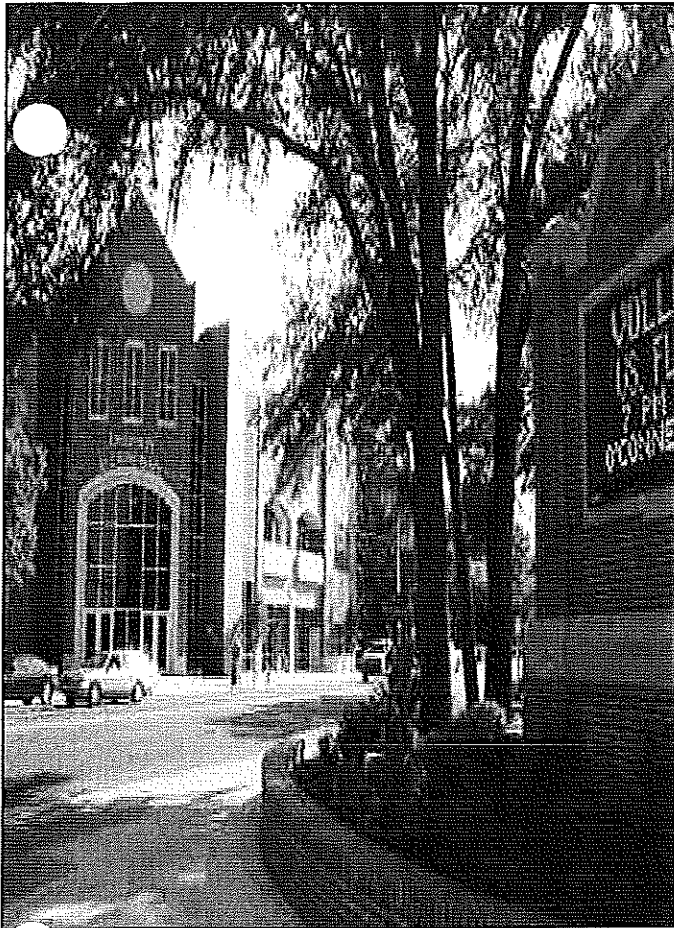


**LEGISLATIVE #**

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# Town/Gown Task Force Neighborhood Action Plan

*A cooperative effort of the University of Florida, City of  
Gainesville and Alachua County*

September 18, 2002

Committee Members:

Mr. Wayne Bowers

City of Gainesville Manager

Dr. Jane Brockmann, co-chair

Faculty Senate

Mr. Brent Christensen

Alliance for Economic Development

Ms. Natalie Hanan

Student Government

Ms. Cindy Trevino

Student Government

Ms. Pegeen Hanrahan

Council of University Neighborhood Associations

Mr. Sherwin Henry

East Gainesville Development Corporation

Mr. Ed Poppell, co-chair

Vice President for Finance & Administration

Mr. Doug Ratay

Graduate Student Council

Mr. Randy Reid

Alachua County Manager

Support Participants:

Ms. Florida Bridgewater-Alford

UF - Community Outreach Coordinator

Mr. Fred Cantrell

Assoc. Vice President, Finance and Administration

Mr. Brent Christensen

Alliance for Economic Development

Mr. Bruce DeLaney

Assist. Vice President, Administration – Real Estate

Mr. Tony Domenech

City of Gainesville Commissioner

Ms. Linda Dixon, facilitator

UF – Manager, Planning Office

Dr. Win Phillips

Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Education

Mr. Bill Radunovich

Graduate Student Council

Dr. James (Mike) Rollo

Assoc. Vice President, Student Affairs

Mr. Tom Saunders

City of Gainesville Community Development Director

Dr. Jim Scott

Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Gene Zdziarski

Dean, Student Affairs

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The University of Florida Town/Gown Task Force was appointed by the University of Florida President Charles E. Young in response to an initiative of the University Faculty Senate. The Task Force met from April to September 2002 to develop an action plan that addresses university impacts in the neighborhoods around campus. The Task Force identified critical issues, defined countermeasures, assigned responsibility and set priorities for implementing change. This university effort was paralleled by a similar process sponsored by the City of Gainesville involving multiple citizen committees and a consultant report, "Analysis of Issues Regarding Student Housing Near the University of Florida." The following table summarizes the actions recommended by the Town/Gown Task Force with their relative priority, cost and anticipated impact.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority Tier</b>	<b>Relative Public Cost</b>	<b>Relative Impact</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
2.1 Continue to Encourage Neighborhood Organization	1	Medium	Medium	City
5.1 Provide Information to Special Event Attendees	1	Medium	Medium	UF
5.2 Manage Neighborhood Parking and Traffic	1	High	High	City
2.2 Promote Private Initiatives and Investment	2	Low	High	Private Citizens
2.3 Enhance Neighborhood Marketing	2	Low	Medium	Private Citizens
1.1 Provide Information to Students	2	Low	Low	UF
1.2 Encourage Student Participation in Neighborhood Clean-Up	2	Low	Low	UF
2.4 Engage in Joint Planning for Infrastructure Improvements	2	Medium	High	City, County, UF
5.3 Increase Special Event Impact Mitigation	2	Medium	High	City, UF
1.3 Organize Neighborhood Special Events	2	Medium	Medium	City, UF, Private Citizens
3.1 Include Landlords in Education Efforts	2	Medium	Medium	City
2.5 Participate in City Code Enforcement Efforts	3	Low	High	UF
1.4 Provide Community Educators	3	Medium	High	UF
2.6 Increase Monitoring and Enforce Code Compliance	3	High	High	City
2.7 Provide Incentive Financing Programs	3	High	Medium	City
5.4 Provide Visitor Welcome Information	3	High	Medium	UF
2.8 Investigate University Employee Home-Ownership Programs	4	High	High	UF
4.1 Provide Student Village Off-Campus Housing	4	High	High	Private Citizens
4.2 Provide On-Campus Student Housing	4	High	Medium	UF
2.9 Provide Multi-family Housing for Faculty & Staff	4	High	Medium	Private Citizens
2.10 Consider Neighborhood Overlay Districts	5	Low	Medium	City
2.11 Promote Neighborhood Primary/Secondary Schools	5	Low	Low	UF
1.5 Reinforce Penalties for Ordinance Violations	5	Medium	High	UF
3.2 Implement Performance-Based Landlord Licensing	5	Medium	High	City
2.12 Consider Engaging the University in Community Redevelopment	5	High	High	UF

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

Students represent a diverse population – undergraduate, graduate or professional; with families or single; international or local; age eighteen or age fifty. The diversity of students attending either the University of Florida or Santa Fe Community College will continue to create diverse city-wide housing demands. For a variety of reasons, some students will continue to live in the residential neighborhoods near the campus. The successful provision of transit service to campus may also make remote neighborhoods more attractive and convenient. Therefore, resolution of neighborhood concerns about student housing must be addressed in a broad context with sensitivity toward the entire community. This report is the result of a combined effort of community and university representatives to identify ways in which the University of Florida can assist in addressing university impacts in single-family neighborhoods.

### **About This Action Plan**

This plan presents the conclusions and recommendations of the Town/Gown Task Force regarding neighborhood issues. The Town/Gown Task Force dialogue exclusively addressed neighborhood issues, primarily in terms of the physical environment, home ownership and student housing. This plan focuses solely on those actions that involve the University of Florida in a lead or strong support role. In a separate effort, the City of Gainesville has recently involved numerous stakeholders and professionals to develop recommendations related to city ordinances, enforcement practices, zoning and other such issues that are outside the purview of the University of Florida. The University supports the intent of these initiatives, but can provide limited collaborative support to implement those proposed solutions. As a companion effort, this Action Plan presents solutions that involve the University of Florida in a more substantial role.

### **Membership**

The University of Florida Town/Gown Task Force was created by President Charles E. Young in the spring of 2002 through an initiative of the Faculty Senate. Members of the Task Force include representatives of the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, UF- Finance and Administration, UF-Graduate Student Council, UF-Student Government, faculty and the neighborhood community. Meeting participants also included representatives from UF- Student Affairs, UF- Public Relations, UF- Research and Graduate Programs, UF-Foundation and the City Commission.

### **Purpose and Process**

The university's interest in these issues is grounded in the desire to be a good community partner and to preserve a positive environment around the campus that reflects the university's academic excellence. The university benefits in terms of marketing, image and support services when the surrounding neighborhoods are safe, clean, attractive and provide university-oriented housing and commercial activities. Neighborhood deterioration, disinvestment and crime near campus can negatively affect student enrollment and faculty recruitment. Several of the actions described herein may be viewed as outside of the university's academic mission, however, they are justified because a favorable surrounding environment is a competitive advantage for the university.

**The Town/Gown Task Force was charged with identifying a university role to address neighborhood concerns about student housing, traffic and related impacts. In recent years, the City of Gainesville has investigated various solutions to these neighborhood issues. In 2001-2002, the City formed four committees to develop recommendations on specific issues including 1) community development, investments and infrastructure; 2) marketing; 3) parking and police enforcement; and 4) regulatory reform (e.g. codes enforcement and landlord licensing). In addition, the City hired a consultant to prepare an analysis and recommendations report regarding student housing and regulatory reform. That report was presented by the consultant to the City Commission in June 2002, and has been reviewed by the Town/Gown Task Force along with reports from the four City committees. The Town/Gown Task Force first met in April 2002 to begin reviewing these prior efforts and identifying issues in which the University of Florida could have a leadership role. The Task Force met regularly for six months to prepare the recommendations contained in this Action Plan.**

**Issue Identification**

The first step for the Task Force was to identify the neighborhood concerns that may relate to the university presence.

The initial list of issues was identified as the following:

- Noise
- Parking
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Home ownership
- Neighborhood appearance
- Code enforcement
- Garbage and litter
- Landlord issues
- Traffic
- Nuisance parties
- Property values
- Consistency of rules application & accountability
- Number of occupants in single-family dwellings
- Community values
- Property restoration
- Maintenance incentives
- Change of student culture
- Safety/security issues
- Funding
- Large attendance special events
- Housing demand

Many of these issues have been identified in previous efforts, and the City of Gainesville has taken steps to address some of them. For example, the police Party Patrol, neighborhood parking decal system, neighborhood traffic calming, sidewalk construction, Neighborhood Planning Program, historic district designations, redevelopment district designations, and increased codes enforcement have been implemented to improve conditions in and around the university neighborhoods. Additional recommendations for City action are forthcoming from its current planning analysis.

**The Town/Gown Task Force's next step was to identify which issues and solutions have a key role for the University of Florida. Of these, the topics fell into several broad categories: 1) teach students to be good neighbors; 2) strengthen residential neighborhoods; 3) require responsible property management; 4) provide appropriate housing options and information; and 5) manage special events and traffic. These five approaches form the outline of this plan.**

The overriding goal of this Neighborhood Action Plan is :

**To improve the quality of the physical environment surrounding the University of Florida campus in order to stabilize existing neighborhoods, reduce negative impacts, and provide appropriate development/redevelopment opportunities that serve the needs of the university and community.**



**ACTIONS****Strategy #1: Teaching Students To Be Good Neighbors**

For many students, particularly younger undergraduates, their college years represent the first opportunity to live as an independent adult in their own household. This experience is new and exciting, but often comes with little preparation for the responsibilities of being a good neighbor. Basic practices and courtesies that are taken for granted by established residents - such as how to put out the garbage, how to maintain a property, and how to be respectful of neighbors' property - are not established habits.

To address this need, a variety of actions have been identified that will provide students with the information they need to be good neighbors and productive citizens of the community. As part of this effort, actions are also identified to instill in students a sense of pride in the neighborhoods where they reside and to provide for positive interaction between students and neighbors.

**Action 1.1 Provide Information To Students**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF - Division of Student Affairs and Division of Public Relations

*Performance Measure:* Number of student contacts and frequency of messages

*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Provide information to students about neighborhood responsibilities, codes and ordinances, and enforcement issues through printed material, email distribution and web sites managed through the Division of Student Affairs. Currently, this Division is in the process of developing a brochure for this purpose. These materials should be aggressively distributed during student orientation and should also be made available for use in the Division of Housing, Student Government/Student Legal Services, and for academic departments that do their own graduate student orientations. Roommate matching programs, such as one that operates within the Law School, and liaisons within the Admissions Office can also assist in disseminating this information. Partnerships should be developed with property management and referral agencies to assist in distributing this information. An existing City-produced brochure "Guidelines for Renters Living in Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods" can be one tool of communication, and can serve as a model for a university-produced companion brochure. A brochure on off-campus housing selection could also be developed to guide students into housing that best meets their needs and provides the most community compatibility. This kind of housing information could be distributed through the university website, graduate coordinators, international student organizations, and the graduate student council.

**Action 1.2 Encourage Student Participation in Neighborhood Clean-Up**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF - Division of Student Affairs

*Performance Measure:* Number of clean-up events

*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Organize student-led neighborhood clean up events, utilizing fraternities, sororities and other campus service organizations. The City of Gainesville - Solid Waste Division and the Keep Alachua County Beautiful program could assist by providing collection containers and special pick-up service. The events could be organized as competitions between fraternity/sorority organizations and include prizes or donations to the organization's favorite charity. The clean-up events should be planned to correspond with occasions when littering and trash collection are most problematic, such as after major sporting events, or in conjunction with community-wide events such as the Great American Cleanup. The City and neighborhood groups can assist by identifying target areas and timeframes. Fraternities and sororities in close proximity to the neighborhoods should be encouraged to participate in the areas closest to where they are located. This student involvement will provide a heightened awareness of the problem and an opportunity to provide community service directly to the neighborhoods. The Community Educators (see action 1.4) could be assigned to help recruit participants and coordinate these activities.

**Action 1.3 Organize Neighborhood Special Events**

*Primary Responsibility:* City of Gainesville – Cultural Affairs Dept., Neighborhood Associations, and UF – Division of Student Affairs, Division of Public Relations, and Student Government

*Performance Measure:* Number of events and number of attendees

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Provide opportunities for students and other residents to interact in a positive way through the development of special events, festivals, block parties and neighborhood clean-up workgroups. These events should be developed through the cooperation of the neighborhoods and the University, with support from the City of Gainesville. Educational opportunities for students to learn about the history of the neighborhood and about being a good neighbor can also be provided through these events. Students should be made aware of the role that the neighborhoods have played historically in the campus community. Events could include walking tours that highlight historic sites including residences of past university leaders. These events could also serve as a mechanism to invite students to become active participants in neighborhood associations. The University of Colorado at Boulder provides an example of a college community that has implemented these types of programs. Yale University and New Haven also have a history of collaboration on cultural festivals for the community. Arizona State University and the City of Tempe have often partnered to market the downtown area and host festivals centered on university special events.

**Action 1.4 Provide Community Educators**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF – Division of Student Affairs and Neighborhood Associations

*Performance Measure:* Number of Community Educators and the effectiveness of their role

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Develop a program to identify and provide Community Educators to neighborhoods in the University of Florida Context Area. Student and non-students will be eligible to serve as Community Educators. These individuals will be responsible for educating their neighbors regarding the standards and expectations of living in the Gainesville community. Community Educators will act as a “welcoming” entity to new neighbors. They will provide information about local ordinances and neighborhood associations. They will assist in the implementation of public relations campaigns and special neighborhood programs. Although Community Educators will not be expected or able to serve as code enforcement officers, they will act as liaisons between the neighborhoods, the Dean of Students Office, and the City.

**Action 1.5 Reinforce Penalties for Ordinance Violations**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF – Division of Student Affairs

*Performance Measure:* Number of complaints made overall and by neighborhood; and the general outcome of these complaints

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Develop a procedure whereby the university can assist the city in holding students accountable for violating local ordinances. A reporting system will need to be developed between the City of Gainesville and the University’s Dean of Students Office that includes reports for repeat infractions of code violations related to noise, parking, garbage disposal and routine property maintenance (i.e. cutting the grass and other such activities that are typically the responsibility of rental occupants). Florida law requires that the city first issue warning citations for code violations, and these would also need to be included in a reporting system to the University. Several challenges will need to be overcome including developing a method to identify student violators, providing equal enforcement city-wide, addressing students living in non-rental properties (e.g. parent-owned second homes), and coordinating with Santa Fe Community College to resolve issues involving their students. Another challenge exists

because code violations are responded to by different organizations within the City – Codes Enforcement, Police Department or Solid Waste Division – depending on the type of violation. The City will need to develop a mechanism to consolidate and convey information from these various entities to the university. Coordination can also be improved by having the City’s Codes Enforcement Manager meet with UF’s Dean of Students Office on a regular basis, as is the current arrangement between UF and the Gainesville Police Department. Coordination for neighborhoods outside the city limits may become necessary in the future. In a program support role, neighborhood associations should be strengthened in order to facilitate reporting violations to the City. However, the City recognizes that increased complaints will require increased response capability through additional staff.

In addition, a protocol will need to be established between the University and the City for the sentencing of student violators. Warning citations could trigger a response from the University aimed at student education through letters and published materials being sent to the student violator. This protocol could also include the option for students sentenced by the city, to participate in a “Responsible Citizenship” training course sponsored by the University. This course might be similar to current defensive driving training courses where violators pay a course fee, participate in a 6 to 8 hour workshop and receive certification of completion to submit to the City. Course content could include information concerning city ordinances, standards of responsible citizenship, presentations by neighborhood association leaders, police ride-a-longs, and community service projects (e.g. neighborhood trash pick up on Saturday or Sunday morning).

The City and University will also have to work together to track the success of this penalty reinforcement program, not on an individual basis, but in terms of the number of reports and overall outcomes in order to demonstrate to neighbors that their complaints receive appropriate attention. Without this community feedback, support for the program will likely falter.

## **Strategy #2: Strengthening Residential Neighborhoods**

There will always be a market for rental homes in the neighborhoods near campus, but the impacts of these rentals can be lessened by reducing their numbers and encouraging occupancy by older student and employee renters. The neighborhoods around the University of Florida can be attractive to university employees as safe, convenient locations to live and to raise families near neighborhood schools. Graduate, post-doctoral and professional students also have housing needs that are often more similar to the established single-family neighborhood residents than to the undergraduate students. Promotion of home ownership and rental occupancy in the university neighborhoods should target these markets. The assets of these neighborhoods should be emphasized through neighborhood associations, real estate marketing and home-ownership programs. Neighborhood ambiance, appearance and amenities can also be enhanced to attract and retain single-family residents. Where multi-family housing is permitted and encouraged adjacent to the university, explore marketing strategies and demand for developments targeted at university staff and faculty.

### **Action 2.1 Continue to Encourage Neighborhood Organization**

**Primary Responsibility:** City of Gainesville – Community Development Department

**Performance Measure:** Number of registered neighborhoods and their participation in available programs

**Public Financial Obligation:** Medium

Provide support to neighborhood residents who desire to be better organized and informed about city and university issues, through expansion of existing community programs. Assistance is currently provided by the City to strengthen neighborhood associations and include them in offerings such as the Neighborhood Crimewatch Program and the Neighborhood Planning Program. The City of Gainesville currently maintains a neighborhood association registry and an email listserve through which community residents are informed about issues of interest. The City’s programs also provide information to residents about how to report code violations and how to work with the City’s Police, Solid Waste, and Codes Enforcement Departments to improve the neighborhoods. The UF Division of Public Relations could supply information about university events and issues to the City for dissemination through these sources. Programs that seek to galvanize neighborhood groups are most difficult to implement in areas with high rental occupancy. Therefore, efforts should focus on neighborhoods with higher home ownership, and different programs aimed at landlord licensing and home-ownership incentives should be explored for predominantly rental neighborhoods.

**Action 2.2 Promote Private Initiative and Investment****Primary Responsibility:** Neighborhood residents and other private citizens*Performance Measure:* Level of private investment and number of privately-sponsored neighborhood activities*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Encourage private investment and individual commitment to neighborhoods as a means to improve conditions and provide stability. The commitment of individual residents is perhaps the single most effective component of neighborhood preservation, and was key to the renaissance of the Duck Pond neighborhood. In the Duck Pond area, private individuals came together to form a non-profit organization, Historic Gainesville, to engage in marketing and rehabilitation activities within the neighborhood. Historic Gainesville, Inc. provided revolving funds for low-interest loans and also bought properties for renovation and resale. Other neighborhoods, such as Lincoln Estates, are being strengthened through the work of individuals who organize block parties and neighborhood clean-ups with limited public agency support. Programs such as the "Paint Your Heart Out, Gainesville" (organized by the Volunteer Center of Alachua County) can serve as models to organize community painting of dilapidated structures or public facilities such as fire hydrants. Hibiscus Park has participated in the City's Neighborhood Planning Program, but residents have also begun to engage the Matheson Historical Center, university faculty, and individual residents to help promote and improve their neighborhood. A recent historic walking tour is one example of the marketing initiative in Hibiscus Park. Without a strong level of citizen involvement, no amount of public agency intervention can successfully accomplish neighborhood preservation.

**Action 2.3 Enhance Neighborhood Marketing***Primary Responsibility:* Neighborhood residents and other private citizens*Performance Measure:* Participation of local real estate agents and property managers*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Encourage realtors and property managers to take an interest in promoting home ownership in the neighborhoods, and promoting rental units to tenants who are university employees or older students (e.g. graduate, post-doctoral, and professional students). The neighborhoods can play an important role in the promotion of their neighborhood identity and many groups are already working on these marketing activities. The University Park Neighborhood Association produces an advertising brochure to promote home ownership in their neighborhood. The brochures are given to the University's Human Resources Department, which distributes them at new employee orientation. With additional quantities, the University could also place these in information packets given to prospective employees. This approach would reach more people before they have made their housing decisions, but larger brochure quantities would be more expensive for the neighborhood association. The Council of University Neighborhood Associations (CUNA) is exploring advertising opportunities on the Internet. If this is developed, a CUNA website could be linked to the University's housing and employment websites, just as links are provided to student-oriented apartment resources. The Hibiscus Park neighborhood recently participated in the City's Neighborhood Planning Program to install historic marker signs that identify the neighborhood in much the same way as conventional subdivisions market their name with entryway signs. The Hibiscus Park neighborhood also participated with the University's Department of Architecture and the Matheson Historical Center to promote the neighborhood with a walking tour of historical sites. Some of the neighborhoods have developed working relationships with local realtors who specialize in their market segment. These relationships can be further expanded, and neighborhood promotional materials can be made available to real estate companies. Routinely, many realtors notify neighbors by post card when a property goes on the market. This notification could include requests for neighbors to assist in identifying potential family-oriented home-buyers. For the rental market, vacancies could be promoted through the Graduate Student Council and in graduate or professional program offices such as the Law School, Health Science Center and other places where older students are the target audience. The International Student Center could provide another avenue for advertising the neighborhoods to older students who would be seeking the amenities of a walkable neighborhood close to campus. As each of these marketing outlets are developed, the internet will provide a powerful tool to combine the efforts through web-based links and information about off-campus housing available from the websites of the Division of Housing and Division of Student Affairs.

**Action 2.4 Engage in Joint Planning for Infrastructure Improvements**

*Primary Responsibility:* City of Gainesville, Alachua County and University of Florida

*Performance Measure:* Creation of an on-going coordination forum

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Develop a forum for continuous collaboration and consensus-building between decision makers at the City, County and University. This could be accomplished by maintaining quarterly meetings of the Town/Gown Task Force or by involving the University in ongoing Joint Planning Meetings of the City and County Commissions. The focus of this coordination would be the implementation of neighborhood initiatives and consensus-building for infrastructure investments. Currently, the University has representation on the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization board, but only as a non-voting ex-officio member.

To date, infrastructure project coordination has occurred between these entities particularly in the areas of transportation, public transit, stormwater, and streetscaping although numerous opportunities exist to expand this coordination. Over the long term, there is a recognized need for continued collaboration and a forum for determining priority projects and programs. The University's involvement in infrastructure improvements could include technical expertise, right-of-way and easements, or in some cases direct financial support. The University could also partner with local governments in seeking external grants. However, these opportunities will only be realized if there is an on-going commitment to joint planning for evaluating community needs and neighborhood priorities.

**Action 2.5 Participate in City Code Enforcement Efforts**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF – faculty and/or Division of Student Affairs

*Performance Measure:* Creation of programs that assist in conducting monitoring inspections of rental properties, and numbers of properties evaluated

*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Explore opportunities for the University to assist in conducting pre-inspections or routine monitoring visits on rental properties in target neighborhoods. This involvement could be conducted with faculty support, perhaps through the School of Building Construction or other appropriate disciplines. The program could also involve the proposed Community Educator function by having those individuals conduct routine walk-throughs of properties to identify potential violations as part of a student outreach and education program. This proposed program could also be patterned after the existing apartment inspections program offered by the University Police Department to identify safety and security concerns at student-oriented apartment complexes. The University and City will need to develop a schedule or mechanism that triggers the inspection by non-City employees. These could be performed as a prerequisite to listing the properties on a university referral website, as a routine screening prior to or enhancing City inspection cycles, or at the request of tenants and prospective renters.

City code enforcement officials are state certified and authorized to issue citations. Faculty and students could not perform this function without certification, but they could conduct pre-inspections for education and prevention purposes. When circumstances warrant, these pre-inspections could result in reports to the City code officials for formal action. Many regulated businesses, such as nursing homes and restaurants, utilize pre-inspection procedures to identify and correct problems before special inspectors arrive. This proposed code enforcement program would be similar to these in intent, and could also be modeled after citizen police patrol programs. The involved faculty and students would require some level of training from City code officials, but participation of qualified faculty would minimize this need. Faculty involvement will be most beneficial when this program fits with instructional goals of academic programs. The involvement of students, either as class participants or Community Educators, provides a peer-to-peer component that may encourage the student community to understand and respect

local housing codes.

### Item 2.6 Increase Monitoring and Enforce Code Compliance

*Primary Responsibility:* City of Gainesville – Community Development and Police Departments

*Performance Measure:* Number of citations issued for codes enforcement, parking violations, noise violations, etc.

*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Increase routine monitoring and capacity for responding to complaints through increased surveillance, staffing and coordination, and explore innovative methods for monitoring code compliance. Primarily, the City of Gainesville Codes Enforcement Division and Police Department carry out these activities. One innovative option may be to use increased feedback from the neighborhood parking decal program that could assist in identifying over-occupancy and landlord control. The current decal program requires tenants to provide documentation, in the form of the lease, utility bill and vehicle registration (with the applicant's name specified) in order to issue a parking decal. Housing over-occupancy may be partially addressed by expanding the enforcement times of the neighborhood parking decals to include overnight parking. Another possible innovative approach is to explore the use of landlord building decals that provide landlord contact information and inspection records in a highly visible location on the premises. Any proposed increase in compliance monitoring for targeted neighborhoods will require exploration of long-term permanent funding.

Like many other communities, the City has established an inspection cycle for rental properties. The City utilizes contractors to respond to code violations such as grass mowing and debris removal if the property owner does not comply. These programs provide a level of surveillance and a means of rapid response with less impact on local government operations and projects. The cost of service to correct code violations is billed to the property owner when a contractor is employed to accomplish the work. Through short-term grants, the City has been able to increase targeted police and codes enforcement monitoring. These efforts include the Police Department's Party Patrol within the University Context area neighborhoods. However, reliance on short-term grants may make these efforts sporadic and ineffective for long-term results. Many recommendations contained within this Town/Gown Task Force report require increased capacity for the City to provide monitoring and response. This capacity is critical in order for the University to implement reinforcement penalties for students, and for neighbors to continue monitoring and reporting activities.

**Action 2.7 Provide Incentive Financing Programs****Primary Responsibility: City of Gainesville – Housing Division***Performance Measure:* Provision of new financing programs or expansion of existing programs, and number of program participants*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Identify target neighborhoods in the University Context area and determine appropriate finance incentive programs to assist in home purchase and/or home renovations. The City currently offers an Interest-Rate Buy-Down program for properties in Historic Districts. This program is financed from the City's General Revenue and is intended to encourage renovation in historic districts. Recently, the City created a historic district that contains portions of the University Heights neighborhood. The City should investigate legal aspects of extending this program into the new historic district and any possible program expansion into other districts, such as the Community Redevelopment Districts. The City also provides housing Rehabilitation Grants in target neighborhoods. These rehabilitation grants are available to home-owners and to owners of rental properties. A House Recycling Program is also available to rehabilitate abandoned structures targeted in the Porters and Pleasant Street neighborhoods that are east of campus but primarily outside of the University Context area. A Natural Gas Conversion Program is made available to a limited number of neighborhoods at a time based upon prioritization of the Gainesville Regional Utilities and the City's Housing Division. Many City housing programs are linked to Community Development Block Grants, State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP Program) and other state-sponsored incentives. The City will need to explore the opportunity to designate additional target neighborhoods that meet these program eligibility requirements. Although the University Context neighborhoods have valid concerns about code enforcement and deteriorating properties, the problems are generally not to the same degree as in other City neighborhoods where the problems present greater threats to public safety such as boarded-up buildings, abandoned automobiles and high crime. Many of these existing incentive finance programs were developed largely to target these critical public safety threats and may not have widespread application in the University Context neighborhoods. Where program parameters apply or can be modified, comparable incentive programs should be offered in the University Context neighborhoods.

**Action 2.8 Investigate University Employee Home-Ownership Programs***Primary Responsibility:* UF – Division of Finance and Administration*Performance Measure:* Availability of the program and number of participants*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Investigate establishment of a home ownership program for university employees similar to ones offered by other employers. These homeownership programs typically provide forgivable loans for a portion of home purchase costs associated with closing, down payment and/or renovation. Repayment of the loan is forgiven based upon continued employment and home-owner occupation.

Recently, the City of Gainesville established such a program for its employees who purchase homes in targeted neighborhoods, including those around the University of Florida. Other colleges and universities offer comparable programs including East Lansing/Michigan State University, New Haven/Yale University, Baltimore/John Hopkins University, Washington DC/Howard University, Philadelphia/University of Pennsylvania, Schenectady/Union College, and Newark/University of Delaware. The Jacksonville Homeownership Alliance Community and Shands-Jacksonville also offer such a program for employees. John Hopkins University offers employees a homeownership program supported by a state-sponsored "Live Near Your Work" program designed to combat urban sprawl across the State of Maryland. These programs are often a welcome benefit for new employees faced with relocation, and are a bonus for employee recruitment. This is a particularly important point since other university communities are offering this benefit as a competitive recruitment advantage. A program to encourage employees to live near campus can also assist in the university's parking management and auto trip reduction strategies.

Establishing a similar program for University of Florida employees would require identifying funding sources, program parameters, target neighborhoods and a promotional campaign. The City of Gainesville's neighborhood planning program and Housing Division could assist in the effort to design a UF employee program. The existing City of Gainesville employee program, and those of other university communities, should serve as a guide. The University Park Neighborhood Association is currently exploring funding and procedures for home-ownership incentive programs that may develop into recommendations to assist the university in its efforts.

**Action 2.9 Provide Multi-family Housing for Faculty and Staff**

**Primary Responsibility: Private citizens with City and County support**

*Performance Measure:* Development of faculty and staff housing in designated locations

*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Identify target locations in the University Context area where multi-family housing could be developed and marketed to staff and faculty rather than student tenants. Multi-family housing is often viewed by adjacent single-family residents as a negative feature. However, when properly designed, maintained and marketed these developments need not be intrusive. In places where multi-family housing is permitted near single-family neighborhoods, these developments should explore the market potential for professional tenants rather than students since these will be more palatable to residents in adjacent neighborhoods. University faculty may have unique housing needs that may be best met with rental arrangements rather than home purchases. For example, new faculty that is not yet tenured or visiting faculty may not desire to purchase a home immediately if satisfactory rental housing can be found near campus. Medical residents, circuit-rider nurses and other employees of the Shands Hospital may have similar housing requirements. Single graduate students may also prefer rental housing that is traditional rather than designed for multiple student occupants. Anecdotal reports suggest that this market is not fully satisfied. Floor plans, rate structures, amenities, location and management policies all dictate whether a multi-family complex is targeted to students or professionals. West University Lofts, a pending project initiated by the Community Redevelopment Agency, is being planned to appeal to either a student or professional market and is designed to a standard that would permit eventual condominium sales if the market supports that approach. Some universities, including the University of California at Irvine, have directly engaged in the development of faculty housing that was later managed by a separate entity.

In addition to initiating housing projects, the City and County have a role in encouraging this type of development through proper zoning and infrastructure capacities. These issues are discussed further in Action 4.2 below regarding off-campus student housing. However, a review of City and County Future Land Use maps indicate that appropriate locations for this type of development density and market could exist in the vicinity of SW 13 Street and SW 16 Avenue; and along portions of Williston Road and SW 20/24 Avenue. Multi-family housing for faculty and staff could also be appropriate within certain designated redevelopment areas in close proximity to campus. Special area studies for the SW 13 Street area and Idylwild/Serenola areas should strive to accommodate this housing market. The public financial obligation could be lower if expanded public infrastructure is not necessary or is paid from private sources to support such developments.

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**Action 2.10 Consider Neighborhood Overlay Districts**

*Primary Responsibility:* City of Gainesville – Community Development District

*Performance Measure:* Adoption of an overlay ordinance and compliance monitoring

*Public Financial Obligation:* Low

Consider adoption of an ordinance that enhances existing building code requirements and addresses special concerns in the University Context neighborhoods. Overlay districts can address aesthetic and urban design issues such as building orientation, parking provisions, building color, exterior materials and ornamentation. Overlay districts could also be used to place restrictions on rental density or reduce the number of unrelated occupants beyond what is permissible in other parts of the community. In conventional subdivisions, deed restrictions often serve the purpose of establishing additional restrictions beyond local code requirements. In older neighborhoods, such deed restrictions typically do not exist. Establishment of appearance overlay districts may be problematic in that they attempt to control issues that are often a matter of personal preference or taste. The City of Gainesville has several existing overlays that affect parts of the University Context neighborhoods including the College Park Special Area Plan, University Heights Special Area Plan, Historic District designations, and the Traditional City ordinance. Portions of the City's Redevelopment Districts also overlay across some University Context area neighborhoods. However, additional restrictions aimed at reducing garish exterior paint colors, yard ornamentation, house subdivisions into multiple units, density of rental units and other such issues may be desirable. The City should be careful that such restrictions do not impede the provision of desirable rental units such as garage apartments, mother-in-law suites and other rental arrangements where the owner resides on the same property. The restrictions should also avoid the creation of undue burdens on home-owners or code enforcement staff. The University's role in this endeavor would be limited, but could include collaboration with faculty possessing expertise in these issues. The University's backing of this program could also assist the City and neighborhoods during its implementation.

**Action 2.11 Promote Neighborhood Primary/Secondary Schools**

*Primary Responsibility:* UF – Division of Finance and Administration, P. K. Yonge school administrators and Neighborhood Associations

*Performance Measure:* Establishment of revised admission procedures, and number of students enrolled from adjacent neighborhoods

*Public Financial Obligation:* None

Recommend revisions to the school admissions procedure at P. K. Yonge Laboratory School to provide preferential acceptance to children living within a designated walkable distance (recommended 0.5 miles) of the school. Currently, the school admissions procedure is a lottery system with some provisions to ensure diversity of race, income and other demographics. With approval of the school administration and the school's parental advisory committee, changes to the admissions policy can be implemented. Neighborhoods that would potentially be affected by such a policy would include Audubon Park, University Heights and Porters. This policy change could help to increase diversity in the P. K. Yonge school population and strengthen these neighborhoods by providing the amenity of a neighborhood school. To the extent that multifamily housing for professionals and families is encouraged near the campus and downtown, a P. K. Yonge neighborhood school amenity can also support the success of these new developments. This approach also seems to be consistent with the laboratory school's mission by testing the influence of a neighborhood school on community and social patterns. The primary drawback to this recommendation is that there are a limited number of families living in the vicinity of the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School. Much of the land proximate to the school is zoned for industrial or commercial uses, or is occupied by sororities, fraternities and student apartment housing.

Revisions to the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School admissions procedure to encourage neighborhood enrollment should also be discussed with School Board of Alachua County (SBAC). As the SBAC is undertaking a review of its school zoning boundaries, neighborhood schools throughout the University Context area should also be encouraged. Numerous opportunities exist to

strengthen neighborhoods around the university by altering the school zones to promote neighborhood schools, particularly at Littlewood, J.J. Finley, and Idylwild Elementary Schools

### **Section 2.12 Consider Engaging the University in Community Redevelopment**

**Primary Responsibility:** UF – Division of Finance and Administration, and UF Foundation

*Performance Measure:* Creation of a redevelopment plan with a funding component, and the number of properties renovated by the program

*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Explore opportunities for the University to become more actively involved in real estate acquisition, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use and resell opportunities in the neighborhoods. In this way, university resources could be mobilized to help the City achieve some of its goals for neighborhood stabilization and commercial redevelopment in these areas. Clearly, redevelopment and rehabilitation in the neighborhoods must be compatible and supportive of the neighborhood character and consistent with the City's vision for future development. The University has recently constructed two new buildings north of W. University Avenue, Emerson Alumni Hall and the 105 Building. These two significant brick structures can serve as anchors to the City's redevelopment vision for NW 1 Avenue and a College Park Village Center. The University of Florida Foundation's Oak Hammock retirement village, the Doubletree University Hotel and Conference Center, and the Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center are other creative examples of the potential for university involvement in community development. The extent to which the University can continue such efforts depends upon the degree to which these projects produce mutually beneficial results for the University and the community. Any university-sponsored community development activity should reinforce neighborhood character, and advance the City's planning goals including those for its redevelopment districts, housing and neighborhood programs. A university area redevelopment plan would need to be created that meets the goals of both the community and the University. Unlike many universities, the University of Florida with its 2,000-acre campus does not need to pursue local land acquisitions in order to continue growing. However, there may be circumstances where such an approach provides unique win-win opportunities.

Examples of similar efforts can be found in other university and college communities. Many of these examples involve private institutions that have more funding flexibility, but public institutions have also found innovative ways to directly engage in community development. The private Union College in the City of Schenectady, NY renovated dilapidated houses to be used for a community outreach center, satellite security office, Montessori school, and college-managed student and staff housing. Clark University, a private school in Massachusetts, purchased and renovated deteriorating homes in its environs to be resold as affordable housing opportunities. As a public institution, Ohio State University created a non-profit Campus Partners redevelopment corporation to work with local organizations for improved management and rehabilitation of low-income apartment complexes in its vicinity. Other institutions, including University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University have utilized public-private partnerships to engage in commercial development that supported university functions. The University of Pennsylvania entered into a public-private partnership to purchase a vacant historic warehouse to lease to a development corporation for renovation as a luxury apartment mixed-use development. UPenn also has leased land to the local school district for construction of a university-assisted K-8 public neighborhood school. At California State University, a creative partnership provided seed money for a university hotel and sports complex from the Fullerton Redevelopment Agency with funds repaid by the university based on revenue guarantees from a lease to Marriott Corporation. Research and development funds can also be attracted for innovative infrastructure investments, such as the Old Dominion University project that pooled public and private funds to construct an on-campus demonstration magnetic levitation system for public transit, similar to Disney's monorail. Issues of university tax-exempt status have been addressed in many of these efforts by collaboration with taxable private partners and development corporations. Another approach was used by DePaul University in Chicago wherein a mixed-use development provided tax-exempt status for the university uses within the project while the parking garage and retail spaces were taxed, essentially as a separate taxing district.

First step, the University and City should continue to discuss and explore opportunities where redevelopment projects may be mutually beneficial. Second, the agencies would need to determine a funding strategy and operational mechanism such as public-private partnerships, foundations, land trusts or non-profit corporations. Funding could also be leveraged as a match toward projects sponsored by the Community Redevelopment Agency and the City's Neighborhood Planning Program. The neighborhood associations and City's redevelopment advisory boards also need to be involved to ensure that university

initiatives are supported by the community.

### **Strategy #3: Requiring Responsible Property Management**

One key to reducing impacts from student rental housing is the willingness of landlords and property managers to perform required maintenance and reinforce tenants' compliance with applicable codes and ordinances. Landlords can play an important role in educating tenants about local requirements, and can hold their tenants accountable by recognizing code violations as a violation of the lease agreement. The City of Gainesville is currently exploring a number of revisions to landlord licensing and rental property regulations, but the following recommendations were identified by the Town/Gown Task Force as holding much promise for success and offering a possible support role for the University of Florida.

#### **Action 3.1 Include Landlords in Education Efforts**

**Primary Responsibility:** City of Gainesville – Community Development Department

**Performance Measure:** Adoption of required ordinance and compliance monitoring

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Require leases of single-family homes to contain information about local ordinances including maximum occupancy levels, yard parking, noise, lawn maintenance, garbage and other such property management issues. The leases should be clear on who is the responsible party – landlord or tenant. The lease could include the names of each individual permitted to occupy the rental unit on a regular basis and be counted toward the occupancy level. Furthermore, the lease should include a provision that violation of the City's ordinances can be cause for termination of the lease. All parties to the lease should be required to sign a statement recognizing that they have received the information and understand the ordinance requirements. The City of Gainesville should provide the proper ordinance information, as pre-approved text and/or a brochure that is to be included in the lease. The City should also be obligated to monitor compliance with this requirement, presumably through landlord licensing procedures. The University could assist in compliance monitoring by providing students with information about this requirement and reviewing compliance when a student is found to have been issued a code citation. Increased enforcement of existing and any new lease requirements will be an increased burden on the City and will require additional incentives or disincentives to increase landlord compliance.

#### **Action 3.2 Implement Performance-Based Landlord Licensing**

**Primary Responsibility:** City of Gainesville – Community Development Dept.

**Performance Measure:** Adoption of revised licensing requirement and compliance monitoring

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Explore and prioritize the commitment of the City to a revised landlord licensing approach based upon a point system for performance/compliance monitoring. This recommendation has been put forth in the City's recent report "Analysis of Issues Regarding Student Housing Near the University of Florida." This concept includes tracking violations and code compliance of landlord properties, and making license renewal contingent on a proven track record of acceptable code compliance. Exceptions or special provisions can be included for rental units with on-site owner occupancy or temporary rentals such as a faculty member renting a property while on sabbatical. Utility billing and service requests can be used to identify rental properties that do not have the required landlord permit or property registration. There are numerous issues facing the City in order to implement this program, but its benefits are also considerable. The City is currently reviewing the recommendations contained in their consultant's report and will develop a prioritized approach to implementation. The university's role in this endeavor should be limited, but could include education of student tenants as previously described. If landlords are held more accountable for the condition of their property, this will likely cause them to hold tenants more highly accountable. Improved property management not only benefits the neighborhood residents, but can also help to ensure safe and acceptable living conditions for students in rental properties. The University can assist by making students more aware their rights and responsibilities as rental tenants. The University's backing of this licensing program could also assist the City and neighborhoods during its

implementation.

#### Strategy #4: Providing Appropriate Student Housing Options

The University of Florida student body is large and diverse with a variety of housing needs. These needs are quite different for undergraduates, graduates, professionals and students with families. The University's housing policy gives priority to housing freshmen on campus with 69% of residence hall spaces reserved for first-time enrolled freshmen. In the Fall 2001 semester, 90% of first-time enrolled freshmen were housed on campus. Overall, the University housed nearly 22% of its Gainesville campus student population in Fall 2001. With recent construction and renovation, that number is expected to rise to 23% with an increase of 929 beds for Fall 2002. Ultimately, the University intends to house 25.5% of this student body on campus. This percentage is comparable to other major universities and is consistent with market demand for on-campus housing.

Looking ahead, graduate enrollment is expected to increase and result in greater demands for graduate housing. Historically, graduate housing has maintained waiting lists, which have been longer for single graduate students than family graduate students. Because of this trend and the expectation of a growing graduate enrollment, the University is proposing construction of a new 676-bed apartment-style facility for Fall 2007 to house single graduate students. Undergraduate housing has maintained shorter waiting lists for the fall semesters, however, in recent years the demand is nearly equal to the supply and those on the waiting list have been primarily returning upper level students. During the spring semester virtually all housing requests are accommodated as 200-400 beds are relinquished between fall and spring semesters on average. On move-in day of the Fall 2002 semester, there were no waiting lists for single student on-campus housing. This was the first time in 20 years that all housing requests were accommodated due to new construction, renovation and more efficient space utilization. Also in the Fall 2002 semester, 82% of all freshmen – not just the first-time enrolled freshmen – were accommodated in on-campus housing. This equals the percentage of freshman that desire to live on campus. In total, an additional 977 freshmen students will be housed on campus in this semester.

The State of Florida requires that university housing operations be financially self-supporting so that vacancies, which do occur at other major universities, would negatively affect the financial stability of the Division of Housing. The national trend in campus housing is toward student preference for off-campus housing which has caused many mid-size schools to close residence halls. The current supply and demand for undergraduate on-campus housing at the University of Florida has reached an equilibrium wherein the majority of students who desire to live on campus are accommodated and the Division does not assume undue risk of vacancies. Projected enrollment trends and availability of off-campus housing do not justify proposals for additional undergraduate campus housing at this time. The Gainesville area student housing market is currently overbuilt with most complexes running at 80% occupancy in 2001. Competition for tenants is generating aggressive incentives such as generous amenity packages, reduced rates, security deposit waivers, and free two months rent on annual leases. However, this trend has not significantly slowed off-campus apartment construction.

The end result for the University is that the Division of Housing must aggressively market campus housing and offer a wide variety of programming and other amenities in order to attract students. Currently these offerings include high-speed Ethernet connections, cable television, real-time tutoring via closed circuit television, automated laundry service information, web-based credit card payment, meal plan enhancements, leadership programs, and integrated academic and residential experiences as embodied in the new Honors Residential College at Hume Hall. These services provide a unique on-campus living experience and marketing niche, but also increase construction and operating costs. When compared to peer universities, on-campus housing rates at the University of Florida are slightly below average for single and double accommodations, and slightly above average for suite and apartment-style living. However, the on-campus rates are significantly less expensive than the average for off-campus apartment complexes on a per year per student basis. The Division of Housing anticipates annual rental rate increases will be required for both single and village-style student housing over the next decade to cover increasing operational costs and debt service commitments. In making these rate adjustments, the Division of Housing must continue to be competitive with the off-campus housing market including below cost marketing strategies employed at many apartment complexes.

#### **Action 4.1 Provide Student-Village Off-Campus Housing**

**Primary Responsibility:** Private citizens with City and County support

**Performance Measure:** Development of student villages in designated locations

*Public Financial Obligation: High*

Provide off-campus student housing in village-style developments where student housing is in close proximity to the university and student-oriented commercial activities, but away from established single-family neighborhoods. Through City and County Comprehensive Plans and zoning ordinances, two significant areas have been identified for this type of future development. Transportation between these future residential areas and campus can be provided by transit, bicycle and pedestrian access. Infrastructure enhancement to support this development is being funded by local government, University (campus development agreement), State/Federal (grants), and private sources (tax-increment financing and developer exactions.)

To the west of campus, the key area for student village development is located south of the proposed Hull Road extension corridor to Windmeadows Boulevard and from I-75 to SW 34 Street. Much of this area is already developed, but significant new development is anticipated in the area of SW 24 Avenue and a future extension of SW 62 Boulevard. To facilitate this development, the County is pursuing improvements to the roadway infrastructure with financial support from the Florida Department of Transportation and the University. The County's Future Land Use Map 2020 indicates primarily special area study, activity center and medium to high density housing in this location (medium density = >4 - 8 units per acre; medium high density = >8 - 14 units per acre; high density = >14 - 24 units per acre.) A preliminary special area study has already been conducted in the form of the "SW 20 Avenue Charrette" which developed the transportation and land use strategies now being pursued. A small portion of this area is currently within the City of Gainesville and is indicated for medium density residential land use (6-30 units per acre.)

To the east of campus, the City of Gainesville has designated a significant area of land on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, 2000-2010, as residential high density (8-100 units per acre) within the College Park/University Heights Redevelopment District. The redevelopment district designation provides development incentives and a mechanism for upgrading infrastructure to accommodate future growth. A portion of the Campus Development Agreement funding for 1995-2005 is earmarked to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in this area near campus. Currently, there are several fraternity and sorority residential complexes in this district and new student apartment complexes have been constructed in the vicinity of Depot Avenue. However, the Future Land Use designation and related zoning provide capacity for additional student housing in the area roughly bounded by University Avenue, SW 13 Street, SW 16 Avenue and SW 6 Street. In close proximity, additional student housing can also be accommodated in the areas of SW 13 Street and SW 16 Avenue. This area is currently the subject of a special area study being conducted jointly by the City and County.

#### **Action 4.2 Provide On-Campus Student Housing**

**Primary Responsibility:** UF – Division of Housing

**Performance Measure:** Percent of the Gainesville campus student population in on-campus residences

*Public Financial Obligation: High*

Provide appropriate on-campus housing with essential support programs and services to meet the university goal of housing 25% of the Gainesville campus student population. In response, the university will continue to monitor housing demand, enrollment trends, and funding capacity in order to determine the timing and type of housing necessary to meet this goal. Estimating the demand for campus housing is unavoidably co-dependent with admissions and enrollment management. Changes in student demographics, timing of admission notification, and the number of students accepting admission greatly impact the ability to predict, assign and accommodate on-campus housing requests. This predictability is further complicated by market trends in off-campus housing. Several statewide policies also impact campus housing policy, including the requirement that university housing programs be financially self-supporting. However, the university commits to on-going monitoring and long-range capital planning to provide the targeted level of on-campus housing.

#### **Category #5: Managing Special Events and Traffic**

Large special events, such as football games, basketball games, and concerts provide benefits to the community in terms of economic activity and entertainment opportunities. The neighborhoods near the Ben Hill Griffith Stadium and the O'Connell Center, have some advantages of proximity to these events, but also bear significant burdens associated with noise, trash, crowds

and traffic. In some respects, recurring events such as football games, provide an opportunity to educate people about expected behavior and local ordinances because many people are repeat attendees. Other non-recurring events, such as concerts or high school sport state tournaments, attract new visitors who are unfamiliar with the campus area and local expectations. Major events create the need to address neighborhood parking, waste management and crowd control. Many measures are already in place to provide additional police presence and solid waste collection. However, the neighborhood residents continue to experience unacceptable levels of impacts from seemingly more frequent events.

#### **Action 5.1 Provide Information to Special Event Attendees**

**Primary Responsibility:** UF – Athletic Association, Alumni Affairs, and Division of Public Relations

**Performance Measure:** Number and type of visitor contacts and frequency of messages

*Public Financial Obligation:* Medium

Provide information to university visitors regarding conduct, parking, alcohol prohibitions and other pertinent messages, particularly related to special event visitation. Several venues are already utilized to meet this purpose. The University Athletic Association provides information about local ordinances, parking and alcohol to season ticket subscribers. The UAA also strictly enforces prohibition of alcohol in the Ben Hill Griffin Stadium by revoking the season tickets of violators. Within the Southeast Conference, the University of Florida and City of Gainesville are the most strict regarding football game-day etiquette. The City of Gainesville has posted signs within the university neighborhoods to inform tailgating fans of the strict enforcement of state open container laws. In a recent public information campaign, Coaches Zook and Donovan have produced a public service announcement that will air during football and basketball games to remind the public about safe and courteous game-day behavior.

The University is also proactive in providing information about special event parking on campus. This is accomplished by temporary signage, variable message signs and the presence of law enforcement officials or other parking management staff. For all games, special provisions are made to accommodate overnight recreational vehicle parking and additional "Bull Gator" parking spaces are opened on the north side of the stadium. During daytime special events at the O'Connell Center, adjacent parking garage commuter spaces are converted to visitor parking. Evening events at the O'Connell Center are accommodated in nearby parking lots where faculty and staff assignments are lifted during evening hours. In spring 2003, a new parking structure will open at the Reitz Union Welcome Center to add an additional 280 parking spaces in the interior of campus that will be primarily assigned as visitor parking. Visitors should be directed to this parking facility through directional signage.

This action item intends that existing programs be maintained and expanded utilizing additional creative means, such as variable message signs, existing electronic bulletin boards and additional public service announcements, to reach the visiting public.

#### **Action 5.2 Manage Neighborhood Parking and Traffic**

**Primary Responsibility:** City of Gainesville – Public Works and Police Departments

**Performance Measure:** Neighborhood satisfaction as measured by the number of complaints received

*Public Financial Obligation:* High

Continue to provide parking and traffic management programs through existing efforts of the City of Gainesville. The City currently administers a neighborhood parking decal program that is in effect from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays in the university area neighborhoods. The City continually monitors the effectiveness of the program, its rate structure and enforcement requirements in order to make modifications as needed. If necessary, the City could consider expanding the areas covered by the program or the hours that the program is in effect, but currently such changes are not justified. The current program generally satisfies the need to control university parking impacts that could occur in the neighborhoods.

The City also administers a city-wide neighborhood traffic calming program with specific data criteria, neighborhood participation provisions, and a menu of traffic management techniques that are appropriate for different types of roadway

conditions. In response to a recent neighborhood request, the Gainesville Public Works Department will be conducting a traffic study in the fall of 2002 to develop recommendations for parking and traffic calming.

A third City initiative provides a high level of coordination between Gainesville Public Works Department, Gainesville Police Department, Alachua County Sheriff's Office, University Police Department and the Athletic Association to provide efficient traffic flow following football games. This coordination utilizes real-time technology and communication along with changes to traffic circulation patterns in order to expedite the flow of traffic away from the stadium. This program has been in place for several years and is very effective. Express bus service to the football games is another coordinated program that helps to relieve traffic congestion on game days. Currently, these programs are functioning at maximum efficiency, but they can be reviewed for possible augmentation over time.

#### **Action 5.3 Increase Special Event Impact Mitigation**

**Primary Responsibility:** City of Gainesville – Police Department and Solid Waste Division, and UF - Athletic Association and O'Connell Center

**Performance Measure:** Number of facilities and services provided

**Public Financial Obligation:** Medium

Provide additional facilities and services, such as temporary trash/recycling containers, portable toilets, park-and-ride transit and police presence during major special events. Currently, the University Athletic Association reimburses the City \$10,000 annually for the additional services required for major sporting events, primarily football games. For the 2004-2006 seasons, that fee will increase to \$12,000. Public services presently do not include the provision of public toilets for special events such as football games. Some temporary rest room facilities are provided at J.J. Finley Elementary School for use by patrons who pay to park on school grounds. The City and University should work together to identify locations and funding to provide the public with this essential service on game days. Additional temporary trash and recycling containers are also an identified critical need during major special events.

#### **Action 5.4 Provide Visitor Welcome Information**

**Primary Responsibility:** University of Florida – Division of Finance and Administration

**Performance Measure:** Provision of campus welcome center, gateway entrances, and visitor information

**Public Financial Obligation:** High

Provide information to campus visitors in the form of gateway entrances, a welcome center, limited signage and printed material in order to assist visitors in finding parking and destinations on campus. The Welcome Center in the Reitz Union is set to open in spring 2003 and provide one-stop visitor services including parking, tours, maps, transit access, and services within Reitz Union such as food, meeting rooms and a new bookstore. This new construction will provide an additional 280 structured parking spaces, primarily assigned to visitors. This parking structure is located internally on campus and will be convenient for visitors to walk to many destinations. Concurrently, the intersection of Museum Road and SW 13 Street will be reconstructed as the main gateway into campus that will lead visitors to the Welcome Center. Signage in the community should direct visitors to this entry point and the Reitz Union. The University intends that all promotional information, including websites and printed communication, will direct visitors to access the Reitz Union Welcome Center via Museum Road and SW 13 Street. In the future, the university intends to establish another new major gateway at the intersection of SW 16 Avenue and an extended North-South Drive.

Currently, the University provides limited numbers and locations of visitor parking. Visitors are primarily directed to these locations by staffed information booths or by viewing a campus map board such as those located near the Museum Road entrance from SW 13 Street, and the Buckman Drive entrance from University Avenue. The University intends to remove most or all of the staffed information booths in an effort to increase staff efficiency and implement vehicle prohibitions in the core of campus. In the Shands Hospital area, visitors are directed to the nearby parking garages, however sign restrictions on the adjacent state road prevent the posting of adequate visitor information signage.

The City of Gainesville – Community Redevelopment Agency is implementing a way-finding sign system for public

roadways, including those on the campus perimeter. The City's sign program should direct visitors to the University of Florida Welcome Center at Reitz Union via the entrance at Museum Road and SW 13 Street. City way-finding sign systems can help to market the nearby neighborhoods by informing the public about available amenities and welcoming them to campus visitor destinations. Neighborhoods may also benefit by reducing the amount of visitors driving around campus or venturing into neighborhoods to find parking.

As these facility changes occur on campus, the University will need to monitor the effectiveness of the information given to visitors and evaluate the need for any additional way-finding signage or campus map boards. Additional coordination will be necessary with the state Department of Transportation and the University in order to improve directional signage to the hospital and clinic services of Shands HealthCare. If needed, additional gateway treatments with some form of way-finding information could be developed to accommodate access from other approaches to campus. Any additional campus signage must be developed with great care to preserve aesthetic appearance and avoid sign clutter.



**IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING**

**5 Priorities**

One method to begin evaluating recommendations and developing a priority order is to examine the relative cost and benefit of each action. The following matrix demonstrates the degree of anticipated impact for each recommendation along with its relative cost (rated as high, medium or low). Cost considerations for this analysis are based upon public investment required of local governments or the University of Florida.

**Impact**

	<b>High</b>	<b>Med</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>High</b>	Investigate University Employee Home-Ownership Programs	Provide Incentive Financing Programs	
	Increase Monitoring and Enforce Code Compliance	Provide Visitor Welcome Information	
	Consider Engaging the University in Community Redevelopment	Provide Multi-family Housing for Faculty & Staff	
	Manage Neighborhood Parking and Traffic	Provide On-Campus Student Housing	
	Provide Student Village Off-Campus Housing		
<b>Med</b>	Provide Community Educators	Organize Neighborhood Special Events	
	Reinforce Penalties for Ordinance Violations	Continue to Encourage Neighborhood Organization	
	Engage in Joint Planning for Infrastructure Improvements	Include Landlords in Education Efforts	
	Implement Performance-Based Landlord Licensing	Provide Information to Special Event Attendees	
	Increase Special Event Mitigation		
<b>Low</b>	Participate in City Code Enforcement Efforts	Provide Information to Students	Promote Neighborhood Primary/Secondary Schools
	Promote Private Initiatives and Investment	Consider Neighborhood Overlay Districts	Encourage Student Participation in Neighborhood Clean-Up

		Enhance Neighborhood Marketing	
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Another method to evaluate priority actions is to examine the ease with which they can be implemented. In general, initiatives with fewer partners and stakeholders can be implemented most quickly. For example, education efforts from the Division of Student Affairs simply involves a commitment of staff and resources primarily within one organizational unit. By contrast, actively assisting in city code enforcement or engaging students in neighborhood clean-ups involve the coordination of multiple entities. Some of the actions in this document are simply maintenance or expansion of existing programs. Still others are new initiatives, many of which require long start-up times and additional development. Those actions qualified for future "consideration" will obviously require on-going debate and refinement. It is also important in deciding priorities, to share the responsibilities so that no single agency is saddled with the bulk of initiatives in any one time frame.

**Overall, the Town/Gown Task Force priorities strive to**

- **Produce short-term successes;**
- **Disperse responsibilities;**
- **Emphasize high impact, low-to-medium cost actions in the near-term; and**
- **Lay the groundwork for longer-term solutions.**

#### **Tier 1 Actions: Continue Current Activities**

As a first priority, the Task Force recommends continuation, monitoring and enhancement of the following current activities.

- Encourage Neighborhood Organization
- Provide Information to Special Event Attendees
- Manage Neighborhood Parking and Traffic

#### **Tier 2 Actions: Pursue Short-Term Successes (initiate in 0-6 months)**

The following actions can be implemented in the near term and produce satisfactory levels of impact. These actions should be initiated in 0-6 months from the adoption of this report.

- Promote Private Initiatives and Investment
- Enhance Neighborhood Marketing
- Provide Information to Students
- Encourage Student Participation in Neighborhood Clean-Up
  
- Engage in Joint Planning for Infrastructure Improvements
  
- Increase Special Event Impact Mitigation
- Organize Neighborhood Special Events
- Include Landlords in Education Efforts

#### **Tier 3 Actions: Pursue Mid-Term Successes and Lay the Foundation for Longer-Term Solutions (initiate in 6-12 months)**

The following actions will require a few months of preparation and additional planning before they can be initiated. Some of these actions will start a process toward more long-term solutions. These actions should be initiated in 6-12 months from the adoption of this report.

- Participate in City Code Enforcement Efforts
- Provide Community Educators
- Increase Monitoring and Enforce Code Compliance
- Provide Incentive Financing Programs
- Provide Visitor Welcome Information

#### **Tier 4 Actions: Commit to Long-Term Investment Initiatives**

The following actions are long-term solutions that may not be realized for several years, but will require advance financial planning and commitment that should begin in the short-term.

- Investigate University Employee Home-Ownership Programs
- Provide Student Village Off-Campus Housing
- Provide On-Campus Student Housing
- Provide Multi-family Housing for Faculty and Staff

#### **Tier 5 Actions: Continue to Evaluate Complex New Initiatives**

The following actions require additional evaluation and input before they are fully developed. This future evaluation could occur within the Town/Gown Task Force structure or be assigned to other appropriate entities. However, this continued debate should follow directly after the adoption of this report so as not to lose momentum.

- Consider Neighborhood Overlay Districts
- Promote Neighborhood Primary/Secondary Schools
- Reinforce Penalties for Ordinance Violations
- Implement Performance-Based Landlord Licensing
- Consider Engaging the University in Community Redevelopment

#### **Link to Academic Programming**

Many of the recommendations contained in this report require action in the administrative side of the university, but others relate to expertise and community service available in the academic functions. Linking actions to the academic endeavors, research centers and community service mission of the University will be an important part of implementation. In this approach, the administration must acknowledge faculty work with community benefit as a career enhancing activity that can be measured commensurate with evaluations for traditional teaching and research. In addition, the work should be linked to the academic strategic plan emphasis areas including children and families, ecology and environment, internationalization of the campus and the newly proposed interdisciplinary School of Natural Resources and Environment. Future review of university centers should consider roles that advance the community benefits outlined in this report. Several existing centers such as the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing, Center for Building Better Communities, Center for Construction and Environment, Center for Real Estate Studies and the GeoPlan Center would seem to be able to contribute toward these goals. Several other centers that focus on issues of social policy, public policy, government, historic preservation and business also have missions that touch on these areas of community need.

Again, other university programs can be examined for ways in which to align Town/Gown goals with the academic mission. The Center for Community and Environmental Development at Pratt University in Brooklyn utilizes a multidisciplinary faculty group to assist local community-based organizations with project development, technical assistance and training, and group facilitation to support neighborhood revitalization and stimulate private investment. The University of Illinois at Chicago utilizes faculty in a Building Sustainable Communities project that provides training for community-based development organizations and supports local affordable housing initiatives with research and graduate intern programs. Faculty at Howard University in Washington, DC collaborated with the Fannie Mae Foundation to perform streetscape, land use and feasibility studies to revitalize a distressed area around its campus. The University of Arkansas also provides comprehensive planning and design services statewide through its Community Design Service. The University of Michigan combines two existing programs, the Urban and Regional Planning Program and the Legal Assistance for Urban Communities Program (Law School) to assist a local community development and housing coalition for Detroit's Eastside. The University of Pennsylvania's Center for Community Partnerships has worked aggressively with multiple community organizations, including school districts and financial institutions, to improve West Philadelphia neighborhoods. An affordable housing initiative in Birmingham is facilitated by the University of Alabama's Center for Urban Affairs to develop collaborations with financial institutions and other community partners. The University of Alabama's community efforts also incorporate youth education, training, and small business development into their housing initiative.

### **Expand Funding Sources**

The university's involvement in local community development programs can also open doors to expanded funding and grant opportunities. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Outreach Partnership Center Program and the Department of Commerce's University Centers Program are specifically for the use of universities in solving community problems. The University Center Program primarily provides technical assistance and strategic planning for economic development in partnership with state and local governments, non-profit organizations, and small firms. The U.S. Department of Education's Title XI Program funds university projects focused on critical urban issues including community development, health and housing. Another HUD program, the Joint Community Development Program serves as a catalyst for universities to engage in large-scale building initiatives in distressed neighborhoods. The federal Corporation for National and Community Service provides project grants to institutions of higher education to engage students in service learning to meet community needs including neighborhood clean-up and revitalization. Several other federal agencies including the National Endowment for the Arts and the Environmental Protection Agency offer other applicable grants. Similar grant opportunities exist with State of Florida agencies. Several private foundations, such as the Fannie Mae Foundation, Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, DeWitt Wallace Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (and many others) also fund university-community partnership programs. Research and development funding can also be sought to implement innovative infrastructure solutions that address community issues. Many of these grant opportunities would not be available to the community without the involvement of a university partner.

### **Maintain Commitment, Momentum and Monitoring**

Above all, the recommendations of the Town/Gown Task Force must not sit idle. There is great potential for the University of Florida to serve as a catalyst, resource and partner in contributing to the resolution of university neighborhood issues. The Task Force's implementation plan includes short-term actions that should be quickly pursued. Several other recommendations call for ongoing debate to resolve outstanding issues, address expanded topics or continue coordination on current projects such as infrastructure. The university neighborhood residents are also called upon to directly engage in neighborhood preservation activities and support these city, county and university initiatives.

In order for the University to move forward on any of these recommendations, its administration will need to determine the appropriate forum in which to pursue the actions, assign specific responsibilities, and commit to ongoing progress monitoring as identified for each action item. University administrative divisions with primary

responsibility for executing these actions will need to develop more detailed implementation plans complete with specific budgets and target dates. During the process of developing these details, continued coordination with various university constituencies will ensure fairness, collaboration, and effectiveness in implementing these recommendations. With this anticipation, the Town/Gown Task Force respectfully submits these recommendations to the University of Florida President Charles E. Young and the University Faculty Senate.

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