



Legislation Text

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Public School Concurrency (B)

The Community Development Committee referred the report on public school concurrency back to the City Commission.

The Community Development Committee on February 14, 2008 heard a presentation from staff on public school concurrency. Following discussion of the item, the Committee referred it to the City Commission with a recommendation that the Commission authorize staff to take school concurrency-related comprehensive plan amendments to the City Plan Board, and remove this item from the referral list.

The Florida Legislature over the past decade has progressively strengthened the linkage between school planning and general land use and comprehensive planning through amendments to Chapters 163 and 1013, Florida Statutes. The 2005 Legislature mandated that availability of public schools be made a prerequisite for the approval of residential construction and directed a closer integration of planning for school capacity with comprehensive planning.

A statewide schedule was established by the State that requires local governments in Alachua County to adopt comprehensive plan amendments to establish school concurrency by July 1, 2008. If the amendments are not adopted and transmitted to the state land planning agency by that date, it will result in the local government being prohibited from adopting comprehensive plan amendments that increase residential density until the school concurrency amendments have been adopted and transmitted.

The Public Schools Facility Element (PSFE) must contain data and analysis that addresses the standards used by the School Board to evaluate school facilities, provide an inventory of existing facilities and planned future facilities and an evaluation of the school system based on these standards and a determination of need, including an analysis of funding. The data and analysis evaluates the school system and its relationship to development and growth within sectors and communities. The findings and conclusions support the goals, objectives and policies of the PSFE, including the establishment of levels of service standards and the delineation of concurrency service areas. Related updates are also required for the Intergovernmental Coordination Element (ICE) and for the Capital Improvement Element (CIE).

Over the past year, a staff working group (established by interlocal agreement) of the School Board, Alachua County, City of Gainesville and other municipalities, with support from the University of Florida's Center for Building Better Communities, has been meeting on school concurrency. The working group has developed the required data and analysis for the PSFE, and has developed a concurrency implementation strategy for use by the various local governments in their comprehensive plans. City staff and others associated with the staff working group made a presentation to the City Commission on December 20, 2007, and the City Commission referred the matter to the Community Development Committee. Concerns regarding the impact of countywide growth and development patterns and their impact on schools located in Gainesville were expressed. Overall growth and development patterns and their impact on the City are topics that perhaps can be best considered in the near future by the Community Development Committee when it discusses recommendations of the Rusk Report. They will also be considered during the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) on the comprehensive plan process which will begin in 2009 and end by November 2010.

The data and analysis shows that the concurrency service areas (CSAs) for the three middle schools (Westwood, Lincoln and Bishop) located within Gainesville are under the 100 percent, proposed level of service (LOS) threshold in both the 5-year (2007/08 through 2011/12) and the 10-year (2012/13 - 2017/18) Middle School District Facilities Plans of the School Board. The same is true, with one exception (Buchholz is at 110.5 percent in 2007/08, which will decrease due to programmatic changes to less than 100 percent in successive years in both the 5-year and 10-year Plans) for the CSAs for the three regular high schools located either in Gainesville (GHS) or nearby (Buchholz and Eastside). The Long-Range District Facilities Program plans additional capacity for 200 students at both Eastside and at Buchholz in the 10-year program.

There are major capacity issues regarding elementary schools in the district. Among the recommendations by School Board staff to address elementary school capacity in the next five years are: additional capacity for 200 students at Alachua Elementary, one new elementary school in the High Springs CSA and one new elementary school in the West Urban CSA, and attendance boundary

changes to shift enrollment from Stephen Foster Elementary (Northwest Gainesville CSA) to Metcalfe Elementary and Rawlings Elementary (Northeast Gainesville CSA). Among School Board staff recommendations for the second five years (2012/13 - 2017/18) are four new elementary schools to be located in the Newberry, Northwest Gainesville, South Gainesville and Alachua CSAs, and an additional 80 student stations at JJ Finley (South Gainesville CSA). These recommendations, if implemented, comprise a financially feasible plan to meet the 100 percent LOS standard by 2011/12, which is the end of the first 5-year period. In order to meet possible capacity deficiencies within the first 5-year period, an interim LOS standard greater than 100 percent for currently backlogged CSAs (none of which are within Gainesville city limits) is recommended. Also recommended is incorporation of a proportionate share mitigation program as a component of the 5-year District Facilities Plan of the School Board.

The three concurrency service areas that include elementary schools located in Gainesville (Northwest Gainesville, East Gainesville, and South Gainesville CSAs) are under the 100 percent, proposed level of service (LOS) threshold in both the 5-year (2007/08 through 2011/12) and the 10-year (2012/13 - 2017/18) Elementary School District Facilities Plans of the School Board.

None

Staff to City Commission: 1) Authorize staff to take school concurrency-related comprehensive plan amendments to the City Plan Board; and 2) remove this item from the referral list.

Community Development Committee to the City Commission: 1) Refer this item to the City Commission and authorize staff to take school concurrency-related comprehensive plan amendments to the City Plan Board; and 2) remove this item from the referral list.