

Alachua County Planning Commission/Local Planning Agency

November 14, 2018

Matrix Of Comprehensive Plan Policies & Recommended Revisions Relating to Equity and Addressing Areas of Disparity Identified in *Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County (BEBR, 2018)*

The attached matrix contains summary descriptions of current comprehensive plan policies and policy revision recommendations relating to the issue of equity as explored in the report *Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County* (BEBR, 2018). The matrix is provided as a reference for helping to understand how the Comprehensive Plan currently addresses issues of Equity, as well as recommended policy revisions that would further address these issues.

The matrix is organized into four columns that identify areas in the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan that have policies pertinent to areas of disparity corresponding generally to areas of disparity from the *Racial Inequity* report. These areas of disparity, listed at the top of the four columns, are Economic Well-Being & Education, Health, Housing & Energy, and Land Use & Transportation. Within each column are listed the corresponding current Comprehensive Plan policies (in black) and recommended revisions (in blue) that more specifically address reducing or eliminating areas of disparity identified in the *Racial Inequity* report.

Background:

[*Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County*](#) is a report prepared by the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (excerpts are attached). The study was jointly commissioned by the "Friendship 7", a group of local governments and community organizations (Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe College, UF Health, and University of Florida). The Introduction states:

"The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive picture of the disparities in Alachua County between each of the minority groups and Whites on several dimensions of human well-being, and to compare race and ethnicity disparities in Alachua County to Florida and the nation. By gaining a more thorough understanding of this issue, community leaders will be better equipped to influence institutional awareness, make policy recommendations and support initiatives that tackle the causes of these problems, resulting in a reduction in these disparities."

As detailed in the report, in "Section III: Racial Inequity In Alachua County" and "Section IV: Insights from the Housing, Transportation, and Neighborhood Supplement", data on 50 different indicators was collected that capture disparities and provide insight into the status of minority groups as contrasted with non-Hispanic White populations (for detailed data, see "Appendix A – Data Tables on Disparity Measures" in the report). The data and analysis in the report highlights areas of disparity on several dimensions including:

- Economic Well-Being – showing disparities in areas such as median household Income, poverty, and unemployment rates

- Education – showing disparities in areas such as reading and math proficiency, high school graduation rates, and suspension rates
- Health – showing disparities in areas such as births to teen mothers, insurance coverage, and causes of death
- Housing – showing disparities in areas such as rates of homeownership, quality and condition of housing, monthly cost burden, property values, energy and water use, energy cost burden, concentrations of poverty, and geographic segregation
- Transportation – showing disparities in areas such as rates of automobile ownership vs other modes of transportation, commuting patterns and proximity to work and non-work destinations

These areas of disparity identified in the *Racial Inequity* report generally correspond to the types of issues addressed in the County’s Comprehensive Plan. The policy matrix demonstrates the correspondence between these areas of disparity and current Comprehensive Plan policies and policy revision recommendations. Other areas of disparity addressed in the *Racial Inequity* report but that are not subject areas addressed by the County Comprehensive Plan include Child Welfare, Family Structure, and Criminal Justice System.

The *Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County* baseline report, the more in-depth supplemental module on housing, transportation, and neighborhoods developed by University of Florida Program for Resource Efficient Communities (PREC), and a slide show presentation of the report are available here –

<https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/economics/racial-inequity>

Matrix of Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan Policies Relating to Equity and Addressing Areas of Disparity Identified in *Understanding Racial Inequity In Alachua County* (BEBR, 2018)

AREAS OF DISPARITY			
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<p>Enhance the economic prosperity of all citizens of Alachua County and expand and diversify the county's tax base (ECO Goal 1) <i>Add: address economic equity</i></p> <p>Diversify County's economy... provide opportunity for all segments of the population... (ECO Objective 1.1) <i>Add: "include strategies to achieve elimination of disparities identified in 'Understanding Racial Inequity In Alachua County' report"</i></p> <p>Expand County's economic base through partnerships with UF, SFC, SBAC and organizations that provide education and training to community (ECO Policy 1.1.5) <i>Add: job skills training, education... CareerSource North Central Florida, YouthBuild/Institute for Workforce Innovation</i></p> <p>Priority given to allocation of resources for retention, expansion, development of local businesses. (ECO Policy 1.2.1) <i>Add: "... support for expanded opportunities for education, including jobs-related skills training, to increase workforce participation and better</i></p>	<p>Preserve the health of Alachua County residents by facilitating health care delivery, improving the livability of the community, and providing all Alachua County residents opportunities for active living (CHE Goal) <i>Add: Promote health in all policies... improving equity</i></p> <p>Promote co-location of health programs/services particularly in underserved and Transit Oriented Development areas. Utilize Health Needs Assessment [HNA] and other data to identify areas needing facilities... for low-income and other populations in need (CHE Policy 1.1.2 – 1.1.3) <i>Add: "Support and promote equitable access to health care services and safety net system for County's underserved population with transportation systems and assistance programs..."</i></p> <p>Pursue grant funding for health promotion and chronic disease self-management programs at community level (CHE Policy 1.1.7)</p>	<p>To promote safe, sanitary, affordable housing for all Alachua County residents (HE Goal 1)</p> <p>To maintain and improve existing supply of affordable housing, and provide for redevelopment of neighborhoods (HE Goal 2)</p> <p>Provide for development and dispersal of affordable housing throughout County (HE Objective 1.1)</p> <p>Provide incentives for development and redevelopment of affordable housing (HE Policy 1.2.2) <i>Add: Reduction of impact fees for accessory dwelling units that provide affordable housing for very low and extremely low income households</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.2.7)</i> <i>Add: Expand housing diversity to provide for non-traditional alternatives such as cohousing</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.2.8)</i> <i>Add: Regulatory incentives for development and</i></p>	<p>Promote sustainable land development that provides for a balance of economic opportunity, social equity including environmental justice, and protection of the natural environment (FLUE Principle 1)</p> <p>Encourage development of residential land in a manner that promotes social and economic diversity... (FLUE Objective 1.1)</p> <p>Activity Centers provide for compact, mixed use, pedestrian-friendly development, functionally integrated with surrounding land use mixed uses, interconnected with other commercial, employment, light industrial, and institutional centers within County through system of multimodal corridors and public transit (FLUE Objective 2.1)</p> <p>Eastside Activity Center Masterplan allows a mix of residential, office, neighborhood-oriented retail, support service commercial, institutional, and public civic uses; Development plan applications</p>

ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR ALACHUA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

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AREAS OF DISPARITY

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<p><i>opportunities for populations experiencing economic disparities identified in ‘Racial Inequity’ report”</i></p> <p>Integrated approach to economic development that includes citizen input (ECO Policy 1.2.3) <i>Add: “... include components that address disparities identified in ‘Racial Inequity’ report”</i></p> <p>Program to retain, expand, develop local business... Encourage economic opportunities for all segments of community, monitor and reduce underemployment, recruit businesses that utilize and train local labor force... Provide review of, and ways to overcome, barriers to employment (ECO Policy 1.2.5) <i>Add: address economic disparities</i></p> <p>Social equity as a factor for providing incentives such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund program for employer investment in high wage job opportunities. Establish criteria for ranking economic development proposals/initiatives... based on contributions to sustainable economic development (ECO Policy 1.2.6 - 1.2.7) <i>Add: reduction and elimination of racial and economic disparities as factors</i></p>	<p>Support for home community gardening programs and target low-income and populations at high-risk for health disparity (CHE Policy 1.3.1.3)</p> <p><i>(CHE new Policy 1.3.1.6)</i> <i>Add: Support providers of fresh and nutritious food assistance to low income residents</i></p> <p>Partnerships to locate grocery stores/farmers markets in proximity to underserved areas (a) Coordinate w/RTS, transit providers for access to food shopping (b) Encourage farmers markets and healthy food retailers to accept federal programs such as WIC and SNAP (CHE Policy 1.3.2.3) <i>Add: Continue to work with local organizations to offer incentives to utilize the nutrition programs; Consider partnerships for healthy corner stores and incentives to attract grocers to food deserts</i></p> <p>Implement 2009 Hunger Abatement Plan and future updates, provide technical assistance for community food access studies (CHE Policy 1.3.2.4)</p>	<p><i>redevelopment of housing affordable to very low and extremely low-income households</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.2.9)</i> <i>Add: Expedited conceptual plan review process for affordable housing developments applying for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.3.7)</i> <i>Add: Support County Housing Authority to develop public/assisted housing sites and programs for very low and extremely-low income households</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.3.8)</i> <i>Add: Coordinate with fair housing programs to provide renters protections and overcome discrimination and disparities in access to housing</i></p> <p>Provide funding for affordable housing activities to ensure access to housing for all income levels (HE Objective 1.4)</p> <p>Encourage methods of financing to increase opportunities for low and</p>	<p>coordinated with Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS) to evaluate potential need for intermodal transit facilities associated with City’s Bus Rapid Transit Study; Where appropriate, development or redevelopment shall be accessible to and accommodate public transit routes; Focus activities to strengthen private investment, including: a. Encourage the linkage of job training to job creation b. Encourage the creation of a business incubator c. Encourage the coordination of community policing and neighborhood servicing efforts (FLUE Policy 2.2.10)</p> <p>Plan East Gainesville guiding vision promoting economic opportunity, employment center, community facilities, strengthen transportation / transit linkages, diverse housing choices, capital improvements, redevelopment, natural resource protection (FLUE Objective 8.5, Policies 8.5.1 – 8.5.10)</p> <p>Eastside Activity Center should be considered as a foundation for establishment of a Community</p>

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AREAS OF DISPARITY

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<p><i>for incentives and criteria for ranking</i></p> <p>Support development and expansion of small and minority businesses. County’s purchasing policies provide for maximum opportunity for increased participation by small, local, and minority businesses (ECO Policy 1.2.13 - 1.2.14) <i>Add: “minority-owned”; “as a means to address economic prosperity and racial and economic disparities”</i></p> <p>“State of Alachua County’s Economy” report including economic indicators, vocational training opportunities and job skills needed by businesses, improvement of economic well-being of unemployed poor (ECO Policy 1.2.18) <i>Add: “address economic opportunity and reduction of disparities identified in ‘Racial Inequity’ Report”</i></p> <p>Coordinate educational, vocational, technical training opportunities with needs of new & existing employers; Collaborate to ensure skills of labor force closely match demand for labor; Collaborate with local organizations and institutions to expand vocational skills training and entrepreneurial opportunities for students (ECO Objective 1.4, Policy 1.4.2 - 1.4.3) <i>Add: • “with a goal to address economic opportunity and eliminate disparities identified in ‘Racial Inequity’ Report”</i></p>	<p><i>Add: Eliminate food insecurity by 2050</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Policy 1.3.3, 1.3.3.1)</i> <i>Add: Implement Health in All Policies approach to use built environment to promote citizen health and wellbeing; involve health experts in all county planning and development projects</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Policy 1.3.3.3)</i> <i>Add: Promote healthy community by developing... opportunities for physical activity for all ages and income</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Policy 1.4.4)</i> <i>Add: Promote use of schools as food distribution sites to increase food security... examples include school-based food pantries</i></p> <p>To assist planning and coordinating Health Care Advisory Board, County departments, and community partners utilize Health Needs Assessments (HNA), Alachua County Health and Human Services Master Plan 2005-2015, and Alachua County Health Department DOH Strategic Plan, to provide policy-makers with findings and recommendations that help</p>	<p>very low income to obtain affordable housing (HE Policy 1.4.6) <i>Add: “extremely low” income households</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.4.9)</i> <i>Add: Provide funding for transitional housing and rental assistance programs</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.4.10)</i> <i>Add: Coordinate with municipalities, associations within County, County legislative delegation to ensure full funding of Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 1.4.11)</i> <i>Add: Use revenue from sale of escheated properties to develop affordable housing; establish local Housing Trust Fund</i></p> <p>Provide systematic approach to identification, preservation, and redevelopment of neighborhoods and existing affordable housing; Inventory of substandard homes to identify geographic areas requiring conservation, rehab, redevelopment, improvement of historically significant housing (HE Objective 2.1, Policy 2.1.1)</p>	<p>Redevelopment Area... (FLUE Policy 8.5.2) <i>Revise: As part of County’s strategy to expand employment and eliminate disparities identified in “Racial Inequity” report, infrastructure improvements that would facilitate development focused within the vicinity of Eastside Activity Center shall be identified as part of a special area planning process</i> <i>[remove reference to Community Redevelopment Area]</i></p> <p>Strengthen economic, social, transportation linkages, establish Bus Rapid Transit system connecting east Gainesville with centers of employment and commerce (FLUE Policy 8.5.5)</p> <p>Address barriers to employment and economic prosperity, including transportation (ECO Policy 1.2.5)</p> <p>Identify and work to eliminate barriers to multimodal connectivity in Urban Cluster (ENE Policy 4.3.2)</p> <p>Establish multi-modal transportation system that provides mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorized-vehicle users, users of rail and</p>

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ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“labor force needs across all population segments within Alachua County”</i> • <i>“prioritize locations and populations with highest indicators of economic disparity identified in reports such as “Racial Inequity”</i> <p>Provide sustainable economic opportunities for all segments of County... emphasizing persons at or near poverty level and redevelopment of economically distressed & under-utilized areas (ECO Objective 1.5) <i>Add: “with a goal to reduce or eliminate disparities identified in “Racial Inequity” report”;</i></p> <p>Pursue funding opportunities for extension of essential infrastructure to encourage development or redevelopment in specific economically distressed areas; Businesses and industries that provide equitable salaries and worker training given high priority in recruitment efforts and support; Support and encourage partnerships which assist small and minority-owned businesses; Support Welfare Transition Program employment/training projects; Collaborate with local businesses and organizations to create or support vocational apprenticeship programs; Support development of micro-enterprises (ECE Policy 1.5.1, 1.5.3 – 1.5.9)</p>	<p>strengthen local partnerships (CHE Policy 1.5.1) <i>Add: help achieve health equity</i></p> <p>Develop community health indicators to measure progress, ensure services in locations to address health needs of different segments of County population, and inform long- and mid-term planning and budgetary decision-making. (CHE Policy 1.5.1.1 - 1.5.1.2) <i>Add: “geographically indexed” community health indicators; consider health criteria as part of capital projects planning to ensure health equity</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Policy 1.5.1.3)</i> <i>Add: When feasible review development plan proposals and programs with a Health Impact Assessment</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Objective 1.6)</i> <i>Add: Reduce prevalence and incidence of substance abuse, including tobacco, and strive for drug-free community</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Objective 1.7)</i> <i>Add: Increase equitable access to affordable mental health services</i></p>	<p><i>(HE new Policy 2.1.6)</i> <i>Add: Coordinate with County Housing Authority to address maintenance and reduction of loss of affordable rental units available to low, very low, extremely low-income households</i></p> <p>Promote construction and rehab techniques that enhance long-term usability and affordability of housing; collaborate to incorporate sustainable building technology in construction of affordable housing (HE Objective 2.2, Policy 2.2.5)</p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 2.2.6)</i> <i>Add: Pilot program for landlords to improve energy and water efficiency for affordable rental units</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 2.2.7)</i> <i>Add: Regulatory and financial incentives (e.g., building permit fee reduction) for redevelopment and rehabilitation of affordable housing units</i></p> <p>Provide funding for rehabilitation and redevelopment (HE Objective 2.3)</p>	<p>aviation facilities, sensitive to cultural and environmental amenities of County (TME Goal)</p> <p>Establish and maintain safe, convenient, efficient automobile, transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation system, capable of moving people and goods throughout County (TME Principle 1)</p> <p>Reduce vehicle miles of travel and per capita greenhouse gas emissions through the provision of mobility within compact, mixed-use, interconnected developments that promote walking and bicycling, allow for the internal capture of vehicular trips and provide the densities and intensities needed to support transit (TME Principle 2)</p> <p>Discourage sprawl and encourage efficient use of urban cluster by directing new development and infrastructure to areas where mobility can be provided via multiple modes of transportation (TME Principle 3)</p> <p>Encourage future land use and transportation patterns that emphasize mixed-use, interconnected developments that</p>

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ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<p><i>Add: engage CareerSource NCF as a partner in coordinating job expansion initiatives; economically distressed areas identified in “Racial Inequity” report; as part of efforts to achieve economic equity</i></p> <p>Encourage expanded and new businesses to locate in compact mixed-use communities with bike/ped access (ECO Policy 1.6.1)</p> <p>Promote infrastructure development in low income areas with GRU (ICE Policy 5.1.8)</p> <p>Programming and funding of capital projects consistent with the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map, to maintain adopted LOS standards, and/or meet other public facility needs not dictated by LOS standards (CIE Objective 1.6) <i>Add: “including equity objectives”</i></p> <p><i>(CIE new Policy 1.6.14)</i> <i>Add: “Address disparities as identified in ‘Understanding Racial Inequity In Alachua County’ (BEBR, 2018) as a factor in decisions on capital projects”</i></p> <p><i>(PSFE new Policy 3.7.2)</i> <i>Add: “Address Disparities in Public School Facilities – The County shall review the School Board’s annual</i></p>	<p><i>(CHE new Objective 1.8)</i> <i>Add: Increase equitable access to affordable dental health services</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Objective 1.9)</i> <i>Add: Support programs to reduce poverty and its effects</i></p> <p><i>(CHE new Definitions)</i> <i>Add: Corner store definition</i> <i>Add: Health Equity definition</i> <i>Add: Health Impact Assessment definition</i></p> <p>Partnerships between local farmers and government organizations to implement 2009 Alachua County Hunger Abatement Plan, provide healthy foods in local schools (ENE Policy 6.2.2)</p> <p>Recreational facilities accessible to all residents of the County; pursue interlocal agreements with municipalities to provide recreation facilities to all County residents (RE Objective 1.1, Policy 1.2.2)</p> <p>New funding mechanisms such as user fees at County parks structured so that accessibility to low-income individuals is enhanced (RE Policy 1.5.1; CIE Policy 1.8.3)</p>	<p>Ensure County land development regulations consistent and conducive to cost-effective redevelopment of neighborhoods (HE Objective 2.4)</p> <p><i>(HE new Policy 2.4.6)</i> <i>Add: Allow for adaptive reuse of existing vacant structures for affordable housing</i></p> <p>Enforcement of Fair Housing Ordinance (HE Policy 3.1.1)</p> <p><i>(HE new Policies 3.1.7, 3.1.8, 3.1.9)</i> <i>Add: Participate in Continuum of Care to meet needs of homeless toward self-sufficiency; Coordinate with City of Gainesville, United Way, other agencies to provide permanent supportive housing services; Utilize best practice of rapid rehousing for homeless</i></p> <p><i>(HE new Definition)</i> <i>Add: Extremely low-income definition</i></p> <p>Cottage Neighborhoods promote variety of housing to meet needs of diverse population (FLUE Objective 1.8)</p>	<p>promote walking and biking, reduce vehicle miles of travel and per capita greenhouse gas emissions, and provide the densities and intensities needed to support transit (TME Objective 1.1)</p> <p>Support compact, mixed-use developments by developing an interconnected multi-modal transportation system that reduces per capita greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging walking, bicycling and driving short distances between residential, retail, office, educational, civic and institutional uses and utilizing transit to commute to regional employment, educational and entertainment destinations (TME Policy 1.1.2)</p> <p>Encourage continued provision and promote expansion of freight and passenger rail service (TME Objective 2.3, Policy 2.3.2)</p>

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ECONOMIC WELL-BEING & EDUCATION	HEALTH	HOUSING & ENERGY	LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
<p><i>Five Year Work Program and Educational Plant Survey to ensure that adequate school building conditions and design are provided districtwide, recognizing that the conditions of the physical learning environment are related to the equitable treatment of students.”</i></p> <p>School Site Selection, Expansions And Closures – County, in conjunction with SBAC, implement effective process for identification and selection of school sites and for review of significant expansions and closures (PSFE Objective 4.4) <i>Add: “equitable” to effective process</i></p> <p>Eastside Activity Center Master Plan capital improvements coordinated with School Board to ensure safety, and UF, SFC to include recreation, social services, and vocational training centers (FLUE Policy 2.2.10.i)</p>		<p>Diversify housing choices in Plan East Gainesville area through SHIP. Develop strategies to expand range of housing choices (FLUE Policy 8.5.6)</p> <p>Partnerships with municipalities to address affordable housing needs Countywide with accessibility to employment and services (ICE Policy 3.1.5)</p> <p>Promote affordable, diverse housing choices throughout community to enhance viability of workforce (ECE Policy 1.5.11)</p> <p>Weatherization program to improve energy efficiency (ENE Policy 2.1.3)</p>	

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EXCERPTS FROM

Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

Prepared by the University of Florida
Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR)
(January 2018)

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FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

Hector H. Sandoval

Project Director

Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

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

A group of Gainesville, Florida community leaders representing Alachua County, Alachua County Public Schools, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe College, UF Health, and University of Florida saw value in completing a similar project. Wishing to understand and document racial inequity in Alachua County, this group called for the development of a baseline report grounded in quantitative findings to document and provide insights about the extent, nature, and source of racial inequality in Alachua County. The University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) led this project in collaboration with the University of Florida Program for Resource Efficient Communities (PREC). This document contains the main results of this effort. Please let us know how you are using the information contained in this report by emailing United Way of North Central Florida at research@unitedwayncfl.org.

Main Goals

Alachua County's population is 19.8 percent Black/African American, 9.2 percent Hispanic, and 6.3 percent Asian. The county is home to two major educational institutions: the University of Florida, the state's flagship university and a highly ranked public research university, and Santa Fe College, winner of the 2015 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. Both attract top talent and contribute to the racial and cultural diversity of the region; however, the growing achievement gap between disparate areas of Gainesville has compelled community leaders to examine racial, social, and economic inequality at the local level. There is a shared concern that the racial divisions in Alachua County perpetuate disadvantage and discrimination in many areas such as employment opportunities, housing and transportation, public accommodations, education, and public benefits to disenfranchised populations.

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive picture of the disparities in Alachua County between each of the minority groups and Whites on several dimensions of human well-being, and to compare race and ethnicity disparities in Alachua County to Florida and the nation. By gaining a more thorough understanding of this issue, community leaders will be better equipped to influence institutional awareness, make policy recommendations and support initiatives that tackle the causes of these problems, resulting in a reduction in these disparities.

Methodology

To compile a comprehensive data-based picture of the racial disparities in Alachua County and to gain a deeper understanding of these disparities, BEBR utilized both a quantitative and qualitative approach. The collection of quantitative data provides a standardized method of comparison across the different minority groups. The qualitative data supplements the quantitative data by providing informative perceptions, experiences, and concerns of Alachua County minority residents as well as the expertise of scholars in racial disparity.

We first collected data on a wide range of indicators representing several aspects of human well-being to provide a quantitative baseline of racial disparity in Alachua County. To accomplish this task, we consulted with experts in racial inequity on each of the following topics: economic well-being, educational achievement, family structure, child welfare involvement, involvement in the justice system, health status, and housing and transportation. Conditional on the availability of data, the outcome of this consultation resulted in the collection of 50 different indicators. For each indicator, the most recent data were gathered for Whites as well as each minority group: African-American, Asian, Hispanic, and a combined group of all other races. We compared each of the minority groups to the non-Hispanic White population in Alachua County, and calculated a disparity ratio to measure racial disparities.¹

Second, a focus group with Black/ African-American residents of Alachua County was conducted. The goal of this part of the project is to assess the perceptions, opinions, and experiences of Black residents in the context of racial inequity. During the focus group, a series of slides were shown that detailed the extent and nature of racial disparities in the area. These slides showed data collected on the seven dimensions mentioned above to motivate the discussion.

In general, the participants acknowledged that they face inequality on a daily basis. In particular, they mentioned that

the history of racism is an important factor contributing to the disparities and that current disparities in the education system and in their interactions with law enforcement are prominent and play an important role.

Third, a total of 10 one-on-one interviews were conducted. Three interviews were conducted with county residents from minority groups other than African-Americans. The remaining seven interviews were with experts in local and national racial disparities from the University of Florida. Similar to the focus group, we asked for respondents' opinions on the picture portrayed by the quantitative data to understand the causes and potential solutions to racial disparities in Alachua County. The residents agreed with the views and experience of the African-Americans that participated in the focus group. The experts provided important insight into the factors and forces behind racial disparities in Alachua County.

Finally, PREC developed a separate, more in-depth supplemental module on housing, transportation, and neighborhoods to expand our understanding of racial inequity in these areas. This module compiles a series of housing, transportation, and neighborhood indicators. Their research serves to shed light on the presence, depth, and breadth of household- and lifestyle-

¹ The disparity ratio is the value of an indicator for a particular minority group at a particular geographic level divided by the value of the same indicator for non-Hispanic Whites at the same geographic level. For some indicators, because we were unable to identify the non-Hispanic White population, the ratio was calculated using the White population.

related inequalities across major racial and ethnic demographic groups within Alachua County. This report contains some of their main findings. The complete PREC report is also available.

Content

Section II provides a snapshot of the population in Alachua County. Section III portrays the picture of racial disparity in Alachua County as illustrated by the quantitative data. Section IV contains a sample of the main results and insights from the housing, transportation, and neighborhood supplement. Section V describes the factors and forces behind the racial disparities in the county as described by the experts we interviewed. Section VI summarizes the findings derived from our interaction with the minorities through the focus group and the one-on-one interviews. The last section concludes and highlights two potential areas that can contribute to reducing the disparities. Appendix A contains the tables and figures from the main report. Appendix B contains several heat maps showing the location where minority groups reside, the areas where poverty is concentrated, and areas of greater concern within the county.

V. FACTORS AND FORCES BEHIND RACIAL DISPARITIES IN ALACHUA COUNTY

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

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

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

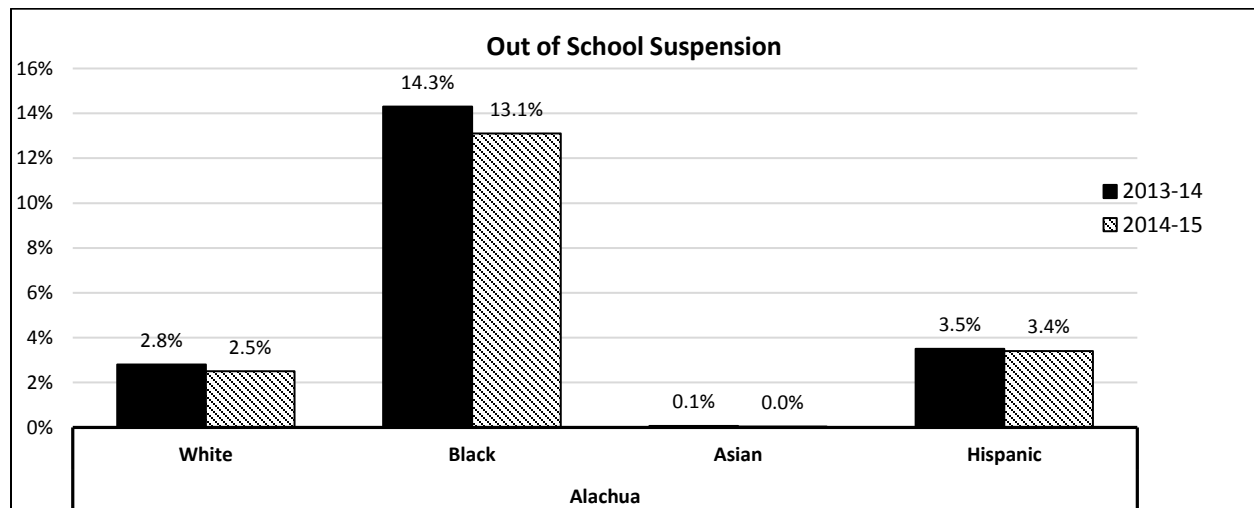
The ability of an area to attract development is critical to bringing in necessary jobs, schools and other services. However, economic development is generally focused on the West side of Gainesville, where minorities are not present because there is very little on the East side to attract developers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

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

Additionally, the county budget is restricted. It's not possible to provide adequate social services because the funding to support them is not available. Because Florida is a low-tax state, counties must fund social services themselves. With a large portion of Alachua County off the tax rolls

because of the University of Florida and other public institutions, decreased taxes result in decreases services.

Third, in addition to the low investment in education, there are two other factors related to the education system in Alachua County. First, schools pull their student base from the surrounding areas. In neighborhoods that are primarily inhabited by minorities, the result is a student body that is almost entirely composed of minorities. Nationwide, busing students to different neighborhoods was an attempt to integrate different races and create an environment of acceptance between races. Alachua County created magnet schools in minority neighborhoods, thereby attracting higher performing students to these schools; however, when high-performing students are mixed into a group of average or below average minority students, minority’s perceptions might be unintentionally reinforced as these minorities perform at lower levels than the students bused in. Minorities who see these high performers may then become discouraged if they mistakenly attribute these differences to race. A second issue is out-of-school suspensions. When a student is removed from school, they quickly fall behind in their classwork, and may also develop a resentment towards the school system. Both of these factors make the student more likely to be disruptive a second time. When they are suspended they are also more likely to be at home alone, which can create a difficult situation for the child. If a student is suspended and must stay at home without any supervision, they are much more likely to create problems that get reported to the police.²

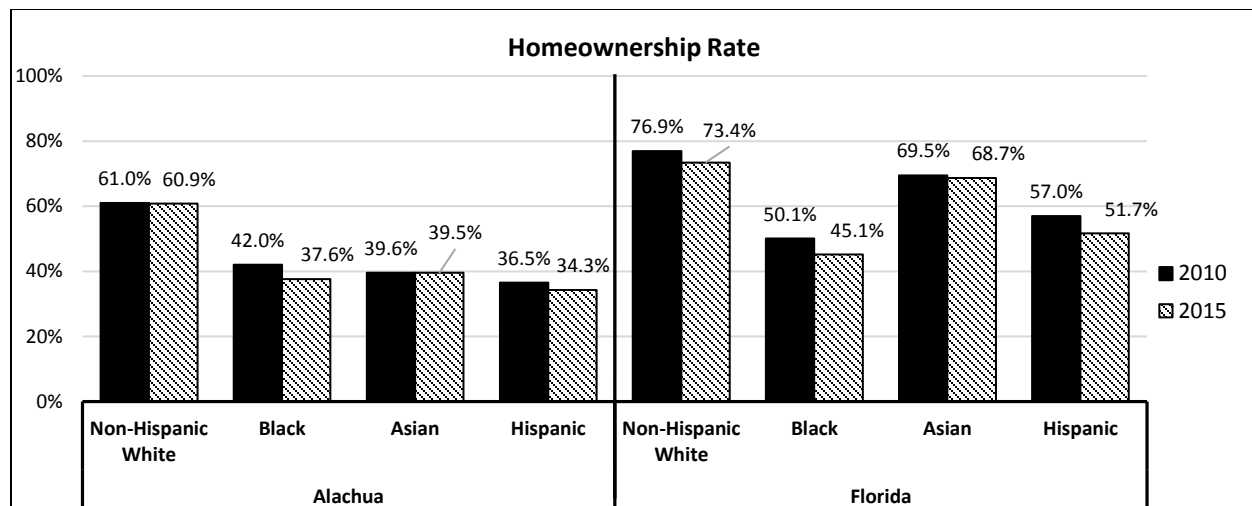


Source: Florida Department of Education.

Fourth, though minority populations have lived in this area for generations; they haven’t been able to accumulate wealth to pass on to future generations. Wealth and income are very different issues. Wealth includes assets that a person can draw upon in a time of need. Owning a home or property of any sort allows a person to have collateral for a loan if an emergency were to happen. The homes on the east side of Gainesville, where a large portion of minorities live, are worth far less than those in other areas of the city. This reduces the resources available to minority

² Alachua County Public Schools has implemented policies and programs that have reduced out-of-school suspensions among all students, most significantly among African-American students.

families in a time of emergency. As mentioned previously, the lack of wealth also drives development away from the area because businesses want customers who are able to afford their products and who can make purchases on a regular basis. This lack of wealth also reduces the tax base that can be used for schools and other basic needs.



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

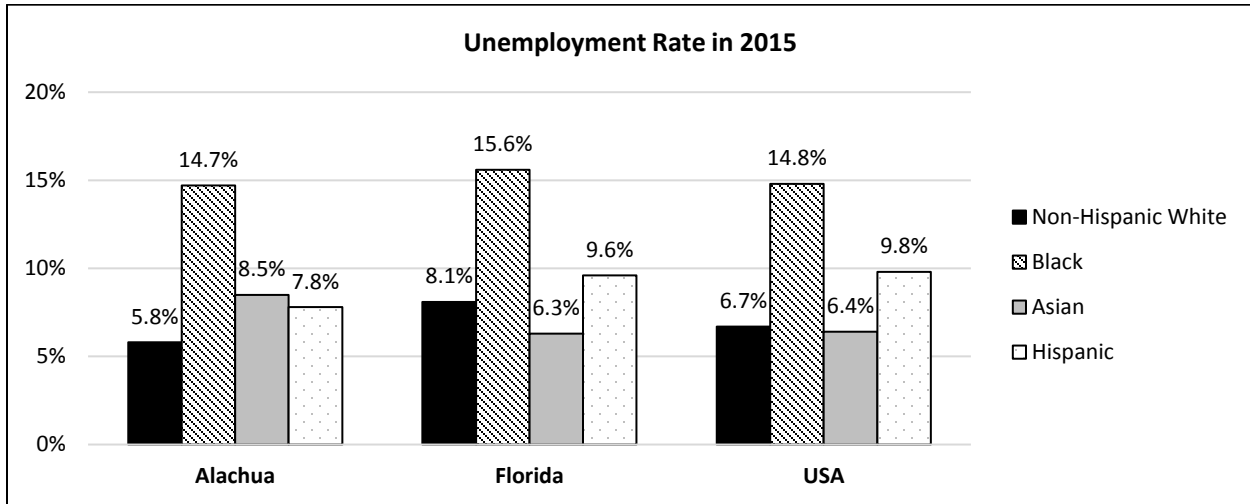
A fifth issue in Alachua County is related to the labor market. A mismatch exists between the skills acquired and the skills needed. On the supply side, there is a disproportionately higher percentage of minorities with lower educational levels and skills. This disproportionality is most pronounced among African Americans.³ On the demand side, approximately two-thirds of the jobs require postsecondary vocational training, an associate’s or higher college degree.⁴ Furthermore, the highest paying occupations represent one-third of the jobs in the county and are in occupations such as legal; health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other healthcare technical; management, business, and financial; and computer, engineering, and science and most of these jobs require a fairly high degree of education.⁵ And while jobs exist for both higher

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

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

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

and lower skill workers, the labor market shows a higher unemployment rate for lower skill workers in the county.⁶ One possible contributing factor to this disparity is that some of the lower skill jobs in the area could employ residents without a higher level of education, but they are sometimes filled with college students who have some advantages over lower skill minority applicants in the eyes of employers. College students can be highly flexible with their schedule and usually have an advanced knowledge of technology that may reduce training costs.



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

Finally, employment for anyone convicted of a crime is more difficult because having a criminal record is a strike against them for most employers. African-American men are disproportionately affected because there is a larger percentage of African-American men incarcerated around the country, including in Alachua County. Moreover, the county has a “war on drugs.” Although drug use is fairly equally split among races,⁷ African-Americans are more likely to be caught with low levels of narcotics or other drugs. One reason is because they are more likely to use drugs in public spaces. Moreover, African-Americans are also more likely to be caught because police patrol minority neighborhoods more. Given the limited resources to control crime, law enforcement uses statistical tools to identify areas of high crime and patrol those areas more often. An area that is patrolled more often is more likely to result in more arrests.

⁶ According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, around 16.9 percent of those with less than a high school diploma were unemployed in Alachua County, while only 8 percent of those with a high school diploma, 7.5 percent of those with some college or an associate’s degree, and 2.9 percent of those with a bachelor’s degree or more were unemployed.

⁷ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015, the use of illicit drugs among people aged 12 and over was 10.2 percent for Whites, 12.5 percent for African American, 9.2 percent for Hispanic, and 4 percent for Asians, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus16.pdf#050>

VII. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

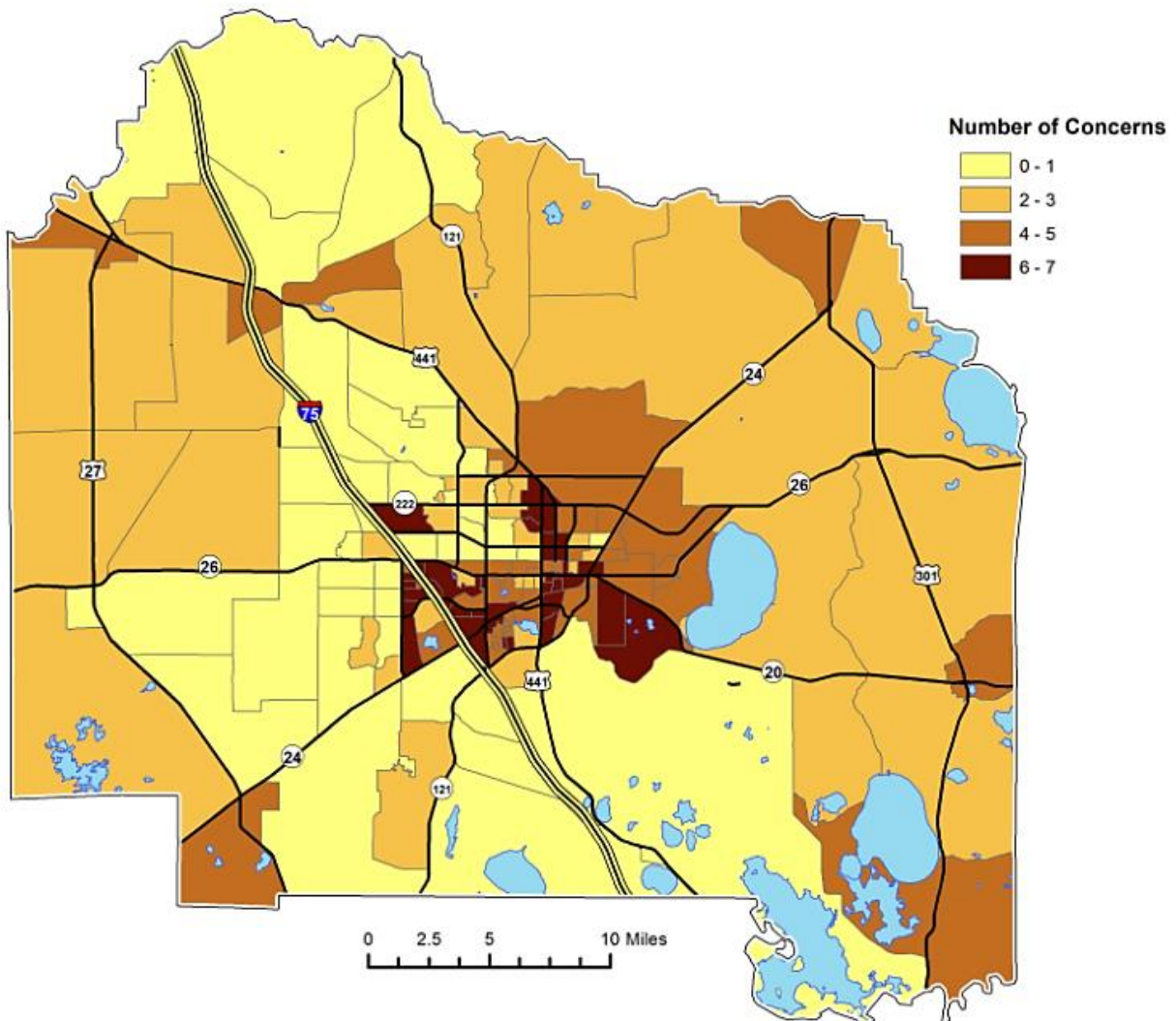
As portrayed by the quantitative data, greater disparities appear in terms of economic well-being, education, and involvement in the justice system. From our qualitative analysis, the insights and opinions from the experts were very valuable in highlighting the factors and forces behind the disparities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

Racial inequity is a massive tangle of issues that are deeply connected and all potential solutions are constrained by the available resources. An important lesson from this project is that all these factors and forces are interconnected and cannot be pulled apart. While an improvement in one area might be possible, it can be negated by other connecting factors that may have resources drawn away from them in an effort to improve that one area. Nonetheless, there are two areas that are worth attention.

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

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

Indicators of Concern (2011 - 2015)



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

Block groups with the higher number of concerns are in darker colors. Using the five years estimates from 2011 to 2015, these areas are: the east side and the southeast of Gainesville, the Butler Plaza surroundings, and north of SW Williston Road. The indicator of concerns index is constructed using seven indicators, each representing one of the dimensions of human well-being described in the report. The indicators considered are: median household income, uninsured rate, poverty rate, mobility rate, homeownership rate, unemployment rate, and mortgage rate. Whenever the value of each indicator is above the median for the corresponding indicator, it was considered an area (block group) of concern. This indicator of concern is a relative measure.