



City of Gainesville

Department of Sustainable
Development

TO: City Plan Board
FROM: Department of Sustainable Development

DATE: June 6th, 2022

SUBJECT: City of Gainesville. City initiated petition to amend the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Element to revise the Single-Family (SF) land use category to include small-scale multi-family development up to four (4) units per building and rename the category as Neighborhood Residential (NR), amend the Land Development Code to consolidate single family zoning districts into Neighborhood Residential zoning district, introduce single-family detached and small-scale multi-family as uses in Neighborhood Residential zoning districts; amend setback, lot size dimensions, remove occupancy limits, amend bedroom limit within the UF Context Zone, amend compatibility requirements, and amend lot split and minor subdivisions regulations.

Applicant: City of Gainesville

Discussion

The City of Gainesville is currently experiencing a period of housing instability that has resulted in unequal housing outcomes for its residents. Per the Exclusionary Zoning and Inclusionary Housing Study done by HR&A, there are three primary issues driving the current housing situation in Gainesville: Housing access and quality, housing cost burden and racial segregation.

Access to housing is severely limited in Gainesville. A total of 63% of residential parcels are zoned single family residential and only allow for the construction of one house. 42% of the single family residential zones are RSF-1 which has the lowest density within all residential zones of 3.5 units per acre along with some of the most generous setback and lot size requirements. This results in a significant amount of land devoted to the construction of single family homes thus restricting the opportunity of diversification of home types needed to meet the needs of all Gainesville residents. This is not consistent with the City's Comprehensive plan Objective 1.2 which is designed to "Provide a variety of housing types and densities for moderate-income, low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income people." Aside from the zoning restriction of single-family homes, development requirements such as lot sizes and setbacks result in the creation of larger lots within single-family zoning thus further restricting the potential of housing development. Furthermore, large lots, large setback requirements, and the restriction to one single family occupancy attribute to a higher cost for



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home construction and land ownership. This further restricts who can afford to purchase a home in Gainesville.

With fewer homes available for purchase, Gainesville residents' alternative for housing is renting. 61% of households in the City are renters. Furthermore, the student housing market is the strongest rental market in the City which makes it more difficult for non-students to access rental housing. According to the HR&A Exclusionary Zoning/Inclusionary Housing Study, student renters make up 36% of the total Gainesville population but make up 50% of the population living in housing built after 2000. Consequently, student renters are the primary beneficiaries of new rental housing development in Gainesville.

Aside from the restriction of housing availability, the cost of housing in Gainesville adversely impacts most of Gainesville residents. It's estimated that a household income of \$40,000 is needed to afford the average rent per unit in Gainesville. However, Gainesville's median household income is only \$37,000 with Black households only making 73% of the median. This cost burden is exacerbated by the lack of a diverse housing stock coupled with a significant demand for housing.

The lack of housing access and quality along with the cost burden of housing disproportionately affects Gainesville's Black and minority citizens. Data shows that white households are more likely to live in single family homes while the Black population occupies "missing middle" housing, or buildings that have 2-4 units. Furthermore, only white and Asian households earn consistently above Gainesville's median household income making the average rental unit only affordable to the typical white household.

Furthermore, Gainesville's growth trend is outpacing new housing construction. According to the Bureau of Economics data, Gainesville's population growth has increased by roughly 4.5% within the past five (5) years and will continue to grow at around this rate within the next five (5) years. It's projected that by 2025, Gainesville's population will increase by 6,542. However, according to Census data only 6,036 housing units were added in ten (10) years between 2010 to 2020.

To address the concerns stated above, staff is proposing amending the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code to provide the opportunity for more equitable development while promoting a diversification of Gainesville's housing stock and eliminating restrictive Land Use and zoning regulations. This petition is initiated by the City of Gainesville and proposes several



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amendments. The amendment discussed in this report pertains to a comprehensive plan amendment to update the Single Family (SF) land use.

A. Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The Gainesville Single Family land use category is designed specifically for detached single family development with a maximum density of eight (8) units per acre. See language below:

Single-Family (SF): up to 8 units per acre

This land use category shall allow single-family detached dwellings at densities up to 8 dwelling units per acre. The Single-Family land use category identifies those areas within the City that, due to topography, soil conditions, surrounding land uses and development patterns, are appropriate for single-family development. Land development regulations shall determine the performance measures and gradations of density. Land development regulations shall specify criteria for the siting of low-intensity residential facilities to accommodate special need populations and appropriate community-level institutional facilities such as places of religious assembly, public and private schools other than institutions of higher learning, and libraries. Land development regulations shall allow home occupations in conjunction with single-family dwellings under certain limitations.

This land use category does not support the development of small-scale multi-family or the mix of detached single-family and small-scale multi-family development. It currently supports zoning districts with single family as their primary use (RSF-1 – RSF-4 and U1). However, Residential Low-Density (RL) is a land use category that supports the development of mixed uses between single detached housing and small-scale multi-family and currently exists within the City's Comprehensive Plan. See language below:

Residential Low-Density (RL): up to 15 units per acre

This land use category shall allow dwellings at densities up to 15 units per acre. The Residential Low-Density land use category identifies those areas within the City that, due to topography, soil conditions, surrounding land uses and development patterns, are appropriate for single family development, particularly the conservation of existing traditional low-density neighborhoods, single-family attached and zero-lot line development, and small-scale multifamily development. Land development regulations shall determine gradations of density, specific uses and



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performance measures. Land development regulations shall specify criteria for the siting of low-intensity residential facilities to accommodate special need populations and appropriate community level institutional facilities such as places of religious assembly, public and private schools other than institutions of higher learning, and libraries. Land development regulations shall allow home occupations; accessory units in conjunction with single-family dwellings; and bed-and-breakfast establishments within certain limitations.

Furthermore, the RL land use category supports existing single-family neighborhoods that have been developed within SF land uses.

Proposal:

Option 1. Amend the Comprehensive Plan Single Family future land use designation to allow for neighborhood scale multi-family of no more than four units per building as a permitted use. Consequently, the name of the Future Land Use would be changed to reflect the addition of the neighborhood scale multi-family use to Neighborhood Residential (NR). No changes to density would be proposed.

~~Single-Family (SF)~~ Neighborhood Residential (NR): up to 8 units per acre

This land use category shall allow single-family detached dwellings at densities up to 8 dwelling units per acre as well as neighborhood scale multi-family development of no more than four (4) units per building. The ~~Single-Family~~ Neighborhood Residential land use category identifies those areas within the City that, due to topography, soil conditions, surrounding land uses and development patterns, are appropriate for single-family and neighborhood scale multi-family development. Land development regulations shall determine the performance measures and gradations of density. Land development regulations shall specify criteria for the siting of low-intensity residential facilities to accommodate special need populations and appropriate community-level institutional facilities such as places of religious assembly, public and private schools other than institutions of higher learning, and libraries. Land development regulations shall allow home occupations in conjunction with single-family and neighborhood scale multi-family dwellings under certain limitations.

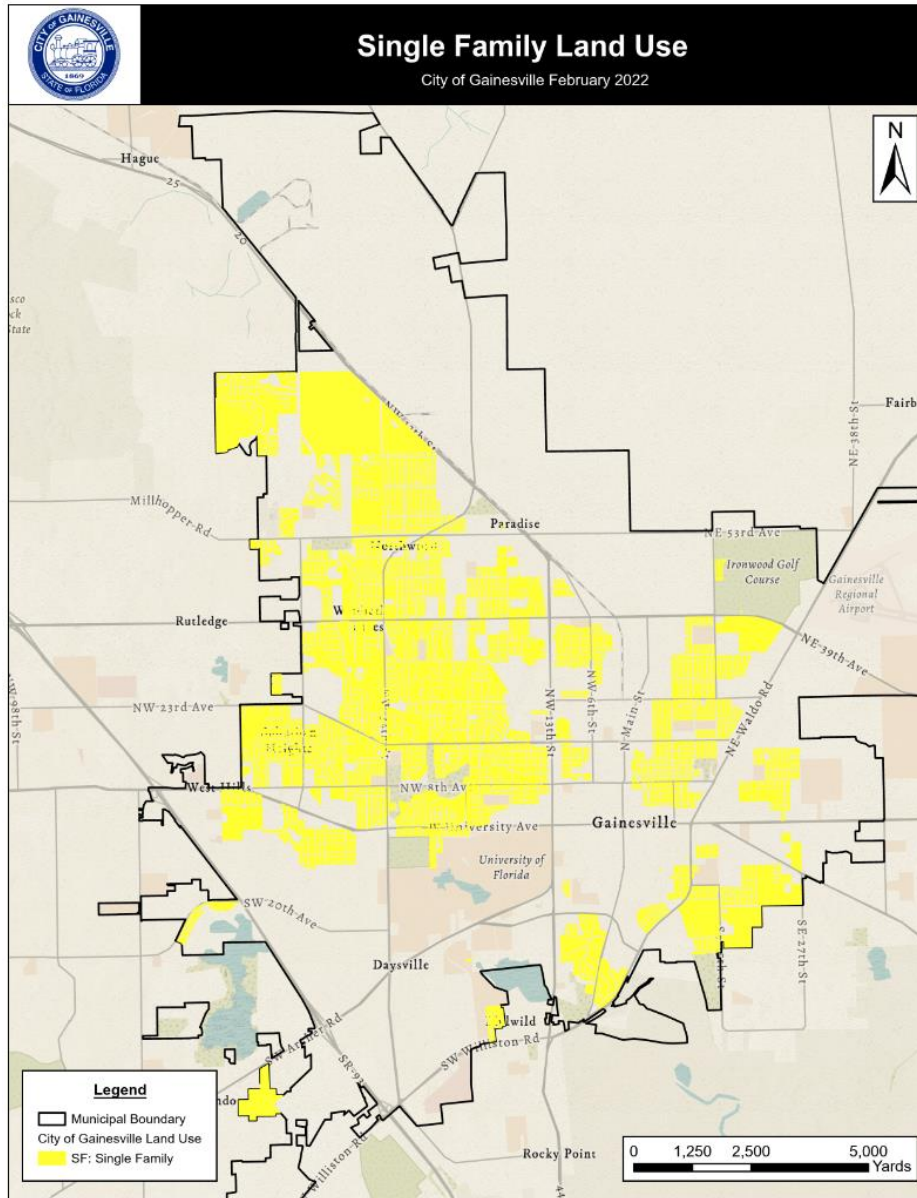
Option 2. Remove Single Family as a Future Land Use Element and amend the Future Land Use Map by assigning the Residential Low land use (RL) to properties that were previously designated with a Single Family land use.



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Existing Single Family parcels in the City of Gainesville





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Along with language amending the future land use map, staff is also proposing the amendment of the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the allowance of neighborhood scale multi-family in areas that are currently designated as single-family districts. This results in the removal of areas that are strictly single-family from the Comprehensive Plan and results in residential zones that provide property owners the option of single family or neighborhood scale multi-family development.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed amendments to the LDC are consistent with Gainesville's Comprehensive Plan as demonstrated below:

Consistency with the Future Land Use Elements

Policy 1.1.3 Neighborhoods should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.

Consistency with the Housing Element

Policy 1.1.4 The City shall review and evaluate zoning and other regulations that pertain to housing to insure that requirements continue to be reasonable and do not unduly limit opportunities for lower income groups to secure housing in desirable locations.

Objective 1.2 Provide a variety of housing types and densities for moderate-income, low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income people.

Objective 1.3 The City shall allocate sufficient acreage in appropriate locations to meet the housing needs of the City's residents.

Policy 1.5.1 The City shall seek innovative ways to encourage affordable housing, which could include use of alternative building materials, reduced lot size requirements, design competitions for affordable housing, and a design advisory committee to advise housing providers on the development of affordable housing designs.

Policy 3.5.1 The City shall develop recommendations on increasing the desirability of owner-occupancy in the University Context Area.



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Respectfully submitted,

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