

ALACHUA COUNTY AND CITY OF GAINESVILLE

JOINT PLANNING AGREEMENT

DRAFT - 9/15/98 Revised at City Plan Board Meeting 10/15/98

MISSION STATEMENT:

We, the City Plan Board of the City of Gainesville and the County Planning Commission of Alachua County, in partnership and in an effort to collaborate with other local planning entities, seek to establish a proactive Joint Planning Program.

We acknowledge that social, economic, and ecological systems do not necessarily adhere to political boundaries, and

We understand the paramount importance of a clean, healthy environment, and seek to protect air and water quality and enhance our natural resources for education, exercise and ecotourism, and

We promote fiscal responsibility through economically efficient, ecologically sensitive, and equitable-public services and long-term economic vitality, and

We recognize the profound impact that both the built and natural environment have on our society, and, therefore, promote planning with social, economic, educational and recreational opportunity for all, enhanced historical and cultural resources, and neighborhood preservation and community building.

OBJECTIVES

1. Enhance coordination and dialogue between local planning agencies, including city, county and large educational institutions (i.e., School Board, University of Florida, and Santa Fe Community College).
2. Ensure that existing policies regarding the Urban Reserve Area are being fully utilized for intergovernmental planning.
3. Promote citizen education and participation in metropolitan and regional planning.
4. Promote and incorporate into comprehensive plans and land use regulations "smart growth" and "sustainable development" initiatives, for example, "Green Builder" programs, multi-modal transportation, mixed-income housing, more compact, environmentally sensitive growth, and preservation of conservation and agricultural lands.
5. Review individual comprehensive plans and land use regulations and consider unification to simplify process and increase efficiency from the perspectives of the agencies, the developers and the citizen planners.
6. Implement planning strategies that protect and enhance the unique communities in Alachua County.
7. Promote infill development and neighborhood redevelopment to fully utilize existing urban infrastructure and balance out an eroded tax base.
8. Develop and initiate a three-phase program for transition into a joint planning system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

To achieve the outlined objectives, the local planning agencies, first independently, then jointly, will initiate and develop a three-phase strategy with specific short-range and long-range plans. The intention of this phased strategy is a smooth transition into a joint planning system, providing the agencies, through their prospective commissions, with adequate opportunity to dedicate the time and resources to develop a comprehensive Joint Planning Program. The phases of the implementation strategy are:

Phase One--Enhanced Staff Coordination and Communication - Enact Immediately

The policies and regulations currently mandate joint staff review of planning and land development petitions and applications in the Urban Reserve Area. This option for intergovernmental coordination should be fully exercised and enacted upon immediately. Planning staff shall review such petitions and report to their respective planning agencies for comment. Planning staff shall also review and report to the agencies on the creation of a Joint Planning Commission and other joint planning strategies.

Phase Two--Creation of a Joint Planning Commission--Within One Year

The separate local planning agencies should then form a proactive Joint Planning Commission to deal with the broader issues of metropolitan planning, while maintaining their separate planning agencies for review of smaller scale planning petitions and applications. This board would consist of members of the City Plan Board and the County Planning Commission, with representation requested from the School Board and colleges. This board would jointly review petitions and applications in the Urban Reserve Area, and, thus, be advisory to the County Commission. The criteria to determine which URA petitions will be jointly reviewed, as opposed to those reviewed by the individual planning agencies, will be worked out prior to implementing a formal joint planning process. The Joint Planning Commission, with appropriate staff input would review implementation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Phase Three--Metropolitan Planning Organization--Within Five Years

Using the appropriate legal mechanisms, there would then be a complete merger of the separate plan boards and the joint plan board into a Citizen's Planning Commission and Technical Review Committee, which would be advisory to a newly formed Metropolitan Planning Organization, similar to the current MTPO model, which would deal with more comprehensive planning, beyond just transportation.