus chaetodon</i>	blackbanded sunfish			S3	S3
<i>Micropterus notius</i>	Suwannee bass		SSC	S3	S3

<i>Umbra pygmaea</i>	Eastern mudminnow			S3	S3
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INVERTEBRATES					
TAXON	COMMON NAME	SOURCE			
		FWS	FWC	FNAI	FNAI'08
<i>Achalarus lyciades</i>	hoary edge				S2S4
<i>Amblyscirtes aesculapius</i>	textor skipper				S3
<i>Aphodius laevigatus</i>	large pocket gopher scarab			S2	S3
<i>Aphodius troglodytes</i>	gopher tortoise <i>Aphodius</i>				S2S3
<i>Aphaostracon chalarogyrus</i>	freemouth hydrobe			S1	S1
<i>Atrytone arogos arogos</i>	Arogos skipper			S2	S2
<i>Atrytonopsis hianna loammi</i>	Southern dusted skipper				S1
<i>Autochton cellus</i>	golden-banded skipper				S2S3
<i>Caecitotea hobbsi</i>	Florida cave isopod			S2	S2
<i>Ceratocanthus aeneus</i>	shining ball scarab			S2	S2
<i>Cerlotina truncona</i>	Florida cernotinan caddisfly			S2	S2
<i>Cicindela scabrosa</i>	Florida scrub tiger beetle			S3	S3
<i>Copris gopheri</i>	gopher tortoise <i>Copris</i>				S2
<i>Cordulegaster obliqua fasciata</i>	arrowhead spiketail				S3
<i>Cordulegaster sayi</i>	Say's spiketail			S1S2	S2
<i>Crangonyx grandimanus</i>	Florida cave amphipod			S2	S2
<i>Crangonyx hobbsi</i>	Hobb's cave amphipod			S2S3	S2S3
<i>Dromogomphus armatus</i>	Southeastern spinyleg			S3	S3
<i>Euphyes dion</i>	dion skipper				S2
<i>Euphyes dukesi (calhouni)</i>	Duke's skipper ( <b>Calhoun's skipper</b> )				S1
<i>Everes comyntas comyntas</i>	Eastern tailed blue				S2
<i>Lestes inequalis</i>	elegant spreadwing			S2S3	S2
<i>Medionidus walkeri</i>	Suwannee moccasinshell				S1
<i>Mycotrupes gagei</i>	North peninsular <i>Mycotrupes</i>				S2S3
<i>Neurocordulia obsoleta</i>	umber shadowfly			S1	S1
<i>Nymphalis antiopa antiopa</i>	mourning cloak				S2
<i>Onthophagus polyphemi</i>	gopher tortoise <i>Onthophagus</i>				S2S3
<i>Palaemonetes cummingi</i>	Squirrel Chimney cave shrimp	T		S1	S1
<i>Peltotrupes profundus</i>	Florida deep-digger scarab				S3
<i>Phidippus workmani</i>	Workman's jumping spider				S2
<i>Pholisora catullus</i>	common sooty wing				S2
<i>Phyllophaga elongata</i>	elongate June beetle				S2S4

<i>Phyllophaga skelleyi</i>	Skelley's June beetle				S2
<i>Poanes viator zizaniae</i>	wild rice skipper				S2S3
<i>Poanes yehl</i>	Southern swamp skipper				S2S3
<i>Polygonia comma</i>	comma anglewing				S2S3
<i>Procambarus lucifugus alachua</i>	light-fleeing cave crayfish			S2S3	S2S3
<i>Procambarus pallidus</i>	pallid cave crayfish			S2S3	S2S3
<i>Progomphus alachuensis</i>	tawny sanddragon				S3
<i>Remasellus parvus</i>	swimming little Fl. cave isopod			S1	S1S2
<i>Satyrium floridensis</i>	striped hairstreak			S1S2	S1S2
<i>Tachopteryx thoreyi</i>	gray petaltail			S3	S4
<i>Triaenodes florida</i>	Florida trianode caddisfly			S1	S2
<i>Trigonopeltastes floridana</i>	scrub palmetto scarab				S2S3
<i>Troglocambarus maclanei</i>	N. Fl. spider cave crayfish			S2	S2
<b>LIGHT GRAY</b>	Added as of 2008 (was not listed in 2005)				
<b>DARK GRAY</b>	Status reduced since 2005				
<b>(STATUS CHANGE)</b>	Significant change since 2005				
Added to Mammal List since 2005					
<i>Myotis austroriparius</i>	Southeastern bat				S3
Added to Reptiles List since 2005					
<i>Crotalus adamanteus</i>	Eastern diamondback rattlesnake				S3
<i>Heterodon simus</i>	Southern hognose snake				S2
<i>Lampropeltis getula</i>	Common kingsnake				S2S3
Added to Invertebrate List since 2005					
<i>Agarodes libalis</i>	Spring-loving psiloneuran caddisfly				S2S3
<i>Ataenius brevicollis</i>	Island woodrat ataenius beetle				S1
<i>Celastrina ladon</i>	Spring azure				S3
<i>Chelyoxenus xerobatis</i>	Gopher tortoise hister beetle				S1S3
<i>Chimarra florida</i>	Floridian finger-net caddisfly				S3
<i>Dasymutilla archboldi</i>	Lake Wales Ridge velvet ant				S2
<i>Eucanthus alutaceus</i>	Mat red globe scarab beetle				S1S3
<i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>	Harvester				S3
<i>Hesperia attalus slossonae</i>	Seminole skipper				S2S3
<i>Hesperia meskei straton</i>	Eastern Meske's skipper				S2S3
<i>Hydroptila bernerii</i>	Berner's microcaddisfly				S2S3
<i>Hydroptila wakulla</i>	Wakulla Springs varicolored microcaddisfly				S1S2
<i>Melanoplus querneus</i>	Larger sandhill grasshopper				S1S2
<i>Nemopalpus nearcticus</i>	Superfoot moth fly				S1S2
<i>Oecetis porteri</i>	Porter's long-horn caddisfly				S2S3
<i>Oxyethira pescadori</i>	Pescador's bottle-cased caddisfly				S2
<i>Phyllophaga clemens</i>	Clemens' june beetle				S1
<i>Pleurobema pyriforme</i>	Oval pigtoe			E (FWS)	
<i>Ptomaphagus schwarzi</i>	Schwarz' pocket gopher ptomaphagus beetle				S3
<i>Pyrgus communis</i>	Checkered skipper				S1
<i>Selonodon floridensis</i>	Florida cebrionid beetle				S2S3



<i>Selonodon mandibularis</i>	Large-jawed cibrionid beetle	S2S3
<i>Serica pusilla</i>	Pygmy silky june beetle	S2S3
<i>Utterbackia peninsularis</i>	Peninsular floater (bivalves)	S2

**\*FISH AND WILDLIFE DEFINITIONS**

E= endangered                      T= threatened

**\*\* FLORIDA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION**

E= endangered                      T= threatened                      SSC= species of special concern

**\*\*\*FNAI STATE RANK DEFINITIONS**

S1 = Critically imperiled in Florida because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1000 individuals) or because of extreme vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.

S2 = Imperiled in Florida because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.

S3 = Either very rare and local in Florida (21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals) or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.

Figure 6.4 provides information on the potential regulatory implications of those animals meeting the definition of ‘listed species’ that have been added subsequent to the effective date of the Comprehensive Plan in May 2005.

**Figure 6.4. Implications of additions to “Listed Species” of Alachua County**

**REGULATORY IMPLICATIONS OF ADDITIONS TO “LISTED SPECIES” OF ALACHUA COUNTY**

A total of 28 animal species (one mammal, three reptiles, and 24 invertebrates) currently meet the definition of “listed species” that were not considered as such at the time the Comprehensive Plan took effect in May 2005. The summary below lists those species, indicates their habitat affinities, and offers thoughts on regulatory implications.

**Mammals added since adoption**

**Southeastern Bat** (*Myotis austroriparius*)....habitat = caves

Discussion: Caves already are regulated conservation resources (“significant geologic features”) under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Reptiles added since adoption**

**Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake** (*Crotalus adamanteus*)....habitat = largely flatwoods; wintering snakes often associated with gopher tortoise burrows

Discussion: Intact examples of native flatwoods already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations. Gopher tortoise burrows already are regulated under state law.

**Southern Hognose Snake** (*Heterodon simus*)....habitat = dry pine flatwoods; sandhills; xeric hammock

Discussion: Intact examples of these communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Common Kingsnake** (*Lampropeltis getula*)....habitat = wetlands; wetland edges

Discussion: Wetlands and wetland edges already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.



**Invertebrates added since adoption**

**Spring-loving Psiloneuran Caddisfly** (*Agarodes libalis*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Island Woodrat Ataenius Beetle** (*Ataenius brevicollis*).....habitat = associated with dung in woodrat nests

Discussion: The chances of finding and accurately identifying this animal during routine development review surveys are minimal. As a result, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” for this species would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Spring Azure Butterfly** (*Celastrina ladon*).....habitat = temperate forests; disturbed sites; larvae feed on floral parts of various plants, none of which are rare

Discussion: *C. ladon* is actually an incompletely understood complex of several species or subspecies. They are considered rare in the state because north Florida is the southern extent of their range. As none of the known larval host plants or habitats are rare, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Gopher Tortoise Hister Beetle** (*Chelyoxenus xerobatis*).....habitat = restricted to gopher tortoise burrows

Discussion: Gopher tortoise burrows already are regulated under state law.

**Floridian Finger-net Caddisfly** (*Chimarra florida*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Lake Wales Ridge Velvet Ant** (*Dasymutilla archboldi*).....habitat = scrub

Discussion: Intact examples of scrub communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Mat Red Globe Scarab Beetle** (*Eucanthus alutaceus*).....habitat = sandhills

Discussion: Intact examples of sandhill communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Harvester Butterfly** (*Feniseca tarquinius*).....habitat = primarily swamps, creeksides, streamsides; larval prey are several species of wooly aphids (mostly on alders [*Alnus*] and other wetland species)

Discussion: Our only carnivorous butterfly species. Wetlands and wetland edges already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Seminole Skipper Butterfly (aka Dotted Skipper)** (*Hesperia attalus slossonae*).....habitat = xeric, fire-maintained communities (e.g., sandhills, longleaf pine flatwoods); larval host plants are wiregrass and other grasses

Discussion: Intact examples of these communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Eastern Meske’s Skipper Butterfly (aka Dixie Skipper)** (*Hesperia meskei*).....habitat = sandhills; larval host plants are various grasses

Discussion: Intact examples of sandhill communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Berner’s Microcaddisfly** (*Hydroptila berneri*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Wakulla Springs Varicolored Microcaddisfly** (*Hydroptila wakulla*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Larger Sandhill Grasshopper** (*Melanoplus querneus*).....habitat = sandhills

Discussion: Intact examples of sandhill communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Sugarfoot Moth Fly** (*Nemopalpus nearcticus*).....habitat = deciduous hardwood hammocks

Discussion: Intact examples of these communities already are regulated as “significant habitat” under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Porter’s Long-horn Caddisfly** (*Oecetis porteri*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Pescador’s Bottle-cased Caddisfly** (*Oxyethira pescadori*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Clemens’ June Beetle** (*Phyllophaga clemens*).....habitat = unknown; larval host(s) and habits unknown

Discussion: As this species has been formally recorded only from Leon and Alachua counties, it appears to be rare and narrowly distributed. Given that life history information for this species is unknown, and that it can only be distinguished from similar species by genitalic characters, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Oval Pigtoe Mussel** (*Pleurobema pyriforme*).....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

**Schwarz’ Pocket Gopher Ptomaphagus Beetle** (*Ptomaphagus schwarzi*).....habitat = pocket gopher and gopher tortoise burrows

Discussion: Gopher tortoise burrows already are regulated under state law. Pocket gophers are widespread in areas of well-drained, sandy soils and are unregulated. Routine surveys in the development review context do not include excavation of pocket gopher burrows. As designation of “listed species habitat” under current comprehensive plan policies relies on “documented” occurrences of the listed species, it is unlikely that this beetle is of regulatory significance in the development review context.

**Checkered Skipper Butterfly** (*Pyrgus communis*).....habitat = wide variety of disturbed, sunny sites; larval host plants are a variety of members of the mallow family (Malvaceae)

Discussion: Cech, R. and G. Tudor (2005)\_*Butterflies of the East Coast: An Observer’s Guide*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey., citing J.M. Burns (2000)\_*Pyrgus communis and Pyrgus albescens (Hesperiidae: Pyrginae) Are Separate Transcontinental Species With Variable But Diagnostic Valves*. Journal of the Lepidopterists’ Society, 54:52-71., indicate that a former race of the Common Checkered Skipper

(*P. communis*) recently was elevated to specific status as the White Checkered Skipper (*P. albescens*). Citing J.V. Calhoun (2002)\_*Sibling Rivalry in Florida: The Displacement of Pyrgus communis by Pyrgus albescens (Hesperiidae)*. Journal of the Lepidopterists' Society, 56(2):98-103, the authors state that the latter species colonized Florida beginning in the 1990s as the Common Checkered Skipper nearly vanished. As the two species apparently can be differentiated only through dissection, it is unlikely that this animal is of regulatory significance in the development review context.

**Florida Cebrionid Beetle** (*Selonodon floridensis*)....habitat = unknown – probably sandy uplands; larval hosts and habits unknown

Discussion: Apparently rare because of limited geographic range of documented occurrence. Given that life history information for this species is largely unknown, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Large-jawed Cebrionid Beetle** (*Selonodon mandibularis*)....habitat = unknown – probably sandy uplands; larval hosts and habits unknown

Discussion: Apparently rare because of limited geographic range of documented occurrence. Given that life history information for this species is largely unknown, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Pygmy Silky June Beetle** (*Serica pusilla*)....habitat = unknown – probably sandy uplands; larval hosts and habits unknown

Discussion: Apparently rare because of limited geographic range of documented occurrence. Given that life history information for this species is largely unknown, it is unlikely that identification and regulation of “listed species habitat” would be a practical consideration in a development review context.

**Peninsular Floater Mussel** (*Utterbackia peninsularis*)....habitat = aquatic

Discussion: Aquatic habitats already are regulated conservation resources under existing comprehensive plan policies and land development regulations.

Alachua County's listed rare and regulated plants are provided at the web link below in a table format that is accessible through the user's PC allowing for increased font size and printing capability.

[http://www.alachuacounty.us/assets/uploads/images/EPD/Natural/summary%20of%20rare%20and%20regulated%20plants\\_v050508.pdf](http://www.alachuacounty.us/assets/uploads/images/EPD/Natural/summary%20of%20rare%20and%20regulated%20plants_v050508.pdf)

Another web-link (below) provides similar capability for Table 6.35. shown above.

[http://www.alachuacounty.us/assets/uploads/images/EPD/Natural/listed%20species\\_animals\\_v010808.pdf](http://www.alachuacounty.us/assets/uploads/images/EPD/Natural/listed%20species_animals_v010808.pdf)

**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

Potential strategies for addressing the issue as part of an update of the Comprehensive Plan.

- EPD staff keep updated lists of state and federal listed species and FNAI category S1, S2, & S3 species. This is an existing comp plan policy.
- Update pertinent supporting data and analysis as part of EAR based Comprehensive Plan update. This is an existing comp plan policy.
- Make necessary updates to special area plan policies in Idywild/Serenola and Cross Creek Special Areas to reflect changes in federal guidelines for bald eagles.
- Changes in the status of certain species necessitate appropriate changes in Comp Plan policy language in each Special Area Study, which will also require appropriate updates to the ULDC.

## URBAN AREA

### Fiscal Constraints – Activity Center Master Plans

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

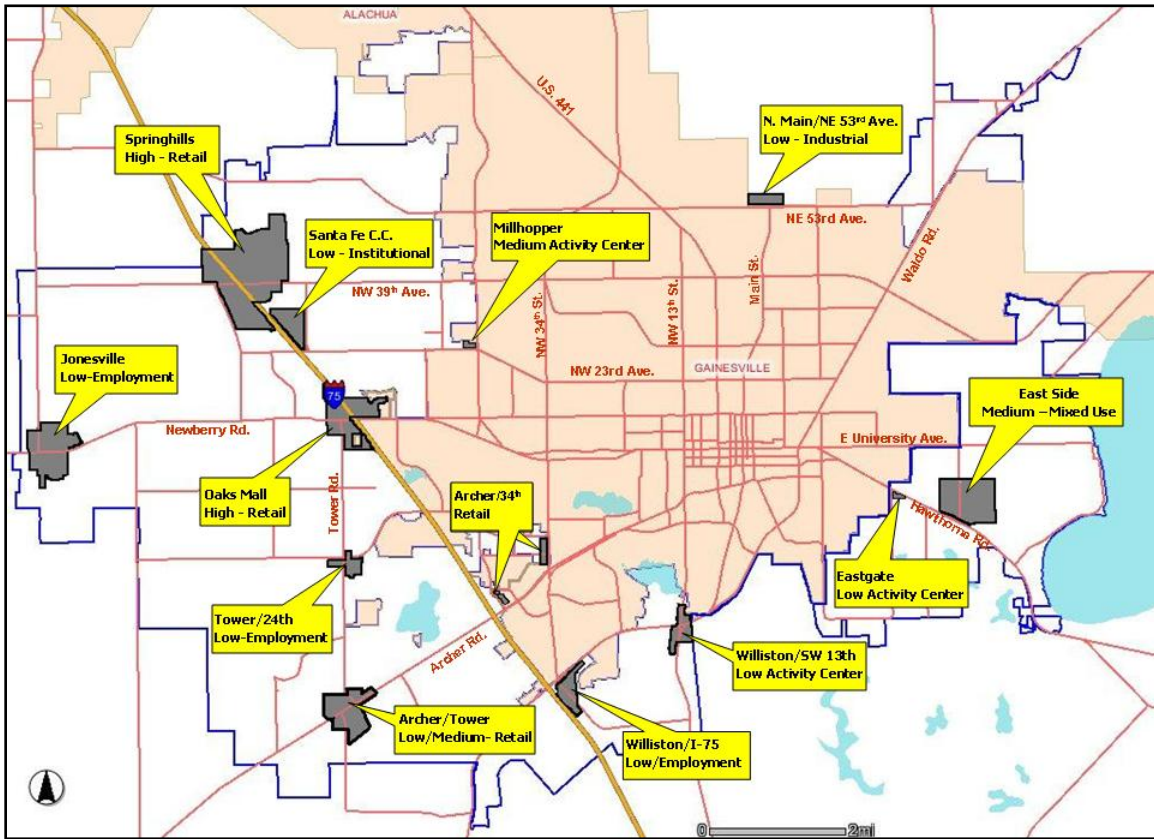
Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Activity Center Master Plans) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints.

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan policies for Activity Centers are key components of the County's overall land use strategy. Adopted Comprehensive Plan policies in Section 2.0 of the Future Land Use Element characterize Activity Centers as nodes of higher density and intensity land uses containing mixed-use, compact, and pedestrian-friendly development (commercial, institutional, office, and medium to high density residential) that is connected to a multi-modal transportation system. The majority of new commercial and higher density residential development in the unincorporated area is required to be located within the thirteen (13) designated Activity Centers in the unincorporated area (see Map 6.26).

Each of the County's Activity Centers has separate specific plans or interim guidelines adopted in the Comprehensive Plan which identify the future land uses and development standards for that particular Activity Center. These plans and interim guidelines are contained in Objective 2.5 of the Future Land Use Element, and subsequent policies. In some cases, these plans date back to the 1980s and 1990s. In the most recent update of the Comprehensive Plan, new general standards for Activity Centers were adopted which placed greater emphasis on compact mixed use development, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design standards, and multi-modal transportation (see Policies 2.1.5 through 2.1.13 of the Future Land Use Element).

Map 6.26. Activity Centers Identified in Alachua County Comprehensive Plan



Policy 2.1.7 of the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan requires that the new general Activity Center development standards be implemented through either the development plan review process, or through a detailed Master Plan for the Activity Center. Master Plans are intended to provide for an evaluation of an entire Activity Center in the context of the surrounding development, transportation facilities, infrastructure, and natural resources in order to develop a plan which has an appropriate mix of land uses, maximizes multi-modal transportation opportunities and connectivity, and protects natural resources. Master Plans are required to provide policies for the Activity Center relating to site and building design, mixed uses, parking, multimodal transportation facilities, community green space, and surface stormwater management facilities. Policy 2.1.14 requires the County to evaluate and update the adopted Activity Center Plans, through the Master Plan process, to bring them into compliance with the more recently adopted mixed-use pedestrian-friendly development standards under Policies 2.1.5 - 2.1.13.

Subsequent to the Comprehensive Plan becoming effective in 2005, the Board of County Commissioners approved a professional services contract for purposes of updating the Land Development Code general standards for Activity Centers and for updating two individual Activity Center Master Plans. With the assistance of a consultant, one Activity Center Master Plan was recently completed for the Eastside Activity Center. The Master Plan included an extensive public involvement process that was spread over several months, resulting in adoption of a Master Plan that was generally supported by the property owners in the Activity Center and the public. As a follow up to adoption of the Eastside Activity Center Master Plan, the Land Development Code is in the process of being updated to implement the new Master Plan. After completion of the first Master Plan for the Eastside Activity Center, it was determined that additional Activity



Center Master Plans would not be initiated at this time, in light of current fiscal constraints, staff workload, and other ongoing projects such as the Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

The Activity Center Master Plan process is an effective way to implement the general concepts of compact mixed use development and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessibility within each Activity Center, but there may be more efficient options available to accomplish the same result.

### **Recent Legislative Changes**

Property tax reform legislation adopted by the State of Florida in 2007, combined with further reductions in local property taxes adopted in a 2008 constitutional amendment, have resulted in decreased revenues for local governments. Long term planning efforts that are called for in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, such as Activity Center Master Plans, need to be re-evaluated, while more time and cost efficient options for accomplishing these projects are identified.

### **Data and Existing Conditions Relating to Issue**

The experience with the development of the first Master Plan for the Eastside Activity Center can be used as an example for addressing future Master Plans. The Eastside Activity Center Master Plan took 2 years to complete from initiation to final adoption. This process involved several community and focus group meetings, evaluation of various plan alternatives, development of a large-scale Comprehensive Plan amendment, and several public hearings leading to final adoption of the amendment. The County paid consultant fees of approximately \$35,000 over the course of the process to assist staff with the project. The consultant's work included a market study to help identify viable land uses for the area, a site existing conditions analysis, facilitation of four community workshops, and development of several conceptual Master Plan alternatives. In addition to consultant fees, the County incurred costs for a widespread public outreach process, which included publishing several newspaper display ads and direct mailings to property owners (postcard production and mailing), as well as staff resources for facilitation of meetings and development of conceptual plan options and draft Comprehensive Plan policies at various stages of the process. There were five total meetings where newspaper and mailed notification were provided. The five meetings included three community meetings during the plan development phase, one BoCC workshop to review the conceptual Master Plan, and one neighborhood workshop in advance of the Comprehensive Plan amendment transmittal hearings. For five total meetings or workshops, there was a cost to the County of about \$7,500 for public notification. Additional costs relating to newspaper and mailed notification were incurred for three required public hearings. Other less costly methods of public notification were also used during the process, including web site postings, press release bulletins, emails to interested persons, and announcements at County Commission meetings and on Community Channel 12 television.

Using the experience with the Eastside Activity Center Master Plan as a guide, County staff could potentially complete Master Plans more efficiently in-house than through the use of a consultant. Completing Master Plans in-house would eliminate the need for future professional services contracts for these Plans. If future Activity Center Master Plans are conducted by in-house staff, then the only additional costs would be for public outreach and notification activities. Public notification and involvement are essential components of Activity Center Master Plans, but could potentially be conducted through readily available and less costly methods such as web site, email, electronic press release, Community Channel 12 information bulletins, and direct communication with community groups. These methods cannot replace required legal notifications, but they could be used for optional courtesy notifications in order to reduce costs.

The Eastside Activity Center Master Plan was a beneficial process because of the unique circumstances of the area. The Master Plan, in part, was an attempt to stimulate economic development in unincorporated East



Gainesville through a proactive planning process that was called for under Plan East Gainesville. The Activity Center also has Eastside High School at its center, which presented planning challenges and required coordination with the School Board. There is also a significant amount of undeveloped land available in the Eastside Activity Center that could potentially be developed in accordance with the new Master Plan.

Master Plans may not be essential or appropriate for all of the County's Activity Centers. In many Activity Centers, such as Tower/24<sup>th</sup> and Archer/Tower, much of the land has been recently developed, and conducting a Master Plan process at this time would not result in a significant benefit to the community or in the resulting development within the Activity Center. See Table 6.36 for information on amount of developed and undeveloped land within Activity Centers. Similarly, in Activity Centers where most or all of the Activity Center has been annexed into the City of Gainesville, such as Archer/34<sup>th</sup>, there is little benefit to the County conducting the Master Plan process. In other cases, such as Activity Centers with older existing development, there may be redevelopment opportunities in the future. In these cases, a Master Plan could potentially be appropriate for facilitating redevelopment that is consistent with the adopted mixed use, multi-modal design policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Table 6.36. Developed vs. Undeveloped Area in Activity Centers**

ACTIVITY CENTER	TOTAL ACRES (UNINCORPORATED ONLY)	DEVELOPED ACRES	UNDEVELOPED ACRES	% UNDEVELOPED
Archer Road/ SW 34 <sup>th</sup> Street	40.58	38.43	2.15	5%
Williston Rd./ I-75	86.38	48.48	37.9	44%
Williston Road/ SW 13 <sup>th</sup> Street	65.14	41.97	23.17	36%
Tower Road/ SW 24 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	58.91	43.48	15.43	26%
Archer Road/ Tower Road	183.26	92.53	89.76	49%
Jonesville	271.41	115.81	154.41	57%
Millhopper	10.93	9.86	0	0%
North Main Street/ NE 53 <sup>rd</sup> Ave.	47.54	0	47.54	100%
Eastgate	4.41	0.24	4.17	95%
Oaks Mall	221.2	183.52	14.5	7%
Santa Fe Community College	117	117	0	0%
Springhills	727.78	178.58	537.96	74%
East Side	296.31	115.7	180.61	61%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2130.85</b>	<b>985.6</b>	<b>1107.6</b>	

Source: Alachua County G.I.S, July 2008. Note: The total acreage is not necessarily the sum of the developed and undeveloped acreage. Common areas, although not developed, are not considered undeveloped either. Environmental constraints, such as wetlands or Strategic Ecosystems may further deduct from the undeveloped acreage that is potentially available for new development.

As an alternative to preparing separate Master Plans for each Activity Center, policy changes could provide a mechanism to implement the adopted general mixed use and multi-modal design concepts through the development plan review process. As discussed in the EAR Land Use/Transportation topic area Issue area, the County has proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to establish an alternative multi modal approach to transportation concurrency management, which would include Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policies that could be applied within Activity Centers, and in limited areas outside of Activity Centers. The proposed TOD policies would provide detailed standards for higher density, mixed use development in close proximity to transit service in order to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. The design concepts for TODs would include small blocks, gridded street networks, reduced amounts of required parking or hidden surface parking, and integration of multiple developments into one overall design concept. The proposed TOD policies would provide many of the detailed design standards that are needed to implement the general concepts for Activity Centers provided in adopted Policies 2.1.5 through 2.1.13 of the Future Land Use Element. As part of the EAR-based Comprehensive Plan update, Future Land Use Element Policies 2.1.7 and 2.1.14 could be amended to replace the requirement for separate Master Plans for each Activity Center with detailed general standards that would be applicable to all Activity Centers, similar to the proposed Transit Oriented Development standards that are now in process.

The proposed TOD policy concepts are discussed in greater detail in the Land Use/Transportation EAR topic area and in the background information for the County's proposed alternative multi-modal concurrency management system.

### **STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Provide a mechanism to implement the general policies for Activity Centers through the development plan review process. Amend Policies 2.1.7 and 2.1.14 to replace the requirement for separate Master Plans for each Activity Center with detailed design standards, similar to the Transit Oriented Development standards now in process, for mixed use, multi-modal, and integrated development, building upon the existing Activity Center policy concepts.
- As a complementary strategy to the one above, continue to develop Master Plans for Activity Centers in appropriate instances, such as to promote redevelopment, or where special circumstances exist that make general standards inapplicable, using only in-house staff and resources, and as staff workload permits. Where Activity Center Master Plans are appropriate, explore potential opportunities to develop them through public/private partnerships. As a complementary strategy, continue to utilize less costly and more effective methods for publicizing the Master Plan process.

## Energy

### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Determination of best ways to integrate policies relating to these issues and promote energy conservation, including consideration of an Energy Element.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

Land use and transportation comprise the majority of contributions to greenhouse gas emissions in Alachua County. Carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels to power the built environment represent a long-term hazard to the world, but also, and in particular peninsular Florida. Greater efficiency of power use, reduction in emissions and transition to renewable forms of energy will have the greatest impact in reducing the County's carbon footprint when tied to land use planning over all other sectors.

The idea of a 'carbon footprint' is a relatively new concept and can have a different meaning, depending on what is being measured. The general concept however, is a measure of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions directly, and sometimes indirectly, caused by a given individual, business, community, etc. The idea is that once a carbon footprint can be determined, efforts can be taken to reduce the footprint through mitigation, also called 'carbon offsets.' The term is a subset of a broader concept known as the 'ecological footprint,' which is a more comprehensive measure of an individual, business, or community's impact on the Earth's ecosystems, comparing human demand with the Earth's ability to regenerate and accommodate such demand.

In 2001, the County went through a process to inventory the GHG emissions in County Government and also for the County as a whole. Further detail on this inventory is included in the final report prepared by the Energy Conservation Strategies Commission in 2008. A Greenhouse Gas Action Plan was subsequently developed identifying strategies to reduce GHG emissions in the County, but was eliminated in 2003 due to budget constraints. The Environmental Protection and Facilities Departments are now in the process of updating this data for County government based on the protocol of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), of which the County is a member. There is a need to also broaden this assessment to include an inventory at the community-wide level.

Land use decisions to save energy and protect the Earth's climate have concurrent and reinforcing benefits of enhancing local quality of life and our community's unique sense of place. By producing better energy and resource efficient building stock and preserving agricultural and natural resources, Alachua County will establish a critical, adaptive buffer against global warming's anticipated erratic and destructive weather patterns over the next century.

The immediacy of these impacts, combined with rising energy costs and the loss of available fossil fuels led the County Commission in 2006 to establish a citizen advisory board called the Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) to create a menu of both short and long term options for an effective and efficient community wide energy conservation program, as well as implementation recommendations. The ECSC prepared a final report that was released in December of 2008, and is referenced at the end of this paper. Many of their recommendations as they pertain to Comprehensive Planning are included in this paper, including the recommendation for adoption of an Energy Element in the Comprehensive Plan.

The current Comprehensive Plan has policies scattered throughout the various elements that address energy efficiency in transportation planning, residential development, and government buildings and facilities, including a GHG reduction goal to reduce GHG emission to 1990 levels by the year 2010 (Policy 4.1.3(7), Conservation and Open Space Element). Through the EAR process, the County must determine whether there is

a need to build on the existing policy framework and/or consolidate the policies into a centralized location, including consideration of adopting an optional Energy Element, as recommended by the ECSC.

## RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

### CS/HB 697 & 7135 – FL Energy Bills

In 2008 the state legislature passed comprehensive energy legislation that include several elements applicable to land use planning:

- Requires that data and analysis for the Future Land Use Element now include information about “energy-efficient land use patterns accounting for existing and future electric power generation and transmission systems”; and “greenhouse gas reduction strategies.”
- Requires that the Traffic Circulation Element incorporate transportation strategies to address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.
- Requires that the Transportation Element for urbanized areas per s339.175 shall address “the incorporation of transportation strategies to address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector.”
- Requires that the Housing Element include standards, plans, and principles relating to “energy efficiency in the design and construction of new housing” and “use of renewable resources.”
- Requires an addition to Future Land Use Map series relating to “energy conservation.”
- Requires construction of all local government buildings begun after July 1, 2008 to meet one of the nationally recognized green building certification standards (such as the United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – LEED)
- Requires use of ethanol and biodiesel blended fuels in government vehicles where available as well as other requirements relating to government fleets and facilities

According to their website, the Department of Community Affairs is in the process of setting up rule development workshop to discuss potential changes to 9J-5 to implement the requirements of the new legislation. The County intends to participate in this process and will look to this rule to assist in implementation of the new requirements.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

### Comprehensive Plan Implementation

The policies of the Comprehensive Plan call for greater energy efficiency in multiple areas, including new developments, residential construction, and transportation systems. These policies are implemented in the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) in the following areas.

### MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The ULDC now includes implementing language that allows and encourages mixed-use developments such as Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Village Centers without requiring a Planned Development. There are also new standards for Activity Centers to provide mixed-use, compact development in a pedestrian-oriented environment with multi-modal transportation options. Staff is also in the process of developing new policies and standards for Transit Oriented Developments and considering new ways to address mobility in the County. All of these regulations help to promote a more energy efficient form of development that will require less dependency on automobiles, resulting in lower fuel costs and fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

### **ACCESSORY LIVING UNITS**

As a means to promote infill as well as a greater range of housing types and affordability in the Urban Area, the Comprehensive Plan provides for accessory living units within residential areas that do not count toward the density of a development, provided certain criteria are met. These criteria are detailed in the ULDC, including requirements for homestead, access, maximum size, and orientation on the lot.

### **TREE PROTECTION/LANDSCAPE STANDARDS**

Chapter 406, Article 2 and Chapter 407, Article 4 of the ULDC include standards for the preservation of trees and native vegetation, as well as standards for landscaping of new development sites. Both articles include provisions to protect mature trees and mitigate for removal of trees, in part to provide shade and assist in the reduction of energy costs. One provision requires that 30% of a development site is under mature canopy after 20 years. Another requires that deciduous canopy be concentrated along the southern and western exposures of buildings to enhance shading and energy conservation. There are also standards for street trees to provide shading and promote walkability. This can lead to fewer automobile trips resulting in fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Information and Analysis on Relevant Variables**

The concept of an Energy Element as part of a Comprehensive Plan is still relatively new, and few communities have one. Some of the communities who adopted an Energy Element include Greenwood, SC; Jackson County, OR; and Pinal County, AZ. Seminole County, FL, also has an Energy Element as an optional Element in their Comprehensive Plan. These Energy Elements typically cover the same general subject matter: land use planning and site development, transportation efficiency, weatherization of existing housing stock, energy conservation in public buildings and facilities, and promotion of alternative energy and renewable energy resources.

Many of these areas are already addressed in the required elements of the County's Plan and could be expanded upon as needed in their current locations. There may be, however, some merit in having these policies combined in a centralized element that would provide a comprehensive overview of the County's energy. Another potential approach would be to focus on the broader goals with respect to energy within an Energy Element, such as the major strategic policies identified in the ECSC Report, while leaving the more detailed implementation policies for these goals in their respective Elements. The following paragraphs provide an overview of how some of the common topic areas are or may be addressed in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

### **LAND USE PLANNING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT**

As mentioned previously, there are policies already in the current Comprehensive Plan as implemented through the ULDC that help to promote energy conservation in land use planning and site development, including policies encouraging mixed-use and infill development and retention or replanting of tree canopy. However there are other concepts that could be considered for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Improved land use/transportation coordination
- Further policies promoting infill or 'greyfield' development
- Policies addressing potential conflicts regarding placement of shade trees and solar panels on development sites
- School & public facility siting to reduce transportation costs

**TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY**

While there are currently policies in the Plan promoting multimodal transportation and mixed-use development to help reduce transportation costs, there are many new efforts underway to improve the land use/transportation connection in the Plan and promote more public transit opportunities, including Bus Rapid Transit, Transit Oriented Developments, and alternative strategies relating to transportation concurrency. A full analysis of these issues is included in the 'Land Use and Transportation Connections' Issue Paper.

**BUILDING WEATHERIZATION**

Although newer building codes require residential structures to be more energy efficient, 90% of the existing housing stock in Alachua County was constructed prior to 1999 and many weatherization upgrades could be made to existing homes to improve their energy efficiency. The Energy Conservation Strategies Commission has recommended several alternatives to reach the goal of making homes more energy efficient in Alachua County. Some of these recommendations that may be appropriate for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan are:

- Providing incentives or regulations to improve energy efficiency of existing housing stock
- Require energy efficiency retrofitting of rental units as a precondition for obtaining a required landlord license
- Establish a bulk-buying program that would allow County residents to purchase energy efficient appliances at competitive prices
- Establish reduction goals encouraging residents to make low-cost energy improvements

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES**

The County is making great efforts to purchase energy efficient vehicles for County use, construct energy efficient buildings and reduce energy consumption in existing buildings. In 2002, the County adopted an Energy Reduction and Conservation Resources Program to efficiently manage and conserve fuel and electrical energy. The County has also adopted a strategy of designing and constructing buildings that conform to the ratings specified under the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Efficient Design (LEED) standards established by the US Green Building Council. The County has already constructed two such buildings, the Alachua County Criminal Courthouse and the Jonesville Fire Station. The County also has plans for construction of two additional buildings and renovation of a third, all in conformance with LEED standards.

There may be a need for new policies in the Plan to address energy efficiency of public buildings and facilities and reinforce the actions and strategies already underway by the County. Such policies could also set an example for the private sector to encourage the adoption of more energy efficient practices in private buildings and facilities, both residential and non-residential. Some specific recommendations of the ECSC include:

- Reserve a percentage of the annual Capital Improvements Budget for energy conservation & energy efficiency projects for County buildings
- Pursue Florida Green Building Coalition Green Government Designation & encourage other local governments to do the same
- Reduce streetlight electrical usage where safe to do so & explore alternative lighting technology such as LED street lights & traffic lights
- Develop timeline by which to implement conversion to hybrid & electric vehicles, biodiesel & biogas, and development of supporting fuel infrastructure; consider same for non-vehicular County machinery



**ALTERNATIVE ENERGY & RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES**

There is a great deal of technology in this area that has emerged or improved since adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan and this information continues to evolve as energy becomes more of a concern around the world. The current Energy Conservation policies in the Conservation and Open Space Element<sup>31</sup> could be updated to deal with newer concepts such as solar power technology, ethanol, biodiesel, biogas, methane capture, and carbon sequestration and trading. Some aspects of these topics are already included in the ECSC recommendations mentioned above, and others include the following:

- Establish a timeline for reduction of fossil fuel use by the County & support production of non fossil-fuel based transportation fuels within the county
- Develop organizational capacity to educate and facilitate trading of carbon credits & offsets, and certify sustainability of forest lands in production of woody biomass for power generation
- As a primary economic development strategy, encourage location within the County of businesses & industries that create, manufacture and install innovative & alternative energy technologies and support local businesses doing the same

**STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE**

- Add an Energy Element as an optional Element in the Comprehensive Plan, focusing on overarching goals for energy conservation in the Element, and pointing to specific implementation policies to be added/updated in the existing Elements, including policies to meet new legislative mandates in HB 697 (2008).

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<sup>31</sup> Text of these policies is included in Appendix D.

## CHAPTER 7 | ASSESSMENT OF CHANGES TO FLORIDA STATUTES, ADMINISTRATIVE RULES, STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS

Chapter 163.3191(2)(f) F. S. requires that the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) contain an evaluation and assessment of relevant changes to the State Comprehensive Plan (187.201, F.S.), Chapter 163, F.S., Rule 9J-5, F.A.C., and the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council's Strategic Regional Policy Plan, since adoption of the last EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments. This analysis was conducted utilizing all of the relevant changes that have occurred to these documents since April 2002, when Alachua County adopted its last set of EAR-based amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

When an inconsistency is identified, such as a requirement not currently addressed in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, the appropriate element is identified for update as part of the upcoming EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments.

### Changes to the State Comprehensive Plan

The State Comprehensive Plan was first adopted in 1985 as Chapter 187, Florida Statutes. Since that time, the State Comprehensive Plan has been revised in nine (9) separate years. The changes that have occurred since April 2002, when Alachua County adopted its last set of EAR-based amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, are identified below.

In 2008, the following changes were made:

a) A new policy was added under Goal (10) Air Quality:

6. Encourage the development of low-carbon-emitting electric power plants.

b) Goal 11 Energy was revised as follows:

Florida shall reduce its energy requirements through enhanced conservation and efficiency measures in all end-use sectors and shall reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide by, while at the same time promoting an increase use of renewable energy resources and low-carbon-emitting electric power plants.

c) A new policy was added under Goal (15) Land Use:

8. Provide for the siting of low-carbon-emitting electric power plants, including nuclear power plants, to meet the state's determined need for electric power generation.

Local government comprehensive plans must be consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan and many of the changes to it have been embodied elsewhere in Florida law, mostly Chapter 163, Part II, F.S., and will be addressed appropriately. The adopted Alachua County Comprehensive Plan addresses energy issues in Objective 5.1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element and subsequent policies. These policies generally promote reductions in overall energy requirements and increased energy conservation; encourage the development and use of innovative energy sources; and support for efforts to reduce the County's dependency on conventional energy sources. These policies are consistent with the updated State Comprehensive Plan policies identified above. Additionally, energy issues are addressed as a major community issue in the EAR, with recommendations identified in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR

Recommendations”, Issue #2.4. The recent changes to the State Comprehensive Plan do not place specific requirements upon local governments, therefore, no particular actions are required to address these changes. The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan remains consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan.

## **Changes to the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan**

Alachua County falls within the area of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, which adopted the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan (NCF SRPP) in 1996. The NCF SRPP is a long-range guide for the physical, economic, and social development of the region. The Plan contains regional goals and policies designed to promote a coordinated program of regional actions directed at resolving issues identified in the trends and conditions statements contained within each strategic regional subject area. The required strategic regional subject areas are affordable housing, economic development, emergency preparedness, natural resources of regional significance, and regional transportation. The Plan also identifies and addresses significant regional resources and facilities that could be adversely affected by development activities.

There has been one update to the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan since adoption of the last EAR-based amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan (adopted April 2002, effective May 2005). The last update of the NCF SRPP was for the EAR-based amendments in February 2003. These amendments included many updates to regional indicators and supporting data, as required by Florida Administrative Code. The amendments also included several policy updates relating to the various types of local government program assistance provided by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council.

There were several updates to the goals and policies of the NCF SRPP as part of the 2003 EAR-based amendments which are applicable to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. These are identified and discussed below.

*Policy 4.2.9. Ensure that local government comprehensive plans, DRIs, and requests for federal and state funds for development activities reviewed by the Council include adequate provisions for the protection of the Floridan aquifer, Areas of High Recharge Potential to the Floridan aquifer, the Ichetucknee Trace, as well as Stream-to-Sink Watersheds and Sinks which have been identified and mapped in the regional plan as Natural Resources of Regional Significance.*

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, as adopted, includes provisions for protection of the Floridan Aquifer, High Aquifer Recharge areas, stream-to-sink watersheds, and sinks. These protection measures are included primarily in Objectives 4.4 (“Geological Resources”) and 4.5 (“Groundwater”) and subsequent policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

The County is also in the process of amending the Comprehensive Plan to replace the adopted “Alachua County Floridan Aquifer Confinement Map” from 1988 with the new “Alachua County Floridan Aquifer High Recharge Areas” map, and amend various policies relating to its use and applicability (CPA 03-09). The Aquifer Confinement map currently adopted in the Comprehensive Plan depicts aquifer vulnerability based on topography and thickness of the confining layer above the Floridan aquifer. The proposed new Alachua County Floridan Aquifer High Recharge Area map uses four data layers to determine vulnerability of the Floridan aquifer as a proxy for recharge. The four data layers evaluated were: overburden thickness (above the Floridan aquifer); karst features; soil permeability; and water level difference between the surficial and Floridan aquifer. The proposed Alachua County Floridan Aquifer High Recharge Area map, with the inclusion

of a Stream-to-Sink Basins overlay, will be consistent with the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

*Policy 4.4.11. Ensure that local government comprehensive plans, DRIs, and requests for federal and state funds for development activities reviewed by the Council include adequate provisions for the protection of listed species.*

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, as adopted, includes provisions for protection of listed species. Objective 3.1 and subsequent policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element identify listed species habitat as one of six types of conservation areas which have related policies providing protection measures and limitations on allowable land uses within these areas. Objective 4.9 (“Biodiversity”) and subsequent policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element also provide specific protection measures for listed species. In addition to the currently adopted policies, one of the major community issues being addressed as part of the EAR is to “review state and federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related state and federal management plans (see Table 1.6, “Summary of EAR Recommendations”, Issue #6.4).

*Policy 4.5.4. Ensure that local government comprehensive plans, DRIs, and requests for federal and state funds for development activities reviewed by the Council include adequate provisions for the protection of Planning and Resource Management Areas identified and mapped in the regional plan as Natural Resources of Regional Significance.*

Alachua County contains many natural features which are identified and mapped as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the NCFSRPP. These resources include preservation lands, listed species habitat, the Floridan Aquifer, areas of High Recharge Potential to the Floridan aquifer, stream-to-sink watersheds, sinks, springs, surface waters, and wetlands. The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan provides protection for each of these resources through various policies throughout the Conservation and Open Space Element. Objective 3.1 and subsequent policies identify six types of conservation areas which have related policies providing protection measures and limitations on allowable land uses. These six types of conservation areas include: wetlands, surface waters, 100-year flood plains, listed species habitat, significant geologic features, and strategic ecosystems. Additionally, Objective 3.2 and subsequent policies establish a Preservation land use category to recognize and protect natural resources within publicly owned lands, including lands owned and managed by non-profit conservation organizations which are intended for use as natural reserves or managed conservation lands for the preservation of natural resources in perpetuity.

*Policy 5.1.13. Minimize the impacts of development within TCEAs to segments of the regional road network located outside TCEAs.*

*Policy 5.1.14. Minimize the impacts of development within TCEAs to local road segments located outside TCEAs either identified or functioning as arterials and when located beyond the jurisdiction of the local government enacting TCEAs.*

Alachua County does not have any Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEA), therefore these policies do not require further assessment or action.

## **Changes to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes**

Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part II provides for Growth Policy, County and Municipal Planning, and Land Development Regulation. Subsection 163.3161 and subsequent sections are collectively known as the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, which governs comprehensive planning in the State of Florida.

An assessment of relevant changes to Chapter 163, F.S. having occurred since the adoption of Alachua County's last EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments in April 2002 is provided in Table 7.1. The table of changes to Chapter 163, F.S. provided on the Florida Department of Community Affairs web site is used as the basis for this assessment.

## **Changes to 9J-5, Florida Administrative Code**

Rule 9J-5 F.A.C. establishes the minimum criteria for the preparation, review and determination of compliance of local government comprehensive plans and plan amendments pursuant to the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, F.S. According to the table of changes to Rule 9J-5, F.A.C. provided on the Florida Department of Community Affairs web site, there have been no changes to Rule 9J-5 that have occurred since adoption of Alachua County's last EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments in April 2002.

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
<b>2002:</b> [Ch. 2002-296, ss. 1 - 11, <u>Laws of Florida</u> ]				
110 Required all agencies that review comprehensive plan amendments and rezoning include a <b>nonvoting representative of the district school board.</b>	163.3174		A school board representative is now a member of the County's Local Planning Agency	
111 Required <b>coordination of local comprehensive plans</b> with the appropriate water management district's regional water supply plan approved pursuant to s. 373.0361.	163.3177(4)(a)		Alachua County is not located in an area subject to a regional water supply plan approved pursuant to 373.0361, F.S. The <a href="#">2005 SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan</a> (Figure 1, Pg. 2 of WMD document) indicates that Alachua County is not within a "region" designated as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area (PWRCA). Both of the County's Water Management Districts are presently conducting updates of the District Water Supply Plans, which are scheduled for adoption in Dec. 2010, and Alachua County is participating in this process. Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) Policy 4.5.9 addresses coordination with the WMDs on water supply issues. COSE Policy 4.5.10.2, adopted in the last update of the County Comprehensive Plan in 2002, noted that, at the time, the SJRWMD had declared the entire District, including Alachua County portions, a "water resource caution area." This declaration was superseded by the 2005 District Water Supply Plan that excluded areas, including Alachua County, from the areas identified by the District as PWRCA's.	<b>See Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation # 6.1.2(7).</b> regarding coordination of the County Comprehensive Plan with the update of the Water Management Districts water supply plans.

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
112	<b>Plan amendments for school-siting</b> maps are exempt from s. 163.3187(1)'s limitation on frequency.	163.3177(6)(a)		Procedural – no specific action necessary	
113	Required that the sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water and natural groundwater aquifer recharge element consider the appropriate water management district's regional water supply plan approved pursuant to s. 373.0361, and <b>include a 10-year work plan</b> to build the water supply facilities identified in the Element.	163.3177(6)(c)		This provision of F.S. 163.3177(6)(c), was updated and modified in 2005. See "where/how addressed" in Line #145 of this table relating to s. 163.3177(6)(c), regarding coordination of the County Comprehensive Plan with regional water supply plans.	See <b>Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation # 6.1.2(7)</b> regarding coordination of the County Comprehensive Plan with the update of the Water Management Districts water supply plans.
114	Required local governments to assess their current, as well as projected, water needs and sources for at least a 10-year period, considering the appropriate regional water supply plan approved pursuant to s. <a href="#">373.0361</a> , or, in the absence of an approved regional water supply plan, the district water management plan approved pursuant to s. <a href="#">373.036(2)</a> , in preparation of the Conservation Element of the local government Comprehensive Plan.	163.3177(6)(d)		Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.9 addresses the evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources, in cooperation with the water management districts.  Alachua County is not located in an area subject to a regional water supply plan approved pursuant to 373.0361, F.S. The <a href="#">2005 SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan</a> (Figure 1, Pg. 2 of WMD document) indicates that Alachua County is not within a "region" designated as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area.	See <b>Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation # 6.1.2(7)</b> concerning updated water supply data and analysis, including assessment of current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10 year period.



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
115	Required that the intergovernmental coordination element (ICE) include relationships, principles and guidelines to be used in coordinating local government comprehensive plans with regional water supply authorities.	163.3177(6)(h)		<p>Alachua County is not located in an area subject to a regional water supply authority pursuant to F.S. 373.1962.</p> <p>Intergovernmental Coordination Element Objective 2, Policies 2.1 through 2.5, and Objective 3 address coordination with the Water Management Districts regarding development proposed under the adopted Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.9 addresses coordination with the Water Management Districts on evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources.</p>	None Required
116	Required the local governments adopting a public educational facilities element execute an <b>inter-local agreement</b> with the district school board, the county, and non-exempting municipalities.	163.3177(6)(h)4.		<p>The County adopted a Public School Facilities Element in June 2008 (effective 10-3-08). The County has also executed an updated interlocal agreement for public school facility planning with the School Board.</p>	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
117	Required that counties larger than 100,000 population and their municipalities submit an <b>inter-local service delivery agreements</b> (existing and proposed, deficits or duplication in the provisions of service) report to DCA by January 1, 2004. Each local government is required to update its ICE based on the findings of the report. DCA will meet with affected parties to discuss and identify strategies to remedy any deficiencies or duplications.	163.3177(6)(h)6., 7., & 8.		The Interlocal Service Delivery Agreement report was prepared by the identified reporting entities (local governments and special districts in Alachua County) and compiled into a single document by the Alachua County Office of Planning & Development. On December 9, 2003 it was approved for submittal to the Department of Community Affairs by the County Commission, and was submitted to DCA on December 19, 2003.	
118	Required local governments and special districts to provide <b>recommendations for statutory changes for annexation</b> to the Legislature by February 1, 2003. NOTE: this requirement repealed by Ch. 2005-290, s. 2, LOF.	163.3177(6)(h)9. [Now repealed]	N/A		
119	Added a <b>new Section 163.31776</b> that allows a county, to adopt an optional public educational facilities element in cooperation with the applicable school board.	163.31776 [New]		The County adopted a Public School Facilities Element in June 2008 (effective 10-3-08).	
120	Added a <b>new Section 163.31777</b> that requires local governments and school boards to enter into an inter-local agreement that addresses school siting, enrollment forecasting, school capacity, infrastructure and safety needs of schools, schools as emergency shelters, and sharing of facilities.	163.31777 [New]		An updated interlocal agreement for public school facility planning with the School Board was adopted by the County in June 2008.	
121	<b>Added a provision</b> that the concurrency requirement for transportation facilities may be waived by plan amendment for urban infill and redevelopment areas.	163.3180(4)(c)		The county does not have any urban infill or redevelopment areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan.	
122	<b>Expanded the definition of "affected persons"</b> to include property owners who own land abutting a change to a future land use map.	163.3184(1)(a)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
123	<b>Expanded the definition of "in compliance"</b> to include consistency with Section 163.31776 (public educational facilities element).	163.3184(1)(b)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
124	<b>Streamlined the timing</b> of comprehensive plan amendment review.	163.3184(3), (4), (6), (7), and (8)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
125	Required that local governments provide a <b>sign-in form</b> at the transmittal hearing and at the adoption hearing for persons to provide their names and addresses.	163.3184(15)(c)		The County has provided the required sign-in forms at transmittal and adoption hearings.	
126	<b>Exempted amendments</b> related to providing transportation improvements to enhance life safety on “controlled access major arterial highways” from the limitation on the frequency of plan amendments contained in s.163.3187(1).	163.3187(1)(k)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
127	Required <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Reports</b> to include (1) consideration of the appropriate regional water supply plan, and (2) an evaluation of whether past reductions in land use densities in coastal high hazard areas have impaired property rights of current residents where redevelopment occurs.	163-3191(2)(1)		(1) Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.9 requires coordination with the Water Management Districts and adjacent local governments in the evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources. The most recent SJRWMD Regional Water Supply Plan (2005) indicates that there are sufficient water resources to meet projected needs through 2025.  (2) N/A: Alachua County is not located in a Coastal High Hazard Area	(1) The next update of the SJRWMD Regional Water Supply Plan is scheduled for adoption in 2010. Coordination with the Regional Water Supply Planning process is identified as a recommendation for the EAR-based Plan updates as identified in Table 1.6, “Summary of EAR Recommendations”, Recommendation # 6.1.2(7).
128	Allowed local governments to <b>establish a special master process</b> to assist the local governments with challenges to local development orders for consistency with the comprehensive plan.	163.3215		Procedural – No specific action necessary	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A *	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed By Element
129	Created the <b>Local Government Comprehensive Planning Certification Program</b> to allow less state and regional oversight of comprehensive plan process if the local government meets certain criteria.	163.3246	N/A	The County has not pursued the optional Certification Program	
130	Added a provision to Section 380.06(24), <b>Statutory Exemptions</b> , that exempts from the requirements for developments of regional impact, any water port or marina development if the relevant local government has adopted a "boating facility siting plan or policy" (which includes certain specified criteria) as part of the coastal management element or future land use element of its comprehensive plan. The adoption of the boating facility siting plan or policy is exempt from the limitation on the frequency of plan amendments contained in s.163.3187(1).	163.3187(1)	N/A		
131	Prohibited a local government, under certain conditions, from denying an <b>application for development approval</b> for a requested land use for certain proposed solid waste management facilities.	163.3194(6)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<b>2003: [Ch. 03-1, ss. 14-15; ch. 03-162, s. 1; ch. 03-261, s. 158; ch. 03-286, s. 61, <u>Laws of Florida.</u>]</b>					
132	Creates the <b>Agricultural Lands and Practices Act</b> .  (2): Provides <b>legislative findings and purpose</b> with respect to agricultural activities and duplicative regulation.  (3): <b>Defines the terms “farm,” “farm operation,” and “farm product”</b> for purposes of the act.  (4): Prohibits a county from adopting any ordinance, resolution, regulation, rule, or policy to prohibit or otherwise limit a <b>bona fide farm operation</b> on land that is classified as agricultural land.  (4)(a): Provides that the act does <b>not limit the powers of a county</b> under certain circumstances.  (4)(b): Clarifies that a <b>farm operation</b> may not expand its operations under certain circumstances.  (4)(c): Provides that the act does not limit the <b>powers of certain counties</b> .  (4)(d): Provides that certain county ordinances are not deemed to be a <b>duplication of regulation</b> .	163.3162 [New]		Procedural – No specific action necessary  Procedural – No specific action necessary  Procedural – No specific action necessary  Procedural – No specific action necessary  Procedural – No specific action necessary  Procedural – No specific action necessary	
133	Changes “State Comptroller” <b>references</b> to “Chief Financial Officer.”	163.3167(6)	N/A		
134	Provides for certain <b>airports</b> to abandon DRI orders.	163.3177(6)(k)	N/A		
135	Throughout s.163.3177, F.S., citations for Ch. 235, F.S., are changed to cite the appropriate section of Ch. 1013, F.S.	163.31776	N/A		
136	Throughout s.163.31777, F.S., citations for Ch. 235, F.S., are changed to cite the appropriate section of Ch. 1013, F.S.	163.31777	N/A		

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<b>2004: [Ch. 04-5, s. 11; ch. 04-37, s. 1; ch. 04-230, ss. 1-4; ch. 04-372, ss. 2-5; ch. 04-381, ss. 1-2; ch. 04-384, s. 2, Laws of Florida.]</b>					
137	<p>(10): Amended to <b>conform to the repeal</b> of the Florida <b>High-Speed Rail</b> Transportation Act, and the creation of the Florida High-Speed Rail Authority Act.</p> <p>(13): Created to require local governments to identify adequate <b>water supply sources</b> to meet future demand for the established planning period.</p> <p>(14): Created to limit the effect of <b>judicial determinations</b> issued subsequent to certain development orders pursuant to adopted land development regulations.</p>	163.3167	N/A	<p>Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.9 addresses the evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources, in cooperation with the water management districts.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p>	See <b>Table 1.6, “Summary of EAR Recommendations”, Recommendation # 6.1.2(7)</b> regarding updated water supply data and analysis, including assessment of current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10 year period.
138	<p>(1): Provides <b>legislative findings</b> on the compatibility of development with <b>military installations</b>.</p> <p>(2): Provides for the <b>exchange of information</b> relating to <b>proposed land use decisions</b> between counties and local governments and military installations.</p> <p>(3): Provides for <b>responsive comments</b> by the commanding officer or his/her designee.</p> <p>(4): Provides for the county or affected local government to <b>take such comments into consideration</b>.</p> <p>(5): Requires the representative of the military installation to be an <b>ex-officio, nonvoting member</b> of the county’s or local government’s land planning or zoning board.</p>	Creates 163.3175.	N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A	The County does not contain any military installations.	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	(6): Encourages the commanding officer to provide <b>information on community planning assistance grants.</b>		N/A		
139	<p>(6)(a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changed to require local governments to amend the future land use element by June 30, 2006 to include criteria to achieve compatibility with <b>military installations.</b></li> <li>Changed to encourage <b>rural land stewardship area</b> designation as an overlay on the future land use map.</li> </ul> <p>(6)(c): Extended the deadline for adoption of the <b>water supply facilities work plan</b> amendment until December 1, 2006; provided for updating the work plan every five years; and exempts such amendment from the limitation on frequency of adoption of amendments.</p> <p>(10)(l): Provides for the coordination by the state land planning agency and the Department of Defense on compatibility issues for <b>military installations.</b></p> <p>(11)(d)1.: Requires DCA, in cooperation with other specified state agencies, to provide assistance to local governments in implementing provisions relating to <b>rural land stewardship areas.</b></p> <p>(11)(d)2.: Provides for <b>multi-county rural land stewardship areas.</b></p> <p>(11)(d)3.-4: Revises requirements, including the acreage threshold for designating <b>a rural land stewardship area.</b></p>	163.3177	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>The County does not contain any military installations.</p> <p>The County has not designated any RLSAs on the Future Land Use Map</p> <p>Alachua County is not located in an area subject to a regional water supply plan approved pursuant to 373.0361, F.S., and is therefore not required to adopt the water supply facilities work plan at this time.</p>	<p>See <b>Table 1.6, “Summary of EAR Recommendations”, Recommendation # 6.1.2(7)</b> regarding coordination with the District Water Supply Planning process</p>



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	<p>(11)(d)6.i.: Provides that <b>transferable rural land use credits</b> may be assigned at different ratios according to the natural resource or other beneficial use characteristics of the land.</p> <p>(11)(e): Provides legislative findings regarding mixed-use, high-density <b>urban infill and redevelopment</b> projects; requires DCA to provide technical assistance to local governments.</p> <p>(11)(f): Provides legislative findings regarding a program for the transfer of development rights and <b>urban infill and redevelopment</b>; requires DCA to provide technical assistance to local governments.</p>		N/A  N/A  N/A	Alachua County adopted a Transfer of Development Rights program in 2008 (Section 9.0 FLUE).	
140	<p>(1): Provides legislative findings with respect to the shortage of <b>affordable rentals</b> in the state.</p> <p>(2): Provides <b>definitions</b>.</p> <p>(3): Authorizes local governments to permit <b>accessory dwelling units</b> in areas zoned for single family residential use based upon certain findings.</p> <p>(4) An application for a building permit to construct an accessory dwelling unit must include an <b>affidavit from the applicant</b>, which attests that the unit will be rented at an affordable rate to a very-low-income, low-income, or moderate-income person or persons.</p> <p>(5): Provides for certain <b>accessory dwelling units</b> to apply towards satisfying the affordable housing component of the housing element in a local government’s comprehensive plan.</p> <p>(6): Requires the <b>DCA to report</b> to the Legislature.</p>	Creates 163.31771	N/A  N/A  N/A	<p>The Plan adopted in 2002 (prior to this legislation) permitted accessory dwelling units in several residential zones, subject to criteria in Policies 1.3.6 through 1.3.6.5, FLUE.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary.</p>	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
141	Amends the definition of “in compliance” to add language referring to the <b>Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act</b> .	163.3184(1)(b)	N/A		
142	(1)(m): Created to provide that amendments to address criteria or compatibility of land uses adjacent to or in close proximity to <b>military installations</b> do not count toward the limitation on frequency of amending comprehensive plans.  (1)(n): Created to provide that amendments to establish or implement a <b>rural land stewardship area</b> do not count toward the limitation on frequency of amending comprehensive plans.	163.3187	N/A	Procedural – No specific action necessary.  Procedural – No specific action necessary.	
143	Created to provide that <b>evaluation and appraisal reports</b> evaluate whether criteria in the land use element were successful in achieving land use compatibility with <b>military installations</b> .	163.3191(2)(n)	N/A	Alachua County does not have any military installations	
2005 [Ch. 2005-157, ss 1, 2 and 15; Ch. 2005-290; and Ch. 2005-291, ss. 10-12, <u>Laws of Florida</u> ]					
144	Added the <b>definition</b> of “ <b>financial feasibility</b> .”	163.3164(32) [New]		No specific action necessary.	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>145 (2): Required comprehensive plans to be <b>“financially”</b> rather than “economically” <b>feasible</b>.</p> <p>(3)(a)5.: Required the comprehensive plan to include a <b>5-year schedule of capital improvements</b>. Outside funding (i.e., from developer, other government or funding pursuant to referendum) of these capital improvements must be <b>guaranteed</b> in the form of a <b>development agreement or interlocal agreement</b>.</p> <p>(3)(a)6.b.1.: Required plan amendment for the <b>annual update</b> of the schedule of capital improvements. <b>Deleted</b> provision allowing updates and change in the date of construction to be accomplished by ordinance.</p> <p>(3)(a)6.c.: Added <b>oversight and penalty</b> provision for failure to adhere to this section’s capital improvements requirements.</p> <p>(3)(a)6.d.: Required a <b>long-term capital improvement schedule</b> if the local government has adopted a long-term concurrency management system.</p> <p>(6)(a): <b>Deleted</b> date (October 1, 1999) by which school siting requirements must be adopted.</p>	<p>163.3177</p>		<p>The adopted Capital Improvements Element and Five Year Schedule of Capital Improvements ensure the financial feasibility of the Comprehensive Plan. The Five Year Schedule has not been updated in several years. As part of the first large scale cycle of 2009, amendments are proposed to several Plan Elements, including the Capital Improvements Element, in order to comply with financial feasibility requirements of Florida Statutes (CPA 01-09). The amendments will provide a financially feasible Schedule of Capital Improvements for projects needed to maintain adopted level of service standards, including a long term capital improvement program for multimodal transportation as part of a proposed long term concurrency management system.</p> <p>School siting criteria are provided in the Public School Facilities Element and in Section 5.3, FLUE.</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(2)(a): Requires that <b>adequate water supplies</b> (in addition to public water facilities) be in place and available to serve new development.</p> <p>(6)(a): Add requirement that future land use element of <b>coastal counties</b> must encourage the preservation of working waterfronts, as defined in s.342.07, F.S.</p> <p>(6)(c): Required the <b>potable water element</b> to be updated within 18 months of an updated regional water supply plan to incorporate the alternative water supply project or projects selected by the local government from those identified in the regional water supply plan pursuant to s. 373.0361(2)(a) or proposed by the local government under s. 373.0361(7)(b). The element must identify alternative water supply projects and traditional water supply projects and conservation and reuse necessary to meet the water needs identified in s. 373.0361(2)(a) within the local government's jurisdiction and include a work plan, covering at least a 10 year planning period, for building public, private, and regional water supply facilities, including development of alternative water supplies, which are identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development. The work plan shall be updated, at a minimum, every 5 years within 18 months after the governing board of a water management district approves an updated regional water supply plan. The ten-year water supply work plan must include public, private and regional water supply facilities, including development of alternative water supplies. Such amendments do not count toward the limitation on the frequency of adoption of amendments.</p>	<p>163.3180(2)(a)</p> <p>163.3177</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>See "where/how addressed" for Line #149 of this table for s.163.3180(2)(a) relating to water supply concurrency.</p> <p>Alachua County is not a coastal county.</p> <p>Alachua County is not located in an area subject to a regional water supply plan approved in accordance with 373.0361, F.S.</p> <p>The current (2005) SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan does not identify any water supply projects/facilities for Alachua County.</p> <p>Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.9 addresses coordination with the Water Management Districts on evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources.</p>	<p><b>See Table 1, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation #1.3.2,</b> concerning the water supply concurrency requirements of s. 163.3180(2)(a).</p> <p>The EAR identifies water supply planning recommendations for EAR-based Comprehensive Plan amendments. The recommendations address coordination with the Water Management Districts on the water supply planning process, updating water supply data and analysis to include data on the County's current and projected water needs and sources for a 10 year period, and revising the Plan as necessary to address water supply concurrency. The EAR recommendations address how the County will meet the requirements of 163.3177(6)(c), should Alachua County become subject to an updated regional water supply plan pursuant to 373.0361, F.S.  <b>See Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation # 6.1.2(7).</b></p>

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(6)(e): Added <b>waterways</b> to the system of sites addressed by the <b>recreation and open space element</b>.</p> <p>(6)(h)1.: The intergovernmental coordination element must address coordination with <b>regional water supply authorities</b>.</p> <p>(11)(d)4.c.: Required <b>rural land stewardship areas</b> to address <b>affordable housing</b>.</p>		<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Policies 1.4.1, 1.4.10, and 1.7.2 of the Recreation Element identify waterways as part of the County’s overall recreation system.</p> <p>There is no regional water supply authority serving Alachua County. Coordination with Water Management Districts is addressed generally in several policies under Objective 2 of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element.</p> <p>The county does not have any RLSAs.</p>	
<p>(11)(d)5.: Required a <b>listed species survey</b> be performed on <b>rural land stewardship receiving area</b>. If any listed species present, must ensure adequate provisions to protect them.</p> <p>(11)(d)6.: Must enact an ordinance establishing a <b>methodology</b> for creation, conveyance, and use of <b>stewardship credits</b> within a <b>rural land stewardship area</b>.</p> <p>(11)(d)6.j.: Revised to allow <b>open space and agricultural land</b> to be just as important as environmentally sensitive land when assigning stewardship credits.</p> <p>(12): Must adopt <b>public school facilities element</b>.</p>		<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>The county does not have any RLSAs.</p> <p>The county does not have any RLSAs.</p> <p>The county does not have any RLSAs.</p> <p>The County adopted a Public School Facilities Element in June 2008 (effective 10-3-08).</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(12)(a) and (b): A <b>waiver</b> from providing this element will be allowed under certain circumstances.</p> <p>(12)(g): Expanded list of items to be included to include <b>collocation, location of schools proximate to residential areas</b>, and use of schools as <b>emergency shelters</b>.</p> <p>(12)(h): Required local governments to provide maps depicting the general <b>location</b> of new schools and school improvements within future conditions maps.</p> <p>(12)(i): Required DCA to establish a <b>schedule for adoption</b> of the public school facilities element.</p>		N/A	<p>Addressed in PSFE Policies 1.1.4 and 2.5.4 and FLUE Policy 5.3.7.</p> <p>The maps are provided in the Interlocal Agreement for public school facility planning adopted by the County and School Board adopted in June 2008.</p> <p>The scheduled due date for the PSFE for Alachua County was July 1, 2008. The County adopted the PSFE in June 2008, effective Oct. 2008.</p>	
<p>(12)(j): Established <b>penalty</b> for failure to adopt a public school facility element.</p> <p>(13): (<b>New section</b>) Encourages local governments to develop a <b>“community vision,”</b> which provides for sustainable growth, recognizes its fiscal constraints, and protects its natural resources.</p>			<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p> <p>The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan addresses issues of sustainable growth, fiscal constraints, and resource protection in various Elements. Alachua County also participates in a Countywide Visioning and Planning Process with municipalities as described in Appendix C and In Recommendation 5.3.1 of the EAR.</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	(14): <b>(New section)</b> Encourages local governments to develop an “ <b>urban service boundary</b> ,” which ensures the area is served (or will be served) with adequate public facilities and services over the next 10 years. See s. 163.3184(17).			The Plan identifies an Urban Cluster boundary on the Future Land Use Map which sets a boundary for urban growth in the unincorporated County. The Urban Cluster is the area where urban services (e.g., central water, sewer, and transportation) must be provided in accordance with level of service standards adopted in the Capital Improvements Element.	As part of the first large scale amendment cycle of 2009, amendments are proposed to several Plan Elements, including the Capital Improvements Element, in order to comply with financial feasibility requirements of Florida Statutes (CPA 01-09). The amendments will provide a financially feasible Schedule of Capital Improvements for projects needed to maintain adopted level of service standards, including a long term capital improvement program for multimodal transportation for the Urban Cluster.
146	163.31776 is <b>repealed</b>	163.31776 <b>[Now: Repealed]</b>	N/A		
147	(2): Required the <b>public schools interlocal agreement</b> (if applicable) to address requirements for <b>school concurrency</b> . The <b>opt-out provision</b> at the end of Subsection (2) is deleted.  (5): Required <b>Palm Beach County</b> to identify, as part of its EAR, changes needed in its public school element necessary to conform to the new 2005 public school facilities element requirements.	163.31777	N/A	The County adopted an updated interlocal agreement with the School Board for public school facility planning in June 2008. The agreement includes provisions related to school concurrency.	



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	(7): Provided that counties exempted from <b>public school facilities element</b> shall undergo <b>re-evaluation</b> as part of its <b>EAR</b> to determine if they continue to meet exemption criteria.		N/A	Alachua County is not exempted from this requirement. The PSFE for Alachua County was adopted in June '08, effective Oct. '08.	
148	(2)(g): Expands requirement of coastal element to include strategies that will be used to preserve recreational and commercial working waterfronts, as defined in s.342.07, F.S.	163.3178	N/A		
149	(1)(a): Added " <b>schools</b> " as a required concurrency item.  (2)(a): Requires that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.	163.3180		The County is now implementing School Concurrency in accordance with the adopted Public School Facilities Element.  Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 4.5.10 provides that "development shall occur only when adequate water supplies are concurrently available to serve such development....." Availability of water supplies to serve new development is also addressed Policies 7.2 and 7.3 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element. The Concurrency process for potable water facilities is provided in Policy 1.3.2.A of the Capital Improvements Element. Policy 3.4 of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element requires that local utility providers be included in the County's Development Review Committee process.	<b>See Table 1, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation #1.3.2</b> to review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(2)(c): Required <b>all transportation facilities</b> to be in place or under construction within <b>3 years</b> (rather than 5 years) after approval of building permit.</p> <p>(4)(c): The concurrency requirement, except as it relates to transportation and public schools, may be waived in urban infill and redevelopment areas. The waiver shall be adopted as a plan amendment. A local government may grant a concurrency exception pursuant to subsection (5) for transportation facilities located within an urban infill and redevelopment area.</p> <p>(5)(d): Required <b>guidelines for granting concurrency exceptions</b> to be included in the comprehensive plan.</p>			<p>The County has met this requirement through its concurrency management system. No specific action necessary.</p> <p>The Plan has not designated any urban infill or redevelopment areas as concurrency exception areas in accordance with Florida Statutes. No specific action is necessary.</p> <p>See above. Also, Objectives 1.2, 1.3, and subsequent policies of the Transportation Mobility Element provide guidelines for concurrency exceptions, including Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEA), Multimodal Transportation Districts (MMTD), and Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (TCEPPPT). The adopted policies for these concurrency exceptions identify the purpose of the exceptions and specific criteria for multimodal mobility within the exception areas.</p>	<p>As part of the first large scale cycle of 2009, amendments are proposed to several Plan Elements relating to a proposed alternative concurrency management system for transportation (CPA 01-09). The amendments will modify the overall transportation concurrency implementation system, including the existing policies relating to concurrency exceptions.</p>

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(5)(e) – (g): If local government has established <b>transportation exceptions</b>, the guidelines for implementing the exceptions must be “<b>consistent with and support a comprehensive strategy, and promote the purpose of the exceptions.</b>” Exception areas must include mobility strategies, such as alternate modes of transportation, supported by data and analysis. FDOT must be consulted prior to designating a transportation concurrency exception area. Transportation concurrency exception areas existing prior to July 1, 2005 must meet these requirements by July 1, 2006, or when the EAR-based amendment is adopted, whichever occurs last.</p> <p>(6): Required local government to <b>maintain records</b> to determine whether 110% <b>de minimis transportation impact</b> threshold is reached. A summary of these records must be submitted with the annual capital improvements element update. Exceeding the 110% threshold dissolves the de minimis exceptions.</p> <p>(7): Required consultation with the Department of Transportation prior to designating a <b>transportation concurrency management area</b> (to promote infill development) to ensure adequate level-of-service standards are in place. The local government and the DOT should work together to mitigate any impacts to the Strategic Intermodal System.</p> <p>(9)(a): Allowed adoption of a <b>long-term concurrency management system for schools.</b></p>			<p>Alachua County does not have any designated TCEAs or MMTDs. Alachua County has approved one plan amendment to establish a Transportation Concurrency Exception for Projects that Promote Public Transportation (Newberry Village). As part of that plan amendment, specific mobility strategies and provisions for alternate modes of transportation were established for the exception area as provided in FLUE Policy 2.5.3.2.h.</p> <p>The County monitors de minimis transportation impacts and maintains these records as part of its concurrency management system</p> <p>Alachua County has not designated a transportation concurrency management area. No specific action is necessary.</p> <p>School concurrency is addressed in the Public School Facilities Element, adopted in June 2008. No specific action is necessary.</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(9)(c): <b>(New section)</b> Allowed local governments to issue approvals to commence construction notwithstanding s. 163.3180 in areas subject to a <b>long-term concurrency management system</b>.</p> <p>(9)(d): <b>(New section)</b> Required evaluation in <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report</b> of progress in improving levels of service.</p> <p>(10): Added requirement that level of service standard for roadway facilities on <b>the Strategic Intermodal System</b> must be consistent with FDOT standards. Standards must consider <b>compatibility with adjacent jurisdictions</b>.</p> <p>(13): Required <b>school concurrency</b> (not optional).</p> <p>(13)(c)1.: Requires school concurrency after five years to be applied on a <b>“less than districtwide basis”</b> (i.e., by using school attendance zones, etc).</p>			<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary.</p> <p>Levels of service are addressed in Chapter 5 of the EAR.</p> <p>Alachua County has implemented the level of service standards for SIS facilities consistent with FDOT standards.</p> <p>The County is now implementing School Concurrency in accordance with the adopted Public School Facilities Element adopted in June 2008.</p> <p>The Alachua County PSFE and Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facilities Planning, adopted in June 2008, apply school concurrency to “Concurrency Service Areas” on a less-than-district-wide basis.</p>	<p>As part of the first large scale cycle of 2009, amendments to the Transportation Mobility Element are proposed (CPA 01-09) which will establish level of service standards for SIS facilities that are consistent with FDOT standards.</p>

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(13)(c)2.: Eliminated exemption from plan amendment adoption limitation for changes to service area boundaries.</p> <p>(13)(c)3.: No application for development approval may be denied if a <b>less-than-districtwide measurement of school concurrency</b> is used; however the development impacts must to shifted to contiguous service areas with school capacity.</p> <p>(13)(e): Allowed school concurrency to be satisfied if a developer executes a <b>legally binding commitment</b> to provide mitigation proportionate to the demand.</p> <p>(13)(e)1.: Enumerated mitigation options for achieving <b>proportionate-share mitigation</b>.</p> <p>(13)(e)2.: If educational facilities funded in one of the two following ways, the local government must <b>credit</b> this amount toward any <b>impact fee or exaction</b> imposed on the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribution of land</li> <li>• construction, expansion, or payment for land acquisition</li> </ul>			<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary.</p> <p>The Alachua County PSFE and Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facilities Planning, adopted in June 2008, apply school concurrency to “Concurrency Service Areas” on a less-than-district-wide basis.</p> <p>Policy 2.5.3 of the PSFE adopted in June 2008 provides for this.</p> <p>Objective 2.5 and subsequent policies of the PSFE adopted in June 2008 provide options and procedures for achieving proportionate-share mitigation for schools.</p> <p>Alachua County does not assess impact fees for public schools. Mitigation options, such as contributions of land or construction of facilities are addressed in Policy 2.5.1 of the PSFE.</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(13)(g)2.: <b>(Section deleted)</b> – It is no longer required that a local government and school board base their plans on consistent population projection and share information regarding planned public school facilities, development and redevelopment and infrastructure needs of public school facilities. However, see (13)(g)6.a. for similar requirement.</p> <p>(13)(g)6.a.: <b>[Formerly (13)(g)7.a.]</b> Local governments must establish a <b>uniform procedure for determining if development applications are in compliance with school concurrency.</b></p> <p>(13)(g)7. <b>[Formerly (13)(g)8.] Deleted</b> language that allowed local government to terminate or suspend an interlocal agreement with the school board.</p> <p>(13)(h): <b>(New 2005 provision)</b> The fact that <b>school concurrency</b> has not yet been implemented by a local government should not be the basis for either an approval or denial of a development permit.</p> <p>(15): Prior to adopting <b>Multimodal Transportation Districts</b>, FDOT must be consulted to assess the impact on level of service standards. If impacts are found, the local government and the FDOT must work together to mitigate those impacts. Multimodal districts established prior to July 1, 2005 must meet this requirement by July 1, 2006 or at the time of the EAR-base amendment, whichever occurs last.</p>		<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>School concurrency implementation procedures are included in the Public School Facilities Element and in Section 8 of the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning adopted in June 2008.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p> <p>Alachua County has not adopted any MMTDs. Objective 7 and subsequent policies of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element require appropriate coordination with FDOT.</p>	<p>As part of the first large scale cycle of 2009, amendments are proposed to several Plan Elements relating to a proposed alternative concurrency management system for transportation (CPA 01-09). The amendments will modify the overall transportation concurrency implementation system, including the existing policies relating to MMTD.</p>

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	(16): <b>(New 2005 section)</b> Required local governments to adopt by <b>December 1, 2006</b> a method for assessing <b>proportionate fair-share mitigation options</b> . FDOT will develop a model ordinance by December 1, 2005.			Methodology for assessing proportionate fair share mitigation options for transportation facilities was adopted as part of the Unified Land Development Code in Nov. 2006 (Section 407.125.1).	
150	(17): <b>(New 2005 section)</b> If local government has adopted a <b>community vision</b> and <b>urban service boundary</b> , state and regional agency review is eliminated for plan amendments affecting property within the urban service boundary. Such amendments are exempt from the limitation on the frequency of plan amendments.  (18): <b>(New 2005 section)</b> If a municipality has adopted an urban infill and redevelopment area, state and regional agency review is eliminated for plan amendments affecting property within the urban service boundary. Such amendments are exempt from the limitation on the frequency of plan amendments.	163.3184 [New]		Procedural – no specific action necessary.  Procedural – no specific action necessary.	
151	(1)(c)1.f.: Allowed approval of residential land use as a <b>small-scale development amendment</b> when the proposed density is equal to or less than the existing future land use category. Under certain circumstances, <b>affordable housing units</b> are exempt from this limitation.  (1)(c)4.: <b>(New 2005 provision)</b> If the small-scale development amendment involves a <b>rural area of critical economic concern</b> , a 20-acre limit applies.  (1)(o): <b>(New 2005 provision)</b> An amendment to a <b>rural area of critical economic concern</b> may be approved without regard to the statutory limit on comprehensive plan amendments.	163.3187  [New]  [New]		Procedural – no specific action necessary.  Procedural – no specific action necessary.  Procedural – no specific action necessary.	



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
152	<p>(2)(k): Required local governments that do not have either a school interlocal agreement or a public school facilities element, to determine in the <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report</b> whether the local government continues to meet the exemption criteria in s.163.3177(12).</p> <p>(2)(l): The <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report</b> must determine whether the local government has been successful in identifying <b>alternative water supply projects</b>, including <b>conservation and reuse</b>, needed to meet projected demand. Also, the Report must identify the degree to which the local government has implemented its 10-year water supply work plan.</p> <p>(2)(o): (<b>New 2005 provision</b>) The <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report</b> must evaluate whether any <b>Multimodal Transportation District</b> has achieved the purpose for which it was created.</p>	163.3191	N/A	<p>Alachua County adopted a Public School Facilities Element and interlocal agreement for public school facilities in June 2008.</p> <p>Alachua County is not identified as a Priority Water Resource Caution area in the 2005 SJRWMD Regional Water Supply Plan, and the 2005 Regional Water Supply Plan does not identify any alternative water supply development projects for Alachua County.</p> <p>Alachua County does not have any multimodal transportation districts.</p>	<p>Alternative water supply projects will be addressed in the EAR-based Plan updates as identified in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations", Recommendation # 6.1.2(7).</p>

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	(2)(p): <b>(New 2005 provision)</b> The <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report</b> must assess <b>methodology for impacts on transportation facilities</b> for the purpose of implementing the concurrency management system in coordination with the municipalities and counties.  (10): The <b>Evaluation and Appraisal Report -based amendment</b> must be <b>adopted within a single amendment cycle</b> . Failure to adopt within this cycle results in <b>penalties</b> . Once updated, the comprehensive plan must be submitted to the DCA.			Coordination of transportation concurrency with municipalities is addressed under “Land Use and Transportation” in Chapter 6, “Major Issues Analysis”.  Procedural – no specific action necessary.	As part of the first large scale cycle of 2009, amendments are proposed to several Plan Elements relating to a proposed alternative concurrency management system for transportation (CPA 01-09). The amendments will address coordination with municipalities on implementation of transportation concurrency.
153	(10) New section designating Freeport as a <b>certified community</b> .  (11) New section exempting proposed DRIs within Freeport from review under s.380.06, F.S., unless review is requested by the local government.	163.3246 [New]	N/A  N/A		
<b>2006 [Ch. 2006-68, Ch. 2006-69, Ch. 2006-220, Ch. 2006-252, Ch. 2006-255, Ch. 2006-268, <u>Laws of Florida</u>]</b>					
154	Establishes plan amendment procedures for <b>agricultural enclaves</b> as defined in s.163.3164(33), F.S. Ch. 2006-255, LOF.	163.3162(5) [New]		Procedural – no specific action necessary.	
155	Defines <b>agricultural enclave</b> . Ch. 2006-255, LOF.	163.3164(33) [New]		Procedural – no specific action necessary.	
156	(6)(g)2.: Adds new paragraph encouraging local governments with a <b>coastal management element</b> to adopt recreational surface water use policies; such adoption amendment is exempt from the twice per year limitation on the frequency of plan amendment adoptions. Ch. 2006-220, LOF.	163.3177(6)(g)2. [New]	N/A	Alachua County does not have, and is not required to have, a Coastal Management Element.	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
157	Allows the effect of a proposed receiving area to be considered when projecting the 25-year or greater population with a <b>rural land stewardship area</b> . Ch. 2006-220, LOF.	163.3177(11)(d)6.		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
158	Recognizes “extremely-low-income persons” as another income group whose housing needs might be addressed by <b>accessory dwelling units</b> and defines such persons consistent with s.420.0004(8), F.S. Ch. 2006-69, LOF.	163.31771(1), (2) and (4)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
159	Assigns to the Division of Emergency Management the responsibility of ensuring the preparation of <b>updated regional hurricane evacuation plans</b> . Ch. 2006-68, LOF.	163.3178(2)(d)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
160	Changes the definition of the <b>Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA)</b> to be the area below the elevation of the category 1 storm surge line as established by the SLOSH model. Ch. 2006-68, LOF.	163.3178(2)(h)	N/A	Alachua County is not located in a CHHA.	
161	Adds a new section allowing a local government to comply with the requirement that its comprehensive <b>plan direct population concentrations away from the CHHA</b> and maintains or reduces hurricane evacuation times by maintaining an adopted LOS Standard for out-of-county hurricane evacuation for a category 5 storm, by maintaining a 12-hour hurricane evacuation time or by providing mitigation that satisfies these two requirements. Ch. 2006-68, LOF.	163.3178(9)(a) [New]	N/A	Alachua County is not located in a CHHA	
162	Adds a new section establishing a <b>level of service for out-of-county hurricane evacuation</b> of no greater than 16 hours for a category 5 storm for any local government that wishes to follow the process in s.163.3178(9)(a) but has not established such a level of service by July 1, 2008. Ch. 2006-68, LOF.	163.3178(9)(b) [New]		This section refers to communities within Coastal High Hazard Areas. Alachua County is not located in a CHHA.	
163	Requires local governments to amend their <b>Future Land Use Map</b> and <b>coastal management element</b> to include the new definition of the <b>CHHA</b> , and to depict the CHHA on the FLUM by July 1, 2008. Ch. 2006-68, LOF.	163.3178(2)(c)		Alachua County is not located in a CHHA	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
164	Allows the <b>sanitary sewer concurrency requirement</b> to be met by onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems approved by the Department of Health. Ch. 2006-252, LOF.	163.3180(2)(a)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
165	Changes s.380.0651(3)(i) to s.380.0651(3)(h) as the citation for the standards a multiuse DRI must meet or exceed. Ch. 2006-220, LOF.	163.3180(12)(a)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
166	Deletes use of extended use agreement as part of the definition of small scale amendment. Ch. 2006-69, LOF.	163.3187(1)(c)1.f.		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
167	Creates a new section related to <b>electric distribution substations</b> ; establishes criteria addressing land use compatibility of substations; requires local governments to permit substations in all FLUM categories (except preservation, conservation or historic preservation); establishes compatibility standards to be used if a local government has not established such standards; establishes procedures for the review of applications for the location of a new substation; allows local governments to enact reasonable setback and landscape buffer standards for substations. Ch. 2006-268, LOF.	163.3208 [New]		Policy 5.5.1.a, FLUE, provides that public utilities (which include electric distribution substations) are permitted in all Future Land Use categories, subject to criteria provided in the Land Development Code.	
168	Creates a new section preventing a local government from requiring for a permit or other approval vegetation maintenance and tree pruning or trimming within an established <b>electric transmission and distribution line right-of-way</b> . Ch. 2006-268, LOF.	163.3209 [New]		Procedural – No specific action related to the Comprehensive Plan is necessary.	
169	<b>Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program</b> ; created by Ch. 2006-69, LOF, section 27. Establishes a special, expedited adoption process for any plan amendment that implements a pilot program project.	New		Procedural – No specific action necessary	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
170	<b>Affordable housing land donation density incentive bonus</b> ; created by Ch. 2006-69, LOF, section 28. Allows a density bonus for land donated to a local government to provide affordable housing; requires adoption of a plan amendment for any such land; such amendment may be adopted as a small-scale amendment; such amendment is exempt from the twice per year limitation on the frequency of plan amendment adoptions.	New		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
<b>2007 Ch. 2007-196, Ch. 2007-198, Ch. 2007-204, <u>Laws of Florida</u>]</b>					
171	(26) Expands the definition of <b>“urban redevelopment”</b> to include a community redevelopment area. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.  (32) Revises the definition of <b>“financial feasibility”</b> by clarifying that the plan is financially feasible for transportation and schools if level of service standards are achieved and maintained by the end of the planning period even if in a particular year such standards are not achieved. In addition, the provision that level of service standards need not be maintained if the proportionate fair share process in s.163.3180(12) and (16), F.S., is used is deleted. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	163.3164		Procedural – No specific action necessary  Financial feasibility for transportation and schools is addressed in the Capital Improvements Element and the Five Year Schedule of Improvements. A Public School Facilities Element and Interlocal Agreement for public school facility planning were adopted by Alachua County in June 2008, and included school concurrency provisions and public school concurrency related capital projects in the Five Year Schedule of Improvements.	An amendment has been proposed in the first large scale cycle of 2009 to address financial feasibility for all facilities that are subject to concurrency, and update the Capital Improvements Program accordingly (CPA 01-09). The amendment will be consistent with the clarification to the definition.

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
172	(2) Clarifies that <b>financial feasibility</b> is determined using a five-year period (except in the case of long-term transportation or school concurrency management, in which case a 10 or 15-year period applies). Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	163.3177		See response above.	An amendment has been proposed in the first large scale cycle of 2009 to address financial feasibility, update the 5-Year schedule of capital improvements and adopt a long range capital improvements program for multimodal transportation (CPA 01-09). The amendment will address the required yearly update to the 5-Year schedule.
	(3)(a)6. Revises the citation to the <b>MPO's TIP and long-range transportation plan</b> . Ch. 2007-196, LOF.			Procedural – No specific action necessary	
	(3)(b)1. Requires an annual update to the Five-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements to be submitted by December 1, 2008 and yearly thereafter. If this date is missed, no amendments are allowed until the update is adopted. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	[New]		Addressed in the Capital Improvements Element	An amendment has been proposed in the first large scale cycle of 2009 to address financial feasibility, update the 5-Year schedule of capital improvements and adopt a long range capital improvements program for multimodal transportation (CPA 01-09). The amendment will address the required yearly update to the 5-Year schedule.
	(3)(c) Deletes the requirement that the Department must notify the Administration Commission if an annual update to the <b>capital improvements element</b> is found not in compliance (retained is the requirement that notification must take place is the annual update is not adopted). Ch. 2007-204, LOF.			Procedural – No specific action necessary	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>(3)(e) Provides that a comprehensive plan as revised by an amendment to the future land use map is <b>financially feasible</b> if it is supported by (1) a condition in a development order for a development of regional impact or binding agreement that addresses proportionate share mitigation consistent with s.163.3180(12), F.S., or (2) a binding agreement addressing proportionate fair-share mitigation consistent with s.163.3180(16)(f), F.S., and the property is located in an urban infill, urban redevelopment, downtown revitalization, urban infill and redevelopment or urban service area. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(6)(f)1.d. Revises the housing element requirements to ensure adequate sites for affordable <b>workforce housing</b> within certain counties. Ch. 2007-198, LOF.</p> <p>(6)h. and i. Requires certain counties to adopt a plan for ensuring <b>affordable workforce housing</b> by July 1, 2008 and provides a penalty if this date is missed. Ch. 2007-198, LOF.</p>	<p>[New]</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p> <p>In Alachua County, the standard to be applied for affordable workforce housing is affordable to those earning less than 120% of the area median income, which is the category of households currently classified in the Housing Element as ‘moderate-income.’ See “Housing” section in EAR Chapter 6, “Major Issues Analysis.”</p> <p>Alachua County is not required to address this specific provision in the Housing Element. See “Housing” section in EAR Chapter 6, “Major Issues Analysis.”</p>	



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008	Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<p>173</p> <p>(4)(b) Expands transportation concurrency exceptions to include <b>airport facilities</b>. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(5)(b)5 Adds specifically designated <b>urban service areas</b> to the list of transportation concurrency exception areas. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(5)(f) Requires consultation with the state land planning agency regarding mitigation of impacts on Strategic Intermodal System facilities prior to establishing a <b>concurrency exception area</b>. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(12) and (12)(a) Deletes the requirement that the comprehensive plan must authorize a <b>development of regional impact</b> to satisfy concurrency under certain conditions. Also, deletes the requirement that the development of regional impact must include a residential component to satisfy concurrency under the conditions listed. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(12)(d) Clarifies that any <b>proportionate-share mitigation</b> by development of regional impact, Florida Quality Development and specific area plan implementing an optional sector plan is not responsible for reducing or eliminating backlogs. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p>	<p>[New]</p>		<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p> <p>Alachua County does not have any urban service areas designated in accordance with Florida Statutes. No specific action is necessary</p> <p>Alachua County does not have any concurrency exception areas.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p>	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
	<p>(13)(e)4. A development precluded from commencing because of <b>school concurrency</b> may nevertheless commence if certain conditions are met. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(16)(c) and (f) Allows <b>proportionate fair-share mitigation</b> to be directed to one or more specific transportation improvement. Clarifies that such mitigation is not to be used to address backlogs. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p> <p>(17) Allows an exemption from concurrency for certain <b>workforce housing</b> developed consistent with s.380.061(9) and s.380.0651(3). Ch. 2007-198, LOF.</p>			<p>School concurrency implementation is addressed in the Public School Facilities Element, adopted in June 2008, in Objectives 2.2 through 2.4 and subsequent policies. School concurrency is also addressed in Section 407.120(b) of the Land Development Code.</p> <p>Addressed in Land Development Code Section 407.125.1.</p> <p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p>	
174	<p>Allows a local government to establish a <b>transportation concurrency backlog authority</b> to address deficiencies where existing traffic volume exceeds the adopted level of service standard. Defines the powers of the authority to include tax increment financing and requires the preparation of transportation concurrency backlog plans. Ch. 2007-196, LOF and Ch. 2007-204, LOF.</p>	163.3182 [New]		<p>Alachua County has not established a transportation concurrency backlog authority. No specific action necessary.</p>	
175	<p>Allows plan amendments that address certain <b>housing</b> requirements to be expedited under certain circumstances. Ch. 2007-198, LOF.</p>	163.3184(19) [New]		<p>Procedural – No specific action necessary</p>	

Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
176	Exempts from the twice per year limitation on the frequency of adoption of plan amendments any amendment that is consistent with the <b>local housing incentive strategy</b> consistent with s.420.9076. Ch. 2007-198, LOF.	163.3187(1)(p) [New]		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
177	Add an amendment to integrate a <b>port master plan</b> into the coastal management element as an exemption to the prohibition in ss.163.3191(10). Ch. 2007-196, LOF and Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	163.3191(14) [New]	N/A	Alachua County does not have, and is not required to have, a Coastal Management Element. Alachua County does not have any port facilities.	
178	Extends the duration of a <b>development agreement</b> from 10 to 20 years. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	163.3229		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
179	Establishes an <b>alternative state review process pilot program</b> in Jacksonville/Duval, Miami, Tampa, Hialeah, Pinellas and Broward to encourage urban infill and redevelopment. Ch. 2007-204, LOF.	163.32465 [New]	N/A		
180	If a property owner contributes right-of-way and expands a state transportation facility, such contribution may be applied as a <b>credit against any future transportation concurrency requirement</b> . Ch. 2007-196, LOF.	339.282 [New]		Procedural – No specific action necessary	
181	Establishes an expedited plan amendment adoption process for amendments that implement the <b>Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program</b> and exempts such amendments from the twice per year limitation on the frequency of adoption of plan amendments. Ch. 2007-198, LOF.	420.5095(9)		Procedural – No specific action necessary	

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
<b>2008 Ch. 2008-191 and Ch. 2008-227, <u>Laws of Florida</u>]</b>					
182	The future land use plan must discourage urban sprawl. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(a)		The primary provisions relating to discouraging urban sprawl include: Future Land Use Map (Urban Cluster boundary); FLUE Policies 2.1.3, 7.1.3, 7.1.3.A, 7.1.3.B, 6.2.2; and PWSS 2.1.	
183	The future land use plan must be based upon energy-efficient land use patterns accounting for existing and future energy electric power generation and transmission systems. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(a)		This and other issues related to new legislative mandates of HB 697 (2008) are addressed in the "Urban Area" section of EAR Chapter 6, "Major Issues Analysis." Also see Recommendation #2.4.1 in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations".	A new Energy Element will be considered as part of the EAR-based plan update to address new legislative mandates of HB 697 (2008). See Recommendation #2.4.1 in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations".

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
184	The future land use plan must be based upon greenhouse gas reduction strategies. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(a)			Amendments are proposed as part of the first large scale cycle of 2009 to the Future Land Use Element, Transportation Mobility Element, Intergovernmental Coordination Element, and Capital Improvements Element (CPA 01-09), which will include establishment of multimodal level of service standards; fee structure which promotes higher density and mixed use TOD and TND; and long term capital improvement program projects for transit service and infrastructure. One of the overall goals of these amendments is to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions through reduced vehicle miles of travel.

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
185	The traffic circulation element must include transportation strategies to address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(b)			Amendments are proposed as part of the first large scale cycle of 2009 to the Future Land Use Element, Transportation Mobility Element, Intergovernmental Coordination Element, and Capital Improvements Element (CPA 01-09), which will include establishment of multimodal level of service standards; fee structure which promotes higher density and mixed use TOD and TND; and long term capital improvement program projects for transit service and infrastructure.
186	The conservation element must include factors that affect energy conservation. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(d)		Addressed in Conservation and Open Space Element Objective 5.1 and subsequent policies.	A new Energy Element is being considered as part of the EAR-based plan update to address new legislative mandates of HB 697 (2008). See Recommendation #2.4.1 in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations".
187	The future land use map series must depict energy conservation. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(d)			Amendments needed will depend on potential 9J-5, FAC rule development by DCA to implement this requirement.

**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
188	The housing element must include standards, plans and principles to be followed in energy efficiency in the design and construction of new housing and in the use of renewable energy resources. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(f)1.h. and i.		This is addressed in Objective 2.2 and subsequent policies of the Housing Element.	A new Energy Element is being considered as part of the EAR-based plan update to address new legislative mandates of HB 697 (2008). See Recommendation #2.4.1 in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations".
189	Local governments within an MPO area must revise their Transportation Element to include strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Ch. 2008-191, LOF.	163.3177(6)(i)			Amendments are proposed as part of the first large scale cycle of 2009 to the Future Land Use Element, Transportation Mobility Element, Intergovernmental Coordination Element, and Capital Improvements Element (CPA 01-09), which will include establishment of multimodal level of service standards; fee structure which promotes higher density and mixed use TOD and TND; and long term capital improvement program projects for transit service and infrastructure. One of the overall goals of these amendments is to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions through reduced vehicle miles of travel.



**Table 7.1. Consistency with Updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, 2002-2008**

Changes to Chapter 163, F.S. 2002-2008		Chapter 163, F.S. Citations	N/A	Addressed (where/how)	Amendment Needed by Element
190	Various changes were made in the State Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 187, F.S.) that address low-carbon-emitting electric power plants. See Section 5 of Chapter 2008-227, LOF.	State Comprehensive Plan			This can be addressed through adoption of a new Energy Element as part of the EAR-based Comprehensive Plan update. See Recommendation #2.4.1 in Table 1.6, "Summary of EAR Recommendations".

## CHAPTER 8 | SPECIAL TOPICS

Chapter 163 requires all local governments to address a series of special topics in their EAR. Each of these topics, the majority of which are not applicable to Alachua County, are addressed below.

### Compatibility with Military Installations

Chapter 163 requires “an assessment of whether the criteria adopted pursuant to s.163.3177(6)(a) was successful in achieving compatibility with military installations” in the EAR [163.3191(2)(n)]. Since there are no military installations in Alachua County, this topic is not applicable.

### Public School Facilities and Concurrency

§163.3191(2)(k) requires an assessment of “the coordination of the comprehensive plan with existing public schools and those identified in the applicable educational facilities plan adopted pursuant to s. 1013.35” in the EAR. The statute further requires that “the assessment shall address, where relevant, the success or failure of the coordination of the future land use map and associated planned residential development with public schools and their capacities, as well as the joint decision making processes engaged in by the local government and the school district in regard to establishing appropriate population projections and the planning and siting of public school facilities. For those counties or municipalities that do not have a public schools interlocal agreement or public school facility element, the assessment shall determine whether the local government continues to meet the criteria of s.163.3177(12).”

Alachua County adopted a Public School Facilities Element as part of the Comprehensive Plan in June 2008. The Element was found in compliance by the Department of Community Affairs and became effective October 10, 2008, requiring all new residential development in the unincorporated area of Alachua County to meet the requirements for public school concurrency. The School Board, the County and the municipalities within Alachua County coordinated the adoption of the Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) and amendments to the Intergovernmental Coordination and Capital Improvements Elements to ensure that all local government comprehensive plan elements within the County are consistent with each other and School Board plans. In addition, the Interlocal Agreement between the School Board and the County was updated in June 2008 and includes a coordinating mechanism for updating the Capital Improvements Program, the Capital Improvements Element, and school location selection. The School Board served as the lead agency in this process, and the development of these amendments was coordinated by a Staff Workgroup consisting of County staff, staff of the municipalities in the County, the School Board staff and its consultant.

### Water Supply Planning

§163.3191(2)(l) requires the following: “Identify the extent to which the local government has been successful in identifying alternative water supply projects and traditional water supply projects, including conservation and reuse, necessary to meet the water needs identified in s.373.0361(2)(a) within the local government’s jurisdiction. Evaluate the degree to which the local government has implemented the work plan for building public, private, and regional water supply facilities, including the development of alternative water supplies identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development.”

There are no water supply development project options for the unincorporated jurisdiction of Alachua County identified in the 2005 SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan (see [http://www.sjrwmd.com/publications/pdfs/fs\\_watsupply\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.sjrwmd.com/publications/pdfs/fs_watsupply_assessment.pdf)) or the SRWMD Water Supply Assessment-2004 (see <http://www.srwmd.state.fl.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=548>). Both of the Water

Management Districts are in the process of updating their District Water Supply Plans, which are scheduled to be finalized around December 2010. Alachua County is working with both Districts on the update process. For information on the development of the upcoming 2010 SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan, see [http://www.sjrwmd.com/WaterSupplyFS\\_north.pdf](http://www.sjrwmd.com/WaterSupplyFS_north.pdf).

Water Supply Planning is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6 of the EAR in the Water Resources section. The EAR has identified specific recommendations relating to water supply planning which will be implemented as part of the EAR-based amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. These recommendations are as follows (also see Recommendation #'s 1.3.2 and 6.1.2(7) in Table 1).

#### **EAR Recommendation #1.3.2**

*Review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.*

#### **EAR Recommendation # 6.1.2(7)**

*7) a. Update data and analysis, including assessment of current and projected water needs and sources for at least a 10 year period, as required by Section 163.3177(6)(d), F.S., in coordination with the updates of the water supply plans for the St. Johns River and Suwannee River Water Management Districts and Gainesville Regional Utilities; b. Should Alachua County or any portion of it be identified as a Priority Water Resource Caution Area as part of the updates of the Water Management Districts Water Supply Plans scheduled to be finalized by December 2010, initiate Comprehensive Plan amendments within 18 months of adoption of a Regional Water Supply Plan pursuant to Section 373.0361, F.S. to incorporate appropriate water supply projects, including conservation and reuse projects, identified in the regional water supply plan into the Comprehensive Plan, as needed to meet the County's projected water supply needs in accordance 163.3177(6)(c) and (d), F.S. Such amendments will be coordinated with Gainesville Regional Utilities.*

### **Coastal High Hazard Areas**

§163.3191(2)(m) requires "If any of the jurisdiction of the local government is located within the coastal high-hazard area, an evaluation of whether any past reduction in land use density impairs the property rights of current residents when redevelopment occurs, including, but not limited to, redevelopment following a natural disaster." Alachua County is not a coastal county and is not located in a Coastal High Hazard Area, therefore this topic is not applicable.

### **Concurrency Management Areas**

Chapter 163 also requires an evaluation of "The extent to which a concurrency exception area designated pursuant to s.163.3180(5), a concurrency management area designated pursuant to s. 163.3180(7), or a multimodal transportation district designated pursuant to s. 163.3189(15) has achieved the purpose for which it was created and otherwise complies with the provisions of s. 163.3180." Alachua County does not have any established concurrency management areas, so this topic is not applicable.

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### APPENDIX A - References

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Environment, Land Use and Infrastructure

[http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/compplanning/forums\\_docs/PPW\\_scope.pdf](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/compplanning/forums_docs/PPW_scope.pdf)

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## **APPENDIX B - Public Participation Documents**

### **Public Participation Plan for Alachua County Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Process**

Approved by Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

January 8, 2008

The Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) provides an opportunity to evaluate the success of the County's Comprehensive Plan in addressing major community issues and to identify recommendations for updating/revising the Plan based on the EAR, as required by Section 163.3191 of the Florida Statutes.

There will be three major phases in the EAR process, culminating in adoption of the EAR by the September 1, 2009 due date established by the Florida Department of Community Affairs. These phases and the components of the Public Participation Process for each phase are identified below.

#### **PHASE I: Identification of Major Community Issues (January-June 2008)**

The first step in the EAR process is to identify the major issues as they relate to the Comprehensive Plan that will be the focus of the EAR leading to a Letter of Understanding with the Department of Community Affairs on the scope of the EAR.

Components of public participation in this phase will include:

- Publicity about the EAR process through press releases, broadcast media, public service announcements, county webpage including posting of information and draft material as it is developed with request for comment, brochures, storyboards, display ads, use of e-mail lists of groups and individuals compiled for planning projects, mail outs to organized groups and neighborhood associations; these elements will be used throughout the process
- Input from County Advisory Committees concerned with Comprehensive Plan
- Community meetings/workshops in different parts of the County
- Meetings with organizations interested in planning issues
- Online survey/questionnaire for citizens to identify major issues
- Workshop with representatives of municipalities in the County, adjoining Counties, regional and state agencies on issues and data
- Input will be sought both in the form of verbal and written comment
- Joint Board of County Commissioners/Local Planning Agency meeting/workshop to consider input from sources listed above and staff recommendations, as well as additional verbal and written comment from public, and to finalize the list of issues to submit to Florida Department of Community Affairs as a basis for the Letter of Understanding on scope of the EAR

#### **PHASE II: Development of Recommendations For Update of Plan (June-Nov. 2008)**

The second phase is to develop recommendations for the update/revision of the Comprehensive Plan, based on data and analysis relative to the major issues identified in Phase I, changes in community circumstances relating to those issues and their social and economic impacts, and assessment of the relevant objectives and policies in the Plan and their effectiveness.

Components of public participation in this phase will include:

- Publicity as identified for Phase I
- Input from County Advisory Committees concerned with Comprehensive Plan
- Community meetings/workshops in different parts of the County
- Meetings with organizations interested in planning issues
- Input will be sought in the form of both verbal and written comment
- Joint Board of County Commissioners/Local Planning Agency meetings/workshops to consider input from above-listed sources and staff recommendations, as well as additional verbal and written comment from public

### **PHASE III: Workshops/Public Hearings on the EAR (January-August 2009)**

This phase will focus on the Evaluation and Report developed based on Phases I and II, leading to adoption of the Report.

Components of public participation in this phase will include:

- Publicity as identified for Phase I
- Joint Board of County Commissioner/Local Planning Agency Meeting/Workshops on the draft EAR (January/February)
- Public Hearing by Local Planning Agency on recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (February/March)
- Public Hearing by Board of County Commissioners on submittal to Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and other Agencies for review and comment (April)
- Following receipt of comments from DCA and needed revisions, Public Hearing by Board of County Commissioners to Adopt EAR (August 2009)

## Press Releases

### **HAWTHORNE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP ON COUNTY EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

February 15, 2008

10:06 a.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY - Alachua County Growth Management Department invites all citizens to attend the first of a series of community workshops being held throughout the County on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the Comprehensive Plan. This first workshop will be held on Thursday, February 21 at 4:30 p.m. at Hawthorne City Hall, located at 6700 SE 221st St., Hawthorne, FL.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the [Comprehensive Plan](#) in addressing major community issues and will be the foundation for the next update and revision of the Plan. The agenda for the meeting includes a presentation on the EAR process followed by a group exercise to identify potential issues, with additional time for questions and discussion.

For a schedule of additional meetings and other information, please visit the new EAR website at [www.alachuacounty.us/ear](http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear). Features of the website include an online survey, a mailing list signup to receive EAR related updates, and pages where meeting dates, documents and links will be posted.

Citizens may also contact the Department of Growth Management, Comprehensive Planning Division, at 352-374-5249 or [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us) for additional information.

### **EAR WORKSHOP AT KANAPAHA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

February 29, 2008

9:25 a.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - Alachua County's Growth Management Department invites all citizens to attend the second of a series of community workshops being held throughout the County on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the Comprehensive Plan. This workshop will be held on Thursday, March 6 at 4:30 p.m. at Kanapaha Middle School, located at 5005 SW 75th St., Gainesville, FL.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the [Comprehensive Plan](#) in addressing major community issues and will be the foundation for the next update and revision of the Plan. The agenda for the meeting includes a presentation on the EAR process followed by a group exercise to identify potential issues, with additional time for questions and discussion.

For a schedule of additional meetings and other information, please visit the EAR website at [www.alachuacounty.us/ear](http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear). Features of the website include an online survey, a mailing list signup to receive EAR related updates, and pages where meeting dates, documents and links will be posted.

Citizens may also contact the Department of Growth Management, Comprehensive Planning Division, at 352-374-5249 or [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us) for additional information.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EAR WORKSHOP 3/24/08**

March 18, 2008

4:00 p.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - The Alachua County Growth Management Department invites all citizens to attend the third of a series of community workshops being held throughout the County on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the Comprehensive Plan. This workshop will be held on Monday, March 24 at 4:30 p.m. at Newberry Municipal Building, located at 25420 W Newberry Rd, Newberry, FL.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the [Comprehensive Plan](#) in addressing major community issues and will be the foundation for the next update and revision of the Plan. The agenda for the meeting includes a presentation on the EAR process followed by a group exercise to identify potential issues, with additional time for questions and discussion.

For a schedule of additional meetings and other information, please visit the EAR website at [www.alachuacounty.us/ear](http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear). Features of the website include an online survey, a mailing list signup to receive EAR related updates, and pages where meeting dates, documents and links will be posted.

For more information contact the Department of Growth Management, Comprehensive Planning Division, at 352-374-5249 or [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us).

**EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT MEETING**

April 30, 2008

10:46 a.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners will be holding a joint Special Meeting with the Local Planning Agency to review the proposed list of Major Community Issues related to the County's Comprehensive Plan to be addressed in the County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2008, at 5 p.m. in the Jack Durrance Auditorium in the County Administration Building located at 12 SE 1st St. Gainesville. The agenda and proposed list of issues is available online with other information on the EAR at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the [Comprehensive Plan](#) in addressing these major community issues and will be the foundation for the next update and revision of the Plan.

For more information please contact Ken Zeichner, Principal Planner, at 374-5285 or [ksz@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ksz@alachuacounty.us).

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EVALUATION

January 13, 2009

10:15 a.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - The public is invited to attend one of three community meetings being held around the County on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report in January. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss options for addressing the [major community issues](#) identified in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report process for the Comprehensive Plan. Each meeting will have a time for informal discussion with staff, followed by an overview of all the major issues, with additional time for breakout sessions to have a more focused discussion on specific [groups of issues](#). The meetings are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

**Thursday, January 15**, 5:30-8 p.m.  
Santa Fe High School Cafeteria  
16213 NW US HWY 441  
Alachua, FL 32615

**Thursday, January 22**, 5:30-8 p.m.  
Alachua County Health Department  
224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32641

**Thursday, January 29**, 5:30-8 p.m.  
Kanapaha Middle School  
5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32606

The input received at these meetings will be summarized for discussion with the Board of County Commissioners and Local Planning Agency (Planning Commission) at a series of Joint Special Meetings in February and March. These meetings will be followed by public hearings in the spring and summer to adopt the Evaluation and Appraisal Report by September 2009 including recommendations for update of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2009/2010.

A full schedule of meeting dates with the County Commission and Local Planning Agency are posted on the County's EAR website at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>. A [summary](#) of major issues and their identified options is also posted. For more information please call the Growth Management Department at 374-5249 or send an email to [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us).

**BOCC/LPA SPECIAL MEETING (REVISED SCHEDULED)**

February 20, 2009

4:15 p.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - Please note: The March 5, 2009 BOCC/LPA Meeting has been cancelled. See below for revised schedule.

The public is invited to attend a series of joint special meetings with the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Local Planning Agency (LPA) on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) in February and March. The purpose of the meetings is to review the [major community issues](#) and potential options and strategies identified in the EAR process for the Comprehensive Plan, and to receive direction from the BOCC and LPA for Public Hearings expected to begin in April. All meetings will be held at the Jack Durrance Auditorium, Room 209 of the County Administration Building (12 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville) and will begin at 5:30 p.m. Each meeting will focus on a different subject area, as follows:

- Thursday, February 12 - Community Facilities & Services
- Thursday, February 19 - Economic Development
- Tuesday, March 3 - Agriculture/Greenspace
- Thursday, March 12 - Land Use/Transportation
- Tuesday, March 17 - Resource Protection
- Thursday, March 31 - Urban Area/Housing

These meetings will be followed by public hearings in the spring and summer to adopt the Evaluation and Appraisal Report by September 2009, including recommendations for update of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2009/2010.

A full schedule of meeting dates with the County Commission and Local Planning Agency are posted on the County's EAR website at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>. A series of [Issue Papers](#) and a summary of all major issues and their identified options are also posted.

For more information, please call the Growth Management Department at 374-5249 or send an email to [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us).

**BOCC/LPA SPECIAL MEETING**

March 23, 2009

3:30 p.m.

ALACHUA COUNTY, FL - The public is invited to attend the last of a series of joint special meeting with the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Local Planning Agency (LPA) on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on March 31. The purpose of the meeting is to review the Urban Area/Energy/Housing subject area, the potential options and strategies identified in the EAR process for the Comprehensive Plan, and to receive direction from the BOCC and LPA for Public Hearings expected to begin in April. The meeting will be held at the Jack Durrance Auditorium, Room 209 of the County Administration Building (12 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street) and will begin at 5:30 p.m.




The meeting will be followed by public hearings in the spring and summer to adopt the Evaluation and Appraisal Report by September 2009, including recommendations for update of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2009/2010.

A full schedule of meeting dates with the County Commission and Local Planning Agency are posted on the County's EAR website at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>. A series of [Issue Papers](#) and a summary of all major issues and their identified options are also posted.

For more information, please call the Growth Management Department at 374-5249 or send an email to [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us).

## Print Ads



### COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

#### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Process

Participate in the evaluation of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 - the blueprint for the County's future.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the Comprehensive Plan in addressing major community issues. It will be the basis for the next update and revision of the Plan.

**Help identify the major community issues for the Report at one of our upcoming workshops:**


**Thursday, February 21 @ 4:30 PM**  
Hawthorne City Hall - 6700 SE 221<sup>st</sup> Street,  
Hawthorne, FL 32641

**Thursday, March 6 @ 4:30 PM**  
Kanapaha Middle School – 5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup>  
Street, Gainesville, FL 32606

See <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear> for additional meeting dates.

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
(352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun, Gainesville Guardian, and Alachua Today on Thursday, Feb. 14, 2008



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Process

Participate in the evaluation of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 - the blueprint for the County's future.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the Comprehensive Plan in addressing major community issues. It will be the basis for the next update and revision of the Plan.

**Help identify the major community issues for the Report at one of our upcoming workshops:**


**Thursday, March 6 @ 4:30 PM**  
Kanapaha Middle School – 5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup> St.,  
Gainesville, FL 32606

**Monday, March 17 @ 4:30 PM**  
Alachua County Health Dept. – 224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> St.,  
Gainesville, FL 32641

See <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear> for additional meeting dates.

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
(352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Monday, March 3, 2008



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Process

Participate in the evaluation of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 - the blueprint for the County's future.

The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the Comprehensive Plan in addressing major community issues. It will be the basis for the next update and revision of the Plan.

**Help identify the major community issues for the Report at one of our upcoming workshops:**


**Monday, March 17 @ 4:30 PM**  
Alachua County Health Dept. - 224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32606

**Monday, March 24 @ 4:30 PM**  
Newberry City Hall - 25440 W Newberry Road, Newberry, FL 32669

See <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear> for additional meeting dates.

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
(352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Thursday, March 13, 2008



**COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**

**Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Process**

Participate in the evaluation of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020 - the blueprint for the County's future.


The EAR is the community's opportunity to evaluate the success of the Comprehensive Plan in addressing major community issues. It will be the basis for the next update and revision of the Plan.

**Help identify the major community issues for the Report at our upcoming workshop:**  
**Monday, March 24 @ 4:30 PM**  
 Newberry City Hall  
 25440 W Newberry Road

See <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear> for additional meeting dates.

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
 111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
 (352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun and Alachua Today Thursday, March 20, 2008



**SPECIAL MEETING:  
 ALACHUA COUNTY BOARD  
 OF COUNTY  
 COMMISSIONERS AND  
 LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY**


**Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)**

A joint special meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 6, at 5:00 p.m.** in the Jack Durrance Auditorium of the County Administration Building, 12 SE 1<sup>st</sup> St., to review Major Community Issues relating to the County's Comprehensive Plan to be addressed in the EAR. The EAR will be the basis for the next update and revision of the Plan.

See <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear> for additional information

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
 111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
 (352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Friday, May 2, 2008



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

The public is invited to one of three upcoming community meetings around the County to discuss evaluation of the County's Comprehensive Plan and recommendations for the update of the Plan:

**Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>**, Santa Fe High School, 16213 US HWY 441, Alachua

**Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**, Alachua County Health Dept., 224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>**, Kanapaha Middle School, 5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**All meetings will run from 5:30 pm to 8:00**


There will be informal discussion from 5:30 to 6:00, followed by overview of the EAR and major community issues, and then small group discussion of issues and options for addressing them.

Input at these meetings is in preparation for Special Joint County Commission/Local Planning Agency meetings in February and March, followed by Public Hearings to adopt the EAR by September 2009, including recommendations for update of the Plan based on the EAR.

<http://www.alachuacounty.us.ear>

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601 (352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Friday, January 9, 2009



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

The public is invited to one of two upcoming community meetings around the County to discuss evaluation of the County's Comprehensive Plan and recommendations for the update of the Plan:

**Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**, Alachua County Health Dept., 224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>**, Kanapaha Middle School, 5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**All meetings will run from 5:30 pm to 8:00**

There will be informal discussion from 5:30 to 6:00, followed by overview of the EAR and major community issues, and then small group discussion of issues and options for addressing them.


Input at these meetings is in preparation for Special Joint County Commission/Local Planning Agency meetings in February and March, followed by Public Hearings to adopt the EAR by September 2009, including recommendations for update of the Plan based on the EAR.

<http://www.alachuacounty.us.ear>

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601 (352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Thursday, January 15, 2009





## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

### Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

The public is invited to attend the upcoming community meetings around the County to discuss evaluation of the County's Comprehensive Plan and recommendations for the update of the Plan:

**Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**, Alachua County Health Dept., 224 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>**, Kanapaha Middle School Cafeteria, 5005 SW 75<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville

**All meetings will run from 5:30 pm to 8:00**


There will be informal discussion from 5:30 to 6:00, followed by overview of the EAR and major community issues, and then small group discussion of issues and options for addressing them.

Input at these meetings is in preparation for Special Joint County Commission/Local Planning Agency meetings in February and March, followed by Public Hearings to adopt the EAR by September 2009, including recommendations for update of the Plan based on the EAR.

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601 (352)374-5249

Published in Gainesville Sun Thursday, January 22, 2009



## Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation

The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Local Planning Agency (LPA) are holding a series of joint meetings on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the Comprehensive Plan, at date and times below.

Each meeting will focus on a different set of EAR Issue Areas, as follows:

- Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>** - Community Facilities & Services
- Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>** - Economic Development
- March 3<sup>rd</sup>** - Agriculture/Greenspace
- March 5<sup>th</sup>** - Land Use/Transportation
- March 12<sup>th</sup>** - Urban Area/Housing
- March 17<sup>th</sup>** - Resource Protection

All meetings will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the **Jack Durrance Auditorium, Room 209** of the County Administration Building (12 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville). *Note: Dates subject to change, refer to contact information below.*

The purpose of the meetings is to review EAR Issues, Options and Strategies to address these Issues as part of the update of the Comprehensive Plan, and for the BOCC/LPA to provide direction to staff for Public Hearings.


For a summary of issues and options and other background information, go to:

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>

Alachua County Department of Growth Management  
111 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32601  
(352)374-5249 -- [ear@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ear@alachuacounty.us)

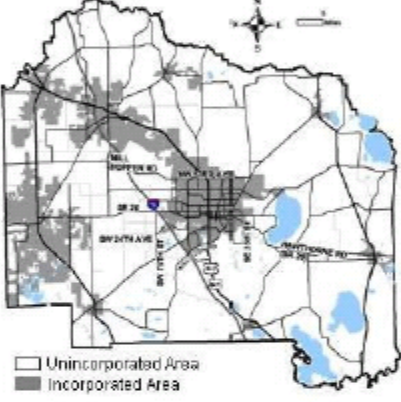
Published in Gainesville Sun and High Springs Herald Thursday, February 5, 2009

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**



## Alachua County Evaluation and Appraisal Report

The Alachua County Planning Commission serving as the Local Planning Agency will hold a public hearing Wednesday, May 20, 2009, 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard at the County Administration Building, Room 209, 12 S.E. 1st Street, Gainesville, Florida to consider and make recommendations to the County Commission on adoption of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2001-2020.



All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard. Written comments may be filed with the Office of Planning and Development for consideration. In addition to any other comments, interested persons are invited to submit comments on whether the proposal will have a significant impact on the cost of housing.

All persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at this public hearing or meeting, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

If any accommodations are needed for persons with disabilities, please contact the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office at (352) 374-5275 (voice) or (352) 374-5284 (TDD).

General Information on the above item will be available on Friday of the week preceding the meeting at the Office of Planning and Development: 111 S.W. 1st Street, Gainesville, FL 32601; (352) 374-5249.

For further information on the EAR see:  
[www.alachuacounty.us/ear](http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear)

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**EAR Meeting Agendas**

**ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION/LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY  
SPECIAL MEETING ON EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

**MAY 6, 2008**

**5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

- 1. PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED MAJOR COMMUNITY ISSUES  
RELATED TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR ALACHUA COUNTY  
EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT (“EAR”)**

**COMMISSION/LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA) GENERAL AND  
INFORMAL DISCUSSION**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**COMMISSION/LPA DIRECTION ON MAJOR COMMUNITY ISSUES RELATED  
TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR EAR**

**ADJOURN**

**ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION/LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY  
SPECIAL MEETING ON EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT (EAR):  
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES<sup>32</sup>**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2009**

**5:30 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**1. PRESENTATION ON EAR**

**a. PROCESS AND MAJOR ISSUE AREAS**

**b. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ISSUE AREAS AND  
OPTIONS**

**i. CAPITAL PROJECT CAPACITY**

**ii. RECREATION FACILITIES LEVEL OF SERVICE AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

**iii. LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY**

**iv. PUBLIC SAFETY**

**v. PUBLIC HEALTH**

**COMMISSION/LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA) GENERAL AND  
INFORMAL DISCUSSION**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**COMMISSION/LPA DIRECTION ON EAR DOCUMENTS FOR PUBLIC  
HEARING**

**ADJOURN**

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<sup>32</sup> This is a sample of the agendas used for each of the joint BOCC/LPA special meetings on individual topic areas held in February and March as outlined in the Public Participation Process information in Chapter 2.

*This is a sample of the agenda used for each of the four community workshops held during Phase I of the EAR process as outlined in Chapter 2.*



# AGENDA

## Community Workshop on Evaluation and Appraisal Report on Alachua County Comprehensive Plan

Hawthorne City Hall  
Thursday, February 21, 2008  
4:30 pm

- I. Sign-In, View Maps and Materials
- II. Welcome
- III. Overview of Evaluation and Appraisal Report  
Process and Purpose of Workshop
- IV. Identification of Major Community Issues
  - A. Group Exercise
  - B. Forms
- V. Next Steps
- VI. Adjourn

*Thanks for joining us today! We appreciate you taking an interest in your community. For more information on the schedule, draft documents and other important links, or to fill out the online survey, please visit the EAR website at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>*

### Alachua County Growth Management

Comprehensive Planning  
111 SW 1st Street  
Gainesville, FL 32601

Phone: 352-374-5249  
Fax: 352-381-0124  
E-mail: [EAR@alachuacounty.us](mailto:EAR@alachuacounty.us)

*This is a sample of the agenda used for each of the three community workshops held during Phase II of the EAR process as outlined in Chapter 2.*



# AGENDA

Alachua County Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)  
 Community Meeting  
 Kanapaha Middle School, Cafeteria  
 Thursday, January 29, 2009  
 5:30 pm

Approximate Time

- |      |  |                        |
|------|--|------------------------|
| I.   | Sign-In, View Maps and Materials,<br>Informal Q&A      | 5:30-6:00              |
| II.  | Welcome & Overview of EAR Process and<br>Issue Areas   | 6:00-6:20              |
| III. | Break out Group Discussion of Issue<br>Areas & Options | 6:30-7:00<br>7:00-7:30 |
| IV.  | Review of Group Discussions                            | 7:30-7:50              |
| V.   | Next Steps/Adjourn                                     | 8:00                   |

*Thanks for joining us today! We appreciate you taking an interest in your community. For more information on the schedule, draft documents and other important links, please visit the EAR website at: <http://www.alachuacounty.us/ear>*

**Alachua County Growth Management**

Comprehensive Planning	Phone: 352-374-5249
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Gainesville, FL 32601	E-mail: <a href="mailto:EAR@alachuacounty.us">EAR@alachuacounty.us</a>



## Public Workshop Summaries

### Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report

#### Hawthorne Community Meeting Comments

February 21, 2008

Persons Present: Candice David, Tiffany Davies, Shane Laakso, Memree Stuart, Heather Surrency, Vivian G. Wagner

Staff Present: Ken Zeichner, Holly Banner, Robert Norton, Kathleen Pagan, Regina Williams.

1. Hawthorne Community Foundation has applied for 501 (C) 3 status.

Group of about 45 people used focus groups to complete a recent survey of issues.

This group wants revitalization of traditional city Main Street, with limited development along US 301 to ensure city center is maintained.

2. Emphasize Eco-Tourism Potential. Need business to support the rail trail (bike and equestrian), along with fishing and hunting.

3. There is agricultural land conversion threat, especially due to in-migration.

4. Potential for greenbelt with public lands & lakes, and this could provide wildlife corridors.

5. Downtown Redevelopment if needed, with emphasis on walkability. The highways (US 301 and SR 20) have divided the community. Access to downtown is confusing.

6. Need to allow multimodal transportation with transit connections into Gainesville.

County wide transit system- service once a week from small municipalities into city.

(Some years ago 5+ there was some transit service in Hawthorne)

Need for transit to UF/SFCC and work trips.

7. Grove Park pedestrian connection needed.

Construction of SR 20 has resulted in north/south cutoff within this small rural community. Connection needed for access to rail trail, county park and to visit relatives.

(Stormwater in this area is also altered recently, perhaps by SR 20 construction or logging)

8. County should require green buildings and fleet (use alternative energy as much as possible).

9. Need for improvement to high speed Internet service in area. Presently the public library is only access for many individuals. This limits business development, in particular home business in the opinion of one citizen.

10. Need to improve intergovernmental coordination.

SFCC previously held classes in Hawthorne, but then located in Keystone Heights.

Hawthorne High School is a community asset. Consider HS for potential magnet programs with emphasis on community intentions (small engine repair mentioned)

11. Recreation Needs are important---a sidewalk connection to Sports Park is priority.
12. Job Creation for Youth Employment—with access/transportation noted as critical need.
13. Problem of isolation of people without transportation to near by cities with commercial and cultural opportunities.

**Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report**

**Kanapaha Meeting Comments**

**March 6, 2008**

Persons Present: Danny Austin, June Brady, Tom Brady, Blanca E. Carbia, Tiffany Davies, Jerry Kirkpatrick, Carrie L. Krone, Gladys Lane, Alison Law, Roberta Lopez, D. Bruce Lucier, Renee Makan, Melissa Norman, Blanch Parker, Evelyn Perry, Don Perry, Joe Prager, Reed Quinn, Justin Tabor, Jim Whik, Bill Young

Staff Present: Ken Zeichner, Holly Banner, Ivy Bell, Ben Chumley, Robert Norton, Kathleen Pagan, Regina Williams.

Major Issues (with # red dots placed by meeting participants noting priorities):

- 1. Capital Projects- Prioritize based on needs and population served (existing, not future) 12
- 2. Water Availability & Quantity- Clean/Potable 6
- 3. Advisory Committees- Representation issues regarding small municipalities (MSTU distribution without representation of county areas) 1
- 4. Stormwater- Need survey of stormwater systems maintained by Homeowners Assoc. to determine effectiveness; Address maintenance by HOA) 2
- 5. Corridor Design Manual Needs Re-evaluation- 11  
 Specifically, Collector streets should not become a “Main Street,” i.e. SW 75<sup>th</sup> St.
- 6. Promote Florida Friendly Landscapes and low impact development- 2  
 Drip irrigation for new development
- 7. Address declining revenues & how to prioritize capital projects (see # 1) 1
- 8. More emphasis on intergovernmental coordination, i.e. Gainesville and County 1
- 9. Capital Improvements- Need County maintenance paving for roads, i.e. end SW 75 St. 2  
 Look at other materials & methods, chip seal
- 10. Selection criteria for paving
- 11. Funding issues for roads- reconsider road tax 1

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Other issues noted during discussion/questions that were not included on flip charts—  
 TDRs, School Concurrency, Recreation LOS, Enforcement of Strategic Ecosystem policies,  
 Safe Routes to Schools for Kanapaha Middle School

## Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report

### Public Health Dept. Meeting Comments

March 17, 2008

Persons Present: Kali Blount, Mike Castine, Judy Daemer, Anthony Davanzo, Tiffany Davies, Lisa Gearen, Nona Jones, Maureen Reschly, Mark Stowe

Staff Present: Ken Zeichner, Ivy Bell, Ben Chumley, Robert Norton, Kathleen Pagan, Regina Williams.

Major Issues (with # red dots placed by meeting participants noting priorities):

1. Weakening, wetlands protection is a concern. Greenspace protection on eastside of Gainesville 5
2. Require Affordable “not just encourage” Housing in New *and* Existing Development  
- contribute to funding affordable units retroactively 4
3. Concern of development impacts on water quality of Rec fishing, for example 3
4. Encourage look/evaluation of water use and hydrology 2
5. LDR’s/encourage low impact development conflicts with some stormwater regs. Etc. i.e. Madeira Subdivision compromise with LID standards  
Pierce Jones/UF 2
6. ICE issue: impacts of other jurisdictions on county resource, i.e. south main water treatment 2
7. Focus on bike/ped paths/routes 2
8. Incentives for local businesses (e.g., fee waivers/reductions) 2
9. Support for TDR Program as incentive to preserve natural resources  
Look at other materials & methods, chip seal
10. Diversify Job/Economic Base

## Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report

### Newberry Community Meeting Comments

March 24, 2008

Persons Present: Chris Wilson, Tiffany Davies

Staff Present: Ken Zeichner, Holly Banner, Ben Chumley, Regina Williams

1. Level of Service for Newberry Road to I-75 and SR 26 by the Oaks Mall is very congested. Coordinate with City of Gainesville especially for peak hours: traffic light synchronization is a problem.
2. Transportation issues: the desire to have bigger arterials to provide capacity AND the opposition to road expansion and more traffic.
3. Concerns that Comp Plan Amendments (Activity Centers) are too easy for developers to get approval.

### 1-15-09 (EAR Community Meeting – Santa Fe High School)

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Recreation  
Public Safety  
Public health

- Recreational Coordination – with MUNIS
- Focus on children & seniors – Programming
- Public Safety LOS
- Tiered LOS for different areas
- Number of emergency vehicles responding to an incident

### 1-22-09 (EAR Community Meeting – Alachua County Health Department)

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

- Intergovernmental Coordination to provide recreational facilities (e.g., pools)
  - Partner with School Board

#### HOUSING

- Incentives/Proactive approach to develop affordable housing

#### URBAN AREA/LAND USE – TRANSPORTATION

- Purpose of USL?
  - Look into Urban Service s Area Statute
- Preservation Areas in Development
- Multimodal Options Needed – Bike Network
- Frequency of Bus Service
- Encourage Higher Density in Low Density areas (l Min. Density Higher?)
- Biomass – County looking to encourage?
- Industrial Land Use Locations (Do our categories fit the market?)
- Differential of tax structure in surrounding areas
  - Problem of Alachua County Growth
  - Contributes to commuting from surrounding areas

### **NATURAL RESOURCE**

- Increase funding for transit to reduce overall number of vehicles on road and lower pollutants level in stormwater
- How does the County prevent stormwater discharges to creeks?
- How can we reduce overall water usage?
- Can landscaping requirements be structured to reduce the amount of watering/irrigation required (i.e.: prohibiting sod)
- Value preserving as much tree canopy as possible during development
- Consider parking limitations (ex. Multifamily) to maximize canopy retention
- How to deal with challenge of balancing resource protections with more urban development/land uses – including solar and tree protection

### **AGRICULTURE/GREENSPACE ISSUE**

- Census Track
- Interest in Urban Agriculture Sustainable Food Sources
- Gardening a Passive Recreation?
- Non-Traditional Agriculture Animals (Exotics)
- Other things ... Federal Programs
- Duplication of Program
- Carbon Trading – Offsets – Should be promoted by Federal Government
- Greenspace Corridor not to be a regulatory overlay – Promote Incentives

### **ECONOMIC INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Mixed Industrial uses
- Flexible Land Use categories
- Blended Industrial with office, residential and retail (restaurants for lunch)
- Pre-Approved sites
- Too Long For Approvals
- Too Much Paper

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**1-22-09 (EAR Community Meeting – Kanapaha Middle School Cafeteria)****COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES**

- Concern over lack of community meeting space – no places to offer classes, have meetings etc.
- ID standards for future park space
  - LOS of Park space within a certain area
- Intergovernmental Coordination – Better Representation by area – take into account better Representation for unincorporated area
- Public Health – SW area has no accessible Health Clinic
- Joint use of existing school facilities for community program
- Reserve future park/recreation areas in the SW areas

**LAND USE/TRANSPORATION URBAN AREA**

- Concern about subdivisions in Rural Area – too many
- Rapid Transit – Need coordination between City/County – essential to success of system
- Bonding of Development Projects to ensure completion
- More funding for transit
  - Dedicated funding source
- Alternative transit Vehicles
  - (e.g. trolley)
- Right of Way for dedicated Transit
  - Lanes – justification for public expenditure
- Concern about higher density in unincorporated area – Higher Density should be downtown first then in other areas (e.g. west urban areas)
- Electric Vehicle Accommodations (e.g. plug – ins)
- Phasing and monitoring of development as it occurs – monitor internal capture, transportation improvements etc.
- Transportation Demand Management – should be required
- Low Impact Development – should be encouraged

**HOUSING**

- To what extent does the intent to provide a range of housing types in a neighborhood lead to decrease in property values? Perception? Reality?
- How will the market respond to a mix of incomes and housing types?
- Affordable Housing should be located near transit and shopping
- Create diversity

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Intergovernmental Coordination – programs – nature/eco tourism
- Education about recycling businesses – link to economic development
- More manufactures for recycled products



- Adjust cultural perception about recycled materials:
- Job training programs – child care, retirees repairing small appliances
- Cleaning house/end market for reuse goods

### **RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- Intergovernmental Partnerships in prescribed fire, waterways, public outreach
- Water star promotion
- Better home construction for energy efficiency and water conservation
- Public education and outreach water conservation
- HOA – turf and landscape requirements; use natives; stormwater management; no lawn/xeriscaping
- LID to reduce the need for large stormwater ponds
- Water, parks, wetlands protection; restrict/regulate water bottling/water use, industrial plants (cement)
- Protective measures for high aquifer vulnerability
- Concern about multi-use of retention ponds for recreation (health and environmental)
- Urban Reserve doesn't have enough greenspace
- Rewrite ACF to have more urban land and preserved for citizens in western Gainesville/Alachua County.
- Stormwater pond discharge to sinkholes

### **AGRICULTURE/GREENSPACE**

- How is the county addressing the local gaps in food production and energy production? Local impacts re: production vs. capacity
- Be more direct in education re: local food production
- City has desire to link greenspace programs i.e. corridor other greenspace
- Look at placement of plantings re: traffic impact visibility = transportation
- Why aren't there more ACF Projects on the West side of county?

## Local Planning Agency Public Hearing Minutes

### ALACHUA COUNTY Local Planning Agency/ Planning Commission Meeting MINUTES: May 20, 2009

The Alachua County Planning Commission held a public hearing on May 20, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jack Durrance Auditorium, Room 209 of the Alachua County Administration Building in Gainesville, Florida.

#### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Carl Salafrio, Chair  
James Higman, Vice-Chair  
John Brunner  
Harvey Budd  
Taylor Brown  
Sergio Reyes  
Susan McQuillan

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Steven Lachnicht, Director, Growth Management  
Patricia McAllister, Staff Assistant, Growth Management  
Missy Daniels, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Ken Zeichner, Principal Planner, Growth Management  
Robert Norton, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Kathleen Pagan, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Ben Chumley, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Ivy Bell, Senior Planner, Growth Management  
Jonathan Paul, Impact Fee Administrator, Growth Management  
Jeff Hays, Transportation Planner, Growth Management  
Chris Dawson, Planner, Growth Management  
Mike Castine, Planner, Growth Management  
Stephen Hofstetter, Environmental Protection  
Michael Fay, Public Works  
Karen Deeter, Public Works  
Rob Avery, Public Works

#### **Meeting Called to Order:**

**Meeting called to order by Chair Salafrio at 6:00 p.m.**

#### **I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion to continue ZOM-03-09 to time certain for the next Planning Commission meeting on June 17, 2009 was made by Commissioner Brunner. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Higman. Action: ZOM-03-09 was continued to the June 17, 2009 Planning Commission meeting with a vote of 7-0.

Motion was made by Commissioner Higman to approve the agenda with the change as amended above. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Brunner. Action: The agenda was approved with a 7-0 vote.

#### **II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

MINUTES OF APRIL 15, 2009

Motion was made by Commissioner Budd to approve the minutes of April 15, 2009 with the change of listing “Susan McQuillan as absent”. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Higman. Action: The minutes of the April 15, 2009 Planning Commission meeting were approved with a 7-0 vote.

### III. QUASI-JUDICIAL ITEMS:

(continued from April 15, 2009 Planning Commission meeting)

#### 1. Application CPA-01-09 (Large Scale Amendment)

A request by Alachua County to amend the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element, Transportation Mobility Element, Intergovernmental Coordination Element, and Capital Improvements Element to update the Transportation Concurrency Management System by establishing Urban Cluster Transportation Mobility Districts; modifying the process for satisfying transportation concurrency requirements; adding Transit Oriented Development policies; modifying the Traditional Neighborhood Development Policies; and updating the Schedule of Capital Improvements for public facilities subject to concurrency, including establishing a long term schedule of capital improvement projects to implement Transportation Mobility Districts in the Urban Cluster.

##### Staff Presentation:

*Jonathan Paul* presented this application. He stated this plan is for a transit system for the future. He further stated one of the principles stated in the FLU summarized this plan: “to reduce vehicle miles of travel in per capital greenhouse gas emissions through provision of mobility within compact, mixed-use, inner connected developments that provide walking and biking, allowed for internal capture of vehicle trips and provides densities and intensities as needed to support transit”.

##### Commissioners Questions:

*Commissioner Brunner* asked if this transportation mobility fee replaces the current transportation impact fee.

##### Public Comments:

1) *Sharon Hawkey* questioned whether this new fee replaces all of the impact fees or just the portion for transportation impact fees. She also had concerns with the current and future RTS bus lines and their effectiveness especially to those affected by the Tower Hill area bus line.

2) *Ralph Hilliard*, City of Gainesville Planning Department, stated that County staff and City of Gainesville staff has been working together on this project. He stated that the City believes the mobility fee should be a tiered one with less cost for projects built closer in toward the city. He stated that RTS believes the maps need to include the current RTS routes, not the BRT feasibility study.

3) *Rob Brinkman*, Suwanee/St. Johns Sierra Club, stated his organization fully supports this application and mentioned this positive move forward for future oriented transit.

4) *David Coffey* stated that he supports this application and he believes this is the correct direction for Alachua County. He stated the ultimate goal for Alachua County would be street cars. He mentioned the BRT is the model to get to the goal of street cars. He mentioned the model of Eugene, Oregon and stated that like Oregon, higher density is overstated and is helpful but not crucial to the success of transit for this county. He stated the mobility fee would be less than current transportation impact fees.

##### Staff response:

*Jonathan* stated the mobility fee will replace the current transportation impact fee or the current proportionate share fee.

Motion was made by Commissioner Higman to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that this application be transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs. Motion was seconded by Commission Budd. Action: CPA-01-09 was approved with recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners that this application be transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs.

## **2. Evaluation and Appraisal Report**

A request by Alachua County to adopt the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (“EAR”) on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2001-2020, pursuant section 163.3191 Florida Statutes. The Alachua County Planning Commission, serving as the Local Planning Agency, is required to prepare the EAR and make recommendations pursuant to s.163.3191 (4), Florida Statutes, to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners on adoption of the EAR.

### **Staff Presentation:**

Ken Zeichner presented this application. He read the summary of the EAR issues.

### **Commissioners Discussion:**

This discussion included reaching the densities for projects, cost of transportation, open space requirements and the process as this project moves forward to the Board of County Commissioners.

### **Public Comments: None**

### **Staff response:**

Ken mentioned that the EAR is transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs for their review. The DCA will review this application and this application then goes before the Board of County Commission for their recommendation.

**Motion by Commissioner Reyes for Local Planning Agency to add additional language to the recommendation on Open Space for the EAR by adding Policy 1.1.4 - Review the policies relative to open space requirements within the Urban Cluster to assess their impact on the ability to achieve higher density, mixed use development within the Cluster; based on that review, consider modifications to those requirements as determined to be desirable and necessary to facilitate higher density/intensity mixed use development within the Urban Cluster.**

**Motion was seconded by Commissioner Higman.**

**Action: Motion was approved with a 7-0 vote.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Brown to approve this application with the bases as noted in the staff report and the addition of the language for Policy 1.1.4 above. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Reyes.**

**Action: EAR was approved with the addition of Policy 1.1.4 for transmittal to the Department of Community Affairs with a 7-0 vote.**

## **3. Application ZOM-03-09(Planned Development Amendment)**

A request by Causseaux, Hewett & Walpole, Inc., agent, for Park Lane Venture, owners, for an amendment to incorporate additional land, amend access provisions, allow for drive thru uses, and amend the phasing schedule on approximately 59.6 acres located at approximately 6700 SW Archer Road on Tax Parcel Numbers 6861-001-000; 6861-001-002; 6861-001-010; 6861-006-000; 6861-007-000; 6861-007-001; 7055-001-000; 7065-000-000; 7065-002-000; 7065-002-001; 7065-002-002; 7065-004-000; 7066-000-000; 7066-001-000; 7066-002-000 and 7066-003-000

**Staff Presentation:**

*Chris Dawson* requested continuation of this application to the next Planning Commission meeting on June 17, 2009.

Motion was made by Commissioner Higman to continue this application to the next Planning Commission meeting on June 17, 2009.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Action: ZOM-03-09 was continued to the June 17, 2009 Planning Commission agenda with a 7-0 vote.

**IV. ATTENDANCE ROSTER**

The attendance roster was distributed to the Planning Commissioners.

\*\*Determined after this meeting that the requirement is when a commissioner has attendance that reaches 2 out of 6 meetings present, they will be off the committee at that point.\*\*

**V. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

## **List of Changes to the Evaluation and Appraisal Report from the Proposed EAR as Recommended by the LPA on May 20, 2009**

The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), in its letter dated June 24, 2009 on the proposed Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), identified “no concerns” with the proposed EAR transmitted by the Alachua County Local Planning Agency to DCA for review on May 20, 2009. Comments were also received from other State and Regional agencies on the proposed EAR. Staff has reviewed the comments provided by these agencies, and in response, staff is recommending modifications to clarify recommendations and background information in the proposed EAR. Staff has also made several minor editorial changes to prepare the document for final adoption. The following changes have been incorporated into the EAR document proposed for adoption by the Board of County Commissioners on August 11, 2009.

### **1. Water Supply Planning and Concurrency**

The St. Johns River Water Management District provided comments relating to legislative mandates on water supply issues, including: water supply concurrency, intergovernmental coordination on water supply planning, and updating data and analysis relating to water supply. The following changes were made to the proposed EAR to address the District’s comments.

- EAR Recommendations (Table 1)
  - o Recommendation #6.1.2(7) (pg. 27) was modified to further clarify how Alachua County will coordinate with the Water Management Districts water supply plan update processes expected to be completed by the end of 2010; update water supply data and analysis; and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to incorporate the results of the regional water supply plan updates.
  - o Recommendation # 1.3.2 (Pg. 16) was added to review, consolidate, and revise policies as necessary to address the requirement of Section 163.3180(2)(a), F.S. that adequate water supplies shall be in place and available to serve new development no later than the issuance by the local government of a certificate of occupancy, in consultation with the applicable water supplier.
- Chapter 6 (Water Resources Discussion) was modified to include additional information relating to the Water Management Districts water supply planning processes and water supply concurrency (Pgs. 205-211 and pg. 230).
- Legislative Updates (Table 7.1) – Table 7.1, relating to consistency with legislative updates to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, was modified to clarify items relating to water supply planning and water supply concurrency (Pgs. 275-312).
- Chapter 8 (Special Topics – Water Supply Planning) was modified to highlight the EAR recommendations shown above relating to water supply planning (Pgs. 313-314).

### **2. Transportation Data and Analysis**

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) provided comments indicating support for Alachua County’s proposed multimodal approach to transportation planning as recommended in the EAR, but had specific comments and recommendations relating to CPA 01-09 (Alachua County’s Mobility

Plan) which is a large-scale Comprehensive Plan amendment being considered for transmittal at a public hearing that has been continued to August 25, 2009. FDOT also provided comments relating to transportation data and analysis, and specifically requests review of the roadway level of service data provided in the proposed EAR. Staff has reviewed the January 2009 Roadway Level of Service Report provided in the proposed EAR, and has updated the transportation data and analysis as needed to address FDOT comments. Several minor changes, in the form of edits, have been made in Chapter 4 (Transportation Mobility Element Assessment, pgs. 60-63), Chapter 5 (General Levels of Service Analysis for Transportation, pgs. 74-76), Chapter 6 (Land Use/Transportation Issue Analysis, pg. 181) and Appendix C (Alachua County Roadway Level of Service Report 2008, pgs. 403-408).

3. Regulated Plant and Animal Species Lists

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission provided a comment requesting additional clarification on the sources of the federal and state regulated plant and animal species lists provided in the EAR. The appropriate state and federal source citations for the lists of regulated plant and animal species have been added to Chapter 6 of the EAR document (pgs. 249-251).

The FFWCC also provided a comment encouraging the preservation of major conservation areas and habitat corridors through the use of techniques such as wildlife crossings for situations where significant natural areas are crossed by major roads. In response to this comment, several policies from the adopted Comprehensive Plan addressing this topic have been identified and added to Appendix D of the EAR.

4. Other Editorial Changes

- The List of Changes to the EAR from the Proposed EAR Recommended by the LPA (this section) was added to Appendix B (Pg. 359)
- LPA public hearing minutes from May 20, 2009 were added to Appendix B (Pg. 355)
- Cover page and acknowledgements page were updated
- Table of Contents and List of Maps were updated
- Several adopted policies relevant to major issues were added to Appendix D
- Document footers were updated
- Map reference numbers were corrected



## **APPENDIX C - Supplemental Information**

Department of Community Affairs Letter of Understanding – July 17, 2008

List of EAR Major Community Issues by Issue Area

Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan

Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee Goals and Action Strategies

City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan Policies Relative to Countywide Vision

Alachua County Health Care Advisory Board Report

Alachua County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Summary

Alachua County Roadway Level of Service Report, 2008

Alachua County Recreation Facilities LOS Projections, 2009-2014

Alachua County Public School Capacity and Enrollment, 2009

Alachua County Summary of Rare and Regulated Plants

## Department of Community Affairs Letter of Understanding on the EAR



STATE OF FLORIDA

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

*"Dedicated to making Florida a better place to call home"*

CHARLIE CRIST  
Governor

THOMAS G. PELHAM  
Secretary

July 17, 2008

The Honorable Rodney Long  
Chairman, Board of County Commissioners  
Alachua County  
Post Office Box 2877  
Gainesville, Florida 32602

Dear Chairman Long:

The Department of Community Affairs has reviewed your letter dated June 24, 2008 which outlines the major issues that will be the focus of the County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report. I am confident that your report will build upon the County's public involvement process. The Department agrees with the summary of the issues as set forth in the attached list of eleven (11) major community issues. This letter serves as confirmation of our understanding. As we discussed, there is an expectation that the applicable requirements under Chapter 163.3191(2)(a) through (p), Florida Statutes, will be fully assessed in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report. As a result of the assessment, there may need to be proposed changes to the comprehensive plan to better implement the intended planning objectives.

We appreciate the cooperation and effort of you and your staff in working with us to successfully complete this Evaluation and Appraisal Report. If you and your staff should have any questions or require further assistance, please contact Ana Richmond, Principal Planner, at (850) 922-1794 or via email at [anastasia.richmond@dca.state.fl.us](mailto:anastasia.richmond@dca.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,

Mike McDaniel  
Chief, Office of Community Planning

MM/ar

Enclosures: Major Community Issues Relating to the County Plan for EAR

cc: Mr. Ken Zeichner, Principal Planner for Comprehensive Planning, Alachua County  
Mr. Scott Koons, Executive Director, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

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♦ COMMUNITY PLANNING 850-488-2356 (p) 850-488-3309 (f) ♦  
♦ HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 850-488-7956 (p) 850-922-5623 (f) ♦



*Seiden*

# Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

Rodney J. Long, *Chairman*  
 Mike Byerly, *Vice Chairman*  
 Cynthia Moore Chestnut  
 Paula M. DeLaney  
 Lee Pinkoson

**Administration**  
 Randall H. Reid  
*County Manager*

June 24, 2008

Mr. Michael McDaniel, Chief of Office of Comprehensive Planning  
 FI Department of Community Affairs  
 Division of Community Planning  
 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Evaluation and Appraisal Report- Major Community Issues for Letter of Understanding with Alachua County

Dear Mr. McDaniel:

Attached please find the list of Major Community Issues for the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, which is being submitted as a basis for the Letter of Understanding with the Florida Department of Community Affairs on the scope of the County's EAR.

We look forward to receiving confirmation of the list of issues and scope. If you have any questions, please contact Ken Zeichner, Principal Planner for Comprehensive Planning in the Alachua County Department of Growth Management (tel. 352 374-5285).

Willing to Serve,

*Mike Byerly, for:*

Rodney J. Long, Chairman  
 Alachua County Commission  
 Chr08.104

Attachment: Major Community Issues Relating to County Plan for EAR

xc: Randall H. Reid, County Manager  
 Richard Drummond, AICP, Assistant County Manager  
 Steve Lachnicht, AICP, Director of Growth Management  
 Ken Zeichner, AICP, Principal Planner for Comprehensive Planning

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 Commissioners' E-Mail: [booc@alachuacounty.us](mailto:booc@alachuacounty.us) ■ Home Page: [www.alachuacounty.us](http://www.alachuacounty.us)

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**PROPOSED MAJOR COMMUNITY ISSUES RELATING TO ALACHUA COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

FOR LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING WITH DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

1. **How to strengthen the land use/transportation connection to enhance quality of life, make efficient use of land, promote energy efficiency and reduce the County's carbon footprint, including:**
  - o Identification of ways to promote compact, higher density, mixed use development while assessing the capacity of the Urban Cluster relative to updated population projections;
  - o Assessment of Activity Center/Commercial policies in meeting goals indicated above;
  - o Development of alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion (eg. Transit Oriented Development, Transportation System Management, alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips);
  - o Extending effective multi-modal transportation to outlying areas of the county to enable access to major destinations in the urban area;
  - o Review of road function and design standards in an urban context;
  - o Prioritize capital projects, especially for transportation and recreation facilities, to serve existing populations;
  - o Determination of best ways to integrate policies relating to these issues and promote energy conservation and green building and design, including consideration of an Energy Element.
2. **How to enhance the economic strength of the community in a sustainable manner that protects natural resources, including:**
  - o Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for industrial and office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies;
  - o Promotion of job diversification/creation/retention;
  - o Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture;
  - o How can economic development in East Gainesville area be promoted in a manner consistent with environmental stewardship?
  - o Review of policies promoting eco-tourism and linkage between tourism and arts development;
  - o Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives.
3. **How to ensure sufficient protection of greenspace:**
  - o Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County;
  - o Consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program.
4. **Water Resources:**
  - o Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques, and potable water and sanitary sewer policies and implementation;
  - o Assess water conservation and reuse strategies.
5. **Affordable and Special Needs Housing:**
  - o Evaluate effectiveness of Plan in promoting affordable housing, including a range of housing types and lot sizes and policies promoting live/work units;



- Assess how Plan policies and implementation impact the cost of housing;
  - Assess need to require affordable housing in all developments and consider funding sources to provide affordable housing retroactively in existing development;
  - Address recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (due by Dec. 08);
  - Assess special needs housing and how to best coordinate to meet needs.
- 6. Recreation:**
- Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e. Countywide unincorporated vs. community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County role relative to recreation facilities;
  - Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community;
  - Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks.
- 7. Intergovernmental Coordination and Planning:**
- Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process;
  - Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities and adjacent counties relative to service provision and facility service levels;
  - Develop effective approaches to interjurisdictional and interagency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.);
  - Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans;
  - Determine key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy needing incorporation into Plan.
- 8. Review and update Long Range Transportation Map Series:**
- Update maps based on population projections and planning horizon (currently 2020);
  - Assess maps and related policies in context of land use, natural resource and economic development goals;
  - Clarify corridor preservation policies and use of the Future Traffic Circulation Corridors Map.
- 9. Public Health and Safety:**
- Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including need for a Public Safety Element;
  - Consider ways to promote public health, including possible Public Health Element.
- 10. Fiscal Constraints:**
- Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems, Activity Center Master Plans) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints;
  - Evaluate need for Air Quality Program;
  - Evaluate capital project capacity in light of current fiscal constraints.
- 11. Historic Preservation:**
- Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)

## Major Issues Organized by Seven Issue Areas

### URBAN AREA

- Identification of ways to promote compact, higher density, mixed use development while assessing the capacity of the Urban Cluster relative to updated population projections
- Promoting economic development in East Gainesville in a manner consistent with environmental stewardship
- Implementation of potable water and sanitary sewer connection policies
- Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Activity Center Master Plans) in light of fiscal constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints.
- Promote energy efficiency and reduce the County's carbon footprint

### LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION

- Development of alternative approaches to standard concurrency strategies for traffic congestion (eg. Transit Oriented Development, Transportation System Management, alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips)
- Extending effective multi-modal transportation to outlying areas of the county to enable access to major destinations in the urban area
- Review of road function and design standards in an urban context
- Determination of best ways to integrate policies relating to these issues and promote energy conservation and green building and design, including consideration of an Energy Element
- Assessment of Activity Center/Commercial policies in meeting goals indicated above
- Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities and adjacent counties relative to transportation facility service levels
- Update transportation map series based on population projections and planning horizon (currently 2020)
- Assess transportation maps and related policies in context of land use, natural resource and economic development goals
- Clarify corridor preservation policies and use of the Future Traffic Circulation Corridors Map
- Evaluate capital project capacity (transportation) in light of current fiscal constraints.

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- Review level of service standards for recreation facilities (currently Activity-Based and Resource-Based) both in terms of the level and structure (i.e. Countywide unincorporated vs. community-based as in Recreation Master Plan) taking into consideration the County role relative to recreation facilities
- Consider how to best meet recreational programming needs of the community
- Consider how to coordinate level of service standards with municipalities while providing for development and operation of economically sustainable parks
- Consider ways to improve coordination with municipalities relative to recreation facility service levels
- Determine key provisions of the Local Mitigation Strategy needing incorporation into Plan

- Assess means of best addressing efficiency, safety and level of service for Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, including need for a Public Safety Element
- Consider ways to promote public health, including possible Public Health Element.
- Evaluate capital project capacity in light of current fiscal constraints
- Prioritize capital projects, particularly for transportation and recreation facilities, to serve existing populations

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Promotion of job diversification/creation/retention
- Linkage between tourism and arts development
- Evaluate policies promoting nature based tourism
- Promotion of use of recycled materials and waste alternatives
- Assess Historic Preservation policies and develop strategies for implementation (e.g. Historic Preservation Ordinance)
- Assessment of sufficiency and appropriateness of location of land designated for industrial and office uses (both in the unincorporated area and Countywide) and review of Industrial and Office land use policies
- Energy Aspects

## AGRICULTURE/GREENSPACE

- Evaluation of potential strategies (including implementation of Transfer of Development Rights program) to promote sustainable agriculture and/or retention of existing agriculture
- Assess adequacy of greenspace protection throughout the County
- Consider level of service for conservation land separate from resource-based recreation, and assess means of implementation including establishment of permanent funding source, 'less than fee' acquisitions and other tools, including Transfer of Development Rights program
- Assess County/Municipal Comprehensive Plans relative to the Countywide Visioning and Planning Process
- Energy Aspects

## RESOURCE PROTECTION

- Assess sufficiency of policies protecting wetlands, surface waters, springsheds, groundwater, wellfields, and water quality, including linkages with stormwater management and promotion of low-impact development (LID) techniques
- Assess water conservation and reuse strategies
- Develop effective approaches to interjurisdictional and interagency coordination regarding protection of resources (Strategic Ecosystems, wetlands and surface waters, groundwater, etc.)
- Review State and Federal agency listings for threatened and endangered species to determine if adjustments are needed, and assess related State and Federal Management Plans
- Evaluate need for Air Quality Program
- Evaluate various planning initiatives as implementation mechanisms by the County (e.g. Special Area Plans for Strategic Ecosystems) in light of budgetary constraints and assess how these issues should be addressed within those constraints

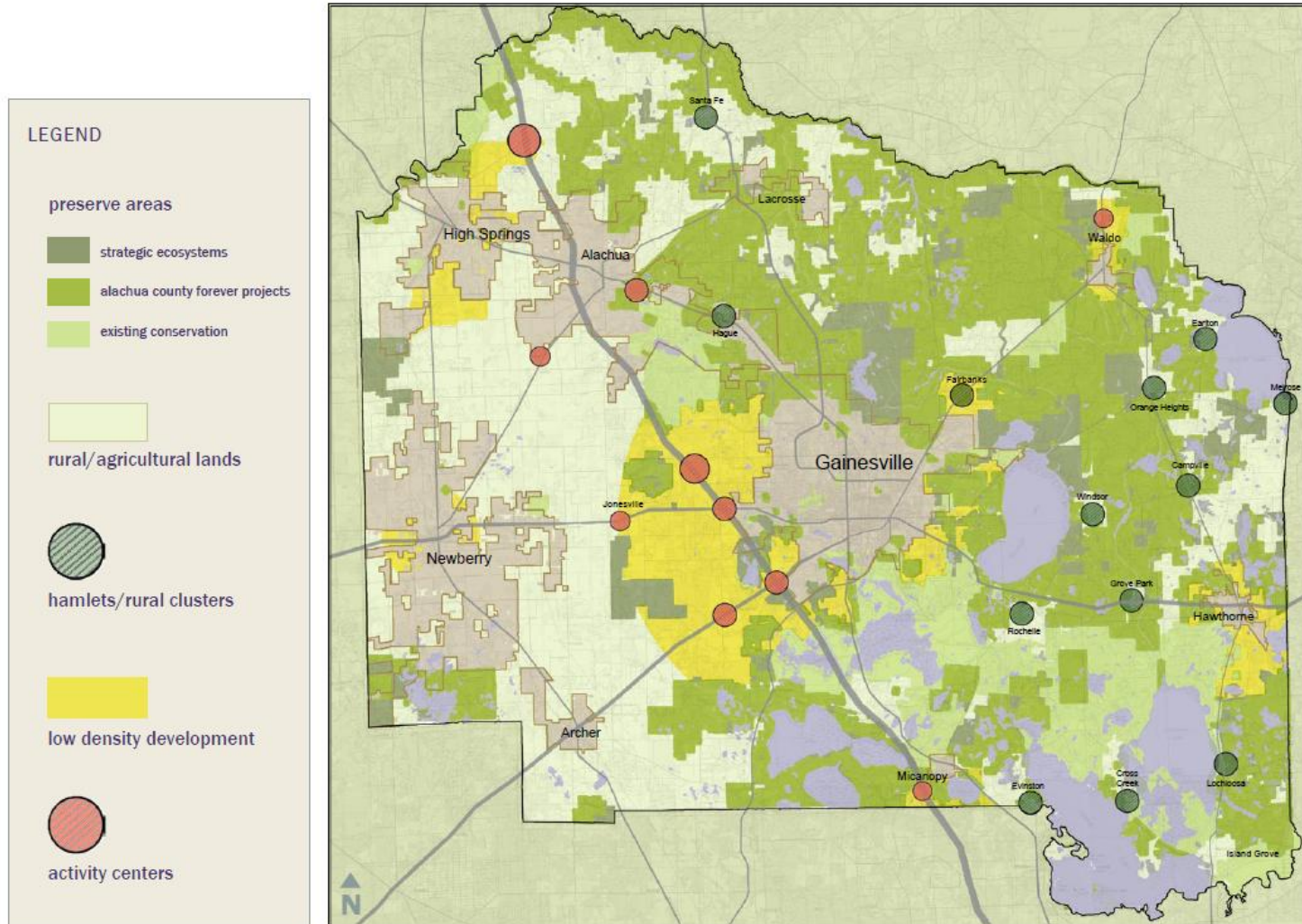


## HOUSING

- Assess how Plan policies and implementation impact the cost of housing
- Assess need to require affordable housing in all developments and consider funding sources to provide affordable housing retroactively in existing development
- Address recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (due by Dec. 08)
- Assess special needs housing and how to best coordinate to meet needs
- Evaluate effectiveness of Plan in promoting affordable housing, including a range of housing types and lot sizes and policies promoting live/work units

### Countywide Vision and Conceptual Land Use Plan

#### CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN FOR THE URBAN AND EXTRATERRITORIAL RESERVE AREAS



## CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN | DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

### PRESERVED AREAS

- Lands that have been identified as environmentally sensitive
- Many are either designated as parks, conservation areas or strategic ecosystems
- Can be in either private or public ownership
- Very limited or no development in these areas
- Passive recreational activities can occur here
- Can provide buffers and greenbelts between urbanized areas

### RURAL/AGRICULTURAL LANDS

- Promotes use of land for active agricultural activities or limited residential development
- Encourages residential development that is designed to preserve more open space/agricultural land
- Incorporates concepts such as clustering and buffers to protect rural viewsheds and preserve rural character
- Open spaces can also serve as active greenbelts or provide opportunities for recreation



### HAMLETS/RURAL CLUSTERS

- A traditional small town settlement containing limited commercial and civic uses with some surrounding residential
- The focal point for a rural community, often occurring at a crossroads
- Rural cluster development is designed to enhance the unique sense of place and character reflective of the community history



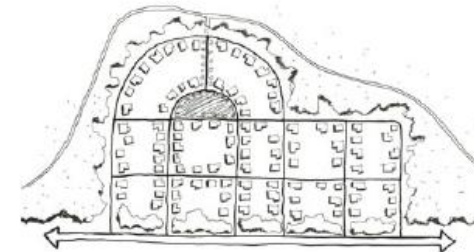
### ACTIVITY CENTERS

- Provides for the concentration of a mixture of higher intensity and density land uses designed to be compact, walkable and accessible by a multi-modal transportation system
- Can range in size from neighborhood scale to regional scale
- Likely focused on either retail or employment uses with supporting residential, institutional or office



### LOW DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

- Low density residential neighborhoods with small blocks and multiple access points for auto, pedestrian and bicyclists
- Designed to provide multiple routes to access the neighborhood
- Can support limited neighborhood commercial
- Could be sited within walking distance of schools, libraries, recreational facilities or other civic centers
- Provision of urban services within these areas
- Can support lower density uses such as agricultural and open space as appropriate



## Countywide Visioning and Planning Committee Conceptual Plan Objectives

### Guiding Principles

- Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries.
- Create greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities utilizing public lands, conservation easements, transfer development rights, and other tools.
- Preserve the unique character of existing downtowns and town centers.
- Focus future annexations primarily on enclaves, urbanized areas, greenbelts and future growth corridors.
- Promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns.
- Protect and maintain private property rights.
- Ensure equal participation by municipalities, residents and the county in planning for the unincorporated areas with regard to buffers and all other aspects of Countywide Visioning and Planning Conceptual Plan Objectives.
- Facilitate relationship building and communication between unincorporated communities and municipalities in Alachua County.
- Pursue extraterritorial joint planning concerning major development in accordance with Comp Plans and other legislatively approved tools.
- Pursue policies jointly that protect key natural resources
- Promote the creation of local renewable energy and energy efficiency policies and goals, as well as implementation plans to achieve them.

### Action Strategies

#### Intergovernmental Coordination

- Create a multi-jurisdictional task force to amend the Boundary Adjustment Act
- Pursue legislation to allow for the easier annexation of enclaves
- Adopt a new model template for transition of service agreements that distinguishes between rural and urban services



## Comprehensive Planning

Enter into joint planning area agreements for the unincorporated areas to:

- Evaluate county and municipal comprehensive plans within the context of the countywide vision.
- Encourage municipalities to integrate the Countywide Visioning and Planning Guiding Principles into county and municipal comprehensive plans.
- Develop special area plans within each community's Reserve Area and Extraterritorial Reserve Area based upon the countywide vision and develop joint planning processes.
- Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.
- Create a Springs Protection and Strategic Resources overlay district in the northwest quadrant of the county.
- Work with the School Board to protect neighborhood school districts as growth occurs county-wide.

## Direct Growth Toward Existing Centers

- Develop strategies and mechanisms to provide technical planning assistance to all communities to implement these action strategies.
- Seek funds to assist small towns in funding needed infrastructure improvements to build capacity and spur downtown revitalization.
- Develop a countywide economic development strategy to identify opportunities for growth in each municipality consistent with each individual community's economic goals and current economic development plans.

## City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan Implementing Goals, Objectives and Policies

### Guiding Principles

- **Concentrate future growth within existing municipal boundaries.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Policy 1.3.f The City of Alachua shall pursue the establishment of activity centers to guide the placement and design of commercial and business areas.

Goal 2: Innovative Design Standards: The City shall utilize innovative design standards to discourage urban sprawl, provide aesthetic standards, promote open space and preserve rural character.

- See Goal 8 and subsequent objectives and policies (listed below)

*City of Alachua Recreation Element*

Policy 1.2.e: The City shall develop passive parks and greenways that satisfy the established levels of service, and are in harmony with the Conservation Element of this plan.

- **Create greenbelts/open spaces as buffers between communities utilizing public lands, conservation easements, transfer development rights, and other tools.**

*City of Alachua Vision Element*

Goal Four: Preservation of the Natural Environment

The rural character of the City of Alachua is one of its most important assets. Many people live in Alachua because of its rolling hills and small-town charm. In an effort to preserve the rural character of Alachua, the community adopted goals and strategies to preserve open space and farmlands.

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Policy 1.1.d Rural conservation subdivision option: To maintain the rural character, open space, and natural features and preserve the viability of agricultural operations within the agriculture areas, conservation subdivisions shall be allowed as a subdivision option within the Agriculture land use category. Standards for the conservation subdivision are found in Objective 2.3.

Objective 2.3 Establishes Conservation Subdivision Standards

Objective 2.5 Establishes Open Space Standards

*City of Alachua Conservation and Open Space Element*

Objective 1.11: The City shall work to preserve native ecosystems and the natural aesthetic beauty and charm of Alachua by ensuring the provision of open spaces and green linkages throughout the City, designed for the enjoyment of the citizenry.

Implementing policies 1.11.a through 1.11.e.

*City of Alachua Community Facilities & Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element*

Policy 5.1.d: The City shall prioritize the acquisition of high aquifer recharge areas for protection as conservation or open space areas and investigate the future use of bonds, lease agreements, property donations, private or public trusts and partnerships, and grants to achieve these purchases.

- **Preserve the unique character of existing downtowns and town centers.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Policy 1.3.c Central Business District

The Central Business District land use category is established to provide an area that forms the City's center for financial, commercial, governmental, professional, and cultural activities. This category is to encourage the development of a central business district as a focal point for the community that provides the services for people to live, work and shop. The following uses are allowed in the Central Business District...

Objectives 3.2 through 3.10 establish policies for preservation of historical structures or resources to preserve the unique character of existing downtown or town centers.

Goal 4 establishes infill and redevelopment standards to encourage development within the City's Downtown Redevelopment Area and encourage development within existing municipal boundaries.

*City of Alachua Economic Element*

Objective 1.7 establishes policies for the preservation of the Central Business District and to preserve the historic value of the City of Alachua downtown.

- **Focus future annexations primarily on enclaves, urbanized areas, greenbelts and future growth corridors.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Goal 8: Countywide Visioning and Planning Process Conceptual Urban Reserve Land Use Map: The City of Alachua shall recognize the CVPC Conceptual Land Use Map adopted on May 19, 2005, and as may be revised pursuant to the Boundary Adjustment Act (BAA), in order to implement its vision for the City of Alachua and to guide land use and future development within its Urban and Extra-Territorial Reserve Areas.

- See Policies 8.1.2 through 8.1.10 below.



*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.5 The City shall coordinate annexations and joint planning issues with Alachua County and with the other municipalities within the County.

Policy 1.5.b Beginning in 2005, the City shall proceed with a process to annex of all enclaves within the City limits of Alachua.

- **Promote fiscally and energy efficient growth and land use patterns.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Policy 2.1.a.5 Residential Planned Developments (PD): The City shall establish flexible development and use regulations for residential PDs for use within residential land use categories. Those regulations shall be developed to achieve the following... Conservation of materials, financial resources and energy through efficient design of infrastructure.

Policy 8.1.2: The area around Medical Manager and the IFAS Dairy Unit should remain Agricultural and become an area where the City could promote Agri-Business activities.

Policy 8.1.3: The area near Moltech should be shown as Industrial.

Policy 8.1.4: The area owned by John Freeland, to the west of Turkey Creek, and north of San Felasco Hammock State Park (SFHSP), should be shown as Medium Low Density Residential, with a preservation buffer along the property line near SFHSP.

Policy 8.1.5: The area that runs north of the City limits, along CR 241, should remain Agricultural, since most of this area is environmentally sensitive with many areas of wetlands and floodplains.

Policy 8.1.6: The area along the south side of US 441 should be shown as Mixed Use Medium Density Residential since it is between two employment centers. This designation would allow for residential opportunities in close proximity to Progress Corporate Park, Alachua Professional Center and the future site of a satellite campus of Santa Fe Community College.

Policy 8.1.7: The area along CR 235 at CR 235A should be designated as Mixed Use Medium Density Residential to promote housing locations close to major employment centers, such as the Dollar General and planned Wal-Mart Distribution Centers.

Policy 8.1.8: The San Felasco Hammock State Park should be designated as Conservation.

Policy 8.1.9: The area currently within the existing and proposed Urban Reserve Area to the north of the city limits should remain Agriculture with publicly-owned conservation areas designed as Conservation.

Policy 8.1.10: Those areas within the existing and proposed Urban Reserve Areas to the west of the existing city limits should be designated as Very Low Density Residential, to reflect the character of the existing residential development in this area.

*City of Alachua Traffic Circulation Element*

OBJECTIVE.1.5 The City shall require that all traffic circulation improvements be consistent with and complement the future land uses on the Future Land Use Map.

*City of Alachua Community Facilities & Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Wastewater service will be made available to new development in a manner to promote compact urban growth, promoting development where wastewater service is available, and discouraging urban sprawl.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 Prioritize and execute needed system improvements in a manner which protects existing investments, promotes orderly growth, and is consistent with the Capital Improvements Element and Capital Improvements Program of this Plan.

- **Protect and maintain private property rights.**
- **Ensure equal participation by municipalities, residents and the county in planning for the unincorporated areas with regard to buffers and all other aspects of Countywide Visioning and Planning Conceptual Plan Objectives.**

*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

Policy 1.5.f: The City acknowledges its participation in a countywide visioning and planning process that culminated with the adoption of a countywide policy statement and conceptual land use map in June 2005. These documents will guide land use and development efforts within our Urban and Extra-Territorial Reserve Areas. In furtherance of this countywide visioning and planning process, the City pledges to continue to work in this collegial setting and to negotiate Joint Planning Agreements with Alachua County in support of that vision.

- **Facilitate relationship building and communication between unincorporated communities and municipalities in Alachua County.**

*City of Alachua Recreation Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.4: Partnerships

The City shall improve on its federal, state, regional and local, public and private partnerships to provide recreational facilities to residents and visitors.

*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

GOAL 1: ESTABLISH PROCESSES AMONG THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES TO ACHIEVE COORDINATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, PROMOTE COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROMOTE THE EFFICIENT USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES AMONG GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES.

- Subsequent objectives and policies of Goal 1.

- **Pursue extraterritorial joint planning concerning major development in accordance with Comp Plans and other legislatively approved tools.**

*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

- Goal 1 and subsequent objectives and policies.

*City of Alachua Traffic Circulation Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.6 The City shall coordinate its traffic circulation planning efforts with the Florida Department of Transportation and Alachua County for consistency with their Transportation Improvement Plans.

- **Pursue policies jointly that protect key natural resources**

*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.4 The City shall coordinate with the Suwannee River Water Management District, Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection regarding all development proposals with the potential for impacting the water resources of the City.

*City of Alachua Conservation and Open Space Element*

Policy 1.2.d The City shall coordinate with the City of Gainesville, City of High Springs, and Alachua County to ensure the protection of native communities and ecosystems that exist across jurisdictional boundaries.

- **Promote the creation of local renewable energy and energy efficiency policies and goals, as well as implementation plans to achieve them.**

## **Action Strategies**

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

- **Create a multi-jurisdictional task force to amend the Boundary Adjustment Act**
- **Pursue legislation to allow for the easier annexation of enclaves**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

- See Goal 8 and subsequent objectives and policies (above and below).
- **Adopt a new model template for transition of service agreements that distinguishes between rural and urban services**

## Comprehensive Planning

Enter into joint planning area agreements for the unincorporated areas to:

- **Evaluate county and municipal comprehensive plans within the context of the countywide vision.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

**Goal 8:** Countywide Visioning and Planning Process (CVPC) Conceptual Urban Reserve Land Use Map: The City of Alachua shall recognize the CVPC Conceptual Land Use Map adopted on May 19, 2005, and as may be revised pursuant to the Boundary Adjustment Act (BAA), in order to implement its vision for the City of Alachua and to guide land use and future development within its Urban and Extra-Territorial Reserve Areas.

- **Encourage municipalities to integrate the Countywide Visioning and Planning Guiding Principals into county and municipal comprehensive plans.**
- **Develop special area plans within each community's Reserve Area and Extraterritorial Reserve Area based upon the countywide vision and develop joint planning processes.**
- **Create an incentive program to encourage private landowners to keep their lands in active agricultural use or as undeveloped preserve areas.**

*City of Alachua Future Land Use Element*

Policy 1.1.d Rural conservation subdivision option: To maintain the rural character, open space, and natural features and preserve the viability of agricultural operations within the agriculture areas, conservation subdivisions shall be allowed as a subdivision option within the Agriculture land use category. Standards for the conservation subdivision are found in Objective 2.3.

*City of Alachua Economic Element*

Policy 1.4.a Allow for flexible, reasonable, and complimentary nonconforming uses on land with agricultural land use and zoning to maintain the economic viability of the land.

*City of Alachua Community Facilities & Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element*

Policy 5.1.d: The City shall prioritize the acquisition of high aquifer recharge areas for protection as conservation or open space areas and investigate the future use of ... private or public trusts and partnerships... to achieve these purchases.

- **Create a Springs Protection and Strategic Resources overlay district in the northwest quadrant of the county.**
- **Work with the School Board to protect neighborhood school districts as growth occurs county-wide.**

*City of Alachua Intergovernmental Coordination Element*

OBJECTIVE 1.1 The City, within one year of adoption of this element, shall enter into interlocal agreements or other formal agreements that describe joint planning processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with the School Board of Alachua County, Suwannee River Water Management District, Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, the City of High Springs and other units of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of the land.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 The City shall provide the City of Gainesville, the City of High Springs, the Suwannee River Water Management District, the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council and the Florida Department of Community Affairs, and any other affected agency the opportunity to comment on Comprehensive Plan amendments, rezonings, and other development proposals.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 The City shall coordinate the establishment and amendment of level of service standards for public facilities with State and local entities having operational and maintenance responsibility for such facilities prior to the adoption or any amendment affecting level of service standards.

The City of Alachua Public School Facilities Element also contains goals and objectives to implement this action strategy.

**Direct Growth Toward Existing Centers**

- Develop strategies and mechanisms to provide technical planning assistance to all communities to implement these action strategies.
- Seek funds to assist small towns in funding needed infrastructure improvements to build capacity and spur downtown revitalization.
- Develop a countywide economic development strategy to identify opportunities for growth in each municipality consistent with each individual community's economic goals and current economic development plans.

*City of Alachua Vision Element*

**Goal One: Economic Development**

The City of Alachua has a unique business climate. The City is home to corporations, technology incubators, local businesses, and start-up companies. The US 441 corridor is beginning to develop into a “corporate corridor” with businesses, such as Sabine and JA Webster, and corporate campuses such as the Progress Corporate Park and Alachua Professional Center. Alachua desires to continue to be a home to innovative businesses that want to be partners with the community.

## Health Care Advisory Board Report & Recommendations

November 19, 2008

[HEALTH CARE ADVISORY BOARD COMMUNITY HEALTH  
ELEMENT EAR RECOMMENDATION]

### HEALTH CARE ADVISORY BOARD OVER-ARCHING RECOMMENDATION

Alachua County's health care system is increasingly overburdened by factors such as an aging and growing population, an unpredictable economy, and residents' sedentary lifestyles. To protect our most valuable resource—our citizens' health—it is imperative that our community prioritize health as a major local issue.

The Health Care Advisory Board recommends that the Alachua County Commission considers adopting a community health element into its comprehensive plan in order to impart reasonable value to individual and public health concerns, obviate potential impacts of future development on public health, and responsibly manage growth to better facilitate health care delivery and preserve the health of Alachua County residents to the best of the county's ability.

#### I. HOW HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES INTERCONNECT WITH LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY AND PLANNING

- At the county level, demands to support the statewide Medicaid match and the local public health system are rising.
- There is a need to address the quality of life issues of Alachua County residents and to explore the impact of County Health Funded Programs and other community-wide initiatives and service delivery.
- More recognition should be given to the potential health care implications and costs when considering development and growth opportunities.

#### II. HOW OUR RECOMMENDATION FITS IN WITH THE EVALUATION & APPRAISAL REPORT PROCESS

Chapter 163 section 163.3177 of the Florida Statutes, commonly referred to as the Florida Growth Management Act, sets forth that the comprehensive plan "shall consist of materials in such descriptive form, written or graphic, as may be appropriate to the prescription of principles, guidelines, and standards for the *orderly and balanced future economic, social, physical, environmental, and fiscal development of the area.*" Because community health is a



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compelling area of interest for our county, it should be addressed routinely as we strive for “order and balance” as our county develops.

While there are a variety of elements required in the comprehensive plan by Florida law, F.S. 163.3177(7)(k) allows for “such other elements as may be peculiar to, and necessary for, the area concerned and as are added to the comprehensive plan by the governing body upon the recommendation of the local planning agency.” These elements are otherwise known as “optional elements.”

Many counties in Florida, such as Pinellas and Palm Beach, have taken advantage of these allowable optional elements to incorporate health care and health and human services elements, respectively, into their comprehensive plans. Given our county’s vast public investment and poor health indicators and outcomes of our residents, and the changing landscape of the formalized health care system, we believe it is imperative that the county incorporate a community health element into the comprehensive plan. It is time to introduce an optional community health element to the comprehensive plan. Not including a community health element in the Alachua County comprehensive plan would be an error of omission.

Currently, the County is in phase II of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), a state-required process designed to allow the public to identify weaknesses in the comprehensive plan every seven years. During this process, the public’s recommendations are to be addressed in two general ways:

1. Amending or revising specific goals, objectives, and policies in the comprehensive plan.
2. Recommending the adoption of optional elements into the comprehensive plan that more thoroughly address community needs.

At the end of phase I of the EAR process, the Board of County Commissioners approved the public’s recommendation for considering ways to promote public (community) health including a possible public health element. The Health Care Advisory Board agreed that the proposed element should be renamed from a public health element to a community health element to reflect that county decision-making should consider the health of the community at-large. Additionally, “public health” is often associated with health departments and governmental services; thus, we want to ensure that the element’s name reflects the importance of communitywide involvement in this process.

Because this proposed element is not currently part of our comprehensive plan, Alachua County staff sought advice from WellFlorida Council and the Health Care Advisory Board to identify the most important health care goals and strategies that the County should include in the element

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to address current and future needs. WellFlorida Council facilitated Health Care Advisory Board meetings related to the EAR process. County staff also attended the meetings to provide technical assistance to the Health Care Advisory Board and provide a list of community health-related policies already addressed in the comprehensive plan.

### III. ALACHUA COUNTY'S ADULT HEALTH AT A GLANCE

A glimpse at the results from the 2007 *Florida Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)* survey for Alachua County yields some startling statistics:

- 63.3% of adults are overweight or obese.
- 22.2% of adults have been diagnosed with hypertension.
- 7.0% of adults have coronary heart disease, have had a heart attack or suffer from angina.
- 6.3% of adults have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- 26.7% of adults do not have a personal doctor.
- 22.9% of adults could not see the dentist in 2007 due to cost.
- 11.6% of adults could not see a doctor at least once during the past year due to cost.
- 13.1% of adults have no form whatsoever of health care insurance coverage.
- 27.4% of adults reduced or changed outdoor activity at some point during 2007 because the air quality was bad.
- 18.0% of adults were limited in activities in 2007 because of physical, mental or emotional problems.
- The uninsured rates, from the 2004 Florida Health Insurance Study by AHCA and UF, for 0-64 years of age are 13.4% (Alachua County) and 19.2% (Florida).

### IV. ALACHUA COUNTY'S CHILD HEALTH AT A GLANCE

Children's health in our county is also a concern as reflected in the data shown below:

- Asthma rates amongst Alachua County's youth have been consistently above the state average.
- Our teenagers are infected with sexually transmitted infections approximately 1.57 times the state average.
- Our children ages 5-11 are 1.36 times more likely than the state average to require hospitalization due to a non-fatal head injury.
- Our children ages 5-11 are 1.67 times more likely than the state average to require hospitalization due to other non-fatal unintentional injuries.

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- Our children ages 10-17 are 1.55 times more likely than the state average to be referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Over half of all Alachua County births are covered by Medicaid.
- 15.9% of teenage mothers ages 15-17 are having repeated births.
- Underlying some of these problems related to adults' and children's health and behaviors, 23% of our population lives in poverty. Further, the tightening of the economy will increase under- and unemployment; future access to health insurance coverage will be challenging for more and more residents as many will no longer have access to coverage through an employer or will not be able to participate in employer-sponsored health coverage due to lack of affordability.
- 6.2% of Alachua County Residents and 12.1% of Florida residents under 19 years old are uninsured according to a 2004 health insurance study.
- The infant mortality rate in Alachua County was 11 per 1,000 live births from 2003-2005.
- The uninsured rates, from the 2004 Florida Health Insurance Study by AHCA and UF, for 0-18 years of age are 6.2% (Alachua County) and 12.1% (Florida).

**V. ITEMS TO BE ADDRESSED IN A COMMUNITY HEALTH ELEMENT  
DESIGNED FOR THE ALACHUA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

As a result of the above challenges, it is imperative that Alachua County constructs a guiding framework that identifies and addresses current disparities in our health care system, while allowing the County to craft a vision for the future that provides the opportunity for all residents to maximize their health, the health of the environment and the overall community health of Alachua County. Fortunately, the County has a vehicle and an opportunity to develop this guiding framework for community health: the comprehensive plan.

**A. Detailed below are initial priority areas of focus upon which the community health element should be built:**

1. Accessible and affordable comprehensive care including primary medical care, specialty care, hospital care, dental care and behavioral health care.
2. Reduction of preventable chronic illness.
3. Reduction of obesity among adults and children;
4. Coordination among local health systems and entities.
5. Expansion of school-based health promotion and activities.
6. Sensitivity to needs of special populations and those populations affected by health disparities.

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- B. Potential strategies to address these priority areas may include:**
- Incentivize development that would encourage increased physical activity and exercise.
  - Incentivize economic development among businesses and industry that increase access to health care coverage insurance for their employees.
  - Incentivize economic development among businesses and industries that minimize their negative impact or promote a positive impact on the natural environment.
  - Encourage the location of community health resources in ways that promote ease of access by residents.
  - Encourage the location of and ease of access to farmer’s markets in underserved communities to promote healthy eating
  - Encourage location of community health resources that enhances access to those resources by public transportation.
  - Develop standards for available community health services and facilities as a part of concurrency requirements.
  - Develop goals to encourage information sharing and coordination among community health resources.
  - Foster development projects that demonstrate coordination with local health system partners and resources as appropriate.
  - Reinforce and highlight areas of the current comprehensive plan that have a positive impact on community health, especially in the priority areas. (See final section.)
  - Develop an ongoing needs assessment schedule that should be prescribed in order to identify current and emerging priorities.
- C. Finally, the development of a community health element should adhere to these guiding principles:**
- As future economic, social, physical, environmental, and fiscal development is taken into account in planning decisions, so should community health implications.
  - As required in the Florida Growth Management Act, all comprehensive plan elements should be financially and fiscally feasible. As such, the approach of the community health element should be that of vision for the future rather than specific standards or hurdles that must be cleared prior to growth. The community health element will be a method to interject community health interests into the decision processes for future growth and development.
  - As a formal part of the comprehensive plan, the community health element should ensure that the public is an equal partner and has a voice in decisions affecting the health and environment of the County.



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- The long-term vision associated with a comprehensive plan is consistent with preventive approach to community health, which has been shown to be most cost effective over time.

**VI. HOW COMMUNITY HEALTH IS CURRENTLY ADDRESSED IN THE ALACHUA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

In addition to the above recommendations, we wish to reiterate the importance of community-health related goals and objectives that are already in the comprehensive plan in our proposed community health element.

Below are the health care issues of importance identified by the Health Care Advisory Board and how they are addressed in the current comprehensive plan:

**A. Preventable Chronic Illness**

Emphasize recreation system and open space benefits.

**Intergovernmental Coordination Element (ICE)**

ICE Policy 3.2. Alachua County shall coordinate with private groups, the School Board, municipalities in the County, the State and Federal Government on the implementation of a County-wide park system as provided for in Objective 1.2 and its implementing policies and policy 1.3.2 of the Recreation Element.

**Recreation Element**

- REC Pol. 1.2.3 The County shall pursue agreements or contracts with the School Board of Alachua County to jointly provide neighborhood recreation facilities at or adjacent to school grounds which would promote the most efficient use of public lands to meet recreation needs. Such agreements will include provisions for capital improvements, operations and maintenance and liability.
- REC Pol. 1.2.7 The County shall investigate and utilize methods to increase private sector participation in provision of recreation facilities and programs including development incentives and/or regulations, e.g., density and intensity bonuses, provision of easements and land dedications.
- RECPol.1.3.2 The County shall coordinate efforts with the State and the municipalities to establish a network of recreational trails and public access that would connect natural and cultural features of the County and provide educational and recreational value to Alachua County citizens

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REC Pol. 1.1.2 The County shall adopt and maintain, at a minimum, the following level of service standards for recreation: (1) 0.5 acres of improved activity-based recreation sites per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County; (2) 5.0 acres of improved resource-based recreation sites per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County. The level of service standards shall consider the location of the site and the population within the service areas for the park types, as set forth in Table 1 of this Element. The level of service standards shall account for changes in population due to annexation. Within twelve (12) months of completion and adoption of a county-wide Recreation Master Plan, the County shall pursue a comprehensive plan amendment to revise the level of service standards and Table 1.

REC Pol. 1.1.4 The criteria for the acquisition and development of recreation sites shall be determined by the Recreation Master Plan and Table 1 of this element which provides the range of park types, service areas, population served, typical size and typical facilities and site characteristics for different types of recreation sites. Park districts shall be established through the Master Plan process and the existing level of service for the individual districts determined. Areas with the lowest level of service, compared to the adopted level of service standard, shall be given priority for the acquisition and development of recreation facilities and programs.

Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE)

COSE Objective 5.2- Preserve or establish open space within developments to ensure public health, safety and welfare and to protect recreational and natural resources and functions.

***B. Obesity***

Transportation/land use linkages below; Also recreation same as above.

Transportation Mobility Element

GOAL

ESTABLISH A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES FOR THE NEEDS OF PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, TRANSIT USERS, MOTORIZED-VEHICLE USERS, USERS OF RAIL AND AVIATION FACILITIES, AND IS SENSITIVE TO THE CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AMENITIES OF ALACHUA COUNTY.

Policy 1.1.7 Proposed development shall be reviewed during the Development Review process for the provision of adequate and safe on-site circulation, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transit facilities, access modifications, loading facilities, and parking facilities. In addition to Comprehensive Plan policies, such review shall include FDOT access management standards. Design criteria, standards, and requirements to

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implement this policy shall be included in the update of the land development regulations.

## OBJECTIVE 1.6

Provide a system of safe, pleasant, convenient, and continuous bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community.

- Policy 1.6.3 Alachua County will promote the development of a multi-modal transportation system consistent with the Alachua Countywide Bicycle Master Plan. Bicycle facility enhancement projects shall be considered for funding based on criteria in the Bicycle Master Plan.
- Policy 1.6.4 Bicycle and pedestrian access for recreation and transportation throughout the community shall be incorporated into a linked open space network, or greenways system, consistent with Objective 6.3 of the Conservation and Open Space Element.
- Policy 1.6.5 The County shall design and locate recreation sites to encourage and expand bicycle and pedestrian access consistent with the Recreation Element.

## Future Land Use Element

## OBJECTIVE 1.2

Provide for adequate future urban residential development that includes a full range of housing types and densities to serve different segments of the housing market, designed to be integrated and connected with surrounding neighborhoods and the community, with opportunities for recreation and other mixed uses within walking or bicycling distance.

- Policy 1.2.2 Residential areas shall allow for mixed uses in traditional neighborhood development free from the influence and encroachment of incompatible land uses, such as heavy industrial, and inappropriately scaled or designed developments, such as large-scale retail. In mixed use traditional neighborhood developments, appropriately scaled and designed non-residential land uses are compatible with the single family or multi-family residential development. Mixed use traditional neighborhood developments shall be allowed in residential zoning districts and through the planned development process.
- Policy 1.2.1. Residential areas shall be designed to provide for an interconnected system of internal circulation, including the provision of streets dedicated to the public connecting the residential area to the major street system. New development shall not preclude public access to the development. Residential areas shall also be designed to provide for substantial interconnectivity between adjacent developments and within developments, except where such connectivity is precluded by constraints resulting from the physical layout of existing development or environmental features. The land development



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regulations shall detail the requirements for public access and substantial interconnectivity based on standards such as the connectivity index, maximum separations between connections to adjacent developments, and rules relative to hours, operations and public safety considerations for any restriction of access through use of gates.

**OBJECTIVE 1.4**

Encourage the use of innovative concepts for residential development to allow for appropriate mixed of housing types and related non-residential uses, adequately served by necessary supporting facilities, in an efficient, environmentally sensitive, and attractive manner.

- Policy 1.4.2** Planned developments or traditional neighborhood developments with village centers are strongly encouraged. Land development regulations shall provide for traditional neighborhood developments including village centers within residential zoning districts, subject to specific design and performance criteria to achieve at a minimum:
- a. The protection of the natural environment and integration with the topography and natural features of the site.
  - b. The creation of usable interconnected open space and recreational facilities on the development site.
  - c. Clustered areas with higher net densities than may be allowed through conventional zoning, with development organized along a density and intensity gradient suitable to the site and surrounding uses.
  - d. A sense of community through:
    1. Well-defined centers and edges, with public or civic space or civic use as an organizing element around which other development is located.
    2. An integrated range of housing types and lot sizes to serve a variety of age and income groups.
  - e. Safe, comfortable, and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, and transit facilities when warranted based on existing or planned bus service determined through consultation with the appropriate transit provider, to the development and the surrounding community. A grid system of interconnecting streets and blocks shall provide multiple routes from origins to destinations. The street grid system shall be designed as multi-use space such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served.

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Policy 1.5.2 In addition to the facilities for which level of service standards are adopted as part of the concurrency management system of this Plan, other facilities that should be adequate to serve new urban residential areas include:

- a. local streets;
- b. police, fire and emergency medical service protection;
- c. pedestrian and bicycle network

**OBJECTIVE 2.1**

Provide for the concentration of mixtures of higher intensity and density land uses through designation of Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map, with standards to ensure pedestrian-friendly compact centers connected to a multi-modal transportation system and integrated with surrounding uses in the urban area.

Policy 2.1.6 **Mixed Uses:** A balanced mixture of uses shall be provided to reduce overall trip lengths, to support pedestrian, bicycle and transit opportunities and create pedestrian friendly streetscapes.

Policy 2.1.8 **Site and Building Design:** Site and building design and scale shall be integrated within the surrounding community. Architectural and site design techniques shall be used to define pedestrian and public space and to provide human scale with the Activity Center. At a minimum Activity Center sites and buildings shall achieve the following:

[...]

- c. The design shall include a pedestrian circulation system to connect the non-residential uses with residential uses and areas. Primary pedestrian routes and bikeways shall coincide with the street system or other public space such as parks or squares, and shall avoid routes through parking lots or at the rear of developments.
- d. Streets and roads shall be fronted by design features including sidewalks which define and contribute to a pedestrian street character. Building design, placement, and entrance shall be at a pedestrian scale and oriented towards streets or other public space such as parks or squares.
- e. Automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation shall be equitably served by the street system. Development shall provide pedestrian and bicycle-friendly access, and shall provide transit facilities to the development and the surrounding community. [...]

Policy 2.1.12 **Community Green Space.** Landscapes and buffers shall be provided on at least 20% of the Activity Center site, including public open space. Paved areas shall require 50% shading as specified

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in the land development regulations, based on factors such as scale of development and performance standards.

## Recreation Element

Policy 1.3.1 The County shall design and locate recreation sites to encourage and expand access by transportation modes other than automobiles such as pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit by implementing the following measures:

1. Construct facilities at recreation sites such as bus stops and shelters along bus routes, bicycle trails and racks and sidewalks for pedestrian access to local neighborhoods, schools and places of public assembly.
2. When assessing the location of new recreation sites, accessibility by transportation modes such as pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit shall be considered a favorable factor along with the recommendations provided by the Recreation Master Plan.
3. County shall develop minimum design standards for recreation sites.

***C. Mental Health/ Substance Abuse (Alcohol / Drugs)***

Emphasize social recreation

REC Pol. 1.2.5 The County shall pursue grant funding from State and Federal sources for development and/or acquisition of park lands and recreation facilities and encourage the State to provide more assistance to the community for the provision of activity-based parks that provide healthy citizen interaction, alternative activities for youth and community growth and assist in reduction of criminal activity.

***D. Uninsured/Health Care Affordability/ Undocumented Ind. Access/  
Dental Access (Children And Adults)***

Promote economic development.

## ECONOMIC ELEMENT OBJECTIVE 1.4

Provide 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 eliminate blighted commercial and industrial uses. [ ... ]

***E. Lack Of Coordinated Health Care Systems***

Land Use Element Facilities siting.

Future Land Use Element

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- Policy 1.2.3 Residential care facilities shall be allowed in residential areas and shall be designed and located to maintain compatibility with the existing residential character of the area neighborhoods, and shall be sufficiently dispersed to afford client the opportunity for community integration and to avoid the concentration of residential care facilities.
- Policy 1.2.4 all new residential development in the urban cluster shall:
  - a. Be economically and efficiently served by supporting community facilities, and service such as streets, utilities, public educational facilities, public protection.
- (Obj.) 5.4.5 HEALTH FACILITIES
  - Major health facilities should be accessible by mass transit.
  - Policy 5.4.5.1 Medical support facilities and services shall locate in close proximity to hospitals.
  - Policy 5.4.5.2 New major health facilities, e.g., hospitals and medical complexes, shall be located in areas designated for Institutional/Medical land uses on the Future Land Use Map. This land use category shall also provide for related facilities such as pharmacies, medical suppliers, lodging, restaurants, and accessory facilities, subject to performance standards in the land development regulations.
  - Policy 5.4.5.3 Other health facilities such as outpatient medical clinics, including emergency facilities and nursing homes, may be allowed in the urban cluster in areas designated on the Future Land Use Map for Institutional, Institutional/Medical, Commercial, Medium-High Density Residential, and High Density Residential, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.
  - Policy 5.4.5.4 Outpatient clinics, including emergency facilities, may be allowed in areas designated for Rural/Agricultural uses and Rural Clusters on the Future Land Use Map subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.
  - Policy 5.4.6 COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS: Community Service Organizations, such as voluntary organizations and clubs engaged in civic, charitable, and related activities, shall be considered as institutional uses. Special provisions shall be made in the land development regulations to address the unique needs of those uses, including criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, clientele, and other impacts. Some activities not typical for residential areas such as the provision of temporary residences, homeless shelters, and community residential homes not otherwise exempted by Florida Statutes may be allowed in the urban cluster through the special use permit process. New homeless shelters shall be subject to

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performance criteria regarding site, size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

## Intergovernmental Coordination Element

## OBJECTIVE 3

Coordinate planning activities mandated by various elements of the comprehensive plan with other local governments, school boards, other unity of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land, the region, and the state.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Coordinate the provision of services and information.

Policy 5.5 Alachua County shall continue to be a member of the Regional Trauma Agency staffed by the North Central Florida Health Planning Council in order to improve inter-County emergency medical services and shall encourage all its adjacent counties to also become members of the Regional Trauma Agency.

Policy 5.7 Alachua County shall continue to pursue developing and implementing inter-local agreements with municipalities on the following issues:

[ . . . ] 3) emergency medical services [ . . . ]

**F. Need For Enhanced School Based Health Promotions And Activities / Food**

Public School Facilities Element (Effective 10/3/08) & ICE

**G. Special Needs Populations—Seniors, Children, Disabled, Homeless, And Other Populations Affected By Health Disparities.**

ICE Policy 3.5 Alachua County shall facilitate and encourage partnerships and strategies with municipalities to address affordable housing needs on a Countywide basis building upon the established State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program implemented through the County's Local Housing Assistance Plan. Strategies shall focus on methods to promote distribution of affordable housing opportunities throughout the County through integration of other available State and Federal housing assistance and implementation of measures such as "fair share" housing allocation criteria to ensure availability of a mix of housing types, including lower cost housing, with accessibility to employment and services.

## Housing Element



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- Policy 1.2.4 Alachua County shall periodically review and evaluate its zoning and other regulations to ensure that requirements are reasonable and do not unduly limit opportunities for lower income groups to secure housing in desirable locations, consistent with the health safety, and welfare of the public.
- Policy 1.2.6 Alachua County shall provide flexibility for innovative housing design for nontraditional households and emerging home-based economic activities.

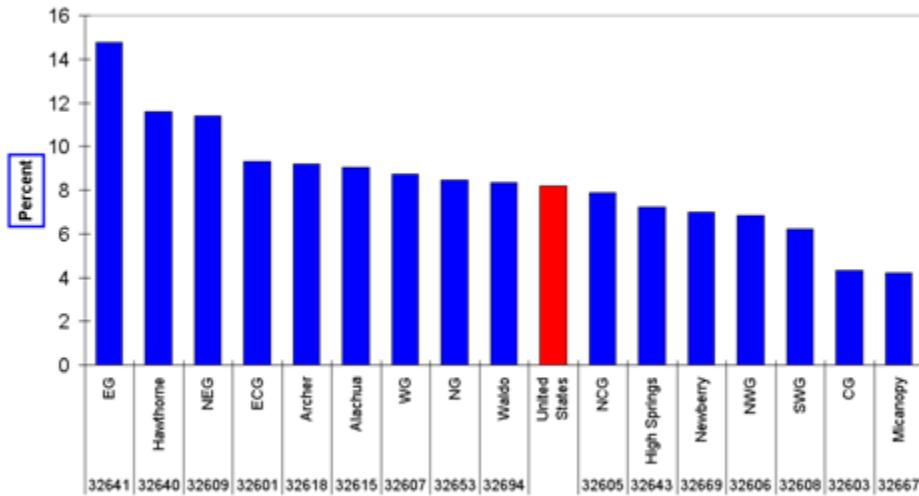
GOAL 3:

TO ENSURE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPPORTUNITY FOR THOSE WITH SPECIALIZED HOUSING NEEDS, PARTICULARLY THE ELDERLY, THE HOMELESS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, OR FARM WORKERS, ALACHUA COUNTY SHALL IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

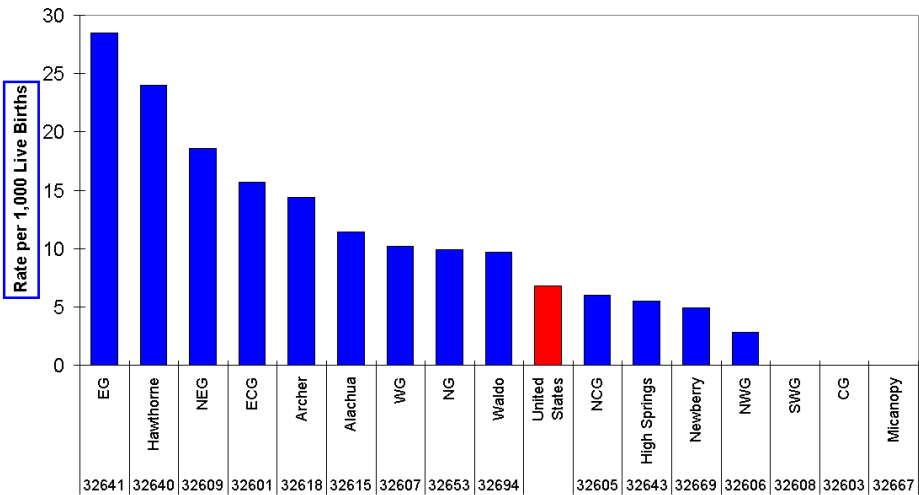
- OBJ 3.1 Alachua County shall provide access to housing opportunities for groups identified as having special needs.
- OBJ 3.2 Alachua County shall ensure that the land development regulations concerning the provision of housing for those with special needs comply, at a minimum with the statutory requirements.
- OBJ 3.3 Alachua County shall provide a dedicated funding source for the provision of Special Needs housing and form partnerships with local advocacy groups or organizations providing such housing.

**SELECTED COUNTY MEDICAL DATA BY ZIP CODE (SOURCE: DR. NANCY HARDT)**

**Low Weight Births, Alachua County, 2003-2005**



**Infant mortality, Alachua County, 2003-2005**





## Criteria for the Addition of Historic Resources to the Alachua County Historic Structures Registry<sup>33</sup>

The Alachua County Historic Structures Survey project was one of several historic preservation-related projects undertaken by Alachua County and the Alachua County Historical Commission. The project involved a historic structures survey that located and documented historic resources located within the unincorporated areas of Alachua County. It was funded by the County with assistance from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. A historical overview of the county and a complete description of this project is found on the Alachua County Web site at [http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/histstruct/infosys/historic\\_survey.php](http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/histstruct/infosys/historic_survey.php).

Completed by Quatrefoil/Anderson Consulting in several phases between December of 1999 and June of 2000, the survey was required to base evaluations on significance of each historic resource on the criteria established by the National Register. This criteria is the established method of site evaluations throughout the United States. It provides a uniform, yet subjective, method of analysis throughout the preservation field. Additional structures can be added to the survey by nomination from citizens, following the same criteria. The structure must meet the approval of the Alachua County Historic Commission and the Alachua County Commission.

The nomination of property to the Alachua County Historic Structures Survey will be evaluated in terms of its potential eligibility as a contributing resource to a historic area or district in the county. Whether or not a potential historic district exists in the area is not taken into account at this juncture because this evaluation is based solely on the property's ability to convey its historic appearance as it stands today. Consequently, a building may be denoted as contributing due to its intact appearance but stands in an area where there is limited potential for a designated historic district due to a lack of clustered historic buildings or large amounts of non-historic infill construction.

The area of concern for future nominations consists of all the unincorporated area of Alachua County. Typically, these areas are rural or located near the city limits of a municipality. Most of the resources in the original survey date from the 1880's to the mid-twentieth century and are associated with the overall development of Alachua County. The design of the buildings and the materials used in their construction are consistent with contemporary national and statewide architectural trends. Most buildings show the influence of national styles, but, due to time and money constraints, are the product of local craftsmen and materials. Additional nominations should be consistent with the intentions of the original survey.

**Criteria for Evaluation:** The following is taken from criteria published by the United States Department of the Interior to evaluate properties for possible inclusion in the National Register. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, objects that possess integrity of locations, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history;
- That are associated with lives of persons significant in the past;
- That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Following the guidelines of the National Register, cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original

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<sup>33</sup> Historic Preservation- Local Registry Process under discussion for future implementation

locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the Alachua County Historic Structures Survey. However, such properties may qualify if they are integral parts of historic districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance;
- A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event;
- A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived;
- A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

**Nomination process for the Alachua County Historic Structures Survey:** The nomination of additional structures will follow this process. Any property owner, Alachua County citizen, or interested individual will complete the nomination form. The form will be submitted to: The Alachua County Growth Management Department, 10 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601, (352) 374-5249. Upon receipt of a nomination proposal, the following procedures will be carried out:

- The nomination proposal and all accompanying documentation will be evaluated by the professional staff of the Alachua County Growth Management Department and forwarded for consideration to the Alachua County Historic Commission. If possible, a staff or commission member will visit the site as a part of the evaluation process.
- The owner(s) of the property and the chief local elected officials will be notified in writing that the property is being proposed for nomination and given the opportunity to comment on the property.
- The proposal when submitted for consideration must have the recommendation of the Alachua County Historic Commission which is charged with reviewing all nomination proposals to the Alachua County Historic Structures Survey.
- Upon the favorable recommendation of the Alachua County Historic Commission, the nomination and all supporting documentation will be forwarded for final approval to the Alachua County Commission. Upon approval by the Alachua County Commission, the structure or property will be added to the existing Alachua County Historic Structures Survey by the Alachua County Growth Management Department.
- If the owner of a private property objects to the nomination, the property will not be listed, but the site may be submitted to the Alachua County Growth Management Department for a formal determination of eligibility for listing.
- The owner is then notified in writing as to the final decision.

The process will require a form documenting the historic resources will be submitted to The Alachua County Growth Management Department.

### Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Review Areas Addressed in Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Code

AHAC Areas of Review	Comprehensive Plan	Unified Land Development Code
1. Expedited processing of development order or permit approvals for affordable housing projects.	Housing Element (HE) Policy 1.2.2.c	
2. Modification of impact fee requirements, including reduction, waiver, or alternative methods of fee payment.	HE Policy 1.2.2.a, b	
3. Flexibility in densities.	Future Land Use Element (FLUE) Policy 1.1.4; HE Policy 1.2.1	Chapter 403, Article 3; Ch. 404.20(d) <sup>34</sup>
4. Reservation of infrastructure capacity.	HE Policy 1.2.2.d	Ch. 407.121(b) <sup>35</sup>
5. Allowance for affordable accessory dwelling units in residential districts.	FLUE Policy 1.3.6	Ch. 404.24
6. Reduction in parking and setback requirements.	HE Policy 1.2.2.f.	Ch. 407.18; Ch. 407.06
7. Allowance for flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line housing configurations.	FLUE Policy 1.3.7.3; FLUE Policy 1.3.8.3; HE Policy 1.2.2.f.	Ch. 403, Article 3
8. Modification of street requirements.		Ch. 407.80(c)(2)
9. Establishment of a process for local government to consider, before adoption, policies, procedures, regulations, ordinances or plans that increase the cost of housing.	HE Objective 1.2	
10. Development of an inventory list of locally-owned public lands appropriate for use as affordable housing.	HE Policy 1.1.8	
11. Support for development and growth near transportation hubs, major employers, and mixed-use centers.	FLUE General Strategy 1; FLUE Objective 2.1; HE Policy 1.1.4	Ch. 405.06

<sup>34</sup> For new developments containing at least 50% affordable housing.

<sup>35</sup> Concerns Traffic concurrency.

## AHAC Recommendations Concerning Specified Areas for Review

1. That the process to expedite building permits for affordable housing be revised to read: “Permits for affordable housing projects shall be available within six business days starting immediately after the day of submission of the application for the permit.”

BoCC Action: For profit and not-for-profit affordable housing permits shall be available within six days after the application is found sufficient

2. The Alachua County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) will be the clearinghouse to help staff determine how new regulations affect housing prices in Alachua County. AHAC will review new additions or revisions to staff sponsored comprehensive plan amendments, the Alachua County Building Code, and the Alachua County Land Development Regulations. The AHAC Chair in concert with staff will craft an “advisory paper” which will be presented to the Planning Commission or Board of County Commissioners as appropriate.

BoCC Action: Accept staff recommendation: Direct staff to establish a process to consider, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing, by requiring a staff analysis in staff reports for any recommended amendments to Land Development Regulations or to the Comprehensive Plan, and by continuing to invite the public to submit comments to the BoCC regarding the impact on housing affordability. Staff analysis would be required of any comprehensive plan amendments or land development regulation text amendments, prior to adoption, to evaluate the impact(s) on the cost of housing, and to incorporate the findings in the staff report. This would be implemented by revising procedures outlined in ULDC Chapter 402.

3. That the County monitor utilization of the Impact Fee Assistance Program and consider increasing the amount budgeted for the Program from the reduced amount of \$25,000 to the original amount of \$100,000 should demand for Program assistance justify an increase in funding.

BoCC Action: Approved the recommendation.

4. Regarding flexibility in densities for affordable housing, the Unified Land Development Code, Chapter 403, Article 3, implemented density based zoning districts that allow for flexible lot sizes and better utilization of densities allowed within land uses. The Unified Land Development Code contains a provision to allow mixed unit types by right (Single family and attached units) in residential zoning districts, allowing for more density and a greater range of unit prices. This in turn creates opportunities to include affordable housing units in market rate developments.

BoCC Action: No changes.

5. Regarding the reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low, low, and moderate income persons, current land development regulations allow for long term concurrency reservation for Affordable Housing Developments without utilizing the Planned Development process. The incentive of offering long term concurrency reservations with a development plan approval for an affordable housing development allows for long term multi-phase projects without the additional effort, time, and costs required to pursue a planned development zoning approval.

BoCC Action: No changes.

6. That the construction of new affordable housing not be penalized with density requirements when accessory dwelling units are proposed for that housing.

BoCC Action: The BoCC did not approve the AHAC recommendation and referred this issue to the Evaluation and Appraisal Report process.

7. Regarding reduction in parking and setback requirements for affordable housing, Chapter 407 allows flexibility in parking requirements by providing options for shared parking for mixed use projects or uses that are adjacent to one another and provides allowances for reductions in off street parking requirements.

BoCC Action: No changes.

8. Regarding allowance for flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line housing configurations, the Unified Land Development Code, Chapter 403, Article 3, implemented density based zoning districts that allow for flexible lot sizes. Allowances have been made in the ULDC to allow zero-lot-line housing configurations. For example, minimum side setbacks do not apply to zero-lot-line developments provided the building spacing requirements of the Florida Building Code, Table 600, are met.

BoCC Action: No changes.

9. That the County explore a reduction in street width requirements.

BoCC Action: No changes.

10. That the County re-evaluate locally-owned public lands with criteria such as the possible rezoning of suitable parcels and the potential for redevelopment of under-utilized property.

BoCC Action: Approved the recommendation.

11. Regarding support for development and growth near transportation hubs, major employers, and mixed-use center, this is a theme of many policies in the comprehensive plan. The land use and transportation connection is one of the major issue areas being evaluated as part of the EAR process. There were no recommended changes.

BoCC Action: No changes.

#### **Additional Recommendations Concerning Issues Raised by the AHAC**

12. Regarding Transfer of Development Rights, Alachua County has a current policy regarding this issue and is in the process of adopting regulations for implementation at this time. However, this process is not intended to or expected to impact housing affordability. There were no recommended changes.

BoCC Action: No changes.

13. That, beginning in Fiscal Year 2009, the County offer a 25% reduction in permit fees for Florida Green Building Coalition-certified affordable housing; that the County encourage all utilities serving Alachua County residents to provide rebates for Energy Star appliances and/or Florida Green Building Coalition-certified affordable housing construction.

BoCC Action: Did not approve the recommendation.

14. That advertisements promoting the County's affordable housing and impact fee relief programs be placed in the Builders Association of North Central Florida and Gainesville-Alachua County Association of Realtors' newsletters; that brochures explaining the County's affordable housing programs be placed with the Alachua County Housing Authority; and that brochures explaining the County's Impact Fee Assistance Program and Incentives for Building Affordable Housing (when finalized) be place with the Department of Growth Management's Building Division.

BoCC Action: Approved the recommendation.

15. Alachua County should ask its Legislative Affairs Director to consider discussion on the matter (Raise the State Housing Initiatives Partnership – SHIP – Program qualifying upper income limit to 140% of the Area Median Income for essential services personnel<sup>36</sup>) for action during the upcoming legislative session.

BoCC Action: Did not approve the recommendation.

16. Regarding concern that necessary rehabilitation reduces amount available for downpayment assistance, there were no recommended changes at this time.

BoCC Action: No changes.

17. That street right-of-way trees should not be required to be in place until the certificate of occupancy for an individual housing unit has been issued.

BoCC Action: Did not approve the recommendation.

18. That the County analyze proportionate fair share and its costs to affordable housing and that the County should consider reducing proportionate fair share costs for affordable housing either by some reduction in proportionate share fees or through mobility fees.

BoCC Action: Did not approve the recommendation.

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<sup>36</sup> The Alachua County Local Housing Assistance Plan defines essential service personnel as teachers and educators; school district, community college, and university employees; police; fire emergency services personnel; code enforcement personnel; health care personnel; and skilled building trades personnel.

19. Regarding inclusionary zoning/housing, staff conducted a thorough evaluation of this topic in 2003 as part of the Affordable Housing Study. In the report, it identified key factors that typically precede a community's decision to adopt a mandatory inclusionary housing policy. Those key factors are not present in the Alachua County housing market at this time. The current housing conditions do not indicate that the adoption of a mandatory inclusionary housing policy is presently warranted.

BoCC Action: Directed staff to present an update of the 2003 Affordable Housing Study.

20. That the County evaluate the Tax Collector's Lands Available and tax delinquent properties lists for vacant lots and abandoned property; that the County explore the possibility of acquiring property through a process similar to the City of Gainesville's rebuilding of condemned property for use as affordable housing.

BoCC Action: Requested the Financial Planning Group to evaluate the Tax Collector's Lands Available and tax delinquent properties lists, that the County explore the possibility of acquiring property through rebuilding condemned structures for use as affordable housing, and any other elements that the Financial Planning Group would deem appropriate; and referred to the County Manager the invitation of Mr. Kildee, of Flint, Michigan, as funds are available.



### Alachua County Roadway Level of Service Report, 2008

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
<b>Urban &amp; Transitioning Area County Roadways</b>											
Ft. Clarke Blvd	Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 23rd Avenue	D	2	14,300	16,400	No	100	D	1,494	606
Kinkaid Loop	Kinkaid Loop	Kinkaid Loop	D	2	2,950	14,600	No	0	C	898	10,752
NW 53rd Avenue (CR 235)	Waldo Road (SR 24)	US 441	D	2	12,000	16,400	Yes	0	C	0	4,400
NW 53rd Avenue (CR 235)	US 441	NW 43rd Street	D	2	16,900	16,400	Yes	50	C	0	-500
Millhopper Road (CR 235)	NW 43rd Street	Interstate 75	D	2	11,000	14,600	Yes	25	D	88	3,512
Millhopper Road (CR 235)	Interstate 75	NW 143rd (CR 241)	C	2	3,700	11,000	Yes	0	C	0	7,300
NW 143rd (CR 241)	Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 39th	D	2	12,000	15,500	Yes	50	C	3,000	500
NW 143rd (CR 241)	NW 39th Avenue	Millhopper Road	D	2	9,400	13,100	Yes	0	C	163	3,537
NW 23rd Avenue	NW 43rd Street	NW 55th Street	D	4	23,000	35,700	Yes	100	B	84	12,616
NW 23rd Avenue	NW 55th Street	NW 98th Street	D	2	18,000	21,300	No	100	D	2,781	519
NW 39th Avenue	Interstate 75	NW 115th Street	D	2	10,600	16,400	Yes	100	C	3,080	2,720
NW 39th Avenue	NW 115th Street	NW 143rd (CR 241)	D	2	10,000	15,500	Yes	0	C	3,690	1,810
NW 43rd Street	NW 23rd Avenue	Millhopper Road (CR 235)	D	4	30,000	35,700	Yes	100	C	3,520	2,180
NW 43rd Street	Millhopper Road (CR 235)	US 441	D	2	14,600	15,500	Yes	50	D	4,000	-3,100
NW 51st Street	NW 23rd Avenue	NW 39th Ave (SR 222)	D	2	10,300	14,600	Yes	100	D	82	4,218
NW 83rd Street	NW 39th Avenue (SR-222)	NW 23rd Avenue	D	2	13,800	16,400	Path	100	D	2,569	31
NW 98th Street	Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 39th Avenue	D	2	10,000	16,400	No	50	C	2,712	3,688
Rocky Point Road	SR 331 (Williston Road)	US 441	D	2	3,400	14,600	No	0	C	28	11,172
SE 43rd Street	University Ave (SR 26)	Hawthorne Road (SR 20)	D	2	3,850	14,600	No	100	C	0	10,750

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
SW 122nd Street (Parker Road)	Newberry Road (SR 26)	SW 24th Avenue	D	2	8,000	16,400	Yes	0	C	3,595	4,805
SW 122nd Street (Parker Road)	SW 24th Avenue	Archer Road (SR 24)	C	2	5,000	13,100	No	0	C	2,046	6,054
SW 20th Avenue	SW 34th Street (SR 121)	SW 62nd Boulevard	D	2	25,000	21,300	Yes	75	F	4,698	-8,398
SW 20th Avenue	SW 62nd Boulevard	Tower Road (SW 75th St.)	D	2	18,500	21,300	Yes	75	D	3,372	-572
SW 24th Avenue	Tower Road (SW 75th Street)	SW 91st Street	D	2	11,850	14,600	No	100	D	2,888	-138
SW 24th Avenue	SW 91st Street	SW 122nd Street (Parker Road)	D	2	7,000	14,600	Path	75	C	5,726	1,874
SW 40th Blvd./SW 42nd/43rd St.	Archer Road (SR 24)	SW 20th Ave	D	2	14,000	14,600	No	0	D	1,163	-563
SW 46th Blvd	Tower Road (SW 75th)	SW 91st Street	D	2	5,400	14,600	No	0	C	1,525	7,675
SW 62nd Avenue/SW 63rd Blvd	Archer Road (SR 24)	Williston Road (SR 121)	D	2	5,500	14,600	No	0	C	219	8,881
Tower Road (NW 75th Street)	Newberry Road (SR 26)	SW 8th Avenue	D	4	25,000	35,700	Yes	100	B	2,361	8,339
Tower Road (SW 75th Street)	SW 8th Avenue	Archer Road (SR 24)	D	2	17,500	21,300	No	100	D	8,917	-5,117
SW 75th Street	Archer Road (SR 24)	SW 85th Ave	D	2	3,400	14,600	No	75	C	2,085	9,115
SW 8th Avenue	Tower Road (SW 75th)	SW 91st Street	D	2	5,800	14,600	Yes	100	C	46	8,754
SW 8th Avenue	SW 91st Street	SW 122nd Street (Parker Road)	D	2	2,100	14,600	Yes	0	C	774	11,726
SW 91st Street	Newberry Road (SR 26)	SW 24th Avenue	D	2	8,200	14,600	No	100	C	0	6,400
SW 91st Street	SW 24th Avenue	Archer Road (SW 24)	D	2	7,500	14,600	No	100	C	1,920	5,180
Highlighted rows are either significantly within the limits of the City of Gainesville or have been recently annexed. Recently annexed roadways are outside the City of Gainesville's TCEA											
<b>Rural Area County Roadways</b>											
CR 219A	SR 26	US 301	C	2	500	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,400
CR 235A	Interstate 75	CR 236	C	2	500	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,400

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
CR 235A	US 441	Interstate 75	C	2	500	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,400
CR 329B/Lakeshore Drive	University Ave (SR 26)	Hawthorne Road (SR 20)	D	2	650	9,400	No	0	A	0	8,750
CR 1469	SR 26	US 301	C	2	1,000	7,900	No	0	A	0	6,900
CR 1491	NW CR 236	CR 241	C	2	700	7,900	No	0	A	77	7,123
Monteocha Road (NE 38th Street)	NE 53rd Avenue	NE 77th Avenue	D	2	3,164	7,900	No	0	B	0	4,736
NE 77th Avenue/CR 225A	CR 225 (NE 38th Street)	SR-24	C	2	680	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,220
NW 32nd / NW 186th / NW 46th	CR 241 (NW 143rd)	CR 235	C	2	2,500	7,900	No	20	B	199	5,201
NW 78th Avenue (CR 232)	CR 241 (NW 143rd)	Gilchrist County	C	2	3,400	7,900	No	0	B	552	3,948
NW 94th Avenue	CR 241 (NW 143rd)	US 41 / SR 45	C	2	800	7,900	No	0	A	124	6,976
NW 143rd (CR 241)	Millhopper Road	South City Limit of Alachua	D	2	8,500	13,100	Yes	0	C		4,600
NW 140th (CR 241)	US 441	Union County	C	2	1,500	7,900	No	0	A	0	6,400
NW 156th Ave	East City Limit of Alachua	CR 237	C	2	700	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,200
NW 156th Avenue	CR 237	CR 231	C	2	800	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,100
NW 202nd Street	NW 94th Avenue	US 441	C	2	1,500	7,900	No	0	A	0	6,400
NW CR 235	Alachua	Newberry	C	2	3,700	7,900	No	0	B	0	4,200
NW CR 236	Interstate 75	NW SR 121	C	2	3,500	7,900	No	0	B	383	4,017
NW CR 236	NW US 441	Interstate 75	C	2	2,500	7,900	No	0	B	58	5,342
NW CR 239	NW CR 239	NW CR 239	C	2	1,900	7,900	No	0	A	358	5,642
SE 171st Street/163rd Street	CR 147	SR 20	C	2	500	7,900	No	0	A	0	7,400
SE CR 325	US 301	Hawthorne RD (SR 20)	C	2	1,000	7,900	No	0	A	0	6,900
SE CR 1469	NE SR 26	CR 219-A	C	2	650	7,900	No	0	A	58	7,192
SW 170th (CR 241)	Archer Road (SR 24)	Newberry Road (SR 26)	C	2	3,000	13,100	No	0	A	0	10,100
SW 91st / SW 137th (CR 346A)	Williston Road (SR 121)	CR 346	C	2	500	7,900	No	0	A	482	6,918
SW Wacahoota Road	SW Wacahoota Road	SW Wacahoota Road	C	2	900	7,900	No	0	A	116	6,884
<b>STATE ROADS</b>											

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
Archer Road (SR 24)	SW 34th Street (SR 121)	Interstate 75	D	6	48,500	49,200	No	100		8,540	-7,840
Archer Road (SR 24)	Interstate 75	Tower Road (SW 75th)	D	4	28,000	35,700	Yes	100		14,606	-6,906
Archer Road (SR 24)	Tower Road (SW 75th)	SW 91st St	D	2	17,000	21,300	Yes	100		11,506	-7,206
Archer Road (SR 24)	SW 91st St	SW 122nd St (Parker Road)	D	2	13,000	21,100	Yes	0		2,600	5,500
Archer Road (SR 24)	SW 122nd St (Parker Road)	SR 45 (US 41)	D	2	11,000	13,900	Yes	0		2,600	300
Archer Road (SR 24)	US 41 (SR 45)	Levy County Line	D	2	3,600	13,700	Yes	0		0	10,100
East University Ave (SR 26)	Hawthorne Road (SR 20)	East University Ave	D	4	11,400	35,700	No	100		0	24,300
SR 26	East University Ave	SE 222 (NE 39th Ave)	D	2	5,200	13,700	Yes	0		0	8,500
SR 26	SE 222 (NE 39th Ave)	US 301	D	2	10,100	13,700	Yes	0		345	3,255
SR 26	US 301	Putnam County Line	D	2	9,400	13,700	Yes	0		0	4,300
Hawthorne Rd. (SR 20)	Waldo Road (SR 24)	SE 43rd Street	C	4	13,800	26,000	Yes	100		1,051	11,149
Hawthorne Rd. (SR 20)	SE 43rd Street	CR 329B (Lakeshore Dr)	C	4	13,800	34,200	Yes	100		10	20,390
Hawthorne Rd. (SR 20)	CR 329B (Lakeshore Dr)	West City Limit of Hawthorne	B	4	8,100	28,600	Yes	0		0	20,500
Hawthorne Rd. (SR 20)	East City Limit of Hawthorne	Putnam County Line	B	4	9,100	28,900	Yes	0		0	19,800
Interstate 75	Marion County Line	CR 234	B	6	62,000	54,300	No	0		0	-7,700
Interstate 75	CR 234	Williston Rd (SR 121)	B	6	64,750	59,800	No	0		83	-5,033
Interstate 75	Williston Rd (SR 121)	Archer Road (SR 24)	C	6	72,250	81,700	No	0		425	9,025
Interstate 75	Archer Road (SR 24)	Newberry Road (SR 26)	C	6	78,000	85,300	No	0		725	6,575
Interstate 75	Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 39th Ave (SR 222)	C	6	81,500	85,300	No	0		116	3,684
Interstate 75	NW 39th Ave (CR 222)	US 441	B	6	61,000	59,800	No	0		20	-1,220

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
Interstate 75	US 441	Columbia County Line	B	6	54,000	54,300	No	0		0	300
Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 8th Ave	I-75	D	4	51,000	44,700	No	100		3,069	-9,369
Newberry Road (SR 26)	I-75	NW 122nd St (Parker Rd)	C	4	28,000	34,700	No	100		10,930	-4,230
Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 122nd St (Parker Road)	NW 143rd St (CR 241)	C	4	25,000	35,700	Yes	100		15,400	-4,700
Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 143rd St (CR 241)	NW 170th (CR 241)	C	4	14,900	32,800	Yes	100		2,500	15,400
Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 143rd St (CR 241)	SW 170th St	C	4	14,900	32,800	Yes	100		66	17,834
Newberry Road (SR 26)	NW 170th (CR 241)	East City Limits of Newberry	C	4	15,400	32,800	Yes	0		0	17,400
Newberry Road (SR 26)	West City Limits of Newberry	Gilchrist County Line	C	2	9,300	11,000	Yes	0		0	1,700
NE 39th Avenue	Gainesville Regional Airport Dr	SR 26	C	2	6,700	13,700	Yes	0		0	7,000
NW 39th Ave (SR 222)	NW 43rd St	NW 83rd St	D	4	30,500	35,700	Yes	100		3,901	1,299
NW 39th Ave (SR 222)	NW 83rd St	I-75	D	4	28,500	32,700	Yes	100		2,821	1,379
SR 121	North City Limits of Gainesville	Union County Line	C	2	4,000	7,900	Yes	0		749	3,151
SR 121 (SW 34th)	SW 20th Avenue	Archer Road (SR 24)	D	6	43,500	49,200	Yes	100		0	5,700
SR 235	East City Limit of LaCrosse	Bradford County Line	C	2	3,500	7,900	Yes	0		0	4,400
SR 235	CR 239	SR 121	C	2	2,700	7,900	Yes	0		573	4,627
US 301	Marion County Line	South City Limits of Hawthorne	C	4	10,200	41,800	Yes	0		8,250	23,350
US 301	North City Limits of Hawthorne	SR 26	C	4	11,900	41,800	Yes	0		230	29,670
US 301	SR 26	South City Limits of Waldo	C	4	10,600	41,800	Yes	0		543	30,657
US 301	North City Limits of Waldo	Bradford County Line	C	4	24,000	41,800	Yes	0		0	17,800
US 41 (SR 45)	Levy County Line	South City Limit of Archer	C	2	4,200	7,900	Yes	0		0	3,700

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	LOS Standard	# of Lanes	AADT	Daily Capacity	Bike Facility	Sidewalk Coverage	Existing LOS	Reserved Trips	Available Capacity
US 41 (SR 45)	North City Limit of Archer	South City Limit of Newberry	C	2	3,313	7,900	Yes	0		0	4,587
US 41 (SR 45)	North City Limit of Newberry	South City Limit of High Springs	C	2	5,150	7,900	Yes	0		0	2,750
US 441	Marion County Line	Williston Road (SR 331)	D	4	11,600	34,200	Yes	0		257	22,343
US 441	Williston Road (SR 331)	Archer Road (SR 24)	D	4	19,900	35,700	Yes	0		129	15,671
Waldo Road (SR 24)	NE 53rd	West City Limit of Waldo	C	4	15,300	43,600	Yes	0		172	28,128
Williston Rd (SR 331)	University Ave	US 441 (SW 13th St)	C	4	18,350	34,700	Yes	100		183	16,167
Williston Rd (SR 331)	US 441 (SW 13th St)	I-75	C	4	26,250	34,700	Yes	100		549	7,901
Williston Rd (SR 121)	I-75	SW 62nd Ave	D	2	11,400	15,500	Yes	0		4,121	-21
Williston Road (SR 121)	SW 62nd Ave	SW 85th Avenue	D	2	9,400	13,700	Yes	0		0	4,300
Williston Road (SR 121)	SW 85th Avenue	Levy County Line	D	2	8,900	13,700	Yes	0		0	4,800

Highlighted rows are either significantly within the limits of the City of Gainesville or have been recently annexed. Recently annexed roadways are not included in the City of Gainesville's TCEA.

Source: Alachua County Growth Management Department, January 2009

### RECREATION SITE CLASSIFICATION FOR COUNTYWIDE PARK SYSTEM

SITE TYPE	TYPICAL SERVICE AREA	TYPICAL SIZE (ACRES)	AVG POPULATION SERVED	EXISTING LOS* AC/1000 PERSONS	TYPICAL FACILITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS
Neighborhood Park	1/2 Mi Radius (May be larger in the rural area due to low pop density)	5 to 15	up to 5,000	2.30/1000 (includes) Public School facilities)	Local activity-based recreation facilities including a ballfield, courts, playgrounds and picnic areas; access central to neighborhood by local streets and trails; location adjacent to school desirable.
Community Park	3 Mi Radius (May be larger in the rural area due to low pop density)	15 to 75	up to 25,000	.65/1000	Active recreation facilities for several neighborhoods for organized events such as soccer, softball, football, tennis, etc.; access by collector or minor arterial roads; access to bicycle trails desirable.
Nature Park	Variable	10 to 300	Variable	1.79/1000	Resource-based passive recreation designed to provide access to unique natural areas; facilities include nature trails and picnic areas; access depends on location of the resource.
Regional Park	Countywide	Greater Than 100	Greater Than 100,000	1.06/1000	A site of diverse recreational activities, provides access to natural resource areas such as springs, rivers or other regionally significant areas including State Parks and supplies active recreation facilities such as multi-use fields and courts; Access should be provided by major roads.
Regional Preserve	Regional Area	Greater Than 1000	Greater Than 200,000	151.5/1000**	An area that provides protection for valuable wildlife habitat areas; it can provide limited access to the public for nature study and may include similar resource-based facilities to the Regional Park in isolated areas; access is variable.
Special Use Activity Park	Variable	Variable	Greater Than 25,000	.26/1000	An area that provides a specific function associated with one recreation activity; examples of active special use parks include golf courses, stadiums or tracks; access is dependent on site location.
Special Use Resource Park	Variable	Variable	Greater Than 25,000	.55/1000	An area that provides a specific function associated with one recreational activity; examples of resource special use parks include boat ramps and fishing piers, botanical gardens and historic sites; access is dependent on resource location.

\*Existing level of service figures correspond to developed acres of each of these park types.

\*\*Regional Preserves are not proposed to be included in the level of service for concurrency purposes.



### Recreation Facilities Level of Service Projections 2009 – 2014, April 1, 2009

Unincorporated Population:			103,217		105,051		105,824		106,596		107,770		108,944		110,117		111,291	
YEAR			2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
PARK	PARK TYPE	ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES	PERCENT DEVELOPED	DEVELOPED ACRES
<b>ACTIVE PARKS</b>																		
COPELAND	N	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00
FOREST	C	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70	100.00%	24.70
GROVE	N	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00	100.00%	4.00
JONESVILLE	C	89.00	22.50%	20.03	22.50%	20.03	80.00%	71.20	88.00%	78.32	88.00%	78.32	88.00%	78.32	88.00%	78.32	88.00%	78.32
KANAPAHA	C	22.95	90.00%	20.66	90.00%	20.66	90.00%	20.66	90.00%	20.66	95.00%	21.80	95.00%	21.80	95.00%	21.80	95.00%	21.80
MONTEOCHA	N	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00
S.E. 35th STREET	N	27.00	0.00%	0.00	50.00%	13.50	100.00%	27.00	100.00%	27.00	100.00%	27.00	100.00%	27.00	100.00%	27.00	100.00%	27.00
SQUIRREL RIDGE	N	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90	100.00%	16.90
<b>Subtotal Active Parks</b>			<b>194.55</b>	<b>49.49%</b>	<b>96.28</b>	<b>56.43%</b>	<b>109.78</b>	<b>89.67%</b>	<b>174.46</b>	<b>93.33%</b>	<b>181.58</b>	<b>93.92%</b>	<b>182.72</b>	<b>93.92%</b>	<b>182.72</b>	<b>93.92%</b>	<b>182.72</b>	<b>93.92%</b>
<b>Level of Service Achieved</b>					0.93		1.05		1.65		1.70		1.70		1.68		1.66	
<b>Acres Needed</b>					-44.67		-57.25		-121.54		-128.28		-128.84		-128.25		-127.66	
<b>RESOURCE BASED PARKS</b>																		
CELLON OAK	SP-r	3.74	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55	95.00%	3.55
E.P. POWERS	SU-r	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90	100.00%	10.90
HIGH SPRINGS BOAT RAMP	SU-r	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25
HOLDEN	SU-r	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00	100.00%	5.00
KANAPAHA BOTANICAL GARDENS	SU-r	62.70	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16	80.00%	50.16
LAKE ALTO	SU-r	22.33	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04	36.00%	8.04
LAKE KANAPAHA	SU-r	453.37	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	10.00%	45.34	20.00%	90.67	30.00%	136.01
LOCHLOOSA	SU-r	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32	100.00%	1.32
McCALL	SP-r	78.42	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00
M.K. RAWLINGS	SU-r	12.08	61.00%	7.37	61.00%	7.37	65.00%	7.85	65.00%	7.85	65.00%	7.85	65.00%	7.85	65.00%	7.85	65.00%	7.85
MELROSE BOAT RAMP	SU-r	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25	100.00%	0.25
OWENS-ILLINOIS	SU-r	21.57	12.00%	2.59	15.00%	3.24	25.00%	5.39	25.00%	5.39	25.00%	5.39	25.00%	5.39	25.00%	5.39	25.00%	5.39
POE SPRINGS	SU-r	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00	100.00%	202.00
SAN FELASCO	NA	194.00	95.00%	184.30	99.00%	192.06	100.00%	194.00	100.00%	194.00	100.00%	194.00	100.00%	194.00	100.00%	194.00	100.00%	194.00
SANTA FE LAKE	SU-r	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98	100.00%	24.98
WALDO CANAL	SU-r	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15	100.00%	10.15
WATERMELON POND	SU-r	12.00	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40	70.00%	8.40
<b>Subtotal Resource Based Parks</b>			<b>1115.06</b>	<b>46.57%</b>	<b>519.26</b>	<b>47.32%</b>	<b>527.67</b>	<b>47.73%</b>	<b>532.25</b>	<b>47.73%</b>	<b>532.25</b>	<b>47.73%</b>	<b>532.25</b>	<b>51.80%</b>	<b>577.58</b>	<b>55.86%</b>	<b>622.92</b>	<b>59.93%</b>
<b>Level of Service Achieved</b>					5.03		5.02		5.03		4.99		4.94		5.30		5.66	
<b>Acres Needed</b>					-3.17		-2.41		-3.13		0.73		6.60		-32.86		-72.34	
<b>ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER PRESERVATION LANDS</b>																		
MILL CREEK PRESERVE	NP	1224.21	0.00%	0.00	4.40%	53.87	13.30%	162.82	15.00%	183.63	15.00%	183.63	15.00%	183.63	15.00%	183.63	15.00%	183.63
SWEETWATER PRESERVE	NP	113.56	0.00%	0.00	50.00%	56.78	60.00%	68.14	70.00%	79.49	70.00%	79.49	70.00%	79.49	70.00%	79.49	70.00%	79.49
BARR HAMMOCK PRESERVE	NP	5633.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	1.00%	56.33	3.00%	168.99	10.00%	563.30	10.00%	563.30	10.00%	563.30
LAKE ALTO PRESERVE	NP	668.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	1.00%	6.68	5.00%	33.40	15.00%	100.20	15.00%	100.20	15.00%	100.20	15.00%	100.20
PHIFER FLATWOODS	NP	644.52	0.00%	0.00	5.00%	32.23	8.00%	51.56	10.00%	64.45	10.00%	64.45	10.00%	64.45	10.00%	64.45	10.00%	64.45
WAINBURG	NP	22.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00
AP&E	NP	242.01	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0.00
<b>Subtotal ACF Lands</b>			<b>8547.30</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1.67%</b>	<b>142.87</b>	<b>3.38%</b>	<b>289.20</b>	<b>4.88%</b>	<b>417.31</b>	<b>6.98%</b>	<b>596.77</b>	<b>11.60%</b>	<b>991.08</b>	<b>11.60%</b>	<b>991.08</b>	<b>11.60%</b>
<b>RESOURCE BASED PARKS + ACF LANDS</b>																		
<b>Subtotal ACF &amp; Resource Based Parks</b>			<b>9662.36</b>	<b>5.37%</b>	<b>519.26</b>	<b>6.94%</b>	<b>670.54</b>	<b>8.50%</b>	<b>821.44</b>	<b>9.83%</b>	<b>949.55</b>	<b>11.68%</b>	<b>1129.01</b>	<b>16.23%</b>	<b>1568.66</b>	<b>16.70%</b>	<b>1614.00</b>	<b>17.17%</b>
<b>Level of Service Achieved</b>					5.03		6.38		7.76		8.91		10.48		14.66		14.91	
<b>Acres Needed</b>					-3.17		-145.28		-292.32		-416.57		-590.16		-1023.94		-1063.41	
<b>GRAND TOTAL ALL LANDS</b>			<b>9856.91</b>	<b>6.24%</b>	<b>615.54</b>	<b>7.92%</b>	<b>780.32</b>	<b>10.10%</b>	<b>995.90</b>	<b>11.48%</b>	<b>1131.13</b>	<b>13.31%</b>	<b>1311.73</b>	<b>17.77%</b>	<b>1751.38</b>	<b>18.23%</b>	<b>1796.72</b>	<b>18.69%</b>
<b>Proposed Development</b>																		

### Public School Capacity and Enrollment, March 2009

Schools	Grade Level	3/11/09 Perm FISH Capacity	3/11/09 Enrollment School Yr. ***	Actual Available Capacity	Actual Utilization Percentage
Alachua	3 - 5	715	467	248	65.3%
Archer	PK - 5	564	351	78	81.8%
Chiles	PK - 5	761	729	32	95.8%
Duval	PK - 5	492	504	-12	102.4%
Finley	PK - 5	489	482	7	98.6%
Foster	PK - 5	498	469	29	94.2%
Glen Springs	PK - 5	475	446	29	93.9%
Hidden Oak	PK - 5	743	828	-85	111.4%
High Springs Comm.	PK - 5	558	602	-44	107.9%
Idylwild	PK - 5	615	569	46	92.5%
Irby	PK - 2	595	474	121	79.7%
Lake Forest	PK - 5	660	422	44	90.6%
Littlewood	PK - 5	685	646	-30	104.9%
Metcalfe	PK - 5	585	357	152	70.1%
Newberry	PK - 4	515	501	14	97.3%
Norton	PK - 5	687	654	33	95.2%
Rawlings	PK - 5	518	347	171	67.0%
Shell	PK - 5	466	193	273	41.4%
Talbot	PK - 5	721	698	23	96.8%
Terwilliger	PK - 5	615	566	49	92.0%
Waldo	PK - 6	268	219	49	81.7%
Wiles	PK - 5	724	660	64	91.2%
Williams	PK - 5	535	574	-39	107.3%
Oakview	5-8		106		
<b>Elementary Total</b>		<b>13,484</b>	<b>11,864</b>	<b>1,252</b>	<b>91.2%</b>
Bishop	6 - 8	1,108	742	366	67.0%
Fort Clarke	6 - 8	875	803	72	91.8%
Hawthorne	6 - 8	283	154	129	54.4%
High Springs Comm.	6 - 8	462	332	130	71.9%
Kanapaha	6 - 8	1,079	891	188	82.6%
Lincoln	6 - 8	1,066	708	331	66.4%
Mebane	6 - 8	778	484	294	62.2%
Oak View	5 - 8	699	431	268	61.7%
Westwood	6 - 8	1,142	970	172	84.9%
<b>Middle Total</b>		<b>7,492</b>	<b>5,515</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>73.6%</b>
Buchholz (95%)	9 - 12	1,969	2,256	-287	114.6%
Eastside (95%)	9 - 12	1,951	1,654	297	84.8%
Gainesville (95%)	9 - 12	1,943	1,891	52	97.3%
Hawthorne (90%)	9 - 12	380	231	149	60.8%
Loften * (90%)	9 - 12	576	243	333	42.2%
Newberry (80%)	9 - 12	620	582	38	93.9%
Santa Fe (90%)	9 - 12	1,110	1,148	-38	103.4%
<b>High Total</b>		<b>8,549</b>	<b>8,005</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>93.6%</b>
<b>District Schools Total</b>		<b>29,525</b>	<b>25,384</b>	<b>3,746</b>	
AQ Jones	9 - 12	144	70	74	48.6%
Horizon Center	9 - 12	292	104	188	35.6%
Other Centers / Areas	9 - 12	292	171		
Prairie View *	PK - 5	575	0	575	0.0%
Sidney Lanier	9 - 12	369	124	245	33.6%
<b>Centers Total</b>		<b>1,672</b>	<b>469</b>		<b>34.0%</b>
<b>District Total (including Centers)</b>			<b>25,853</b>		

\* School of choice - countywide attendance area

Source: School Board of Alachua County

# SUMMARY OF RARE AND REGULATED PLANTS: ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

Michael E. Drummond, Alachua County Environmental Protection Department

May 5, 2008

TAXON	FAMILY	STATUS			REPRODUCTIVE SEASON												HABITAT	NOTES							
		FDACS	FWS	FNAI	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D									
<i>Acacia angustissima</i> (Mill.) Kuntze var. <i>hirta</i> (Nutt.) B.L. Rob.	Fabaceae	E						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			sandhills; disturbed sites	listed for Alachua County by Wunderlin and Hansen (2008)						
<i>Adiantum tenerum</i> Sw.	Pteridaceae	E		S3	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; limestone ledges; shaded limestone sinkholes	epipetric; reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)						
<i>Agrimonia incisa</i> T. & G.	Rosaceae	E															x	x	x	x	x	sandhills; upland pine forest			
<i>Andropogon arctatus</i> Chapm.	Poaceae			T																		x	x	dry-wet flatwoods; [sand pine scrub]	
<i>Asplenium monanthes</i> L.	Aspleniaceae	E															x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks & upland mixed forest, on limestone outcroppings near streams	epipetric; extirpated; reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)	
<i>Asplenium pumilum</i> Sw.	Aspleniaceae	E								S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; shaded limestone boulders & ledges	epipetric; reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)	
<i>Asplenium verecundum</i> Chapm. ex Underw.	Aspleniaceae	E								S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; limestone sinkholes; shaded limestone boulders & ledges	epipetric; reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)	
<i>Asplenium x curtissii</i> Underw.	Aspleniaceae									S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; shaded limestone sinkholes	epipetric	
<i>Asplenium x heteroresiliens</i> W. H. Wagner	Aspleniaceae									S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; shaded limestone sinkholes	epipetric	
<i>Asplenium x plenum</i> E. P. St. John ex Small	Aspleniaceae									S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone	epipetric	
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i> (L.) Roth ex Mert. subsp. <i>asplenioides</i> (Michx.) Hulten	Dryopteridaceae			T																			moist hammocks; swamps; shaded bluffs	reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)	
<i>Blechnum occidentale</i> L. var. <i>minor</i> Hook.	Blechnaceae	E								S1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	hammocks, on limestone; shaded limestone sinkholes	epipetric; reproductive season not noted in Coile & Garland (2003)	
<i>Brickellia cordifolia</i> Ell.	Asteraceae	E																					hammocks; upland hardwoods		













**TAXON:** Pteridophyte nomenclature is consistent with that found in Wunderlin and Hansen (2000). Remaining nomenclature is consistent with that found in Wunderlin & Hansen (2008). Where alternate nomenclature is used by Coile & Garland (2003), or FNAI (1997), referenced synonyms are identified in [brackets]. Included taxa are those noted as occurring in Alachua County in one or more of the following references: Coile & Garland (2003), FNAI (1997), Wunderlin (2003), Wunderlin and Hansen (2000), and Wunderlin and Hansen (2008).

**FAMILY:** Family affiliations of Pteridophytes are consistent with the treatment found in Wunderlin and Hansen (2000). Family affiliations of remaining taxa are consistent with the treatment found in Wunderlin & Hansen (2008).

**STATUS:** Rarity/regulatory status of taxa is based upon lists maintained by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). State-regulated taxa are those included in the Regulated Plant Index (Section 5B-40.0055, F.A.C.). Endangered (E), Threatened (T), and Commercially Exploited (C) taxa are as defined in the Preservation of Native Flora of Florida Act (Section 581.185, F.S.). Federally-regulated taxa are those included in Subsection 50 CFR 17.12. Endangered (E) taxa are as defined in Section 3 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Taxa tracked by the FNAI and considered rare (ranked S1 through S3) are listed in the Element Tracking Summary (2004). Explanations of FNAI-assigned rarity ranks can be found at the end of the Element Tracking Summary.

**REPRODUCTIVE SEASON:** This term generally refers to the period when a taxon bears flowers (spores on Pteridophytes), though fruits sometimes may be apparent. Reproductive seasons are derived from Coile & Garland (2003), FNAI (1997), Wunderlin (2003), and Wunderlin & Hansen (2000). Redundancy in two or more references regarding reproductive season is depicted in bold type. Users should consider that, while an effort has been made to accurately identify reproductive seasons based upon best available data, specimens or populations may be found flowering "out of season." Users also should bear in mind that taxa with broad latitudinal ranges will usually flower earlier in the southern part of the state than in the northern part. Of importance in rare plant surveys, certain (usually herbaceous) taxa may only be readily evident or reliably identified during the reproductive season, either because they are temporally cryptic or because of similarity to other, closely related taxa. It is critical in such cases that the survey be conducted at a time of year that maximizes a surveyor's chance of observing the taxon and obtaining an accurate identification.

**HABITAT:** Habitat proclivities are derived from Coile & Garland (2003), FNAI (1997), Wunderlin (2003), and Wunderlin and Hansen (2000), with rare modification based on the author's experience in Alachua County.

In most cases, habitat descriptions are intentionally broad and intended to give the user a general impression of the situations in which a taxon may reasonably be expected to be found. As in the case with taxa flowering "out of season," plants sometimes may occur "out of habitat." Nonetheless, responsible survey efforts should be concentrated in areas that maximize a surveyor's opportunity of observing a target taxon. Habitats that generally are not relevant to Alachua County are identified in [brackets].t

**NOTES:** Additional comments regarding occurrence, status, reproductive season, or habitat.

#### **REFERENCES:**

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## **APPENDIX D - Adopted Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Policies Relative to Issues Discussed in EAR, Especially Ch. 6, Major Issues Analysis (From Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, 2001-2020)**

### **Agriculture/Greenspace Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies**

#### **FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

##### **OBJECTIVE 6.1**

Rural areas shall protect rural and agriculture areas in a manner consistent with the retention of agriculture, open space, and rural character, and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, and efficient use of public services and facilities.

Policy 6.1.1 The County shall encourage the continuation of productive agricultural uses through an integrated program of strategies, including innovative land use regulations in conjunction with transfer of development rights and support for use of local, State, and Federal incentives including pursuit of funds from state and federal programs for purchase of agricultural conservation easements and purchase of development rights. The County shall initiate a stewardship program utilizing strategies from but not limited to the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act, Section 163.3177 (11) (d) F.S. and Section 570.70, F.S., as appropriate to Alachua County.

Policy 6.1.2 Protection of important agricultural areas, based on factors such as the existing agricultural uses, soils, land use patterns, and economics of the county's agricultural community, shall be encouraged.

Policy 6.1.3 The most recent, applicable best management practices for agriculture and silviculture shall be required consistent with Section 5.5, Agricultural and Silvicultural Practices, of the Conservation and Open Space Element. The County shall encourage conservation practices for agriculture and silviculture, including voluntary participation in certification programs whose standards meet or exceed best management practices, and facilitating participation in federal and state cost-share programs. The land development regulations shall be reviewed for the inclusion of incentives to encourage voluntary participation in certification programs.

Policy 6.1.4 The County shall support the development of markets and programs that promote the sale of locally produced agricultural goods.

Policy 6.1.5 Agricultural pursuits shall be allowed in all land use classifications, provided that the health, safety and welfare of the general public and the protection of the natural environment are assured.

Policy 6.1.6 The land development regulations shall specify performance criteria and standards for intensive agricultural operations such as concentrated animal feeding operations and dairies to ensure protection of water quality and natural systems.

Policy 6.2 Areas identified for Rural/Agriculture on the Future Land Use Map are for rural residential uses, home-based businesses, and agricultural activities including forestry and other agricultural uses, such as cattle grazing, cultivation of field crops, vegetable crops, dairies and those commercial or other uses on a limited scale serving or ancillary to agricultural activities, such as farm equipment and supplies, sales or service, and agricultural products distribution. New residential uses at a maximum density of one dwelling unit

per five acres shall be permitted subject to the restrictions in Policy 6.2.7, except that the total allowable dwelling units may be increased pursuant to the Planned Development-Transfer of Development Rights program in accordance with 6.2.5.1 or the incentive bonuses for clustering of rural residential subdivisions in accordance with Policies 6.2.9 - 6.2.14.

Policy 6.2.5.1. In order to implement COSE Policy 4.10.6, Planned Developments with Transfers of Development (PD-TDR) may be proposed for two or more separate parcels under the same ownership to facilitate transfers of development rights from regulated conservation areas, as defined in Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 3.1.1, to less sensitive areas designated as Rural/Agriculture on the Future Land Use Map. The PD-TDR will allow units of density to be transferred from one or more contiguous parcels (sending parcels) to one or more geographically separate parcels (receiving parcels). All parcels involved shall be rezoned as PD-TDR-S or PD-TDR-R. As a result of the transfer, receiving parcels may be developed at a gross density that exceeds that provided on the receiving parcel by the Rural/Agriculture land use category. The process and standards for PD/TDR developments shall be consistent with rural clustering policies with the following additional requirements:

a. The parcel (s) from which density will be transferred shall be designated PD-TDR-S on the zoning map. The parcel receiving the density shall be designated PD-TDR-R. The sending parcel shall be so designated in perpetuity unless both the sending and receiving parcels are considered for rezoning simultaneously and the overall density in the rural area is not increased.

b. The maximum number of units that can be transferred shall be the lesser of:

1. The number of units that could be developed on the sending parcel(s) under the Rural/Agriculture maximum gross density of 1 units per 5 acres, plus bonus units consistent with Policy 6.2.10.4; or

2. The number of upland acres, excluding wetlands and wetland buffers, on the sending parcel(s).

c. The sending parcel(s) must be at least 50% field-verified conservation areas, as defined in Conservation and Open Space Element Policy 3.1.1. The sending parcels shall include all individual parcels that have been created after the adoption of this amendment to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan or from a date 5 years prior to the application for a PD-TDR, whichever is later.

d. Units not transferred to an initial receiving parcel(s) as part of the original PD-TDR approval shall remain with the sending parcel(s). At a subsequent time, the remaining units may only be directed to additional receiving parcels by way of a major amendment to the approved PD-TDR Master Plan. All sending and receiving parcels shall be identified on the PD-TDR Master Plan.

e. Sending parcels shall be designated as conservation management areas on the PD-TDR Master Plan. Residential densities of one dwelling unit per 40 acres to one dwelling unit per 200 acres may be retained on the sending areas where consistent with a Conservation Management Plan. Retained density must be clustered on the least sensitive portion of the property. The amount of density to be retained shall be based on what is necessary to protect the integrity of the ecological system and conservation resources.

f. Development of receiving parcels shall be consistent with COSE policies 3.1.1 - 3.1.3 and the objectives and policies in COSE 3.6.

g. An area equal to at least 50% of the combined acreage of the sending and receiving areas for a PD-TDR shall be permanently set aside as open space on the sending parcel(s). Additionally, a minimum of 20% of the receiving parcel(s) shall be designated as open space consistent with COSE Policy 5.2.2.

h. The maximum density allowed on the receiving parcel will be the number of units based on the Rural/Agriculture land use designation for the receiving area, plus the additional units transferred from the sending area, subject to the minimum lot size requirements for developed areas of rural clustered subdivisions specified in Policy 6.2.13. Allowance of this maximum density shall be subject to an evaluation of factors, including: proximity to developed areas; availability and capacity of public infrastructure and services; environmental suitability; and compatibility with surrounding land uses. A finding shall be made whether or not the receiving parcel location and proposed density are appropriate based on these factors.

i. The land development regulations shall include provisions to assure implementation of the planned development as a unified development plan.

Policy 6.2.7 The Development Review Committee shall not authorize more than 150 lots smaller than eight acres in the Rural/Agricultural area in any calendar year except for lots that are clustered according to the provisions of 6.2.9 – 6.2.14.

#### Policy 6.2.9 Clustering

The preferred design for new rural residential subdivisions is that they be clustered in order to protect the characteristics and features of rural areas through the following goals:

1. Protect natural and historic resources.
2. Support continued agricultural activities by preserving viable soils and effective land masses.
3. Minimize land use conflicts.
4. Provide recreational and habitat corridors through linked open space \ networks.
5. Achieve flexibility, efficiency, and cost reduction in the provision of services and infrastructure.
6. Reduce natural hazard risks to life and property.

*(subsequent policies 6.2.10-6.2.13 outline detailed standards for clustered subdivisions)*

#### Policy 6.2.12 Open Space Area in Clustered Subdivisions

A portion of a clustered rural residential subdivision shall be designated and maintained as undeveloped open space area.

1. Percentage of site. Clustered Rural residential subdivisions shall designate a minimum of 50% of the site as open space area.

2. Design Principles. Open space shall be selected and designed according to the following principles, consistent with Conservation and Open Space Element policies for the identification and protection of natural resources:

a. Protect natural, historic, and paleontological resources and agricultural areas of the site identified through a site specific inventory.

(1) Conservation areas shall receive top priority for inclusion as part of the designated open space area, and may only be impacted in accordance with Conservation and Open Space Element policies specific to the resource.

(2) Agricultural areas with viable soils and effective land masses shall be included as part of the designated open space area after resource protection criteria are met. Agricultural uses are encouraged to be included as part of the designated open space area.

(3) Historic and paleontological resources shall be included as part of the designated open space area when appropriate in accordance with the Historic Preservation Element.

b. Design the open space area as a single contiguous area with logical, straightforward boundaries to eliminate or minimize fragmentation.

c. Form linked open space networks with existing or potential open space areas on adjacent properties, other developments, or greenways, consistent with Conservation and Open Space Element Section 6.3.

3. Permitted uses.

a. Permitted uses in the open space area are natural resource conservation areas, non-intensive agriculture, silviculture, and common open space, resource-based recreation uses which maintain the undeveloped area in a natural state, permeable stormwater facilities consistent with Stormwater Element Policy 5.11, and common water supply systems and common septic system drainfields. A residential unit used as a homestead just prior to the creation of the clustered subdivision can continue to be used as a homestead within the open space area and not counted toward the total number of units allowed in the rural clustered subdivision.

b. More intensive agriculture uses such as concentrated animal density generally associated with milking barns, feed lots, chicken houses, or holding pens shall not be allowed in any clustered rural residential subdivision.

4. Permanent protection. All future development in designated open space areas is prohibited.

a. All open space shall be maintained and remain undeveloped in perpetuity using a legal instrument that runs with the land to set forth conditions and restrictions on use.

b. All open space area and lots shall be restricted from further subdivision through an instrument in a form acceptable to the county and duly recorded in the public record which assures the preservation and continued maintenance of the open space.

c. The boundaries of designated open space areas shall be clearly delineated on plans, including record plats, and marked in the field to distinguish these areas from developed areas.

5. Ownership, maintenance, and management plan.

a. Ownership methods. Ownership and maintenance of open space shall be by one or a combination of the following:

- (1) Original landowner
- (2) Homeowners association
- (3) Established land trust
- (4) Non-profit conservation organization
- (5) Alachua County, with county approval
- (6) Other public agency (e.g. Water Management District)

b. Maintenance. Unless otherwise agreed by the County, the cost and responsibility of maintaining common facilities, including but not limited to open space, private roads, shared water systems, and stormwater systems, shall be borne by the owner(s) of the open space. If the open space is not properly maintained, the County may assume responsibility of maintenance and charge the property owner or homeowners association a fee which covers maintenance and administrative costs.

c. Management plan. An open space management plan shall be required to accompany the development plan, subject to county review and approval. The management plan shall establish management objectives, outline procedures, and define the roles and responsibilities for managing the open space. Management shall include wildfire mitigation.

Policy 7.1.3.d If this methodology determines expansion of the Urban Cluster is warranted, the evaluation of appropriate location shall be subject to analysis including the following economic, infrastructure, transportation, and conservation and recreation criteria:

- 1) rural character and viable agriculture land and the potential impact of expansion of the Urban Cluster on existing agricultural uses (emphasis added)
- 2) economic development considerations including affordable housing
- 3) relationship to existing and planned future urban services and infrastructure
- 4) access to the regional transportation network and multi-modal transportation systems
- 5) Conservation and Preservation land uses
- 6) planned recreation/open space or greenway systems

Policy 7.1.3.e In addition to meeting the requirements identified above, any proposed amendment to expand the Urban Cluster must include a commitment to purchase development rights at a rate equivalent to the proposed increase in density or intensity through the Transfer of Development Rights program in accordance with Section 9.0 of this Element.

## 9.0. TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM

### OBJECTIVE 9.1

To create a tool that, in addition to other County policies and regulations, will protect the County's environmental resources and promote viable agriculture and the rural landscape while encouraging efficient use of services and infrastructure by concentrating development in more suitable areas of the County.

Policy 9.1 Transfers of development rights may be proposed for two or more separate legally created parcels to facilitate transfers of development rights from regulated conservation and viable agriculture areas to areas within the Urban Cluster or potentially within other municipalities.

#### Policy 9.1.2 Sending Areas

a. Agricultural Sending Areas shall be defined as any legally created parcel or combination of contiguous parcels that meet the following criteria:

1. property has an approved agricultural classification from the Alachua County Property Appraiser;
2. property is located outside the Urban Cluster; and
3. property is  $\geq 160$  acres.
  - a. An exception to the size threshold may be permitted where the property is determined to be contiguous to another designated sending area.
  - b. An exception to the size threshold may be permitted where the property is determined by the County to be of exceptional agricultural value.
  - c. No agricultural sending area property may be smaller than 40 acres in size.

b. Conservation Sending Areas shall be defined as any legally created parcel or combination of parcels that meet the following criteria:



1. property contains Strategic Ecosystems or is on the Alachua County Forever (ACF) active acquisition list; and
  2. property is  $\geq 160$  acres.
    - a. An exception to the size threshold may be permitted where the property is contiguous to an established Preservation area or designated sending area.
    - b. An exception to the size threshold may be permitted where the property is determined by the County to be of exceptional conservation value based upon ground-truthing of the property.
    - c. No conservation sending area property may be smaller than 40 acres.
- c. Calculating Development Rights
1. Development rights available for transfer shall be equal to the lesser of the following, minus the residual units not to be included in the transfer:
    - a. number of residential units otherwise allowed on the sending area property; or
    - b. number of upland acres on the sending area property.
  2. As an incentive to transfer development rights away from a sending property, a total of 2 development rights in addition to the number of rights granted through the calculations identified above are allowed, plus one additional right per every 10 acres of conservation area on site and one additional right per every 20 acres of non-conservation area on site, consistent with Policy 6.2.9 of this Element.
- d. Residual Uses
1. Agriculture – Residential densities of up to one dwelling unit per 40 acres may be retained in the sending area and continuation of agricultural uses in accordance with the most recent best management practices (BMPs) adopted by the State. When mapped conservation areas are located on site, Conservation Sending Area residual guidelines apply.
  2. Conservation – Residential densities of up to one dwelling unit per 200 acres may be retained on the sending parcel where consistent with a Conservation Management Plan.
    - a. Higher densities of up to one dwelling unit per 40 acres may be proposed where it can be demonstrated that there is no impact on resource protection and where consistent with the Conservation Area Management Plan.
    - b. The amount of density to be retained shall be based on what is necessary to protect the integrity of the ecological system and conservation resources.
    - c. Continuation of agricultural uses is allowed in accordance with the most recent best management practices (BMPs) adopted by the State.
    - d. Residual units shall be developed in a clustered pattern, when necessary, to protect the integrity of the environmental resources on and adjacent to the site.

#### Policy 9.1.3 Receiving Areas

- a. Any nonresidential development in the unincorporated area may become a receiving area through the purchase of development rights in order to reduce the amount of open space required on the development site, at a transfer rate to be established in the Land Development Regulations.

- b. Receiving areas may be located within any of the municipalities in Alachua County through the establishment of interlocal agreements.
- c. Any proposed amendment to expand the Urban Cluster must include a commitment to purchase development rights at a rate equivalent to the proposed increase in density or intensity in accordance with Policy 7.1.3.e of this Element.

Policy 9.1.4 Program Administration

- a. The County shall create and maintain a publicly accessible database of development rights.
- b. Sending property owners shall record a conservation or agricultural easement on the sending parcel and commit to a County-sponsored rezoning of the parcel to a sending area zoning designation.

**TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT**

Policy 2.1.2 Appropriate conservation, arboricultural, and horticultural standards shall be used in the design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities in order to promote energy conservation, enhance habitat connectivity, provide for the safe passage of wildlife, and improve scenic quality, consistent with Objectives 5.3 and 5.4 of the Conservation and Open Space Element

GOAL 3 - TRANSIT

To encourage the provision and use of a safe, efficient, and financially feasible mass transit transportation system which is responsive to community needs, consistent with land use policies, environmentally sound, and which promotes economic opportunity and energy conservation.

**HOUSING ELEMENT**

Policy 1.2.5 Alachua County's development review process shall include performance standards that reward developers who use construction techniques which reduce future maintenance and energy costs, such as homes oriented and constructed for energy efficiency and sustainability.

Policy 2.2.1 Energy Conservation. Alachua County shall promote Energy Conservation techniques that incorporate Federal Energy Star Standards as consistent with the requirements of the State Energy Code.

Policy 2.2.2 Alachua County shall provide developers/builders with information on how to incorporate Federal Energy Star Standards into construction. Policy 2.2.3 Alachua County shall seek financial resources that mitigate the cost of building to Federal Energy Star Standards in affordable housing units.

Policy 2.2.5 Alachua County shall collaborate with the Alachua County Cooperative Extension Office, the banking community, the builders' associations and other interested parties, to determine ways builders can incorporate "Sustainable Building" technologies in the construction of affordable housing, through the following areas:

- a. Water (e.g., indoor water conservation, low-flow/low-flush fixtures, composting toilets, pervious materials, xeriscaping, reclaimed water irrigation, harvested rainwater, water budget)
- b. Energy (e.g., Energy Star ratings, traditional, local vernacular techniques of climate sensitive design, passive solar design, landscaping for energy conservation, site development and unit orientation (e.g. north/south rather than east/west windows)) that takes advantage of the natural shade and lighting available, radiant barrier and ridge and soffit venting, earth sheltered design, solar heating and cooling systems, photovoltaic systems, gas water heating systems, ductwork, fans, energy recovery ventilators, programmable thermostats, energy efficient appliances)

- c. Building materials (e.g., dimensional lumber, wood treatment, engineered structural materials, engineered siding and trim, concrete, non-toxic termite control, earth materials, floor coverings, wood flooring, roofing structural wall panels, insulation, windows and doors, cabinets, finishes and adhesives, straw bale construction)
- d. Solid Waste Management (e.g., home recycling, compost systems, construction waste recycling)

**CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

**1.1. CONSERVATION STRATEGIES**

Objective 1.1:

Embrace multiple, diverse strategies for the conservation of natural systems in Alachua County.

**1.2. CONSERVATION AS PRIORITY**

Objective 1.2:

Establish environmental conservation as a priority in all decision-making for Alachua County.

COSE Policy 2.1.1.10 The County shall update and maintain the Conservation Element Map Series and related information system containing data relevant to protect the environmental quality of Alachua County's natural resources. The information shall include, at a minimum, an inventory and maps of:

10. Open space and greenways.

Policy 2.2.2 The County shall implement proactive, innovative, and creative educational programs concerning natural resource issues including, but not limited to:

- Air quality;
- Surface water and wetlands quality and function;
- Groundwater quality and vulnerability;
- Water conservation;
- Wildlife and aquatic species and habitat;
- Native vegetative communities;
- Invasive species control;
- Natural areas protection;
- Agricultural preservation; (emphasis added)
- Sustainable agriculture and forestry; (emphasis added)
- Soil conservation;
- Energy conservation;
- Flood and fire hazard mitigation;
- Hazardous waste; and
- Waste management.

**2.3. RESOURCE AREAS PLANNING**

Objective 2.3:

Manage natural resources at a scale appropriate to their protection, and facilitate consensus-building in the public participation process.

### 3.1. CONSERVATION LAND USE CATEGORIES

#### Objective 3.1:

A conservation land use category shall be established to recognize and protect natural resources within privately owned lands in Alachua County utilizing appropriate regulatory, acquisition, and incentive mechanisms.

#### Objective 3.1:

A conservation land use category shall be established to recognize and protect natural resources within privately owned lands in Alachua County utilizing appropriate regulatory, acquisition, and incentive mechanisms.

Policy 3.1.1 Conservation areas shall consist of natural resources that, because of their ecological value, uniqueness and particular sensitivity to development activities, require stringent protective measures to sustain their ecological integrity. These areas shall include:

1. Wetlands;
2. Surface waters;
3. 100-year floodplains;
4. Listed species habitat;
5. Significant geologic features; and
6. Strategic ecosystems.

Policy 3.1.2 In conservation areas, the following uses, if otherwise consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, generally shall be permitted to the extent that they do not significantly alter the natural functions of the conservation area:

1. Public and private conservation, recreation and open space uses.
2. Public and private wildlife preserves, game management and refuge areas.
3. Water conservation and retention/detention areas that are determined to be appropriate for stormwater management.
4. Agricultural uses, employing latest applicable best management practices.

### 3.2 PRESERVATION LAND USE CATEGORY

#### Objective 3.2:

A preservation land use category shall be established to recognize and protect natural resources within publicly owned lands in Alachua County.

Policy 4.1.6 Factors contributing to the maintenance or improvement of air quality shall be identified and considered during land use planning and development review. These factors include but are not limited to:

1. Increased use of mass transit and non-motorized modes of transportation, and the promotion of a land development pattern conducive to support of public transportation, including containment of urban development in existing urban areas or carefully planned expansions of urban areas;
2. Increased use of green space in site planning for all types of development and along major roadways; and

3. Increased strategic planting of trees and shrubs to shade streets and buildings, reducing energy consumption and new carbon dioxide generation caused by combustion of fossil fuels; and
4. Control of airborne dust generated from land clearing and site preparation activities. Control may involve the use of techniques such as temporary silt fencing, immediate seeding or sodding, permanent vegetative buffering, phasing land clearing with development, or sprinkling the area with water.
5. Promotion of industries that exceed Federal and State air quality and emission standards. Existing and new industries shall be regulated as follows:
  - a. Existing industries not meeting these standards shall be brought into compliance under a specified schedule.
  - b. New industries shall be designed to exceed the specified standards.

Policy 4.6.6 The following activities may be allowed within the [surface water and wetland] buffer subject to standards that regulate environmental impacts:

1. Agricultural and silvicultural operations consistent with Objective 5.5; (emphasis added)
2. Water dependent facilities;
3. Minimal impact activities;
4. Activities that serve the overriding public interest; and
5. Development allowed through implementation of policy 3.6.5.3, provided that the development impact area shall not exceed the rate of one-half (1/2) acre per ten acres of conservation area, including the footprint of principal and accessory structures and parking, allowing for reasonable access.

Policy 4.9.1A critical portion of each significant plant and wildlife habitat type in Alachua County shall be protected. Protection shall be accomplished using all available methods, including land acquisition, incentives and requirements for the provision of conservation or preservation areas, habitat corridors, greenways, and common open space. COSE Objective 5.2 Preserve or establish open space within developments to ensure public health, safety and welfare and to protect recreational and natural resources and functions.

Policy 4.10.7 The County shall work with owners of agricultural and silvicultural lands to retain the ecological integrity and ecological value of strategic ecosystems through management plans and incentives. A management plan shall be required before any activity occurs in a strategic ecosystem that has not been used for agriculture or silviculture within the last 20 years, in accordance with the following:

1. The management plan shall provide for retention of the ecological integrity and ecological value of the strategic ecosystem.
2. The management plan shall be submitted to Alachua County for review and approval by appropriately qualified technical staff.
3. The management plan may be satisfied by Forest Stewardship Council certification, land acquisition, or participation in a conservation program sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.
4. Passive recreational and ecotourism activities shall be encouraged where consistent with protection of the ecological integrity of the strategic ecosystem.

The County shall, through community outreach and collaboration, facilitate participation of landowners in forestry certification programs, land acquisition programs, and federal and state cost-share conservation programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, and the Farmland Protection Program.

Objective 5.1: Provide for energy efficiency in human activities, land uses, and development patterns in order to reduce overall energy requirements for the County and its residents.

Policy 5.1.1 The County shall encourage the development and use of economically feasible and environmentally safe, innovative energy sources and management techniques for housing, transportation, commerce, and government offices by providing amendments to building codes, where applicable, that facilitate the use of such sources and techniques and through promotion of applicable tax incentives.

Policy 5.1.2 The development regulations shall be revised to encourage and accommodate site design techniques which provide for passive heating and cooling in construction and landscape design.

Policy 5.1.3 A safe, practical system of walkways and/or bikeways shall be established in conjunction with County road improvement projects within and between activity centers within the Gainesville Urban Area and high density residential areas. Wide use of public transportation to activity centers shall be encouraged by expanding bus routes and locating public transit stops at urban residential areas and urban activity centers. The provisions of this policy shall be implemented consistent with the objectives and policies of the Transportation Mobility Element.

Policy 5.1.4 Governmental agencies shall identify active energy conservation programs and major energy users and shall encourage use and expansion of such programs.

Policy 5.1.5 Alachua County should support the efforts of private individuals and organizations in their attempt to reduce the County's dependency on conventional sources of energy.

Policy 5.1.6 Recognizing that efficiency of transportation systems is a major factor in achieving energy conservation, the County shall utilize transportation planning and design efforts, consistent with the provisions of the Transportation Mobility Element, which improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.

Policy 5.2.1 Natural features such as steep slopes, ridges, sinkhole areas, floodplains, and other unsuitable areas for urban development shall be retained as open space areas. If appropriate, these areas shall be developed for use as trails, and where possible, used to connect other recreation and open space areas and other developments.

Policy 5.2.2 Pervious open space shall be provided on at least 20% of the development site through a variety of features such as:

1. Open spaces dedicated primarily to public, recreation, or pedestrian use, such as community fields, greens, plazas, and squares.
2. Natural areas of non-invasive trees and plants.
3. Landscaped areas, including street trees, utilizing a variety and balanced mix of canopy and understory trees, shrubs, and groundcovers, consistent with xeriscape principles and emphasizing native species.
4. Linkages to larger open space corridors.
5. Portions of stormwater management areas that meet conservation, recreation, or open space design criteria to be specified in the land development regulations.

Policy 5.2.3. When land development involves a parcel that contains conservation areas, the County's open space requirements shall be fulfilled first with conservation areas, then with other allowable types of open space. Open space requirements are not intended to diminish other conservation requirements in this element.

Policy 5.3.7 The County shall require that adverse impacts of outdoor lighting be minimized in order to preserve the ambiance and quality of the nighttime sky and reduce energy consumption while allowing for public safety and security.

1. The following conservation principles shall be required:
  - a. Minimize offsite lighting impacts, including glare, light trespass, and light pollution.
  - b. Use lighting at the appropriate intensity, direction, and times, to ensure light is not overused or impacting areas where it is not intended.
  - c. Maximize energy and cost efficiency.
2. The County shall adopt land development regulations for a comprehensive set of outdoor lighting design standards based on conservation principles.
3. Land development regulations shall address the outdoor lighting of roadways, parking lots, advertisements, commercial, industrial, residential, municipal and recreational activities.
4. Current and planned municipal outdoor street lighting shall be evaluated and, where practicable, revised for consistency with conservation principles.
5. The County shall seek the involvement of all of the local municipalities.

#### Objective 5.5

The County shall encourage the retention of agricultural and silvicultural operations that are conducted in accordance with best management practices.

Policy 5.5.1 The most recent federal, state, and water management district BMPs shall be required, as applicable, to all agricultural and silvicultural activities, including but not limited to the following:

1. Silviculture Best Management Practices, published by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), 2000.
2. BMPs for Agrichemical Handling and Farm Equipment Maintenance, published by FDACS and FDEP, 1998.
3. Water Quality BMPs for Cow/Calf Operations, published by the Florida Cattlemen's Association, 1999.
4. Protecting Natural Wetlands: A Guide to Stormwater BMPs, published by the U.S. EPA, 1996.

Policy 5.5.2 Where the use of BMPs is required, property owners shall identify and verify to the County the use of the most recent applicable best management practices.

Policy 5.5.3 The County shall cooperate with agricultural and silvicultural operations, as well as the appropriate federal, state, and regional agencies, to address weaknesses in the implementation and effectiveness of BMPs related to issues such as water quality and habitat protection. The County shall participate in State Division of Forestry compliance audits and coordinate site inspections to address natural resource concerns.

Policy 5.5.4 County policies and regulations should be reviewed for guidance with respect to agricultural and silvicultural practices. Federal, state, water management district, and county resource quality standards shall be maintained.



Policy 5.5.5 The County shall encourage and recognize those operations which receive industry certification of forest management practices, including the following:

1. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
2. American Forest and Paper Association's Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).
3. American Forest Foundation's American Tree Farm System.
4. Green Tag Forestry.
5. Forest Stewardship Program (FSP).

Policy 5.5.6 The land development regulations shall be reviewed for the inclusion of incentives to encourage voluntary participation in certification programs whose standards meet or exceed best management practices.

Policy 5.5.7 The County shall seek funds for pilot projects in agricultural and silvicultural areas that demonstrate the use of conservation practices.

Policy 5.5.8 The County shall work with agricultural and silvicultural land owners and operators, the U.F. Agricultural Extension Office, the Florida Division of Forestry, the Florida Farm Bureau, and other appropriate entities to develop conservation management plans for lands that contain conservation areas.

Policy 5.5.9 Agricultural and silvicultural lands which have value for historic or natural resources conservation, recreation, or open space purposes shall be identified and, based upon willing landowner participation, may be included as part of the County's land conservation program.

## 6.1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Objective 6.1: Establish and maintain a land conservation program for the purchase, preservation, and management of natural areas and open space to complement the regulatory approaches identified in other sections of this element.

Policy 6.1.2 The land conservation master plan shall identify the components of the land conservation program, including but not limited to:

1. The Alachua County Forever program.
2. Open space and greenways programs.
3. Coordination with other land acquisition and management programs.
4. Private donations and dedications.
5. Regulatory mechanisms.
6. Taxation policies, such as agricultural and bluebelt assessments.
7. Purchase of agricultural conservation easements (PACE) and purchase of development rights (PDR) for agricultural areas.

## 6.2 ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER

Objective 6.2: Implement the Alachua County Forever program.

Policy 6.2.1 The County shall establish and maintain the Alachua County Forever program to acquire and manage environmentally significant lands for the protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

Policy 6.2.2 Alachua County Forever shall be funded for a minimum of 20 years, as approved by voter referendum on November 7, 2000.

Policy 6.2.3 The emphasis of Alachua County Forever shall be to increase the acreage of environmentally significant lands managed in perpetuity for conservation purposes.

Policy 6.2.4 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.

Policy 6.2.5 During the acquisition of environmentally significant lands, the County shall give priority to acquiring the optimal acreage needed to maintain the integrity of the natural plant communities or ecological units involved.

Policy 6.2.6 All acquisitions under the Alachua County Forever program shall be based on voluntary participation by a willing property owner.

Policy 6.2.7 Resource-based recreation may be considered on and adjacent to land acquired through Alachua County Forever provided the associated activities do not have significant adverse impacts on the ecological integrity or ecological or historical values of the resources in these areas.

### 6.3 LINKED OPEN SPACE NETWORK

Objective 6.3: Develop a linked open space network, or greenways system, that can be managed to support the protection, enhancement and restoration of functional and connected natural systems while providing unique opportunities for recreation, multi-modal transportation, and economic development.

Policy 6.3.1 The County shall develop planning strategies for a greenways system that includes but is not limited to consideration of the following components:

1. Conservation and preservation areas
2. Environmentally sensitive lands
3. Open space areas
4. Parks and recreational facilities
5. Commercial recreation areas
6. Surface water systems
7. Bikeways and trails
8. Utility corridors
9. Stormwater management systems
10. Habitat corridors
11. Historic resources
12. Scenic corridors

Policy 6.3.2 The greenways system shall be designed to interconnect existing greenways components. Other lands may be included in the system based on connectivity or value as a natural resource buffer. The greenways system shall be identified as an overlay on the Future Land Use Map. The greenways system overlay shall be used to identify potential open space linkages for planning purposes. Open space linkages shall be provided through available opportunities in the development approval, land acquisition, special area planning, and similar processes.

Policy 6.3.3 Where necessary to connect publicly owned recreation and conservation lands to develop the greenways system, the County shall encourage public acquisition of land and other means of voluntary landowner participation.

Policy 6.3.4 The County shall develop a strategy for identifying and providing for publicly accessible open spaces of native flora and fauna in or near neighborhood settings. Resource-based recreation such as picnicking and hiking shall be encouraged.

Policy 6.3.5 To protect sensitive ecosystems and habitat corridors, the County shall locate and design greenway facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner, including limiting or prohibiting public access where necessary to protect such resources.

Policy 6.3.6 The County shall approve a master management plan for the greenways system, and specific plans for lands acquired, preserved, or otherwise included in the greenways system. The management plans shall address natural resources protection, public access, recreation, education, and opportunities for economic development that is complementary to maintaining the system. The management plans shall identify anticipated costs and departments responsible for implementation of the plans.

Policy 6.3.7 The County shall coordinate with local municipalities in order to include appropriate incorporated properties as part of the greenways system.

#### 6.4 OTHER ACQUISITION PROGRAMS

Objective 6.4: Coordinate with other programs for the acquisition and management of natural areas and open space for recreational, open space and conservation purposes.

#### 6.5 ACQUISITION TOOLBOX

Objective 6.5: Encourage the use of multiple, diverse land acquisition strategies.

COSE Policy 6.5.1 The County shall use and promote a variety of tools for acquiring and protecting natural areas and open space. Acquisition tools shall include, at a minimum, fee simple purchase, conservation easements, conservation trusts, land donations and dedications, transfer or purchase of development rights, long-term leases, and tax incentives.

Policy 6.6.9 Multiple use opportunities (see below), including resource-based recreation, shall be considered in County-owned preservation and conservation areas where consistent with conservation of wildlife habitat, watershed protection, erosion control, maintenance or enhancement of water quality, and aquifer recharge protection.

Multiple use opportunities: The coordinated management of a natural area to simultaneously provide more than one of the following resource objectives: conservation of fish and wildlife, habitat, natural communities, or other ecological values, watershed protection, sustainable agricultural and silvicultural activities, preservation of scenic quality, open space, or historic resources, provision of resource-based recreation, educational, and scientific activities, and environmental stewardship.

#### ECONOMIC ELEMENT

Policy 1.1.6 Industries which create a market for local agricultural products shall be encouraged to locate or expand existing local business in Alachua County.

Policy 1.5.2 Alachua County shall promote economic development efforts that build on and complement existing commercial, industrial and agricultural assets in the local economic system.

## Community Facilities Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies

### FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

#### GENERAL STRATEGY 1

Minimize the conversion of land from rural to urban uses by maximizing the efficient use of available urban infrastructure, while preserving environmentally sensitive areas, according to the following:

. . . (a-d not listed here)

- e. Preserve ecosystems of a given area and incorporate hazard-resilient land planning.

FLUE Definition: Hazard Resilient Land Planning- Land use planning process that includes suitability analysis for development of land exposed to natural hazards, so the limitations of hazard prone areas are understood by citizens, potential investors, and government officials. The plan results in a linkage of land-use and emergency planning efforts.

#### 5.4.5 HEALTH FACILITIES

Major health facilities should be accessible by mass transit.

Policy 5.4.5.1 Medical support facilities and services shall locate in close proximity to hospitals.

Policy 5.4.5.2 New major health facilities, e.g., hospitals and medical complexes, shall be located in areas designated for Institutional/Medical land uses on the Future Land Use Map. This land use category shall also provide for related facilities such as pharmacies, medical suppliers, lodging, restaurants, and accessory facilities, subject to performance standards in the land development regulations.

Policy 5.4.5.3 Other health facilities such as outpatient medical clinics, including emergency facilities and nursing homes, may be allowed in the urban cluster in areas designated on the Future Land Use Map for Institutional, Institutional/Medical, Commercial, Medium-High Density Residential, and High Density Residential, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

Policy 5.4.5.4 Outpatient clinics, including emergency facilities, may be allowed in areas designated for Rural/Agricultural uses and Rural Clusters on the Future Land Use Map subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

### TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT

Policy 1.3.2 Alachua County shall adopt connectivity index standards in the Unified Land Development Code for designated MMTDs for the purpose of ensuring adequate internal connections as well as connections to adjacent and nearby uses. The connectivity standards shall address connectivity for bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.

OBJECTIVE 1.6 Provide a system of safe, pleasant, convenient, and continuous bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community.

Policy 1.6.1 New development proposals shall be reviewed as part of the Development Review process for the provision of adequate and safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities consistent with policies in the Future Land Use Element, and for consistency with the recommendations of the Alachua Countywide Bicycle Master Plan. Standards and requirements for bicycle and pedestrian facilities (such as sidewalks, pedestrian paths, bicycle lanes, and bicycle parking) shall be detailed in the land development regulations and include elements such as amount, design, and location.

Policy 1.6.2. Streets and roads shall be designed such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served to the greatest extent possible. Design will include public and emergency vehicle access. Such designs shall include strategies to calm automobile traffic, provide a pleasant pedestrian environment, and create safe, balanced, livable streets, such as:

- a. narrow travel lane width,
- b. minimum turning radius,
- c. bike lanes,
- d. pedestrian-friendly frontage uses and design,
- e. street trees, street furniture, and landscaping,
- f. wide sidewalks,
- g. crosswalks, and/or
- h. gridded street system of short blocks.

#### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

OBJECTIVE 7 (and associated policies 7.1 thru 7.5)

Stormwater management in floodplain areas shall protect the public health, safety and welfare by incorporating hazard mitigation and multi-functional designs.

#### **CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

Objective 5.6 (and associated policies 5.6.1. thru 5.6.8.): Protect life, property, and the economy by eliminating or minimizing the present and future vulnerability to wildfire hazards.

Policies 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3, 5.6.4, 5.6.5, 5.6.6, 5.6.7, 5.6.8 : These policies all pertain to the implementation of objective 5.6 by stating wildfire hazard areas will be mapped, promoting public education of wildfire risks and proactive steps for mitigation, implementation of Firewise Community Programs, use wildfire risks and hazards in determining the location of land use, implementing minimum standards for development in wildfire hazard areas, pursuing available funding for fuel and land management in the County, implementing a County wide fuel management program with stated practices such as prescribed fire.

Policy 5.7.7: Requires safety of citizens and protection of the environment when determining the location of a facility that handles or stores hazardous materials and lists items to consider when determining an appropriate location for these uses, one of which is the proper staff training and equipment and response times for emergency medical and fire protection services.

COSE Definition: Area of Special Flood Hazard: Any locality that, because of topography, soil limitations or geographic location, is subject to periodic or occasional inundation.

Objective 6.3:

Develop a linked open space network, or greenways system, that can be managed to support the protection, enhancement and restoration of functional and connected natural systems while providing unique opportunities for recreation, multi-modal transportation, and economic development.

## **RECREATION ELEMENT**

**OBJECTIVE 1.1** Develop and maintain an enhanced system of activity-based and resource-based recreational facilities that consist of a broad range of developed and protected sites and programmed recreation that is integrated by service area throughout the County from the neighborhood to the regional scale and accessible to all residents of Alachua County.

**Policy 1.1.1** By the end of 2003, the County shall complete a countywide Recreation Master Plan for meeting future recreation facility and program needs. The Master Plan shall be based on existing and projected demographic characteristics and geographic concentrations of population. The Master Plan shall include a financial component for both capital and maintenance/operations costs.

**Policy 1.1.2** The County shall adopt and maintain, at a minimum, the following level of service standards for recreation: (1) 0.5 acres of improved activity-based recreation sites per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County; (2) 5.0 acres of improved resource-based recreation sites per 1000 persons in the unincorporated area of Alachua County. The level of service standards shall consider the location of the site and the population within the service areas for the park types, as set forth in Table 1 of this Element. The level of service standards shall account for changes in population due to annexation. Within twelve (12) months of completion and adoption of a county-wide Recreation Master Plan, the County shall pursue a comprehensive plan amendment to revise the level of service standards and Table 1.

**Policy 1.1.4** The criteria for the acquisition and development of recreation sites shall be determined by the Recreation Master Plan and Table 1 of this element which provides the range of park types, service areas, population served, typical size and typical facilities and site characteristics for different types of recreation sites. Park districts shall be established through the Master Plan process and the existing level of service for the individual districts determined. Areas with the lowest level of service, compared to the adopted level of service standard, shall be given priority for the acquisition and development of recreation facilities and programs.

**Policy 1.1.5** The County shall adopt a five year Capital Improvement Program as part of its Capital Improvement Element that shall be coordinated with the Recreation and Future Land Use Elements and based on the availability of funds to provide the necessary facility improvements to maintain, at a minimum, the level of service identified in Policy 1.1.2.

**OBJECTIVE 1.2** The County shall utilize recreation sites and funding mechanisms provided by the County, municipalities, State and Federal Governments, School Board of Alachua County, volunteer organizations and private groups to expand the recreational opportunities of Alachua County citizens.

**Policy 1.2.1** Alachua County shall expand the availability of recreational opportunities by seeking agreements with recreational facility and program providers to serve multi-jurisdictional areas based on the findings of the Recreation Master Plan. These agreements shall address issues that include provision of operations and maintenance, capital improvements and capital funding, liabilities and other appropriate issues.

**Policy 1.2.2** The County shall pursue interlocal agreements with the municipalities to provide joint recreation projects that most efficiently provide recreation facilities to all County residents.

**Policy 1.3.2** The County shall coordinate efforts with the State and the municipalities to establish a network of recreational trails and public access that would connect natural and cultural features of the County and provide

educational and recreational value to Alachua County citizens. Such a network should be developed in a sustainable manner and include:

1. Appropriate access to geological, archaeological, historical, environmental and recreational features.
2. Trail linkages such as creekside boardwalks, nature trails through hammocks and along prairies, canals and canoe trails, and connections to nature centers, parks and exhibits.
3. Rail to trails for connective access between recreational sites and activity centers.

Policy 1.3.8 The County shall develop a plan for a multi-modal transportation system that links open space and recreational areas and other recreational facilities with residential areas.

Policy 1.3.8.1 The County shall participate in the development of non-automotive transportation networks by promoting the appropriate use of corridor open space for recreational trails e.g., required 75 feet setbacks on section lines and half section lines, water courses, abandoned railways including the Paynes Prairie Rail To Trail, major overhead transmission line right-of-ways, and appropriate easements for bicycle, jogging and bridle paths.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 Utilize current funding sources and identify new funding sources for operations and maintenance of County-owned recreation facilities and for recreation programming for County residents.

Policy 1.5.1 The County shall utilize current funding sources and identify, as part of the Recreation Master Plan, appropriate new funding sources (e.g., utility tax, user fees, benefit districts and special assessments) for the provision of recreation site maintenance and operations. New funding mechanisms such as user fees at County parks shall be structured so that accessibility to low-income individuals is affirmatively enhanced.

Policy 1.5.2 Upon implementation of a funding mechanism, based on the Recreation Master Plan, for the operation and maintenance of new parks and recreation facilities, the County will consider adopting a higher level of service standard and county-wide impact fees to maintain that level of service standard. If park impact fees are adopted, the County and municipalities shall coordinate impact fee revenues to develop recreation improvement projects to meet the needs resulting from new development and to maintain, at a minimum, the level of service standard for recreation as amended pursuant to this policy.

Policy 1.5.3 The County shall implement the most efficient and effective use of public funds to provide comprehensive recreation programs and opportunities for the public. The County shall contract with public or private organizations for such services where it has been demonstrated that they provide the most beneficial recreational programs.

#### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT**

OBJECTIVE 3- Coordinate planning activities mandated by the various elements of the comprehensive plan with other local governments, school boards, other units of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land, the region and state.

Policy 4.1 (c): References annexation issues and specifically states that local governments will coordinate with each other in urban reserve and annexed areas regarding which services the County and Cities will provide before and after annexation and how these services will be financed.

Policy 5.5: States that the County will be a member of the Regional Trauma Agency in order to improve inter-County emergency medical services and encourages adjoining Counties to participate.

Policy 5.7: States the County shall continue to develop and implement inter-local agreements with municipalities related to fire services, law enforcement, and emergency medical services among other services.



**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT**

1.2.1 C.: States that emergency medical services and fire services are classified as Category “C” public facilities which means the level of service for these facilities are to be used for analysis and capital facilities planning. These guidelines are advisory.

Policy 1.2.5.A: This policy establishes the guidelines for Category “C” public facilities, including Fire Rescue services and establishes emergency response guidelines with the Urban Service area, Urban Cluster and Rural areas.

1.2.5. A.4. : Provides for updates to the Fire Service Master Plan and any associated capital improvements plan to form the basis of consideration for establishing Fire Rescue level of service standards as part of concurrency management requirements.

Policy 1.2.5.E: This policy establishes functional road classifications in the land development regulations and specifically establishes guidelines and standards for assessing graded roads including the potential public safety issue regarding the inaccessibility of these roads by emergency vehicles.

**Economic Development Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies****FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT****2.0 URBAN ACTIVITY CENTER POLICIES** (See *relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation*)**Policy 2.5.8** North Main Street/53rd Avenue Low-Industrial Activity Center

1. General
  - a. The Activity Center Plan provides for principal land use of industrial with possible secondary supporting uses of commercial, office or institutional.
  - b. The internal boundaries shown for different land uses are intended to be conceptual in nature (plus or minus 25 percent) and final boundaries shall be determined at site plan approval. No land use shall be developed within the rights-of-way of the North Main Street extension.
2. Land Use
  - a. Industrial land uses may include all uses permitted in Alachua County industrial zoning categories appropriate with the environmental limitations of the area, such as warehousing, transportation and distribution, manufacturing and fabrication.
  - b. Conservation areas shall be set aside of the approximate size, shape and location shown on the Activity Center Map to protect selected cypress wetlands. The actual boundaries of the conservation areas shall be determined by field survey with the Alachua County Department of Environmental Protection at site plan approval.

- c. The long term sanitary waste plan shall include installation of a pumping station and sewers to collect and pump waste to the Gainesville Regional Utilities System. All septic tanks permitted for small commercial or office users approved by the Health Department shall be phased out when a pump station is constructed. No industrial use shall be permitted without the central sanitary sewer system. In addition, all uses shall be served by central water.
- d. The following minimum buffers shall be required, as defined by the Buffer Matrix of the Future Land Use Element:
  - (1) All industrial development abutting institutional land use shall establish and maintain a medium density buffer of at least 30 feet in width.
  - (2) All industrial development abutting office land use shall establish and maintain a medium density buffer of at least 25 feet in width.
  - (3) All industrial development abutting commercial land use shall establish and maintain a medium density buffer of at least 20 feet in width.

3.9 OFFICE POLICIES AND STANDARDS (see relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation)

4.0 Industrial Development

4.1 GENERAL

OBJECTIVE 4.1 Industrial land use categories shall be established to allow for a range of industrial activities, subject to the policies and standards contained in this Chapter. Industrial developments are characterized by the fabrication, manufacturing, transporting, warehousing or distribution of goods. In addition a fairground shall be authorized on that portion of Tax Parcels 07872-003-002 and 07872-003-008 described in the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions recorded in Book 3598, Page 1133 of the Official Records of Alachua County; fairground uses include agricultural, community-based or government-oriented activities, and to the extent any of these activities are commercial in nature, said activities shall not exceed a period greater than six (6) consecutive months.

Policy 4.1.1 Industrial development shall be located in the urban cluster, with the following limited exceptions:

- a. Material-oriented industrial development that is 1) dependent on natural resources found in the rural area, or 2) based on raw agricultural products, materials, or activities at or proximate to the site, may be located only as follows:
  - 1. The Board of County Commissioners must first make a determination that the proximity of the particular industrial use to natural resources or raw materials is so significant a factor for that industrial use that:
    - (a) its location outside of the urban cluster at or near the site of those resources or materials is appropriate, and
    - (b) its location within the urban cluster is inappropriate.
  - 2. The determination shall be based in part on an economic analysis of the particular industrial activity. The economic analysis shall evaluate, without regard to land cost, economies associated with performing the industrial activity at or near the site of the

resources or materials, compared to performing the industrial activity in an industrial area. The Board of County Commissioners shall also consider the following factors:

- (a) the impact on public health and the environment,
- (b) compatibility with surrounding land uses,
- (c) cost in the provision of public services and infrastructure to the particular material-oriented industrial activity,
- (d) effect on the economy of the area, and
- (e) consistency with other policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. If consideration of all the factors in paragraph 2 leads to the conclusion that the industrial activity should be located at a particular site outside the urban cluster, then the site shall be designated on the Future Land Use Map as Industrial/Resource-based or Industrial/Agriculturally-dependent. The Industrial/Resource-based or Industrial/Agriculturally-dependent land use classification shall be applied as an overlay district, providing for the underlying land use classification to remain in effect as well.
4. Any designation of sites with such a rural industrial overlay district shall be accompanied by policies addressing standards for the specific type of industrial use, its scale and intensity, and other conditions related to matters such as environmental issues, compatibility with surrounding uses, infrastructure, and the specific form of subsequent development orders that will be required to proceed with development of the site. These policies may include requirements for any necessary additional special studies to be carried out by or for the County at the expense of the applicant.
5. The land development regulations shall establish or identify appropriate zoning classifications and other site-specific approval processes for these types of industrial uses.
  - b. Industrial uses, other than those limited uses provided for in Policy 4.1.1.a, located outside of the urban cluster shall locate in existing rural employment centers, and shall be designated on the future land use map with the appropriate land use classification. Standards for rural employment centers are contained in Section 6.0.

**Policy 4.1.2** A range of choice in land areas and locations for the different types of industry shall be provided to meet the anticipated expansion of industry in the County and to meet the objectives of the Economic Element of this Plan. Sufficient area for industrial land use shall be identified in appropriate locations on the Future Land Use Map in an effort to create a supply of land which has the proper zoning already in place, which is therefore immediately available for such uses. The County shall identify a number of potential locations with suitable infrastructure, including parcels with rail access, interstate access, or proximity to cargo terminals, and suitable environmental characteristics for such uses. Procedures and standards to facilitate development review shall be adopted as part of the land development regulations to implement this policy. Such standards and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness in protecting public health and the environment, and facilitating permitting.

**Policy 4.1.3** Industrial locations and proposed uses shall be consistent with the Conservation and Open Space Policies of Alachua County.

Policy 4.1.3.1 Industrial operations shall eliminate or, where possible, minimize the following impacts on public health and the environment:

- a. erosion;
- b. noise;
- c. odor, fumes, vapors and gases;
- d. fire and explosion hazards;
- e. radioactive elements;
- f. electromagnetic interference;
- g. smoke, dust, particulate matter, and dirt;
- h. vibrations;
- i. glare;
- j. toxic wastes.

#### 4.2 LOCATION AND COMPATIBILITY

Policy 4.2.1 Industrial uses shall not be located adjacent to residential or agricultural areas without adequate buffering or integrating design and business practices to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts. Land use decisions concerning location of industrial uses shall take into consideration environmental justice.

Policy 4.2.2 Prime industrial locations, pursuant to Policy 4.1.2 above, shall be kept free from encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Policy 4.2.3 Commercial uses within an industrial area shall be limited to neighborhood convenience, except as provided in Objective 4.1 for that portion of Tax Parcels 07872-003-002 and 07872-003-008 described in the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions recorded in Book 3598, Page 1133 of the Official Records of Alachua County.

#### 4.3 DESIGN AND SITE STANDARDS

Policy 4.3.1 Industrial facilities in urban clusters shall group together in planned industrial districts on sites capable of being expanded and developed in stages. Criteria for permitting industrial development shall include but are not limited to:

- a. topography and soils--land having stable, well-drained soils, free from flooding;
- b. climate--prevailing wind direction that does not impact adjacent residential areas;
- c. accessibility--access to arterials and highways and, where possible, rail facilities;
- d. utilities--availability of water, sewer, electricity or natural gas in adequate quantities;
- e. size--large enough for proper site design.

Policy 4.3.2 Industrial sites shall be designed to provide for:

- a. adequate off-street parking to meet the needs of the operation;
- b. adequate buffering along roadways and adjacent uses to minimize the effects of lighting, noise and signing.

Policy 4.3.3 When development is located along a railway facility or a railroad-highway intersection, conflicts between the development and the adjacent highway network should be avoided.

#### 4.4 REQUIRED FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Policy 4.4.1 Industrial development shall be located only in areas where adequate facilities and services exist or will be provided prior to occupancy. These facilities include, but are not limited to:

- a. roadways.
- b. fire service.
- c. water supply.
- d. street lighting.
- e. solid waste collection and disposal.
- f. sewage collection and disposal.
- g. storm water drainage and disposal.
- h. emergency medical service.

Policy 4.4.2 New industrial development shall meet all of the requirements for adequate facilities based on the level of service standards for those facilities and concurrency provisions of the Plan.

#### 4.5 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Policy 4.5.1 The light industrial designation is applicable for industrial parks or office parks in a campus-like setting. This designation is intended for use on large tracts of land within the urban cluster or rural employment centers which can provide internal road systems. Stringent performance standards shall be incorporated into the land development regulations to provide buffering, signage, landscaping, and architectural standards and other methods to limit any adverse impacts and ensure compatibility with adjacent areas. Certain research and development, warehousing, transportation and distribution uses may be appropriate if all performance standards can be achieved.

#### **CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

Policy 5.3.5.2. b. Alachua County shall participate in the preservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources of the Scenic 441 Old Florida Heritage Highway by supporting the concepts described in the Scenic 441 Vision Statement, and by providing appropriate resources and support to the Corridor Management Council for implementation of the Corridor Management Plan.

Policy 5.3.6 The County shall enhance the value and beauty of bicycle and pedestrian routes by locating them to take advantage of scenic resources while maintaining the ecological integrity of other conservation and preservation areas.

#### **RECREATION ELEMENT**

Policy 1.4.10 The County shall participate in the development and expansion of canoe trails on Alachua County creeks and rivers through coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and any governments sharing jurisdiction over the waterways, where appropriate, with provisions to protect and maintain the environmental character, and promote the safe and peaceful enjoyment of the waterways.

#### **SOLID WASTE ELEMENT**

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Establish level of service standards for solid waste management in order to coordinate capital improvement planning with land use decisions to meet the requirement that adequate solid waste

management facilities be available when needed for development concurrent with the impacts of development by implementing Policies 1.1.1 through 1.1.4.

Policy 1.1.1 requires a minimum LOS standard at 0.73 tons per person for solid waste disposal.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 The County shall develop and implement a waste reduction strategy that includes waste prevention, source reduction, reuse, recycling and biological disposition, resulting in a reduction of solid waste disposed per capita.

OBJECTIVE 1.7 The County will continue to provide safe and economic disposal and recycling of household hazardous waste (HHW).

## ECONOMIC ELEMENT

### GOAL 1

ENHANCE THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF ALL CITIZENS OF ALACHUA COUNTY AND EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY THE COUNTY'S TAX BASE.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Provide a comprehensive economic development program Alachua County.

Policy 1.1.1 Alachua County shall coordinate its economic development activities with its municipalities and the appropriate federal, state, regional and local agencies including the University of Florida, Santa Fe Community College, the School Board of Alachua County and economic development organizations.

Policy 1.1.3 Alachua County shall encourage the allocation of resources for the retention, expansion and development of local business and the recruitment of businesses and industries. Priority shall be given to the retention, expansion and development of local businesses.

Policy 1.1.5 The Alachua County department or the agency contracted to implement this plan shall develop an annual program to retain, expand and develop local businesses. This program shall also explore opportunities for attracting appropriate businesses and industries. This program shall encourage the availability of economic opportunities for all segments of the community, monitor and reduce the extent of underemployment in the community, and recruit businesses and industries that will utilize and train the local labor force as their employees.

This program shall:

- a. Provide current informational material to prospective businesses and industries that includes but is not limited to:
  1. An inventory of available commercial and industrial land and vacant buildings.
  2. Analysis of labor force characteristics and needs.
  3. Availability and cost of electricity, water, sewer, and natural gas.
  4. Analysis of community characteristics (e.g., quality of public schools and cultural amenities).
  5. Provide site location and development review assistance.
- b. Advise the Local Planning Agency and the Board of County Commissioners on economic development issues that affect comprehensive planning and land development regulation activities.

- c. Participate in the review of grant proposals relating to economic development.
- d. Provide a review of barriers to employment and economic prosperity (e.g., transportation, child-care, education, employability and health-care) and ways to overcome those barriers.

Policy 1.1.6 Industries which create a market for local agricultural products shall be encouraged to locate or expand existing local business in Alachua County.

Policy 1.1.7 Alachua County shall establish a matrix for ranking future economic development proposals/initiatives and requests for funding from economic development organizations based on their contributions to sustainable economic development.

Policy 1.1.14 The County shall conduct a cost/benefit assessment of any financial incentives proposed to be provided by the County to support the retention, expansion or development of local business or to attract new business. Such an assessment shall factor in the financial costs as well as the social equity and environmental impacts of proposed incentives.

Policy 1.1.15 A comprehensive annual "State of Alachua County's Economy" report shall be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. This document shall review the economic indicators of the local economy and the impact of economic development efforts on the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. This report shall be developed by the County Manager or his designee in cooperation with any agency which may be contracted to implement this element. This report shall include at a minimum:

- a. A review of the annual economic development program for Alachua County as it relates to the objectives and policies set forth in this Economic Element.
- b. Recommendations concerning identified infrastructure needs to support economic development efforts; this information shall be considered as part of the annual update of the Capital Improvement Program.
- c. A report of existing business expansions and new business starts within the County.
- d. A report on businesses attracted to the County through the recruitment efforts of Alachua County or the agency.
- e. A report on vocational training opportunities, including identification of needed job skills reported by businesses during the recruitment or expansion process.
- f. The number of new jobs created.
- g. A report on the costs and benefits to the County, as well as the effectiveness, of any incentives provided by the County to support the retention or expansion of existing businesses or to develop or attract new business.
- h. A report on the effectiveness of the economic development program in improving the economic well being of the unemployed poor, including those not covered by general unemployment statistics.

## OBJECTIVE 1.2

Coordinate educational, vocational, and technical training opportunities with the needs of new and existing employers.

Policy 1.2.1 Alachua County shall assist in the coordination of educational, professional, technical, and vocational training of the labor force with the needs of businesses and industries. This assistance shall include, but not be limited to, disseminating information about the vocational and other programs available through



Santa Fe Community College and the School Board of Alachua County to prospective businesses and industries and disseminating statistical data on population and employment relating to labor markets for use by potential employers and vocational programs.

Policy 1.2.2 Alachua County shall foster collaboration among the educational institutions, the employees and employers to ensure that the skills of the County's labor force closely match the demand for labor.

Policy 1.2.3 Alachua County shall, as referenced in the County's Strategic Plan for Sustainable Economic Development, collaborate with local educational institutions to expand vocational skills training and provide entrepreneurial opportunities for students.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 The County shall evaluate and ensure that the types of new businesses and industries developing and locating in Alachua County (and the expansion of existing businesses and industries) will contribute to maintaining a clean environment (air, water, soil) and be located in areas with suitable infrastructure and compatible land uses. Each employer shall be a good neighbor by preventing adverse impacts on the environment with emphasis given to the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.3.1 Alachua County shall adopt objective standards for timely decisions on applications for development approval for business and industrial uses that correspond to Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. Such standards and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness in facilitating the permitting process and protecting the environment. The County shall develop and maintain, as a mechanism for expediting the development review process, an inventory of suitable potential business locations which would include information on the infrastructure available and the environmental conditions of the site.

Policy 1.3.2 Alachua County shall encourage the development and expansion of business and industry in appropriate locations that make efficient use of existing public services and infrastructure.

Policy 1.3.4 Alachua County shall encourage and allow flexibility in the development of "home-based businesses" consistent with public health and safety concerns. Home-based businesses are defined as a business or commercial activity conducted on a residential property which is accessory to the residential use of that property.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 Provide 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 eliminate blighted commercial and industrial uses. 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.

Policy 1.4.1 Businesses and industries that meet the demands of the existing labor force by providing employment opportunities and equitable salaries shall be given a high priority in recruitment efforts and in provision of support for expansion of existing local business.

Policy 1.4.2 Businesses and industries that are willing to participate in the training of skilled and unskilled workers through the local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and/or other similar programs, shall be given a

high priority in recruitment efforts and strongly encouraged to locate in Alachua County, and in provision of support for expansion of existing business.

Policy 1.4.3 Alachua County shall support and encourage the development of public/private partnerships which assist small and minority businesses that may otherwise not have access to adequate start up capital.

Policy 1.4.4 The County shall create incentives for the development or redevelopment of specific economically distressed areas by sharing or incurring the cost of extending essential infrastructure to those areas.

Policy 1.4.5 Alachua County shall support Welfare Transition employment/training projects in the County.

Policy 1.4.6 Alachua County shall collaborate with local businesses and organizations, including builders, developers, contractors and labor unions, to create a program that enhances apprenticeship opportunities for vocational trades.

Policy 1.4.7 Alachua County shall support the development of micro-enterprises and small businesses.

Policy 1.4.8 Alachua County shall support existing businesses and encourage new business development in economically distressed areas of the County.

**OBJECTIVE 1.5 Diversify the County's economy.**

Policy 1.5.1 Alachua County shall expand its economic base by creating an environment which encourages entrepreneurship.

Policy 1.5.2 Alachua County shall promote economic development efforts that build on and complement existing commercial, industrial and agricultural assets in the local economic system.

Policy 1.5.3 Alachua County shall implement the goals of the Alachua County Visitors and Convention Bureau to promote North Central Florida as a tourism destination through events, advertising and accessible recreation sites. The County shall promote tourism, including eco-tourism, and tourism-related businesses which complement the County's environmental, social and economic quality.

Policy 1.5.4 Alachua County shall encourage the development and expansion of e-commerce.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT**

### **GOAL 1**

**PRESERVE, PROTECT, ENHANCE AND SUPPORT HISTORIC RESOURCES AND PROPERTIES AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES WITHIN ALACHUA COUNTY.**

Policy 1.1 of the Historic Preservation element designates Alachua County to create a Historic Resources Preservation Plan that addresses comprehensively responsible stewardship of historic resources and properties. It is intended that the plan shall be implemented through appropriate land Historic Preservation Element and land development regulations.

Policy 1.2 - The Historic Resources Preservation Plan will include, at a minimum:

- a. Identification of a lead agency to manage the plan.
- b. Mechanism for coordination of the Alachua County Historical Commission,
- c. Departments of Growth Management, Environmental Protection, and Public Works

- d. for the preservation of historic resources and properties.
- e. Consideration by Alachua County to become a Certified Local Government for
- f. Historic Preservation.
- g. Mechanism for pursuing state and federal grants and other funding.
- h. Establishment of a methodology to qualify a historic resource or property as
- i. significant based on National Register of Historic Places and/or local criteria.
- j. f. Maintain an inventory of historic resources and properties.
- k. g. Creation of a Historic Preservation Ordinance to provide regulatory protection of
- l. historic resources and properties, including prohibition and enforcement regarding
- m. vandalism, and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of development impacts.

**OBJECTIVE 2** Conserve and extend the useful life of historic resources and properties through the identification, protection and/or rehabilitation of properties significant on a national, regional, or local level consistent with preserving their historic or archaeological character and value. Strategies for preservation of historic resources and properties shall include:

- Incentives for maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation, and stabilization.
- Incentives for productive and adaptive reuse.
- Incentives for private ownership and responsible stewardship.
- Opportunity for acquisition/conservation by governmental entities, private interests, or not-for-profit organizations.
- Establishment of historic and/or archaeological districts.

## Housing Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies

### **FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

- Policy 1.1.1 Adequate locations shall be available in the urban cluster for all types of housing including the placement of manufactured homes, and manufactured home parks and subdivisions.
- Policy 1.1.4 Higher urban densities than designated on the Future Land Use Map may be allowed for housing as established by policies in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy 1.3.6 To provide for a greater range of choices of housing types in single family residential areas, affordable housing, and the promotion of infill to new and existing neighborhoods while maintaining single family character, one accessory living unit shall be allowed on single family residential lots in the Estate, Low, and Medium Density residential areas without being included in gross residential density calculations. Performance criteria shall be detailed in the land development regulations and include elements such as site design, landscaping, access, and parking requirements.
- Policy 1.3.6.1 Prior to the issuance of a building permit for the construction of an accessory living unit, the applicant shall provide proof of homestead exemption status establishing ownership and principal residence of the lot. Certification of homestead exemption status to ensure owner occupancy shall be provided to Alachua County on an annual basis. Permanent occupancy by the owner of either the primary or accessory living unit shall be required.

- Policy 1.3.6.2 The total gross floor area of the accessory living unit shall not exceed more than 40% of the area of the primary living unit, nor be more than 800 square feet, nor less than 400 square feet or contain more than one bedroom.
- Policy 1.3.6.3 For accessory living units created by internal conversion or by an attachment that is an addition to an existing primary residence, the entrance shall be located on the side or rear of the primary residence.
- Policy 1.3.6.4 One driveway shared by primary residence and accessory living unit shall be permitted. No additional driveway shall be created to serve an accessory living unit.
- Policy 1.3.6.5 If available, all accessory living units shall be required to connect to the municipal potable water and sewer system of the primary residence and shall not have separate services.
- Policy 1.3.7.1 Low Density residential land use category shall provide for single residential detached and attached dwellings. In addition, traditional neighborhood developments and planned developments may include mixed housing types and mixed uses.
- Policy 1.3.7.2 The Low Density residential land use category shall provide for various housing types, such as conventional site-built single family homes, accessory living units, attached structures including townhouses, multi-family developments in planned developments, dwellings with zero lot line orientation, factory-built modular units, manufactured homes, or mobile homes.
- Policy 1.3.7.3 Revise zoning regulations and the County's Cluster Ordinance to allow Low or Medium density residential land use to include flexible and mixed minimum lot sizes, relying on design standards and gross density. Such revisions shall address the need for affordable housing, compatibility with transit alternatives, and open space preservation including greenway corridors.
- Policy 1.3.8.1 Medium Density residential development shall provide for small lot single family residential detached and attached dwellings, and multi-family residential dwellings. In addition, traditional neighborhood developments and planned developments may include mixed housing types and mixed uses.
- Policy 1.3.8.3 The Medium Density residential land use category shall provide for various housing types, such as conventional, site-built single family dwellings, accessory living units, attached structures including townhouses, dwellings with zero lot line orientation, factory built modular units, manufactured homes, mobile homes, or multi-family dwellings.
- Policy 1.3.9.1 The Medium-High Density residential land use category shall provide for small lot single family residential detached and attached dwellings, and multiple family residential dwellings. In addition, traditional neighborhood developments and planned developments may include mixed housing types and mixed uses.
- Policy 1.3.10.2 The High Density residential land use category shall provide for small lot single family residential detached and attached dwellings, and multiple family residential dwellings. In addition, traditional neighborhood developments and planned developments may include mixed housing types and mixed uses.
- Policy 1.4.1.1 Appropriate mixes of housing types within planned developments, village centers, and traditional neighborhood developments shall be allowed where such mixes may be integrated with the character of the surrounding residential area.
- Policy 1.4.3 1. Residential developments of mixed housing types may be allowed through the development review process provided the development is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and:

- a. meets all TND policies and
  - b. meets all TND land development regulations.
2. Residential developments of mixed housing types that do not meet all TND land development regulations may be allowed through the planned development rezoning process provided the development is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and:
- a. meets all TND policies.

**OBJECTIVE 2.1**

Provide for the concentration of mixtures of higher intensity and density land uses through designation of Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map, with standards to ensure pedestrian-friendly compact centers connected to a multi-modal transportation system and integrated with surrounding uses in the urban area.

**HOUSING ELEMENT**

**OBJECTIVE 1.1**

Alachua County shall provide for the development of affordable housing, dispersed throughout the County, through policies which focus on the following areas:

- Land use and facilities
- Methods to promote the dispersion of affordable housing, and
- Manufactured housing.

Policy 1.1.1 Alachua County shall, through the policies in the Future Land Use Element, provide areas for residential development which would be suitable for the development of affordable housing. These areas shall take into account the availability of infrastructure and land, the accessibility to employment and services, the proximity to shopping, daycare facilities, transit corridors, and the promotion of infill opportunities.

Policy 1.1.3 Alachua County shall, with participation by the Gainesville Builder’s Association, the Board of Realtors, lending institutions, Habitat for Humanity, the public, and other housing providers, conduct a detailed Housing Study which includes the following elements:

1. A detailed, County-wide Needs Assessment;
2. A Housing Production Cost Analysis, taking into account the cost of production, including any differences related to the unit’s geographical location within the County;
3. An Economic Feasibility Analysis of building affordable housing;
4. An Inventory of substandard housing;
5. An assessment of existing affordable housing developments; and
6. An identification of specific areas in the County where the market and incentive programs are not producing enough affordable housing to meet the area’s needs including the needs of very low, low and moderate income households. The results of this study shall form one of the bases for any future affordable housing goals, development requirements, and implementation strategies.

Measure: This Study shall be completed by 2002.

Policy 1.1.4 It is and shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners to promote the dispersion of newly built affordable housing units within developments throughout the entire County. This should include areas which are proximate to schools, shopping, employment centers, daycare facilities,

and transit corridors. The Board of County Commissioners shall promote the development of affordable housing in the areas identified in the Housing Study that are deficient in market produced, or incentive based, affordable housing. This policy shall also apply to any proposed Development of Regional Impact (DRI), and shall be used as a guideline to determine future affordable housing development goals. This policy shall not limit housing programs created to assist farmers or rehabilitation assistance programs and activities which may be appropriate in rural areas.

Policy 1.1.5 Alachua County shall support the development of new affordable housing within the areas identified in Policy 1.1.3 through the allocation of dedicated funding sources such as CDBG or single family revenue bond programs.

Policy 1.1.6 Alachua County shall enact an Affordable Housing Ordinance that:

1. Establishes a need for new development that must be affordable within the areas that the Housing Study indicated where the market or incentive based housing programs are not producing affordable housing. The amount of new affordable housing needed shall be equivalent to a percentage of the County-wide need as determined by the Housing Study called for in Policy 1.1.3;
2. Establishes development requirements for affordable housing, including provisions requiring a phasing schedule for affordable housing units to be constructed in conjunction with the market based housing;
3. Establishes incentives for the creation of affordable housing;
4. Establishes incentives for the rehabilitation of the existing housing supply to ensure its long-term affordability and re-use;
5. Establishes mitigation options for new development unable to meet the required development percentage, provided that mitigation options a. and b. below may only be applied to areas identified in policy 1.1.3(6) that are not producing enough affordable housing to meet the area’s needs. Mitigation options may include:
  - a. off-site development of affordable housing units;
  - b. fees paid in-lieu of the creation of affordable housing units to be contributed to a fund to be used for things such as; down payment assistance, the creation of affordable housing units, reduced rate financing, and the reduction of fees;
  - c. off-site rehabilitation of existing affordable housing units; or
  - d. off-site redevelopment of neighborhoods characterized by substandard and blighted housing.
6. Allocates a portion of the annual SHIP funding to assist the development community in meeting the County requirements.
7. Establishes a process whereby the effectiveness of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be reviewed at least every 3 years after adoption, and allows for change in priorities and requirements.

Policy 1.1.7 Alachua County shall review and update the list of areas for affordable development identified in Policy 1.1.3 every three years, to determine whether areas need to be added or removed from the list.

Policy 1.1.8 Alachua County will review surplus land in its possession for suitability for sale or donation to organizations which propose to develop affordable housing projects.

Measure: By 2001, revise the list of County owned parcels which may be suitable for affordable housing projects, and disseminate this information to developers and builders throughout the County

- Policy 1.1.11 Manufactured homes. Alachua County recognizes manufactured homes as one source of affordable housing when constructed, placed, and maintained in a safe manner. Although recognized as a source of housing, Alachua County may be restricted in its ability to offer funding for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of manufactured homes.
- Policy 1.1.13 Manufactured/ or mobile homes meeting the minimum construction standards should be generally permitted for use as permanent housing in the same manner as conventional housing for the following areas of the County:
  - a. in rural areas;
  - b. in areas where the nature of surrounding development indicates that there will not be adverse impacts on existing development or
  - c. provided that any adverse impacts can be mitigated through buffers and other design strategies.

OBJECTIVE 1.2

The land development regulations shall be evaluated for their impacts on housing prices and periodically reviewed.

- Policy 1.2.1 Alachua County shall provide incentives in the land development regulations for residential development at the maximum allowable density.
- Policy 1.2.2 Alachua County shall provide incentives in the land development regulations for the development and redevelopment of affordable housing. These incentives may include but are not limited to:
  - a. relaxation of applicable impact fees;
  - b. fee relief;
  - c. provisions for expedited development review, approval, and permitting processes;
  - d. special provisions for reservation of infrastructure capacity for concurrency;
  - e. density bonuses;
  - f. provisions for reduced lot sizes and modification of setback requirements; and
  - g. grants and other financial incentives.
- Policy 1.2.3 The land development regulations shall be periodically reviewed to consider the inclusion of new construction techniques and promote the usage of building materials which can help reduce housing construction costs, and/or enhance public health and safety.
- Policy 1.2.4 Alachua County shall periodically review and evaluate its zoning and other regulations to ensure that requirements are reasonable and do not unduly limit opportunities for lower income groups to secure housing in desirable locations, consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
- Policy 1.2.5 Alachua County's development review process shall include performance standards that reward developers who use construction techniques which reduce future maintenance and energy costs, such as homes oriented and constructed for energy efficiency and sustainability.
 

Measure: By 2002, identify appropriate building technologies and revise the appropriate land development regulations or building codes to implement this policy.
- Policy 1.2.6 Alachua County shall provide flexibility for innovative housing design for nontraditional households and emerging home-based economic activities.



- OBJECTIVE 1.3 To ensure consistency of housing activities, and to provide for the most effective methods for achieving its housing goals, Alachua County shall embark on the following policies of collaboration and implementation.
- Policy 1.3.1 Alachua County shall review plans and programs of other local, regional and state agencies to ensure consistency of County efforts and to accomplish effective coordination of housing opportunity activities.
- Policy 1.3.2 Alachua County shall continue to provide funding for affordable housing to residents of local municipalities as well as the unincorporated County, through mechanisms such as partnerships, interlocal agreements and joint planning activities.
- Policy 1.3.3 Alachua County will assist any affordable housing provider in making information available to all persons concerning opportunities to obtain affordable housing in the County.
- Policy 1.3.4 Alachua County shall continue County participation in local affordable housing advocacy groups.
- Policy 1.3.5 Alachua County shall establish partnerships with for-profit and non-profit developers of affordable housing.
- Policy 1.3.6 Alachua County shall establish partnerships with lending institutions to assist with affordable housing for citizens of local municipalities as well as unincorporated Alachua County.
- OBJECTIVE 1.4 To ensure access to housing for all income levels of the population, Alachua County shall provide funding for affordable housing activities
- Policy 1.4.1 Alachua County shall continue to allocate public funds for the creation, rehabilitation, or purchase of affordable housing.
- Policy 1.4.2 Alachua County shall continue to dedicate a portion of its annual State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program allocation to the following programs:
- a. down payment assistance;
  - b. single-family housing development (new, affordable housing construction);
  - c. multi-family housing development (new, affordable, rental units)
- Policy 1.4.3 By 2002, Alachua County staff shall present a report to the Board of County Commissioners outlining additional funding sources that can be used to fund affordable housing activities within the County .
- Policy 1.4.4 Alachua County shall utilize Alachua County Housing Finance Authority bonds and approved bonds from other Issuing County Housing Finance Authorities to provide low interest rate mortgage loans to eligible homebuyers or to subsidize the creation of affordable rental housing in Alachua County. Areas identified under Policy 1.1.3 are eligible for bond financing, in addition to areas previously defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Policy 1.4.5 Alachua County shall apply for Federal or State housing funding, under such programs as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs or the HOME (Home Ownership Made Easy) Programs.
- Policy 1.4.6 Alachua County shall encourage methods of financing which will increase the opportunities for low and very low income households to obtain decent, safe, sanitary, attractive and affordable housing.

Policy 1.4.7 Alachua County shall assist the Alachua County Housing Authority in the pursuit of increased Federal and State funding for the creation of new assisted dwelling units

Policy 1.4.8 By 2003, Alachua County staff shall provide a report to the Board of County Commissioners, detailing ways that local assistance can be offered to meet certain needs for which state and federal funds are not available. Approaches that are determined to be feasible and potentially effective will be incorporated as experimental projects.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Alachua County shall provide a systematic approach to the identification, preservation, and redevelopment of neighborhoods and existing affordable housing across the County.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 Provide funding for rehabilitation and redevelopment.

### GOAL 3:

TO ENSURE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WITH SPECIALIZED HOUSING NEEDS, PARTICULARLY THE ELDERLY, THE HOMELESS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, OR FARM WORKERS, ALACHUA COUNTY SHALL IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Alachua County shall provide access to housing opportunities for groups identified as having special needs.

Policy 3.1.1 Alachua County shall encourage and promote the opportunity for each person to obtain housing of their choice, without regard to race, color, ancestry, sex, familial status, marital status, age, disability, housing status, religion, or national origin. Alachua County shall provide policies and programs which will help alleviate conditions resulting from discrimination. Chief among these shall be the continued enforcement of its Fair Housing Ordinance.

Policy 3.1.2 Alachua County shall continually review its development regulations to ensure that farmworker housing needs are addressed.

Policy 3.1.3 Alachua County shall continue to provide adequate sites in areas of residential character for group homes and foster care facilities licensed or funded by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Policy 3.1.4 Alachua County shall cooperate with and assist the Florida Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in its effort to deinstitutionalize and equitably distribute foster care facilities and group homes throughout the County.

Policy 3.1.5 To promote greater accessibility to employment, facilities, and services, adult congregate living facilities and housing for the elderly are encouraged to locate inside or close to activity centers, as defined in the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 3.1.6 Alachua County shall continue to provide funding and assistance through the SHIP program to homeless shelters or housing providers that support the “working homeless”.

### OBJECTIVE 3.2

Alachua County shall ensure that the land development regulations concerning the provision of housing for those with special needs comply, at a minimum, with the statutory requirements.

- Policy 3.2.1 The development regulations shall allow densities for farmworker housing which may be in excess of the maximum densities shown on the Future Land Use Map. Such farmworker housing may be permitted by a special use permit or other appropriate mechanism to allow living accommodations of multiple farm employees and their families on one parcel without regard to duration, while performing agricultural labor.
- Policy 3.2.2 Alachua County may require farmworker housing which exceeds the density permitted on the future land use map to be provided by manufactured homes which can be removed once the need for provision of farmworker housing is no longer present. Such ordinance shall ensure that all appropriate federal, state and local regulations are met especially with regard to the provision of water and wastewater facilities.
- Policy 3.2.3. In accordance with Florida Statutes Section 419.001, the development regulations shall provide that homes falling within the statutory definition of a community residential home which has six or fewer residents shall be allowed in any single or multifamily zoning district, In accordance with Florida Statutes Section 419.001, community residential homes which have between 7 and 14 residents shall be allowed in multifamily zoning districts.
- Policy 3.2.4 Alachua County shall consider the proposed size, intensity and type of care, and prospective number of residents of community residential homes when reviewing suitable locations for new facilities.
- Policy 3.2.5 Density thresholds as set forth in the Future Land Use Element for other residential uses shall apply to community residential homes. Standards shall be developed for inclusion in the development regulations for converting the capacity of community residential homes into "equivalent residential units" for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the density thresholds. Such standards should define the comparable density as resident capacity divided by persons per household, divided by site area.

### OBJECTIVE 3.3

Alachua County shall provide a dedicated funding source for the provision of Special Needs housing, and form partnerships with local advocacy groups or organizations providing such housing.

- Policy 3.3.1 Alachua County shall actively seek opportunities to partner with local organizations or agencies providing housing assistance to those with special needs, including the homeless, the elderly, and the disabled.
- Policy 3.3.2 Alachua County shall dedicate a portion of its annual State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program allocation to assist agencies in the provision of special needs housing, including, but not limited to the construction of new housing, or the rehabilitation of existing units.
- Policy 3.3.3 Alachua County shall assist local organizations or agencies that are providing special needs housing in securing additional Federal or State funding. This assistance may be in the form of dedicated funding that can be used for leveraging, information sharing, or grant writing assistance.

Policy 3.3.4 Alachua County shall continue to participate in local advocacy groups which provide assistance to those needing specialized housing. The Alachua County Affordable Housing Coalition and the Coalition for the Hungry and Homeless are examples of such groups.

## Land Use and Transportation Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies

### FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

PRINCIPLE 2. Base new development upon the provision of necessary services and infrastructure. Focus urban development in a clearly defined area and strengthen the separation of rural and urban uses.

GENERAL STRATEGY 1. Minimize the conversion of land from rural to urban uses by maximizing the efficient use of available urban infrastructure, while preserving environmentally sensitive areas, according to the following:

- a. Designate and maintain on the Future Land Use Map an urban cluster that sets a boundary for urban growth.
- b. Provide incentives for higher average densities for residential development and mixed uses in the urban cluster, including density bonuses and transfer of development rights.
- c. Provide a range of urban residential densities with the highest densities located in or near urban activity centers, and lower densities located in outlying rural areas or areas of the County which have physical limitations to development.
- d. Utilize mechanisms such as land acquisition, conservation easements, variable lot sizes, and conservation subdivisions.
- e. Preserve ecosystems of a given area and incorporate hazard-resilient land planning.
- f. Time development approval in conjunction with the economic and efficient provision of supporting community facilities, urban services, and infrastructure, such as streets, utilities, police and fire protection service, emergency medical service, mass transit, public schools, recreation and open space, in coordination with policies in the Capital Improvements Element.

Policy 1.3.3 A range in urban residential densities should be provided with the highest densities located in or near urban activity centers, and lower densities located in outlying areas or areas of the County which have physical limitations to development.

Policy 1.3.4 The gross residential densities of new subdivisions and multi-family developments shall not be less than the urban residential density range for the assigned future land use category except where necessary to protect natural resource conservation areas as identified in Objective 3.1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element. With regard to land designated Low Density Residential (1-4 DU/acre) on the Future Land Use Map, an exception may be made for subdivisions with gross densities of one dwelling unit per two acres with lots as small as one dwelling unit per acre, if it is determined that severe environmental site constraints, infrastructure constraints, or parcels of limited scale preclude achieving a gross density of one unit per acre. However, nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to preclude single-family residential construction on one or two new parcels, each not exceeding 5 acres, where such parcels are divided from a parcel of record (as of October 2, 1991) when such division is not subject to subdivision regulations.

Policy 1.3.10.1 High Density Residential development should occur in the vicinity of the University of Florida, along related corridors such as SW 20th Avenue, transit corridors, immediately adjacent to Santa Fe

Community College and in or near activity centers, preferably in mixed developments, to reduce the length and number of automobile trips. High density residential areas shall be located in the urban cluster.

Policy 1.3.10.4 Densities higher than 24.00 DU/Acre may be considered in high activity centers, on well served transit corridors, such as SW 20th Avenue, or in the vicinity of the University of Florida, provided that the development is compatible with surrounding land uses. A comprehensive plan amendment will be required to establish policies and identify areas appropriate for these higher densities. The policies shall provide for the integration of these developments into the surrounding community using high quality development design features.

Policy 1.4.2 Planned developments or traditional neighborhood developments with village centers are strongly encouraged. Land development regulations shall provide for traditional neighborhood developments including village centers within residential zoning districts, subject to specific design and performance criteria to achieve at a minimum:

- a. the protection of the natural environment and integration with the topography and natural features of the site.
- b. the creation of usable, interconnected open space and recreational facilities on the development site.
- c. clustered areas with higher net densities than may be allowed through conventional zoning, with development organized along a density and intensity gradient suitable to the site and surrounding uses.
- d. a sense of community through:
  1. well-defined centers and edges, with public or civic space or civic use as an organizing element around which other development is located.
  2. an integrated range of housing types and lot sizes to serve a variety of age and income groups.
- e. safe, comfortable, and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, and transit facilities when warranted based on existing or planned bus service determined through consultation with the appropriate transit provider, to the development and the surrounding community. A grid system of interconnecting streets and blocks shall provide multiple routes from origins to destinations. The street grid system shall be designed as multi-use space such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served.

#### OBJECTIVE 1.6

To provide for limited mixed-use centers integrated into new residential neighborhoods through specific site and design standards, to encourage the consolidation of trips and non-automobile modes of transportation, moderate peak hour automobile trips, enliven outdoor spaces, and calm or separate automobile oriented uses from pedestrian oriented uses.

Policy 1.6.1 Mixed uses may be allowed in areas designated on the Future Land Use map for urban residential uses, provided they are part of a new residential development and designed as village centers that meet the standards in the Comprehensive Plan. Such village centers may be allowed through:

- a. Development plan approval as part of traditional neighborhood developments of a minimum of 30 acres provided the development plan is consistent with all village center and traditional neighborhood development standards in the Comprehensive Plan and with all traditional neighborhood development standards in the land development regulations.
- b. Residential planned development rezoning, provided the development plan is consistent with all village center and traditional neighborhood development standards in the Comprehensive Plan.

#### OBJECTIVE 2.1 (Activity Center Policies)

Provide for the concentration of mixtures of higher intensity and density land uses through designation of Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map, with standards to ensure pedestrian-friendly compact centers connected to a multi-modal transportation system and integrated with surrounding uses in the urban area.

Policy 2.1.1 Different levels of Activity Centers are identified and designated on the Future Land Use Map based on the primary and secondary functions, market size and area, and intensity.

1. Activity Centers shall be identified as high, medium or low intensity:
  - a. High activity centers have cumulative development at the level of a regional shopping center, or have an equivalent concentration of a mix of office, institutional, or industrial activities.
  - b. Medium activity centers have cumulative development at the level of a community shopping center or have an equivalent concentration of a mix of commercial, offices, institutional, or industrial activities.
  - c. Low activity centers have cumulative development at the level of a neighborhood shopping center, or have an equivalent concentration of a mix of commercial, offices, institutional, or light industrial activities.
2. Activity centers shall be further characterized by the concentration of primary and secondary land uses:
  - a. Retail oriented activity centers shall have commercial activities as the primary use.
  - b. Employment oriented activity centers shall have institutional, industrial, or office as the primary use.
  - c. Secondary uses for activity centers may include residential, retail, service, institutional, or office.

Policy 2.1.2 Existing Activity Centers are designated on the Future Land Use map with specific locations and boundaries and have specific Activity Center plan policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 2.1.3 A Comprehensive Plan Amendment shall be required for new, expansion, or redevelopment of activity centers to establish level, type, and uses on the Future Land Use map and to establish specific activity center Plan policies in the Comprehensive Plan. Such Comprehensive Plan Amendments shall be considered based on:

- a. The findings of a market study or employment study, such that:
  1. The market study shall document the need for location and type of new Activity Centers or for expansion of existing Activity Centers, through analysis of factors including population projections within the relevant market or service areas, identified in Section 3.0 Commercial Policies, based on estimated build out of the future land uses.

2. The employment study shall document the need for location and type of new Activity Centers or for expansion of existing Activity Centers, through analysis of factors including employment rates, economic development needs, income levels, and jobs-housing balance within the relevant service area based on estimated build out of the future land uses.
  - b. Urban form requirements including, wherever possible, confining sites to intersections of multi-modal corridors, and sizing sites to allow development of associated activities while minimizing encroachment on existing and future neighborhoods.
  - c. Primary and secondary uses shall be determined based upon the needs of the community, character of the surrounding area, and market considerations identified in a market study.

Policy 2.1.4 The design standards of Policies 2.1.5. - 2.1.13. shall apply to any new Activity Center and/or expansion of any existing Activity Center, and to the update of Activity Center Plans provided in

Policy 2.1.14. These standards shall also apply to any development or redevelopment within existing Activity Centers, except for development authorized by an approved Final Development Plan or approved Development of Regional Impact Development Order issued prior to May 2, 2005.

Policy 2.1.5 Compact Centers. Activity Centers shall be compact, multi-purpose, mixed use centers which integrate commercial development with residential, civic, and open space. Commercial facilities shall be phased with the residential component of the development.

Policy 2.1.6 Mixed Uses: A balanced mixture of uses shall be provided to reduce overall trip lengths, to support pedestrian, bicycle and transit opportunities and create pedestrian friendly streetscapes.

- a. Mixed uses shall be encouraged within individual buildings (e.g. residential above retail or office space).
- b. All Activity Centers shall provide civic uses, such as green spaces or community centers.
- c. Mixed uses shall be integrated within an overall design framework to create a pedestrian friendly, human scale environment, through objective, measurable criteria including size, scale, proportion, and materials detailed in the land development regulations. Flexibility in design shall allow for choice and variety in architectural style.

Policy 2.1.7 A detailed master plan shall be prepared for each Activity Center. The master plan shall include an overall site plan that incorporates the design standards in Policies 2.1.8. Site and Building Design, 2.1.10. Parking, 2.1.11. Automobile Access, 2.1.12. Community Green Space, and 2.1.13. Surface Stormwater Management Facilities.

Policy 2.1.8 Site and Building Design: Site and building design and scale shall be integrated within the surrounding community. Architectural and site design techniques shall be used to define pedestrian and public space and to provide human scale with the Activity Center. At a minimum Activity Center sites and buildings shall achieve the following:

- a. Centers and edges are well-defined. Public or civic space or civic use shall be an organizing element around which other development in the Activity Center is located.
- b. Development is organized along a density and intensity gradient suitable to the site and integrated with surrounding land uses.



- c. The design shall include a pedestrian circulation system to connect the non-residential uses with residential uses and areas. Primary pedestrian routes and bikeways shall coincide with the street system or other public space such as parks or squares, and shall avoid routes through parking lots or at the rear of developments.
- d. Streets and roads shall be fronted by design features including sidewalks which define and contribute to a pedestrian street character. Building design, placement, and entrance shall be at a pedestrian scale and oriented towards streets or other public space such as parks or squares.
- e. Automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation shall be equitably served by the street system. Development shall provide pedestrian and bicycle- friendly access, and shall provide transit facilities to the development and the surrounding community.
- f. Vistas created by street terminations within the Activity Center shall incorporate significant buildings or places to the maximum extent possible.
- g. Large scale nonresidential establishments shall incorporate development design techniques to integrate the establishment into the surrounding community. Such design techniques shall include:
  - 1. creation of a series of smaller, well defined customer entrances to break up long facades and provide pedestrian scale and variety, that may be achieved through the use of liner buildings.
  - 2. limited number and size of signs.
  - 3. landscaping and use of pocket parks and courtyards adequate to soften large building masses.
- h. An “A/B” street grid system may be utilized where “A” streets shall meet all pedestrian oriented Activity Center standards in a continuous uninterrupted pedestrian friendly network, while “B” streets can be assigned to non-pedestrian oriented uses.
- i. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design guidelines shall be incorporated to the maximum extent possible.

Policy 2.1.9 Signs: Signs shall be designed to minimize negative visual impacts through guidelines addressing characteristics such as:

- a. uniformity, materials, placement,
- b. limits on scale, lighting, height, width, movement, and sign area to facade area ratios.

Policy 2.1.10 Parking: Parking areas shall be designed to minimize intrusiveness and impacts on the pedestrian character, through the following techniques:

- a. On-street parking may be allowed with landscaping that affords traffic calming and produces a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment.
- b. Parking lots shall generally not be located between buildings and adjacent pedestrian areas such as storefront streets and public squares.
- c. Parking lots shall be screened from streets, sidewalks, and open spaces, and shall be designed to maintain or enhance the street edge.
- d. Parking lots shall be designed with safe pedestrian connections to business entrances and public space to create a park-once environment.

- e. Reduction of paved parking areas shall be required wherever practicable through measures such as provision of shared parking to serve multiple uses and alternative paving materials. Large expanses of pavement shall be discouraged. Reduced ratios of required parking for non-residential uses shall be provided in the land development regulations.

Policy 2.1.11 Automobile Access: Automobile facilities shall be designed to provide safe access to the development.

- a. Internal traffic circulation systems shall be designed with:
  1. traffic calming techniques to maintain safe multi-modal transportation.
  2. an interconnected street grid system.
  3. maximum use of common access drives.
  4. convenient access to transit facilities.
- b. Points of ingress to and egress from the Activity Center to arterial and collector roads carrying through traffic shall be minimized. A connector street system shall provide multiple linkages from the Activity Center to local destinations, including neighborhoods, as an alternative to arterial and collector roads, except where such connections are precluded by physical layout of existing development or environmental features.
- c. Automobile-oriented uses shall have a limited number of driveways, and drive-in or drive-up windows shall be located to minimize conflict with pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- d. Street design shall produce small blocks.
- e. All new commercial development shall provide vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to adjacent commercial development and to adjacent residential development, except where such connections are precluded by physical layout of existing development or environmental features.
- f. All new residential development shall provide vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to adjacent residential development and to adjacent commercial development, except where such connections are precluded by physical layout of existing development or environmental features.

Policy 2.1.12 Community Green Space. Landscapes and buffers shall be provided on at least 20% of the Activity Center site, including public open space. Paved areas shall require 50% shading as specified in the land development regulations, based on factors such as scale of development and performance standards.

Policy 2.1.13 Surface stormwater management facilities shall be sufficient to serve the functional purpose, and shall be designed as an integral part of the Activity Center, as a physical or visual amenity that provides usable open space or an aesthetic feature that resembles natural areas, to the maximum extent possible.

Policy 2.1.14 The County shall evaluate and update Activity Center Plans provided for in Section 2. 5.6. to bring them into compliance with the mixed use, pedestrian-friendly standards under Policies 2.1.5. - 2.1.13. This evaluation and update shall include a public participation process incorporating neighborhood meetings, charrettes, notice to property owners, and other components.

## 2.2 HIGH ACTIVITY CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Policy 2.2.1 High Activity Centers are characterized by a concentration of commercial, office, institutional or industrial activities at the level of a regional shopping center or equivalent concentrations of a mix of uses.

Policy 2.2.2 There may be two types of High Activity Centers designated on the Future Land Use Map, depending upon the combination of primary and secondary uses planned for the Activity Center.

- a. High Activity Centers/Retail will have commercial activities as their primary use and secondary activities consisting of office, institutional and multifamily residential use.
- b. High Activity Centers/Employment will have office, institutional, industrial uses, individually or in combination, as their primary uses and secondary activities consisting of multifamily residential and limited retail and service uses that are supportive of the primary uses. Such supporting uses shall be phased to coincide with the primary uses they are supporting.

Policy 2.2.3 As part of the Urban Activity Center concept, higher intensities and densities will be encouraged in those high activity centers that are additionally designated as a "Regional Activity Center", defined as a compact, high intensity, high-density, multi-use area appropriate for intensive growth (Section 380.06(2)(e), F.S., and Rule 28-24.014(10)(c)2., F.A.C.). The applicable multi-use guidelines and standards may be increased by 100% provided that one land use of the multi-use development is residential, and the residential development amounts to not less than 35% of Alachua County's residential threshold (Section 380.06(2)(e), F.S., and Rule 28-24.014(10)(a)2., F.A.C.). If any portion of the proposed development is located outside the delineated Regional Activity Center, then the increased DRI guidelines and standards shall not apply.

Policy 2.2.3.1 Pursuant to Section 380.06(2)(e), F.S., and Rule 28-24.014(10)(a)1., F.A.C., the Archer Road/34th Street Regional Activity Center is hereby established to increase the development of regional impact guidelines and standards by 50% for residential, hotel, motel, office, or retail developments within the designated area. These increased thresholds shall apply only to those developments approved after the effective date of the implementing ordinance (Alachua County Ord. 94-9).

### 2.3. MEDIUM ACTIVITY CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Policy 2.3.1 Medium Activity Centers are characterized by the concentrations of commercial, office, institutional or industrial uses at the level of a community shopping center or equivalent concentrations of a mix of uses.

Policy 2.3.2 There may be two types of Medium Activity Centers designated on the Future Land Use Map depending upon the combination of primary and secondary uses planned for the Activity Center.

- a. Medium Activity Centers/Retail will have commercial activities as their primary use and secondary activities consisting of office, institutional and residential uses.
- b. Medium Activity Centers/Employment will have office, institutional or limited light industrial uses as their primary uses and secondary activities consisting of residential, and limited retail and service uses that are supportive of the primary uses. Such supporting uses shall be phased to coincide with the primary uses they are supporting.

### 2.4. LOW ACTIVITY CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Policy 2.4.1 Low Activity Centers are characterized by neighborhood-oriented commercial uses or a mix of limited office, institutional or limited retail and service or light industrial activities.

Policy 2.4.2 There may be two types of Low Activity Centers designated on the Future Land Use Map depending upon the combination of primary and secondary uses shared for the Activity Center.

- a. Low Activity Centers/Retail will have neighborhood-oriented commercial activities as their primary use and secondary activities consisting of office, institutional and residential uses.
- b. Low Activity Centers/Employment will have office, institutional or industrial uses as their primary uses and secondary activities consisting of residential, and limited retail and service uses that are supportive of the primary uses. Such supporting uses shall be phased to coincide with the primary uses they are supporting.

## COMMERCIAL POLICIES

### 3.1. GENERAL

#### OBJECTIVE 3.1

A variety of commercial land use categories shall be established to allow for a range of commercial activities within designated areas, distributed to make efficient use of infrastructure and land, and to meet market demand. Commercial development shall include such uses as retail sales, professional services, business services, and personal services and storage (mini-warehouses).

Policy 3.1.1 In order to provide sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of different types of commercial activities, a range of land areas and locations shall be provided for commercial development.

Policy 3.1.2 New commercial facilities shall be encouraged to locate on vacant parcels of land within designated activity centers in order to discourage strip commercial development and the premature establishment of new activity centers.

- a. All neighborhood level shopping centers shall locate within high, medium, or low activity centers according to appropriate standards.
- b. All community level shopping centers shall locate within high or medium activity centers according to appropriate standards.
- c. All regional level shopping centers shall locate within high activity centers according to appropriate standards.

Policy 3.1.3 The size, location, and function of shopping centers shall be related and central to the population and market area they serve.

Policy 3.1.4 In conformance with the Economic Element, the land development regulations shall provide for home-based businesses. Home-based businesses are defined as a business or commercial activity conducted on a residential property which is accessory to the residential use of that property. Home-based businesses shall not adversely impact adjacent residential uses, subject to performance criteria to be adopted in the land development regulations.

Policy 3.1.5 The sale of agricultural products produced on site shall be permissible on that site.

Policy 3.1.6 Limited neighborhood scale commercial shall be allowed in village centers subject to location, site, and design standards in the Urban Residential policies.

Policy 3.1.7 Commercial locations and proposed uses shall be consistent with the Conservation Policies and Standards.

### 3.2 LOCATION AND COMPATIBILITY

#### OBJECTIVE 3.2

Commercial development shall be located and designed to maintain compatibility with neighboring residential uses and support pedestrian activity, taking into account scale and intensity, through implementation of the following policies.

Policy 3.2.1 Commercial development shall be designed to eliminate or minimize the negative impacts on surrounding residential uses.

Policy 3.2.2 Commercial development shall provide adequate buffering or transitional development and design practices, to adequately integrate the development along the edges of different land uses in accordance with standards in Section 2.0.

Policy 3.2.3 Commercial landscaping and signage shall comply with standards for commercial development in the land development regulations.

Policy 3.2.4 All Neighborhood, Community, and Regional shopping centers shall include pedestrian access, bicycle parking areas, and bus bays and bus shelters in order to encourage alternative transportation modes in accordance with standards in Section 2.0.

### 3.3 REQUIRED FACILITIES AND SERVICES

#### OBJECTIVE 3.3

New commercial development or redevelopment shall have adequate public facilities and services at the time development occurs.

Policy 3.3.1 New commercial development shall meet all of the requirements for adequate facilities based on the level of service standards adopted in this plan for roads, potable water and sanitary sewer, solid waste, and stormwater facilities and the concurrency provisions of this Plan.

Policy 3.3.2 In addition to the facilities for which level of service standards are adopted as part of the concurrency management system of this plan, other facilities that shall be adequate to serve new commercial development include:

- a. fire, police, and emergency medical protection;
- b. local streets;
- c. pedestrian facilities and bikeways.

### 3.4 ROADWAY COMMERCIAL POLICIES AND STANDARDS

#### OBJECTIVE 3.4

Roadway commercial areas are located where existing commercial developments are found, and provide for limited in-fill between such uses. Roadway commercial or "strip commercial" developments are generally undesirable because of increased traffic problems and decreased visual.

Policy 3.4.1 New development in existing Roadway Commercial areas shall be subject to the following location and compatibility standards:

- a. New Roadway Commercial developments shall only be permitted as infill of existing "strips" rather than extending or opening up new "strips".
- b. Roadway commercial uses shall meet the criteria in Policy 3.4.3.b. concerning access management.
- c. Roadway commercial uses are appropriate only within the designated urban clusters.
- d. Office uses may be permitted to infill existing strip commercial areas when appropriate office standards are met (see 3.9.1.).

Policy 3.4.2 Roadway Commercial uses shall be implemented with development regulations which address the unique needs of this land use classification. In the interim, until land development regulations consistent with these policies are adopted, the standards and criteria governing Roadway Commercial development shall be implemented through Planned Development zoning.

Policy 3.4.3 New roadway commercial areas shall be prohibited.

Policy 3.4.4 Commercial Enclaves are designated within the Urban Cluster on the Future Land Use Map. These sites shall be subject to the following standards:

- a. Development of Commercial Enclaves shall be required to meet all concurrency requirements.
- b. Development shall be required to minimize access from arterials and collectors. Whenever possible, driveways shall use common access points to reduce potential turn movements.
- c. A maximum of 20,000 square feet of gross leasable area shall be permitted within each enclave.
- d. Uses may include neighborhood convenience centers consistent with Policy 3.8., offices consistent with Policy 3.9.1., and sit down restaurants.
- e. The land development regulations for this land use category shall specify performance standards required to mitigate any adverse impact of such development on adjacent land uses and affected public facilities. Such performance standards shall include buffering and landscaping provisions, site design measures to locate such uses away from less intensive adjacent land uses, signage and parking restrictions, and intensity provisions (e.g. height and bulk restrictions). In the interim, until land development regulations consistent with these policies are adopted, the standards and criteria governing Commercial Enclaves shall be implemented through the County's Development Review Committee process.
- f. New Commercial Enclaves shall be prohibited.

### 3.5 REGIONAL SHOPPING CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

#### POLICY 3.5

Regional Shopping Centers are described by the following standards and general characteristics:

Usual Minimum Site Area	30-50 acres or more
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Gross Leasable Area (GLA)	300,000-1,000,000 sq. ft. or more
Minimum Support Required	150,000 or more people
Market Area Radius	10-15 miles or more
Number of Stores	40 or more
Leading Tenant	1 or more full-line department stores of at least 100,000 sq. ft. GLA
Other Tenants	Stores providing such items as: General merchandise, furniture, and home furnishings.

Policy 3.5.1 Regional Shopping Centers shall only locate in areas designated for commercial development in High Activity Centers, consistent with the following policies:

- a. Regional Shopping Centers shall be located at the:
  - 1. intersection of arterials, or
  - 2. interchanges of arterials and interstate highways.
- b. Regional Shopping Centers and any planned expansion shall be developed with an overall plan to address access management issues.
- c. Regional Shopping Centers shall be served by mass transportation routes and shall be designed to accommodate mass transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- d. Regional Shopping Centers shall only locate where automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian access is adequate to accommodate safe and convenient access to the shopping center.

3.6 COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

POLICY 3.6

Community Shopping Centers are described by the following standards and characteristics:

Usual Minimum Site Area	10 acres
Gross Leasable Area (GLA)	100,000 to 300,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Support Required	20,000 to 60,000 people
Market Area Radius	2 miles or more
Number of Stores	15 to 40
Leading Tenant	Variety, discount, or junior department store
Other Tenants	A supermarket and drugstore



Policy 3.6.1 Community Shopping Centers shall be only located in areas designated for commercial development in Medium or High Activity Centers, at the:

- a. intersection of arterials, or
- b. intersection of collectors and arterials.
- c. Community Shopping Centers shall only locate where automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian access is adequate to accommodate safe and convenient access to the shopping center.

3.7 NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

POLICY 3.7

Neighborhood shopping centers are described by the following standards and general characteristics:

Usual Minimum Site Area	4 acres
Gross Leasable Area (GLA)	30,000 to 100,000 sq. feet
Minimum Support Required	5,000 to 10,000 people
Radius of Market Area	1-1/4 miles or more
Number of Stores	5 to 20
Leading Tenant	Supermarket
Other Tenants	Stores providing convenience goods and personal services for the day-to-day needs of the immediate neighborhoods.

Policy 3.7.1 Neighborhood Shopping Centers shall only locate in areas designated for commercial development in Low, Medium, or High Activity Centers, where:

- a. automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian access is adequate to accommodate safe and convenient access to the shopping center
- b. local neighborhood streets do not provide principal automobile traffic access.

3.8 NEIGHBORHOOD CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL POLICIES AND STANDARDS

POLICY 3.8

Neighborhood Convenience Centers are represented by the following standards and characteristics:

Usual Maximum Site Area	4 Acres
Gross Leasable Area (GLA)	3,000 to 30,000 square feet

Spacing	At least 1 mile travelling distance on public roads from the property boundary of facilities supplying the same needs or another Neighborhood Convenience Center.
Leading Tenant	convenience store, drug store, grocery store
Other Tenants	laundry, dry cleaning, eating places, day care center.
Transitional Land Uses (at the edge of the Neighborhood Convenience center, to be included in the four acre site	civic, open space, office, residential, business, industrial.

Policy 3.8.1 Neighborhood Convenience Centers shall only be located in areas designated and mapped for commercial development, Low, Medium, or High, Activity Centers, rural employment centers, or rural clusters, consistent with the following policies:

- a. on major collector or arterial streets, with preference given to locations at the intersections of such streets.
- b. New Convenience Centers shall not be located internally within existing single family neighborhoods unless integrated with the surrounding neighborhood through a neighborhood planning process and approved through a comprehensive plan amendment.
- c. The County shall promote the development of commercial uses in planned commercial centers and discourage scattered, incremental and strip commercial development.

### 3.9 OFFICE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

#### POLICY 3.9

An Office land use category shall be established for individual offices or office parks to provide for professional and business services, exclusive of retail trade. Office uses are unique because of the need to have accessibility to both residential and other commercial uses. Their special trade area characteristics require office uses to have additional policies and standards.

Policy 3.9.1 Office uses shall only be located in areas designated for commercial development, Low, Medium, or High Activity Centers, village centers, planned developments, or traditional neighborhood developments, rural employment centers, or rural clusters.

- a. Office uses shall be grouped within compact areas to discourage disruption to residential areas.
  - 1. Office uses should not be located between properties designated for development at low or medium density on the Future Land Use Map, except when designed as part of a village center.

2. The land development regulations shall specify appropriate buffers or transitional development and design practices, when office uses are permitted adjacent to residential development or other uses.
  - b. Office uses are appropriate in areas planned for high density residential use along major arterials served by public mass transportation.

### 3.10. TOURIST/ENTERTAINMENT COMMERCIAL POLICIES AND STANDARDS

#### POLICY 3.10

Tourist/entertainment commercial uses are oriented primarily toward providing services for the short term visitor to Alachua County. These commonly include gasoline stations, restaurants, lodging, bed and breakfast, and special entertainment facilities.

Policy 3.10.1 Tourist/entertainment uses shall be located consistent with the following policies:

- a. These uses are most appropriate, but are not limited to, highway interchanges with Interstate 75.
- b. Tourist/entertainment uses should have direct access from arterials with preference given to intersections. In specific instances it may be appropriate for certain uses to locate away from arterials due to the desire to locate that individual use adjacent to the natural environment or a cultural resource. (e.g., near lakes, marine business uses and campgrounds might be appropriate, or in a rural cluster, where a bed and breakfast establishment might be appropriate.)

Policy 3.10.2 Development regulations to implement the Tourist/Entertainment commercial uses shall be adopted. These shall include specific standards to govern the design and intensity of the tourist/entertainment uses that may be located adjacent to the natural or cultural resources consistent with the protection of those resources and the Conservation and Open Space Element of this plan.

### 3.11 RURAL COMMERCIAL USES

Policy 3.11.1 The standards for the establishment of non-residential uses in rural clusters are as follows:

- a. Commercial uses within rural clusters shall be limited to retail and personal services intended to serve the immediate population.
- b. There shall be a maximum of 30,000 square feet of gross leasable area of retail and personal services uses for each rural cluster. The amount appropriate for any rural cluster should be relative to the population being served.
- c. Uses should be concentrated at the center of activity in a cluster and preferably at the intersection of major roadways.
- d. Typical uses are grocery, pharmacy, medical offices, and personal services.

Policy 3.11.2 Rural Commercial-Agriculture uses are shown on the Future Land Use map. The standards for Rural Commercial-Agriculture uses outside of rural clusters are as follows:

- a. Development of Rural Commercial-Agriculture uses shall be required to meet all concurrency requirements.
- b. Development shall be required to minimize access from arterials and collectors. Whenever possible, driveways shall use common access points to reduce potential turn movements.

- c. Unless otherwise permitted as a Special Exception by the Board of County Commissioners, a maximum of 10,000 square feet of gross leasable area shall be permitted on each Rural Commercial-Agriculture parcel.
- d. Uses may include neighborhood convenience centers consistent with Policy 3.8., offices consistent with Policy 3.9.1., sit down restaurants, and agricultural services to serve the rural area.
- e. The land development regulations for this land use category shall specify performance standards required to mitigate any adverse impact of such development on adjacent land uses and affected public facilities. Such performance standards shall include buffering and landscaping provisions, site design measures to locate such uses away from less intensive adjacent land uses, signage and parking restrictions, and intensity provisions (e.g. height and bulk restrictions). In the interim, until land development regulations consistent with these policies are adopted, the standards and criteria governing Rural Commercial-Agriculture development shall be implemented by the County's Development Review Committee process.

Policy 6.2.2 Central water and sanitary sewer lines shall not be extended into the Rural/Agricultural area, unless these services are needed to correct a public or environmental health threat, or as necessary for the efficient delivery of services to the Urban Cluster, as provided in the adopted Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer element.

Policy 7.1.3 As part of the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan and any proposed amendments to the Urban Cluster, determine a sufficient and nonexcessive amount of land within the Urban Cluster to accommodate urban uses for a ten year and twenty year time frame.

- a. The determination (methodology is shown in Appendix A) shall be based on a comparison of:
  - (1) a forecast need for land for urban residential and non-residential development based on projected population, average household size, a residential vacancy rate, and a market factor. The market factor for the ten year time frame shall be 2.0. The market factor for the 20 year time frame shall be 1.5
  - (2) land available in the Urban Cluster for urban residential and non-residential uses. Mapping of environmentally sensitive areas shall be utilized as a factor for determining land availability
- b. If the comparison shows that the land available is less than the forecast need for land, the following measures shall be considered:
  - (1) revisions to density standards and land development regulations, or other measures, to accommodate greater population within the existing Urban Cluster
  - (2) coordination with municipalities regarding possible reallocation of forecast need to the incorporated areas
  - (3) phased expansion of the Urban Cluster
- c. If the forecast need for one type of land use exceeds the supply of land for that particular use, a revision to the allocation of land uses within the Urban Cluster shall be considered before the Urban Cluster is expanded.

- d. If this methodology determines expansion of the Urban Cluster is warranted, the evaluation of appropriate location shall be subject to analysis including the following economic, infrastructure, transportation, and conservation and recreation criteria:
- (1) rural character and viable agriculture land and the potential impact of expansion of the Urban Cluster on existing agricultural uses
  - (2) economic development considerations including affordable housing
  - (3) relationship to existing and planned future urban services and infrastructure
  - (4) access to the regional transportation network and multi-modal transportation systems
  - (5) Conservation and Preservation land uses
  - (6) planned recreation/open space or greenway systems
- e. In addition to meeting the requirements identified above, any proposed amendment to expand the Urban Cluster must include a commitment to purchase development rights at a rate equivalent to or greater than the proposed increase in density or intensity through the Transfer of Development Rights program in accordance with Section 9.0 of this Element.

#### **TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT**

##### **GOAL**

ESTABLISH A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES FOR THE NEEDS OF PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, TRANSIT USERS, MOTORIZED-VEHICLE USERS, USERS OF RAIL AND AVIATION FACILITIES, AND IS SENSITIVE TO THE CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AMENITIES OF ALACHUA COUNTY.

Policy 1.1.8 Adequate roadway capacity necessary to support new development and redevelopment shall be required to be available "concurrent" with the impact of that development except for developments within Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas, Multi-Modal Transit Districts, and Transportation Concurrency Management Areas established in accordance with Objectives 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4, respectively, and Transportation Concurrency Exception Projects Promoting Public Transportation in accordance with Policies 1.2.11 through 1.2.13. The procedures for implementation of concurrency management as detailed in the Capital Improvements Element shall include a requirement for a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance as a condition of approval of a final development order, specifying intensity and density of development. "Concurrent" shall mean that all adopted LOS Standards shall be maintained or be achieved within a reasonable time frame as set out in 1.1.8.17 below, consistent with 9J-5.0055(2). Failure to receive a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance will preclude the establishment of vested rights for a project and will preclude the issuance of any final development order on the project or project phase, until the requirements of 1.1.8.17 have been met. This policy shall be implemented through the Development Review process in accordance with the Concurrency Management Ordinance.

Policy 1.1.9 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, that promote alternatives to the single occupant vehicle mode of transportation, discourage automobile use, or encourage more efficient use of the transportation system, and Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies, such as modifications to improve traffic flow and ease congestion while ensuring adequate multi-modal facilities, shall be implemented

in order to maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and preserve the remaining capacity of existing roads. Specific measures required of an applicant for development plan approval shall include:

1. A traffic impact analysis in accordance with the County's Concurrency Management Ordinance;
2. Identification of TDM and TSM strategies to mitigate the impacts of new development based on the traffic impact analysis for that development; mitigation measures shall be required as a condition of issuance of certificates of level service compliance for new development;

The following analysis, Transportation System Management, and Transportation Demand Management strategies shall be implemented as part of the strategy to maintain or improve the adopted level of service standard:

- a. Further analysis of the level of service shall be performed, including intersection modifications,(to provide a more refined LOS determination).
- b. Ride-sharing promotion and assistance (contingent upon funding) from the FDOT and major employers shall be coordinated with the Regional Transit System and for park and ride lots.
- c. Impacts from proposed development(s) (whether directly accessing this facility or not) shall be assessed in order to ensure that the new trips created by such development(s) do not degrade the level of service below the adopted standard. If analysis of a specific development indicates that the impact will degrade the level of service below this standard, a plan to mitigate such impacts (including TSM and/or TDM strategies) shall be required as a condition of approval. If a generalized analysis indicates that this will occur, more specific traffic analysis (as detailed in subsection 'a') and/or a speed study will be considered.
- d. The County shall:
  1. Utilize TSM techniques to the maximum extent possible as part of its Capital Improvements Programming activities relative to transportation:

1. Support efforts to enhance mass transit service through entities such as the Regional Transit System and promote use of alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle mode of transportation; Include provisions in the land development regulations that are supportive of TSM and TDM activities.

Policy 1.1.10 Alachua County shall promote the implementation of Traffic Management Programs (such as ride-sharing, staggered work hours, and other techniques to be implemented through conditions of development approval, development agreements, and other techniques) during the development review and/or zoning process, in order to accommodate travel demand while preserving the surplus capacity of existing roads where review of development proposals indicate that such conditions are necessary in order to maintain level of service standards.

Policy 1.1.11 Alachua County shall continue to coordinate the traffic count program with other local governments and the FDOT for recording traffic volumes on collector and arterial roadways where counts are currently not recorded.

#### OBJECTIVE 1.2 Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas

To promote innovative solutions to transportation concurrency through the use of Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEA) and Transportation Concurrency Exceptions for Projects that Promote Public

Transportation, including strategies and standards to implement specific transportation concurrency management plans.

Policy 1.2.7 Alachua County shall coordinate with the City of Gainesville, FDOT, and any other affected municipalities in planning and implementing a TCEA. Alachua County shall coordinate to establish a joint TCEA with similar policies with any adjacent municipality where proposed TCEA boundaries meet.

#### Transportation Concurrency Exception for Projects that Promote Public Transportation

Policy 1.2.10 Exceptions from roadway concurrency requirements may be granted to Projects That Promote Public Transportation, in accordance with F.S. 163.3164 and F.S. 163.3180 for qualifying projects in the Archer Road/Tower Road Activity Center and the Springhills Activity Center designated on the Future Land Use Map Series. A portion of a development outside one of these Activity Centers that meets the criteria for this Transportation Concurrency Exception will be eligible for this exception if that portion is part of a unified plan that is integrated with a project within one of these Activity Centers and the development as a whole meets the criteria specified below.

Policy 1.2.11 The County shall adopt land development regulations providing in greater detail the standards for Transportation Concurrency Exception for Projects that Promote Public Transportation, including connectivity index standards for the purpose of ensuring adequate internal connections as well as connections to adjacent and nearby uses.

Policy 1.2.12 In order for a project to be eligible for this TCE, the project shall meet all of the following criteria:

- a. Is located on or within 1/4 mile of an existing public transit line, or a planned public transit line, with 15 minute peak hour frequencies, or alternatives that are funded and assured to be operational within the first phase of the development. This may include things as such as express bus service or other transit that meets these requirements.
- b. The development plan includes public transit facilities and services designed to maximize use of the public transit line by persons expected to live and/or work within the proposed development;
- c. Contain a range of uses and density and intensity of uses organized along a transitional gradient suitable to the site and surrounding land uses.
- d. Provides a transit shelter or a station on the public transit line of sufficient size to accommodate the persons expected to live and or work/shop within the project boundaries. The transit shelter/station shall be safe, comfortable and convenient for its intended users. The station shall be of a size and design, to include such amenities. The station shall not be a single purpose facility, but shall instead include a mix of uses and amenities. The transit station shall be located near the center of the project. Alachua County shall adopt in the Land Development Regulations, definitions, criteria, and specifications for transit shelters and stations.
- e. The project must be designed in such a way as to provide easy access for transit to service the project. The project should be designed to allow 80% of the residents/workers walking access to the transit station. As an alternative the project may provide for 80% of the users to have walking access to a feeder-distributor service that provides for fast and easy access to the mainline transit shelter/station via shuttles, vans, or some other automated form of people mover (other than a single-occupant vehicle). For the purposes of this section walking access is defined as being within 1/4 mile. Safe, comfortable and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly facilities shall be provided within the development to the transit shelters, stations and stops, including appropriate bicycle parking and lockers at the



transit shelter/station. Access for pedestrians shall be by sidewalks, trails, and paths, and should provide for safety, shade, comfort and generally a pedestrian friendly atmosphere. The connectivity standards shall address connectivity for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.

- f. The project provides a commercial center that includes the main transit station.
- g. The project meets the requirements for Traditional Neighborhood Developments as specified in the Future Land Use Element, and the commercial center must be consistent with the policies for either Neighborhood Center or Activity Centers, whichever is applicable. In addition, the project should be designed according to the following criteria:
  1. Residential lots are serviced by a system of streets, alleys and sidewalks, with setback/build-to lines established to ensure that buildings front on sidewalks and are oriented to the street. Generally, garages are located on the rear portion of the property and accessed from the rear by an alley or lane.
  2. Sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, street furniture, entryway features, signage, and lighting are required and used to strengthen the identity of the neighborhood centers.
  3. A continuous interconnected network of narrow streets, including a pedestrian and bicycle circulation system, designed to calm traffic speeds and encourage walking and bicycling throughout the development, provide connectivity, and functionally and physically integrate the various uses within and beyond the neighborhood.
  4. Street design standards address pavement and right-of-way widths, turning radii, on-street parking, and other design criteria for roads, alleys and lanes. Standards should promote walkability, ensure pedestrian safety and allow for emergency access.
  5. Building frontages spatially delineating the thoroughfares and masking the majority of the parking.
  6. Parking and loading functions are located and designed to respect, and reinforce, the pedestrian orientation of the neighborhood, through on-street parking, and parking placed behind or on the side of buildings.

Policy 1.2.13 The County shall incorporate into its LDRs procedures and standards for projects that promote public transportation, and exceptions to concurrency requirements for such projects. In the interim period between the effective date of these policies (May 2, 2005) and amendment of LDRs, projects shall meet the requirements in Policies 1.2.11 through 1.2.13. The County may consider TCEs for Planned Development zoning proposals that meet the requirements of these policies and incorporate conditions that the County determines to be sufficient to ensure compliance with these requirements.

#### OBJECTIVE 1.3 Multi-Modal Transportation Districts

To promote innovative solutions to transportation concurrency through the use of Multi-Modal Transportation Districts (MMTD) designed to give priority to pedestrians and connections to transit, including strategies and standards to implement specific transportation concurrency management plans.

Policy 1.3.1 Areas may be identified on the Future Land Use Map through the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process as overlay zones with the Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) designation in accordance with F.S. 163.3180, incorporating a complementary mix and range of land uses including educational, recreational, and cultural, of a density and intensity appropriate to support transit within walking

distance. An area that may be considered for this designation through a comprehensive plan amendment is the 20th Avenue Charrette area shown in Appendix B.

Policy 1.3.2 Alachua County shall adopt connectivity index standards in the Unified Land Development Code for designated MMTDs for the purpose of ensuring adequate internal connections as well as connections to adjacent and nearby uses. The connectivity standards shall address connectivity for bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.

Policy 1.3.3 Within the MMTD existing and new development shall be designed, to the maximum extent practicable, to be connected by roadways, bikeways, and pedestrian systems that encourage travel between developments and neighborhoods without requiring use of the major thoroughfare system.

Policy 1.3.4 Alachua County shall adopt in the land development regulations typical cross-sections and traffic calming features for all roadway types within the MMTD.

Policy 1.3.5 New development, or redevelopment within the MMTD shall incorporate stubouts of the existing transportation systems to adjacent abutting land with development or redevelopment potential. Provisions for future connections should be made in all directions whether the facilities are public or private, except where abutting land is undevelopable.

Policy 1.3.6 The County shall ensure that new development or redevelopment within the MMTD aligns its transportation systems with the stubouts provided by adjacent developments.

Policy 1.3.7 Within the MMTD, development or redevelopment shall be designed to:

- a. Orient pedestrian access to transit centers and existing and planned transit routes.
- b. Provide pedestrian accessibility to building entrances and walkways from the street, rather than separating the building from the street by parking.
- c. Clearly delineate routes for pedestrians and bicycles through any parking areas to accommodate safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- d. Provide sidewalk connections from the development to any existing or planned public sidewalk along the property frontage, or an existing or planned pedestrian connection to recreation or education facilities.

Policy 1.3.8 Alachua County shall conduct area studies to determine the additional needed transportation modifications within the MMTD for all transportation modes. The listed of financially feasible projects for the MMTD contained in the CIE shall be included upon completion of the study. Projects needed for the MMTD shall be included in the Capital Improvements Program upon adoption of the MMTD.

Policy 1.3.9 Within the MMTD, TND development proposals designed to enhance pedestrian modes with connections to transit, and that meet all of the following criteria, shall be excepted from roadway concurrency requirements.

- a. Transit-supportive with a complementary mixed-use pattern forming neighborhood centers.
- b. A size that is defined by an easy walking distance from the edge to the center, typically 1/4 mile.
- c. Contain a range of uses and density and intensity of uses organized along a transitional gradient suitable to the site and surrounding land uses.
- d. Provides for a system of streets, alleys and sidewalks, with setback/build-to lines established to ensure that buildings front on sidewalks and are oriented to the street.
- e. Sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, street furniture, entryway features, signage and lighting are required and used to strengthen the identity of the TND neighborhood.

- f. When adjacent to a land use of a significantly lower intensity or density, a buffer that may be vegetated open space or a transitional use, may be required.
- g. A minimum of 20% of the land area is devoted to landscaping and open space, inclusive of a system of public greens or squares located within 1/4 mile of residences, and gathering space throughout the neighborhoods.
- h. A discernable neighborhood center creating a community focal point capable of serving multiple neighborhood needs.
- i. Special sites are reserved for civic buildings. Civic buildings and public space, where appropriate, placed and oriented to terminate vistas, and provide a focal point in the TND B sites designed to provide for social, cultural, and/or religious activities.
- j. A continuous interconnected network of narrow streets, including a pedestrian and bicycle circulation system, designed to calm traffic speeds and encourage walking and bicycling throughout the development, provide connectivity, and functionally and physically integrate the various uses within and beyond the neighborhood.
- k. Street design standards address pavement and right-of-way widths, turning radii, on-street parking, and other design criteria for roads, alleys and lanes. Standards shall promote walkability, ensure pedestrian safety, and allow for emergency access.
- l. Parking and loading functions located and designed to respect, and reinforce, the pedestrian orientation of the neighborhood through on-street parking, and parking placed behind or on the side of buildings.
- m. Provides a Neighborhood Center at an identifiable central location, including the main transit station, and designed consistent with Future Land Use Element Objective 1.6.

OBJECTIVE 1.6 Provide a system of safe, pleasant, convenient, and continuous bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community.

Policy 1.6.2. Streets and roads shall be designed such that automobile and non-automobile modes of transportation are equitably served to the greatest extent possible. Design will include public and emergency vehicle access. Such designs shall include strategies to calm automobile traffic, provide a pleasant pedestrian environment, and create safe, balanced, livable streets, such as:

- a. narrow travel lane width,
- b. minimum turning radius,
- c. bike lanes,
- d. pedestrian-friendly frontage uses and design,
- e. street trees, street furniture, and landscaping,
- f. wide sidewalks,
- g. crosswalks, and/or
- h. gridded street system of short blocks.

Policy 1.7.4 In order to assess intergovernmental traffic impacts, Alachua County shall continue to coordinate with the following entities concerning the indicated facilities:

1. the FDOT for state-maintained roads in the unincorporated area,
2. municipalities in Alachua County for County-maintained roads within the municipality and municipal roads which may impact those County-maintained roads, and;
3. adjacent counties for inter-county roads, where appropriate.

The coordination shall include provisions for:

1. Periodic monitoring reports to be prepared by Alachua County for use by the FDOT in determining road modifications needs in their five-year work program.
2. Reporting of development activity from the entity approving development orders that would result in additional traffic on County roads to monitor the capacity of County maintained facilities and for use in capital improvement programming.
3. Procedures for verification with the County of road capacity for developments whose approval by the entity would generate traffic exceeding more than five percent (5%) of the maximum capacity of the road based on the adopted minimum level of service standards.
4. Bike facilities and sidewalks.

OBJECTIVE 1.8 To coordinate the traffic circulation network with the future land use map.

Policy 1.8.1 Amendments to the Future Land Use Element and/or Map will be coordinated with the Transportation Mobility Element and the Capital Improvement Element through the evaluation of the impact of additional traffic projected to result from proposed land use plan amendments. This evaluation shall include assessment of the impact on the level of service of affected roads based on the roadway functional classification and number of lanes indicated on the Five Year Future Traffic Circulation Map Series (FTCMS). No amendment to the Future Land Use Element shall be approved where this evaluation indicates that the level of service on affected roads in the Five Year FTCMS would be reduced below the adopted level of service standards. Under these circumstances, any amendment to the Future Land Use Map shall be accompanied by corresponding amendments to the FTCMS which identify roadway modifications needed to maintain adopted level of service standards, as well as the scheduling of such modifications in Alachua County's Five Year Capital Improvement Program.

Policy 3.3.1 Alachua County will coordinate with the City of Gainesville to establish future mass transit rights-of-way and/or corridors (such as exclusive mass transit lanes). Alachua County shall protect such future rights-of-way through its development review process. Rights-of-way necessary on County-maintained projects shall be acquired as soon as funds become available for such specific projects. The County will coordinate with the FDOT to determine right-of-way needs when proposed ROW are located on state-maintained roadways.

Policy 3.6.2 Alachua County shall continue to coordinate transit issues with its municipalities, the Regional Transit System and other transportation providers, transportation disadvantaged programs, Florida Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization.

OBJECTIVE 3.4

To promote the use of mass transit through land use planning in coordination with the City of Gainesville/Regional Transit System (RTS).

Policy 3.4.3 The determination of land uses designations on the Future Land Use Map will take into consideration areas to be intensified for the availability (or future availability) of mass transit. Those uses which would be high mass transit trip generators shall be encouraged to locate in areas with access to adequate mass transit system.

Policy 3.4.4 Future development at densities and intensities suitable for mass transit within or adjacent to the RTS service area shall be designed to facilitate the use of mass transit through site design features such as

covered bus stops, pedestrian access to and from bus stops, and bus pullouts where they can be designed for easy access onto the main line.

#### OBJECTIVE 3.6

To improve the functioning of the traffic circulation network through use of measures to reduce individual vehicle trips.

Policy 3.6.1 Mass transit, and other measures such as van or car pooling and provision with the private sector of park and ride facilities, shall be developed as a part of Transportation Demand Management strategies to maintain or improve levels of service on roadway segments through non-capital intensive means.

Policy 3.6.2 Alachua County shall continue to coordinate transit issues with its municipalities, the Regional Transit System and other transportation providers, transportation disadvantaged programs, Florida Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization.

### **CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

#### 5.1. ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION

Policy 5.1.3 A safe, practical system of walkways and/or bikeways shall be established in conjunction with County road improvement projects within and between activity centers within the Gainesville Urban Area and high density residential areas. Wide use of public transportation to activity centers shall be encouraged by expanding bus routes and locating public transit stops at urban residential areas and urban activity centers. The provisions of this policy shall be implemented consistent with the objectives and policies of the Transportation Mobility Element.

Policy 5.1.6 Recognizing that efficiency of transportation systems is a major factor in achieving energy conservation, the County shall utilize transportation planning and design efforts, consistent with the provisions of the Transportation Mobility Element, which improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT**

Policy 1.6 Alachua County shall establish a mechanism to promote intergovernmental coordination through regular joint meetings of the City of Gainesville Plan Board and the Alachua County Planning Commission and regular meetings of planning staff of the County, municipalities within the County, and the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council.

#### OBJECTIVE 2

Establish mechanisms to address the resolution of intergovernmental issues related to impacts of development proposed in the comprehensive plan upon municipalities within the County, adjacent counties, the region and the state.

#### OBJECTIVE 5

Coordinate the provision of services and information.

#### OBJECTIVE 6

Coordinate with relevant state or regional agencies, local governments, or other entities with operational and maintenance responsibility for such facilities in establishing levels of service standards and guidelines.

Policy 7.2 In establishing level of service standards for roadways, Alachua County shall coordinate with the following entities for the indicated facilities:

- 1) the Florida Department of Transportation for State roads in the unincorporated area and inter-jurisdictional segments,
- 2) the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for County roads in the Gainesville urbanized area,
- 3) municipalities in Alachua County for County roads in the municipality, and inter jurisdictional segments,
- 4) adjacent counties for inter-county roads.

Policy 7.3 The designation of constrained or backlogged roadway facilities and standards for roads within any transportation concurrency exception areas (TCEAs) or transportation concurrency management areas (TCMAs) shall be coordinated with the following entities for the indicated facilities:

- 1) the Florida Department of Transportation for State roads in the unincorporated area and inter-jurisdictional segments,
- 2) the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for County roads in the Gainesville urbanized area,
- 3) municipalities in Alachua County for County roads in the municipality and inter-jurisdictional segments, and
- 4) adjacent counties for inter-county roads.

Policy 7.6 In order to assess and address intergovernmental traffic impacts, Alachua County shall coordinate with the following entities concerning the indicated facilities:

- 1) the Florida Department of Transportation for State roads in the unincorporated area,
- 2) municipalities in Alachua County for County roads within the municipality and municipal roads which may impact those County roads,
- 3) adjacent counties for inter-county roads, and
- 4) Florida Department of Transportation, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council, and Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council to develop strategies (e.g., ride-sharing, park and ride facilities, etc.) to offset the impacts of commuter traffic on the County's transportation network; this shall include efforts to maximize the effectiveness of the park and ride facility planned as part of FDOT's SR 20 Intrastate expansion project, and
- 5) I-75 Corridor Council for I-75 from the Georgia State Line to Wildwood.

The coordination mechanisms shall include provisions for:

- 1) Periodic monitoring reports to be prepared by Alachua County for use by the Florida Department of Transportation in determining road improvement needs in their five-Year Work Program.
- 2) Periodic development action reports from the entity approving development orders that would result in additional traffic on County roads to monitor the capacity of County-maintained facilities and for use in Capital Improvement programming.
- 3) Procedures for verification with the County of road capacity for developments whose approval by the entity would generate traffic exceeding more than five percent (5%) of the maximum capacity of the road based on the adopted minimum level of service standard.

## Resource Protection Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies

### TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT

Policy 2.1.1 Transportation facilities shall be located, designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to Conservation and Preservation areas consistent with Objective 3.6 of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

Policy 2.1.2 Appropriate conservation, arborocultural, and horticultural standards shall be used in the design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities in order to promote energy conservation, enhance habitat connectivity, provide for the safe passage of wildlife, and improve scenic quality, consistent with Objectives 5.3 and 5.4 of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

### POTABLE WATER AND SANITARY SEWER ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 2 To maximize the use of existing facilities in order to discourage urban sprawl and provide an adequate, safe, and environmentally sound system of potable water supply and sanitary sewer collection, treatment, and disposal.

Policy 2.1 All new development in the Urban Cluster shall be timed to occur when both centralized potable water and sanitary sewer systems are available for connection. The timing and availability of municipal water and sewer to a property shall be one of the factors to be considered when deciding upon proposed changes in zoning to a higher density or intensity pursuant to Policy 7.1.2.b. Any new subdivision, expansion of an existing subdivision, multi-family, or any new or expansion of a non-residential use, development or redevelopment in the Urban Cluster, shall be required to connect to a centralized potable water and sanitary sewer system for service by FDEP permitted potable water and wastewater treatment plants. This connection requirement and any exception thereto shall be implemented at the stage of development review and approval. Exceptions to this requirement may be provided for certain uses for which connection is infeasible because of engineering factors that would prevent operation and maintenance of the system connection within the range of standard procedures. The land development regulations shall specify the factors that will be the bases of such determinations including:

- a. The minimum flow necessary for adequate pipe velocity; and
- b. The maximum distance between the proposed development or connection point and the centralized system; and
- c. The relationship between flow and distance; or
- d. The inability to secure connection without adverse environmental effects; or
- e. The inability to obtain rights through adjacent properties necessary for connection.

The Land Development Regulations shall provide criteria and a process for consideration of exceptions based on the above factors. The LDRs shall require that any application for an exception provide an analysis of the potential to overcome engineering impediments to connection through coordination with adjacent property owners within the collection basin and the utility. If it is determined that there is no current opportunity for connection, an exception may be granted, provided there is a conceptual plan for connection when it becomes feasible, and there is assurance of future connection to a centralized system through enforceable conditions



including the posting of a bond or similar financial guarantee to cover the costs of future connection, utility system retrofitting, and the abandonment of any on-site private wells and septic systems in accordance with Florida Statutes and Administrative Codes. Additionally, facilities such as dry lines needed for connection shall be constructed on the property receiving the exception.

**OBJECTIVE 6** The County shall encourage wastewater effluent reuse and other incentives for the maximum utilization of reclaimed water to the greatest extent possible by facilitating the approval of environmentally-sound facilities.

**Policy 6.1** Spray irrigation sites shall incorporate perennial vegetation as a primary crop.

**Policy 6.2** Biosolids from wastewater treatment facilities shall be disposed of through means such as land application, consistent with revised Policy 6.3. For purposes of this policy, biosolids are prohibited from disposal in landfills.

**Policy 6.3** All proposed sites for land application of biosolids shall be subject to prior approval by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, based on criteria in this policy section and applicable requirements contained in the unified land development code. Biosolids application sites shall include sufficient land area for direct application, buffers from adjacent land areas, and emergency sites for adverse weather conditions. Surface water runoff resulting from land application of biosolids that impacts groundwater or surface water shall not violate state water quality standards.

**Policy 6.3.1** Runoff from a site shall not cause water quality violations as a result of land application of biosolids. Runoff of biosolids to on-site water bodies shall be prevented by not spreading during rainfall events or runoff periods.

**Policy 6.3.2** All proposed sites for spray irrigation shall be subject to approval of a permit by the Alachua County Development Review Committee. The land development regulations shall be revised to include compliance with specified criteria. The criteria shall at a minimum address the provision of sufficient land area for direct application, the incorporation of perennial vegetation as a primary crop, buffers from adjacent land areas, and emergency sites for adverse weather conditions. Surface water runoff resulting from spray irrigation that impacts groundwater or surface water shall not violate applicable federal, state, regional, water management districts, and local water quality standards.

**Policy 6.4** Alachua County shall coordinate with the municipalities in development of effluent handling systems (located within the unincorporated portion of the County) such as artificial wetland disposal sites, irrigations reuse for crops, or recreation open space and industrial reuse.

**Objective 7** To protect the potable water supplies and sources.

**Policy 7.2** Alachua County shall coordinate with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and/or the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) in determining and assessing impacts of proposed developments on the County's potable water supplies. These impacts shall be used by the County's Development Review Committee (DRC) in the evaluation of applications for site plan and development plan approval.

- a. Alachua County shall incorporate the results of any studies by the water management districts on projected demands on the sources of potable water for Alachua County, relative to potential supply, as a factor in determining the maximum population the water supply in Alachua County will be able to support.

Policy 7.3 Alachua County shall coordinate future land use designations of this plan with incorporated towns and cities and surrounding counties to ensure that sufficient water quantity is available and that its quality is not degraded. In evaluating any proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element that would provide for more intensive development adjacent to such jurisdictions, the County shall address such impacts and the capacity of such potable water facilities to implement this policy.

OBJECTIVE 8 To promote the increased conservation and reuse of water.

Policy 8.1 Alachua County shall promote public information programs in an effort to increase public awareness and acceptance of water conservation techniques through newsletters, public service announcements, and displays at public awareness events.

Policy 8.2 Land Development Regulations shall provide for the use of cluster development and attached dwelling units and zero lot line arrangements and smaller lot sizes. Such development patterns shall be encouraged during the County's Development Review Committee (DRC), until the land development regulations include provisions to implement this policy.

Policy 8.3 Development plans shall be reviewed for inclusion of native vegetation and other low water demand landscape material in order to reduce outdoor water consumption.

Policy 8.4 Restrictions established by applicable water management districts or water districts shall be adhered to. These restrictions shall be enforced by the County or other government organization. Whenever possible, outdoor use of water for turfed areas shall occur in the morning hours. Alachua County shall also encourage large scale commercial and institutional users of outdoor water to utilize early morning consumption as part of its public awareness efforts.

Policy 8.5 The County will make available lists of vegetation classified by water demand for use by residents and developers as part of the public awareness efforts of the County.

Policy 8.6 Low-volume plumbing devices shall continue to be required, consistent with local building codes.

Policy 8.7 The County shall encourage the use of stormwater runoff for irrigation, agricultural or industrial water needs in order to conserve potable water sources. By 2002, Alachua County shall complete a study of alternative technologies for consideration in revising the land development regulations.

#### **SOLID WASTE ELEMENT**

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Provide for safe operation and maintenance of publicly owned solid waste management facilities, in compliance with all stipulations and conditions of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) permits; and other applicable local, state or federal regulations; provide for protection of water, soil and air resources, in compliance with local, state, and federal permit requirements including monitoring of groundwater at all public landfill sites.

Policy 1.2.3 The County shall monitor closed landfills and surrounding properties as required by Florida Department of Environmental Protection Landfill permit conditions and local, state, or federal regulations for groundwater and potable water supply contamination.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Regulate, consistent with local, state, and federal regulations, all privately operated landfills, including C&D landfills, and solid waste management facilities to ensure proper disposal methods and protection of natural resources including groundwater.

Policy 1.3.2 Solid waste disposal systems shall be designed to prevent air, water and soil pollution, and danger to public health and safety. The use of land, water or air for uncontrolled disposal of any waste shall be prohibited. Development regulations shall require use of appropriate methods for preventing leachates which violate water quality standards from entering ground and surface water at all active landfill sites. At the County's discretion additional regulatory methods may include, but not be limited to, periodic inspections and monitoring programs during the permitting, operation, closure, and after closure of landfills. The need for additional regulatory methods will be based upon site specific conditions such as hydrogeology, ecological characteristics, and neighboring land use. Additional inspections and groundwater monitoring requirements shall be at the expense of the owner. It shall be the responsibility of the permit holder and/or land owner to provide for the cost of monitoring and proper closure. Monitoring and closure shall be reviewed by the County and/or other appropriate agencies. This policy does not preclude the proper use of manure, mulching or composting of yard waste, or regulated use of biosolids for land application.

Policy 1.3.2.1 Each landfill operator, including C&D landfill operators, shall be required to monitor soil and groundwater, using sufficient methods to ensure no contamination of ground and surface waters as a result of the landfill activity. Monitoring programs shall be, at a minimum, in accordance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection landfill permits. The County may require a more stringent monitoring program at specific landfill sites. A monitoring program imposed by the County that is more stringent than that called for in the FDEP permit(s) shall consider the expense of the increased requirements.

#### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

Policy 3.1 To ensure water quality and flood protection, new development shall provide facilities designed to control and treat stormwater runoff at the following levels of service:

Policy 3.4 The County shall amend land development regulations to include the standards adopted in this Stormwater Management Element.

Policy 5.12 The proportion of the area of stormwater management facilities to the area of the site shall be limited to the maximum extent practicable through the reduction of impervious surfaces via vertical construction and the use of alternative parking surfaces in order to preserve the existing pre-development hydro-period from discharge to wetland systems and adequate existing vegetation on the site.

Policy 5.6 All new development, redevelopment, and, when expansion occurs, existing developed areas located within the High Aquifer Recharge Areas shall provide treatment of the stormwater before it enters the Floridan Aquifer. This shall be presumed to have been met by designing and constructing a stormwater management system to control post-development water runoff rate and/or volume and water quality to not exceed pre-development runoff rate and/or volume and water quality.

#### **CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

##### **2.2. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

Objective 2.2: Increase public understanding of natural resources issues and provide access to the most current and reliable information so that the public may make informed decisions regarding their health, welfare, and safety.

Policy 2.2.2 The County shall implement proactive, innovative, and creative educational programs concerning natural resource issues including, but not limited to:

Air quality;  
Surface water and wetlands quality and function;  
Groundwater quality and vulnerability;  
Water conservation;  
Wildlife and aquatic species and habitat;  
Native vegetative communities;  
Invasive species control;  
Natural areas protection;  
Agricultural preservation;  
Sustainable agriculture and forestry;  
Soil conservation;  
Energy conservation;  
Flood and fire hazard mitigation;  
Hazardous waste; and  
Waste management.

Policy 2.2.5 Educational materials shall be made available to developers, homeowners, and other interested citizens concerning proper maintenance, management, restoration, and development in natural areas (for example, habitat creation, endangered species, management of development ponds, wetlands vegetation, xeriscape, water quality, and water conservation).

### 3.1. CONSERVATION LAND USE CATEGORIES

Objective 3.1: A conservation land use category shall be established to recognize and protect natural resources within privately owned lands in Alachua County utilizing appropriate regulatory, acquisition, and incentive mechanisms.

Policy 3.1.2 In conservation areas, the following uses, if otherwise consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, generally shall be permitted to the extent that they do not significantly alter the natural functions of the conservation area:

1. Public and private conservation, recreation and open space uses.
2. Public and private wildlife preserves, game management and refuge areas.
3. Water conservation and retention/detention areas that are determined to be appropriate for stormwater management.
4. Agricultural uses, employing latest applicable best management practices.

### 3.4. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Objective 3.4: Protect natural resources during the land use planning and development review process from activities that would significantly damage the ecological integrity of these areas. The applicability of the policies and standards in this section shall be determined for all development at each stage of the land use planning, zoning, and development review and permitting process.

### 3.5. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Objective 3.5: Adoption of new or revisions to existing land development regulations based on policies in this Element shall begin immediately following the adoption of this Element by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and shall be completed in accordance with a rigorous adoption schedule.

Policy 3.5.2 LDRs shall provide performance standards for development in and adjacent to conservation and preservation areas to protect and enhance the natural, physical, biological, ecological, aesthetic, and recreational functions of these areas. Performance standards for the rural area shall include innovative approaches such as flexible lot sizes, clustered subdivisions, setbacks, buffers, and density transfers as provided in the policies under Objective 6.2 of the Future Land Use Element.

### 3.6 RESOURCE PROTECTION STANDARDS

Policy 3.6.5 Development on land that includes conservation areas shall be sited and designed according to the following standards and consistent with policies under Objective 6.2 of the Future Land Use Element in the rural area:

5. Existing landscape connections to other conservation areas shall be maintained so that fragmentation is avoided.

Policy 3.6.6 Development on land that includes or is adjacent to conservation or preservation areas shall exhibit best environmental management practices with the emphasis on designing with nature, e.g. in the context of the natural features of the landscape, such as topographic and stormwater features, vegetative edges, and soil types, to avoid and minimize adverse environmental and visual impacts. The major criterion for approval shall be the continued functioning, with minimum disturbance, of the ecosystem which the development is impacting.

Policy 3.6.8 Development occurring along the edges of conservation and preservation areas shall be designed to protect and minimize the impact of development on conservation areas through the use of natural vegetative buffers.

1. Buffer width shall be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on what is demonstrated to be scientifically necessary to protect natural ecosystems from significant adverse impact. This determination shall be made in consideration of at least the following factors:
  - a. Type of development and associated potential for adverse site-specific and off-site impacts;
  - b. Natural community type and associated hydrologic or management requirements;
  - c. Buffer area characteristics and function;
  - d. Presence of listed species of plants and animals.
2. Absent scientific information which demonstrates that a larger or smaller buffer width is appropriate, the following buffer widths shall apply for the resources set forth in the table below.

Protected Resource	Buffer Distance (feet)*
Surface waters and wetlands less than or equal to 0.5 acre that do not include OFWs or listed animal species as described elsewhere in this table	50 average, 35 minimum
Surface waters and wetlands greater than 0.5 acre that do not include OFWs or listed animal species as described elsewhere in this table	75 average, 50 minimum
Areas where federally and/or state regulated vertebrate wetland/aquatic dependent animal species have been documented within 300 feet of a surface water or wetland	100 average, 75 minimum
Outstanding Florida Waters (OFWs)	150 average, 100 minimum

\* If the buffer precludes all economically viable use of a particular property, development may be allowed within the buffer in accordance with policy 3.6.5, and where applicable, policies 4.6.6 and 4.7.4.

3. Buffers shall be measured from the outer edge of the protected resource.

Policy 3.6.12 All public projects, such as utilities, new travel corridors, and travel corridor modifications, shall be located and designed to avoid adverse impacts to conservation and preservation areas, except where it is demonstrated that there is no prudent and feasible alternative that avoids adverse impact. The County shall use an interdepartmental team to determine whether a particular project warrants adverse impact, based on an evaluation of the environmental, economic, and social costs and benefits of the proposal and alternatives. Inconvenience alone is insufficient justification for adverse impact.

Policy 3.6.13 In the case of a public project for which there is no prudent and feasible alternative that avoids adverse impacts to conservation and preservation areas, the project shall incorporate appropriate design features that enhance habitat connectivity, provide for the safe passage of wildlife, and provide other significant environmental benefits. Mitigation shall be required as for private developments.

**4.1 AIR RESOURCES**

Objective 4.1: Alachua County shall take appropriate steps to maintain or improve ambient air quality to ensure the protection of public health and the environment and to exceed compliance with state and national ambient air quality standards.

Policy 4.1.1 Alachua County shall maintain a local air quality program that emphasizes pollution prevention, monitors ambient air quality, regulates air emission sources, and educates the public about air quality concerns.

Policy 4.1.2 The air quality program shall include the following monitoring components:

1. Maintain the County air monitoring network and upgrade air monitoring stations as new standards or procedures are promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
2. Develop, using a combination of ambient air monitoring data and computer modeling, the spatial and temporal variations of air pollution levels.
3. Evaluate the incremental and cumulative air quality impacts of individual land use and transportation decisions in Alachua County.

Policy 4.1.3 The air quality program shall include the following regulatory components:

1. Adopt state air pollution control and air quality regulations within one year of the effective date of such rules.
2. Communicate and work with federal, state, and local governmental agencies in pursuing regional improvements in air quality.
3. Regulate land use and development activities to protect and enhance the quality of the air resources.
4. Develop strategies for reducing EPA criteria pollutant emissions and hazardous air pollutant emissions.
5. Study the levels and sources of hazardous air pollutants in the County.
6. Pursue state delegation for an approved local air quality program from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
7. Inventory greenhouse emissions (GHG) and implement a plan to reduce County GHG emissions by 20% of year 1990 baseline emissions by 2010.

Policy 4.1.4 The air quality program shall include the following public education components:

1. Establish an air quality public education program, including a County-maintained website.
2. Include a component that informs the public of indoor air pollution concerns.
3. Continue the radon information education program that informs the public about the soil radon potential in different areas of Alachua County.
4. Every two years, beginning in 2002, publish a status report on local air quality which assesses the effectiveness of the existing air quality program and the need for revised or additional program elements. The status report should also provide an overview of activities of the air quality program, ambient air quality levels, air emission sources, and other such information.

Policy 4.1.5 All incineration, prescribed open burning, and yard trash burning shall be conducted in accordance with local, State and Federal regulations such that the health and safety of the public and the environment is protected.

1. Open burning of land clearing debris in the urban cluster shall be prohibited. This does not preclude burning of vegetative debris accumulated as a result of cleanup from a local emergency or severe weather event, such as a hurricane or tornado. Such burning shall only be conducted with a permit from the appropriate local or state agency(s).
2. In lieu of burning, the following practices shall be used:
  - a. Vegetative debris may be ground and used as mulch or compost onsite;
  - b. Vegetative debris may be delivered to an appropriately permitted facility for processing and disposal;



- c. Non-vegetative land clearing debris must be separated out of the vegetative debris and transported to an appropriately permitted facility for processing and disposal.
3. Prescribed burning for fuel reduction or maintenance of ecosystem health shall be in accordance with a land management plan, where required, and all applicable permits.

Policy 4.1.6 Factors contributing to the maintenance or improvement of air quality shall be identified and considered during land use planning and development review. These factors include but are not limited to:

1. Increased use of mass transit and non-motorized modes of transportation, and the promotion of a land development pattern conducive to support of public transportation, including containment of urban development in existing urban areas or carefully planned expansions of urban areas;
2. Increased use of green space in site planning for all types of development and along major roadways; and
3. Increased strategic planting of trees and shrubs to shade streets and buildings, reducing energy consumption and new carbon dioxide generation caused by combustion of fossil fuels; and
4. Control of airborne dust generated from land clearing and site preparation activities. Control may involve the use of techniques such as temporary silt fencing, immediate seeding or sodding, permanent vegetative buffering, phasing land clearing with development, or sprinkling the area with water.
5. Promotion of industries that exceed Federal and State air quality and emission standards. Existing and new industries shall be regulated as follows:
  - a. Existing industries not meeting these standards shall be brought into compliance under a specified schedule.
  - b. New industries shall be designed to exceed the specified standards.

Policy 4.1.7 The County shall pursue and support programs that reduce adverse impacts on air quality due to traffic emissions by encouraging use of public transit, multiple ridership in automobiles, and safe use of bikeways.

Policy 4.1.8 Asbestos shall be surveyed for and removed by a licensed contractor prior to demolition or renovation of all buildings.

Policy 4.1.9 The County shall establish a tree planting program to improve air quality in designated areas.

Policy 4.1.10 The County shall establish an intergovernmental task force, comprised minimally of representatives from local governments and utilities, to coordinate on air quality issues such as alternative fuels and the use of hybrid fuel vehicles.

### 4.3 MINERAL RESOURCES

Objective 4.3: Regulate extraction activities so that they do not adversely affect the quality of air, groundwater, surface water, land, and wildlife.

### 4.4. GEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Objective 4.4: Protect and maintain significant natural geologic features such as special karst features -- springs, caves and sinkholes in their natural condition.

Policy 4.4.5 The County shall cooperate with municipalities on the protection of groundwater within any watershed having the Floridan aquifer exposed in sinks or open pits to potentially harmful deposition of atmospheric and other non-point source surface pollution where citizens of the County may be affected.

### 4.5 GROUNDWATER

Objective 4.5: Protect and conserve the quality and quantity of groundwater resources to ensure long-term public health and safety, potable water supplies from surficial, intermediate, and Floridan aquifers, and the ecological integrity of natural resources.

Policy 4.5.3 The County shall engaged the Florida Geological Survey (FGS) to perform an aquifer recharge/vulnerability study of Alachua County. Upon assessment of this study, additional best available data and review by relevant parties such as St. Johns River Water Management District, Suwannee River Water Management District, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, County and State Departments of Health, the County shall amend the Comprehensive Plan to adopt the high aquifer recharge area map identified through this process by 2008.

Policy 4.5.5 Appropriate local planning, development design standards, and special construction practices shall be required to ensure both short and long-term mitigation of impacts on groundwater created by activities occurring in high aquifer recharge areas. The following provisions shall apply:

1. All new development or modifications to existing development shall provide stormwater treatment consistent with the Stormwater Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
  2. All stormwater basins in high aquifer recharge areas shall be designed and constructed to provide for at least three (3) feet of unconsolidated solid materials such as sand, silts, and clays between the surface of limestone bedrock and the bottom and sides of the stormwater basin.
  3. Corrective action to retrofit or upgrade existing hazardous material facilities consistent with standards applicable to new facilities shall be required by the County.
  4. New development activities which involve handling or storing of hazardous materials may be prohibited in high aquifer recharge areas, and, where permitted, shall be subject to the general requirements, siting prohibitions, storage facility standards, secondary containment requirements, and monitoring provisions of the Hazardous Materials Management Code. Where such facilities exist and are proposed to be modified, development review and permitting activities shall include careful evaluation and implementation of engineering and management controls, setbacks and buffers, and monitoring. Existing facilities shall meet the requirements of the Hazardous Materials Management Code pertaining to such facilities.
1. The following new uses shall be prohibited in areas of Alachua County designated as the unconfined zone of the Floridan Aquifer system in Florida Geological Survey Open File Report 21, "Geologic Interpretation of the Aquifer Pollution Potential in Alachua County, Florida," unless it can be demonstrated that the material, in

the quantity and/or solution stored or the conditions under which it is to be stored, does not pose a hazard to human health or the environment:

- (a) Wholesale bulk fuel storage;
- (b) Chemical manufacturing;
- (c) Pesticide manufacturing;
- (d) Auto salvage or junk yard;
- (e) Asphalt plant;
- (f) Battery reclamation or manufacturing;
- (g) Electronics manufacturing using halogenated solvents;
- (h) Any hazardous waste transfer site;
- (i) Any site defined by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) as a treatment, storage, or disposal (TSD) facility for hazardous waste;
- (j) Regional pesticide distribution site;
- (k) Underground storage tank for the storage of hazardous materials; and
- (l) Portland cement manufacturing.

6. Limitations on package treatment plants and septic systems are as follows:

a. Package treatment plants shall not be allowed in areas served by centralized wastewater treatment plants. The use of new package treatment plants is discouraged, and may be considered outside the Urban Cluster only in accordance with Policy 2.6 of the Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer Element.

b. New development not connected to central sanitary sewer shall be limited to a minimum lot size of one (1) acre to prevent degradation of groundwater quality unless the applicant can demonstrate that smaller lot sizes and associated sanitary systems will cause no degradation of groundwater quality.

7. The Alachua County Hazardous Materials Management Code provides the following measures towards the protection of natural resources:

- a. Regulates hazardous materials to prevent discharges to the environment in the County.
- b. Provides uniform standards for the proper storage, handling, and monitoring of hazardous materials on a county-wide basis.
- c. Provides for early detection, containment, and recovery of discharges.
- d. Establishes a cost recovery mechanism to pay for hazardous materials emergency response actions performed by the Environmental Protection Department.
- e. Provides Alachua County with legal authority to establish environmental monitoring, remediation, and closure requirements for contaminated sites: and,
- f. Disallows the construction of new storage tank systems within three hundred (300) feet of an existing private water supply utility well, or within one thousand (1000) feet of an existing public water supply well.

Policy 4.5.6 Appropriate development regulations shall be established to control land uses and activities in proximity to wellfields and designated High Aquifer Recharge Areas. These controls will be based at a minimum upon:

- a. The potential of the land use or activity to contaminate groundwater;
- b. Distance from a public wellfield;
- c. Local aquifer geology; and
- d. The capability of the activity to contain or eliminate the hazard of contamination.

These regulations shall control activities involving fuel storage tanks, hazardous waste generators and hazardous material users, private wells, waste water treatment systems, landfilling operations, dairies or other uses with a high potential for ground water contamination. Interim control of activities shall be through the development review Committee process and shall be consistent, at a minimum, with the Hazardous Materials Management Code.

Policy 4.5.9 The County shall cooperate with the WMDs and adjacent local governments in the evaluation of current and projected water needs and sources.

Policy 4.5.10 Large volume withdrawals of ground water that could result in significant adverse impacts on potable water supply and natural ecosystems due to cone of depression effects shall be evaluated for their effect on municipal wellfield supplies and natural ecosystems before being permitted. Development shall occur only when adequate water supplies are concurrently available to serve such development without adversely affecting local or regional water sources or the natural ecosystem.

1. The St. John's River Water Management District has declared the entire district a water resource caution area in recognition that, within recent history, all parts of the district have been subject to a declaration of water shortage on more than one occasion. Since insufficient supply has been documented, and reductions in use have been required to protect water resources from serious harm, Alachua County shall take steps to implement reuse, provide for the greater availability of reclaimed water, and otherwise conserve available water resources in accordance with Chapter 62-40, F.A.C.
2. The County shall request the water management districts to expedite a groundwater basin resource availability inventory for Alachua County which will identify, in addition to the location of recharge areas, site specific areas prone to overdraft, areas suitable for future water resource development, existing sources of wastewater discharge suitable for reuse, and potential quantities of water available for consumptive use, in accordance with section 373.0395 F.S.

The County shall take an active role in participating in water management district review, permitting and maintenance of operations such as bottled water plants and mining activities that use large volumes of ground water on an ongoing basis.

Policy 4.5.11 Large volume transfers of water out of Alachua County shall be allowed in emergencies only for private and municipal drinking water purposes and only in counties contiguous to Alachua County. Any emergency supply transfer to a public system of a contiguous county for an extended, indeterminate period of time shall be made only when Alachua County supplies will not be endangered by the transfer, and only when the receiving entity demonstrates that local government growth management policies have been reasonably implemented to ensure that future demand will be provided within that jurisdiction. The County shall further seek to protect its water resources from being exported to other regions of the state through several strategies, including:

1. Participating in the development of the five year work plans of the Suwannee River and St. John's River Water Management Districts;
2. Requesting to receive notice of any applications for the transfer of the County's waters, and advocating for water reuse and the development of alternate supply sources (such as desalinization) by such applicants;

3. Considering the establishment of a regional water supply authority pursuant to section 373.1962, F.S.; and
4. Amending existing legislation regarding consumptive use permitting and exercising vigilance through the County's legislative delegation.

Policy 4.5.12 The County shall cooperate with the Suwannee River Water Management District, the St. Johns River Water Management District, and local governments to conduct current and future water conservation programs and prepare an emergency water management conservation plan.

Policy 4.5.13 A County-wide groundwater monitoring program shall be developed and funded to coordinate and expand upon existing groundwater monitoring efforts. This program shall include monitoring of springs.

#### 4.6 SURFACE WATER SYSTEMS

Objective 4.6: Ensure the protection and improvement of the water quality, biological health, and natural functions of surface water systems in Alachua County.

Policy 4.6.2 Alachua County shall promote recovery to water quality standards by identifying significant point and non-point sources of water pollution, and acting to reduce the harmful impacts of these pollutants on the natural environment.

Policy 4.6.4 The natural hydrologic character and function of surface waters, including natural hydroperiods, flows found in floodways, flows that connect wetlands with other wetlands and surface waters, and wildlife habitat and connectivity, shall be protected. Land development regulations shall specify criteria for site design including limits on and mitigation for filling and excavation. In addition, the County shall establish an appropriate review and approval process that provides for regulation of water control structures including but not limited to indirect impacts from land development activities.

Policy 4.6.8 Native vegetation that occurs in natural surface waters, buffers, and natural floodways shall be retained in its natural state. Harvesting, cutting, and clearing activities shall be restricted except to remove non-native species or as part of good vegetative management, including legitimate silvicultural activities consistent with Objective 5.5, or to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

Policy 4.6.11 Alachua County shall publish a reader-friendly status report that describes the following conditions of each watershed:

1. Physical habitat;
2. Biology;
3. Pollution sources;
4. Water quality;
5. Erosion and sedimentation; and
6. Ecosystem health.

Policy 4.6.12 Alachua County shall continue to participate in multi-agency task forces and working groups established to address specific surface water quality concerns, including nutrients in the Santa Fe River, Possum, Hogtown, and Little Hatchet Creeks, and coliform and bacteria in Tumblin Creek and Sweetwater Branch.

Policy 4.6.14 Alachua County shall encourage and contribute to watershed management as well as creek and river cleanups.

Policy 4.6.16 Land uses that have the potential to pollute surface waters (are located adjacent to surface waters and that contribute significant nutrient loadings) shall be identified and regulated using the following measures to protect water quality and biological health.

1. Buffers shall be increased for activities such as landfills, composting facilities, wastewater treatment percolation ponds, spray fields, golf courses, dairies, row crops, and septic tanks, which have been associated with surface water quality and biological health problems.
2. The implementation of best management practices shall be required to control nutrient loadings, including retrofitting if needed to maintain water quality and biological health.
3. The use of pesticides and fertilizers shall be discouraged in buffers.

Policy 4.6.17 Wastewater and stormwater discharges to surface waters and wetlands shall be allowed only if the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The quantity, timing, and quality of the discharge maintain or improve water quality, biological health, and the function of the natural ecosystem.
2. Downstream waters are not affected by nutrient loading.
3. The project owner or developer prepares and implements maintenance and monitoring plan acceptable to the County.
4. The project owner or developer corrects any failures in design or operation of the system that cause degradation of water quality, biological health, or the function of the natural ecosystem.
5. The owner or developer posts a performance bond or similar financial guarantee to assure implementation of the maintenance and monitoring plan.

Policy 4.6.20 The County shall monitor emerging state-of-the-art wastewater and stormwater treatment technology and shall cooperate with Water Management Districts, state and local agencies to ensure that water quality objectives are met through the most appropriate and effective methodologies.

Policy 4.6.21 Retrofitting where practicable of substandard stormwater management systems shall be required during repair, expansion, or redevelopment activities. This policy is intended to address water quality and biological health problems resulting from the absence of stormwater management systems, as well as obsolete, inadequately designed or improperly maintained systems. Where retrofit occurs, protection of water quality, biological health, and the function of the natural ecosystem shall be required.

Policy 4.6.22 The development of stormwater management systems across or for multiple properties and for multi-purpose use shall be encouraged.

Policy 4.6.23 The County shall coordinate with the Water Management Districts and applicable local, state and federal agencies on the evaluation of existing surface water control structures, such as, but not limited to, those on Orange Creek and Prairie Creek, for their economic benefits and impact on lake and wetland ecosystems.

Policy 4.6.24 Where past modifications have been made and restoration of original natural flows would be beneficial to water management and wildlife needs, consistent with development needs and good site design practices, restoration shall be encouraged and may be required prior to development approval. The County shall include standards in the development regulations that will evaluate the feasibility of restoration on a case-by-case basis.

#### 4.7. WETLAND ECOSYSTEMS

Objective 4.7: Wetland acreage and function shall be protected.

#### 4.8 FLOOD PLAINS AND FLOODWAYS

Objective 4.8: Protect and maintain the natural functions of floodplains, floodways, and all other natural areas having hydrological characteristics of the one hundred (100)-year flood elevation. Natural functions include water purification, flood hazard mitigation, water supply, and wildlife habitat and connectivity.

#### 4.9 BIODIVERSITY

Policy 4.9.1 A critical portion of each significant plant and wildlife habitat type in Alachua County shall be protected. Protection shall be accomplished using all available methods, including land acquisition, incentives and requirements for the provision of conservation or preservation areas, habitat corridors, greenways, and common open space.

Policy 4.9.2 During the land use planning and development review processes, the County shall minimize the effects of development on significant plant and wildlife habitat. All developments shall protect the significant plant and wildlife habitat that occurs on site, subject to the limitation of 4.9.12.

1. The habitat to be conserved shall be selected based on the quality and viability of the habitat. The County shall work with the landowner to select the portion of the habitat that will be included in the set aside.
2. Conserved habitat shall be located and maintained in areas with intact canopy, understory and groundcover in functional, clustered arrangement which maximizes use by wildlife and maintains the long-term viability of native upland plant communities. Linkages to habitat corridors and greenways shall be required where available.
3. The County shall have the authority to accept alternatives to onsite conservation that provide for the long-term protection and management of significant plant and wildlife habitat of equal or greater habitat value that would not have otherwise been preserved.
4. The land development regulations shall establish criteria for determining which projects warrant the use of alternatives to onsite conservation. Criteria may include but are not limited to: the size of the development site, habitat quality, uniqueness, connectivity, management opportunities, and adjacent uses.
5. Off-site conservation shall not be permitted for listed species habitat that is capable of being managed or restored on-site as a high quality natural plant or animal community or communities.
6. This requirement is not intended to limit the effect of other resource-specific protective measures in this element, such as clustering and buffers.

Policy 4.9.3 The County shall require the development and implementation of management plans for all significant plant and wildlife habitat that is to be protected. The management plan shall be prepared at the expense of the developer by an appropriately qualified professional and provide for the following:

1. Removal of invasive vegetation and debris.
2. Replanting with native vegetation as necessary.



3. Maintenance of biodiversity, with special emphasis on protection of listed plant and animal species.
4. Any additional measures determined to be necessary to protect and maintain the functions and values of the habitat conservation areas while ensuring protection from wildfire.

Policy 4.9.11 The County shall establish and preserve habitat corridors that connect significant plant and wildlife habitats throughout the County. The County shall perform an objective analysis to determine the appropriateness of habitat corridors, how extensive they should be the location of potential corridors, what fiscal resources are available for implementation, and economic incentives for property owners to voluntarily participate in formation of a habitat corridor program.

#### 4.10 STRATEGIC ECOSYSTEMS

Policy 4.10.3 The County shall create special area plans in cooperation with landowners to establish specific guidelines for strategic ecosystems prior to approval of land use change, zoning change, or development approval.

1. The County shall devise a schedule for creating special area plans, based on current development pressures and anticipated priorities.
2. The County shall create special area plans for each strategic ecosystem, in accordance with the schedule and with the standards under Objective 3.6.
3. If an applicant seeks development prior to the County's creation of a special area plan for a particular strategic ecosystem, the applicant has two avenues for pursuing development. A special area study may be conducted at the applicant's expense. Alternatively, if the applicant demonstrates that the ecological integrity of the strategic ecosystem will be sufficiently protected, the applicant may proceed according to the clustering provisions in policies under Objective 6.2 of the Future Land Use Element.

Policy 4.10.6 The County shall provide regulatory flexibility to facilitate planning across multiple parcels that protects the integrity and ecological value of strategic ecosystem as an ecological unit. Existing cluster and PUD ordinances shall be revised to enhance long-term protection of strategic ecosystems.

Policy 4.10.7 The County shall work with landowners of agricultural and silvicultural lands to retain the ecological integrity and ecological value of strategic ecosystems through management plans and incentives...

#### 5.1. ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION

Objective 5.1

Policy 5.1.1

Policy 5.1.2

Policy 5.1.4

Objective 5.3

Policy 5.3.8

*(See relevant policies for Agriculture/Greenspace section.)*

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT**

Policy 3.4 In order to ensure adequate provision of utilities for proposed land uses in the Comprehensive Plan, Alachua County shall continue to include utility companies on the County's Development Review Committee.

Policy 8.1 Alachua County shall coordinate the environmental protection of land, air, and water with the appropriate agencies and jurisdictions for the benefit of people, wildlife, and plants.

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT**

Policy 1.3.2 Require Category "A" and "B" public facilities and services needed to support development to be available concurrent with the impacts of development and require issuance of a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance (CLSC) as a condition of all final development orders. "Concurrent" shall mean that all adopted LOS Standards shall be maintained or be achieved within a reasonable time frame as set out in 1.3.2 (A-D) below. Failure to receive a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance will preclude the issuance of any final development order on the project or project phase, until the requirements of 1.3.2 (A-D) have been satisfied.

- A. For potable water, sewerage, solid waste and storm water management, the following standards must be met to satisfy the concurrency requirement and to receive a Certificate of Level of Service Compliance:
  - 1. The necessary facilities and services are in place at the time a development permit is issued; or
  - 2. A development permit is issued subject to the condition that the necessary facilities will be in place when the impacts of development occur; or
  - 3. The necessary facilities are under construction at the time a development permit is issued and will be in place when the impacts of development occur; or
  - 4. The necessary facilities and services are guaranteed in an enforceable development agreement that includes the provisions of Policy 1.3.2(A-C). An enforceable development agreement may include, but is not limited to: (1) development agreements pursuant to section 163.3220, Florida Statutes, or (2) an agreement or development order issued pursuant to Chapter 380, Florida Statutes. Any such agreement must guarantee that the necessary facilities and services will be in place when the impacts of development occur.

**Urban Area Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies**

**FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

- PRINCIPLE 2 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*
- GENERAL STRATEGY 1 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*
- Policy 1.3.3 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*
- Policy 1.3.4 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*
- Policy 1.3.10.1 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*
- Policy 1.3.10.4 *(See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)*

Policy 1.4.2 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

OBJECTIVE 1.6 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

Policy 1.6.1 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

OBJECTIVE 2.1 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

#### URBAN ACTIVITY CENTERS POLICIES

Policy 2.1.1 through 2.1.14 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

Policy 7.1.3 (See relevant policies under Land Use/Transportation Section)

Objective 8.5 Plan East Gainesville Alachua County has established a special area plan, Plan East Gainesville, for the East Gainesville area. This plan was established in collaboration with the City of Gainesville and other stakeholders and would require the collaboration of the City of Gainesville for part of its implementation. Alachua County is committed to implementing the general vision of the plan – both long and short term, consistent with the implementation strategies outlined in the plan. The key elements of the County’s implementation strategy are captured in the following policies.

Policy 8.5.1 Map (Figure A Recommended Master Plan) adopted as part of FLUE Map Series to serve as a guiding vision for East Gainesville.

Policy 8.5.2 Update the plan for East Side Activity Center to incorporate the design standards, site and buildings design, parking, automobile access, community green space, and surface stormwater management facilities to be consistent with policies 2.1.8, 2.1.10, 2.1.11, 2.1.12 and 2.1.13 of the Future Land Use Element. Use the updated Eastside Activity Center as a foundation for development of a Community Redevelopment Area.

Policy 8.5.3 Coordinate with the City of Gainesville and other stakeholders in the development of a strategy for the Alachua County Fairgrounds for possible conversion to a mixed-use employment center.

Policy 8.5.4 Coordinate 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.

Policy 8.5.5 Transportation Coordinate with the MTPo and the City of Gainesville to establish a Bus Rapid Transit system connecting east Gainesville with centers of employment and commerce. Coordinate with the City of Gainesville and the MTPo to extend East 27th Street from Hawthorne Road to NE 39th Avenue.

Policy 8.5.6 Housing Diversify housing in the area by creating incentives for more market rate housing through the County’s housing program such as State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP).

Policy 8.5.7 Capital Improvement Assign priority, in County’s economic development budget, to capital improvement projects that enhance the implementation of Plan East Gainesville.

#### TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT

Policy 2.1.2 Appropriate conservation, arboricultural, and horticultural standards shall be used in the design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities in order to promote energy conservation,

enhance habitat connectivity, provide for the safe passage of wildlife, and improve scenic quality, consistent with Objectives 5.3 and 5.4 of the Conservation and Open Space Element

### GOAL 3 - TRANSIT

To encourage the provision and use of a safe, efficient, and financially feasible mass transit transportation system which is responsive to community needs, consistent with land use policies, environmentally sound, and which promotes economic opportunity and energy conservation.

### HOUSING ELEMENT

Policy 1.2.5 Alachua County's development review process shall include performance standards that reward developers who use construction techniques which reduce future maintenance and energy costs, such as homes oriented and constructed for energy efficiency and sustainability.

Policy 2.2.1 Energy Conservation. Alachua County shall promote Energy Conservation techniques that incorporate Federal Energy Star Standards as consistent with the requirements of the State Energy Code.

Policy 2.2.2 Alachua County shall provide developers/builders with information on how to incorporate Federal Energy Star Standards into construction.

Policy 2.2.3 Alachua County shall seek financial resources that mitigate the cost of building to Federal Energy Star Standards in affordable housing units.

Policy 2.2.5 Alachua County shall collaborate with the Alachua County Cooperative Extension Office, the banking community, the builders' associations and other interested parties, to determine ways builders can incorporate "Sustainable Building" technologies in the construction of affordable housing, through the following areas:

- a. Water (e.g., indoor water conservation, low-flow/low-flush fixtures, composting toilets, pervious materials, xeriscaping, reclaimed water irrigation, harvested rainwater, water budget)
- b. Energy (e.g., Energy Star ratings, traditional, local vernacular techniques of climate sensitive design, passive solar design, landscaping for energy conservation, site development and unit orientation (e.g. north/south rather than east/west windows)) that takes advantage of the natural shade and lighting available, radiant barrier and ridge and soffit venting, earth sheltered design, solar heating and cooling systems, photovoltaic systems, gas water heating systems, ductwork, fans, energy recovery ventilators, programmable thermostats, energy efficient appliances)
- c. Building materials (e.g., dimensional lumber, wood treatment, engineered structural materials, engineered siding and trim, concrete, non-toxic termite control, earth materials, floor coverings, wood flooring, roofing structural wall panels, insulation, windows and doors, cabinets, finishes and adhesives, straw bale construction)
- d. Solid Waste Management (e.g., home recycling, compost systems, construction waste recycling)

### CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Policy 2.2.2 (See relevant policies under Agriculture/Greenspace Section)

COSE Policy 2.3.2 A Community and Neighborhood Planning program, per Future Land Use Element Section 7 (Implementation), shall address conservation issues including provisions for regional habitat corridors, watersheds and greenways.

Policy 3.6.6 Development on land that includes or is adjacent to conservation or preservation areas shall exhibit best environmental management practices with the emphasis on designing with nature, e.g. in the context of the natural features of the landscape, such as topographic and stormwater features, vegetative edges, and soil types, to avoid and minimize adverse environmental and visual impacts. The major criterion for approval shall be the continued functioning, with minimum disturbance, of the ecosystem which the development is impacting.

Policy 4.1.3 (See relevant policies under Resource Protection Section)

Policy 4.1.6 (See relevant policies under Resource Protection Section)

Objective 5.1:

Policy 5.1.1 through 5.1.6 (See relevant policies under Agriculture/Greenspace Section)

Policy 5.3.7 (See relevant policies under Agriculture/Greenspace Section)

#### **RECREATION ELEMENT**

Policy 1.1.7 Facilities, equipment and landscaping installed at each recreation site shall be energy efficient and cost-effective and shall include characteristics that provide for low maintenance (e.g. native landscape plants), durability, longevity and resistance to vandalism, and will provide for multi-uses.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT**

Policy 1.2.5.C Government buildings and facilities - LOS guidelines based on Alachua County

Master Space Plan adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on June 13, 1995, and any amendments thereto. Facilities shall incorporate and recognize urban design principles. Life cycle costs should be considered in the design and construction of government facilities. The County shall implement an Energy Conservation Plan including a program to track the use of energy and water in facilities owned by the County and reducing energy consumption as it relates to budgetary constraints. The County shall require energy efficient retrofits of existing facilities and will ensure energy efficient objectives are met in the planning and construction of any new facilities.

Policy 1.6.13 Alachua County shall consider a Sustainability Index for use in assessing proposed capital projects.

Policy 1.9.4 Appropriate conservation, arboricultural, and horticultural standards shall be used in the design, construction, and maintenance of capital improvement projects in order to promote energy conservation, enhance habitat connectivity, provide for the safe passage of wildlife, and improve scenic quality, consistent with Objectives 5.3 and 5.4 of the Conservation and Open Space Element.