

Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation & Appraisal Based Amendments

Local Planning Agency Recommendations on 5-15-19 with Staff Responses

On May 15, 2019, staff presented to the Local Planning Agency (LPA) for Transmittal Hearing the Evaluation and Appraisal Based Amendments to Update the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan for the Period 2019-2040 (CPA-03-19). The amendments provided to the LPA were the result of the process of workshops, special meetings, and direction by the Board of County Commissioners as of March 28, 2019, on the revisions to include in the draft for Public Hearing.

At its May 15, 2019 public hearing, the LPA made recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding each of the Comprehensive Plan Elements proposed for updates. These recommendations included approval of amendments to the Elements as proposed and in the case of some Elements included comments, notes, and/or identification of additional policy revisions. The attached document compiles each of the LPA motions by Comprehensive Plan Element.

Staff has provided responses to the LPA comments, notes, and additional policy revisions that were included in the motions (including identification of whether staff recommends additional revisions to the Board of County Commissioners). In instances where staff recommends the LPA revisions to the Board of County Commissioners, those revisions are shown in context within the policy in **bold highlighted** text and are also included in the draft provided for Public Hearing by the Board of County Commissioners.

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FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend that the County Commission approve the Future Land Use Element as presented by staff with the following comments:

1. In Policy 7.1.32 include trees in addition to landscaping

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 7.1.32 Existing and future rights-of-way shall, generally, be available for use for utility corridors. However, the design of roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall have priority in allocation of space within any County-owned right-of-way. Priority shall be placed on the proper allocation of these facilities and any required landscaping, **including trees**, before considering utility locations. Where location of utilities within rights-of-way conflicts with the primary transportation purpose, utilities shall be located outside the right-of-way, or the right-of-way shall be expanded to allow for utilities to be placed within the right-of-way. Above-ground utility infrastructure shall be designed and located to ensure that users of the right-of-way are safe and comfortable and shall not impact any minimum design standards established in the land development regulations.

2. Include comments from Mr. David Coffey regarding tax parcel numbers and various other items in the Springhills Activity Center

*Staff response: Changes proposed by David Coffey at 5-15-19 Local Planning Agency hearing consist of corrections to parcel numbers and deletion of obsolete reference to Development of Regional Impact (DRI) development order, which was rescinded in 2011 by County Resolution 11-47. In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following changes (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 2.2.1 Activity Center Plan – Springhills

...

(e)(2)

...

- c. Prior to approval of any final development plan, the developer shall enter into an agreement with the County assuring:
 - 1. The developer’s responsibility for the design and construction of a roadway with dedicated transit lanes connecting NW 83rd Street at the eastern property boundary of the northeast quadrant (tax parcels 06038-000-000 and 06038-02**23**-000) to an appropriate connection point on the western boundary of the same property; and

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2. The developer shall be responsible for providing dedicated transit lanes with bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting and continuing from the southern end of NW 83rd Street and NW 23rd Avenue to the northern extent of tax parcel 06315-001-000 by way of an overpass across I-75. In the event that the developer is unable to secure authorization from state and federal permitting authorities for said overpass, or rights to use of tax parcels 06315-001-000 and 06318-000-000 for said dedicated lanes, the developer shall be required instead to provide a roadway, dedicated transit lanes with bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting and continuing from the western end of NW 83rd Street by way of an overpass across I-75 to parcel 06038-**022**-003.

...

~~**d. These parcels are currently under a Development of Regional Impact development order. The Capital Improvements and Transit Service required in Policy 2.2.1.5(e)1-2 may be required to be revised via a revision to the Capital Improvements Element based on either a Development of Regional Impact Development Order or Urban Service Area/Transportation Concurrency Exception Area policies if adopted in the future.**~~

ed. NW 95th Blvd, the frontage road located in the northeast quadrant of I-75 and NW 39th Avenue, must be provided with access to the internal roadway system in the northeastern quadrant of the development.

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TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY ELEMENT

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval by the County Commission of the updates to the Transportation Mobility Element and related Capital Improvements Element as presented by staff with the following comment:

- Policy 1.8.5 add language for engineering for speeds by design rather than just by signage

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 1.8.5 It shall be the Policy of the Board of County Commissioners that speeds on County roads shall be the minimum necessary to ensure safe and efficient travel. **Roads and streets shall be designed with context sensitivity using the techniques in Transportation Mobility Element Policy 1.6.5 to encourage reduced speeds.** The County's general policy shall be that proposed posted speed increases shall be brought to the Board for approval along with suggested alternatives.

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HOUSING ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval by County Commission of Housing Element with the addition of expecting the use of the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) database in our planning work especially in meeting the needs of substandard housing.

Staff response: Staff utilizes current data sources – including the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) database, US Census/American Community Survey data, and data derived from the Alachua County Codes Enforcement Division and the Alachua County Property Appraiser – to establish an inventory of substandard housing units in Alachua County.

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CONSERVATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

POTABLE WATER & SANITARY SEWER ELEMENT

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval by County Commission of updates to Conservation & Open Space Element, Potable Water & Sanitary Sewer Element, and Stormwater Management Element as presented by staff.

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SOLID WASTE ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval by the County Commission of the updates to the Solid Waste Element as presented by staff with the following comment:

- **Would like to see the addition of some innovative and new ways of addressing site- and use-specific litter on non-park areas of the County [public right-of-ways] including lake fronts and Paynes Prairie**

Staff response: The Solid Waste Element has an existing Objective and Policies that address illegal littering as shown below, including prohibition, enforcement, deterrence, and investigation and institution of additional measures as indicated in Policy 1.8.2. The Solid Waste division partners with Keep Alachua County Beautiful to clean up illegal dumping sites, and Keep Alachua County Beautiful also coordinates the Adopt-a-Road roadside litter cleanup operations. Staff can explore additional partnerships with Keep Alachua County Beautiful or similar organizations to develop innovative ways to address site- and use-specific littering identified in the LPA motion.

OBJECTIVE 1.8

Dumping, disposal and littering of solid waste on land, rights-of-way, wetlands, lakes, streams, ponds or any other site not permitted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or the County is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of yard trash or other vegetative wood debris for use as compost or mulch when applied as a soil amendment for an active farming operation or landscaping. Nor does it prohibit the application of bio-solids in accordance with local, state and federal regulations.

Policy 1.8.1 The County shall control illegal dumping and littering by enforcing existing regulations prohibiting such actions. The County shall utilize the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, Codes Enforcement Office, Solid Waste Management Division, Environmental Protection Department, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to enforce these regulations.

Policy 1.8.2 The County shall investigate and institute additional regulations and measures to deter illegal dumping and littering such as vehicle tarp requirements. Illegal dumping and littering shall be an issue addressed by the Environmental Crimes Task Force.

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RECREATION ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval of Recreation Element to the County Commission with the following notes:

1. **Policy 1.1.11 add community groups**

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 1.1.11 The Recreation Master Plan shall be developed in collaboration with the City of Gainesville and other municipalities, state agencies, **community groups**, and other parks and recreation providers in Alachua County.

2. **Policy 1.3.2 set a deadline for the Greenways Master Plan completion and that will also apply to the previous Element [Conservation and Open Space Element]**

Staff Response: Recreation Element Policy 1.3.2 addresses coordination of efforts “with the State and municipalities on establishment of a Greenways Master Plan network of trails and public access that would connect natural and recreational features of the County and provide cultural and recreational activities to County citizens”. More details concerning such a network are provided in (a)-(c) in existing Policy 1.3.2. Policy 1.3.2(d) was proposed as part of the public hearing draft provided to the LPA to include consideration of linkages “with the greenways as shown on the Greenways Master Plan Map”.

The Greenways Master Plan Map (proposed Map 7. Alachua County Greenways and Blueways in the Conservation and Open Space Element), associated Objective 7.1, and accompanying Policies, all included in the public hearing draft provided to the LPA, comprise the Greenways Master Plan. The objective is to develop “a linked greenway system that provides unique opportunities for recreation, multi-modal transportation, and economic development.” As indicated in the associated Conservation and Open Space Element policies, the Greenways Master Plan “is intended to guide and prioritize future Open Space designations, construction of bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and public land acquisitions needed to complete the Plan, consistent with respective program policies” (Policy 7.1.1). The other policies under Objective 7.1 (Policies 7.1.2 – 7.1.7) address various aspects of implementation of the Plan including coordination with municipalities, protection of sensitive ecosystems or natural features, pursuit of grant funding, providing for publicly accessible open space of native flora and fauna, and a master management plan and specific plans for the lands included in the Greenways Master Plan. Implementation of the Plan in the form of specific projects in accordance with these policies will be undertaken taking into account available funding, acquisition opportunities, and partnership opportunities.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend the Intergovernmental Coordination Element to the County Commission for approval with the following comments:

1. **Policy 1.1.2 Alachua County shall ~~consider~~ actively pursue**

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 1.1.2 ~~Mechanisms to supplement the Boundary Adjustment Act, such as additional Alachua County shall~~ **consider actively pursue** the use of joint planning agreements and joint processes with municipalities for review of annexations and development proposals ~~shall be considered~~ for inclusion as part of the inter-local agreements to implement this element.

2. **Policy 5.1.7 include environmental services**

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 5.1.7 Alachua County shall continue to pursue developing and implementing inter-local agreements with municipalities on the following issues:

- (a) fire suppression services
- (b) law enforcement
- (c) emergency medical services
- (d) animal control
- (e) building inspection services
- (f) coordination of capital plans for centralized potable water and wastewater systems-
- (g) multi-modal approaches to transportation planning consistent with the Transportation Mobility Element-
- (h) solid waste collection services
- (i) planning, zoning, and code enforcement services
- (i) social services.
- (k) environmental services.**

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**ECONOMIC ELEMENT
PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY ELEMENT**

LPA Motion

Recommend approval by the County Commission of the updates to the Economic Element and Public School Facility Element as presented by staff with the following recommendation:

- **Economic Element Policy 1.5.8 add State or Federally registered apprenticeship programs**

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 1.5.8 Alachua County shall collaborate with local businesses and organizations, including builders, developers, contractors and labor unions, to create or support programs that enhance apprenticeship opportunities for vocational trades as part of the efforts to achieve economic equity. Recognizing the importance of **State or Federally registered apprenticeship programs in workforce development**, Alachua County shall explore adding consideration of employer apprenticeship programs as a factor to be included in its purchasing policies.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Suggest approval of changes to the Community Health Element as presented by staff with the following 3 notes:

1. Add definition of food desert to the list of definitions.

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Food desert - A geographic area where residents have limited access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh produce) determined by low income and distance to major supermarket locations. Food deserts are based on USDA data with low income census tracts determined by a poverty rate of 20% or higher, or tracts with a median family income less than 80% of median family income for the state or metropolitan area. Food deserts are low-income census tracts where at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population reside more than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.

The term "food desert" was proposed as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal Based amendments in the public hearing draft provided to the LPA in the following existing Community Health Element Policy:

Policy 1.3.2.3. Alachua County shall utilize economic development tools including public/private partnerships, and site facilitation, to promote location of grocery stores and Farmers Markets in proximity to underserved areas.

...

(c) Alachua County shall consider a program for partnerships for healthy corner stores, and incentives to attract grocers to food deserts.

2. **Objective 1.6 incorporate both nicotine and electronic smoking devices in the Policies when appropriate.**

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following changes (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

OBJECTIVE 1.6

Reduce the prevalence and incidence of substance abuse and strive for a drug-free community.

Policy 1.6.1. The County should partner with agencies and community organizations for education, prevention, harm reduction and treatment programs to reduce substance abuse in all neighborhoods and workplaces.

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Policy 1.6.2. Alachua County shall coordinate substance abuse programs and policies with local health organizations including Tobacco Free Alachua, University of Florida Health Street, and the HPW Coalition.

Policy 1.6.3. Alachua County will reduce and maintain low **nicotine**, tobacco, alcohol, and drug abuse, and drug related crime rates.

Policy 1.6.4. Support efforts to reduce exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke in indoor and outdoor areas, particularly where vulnerable populations, such as children and seniors are likely to be present.

Policy 1.6.4.1 Encourage and support local jurisdictions in establishing smoke-free parks and recreational areas.

Policy 1.6.4.2 Encourage and support cities, workplaces, and multiunit housing to reduce residents' exposure to secondhand smoke by banning use on government property and public spaces and events, including outdoor dining and service areas, entryways, farmers' markets, plazas, and community street fairs.

Policy 1.6.5. Coordinate with cities and other stakeholders to establish tobacco free housing, and prohibit smoking **including electronic delivery systems** in multi-family residential housing.

Policy 1.6.5.1 Promote tobacco free multiunit housing which shares common walls, such as apartments, duplexes, townhouses, row houses, and condominiums.

Policy 1.6.6. Create a tobacco retail licensing policy that earmarks a portion of the license fee for compliance checks.

Policy 1.6.7 Consider the potential negative impacts of proposed uses involving selling or serving alcohol, tobacco products, **electronic delivery systems**, or any other controlled substance of a similar nature when a proposed site's proximity to other such uses and to youth serving facilities would result in negative impacts. Establish standards for mitigation of impact or restriction of sales.

Policy 1.6.7.1 Encourage and support cities to restrict the number of tobacco **and electronic delivery systems** retailers near schools, other youth-populated areas, and areas with a high density of existing tobacco retailers.

Policy 1.6.8. Encourage and support cities, workplaces, and multiunit housing to include limitations or restrictions on electronic smoking devices in all (existing) smoking and tobacco policies, regulations, and educational programs.

Policy 1.6.8.1 Support the elimination of the sale and distribution of mentholated cigarettes and/or other flavored tobacco including electronic nicotine delivery products.

Policy 1.6.9 Support and increase the number of programs, clinics, and social service agencies that implement evidenced-based tobacco cessation treatment services.

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3. Add Children's Trust to the list of community partners when they are mentioned and when appropriate.

*In response to this recommendation, staff recommends the following change (shown in **bold highlight**) to the public hearing draft provided to the LPA:*

Policy 1.4.1 The County should partner with education and governmental organizations to encourage community access to health information and education. Examples include the School Board of Alachua County, ~~UF, Santa Fe College,~~ higher education institutions, Alachua County Library District, **the Children's Trust of Alachua County,** the State of Florida, and the various private and public educational and health programs available to the Alachua County community. Alachua County should help promote participation in the Teen Safe Driving Coalition.

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ENERGY ELEMENT

LPA Motion

Recommend approval to the County Commission of the changes to the Energy Element including:

1. Moving Section 6 Local Foods to Economic Element.

Staff response: The Energy Element objectives and policies related to local food production and processing are one of the sets of objectives and policies connected to the multi-faceted Goal of the Energy Element:

“Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel consumption; mitigate the effects of rising energy costs; and promote the long-term economic security of Alachua County through energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy production.”

The adopted Objectives and Policies in Section 6.0, Local Food Production and Processing, in the Energy Element, address one of the key concept areas of Local Food and Energy Security identified in the 2008 Alachua County Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) Report, which recommended and was the foundation for the Energy Element, adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan in 2011. In discussion of local foods, the ECSC Report highlights the different energy-related aspects of production, transportation, storage, and processing of foods. Adopted Energy Element Objective 6.1 is drawn from one of the 21 Major Strategic Policies in the ECSC Report:

“Maximize local resource & energy-efficient food production and processing within Alachua County’s local food shed.”

Additional text was proposed, as part of the public hearing draft provided to the LPA, to Objective 6.1 elaborating on the multiple purposes of a robust local food system.

Adopted Policy 6.1.1 addresses partnering with community groups and local governments on the development of a sustainable local food system. Policy 6.1.1 was expanded as part of the public hearing draft provided to the LPA, by adding policy language regarding County participation in a study to establish baseline measures and measurable targets towards the increase of local food use.

Complementary to the policies and objective in Section 6 related to local foods, adopted Energy Element Objective 9.1 calls for providing education and public information, and Policy 9.1.3 calls for partnering with IFAS local farmers and community groups for implementation of educational strategies on the benefits of locally grown and processed foods. This policy was expanded as part of the public hearing draft provided to the LPA, by adding more specific language on educational strategies on aspects of local foods.

As is the case with many other objectives and policies in the Energy Element, there are interrelationships with other Elements of the Plan, but staff does not recommend moving Section 6.0 Local Food Production and Processing from the Energy Element.

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2. Consideration of jail and any other facility the County purchases food for in the measurement of the baseline local food usage.

Staff response: As part of the public hearing draft provided to the LPA, additional language regarding County participation in a study to establish baseline measures and measurable targets towards the increase of local food use by Alachua County institutions was added to existing Policy 6.1.1, as shown below. It is expected that relevant institutions, including those with programs involving County expenditures such as the jail, will be considered as part of the baseline study.

Policy 6.1.1 Partner with community groups and other local governments in the region to delineate and promote a local foodshed for the development of a sustainable local food system.

Alachua County will participate in a study to establish baseline measures and measurable targets towards the increase of local food use by Alachua County institutions, including:

- (a) Identify and partner with relevant agencies and organizations, such as the City of Gainesville, area retailers, UF IFAS Extension, Florida Farm Bureau, Florida Organic Growers, UF Field to Fork, Working Food, Alachua County School Board, UF, UF Health, and SFC.
- (b) Identify components of the local food economy, such as appropriate food shed, distribution system, and local food segment of retail purchases. Set target goals and develop methodology to identify and track local food use by Alachua County institutions.